

## **BUSINESS SUPPORT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**18 AUGUST 2009**

### **FIRST QUARTER PERFORMANCE REPORT 09/10**

Report from: Neil Davies, Chief Executive  
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#### **Summary**

This report presents Council performance for the first quarter of 2009-10. In particular it includes performance against indicators and actions agreed in the Council Plan 2009-12. This report represents an enhanced performance reporting process completed consistently across the council, to facilitate the timely management of performance.

#### **1. Budget and Policy Framework**

1.1 This document reports progress against the Council Plan 2009-12, which is a key part of the budget and policy framework

#### **2. Background**

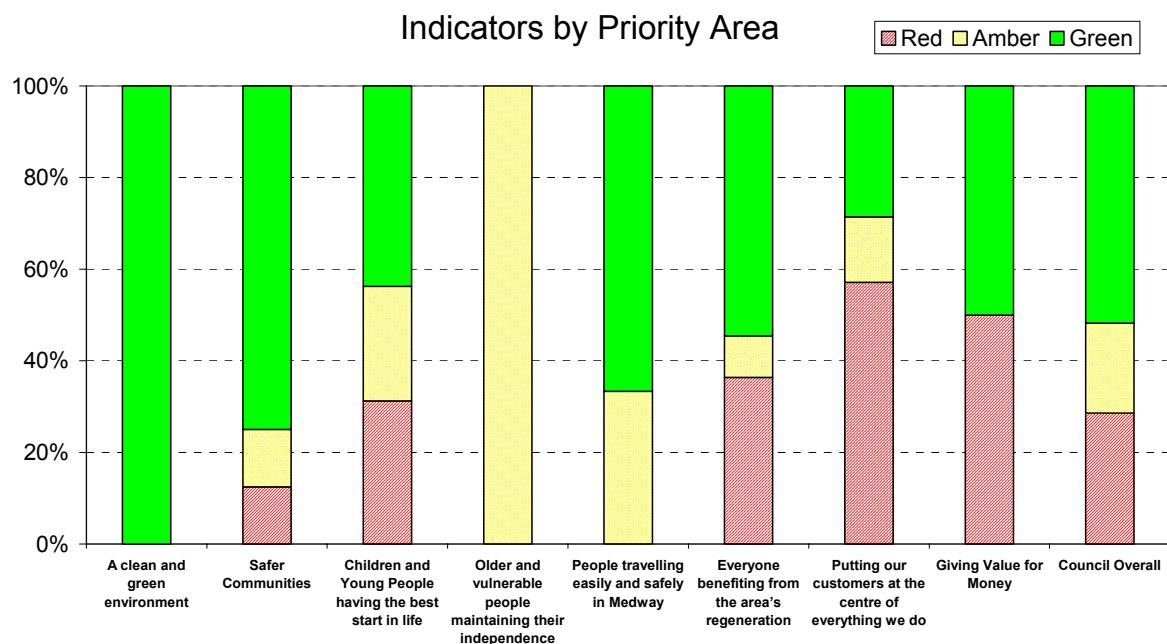
2.1 In February 2009 full council agreed the Council Plan 2009-12, setting out the key outcomes and actions to be achieved in the medium term, together with the key indicators and associated targets by which achievement will be measured. This report allows members to monitor progress to achieving the outcomes agreed in the plan.

#### **4. Advice and analysis**

4.1 A summary of performance against the outcomes agreed in the Council Plan 2009-12 is set out below

4.2 Appendix 1 details performance against each of the six priorities and two core values agreed in the Council Plan. Specific performance against individual actions and indicators is given at Appendix 2.

4.3 Performance on 55 key measures of success can be reported this quarter – 29 (52%) are on track (rated green), 11 (20%) are off target but we believe are capable of reaching target within the year (rated amber), and 16 (29%) are off target and require improvement – these are rated red. However, 5 of these 16 are behind target but showing an improving trend towards target. The main report at Appendix 1 details further information about remedial action. The following chart illustrates the breakdown across priority areas and core values:



