

WIRRAL COUNCIL

NATIONAL INDICATOR (NI 179) – 2009/10 ACTUAL

Strategy

The Council's overall strategy is directly influenced by the citizens of the borough and driven to improving customer service and customer access. This is being achieved through linking with partner agencies in the provision of One Stop Shops, the continuing enhancement of the Corporate Call Centre and the developing of web-based channels of service delivery.

The Council is committed towards improving the identified priority areas as well as keeping Council Tax at affordable levels. The use of available resources is being maximised and targeted towards key front-line services.

Great importance is placed upon partnership working. A new multi-partner Local Area Agreement commenced during 2008/09, which included a shared Vision of Place for Wirral. With the Local Strategic Partnership setting the overall vision and opportunities are taken within specific service areas. This includes Adult Social Services and joint commissioning with the health sector and the relationship with Wirral Partnership Homes following the transfer of the Council housing stock in 2005.

Actions taken during 2009/10

In delivering the targets the Council expanded upon the actions taken in the previous years and achieved further efficiencies through the following actions which have helped keep the Council Tax affordable and improve customer services.

The overall Wirral Council Tax for 2009/10 represented a rise of 4.46% being below the prevailing rate of inflation and below the 5% maximum set by Government. This saw the sums allocated to the priority areas including £5.1 million to schools, £690,000 to support increased child protection demands following the baby Peter case, £280,000 of bridging finance for residential care for children and a range of policy options tackling crime, environmental and social issues.

Inflationary rises of for 2% prices and contracts were built into the 2009/10 estimates with 1% percentage increase built in for pay awards. A number of contracts in activity areas such as waste and Social Care saw increases beyond the inflation provision resulting in the need to deliver efficiencies to maintain existing services. The demands for care continue to grow from an increasingly elderly population, from increasing numbers with complex needs and increasing numbers of looked after children. Whilst additional resources were input into these areas working with external agencies, particularly in respect of adults, delivered efficiencies to maintain services.

A series of cost reduction options totaling £12.7m were agreed as part of the 2009/10 budget. The cost reduction figures were reduced during the year following decisions regarding the Strategic Asset Review. Not all of reductions qualify under the strict 'efficiency' criteria required for the NI 179 definition. The sums included here in the return therefore reflect only those eligible.

Included are savings from reduced residential and nursing fees and savings from a number of retendered Adult Social Services Contracts. Children's residential care costs have also been reduced and savings made within the administration of Children and Young People services. The Central Procurement Support Unit continued to support the delivery of efficiencies through purchasing and further efficiencies were realised through Information Technology reviews.

Information received from both Merseyside Integrated Transport Authority and the Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority regarding the apportionments to Wirral where received is incorporated within the return.

The Council continues to secure benefits from the release of assets for disposal through asset management and also through pro-active risk and insurance claims management. The latter continued to produce significant savings in previous years with further reductions realised in 2009/10 in releasing both sums set-aside for potential claims as well as for annual premium costs.

Significant savings were again made in the year from treasury Management activities. Proactive management of our investments despite poor market conditions meant that investment returns were again above budget. Continued improvements in cash flow forecasting and management resulted in savings from the virtual elimination of temporary borrowing costs. However under the NI 179 regime whilst benefitting the authority and council tax payers many of the Treasury management savings are not eligible for inclusion within the indicator.

	Total net value of ongoing cash-releasing Value for money gains that have impacted since the start of the 2008/09 financial year (£)	Further ongoing cash-releasing value for money gains achieved in 2009/10 (£)	Further ongoing cash-releasing value for money gains achieved in 2010/11 (£)	Cumulative gains as at end of 2010/11 (£)	
Adult Social Services	2,420,600	4,610,700	-	7,031,300	
<p>Key actions undertaken to achieve efficiency gain:</p> <p>2008/09 The continuing changes in the provision of domiciliary care achieved a net savings of £700,000 from the expansion of the home assessment and reablement team (HART) and a further £500,000 from the take up of assistive technology care by 533 service users in the year. The more efficient use of support services produced a further £400,000 of efficiencies by the re-organisation of the finance and performance branch. By working with the private sector gains of £130,000 from renegotiated care contracts were achieved. Reassessments and use of supported living arrangements rather than residential care produced efficiencies of £250,000 which were complemented by a further £170,000 net saving through re-provision from an in-house residential home to providing the service via the private sector. The level of pay inflation built into the budget for 2008/09 an efficiency gain of £270,600.</p> <p>2009/10 Assistive Technology has produced savings of £1,300,000 in year. The renegotiation of Residential and Homecare contracts with providers has produced savings of a further £1,900,000. Efficiencies of £600,000 arose from renegotiated rates with Supporting Living providers with a further £400,000 from an invest to save scheme for care services. Transport tendering has produced £180,000 of savings and a further £100,000 arose from the review of administrative support. The departmental share of the 2009/10 savings from the Council wide renegotiated gas and electricity contracts was £130,700.</p> <p>Quality crosscheck notes:</p> <p>2008/09 Key areas where the time taken from referral to completed assessment increasing from 76.4%</p>					

