

**BUSINESS SUPPORT  
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
5 DECEMBER 2013  
COUNCIL PLAN 2013/14  
QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

Report From: Stephanie Goad AD Communications, Performance and partnerships

Authors: Children and Adults Directorate Management Team  
Regeneration Communities and Culture Directorate Management Team  
Public Health  
Corporate Performance and Intelligence Team

**Summary**

This report sets performance against the Council's Key Measures of Success for the second quarter of 2013/14.

**1. Budget and Policy Framework**

1.1 This report summarises the performance of the Council's Key Measures of Success for Q2 2013/14 as set out in The Council Plan 2013/15.

**2. Background**

2.1 This report sets out the performance summary against the relevant council priority and two values that fall under the remit of this committee:

**Medway's Priorities**

- Everyone benefiting from regeneration (Housing)

**Medway's Values**

- Putting our customers at the centre of everything we do
- Giving value for money

2.2 It focuses on how we have performed against targets, and compares current performance against both the previous quarter (short trend), and also the average data for the previous 4 quarters (long trend).

2.3 Given the over-arching responsibilities of Business Support O&S the overview narrative of Council performance is provided for members' information at Appendix 1

### **3. Everyone benefiting from the area's regeneration**

#### **Service Comments**










- 3.1 Medway's provision of housing over recent years has seen an exceptional level of performance given the national economic situation and virtual collapse in house building in many parts of the country. The net additional homes provided for 2012/13 was 565. This is a reduction from the previous year and the target of 815 but still represents good performance given economic conditions at the time.
- 3.2 Nationally there has been an increase in homelessness, however the increase has not been uniform across the country with London and the southeast seeing the greatest increase. Whilst an increase in homelessness had been expected the extent of the increase locally has been higher than expected, and so the services ability to respond to the increased number of applications has been challenging.
- 3.3 The number of people making homeless applications has increased by 15% comparing Q1 13/14 188 to Q2 13/14 218. There has been a steady increase in the number of applications since 10/11 reflecting national and local housing pressures. Households living in temporary accommodation have increased by 32% from 128 in Q1 13/14 to 169 at the end of Q2 13/14; this is the highest it has been since Q3 08/09. Work is currently underway on a review of the Council's approach to dealing with Homelessness. This review will inform the development of a new Housing Strategy in 2014.
- 3.4 The percentage of homelessness decisions made within 33 days has not achieved target for the second consecutive quarter (for Q1 13/14 86.3% (139 out of 161 cases) to 61.9% (122 out of 197 cases) in Q2 13/14). Work is currently underway within the service to review operating systems and on the development of a new homeless strategy. The number of homeless decisions made has risen by 22% from 161 in Q1 13/14 to 197 in Q2 13/14 and this has placed an increasing demand on the service. The increase in homeless applications reflects the national and in particular the regional trend which is caused by various factors including welfare reform and the current economic situation.
- 3.5 Where authorities are unable to prevent homelessness and the Council has a duty to provide accommodation and no suitable long-term accommodation is available it will use Temporary Accommodation.
- 3.6 Nationally the use of Temporary Accommodation has increased by 10%, however in the northeast this has fallen by 12%, whilst across the southeast as a region it has gone up by 40%, however in Medway it has increased by

6%. It was agreed that CIPFA and national unitary authorities would be used to benchmark performance and it is these results, which are included within the report.





