

**8<sup>th</sup> June 2010**

**STIRLING PERFORMS: MARCH 2010 AND  
COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 4**

**1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report presents the Stirling Performs report for March 2010 and the Quarterly Council Performance Report for quarter 4 of 2009/10.
- 1.2 Stirling Performs provides performance information relating to 50 agreed performance indicators covering all customer-facing services within the Council, as well as detailing planned improvement actions for those areas where there is weaker performance. The Stirling Performs reports are updated monthly on the Council website and reported regularly to the Service Delivery and Performance Committee.
- 1.3 The Quarterly Council Performance Report is a narrative report reflecting progress towards meeting the Council's strategic priorities and the actions taken to improve areas of weaker performance as identified in the Annual Improvement Statement.

**2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Service Delivery and Performance Committee is asked to:

- 2.1 Consider the performance information in the Stirling Performs At a Glance and Hot Spot reports for March 2010 (see Appendices 1 and 2).
- 2.2 Advise whether the target for non-household planning applications should be amended for the new financial year – see point 3.10 below.
- 2.3 Consider the Quarterly Council Performance Report for quarter 4 of 2009/10 (see Appendix 3).

**3 CONSIDERATIONS**

**Stirling Performs**

- 3.1 The 50 indicators in Stirling Performs are compiled from those previously included in Stirling Stat, certain key SPIs and some additional indicators, to ensure that all customer-facing processes are represented and the suite reflects a strong emphasis on quality and customer focus. This is required by Best Value 2 and revised Audit Scotland SPI requirements.
- 3.2 Further details on the background to each indicator including where the data comes from, what it measures, and an explanation of how the targets were arrived at are provided in a report on the Stirling Performs page of the Council website: <http://www.stirling.gov.uk/index/council/stirlingperforms.htm>. This document also provides an explanation of some of the terms commonly used in performance reports, such as target and tolerance, as requested by the Service Delivery and Performance Committee in February 2010.
- 3.3 Stirling Performs consists of an At a Glance report which shows the current status of all indicators, along with a more detailed Hot Spot report which provides narrative on those indicators performing below target and outwith agreed tolerance levels. The Hot Spot report also gives details of any relevant improvement actions and the resource implications of these improvement actions.
- 3.4 In addition to reporting to the Service Delivery and Performance Committee, monthly monitoring Stirling Performs reports also appear on the Stirling Performs page of the Council's website, with a link provided in the Members' Bulletin.
- 3.5 The full At a Glance report presenting performance data for March 2010 is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. It shows 29 indicators above or on target, 12 below target but within tolerance, and 9 below target and outwith tolerance (hot spots).

### **Hot Spots**

- 3.6 Appendix 2 is the Hot Spot report, providing further details around indicators where performance has shown deterioration and is currently below target and outwith tolerance. There are no new hot spots this month.

#### Existing Hot Spots that are still below target

- a) Number of days lost due to sickness absence (*indicator 5*)
  - b) Social background reports submitted to the Children's Reporter (*10*)
  - c) Youth learning clients moving into training, employment or further education (*30*)
  - d) Housing emergency repairs completed within time (*33*)
  - e) Time taken to re-let void properties (*34*)
  - f) Current tenants' arrears (*38*)
  - g) Planning applications dealt with within target time (*39*)
  - h) Waste and recycling collection route completion (*43*)
  - i) Roads maintenance enquiries (*46*)
- 3.7 Recent hot spots that have now recovered:
    - j) Computer usage at libraries (*indicator 26*)

- k) Housing repair appointments met (33)
- l) Homeless applicants sustaining their tenancies (36)

### **Areas of deteriorating performance**

3.8 In addition to hot spots, there can be indicators where performance is currently within tolerance (amber) but where there has been deterioration in performance over the last three months. These are indicators that should be monitored and intervention action taken as necessary to ensure that performance recovers, rather than allowing the declining trend to continue to a point where they become hot spots. In March 2010 these are as follows:

- a) Schools evaluated as good or better (*indicator 7 - quarterly*)

This indicator evaluates school performance against the three core quality indicators used by HMIE in school and early years inspections: Improvements in Performance; Children's/Learners' Experiences; Meeting Learning Needs. In March 2010 four establishments were inspected and the average overall evaluation was good. However, Bannockburn High School received a 'Weak' grading for Improvements in Performance and 'Satisfactory' for Meeting Learning Needs, which has brought the performance for this indicator down to amber for quarter 4. Three areas for improvement were identified in Bannockburn High's report and these will now be progressed by the school. A follow-through inspection will be carried out within the next year.

- b) Residential respite nights for those aged over 65 (13)

Respite care is a service intended to benefit a carer and the person he or she cares for by providing a short break from caring tasks. This break is made possible through alternative care arrangements. The Stirling Performs indicator looks specifically at residential overnight stays only, and does not include daytime respite delivered in service users' homes or via Day Services. In March 2010 there were 15 respite nights provided per 1,000 of the population aged over 65, which is below the target of 25. This decrease is partly offset by an increase in home-based, daytime respite, which is not currently monitored on a monthly basis. The Community Care Strategy - Modernising Community Care Services: "Adding Life To Years" - includes plans to develop a short breaks bureau approach to the delivery of respite to improve outcomes for carers. This will be progressed over the coming year.

- c) Processing of new benefits and event change claims (32)

This indicator measures the efficiency of the Council in processing Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit applications. In March 2010 the average time to process new and event change claims was 6.4 days, which is only slightly above the maximum target of 6 days. Performance for this indicator is affected by the complexity of claims, the amount of information required from claimants and the resources allocated. However, it should be noted that Stirling's performance remains in the upper quartile when compared to the national picture. This will continue to be monitored over the coming year and improvement action taken as and when required.

