

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

19 MARCH 2009

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

FINANCIAL AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING SUMMARY

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This is one of a series of reports submitted throughout the year presenting an overview of the performance of the Council in delivering the Vision for Wirral as set out in the Corporate Plan and is for the quarter-ended 31 December.

2. OVERVIEW

- 2.1. The volatility of the world financial markets is the dominant factor as the financial pressures within the global economy have repercussions at national and local levels. The British Government has injected large sums of public money to support the financial and private sectors and has maintained funding for local authorities at the initially projected levels for 2009/10. However, the recovery is not expected to be short-term and the projections are for significant public sector efficiencies to be required from 2010/11 onwards.

- 2.1.1 To date Wirral has benefitted through exercising prudent financial management around cash flow and investments that has realised additional income and a reduced need for temporary borrowing. The impact upon the banking sector placed at risk a £2 million investment with an Icelandic bank although there remains every possibility that this sum will be recovered.

- 2.1.2 The world economic position places additional pressures upon those reliant upon the financial sector with implications for the delivery of the Wirral Investment Strategy, major investment schemes and the NewHeartlands initiative. To date the impact upon planned programmes has been effectively contained but the developing links with the China economy do present an opportunity for securing additional investment to Wirral.

- 2.1.3 Against this background the Council continues to maintain progress in achieving the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan whilst recognising the impact on the private sector including the building industry. This has had a consequential impact upon demands for services such as care services and benefits as well as in delivering priority areas such as worklessness.

- 2.2. Towards the end of the financial year there were high profile cases regarding the provision of care services for children in other parts of the country. The safeguarding of children is one of the areas kept under review as part of the Corporate Risk Register. Further actions are being implemented in this area and are to be reported to Cabinet.

- 2.3. In reviewing the progress made at the end of December the table gives a brief summary for each of the key areas which are expanded upon in the subsequent sections of the report. As agreed by Cabinet on 27 November 2008 the

supporting appendices, together with this covering report, are now placed in the Virtual Committee.

Area	Progress Summary
Corporate Plan	The majority of performance indicators are achieving or exceeding targets at quarter 3. The underpinning projects are presently either on target or actions are in place to enable them to be achieved during the year.
Performance	Improvements in recycling during 2007/08 recognised Wirral as the most improved metropolitan and also reflected in score increasing for 2 to 3 under the Environment Assessment of the CPA. Considerable time spent reviewing processes to ensure that Wirral is dealing effectively with Looked After Children in light of recent cases.
Financial	The projected overspends in Adult Social Services, Regeneration and Technical Services are partially offset by the savings within Treasury Management. The release of 'one-off' resources to balances should ensure the projected year-end position is as originally projected. The 2009/10 budget is set to be agreed in March 2009.
Capital	The period saw the completion of the Children's Centres, the re-opening of the Oval Sports Centre and the opening of the new Floral Pavilion Theatre. The forecast spend remains in line with the programme as approved for 2008/09 with the future years programme agreed in December 2008.
Risk	The Corporate Risk Register was revised by Cabinet in December 2008 and any required actions are being addressed through the developing Departmental Plans for 2009/10. The actions in respect of existing risks are being progressed with the profile recently raised regarding the safeguarding of children. The delivery of the Change programme, including the Strategic Asset Review, now has an increased profile.

2.4. The key issues highlighted as requiring to be addressed in the forthcoming period are the:-

- Impact of the economic downturn
- continuing development of the Adult Social Services personalisation agenda;
- the impact of the recent child care services cases;
- progression and implementation of the strategic asset review;
- management of the potential overspends in 2008/09 within Adult Social Services, Regeneration and Technical Services;
- decisions to enable the setting of the Council budget for 2009/10.

3. CORPORATE PLAN AND PERFORMANCE

3.1 On 13 March 2008, Cabinet agreed the Council's Corporate Plan which detailed how the vision 'of a more prosperous and equal Wirral, enabling all communities and people to thrive and achieve their full potential' would be achieved. The vision set five clear objectives, and identified eleven immediate priorities for improvement in the year ahead.

3.2 This section includes narrative and performance indicators on the priorities for improvement areas for 2008/09. The narrative includes the progress made to date, challenges remaining and further improvements to be completed. It should be noted that the narrative refers to some matters that occurred after the end of the 3rd quarter (31st December) that have been included due to the particular relevance to the issues being considered.

3.3.1 Reduce worklessness

Progress made:

Wirral continues to make steady progress in reducing the number of residents claiming Incapacity Benefit (the latest available data, to May 2008, shows a rate of 10.4% of the working age population which is a reduction of 0.1% points or 160 fewer claimants on the previous quarter) and Lone Parent Benefit rates remaining stable (at 2.9% with a reduction of 20 claimants).

However, these reductions are negated by more recent figures for Job Seekers Allowance, which show a rise in the number of people claiming JSA (an increase of 0.8% points or 1,145 additional claimants since May 2008). This rise is in line with national trends but slightly better than the regional average.

The Wirral Economic Development and Skills (WEDS) partnership continues to progress in ensuring the Working Wirral programme contributes to the reduction in worklessness.

Working Wirral continues to commission activity against the Employment and Enterprise Investment Framework to support mainstream activity and its 'Reach Out' programme has achieved impressive outcomes which include supporting 635 workless residents from Wirral's most disadvantaged communities into employment in the first 3 quarters of the year.

Challenges remaining:

The global downturn has put the economy into recession, resulting in a continuing rise in unemployment nationally. The situation is expected to worsen over the next 12 months with JSA trends in Wirral rising above the national average.

Worklessness data is released quarterly (and up to six months later in some areas), so it is difficult to demonstrate the impact of the global economic downturn in real time. However, we continue to measure JSA data sets which is made available monthly to identify trends within that claimant group.

Residents who are in employment but have low skill levels or no qualifications may struggle to return to the labour market if they lose their jobs.

How we're making further improvements:

We continue to work with partners to ensure Wirral has the provision to support residents and to identify and design interventions to continue to tackle worklessness. Partners are committed to addressing the longer term structural problems that cause worklessness.

3.3.2 Increase enterprise

Progress made:

Wirral continues to support enterprise growth through the Wirralbiz programme. The last LAA stretch targets have been achieved in terms of the number of new business starts and their survival rates after one year of trading.

Invest Wirral continue to signpost and encourage local firms to take up the support offered by regional business support programmes.

We are working closely with the NWDA to ensure that future business support programmes are in line with the National Business Support Simplification Programme (BSSP) and complements other NWDA funded activities.

Challenges remaining:

Given the current economic conditions it is vital that we continue to support new and existing businesses. The current transitional funding for new business starts finishes in March 2009. Negotiations are taking place with NWDA to ensure that contingency arrangements are in place if the post-March contract has not been agreed by the end of March.

Wirral has a high proportion of small businesses that are not VAT-registered and support for to grow these businesses will be tailored around the BSSP model to encourage future growth.

How we're making further improvements:

We continue to work with the NWDA to ensure that future programmes meet business needs and local firms take up the support available.

The Wirral Investment Board gave their support (In November 2008) for Wirral Officers to develop a programme to provide consultancy and grant assistance to micro businesses (those with fewer than 10 employees) in the borough.

3.3.3. Increase levels of recycling

Progress made:

DEFRA has recognised Wirral as the most improved metropolitan Council for recycling and composting performance in England for 2007/08. The Council has improved from a 2 to a 3 Star rating under the Environment Block of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment.