- 4.4 Place survey data has been included in the report to show the 08/9 performance against the 18 national indicators which come from this survey data. A partial set of Place survey results was confirmed and published by CLG in June. There have been long delays in national publication of the data, amidst concerns about the quality of the data due to low response rates to the postal place survey. Councils have expressed concerns about the reliability of the data given the extent to which responses from certain age groups have had to be weighted or multiplied to counteract low response rates. For example the views of one respondent to Medway's survey are given twelve times the weighting of other respondents. Due to late changes in weightings applied to the data by CLG, the council does not yet have a full report from the contractors Ipsos Mori who conducted the survey on our behalf. Due to these difficulties with methodology, the council will be commissioning a full and representative residents' opinion poll as part of the forthcoming re-recruitment of our 1500 strong citizens panel. The panel will be fully representative of Medway's population in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, working status and area of Medway in which they live. The opinion poll results are due during quarter 3.
- 4.5 The council has implemented significant changes to its performance management arrangements which are having an impact this quarter. The development of an outcome focused council plan has been underpinned by service plans which track the contribution of each service area to the council's priorities. An enhanced quarterly monitoring process has also been carried out to a standard format by each assistant director. This has meant that officers can report in a timely way on both achievement of the council's key measures of success and supporting actions. This rounded approach is recognised as good practice.
- 4.6 Comparative information with other local authorities has not yet been released nationally. As discussed at the last Business Support Overview & Scrutiny meeting, it is hoped that these will be available for quarter 2 monitoring Red/Amber/Green ratings will be assigned, as members requested, to both performance against target and against comparator authorities.
- 4.7 In the first round of financial monitoring the council is forecasting an overspend of just over £1million, approximately half of which relates to Dedicated Schools Grant funded services. Prudent financial management dictates that forecasts at this stage of the year are conservative, and against that background, this is an encouraging position. The forecast also does not include the potential £1.6million saving that would materialise if this years pay award were to be settled to reflect current inflation rates, below the figure projected

during the budget setting process. There are two key areas of budget pressure. Firstly in Children's Care which reflects the increase in workload discussed in the main report. Secondly, the impact of the recession on income, particularly affecting the Regeneration, Community and Culture directorate, as detailed in the Value for Money section of the main report.

## A Clean & Green Environment

Number of indicators reported this quarter	Red	Amber	Green
4	0% (0)	0% (0)	100% (4)

- 4.8 We have achieved our third green flag for a park in Medway – Hillyfields Community Park, and have retained the green flags for Riverside Country Park and the Vines. Public consultation has been completed on Phase 1 of the delivery plan for the playbuilder scheme and it has been approved by Play England. We are currently preparing contracts to deliver all phase 1 site improvements by the end of March 2010. Our £2.4m bid to Heritage Lottery Fund to refurbish Gillingham Park has been unsuccessful. The £20m "Parks for People" fund was more than four times oversubscribed. A revised scheme is being drawn up to be considered by cabinet during the second quarter.
- 4.9 Early provisional data suggests a recycling rate of 38% for the first quarter, a slight increase on the same quarter of 2008/9 of 36%, indicating we are on track to meet our recycling and waste minimisation targets. For April and May, 64kg and 61kg of household waste was collected per household, ahead of our LAA target of 68kg per month. Although the council has concerns about the reliability of place survey data, the results in relation to refuse collection and doorstep recycling showed satisfaction rates of 82.4% and 79.3% respectively. Satisfaction with household waste recycling stood at 76.5%.
- 4.10 The latest available results (08/9) show that the condition of the streets in terms of littering, graffiti, flyposting and flytipping has improved and is performing well with only 6% of roads falling below acceptable standard on inspection. The number of service requests has remained consistent over the first quarters of 2008/9 and 2009/10. We have cleared 581 instances of graffiti this quarter.
- 4.11 The carbon footprint for the local area stands at 4.9 tonnes of CO2 per capita, which is the lowest in the South East. To ensure we achieve our LAA target of a further 14% reduction, the council is working with the both the Energy Saving Trust and the Carbon Trust, to support local residents and businesses to reduce their carbon footprint, whilst also reducing their energy bills.

## Safer communities

Number of indicators reported this quarter	Red	Amber	Green
8	12.5% (1)	12.5% (1)	75% (6)

- 4.12 The police are reporting that levels of crime in Medway have dropped for the first quarter in comparison with the same period last year by 16.6%, exceeding the reduction for all of Kent which stands at 12%. This includes serious violent crime down by 51.7%, burglary from dwellings down by 38.6%, robbery down by 33%, serious acquisitive crime down by 22%, and vehicle crime down by 14.5%.
- 4.13 A key priority for the Community Safety Partnership is feelings of safety and confidence, which lag behind the improvements achieved in reducing levels of crime and anti social behaviour. Although the place survey results showed that 25% of respondents believed that anti social behaviour is a problem and 23% of people feel that local public services are

dealing effectively with the problems, we have very different evidence from the Kent Crime and Victim Survey. 72% of respondents feel that the police and council are working together to deal with anti social behaviour and crime issues, against a target of 77% for 09/10. 9.8% of people perceive anti social behaviour to be a problem, down from 21% last year. The Community Safety Partnership has recruited a specialist media officer to deliver a reassurance communications campaign to bring fear of crime in line with actual crime.