- d) Business advice requests dealt with within target time (42)

This indicator provides a measure of the efficiency of the Trading Standards Service in dealing with business advice requests. In quarter 4 of 2009/10 the percentage dealt with within 14 days of receipt has dropped slightly to 89.3%, which is just below the target of 90% but well within tolerance levels. The annual figure for this indicator is 93.8%, which is above target.

### **Recognising good performance**

- 3.9 This month there are 29 indicators that are green and performing to their agreed targets. These can be seen in the At a Glance report at Appendix 1.

### **Proposed change to indicator**

- 3.10 In relation to indicator number 39 – planning applications dealt with within target time – the performance for non-household planning applications has been below target and outwith tolerance for nine months of the last financial year, as is described in the March Hotspot Report. These applications are generally of a larger scale, more complex and often require applicants to provide additional supporting information to be assessed prior to determination, which can take considerable time (more than two-month target) and is outwith control of the Service, which adversely impacts on the performance indicator.

Under the Scottish Government's reform of the planning system (Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006), there are now no national performance indicators or targets for planning performance. The intention appears to be that targets should be set at a local level, including for large-scale developments, through processing agreements that Councils may enter into with applicants.

It is recommended that the performance indicator for householder applications should be retained at a target of 90% (with 10% tolerance), as it is generally residents who are directly affected by this service.

For the other categories of 'local – non-householder' and 'major' planning applications, which were introduced from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010, Members are asked to advise whether they wish to retain the existing target of 80% of such applications being dealt with within two months, or to remove the non-householder element of the indicator for the time being and give further consideration to a revised indicator after a period of implementation and review of the new categories.

### **Quarterly Council Performance Report**

- 3.11 In September 2007, Council approved its revised public performance reporting arrangements, which included quarterly Service Performance Reports. These were introduced in 2008/09 once the Strategic Plan for 2008-2012 had been agreed.
- 3.12 In September 2009, following the Council's restructuring, a single quarterly narrative report from the Council Management Team replaced the quarterly reports from individual services, presenting Council-wide progress towards strategic priorities.
- 3.13 The Performance Report is designed to record progress made towards meeting the Council's strategic priorities. These reports complement the

regular reporting of performance indicators and the quarterly financial reporting against budgets by providing a narrative picture of service performance.

- 3.14 The report on performance for quarter 4, covering January to March 2010, is attached as Appendix 3 to this report.
- 3.15 There are two sections to the report at Appendix 3. Section one presents progress towards the Council's key actions as listed in Shaping Stirling: Strategic Plan 2008-2012. Section two presents progress towards the Council's priorities for improvement throughout the year, including items identified within the Council's Annual Improvement Statement 2009/10.
- 3.16 The current Strategic Plan relates to the first iteration of the Single Outcome Agreement and so a review is now urgently required to bring it in line with the version published in 2009. It is suggested that this could be linked to the performance objectives that are to be set by Council in June 2010 for the Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executives and the Heads of Services, and to other priorities within individual Service Plans.

#### 4 POLICY/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS

<b>Policy Implications (delete Yes/No as appropriate)</b>	
Diversity (age, disability, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation)	No
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	No
Corporate/Service Plan	Yes
Existing Policy or Strategy	Yes
Risk	No
<b>Resource Implications (delete Yes/No as appropriate)</b>	
Financial	No
People	No
Land and Property or IT Systems	No
<b>Consultations (delete Yes/No as appropriate)</b>	
Internal or External Consultations	Yes

##### Policy Implications

- 4.1 Stirling Performs is part of the Council's overall performance management arrangements, which links to the Single Outcome Agreement and Shaping Stirling: Strategic Plan 2008-2012, in particular in relation to the Strategic Theme of Making Services Better.
- 4.2 The Quarterly Council Performance Report tracks progress in implementing the actions outlined in Shaping Stirling: Strategic Plan 2008-2010.

##### Resource Implications

- 4.3 Effective performance management requires corrective action and, in instances where performance reporting identifies areas where corrective action is required, resulting improvement actions may have resource implications. Some actions may be covered by existing budget allocation or

require additional investment identified by the Council through its strategic planning process. Others may be outstanding and require consideration through the annual budget strategy arrangements. The Stirling Performs Hot Spot report outlines the resource implications of improvement actions relating to those indicators identified as hot spots.

### **Consultations**

- 4.4 The Council Management Team oversaw the review of indicators and targets for Stirling Performs. Heads of Service have approved the information contained in the Stirling Performs and Quarterly Reports.

## **5 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 5.1 Corporate Performance Management – Priorities for 2010/11, SD&P Committee, 11<sup>th</sup> May 2010.
- 5.2 Performance Reporting Arrangements, Executive, 4<sup>th</sup> September 2007.
- 5.3 Previous Stirling Stat reports to Executive (most recent 18<sup>th</sup> June 2009).
- 5.4 Stirling Performs February 2010 report, SD&P Committee, 11<sup>th</sup> May 2010.
- 5.5 Stirling Performs January 2010 report (published on Council website).
- 5.6 Stirling Performs December 2009 report, SD&P Committee, 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2010.
- 5.7 Council Performance Report Quarters 2 and 3 2009/10, SD&P Committee 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2010.
- 5.8 Council Performance Report Quarter 1 2009/10, SD&P Committee, 8<sup>th</sup> October 2009.

