



COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 4 2009/10

1 WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

Section 1 presents progress towards the actions listed in *Shaping Stirling: Strategic Plan 2008–2012*.

1.1 VIBRANT ECONOMY

1.1.1 Collaborate with major employers to develop and grow business through partnership working; including the development of the Stirling Business Panel

At the end of March 2010, Stirling Business Panel membership exceeded 580 members. The results of the 2009 Business Panel Survey were published in February 2010. The survey results are available on the Business Panel Website (see below) and comparisons with the 2008 survey are included in the final report.

The Business Panel have also hosted a 'Have Your Say' event on 22nd March 2010. Over 80 delegates participated in a workshop, addressing four of the key issues highlighted in the 2008 and 2009 Annual Business Surveys. The attendance was exceptional, particularly as businesses had to take time out to participate. All respondents to the feedback questionnaire (59) have indicated that they would be willing to participate in business related focus groups.

The topics were learning/skills and recruitment, business support, business space and city centre revitalisation. Dr John Rogers, chair of the Stirling Economic Partnership, put the 'Open for Business' Stirling Economic Strategy into context and outlined how the Business Panel can contribute to the development of the action plan. With the focus of the workshop on actions, the results of the workshop will be presented at the next meeting of the Economic Partnership and developments will be published on the Panel website.

Preparations are now underway to host a business-to-business trade show for local businesses. This is scheduled to take place on the 21st September 2010.

The Business Panel Website, www.stirlingbusinesspanel.org was launched in September 2009. To date, the site has received almost 9,000 hits.

1.1.2 Manage the Business Gateway function with Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Councils

The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) application developed in partnership with Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Councils was unsuccessful. A second application is in development to enhance the Business Gateway function at a local level within an agreed national framework.

1.1.3 Support business research and development, e.g. through better business, higher education links and the Stirling University Innovation Park

The University of Stirling has secured £1.3m to fund the Sporting Chance Initiative, a project to support small and medium sized businesses in Scotland to identify and take advantage of sports-related commercial opportunities.

While the project will support businesses across Scotland, it is anticipated that the combination of Stirling's existing strong reputation in relation to sport, the location of the Initiative team at the Innovation Park and the number of events and project activities that will take place in Stirling, will lead to a high number of local businesses benefiting from the programme through increased turnover and the creation of new jobs.

Stirling Council has approved match funding of £300k over three years to support the Sporting Chance Initiative. A report on key performance indicators to monitor the impact of the initiative on the local economy is being prepared for approval by the Executive Committee.

1.1.4 Provide property search services for businesses locating in Stirling and local businesses with business space requirements

Emerging from the economic downturn, the number of enquiries in the first quarter is more positive when compared with the same period in 2009. Data shows ongoing availability is still low for industrial space when compared with the Scottish average, which has contributed towards new speculative unit developments coming forward.

1.1.5 Proactively support rural businesses and business associations, including continuation of a rural mentoring scheme and national park apprenticeship scheme

At the end of March 2010, 32 businesses were engaged with the Trossachs Enterprise & Rural Mentoring Scheme (TERMS), either at pre start up, early stages or, through TERMS, engaged with Business Gateway.

The TERMS project attended the Trossachs Health Fair at the McLaren Centre in February 2010 to maintain a profile within the Trossachs rural community. Pupils at McLaren High School, in conjunction with TERMS and a local audio-visual business, produced a CD. This exercise promoted awareness of TERMS within a younger age group and will be used to promote the benefits of the Trossachs as a place to do business, live and visit.

A final report is about to be commissioned to update progress with the TERMS project since 2009. The report is expected to be available by the end of May 2010. It is anticipated that the report will recommend a continuation of the project as there is a perceived need for support in the Trossachs area and the project has started to attract increased interest and momentum in the last twelve months. Available funds will allow the project to continue in a limited fashion for circa 10 weeks after the report is available. Dependent on the results, this will allow enough time to explore the possibility of securing funding to continue the project in some fashion, beyond 2010.

In March 2010, the National Park Apprentice Scheme delivered a presentation at Parliament to the Cross Party Group on Skills. The project was outlined and put forward as a model of good practice. However, the scheme did not meet the criteria needed to gain 'Demonstration Project' status by the Scottish Construction Centre, as was hoped for.

1.1.6 Co-ordinate economic development activity locally through the Community Planning Partnership, across Forth Valley through the Forth Valley Economic Partnership and regionally through Scottish Enterprise East Central Scotland

The Forth Valley Tourism Partnership has collaborated on a joint promotion as part of VisitScotland's 'Perfect Day' campaign. This was sent to 28,000 positive contacts. In preparation for the print piece a workshop was held with Forth Valley tourism businesses in January 2010 to consider itineraries for key market segments. Attendance was excellent and, in addition to generating ideas, the event was welcomed as a good networking opportunity.

1.1.7 Jointly work with Perth and Kinross Council and other surrounding areas to investigate, develop and implement areas for collaboration in strategic economic development

After a highly successful event in 2009, work is underway with International Motor Sports, EventScotland and Perth & Kinross Council on the RACMSA Rally of Scotland 2010, which will take place from the 15th to the 17th October. Apart from funding support that was agreed on a three-year basis in 2009, Stirling Council will provide logistical and operational support to the event and will also add value to the rally marketing campaign through established Stirling Council marketing mechanisms.

1.1.8 Produce a revised Economic Development Strategy for Stirling

After the launch of 'Open for Business', Stirling's Economic Development Strategy, in November 2009, work is ongoing to develop detailed action plans to deliver outcomes focused on economic success, business support, skills development and access to jobs, financial inclusion, communicating confidence and building for the future. These actions plans will be brought forward to Council for approval at a future meeting.

1.1.9 Develop and implement a Stirling Tourism Action Plan

This quarter saw considerable planning and promotion of the Stirling - Scotland's Heart stand at the VisitScotland EXPO in Glasgow, Scotland's largest and most important event for the travel trade. The stand was co-ordinated by Stirling Council in collaboration with Stirling District Tourism, Historic Scotland, Blair Drummond Safari Park, SS Sir Walter Scott, and Stirling University.

With regard to interpretation, proposals have been developed for an additional 10 heritage plaques around Stirling city centre. A new interpretation panel for the car park at Rob Roy's graveyard has been produced and is in place.

A meeting was held in March 2010 at Loch Katrine for local businesses in the Aberfoyle area to hear about the opportunities available to visitors and tourism businesses with the expansion of the demand responsive transport system in the Trossachs.

Financial and logistical support has been provided to the Montane Highland Fling Road Race 2010, which will take place in April. The event will involve over 300 'ultra-runners' from throughout the world and covers a gruelling 53-mile route that takes in part of the West Highland Way from Loch Lomond to Tyndrum.

Economic Support & Tourism have also provided funding and officer assistance to the National Park for the Scottsland 2010 programme. Scottsland will feature a diverse programme of cultural and literary events, promoted by Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park, in partnership with Stirling Council, Forth Valley & Lomond LEADER and Forestry Commission Scotland. The event marks the 200th anniversary of the publication of Sir Walter Scott's poem Lady of the Lake and will take place throughout the Trossachs to celebrate the poem, the heritage and the landscapes.

The Council is working with the National Park Authority and partners on the project group looking at visitor welcome and orientation signage in Callander, together with a heritage trail throughout the town. The aim of the initiative is to make visitors aware of the wealth of things to do in and around Callander, increasing the amount of time spent in the area and consequent expenditure and repeat visits. The Council is making a financial contribution to the project.

