

This Report will be made public on 19 April 2021



Report Number: **OS/20/16**

To: Finance & Performance Scrutiny Sub-committee
Date: 27 April 2021
Status: Non Key Decision
Director: Charlotte Spendley – Director for Corporate Services
Cabinet Member: Councillor David Monk, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Performance

SUBJECT: QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020/21

SUMMARY: This report provides an update on the Council's performance for the third quarter of 2020/21, covering 1 October 2020 to 31 December 2020. The report enables the Council to assess progress against the approved key performance indicators for each service area.

Key performance indicators will be monitored during 2020/21 and reported to CLT and Members quarterly.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note report OS/20/16.
2. To note the performance information for Quarter 3 2020/21 in Appendix 1.

1. QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020/21

- 1.1 The Council's Corporate Plan (2017-20) for the district referenced six 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 Quarterly Performance Reports enables Finance & Performance Scrutiny Subcommittee, 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.
- 1.4 The Quarterly Performance Report (Appendix 3) has been produced to summarise the Council's performance for Quarter 3 (1st October to 31st December 2020) during what has been a very challenging period as the Council continues to respond to the coronavirus pandemic.
- 1.5 Where the performance indicator is not being met, explanations have been given from the relevant Service Managers and noted in the report.
- 1.6 The performance indicators which have fallen below target are monitored by the Council's Performance & Improvement Specialist who will work with the relevant Service Manager to identify appropriate action that can be taken to resolve the situation.
- 1.7 It should be noted this will be the second to last report that will monitor performance against the existing 2017-20 Corporate Plan following the adoption of the new corporate plan 'Creating Tomorrow Together' 2021-30 last month. Further work is being undertaken to shape new KPIs that will reflect the new priorities of the plan.

2. PERFORMANCE – EXCEPTION REPORTING

2.1 More Homes

- The Council determined 100% of major planning applications within the statutory period in the quarter helping to support the delivery of new housing and employment sites in the district.
- A further 76 private sector homes have been improved as a result of intervention by the Council and its partner agencies helping to continually improve the standards and compliance of properties within the sector. This brings the total number of private sector homes

improved so far this year to 175, therefore meeting the annual target set.

- A further 13 private rental properties were provided through both the Social Lettings Agency and Property Solutions helping landlords to let their properties to households who contact the Council as homeless or threatened with homelessness at affordable rents, whilst ensuring their properties meet the required standards.

To monitor

- The number of homelessness approaches has fallen slightly, but continues to remain high with 320 approaches recorded during the quarter. This can be attributed to the government's change in legislation that has extended the ban on evictions and the extension on notice periods from 2 to 6 months in all but serious anti-social behaviour and domestic abuse cases until March 2021. The change in legislation could increase the number of potential evictions accumulating if it is not extended beyond March 2021.
- The number of households in temporary accommodation continues to remain high as result of the coronavirus pandemic slowing down the number of suitably sized private rented properties becoming available for temporary and long term accommodation.
- The number of households in Bed and Breakfast accommodation has fallen slightly, but like temporary accommodation this measure continues to be impacted by the pandemic. Bed and Breakfast accommodation is being used to house single persons and couples. Families are continuing to be placed in self-contained accommodation, unless it is an emergency and no self-contained accommodation is available. The Housing Options team are actively working to move all clients into more suitable accommodation as soon as possible.
- The number of additional homes delivered by the Council and its partners has slowed due to the Coronavirus Pandemic. Housing association partners have advised that a number of sites originally anticipated to complete before the end of March 2021, are now scheduled to complete in the early part of the 2021/22 year. There are approximately 90 additional affordable homes for rent and shared ownership purchase currently under construction on sites in Shorncliffe, Sellindge, New Romney and Hawkinge.

