

APPENDIX 1

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 well-being. 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 green as progress has been made to sustain our capacity to deliver an improved environment. Performance on 6 key performance indicator measures of success can be reported this quarter, 5 of which (83.3%) have achieved or performed above target and are rated green. One (16.7%) is below the annual target but within acceptable variance and is rated amber.

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

The Council is focusing on reducing its own carbon footprint as a priority. As part of this a business case is being developed for a number of spend-to-save initiatives in order to reduce the Council's footprint focussing on the highest energy consuming buildings. The introduction of Automated Meter Readers (AMRs) is being progressed to enable building managers to identify energy consumption peaks and areas to be targeted for savings.

Outcome: Make Medway a place where open spaces and outstanding natural beauty are available to everyone

The annual target of achieving 4 Green Flags has been met. However, our application to achieve a further green flag, over and above the target of four was, Broomhill Park (in Strood) was unsuccessful. Once the judging feedback report is received an action plan will be developed to support the re-application in 2011. The latest Citizens' Panel results show that parks and open spaces are amongst the top five important services with 36% of people saying they are important to them personally and 28% saying they feel they are important to the community.

Planning consent was secured and work started on site for Cozenton Wheelpark during this quarter. Work is on schedule and within budget for formal completion by the end of November in accordance with the Big Lottery Fund requirements.

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

The percentage of waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting NI 192 has fallen slightly below target this quarter. However, it is comparable to the same period last year and the average for the first 6 months of this financial year are in-line with the annual target of 36%.

The new Waste Contract is now operational (from 4th October) and the changes to collection, effective from 8 November, are being rolled out and communicated to residents. This quarter, waste services have undertaken 6 public promotional events on recycling services and litter enforcement campaigns and 2 of the 7 planned events on the new recycling services (which begin to be rolled out in October). 13 out of the 19 education presentations to both council officers and members regarding the new waste collection contracts have been made.

Outcome: improving the local street scene

In the second quarter, the Council received 315 enquiries relating to privately owned land that is littered (which is an increase in demand for service of 12.5% on the first quarter). 105 required enforcement action and compliance was achieved in 105 cases without the need to serve notice. Of the 86 open and ongoing cases, 65 are at the initial stage of investigation and warning

letters have been sent to 20 landowners. 1 notice has been served and is awaiting compliance. In the second quarter a total of 71 Fixed Penalty Notices were issued for offences including littering and dog fouling.

Priority 2: Safer 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. Performance on 6 key performance indicator measures of success can be reported this quarter all of which have achieved or performed above target and are rated green. There are other measures that we use to monitor progress on this priority but these are 'data only' and therefore no target is set and no status is assessed.

Outcome: reduce antisocial behaviour, criminal damage and youth crime

The latest KCVS data shows that perceptions of anti-social behaviour being a problem stands at 8.7% in the second quarter – down 0.5 percentage points (from 9.2%).

From 1 April to the end of June 2010 the graffiti team removed graffiti from 201 locations across Medway (compared to 581 in the same period last year). However, it is difficult to compare the number of incidents year on year as one incident may be a small tag and another can be a large area covering a whole wall. The Love Medway campaign has been launched to focus on improving environmental crimes like dog fouling and littering. The success of the campaign will be monitored through satisfaction with areas of Medway, and feedback will be sought through telephone interviews on a monthly basis.

Outcome: reduce the fear of crime and improve public confidence

Feeling safe continues to be a priority for local residents; the recent citizens' panel rated safer communities as the top priority. Delivering this priority is clearly something the council must do in partnership with the Police, with the council focusing more on the environmental type crimes that can give areas a feeling of being unsafe. 1,618 proactive jobs were undertaken this quarter, which is a 3% drop on the previous quarter – there has however been more reactive work. The fly tipping workload has increased by 25% on last year. Six outreach education and advice visits were carried out representing 40% of the annual target. There are 4 cases with the legal department pending prosecution relating to illegal waste carriers.