Work is also underway in relation to Visitor Management on East Loch Lomondside. This is a joint project between the Council, the National Park Authority, Forestry Commission Scotland, Central Scotland Police and local communities, aimed at joint action to manage the impact of visitor activity in the area, improving the experience for both visitors and local residents. Council approved a set of Outdoor Drinking Byelaws for consultation at its meeting on 22nd April and will receive a report on further actions at Executive.

Logistical assistance has also been provided to Burke & Hare, the latest film by director John Landis, which was partially filmed at Stirling Castle in February 2010.

1.1.10 Develop and implement a Cultural Strategy and Action Plan

The Cultural Strategy was formally launched at the end of February 2010 and was followed by a weekend of activity hosted and delivered by Cultural Forum partners. A celebratory/promotional DVD was produced to coincide with the strategy launch. Partners are now taking forward discussions on mechanisms to put further detail to the 'Big Actions' contained in the strategy, and how they will be implemented. Cultural Forum meeting dates have been set for the rest of 2010.

1.1.11 Develop and implement a City Centre Strategy and Action Plan

Officers and the Depute Leader attended a seminar on Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in March 2010 as part of the preparation for the Stirling city centre BID feasibility study, £40k funding for which has been agreed in the 2010/11 budget.

1.1.12 Develop and deliver a Business Space Action Plan

The Business Space Strategy and Action Plan is in its final draft. A full version will be placed online in April 2010 to support the Local Development Plan process. A more concise version is being prepared for a public launch, following the launch of 'Open for Business'.

1.1.13 Improve access for businesses, visitors and residents through implementation of the Regional and Local Transport Strategies

Access for businesses, visitors and residents continues to be improved through the implementation of the Local Transport Strategy, with ongoing work to deliver projects including: safer routes to schools, road safety, bridges, street lighting, cycle and walking paths, safer streets, 20 mph and travel to school safety zones, and roads and transport maintenance.

The Council has developed a cycle map for the Stirling City area highlighting routes for cyclists to use. The map is available free from locations including libraries, bike shops and Council Offices, and will also be available on the Council's web site later in 2010.

1.2 JOBS AND OPPORTUNITIES

1.2.1 Implement a Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) to meet Housing Quality Standards

A group consisting of four Elected Members, Housing Services' staff and directors and Board Members from the local housing associations met to take an overview of the SHIP process this quarter. This group will agree the final content of the next SHIP before it goes before Council in October 2010.

1.2.2 Increase the number of social rented homes and address rural housing needs

Stirling Council has now begun its own programme of new council house building. A grant has been received from the Scottish Government to contribute towards the provision of 73 new homes for rent.

1.2.3 Create a new community with 2,500 homes at Durieshill

Discussions are continuing with the developer with regard to the initiation of the Durieshill project, including timescales, phases and infrastructure requirements. The current economic climate is delaying the start of the development.

1.2.4 Deliver the Homelessness Strategy

The review of the Homelessness Strategy is included in the review of the Local Housing Strategy, which is currently ongoing. The target for completion is October 2010.

The number of units of temporary accommodation is now at 242 units (as at 23rd April 2010) and we continue to have an average of 95 households in bed and breakfast accommodation each night. Housing Services are exploring the possibility of using some extra hostel accommodation for those applicants with high support needs, to aid transition to permanent accommodation and encourage sustainable tenancies. If successful, this may enable the Council to reduce its reliance on bed and breakfast accommodation by as many as 50 units. The number of mainstream Council properties available to be used as dispersed lets has increased by a further 11 this quarter, and Housing Services are seeking 4 more.

With reference to the Council's processes to prevent homelessness through Section 11 of the Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003, as at the 31st March 2010 the Council received 154 Section 11 referrals and purchased 5 properties through the mortgage to rent scheme.

In addition, the Council has been looking at opportunities to purchase new private sector properties available on the open market to be used for dispersed lets and has successfully managed to purchase nine properties before the end of March 2010.

1.2.5 Develop specialist and adapted housing to address the housing need of individuals with additional care needs

The Housing and Community Care will meet again in June 2010 to discuss the main issues affecting housing for those with additional care needs.

Housing Services are working with Community Care and Forth Housing Association to provide supported accommodation for older people, people with mental health related issues and people with learning disabilities on a variety of sites. Some of these houses will be provided by the Council as part of our new council house-building programme (see 1.2.2 above). Forth Housing Association, Housing and Community Care are working to develop more detailed proposals for houses for older people in the Raploch and Bannockburn.

1.2.6 Focus Employability Services on those most in need to support people towards sustainable employment and independent living

The number of adults with disabilities, learning difficulties or multiple barriers to employment supported by Employability who moved into training, employment, further education or voluntary activity this quarter was 46. This brings the annual total to 129, which is well above the target of 80.

1.2.7 Support young people to make a successful transition from schools to jobs, further education or training and independence

Youth Services has worked with 103 young people on training programmes between January and March 2010. 59 participated in the Access to Construction, Access to Motor Vehicle, Choices in Care, Rural Skills and pre-apprenticeship schemes. These programmes continue to offer accreditation in sector skills, self-development opportunities and work experience with local employers.

In partnership with other Stirling Council services, 5 young people are still undertaking the Skillseeker Level 2 Road worker's qualification and are expected to complete this in Summer 2010.

15 young people were supported within the delivery of the Community Lifeskills programmes and received individually tailored support and learning packages to address the complex issues preventing their ability to access the Get Ready for Work provision, or mainstream employment and educational opportunities within Stirling.

5 young people registered on the Activity Agreement pilot scheme this quarter, which will provide them with a bespoke programme of personal learning and activities to support their progression to a positive outcome. 10 young people are undertaking Modern Apprenticeships in Plastering, Motor Vehicles, Bricklaying and Roof Slating/Tiling. Through the Future Jobs Fund, nine young people have successfully gained employment in the vocational areas of Construction, Fisheries and Livery.

In addition to the 103 young people registered in training through Youth Services the following work has been undertaken:

- An Employability Group of 10 young people has been established in partnership with Wallace High School and SDS Careers, through which young people who have been identified as requiring additional information are being supported.
- Success Txt, has been re-branded and re-launched. This Infotxt service will enable young people to gain information about all of the 16+ Learning Choices available within Stirling through text message.

- Infotxt bookmarks have been created to advertise the new 'Success Txt' service, which provides information about 16+ Learning Choices for young people. The bookmarks will be distributed to all S4, S5 & S6 pupils.

1.2.8 Ensure adequate childcare is available

February 2010 reporting shows that the Council is fulfilling its statutory responsibilities to provide up to 15 hours of pre-school education per week for the requisite number of weeks, in respect of all eligible children whose parents seek places for them. There is therefore capacity for all 3 and 4 year old children to access places within the Council area for every parent who chooses.

1.2.9 Continue the physical and social regeneration of Raploch, Cornton and Culterhove with active community involvement

Ongoing consultation with the communities of Cornton and Culterhove has taken place. A proposal around the methodology for taking forward the master planning in the two communities has been drafted, to ensure that master plans are in place within the timescale of the Local Development Plan. A report will go to the Executive Committee on the 20th May with this proposal.

1.2.10 Focus advice services to provide options and solutions to a range of serious financial and quality of life problems

The Community Planning Partnership (CPP) is currently considering a proposal to develop a Stirling Wide Advice Partnership (SWAP) network to maximise existing provision and manage unmet need. The CPP will be interviewing for this tender in May 2010.

