

This Report will be made public on 5 March 2019



Report Number **C/18/80**

**To:** Cabinet  
**Date:** 13 March 2019  
**Status:** Non-Key Decision  
**Responsible Officer:** Sarah Robson, Assistant Director for Strategy, Performance and Communications  
**Cabinet Member:** Councillor David Monk

**SUBJECT:** QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT 2018/19

**SUMMARY:**

This report provides an update on the Council's performance for the third quarter of 2018/19, covering 1 October 2018 to 31 December 2018. The report enables the Council to assess progress against the approved key performance indicators for each service area.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be monitored during 2018/19 and reported to CLT and Members quarterly.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Cabinet is asked to agree the recommendations set out below because:

- a) The Council is committed to monitoring performance across all of its service areas to ensure progress and improvement is maintained.
- b) The Council needs to ensure that performance is measured, monitored and the results are used to identify where services are working well and where there are failings and appropriate action needs to be taken.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. To receive and note report C/18/80.
2. To note the Council's performance information for Quarter 3, 2018/19.
3. To approve the updated Key Performance Indicators outlined in section 1.4 to monitor the Council's performance against its statutory duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

## **1. Background**

1.1 The Council's Corporate Plan (2017-20) for the district, introduced six new strategic objectives:

- More Homes
- More Jobs
- Health Matters
- Appearance Matters
- Achieving Stability
- Delivery Excellence

1.2 Underpinning each strategic objective is a set of priorities that explain how each objective will be achieved.

1.3 Key Performance Indicators, currently collated on a quarterly basis, were not reviewed as part of the Corporate Plan refresh and currently do not fully align to how the Council will measure progress in delivering the strategic objectives and priorities. The ongoing work in this area means that 2018/19 will be something of a transitional year.

1.4 However, as a result of the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act (2017) in April 2018, which set out a framework for one of the biggest changes to homelessness legislation, the relevant performance indicators have had to be amended as performance is now measured and collated by Government in a different format. As the measure of good performance has changed, a suite of new performance indicators for homelessness were approved by Cabinet in the Quarter 2 report presented in December 2018. Following on from further work undertaken with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in terms of how local housing authorities collate their performance data, two further performance indicators will be introduced in Quarter 3 showing how homelessness approaches to the Council are managed. These are:

- Number of homelessness approaches accepting a personal housing plan
- Number of homelessness approaches declining or withdrawing a personal housing plan.

## **2. Introduction**

2.1 Quarterly Performance Reports enable the Cabinet, other Members of the Council and the public to scrutinise the performance of the Council against strategic deliverables and key indicators in accordance with the approved Corporate Plan.

2.2 The Quarterly Performance Report (Appendix 1) has been produced to summarise the Council's performance for the third quarter of 2018/19 (1 October to 31 December 2018). It captures how the Council is performing against its agreed Key Performance Indicators.

- 2.3 Where the performance indicator is not being achieved, explanations have been sought from the relevant Service Manager's and noted in the report (Appendix 1).
- 2.4 The performance indicators which have fallen below target are monitored by the Council's Policy & Improvement Officer who will work with the relevant Service Manager to identify appropriate action that can be taken to resolve the situation.
- 2.5 Performance areas to be monitored will also be raised with iESE, the Council's transformation partner, to discuss where performance improvements can be achieved through reviewing service resourcing, process redesign and digital enablement. Any significant areas of concern will be brought to the attention of CLT for consideration.

### **3. Performance - Exception Reporting**

- 3.1 The Council has performed well in Quarter 3, with 62 of the 75\* indicators meeting/exceeding target or on track at the end of the quarter.

*\*N.B – The data for one KPI in Quarter 3 will not be available until Quarter 4, therefore data has been recorded against 74 key performance indicators in Appendix 1.*

- 3.2 Some areas of monitoring raised in Quarters 1 and 2 as a result of performance not meeting target have continued to be monitored throughout Quarter 3. The current status of these exception areas will be set out within this section of the report.