A number of issues are being tackled by the Policing Unit and Community Officers, relating to the alcohol control zone in Chatham High Street, this is progressing well. The possible need for alcohol control zones is being reviewed in Twydall and Rainham.

NI 21L regarding dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime issues by the local council and police (proxy measure) is no longer being measured by the KCVS survey because the numbers included in the responses are too small. The measure was an interim measure undertaken between Place Surveys. The Place Survey has now been deleted although a similar question may be asked in future surveys, to be determined at a later date.

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

The latest Police data shows that the serious violent crime rate (per 1,000 population) has risen very slightly (0.004%). The year to date figure is 61.

Analysis has shown a continuing pressure on the Housing service where there has been a continuing increase in caseload since June 2010, especially around mortgage repossessions, rent arrears and domestic abuse.

Domestic abuse is not only a crime; it can often be a cause of homelessness. The number of homeless households prevented through the sanctuary scheme during the first quarter stood at 12, slightly under a target of 12.5 but on track for a target of 50 during 2010/11. Demand for services relating to domestic violence have increased by 60% between quarter 1 and quarter 2. At this point in the year there have been 33 new requests for support. A domestic abuse information DVD is being produced which will be part of a Medway campaign .

Outcome: reduce substance misuse

The latest available figures show perceptions of drug use or drug dealing as a problem stands at 18.2%, down 1.2 percentage points (from 19.4%).

Perceptions of drunk and rowdy behaviour stands at 17.5%, a 1 percentage point fall (from 18.5%).

No test purchases were carried out in quarter 1 because of follow-up work after five test purchase operations in March 2010 together with a focus on other underage sales activities. Seven test purchases were planned for July. Test purchases are one tool to reduce underage sales; the Council also works with traders to provide advice on the law and business systems to reduce the chances of illegal sales. Eleven underage test purchase operations were carried out this quarter (on 115 premises). The target is 12 operations by end March 2011. This work covers solvents, tobacco and alcohol as well as knives and fireworks, which will be reported on in quarter 3.

Outcome: build strong communities by improving community cohesion

£140,000 from the EU for a programme of youth development, parenting skills and vocational training, benefiting 60 local people – The ‘Creative without Borders’ personal development programme has been completed successfully and has been nominated in the partnership working category of Medway Culture and Design Awards. This project has now been extended and is benefiting young people and residents from some of Medway’s most vulnerable communities.

The current financial climate and recent Government announcements on funding reductions mean projects to improve community cohesion have been reviewed. Funding had been secured to appoint a Community Inclusion Co-ordinator, the Council is now waiting for confirmation this funding remains in place before appointing to the post. However, existing external funding has been used to recruit four community outreach workers and four migrant community groups established to date (Czech-Slovak, Russian, Polish, Bulgarian) these will support integration into the community. The Council's Housing Service have provided advice to landlords and tenants in 82 households, ensuring that new migrants are aware of housing standards and some of the protocols of daily living in Medway. A Community Liaison worker at Bishop of Rochester Academy is working with EAL teachers to enable the integration of around 60 new migrant pupils. A series of ESOL English language programmes are being run at Bishop of Rochester Academy and All Saints church and these have engaged to date 25 new migrants living in Chatham. An Information Pack is being produced to provide clear direction to new migrants on the protocols of day to day living in Medway and this will be supplemented by a programme of cultural awareness training so that new migrants understand better the culture of the host community.

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

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. The rating for our achievement of planned actions and outcomes this quarter as ‘green’. Performance on 12 key performance indicator measures of success can be reported this quarter – 5 (42%) have achieved or performed above target (rated green), 2 (17%) are below the annual target but within acceptable variance limits (rated amber), and 5 (42%) have performed below the target and are rated red.