Recycling rates for October-December 2008 are 34.67 %, 35.67% and 29.04% and we are predicting a 35-36% recycling/composting rate for the end of the 2008/09 financial year, meaning we will meet 2009/10 LAA target 35.5% one year ahead of schedule.

A new garden waste contractor has been appointed and will start on 1 April 2009, resulting in financial efficiencies and environmental improvements.

A survey into the composition of domestic waste has been undertaken. It shows problems with materials going into the wrong bins and the opportunities for recycling being lost. Officers are currently looking at the survey results in order to target communications more effectively.

Merseyside Waste Partnership has secured £195,000 funding for the Merseyside-wide 'Love Food Hate Waste' campaign.

Multi-occupancy premises have been assessed for recycling services and we are currently consulting with landlords to improve the position.

Challenges remaining:

The 'Love Food Hate Waste' campaign is being developed that will encourage further waste reduction.

More effort is required to improve waste segregation and further increase the levels of recycling.

How we're making further improvements:

A targeted enforcement campaign (backed up with a borough-wide information campaign) will begin in March / April targeting areas of high contamination & side waste. Target areas will be agreed between by the Council and Biffa.

Multi-occupancy recycling will be rolled out in March 2009, which will help to increase levels of recycling.

On street recycling receptacles are being placed in 4 main shopping areas in February to raise the profile of recycling and encourage the public to recycle.

3.3.4. Reduce the Council's carbon footprint

Progress made:

The Investment in Energy Efficiency Programme (IEEP) continues to reduce the Council's CO2 emissions. Progress was reported to Cabinet in September 2008, a further update report in April 2008. The Water Efficiency Scheme and BEMs phases 2 & 3 are now complete and operational.

28 January 2009 Employment & Appointments Committee approved the establishment of the Climate Change Officer and Sustainability (Cred) Liaison Officer posts and it is hoped to have them filled by July 2009. These officers will drive improved working with businesses and the community to raise awareness of the urgent need to reduce Wirral's carbon footprint and to sign up to the CRed community carbon reduction programme.

The two recently appointed Energy Awareness officers have been implementing an awareness programme over the last 3 months. Progress on this campaign was reported to Environment Committee on 28 January 2009.

As part of the work of the Nottingham Declaration working group, we launched a co-funded poster campaign with our partners (Wirral PCT and Cheshire & Wirral Partnership NHS Trust) in November 2008 to coincide with Energy Saving week. A formal media launch with the Chief Executive officers of each organisation is planned for Spring 2009.

Challenges remaining:

Energy costs have risen significantly over the last 12-18 months and are likely to add around £3.5 million to the Council's annual expenditure.

Much of the authority's energy consumption is building-related. Energy conservation is a key consideration in the current Strategic Asset Review (SAR) of all Council buildings.

A number of IEEP phase 2 projects await the outcome of the SAR. Officers will begin to detail the SAR programme of works required and this will enable energy investment work to proceed on the buildings that are being retained.

How we're making further improvements:

Preparations are underway to take part in the Government's Carbon Reduction Commitment scheme (CRC), which is expected to help to further reduce carbon emissions. An update will be reported to Cabinet on 19 March 2009.

IEEP phase 3 is being progressed with the roll-out of further Street Lighting efficiency measures and then the introduction of Automatic Meter Reading Systems, which provide financial benefits when the CRC is introduced in 2010.

Display Energy Certificates are being produced for 158 sites. A greater number of sites than expected are producing above average results.

3.3.5. Reduce number of people killed or seriously injured in road accidents.

Progress made:

Initiatives under the Roadsafe partnership with Merseyside Police and Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service continue to be rolled out and regular coordination meetings ensure progress made / corrective action taken.

The numbers of people killed or seriously injured continued to fall towards the LAA and DfT targets.

A successful pilot campaign - Bring accidents down 2 zero - is still underway, although its results so far show that 74% of drivers preferred the new scheme with the voluntary 20mph speed limit to physical speed reduction measures. 89% of drivers also thought that the scheme should be provided in other areas of Wirral. Area forums are being asked to nominate other areas for consideration in the next tranche of this popular scheme.

Working in partnership with the Police a Christmas Drink Driving campaign was implemented over the last quarter with marked success.

Challenges remaining:

While those of school age are relatively easy to engage and educate with road safety messages, other groups are harder to-reach; These include senior citizen drivers and 'born again' adult motorcyclist and cyclists. Roadsafe partners are making progress communicating with such groups.

How we're making further improvements:

A 'theatre in education' programme was rolled out in February to those secondary schools that wished to take up the offer. It encourages young people to have a responsible attitude and behaviour around roads and 4,268 young people are expected to benefit from the initiative.

Road Safety will support the annual motorcyclist Egg Run which will allow us to communicate Bike Safe messages and promote Bike Safe training courses.

The '4 Wheel Ed' campaign, which is run in partnership with the Police, Response (Drug & Alcohol) and MFRS and 'Drive to Arrive' (in partnership with MFRS) will continue to be delivered in schools to Y6, Y7, Y10.

An anti-speeding and anti-use of mobile phones in cars campaign is being run in partnership with the Police in the current quarter.

The Council and Police will be supporting the DfT's Think campaign with media messages and a detailed communications strategy is being developed.

The Streetscene and Transport Services Committee will received the annual programme of proposed engineering measures designed to improve the safety record on the roads on 24 February.

We are currently installing a sign posting scheme on 6 main corridors giving road users the message on just how many collisions have occurred to encourage drivers to take more care.

Cabinet will receive a report on vehicle-activated signs outlining a policy and strategy for their further deployment across the borough and to be used at collision sites where the conventional signing fails to curb motorists' speeds.

3.3.6. Promote greater independence and choice

Progress made:

The Department of Adult Social Services (DASS) was rated as a 2 star authority by the Commission for Social Care Inspection, continuing to provide good outcomes for adults with promising capacity to improve.

The Department has continued to progress its major restructure to transform social care. The majority of senior appointments have been made and the formation of new locality structures, co-terminus with NHS Wirral, is underway.

A major Personalisation conference was held in December. The event featured keynote national and local speakers who set out the latest developments in policy, as well as presentations from stakeholders. The objectives of the Conference were to develop awareness and for attendees, including elected

members to further understand the changes that Personalisation is bringing to social care and health services in Wirral.

Wirral PCT (now NHS Wirral) was assessed against the World Class Commissioning standards in November 2008. The assessment included a detailed examination of how the PCT works with its partners. Although the PCT is awaiting final confirmation they were awarded a score of 3 for Partnership with praise for the partnership with Local Authority.

The Department continues to develop of the system dynamic modelling tool based on Wirral's Dementia Pathways working with CSED. NHS Wirral has produced a draft Commissioning Strategy for Dementia and has announced planned investment of £500,000 in 2009/10 in dementia services.

Progression has been made on a Pilot for Personal Budgets that will enable increased choice and control and greater independence for people who use services, and improved outcomes for individuals and their carers.

The need to develop different models of care and support for older people is a key objective with NHS Wirral. The plans are being made in response to demographic, health, well being and lifestyles changes in the older population. One initiative is extra care housing which affords the opportunity for older people to live in independent accommodation (be it privately owned, shared equity or rented) while benefiting from a wide range of facilities on site.

Wirral has secured capital grants of £4m for 70 units, and a further £2.6m for 49 units with these schemes also providing a range of facilities for primary care and the local community and significantly advance the development of new and improved models of care and support in Wirral for older citizens.

