

## **Priority 1: A clean and green environment**

### **What we aim to do:**

Our commitment to the environment includes keeping the streets clean, recycling more rubbish and reducing carbon emissions. We will protect our existing green spaces in urban and rural areas, whilst continuing to invest to create parks that can be enjoyed by all. We want to create an environment where people have opportunities to take more exercise to improve their health and wellbeing. We seek to plan and deliver our services in a sustainable way to protect the environment for current and future generations.

### **How well are we doing?**

Outlined below is performance against the 4 outcomes set out in the council plan under the 'clean and green environment' priority. We have rated our achievement of planned actions and outcomes this quarter as 'amber' as progress has been made to sustain our capacity to deliver an improved environment but there has been an increase in litter, detritus and graffiti. Performance on 7 key measures of success can be reported this quarter – 4 (57%) are on track and 3 (43%) are off target and require significant improvement these are rated red.

#### Outcome: Manage, protect, conserve and invest in our open spaces to create parks that can be enjoyed by all

'More things for young people to do' has been a consistent message from resident surveys. This remains a priority and Medway has therefore embarked on a programme of open spaces and play area improvement, mostly funded (£0.5 million) by the Phase 1 Playbuilder programme. During quarter 2 the first contracts under the Playbuilder programme were let and awarded for Riverside Country Park and Jackson's recreation ground, to be completed by the end of the calendar year. In addition to the Playbuilder schemes, improvements at playgrounds at Pottery Road and Wigmore Park have been completed, with contractors on site at Abermarle Road play area. Further projects are being progressed at Princess Park, and Barnfield Recreation ground.

External validation of our progress in improving open spaces is demonstrated by the Green Flag scheme having achieved, the third Medway green flag, awarded for Hillyfields and a rating in the top 5% of green flag parks for the Vines. A Green Flag Working Group has been established to undertake further work towards the standard. The group's role is to ensure we retain existing accreditations next year, and consider further potential sites for green flag status.

#### Outcome: Manage Medway's waste sustainably and reduce waste sent to landfill.

The percentage of waste recycled was roughly constant when comparing the second quarter to the first, at 35.5% and is better than target, although September data is still provisional. This maintenance of position is positive, given that usually the amount of garden waste peaks during the first quarter and declines in the second quarter. However, despite improvements Medway is still below the national average for the percentage of waste recycled and a number of projects are in place to address this.

It is believed that the recession has resulted in a positive drop to 191 kg of residual waste per household collected during the second quarter, down from 206 kg in the previous quarter. However, Medway has historically collected more waste than other authorities.

The current contracts for waste collection were due to change in November. This has been delayed and the contract will be awarded in the first quarter of 2010 to commence in late summer 2010. The contract will see a new kerbside kitchen waste service and an expansion of the council's garden waste collection service.

Making sure as many residents as possible have access to garden waste collections will assist an increase in recycling. The Waste Minimisation Team have won a prestigious Green Apple award for environmental best practice after introducing a successful household waste recycling service at Bryant Street flats. Each flat is designed differently so a unique solution was required, working in partnership with the housing association and the caretaker for the block. Residents recycled more than 1.6 tonnes of waste during the scheme's first eight weeks. Other partnership working between the waste minimisation team and housing associations or letting agents, has resulted in a further 1,217 flats in 56 developments having recycling facilities installed. In addition, so far this year, over 5,500 houses have been assessed for brown garden waste bins, and 1,936 additional households are suitable for brown bins, with a further 1,811 households with space restrictions being given a brown bin if they want one.

Last year the change in recycling markets meant that for a significant part of the year recycling of timber was not possible, but a new processor has now been identified and is in place, recycling 2340 tonnes of wood waste in the first 6 months of 2009/10. The first set of figures is now available for the Neighbourhood Furniture Store initiative reported in Quarter 1. Between April and June 8 tonnes of furniture have been diverted from landfill through re-use. A total of 6,031 tonnes of household waste excluding composted waste was sent for recycling in the first quarter of this year. This increased to 6,737 in the second quarter.

#### Outcome: improving the local street scene

Street cleaning has been highlighted as a priority by residents. Performance for the condition of the streets in terms of littering, graffiti, fly-posting and fly-tipping is reported every 4 months, with the first set of results for April to July now available. They show that the proportion of streets with unacceptable levels of litter has increased from 5% for 2008/9 to 8% this year above the target of 5%. The percentage with unacceptable levels of detritus has also increased from 8% to 14%, as has graffiti, from 4% to 6%. However, fly-posting remains good at 0%, maintained from last year and the graffiti team has removed 843 instances of graffiti so far this year.

In response to the above performance, officers from Community safety, enforcement and waste services have introduced a local inspection survey looking at all aspects of the street scene. Next quarter waste services will work with the contractor to change the current street cleansing methods, with more emphasis on sweeping as well as litter picking and will then assess if this has a positive impact on cleanliness. A weed removal programme has also been implemented following reports of increased weed growth. During the quarter Medway has carried out 11 Community Clean-Up events, clearing vegetation and rubbish from both public and private land, and supported the Clean-Up Lordswood Day", removing graffiti from 11 sites and providing a waste disposal facility.

A further issue identified is the contractor's street cleansing vehicles ageing, resulting in the fleet being below full capacity due to additional maintenance requirements. The vehicles were due to be renewed at the start of the new contract in September but this was delayed due to the contract extension. Replacements are now on order and will be operational later in the year.

The number of enforcement actions for fly-tipping has increased from 100 per month at the start of the year, to 154 in September, bringing the total for the second quarter to 397, significantly above the 241 recorded in the same period last year. The number of fly tips incidents has seen a slight increase from 984 to 996 from the first quarter, but a decline from the previous year figure of 1015 for the second quarter.

It has been demonstrated that the quality of public toilets has an impact on the public perception of an area. During the second quarter, Medway has refurbished Parkwood toilets with a further 7 receiving minor improvement works. Following the commencement of a new cleaning contract, a significant improvement in standard has been seen, with a corresponding drop in complaints.

## Outcome: reduce the carbon footprint and foster sustainable development in Medway

Carbon footprinting is currently only available annually, and results become available for both the council's carbon footprint and that of the local area each year in this second quarter.

The council's carbon footprint from its own buildings and operations is 38,796 tonnes of carbon dioxide as compared to 2005/6 when it was 41,200 tonnes. Whilst the way of measuring this has been updated, it is broadly comparable and represents a 6% reduction. Based on this assessment, officers are now able to prepare for the Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC), under which local authorities and other large organizations will be required to buy permits to release carbon dioxide, with the overall amount of allowances reducing year on year. An Energy Manager has been recruited to significantly increase capacity to reduce the carbon footprint and reduce our £3.5m energy bills and limit the potential £0.5m cost of Carbon Reduction Commitment.