Outcome: Children and young people are safe & cared for

There continues to be increased pressure on the Integrated Area Teams as the number of referrals continues to rise. Not only is this increase impacting on assessment timescales, but numbers of looked after children (LAC) and children with a child protection plan have also increased. A recently published study on safeguarding pressures undertaken for the Association of Directors of Children's Services has produced some useful findings. This study explored some of the potential consequences of safeguarding increases including the effect on timeliness of work by analysing four performance indicators. Although some of the 2009/10 results are provisional, they illustrate deterioration in the number of initial assessments and core assessments carried out to timescale across the 57% of authorities that responded:

- NI59: Timeliness of initial assessments = 70.3% (-2.5 percentage points)
- NI60: Timeliness of core assessments = 74.0% (-5 percentage points)
- NI67: Timeliness of child protection reviews = 98.0% (-1.2 percentage points)
- NI66: Timeliness of LAC reviews = 92.9% (-1.2 percentage points).

For Medway Council NI 67 Percentage of child protection cases reviewed within required timescales has dropped below the 100% target. This is due to one review in August (involving 2 children) being held a day late. The stretched capacity within all agencies working within the safeguarding system is showing in reductions in agency attendance at conferences and less availability of documentation prior to conferences which can make risk assessment more difficult. The percentage of initial assessments carried out within timescale (NI 59) remains a priority for the council to ensure the needs of potentially vulnerable children and young people are identified quickly. The new Working Together Guidance stated best practice is now to allow social workers 10 working days to complete an initial assessment. 79% of initial assessments this quarter were carried out in 10 working days, this has fallen slightly from 82% in quarter 1. Performance dipped to 73.5% in August following the second highest number of referrals in 9 months (339 referrals received).

NI 60 Percentage of core assessments for children's social care that were carried out within 35 days of their commencement has fallen slightly (77%) from the previous quarter (79%) and below the target of 80%, but remains above the figure for the same period last year.

As the demand for children's services is continuing to rise, numbers of Looked After Children have risen by 12% from August 2009, which is putting pressure on the ability to respond within timescale, whilst also delivering a quality service. During this quarter 17 looked after children's reviews out of a total of 296 reviews, were held out of timescale (NI 66) therefore performance has dipped below target.

Aut Even, the residential respite centre for children with disabilities, was inspected in August. The previous Ofsted judgement of "Adequate" given in 2009 improved to "Good".

Outcome: Children and young people succeed in learning

From 1st September local authorities became responsible for the education provision within Young Offender Institutions. The Young Persons Learning Agency currently manages the national contract with CfBT Education Trust, which delivers the education programme at Cookham Wood. It is yet to be decided whether the operational provision for the education programme will transfer to the local authority. In the meantime the 14-19 team is working closely with the Prison Governor and the YPLA.

The Government's policy towards diplomas (the reduction in the central funding and development of diplomas) appears to have already had a significant impact on their take-up. Schools reported an expected drop, enrolment of 233 pupils, compared with 377 last year (subject to a final data check). Schools are already making plans to replace diplomas with the qualifications such as BTECs.

Provisional school data on attainment has become available this quarter. These figures are not confirmed until January, which means that these results cannot be compared nationally. As a

result the information in the appendix tables still reflects the confirmed results from the previous academic year.

Key stage 1 results show a significant improvement in boys' attainment and the best ever at level 2B+ in reading and writing. Key stage 2 results have also improved and the gap between pupils who have free school meals and those who do not has closed to 19%. The attainment of Looked After Children substantially improved to 67% L4+ in English and 58% L4+ in mathematics. Provisional Key stage 4 results show an improvement in all measures. 55.5% of pupils obtained five or more A*-C grades including English and Mathematics, this is an increase of 4 points from last year. The gap between SEN pupils and pupils without a special educational need has closed by 3 points, with 21.3% of SEN pupils gaining five or more A*-C grades including English and Mathematics (a 5 point rise on the previous year), attainment of Looked After Children increased to 17%. All national challenge schools improved their performance in 2010, four out of the five schools achieved results above the 30% five or more A*-C grades threshold. Key stage 5 results show the highest ever participation rate and the best ever results, with average point score per entry increasing from 204 to 212 and average point score per student increasing from 771.4 to 807.6.