An extended Carers Development Committee was held with a number of speakers in attendance and enabling the newly appointed 'Carers Champion' Cllr Sheila Clarke to meet key stakeholders.

Challenges remaining:

The Department continues to face significant financial pressures. The three year strategy has been adopted to address financial pressures, with the Efficiency Plan (Budget Stabilisation Strategy) monitored at Strategic Leadership Team, linked to the Transformational Change Programme Board.

How we're making further improvements:

The development of integrated posts, services, and work to reduce duplication contributes to sustaining improvement as part of the Wirral Integrated Services Programme (WISP): working across the health & social care economy. This includes working at locality level and engaging in a new community model

3.3.7. Raise overall educational attainment, particularly lower achieving young people

Progress made:

Results at Key Stage 3 show that standards have risen (against the national trend) in English, remained static in mathematics (against a national rise) and declined by less than the national trend in science. The proportion of pupils attaining Level 5 and above in English and mathematics combined has risen slightly compared with a national fall. However, the proportion of pupils gaining five or more good GCSE passes including English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 4 has improved by 1.5ppts with a strong upward rise of 4.4ppts for 5 good GCSEs.

The LA is the second most improved nationally for reducing the number of Persistent Absence schools.

There is a clear vision for school improvement that has been shared with stakeholders across the LA and with the SIPs. Progress against the milestones in the CYP plan is reviewed at monthly intervals. There are a range of focus groups at all phases which are charged with identifying ways to improve the attainment of all pupils, but especially vulnerable groups including looked after children. The performance of SIPs is monitored closely with careful scrutiny of all SIP reports by the LA's SIP Manager and the Strategy Manager. Attention is paid to the level of challenge represented in the reports in terms of the targets being set by schools and the reviews of the schools' performance. The agenda for SIP conversations with schools includes the LA priorities for raising attainment for all pupils and in particular in mathematics, and the 14-19 agenda.

Challenges remaining:

Improving the outcomes for Maths at all Key Stages.

National Strategies through the Target Setting Guidance expect all schools to set targets at FFT-D, and SIPs in Wirral have engaged with schools so they set targets that are appropriately aspirational to FFT-D.

The Government has produced combined statistics for English and Maths, with the aim of ensuring standards in both subjects are improved simultaneously.

There is the challenge of increasing the proportion of pupils who make two levels progress across the Key Stages.

Improving the performance of National Challenge schools.

Improving tracking and monitoring of progress of Looked After Children, using FFT data to ensure LAC achieve their potential, taking into account prior attainment.

How we're making further improvements:

Continue to implement the programme around Children's Centres.

Raise outcomes for Foundation Stage in line with targets and especially with regard to language and literacy.

Continue to implement, embed and further develop the Extended Schools programme.

Implement and evaluate a number of projects focusing on Narrowing the Gap involving multi-agency support and Results Based Accountability methodology.

3.3.8. Safely reduce the number of looked after children

Progress made:

Plans continue to be implemented to support more children in the community and consequently, safely reduce the children in care population; however, performance at 31 December was 91.9 per 10,000, which is an increase upon the previous quarters report. This figure continues to increase.

A Senior Manager chairs all pre-proceedings meetings (PLO), which ensures consistency of practice, and working with CAF/CASS nationally to evidence the impact upon outcomes for children through the new Court processes.

An outcome based accountability action plan has been developed to support the safe discharge of Care Orders of children placed with parents, which remain high, although there has been a small decrease during the last quarter. Local practice seminars are supporting this activity.

Repeat referrals - the changes made to Wirral's Central Advice and Duty Team (CADT), have been in place for a full 12 months; as projected the re-referral rate has decreased month on month since 1 April to 24.7% (31/12/08) from 27.6%, which is more in line with our statistical neighbours / national average. We are projecting a comparable outturn this year to referral rates for 2007/8.

Weekly meetings, chaired by the Strategic Service Manager, Children and Families, involving all District and Assessment Team Managers continue, overseeing and scrutinising all incoming work; focusing on consistency of threshold application.

Challenges remaining:

Events in Haringey and consequent media attention have impacted upon the type of referrals being received by Social Care. There has been an increase in children being considered by the legal gate keeping panel and more children have become looked after during this quarter. There is an inevitable greater degree of cautiousness in decision making regarding children's welfare and safety. It is firmly predicted that there will be more children in care at the end of this financial year than 31 March 2008, and that the targeted reduction to 590 children will not be achieved.

Steps described in a separate report to this Cabinet explain how further investment by the Council will be used to address the issues raised above and help to bring the reduction of numbers looked after back on track during 2009/10 financial year.

How we're making further improvements:

Social Care is identifying where there are delays in children being discharged from local authority care, where there are plans to do so, some of which are attributable to delays in appointing CAFCASS guardians.

One meeting with senior CAFCASS officers took place to raise these issues in December 2008, with a further meeting planned. The authority is also focusing on children who have recently become looked after voluntarily, to determine what packages of care can be implemented to support children, where possible, to safely return to their family.

External review of the strategy to support more children in the community is being sought from the CWDC (Remodelling Social Work Delivery Pilot), to determine whether there are additional measures which can be implemented, to reinforce preventative intervention to safely reduce the need for children to become looked after. Work is underway to develop a Multi Systemic Treatment (MST) programme in Wirral, in partnership with the PCT, to provide intensive intervention to young people on the edge of care / at serious risk of offending.

There has been an increased level of auditing and scrutiny of social work practice following Baby P, to ensure that children are being adequately assessed, monitored and supported – for example, there has been an audit of all children subject to a child protection plan to ensure that visits comply with procedural timescales and that they have clear plans which are meeting children's needs. Caseloads are being monitored, and the impact upon case work, of any social worker absence, is being continuously reviewed. Senior fieldwork managers are now reporting to the Director on staffing and caseloads on a monthly basis. Additional temporary social workers have been located in 6 social work teams where there are the greatest pressures.

Staff are being supported through the continued roll out of the well being programme.

3.3.9. Improve the use of the Council's land and assets

Progress made:

The Council's Strategic Asset Review has been approved following extensive public consultation. The Review considered the whole of the borough using

seven agreed geographical areas and focussed on public facing assets. A strategic consolidation of the asset base has now been agreed, with a package of borough-wide proposals based on a vision of fewer but better assets and optimum value for money for local people.

This has:

- Created a framework that will be used to maximise opportunities for partnership working
- Endorsed the principle of asset transfer to take place over an anticipated period of two years as an alternative to closure
- Proposed a programme for the development of multi-purpose complexes strategically located across the borough, and
- Proposed substantial rationalisation of the council's administrative accommodation underpinned by a drive to transform ways of working.

A revenue saving of £3,101,000 has been agreed as a result and a provision of £1,863,000 created to cover amendments to the review and any necessary transitional funding.

Challenges remaining:

Approval of the Strategic Asset Review starts the process of substantially modernising the Council's estate. A programme of investment in enhanced facilities will be coupled with changes to service delivery designed to meet customers' needs more effectively. Several current development projects will be examined to see how they fit with the new framework of the Strategic Asset Review and whether they should continue as previously proposed, particularly where there are compelling reasons to avoid delay.

There was a concentration in the review on Leisure and Cultural Services' assets, but it was recognised that the other main operational asset groups need to be more effectively joined into corporate asset review processes. In particular the schools' estate and children's' centres have major roles in delivering a broad range of services and activities within local communities. In addition the modernisation of adult social care will lead to different forms of service provision which are likely to reshape future property requirements. The continuous process of property review across the remainder of the corporate estate will create further opportunities for modernisation and efficiency.

