

Departmental Quarterly Monitoring Report

<u>Directorate:</u>	Environment & Economy
<u>Department:</u>	Environmental & Regulatory Services
<u>Period:</u>	Quarter 2 - 1 st July – 30 th September 2010

1.0 Introduction

This quarterly monitoring report covers the Environmental & Regulatory Department second quarter period up to 30th September 2010. It describes key developments and progress against 'key' milestones and performance indicators for the service.

The way in which the traffic lights symbols and direction of travel indicators have been used to reflect progress to date is explained within Appendix 8.

2.0 Key Developments

Waste & Environmental Improvement Service area

During this quarter the RecycleBank 'rewards for recycling' scheme was extended to a further 36,000 households across the borough. The scheme rewards residents with points for recycling through the blue wheeled bin recycling service. These points can then be exchanged for money off goods and services at over 120 local shops, businesses, restaurants and leisure and entertainment facilities. Early indications following the extension of the scheme show an increase in both the number of households using their blue bins for recycling and the amount of recyclable materials collected.

The Council's efforts to tackle littering and other environmental nuisance are on-going. Listed below are the actions taken in the first two quarters of this year;

- 66 Warning letters have been sent to householders and local business regarding potential waste offences.
- 84 inspections/visits relating waste storage have been made to commercial business in Runcorn and Widnes Town Centres

- 18 Untidy Land Clearances letters have been to land owners and businesses across the borough
- Weekly enforcement patrols have been carried out in Town Centres and other areas of the borough resulting in 82 Fixed Penalty Notices being issued for littering and dog fouling offences.

The Executive Board have approved the introduction of measures to prevent misuse of the Council's Household Waste Recycling Centres by commercial businesses. The Centres are provided by the Council for member of the public to deposit household waste, however, commercial businesses and traders often attempt to use these facilities for free, which is illegal, and increases the burden on local tax payers who ultimately pay the bill for the disposal of the commercial waste. It is planned that the scheme shall be implemented with effect from 1st April 2011. A comprehensive public communications campaign shall be undertaken prior to the scheme being introduced.

The revocation of regional strategies was announced during the quarter. It is intended that the waste data and information function previously carried out by Regional Waste Technical Advisory Bodies will be transferred to Local Authorities in due course.

Open Space Services

By the end of Quarter 2 the project to deliver an extension to the Runcorn Cemetery was at an advanced design stage. Site investigations had been completed and a draft design had been drawn up.

Playbuilder projects remain stalled whilst a final decision is made by national Government. Projects at Upton, Runcorn Hill, The Glen, Hough Green and Crow Wood Park are affected by this situation. Bids for funding from other sources have been made for the project but a decision will not be known until later in the year.

The Green Flag Award submissions for 2011 had to be submitted by the 30th September 2010. This is the first time that submissions for a given year have had to be made as early as September. Open Space Services submitted the existing twelve Green Flag Award parks for the award in 2011 by the deadline date.

A mini restructure of the operational cemetery staff was completed in September. All staff now have a dual horticultural/grave digging role which gives a greater flexibility in terms of dealing with peaks in particular work streams within the Borough's cemeteries.

Regulatory Services

The following applications were dealt with by Development Control in Quarter 2:

Applications Received – 138

Applications Decided – 143

Applications on hand (undecided) – 111

Pre applications Received – 67

Pre applications closed – 35

Pre applications on hand -135

N.B. There are certain applications (such as tree preservation orders) that are not counted in the statutory CLG speed of processing statistics (NI157). This accounts for the difference between the figures reported above and the figures given for N157.

