

Scrutiny Committee – 29th June 2010

9. Quarterly Performance and Complaints Monitoring Report – 4th Quarter 2009/10

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Purpose of the Report

To present to members a performance monitoring report covering the period to the end of the fourth quarter of 2009/10 (1st January – 31st March 2010).

Forward Plan

This report appeared on the District Executive Forward Plan with an expected date of March 2010.

Public Interest

The performance of the Council is of interest to the whole community. People expect high quality and good value for money services. It is very important for the Council to be accountable for its performance to the local community. We endeavour to make sure that South Somerset residents have confidence in the quality, cost-effectiveness and responsiveness of their Council and that we are able to make a difference where it counts.

Performance management is about improving the performance of the organisation through having clear objectives, setting relevant targets, monitoring and measuring these targets and making appropriate adjustments. Performance against the key targets that measure progress against our corporate aims and objectives are collected and reported to SSDC members on a quarterly basis. Managers monitor the performance levels of the service, and where performance is below target, explain the reasons and clarify what action will be taken to improve performance.

Action Required

The Scrutiny Committee is asked to:

- (1) Consider the performance monitoring report and comment on those areas highlighted under 'performance exceptions' where performance is below target levels.
- (2) Note the summary of complaints for the third quarter of 2009/10.

Background

The financial year, 2008/09, saw the introduction of the new national Performance Framework, replacing the existing Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) with the new National Indicators (NIs). These NIs are an integral part of the performance management of SSDC and have been included as measures within the refreshed Corporate Plan (2009-2012) and its delivery plans.

This report details performance for a basket of both local and national performance indicators against which progress of the Corporate Plan can be measured.

As part of the continual drive to improve performance management the council uses a performance and risk management system, called TEN. Performance, complaints and risk information is being captured in this system, allowing both Officers and Members ready access to up to date information.



Annual Summary Highlights 2009/10:

⊕ Theme 1- Increase economic vitality and prosperity

- **NI 157a - Processing of Major planning applications determined in 13 weeks**
- **NI 157b - Processing of Minor planning applications determined in 8 weeks**
- **NI 157c Processing of Other planning applications determined in 8 weeks**

Achieving the performance target for the 'major' applications (NI 157a) over the last year has been very difficult due to the downturn in the economy that has resulted in significantly less applications. The relationship between volume and performance is clearly indicated in Q4 where we exceeded the target. Therefore a continued increase in the number of applications together with improvements in efficiency created by the 'lean' restructure means that we are confident that we can sustain this improvement.

⊕ Theme 2- Enhance the environment, address and adapt to climate change

- **NI 191- Residual household waste per household**

NI 191 has performed consistently above the target of 145.5 kg per quarter throughout 2009/10. The annual outturn is 391.51kg compared to a target of 582kg.

⊕ **Theme 3- Improve the health and well being of our citizens**

• **NI155 - Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)**

Despite the economic climate SSDC has beaten the 2009/10 target with a figure of 138, a tremendous achievement. SSDC remains one of the highest performing councils in the Region. This excellent performance is set to continue with projected figures of 300+ in 2010/11 and 2011/12. The projected figure for both these years is our highest ever performance - and this against a backdrop of reducing budgets and macro economic factors. The performance in this area also reflects the hard work put in during the previous two years.

• **LI002 - Annual % increase in the number of cases in which homelessness is prevented (Annual)**

LI002 has demonstrated excellent performance for 2009/10 with a huge improvement on the already on target figure for 2008/09. In Quarter 1 of 2009/10 there was an increase in the usage of the private rented sector to provide housing for people who were threatened with homelessness. In these cases we normally use our rent deposit scheme to pay a deposit and rent in advance. Although the amount of preventions for each of the remaining 3 quarters were much lower, a high proportion of these were still due to people moving to private rented accommodation. This prevented placing residents in temporary accommodation and/or avoiding lengthy waits for Housing Association accommodation.

⊕ **Theme 4- Ensure safe, sustainable and cohesive communities**

• **LI004 - Number of incidents of antisocial behaviour reported to SSDC**

This data is collected using the centralised ASB reporting system held at South Somerset District Council. The system enables users to receive automatic feedback as to the status of their complaint; this too encourages people to report ASB as satisfaction increases with resulting actions and feedback provided by SSDC.

Since the system has been introduced this indicator demonstrates an **11.42% decrease in the number of Anti Social Behaviour incidents** in South Somerset when compared to last year.