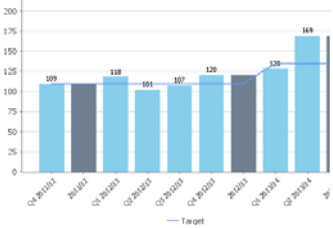
- 3.7 However, the level of homelessness varies drastically across the country and Unitary groups. With each local authority able to respond to these pressures in different ways depending upon a range of factors including:-
- The availability of social housing for clients
  - The availability of suitable affordable private rented accommodation
  - The willingness of private landlords to accept the households approaching the Council for assistance
- 3.8 Therefore where comparisons are made with countrywide comparisons Medway will always place in the lower quartiles. However, when compared with more local authorities Medway places higher. For Medway these factors are more challenging than for many other authorities, and these combined with the wider environment have resulted in an overall increase in homelessness. Which in turn results in an increasing need to place households into temporary accommodation whilst investigations are undertaken or until suitable alternative accommodation can be identified.
- 3.9 There are a limited number of private landlords who are willing to provide accommodation to many of the vulnerable households with which we work who often have a history of rent arrears, challenging behaviour, are vulnerable and who are on Housing Benefit. This issue is then further exacerbated where the households are families as there are even less landlords who will take this client group and less properties available
- 3.10 In order to help respond to this environment the Council is preparing a specific strategy to help address homelessness, there is no single cause of homelessness and there is no single solution the Council's response has to be multi-faceted, flexible and will continue to develop depending upon the wider environmental and personal factors.
- 3.11 Where the Council cannot prevent customers from becoming homeless we work with them to find housing solutions and endeavour to keep temporary accommodation times to a minimum. The average length of stay in bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodation has remained fairly static from Q1 13/14 at 2.5 weeks to Q2 13/14 at 2.6 weeks. The number of households leaving B&B during the quarter has increased from 30 in Q1 13/14 to 41 in Q2 13/14, this is as a result of an increase in the number of households placed into B&B during the quarter (Q1 70, Q2 86). The government target time for households with dependants staying in B&B is 6 weeks, in Q2 13/14 36 of the 41 households were in B&B for less than 6 weeks.
- 3.12 For those in council house accommodation we have been working with tenants through the changes Welfare Reform has introduced. We have advised tenants on income and expenditure, debt management, completed road shows on council housing estates, encouraged direct debit payments for





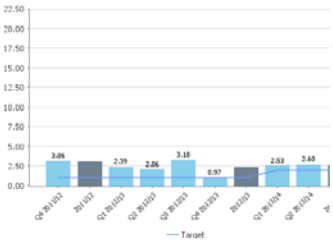
rent collection, identified those tenants affected by welfare reform to provide additional support. On the 31 March 2013 rent arrears were £279,209 including Homes for Independent Living/Sheltered Accommodation. This equates to a total of 828 tenants in arrears. At the end of quarter 2 this figure had fallen to £269,368 with 733 tenants in arrears, a reduction of £9,840.





### 3.15 Performance against Business Support indicators

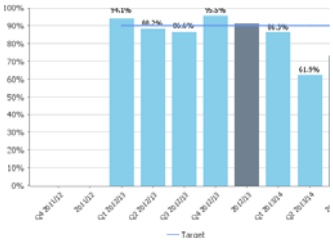
PI Status	Trend Arrows	Success is
 This PI is significantly below target	 The performance of this PI has improved	 Higher figures are better
 This PI is slightly below target	 The performance of this PI has worsened	 Lower figures are better
 This PI has met or exceeded the target	 The performance of this PI is static	N/A - Desired performance is neither too high nor too low
 This PI is data only. There is no target and is provided for reference only.	The long trend measures average performance over the previous four quarters	
N/A – Rating not appropriate / possible	The short trend measures performance since the previous quarter	