Author(s)

Name	Designation	Tel No/Extension
Lesley Carnegie	Performance & Improvement Officer	3025

Approved by

Name	Designation	Signature
Bob Jack	Chief Executive	

Date 28<sup>th</sup> May 2010

Reference \_\_\_\_\_

## At a Glance Report

- March 2010

**Legend:**

- ✓ Above or on target
- ▲ Below target within tolerance:  
*further details of those showing significant deterioration can be found in the covering report*
- Below target outwith tolerance:  
*further details provided in the monthly Hot Spot report*
- ⬆ Improving
- ➡ Steady
- ⬇ Deteriorating

		Status	Trend
1.	Percentage of calls to Council answered	▲	⬆
2.	Contact centre calls answered within 20 seconds	✓	⬆
3.	Talkback stage 2 & 3 enquiries	▲ <sup>1</sup>	⬆
4.	Online transactions	✓	⬆
5.	Number of days lost due to sickness absence per employee	●	⬆
	Number of days lost due to sickness absence per teacher	✓	⬆
6.	Primary/Special Needs School Free Meal Uptake	✓	⬆
	Secondary School Free Meal Uptake	✓	⬆
	Primary/Special Needs School Paid Meal Uptake	▲	⬆
	Secondary School Paid Meal Uptake	▲	⬆
7.	Schools evaluated as good or better against the three core indicators (quarterly)	▲	⬇
8.	External care or residential school placements	✓	⬆
9.	Child protection activity	na <sup>2</sup>	➡
10.	Social Background Reports submitted to the Children's Reporter within time	●	⬇
11.	Children seen by a supervising officer within target time	✓	➡
12.	Percentage of those aged 0-17 assessed as needing respite who are receiving a service	na <sup>3</sup>	⬇
13.	Residential respite nights for those aged 18-64	✓	➡
	Residential respite nights for those aged over 65	▲	⬇
14.	Delayed discharges	▲	➡
15.	Priority 1 and 2 care assessments pending allocation	na <sup>4</sup>	⬇
16.	Waiting time for Priority 1 and 2 care assessments pending allocation	▲	➡
17.	Home care provision level for those aged 18-64	✓	➡
	Home care provision level for those aged over 65	✓	➡
18.	Completion of community orders (quarterly)	✓	⬇
19.	Social Enquiry Reports submitted to the courts within target time (quarterly)	✓	⬆
20.	New probationers seen by a supervising officer within target time (quarterly)	✓	⬆
21.	Personal outcome achievement of literacy and numeracy learners (quarterly)	✓	⬆
22.	Personal outcome achievement of ESOL learners (quarterly)	✓	⬆
23.	Cultural attendances	✓ <sup>1</sup>	⬇
	Young people's cultural attendances	✓	⬇
24.	Museum attendances	✓	⬆
25.	Pool attendances (quarterly)	✓	⬆
	Indoor sport facility attendances (quarterly)	✓	⬆
26.	Computer usage at libraries	▲	⬆
27.	Number of visits to libraries	✓	⬆

		Status	Trend
28.	External funding applications by community groups with our support (quarterly)	✓	➡
29.	Employability clients moving into training, employment, education or voluntary activity	✓	⬆
30.	Youth learning clients moving into training, employment or further education	●	⬇
31.	Amount of debt being managed through Advice Services	✓	⬇
32.	Processing of new benefits and event change claims	▲	⬇
33.	Housing repair appointments met	▲	➡
	Housing emergency repairs completed within time	●	➡
	Customer satisfaction with housing repairs	✓	➡
34.	Percentage of void properties re-let within 14 days	●	⬇
	Percentage of void properties re-let within 28 days	▲	⬆
	Percentage of void properties re-let in more than 28 days	●	⬆
35.	Percentage of homeless cases assessed within 28 days	▲	⬆
36.	Percentage of housing applicants who sustain their tenancy for 12 months	▲	➡
	Percentage of homeless applicants who sustain their tenancy for 12 months	▲	⬇
37.	Percentage of homeless households in B&B for 90 days or more	tbc <sup>5</sup>	⬆
38.	Current tenants' arrears as a percentage of net rent due (houses only)	●	⬆
39.	Planning applications dealt with within target time	●	⬇
40.	Building warrants processing	✓	➡
	Building warrant determinations	▲	⬆
41.	Food hygiene inspections (quarterly)	✓	⬆
42.	Consumer complaints dealt with within target time (quarterly)	✓	⬆
	Business advice requests dealt with within target time (quarterly)	▲	⬇
43.	Waste and recycling collection route completion	▲	⬆
44.	Tonnage of biodegradable municipal waste within landfill allowance target	✓	➡
45.	Percentage of municipal solid waste recycled or composted	✓	⬆
46.	Roads maintenance enquiries responded to within target time	●	⬇
47.	Percentage of road network treated (quarterly)	✓	⬆
48.	Housing completions (quarterly)	✓	⬇
49.	Availability of key IT applications	▲	➡
50.	IT incident resolution within service level agreement	✓	⬆

Further details on current performance for all indicators is available from the Performance and Research Team:

[stirlingperforms@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:stirlingperforms@stirling.gov.uk)

A compendium of background information for each indicator can be found on the Stirling Performs pages of the Stirling Council internet site:

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

**Footnotes:**

<sup>1</sup> Still based on February/quarter 3 data - March figures to follow.

<sup>2</sup> This indicator reports the number of child protection activities carried out each month - there is therefore no target set and the trend arrow refers to whether activity is increasing, steady or decreasing.

<sup>3</sup> No target currently in place - awaiting national framework.

<sup>4</sup> Contextual information for performance indicator 16.

<sup>5</sup> Target to be confirmed as this is a new indicator only reported from February 2010 onwards.

## Hot Spot Report

- March 2010

This report provides further information on the trends and issues affecting performance for those service areas currently identified as 'hot spots' in the Stirling Performs At a Glance Report for March 2010.