Rationalisation of the Council's administrative accommodation will require the modernisation of current working arrangements and substantial investment in Information Technology.

How we're making further improvements:

Investment will now be made in the development of five major multi-purpose complexes at Bebington, Birkenhead, Liscard, Moreton and West Kirby. In addition, smaller community-focused, multi-purpose complexes will be developed at Greasby, Heswall, Leasowe, Rock Ferry, St. James and Bromborough. Delivery of services in the Upton / Woodchurch area will be concentrated on Woodchurch Leisure Centre, Upton Library and Upton One Stop Shop in the Department for Work and Pensions site.

Where the community expresses an interest, the transfer of assets to community management will be explored within a two-year period and finances will be available to help communities with the transition.

In addition the review of Office accommodation will be prioritised that will deliver savings of £1 million by 2001.

3.3.10 Create a sustainable and stable budget, providing value for money

Progress made:

Council Budget 2008/09 was agreed in March and was supported by the s151 officer statement as being sustainable.

Regular financial monitoring updates to Cabinet Members and Scrutiny Chairs highlight potential overspends, primarily within Adult Social Services, and increased 'one-off' resources.

Annual Efficiency Statement 2007/08 reported to Cabinet in June was submitted to, and subsequently, agreed by Government in July.

Review of the high spending areas as identified by the Audit Commission 'spend profiles' was reported to Cabinet on September 25.

Clarification received around reporting of NI 179 (the net value of ongoing cash releasing gains) and projection for 2008/09 sent to Government in October.

Director of Finance regularly updates Cabinet on the Projected Budget position. Supported by regular liaison between Cabinet and Chief Officers to assess the implications and address the gap between likely spend and resources.

Challenges remaining:

Address the identified areas of overspending in 2008/09 to ensure overall spending remains within the resources available.

Report to Government, after the financial year-end, the achievements in respect of NI 179.

Agree a sustainable and stable budget for 2009/10 by March 10 2009.

How we're making further improvements:

Director of Adult Social Services provides regular progress reports to Cabinet on Transforming Social Care including stabilising the departmental budget.

Projected Budget position is regularly reported to Cabinet with investment / saving decisions being taken at the appropriate times.

Cabinet receiving and considering reports around longer-term issues eg Strategic Asset Review.

3.3.11 Improve the Council's budgeting process to fully reflect its priorities

Progress made:

2008/09 Council Budget resolution included references to, and linkages to, the Council priorities.

Efficiency Investment Fund of £5.3 million created as part of the 2008/09 budget with further amounts set aside for future years.

Council strategies including Customer Access, Medium Term Financial, IT and Risk were revised per Corporate Plan and approved by Cabinet on 23 July.

Cabinet in September re-affirmed that the Corporate Plan priorities for 2008/09 remain as the priorities for 2009/10.

Budget process further refined in terms of the information flow to Members and Officers. The regular updates give greater clarity and focus upon the key changes.

Challenges remaining:

The current financial climate is bringing additional pressures on available resources and the delivery of the aims and objectives of the Corporate Plan.

Responding to demand lead pressures for care services – adults and children.

Links to the setting of a sustainable and stable budget for 2009/10.

How we're making further improvements:

The Efficiency Investment Fund is available for initiatives that require resources to deliver future benefits and invest in priority areas of the Council. This continues as part of the budget setting process.

Any submissions for increased resources, including from the capital and IT programmes require a Business Case which is weighted towards meeting the agreed priorities.

Capital programme 2009/12 agreed by Council in December 2009.

3.4 PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

This following section shows the performance indicators and key projects for the priority for improvement areas 2008/09.

3.4.1 Reduce worklessness

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 3 Target	Quarter 3 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
NI 152	Working age people on out of work benefits	17.74% (Lower is Better)	17.28%	17.79%	17.28%	Green	n/a	
NI 153	Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods (WNF)	35.22 (Lower is Better)	34.98	35.22	34.98	Green	n/a	

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 3 Status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective Action (Amber & Red only)
Implementation of the Full Employment and Skills plan	Corporate Services	GREEN	
Implementation of the City Region Employment Strategy	Corporate Services	GREEN	
Strategically plan and align activity and resources of all partners to support the delivery of sub regional and local employment and skills strategies	Corporate Services	GREEN	

3.4.2 Increase enterprise

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 3 Target	Quarter 3 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
LOCAL 4128	Number of new business start-ups supported through Wirral Biz or Business Link in Wirral as measured	262	262	200	248	Over Performing	↑	This is a demand led initiative. The performance over the last quarter recognises the increased demand for the

by data from both organisations								service. However we expect the numbers of new business starts to slow considerably in the final quarter due to the prevailing economic conditions, therefore the year end forecast remains unchanged.
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Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 3 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Implementation of the Enterprise Strategy	Corporate Services	GREEN	
Co-ordinate the implementation of local, sub regional and regional enterprise development and business support strategies	Corporate Services	GREEN	

3.4.3 Increase levels of recycling

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 3 Target	Quarter 3 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
NI 191	Residual household waste per household	636 (Lower is Better)	585	480	446.21	Amber	n/a	The Q3 performance figure is unverified and subject to change due to data not yet verified.
NI 192	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	34%	35.4%	35%	33.34%	Green	n/a	The Q3 figure is unverified and subject to change due to data not yet received. The year end forecast figure is subject to all recovered recyclates being sent to reprocessors.

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 3 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Increase participation in alternate weekly collection scheme	Technical Services	GREEN	

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 3 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Promote waste minimisation initiatives to householders	Technical Services	GREEN	
Encourage recycling and minimisation of municipal waste	Technical Services	GREEN	

3.4.4 Reduce the Council's carbon footprint

There are no performance indicators to report for this priority area at Q3.

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 3 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Continue the Energy Efficiency Investment Programme	Technical Services	AMBER	Have commenced IEEP Ph 2 projects, however some held up by SAR, awaiting outcome of the public consultation
Develop and implement Wirral CRed initiative	Law, HR & Asset Management	Awaiting Status	
Produce a Developer's Guide for Sustainable Development	Technical Services	RED	Timescales for the Guide have extended from the initial target for various reasons which include recent legislative changes and the reliance on other sections for their input, both internal and external to Technical Services Dept. It is now anticipated that a Developers Guide will be produced by the end of 2009 calendar year.
Development of Sustainability Unit within Wirral Council	Law, HR & Asset Management	AMBER	Posts for the sustainability unit have now been approved but have not yet been recruited for.

3.4.5 Reduce number of people killed or seriously injured in road accidents.

There are no performance indicators to report for this priority area at Q3.