## 4.2 Support the provision of new homes and improve existing housing

Code	Short Name	Success is	2011/12	2012/13	Q1 2013/14	Q2 2013/14				2013/14	Note	Chart																							
			Value	Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend			Target																						
NI 156	Number of households living in temporary accommodation		109	120	128	169	135				135	<p>18-Oct-2013 Work is currently underway to increase the level of resources available to help deal with increased demand whilst revisions are being made to the interventions currently available. The number of households placed into Temporary Accommodation has increased from 128 in Q1 13/14 to 169 at the end of Q2 13/14. There has been an increase in the number of homeless applications from 188 in Q1 13/14 to 218 in Q2 13/14, and the trend in applications has seen a steady increase since 10/11.</p>	 <table border="1"> <caption>Data for Chart: Number of households in temporary accommodation</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Period</th> <th>Value</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Q4 2011/12</td><td>109</td></tr> <tr><td>2012/13</td><td>120</td></tr> <tr><td>Q1 2013/14</td><td>128</td></tr> <tr><td>Q2 2013/14</td><td>169</td></tr> <tr><td>Q3 2013/14</td><td>181</td></tr> <tr><td>Q4 2013/14</td><td>187</td></tr> <tr><td>2013/14</td><td>128</td></tr> <tr><td>Q1 2014</td><td>120</td></tr> <tr><td>Q2 2014</td><td>169</td></tr> <tr><td>Target</td><td>135</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Period	Value	Q4 2011/12	109	2012/13	120	Q1 2013/14	128	Q2 2013/14	169	Q3 2013/14	181	Q4 2013/14	187	2013/14	128	Q1 2014	120	Q2 2014	169	Target	135
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H14	Average length of stay in B&B accommodation of households with dependent children or pregnant woman (weeks)		2.96	2.32	2.53	2.60	2.00				2.00	<p>18-Oct-2013 Work is currently underway within the service which aims to reduce the amount of time families spend in B&amp;B. This includes reviewing operating systems and the development of a new homeless strategy. The average number of weeks stay of households with dependants who have left B&amp;B during the reporting period has remained fairly static from Q1 13/14 at 2.5 weeks to Q2 13/14 at 2.6 weeks.</p> 

Code	Short Name	Success is	2011/12	2012/13	Q1 2013/14	Q2 2013/14				2013/14	
			Value	Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target
HC1 new	Homelessness decision cases decided within 33 working days (specialist service)			91.1%	86.3%	61.9%	90%				90%

Note	Chart																
<p>18-Oct-2013 Work is currently underway within the service to review operating systems and on the development of a new homeless strategy. The number of homeless decisions made has risen by 22% from 161 in Q1 13/14 to 197 in Q2 13/14. This has placed an increasing demand on the service and over this period the percentage of these decisions made within 33 working days has decreased from 86.3% in Q1 13/14 to 61.9% in Q2 13/14. The increase in homeless applications reflects the national and in particular the regional trend which is caused a by various factors including welfare reform and the current economic situation. This situation is also exacerbated in Medway by a limited supply of suitable affordable homes and an overall increase in the demand for private rented accommodation.</p>	 <table border="1"> <caption>Percentage of homelessness decisions made within 33 working days</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Quarter</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Q4 2012</td> <td>94.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q1 2013</td> <td>86.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q2 2013</td> <td>86.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q3 2013</td> <td>86.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q4 2013</td> <td>79.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q1 2014</td> <td>86.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q2 2014</td> <td>61.9%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Quarter	Percentage	Q4 2012	94.1%	Q1 2013	86.3%	Q2 2013	86.3%	Q3 2013	86.3%	Q4 2013	79.3%	Q1 2014	86.3%	Q2 2014	61.9%
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			Value	Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target
HOU_HRA20	% of customer satisfaction with overall repairs service			97.96 %	98.42 %	99.26 %	97 %				97%

Note	Chart
<p>16-Oct-2013 Satisfaction results show that the outcomes of the repairs transformation plan are proving to be a benefit to the customer and their experience of the repairs service. This is also corroborated by the 2013 tenant survey, this survey was sent to all of the HRA tenants (approx 3000). The results highlighted a significant improvement in the satisfaction rates with repairs service overall at 82.1% in 2013 compared to 72.9% in 2011.</p>	

5.0 Better for less

Code	Short Name	Success is	2011/12	2012/13	Q1 2013/14	Q2 2013/14			2013/14		
			Value	Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target
LX5	Working days lost due to sickness absence		7.43	7.44	1.83	3.27	4.00				8.00

Note	Chart
<p>22-Oct-2013 Q2 figures confirmed, on track to achieve target, though sickness levels do tend to rise in winter months.</p>	

## 4. Values 1: Putting our customers at the centre of everything we do

### 4.1 Customer Perception

Percentage of respondents who agree with the following statements which reflect how Medway put its customers at the centre of everything we do.