A hot spot is an indicator where performance is below target and outwith the agreed tolerance<sup>1</sup>, and/or where there has been a substantial and prolonged deterioration in performance. For March 2010 there are no new hot spots. The nine existing hot spots carried forward from February 2010 that are still performing below target are as follows:

- a) Number of days lost due to sickness absence (*indicator number 5*)
- b) Social background reports submitted to the Children's Reporter (*10*)
- c) Youth learning clients moving into training, employment or further education (*30*)
- d) Housing emergency repairs completed within time (*33*)
- e) Time taken to re-let void properties (*34*)
- f) Current tenants' arrears (*38*)
- g) Planning applications dealt with within target time (*39*)
- h) Waste and recycling collection route completion (*43*)
- i) Roads maintenance enquiries (*46*)

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Recent hot spots that have now recovered are:

- j) Computer usage at libraries (*26*)
- k) Housing repair appointments met (*33*)
- l) Homeless applicants sustaining their tenancies (*36*)

<sup>1</sup> Further explanation of terms such as 'target' and 'tolerance' are available in the compendium of background information, which can be found on the Stirling Performs pages of the Stirling Council website:  
<http://www.stirling.gov.uk/index/council/stirlingperforms.htm>

# Existing Hot Spots from February 2010

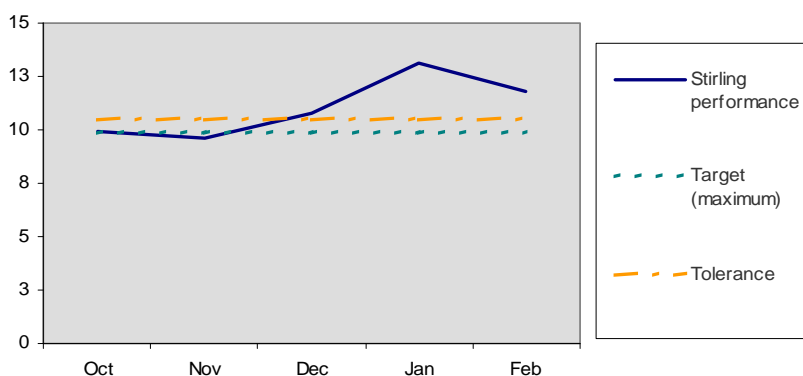
## a) Number of days lost due to sickness absence (*indicator 5*)

### Performance Information

The level of absence for employees is measured in terms of the equivalent annual number of days lost per FTE employee. For all Council employees excluding teachers, performance deteriorated in January 2010 to 13.14 days per employee against a maximum target of 9.84 days. Although this has improved slightly in February current levels of absence remain outwith target at 11.82 days per employee (please note that as this indicator is reported one month in arrears the latest figure is for February).

This is marginally worse than the equivalent absence rate for February 2009 and it is suggested that at least some of the deterioration is because the new procedure, whereby all absence is reported through the Contact Centre, has resulted in a rise in reported absence. Across the Council the greatest number of days lost due to absence in February 2010 was personal stress, which accounted for 22.5% of days lost (726 days). Strain/pain/injury accounted for 20.7% of days lost (667 days), and hospital for 10.4% (335 days). A detailed report on Employee Absence was considered at the Service Delivery & Performance meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> May.

### Days lost due to sickness absence per employee (FTE), excluding teachers (*annualised*)



### Improvement Action

The revised Attendance Support Policy and the Attendance Capability Procedure were considered by the Executive Committee on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2010. The intention is to ensure that there is early support for employees who are suffering from stress, have musculoskeletal injuries, or have repeated absence, to help minimise absence. Training on the new procedures is now being planned for all managers.

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.

Resource Implications of Improvement Action: None at this time.

Head of Service: John Risk, Head of Improvement & Customer Service

Named Officer: David Ruse, HR Admin / Payroll Manager

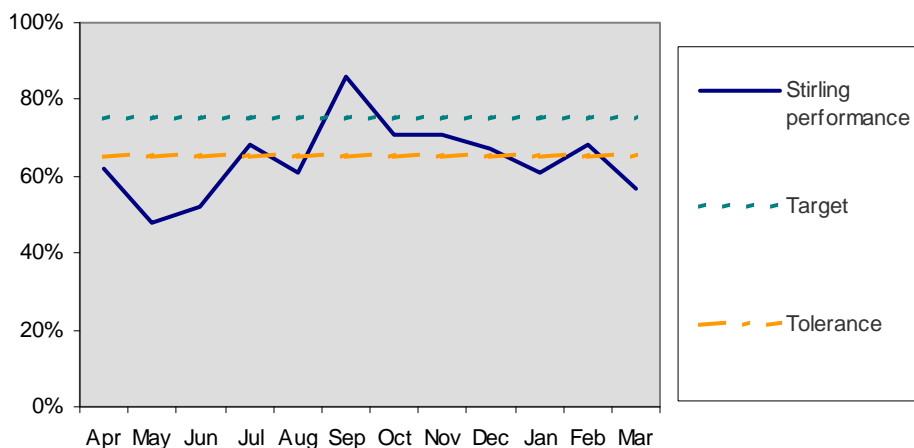
## b) Social background reports submitted to the Children's Reporter within target time

### Performance Information

The target for this indicator is 75% of all social background reports requested by the Children's Reporter being submitted within the target time. Performance dropped to 67% in December 2009 and then 61% in January. Despite a slight improvement in February there has been further deterioration in March to 57%. This is outwith the agreed tolerance for this indicator.

The deterioration from September appears particularly pronounced as the level of performance at this time was well above the national target. Children and families social work underwent significant reorganisation during this period, resulting in a change from 7 to 5 casework teams and, consequently, a high number of case transfers between workers. The level of demand post re-structuring has been higher than anticipated in some teams, presenting a capacity issue. The service has also been affected by long-term absence (including two social workers on long term sickness absence and three on maternity leave) and staff turnover.

### Percentage of reports submitted on time



### Improvement Action

In the short-term two members of staff have been temporarily redeployed to teams experiencing particularly high demand. The filling of vacancies has been progressed as quickly as possible, with HR engaged to help address the long-term absence issues. One of the social workers on long-term absence has left the service and this post will be advertised as soon as possible. Budgets have been realigned to create an additional 0.5 FTE social worker post, and a small budget has been identified which will allow the appointment of sessional staff.

The redeployed staff are now working through the backlog of reports and performance is expected to improve for the start of the new financial year.