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 3 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Develop initiatives to deliver road safety education, training and publicity	Technical Services	GREEN	

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 3 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Implement engineering measures to improve road	Technical Services	GREEN	
Work with Merseyside Police via the Accident Reduction Partnership to improve road safety	Technical Services	GREEN	

3.4.6 Promote greater independence and choice

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 3 Target	Quarter 3 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
NI 130	Social care clients receiving Self Directed Support (Direct Payments and Individual Budgets)	322.3	175	291.5	152.10	Red	n/a	Performance continues to be monitored with the Personal Budgets Steering Group focused on improving performance and the take up of Direct Payments. In Jan 2009 a Personal Budgets Pilot will commence. A new definition for this indicator from April 2009 will mean performance will be reported as a percentage.
NI 135	Carers receiving needs assessment or review and a specific carer's service, or advice and information	18.0%	22%	15.0%	23.13%	Over Performing	n/a	Performance for this new national indicator has exceeded targets at present. Monthly monitoring of performance will continue, and consideration will be made to refresh targets as part of the LAA review.
NI 136	People supported to live independently through social services (all adults)	2185.80	2185.80	2173	2160.29	Green	n/a	
NI 146	Adults with learning disabilities in	8.3%	5%	7.9%	4.16%	Red	n/a	The JOBS (Jointly Overcoming Barriers equals

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 3 Target	Quarter 3 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
	employment							Success) programme is currently working with its first 20 people (just starting to go to work) but there is a concern that the current economic crisis will limit the availability of employment and reduce opportunities for those on the programme.

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 3 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Enablement and re-ablement	Adult Social Services	GREEN	
Carers Strategy	Adult Social Services	GREEN	
Access and assessment arrangements	Adult Social Services	AMBER	Full implementation strategy in place, with majority of appointments made to posts. Implementation due from Feb 2009, with some delay to full locality moves post April 2009.
Promoting independence	Adult Social Services	GREEN	
Develop Self Directed Support services	Adult Social Services	GREEN	
Implement the Strategic Framework for Health and Wellbeing	Adult Social Services	AMBER	Appointments have been made at a senior level, and restructuring of the Integrated Communities and Wellbeing Branch is underway to deliver on the strategic framework.
Joint Strategic Needs Assessment	Adult Social Services	GREEN	

3.4.7 Raise overall educational attainment, particularly lower achieving young people

There are no performance indicators to report for this priority area at Q3.

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 3 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Project plan to close the attainment gap where poverty affects achievement	Children & Young People	GREEN	
Strategies Intervention Project	Children & Young People	GREEN	
Ensure there are no schools in Ofsted categories	Children & Young People	AMBER	Intervention and support provided to the one school in a category, now expected to come out of category on next inspection in the Spring.
Develop a range of intervention strategies to support underachieving and underattaining pupils	Children & Young People	GREEN	
develop literacy and numeracy via family learning programmes	Children & Young People	GREEN	

3.4.8 Safely reduce the number of looked after children

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 3 Target	Quarter 3 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
NI 61	Timeliness of placements of looked after children for adoption following an agency decision that the child should be placed for adoption	68.0	68.0	50.0	50.0	Green	n/a	This indicator is sensitive to small numbers. 50% represents 4 out of the 8 adoptions being completed within 12 month of the adoption decision. Children have taken longer than expected to settle within their adoptive placements and this has led to delays in adoption proceedings. It is expected that 7 more adoptions should take place in the last quarter.
NI 62	Stability of placements of looked after children: number of placements	11% (Lower is Better)	11.0%	11%	11.9%	Amber	↓	Work continues to build capacity of foster care, to increase placement choice and family matching. The latest inspection of foster care graded the service as good. This figure of 11.9% falls

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 3 Target	Quarter 3 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
								within the OFSTED "Very Good" category.
NI 63	Stability of placements of looked after children: length of placement	63.0	65.5	63.0	65.5	Green	↑	
LOCAL 1401	Percentage of referrals progressed to CIN assessment (NI 68 proxy)	71	71.0	71	68.3	Green	n/a	

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter3 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Project plan to safely reduce the number of looked after children	Children & Young People	GREEN	

3.4.9 Improve the council's use of land assets

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 3 Target	Quarter 3 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
LOCAL 6275	The number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence	8.5 (Lower is Better)	10.20		10.25		↔	Targets for next year are currently under review.

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 3 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Undertake a Strategic Asset Review	Law, HR & Asset Management	GREEN	
Deliver and implement the people strategy	Law, HR & Asset Management	GREEN	

3.4.10 Create a sustainable budget, providing value for money

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 3 Target	Quarter 3 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
NI 180	The number of changes of circumstances which affect customers' HB/CTB entitlement within the year.	620	620	400	595.44	Over Performing	n/a	Reflects a higher percentage of changes identified by Wirral than originally anticipated in this new PI. Will continue to review during year but no service delivery issue.
NI 181	Time taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit new claims and change.	16.4 (Lower is Better)	16.4	16.4	16.99	Green	n/a	
LOCAL 2067	Efficiencies gained through procurement.	£2200000	£2200000	£1400000	£1495690	Amber	n/a	Performance more than 5% above target for the 3rd quarter. No service issues.
LOCAL 2073	Percentage of Council Tax collected	96.8%	97.2%	84.5%	85.1%	Green	↔	

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 3 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Agree a budget which is sustainable, and which identifies resources for further developing Council Services.	Finance	GREEN	
Contain expenditure within agreed budgets and provide services to agreed standards.	Finance	GREEN	
Review comparative data to ensure we provide our services most cost effectively taking into the	Finance	GREEN	

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 3 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
needs of our community			
Implement our procurement strategy to ensure that services and goods are acquired economically and efficiently, and if advantageous, in partnership with others.	Finance	GREEN	
Implement agreed change programme.	Finance	AMBER	Agile working has been introduced into a number of areas including CYPD (use of push email by school inspectors) and Technical Services (use of remote scheduling). All 15 highways inspectors have been 'home based' since October. Areas within the Environmental Health service (Regeneration department) have been selected for initial trials of flexible working with a view to the approach subsequently being applied more widely. Cabinet resolved in July 2008 to procure an Oracle implementation system. This has not taken place. A report for Cabinet is being prepared by the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management. The Change Programme, as agreed by Cabinet in December 2008, now focuses on 4 areas for improvement: the Customer Access Strategy, Common Administrative Processes, Strategic Asset Review and ICT Technological Developments.
Exceed government standards for Housing and Council Tax benefits and Council Tax collection.	Finance	GREEN	
Delivering the pay review	Law, HR & Asset Management	GREEN	

