

Departmental Quarterly Monitoring Report

Directorate: Resources

Department: Legal & Democratic Services

Period: Quarter 2 – 01st July to 30th September 2010

1.0 Introduction

This monitoring report covers Legal and Democratic Services second quarter period up to period end 30th September 2010. It describes key developments and progress against key objectives and performance indicators for the service.

The way in which the traffic light symbols and direction of travel indicators have been used to reflect progress is explained within Appendix 6.

2.0 Key Developments

The revised Health & Safety Policy was approved by Council in July 2010.

The Democratic Services Team has now been fully integrated and relocated to a central office.

The Council's reply has been sent to the Ministry of Justice's consultation on court closures. In so far as Halton is concerned, the proposals involved the closure of Runcorn County Court, with Runcorn Magistrates Court being retained. The Council's response has been to object to the proposed closure, largely on social inclusion grounds. The outcome is awaited.

Significant legal support has been provided to major development projects.

The Licensing and Risk & Emergency Planning Teams have been involved in ensuring a successful Creamfields event during August 2010 Bank Holiday.

The Risk & Emergency Planning team were instrumental in carrying out a Silver Jubilee Bridge exercise on 30th September 2010. This was multi-agency and was very successful. A subsequent de-brief identified good points and areas for development.

3.0 Emerging Issues


Council will consider proposals for revised governance arrangements in October 2010 with a final decision taken in December 2010.

Work continues on the renewal of the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy and

the adoption of legislation controlling sex establishments.
Government announcements on the future of the Standards regime continue to be monitored to ensure that the Council is fully equipped to deal with changes.

4.0 Service Objectives / milestones

4.1 Progress against 'key' objectives / milestones

Total	2		2		0		0
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All of the key objectives / milestones for the service are progressing as planned and additional details are provided within Appendix 1.

4.2 Progress against 'other' objectives / milestones

Total	2		2		0		0
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Both 'other' additional objectives / milestones are on target and detailed in Appendix 2.

5.0 Performance indicators

5.1 Progress Against 'key' performance indicators

Total	2		1		1		0
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The one key performance indicator that can be reported at this stage is on track to achieve annual target with the exception of LDSLI 1, proportion of departmental working days lost to sickness. Additional details are provided within Appendix 3.

5.2 Progress Against 'other' performance indicators

Total	12		6		1		2
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The majority of other indicators for the service are progressing as planned. However at this stage it seems unlikely that targets concerning public attendance and questions at meetings will achieve their annual target. Although the overall Performance total is 12 indicators, 3 indicators are scheduled for reporting later this year; NI 1, % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area; % of people who have been involved in decisions that affect the local area in the last 12 months and LDSLI 9, % of completed form A's returned. Additional details are provided within Appendix 4.

6.0 Risk Control Measures

During the development of the 2010 -11 Service activity, the service was required to undertake a risk assessment of all Key Service Objectives.

No 'high' risk, treatment measures were identified.

7.0 Progress against high priority equality actions

As a result of undertaking a departmental Equality Impact Assessment no high priority actions were identified for the service for the period 2010 – 2011

8.0 Data quality statement

The author provides assurance that the information contained within this report is accurate and valid and that every effort has been made to avoid the omission of data. Where data has been estimated, has been sourced directly from partner or other agencies, or where there are any concerns regarding the limitations of its use this has been clearly annotated.

9.0 Appendices

- Appendix 1 Progress against 'key' objectives / milestones
- Appendix 2 Progress against 'other' objectives / milestones
- Appendix 3 Progress against 'key' performance indicators
- Appendix 4 Progress against 'other' performance indicators

Appendix 5 Financial Statement


Appendix 6 Explanation of use of symbols

Appendix 1: Progress Against 'key' objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective
LDS O1	To provide a high quality legal service to the Council and its departments to ensure that the Council is able to deliver its services effectively


Milestones	Progress Q 2	Supporting Commentary
Secure renewal of Lexcel & ISO Accreditation January 2011		On course to be achieved by target date as work on the ISO Internal Audits continues.

Ref	Objective
LDS O2	To ensure that decision makers are supported through the provision of timely and accurate advice and information and are kept informed of changing legislation and responsibilities

Milestones	Progress Q 2	Supporting Commentary
Review Constitution May 2010		The Constitution was approved by full Council in May and a meeting of the Working Group has been held to consider further related issues, which will be considered by Council on 20 th October 2010.




Appendix 2: Progress Against 'other' objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective
LDS O3	To provide efficient and effective Democratic Support Services that provides Elected Members, as key decision makers, with the necessary information, support and training opportunities to fulfil their individual potential and management and governance role effectively

Milestones	Progress Q 2	Supporting Commentary
To ensure that all members have been given the opportunity of a having a MAP meeting.		Arrangements are in hand to arrange MAP meetings with Members.
To induct all new members – by October 2010		The last induction for new Members will take place on 13 October 2010.







Appendix 3: Progress Against 'key' performance indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2009/10	Target 2010/11	Quarter 2	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
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Corporate Health							
<u>LDSLI 1</u>	Proportion of departmental working days lost to sickness absence (%)	4.5	4.0				No details of current progress, waiting for information from the Administration Divisional Manager.
<u>LDSLI 2</u>	No. Of Members with Personal Development Plans (56 Total)	52 (92%)	56 (100%)	48 (85%)			Although on track to meet the target at year end, in comparison to Q2 last year it is below performance.