The government has released the third report on the total carbon dioxide emissions for whole of the Medway area, and whilst relating to 2007, it is the most up to date information available. Performance has improved from 5.02 tonnes of carbon dioxide per head of population in 2005 to 4.89 tonnes per head of population in 2007, a reduction of 2.7%. Whilst positive, there is still some way to go to achieve the LAA target reduction of 13.9% by 2010. As part of the Multi Area Agreement signed in quarter 2, Medway has agreed a target to further reduce carbon emissions by 16.7% by 2014.

Although there have been reductions, looking at the breakdown of the area's carbon emissions, shows there has been an increase of 1% in emissions due to transport but a reduction of 2.8% in domestic reductions, an indication of the impact of the council's Medway Our Planet campaign to help residents reduce their energy bills and carbon emissions. Provisional data shows that this 3 year campaign has supported residents to install 6,638 home insulation measures, preventing 93,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide being released, surpassing our target of 82,000 tonnes.

This quarter, the focus has been on continued engagement with the Energy Saving Trust's 1-1 support programme, an intense period of consultancy work over two years to develop a comprehensive action plan to reduce the carbon footprint of the local area. The draft report and recommendations were completed during quarter 2, and scored Medway as 5<sup>th</sup> best of the 44 authorities on the programme for progress to date. The recommendations will be worked up into an action plan during quarter 3.

### **Summary**

#### **Highlights:**

- Sustaining increases in recycling to 35.5% (provisional) and reductions in waste going to landfill, although still below the national average.
- 6% reduction in the council's carbon footprint.

#### **Areas requiring development / key risks**

- The letting of the waste contract has been reprogrammed and the new enhanced service will not become operational until September 2010.
- Increase in street litter, detritus and fly-posting.

## Priority 2: Safer communities

We want people to be safe in Medway, and as important, to feel safe. Medway residents' perceptions of safety lag behind the actual levels of crime and disorder and we want to change that so people feel safe and confident. The council has an important contribution to make, working in partnership with the police, to reduce crime and the causes of crime, and increase confidence and pride in the area. We will continue to work in partnership with the police, focussing on tackling serious violence, reducing antisocial behaviour and reducing domestic violence. We want to build safe, strong and cohesive communities.

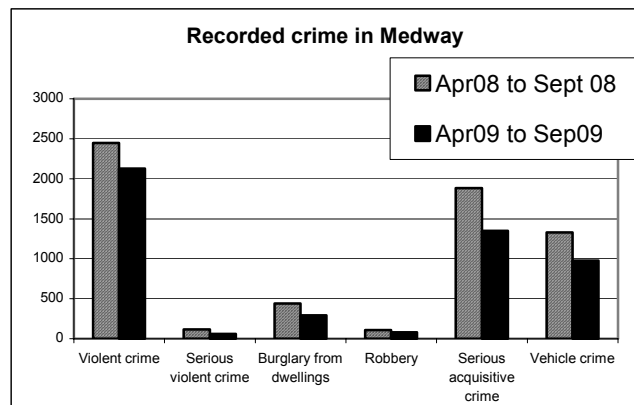
### How well are we doing it?

Outlined below is performance against the 5 outcomes set out in the council plan under the 'safer communities' priority. We have rated our achievement of planned actions and outcomes this quarter as green as both crime and antisocial behaviour are showing a decline. Proxy measures continue to show a decrease in the fear of crime and an increase in public confidence. Performance on 5 key measures of success can be reported this quarter – all 5 (100%) are on track (rated green).

Compared to the same period last year the police are reporting that levels of crime in Medway have dropped by 19.4%. This exceeds the reduction for all of Kent which stands at 16%. This includes:

- violent crime down by 13.1%
- serious violent crime down by 46.6%
- burglary from dwellings down by 33.8%,
- robbery down by 27.3%,
- serious acquisitive crime down by 28.2%,
- vehicle crime down by 26.4%,

The reduction in serious violent crime and serious acquisitive crime are particularly encouraging as these are partnership local area agreement priorities. Medway is now on track to achieve its targets.



### Outcome: build strong communities by improving community cohesion

The council has secured £1.029 million of external funding for investment in community cohesion projects to strengthen the integration of new migrant communities and deliver neighbourhood cohesion projects. These funds will enable the council and partners to deliver a programme of community cohesion projects over the next three years, to promote the aim of people from different backgrounds getting on well together.

This work will be supported by the employment of a community cohesion officer who will also take on responsibility for the continued development of the existing community cohesion group.

### Outcome: reduce antisocial behaviour, criminal damage and youth crime

Anti-social behaviour is a high profile local and national priority. The role of councils is key to tackling anti social behaviour. Positively, the perception of anti social behaviour being a problem has reduced in Medway from 15% in September 2008 to 8% in September 2009. Criminal damage offences have also reduced by just over quarter comparing figures for April to September 2008 and 2009. As part of this work the council employs ward based officers who are visible in local areas and support the neighbourhood police role.

The Safer Communities Service was re established in April 2009 to provide 3 area ward based teams in East, West and Central whilst maintaining a lead community officer for each ward. This

has led to reinforcing the council's partnership arrangements with the police and led to task groups to tackle various types of crime. Examples include Victoria Gardens, Anchor Wharf and Greatlines.

Work to prevent youth offending continues to have a positive impact 11 young people at risk of offending have completed an accredited 6-week course providing diversionary activity. Youth re-offending rates have dropped from 0.58 in the first quarter to 0.18 against an annual target of 1.13.

Outcome: reduce repeat occurrences of violent crime, such as repeat offenders, location and victims

Tackling repeat violent crime, including domestic violence, is one of the Community Safety Partnership's priorities for 2009-2012. Repeat victims of domestic violence has decreased by 12% compared to this point last year.

The Community Safety Partnership has formed a Violent Crime Partnership to tackle disorder in the night time economy.

The Police and the Council continue to work with the Safer Medway Partnership to provide a solution for businesses in the night time economy to work together to promote safer socialising working with the Council's CCTV service.

Outcome: reduce substance misuse including alcohol

The Medway Drug and Alcohol Team (DAAT) has been praised by the National Treatment Agency for increasing the numbers of drug users in treatment. Performance information is awaiting national verification by the National Treatment Agency (NTA) this information will be available for quarter 3 reporting.

The DAAT have published a draft alcohol strategy that is currently being consulted on. This aims to promote health related messages and respond to the crime and disorder related effect of alcohol misuse, including the impact on children's safety.

The Council continues to visit premises to ensure underage sales of alcohol and tobacco do not taking place. 76 premises have been visited this year; out of these 21 underage sales advice was given. The majority of the underage sales where for sales of tobacco from vending machines. Fixed Penalty Notices are expected to be introduced in the fourth quarter to enforce against underage alcohol sales.

Outcome: reduce the fear of crime and improve public confidence

To increase the feeling of safety in Medway and improve the confidence of the public of the police, council and partners working effectively together the Community Safety Partnership have developed a marketing campaign. The campaign includes the multi agency organisation of the 'Confidence and Reassurance Conference' taking place in November, ward specific newsletters and Community Safety Partnership road shows. The marketing campaign will continue into 2010 and a post-campaign evaluation will be commissioned to measure its effectiveness.