- 4.14 The Place Survey results gave a figure of 70.4% of people believing people from different backgrounds get on well together, a 1% reduction from 2006/7, against the local area agreement target of 75.4% by 2010/11. 40% of respondents believe people in the area treat each other with respect up from 34% in 2006/7. The percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions is 23.4%, a slight increase from 2006/7, but compares to the LAA target of 27.1% by 2010/11.
- 4.15 The actual number of anti social behaviour incidents in hotspot locations in the first quarter have dropped by 22% in comparison with the same period last year. The combined drop for anti social behaviour and criminal damage in hotspot locations for the first quarter is 20.1%, compared to an 11.4% drop for the whole of Kent.
- 4.16 By the end of 2008/9, the total number of incidents in night time economy hotspots had fallen by 26.4%. A key development in the last quarter has been the launch of the SOS bus in May 2009. The bus, and the smaller Sprinter support vehicle, is currently deployed on Friday evenings and operates with between 4 - 6 volunteers and a minimum of 2 Red Cross personnel. There have been 9 Friday deployments with 45 recorded visits, ranging from requests for advice on homelessness, re hydration, 'safe haven' usage, drug and alcohol issues and social services advice.
- 4.17 On 1<sup>st</sup> April Medway began to operate its own Medway Drug & Alcohol Action Team (MDAAT). Since 1998 the function of a DAAT had been undertaken on Medway's behalf by Kent County. Medway has already exceeded its 2009/10 targets, with 769 problem drug users recorded as being in effective treatment compared to the target of 727.

### Children and young people having the best start in life

Number of indicators reported this quarter	Red	Amber	Green
16	31% (5)	25% (4)	44% (7)

- 4.18 In the last quarter we have continued to see a significant increase in child protection workload following the publicity around the Baby Peter case. The biggest increase is in children identified as being at sufficient risk to warrant a child protection conference. At the end of March 09 there were 176 children subject to child protection plans, compared to 201 at the end of June. The number of looked after children had increased from 310 to 321. The increased workload has stretched the capacity of social work teams and the independent reviewing officer service. Performance on initial assessments (an LAA target) has been sustained at 79% in the first quarter. However, completion of the in depth core assessments has dropped to 68% from the year end figure of 83%. Our performance for child protection conferences at the end of June was 94%, behind the 100% target, representing two conferences held out of time for two sibling groups. This was due to scheduling errors, with one conference only one day late. The safety of these children was not compromised. The Council is identifying options to re-align resources to ensure the Council can continue to respond effectively to this important work.
- 4.19 The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage as judged by Ofsted inspections continues to improve, with the proportion judged as good or better currently at 52%. However, the number of registered childminders with good or better judgements remains below the national and regional average at 48%.

- 4.20 A Primary Re-organisation report was considered by Cabinet in May and recommendations to undertake consultation on a number of proposals for both closure and amalgamation to reduce surplus places and raise standards were agreed. This consultation is now being progressed. Provisional Key Stage 2 results will be reported in the second quarter.
- 4.21 At secondary school level the council is maintaining its drive to sustain the four year improving trend in GCSE results to the 2008 high of 66% achieving five or more A\*-C GCSE grades. Using 2007 data, the government's National Challenge programme identified 7 Medway secondary schools as being at risk of failing to achieve at least 30% of pupil achieving 5 or more A\*C grades at GCSE (or equivalent) including English and mathematics by 2011. Targeted support has already reduced this to 5 schools. We have appointed specialist National Challenge Advisers in the remaining five schools to support them to achieve this target. At the end of the academic year there have been only 8 permanent exclusions at secondary level, as compared to 43 at the same time last year.
- 4.22 Evidence shows that young people who have children at a young age will find their future more challenging, as will their children. The latest provisional data for March 2008 from the Office for National Statistics shows a quarterly rate of 49.9 conceptions per 1000 population, a reduction from the September 2007 high of 52.7 per 1000. The 2010/11 target of 23.1 per 1000 still remains very challenging and is the focus of multi agency work between the council and NHS.
- 4.23 We remain ahead of the National Healthy Schools Standard target, at 76% compared to a target of 65%. A further 20% of Medway schools are participating in the award. The free swimming initiative aimed for under 16's continues to be a success. Participation has increased by 111% overall compared to the same period last year, with an increase of 138% at Splashes Leisure Pool and 745% at the Strand Leisure Park.
- 4.24 The level of young people 'not in education employment or training at the end of June improved to 8.4%, down from 9.3% at the end of 2008/9, but against a target for the end of the year of 5.8%. The proportion of young people leaving care who are in employment education or training is strong at 71% against a target of 39%.