Outcome: Children and young people thrive

We have continued to assist young people to access safe, suitable and affordable housing that meets their needs. 71 vulnerable young people have been successfully housed in permanent affordable housing since April 2010. The number of young people placed in B&B accommodation has reduced by 55% this quarter compared to the previous quarter. The average length of stay for those aged 25 and under in B&B accommodation has also reduced from 15.58 days in quarter 1 to 7.69 days in quarter 2, well below the target of 11 days. However, there are currently 33 people under the age of 25 in temporary accommodation which is an increase of 30% from the previous quarter. Move-on plans are in progress and are continually monitored.

NI 148 – Care leavers in education, employment or training. Improved performance in September has meant that for quarter 2 performance was 66%. However, the year to date figure is only 33% (4 out of the group of 12 who had turned 19 in this period) against the target of 60%. Additional monitoring is being developed to further focus attention and interventions that address the attributing factors to the long term employability of our care leavers.

Data for the first 3 months of this financial year was published this quarter for the percentage of the population aged 15-24 who accepted Chlamydia screening/testing (NI 113). 4.7% is below the quarter 1 target of 8.8% but is an improvement on the same period last year. Successful outreach events during quarter 2 included university freshers weeks.

Outcome: Ensure that the Children's Trust board is effectively focusing on the priorities agreed in the Children and Young People's Plan and is achieving its agreed targets and outcomes

The review of the children and young people's plan was completed in July. The council is awaiting feedback from OFSTED. The wider Every Child Matters needs assessment is in the final stages of completion. A draft proposal has been written identifying how Medway is going to approach the task of carrying out a poverty needs assessment and produce a plan to tackle the issues raised.

The Transition Strategy, to support children and young people as they move through various stages into adulthood, has been agreed and the timetable for improvements to the transition process is being met, in such areas as developing a transition pathway and protocol; establishing a transition database, developing a 'virtual team' approach and improving governance arrangements.

A Child Health Action Plan is being developed. Initial work has been done on mapping resources available to services for children and families.

Putting our customers at the centre of everything we do

The work of the young inspectors this quarter has included inspecting 11 Medway Parks, Child Adolescent Mental Health Services and Mid Kent College Health Service. It continues to be extremely useful to have this group of young people reviewing the work of statutory agencies and reporting their findings to the Children's Trust Board.

Giving Value for Money

Government funding (£43k) has been secured to deliver dyslexia training to Medway schools.

Our Outreach and Day care service is relocating in order to develop the service as an invest to save service to meet the more complex needs of our older Looked After Children (in particular those children who have come to us through the Southwark judgement).

The Family Intervention Project is a preventative service which supports families where there is children's social care involvement and where there are other risk factors such as reoffending, housing difficulties, substance misuse etc. Established earlier this year the service is currently working with 50 vulnerable families, supporting 130 children towards positive change. A recent local case study has resulted in evidenced cost savings of £180,000 to date using the Department For Education family costing tool.

Priority 4: Older and vulnerable people maintaining their independence

What we aim to do:

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 a key priority for us.

How well are we doing?

Performance on 9 key performance indicator measures of success can be reported this quarter – 3 (33%) have achieved or performed above target (rated green). 2 (22%) are below the annual target but within acceptable variance limits (rated amber), and 4 (44%) have performed below the target and are rated red/amber – noting mitigating management action underway.

There are five outcomes set out in the council plan under the 'older and vulnerable people maintaining their independence' priority.

Outcome: Putting People First – people who use social care services in Medway have their needs met in a personalised way that delivers the best outcomes for them

This quarter further progress has been made establishing the long-term self-directed support system arrangements. Significant work has been done with KMPT (Kent and Medway Partnership Trust), over 100 staff have been trained on Self Directed Support, and processes and procedures rewritten, enabling this approach will also be used with mental health clients.

NI 130 Clients receiving self-directed support remains a challenge. However, progress continues to be made each month and the numbers at the end of quarter 2 are 6.5% higher than March, at 14.6% by the end of September, against a target of 30% at the end of the financial year. Performance is expected to rise next quarter as new and existing mental health clients are to be offered a personal budget and rollout across other teams commences October 2010.