Summary of major applications received (but not necessarily decided) over the last quarter:

10/00316/S73 S73 application to vary condition No.2 of planning permission 07/00072/FUL to extend the permission expiration for a further 3 years at 79-83 High Street Runcorn Cheshire WA7 1AH

10/00320/FUL Proposed demolition of existing building and construction of 14 No. new affordable dwellings with associated access road at Widnes Timber Centre Foundry Lane Widnes Cheshire

10/00355/FUL Proposed residential development comprising 127 No. detached two storey dwellings, roads, open space, landscaping and ancillary development on Land To The North East Of Rail Line Barrows Green Lane Widnes Cheshire

10/00368/S73 Application to vary condition No.2 of extant planning permission 07/00716/FUL to extend time limit for a further 3 years with regards to proposed four storey mixed use development comprising 24 No. two bed apartments and 4 No. retail units at 88A - 92 Albert Road Widnes Cheshire

10/00369/FUL Proposed demolition of existing dwellings and erection of 12 No. detached dwellings with associated infrastructure at 177 - 181 Heath Road Runcorn Cheshire WA7 4XG

10/00397/OUT Outline planning application for the construction of up to 168 residential dwellings (with appearance, landscaping, layout and scale matters reserved) on Land At Halton Road Runcorn Cheshire

10/00400/FUL Proposed two storey Community Centre and Centre of Excellence for Autism, associated access and car parking on Land At Hallwood Park Avenue Runcorn Cheshire

10/00411/S73 Proposed variation of conditions of extent planning permission 07/00362/FUL to extend time limit for implementation / commencement for a further 3 years at HBC Field, Hale Bank Road, Hale Bank Widnes Cheshire

Residents of Derby Road sought a judicial review of the Council's action with regard to the remediation works currently being carried out on the Marley Eternit site in Widnes, together with an injunction stopping all work on the site. The allegation that the Council had acted illegally in granting permission and failed to safely regulate the remedial works was totally rejected by the judge in Manchester High Court who noted also that application was 'out of time'.

3.0 Emerging Issues

The Government intends to amend the Climate Change Act 2008 to remove the powers that allow Local Authorities to pilot waste reduction schemes – including charging householders based on how much they throw away. The changes will also make it easier for Local Authorities to bring in schemes to reward people who produce less waste. The early introduction of the RecycleBank incentive scheme by Halton places the Authority in a good position regarding this change in government policy.

The end of the call for evidence for the Government's forthcoming waste policy review is imminent. A joint response on behalf of Merseyside and Halton partnership will be forwarded to Defra and preliminary results from the review will be available in spring 2011.


4.0 Service Objectives / milestones

4.1 Progress against 'key' objectives / milestones

Total	11		8		3		0
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For further details please refer to Appendix 1. There is uncertainty around funding streams for projects due to issues with the Playbuilder Funding. Although the service is currently awaiting a decision by national government, alternative funding has been applied for.

4.2 Progress against 'other' objectives / milestones

Total	0		0		0		0
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There are presently no objectives/ milestones of this type identified for this service.

5.0 Performance indicators

5.1 Progress Against 'key' performance indicators

Total	6		1		0		3
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For further details please refer to Appendix 3.

Please note that the total also includes 2 indicators for which information is currently unavailable.

Red indicators are noted for the targets concerning the percentage of planning applications determined within set timescales.

The Development Control Team has reduced in size and also experienced ongoing issues around experienced administrative support staff which, combined with the impact of the Eternit High Court action, has led to delays.

5.2 Progress Against 'other' performance indicators

Total	10		7		0		0
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For further details please refer to Appendix 4. Please note that the total also includes 3 indicators for which information is currently unavailable.

6.0 Risk Control Measures

There are no Risk Control Measures for this area.

7.0 Progress against high priority equality actions

There are no High Priority Equality Actions for this area.

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 Progress against risk control measures
- Appendix 6 Progress against High Priority Equality Actions
- Appendix 7 Financial Statement
- Appendix 8 Explanation of use of symbols

Appendix 1: Progress Against 'key' objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective
EAR 2	To prepare and adopt a local development framework (LDF) and to review the LDF on a regular basis ensuring that an up to date development plan is available (statutory requirement). To achieve this by producing the following targets set out in the most current Local Development Scheme (LDS):

Milestones	Progress Q 2	Supporting Commentary
Submissions of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) to the Secretary of State February 2011 .		Work is progressing on the Core Strategy, associated evidence base and supporting documentation. The intention is to secure approval for publication during November as stated in the published timetable

Ref	Objective
EAR 3	Continue to improve Parks, Sports Grounds, Open Spaces and Local Nature Reserves.