#### **3.3 More Homes**

- The Council determined 100% of major planning applications within the statutory period helping to support the delivery of new housing and employment sites in the district.
- A further 22 long term empty homes were brought back into use within the district in Quarter 3 helping to provide much needed local homes. This brings the current total to 56 since April 2018. The intervention of the Council and its partner agencies has resulted in 42 private sector homes being improved in the quarter as result of improvement works undertaken as a result of enforcement action and the provision of the Disabled Facilities Grant, Winter Warmth and Home Safe loans. This brings the current total to 247 private sector homes being improved so far in 2018/19.
- The Council has worked hard to improve its housing advice and support, with only 25 households being placed in temporary accommodation, compared to 67 in the same period last year. The impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act has seen homelessness approaches to the Council significantly rise, with 302 homelessness approaches recorded in the quarter, however, 192 of the 302 homelessness approaches were able to be prevented.
- Improved housing advice and decision making has seen the average number of families placed in temporary B&B accommodation continue

to stay at zero this quarter, compared to 24 in the same period last year.

- The average number of weeks families are staying in Bed & Breakfast continues to remain at zero at the end of the Quarter 3, compared to 5.3 weeks in the same quarter last year.

#### To monitor

- As a result of Government's introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act, which places a number of new statutory obligations on local housing authorities, the Council has seen the number of homelessness approaches continue to remain high with 302 approaches in the quarter, compared to 142 in the same period last year. The introduction of the Duty to Refer, as part of the Homelessness Reduction Act, will see these figures rise again, potentially doubling, in the next 6 months. Exception performance monitoring for previous quarters identified the Housing Options team as being under-resourced to support the increase in homelessness approaches. Exception performance monitoring in Quarter 3 confirms the successful recruitment of two out of the three required posts, Senior Accommodation Officer and Initial Assessments Officer. At the time of writing this report, the team are shortlisting for the Housing Advice and Prevention Officer position.

#### 3.4 More Jobs

- The annual target of 6 engagement visits delivered to key employers is on track with 5 visits being completed this quarter to four Folkestone based businesses (Sterlingbuild, NIC Instruments, Plamil Foods, Dryhoff) and one in Hythe (GoPak). The meetings identify areas where the Council can support the growth of these important companies, including meeting their future expansion (or consolidation) needs in order to retain jobs in the district. Opportunities are also identified to link with other organisations such as Folkestone College regarding training and skills development. These companies are encouraged to use the Folkestone Works website ([www.folkestone.works](http://www.folkestone.works)) to promote their success stories, thereby also providing third party validation of Folkestone & Hythe District as an attractive business location.

#### 3.5 Appearance Matters

- Recycling is very important as waste can have a huge negative impact on the natural environment. Folkestone & Hythe's residents are helping to make a difference, increasing the amount of household waste recycled to more than 46% in Quarter 3 compared to 44% in the same period last year. The Council will continue to promote its drive to increase household recycling over the coming years.
- We know the appearance of the district is important to local residents and businesses. In Quarter 3:
  - 98% of streets surveyed were clear of litter, up from 97% in the same quarter last year.

- 251 instances of fly tipping were reported in the quarter, with the average time for fly tipped waste being removed within 2 days, compared to the 3 day target.
  - Our Environmental Enforcement Officers spent more than 573 hours patrolling the District. This increased the number of Fixed Penalty Notices issued for fly tipping, litter and dog control to 42, compared to 19 in the same period last year.
  - 24 enforcement notices were served for noise, rubbish accumulation and fly tipping, compared to 47 in the same period last year. The Environmental Protection team will continue to deliver a range of informal interventions as a first step in resolving to environmental issues in the district. In cases, where informal intervention has not worked, the team maintains a firm stance in issuing notices and pursuing prosecutions against those who commit environmental crimes.
- Operational since October 2018, our Area Officer team has actively worked with local Elected Members, businesses and community groups to improve the appearance of the district. Quarter 3 has been a resounding success, supported by the following achievements:
    - Completed 2,050 'See it, Own it, Do it' jobs across the district to ensure it remains a welcoming and attractive place to live, work and visit.
    - Removed 363 bags of waste from 15 community clean-ups held across the district.
    - Actioned all 51 reactive reports received from Elected Members identifying priority work required to improve the appearance in their wards.
    - Nearly 30 community and social responsibility events have been hosted in the district providing environmental activities including litter picks and clean ups.
    - 8 community jobs referred to the appropriate agency to action, including removal of redundant phone boxes by British Telecom, cutting of vegetation and repairs to the crossings at Tram Road by Network Rail as well as highways repairs in the precinct by Kent County Council.