In addition to the £75,000 already committed by MacMillan Cancer Support to Stirling Council to allow for the continuation of the Money Matters initiative, further funding has now been secured from MacMillan to expand this service to help those dealing with other long-term conditions, as well as cancer. The initiative provides financial advice for people and their families who are dealing with the social and economic impact of living with these conditions. This additional funding will be used over the next two financial years.

To help raise awareness of the effects of the credit crunch and highlight some of the solutions available, a Financial Inclusion conference is being organised under the auspices of the Community Planning Partnership Economic Partnership. Due to recent internal restructuring this has been slightly delayed and is now planned for Autumn 2010.

1.2.11 Develop and implement equalities schemes and action plans and review these annually

Work is underway to review and refresh the Council's statutory Gender Equality Scheme, which will be brought forward for approval at Council in June. Council Management Team has also reviewed the role, remit and membership of the Council's Diversity Working Group to reflect the new management arrangements within the Council and to allow better focus on the priorities within the Equalities and Diversities agenda, including movement towards a Single Equality scheme for the Council.

1.2.12 Provide support to develop a diverse, viable rural business base

Callander Development Trust, Callander Community Council and Callander Enterprise have continued to be supported this quarter in developing plans for a sustainable future for St Kessog's.

1.2.13 Invest in support for rural businesses and communities through the Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER programme

The Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER Local Action Group awarded £125,781 to two projects during this quarter: Camphill Blairdrummond for its In Touch and Craft New Build project, and Thornhill Development Trust for its New Community Future project.

1.3 LIFELONG LEARNING

1.3.1 Improve performance in all schools and nurseries, with specific focus on the performance of the lowest attaining 20% of young people

HMle inspected one stand-alone nursery this quarter, and another nursery class was inspected as part of a whole school inspection programme (Callander Primary School). The evaluations for improvements in performance, children's experiences and meeting learning needs were evaluated as very good in both establishments. The evaluations of the curriculum being offered were very good in the stand-alone nursery and satisfactory in the nursery class. Improvement through self-evaluation received an excellent evaluation in the stand-alone nursery and a satisfactory evaluation in the nursery class.

The Care Commission published inspection reports on three of Stirling's stand-alone nurseries between January and March 2010. Within all three standalone nurseries inspected, all of the key themes were evaluated as very good or excellent.

Please see Section 2 for further details of HMle school inspections.

A number of primary and secondary schools are using specific strategies to improve the performance of the lowest 20% of young people. Some pupils on staged intervention take part in a Welcome Club before the school day and during intervals and lunchtime are invited to attend a Fun Time Club, with both of these being supported by staff volunteers and Support for Learning Assistants. Duke of Edinburgh and Asdan & Activate courses continue to be offered across the secondary sector including Key Steps, Personal Development programme and Bronze Awards. Key Workers from Careers Scotland and Youth Projects have identified and worked with small numbers of pupils to support literacy/numeracy/life skills. Significant support is provided in the primary sector to improve performance in reading skills, writing and maths through the use of Write from the Start, Wave 3 Maths recovery, Phonological Awareness, Training and Reading Recovery.

Work is continuing on the development of Guidance to Schools by the Dyslexia Working Group. It is anticipated that the draft document will be ready for consultation by June 2010, and ready for implementation by early September 2010.

Planning for Transitions, in particular in relation to young people with additional support needs, is being taken forward with schools and partner agencies. It is anticipated that a multi-agency consultation group will be brought together to develop more detailed operational guidance for schools, provide leaflets and information for parents and young people, and to clarify the roles and responsibilities of agencies currently supporting this group of young people.

1.3.2 Locally implement key national strategies including Curriculum for Excellence and Assessment is for Learning

The Education Service continues to focus on further development of effective learning and teaching, with particular focus on the Talking Listening Learning Initiative. A further 50 teachers participated in training this quarter. In addition, time was allocated to training in-house trainers to facilitate further capacity-building next session.

With the national publication of Building the Curriculum 5: The Assessment Framework, a seminar/workshop was attended by all Heads of Establishment to engage in professional dialogue and increase understanding. Heads will replicate this engagement in their establishments.

Support packs on Building the Curriculum 5 were developed by the Quality Team to support the additional professional development day that will be held next term.

Information on interesting practice in Literacy across learning in Stirling establishments has been collated and published. Copies were sent to all establishments and are also available on the Source.

In response to identified needs following early literacy staff development in November 2009, a working group was established to explore phonological awareness. The group has created a series of support resources that are available to all educators through Glow. In addition, over eighty educators have participated in further training to develop their knowledge and understanding within this area.

Thirty early years educators came together to form a community of learners within a centrally delivered staff development opportunity entitled 'Let's Talk About Learning'. Their participation in this five-part programme enabled them to explore some of the significant issues relating to the provision of high quality learning experiences and the processes of learning.

'Literacy across learning' was the theme of the recent Curriculum for Excellence newsletter, which communicated key national messages as well as providing a forum for educators to celebrate examples of good practice in early literacy.

1.3.3 Provide enhanced sports, arts and cultural opportunities for children

The Tolbooth's provision for children and young people is a mix of regular classes, workshops and ongoing advice and opportunities as well as one off projects. Through this past year, this has included:

- Three terms of workshops in drama, fiddle, art and pottery, and various one-off summer workshops led by top arts professionals.
- Regular after school workshops including traditional music workshops, jazz workshops, and the song writing and band development club Pump Up the Jam.
- A Scots song project in two primary schools culminating in a performance in the Tolbooth. Percussion workshops for children with additional support needs in Castleview and Ochil House schools.
- Ongoing music development including support and advice for bands and emerging talent, with a range of associated activity including rehearsal, recording, touring and performing opportunities.
- A new music commission with children of Allan's Primary School culminating in a performance at Le Weekend festival 2009 – The Clothes Line Saga Blues.
- Schools involvement including support for the Battle of the Bands and use of the recording studio.
- Visual Arts workshops to coincide with exhibitions in The Changing Room introducing young people to contemporary artists and arts events programmed as part of national initiatives Children's Arts Week and The Big Draw.

The above activities were funded from different sources, including the Tolbooth budget, but a significant proportion is funded from Scottish Arts Council and the Youth Music Initiative. The jazz and traditional workshops were organised by Stirling Council's Cultural Co-ordinator.

1.3.4 Implement the Schools Estate Management Plan to ensure high quality learning and teaching environments

The handover of the first phase of Bannockburn High School, including the library, dining and social space and one wing of teaching accommodation, was completed ahead of programme in February 2010. Work has now commenced on the second wing and central block of the main building with completion targeted for August 2010 (achievement of this would see completion half a term ahead of programme). The design brief for Cowie Primary School has been completed and detailed design work commenced, with commencement on site planned for late 2010/11. Other design works nearing completion include window replacement at Braehead Primary and upgrading of the heating system at Callander Primary, with work due to be undertaken in the summer. Works to refurbish the

old Whins of Milton School to facilitate the relocation of the Secondary Student Support Service from Edward Avenue in Riverside are about to commence.

A full review of the School Estate Management Plan is now under way with priority being reassessed against the three key criteria of capacity, condition and suitability.

1.3.5 Complete the Schools Review to ensure sufficient capacity to meet the needs of a growing population

Education, forward planning and involvement has been focused on long-term planning. The service has modelled forward to take account of the consequences of growth within the local development plan. This exercise has also used council population data to predict localised future school requirements.

Where school capacity is insufficient, indications of how to efficiently use alternative existing provision or extend or add new facilities is also being explored.

Levels of build have reduced in the current financial climate, and the Council is currently monitoring potential development timings and their subsequent impact on education provision.