Milestones	Progress Q 2	Supporting Commentary
Runcorn Hill Park - Parks for People bid. Work up bid to 'First Round' submission stage, Dec 2010 .		The bid was submitted in August 2010. A decision will be made by HLF in Quarter 4.
Develop plan for new Park and associated landscape improvements at Upton, Mar 2011 .		This project is currently stalled due to issues with Playbuilder Funding. Currently awaiting a decision by national government. Alternative funding has been applied for.
Woodland Expansion - Additional 200m2 of Woodland planted Boroughwide, Mar 2011 .		Plans have been drawn up for planting during Q3. Work to follow on receipt of funding.

Appendix 1: Progress Against 'key' objectives / milestones







Deliver 4 new or refurbished Play Areas through Playbuilder Programme, **Mar 2011**.



This project is currently stalled due to issues with Playbuilder Funding. Currently awaiting a decision by national government. Alternative funding has been applied for.

Appendix 1: Progress Against 'key' objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective
EAR 4	Implementation of actions to ensure the Council achieves its targets and objectives relating to waste and climate change.





Milestones	Progress Q 2	Supporting Commentary
Extension of kerbside green waste collection service May 2010.		This was completed ahead of schedule with a further 400 properties added to the scheme in February 2010.
Extension of multi-material recycling service to all properties. June 2010.		As reported in Q1, this target was achieved.
Review of the network of neighbourhood recycling 'Bring Sites' Sep 2010.		This review has been completed and results will be reported to Members at a future meeting of the Board.
Produce a Schools and Retailers Recycling Communications Pack Sept 2010 (AOF 31)		The communications pack has been completed.
Complete a full review and update of the Council's Waste Action Plan Nov 2010.		Preparatory work on the updating of the Waste Action Plan has commenced and it is anticipated that this target will be met.
Complete a review of the Council's Waste Management Strategy Mar 2011		An initial review of the Council's Waste Management Strategy was carried out by officers during this quarter. A report was subsequently presented to the Executive Board recommending that a full review of the Strategy be deferred for a period of up to two years. Members of the Executive Board approved this recommendation.

Appendix 2: Progress Against 'other' objectives / milestones





Ref	Objective
	There are presently no objectives / milestones of this type identified for the service.

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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Service Delivery							
<u>NI 157a</u>	Percentage of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks	60%	60%	16.67%			A total of 6 applications were determined this quarter. One was determined within 13 weeks. Of the applications determined over this time period 1 related to the Castlefields local Centre that has regeneration benefits. The processing of other applications was complicated by the signing of legal agreements. In addition officers' time was taken up by a judicial review challenge in the High Court in relation to application approval of the Eternit site on Derby Road.
<u>NI 157b</u>	Percentage of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks	90.1%	80%	75.76%			A total of 33 applications were determined this quarter. 25 were determined within 8 weeks. The reduction in the size of the Development Control team and the ongoing issues around experienced administrative support together with the impact of the Eternit High Court action has affected current progress towards the target.





Appendix 3: Progress Against 'key' performance indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2009/10	Target 2010/11	Quarter 2	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
<u>NI 157c</u>	Percentage of other planning applications determined within 8 weeks	77.55%	80%	71.95%			A total of 82 applications were determined this quarter. 59 were determined within 8 weeks. The reduction in the size of the Development Control team and the ongoing issues around experienced administrative support together with the impact of the Eternit High Court action has affected current progress towards the target.
<u>NI 159</u>	Supply of ready to develop housing sites	131.9%	100%	Refer to comment	N/A	N/A	Data collected & reported annually. No indication/information that target cannot be reached at this stage.
<u>NI 170</u>	Previously developed land that has been vacant or derelict for more than 5 years	2.33%	2.24%	Refer to comment	N/A	N/A	Data collected & reported annually. No indication/information that target cannot be reached at this stage.
<u>EAR LI8</u>	Greenstat-Survey, Satisfaction with the standard of maintenance of trees, flowers and flower beds.	-	70%	100%			Data collected from Greenstat.







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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Quality

EAR LI2	Satisfaction with the standard of cleanliness and maintenance of parks and green spaces.	94%	90%	100%			Data collected from Greenstat.
EAR LI3	Number of Green Flag Awards for Halton.	12	12	12			Green Flags awarded in June and last for 12 months.