The existing Community Safety Television system is being developed through further filming opportunities. The contract is being re-let and the hope is to extend the system beyond the current 14 plasma screens. (This follows on from a successful external evaluation of the scheme last autumn). Currently the Community safety partnership has agreed a three-month extension whilst contract negotiations are conducted. Televisions are based in a variety of locations across the area including schools, shopping centres and leisure centres.

To improve information sharing with 17 Partners and Communities Together (PACTS) the Community Safety Partnership Manager is investigating methods of information sharing, who to share information with and how the information will be used before January 2010.

**Summary**

**Highlights:**

Perception of antisocial behaviour down by 7%.  
Reducing incidents of domestic violence

**Areas requiring development / key risks**

### **Priority 3: Children and young people having the best start in life**

#### **What we aim to do:**

We want children and young people in Medway who are:

- safe and cared for,
- succeed in learning and
- thrive.

This will be championed by a confident and competent workforce and we will have arrangements in place to ensure:

- effective safeguarding
- integrated services and support
- timely and targeted interventions

#### **How well are we doing?**

Outlined below is performance against the 4 outcomes set out in the council plan under the 'children and young people having the best start in life' priority. Our achievement of planned actions and outcomes this quarter remains as 'amber' this is because of the continued high referral rate within social care as a result of the Baby Peter case. This increase is being experienced nationally and is beginning to have an impact on the numbers of children subject to a child protection plan and looked after. Performance on 17 key measures of success can be reported this quarter – 9 (53%) are on track, 2 (12%) are off track but we believe are capable of reaching target within the year (rated amber), and 6 (35%) are off target and require significant improvement these are rated red.

#### Outcome: Children and young people are safe & cared for

This outcome seeks to ensure that our safeguarding practice exceeds minimum requirements, responds to changes in national policy and is supported by effective quality assurance. The council aims is to safeguard all vulnerable children including support for disabled children and their families. An important part of our work is to ensure all families, but particularly those who need additional support, have easy access to family support services, our programme of Sure Start centres is key to providing that support.

The significant increase in referrals to Children's social care, reported in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter has continued. The rise in Medway mirrors the national picture. This has resulted in an increase in the number of initial and core assessments carried out to assess children's needs and more children becoming subject of a child protection plan or being looked after. Comparing to the same period last year when there were 169 children with a child protection plan, there are now 226 children (an increase of 34%), and 341 looked after children up from 309 at the end of September 08 .

As a result of this increased workload the capacity of social work teams and the independent reviewing officer service, who chair reviews for looked after children and child protection conferences, is stretched. The priority for the teams is to ensure that those children most likely to be at risk are visited and safeguarded. Additional staffing is being put in place, with the use of suitable experienced temporary staff in the short term to give extra capacity whilst permanent recruitment takes place. The council is investing a further £700k to support the response to the increased demands; this is being used in part for additional professional staff but also to increase administrative staff to ensure social workers maximise their time working with children and families. In response to a review of the work load across the three integrated area teams, changes to the boundaries are being introduced to ensure the Chatham team can manage its caseload safely.

The percentage of children who are deemed to be at risk and so become subject of a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time has increased to 22.9% (relates to 31 children) in

the second quarter. This is above target and the normally acceptable range of between 10-15%. However, the number of children in Medway with plans is small in overall terms so any change can make a big difference to percentage changes. All cases have been audited and there is no evidence that children were removed from plans prematurely or that decision making regarding plan closure was overly optimistic.

94.5% of looked after children case reviews were held within statutory timescales this quarter against a target of 95%. Staff sickness has contributed to the slight drop in performance. 94.5% of child protection conferences were held within timescales but this is below the target of 100%. This was due to three conferences (for nine children) being wrongly scheduled for a couple of days later than the due date. All staff have been reminded of the correct guidance for calculating timescales for conferences, and pre-conference checks have been put in place to ensure the guidance is being followed correctly.

In the last quarter the Medway Safeguarding Children Board concluded its first serious case review following the death of a young person in Medway. This kind of review is carried out, using national guidelines, if abuse or neglect are suspected to be factors in the child's death. The review has been submitted to Ofsted, as required, and their judgement is awaited. An executive summary will be published once their assessment has been received. Single and multi agency action plans are already in place to drive improvement. The Board has commissioned self audits from the council, police and health bodies in response to Lord Laming's report on child protection and safeguarding. It will consider the audit findings in November.

The Board is also recruiting to the position of independent chair, which is regarded as good practice. This is as a result of the forthcoming end of the tenure of the current independent chair.

#### Outcome: Children and young people succeed in learning

Overall, the achievement of Medway's children in their first year at school has improved and is now above national averages, but their performance by age 11 has dipped significantly, with the boys doing particularly poorly. Performance increases significantly during the secondary education phase, so that young people's attainment at GSCE is above national averages. Looking at each level in detail using the provisional results for summer 2009:

Performance by five year olds has improved for the fourth successive year up two more points to 52% achieving at the expected level, exceeding our target for this indicator and now bettering national averages. We have also achieved our target for narrowing the gap between the lowest achieving children and their peers.

Key Stage 1 – We have maintained performance in the percentage of children achieving the expected L2+ at Key Stage 1 but we continue to be just below the national average.

Key Stage 2 - Performance at Key Stage 2 is significantly below average. A consistent trend of improvement stalled in 2009, when achievement fell by one percentage point in mathematics and four points in English.

Key Stage 4 – There has been an increase in the percentage of students attaining 5+A\*-C (including English and mathematics) from 46.7% to 51.7%. We have achieved the target for the year and are on track to achieve the challenging target for 2009/10. There has also been an increase in the percentage of students attaining 5+A\*-C (71.6%).

Post 16 – The proportion of young people achieving level 3 post 16 programmes has increased to 39%, this is based on the cohort of young people who were in Year 11 in 2007.

There has been some success in narrowing the gap between young people from less affluent backgrounds and their more affluent peers. The free school meals/non free school meal gap has reduced by 6.6% at Key Stage 4 with a more modest decrease of 0.1% at Key Stage 2.



The National Indicator definitions for looked after children attainment levels are very precise, in all cases only children who are looked after on 30<sup>th</sup> September in the reporting year and who have been looked after for 12 months or more are included in any calculations. As such the cohorts are extremely small. At Key Stage 1 there are 8 eligible children in the cohort and of these 3 have achieved L2+ (38%) in Reading, Writing and Mathematics. This is an improvement of last year where no child was at age appropriate level. Of the 8 children in the cohort for Key Stage 2, 3 achieved L4+ in English and 2 achieved L4+ in Mathematics, while this is below the target set for NI's 99 and 100 all pupils did make 2 levels of progress between KS1 and KS2. There are 32 children in the cohort at GCSE, of these 13% gained 5+A\*-C (including English and Maths) at GCSE this is below the target of 26%. It should be noted that the cohorts for these indicators have changed considerably since the targets were set.