• **NI195 – Improved street and environmental cleanliness**

NI195 has not only demonstrated a consistent improving trend throughout the year but it has also improved since 2008/09, going from a score of 8.60% to 6.50%. The Streetscene Team study the results and target the areas that are identified as below standard. The first tranches of this season showed that there were issues on industrial land; these areas have been targeted with deep cleaning. Changes in approaches to the way the teams work have also improved performance. Different areas require different treatments, the Streetscene Team look at the results and try to improve the area, whilst still maintaining the day job.

⊕ **Theme 5 – Deliver well managed, cost effective services valued by our customers**

- **NI179 - Value for money - total net value of ongoing cash-releasing value for money gains that have impacted since the start of the financial year**

Providing good value for money is a top agenda both nationally and locally. SSDC have demonstrated a real commitment to providing good value for money to its residents and this has been recognised by the 2009/10 NI179 figure of £2,584,439, exceeding the target of £2,143,000



Q4 Performance Exceptions:

Appendix A details the performance of the Council for the 4th quarter of 2009/10. This information is colour coded, using the red, amber, green statuses, to indicate performance against target. A trend arrow is included where appropriate, showing whether performance is improving or deteriorating from quarter to quarter and the 2008/09 actual performance figures are provided for comparison.

In cases where quarterly performance is below target or has deteriorated significantly from the previous quarter, a comment is requested from the Service Manager. The key exceptions are as follows:

⊖ **Theme 4- Ensure safe, sustainable and cohesive communities**

- **LI004 - Number of incidents of antisocial behaviour reported to SSDC**

Target – 538, **Actual** – 531

Status – Above target but performance has deteriorated in quarter 4.

The quarterly trend of this indicator has followed a similar trend to the 2008/09 data, remaining consistent throughout the first three quarters and then a slight increase in quarter 4. This slight increase is thought to be due to increased fly tipping during the post Christmas period.

• **Theme 5- Deliver well managed, cost effective services valued by our customers**

• **LI021 - Working Days Lost Due to Sickness Absence - Quarterly (BV12)**

Target – 8.20 days, **Actual** – 9.56 days

Status – Q4 and Annual figure below target and performance has deteriorated in quarter 4.

Long Term - 48%, Short Term - 52%

Absence figures in the 3rd quarter were particularly high and have impacted on the annual total. This appears to be due to swine flu and the fear of spreading the flu.

Action taken to address:

- Analysis of absence records has been undertaken over a 4 year period
- Individual action plans instigated for individuals with a consistently poor record
- Workshops for 4th tier managers to be arranged - handling of absence issues

• **LI007 - % of call centre calls answered within 30 seconds (Quarterly)**

Target – 80% **Actual** 77%

Status –Within 10% of target but performance has deteriorated in quarter 4.

Performance affected by three main elements: -

- Period of missed refuse and recycling collections due to snow and ice (Jan),
- Calls received from renewal of 4,500 garden waste subscribers along with 800 new subscribers joining service (Feb/Mar)
- 70,000 council tax bills for new year always causes an increased number of calls (Mar).

Despite the slight dip in Quarter 4, the annual performance is above target at 81%

Complaints:

Services are required to monitor all complaints received by the council and to action them in accordance with the Complaints procedure. This report presents a summary of complaints by service area to Management Board and members on a quarterly basis. See Appendix B for the full summary of complaints for 2009/10.

Complaints Analysis for 2009/10:

During the period 1st April – 31st March 2010, SSSC has received 414 complaints from members of the public. The services that received the most complaints in 2009/10 are the same services as in 2008/09:

- Waste (117),
- Development Control (88)
- Streetscene (86)

Both Waste and Development Control complaints have decreased by 12.68% and 3.3% respectively since 2008/09. However Streetscene complaints have increased due to a rise in the number of calls that are 'not SSSC responsibility'