Since October 2010, all new and known service users are offered a personal budget as part of their assessment or review. For new service users, the Initial Intake team ensure that all those who need ongoing support, after an initial period of assessment and intensive support, are on a personal budget. Work is being done with the Rapid Response and Stroke Community Assessment and Rehabilitation teams to ensure people whose needs are identified through the hospital are also on personal budgets. For known service users, a virtual team, established in

June 2010, has been focusing on reviewing the care needs of existing service users and ensuring they are offered personal budget as part of their review.

Outcome: Partnership working between Medway council, NHS Medway, the voluntary sector and independent providers ensures that people have their health, housing and social care needs met in a holistic and seamless way.

The number of adult protection referrals continues to increase, on average a 30% increase on the number of referrals last year. Significant work has been carried out to raise awareness of adult protection issues both with council staff and more widely across the sector.

Delayed transfers of care from hospital for quarter 2 continues to improve and achieved the target, however the year to date figure is slightly below the annual target of 8.5% because of one month of poor performance in April. Important to note that this PI relates to performance of all partners in Medway (Medway FT, KMPT, MCH and OLAs). Since May 2010, there have be NIL delays attributable to Medway Council, Adult Social Care at Medway Maritime Hospital. We participated in an audit of the process with partners and continue to work with them to improve their performance.

Carers receiving assessments (NI 135) remains below target at 4.2% (325 carers have been assessed during the first 2 quarters of the year) against an annual cumulative target of 15% (1162 carers). Medway Carers Partnership Board has identified this as a priority area within their work plan and recommendations of how to take it forward will be presented to the Board in October. Work has already begun to address some of the issues.

Outcome: People with disabilities and family carers have choice and control through economic well-being.

The number of people with a learning disability in employment, known to Medway Council Adult Social Care, has risen from 8 to 14 this quarter. However due to how this indicator is calculated because the number of reviews has increased, but the number of people in employment has not increased at the same rate, performance has decreased slightly from 3.6% to 3.4%. Medway Council's Fair Access to Care Services eligibility criteria is set at Substantial and Critical and therefore we can only count people with a learning disability at these levels. We have agreed a census with Job Centre Plus and will be undertaking this to achieve a clearer picture of the number of people with learning disabilities open to the council in work and this will be a benchmark for measuring progress more reliably.

Outcome: Dignity and Respect – people who use health and social care services in Medway are treated with dignity and respect.

Data is available for the first 2 months of this quarter for NI 149 adults receiving secondary mental health services in settled accommodation. At the end of August performance was 30.7% (203 adults) a decline from quarter 1 performance of 34% (224 adults). We are discussing this with KMPT and will be working with them to improve this performance.

Outcome: Residents in Medway achieve improved health.

The final version of the Health and Well-being Strategy for Medway has been produced and agreed with partners. An implementation plan is being developed to drive forward priority areas for health improvement.

The Medway Alcohol Partnership, established in January 2010, continues to meet bi-monthly. Alcohol screening and the delivery of 'Identification and Brief Advice' in primary care settings remains a priority area for development. Work has begun in identifying those GP practices which are undertaking alcohol screening with new patients.

The 'Smart Medway' brand has been used in health promotion roadshows throughout the summer. Two bids have been submitted to the Centre of Public Innovation to pilot two alcohol interventions

in Medway Maritime hospital. The projects are aimed at reducing alcohol related hospital admissions.

Putting Customers at the centre of everything we do

Over £4.5 million of HCA funding has been secured this quarter which will deliver 64 housing units for older and vulnerable people by April 2012. This includes an additional 60 unit Extra Care Housing scheme at Victory Pier which provides accommodation which is accessible to wheelchair users.

A scheme to deliver nine one bedroom housing units for clients with learning disabilities began this quarter, and will be completed by the summer 2011.

Priority 5: People travelling easily and safely in Medway

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 has been made on key actions. Performance on 5 key performance indicator measures of success can be reported this quarter. 4 (80%) achieved or performed above target and are rated green. 1 (20%) has performed below the target and is rated red.