An assessment has been carried out to determine which schools require increased levels of support and challenge from the school improvement partners (SIPS) and the wider school improvement team, and as a result SIP allocation of time has been adjusted to focus on areas of greatest need. Consultants and other support staff have been deployed to support schools in developing provision for all pupils and raising the quality of learning and teaching. A programme of 1-2-1 tuition, focusing on raising attainment of vulnerable groups is being rolled out to schools. All schools now have designated teachers to oversee the progress of looked after children.

As well as targeting support and challenge to schools, the council is also restructuring some school provision to improve standards. In order to reduce the number of transitions children make between schools which can impact on their achievement levels, the council has been consulting on closure and amalgamation of some infant and primary schools. The consultation on the futures of Ridge Meadow and St John's schools is complete and agreement has been made to issue statutory notices proposing closure. St Peter's Infant School will remain open. The Primary capital programme is also underway with pre-construction phase of Walderslade rebuilding project having started during the quarter.

To support standards in secondary schools, the council is actively delivering its academy programme. It is progressing to schedule with Strood Academy having opened in September, which as a result has seen the closure of Chapter and Temple schools which were below the acceptable threshold for National Challenge Key Stage 4 schools. Principals designate have now been appointed at Bishop of Rochester and Gillingham academies which are both on track to open in September 2010.

The Onside project at Silverbank has been successful at supporting young people at risk of permanent exclusion from school. During the 2008/09 academic year 8 young people were permanently excluded from school, this is the lowest exclusion rate we have ever achieved.

There has been progress made in securing additional SEN provision within Medway. The new provisions became operational in September and include: 10 places at Abbey Court to support pre-school aged children with complex needs, 8 places at Woodlands for primary aged children and 7 places at Robert Napier for secondary aged children. Additional capacity has been created at the St Werburgh Centre, with an additional 7 places for young people on the autistic spectrum. The increase in in-house provision should reduce the numbers of children and young people in expensive independent and non-maintained placements.

#### Outcome: Children and young people thrive

Reducing the level of teen conception remains one of the biggest challenges facing the council and its health partners. The latest provisional data for teenage conceptions for the first quarter of 2009 indicates there is as yet no change in the rate of conceptions. New systems for collecting local monitoring data are in place so that the partnership can monitor the impact of their interventions more closely. The Council and partners continue to develop targeted services to address this to ensure that young people have a variety of options open to them to seek advice and access support services. A summer campaign included use of the SOS bus Summer

Peninsula project, attendance at the Youth can Shine event, a babysitting course at Woodlands Youth Centre and drop in sessions at all Medway Youth Centres. The teenage pregnancy team have attended Fresher events at the college and universities. 10 youth workers have completed core competency training in sexual health for youth workers to enable more on site access for young people.

Progress has been made to further develop Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. A single point of access for all referrals became operational during the second quarter. This will be piloted for 6 months and reviewed by the multi agency CAMHS Implementation group on a monthly basis with a report back to the Emotional Wellbeing board of the Children's Trust by March 2010. Whilst waiting lists are now falling, analysis of the current waiting list is being carried out to explore the range and type of needs of the children waiting. Further work has been agreed to develop a service specification to reduce the waiting list.

The Medway Youth Trust delivers the Connexions service in Medway. A recent Ofsted Inspection was very positive and identified areas of good practice and highlighted the range of interventions by partners that successfully support vulnerable young people in education, employment and training. The percentage of 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training is 8.7% against a target of 5.8% mainly due to the current economic climate and rising unemployment generally. Options are being identified during quarter 3 to seek to reverse the increase in young people not in education, employment and training.

#### Outcome: Effective multi agency partnerships delivering improved outcomes for children

The Children's Trust was launched last quarter and good partnerships are developing between the commissioning team and the relevant partnership boards. The boards are developing comprehensive programmes of activity to drive forward the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) priorities.

The Young Commissioners have been evaluating a number of services aimed at young people at risk of teenage pregnancy and those for disabled children. The findings of this work will contribute to more effective commissioning and ongoing evaluation.

The Children's Trust Communication Framework was developed this quarter and was approved by the Children's Trust Board in July. The printed version of the Children and Young People's Plan is in the process of being distributed, together with the DVD introducing the Children's Trust. Leaflets summarising the CYPP have been produced for children and young people.

Work has also progressed in developing an interactive Children's Trust website. External developers were appointed. The website is due to go live in October to promote the Children's Trust and all aspects of its work to deliver the priorities of the CYPP.

## **Summary**

### **Highlights:**

- Effective management action has resulted in improved administration of SEN statements, more statements are being issued within statutory timescales and performance is now rated green, this was an area highlighted as a risk last quarter
- Key Stage 4 performance continues to improve with 51.7% of students attaining 5A\*-C including English and mathematics

### **Areas requiring development / key risks**

- The sustained increase in referrals to Children's Social Care is impacting on performance particularly in core assessments. We are also seeing an increase in the number of children who have a child protection plan or are looked after.
- Performance at Key Stage 2 has dropped and is significantly below the England Average.

#### **Priority 4: Older and vulnerable people maintaining their independence**

##### **What we aim to do:**

We aim to encourage and support healthy lifestyles and well being for all. We also aim to improve the quality of life for our residents. We have a key role to play in helping older and vulnerable people and their carers maintain their independence and exercise choice and control over their care. The safety of vulnerable adults is also a key priority for us.

##### **How well are we doing it?**

Outlined below is performance against the 4 outcomes set out in the council plan under the 'older and vulnerable people maintaining their independence priority. Our achievement of planned actions and outcomes this quarter is rated 'amber'. Performance on 4 key measures of success can be reported this quarter – 1 (25%) is on track, 1 (25%) is off track but we believe it is capable of reaching target within the year (rated amber), and 2 (50%) are off target and require significant improvement. These are rated red.

##### **Outcome: Transform our services in line with the principles of Putting People First to ensure people receive social care support in the way they choose**

The aim of transformation and personalisation of adult social care is to ensure older and vulnerable people have a say in the care and support they receive and how they receive it, to make sure their needs are met. Personalised budgets give clients greater control and are developed through a process of joint assessment. Providing direct payments to clients is one means of accessing the personalised budget, allowing them to choose and pay for the services they need. Our target is to set up personalised budgets or direct payments for 7% of clients (640 clients) assessed as needing social care, by the end of 09/10. We are currently at 4.7% (425 clients), but believe we will exceed target and reach 10% by end of March 2010. We have secured this through a re-launch of the self directed support programme with staff, including development of new guidance. We are currently considering a 'Medway Card' which will help older people who may be deterred from taking advantage of direct payments as it means they will not have to open a bank account.