Service Delivery

NI 154	Net additional homes provided (Cumulative)	114	159	133			Data collected quarterly on sites greater than 10 dwelling (gross) Demolitions are reported annually
NI 155	Number of affordable homes delivered (gross) (Cumulative)	108	80	46			Data collected quarterly on sites greater than 10 dwellings. All sites within Borough reported annually.
NI 191	Residual household waste per household (Kgs)	819.41	811	354.04			Waste production is subject to seasonal variation and will change during the year, however, estimated performance in Q2 is better than the corresponding period last year (482kg) and indications at this stage are that the year end target will be achieved.

Appendix 4: Progress Against 'other' performance indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2009/10	Target 2010/11	Quarter 2	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
NI 192	Household waste recycled and composted	29.97%	34%	39.07% Estimated			<p>In the absence of current data being available, an estimated figure has been established based upon data for the same period in 2009/10. Accepting that this will only provide an indication of our current position, there are no known factors that would suggest that there will be any significant deviation from this estimate.</p> <p>Waste production is subject to seasonal variation and whilst performance in Q2 exceeds the end of year target, performance is likely to decrease. Indications are that the year-end target will be achieved.</p>

Appendix 4: Progress Against 'other' performance indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2009/10	Target 2010/11	Quarter 2	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
NI 193	Municipal waste land filled	70.16%	63%	61.33%			Waste production is subject to seasonal variation, however, performance in Q2 is better than the corresponding period last year (72.67%) and indications at this stage are that the year end target will be achieved.
NI 195	Improved street and environmental cleanliness: a) Litter b) detritus c) Graffiti d) Fly-Posting	13% 9% 3% 1%	8% 5% 1% 0%	Refer to comment	N/A	N/A	The data is collated at the end of each year. Therefore this will be reported in Q4.
NI 196	Improved street and environmental cleanliness - Fly tipping	3	1	Refer to comment	N/A	N/A	The data is collated at the end of each year. Therefore this will be reported in Q4.
NI 197	Improved local biodiversity – active management of local sites	57.5%	67%	Refer to comment	N/A	N/A	The score will remain the same throughout 2010/11 year. A new score will be calculated in Q1 2011/12 year.

Appendix 5: Risk Control Measures

Ref	Risk Identified	Treatment Measure	Progress	Supporting Commentary
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There are no Risk Control Measures for this area.

Appendix 6: High Priority Equality Actions

Ref	Service Area	High Priority Action	Progress	Supporting Commentary
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There are no High Priority Equality Actions for this area.

Appendix 7 Financial Statement

ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY DIRECTORATE

ENVIRONMENT & REGULATORY SERVICES

Revenue Budget as at 30th September 2010

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget To Date £'000	Actual To Date £'000	Variance To Date (overspend) £'000	Actual Including Committed Items £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	6717	3337	3476	(139)	3476
Landscape Maintenance	217	113	44	69	44
Other Premises Supplies & Services	71 403	45 162	54 148	(9) 14	54 236
Hired & Contracted Services	352	177	179	(2)	267
Unitary Development Plan	30	0	0	0	0
Trade Waste Tipping	120	60	58	2	58
Other Transport Grants To Voluntary Organisations	90 44	45 44	47 38	(2) 6	47 38
Recycling	524	280	340	(60)	340
Waste Disposal	5135	2140	2054	86	2054
Agency Related Finance Charges	19 78	19 0	18 0	1 0	18 0
Total Expenditure	13800	6422	6456	(34)	6632