	Quarter 4		2009/10 TOTAL	2008/09 Totals
Total number of complaints	185		414	415
What stage were the complaints resolved at?	Stage 1 – 176 Stage 2 – 6 Stage 3 – 0 Stage 4 – 3		Stage 1 – 390 Stage 2 – 17 Stage 3 – 1 Stage 4 – 6	Stage 1 – 374 Stage 2 – 20 Stage 3 – 18 Stage 4 – 3
Main reasons complaints were made	Issue with Policy/ Decision – 103 Failure to Deliver – 26 Staff Handling - 19		Issue with Policy/ Decision – 200 Failure to Deliver – 107 Staff Handling - 47	Failure to deliver - 194 Issue with Policy/ Decision -136 Staff handling - 30
Main area services improved as a result of a complaint*	Communication – 12 Monitoring of service delivery - 7 Changes in working practice/ procedure - 6		Communication – 33 Monitoring of service delivery - 19 Changes in working practice/ procedure -15	Communication – 85 Changes in working practice/ procedure – 44 Staff training required - 24

*Please note in the majority of complaints in 2009/10 required no action (208) or the problem was rectified (93).

Headlines:

- Of comparable services, 69% have either improved or stayed the same when compared to the number of complaints received in the previous year
- Complaints relating to failure to deliver have reduced by 45%.
- Complaints relating to an issue with a policy/ decision have increased by 32%.

The two main reasons are the removal of the bring bank facilities across South Somerset and an increase in the charge for garden waste collections.

The bring banks were removed due to increasing costs and significant anti-social behaviour and fly-tipping. The money saved in cleaning and emptying the bring banks, £180k, went towards the implementation of Sort It+ - plastic & cardboard collected from the kerbside, which negates the need for the bring banks.

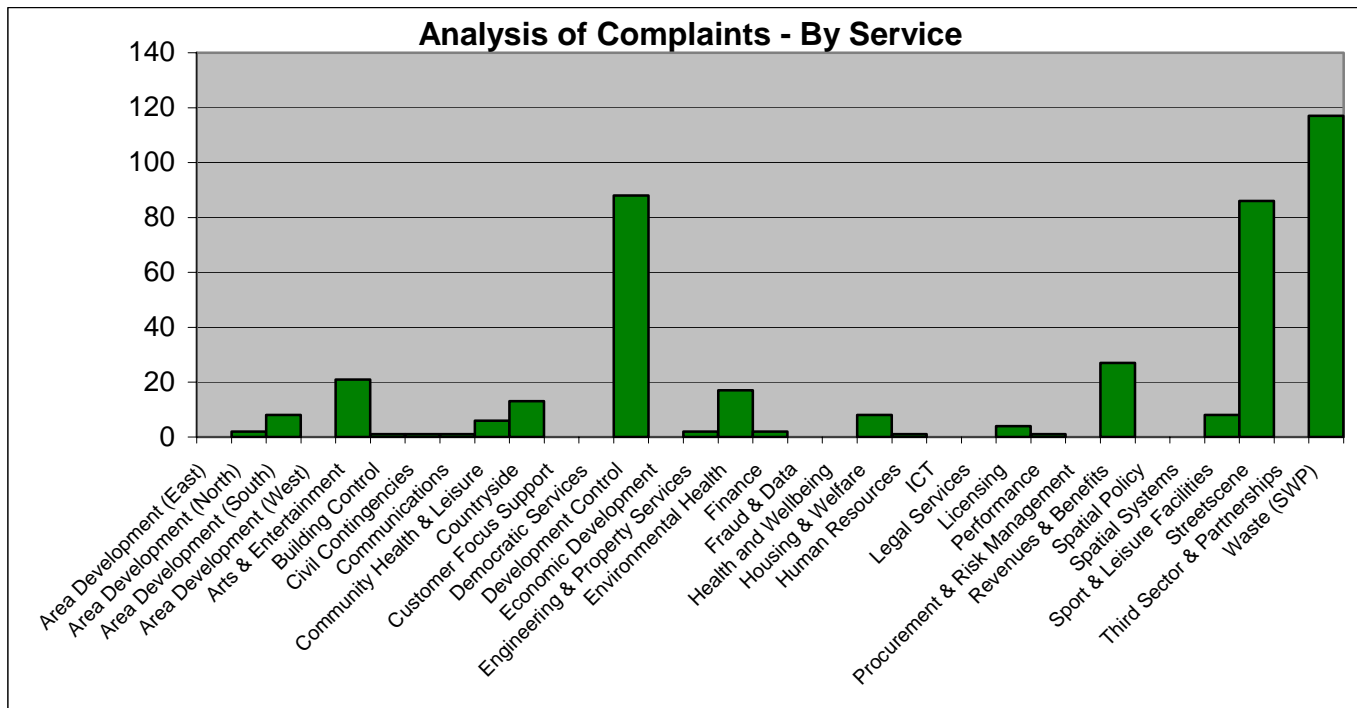
The actual cost of garden waste collections to SSDC is just over £50 per subscriber. The current annual cost to residents is £42.50, meaning there is a subsidy of £7.50. As there is about 10% sign up across the district it means that 90% of council taxpayers were subsidising a service that they are not receiving. In view of the above, members were minded to increase the cost of subscriptions in future years until the subsidy is removed. The cost for the service started at £25 (2007/08) and was increased to £35 (2009/10) before this year's increase to £42.50.