#### **Older and vulnerable people maintaining their independence**

<b>Number of indicators reported this quarter</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Green</b>
3	0% (0)	100% (3)	0% (0)

- 4.25 Delivery of the Council's Fair Access to Care project (FACS) has continued. The project ensures that our resources are directed to support the most vulnerable clients in greatest need. The project also continues to fund voluntary sector providers to provide support to clients whose level of need means they are not eligible for council services. At the beginning of the first quarter there were about 800 cases awaiting moderation and due to concentrated efforts of Service and Team Managers all of these cases have been processed. This concludes Phase 1 of the FACS project. Phase 2 focuses on routine application of FACS for all new referrals and re-assessments.
- 4.26 Although figures for the number of clients receiving self directed support cannot be finalised until the year end due to the variety of data sources, the council monitors take-up of direct payments as a proxy measure. At the end of 2008/9, 285 service users were in receipt of direct payments, which has risen to 361 at the end of June. However, there is still some way to go to achieve the year end target of 640.
- 4.27 For the year to date, there have been 328 delayed transfers of care from hospital. However only 24 (7%) were attributable to the Council, the remaining being attributable to the NHS.

The percentage of vulnerable people achieving independent living has declined slightly from 85.2% at the end of the year to 81.2%. However, this is significantly better than the 60% seen in the same quarter of the previous year, and better than the national average of 74.3%. The proportion of vulnerable people *supported* to achieve independent living is higher, at 93.1%, although still behind the target of 97.2% for the year end.

- 4.28 Initial evaluation of the weight management and education programme being delivered by Tipping-the-balance clinic is showing encouraging results. Likewise, the Medway Stop Smoking service is above target for the number of participants quitting after 4 weeks and was the top performing service in south east coast region for 2008/09.
- 4.29 Swimming participation for adults has increased by 141% compared to the same quarter last year, with Free swimming showing an increase quarter on quarter. A survey has been completed this quarter which indicated that over 90% of those using the scheme were from Medway, around 5% from Swale & Maidstone, and around 1.5% from Gravesham. This is a clear indication that the free swimming initiative is benefiting the residents of Medway and travel from other areas is less than anticipated.
- 4.30 Latest interim figures from the Sport England Active People survey suggest participation in sport amongst adults is at 16.2% - this is two per cent below the baseline 18.2% figure used to set the 23.2% LAA target. This is based on a small sample of 500 adults using telephone surveys. To gain a more accurate picture, Medway has commissioned its own survey based and the results will be available quarter two.

### People travelling easily and safely in Medway

Number of indicators reported this quarter	Red	Amber	Green
3	0% (0)	33% (1)	67% (2)

- 4.31 Progress has been sustained on the Chatham road network improvement programme. During the last quarter contractors were appointed for the flyover demolition and bus route construction, the temporary bus route has been completed and the flyover closed to general traffic and demolition work commenced. During the first quarter, design of the bus facility has been progressing and the planning application was submitted in March, with a decision expected in August.
- 4.32 Phase 2 improvements to the A228 are being progressed– key to opening up major economic regeneration sites on the Hoo peninsular as well as improving road safety. The planning application for the roundabout at Fenn Corner which is due to be completed this year, has been prepared. Submission was delayed due to issues with land acquisition which have now been resolved.
- 4.33 Quarter 1 also saw the launch of a new walking bus at Kingfisher primary school, and bikeability training at several primary schools. There are now 40 walking buses involving 700 pupils. During Walk to School Week in May a practical exercise of “Coning Off” was delivered at three primary schools, where areas immediately outside schools were coned off to highlight the no parking zones and encourage walking to school. All feedback from these exercises was positive, and has encouraged parents to address congestion outside these schools. To date 86.4% of schools (102 out of 118) have travel plans in place.
- 4.34 The Roads Maintenance programme, which was developed for implementation from April onwards, is based on structural surveys with the roads in worst condition receiving the highest priority for remedial works. Works are being completed during July to October. The council has taken out a £4million loan to invest in better roads and pavements.