As reported in the first quarter, a significant impact has been felt on this priority as a result of the new coalition government's announcements on budget reductions. As a direct consequence, almost £1m has been cut from capital projects under the local transport plan, and a number of projects have been reduced or spread over two years. These include traffic calming measures in Twydall, road safety, and access improvements at Lordswood Leisure centre, Parkwood Shopping centre and Albermarle Road.

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

The 12 week consultation on the draft Local Transport Plan (LTP) was completed in the second quarter including exhibitions at shopping centres and libraries. Work on this third LTP has also informed the first draft of Medway's Local Development Framework Core Strategy which was finalised in the second quarter and approved by Cabinet on 19 October 2010; it will now be subject to consultation in November and December 2010.

The Quality Public Transport Corridor project is progressing, this will improve bus services along the A2 route. However, a 5% reduction in funding for the project has been announced by central government, but it is anticipated that this reduction can be controlled within the project without significant impact. Contracts have been awarded with planned commencement in October for Corporation Street and Strood Riverside Link. North Dane way and the second phase of Chatham Hill are on hold subject to funding. Smart card electronic ticket machines on buses went live in early October and bus real time passenger information and new display are going live in early November.

Contracts have been awarded to construct Chatham Waterfront Dynamic Bus Facility (DBF) and Corporation Street public transport corridor. Work started in June 2010 and depending on weather should be completed by July 2011. Management arrangements for the operation of the facility are in the process of being agreed with bus operators.

Negotiations have been ongoing relating to a new Sainsbury's supermarket and park and ride facility at Whitewall Creek. This has now been locally approved and a positive decision by the Secretary of State was received during November.

The number of users of the primary cycle route network continues to exceed the target with an increase of 5.3% in quarter 2 on the same period last year.

The grant funding has been reduced by £50k for improvements, in partnership with train companies, to Gillingham Station, by March 2011. The plans have been reviewed and a contract is now in place with construction due to commence in January 2011.

Powers to enforce bus lanes were granted on 28th June. Preparation work is now underway to take this forward.

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

The Council has been preparing for the Good Egg Guide car seat clinics (for in car child safety) that commence in October 2010.

Due to recent budget cuts, the future of the safety camera partnership will be reviewed and a report on options is being prepared.

Priority 6: Everyone benefiting from the area's regeneration

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 the areas regeneration' priority. We have rated our achievement of planned actions and outcomes this quarter as 'green'. Performance on 10 key performance indicator measures of success can be reported this quarter – 7 (70%) have achieved or performed above target (rated green), 1 (10%) is below the annual target but within acceptable variance limits (rated amber), and 2 (20%) have performed below the target and are rated red.

Although the council has been seeing early signs of economic recovery for a few months the pressures are continuing in some areas. There are still great uncertainties in terms of job creation projects and additional applications relating to prevention of homelessness. In addition to this central government funding reductions are likely to impact on Regeneration work.

Outcome: Decent homes and living environments for all

The Housing Strategy annual monitoring is showing that the only areas currently off target are those associated with either the suspension or uncertainty of future funding. The council is well ahead of the target of 617 by 2011 additional affordable homes since April 2008 with last confirmed figure being 906. To exceed our target by 46% in such a challenging economic climate is positive. At this point in the year £8.8m of submitted bids to the Homes and Communities Agency have been approved, however a further £10.1m are not currently progressing due to funding uncertainties. £5.8m funding has been secured for the Extra Housing Care Scheme at Victory Pier, the first of its type in the country (see adults chapter).

Since June there has been a continuing increase in demand relation to housing support, as a result of mortgage repossessions, rent arrears and domestic violence. It is therefore positive that 172 households have been assisted this quarter and targets are still on track to be met.

Outcome: Medway as a 21st century riverside city and destination of choice

The Local Development Framework Core Strategy is due for completion by April 2011 and proposed adoption in September 2012. The overall program has been revised following the revocation of the South East Plan and associated Government announcements. The draft strategy is now out for consultation.

Planning application for the first 600 homes on Rochester Riverside was submitted in September and will be considered next quarter. The enabling work for the Chatham bus facility is nearing completion.