#### To monitor

- The overall number of missed bins reported (number of missed collections per 100,000 population) remains positively low (5.44) compared to the contractual target of 50. This equates in real terms to approximately 78 bins or containers missed in total within the quarter. From this a further 90% were then subsequently collected by the end of the next working day, if reported within 24 hours. Those not collected were often reported late or were operationally difficult to complete. Defaults are issued to the contractor where the bin has not been collected within the 24 hour contracted timescale.
- The British Vehicle PCN (Parking Contravention Notice) recovery rate has shown improvement in the quarter and will continue to be monitored. The British Vehicle PCN recovery rate has increased to

62.95% against the 70% quarterly target, an improvement over the Quarter 2 figure of 61.64%. Exception performance monitoring for Quarter 3 has confirmed that the recovery rate was still under target during the quarter due to bailiff enforcement action being suspended during the Christmas period for 2-3 weeks that consequently impacted on the recovery rate. Enforcement action has now fully resumed and performance should continue to improve.

- The Foreign Vehicle PCN recovery rate has decreased slightly to 48.36% against a 50% quarterly target, but remains greatly improved when compared against the same quarter last year, where a 37% recovery rate was achieved. Exception performance monitoring for Quarter 3 has confirmed the same contributing factor for under target performance as highlighted previously with the British recovery rate. Enforcement action has now fully resumed and performance will kept under constant review - two debt recovery agencies currently operate in Europe on behalf of the Council, although it remains difficult to trace foreign vehicles in receipt of an unpaid PCN. KCC are currently running trials to introduce vehicle clamping, which could see recovery rates and income increase if successful – this is a watching brief.

### 3.6 Health Matters

- Our residents have shown that they love where they live, with the number of community volunteer hours increasing to 264 hours in the quarter, compared to 152 hours in same period last year. 11 Council-supported litter picks were held across the district, including Folkestone, Sandgate and Battery Point beaches alongside Harbour Ward, Twiss Road (Hythe) and Hawkinge, compared to 7 in the same period last year.
- Local businesses have continued to support local areas, with over 395 volunteering hours undertaken in the quarter to support community litter picks. Participating organisations include the Hythe Rotarians, Balfour Beatty, Holiday Extras, Environment Agency and The Radnor Arms Public House.

### 3.7 Achieving Stability

- Business Rates, Council Tax and Council Tax reduction collection rates continue to show positive cumulative trends towards their overall annual targets as a result of improved working processes for charging and pre-enforcement activities, alongside regular scheduled reviews for various discounts and exemptions.
- Oportunitas, the Council's housing and employment trading arm, has benefitted from a successful quarter, invoicing more than £29,500, against an income target of £10,000 in Quarter 3.

### 3.8 Delivering Excellence

- Average processing times for new Housing Benefit claims from the date complete evidence is received have been undertaken in 6.1 days during the quarter against a target of 10 days. Change of circumstances for housing benefit falls within 4.8 days against a target

of 7 days, helping to support some of the Council's most vulnerable customers as quickly as possible. Faster processing times have partially been attributed to a continued channel shift towards making essential benefit services accessible to customers online.