- 4.35 Of the 23 targets in the local transport plan, we are achieving 22. The only target not being met is to reduce the number of air quality management areas by 3. This is partly due to certain national trends in air pollution chemistry that are making it harder to meet the UK air quality objectives for nitrogen dioxide. We are producing an Air Quality Action Plan to tackle air quality issues that result from traffic and the Urban Traffic Management and Control system currently being developed will contribute to air quality.

#### Everyone benefiting from the area's regeneration

Number of indicators reported this quarter	Red	Amber	Green
11	36% (4)	9% (1)	55% (6)

- 4.36 In February 2009 we were subject to a Regeneration Inspection by the Audit Commission and the results were published in May. The Commission gave the Council a 'good', two-star rating out of a possible three stars with promising prospects for improvement.
- 4.37 Our aim is to provide decent homes and living environments for all by maximising the supply of suitable and affordable homes. The South East Plan target of 815 net additional homes has been exceeded by completing 914 for 2008/09, the highest figure since 1989/90. It shows Medway is bucking the trend in the rest of the country where building levels have collapsed as a result of the recession. Provisional survey results suggest a reasonable level of construction and that our performance in 2009/10 may not be as good as last year but is still better than expected, given the economic situation.
- 4.38 Despite the current challenging economic climate we have reduced the number of households living in temporary accommodation from 151 at end of March to 142 at the end of June. This means we have already exceeded the government to reduce numbers in temporary accommodation by 50% from the 2004 baseline of 629 by 2010.
- 4.39 Cabinet has approved the Local Development Framework Core Strategy 'Issues and Options' document for consultation. The consultation period is 24 July to 18 September 2009. A first stage of public consultation has been completed by Land Securities regarding the proposed 5,000 homes at the Lodge Hill at Chattenden development. An additional development control planning officer is being recruited to support the development.
- 4.40 The economic downturn continues to slow progress at Rochester Riverside due to the risk-averse nature of developers and financial institutions. However, officers continue to work with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and developers to bring forward development opportunities which have been hindered by the economic climate. Following the appointment of RHWL Architects Ltd in March, a concept hotel and commercial quarter masterplan for Rochester Riverside was completed in June.
- 4.41 Work continues to develop our town centres; noticeably this quarter the Chatham flyover is now closed and temporary bus routes and traffic flow measures are in place, and demolition has begun. A brief is now being prepared for the next stage of masterplanning for Chatham work proposed for the High Street / Best Street and Gun Wharf areas.
- 4.42 There are clear indications that projects in place to reduce the impact of the economic recession are having an impact from a job creation and business investment point of view. Over the period 2008-2009, 394 new business investments were made in Medway creating over 1,780 jobs whilst during the same year there were over 1,050 jobs lost through recorded redundancies. The number of higher value professional and management occupations in Medway has increased in Medway from 47,400 in 2007 to 50,400 in 2008. The number of people claiming Job Seeker Allowance (JSA) over the period April to June 2009 rose by just 3.9%. This compares to 34% and 24% increases in the previous two quarters. The Innovation Centre Phase Two has been operational for the first time this

quarter and ten tenants have already been secured for the 48 available business units, representing 31 jobs created or protected. We currently have 79% occupancy of the two managed workspaces operated directly by the Council.

- 4.43 The proportion of the workforce in Medway with a basic qualification is now 83.6%, higher than the regional average and a 2.6 percentage point growth since 2007 compared to 0.9% at the regional level. 22.8% of the local workforce now have a degree level qualification against the regional average of 31.5%. The difference has closed to 8.7% in 2008 compared to 10.1% in 2007. We have been able to sustain the REIGNITE project employment support services through jointly financing the project with the Diocese of Rochester, and a further 180 local beneficiaries have benefited as a result. We are currently negotiating with Skills Training UK Ltd for the local REIGNITE partnership consortium to enter into a sub-contract with them to deliver the Flexible New Deal service on their behalf in Medway and secure REIGNITE's long term future.
- 4.44 Despite the economic recession, visits to the council's cultural and heritage facilities have improved. Eastgate House has held several exhibitions and activities this quarter which has seen an increase of 52% visitors compared to the same quarter last year. Visits to Rochester Castle were 17% up on the same quarter of the previous year. Visits to Upnor Castle were 28% up on the same quarter in 2008. This is an impressive increase but needs to be qualified as spring 2008 was a particularly poor quarter for the castle. This quarter has seen the delivery of a range of festivals from our extensive programme. The Sweeps Festival and Summer Dickens Festival had increased attendance levels on all days and satisfaction levels remain above 90%. The FUSE arts festival took place in June ensuring that our cultural offer is genuinely accessible to the residents of Medway. The castle concerts were launched and sales have been strong given the current financial climate with 76% of sales during the first quarter conducted on line. The number of physical visits to libraries during the first quarter of this year is 1015 per 1000 population, marginally behind the figure of 1032 for the same period in the previous year. The proportion of the population who are active borrowers is 19.6%, which represents an increase from 19% at the end of 2008/9. Investment in library stock, public access PCs and marketing is expected to increase library use during the remainder of the year.