##### **Outcome: Partnership working within Medway to deliver independence and choice to the customer**

The voice of the customer is an important element of partnership working and we continue to work with the Local Involvement Network, which will lead to an improved experience of social care services for all people within Medway. Joint consultation events are planned regarding issues such as the future national funding of social care. We have commissioned the LINK to carry out mystery shopping on our assessment system which determines whether people are eligible for social care support, and if they are not, signposts them to other forms of support.

Year-to-date performance on the percentage of vulnerable people achieving independent living is 83.1% and close to our annual target of 84% for 2009/10. 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%. Those supported to maintain independence is higher at 93%.

Formal reporting against national indicator NI 125 which measures the percentage of service users who have received rehabilitation and intermediate care services and who are maintaining their independence at home, started in July 2009. Early indications are that approximately 80% of service users who have received rehabilitation and intermediate care services are maintaining their independence at home.

NI 131 is the national performance indicator which tracks performance on number of 'delayed transfers of care' from hospital, often referred to as bed blocking. Given the limited capacity in the hospital this is potentially a very serious issue. Weekly multi agency monitoring meetings are held. Year-to-date performance shows that 92% of the delays are attributable to Medway NHS and only

8% apply to adult social care delays in placing clients. However, there is an adverse trend in the councils' performance when compared to 2008/09. Mitigating factors are sought to rectify this position and action plans created with action owners that are tasked for timely delivery of them.

Detailed multi agency planning between the council and NHS Medway has continued to plan responses to the predicted second phase of swine flu. At a strategic level, the council and NHS Medway are jointly developing an older people's plan due for sign off by the end of March 2010. We are participating in a pilot with NHS Medway on personalised health budgets for patients at the end of life.

**Outcome: Disabled people achieving economic wellbeing**

Year-to-date performance on the percentage of adults with learning disabilities in employment is 2.1% compared to the council's target of 3% for 2009/10. There is much more to do to improve this when we compare our performance to other areas. Our comparator councils achieve an average of 6.2%. The Getting-a-Life cross-directorate and multi-agency project is designed to achieve this improvement. This project helps people with a learning disability to find suitable employment and meets the requirements of 'Valuing Employment Now' strategy.

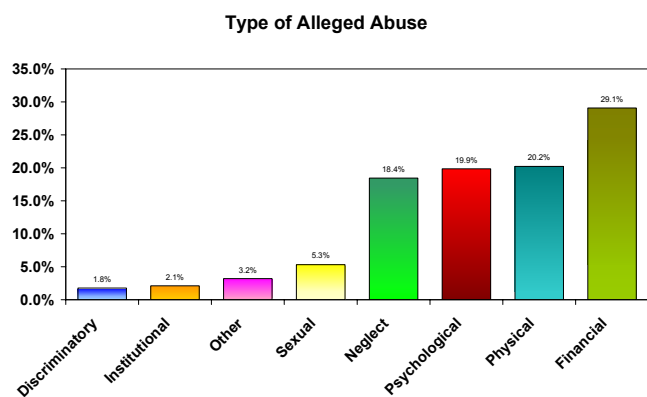
An Expression of Interest has been submitted to Project Search for an Office of Disability Issues pilot. This is a work programme for adults with severe and moderate learning disabilities. This will identify work placements within the Council for adults with learning disabilities.

**Outcome: Maintain the safety and dignity of vulnerable adults**

Safeguarding of vulnerable adults is high on the councils' agenda and a revised robust process and strict recording and monitoring arrangements have been put in place during quarter 2. A total review of safeguarding vulnerable adults is currently being undertaken, including auditing case records, and this will be reported in quarter 3. To support providers of social care in the council and the independent sector to improve levels of safeguarding, an e-learning package has been made available to providers. More specialist training is being commissioned for team managers including their responsibilities to supervise those undertaking adult protection investigations.

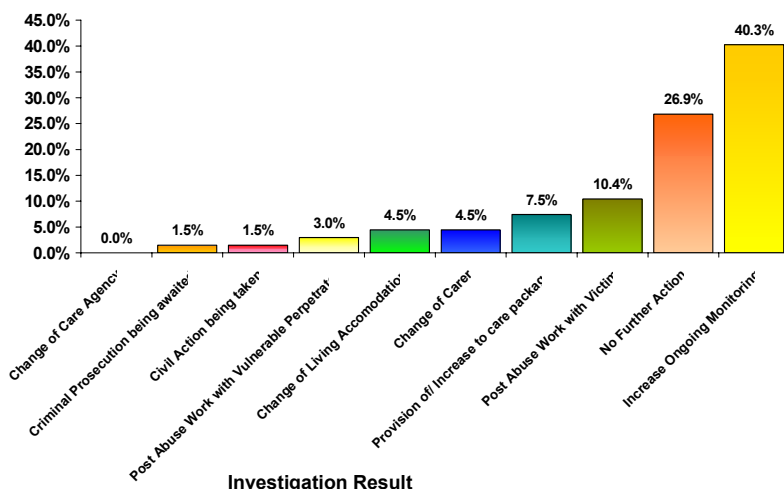
There are currently approximately 170 cases either being investigated or where the multi-agency team are working on action plans to protect the alleged victim and prevent reoccurrence. From September 2009, monitoring arrangements have been greatly improved. A breakdown of the nature of referrals is as follows:

- Majority of the concerns have been raised by relatives/neighbours (48 referrals out of 205)
- the independent sector (56 out of 205 referrals)
- and social care staff (50 out of 205 referrals)
- The police were involved in 65 out of 178 investigations
- The predominant victim groups were people with a physical disability including older people (132) and people with learning disabilities (81 out of 231)
- The most reported forms of abuse were financial (82), physical (57), psychological (56), and neglect (52 out of 282)
- The highest forms of alleged abuses for the older people and people with physical disabilities are financial and neglect

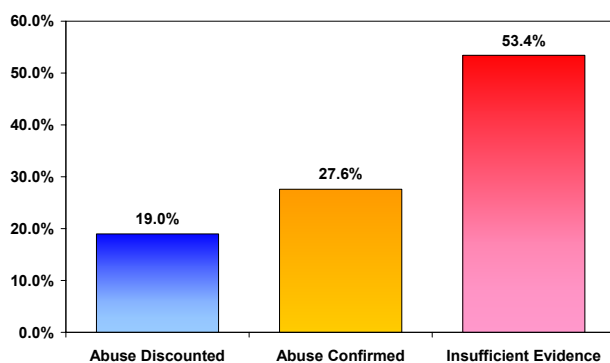


- The locations of alleged abuse were own home (104), Private residential (42) and private nursing care (21 out of 209)

**Outcome of Safeguarding referrals**



**Investigation Result**



The table on the left shows that out of 58 cases that are closed, 16 have had abuse confirmed.