Beyond March 2011 government funding for projects within Medway and the Medway Renaissance team is uncertain. Options are being considered to continue the delivery of regeneration sites beyond this date. However, the uncertain funding position remains a key risk for the regeneration agenda.

The City Status campaign continues to progress, significant backing has now been secured from range of organisations including KM Group, BAE systems, MHS Homes, Asda, Sainsburys, Christian Salvesen, Swain Haulage, Hochiki Europe, Peel Ports, Nordic, Ward Homes, Arriva and Veolia. A recent telephone survey to gauge public support resulted in 67% supporting the bid. Expenditure to date has been just over £11k.

Outcome: Quality jobs for local people

Following work in partnership with Job Centre Plus – 90 Flexible New Deal Clients have found jobs via local employers.

This quarter information was received demonstrating that there were 395 separate business investments in Medway during 2009/10 which created 1,192 jobs in Medway, the highest figure across Kent and Medway.

Outcome: Realising everyone's potential

By the end of September 2010 a total of 297 jobs were created, through the Future Jobs Fund, by the end of September 2010, with 117 posts still waiting to be filled. This exceeds the job creation target of 240 by the end October 2010. Following work in partnership with Job Centre Plus – 90 flexible New Deal clients have found jobs via local employers.

Outcome: Culture & leisure for all

Planning permission was secured for the Christmas Market, set to be a significant addition to Rochester's Christmas offer.

The Will Adams Festival continues to thrive at Gillingham Park. Audience figures were estimated at 5,000. Traditional England, which incorporated 'A Countryside Experience', took place at Riverside Country Park on September 12. Estimated attendance was 8,500 – 10,000 and feedback has been very positive. Castle concerts resulted in a profit of £12K.

A modern pentathlon performance centre has been opened at Medway Park and Medway has been chosen to host the Modern Pentathlon European Championships in July 2011. Medway Park has also been officially accredited as a coach education development centre for rugby union and Medway has staged its first international basketball series. For the first time, Medway is ranked in the South-East top ten for the number of national accredited Clubmark clubs in an area. Positively, a record number of schools have signed up to undertake Our Medway 2012, the specially devised primary school curriculum

Customer at the centre of everything we do

Providing good information to our customers is an essential element of the council's work. The new website has been a major development over the last year. The launch preparations were completed in quarter 2 and content has been migrated from the old website to the new. The second round of user testing shows high levels of satisfaction with the new site – 92% believe it to be better than the current site, 88% find it easy to use. Minor improvements suggested through the testing are being implemented. The new site went live at the end of October.

The 'We were there' national MOD exhibition was launched as part of Black History Month, the event highlighting the important contribution BME groups have made to the armed forces. This was the opening event for a series of activities being held in October.

60 Homebonds have been issued this quarter, 234 since the new scheme started in October 2009. This has been recognised Countywide as providing value for money and awarded a Kent Excellence Award.

Giving Value for Money

What we aim to do:

Providing high-quality, value-for-money services is central to the council's work. This is not just about providing a cheap service – the council has a rounded view of value for money – identifying and meeting customers needs in the most appropriate way, at the best price. Understanding our customers needs and managing our finances well are both essential if we are to achieve that.

The changing financial climate

On 20 October 2010 the Government outlined the £697billion public spending proposals for the next four years in its Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR). The CSR sets out the parameters within which the Council will be setting its budget for 2011/12 onwards. Whilst the CSR confirmed spending cuts of 25% or more in local government grant (including a 7.1% annual fall from April 2011), the exact details of the impact on the Council will not be known until later in 2010 as Government departments release further details of what the changes will mean. In advance of this, on 28 September 2010, Cabinet considered the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for 2011/14 which identified the key issues that needed to be considered as part of the budget preparation for that period. The council expects to receive notification of its government funding levels for the next 1-3 years in early December. The CSR also included measures to end the ring-fencing of local authority revenue grants and give councils the freedom to borrow against their assets.