#### Resource Implications

of Improvement Action: This improvement action has been undertaken with no increase in resource.

Head of Service: Bill Eadie, Head of Social Care

Named Officer: Mark Smith, Quality Assurance & Performance Manager

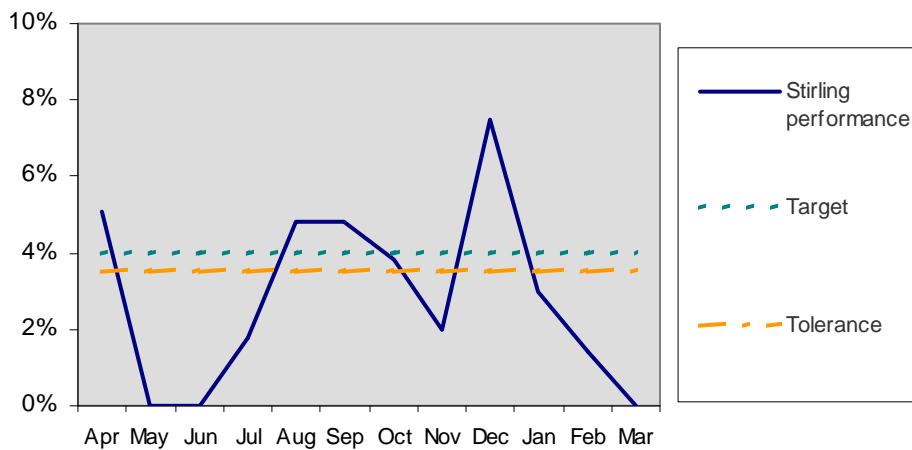
### c) Youth learning clients moving into training, employment or further education (30)

#### Performance Information

Performance for this indicator was well above the monthly target of 4% in December 2009 when 7.5% of the young people that Youth Learning were working with achieved positive outcomes such as training, employment or further education. However this dropped to 3.0% in January and has deteriorated further to 1.4% in February and 0% in March.

This indicator can fluctuate from month to month due to term times and the academic year. However, the current deterioration in performance is related to the economic climate – a reduction in the opportunities available and an increase in the number of people looking for employment has meant that it has been more difficult to progress young people into work.

#### Percentage of young people moving into training, employment or further education



#### Improvement Action

This indicator will continue to be closely monitored by the service, particularly in terms of the impact of the economic climate on the opportunities available for young people. The service will continue to work with Council partners such as Forth Valley College and with local employers to maximise these opportunities.

Resource Implications of Improvement Action: None.

Head of Service: Des Friel, Head of Economy, Employment & Youth

Named Officer: Bill Miller, Youth Services Manager

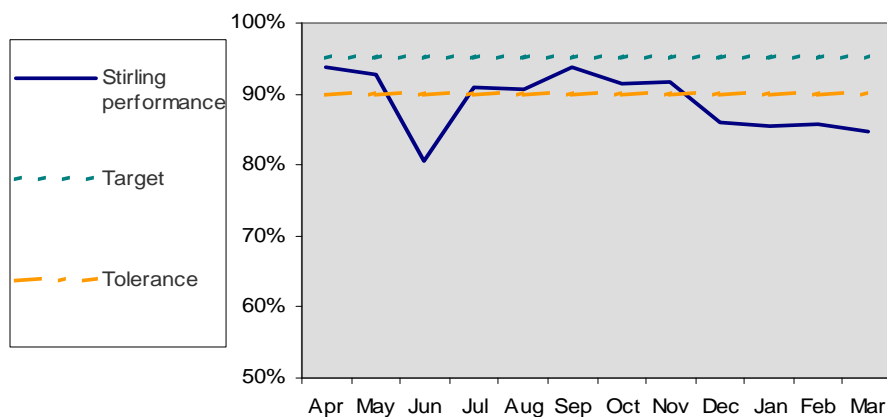
## d) Housing emergency repairs completed within time (33)

### Performance Information

Performance in this area dropped in December 2009 to 85.9%, from 91.8% the previous month. This downward trend levelled out in January and then slightly improved in February. However there has been a slight deterioration in March when 84.6% of emergency repairs were completed within the target time (either 4 hours or 24 hours depending on the category of repair). This is below the target of 95%.

On investigation some of the emergency repairs reported as not being completed within time were still due to data input errors. Other issues that contributed to reduced performance were duplicate work tickets being issued and the manual overriding of job tickets.

### Percentage of emergency repairs completed within target time



### Improvement Action

Technical Services have begun making significant changes to their monitoring processes from the beginning of March 2010 in order to rectify the data input problems. This is an ongoing process and it is anticipated that improvement will be evident in performance from April 2010 onwards.

Resource Implications  
of Improvement Action: None.