Despite this, it is worth noting that Waste received 12.68% fewer complaints compared to last year.

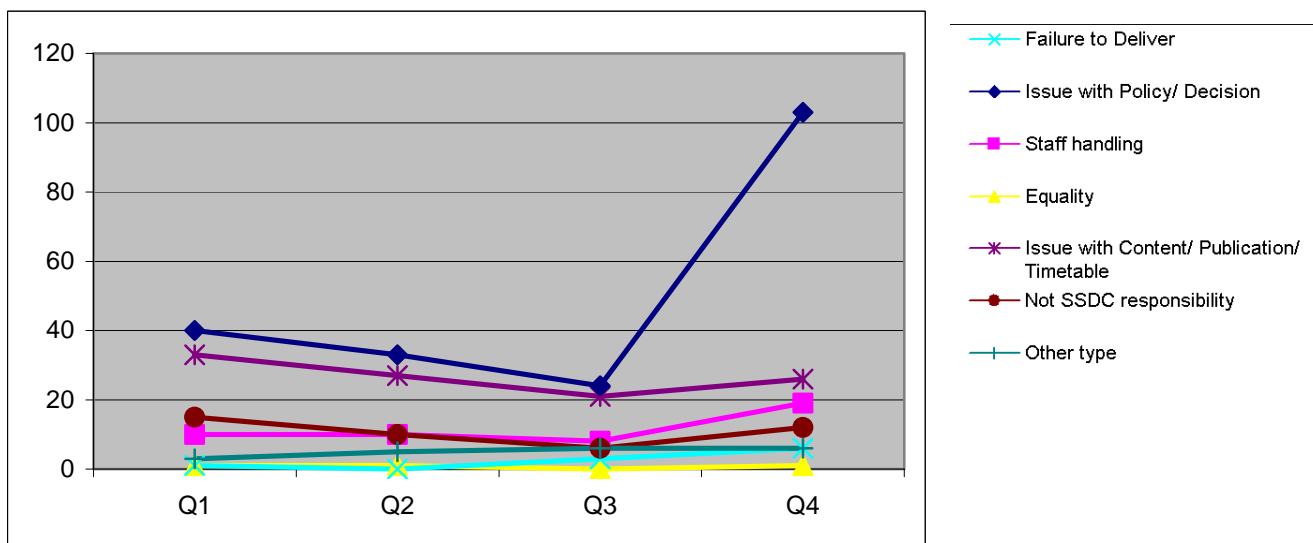
- 50.24% of complaints required no action; this is due to the majority of complaints referring to a policy or decision as mentioned above

- 94.2% of complaints have been resolved at Stage 1 – an improvement of the 2008/09 figure of 90.12%
- In 2008/09 85 of the complaints received required improved communication, in 2009/10 this has dropped to 33 demonstrating an improvement in communication

The total number of complaints received per service for 2009/10 is demonstrated below:



During 2009/10 the majority of complaint types reduced over the year, however during quarter 4 complaints relating to an issue with policy/ decision steeply increased due to the removal of bring banks and the increase in garden waste charges.



Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications related to this report other than compensation paid. However, financial implications may need to be considered for possible actions necessary to address performance in failing areas.

Corporate Priority Implications

Contributes toward delivery of Corporate Plan Theme 5 “Deliver well managed, cost effective services valued by our customers” - through effective monitoring and smart target setting to deliver continuous improvement.

Carbon Emissions & Adapting to Climate Change Implications (NI188)

N/A

Equality and Diversity Implications

N/A

Background Papers: New National Performance framework introduced 2008-09
Refreshed Corporate Plan 2009-2012
Portfolio Statements 2009-10
Developing a better corporate focus with performance indicators – District Executive Dec 2005
SSDC Complaints Procedure