### **Priority: Improve the health of Medway's residents and promote healthy lifestyles**

A detailed social marketing research project was completed in September 2009. The aim of this research was to provide evidence on attitudes and barriers to healthy living among people living in Medway. This evidence underpins the activities being planned for the year-long healthy living campaign in 2010. The campaign will provide an overarching message or challenge to Medway residents to make practical, realistic and achievable lifestyle changes to improve their health. It will also signpost people to relevant public health and related services, including Sure Start and leisure, that already exist in Medway.

Detail of participation in sport and swimming are included in the regeneration chapter of this report.

#### **Summary**

##### **Highlights:**

- Progress on increasing direct payments, though this remains below national averages

##### **Areas requiring development / key risks**

- Embedding revised systems for adult safeguarding

## **Priority 5: People travelling easily and safely in Medway**

### **What we aim to do:**

We have a key role in supporting the development of a transport system that supports the planned physical and economic regeneration of Medway. Our focus is on delivering improved public transport services, tackling congestion, monitoring the condition of our roads, and encouraging alternatives to the car. We will achieve this by delivering the actions identified in the Local Transport Plan, and reviewing our transport strategies through the annual monitoring report process.

### **How well are we doing?**

Outlined below is performance against the 2 outcomes set out in the council plan under the "people travelling easily and safely" priority. We have rated our achievement of planned actions and outcomes this quarter as 'green' as progress is being made on key actions. Performance on 5 key measures of success can be reported this quarter – all 5 (100%) are on track (rated green). One further indicator is awaiting information from a partner organisation.

The Local Transport Plan sets out the priorities for the council currently, of the 23 targets in the plan, 22 are being achieved. The only target not being met is to reduce the number of air quality management areas (AQMA's) by 3. Monitoring indicates that this may not be achieved in the life of the plan. This is partly due to national changes making it harder to meet the UK air quality objectives for nitrogen dioxide. An Air Quality Action Plan is being produced which will contribute to tackling air quality issues.

#### Outcome: limit the growth of traffic and tackle congestion, responding to the travel demands resulting from regeneration

The council has secured £4.9 million funding from the Department of Transport for capital improvements, including upgrading CCTV and the environmental management system for the Medway Tunnel. These works will be discussed at Cabinet in November 2009. Work is due to commence in early 2010.

Progress on delivering improvements to the Chatham Road Network is proceeding well, tenders have been received for Union Street and works are due to commence early 2010.

Work continues to reduce congestion and make it safe for people to travel in and around Medway. CCTV vehicles, foot patrol officers and the parking enforcement team have issued 10666 parking notices for quarter 2.

During quarter 2 planning applications have been submitted for the A228 Phase 2 for Fenn Corner and A228 Phase 2 for Stoke Crossing, this will improve the A228 and make it easier to access the Hoo Peninsular and its economic regeneration sites.

To encourage people to use different forms of transport and to leave their car at home. 33 bus stop improvements have been delivered this quarter and the bus shelter improvement contract has been awarded.

#### Outcome: keep people safe on our roads and reduce the number killed and seriously injured in road crashes

Based on the 2009 school census data, there has been an overall 1.5% decrease in the number of Medway pupils travelling to school by car compared to the 2008 data, from 32.0% to 30.5%. This is on track to achieve the LAA target. The number of approved School Travel Plans in Medway has increased again in 2009, with 102 out of a possible 118 schools having one. This figure equates to 86.4% of all schools in Medway, including non-LEA establishments. For new walking

bus routes have been established this quarter. As of July there are 40 walking bus routes with some 695 pupils participating. 21 Medway schools are currently signed up to the KM Green Footsteps walk to school initiatives in Medway from September 2009.

## **Summary**

### **Highlights:**

- 86.4% of schools have a school travel plan
- 1.5% decrease in the number of children travelling to school by car

### **Areas requiring development**

- Air quality management targets for the LTP may not be met due to national developments



## **Priority 6: Everyone benefiting from the area's regeneration**

### **What we aim to do:**

We remain committed to developing the area so that all residents, businesses and visitors can benefit from regeneration, with social and economic regeneration and protection of heritage and the environment accompanying physical change.

### **How well are we doing it?**

Outlined below is performance against the 5 outcomes set out in the council plan under the 'everyone benefiting from regeneration' priority. We have rated our achievement of planned actions and outcomes this quarter as 'amber' because although significant progress has been made against regeneration projects, and Medway appears to be bucking the trend of recession in terms of housing, skills and development, the recession remains a risk to performance. Performance on 15 key measures of success can be reported this quarter – 9 (60%) are on track (rated green), 3 (20%) are off target but we believe are capable of reaching target within the year (rated amber), and 3 (20%) are off target and require significant improvement – these are rated red.

Although the council is responding well, during Q1 the economic recession was identified as the major challenge for this regeneration priority, particularly in terms of the pace of delivery of the regeneration performance, the social and economic impact on residents and the affect on council income. The council continues to work hard to redress the recession in terms of employment, economy and skills and a raft of counter-recessionary initiatives are in place. Although the council is continuing to deal with this effectively, the impact of the recession is still being seen in numbers of people unemployed, claiming benefits and requiring housing support.

### Outcome: Decent homes and living environments for all

Our aim is to provide decent homes and living environments for all by maximising the supply of suitable and affordable homes whilst improving their quality and efficiency. The capital works programme to address poor levels of non-decency in HRA stock is underway the impact will be demonstrated at year-end. The latest figures for 2009/10 show a 42% increase in households receiving energy efficiency advice and there is continued targeting of our most vulnerable neighbourhoods through the 'In Focus' project. Since April £11 million investment has been secured for affordable homes in Medway and 110 affordable homes have been delivered so far this year. Significant investment, £700,000, has been made available to adapt the homes of disabled people to support them to remain living at home. Over the course of this financial year 7 new homes have been delivered for people who use wheelchairs, and before the end of November 20 homes will have been delivered for people with learning disabilities including 8 for clients with autism. The Occupational Therapist located in the HomeChoice Team continues to support the allocation of suitable housing for disabled clients. This year to date we have approved 169 Disabled Facilities Grants as compared to 197 for the whole of 2008/09.

There is clear potential for the current economic situation to impact on homelessness, there is now a month on month increase in applications. Bailiff warrants and notices of possession have increased by 30%. This quarter has seen a focus on prevention, whilst responding to the needs of those that have been made homeless. A Prevention Toolkit to provide information for homelessness officers, was developed during the last quarter, this has assisted the council and partners in preventing 722 households from becoming homeless between July and September. The service is implementing a new Rough Sleepers initiative which will involve counting the numbers of people sleeping rough and 'sofa-surfing' (a new requirement). Once these people have been identified there will be a requirement to proactively provide advice and support. The Homelessness Forum webpage and newsletter have been improved to keep stakeholders updated on changes to legislation and good practice.

Processing of homeless applications remains at a static level. A Business Continuity Plan had to be put into place during September due to a number of Swine Flu cases within Housing Services and is being used to cover ongoing increases in sickness within Housing Services. Work also continues to reduce the number of households living in temporary accommodation, currently 132 against a target of 250. 100 per cent of temporary accommodation visits were carried out, this assists with maximising benefits, monitoring Homechoice applications and with preparations to move on.