	<p>in 2007/08 to 78% for 2008/09. People supported to live independently through Social Services (Adults) reached 2,842 against target of 2,186. Carers receiving needs assessment or review and a specific carers service, or advice and information 25.46% versus target of 18.0%.</p> <p>2009/10 All age mortality rates for both men and women (NI120 a/b) have improved between 2008/09 and 2009/10. There was an increase in people being able to live independently through Social Services. The national indicator for carers receiving needs assessments or review and a specific carer's service or advice and information continued to improve. The timeliness of the arrangement of care packages after assessment also showed good progress.</p>				
Children's and Young People	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	TOTAL	
	2,068,700	316,200	-	2,384,900	
	<p>Key actions undertaken to achieve efficiency gain:</p> <p>2008/09 The re-provision of services through working with the private sector realised a transfer from in house provision which realised efficiencies of £525,000. In terms of reviewing support the review of operational support and Family Support Teams released efficiencies of £190,000 and £173,000 respectively whilst the rationalisation of the planning and resources support service released a further £421,000. Reductions in admin support and in contracts support allowed efficiencies of £119,100 to be achieved. The re-configuration of the behavioural review programme generated £200,000 of efficiencies, Re-organising Youth offending services provided an additional £70,000 and a review of Social Welfare and play services commissioning provided savings of £123,000. The level of pay inflation built into the budget for 2008/09 an efficiency gain of £247,600.</p> <p>2009/10 Efficiencies were achieved by re-configuration of the Youth Service £150,000, facilities management savings of £25,000 and administration savings £80,000 from vacant posts. The departmental share of the 2009/10 savings from the Council wide renegotiated gas and electricity contracts was £61,200. A number of additional efficiencies were also achieved within this area, which do not score against the NI 179 criteria. These included insurance reallocations on a claims basis to schools of £400,000 and fee income from music tuition.</p> <p>Quality crosscheck notes:</p>				

	<p>2008/09 The progress made in transferring looked after children from the most expensive care through to lesser costing care continued. However, events elsewhere in the country in the latter part of the year resulted in an additional number of referrals such that the progress made was not sustained to the year-end.</p> <p>2009/10 Significant improvements on previous years occurred both in the timeliness and stability of looked after children placements. Percentage of schools offering extended services to young people continued to increase. General educational standards continue to improve with the percentage of both those earning 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE including English and Maths improving and those achieving 2 or more A*-C grades in sciences increasing on the previous year.</p>				
Regeneration (including Culture and Sport)	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	TOTAL	
	284,700	845,700	-	1,130,400	
	<p>Key actions undertaken to achieve efficiency gain:</p> <p>2008/09 A number of efficiencies within this area are not eligible under the criteria as they involve either reductions in service provision, increases in income or the use of grant income from other public bodies. Efficiencies were obtained by better use of IT (£28,700), a review of the finance function (£27,500) and the reorganization of supported housing (£14,300) The level of pay inflation built into the budget for 2008/09 an efficiency gain of £214,200.</p> <p>2009/10 A number of efficiencies were achieved in year. These included a review of administration releasing £138,000 Of savings, revised Supporting People contracts saving £86,300 and grant maximization of £107,000. Revised toilet cleansing operations released a further £70,000. The remaining £48,000 came from reducing administration in areas such as training, conference attendance and advertising. The departmental share of the 2009/10 savings from the Council wide renegotiated gas and electricity contracts was £336,400. A £60,000 efficiency was achieved through an invest to save scheme at the Wirral Tennis Centre.</p> <p>Quality crosscheck notes:</p>				