1.3.6 Develop and implement a Community Learning and Development (CLD) Strategy by the Learning in Communities Critical Partnership

It is likely that the launch of the Community Learning and Development (CLD) Strategy will now take place in September 2010. It has been agreed that more time should be allocated to the development of the Action Plan to ensure full partner buy in.

To support the Action Plan, community organisations are currently being consulted on their training needs. This will lead to a series of training events for those working voluntarily in their communities, and the refreshing of the Skills Toolkit for Community Organisations, which supports both community organisations and those working with them.

A series of targeted workshops on community engagement and health have taken place. Others on the environment, young people, culture and adult learning are planned.

A further grant of money has been awarded to support the professional development needs of all those working in CLD. This will initially be targeted at those who do not have a professional qualification. Later training will be targeted at other areas.

A second CLD HMLe inspection has taken place for the Bannockburn Learning Community. This was a successful inspection for all partners with Very Good being awarded to Youth, Communities and Adult Learning Services.

1.3.7 Deliver the Literacy Partnership Strategic Plan

Stirling Literacies partnership has supported almost 350 learners this quarter, through specific programmes delivered by the Council Adult Learning Team, Youth Services and Forth Valley College.

Work in the Criminal Justice area has continued with improved links between service staff. Further programmes of learning have been delivered at Cornton Vale Prison in partnership with City Literacy and Numeracy Edinburgh and the Lothian and Border Community Justice Authority, with participants writing a recipe book for use in independent living units. The Momentum in Lifelong Learning Project funded by the Scottish Government, Fife and Forth Valley Community Justice Authority and local authorities is about to start. The project aims to get participants into literacy learning prior to any further re-offending resulting in their imprisonment.

The Adult Learning team has supported a number of participants to achieve numeracy accreditation through SQA via its SQA approved centre status. The team also had a recent successful SQA audit.

The Adult Learning Team are also helping literacies learners to further develop their skills through a new European project called "Breaking Down Barriers", funded by the Grundtvig European

Partnership. Participants have been working on plans for exchanges with learners in Spain, Austria and Portugal, sharing learning experiences, pieces of writing, information on their own countries and home cities and learning about video conferences, as well as further developing personal skills in preparation for exchange visits in 2010/11.

Work by literacies learning providers in the Stirling Literacies Partnership also contributed to a positive HMle aspect report on national literacies development in Scotland with Community Learning and Development provision and that of the college sector showing many effective strategies for the delivery of literacies services.

More locally, adult learning provision delivered by the Adult Learning Team in partnership with other Community Learning and Development providers has been rated Very Good as a result of two HMle inspections carried out in 2009/10. This is level five in a six-point scale.

1.3.8 Locally implement the national strategy on English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

This quarter the ESOL stakeholder group has supported almost 200 learners. This includes classes and opportunities delivered by the Adult Learning Team, Library Services, Forth Valley College, Stirling Multicultural Partnership and the Stirling School of English.

The stakeholder group this year has held a number of consultation exercises with learners to get feedback from participants about provision and how we can make this better. This included holding a successful Burns Supper Night where activities gave participants the opportunity to learn more about Scottish language and culture and gave providers valuable feedback about how programmes are delivered and supported.

Effective partnership working has ensured that a varied programme of staff development has been available to staff in different organisations. This has included training in writing group learning plans, evaluating learning programmes and peer class visits looking at teaching practice.

A partnership programme between the Adult Learning Team and Culture Team resulted in a Scots Culture and Language programme being delivered for participants.

ESOL learners have also enhanced their learning by taking part in an ESOL and computing class delivered by the Adult Learning Team.

1.3.9 Work with Forth Valley College to deliver a new Stirling Further Education college with a focus on vocational training in skills that are required by the expanding local economy

Creative Industries are planned to be moved into the new college in Stirling and there are ongoing discussions on linkages with Cultural Strategy work including input to the mPower Project for Youth, led by the MacRobert. Future discussions on developments with schools will take place through the Stirling Learning Alliance.

1.3.10 Develop learning opportunities available through libraries

TasteIT sessions are now being held in most of the libraries in the Stirling Council area. They are continuing to meet with high levels of satisfaction and there are waiting lists for all sessions. Learn@ the library is also being re-launched, with new courses available for participants.

Classes in IT and in contemporary jewellery making, run by tutors from Forth Valley College, have started in Dunblane Library. The Archives Service is also running a new course entitled 'Routes to your Scottish Roots – basic steps in Family History'.

Six housebound readers are currently undergoing basic IT training delivered in their own homes through volunteers.

The Reader in Residence continues to work with Cornton Vale Women's prison delivering book groups, film groups, Scottish poetry group, recipe book project, Scottish History project, and Storybook Mums project. He works closely with the Learning Centre staff, SPS staff and various partners within the prison.

1.4 IMPROVED WELLBEING

1.4.1 Implement an Assessment and Care Planning Framework for children and young people in need

The Assessment and Care Planning Framework continues to be progressed by the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) Strategy Group. Work has continued with its development, and some piloting has taken place within Social Care. It is intended that this process of change will accelerate over the next few months but this is dependent upon accessing resources from the Community Planning Executive Delivery Group to take this forward, as it is a multi-agency action.

1.4.2 Implement the recommendations of the Review of Inclusion Services for Children and Young People with Additional Support Needs (ASN)

Key elements of the Inclusion Review implementation plan continue to be progressed. Much of the restructuring of specialist provisions has now taken place. The final part of a research project led by the educational psychology team to look at the purpose and future need for the primary extended learning support bases at Riverside and Fallin Primary Schools has been completed and its findings are currently being shared and reviewed.

The new model for allocating Support for Learning Assistants - Additional Support Needs - was implemented, with the first Cluster Moderation Panels taking place in January 2010. Successful referrals for exceptional resource needs were taken to the Authority Moderation Panel in March for consideration. This panel is chaired by the Inclusion & Additional Support Needs (ASN) Service Manager, and includes ASN officers, Head teacher representatives from each cluster, the Principal Psychologist and partner agencies. The Panel will meet again in May, October and December 2010 to consider further referrals and review resource needs. This model of allocating support will lead to more consistent staffing arrangements for schools, and provide earlier notification of staffing arrangements for the coming session than the previous model.

Updated policy and procedures for the Council's Resource Allocation Group have been developed in draft form to ensure that they are in line with the additional functions the group is now responsible for. The Resource Allocation Group now determines all internal full time educational placements and reviews all internal foster care placements as well as all external care and educational placements. New referral criteria for all full time placements have been fully shared and agreed with all specialist provisions.

Referral processes for all Outreach Support have been developed and all referrals are now considered at the monthly panel meeting, which has representation from all outreach services and educational psychology. New guidelines have been set and disseminated to all schools and establishments. These changes will lead to a more integrated and responsive service to schools and establishments, and will allow for better information sharing with council managers and partner agencies.

The new legislation contained within the Education (Additional Support for Learning) Scotland) Acts 2004 and 2009 will be implemented by the Scottish Government in the Autumn of 2010. An action plan developed by the ASN team in Stirling is being implemented and partners from a number of agencies are working with ASN staff to put the necessary procedures in place. Working groups are addressing the changes required for Co-ordinated Support Plan processes, notification requirements, and sharing of information on all aspects of Additional Supports Needs organisation within the council with relevant parties. This action plan will be the focus of work for the ASN team for session 2010-2011.

1.4.3 Develop and implement a commissioning strategy for services for older people

Capacity planning work was completed jointly with the NHS this quarter (see paragraph 2.5), which will inform the further development of a commissioning strategy for older people.