This year's target to return empty homes back to use is 55, the figure for the first half of the year is already 47, it is therefore very likely that the target will be exceeded. Additionally, work has been carried out using council tax information to identify empty homes.

#### Outcome: Medway as a 21<sup>st</sup> century riverside city and destination of choice

Delivering the Chatham regeneration programme by 2011 continues to be a priority. The Chatham Road works are progressing to timescale and on budget.

As anticipated the progress on Rochester Riverside continues to be affected by the economic downturn. Meetings continue to review how to address current funding gaps. Despite the current regeneration climate plans are moving ahead, the initial study analysing opportunities and options in Strood has been completed and good progress has been made on the redesign of the hotel quarter in Rochester. The first draft of the Public Realm Strategy has been completed.

Public Consultation on the Local Development Framework Core Strategy ended on 18 September 2009. Over 140 representations have been received which are now being analysed. The process to produce Medway's Local Development Framework (as set by government) is complex and it will be challenging to complete the process in accordance with the agreed timetable. A new Project Manager for the LDF has been recruited enabling more effective management and monitoring of the process.

The design and relocation of the Bus Station are being reviewed a planning application will be submitted with a decision expected early in the new year. Community Infrastructure Funding for station improvements has now been secured. Network Rail and South Eastern trains have also allocated funding for station improvements and the total sum identified is around £3million. The council and Network Rail have been working together to look at improvement options around Gillingham Station. Following consultation, Network Rail will submit a planning application later this year.

#### Outcome: Quality jobs for local people

There are still clear indications that the projects already in place to reduce the impact of the economic recession are having an impact on job creation and business investment. During the last quarter the Employ Medway Advice Centre opened on Chatham High Street. The current focus is on people recently made redundant and already over 150 people have benefited from the service. It is also anticipated that approximately 40 businesses will get assistance to employ local people. A further positive sign is the success of the Future Job Fund Programme, monies secured with North Kent Partners, this will help to generate up to 420 new temporary jobs for young unemployed people in Medway.

#### Outcome: Realising everyone's potential

Alongside the work that is being done to support job creation for local people the council continues to focus on raising skills levels. Over £300,000 of external funding has been secured and the council is working with our voluntary and community sector partners to access funding from Community Grants schemes to implement new community learning programmes.

In addition to this the council is using its role as an employer and a community leader to assist young people by providing apprentice schemes. The number of apprenticeships within the council is 20, with a further 21 in the pipeline. This is a total of 41, up from 35 in the last quarter.

#### Outcome: Culture & leisure for all

Medway continues to develop the culture and leisure activities it offers to the local population recognising the positive impact they can have on community cohesion and health and well being. The future plans are set out in the Cultural Strategy, which was approved in October by Cabinet. To ensure our cultural offer is widely advertised in the way that residents want, Medway launched the What's On website in quarter 2, which details all the up coming events, festivals and entertainment. This quarter has seen a positive improvement in library usage, showing the impact of increased investment in book stock, and museum visits.

Satisfaction with cultural activities during the last quarter remains high. The Castle Concerts came in on budget; 14,000 people attended and satisfaction ratings were 97%. The concert series concludes with the Under Siege, allowing young aspiring musicians to perform on the same professional stage setting. The Will Adams Festival changed venue to Gillingham Park, this significantly increased attendance compared to last year (4-5000 compared to 1500) and satisfaction levels were 96%.

Results from a residents survey of participation in sport became available in quarter 2, showing that 45% of residents undertake 30minutes or more of sport three times each week. This is significantly higher than the 14.1% reported against the same question in the Sport England survey. The figure rises further to 67% when residents were asked if they participated in 90 minutes of sport per week. Medway continues to promote opportunities for residents to lead active lifestyles, through the new Medway Gets Active website. The Medway Park development continues to take shape, with the running track completed during quarter 2.

#### **Summary**

##### **Highlights:**

- Increased funding to deliver affordable homes
- Employ Medway Advice Centre opened

##### **Areas requiring development**

- The economic recession continues to present the greatest challenge for regeneration, in terms of income. Need to remain vigilant in terms of identifying counter recessionary measures.

## **Our Core Values**

### **1. Putting our customers at the centre of everything we do**

#### **What we aim to do:**

We aim to deliver the services our customers need and want, in the way that they want. Central to achieving this will be improving how we communicate with our customers and listening to their views.

#### **How well are we doing it?**

Outlined below is performance against the 2 outcomes set out in the council plan under the 'putting the customer at the centre of everything we do' core value. We have rated our achievement of planned actions and outcomes this quarter as 'amber' as performance on complaints has improved but avoidable contacts have gone up. Performance on 6 key measures of success can be reported this quarter – 2 (33%) are on track (rated green), 3 (50%) are off target but we believe are capable of reaching target within the year (rated amber), and 1 (16%) is off target and requires significant improvement – this is rated red.

#### **Outcome: Continue to deliver our services in a fair and equal manner, recognising the diversity of our local population**

Knowing your community and providing services that reflect people's needs is important to the council. Services continue to engage with customers to understand their experience of existing services and to assist with the design of new services, for example the young inspectors, young people who help improve and evaluate services. Some are young parents, some disabled, some have been in trouble with the law and some are experiencing hardship, which makes them experts in knowing what they want from a service they are likely to use.

We are currently undertaking a Residents' Opinion Poll and refreshing our Citizens' Panel which will support this work. At this point over 700 interviews have taken place and the fieldwork will be completed at the end of November. A summary of the results will be reported in Q3. Following the tragic Pilkington Case the council supported a Kent and Medway Disability Hate Crime Conference. The conference will produce a good practice action plan to assist public authorities to recognise and prevent this type of crime.

The council continues to review the ways that our work benefits the whole community. This quarter we have focused on ensuring the Local Development Framework and the Local Transport Plan take account of different needs of the community. The council's diversity impact assessment process is crucial to achieving this. Workshops continue and real improvements have been seen, but a more rigorous scrutiny procedure has been introduced to ensure that the quality is consistent across the authority.

The council will have a final draft of the Single Equality Scheme by the end of November, this has been the primary focus this quarter and will bring together existing work in equality and diversity. Medway Council wants to be acknowledged as an organisation that promotes fair access and inclusion by effectively meeting the changing and diverse needs of the Medway community, visitors, and our workforce. The Scheme extends to all strands of diversity. Consultation has taken place with representatives from 40 organisations.

#### **Outcome: Continue to improve the customer experience and deliver value for money.**

Providing an excellent customer experience means that the council must limit unnecessary contact and respond to customer queries and complaints as quickly and effectively as possible. This quarter has seen an increase in numbers of cases dealt with on a 'one and done' basis at Riverside from 56.1% in quarter 1 to 67.4%, However, 'avoidable contacts' has risen from 24.7%

in quarter 1 to 49.5% in quarter 2. Responses to letters and complaints responded to in time has also improved. The number of Ombudsman complaints has also dropped significantly this quarter to 14 from 27 in quarter 1.