Head of Service: Tony Cain, Head of Housing

Named Officer: Lindsay Stother, Quality and Performance Manager

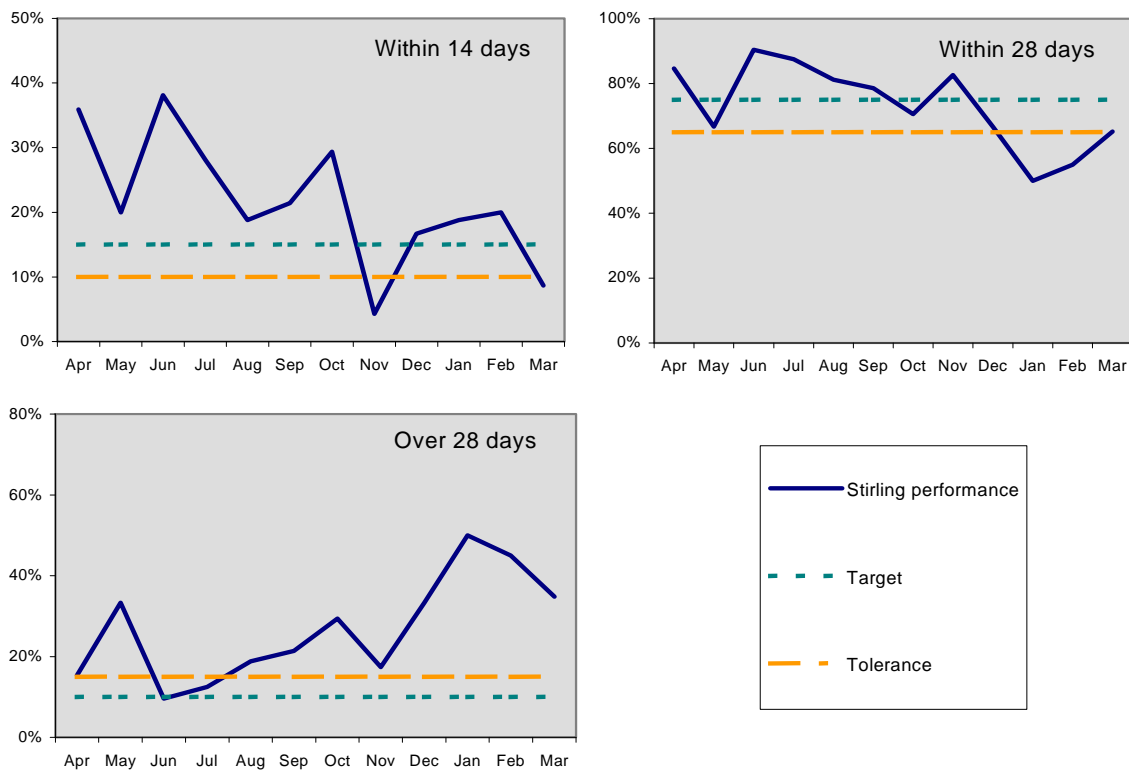
## e) Time taken to re-let void properties (34)

### Performance Information

This indicator looks at the percentage of properties re-let within specific time bands. In March 2010 only 8.7% were re-let within 14 days, against a target of 15%. 34.8% took over 28 days to re-let, which is significantly over the maximum target of 10%.

The condition of void properties and the work required to bring them up to a lettable standard can vary significantly and has an impact on void turnaround times. In addition, improvement work such as replacing bathrooms is often completed when properties are empty to limit the inconvenience to tenants, which can also impact on performance. However, these reasons only partially explain the poor performance during March and further investigation to identify all reasons is currently underway.

### Percentage of void properties re-let within specific time bands:



### Improvement Action

Further investigation is underway to fully understand the poor performance in this area, and remedial action will then be taken to address this. This indicator will continue to be monitored closely and it is expected that performance will recover to target levels over the next few months.

Resource Implications of Improvement Action: None.

Head of Service: Tony Cain, Head of Housing

Named Officer: Lindsay Stother, Quality and Performance Manager

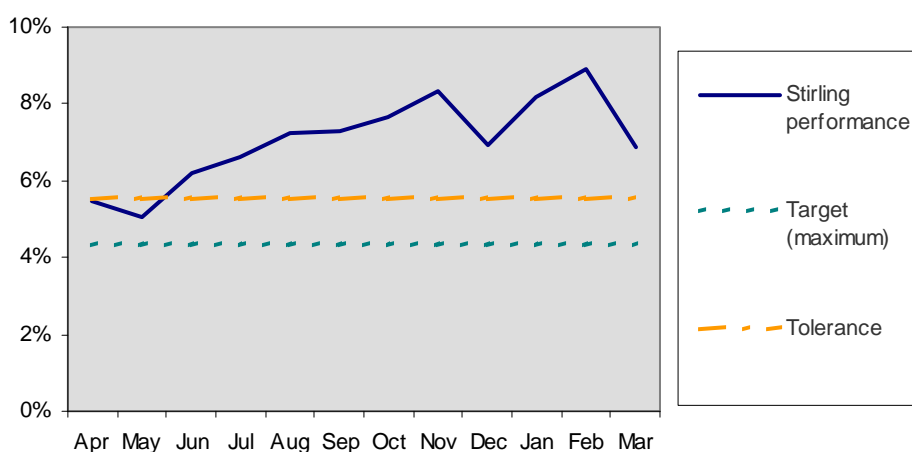
## f) Current tenants' arrears (38)

### Performance Information

The level of current tenants' arrears as a percentage of net rent due has shown a general upward trend during the year and has been reported as above the maximum target and tolerance from June 2009 to March 2010. There has however been improvement over the last month and the latest figure reported is 6.9%, though this is still outwith the maximum target level of 4.3%.

The increase over the year can in part be attributed to the current economic climate and due to the Council's decision on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2009 to stop evicting tenants for rent arrears. In addition, the increase of net rent due from August to November is a historical trend that is to be expected. However, over the year it has become clearer that a small number of tenants are still not making any significant payments towards their arrears, and so arrears continue to increase.

### Current tenants' arrears as a percentage of net rent due



### Improvement Action

The paper that went to Council on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2010 relating to rent arrears concluded that Shelter (Scotland) would carry out a pilot mediation exercise on 10 rent arrears cases. The outcome of the pilot mediation exercise is due to be discussed at a future Council meeting. There has also been an ongoing commitment to develop new arrears recovery procedures and to continue the practice of increasing the level of face-to-face contact with tenants in arrears.

Resource Implications  
of Improvement Action: None.