#### Provide high quality services

Q2 13/14 (%)	Q1 13/14 (%)	Q2 12/13 (%)	Short Trend	Long Trend
67	57	63	↑	↑

Source: Quarterly Tracker. Short Trend: Comp with previous quarter. Long Trend: Comparison with same period previous year.

#### Acts on concerns of local residents

Q2 13/14 (%)	Q1 13/14 (%)	Q2 12/13 (%)	Short Trend	Long Trend
58	50	54	↑	↑

Source: Quarterly Tracker. Short Trend: Comp with previous quarter. Long Trend: Comparison with same period previous year.

#### Talk positively with family about Medway Council

Q2 13/14 (%)	Q1 13/14 (%)	Q2 12/13 (%)	Short Trend	Long Trend
45	42	43	↑	↑

Source: Quarterly Tracker. Short Trend: Comp with previous quarter. Long Trend: Comparison with same period previous year.

#### Satisfied with overall telephone contact

Sept 2013 (%)	April 2013 (%)	July 2012 (%)	Short Trend	Long Trend
86 (149/173)	92 (373/405)	N/A	↓	N/A

Source: GovMetric. Short Trend: Comp. with previous quarter. Note: revs & bens and switchboard calls not measured

#### Satisfied with face to face contact

Sept 2013 (%)	April 2013 (%)	July 2012 (%)	Short Trend	Long Trend
64(1366/2143)	65 (1507/2321)	N/A	↓	N/A

Source: GovMetric. Short Trend: Comp. with previous quarter

#### Satisfied with web contact

Sept 2013 (%)	April 2013 (%)	July 2012 (%)	Short Trend	Long Trend
47 (209/449)	52 (295/572)	N/A	↓	N/A

Source: GovMetric. Short Trend: Comp. with previous quarter

### 4.2 How our performance compares with other authorities

- We participate in a benchmarking group comprising 70 authorities who all subscribe to the GovMetric service in England.
- We were in the medium-to-high quartile for customer satisfaction on web contact in September 2013. (Source: GovMetric)
- We were in the medium-to-low quartile for customer satisfaction on face to face contact in September 2013 (Source: GovMetric)
- We were in the top-quartile for customer satisfaction on telephone contact in September 2013 (Source: GovMetric)

### 4.3 Complaints (Q2 Performance)

Total number of complaints received	508
Total number of cases closed	494
Total number of cases dealt with within 10 days	309
% of cases dealt with within 10 days	62.5%



### 4.4 Service Comments

Although the 10-day turnaround time has improved each month between July and September, the August and September achievement was below the Q.1 average of 65%, dipping the Q.2 average to 62.5%. It was encouraging that the September turnaround time was 73%. As said at Q.1, we remain some way from the Council target of 95%, and until the backlog is cleared and services are able to improve their response times we cannot attain this level of performance in the current financial year.

A breakdown of all live cases by service area has been shared with services, seeking cooperation from Service Managers to examine performance in their own areas. That data was shared at the end of September so this exercise would not have yet impacted on performance improvement. That data showed that complaints were spread evenly across services, with only 3 Service Managers having more than 5 live complaints in their area. The information sharing exercise will be repeated at the end of October. Discussions with service managers are continuing to improve performance.

## 5. Values 2: Giving value for money

### 5.1 Customer Perception

Q2 13/14 (%)	Q1 13/14 (%)	Q2 12/13 (%)	Short Trend	Long Trend
68	61	63		

Source: Quarterly Tracker. Short Trend: Comp with previous quarter. Long Trend: Comparison with same period previous year.

### 5.2 How we compare with other authorities

#### 2013/14 Central Government Grant Settlement per capita

Medway (value)	Family Average (value)	Family Maximum (value)	Family Minimum (value)	Family Place
£398.00	£463.37	£640.69	£275.25	13/16

Source: CIPFA Council Tax Demands and Precepts Statistics 2013-14. Comparator group – Nearest Neighbour.