Overview and Scrutiny Task Groups on disabled parking bays, child protection and support for people in temporary accommodation have concluded with reports due back to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committees in October.

There has been a well attended series of special (unscheduled) meetings of the Cabinet, Council and Children and Adults Overview and Scrutiny Committee to resulting from the first round of consultation on primary schools reorganisation.

## **Summary**

### **Highlights:**

- Single Equality Scheme consultation

### **Areas requiring development**

- Avoidable contacts

## **Giving Value for Money**

### **What we aim to do:**

Providing high-quality, value-for-money services is central to the council's work. Managing our finances well is essential if we are to achieve that. We are proud that council tax levels are among the lowest nationally and that we want to continue to be independently judged as providing good value for money and as having good budget setting and monitoring systems.

### **How well are we doing it?**

Outlined below is performance against the x outcomes set out in the council plan under the 'value for money core value. We have rated our achievement of planned actions and outcomes this quarter as 'amber' as we are achieving our efficiency targets, and although the increase in contact to the benefits service has meant an increase in the time taken to process claims staff are now in place to reduce waiting times in the second half of the year. Performance on 5 key measures of success can be reported this quarter – 1 (20%) is on track (rated green), and 3 (60%) are off target and require significant improvement – these are rated red. One (20%) is behind target, but shows an improving trend towards target. A further two are dependent on the biennial place survey.

#### Outcome: Improve efficiency and deliver value for money for our residents

During quarter 2, Medway was graded 3, or 'performing well' for its Use of Resources, a significant achievement against the more stringent assessment process under Comprehensive Area Assessment. It reflects the careful management of all aspects of the council's resources including financial, workforce and natural resources.

The council continuously reviews its services to find greater efficiencies and share services with other organisations to save money. During the second quarter a Value-for-Money Strategy was adopted by the council, and PWC have been engaged to provide a benchmark analysis of Council performance. An Executive Member Performance and Efficiency Group has been established to oversee continued improvements.

Although time taken to process benefit claims is still underperforming due to an increase in applications, the rate of increase is greatly reduced from the first quarter. Additional funding has been granted by the DWP to assist Benefits sections faced with increased workloads during the current recession and this has enabled new staff to be recruited in August the new staff are beginning to have an impact although real improvement will not be seen until the second half of the year.

#### Partnership

The development of the new Sustainable community strategy has continued during the quarter, with the Project Manager role filled to support its development. A programme of consultation on the new community strategy vision and priorities is underway and includes the annual Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Plenary event planned for October, together with further events for members and lead officers of partner agencies and feedback on area priorities through the residents' opinion poll, the results of which are due early in December 2009. The new LSP performance managers group will work to strengthen the performance managements arrangements for the Local Area Agreement.

#### Finance

Over £600,000 has been secured during quarter 2 through applications to grant funding for specific projects. This includes almost £400,000 of external funding from the Migrants Impact Fund, for services which support the integration of new arrivals to Medway. This brings the total secured this year to just under £1million. A further 9 projects are awaiting decisions by the funders.

Council tax collection rates have improved during quarter 2, at 52.83%, only 0.17% behind the position at the same time last year, an improvement from 0.71% behind last quarter. This reflects an increase in take up of direct debits following recovery action. Non Domestic Rates have fallen a little during quarter 2, at 55.88% compared to 57.38% last year. However, non domestic rates can vary due to a few large assessments. Rent collection for Housing is performing well, with collection rates increasing to 94% from 91% in quarter 1, but is still behind the target of 98%.

Embedding a performance culture in Medway Council is essential to securing ongoing improvement and finding efficiencies. The roll out of Covalent Performance Management software took a significant step forward during the second quarter, being used for all quarterly performance monitoring at the corporate level, with service managers and assistant directors providing updated action plans and performance via the software.

There has been a loss of income within Leisure services as a result of the redevelopment of the Black Lion centre, with the total income lost forecast to be £486,000 by the end of 2009/10, some 31% of income. However, performance across the rest of the leisure portfolio is better, with a slight increase of 4% in income, although this is 9.6% below the £3.2m income target. Overall across the whole service (including Black Lion) this therefore equates to a 1% reduction in income, and 16% behind the delivery target.

### Workforce

Developing our workforce is key to our drive to improve efficiency and deliver effective services. The Employment Matters Committee has agreed the council's Workforce Strategy, which sets the workforce priorities for the next 3 years. The strategy commits the council to build a workforce that reflects the community through better workforce planning, recruitment and retention. Improving employment opportunities within Medway and improving leadership and management skills across the organization were also highlights of the strategy, as well as training and developing individuals and teams to deliver effective and improving services.

Following the successful launch of I-share, the web-based learning and development tool for staff, there are now currently 500 members signed up, and a number of paying customers. I-share was developed by the Kent and Medway Workforce Board, chaired by Medway, which is now looking to develop a regional Workforce Plan, a flagship project which has received national recognition. e-recruitment has been developed to automate the recruitment process and is expected to be implemented during quarter 3. The business case for electronic employee self-serve is being developed to increase the efficiency of dealing with day-to-day personnel issues.

Current data for staff sickness relates to July, due to the time delay in confirming sickness returns. This shows that the number of days sickness per employee is 2.3 days, an improvement from 2.7 at the same point in the previous year, and is currently on target to achieve the year end target of 8 days. Although, Regeneration, Communities and Culture directorate was showing an increase to 3.1 days over the previous year's performance of 2.7 days this is related to some specific cases of long term sickness and careful management and reporting of sickness is intended to bring this back on track.

### ICT

Work continued during quarter three to secure the implementation of a regional data centre at Gun Wharf. All Medway Council servers have now been relocated from the Civic Centre site to Gun Wharf and the potential use of the data centre by other public sector organisations is being explored. ICT are also currently testing a new processor, which, if suitable will reduce the purchase cost of a PC. In addition, old PC's which are not suitable for high processing requirements are being re-used to provide lower specification services.

The number of calls dealt with by the ICT service desk at the first point of contact has increased from 31% at the end of quarter 1 to 49%, meaning more enquiries are dealt with quickly and ensuring employees can get on with their work and frees up ICT staff to spend more time dealing with more complex or developmental issues

### **Priority highlights and areas for remedial action**

#### **Summary**

#### **Highlights:**

- Medway was graded 3, or 'performing well' for its Use of Resources by the auditors.
- A value for money strategy has been agreed and adopted by the council
- Staff sickness rates improved from previous year.

#### **Areas requiring development**

- Loss of income of 1% compared to last year and 16% behind income target across leisure services as a result of Black Lion Leisure Centre re-development and the recession with fewer visits to our leisure centres.
- The time taken to process benefits claims is still behind target, but the rate of increase in new applications is slowing, and the employment of additional staff expected to improve performance.