#### Putting our customers at the centre of everything we do

Number of indicators reported this quarter	Red	Amber	Green
7	57% (4)	14% (1)	29% (2)

- 4.45 The Customer First service received over 200,000 contacts during the first quarter, with 79% by phone and 17% at our five contactpoints. 95% of survey respondents said staff were helpful, 96% said they were both patient and friendly and 91% said that staff were knowledgeable. Current performance against NI14, avoidable contact, is 24.7%, ahead of the target of 28%. NI14 enhances the previous 'one and done' indicator by measuring the quality of the contact as well as the efficiency. The proportion of people seen on a 'one and done' basis for housing queries has improved from 53% in April to 60.8% in June, meaning our rate of improvement is on track to meet the 65% target. Both stage 1 and stage 2 complaints show that we are not currently responding within the timescales at 85% and 76% compared to targets of 96% and 90% respectively. Furthermore, 27 complaints were received at Ombudsman level, up from 17 in the first quarter of 2008/9. The systems and processes for complaints handling are being reviewed, to ensure the council learns from complaints and responds in a timely fashion. However, 99.2% of emails are answered within 5 working days against a target of 99%, and 93.3% of letters are answered within 10 days, against a target of 95%.
- 4.46 The average time taken to process housing and council tax benefit claims stands at 32.9 days for June, and 29.2 days for the quarter, up from 17.3 days for 2008/9. This breaks



down as 50.2 days for new claims and 24.2 days for changes of circumstances. This is due to a significant increase in new applications as a result of the current economic climate, with the final quarter of 2008/9 receiving 22.6% more, and the first quarter of 2009/10 receiving 10.2% more, when compared to the first quarter of 2008/9. Additional staff have been recruited to ensure the backlog is cleared.

## Giving Value for Money

Number of indicators reported this quarter	Red	Amber	Green
4	50% (2)	0% (0)	50% (2)

- 4.47 The council continuously reviews its services to find greater efficiencies and share services with other organisations to save money. The final year end outturn for 2008/9 was £6.7million, which, whilst still subject to audit, exceeded our target of £6.5 million. A total of £334,850 has been secured from 3 bids in additional external funding this quarter through bids for grant funding streams, with a further 15 bids awaiting decision by the funders. Gross capital receipts in 2008/09 were £4,054,834. During the first quarter of 2009/10 gross receipts amounted to £160,500. The predicted outturn for 2009/10 is currently £4,466,000, better than the annual target of £4m, but is reliant on a small number of large receipts and the current economic situation has impacted disposals.
- 4.48 The economic situation impacted on council tax collection rates with 26.9% of collected compared to 27.6% in the same quarter of the previous year. Conversely, non domestic rates collection is up slightly on the previous year, at 29.9% compared to 29.5%. Income relating to planning applications and building regulation applications is less than previous years, with applications dropping from 2558 to 1568 when comparing 2009 to 2006. Likewise the anticipated loss of income in Leisure services has materialised as forecast, with building works at the Medway Park development contributing to a 36% loss of income at that site.

## 5. Risk Management

- 5.1 The purpose of this performance report is to enable the Council to manage the key risks to performance which have arisen over the previous quarter, note remedial actions taken and comment appropriately. The key risks to achieving priorities and outcomes are included in the monitoring report attached at appendix 1, along with actions to mitigate those risks.

## 6. Financial and legal implications

- 6.1 The report and its attached appendices summarises reports performance for the quarter ending 30<sup>th</sup> June 2009. As such there are no financial or legal implications to report.

## 7. Recommendations

- 7.1 Members should note and scrutinise performance for the first quarter 2009-10 and comment accordingly.

## Lead officer contact

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## Background papers

Council Plan 2009-12  
Annual Report 2008/9