Head of Service: Tony Cain, Head of Housing

Named Officer: Lindsay Stother, Quality and Performance Manager

## g) Planning applications dealt with within target time (39)

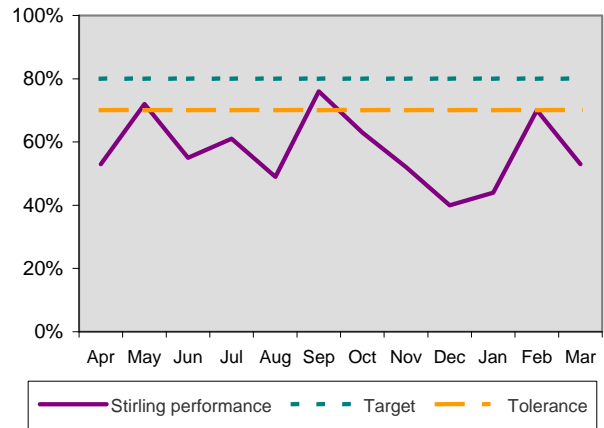
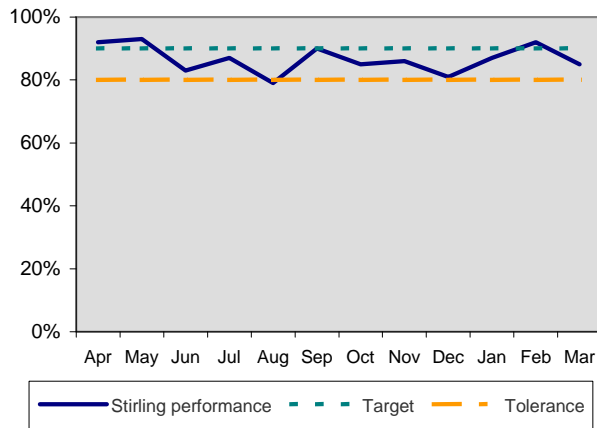
### Performance Information

Although there has been an overall improvement in the performance for processing for both household and non-householder planning applications over the last quarter, in March performance has dipped slightly, with overall performance for all planning applications dealt with within the target of two months now at 67% against a target of 80%.

Determination of householder planning applications in March is below the national target of 90% but is within tolerance at 85%. The annual performance for determination of householder applications is 87%, just below the national target, and above the local target of 80%.

Non-householder planning applications remains below the national 80% target at 53% in March due to the nature and complexity of the applications and the extended time taken to receive supporting information from applicants and to determine the applications, including referrals to Planning Panel. The annual performance for determination of non-householder applications within target timescale is 59%.

### Planning applications dealt with within target time



### Improvement Action

During 2009/10 the Planning Service have implemented e-Planning systems (effective since August 2009), which when fully utilised by applicants, will assist in improving the efficiency of the planning application submission, notification and determination process.

Resource Implications of Improvement Action: Implementation of the e-planning system required new software and hardware and this has been met from within existing revenue budget.

Head of Service: Kevin Robertson, Head of Planning, Regulation & Waste

Named Officer: Peter Morgan, Chief Planning Officer

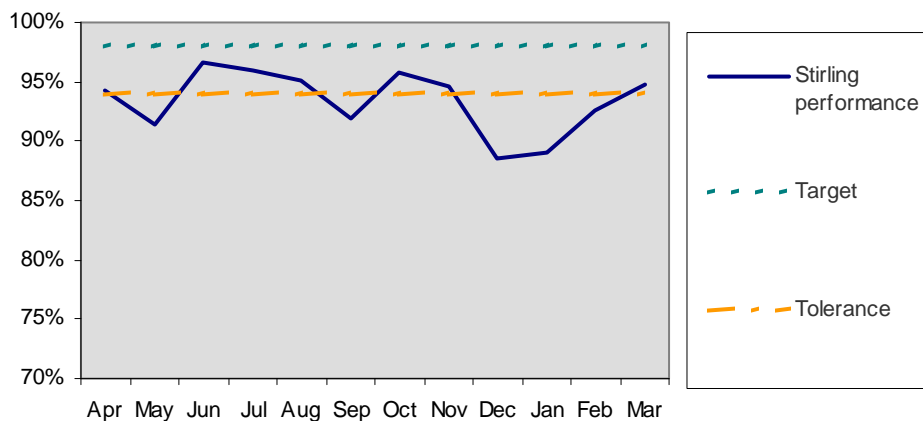
## h) Waste and recycling collection route completion (43)

### Performance Information

The percentage of recycling and waste collection routes completed on the correct day fell below tolerance during December 2009 and January/February 2010, when lengthy periods of severe weather and the prolonged presence of ice and snow on untreated residential and rural roads and footways adversely affected service delivery. Performance has significantly improved in March, with 94.8% of collection routes completed on the correct day in March, which is back within tolerance. However, performance for the year as a whole is slightly lower at 93.4%.

An ageing fleet of refuse collection vehicles has also directly impacted on performance, as vehicle downtime has increased for breakdowns and repairs.

### Recycling & waste routes completed on the correct day



### Improvement Action

Three new replacement refuse collection vehicles came on to the fleet in December, with a further four due in April 2010, which should improve reliability and route performance.

**Resource Implications of Improvement Action:** Funding for the replacement refuse collection vehicles is allocated within budgets, with no additional resources required. The new vehicles are expected to have marginally lower whole life costs compared to the current vehicles that are being replaced.

**Head of Service:** Kevin Robertson, Head of Planning, Regulation & Waste

**Named Officer:** David Hopper, Waste Services Manager

## i) Roads maintenance enquiries (46)

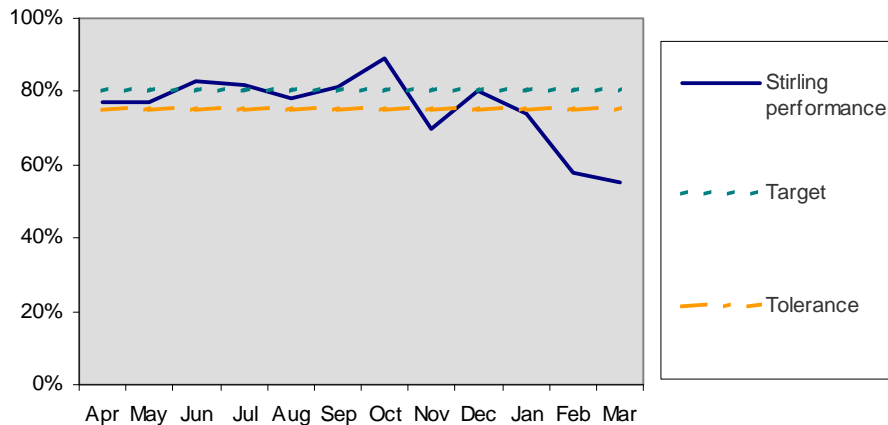
### Performance Information

This indicator refers to road maintenance enquiries received from members of the public via the Contact Centre. The target response times vary in relation to the priority rating assigned to each enquiry, which is based on assessed risk.