Appendix 4: Progress Against 'other' performance indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2009/10	Target 2010/11	Quarter 2	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
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Corporate Health							
NI 1	% of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area	74.5% (2008)	Refer comment			This information is sourced via the biennial Place Survey, which is scheduled for later this year. However the requirement for undertaking the survey is currently subject to review by the new government and further details will be provided as and when information becomes available.	
	Civic participation - % of people who have been involved in decisions that affect the local area in the last 12 months	10.5% (2008)	Refer comment				
LDSL1 3	% of Members attending at least one organised Training Event	82%	100%	70%			On target and work will be done to attempt to ensure that 100% is achieved by year end. The target is significantly higher than this time last year.
LDSL1 4	% Of Departments with up to date Business Continuity Plans	100%	100%	100%			100% of departments have existing plans but additional work is now being done to review the process to simplify and ensure it meets the changing structure and demands.
LDSL1 5	% Of Departments with up to date Risk Registers	100%	100%	100%			Most of the reviews have now been completed and the remaining reviews are underway.







Appendix 4: Progress Against 'other' performance indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2009/10	Target 2010/11	Quarter 2	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
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Fair Access							
LDSL1 6	Members of Public attending Council Meetings (Council, PPBs, Exec Board, Exec Board Sub, Area Forums)	188	600	74			Figures are being kept under review, although as always they are governed by a great extent to the subject matter under discussion.
LDSL1 7	No. Of Questions asked by Members of the Public at Council Meetings (Council, PPBs, Exec Board, Exec Board Sub, Area Forums)	14	175	14			LDSL1 6 is presently showing considerably below target in comparison to Q2 last year. LDSLI 7 is also showing below target but slightly higher than Q2 last year.
LDSL1 8	% Of those eligible casting a vote.	25% (08-09)	50%	60%		N/A	The figure is slightly higher than the target but will not alter as there are no elections scheduled until May 2011. A baseline only was created at the end of last year so a comparison cannot be made against this years figure.
LDSL1 9	% Of completed form A's returned	96% (08-09)	100%	NA	Refer comment	N/A	Registration forms sent out August/September. Information should be available in Q3.

Appendix 4: Progress Against 'other' performance indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2009/10	Target 2010/11	Quarter 2	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
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Service Delivery							
LDSL1 10	Average Time taken to issue prosecutions from receipt of instructions (working days)	12	10	11			On target. Performance has improved slightly in comparison to this period last year.
LDSL1 11	Average time taken to complete Conveyancing Transactions	360	325	450			The figure continues to be distorted by very complex; long standing matters and efforts to improve are continuing.
LDSL1 12	Average time taken to complete Child Care Cases (calendar days)	224	250	224			Child care cases are complex and lengthy and resultant timescales are not always within the control of the legal staff involved.

Appendix 5: Financial Statement

LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Revenue Budget as at 30th September 2010

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date	Actual Including Committed Items
	£'000	£'000	£'000	(overspend) £'000	£'000
<u>Expenditure</u>					
Employees	1,749	844	842	2	845
Members Expenses	773	389	385	4	389
Supplies & Services	205	124	139	(15)	149
Civic Catering & Functions	82	41	28	13	29
Legal Expenses	207	104	113	(9)	114
Total Expenditure	3,016	1,502	1,507	(5)	1,526
<u>Income</u>					
Land Charges	-130	-65	-77	12	-77
SLA to Schools	-23	-23	-46	23	-46
Licence Income	-309	-104	-104	0	-104
Other Income	-63	-25	-52	27	-52
Total Income	-525	-217	-279	62	-279
Net Controllable Expenditure	2,491	1,285	1,228	57	1,247
<u>Recharges</u>					
Premises	63	2	0	2	0
Transport	41	21	19	2	20
Asset Charges	6	0	0	0	0
Central Support Services	47	0	0	0	0
Support Service Income	-75	0	0	0	0
Net Total Recharges	82	23	19	4	20
Net Department Total	2,573	1,308	1,247	61	1,267

Comments on the above figures:




In overall terms spending to the end of the second quarter is slightly under budget.

With regards income, receipts from Legal Fees are currently exceeding budget which is due to the increased levels of court costs being reimbursed. SLA to Schools income is also in excess of the budget due to a new Health & Safety provision of Health & Safety service. This will be reflected in the 2011/12 budget setting process.

At this stage, it is anticipated that total net spending will be within budget at year-end.




Appendix 6: Explanation of use of Symbols

Symbols are used in the following manner:

Progress	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Performance Indicator</u>
Green	 Indicates that the <u>objective is on course to be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that the annual target <u>is on course to be achieved</u>.</i>
Amber	 Indicates that it is <u>uncertain or too early to say at this stage</u> , whether the milestone/objective will be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that it is <u>uncertain or too early to say at this stage</u> whether the annual target is on course to be achieved.</i>
Red	 Indicates that it is <u>highly likely or certain</u> that the objective will not be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that the target <u>will not be achieved</u> unless there is an <u>intervention or remedial action</u> taken.</i>

Direction of Travel Indicator

Where possible performance measures will also identify a direction of travel using the following convention

Green	 Indicates that performance is better as compared to the same period last year.
Amber	 Indicates that performance is the same as compared to the same period last year.
Red	 Indicates that performance is worse as compared to the same period last year.
N/A	Indicates that the measure cannot be compared to the same period last year.