External care at home services were put out to tender with three framework providers - Carewatch, ILS and Sue Ryder - now in place. A Commissioning Group has been established to oversee the change to these new arrangements for service provision, incorporating regular meetings (monthly in the first instance) with framework providers.

A community rehabilitation service is being introduced to allow more people to be cared for closer to home. The new service will provide community-based intensive rehabilitation and support for people living in the rural north west area of Stirling Council. It will be delivered by a joint community support team, which is staffed by district nursing, occupational therapy, physiotherapy and community social care staff based at Callander Health Centre. The service, which is run by Rural North West Forth Valley Partnership, brings together staff from the NHS, Stirling Council, voluntary agencies, community agencies and other partners.

1.4.4 Implement the commissioning strategy for services to people with learning disabilities

Social Care continue to work closely with the Joint Improvement Team and NHS partners to further develop the integrated Learning Disability service and the joint commissioning arrangements.

Following on from the Day Services review for people with learning disabilities, an action plan is now being addressed commencing with person centred planning work with service users of Streets Ahead.

An additional Local Area Coordinator post has been created to further support the delivery of person-centred planning. The process of recruitment to this post is well advanced, with the preferred candidate identified and awaiting the completion of pre-employment checks. Day Services for people with learning disabilities are currently being reviewed, consultation with service users, families and staff having commenced.

1.4.5 Complete the Forthbank Sports Village, and through Active Stirling, increase participation in physical activities through sports development activities and provision of sports facilities.

The Active Stirling management team are working in partnership with key agencies to develop new programmes and analyse the impact of existing activities, as part of its commitment to improving the activity levels and health and wellbeing of the communities of Stirling. In partnership with Raploch Urban Regeneration Company they have delivered two employability courses with funding from the Department of Work and pensions. The programmes give participants core training in sport and physical activity areas such as coaching, health and fitness and customer service. Through the courses 22 participants have completed the programme and five are now working with Active Stirling as either volunteer or paid staff, and four have been accepted into further education.

1.4.6 Enable access to information and library services, arts, heritage and cultural experiences

The Library Service has been successful in achieving grant funding of £8,500 from the Scottish Arts Council in support of the Off the Page Stirling Book Festival, to be held from the 11th to the 18th September this year.

A series of PowerPoint presentations on a laptop were put together by the Archives Service and taken round all of the Mobile Library routes from February to April 2010. A separate presentation was put together for each route - nine in all. 11 exhibitions are being held between March and September 2010 showcasing the Kirk Sessions' records, which are held at the Archives courtesy of the National Archives of Scotland. Also this quarter, the Stirling Makar, Magi Gibson, visited some of the villages on the Mobile Library's Thursday route giving readings.

Reading Groups for primary school-age children, the Bairns Exhibition, have been developed. A successful application was made for Live Literature Funding for this project to mount exhibitions in the libraries where the Chatterbooks Groups meet - Central Library, St Ninians, Bridge of Allan and Fallin.

Scottish Natural Heritage is using Stirling's libraries to promote the work being done at Flanders Moss. The exhibition of local poetry and history is inspired by the Flanders Moss national nature reserve and will be displayed in several libraries between April and late August.

1.4.7 Provide better access to and improved use of open space across the Council area through the Access Strategy, the Core Paths Plan and the Walks for All programme

Contracts have been let for the manufacture and supply of signposts and countryside gates to enable the Core Path Network to be signed and made more accessible. The first signs and gates are now being installed.

An audit is underway to quantify the level of work needed to bring the entire network up to a minimum-walking standard. Partnership working with Clackmannanshire, Fife and Falkirk Councils and the Fieldfare Trust is establishing a standard methodology for assessing core paths for their ease of use by disabled people.

Financial support is still being provided to Active Stirling to continue the health walks initiative Walk About Stirling.

Work is also beginning to encourage community ownership of their access networks and to encourage community management of them.

1.4.8 Encourage active travel, including active travel to school through the Safe Routes to School initiative

In September 2009 Sustrans repeated the Annual National Hands Up survey in primary and secondary schools throughout Stirling and Scotland. This survey provides statistical information on methods of travel (walking, cycling, scooter/skate, park and stride, driven, bus, taxi or other) to and from school by children and young people, broken down by age group. As a result of this research facilities such as improved cycle parking are being provided at schools in the Stirling area as part of the Safe Routes to School initiatives in partnership with Sustrans.

1.4.9 Implement the Road Safety Plan

A report from the Central Scotland Safety Camera Partnership (CSSCP) is due shortly. This will cover the first year of operation of the A811 Route Enforcement Strategy.

The first phase of traffic sign improvements on the A81 and A811 route plans is complete. The second phase will be undertaken during 2010/11.

1.5 QUALITY ENVIRONMENT

1.5.1 Implement an Open Space strategy to improve public open spaces where sports, leisure and other activities take place

Work continues on developing Stirling's Open Space Strategy with a consultation strategy developed to lead us into the first stage of community consultation alongside the Local Development Plan. The Quantitative Audit has been undertaken by Forth Valley GIS on our behalf and this will form the baseline information used during consultations.

Following endorsement of the Beechwood Park Masterplan by the Council in December 2009, work on the detailed design of a new play area has been completed and supply of the equipment is currently out to tender. A detailed design for a Four Seasons Garden incorporating an orchard is about to be presented to the community for consultation.

Work continues on developing a baseline appraisal to inform a draft master plan for Kings Park. Questionnaires, workshops and park walkabouts have all been undertaken to ascertain the views of the community and wider stakeholders on their aspirations for the park. The draft master plan will be presented for consultation in May 2010.

TGP Consultants have been appointed to undertake a master plan of Plein Country Park and work will get underway on developing the master plan shortly.

Officers are currently drafting a Tree & Woodland Strategy and a consultation strategy is being developed to determine the requirement for allotments within the Stirling Council area.

1.5.2 Update policies and planning guidance to secure a higher quality public realm in new developments

Planning policies, guidance and advice notes are being reviewed and developed in conjunction with the preparation of the new Local Development Plan. This will ensure that new developments are designed to the highest standard, with greater emphasis on public spaces.

1.5.3 Increase communities' influence over their own local environment and public realm

Meaningful community participation continues to be encouraged and facilitated to inform the preparation of the Local Development Plan, with full engagement and consultation with community groups, partner organisations and businesses, to gain their views and input into determining the type of place and planning the shape, style and scale of Stirling over the next 20 years and beyond. All Area Community Planning Forums have had input into the Local Development Plan. The roadshows to encourage involvement in the Plan are scheduled to run during May and June 2010. Consultation to inform the development of the Open Space strategy is scheduled to run concurrently with the Local Development Plan consultation.

Fourteen grant applications were approved for the Community Pride funding this quarter, totaling £10,915 for projects such as Marquee Hire for Community Fun Day, drystone walling, restoration of War Memorial, Community Noticeboard, Community Eco-day and various planting of tubs and flower beds.

Additional criteria have been developed for 2010/11 and circulated to Elected Members via the Information Bulletin for approval. The 2009/10 budget will provide approx £28,000 for community projects. The first deadline is the 28th May 2010.

The Council have also agreed to work with Braehead and District Community Council on a Scottish Government funded Community Council Empowerment Pilot Project. This will see Braehead and District Community Council work to manage an allotment site as a local asset.