In January 2010 the percentage of these enquiries responded to within their target timescale dropped to 70%, and this indicator was identified as an area of significant deterioration in the January Stirling Performs report. This downward trend has continued and the latest reported level is 55% for March. This is significantly below the target of 80%.

The service normally deals with around 250 enquiries each month. The recent severe cold weather - the worst winter weather for more than 30 years - resulted in a significant increase in the number of winter maintenance related enquiries received in November (457), December (1138) and January (918). This along with the requirement to deal with frost heave damage and to catch up on other programmed works has had a direct effect on the service's capacity to meet its target response rates for the year.

### Percentage of road maintenance public enquiries responded to within target timescale



### Improvement Action

As weather conditions continue to improve and the backlog of work reduces, the existing staff infrastructure will ensure a return to the normal performance level by April 2010.

Resource Implications of Improvement Action: None – a return to normal service levels will be achieved within existing resources.

Head of Service: Les Goodfellow, Head of Roads, Transport & Open Space

Named Officer: Jamie Wright, Roads Maintenance Manager

## Recent Hot Spots now Recovered

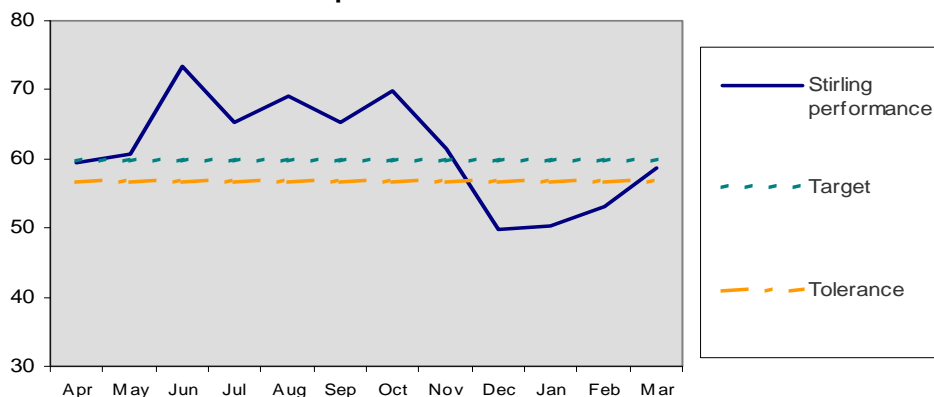
### j) Computer usage at libraries (indicator 26)

#### Performance Information

The level of computer use at libraries showed a downward trend from October 2009, and in January 2010 computer terminals were accessed only 50.2 times per 1,000 of the Stirling population compared to a target of 59.7. This has now risen to 58.6 in March, which is back within the agreed tolerance for this indicator and only just below the target of 59.7.

The poor weather this winter was a major factor in the drop in computer usage as this discouraged users from visiting libraries as frequently as usual. The move into Spring has been the main reason for the recent recovery in performance.

#### Number of occasions the computers at libraries were accessed



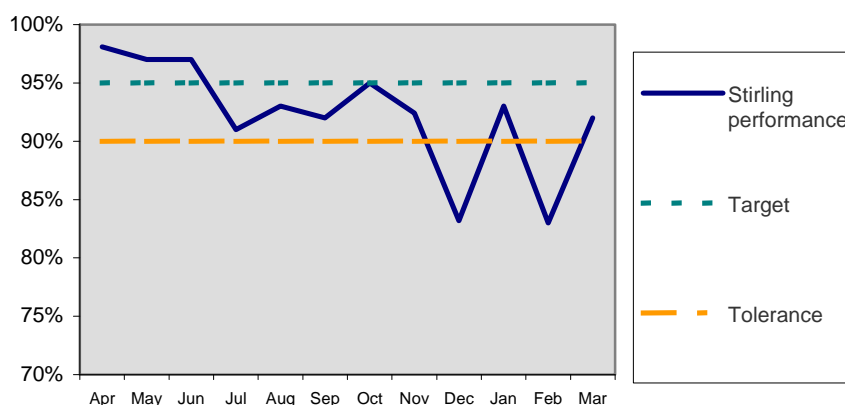
### k) Housing repair appointments met (33)

#### Performance Information

The percentage of housing repair appointments that were met in February 2010 was 83.0% against a target of 95%. Improvement has been evident in March and the current reported level is now 92.0%.

Over 80% of the appointments that were not completed within time in February were due to data input errors. Technical Services have made significant changes to their monitoring processes in order to rectify these data input problems, which have been in place from the beginning of March 2010.

#### Percentage of Housing repair appointments met



## I) Homeless applicants sustaining their tenancies (36)

### Performance Information

In February 2010 77.8% of homeless tenancies commenced the year before had been sustained for the full 12 months. This was below the target of 90% and outwith tolerance. March has seen an improvement to 85.7%.

Tenancy sustainment performance can fluctuate from month to month due to a variety of reasons. However, the Council is committed to providing support and advice to tenants and will continue to do so in order to improve tenancy sustainment levels.

### Percentage of homeless applicants who have sustained their tenancy for 12 months