3.2 More Jobs

- The Economic Development team are continuing to progress with projects to bring forward new employment space in the district, most notably the Romney Marsh Employment Hub in New Romney, where work successfully began on site during December 2020 with first phase completion targeted for December 2021. Additional funding from 'Getting Building Fund' has also been secured to bring forward the second phase of the scheme that will release a further five hectares of employment land for development. In Folkestone Town Centre, 16 Bouverie place is expected to complete a programme of refurbishment works in March 2021 to provide employment space for businesses

ranging from startups to medium size enterprises with occupation by tenants anticipated by the summer.

- The business engagement programme in its usual form has remained suspended as result of the coronavirus lockdown, however virtual meetings have continued during the quarter with local businesses. The Economic Development team have continued to ensure that engagement activity has been focused on communicating with a wide range of businesses to inform them of the support and grants made available to assist them during the lockdown period. The team has also administered the Folkestone & Hythe Additional Restrictions Grant that was allocated £2.26 million of funding by central government. At the end of the quarter, the scheme received 227 applications and has successfully made awards to 95 businesses totaling £140,052.

3.3 Appearance Matters

- The percentage of streets surveyed as being clear of litter continues to remain at 96% during the quarter. This will help maintain residents' satisfaction at the quality of life offered by their neighbourhoods and will also help to make the district an attractive place to visit when restrictions are eased.
- More than 760 hours were spent by Environmental Enforcement officers on patrol as result of additional resources being allocated to the team. The number of Fixed Penalty Notices issued for fly tipping, litter, dog control and Covid-19 legislation breaches were 127, compared to 52 in the same period last year.
- Successful prosecution cases took place against four separate individuals for fly tipping rubbish within the district.
- The Area Officer team completed 1,995 'See it, Own it, Do it' jobs across the district to ensure it remains a welcoming and attractive place to live and work.

To monitor

- The overall recycling rate has decreased from 49% in Quarter 2 to 46% in Quarter 3 due to the inherent seasonality of garden waste. Performance trends continue to identify collected tonnages associated with garden waste being lower during Quarter 3 due colder and wetter weather conditions.
- The percentage of returns to empty a missed bin by the end of the next working day if reported within 24 hours has decreased to 87% in the quarter as a result of an increase in the coronavirus infection rate amongst the contractor's workforce that has required staff to self-isolate and has consequently impacted on the delivery collection service.
- The number of community and corporate social responsibility events hosted by the Area Officer team within the quarter have fallen below target due to tier 4 coronavirus lockdown restrictions advising people to stay at home.

- The overall British Vehicle PCN (Parking Contravention Notice) achieved 46.5% within the quarter compared with 62.95% in the same period last year. In light of the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic, the British Parking Association (BPA) and the Local Government Association (LGA) have recommended local authorities take an understanding and flexible approach towards taking payments in recognition that an increasing number of people will be impacted financially. The Council has revised its approach by: extending the discount period for PCNs, placing cases on hold for specific periods of time, and offering repayment plans to people with multiple PCN cases. This has consequently reduced the overall recovery rate achieved.
- Foreign Vehicle PCN recovery rates have decreased to 26.8% compared with 37% in the same period last year. The owners of foreign registered vehicles continue to pose a difficulty to trace and, even when they are successfully traced, there is no legal process by which they can be made to pay civil penalties. Like the British recovery rate, the guidance provided to local authorities by both the LGA and BPA is being applied to these cases, however bailiff enforcement is continuing to pursue outstanding cases.

3.4 Health Matters

- A further 11 disabled facilities grants were issued during the quarter to pay for essential housing adaptations to help disabled people stay in their own homes.
- A total of 8 fixed penalty notices were issued under the public space protection order (PSPO) in the quarter to help tackle issues of anti-social behaviour within the district.
- The number of visits and inspections to licensed premises has shown an increase on the previous quarter reaching a total of 69. The Environmental Health and Licensing team have been undertaking a planned programme of visits to premises across the district to ensure compliance with coronavirus regulations were being upheld as well as proactively responding to complaints of non-adherence to these regulations.