1.5.4 Develop cleanliness measures with Keep Scotland Beautiful and implement a Community Litter Plan

Land Services won two awards at the recent Keep Scotland Beautiful People & Places conference. The team won the category in the 'Best Local Environmental Quality Innovation Award' for their innovative Community Local Environmental Audit and Management System (LEAMS) measurement system, and were a finalist in the same category for their successful Litter Day of Action.

The Service has undertaken a succession of Deep Cleans during the first three months of 2010, removing 190 tonnes of detritus from the road channels and footways within a number of communities.

1.5.5 Regularly report on the state of the environment in Stirling

An updated State of the Environment Report was posted on the Council's public website in December 2009. It can be accessed on the following page:

<http://www.stirling.gov.uk/index/stirling/sustainable/report.htm>

The next update is planned for 2 years time.

1.5.6 Continue to protect, develop, manage and improve open areas, countryside and built heritage for the benefit of visitors and residents

Work continues on the Back Walk, now under the auspices of a tri-partnership leading the project on behalf of the Community Planning Partnership. Land Services continue to undertake selective tree felling/surgery, enhanced cleansing, weed removal and generally tackle issues relating to anti-social behaviour such as dog fouling, littering.

Significant work has been undertaken at Plean Country Park in partnership with the Criminal Justice Service to clean out reed bed filters and other much needed works. Extensive works to the Dunblane Riverside Walkway continue to ensure the stability and life of this feature.

A number of roundabouts throughout Stirling have recently been completely re-landscaped, resulting in a significant improvement to many of our gateway features.

Planning policies, guidance and advice notes are being reviewed and developed in conjunction with the preparation of the new Local Development Plan to ensure that the natural environment and built heritage are appropriately protected and not compromised by new development, with their setting enhanced wherever practicable.

1.5.7 Reduce landfill use and increase recycling rates

The Council continues to improve the amount of waste that is recycled and composted, achieving over 43.6% during 2009/10. This is anticipated to increase further with the continuing roll out of the kerbside collection of food waste, tetra-paks and small electrical goods to all homes across the Council area. The introduction of the Stirling City Centre Recycling Service, including householder recycling points, and a residual waste materials recovery service will further contribute to the overall recycling rates, and continue to reduce the amount of waste disposed of in landfill, which is well within the landfill allowance targets.

1.5.8 Develop a comprehensive Flood Management Strategy that includes local flood intervention schemes to help reduce the risk of flooding to local properties and infrastructure

The new Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 has been enacted and the old Acts of 1961 and 1973 will be rescinded in late 2010. Meanwhile local authorities are to continue under the old Acts while preparing for the full implementation of the new Act.

The Council has the following duties under the new Flood Risk Management Scotland Act:

- Assess relevant bodies of water to ascertain whether there is a risk of flooding.
- Prepare a schedule of works for clearance and repair works for locations where the risk of flooding can be greatly reduced. Carry out the works within the schedule.
- Provide information to the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) to facilitate their responsibilities under the new Act. SEPA has to fulfill deadlines for a national assessment of flood risk by 2011, produce new flood risk and hazard maps by 2013, and put in place Scotland's first national flood risk management plan by 2015.
- Consider surface and ground flooding as well as tidal and river flooding.
- Promote flood alleviation schemes

Stirling Council continues to:

- Work towards producing local flood risk management plans.
- Carry out inspections and clearance of piped watercourses that cross Council property.
- Develop flood risk and hazard maps for the area

1.6 BETTER SERVICES

1.6.1 Create clear connections between strategy, planning, performance and service delivery

The implementation of the new Corporate Performance Management System later this year (see point 1.6.4 below) will allow clear mapping of performance indicators to strategic topics and themes from the Single Outcome Agreement and the Strategic Plan, illustrating the 'golden thread' and helping the Council identify any gaps or areas for further development. It will also enable community planning partners to include their performance data in the Council's reporting framework.

1.6.2 Implement performance management and reporting frameworks

The Council's performance reporting arrangements have been revised to reflect the restructured services, to ensure compliance with Audit Scotland's new Statutory Performance Indicator (SPI) Direction and to improve the timeliness, accessibility and focus of the Council's performance reporting. The two regular reporting methods are:

- **Stirling Performs**
Monthly At a Glance and Hot Spot reports providing performance information relating to 50 agreed indicators covering all customer-facing services within the Council, as well as detailing planned improvement actions for those areas where there is weaker performance. This is the replacement for Stirling Stat and has been up and running since December 2009.
- **Council Performance Report**
A quarterly narrative report from the Council Management Team presenting council-wide progress towards the key actions listed in Shaping Stirling: Strategic Plan 2008-2012.

Both are reported regularly to the Service Delivery and Performance Committee, and are posted in the Members' Bulletin and on the performance pages of the Council's website:

<http://www.stirling.gov.uk/index/council/stirlingperforms.htm>

These web pages have been expanded and revised to strengthen the Council's public performance reporting and now include details of recent inspections by regulatory bodies such as HMIE and SWIA. A compendium of background information is also available, which includes a glossary of commonly used performance terminology.

The new Corporate Performance Management System (see point 1.6.4 below) will help improve performance management and reporting frameworks further by enabling all information to be kept in one place, with easily produced, visually interesting and meaningful performance summaries including scorecards and dashboards.

1.6.3 Publish an Annual Improvement Statement detailing specific targets for performance improvement

The Annual Improvement Statement for 2010-11 has now been drafted and will be reported to Service Delivery and Performance Committee on the 8th June 2010.

1.6.4 Ensure best value in the use of Council resources, including exploring the potential for shared services and collaborative working with other Councils and Community Planning Partners

In December 2009 Stirling entered into an agreement with Fife and Clackmannanshire Councils to jointly procure a Corporate Performance Management System. The tender was advertised in December and nine bids were received, which were then assessed by a joint evaluation team with representation from all three councils. The award of the contract is likely to take place in early May, following which implementation will commence.

This has proved an excellent opportunity for partnership working with two nearby councils, particularly Clackmannanshire with whom Stirling already has some shared services. The three councils investing together in the same system will mean greater influence in Scottish user groups and will allow benchmarking of performance and future joint training sessions and reporting developments. Costs have also been reduced for all three councils – the cost of a performance management system when procuring individually is £100,000, which has been reduced to £40,000 for Stirling through this collaboration. The joint procurement project will be submitted for a CoSLA Excellence Award in Summer 2010.

The system will provide integrated software to support the consistent collation, management and reporting of corporate and service level performance and performance-related information. This will assist the Council in fulfilling the recommendations of the 2005 Best Value audit and preparing for BV2.

1.7 PARTICIPATION AND RESPONSIBILITY

1.7.1 Encourage community involvement and community based activity

The Callander Partnership – which brings together the major community organisations, Stirling Council and Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park – continues to make progress on a range of important issues such as learning, the future of St Kessog's, best use of community facilities, and affordable housing. These are acknowledged as long-term issues, but there is common understanding and commitment to working in partnership on these issues.

Community activity in Raploch continues to grow and develop. The first Health Issues in the Community course has been completed with all participants passing with flying colours. The Raploch Community View Newspaper continues to grow, attract new contributors, but also generate new activity – in particular work with young mothers and unemployed young men.

The Stepin Stones group in Cornton has made significant progress in developing small-scale environmental action and involving people who had not previously been involved in community activity.

Throsk Community Enterprise continues to be supported in the project management of the construction of their new village hall.

1.7.2 Promote inclusion and engagement within the democratic process

A revised Community Council Handbook has now been sent to each individual Community Councillor, giving guidance and information. Training Needs Analysis forms will be circulated shortly. Feedback from this will inform the timing and content of a Community Council Induction/Development Day.