3.4.11 Improving the council's budgeting process to fully reflect its priorities

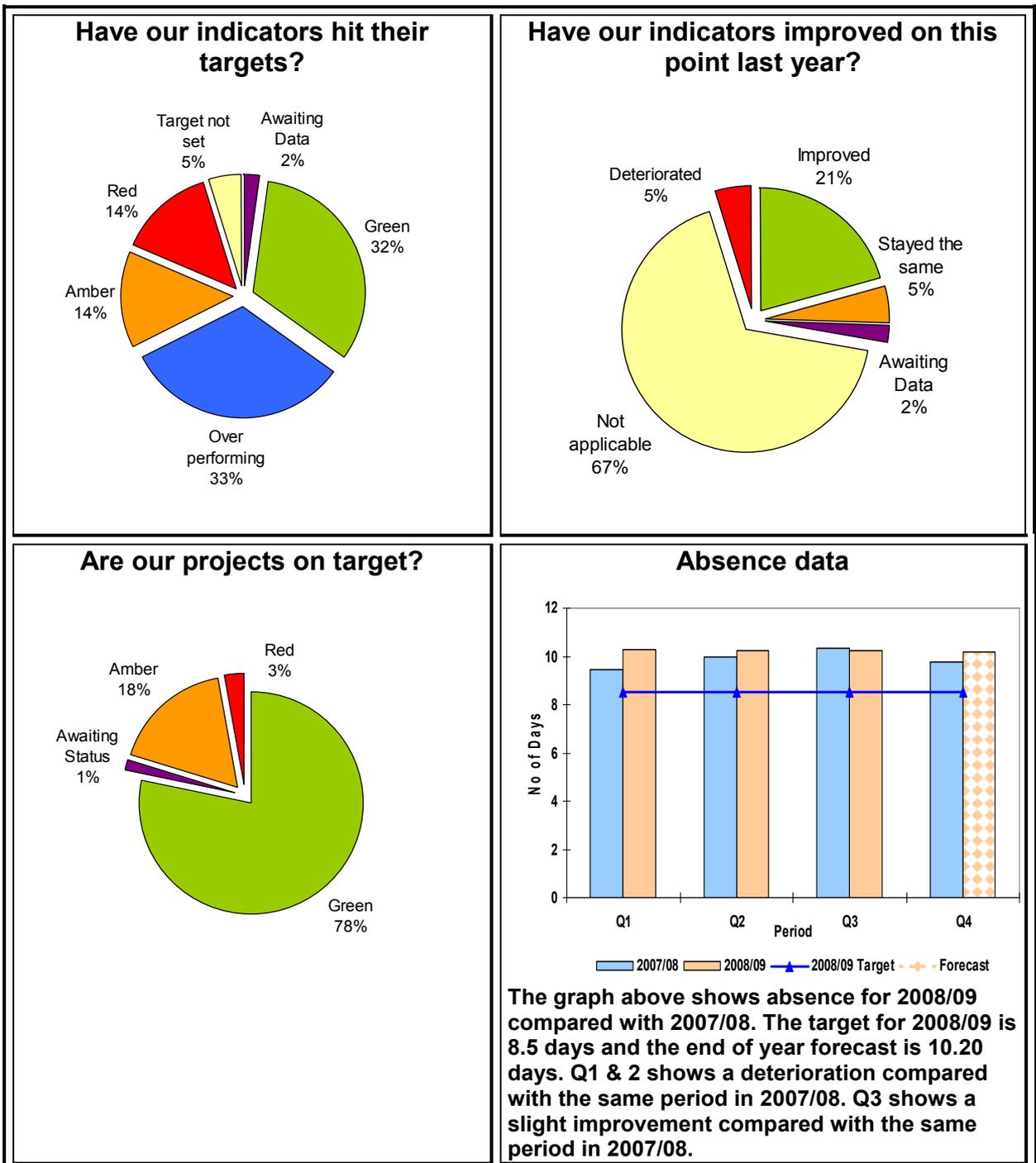
There are no performance indicators to report for this priority area at Q3.

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 2 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Further integrate the risk management, planning and financial processes to enable	Finance	GREEN	

better-informed decision making and enhanced service delivery.			
Reflect the implications of the priorities in the Corporate Plan in our Medium Term Financial Plan and corporate planning processes.	Finance	GREEN	

3.5 Corporate Plan Performance Summary

3.5.1 The charts below show the overall council position for all key performance indicators and projects within the council's 2008/09 corporate plan at the third quarter.



3.6 Performance Exceptions

This section includes all corporate plan indicators which are red at Quarter 3 not including priority for improvement indicators.

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 3 Target	Quarter 3 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
NI 117	16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)	7.4% (Lower is Better)	9.0%	7.4%	8.5%	Red	↑	The performance for December is showing a year on year improvement, whilst also continuing a month on month improvement commencing with a peak in August 2008 of 12.11%. The return for December is therefore a significant achievement, against a difficult economic back drop. Work continues apace in January towards meeting the target.
NI 195a	Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of litter)	8% (Lower is Better)	8%	7%	8%	Red	n/a	There is the possibility of further changes to the second survey performance figures until Waste Data Flow achieves full validation of data. Two of three surveys have been completed for the annual return. Litter and detritus are on track to hit target.
LOCAL 2069	Number of visits to the Council's website	61725	61725	60851	54507	Red	n/a	Seasonal fluctuations generally reflect a downturn in web performance. No service delivery issues.
LOCAL 4049	Total number of homes acquired, demolished, refurbished or built as a result of HMRI investment	950	920	466	383	Red	↓	Energy efficiency improvements as a result of targeted marketing will report in Q4. Take up of Equity Renewal loans very low because of current "credit crunch". The latter is the reason for adjustment of end of year forecast.

3.7 Corporate Plan Project Exceptions

This section includes all corporate plan projects which are red, amber or awaiting status at Quarter 3 excluding priority for improvement projects.

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 3 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Develop and implement the 2008/9 NEET strategy for the Borough.	Children & Young People	RED	The Borough EET Action plan is in place which outlines partner responsibilities and contributions to achieving the NEET target. Confirmation was received in December that the Activity Agreement Pilot would continue until at least 2010. The Activity Agreement pilot is a programme that focuses on structured activities and incentive payments for NEET young people and is delivered through Greater Merseyside Connexions. It continues to bear fruit with clear evaluation demonstrating improved progression rates, increased employability and reduced time spent NEET (on average 60% progressing into EET which is a significant achievement with some of the most marginalised young people).
Progressing the production of the Local Development Framework	Corporate Services	AMBER	New staff are in the process of being appointed which will accelerate delivery for this activity. Consultation on an Issues Report is currently being undertaken with stakeholders including Area Forums.
Improve environmental quality across the Borough through improved operational performance of the strategic contract	Technical Services	AMBER	Additional pump priming grant secured for final quarter to address primary and secondary retail areas due to increased smoking related litter and other similar detritus. Final Survey to be conducted Feb/ March. Due to other 2 surveys this year, over performance is now necessary to achieve BV199 target. Currently on Target (GREEN) for NI 195 LAA Target)

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 3 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Develop neighbourhood management approach in deprived communities including education & enforcement	Technical Services	AMBER	Reduction in HMRI funding and uncertainty of future of Warden Services has affected planning of integrated/ mainstreamed neighbourhood management approaches. However, pathfinder areas have made significant progress and more recently, Technical Services have increased community engagement in deprived areas. A targeted education and enforcement campaign for the prevention of fly tipping and section 46 offences is now scheduled for March 2009.
Homelessness Strategy	Regeneration	AMBER	Some non-critical milestones have slipped but many actions are achieved
Develop comprehensive engagement strategy and compact agreement with the voluntary and community sector	Corporate Services	AMBER	Draft framework for consultation will be circulated to the local strategic partnership.
Customer Access Strategy	Finance	AMBER	<p>Customer Care standards have been launched to the public and to all staff. Web usage and e-citizen registrations continue to increase. Web software is being reviewed in order to enhance the current product.</p> <p>Partnership working with diverse groups and local organisations continues to flourish. Building access is being addressed within the Strategic Asset Review.</p> <p>A revised Customer Access Strategy programme was agreed by Cabinet in December 2008. The four year programme is already underway and is initially focusing on Streetscene - looking at whole processes rather than individual systems.</p> <p>Amendments to the CRM software were made in November. These will resolve the key job scheduler problems with the ERIC Service and address all but two of the outstanding</p>

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 3 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
			technical issues. Work continues on allowing Pest Control and other potential users to make full use of the mobile solution.
Review partnership and governance arrangements for LSP	Corporate Services	AMBER	A revised governance structure has been presented to the LAA Programme Board for endorsement and comments. This structure will be presented to the LSP board in March. Further work is required regarding the roles and responsibilities of both of these boards as well as a review of the member representation.