To monitor

- The number of young people engaged in ASB diversionary activities has remained at zero during the quarter due to the coronavirus pandemic with schools discouraging ongoing contact with outside agencies to reduce the risk of transmission, but support has instead been provided through virtual initiatives. Police Crime Commissioner (PCC) funded projects have also been placed on hold due to the pandemic, but partnership working continues to take place with high risk young people who are identified through both weekly Community Safety Unit (CSU) and the fortnightly District Contextual Safeguarding (DCS) meetings. Once the current lockdown restrictions are eased, it is hoped that community safety projects within schools and PCC funded projects can safely recommence.

3.5 Achieving Stability

- The council's corporate property portfolio has generated a further £253,686 of income during the quarter and is on track to achieve its target of £1.6million for the year.
- Over £129,000 in Community Infrastructure Levy receipts have been received during the quarter to help with the continuing delivery of infrastructure needed across the District.
- Over £49,000 of income has been generated by the Organisational Development team through apprenticeship and commercial work undertaken with neighbouring East Kent Authorities (Canterbury, Dover and Thanet) in the quarter that will allow our OD team to continue to invest in and support the development of the Council's own staff.

3.6 Delivering Excellence

- The webchat facility is continuing to provide our customers with a quick and convenient way to get in contact with us regarding a range of essential services, including council tax, housing benefit and planning. The percentage of customers satisfied with the webchat facility achieved 93.9% in the quarter compared with 89% in the same period last year.
- The percentage of emergency repairs completed on time within council dwellings continues to exceed target in the quarter, reaching 99.66% against a target of 98% ensuring properties remain safe for our tenants.
- The average number of days taken to process new claims for housing benefit continues to exceed target, decreasing to 10.2 days against a target of 21 days.

To monitor

- The Lifeline team has answered a total of 26,615 calls during the quarter, however periodic connectivity issues with Skype and the Lifeline system (Jontek) have continued to directly affect the number of calls answered within targeted time frames. A new server has now been installed to help alleviate the problems and a replacement system is being investigated by the service Manager.
- The average time taken to re-let council dwellings excluding major works has improved to 22.5 days during the quarter. Delays experienced in during Quarter 1 due to coronavirus restrictions will continue to impact on void times for the remainder of this year. Performance has shown continued improvement for the fourth consecutive month due to the hard work of our repairs team and Mears in challenging circumstances, however it should be noted that the target at present will not be achieved at year end.
- The number of Subject Access Requests (SARs) and Freedom of Information (FOI)/ Environmental Information Requests (EIR) responded to within statutory timeframes both remain under target during the quarter. The Case Management team have improved overall

compliance through increased specialist guidance on complex cases, best practice and legislation. However performance has been affected this quarter due to a team member being seconded on a part time basis to provide resilience to another team. Further discussions on resourcing are being undertaken to address the situation to help improve future performance.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

4.1 There is not a great deal of risk management involved in this issue

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.
The key performance indicators (KPIs) do not link to the objectives of the Council's Corporate Plan.	High	Medium	Monitor progress against key performance indicators and take remedial action for those areas where targets and actions are unlikely to be achieved. As noted in the report, this will be the second to last report following the objectives set by the 2017-20 Corporate Plan. A new Corporate Plan has been agreed, and new performance indicators will therefore need to be identified to meet the new service objectives looking to 2030.

5. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

5.1 **Legal Officer's Comments (NM)** - There are no legal implications or risks arising directly out of this report. The Key Performance Indicators must continue to take account of both existing and new statutory duties and responsibilities that are imposed on the Council by the Government. 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 and Service Plans on a regular basis.

- 5.2 **Human Resources Comments (RB)** - There are no direct Human Resource implications emanating from this report. The council's People Strategy has been created to support the corporate plan and achievement of associated KPIs.
- 5.3 **Finance Officer's Comments (LW)** -There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.
- 5.4 **Diversities and Equalities Implications (GE)** - 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 Comments (KA)** - The communications team will use these KPIs as appropriate in their promotion of council services.

6. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

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The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report:

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Quarter 3 Key Performance Indicators Report