The Strategic Forum for Learning, Empowerment and Citizenship is currently exploring approaches to inclusion and engagement. In particular the Forum is debating and researching an authority-wide framework for volunteering. A report has been commissioned which will be the main agenda item at the next meeting on the 14th May 2010.

1.7.3 Develop and maintain resources to support community capacity building and enable individuals and communities to develop, manage and sustain community owned/led services, projects and assets

In the period of January to March 2010 the Communities Team supported seven community organisations to attract £156, 615 of external funding. Overall in 2009/10, £518,769 was attracted to support community organisations to develop their own activities. This does not include the £34,700 disbursed through Community Grants.

The Communities Team also disbursed £8,000 to community credit unions. In addition, the team has continued to support credit unions to examine other forms of funding. Cornton Credit Union has recently reported an increase in its number of members.

Ongoing support is offered to a range of community organisations to enable them to manage their own projects, services and assets. Particular examples are Raploch Community Partnership, Fallin Community Enterprises and Crawford Hall Management committee.

1.8 MORE SUSTAINABLE

1.8.1 Implement the Council's Sustainable Development Strategy

Preliminary work to update the Council's Sustainable Development Strategy - to reflect changes to management structures, move from services to themes and strengthen information on climate change - took place in March 2010. A briefing Note on 'Sustainable Development & Climate Change: Main Initiatives & Activity' has been drafted.

1.8.2 Achieve a sustained reduction of the Council's carbon emissions through delivery of a Carbon Management Programme (CMP)

An estimate of Council emissions for 2008/09 was compiled in January 2010 to compare with the 2006/07 baseline. This highlighted errors in the original baseline, which has subsequently been increased from 39,181 tonnes to 39,696 tonnes. Estimated emissions in 2008/09 were 38,060, giving a 2% year on year decrease. At this rate of reduction, the Council's emissions reduction target is likely to be met in 2014, rather than April 2013 as projected. The first annual update of delivering the CMP, including an estimate of 2009/10 emissions, is planned to report to Council in September 2010.

A workshop is being planned to identify further opportunities to reduce the Council's carbon footprint, and the Assistant Chief Executive for Sustainability, Economy and Environment is visiting Service Management Teams during the course of the year to highlight the twin priorities of reducing carbon emissions and adapting to the impacts of climate change and Peak Oil.

1.8.3 Provide community leadership on the promotion of Sustainable Development, including support for the Going Carbon Neutral Stirling initiative and continued participation in the Eco-Schools programme

A Public Engagement Campaign has been developed and was approved by the Executive Committee on the 15th April 2010. The Council again participated in the annual Earth Hour campaign on 27th March and a supporting article was published in the spring edition of Focus magazine. A monthly e-newsletter roundup of sustainable development news & activity continues to be sent to Members, Council Management Team and relevant officers across the Council.

The Council Management Team has committed to supporting the implementation of Going Carbon Neutral Stirling (GCNS) Carbon Cutter Plans across the Council, setting a target of one team per service per quarter for 2010/11.

The Council and GCNS jointly hosted a visit from US environmentalist Chris Martenson, at which he delivered the Crash Course in Energy, Economics and the Environment to business representatives, members of the public, Council and Community Planning Partners.

1.8.4 Develop and implement a Climate Change Strategy to mitigate the causes of climate change and adapt to its effects

Presentations to two Service Management Teams were given in March 2010. A briefing note on 'The Role of Open Space in Reducing the Impacts of Climate Change' has been drafted. The 2010 Annual Statement on delivering commitments in Scotland's Climate Change Declaration is due to be forwarded to the Sustainable Scotland Network in September 2010.

2 HOW WE HAVE IMPROVED

Section 2 presents progress towards the Council's priorities for improvement throughout the year, including items identified within the Council's Annual Improvement Statement 2009/10

2.2 Social Work Performance Inspection

Social Care has continued to work closely with the Joint Improvement Team and Social Work Inspection Agency (SWIA) to progress service developments and the SWIA Action Plan that identified the improvements required following the previous inspection. Elected Members continue to scrutinise the action plan and progress reports at Service Delivery & Performance Committee and the Executive.

Most of the improvement actions are progressing on target with a few actions subject to some minor slippage. SWIA have announced that the proportionate follow-up inspection will take place in September 2010. The Service Delivery & Performance Committee considered the latest progress report at their meeting in May 2010.

2.3 Care Commission Care Home Inspections

There have been three Care Commission care home inspections carried out during quarter 4 of 2009/10. The results are shown in the table below:

	Quality of Care & Support	Quality of Environment	Quality of Staffing	Quality of Management & Leadership
Allan Lodge Care Home 5 th February 2010	Very Good	Not Assessed	Very Good	Not Assessed
Beech Gardens Care Home 12 th January 2010	Adequate	Good	Good	Adequate
Strathendrick Care Home 13 th January 2010	Very Good	Not Assessed	Very Good	Not Assessed

There were a total of six requirements and four recommendations made in these inspection reports, which are now being progressed by Direct Provisions within Social Care.

2.4 Scrutiny Review of Care Services for Older People

Services have continued to progress the 36 recommendations contained in the Scrutiny Review of Care Services for Older People Improvement Plan. The timescales for completing the improvement actions are from August 2009 until January 2011. Positive progress has been made in the majority of areas for development. The balance of care continues to demonstrate overall improvement for the last quarter with an increase in care at home provision set against a decrease in long term care use.

Following the completion of capacity planning, external care providers were invited to tender for mainstream care at home services. The tender process involved service user and carer representation and resulted in the award of a contract to three service providers - Carewatch, ILS and Sue Ryder. Work has commenced with these providers to transfer long term maintenance care at home services to them, which in turn releases further internal capacity to provide re-ablement and intermediate care services in conjunction with NHS partners. A Commissioning Group has been established to oversee the change to these new arrangements for service provision.

In addition, by the end of the quarter 80% of the care at home workforce had been trained to deliver services within the re-ablement framework. The Re-ablement Service was implemented fully in the urban areas of Stirling Council and work continues to complete the roll out in the rural area.

Additional funds have been allocated (for the financial year 2010/11) for care of older people, to reduce the waiting times in the critical and substantial priority levels of risk and need, and to meet the

minimum standards. Funding will support the roll out of re-ablement services and the recruitment of additional Occupational Therapists to carry out assessments of need and reviews of care. While recruitment is underway the Service has seen a continued reduction in the numbers of people waiting for assessments of need during the quarter, and an increase in assessments being carried out.

The process of Carers Assessments is being revised to ensure access to services is maximised and work commenced with Princess Royal Carers Trust to develop and implement a user-led assessment process.

2.5 Joint Capacity Planning for Health and Social Care Needs in Stirling

As a result of ongoing discussions between the Council and Forth Valley NHS a joint team have undertaken a capacity planning study. The aim of the study was to forecast the Health and Social Care needs of Stirling's adult population in order to inform service planning and delivery.

Combined provision data from the Council and FV NHS formed the basis of the forecast of care demand for four main care groups – physical disability, dementia, learning disability and mental health. Adjustments were also made for unmet need. Expected population changes and prevalence of key conditions were then applied in order to forecast demand for services.

The study shows that Health and Social Care face similar challenges from increasing demands and costs. A more coherent approach is needed as well as wider cultural and societal change. This forecast will now be used for detailed service planning activity.

2.6 Capacity Planning for Older People's Services

In recognition of the growing proportion of older people within Stirling's population, and the challenge this presents for traditional models of social care, a detailed capacity planning exercise for older people's care has been conducted. The capacity plan collects together service provision and demographic information and uses this as a basis for planning service capacity for older people's care.