#### Cost of Band D Council Tax (inc. precepts)

Medway (value)	Family Average (value)	Family Maximum (value)	Family Minimum (value)	Family Place
£1,146.01	£1,219.45	£1,412.95	£1,124.64	13/16

Source: CIPFA Council Tax Demands and Precepts Statistics 2013-14. Comparator group – Nearest Neighbour.

### 5.3 **Better for Less – transforming the way we work to deliver better outcomes for residents**

5.3.1 Medway's Better for Less transformation programme was created in 2010 in response to the government's ongoing public spending cuts. It acknowledged that the reduction in government funding needed to be reconciled with a continuing increase in demand for council services. Consequently, the vision for Better for Less was to make the council work more efficiently while delivering better services for residents.

5.3.2 The Better for Less programme was based on the following objectives to:

- *Put our customers at the centre of everything we do*
- *Give value for money*
- *Put all initial customer contact through Customer Contact*
- *Maximise first time resolution of issues*
- *Simplify, standardise and share*
- *Pursue an internal shared services agenda*
- *Build organisational resilience by reducing reliance on individuals*
- *Build an intelligence led organisation*

5.3.3 Following 18 months of delivering the Better for Less programme, significant achievements have been delivered against the programme's objectives.

- Core customer contact service established - 700,000 customer calls and 100,000 face to face contacts handled per year
- Community hubs open in Gillingham and Chatham, Rochester to follow next month
- The shared administration service has been created to provide a flexible business support service to the council. It includes generic administration hubs as well as a range of specialist support teams (blue badge, customer relations and support for child and adult protection panels)
- £3.7m savings will have been delivered by February 2014, off 2010/11 base – cumulative savings over £10m.
- Customer satisfaction ratings with council, vfm and customer service sustained
- Delivery of major IT changes – new customer relationship management system with integrations to back office systems – improved customer service, efficiency and gives platform for channel shift and data analysis to support future demand management
- The Category Management team helped to secure £1.9m of savings on a Home Care contract (against a target of £1.5m) in 12/13, and has started a joint venture “Medway Norse” for facilities management work that is projected to save £200k in 13/14 with future savings and income to the Council to be agreed. This year (13/14) the team is on target to help secure savings of £250k on agency work and £600k on high cost placements with a further £600k in 14/15. In addition, and in its first year of operation, the team has helped to secure on 31 other contracts combined savings of £1.5m which is likely to rise to at least £2m by the end of the financial year

- Performance and intelligence teams established driving performance improvement through enhanced analysis and use of performance information
- Compulsory redundancies have been kept to a minimum through staff retraining and redeployment – the total stands at 11 compulsory and 27 voluntary redundancies. 14% of staff seeing changes to their roles through Better for Less have secured increase in grades showing that the council has been successful in realizing the potential of its workforce.

5.3.4 Where areas for improvement have been identified, eg timeliness of some customer contact telephone answering, benefits processing and complaints resolution, action plans are being closely monitored to bring performance on track as a matter of urgency.

## **6 Risk management**

6.3 Risk helps to deliver performance improvement and is at the core of decision-making, business planning, managing change and innovation. It is practised at both management and service delivery level and enables the effective use of resources, secures the assets of the organisation and its continued financial and organisational well-being.

6.4 The purpose of the Council Plan performance monitoring reports during the year is to enable managers and members to manage the key risks identified in delivering priorities.

## **7 Financial and legal implications**

7.1 There are no finance or legal implications arising from this report.

## **8 Recommendations**

8.1 It is recommended that members consider second quarter performance for the areas that fall within the committees remit.

## **9 Suggested reasons for decision(s)**

9.1 Regular monitoring of performance by management and members is best practice and ensures achievement of corporate objectives.

### **Lead officer contact**

Anthony Lewis, Corporate Performance and Intelligence Manager, Gun Wharf, ext.2092

### **Background papers**

Council Plan 2013/15