	<p>2008/09 The year saw the refurbished Oval sports Centre and the new Floral Pavilion Theatre & Conference Centre opened with the latter winning a Best practice award at the Northwest Regional Construction Awards in 2009.</p> <p>2009/10 Percentage of vulnerable people achieving independent living increased Confirmation of the continued operation of the Guinea Gap Sports Centre (since extended further) occurred in the year. The national indicator for Adults undertaking exercise of 30 minutes or more at least 3 times per week continued to be within the target range. There was an increase in use of library facilities during the year.</p>				
Technical Services	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	TOTAL	
	1,105,000	724,100	-	1,829,100	
	<p>Key actions undertaken to achieve efficiency gain:</p> <p>2008/09 The Environmental Streetscene Services contract which commenced in August 2006 continues to be further progressed through close working with the appointed contractor. A review of the waste contract and of contractual management released £186,600 whilst recycling rates continued to improve. The limited inflation awarded to the waste contract meant that efficiencies of £257,200 were generated to maintain the service level. Reviews of highways maintenance produced efficiencies of £358,000, whilst the ongoing rationalisation of support services and administration processes through the use of IT contributed a further £80,000. Reviews of traffic management, health and safety and building and control functions released efficiencies of £115,000. Extensions to streetscene contracts and energy conservation initiatives provided a further £35,000 of efficiencies. The level of pay inflation built into the budget for 2008/09 an efficiency gain of £73,200.</p> <p>2009/10 Highways Engineering retendering produced savings of £320,000 in the year. The street lighting contract provided a further £317,000 of savings The departmental share of the 2009/10 savings from the Council wide renegotiated gas and electricity contracts was £42,100. The remaining £45,000 relates to administration and publicity savings.</p>				

	<p>Quality crosscheck notes:</p> <p>2008/09 The % of household waste sent for recycling increased from 20.8% in 2007/08 to 22.6% in 2008/09. In terms of highways the number of killed or seriously injured road casualties decreased from 171 in 2007/08 to 145 in 2008/09</p> <p>2009/10 Percentage of waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting continued to rise. Improved rates for those killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents was achieved for both children and the general population.</p>				
Corporate Services, Law, HR and Asset Management	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	TOTAL	
	392,500	230,200	-	622,700	
	<p>Key actions undertaken to achieve efficiency gain:</p> <p>2008/09 Essentially around support a series of reviews were undertaken within Corporate Services to achieve efficiencies. These included the areas of strategic development staffing (£75,000), restructuring administration functions (£60,000), a similar exercise reviewing central services (£50,000). A restructuring the tourism and marketing and transformational change functions released £60,000 and £30,000 respectively whilst changes to the management and operation of legal and democratic services released a further £40,000. The level of pay inflation built into the budget for 2008/09 an efficiency gain of £77,500.</p> <p>2009/10 Efficiencies were achieved by implementing the outcome of a series of reviews. These included reduced administration of employee administration and recruitment and payroll worth £125,000 and of legal and democratic services contributing a further £40,000. The departmental share of the 2009/10 savings from the Council wide renegotiated gas and electricity contracts was £65,200.</p> <p>Quality crosscheck notes:</p> <p>2008/09 The nature of these areas is essentially the provision of 'back-office' support to front-line services.</p>				

	<p>2009/10 The authority achieved level 3 of the Equality Standard. There also a positive direction of travel for a number of HR indicators such as sickness and proportions of employees who are have a disability or are from a minority ethnic background.</p>				
Finance Department	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	TOTAL	
	1,550,400	1,006,700	-	2,557,100	
	<p>Key actions undertaken to achieve efficiency gain:</p> <p>2008/09 The continuing review of Housing and Council Tax functions and improvements in controls resulted in efficiencies of £600,000. The creation of the Corporate IT Unit was further developed through increased integration and this resulted in £100,000 of savings. As the IT investment of previous years is developed additional benefits are achieved and the benefit of integrated systems provided further cash releasing efficiencies of £380,000 through reduced staffing and contract costs. A further £200,000 was achieved through systems support and new technology savings and £80,000 from reductions in call centre staffing. The content of the Corporate Procurement Strategy remains under annual review and the Procurement Unit continues to support departments in the delivery of efficiencies. This includes the use of e-auctions and the national solution operated by the Office of Government Commerce Buying Solutions. The level of pay inflation built into the budget for 2008/09 an efficiency gain of £190,400.</p> <p>2009/10 A further review of Housing and Council Tax functions and improvements in controls resulted in efficiencies of £600,000 being released. The creation of the corporate IT unit and economies arising resulted in a further £100,000 of savings. Continued partnership working with Wirral Partnership Homes released another £140,000 of efficiencies. Procurement savings have continued to be been achieved by Corporate Procurement. These though have been reflected within individual departments savings. The reorganisation of student awards has contributed £50,000 of efficiencies. A further £50,000 has been saved from retendered insurance contracts for motor and engineering insurances and £10,000 from revised cash handling arrangements. The departmental share of the 2009/10 savings from the Council wide renegotiated gas and electricity contracts was £56,700.</p> <p>Quality crosscheck notes:</p>				