The service's aspiration to follow a flexible 'intermediate care' route is modelled in the plan. A redesigned care pathway is described, along with the financial impact and projected service volumes suggested for the key areas of Care at Home, Intermediate Care and Care Home Beds Provision. These models and the detailed analysis behind them provide a firm evidence-based footing for future service delivery and development.

2.7 Scrutiny Panel on Disruption within Stirling's Schools

In June 2009 the Council agreed to set up an Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel on Disruption within Stirling's Schools. Phase 1, research and data collection, has now been completed and the findings presented to Council on 11th March 2010. The findings show that in many areas of research, Stirling's schools exceed the national results in a positive way.

There is a clear difference in the perceptions of the different stakeholder groups surveyed, with the most positive stakeholder groups being head teachers. Support staff, parents, teachers and pupils are less positive than head teachers to different degrees. This is replicated in both primary and secondary schools. There is scope in some key areas for further improvement also identified at national level, and some areas for improvement within Stirling specifically.

Council agreed the recommendations of the report on 11th March with two additions:

- The Scrutiny Panel returns to the next full Council meeting with costed proposals that will help with the implementation of the findings.
- The Scrutiny Panel should also return to the next Council meeting with proposals for how to build on the good will created by this process and create ongoing contributions from parents and pupils to education policy.

The Education Service is presently working up a detailed action plan to implement all of the recommendations.

2.8 HMle Child Protection Inspection

HMle announced that they would carry out the second Child Protection Inspection of the Stirling local authority area from the 1st to the 19th March 2010. This is a multi agency inspection involving the key partners: Stirling Council, NHS Forth Valley, Central Scotland Police and the Scottish Children's Reporters Administration. The previous inspection was carried out in 2008.

Prior to the inspection phase the partners prepared a self-evaluation report on child protection services and provided supporting evidence. Fieldwork is now complete and the inspection report will be published in early June 2010. Following this, the Council and its partners will work closely with HMle to develop an action plan that will take forward the improvements identified from the inspection. A multi-agency group will be established to progress this action plan.

2.9 HMle School Inspections

HMle inspection reports for the undernoted schools have been published between January and March 2010. Performance against the quality indicators was assessed as follows:

School/Nursery Class	Improvements in Performance	Children's/learners' experiences	Meeting learning needs
Allan's Primary School 30 th March 2010	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Callander Primary School 19 th January 2010	Good	Satisfactory	Good
Inversnaid Primary School 30 th March 2010	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Bannockburn High School 30 th March 2010	Weak	Good	Satisfactory

2.10 HMle Community Learning and Development Inspection

This quarter HMle carried out a Community Learning and Development Inspection of the learning community surrounding Bannockburn High School. The results were as follows:

Quality Indicator	Grade
Improvements in performance	Satisfactory
Impact on young people	Very Good
Impact on adults	Very Good
Impact of capacity building on communities	Very Good
Improving services	Good

2.11 Scottish Housing Regulator Inspection

The Scottish Housing Regulator's final inspection report was published in March 2010 and the Council's Housing Services were awarded a C grade. The report identified 13 key recommendations in addition to other areas that need to be improved.

The Council is required to develop an Improvement Plan to address the weaknesses identified and submit this to the regulator in May 2010. Housing Services' Quality and Performance Manager will co-ordinate the development of the Improvement Plan and bring a draft version of the plan to the Housing Advisory Group meeting on the 23rd April 2010 and the Service Delivery & Performance

Committee on 11th May 2010 to note the process of developing the Improvement Plan and the monitoring and reporting frameworks suggested.

2.12 Staff absence

The revised Attendance Support Policy and the Attendance Capability Procedure were considered by the Executive Committee on 15th April 2010. The intention is to help minimise absence by ensuring that there is early support for employees who are suffering from stress, have musculoskeletal injuries, or have repeated absence. Across the Council the greatest number of days lost due to absence in February 2010 was due to personal stress, which accounted for 22.5% of days lost (726 days), followed by strain/pain/injury at 20.7% (667 days).

Work continues to focus on Employee Health and Wellbeing across the Council including the promotion of healthy eating and exercise. In addition, work is progressing to roll out PRDs (Personal Review & Development) across the Council, to ensure that all employees have a 1-2-1 with their line manager to discuss work issues, achievements and objectives, and to improve communications to and engagement with employees on what the key issues are for the Council.

2.13 Performance management timetable

This was initially recommended in the Best Value Improvement Plan from 2005, which stated that a performance management timetable should be implemented that ensures performance is regularly monitored and reported to senior management, elected members and the public as appropriate to drive continuous improvement. The 2010 Performance Reporting Timetable was approved by Council Management Team (CMT) in February and outlines when services need to provide their information, when this is reported to CMT and the Service Delivery & Performance Committee, and when reports are published on the Council website for public access.

This timetable is available on The Source:

<http://web.stirling.gov.uk/chiefexecsoffice/performanceceresearch/performancecereporting.htm>

2.14 Maintenance of the road network

The overall condition of the road carriageway network continues to show signs of improvement, although the severe weather conditions over the 2009/10 winter period have increased deterioration over vulnerable parts of the network. The ongoing improvement of condition is directly related to increased investment in road maintenance over a 5-year period, 2008/09 to 2012/13. Continuing and maintaining this improvement is wholly dependent on the level of investment.

2.15 Attendances at swimming pools

Increasing the number of attendances at pools has been identified as a key priority for improvement in Stirling over recent years, particularly since the closure of Rainbow Slides in 2008. Performance has been weak in this area due to the lack of facilities, with only 470 pool attendances per 1,000 of the population reported in 2008/09. This meant that Stirling ranked lowest out of all 32 local authorities in Scotland for this indicator.

Since the opening of The Peak in April 2009 performance has significantly improved. In fact, pool attendance figures during the first three months of The Peak opening, April to June 2009, were over three times the annual figure from the year before, at 1788.5 per 1,000 of the population.

The final audited annual figures for this indicator will be reported in September 2010, when it is expected that Stirling will achieve a much higher ranking and will be in the top quartile of Scottish authorities.

2.16 Planning & Regulation Services activity based time recording/costing

An electronic activity based time recording system (as already utilised within Waste Services) has been introduced throughout Planning, Building Standards, Licensing, Environmental Health, Trading Standards, Animal Health & Welfare, and Fleet Management Services. This will be used to assess and monitor the resource input into the activities and functions undertaken by the service areas, thereby enabling trend analysis and interrogation of cost inputs against business processes and performance outcomes, with identification of efficiencies.

2.17 Building Standards process improvements

All key activities within the Building Standards Service have been process mapped and analysed recently, with service delivery improvements and efficiencies identified, and outcome-based performance indicators developed using a balanced scorecard approach. Performance will be measured, monitored, analysed, reported and benchmarked to demonstrate continuous improvement and customer focus in service delivery.

2.18 Waste Services' Environmental Management System

Waste Services have achieved certification by the British Standards Institution (BSi) of their integrated Environmental Management System (EMS) to the internationally recognised ISO 14001:2004 environmental management standard.

Certification of an EMS to this standard demonstrates that Waste Services have strong management systems in place for continually improving its environmental performance with regards to regulatory compliance, pollution prevention, emergency preparedness and minimising environmental impacts; with robust measurement and monitoring of environmental processes and identification of opportunities for improvement.

The electronic EMS is integrated with Waste Services' process-based Business Management System (previously certified to ISO 9001:2008) and comprehensive Performance Management System.

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