- Focusing on the customer in delivering excellence is highlighted in both the Council's Corporate Plan and its evolving transformation project, with work to date concluding that customers value four elements: (1) the behaviours we exhibit; (2) the speed and efficiency of transactions; (3) our capacity and resilience, being one high performing team; and (4) maintaining an external focus, working collaboratively.
- The percentage of calls served showed significant improvement with 84.72% served in Quarter 3 against a target of 80%, up from 77.58% recorded in Quarter 2. The average wait for calls (except peak times) has also show improvement in the quarter, with the average wait being 2mins 39secs against a target of 3mins, down from 4mins 20secs recorded in Quarter 2. The month of December is traditionally a quieter month in relation to customer calls into the Council, which has contributed to improved performance during Quarter 3. However, staffing resilience has been impacted by four staff members securing new employment or promotion within the Council. Recruitment is being undertaken in Quarter 4 and new staff will be provided with extensive training. This may have a short term adverse impact on overall performance figures moving into Quarter 4 as the number of calls traditionally tend to rise in the run up to the end of the financial year.

#### To monitor

- The number of Freedom of Information (FOI) and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests satisfactorily replied to within the statutory timeframe of 20 working days has improved to 95.4% in the quarter against a target of 100% in comparison to 91.5% achieved in Quarter 2. The environment surrounding EIR and FOI continues to be challenging, with the Council receiving high volumes of requests that are frequently technically complex. The push to proactively publish materials has continued to make good ground, and this is reflected in the steadily improving response rate compared to Quarter 1 and 2 statistics. The failure to hit the 100% target can be attributed to a range of factors, for example, delays in information being provided for consideration and complex cases requiring extended consideration of exemptions. Ongoing efforts are being made to address performance with work being undertaken to consider the department's work processes and IT requirements, alongside the continuation of proactive publication of Council information online.

#### 4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

| Perceived risk                                  | Seriousness | Likelihood | Preventative action   |
|---|-------------|------------|---|
| The Council's strategic objectives are not met. | High        | Medium     | Monitor progress against performance indicators and take remedial action for those areas where targets and actions are unlikely to be achieved. |

#### 5. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

- 5.1 Legal (DK)** – There are no legal implications arising directly out of this report. The Key Performance Indicators (as amended) must continue to take account of both existing and new statutory duties and responsibilities that are imposed on the Council by Central Government and reflect the strategic objectives contained in the Council's Corporate Plan. Failure to do so will put the Council at risk of legal challenge by affected residents and/or businesses. Whilst reporting on performance is not a statutory requirement, it is considered best practice to review the Council's progress against the Corporate Plan on a regular basis.
- 5.2 Finance (CS)** – There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. There is a presumption that targets will be delivered within existing resources. Adverse performance for some indicators may have financial implications for the Council. In the event that targets cannot be achieved within the agreed envelope of resources officers are expected to raise the issue through the appropriate channels as the needs arise.
- 5.3 Human Resources (AS)** – There are no direct HR implications or risks arising from this report.
- 5.4 Equalities (SR)** – Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are systematically carried out for any services, projects or other schemes that have the potential to impact on communities and / or staff on the grounds of particular protected characteristics or socio-economic disadvantage. Over the course of the year, performance against some indicators might potentially have equality and social inclusion implications, if performance is not at an acceptable level. These will be highlighted as necessary in the corporate performance reporting, along with details of the steps that will be taken to address these.
- 5.5 Communications (MR)** – The quarterly performance report should be widely communicated internally and externally. Thought should be given to how this is communicated to our different audiences.
- 5.6 Transformation (SR)** – There are no direct implications on the delivery of the transformation programme arising from this report. However, any performance areas to be monitored should be raised with iESE, the Council's transformation partner, to discuss where performance improvements can be achieved through reviewing service resourcing, process redesign and digital enablement.



## 6. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officer prior to the meeting

Sarah Robson – Assistant Director for Strategy, Performance and Communications

Email: [sarah.robson@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.robson@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk)

Tel: 01303 85 3426

Gavin Edwards – Policy and Improvement Officer

Tel: 01303 85 3436

Email: [gavin.edwards@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk](mailto:gavin.edwards@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk)

### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Quarter 3 (2018/19) Key Performance Indicators Report