	<p>2008/09 Despite the economic downturn Council Tax collection continued to improve with the 2008/09 rate of 96.7% slightly above the 2007/08 rate of 96.6%. The Audit Commission review of Access to Services rated the Council as good with promising prospects for improvement whilst their annual assessment of Use of Resources saw an improvement to performing well from adequate performance.</p> <p>2009/10 The 2009/10 collection rate improved further to 96.8% despite the continuation of a difficult economic climate. Housing benefit processing times showed a slight decrease despite an increased caseload. Contacts via the call centre increased and improvements in waiting times at the One Stop Shops were achieved. The percentage of suppliers paid within 30 days also increased.</p>				
Miscellaneous	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	TOTAL	
	746,300	462,200	-	1,208,500	
	<p>Key actions undertaken to achieve efficiency gain:</p> <p>2008/09 Further improvements in the cash flow forecasting resulted in a permanent reduction in the resources allocated towards the need for temporary borrowing allowing efficiencies to be delivered and re-invested into other services. A total of £550,000 being made available. The proactive approach to insurance and claims management produced further efficiencies. The property insurance retendering produced like for like savings of £101,800. This was then reinvested to provide increased coverage of areas previously not catered for such as flood damage from burst pipes. The year saw an increased focus on the management of the asset base which will deliver substantial efficiencies in future years. During 2008/09 the sale of surplus assets generated capital receipts of £1.8 million. Equating this to the cash flow savings this amounts to £94,500.</p> <p>2009/10 Application of the notified inflation rates to previous years on-going savings produced additional efficiencies of £390,700. The retendering of insurance contracts for motor and engineering insurances has been saved from a further £50,000 during the year. Interest earned on surplus capital receipts contributed £21,500 in the year.</p> <p>Quality crosscheck notes:</p>				

	<p>2008/09 The improvements in Treasury Management received external recognition by the Local Government Chronicle as Wirral received the investment Officer of the Year Award 2008.</p> <p>2009/10 The insurance fund was also able to contribute monies to the general fund balances at year end although this itself does not constitute an NI 179 Efficiency.</p>
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Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	TOTAL	
	0	-	-	0	
	<p>Key actions undertaken to achieve efficiency gain: Figures still awaited from Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority.</p> <p>Quality crosscheck notes: None.</p>				
Merseyside Transport Authority	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	TOTAL	
	919,600	880,700	-	1,800,300	
	<p>Key actions undertaken to achieve efficiency gain: Figures provided by Merseyside Integrated Transport Authority and apportioned in accordance with the levy figures..</p> <p>Quality crosscheck notes: 2008/09 None. 2009/10 None.</p>				

Brought Forward from SR04	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	TOTAL
	8,351,200	-	-	8,351,200
	<p>Key actions undertaken to achieve efficiency gain:</p> <p>2008/09 Under NI179 criteria any cash releasing efficiencies achieved as part of the previous efficiency regime (as part of SR2004 and reported through the Annual Efficiency Statement process to the Government) are allowed to be carried forward into the new regime (as part of CSR 2007).</p> <p>Quality crosscheck notes:</p> <p>2008/09 The Annual Efficiency Statement Backward Look 2007/08 included cumulative cashable efficiencies of £33,748,000 compared to the target of £25,600,000.</p>			
Total NI 179 Efficiency Gains	17,839,000	9,076,500	-	26,915,500

CERTIFIED AND APPROVED BY:-

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