Appendix 7 Financial Statement

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date	Actual Including Committed Items
	£'000	£'000	£'000	(overspend) £'000	£'000
Income					
Sales	-64	-55	-31	(24)	-31
Planning Fees	-577	-231	-234	3	-234
Building Control Fees	-252	-126	-67	(59)	-67
Pest Control	-69	-53	-48	(5)	-48
Trade Waste Charges	-346	-173	-146	(27)	-146
Other Fees & Charges	-561	-280	-79	(201)	-79
Rents	-18	-7	0	(7)	0
Government Grants	-242	-127	-104	(23)	-226
Reimbursements & Other Grants	-11	0	-1	1	-1
Schools SLA	-250	-125	-123	-2	-123
Non-Revenue	-101	-51	-69	18	-69
Total Income	-2491	-1228	-902	(326)	-1024
Net Controllable Expenditure	11309	5194	5554	(360)	5608
Recharges					
Premises Support	125	8	7	1	7
Transport	2043	1026	1048	(22)	1048
Departmental Support Services	0	0	0	0	0
Asset Charges	100	0	0	0	0
Central Support Services	0	0	0	0	0
Support Service Income	-	-	-		-
	315	31	35	4	35
Net Total Recharges	1953	1003	1020	(17)	1020
Net Departmental Total	13262	6197	6574	(377)	6628

Comments on the above figures:

In overall terms revenue spending at the end of quarter 2 is ahead of the budget profile.

Staffing is above budget to date as anticipated savings from the efficiency review have not yet been met. This situation will be closely monitored through out the year.

With regard to landscape maintenance there have been delays in the start dates of some projects.

With regard to supplies & services, although expenditure appears to be below budget to date this is not the case when commitments are taken into account

With regard to recycling, the recycle bank scheme is progressing faster than anticipated

With regard to income, Building Control fees are less than budget to date as a result increased competition from the private sector and the current economic climate. Planning fee income is also below budget to date. This item under achieved its target by £200k last financial year and is forecast to underachieve again this financial year. This is a result of a slow down in the development industry. Income from Open Spaces external works and Trade Waste is also lower than anticipated. These income budgets are being closely monitored and all efforts are being made to maximise this income, but it is highly unlikely that year-end targets will be met.

Sales income relates to pollution prevention control. Investigations are underway to ensure that all possible income has been invoiced.

At this stage it is anticipated that the overall spend will be ahead of the Departmental budget by the end of the financial year. All efforts are being made to minimise the impact.

ENVIRONMENTAL & REGULATORY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Capital Projects as at 30th September 2010

	2010/11 Capital Allocation £'000	Allocation To Date £'000	Actual Spend To Date £'000	Allocation Remaining £'000
Screened Tip Area	25	25	25	0
Improvement To Allotments	85	20	18	67
Hale Park	447	40	34	413
Children's Playground Equipment	93	10	7	86
Milton Avenue	34	34	48	-14
Victoria Park	8	4	4	4
Town Park	42	42	76	-34
Hallwood/Roehampton Playground – Wellington Street	0	0	6	-6
Arley Drive	36	2	2	34
Playground – Runcorn Hill Park	0	0	2	-2
Landfill Tax Credit Schemes	340	0	0	340
Growth Points Award	580	0	0	0
Litter Bins	20	0	0	20
Recycling Bins	70	70	77	-7
Total Capital Expenditure	1810	277	337	893

Comments on the above figures:

The programme is a little ahead of target, however, it is expected that the full capital allocation will be spent by the year-end

ENVIRONMENTAL & REGULATORY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Local Strategic Partnership as at 30th September 2010




	Annual Budget £'000	Budget To Date £'000	Actual Spend To Date £'000	Variance To Date (overspend) £'000
Area Forum				
Area Forum 1	110	55	8	47
Area Forum 2	89	45	7	38
Area Forum 3	87	44	14	30
Area Forum 4	127	64	43	21
Area Forum 5	114	57	20	37
Area Forum 6	53	26	4	22
Area Forum 7	20	10	1	9
Priority 5 Safer Halton				
Pride of Place Action Team	33	16	0	16
Area Forum Co-Ordinator	42	21	19	2
ASB Commissioned Services	543	271	-103	374
Total LSP Expenditure	1218	609	13	596

Comments on the above figures:

Regular monitoring reports are sent to the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) in respect of all LSP projects and any areas of concern are dealt with throughout the year by the LSP support team and individual project managers. Some variances against the budget to date are expected, as the LSP have deliberately over-programmed in order to ensure that the full allocation of Neighbourhood Renewal Fund grant is spent during the year.




Appendix 8 Explanation 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 whether the annual target is on course to be achieved</u>.</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 unless there is an intervention or remedial action taken</u>.</i>

Direction of Travel Indicator

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

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