- 3.8. Customer feedback is now recorded on the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and includes both complaints and compliments. Of the Stage 1 complaints in the last quarter these primarily related to the Strategic Asset Review. A total of 9 enquiries were received from the Ombudsman across all services of which 3 (2 for planning and 1 for sports and leisure services) are being investigated. Of the compliments recorded the number received continues to increase particularly in respect of waste services.

4. FINANCIAL MONITORING

- 4.1. The net Council spend for 2008/09 is £299 million. The monitoring compares spend against the approved budget which includes growth and policy options as well as the agreed savings targets. When setting the 2008/09 budget the projected balances at 31 March 2009 were £5 million.
- 4.2. The latest position is as follows:-

Details	£million	£million
Projected General Fund balances at 31 March 2009 when setting the budget for 2008/09		5.0
Cabinet decisions		
26 June - Financial out-turn for 2007/08 showed an underspending and contribution to balances (see 4.3)		+2.5
9 July - Release of Insurance Fund reserve to general balance (see 4.4)		+3.0
23 July - Receipt of Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI) grant to general balance (see 4.5)		+1.3
23 July - Funding for street lighting energy and Children & Young People transport costs (see 4.5)		-0.9
16 October - Net impact of reduced capitalisation of highways maintenance spend (see 4.6)		-2.0
6 November - Use of Efficiency Investment Fund to fund change / reform teams (see 4.7)		+2.2
10 December - Release of reserves and provisions to		+0.3

the general balance (see 4.8)		
Projected variances		
Overspend		
Adult Social Services (see 4.9)	+3.5	
Children & Young People (see 4.10)	-	
Regeneration (see 4.11)	+0.8	
Technical Services (see 4.12)	+0.5	
Underspend		
Treasury Management (see 4.13)	-2.6	-2.2
Potential liability		
Reported to Cabinet 23 July in respect of fuel and energy costs in 2008/09 (see 4.5)		-2.6
General Fund balances at 31 March 2009 based upon the latest projections		6.6

- 4.3. The completion of the year-end accounts resulted in an increase in the projected balances at 31 March 2008 by £2.5 million. The main spending pressures within Adult Social Services more than offset by the increase in Housing Benefit grant and the benefits from Treasury Management activities.
- 4.4. The release of £3 million from the Insurance Fund reserve to the general balance is a result of the continuing improved performance in respect of insurance and risk management. This improved performance evidenced by the annual Actuarial assessment and the potential liability for claims.
- 4.5. The receipt of the final payment of the Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI) grant of £1.3 million, which related to the 2007/08 financial year, was added to balances. In terms of fuel and energy costs it was agreed that £780,000 be provided from balances this year to meet the increased energy costs for street lighting in Technical Services and £125,000 for fuel costs relating to Children & Young People transport costs. Financial pressures were identified based upon the likely outcome of the energy contracts due to be tendered later in 2008 and which were to be finalised and reported to Cabinet in February 2009.
- 4.6. Following the Audit of the Statement of Accounts for 2007/08 the amount included within the 2008/09 budget for the capitalisation of highways improvements was reduced by £2 million.
- 4.7. Cabinet agreed to fund a number of improvement teams from the Efficiency Investment Budget in 2008/09 totalling £2.2 million. These included the Adult Social Services Reform Team and the Finance department areas covering Procurement and Creditors, Change and Customer Services Development.
- 4.8. The review of Reserves and Provisions identified the release of sums totalling £360,000 into the General Fund balances. It was also agreed that the £230,000 which related to Regeneration be used to offset the projected departmental overspend.
- 4.9. Within Adult Social Services the pressures of increasing demand for care services that resulted in an overspend in 2007/08 remain. In terms of savings there are issues around the achievement of the total required this year. The present projections continue to indicate a £3.5 million overspend. The Director presented a detailed report to Cabinet on 4 September including the actions

being taken to mitigate the projected overspend. Cabinet noted this and regular updates on progress are being presented to Cabinet.

- 4.10.. The Director of Children and Young People has taken action to offset the pressures within the areas of Special Education Needs (SEN), care services and the delivery of employee related savings targets. The maximisation of grant opportunities has seen the projection from £3 million be eliminated.
- 4.11. Within Regeneration income and energy costs are projected to be at variance with the budget and efforts are being made to contain spend within the budget allocated. However, the options proposed to deliver the Service Re-engineering savings targets brought forward from 2007/08 are now incorporated within the Strategic Asset Review meaning an overspend of £0.8 million is likely. This has partially been offset by the release of reserves and provisions identified in 4.8.
- 4.12. The technical services budget is reliant upon income from car parking and planning and, as in previous years, the Director is highlighting shortfalls in these areas which will be difficult to accommodate from within the departmental budget. Whilst actions to address these by a series of budget virements were agreed by Cabinet pressures remain and with winter maintenance costs there is a projected £0.5 million overspend.
- 4.13. Treasury Management includes the management of cash flow and the need to borrow to fund investment has been re-engineered reducing the requirement for temporary borrowing. The savings achieved in 2007/08 continue and will deliver £0.5 million in 2008/09. With further benefits being a reduced need to borrow to fund the capital programme delivering £0.6 million savings and the opportunity to access the increased rates offered by the banking sector taken earlier this year the additional income realised is in the order of £1.1 million. Given the unpredictability in the financial sector any surplus resources are now being invested in lower risk / lower return investments.

5. CAPITAL MONITORING

- 5.1. The capital programme 2008/11 was approved by Council on 17 December 2007 and confirmed as part of the budget by Council on 3 March 2008. The 2009/12 programme was approved by Council on 15 December 2008. Monitoring compares the original programme with the latest forecast and incorporates changes, including slippage, agreed by Cabinet.

Spend	Original	Forecast	Forecast
	Approval	September	December
	£000	£000	£000
Adult Social Services	2,952	3,815	3,128
Children & Young People	32,221	26,426	25,455
Corporate Services	410	1,160	1,160
Law, HR and Asset Mgt	1,860	2,111	2,111
Regeneration	29,079	36,876	37,276
Technical Services	11,318	12,589	10,433
Total programme	77,840	82,977	79,563

- 5.2. The resources table similarly compares the developing programme and reflects the agreed changes. The generation of capital receipts through the sale of assets is used to fund the programme and at this stage £4 million is included for

use in 2008/09. Income from sales, whilst uncertain in the exact timing of receipt, offers flexibility in the timing of its use and can be used to either balance the current programme or to address future budgetary issues.

Spend	Original Approval £000	Forecast September £000	Forecast December £000
Borrowing	31,092	31,073	27,816
Grant – HMRI	9,800	8,900	8,900
Grant – Education	20,899	17,100	16,359
Grant – Other	11,636	21,487	22,025
Revenue	413	417	463
Capital Receipts	4,000	4,000	4,000
Total resources	77,840	82,977	79,563

- 5.3. The main reasons for the changes between the forecasts for September and December relate to the cancelling of the Poulton House project and the reduced capitalisation of highways maintenance which were agreed at Cabinet on 16 October 2008.
- 5.4. The Director of Adult Social Services has commenced the consultation on a review of intermediate care that will also impact upon the decisions regarding adult accommodation provision. This resulted in the Cabinet agreeing to the scheme for Poulton House being deleted from the programme. Other schemes are therefore subject to review pending the outcome of the consultation.
- 5.5. Within Children and Young People the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) - One Pathfinder project continues to progress in accordance with the timescales agreed with the Department for Children, Schools and Families. A start on site is expected early in 2009. Under the national scheme to develop Children's Centres Phase 1 and Phase 2 has now seen all 19 centres opened.
- 5.6. Under Regeneration the Oval Sports Centre successfully re-opened after a substantial programme of works and the redevelopment of New Brighton is progressing well. This includes the creation of the new Floral Pavilion which was officially opened in December.
- 5.7. The Special Initiatives element of the programme includes schemes and related funding in respect of Objective One (£5.5 million) and the Single Regeneration Budget (£4.5 million). The schemes contribute towards the conclusion of the Merseyside-wide programme which will be further refined as it is not due to complete until 2010.
- 5.8. The Housing Market Renewal Initiative (NewHeartlands) continues to progress although the impact of the worldwide and national financial situation is affecting developers. The size and nature of the programme requires both the programme and the funding to be more flexible with the re-phasing of expenditure and resources kept under review to maintain progress.
- 5.9. The Technical Services programme and financing reflect the decision of Cabinet agreeing to the reduction in the amount of works that could be capitalised in 2008/09.