The budget set for 2010/11 was amongst the most robust and less prone to financial risk than previous years. However, because of funding reductions made in the emergency budget of 22 June 2010 (which included local government cuts of £1.165 billion), during the second quarter of 2010/11 the Council has had to review its work to respond to the changes. This included reductions to Area Based Grant of £1.961m (out of £18.1m), capital funding related to the Local Transport Plan (just under £1m) and a reduction in Public Service Agreement (PSA) reward grant (of £3.3m).

In response to the in-year reductions, on 14 October 2010 the authority also reviewed its Council Plan to address some of these changes. The Council is continuing to embed Value for Money in the culture of the organisation, driven by specific pieces of work including the 'better for less' programme which includes:

- Carrying out an independent review of data / benchmarking of services;
- Completing service reviews and commissioning a new programme; and
- Developing an ongoing Value for Money self assessment.

Improve efficiency and deliver value for money for our residents

In August 2010 the Council consulted residents about value for money and what it means to them.

- 65% of people felt well informed about how their Council tax is spent.
- 31% of people felt the Council provides Value for Money, with only 11% disagreeing. However, a large number of people were neutral (50%); they neither agreed or disagreed the Council provides value for money.
- In rating whether the Council provides Value for Money, 64% of people said that the level of Council tax they pay is a factor in their judgement. 45% said the range of Council services they and their family use. 44% said they considered the benefit of council

services to the community and 44% said how efficient they think the Council is. 34% of people said the services their family received in the past was a factor.

- 54% of people thought it was possible for the Council to provide good quality services at the same time as reducing costs.

The 'achieving better for less' programme seeks to achieve better outcomes at lower cost to the taxpayer. Nine areas across the Council have been identified for further analysis with the objective of improving the customer experience and improving performance:

- Better Administration
- Better Customer Management
- Better Decision Making
- Better Financial Management
- Better Performance and Intelligence
- Better Procurement
- Better Staff Management
- Better Technology

During the third quarter more detailed plans will be established to realise improvements in these areas.

On 29 June 2010 Cabinet considered a report on the in-year public spending reductions subsequently agreed by Council on 29 July 2010. This amended the budget to compensate for reductions in funding streams, including £1.8m from capital budgets and an expected £2.8m from revenue budgets. This included the identification of 50 posts being subject to compulsory redundancy; the redundancy process has been followed during the second quarter. The savings target for 2010/11 is £4.635m and the savings identified £4.623m. Short-term costs incurred in making these reductions will be met from reserves.

During the second quarter preparations are being made to publish Council spend data in January 2010 and the Government recently released guidance outlining how authorities should do this.

Data for 2009/10 regarding efficiency gains was submitted in the second quarter and revealed £13.3m of efficiencies achieved, which was £31,000 above target. And good progress has been made recently in terms of the time taken to process Housing Benefit/ Council Tax Benefit new claims and change events (NI 181). Performance for the first half of the year stood at 12.02 days (which is a substantial improvement on the same period last year and an outturn of 23.21 days for 2009/10 as a whole). This is compared to a target of 17 days.

Performance on complaints has improved this quarter but is slightly below the year end target.

Whilst the council faces reduced funding on the one hand, on the other there are increases in demand for certain services. For example, within Housing there has been a continuing increase in caseload since June 2010, especially around mortgage repossessions, rent arrears and domestic abuse, with analysis showing a continuing pressure. The continuing current housing and economic situation (where there has been a 40% increase on debt advice, along with the average household debt (unsecured) for Medway increasing from £18,000 to £22,000) is still continuing to have a impact on Temporary Accommodation and Prevention e.g. an increase in Bailiff Warrants and notices of mortgage possession up by a further 9% on last quarter, 19,000 households have been assisted through the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) service which is an increase of 40% to date.

Recognising the changing environment in which the authority operates, Cabinet agreed, at its meeting on 28 September 2010, to undertake a fundamental review of the Council Plan for 2011/14 (to take place in line with budget preparation) so that the budget and a streamlined plan will be agreed by Council in February 2011. This timescale will allow the authority to take

advantage of the freedoms promised by the Government as part of their Coalition agreement and further outlined by Eric Pickles, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.