6. RISK MONITORING

- 6.1. The revised Corporate Risk Register was agreed by Cabinet on 13 March 2008 and is the baseline document which is reviewed quarterly. The register was further reviewed by Cabinet on 10 December 2008 and is to be refined as Departmental Service plans for 2009/10 are produced.
- 6.2. For most of the risks the planned improvements in control actions have been implemented along with further identified actions to ensure that the risks are being controlled. Examples of positive developments include:-

Risk No.	Description	Positive Developments in Control Actions
1.	Death or serious injury to a service user, staff member, or anyone to whom the Council owes a duty of care.	3 IOSH Managing Safely Courses covering 35 managers now delivered. In October the Corporate Health & Safety Committee ratified 6 revised health & safety arrangements.
2.	Failure to prepare adequately for/manage the impact of a pandemic.	Critical employees from Adult Social Services, Children & Young People and Cemeteries & Crematoria identified as priorities for anti-viral drugs.
4.	Changing need and demand for services (driven by legislative, social and demographic change) is not managed effectively	In connection with the Equalities Policy & Standard a Single Equality Scheme produced and is subject to consultation.
9.	Partnerships are not well planned and we do not work effectively with others	As part of its preparation for CAA the Partnership took part in a self-evaluation toolkit pilot and lessons learnt are now being fed into CAA planning.
11.	Failure to effect a workforce development plan to ensure that we have a workforce in place which meets the planned changing needs of the Council, including effective succession planning	An external provider has been selected to develop an online application tool attached to a number of national electronic recruitment portals. Workforce planning has been incorporated into departmental services plans for 2009/10.
12.	We do not fully exploit all available resources, including technology.	Cabinet was provided with an update report on delivery of the Change Programme on 10 December 2008.
14.	Failure to plan and manage performance (CAA) and finances in accordance with plans and budgets	A report detailing the Audit Commission's project brief for the CAA Use of Resources Assessment 2009 to Audit & Risk Management Committee on 26 January.
17.	Failure in safeguarding arrangements (adult or child)	With the exception of the development of formal links and training to the Wirral Multicultural Centre staff actions planned by Adult Social Services implemented.
22.	Adverse effect on Council budgets of rising energy prices.	Developments in the Strategic Asset Review have been reported to Cabinet in December and January.
24.	Impact of volatility and downturn in the economy	Treasury management policies have continued to be reviewed as have

Risk No.	Description	Positive Developments in Control Actions
		enhancements to the monitoring of key budget areas.
29.	Serious failure in information governance.	Revised ICT Security Policy reported to Cabinet on 10 December 2008 and communicated to staff in January 2009.

6.3. Those areas where progress in implementing controls has not proceeded to timetable or where information is not available are:

Risk No.	Description	Areas where Control Actions have yet to be progressed
3.	Key Council services are not resilient to disruption and business continuity arrangements are inadequate.	The date for finalising all business continuity plans has been revised to January 2009 as some departments have yet to supply their plans to the Health, Safety & Resilience Operations team.
6.	Community expectations are not properly understood or managed well.	The programme for the sustainability appraisal of the LAA remains slightly behind schedule.
15.	Failure to execute the Council's Investment Strategy (or failure of the Strategy to deliver).	After a slight delay the Corporate Investment Group is being established.
19.	Failure to progress the regeneration of economically disadvantaged areas	After a slight delay the Corporate Investment Group is being established.

6.4. A further issue proposed was considered to be of corporate significance and will be added to the Register.

- Failure to deliver the Change Programme.

6.5. All risks previously on the register were still considered to present a sufficiently large corporate threat and none have been removed. The recent high profile cases in respect of child care services have enhanced the existing corporate risk relating to safeguarding arrangements. The management of this area continues with increasing monitoring and, if appropriate, a report on any further planned actions will be taken to Cabinet.

7. REPORTING OF 2008/09 FULL YEAR PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

7.1 It has not been possible to present this quarter three report earlier given that the Cabinet meeting of 23rd February was reserved by members for budget discussions.

7.2 The timeliness of future reports continues to be problematic due to the timing of Cabinet meetings. The full year report will be the next performance and financial report that Cabinet will receive and will include performance and financial information for 2008/09. The table below sets out the future Cabinet meeting dates and explanations for potential timelag in reporting the full year position:

Year end date	Cabinet Meeting	Explanation
Tuesday 31 st March 2009	9 th April 2009	The server deadline for this report is the 23 rd March which is earlier than the year end date.
	23 rd April 2009	The server deadline for this report is the 30 th March which is earlier than the year end date.
	12 th May 2009 (provisional subject to approval by Cabinet 19.03.09)	This Cabinet meeting has been identified for the selection meeting. Should Cabinet agree that the performance and financial information can be reported to this meeting, it should be noted that departments have indicated that some performance information will not be available for this report due to the validation process. For example social care data within the Children and Young People's Department will still be subject to validation.

7.3 Given the issues set out above the earliest opportunity to present full performance and financial information for 2008/09 would be the Cabinet meeting which is provisionally scheduled for 3rd June 2009.

7.4 Should members agree to receive the report at the 3rd June Cabinet meeting then officers will make the information within this report available on the virtual committee and Chief Officers will brief Executive Members at the earliest opportunity after the year end. This issue has been discussed with the Audit Commission who consider it to be a reasonable approach.

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

8.1. There are no equal opportunities, human rights, community safety, local member support, local agenda 21 or planning implications arising directly from this report.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 Wirral Corporate Plan 2008/11.

9.2 This report and the following supporting appendices have been placed in the Virtual Committee:-

Appendix A – Performance Monitoring Summary.

Appendix B – Financial Monitoring Summary.

Appendix C – Capital Monitoring Summary.

Appendix D – Corporate Risk Monitoring Summary.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1. That Cabinet review the performance to date as detailed in this report and identify any areas for further action.
- 10.2. That full year performance and financial information is presented to Cabinet in June. The Cabinet meeting prior to the 3rd June is the Cabinet selection meeting (13th May). Should Cabinet request to receive the performance and financial information at the selection meeting it is important to note that the performance and financial information in some cases will be provisional and unvalidated.
- 10.3. Should Cabinet approve that the report is taken to the 3rd June Cabinet as recommended in 10.2; then the full performance and financial information will be made available on the virtual committee and Chief Officers will brief the relevant Executive Members at the earliest opportunity after the year end.

STEPHEN MADDOX
CHIEF EXECUTIVE