

Public
Key Decision – No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Corporate Performance Report 2020/21, Quarter 2

Meeting/Date: Cabinet, 19th November 2020

Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning

Report by: Business Intelligence and Performance Manager

Wards affected: All

Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to brief Members on progress against Key Actions and Corporate Indicators listed in the Council's Corporate Plan 2018/22 for the period 1 July to 30 September 2020 and on current projects being undertaken.

Key Actions, Corporate Indicators and targets are as included in the Corporate Plan Refresh 2020/21, as approved by Council on 14 October 2020.

The report does not incorporate the usual Financial Performance Monitoring Suite information setting out the financial position at the end of the Quarter. This information is being reported as a separate item to Overview and Scrutiny (Performance and Growth) Panel and Cabinet, due to the need for separate focus on financial matters as a result of the impact from Covid-19.

Recommendation:

The Cabinet is invited to consider and comment on progress made against the Key Actions and Corporate Indicators in the Corporate Plan and current projects, as summarised in Appendix A and detailed in Appendices B and C.

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present details of delivery of the Corporate Plan 2018/22, and project delivery.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council's Corporate Plan has recently been refreshed to reflect the impact of Covid-19 on services and was approved at the Council meeting on 14 October 2020. The performance data in this report and its appendices relates to the indicators and actions selected for 2020/21. The information in the summary at **Appendix A** relates to Key Actions and Corporate Indicators and the performance report at **Appendix B** details all results at the end of September.
- 2.2 As recommended by the Project Management Select Committee, updates for projects based on latest approved end dates are included at **Appendix C**. Across all programmes there are currently 17 projects which are open, pending approval or pending closure.

3. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

- 3.1 Members of the Overview and Scrutiny (Performance and Growth) Panel have an important role in the Council's Performance Management Framework and a process of regular review of performance data has been established. The focus is on the strategic priorities and associated objectives to enable Scrutiny to maintain a strategic overview. Their comments on performance in Quarter 2 will be submitted to Cabinet with this report following the Overview and Scrutiny meeting on 4 November 2020.
- 3.2 Progress against Corporate Plan objectives is reported quarterly. The report at **Appendix B** includes details of all Key Actions and Corporate Indicators at the end of Quarter 2. **Appendix C** provides information about projects, including the purpose of the project and commentary from the project managers as to the current status of each project.
- 3.3 Performance Indicator data has been collected in accordance with standardised procedures.
- 3.4 The following table summarises Quarter 2 progress in delivering Key Actions for 2020/21:

Status of Key Actions	Number	Percentage
Green (on track)	30	77%
Amber (within acceptable variance)	9	23%
Red (behind schedule)	0	0%
Awaiting progress update	0	0%
Not applicable	0	

Most key actions were on track at the end of Quarter 2 and none were significantly behind schedule.

Actions which have seen positive progress include:

- KA 2. The Healthy Open Spaces Strategy and Plan finalised during the Quarter has since been approved at Cabinet.
- KA 4. Hardship fund payments totalling over £500k have been awarded to 5,300 Council Tax Support recipients and we are encouraging new Universal Credit claimants liable for Council Tax to apply for Council Tax Support.
- KAs 5 & 7. Pathways and protocols previously developed for Housing helped mitigate against prisoners being released onto the streets during the Covid-19 pandemic, with additional family accommodation due to be available from October.
- KAs 10, 11 & 12. Flexibility built into new contracts with community organisations has helped with the local response to Covid-19, supporting residents, volunteers and community groups. Local job clubs being developed will help people find work.
- KA 13. Work is underway on final stages of the new park in St Ives.
- KAs 15, 21 & 31. A Waste Minimisation Plan has been drafted to go to Cabinet in November, an Economic Growth Strategy is currently in development and a new Housing Strategy has been prepared for submission to Cabinet during Quarter 3.
- KAs 22, 24, 25 & 27. HDC continues to be involved in supporting critical transport infrastructure developments including the A428, East-West Rail and A14.
- KAs 29 & 30. Development of strategic housing sites and associated infrastructure at Wintringham Park, Alconbury Weald and Bearscroft has continued, with work to support delivery of affordable homes including a proposal to sell 13 parcels of land for the delivery of affordable homes which has now been approved by Cabinet.
- KA 38. While work to expand online and out of hours access to services via the customer portal has been delayed, priority was given to development of additional digital resources to support residents and businesses through the pandemic.

Most of the Key Actions that have been given an Amber status relate to impacts from the effects of the national lockdown and the impacts of Covid-19 on our activities. The pandemic directly affected our ability to provide leisure and health opportunities (KAs 1 & 3) and is referenced as a factor in delays to KA 14 (planning to protect and increase biodiversity in our parks and open spaces), KA 20 (work to deliver economic growth), KA 32 (achieving a market return from Council assets) and KA35 (financial recovery).

3.5 Quarter 2 results for 2020/21 Corporate Indicators are shown in the following table:

Corporate Indicator results	Number	Percentage
Green (achieved)	17	57%
Amber (within acceptable variance)	10	33%
Red (below acceptable variance)	3	10%
Awaiting progress update	0	0%
Not applicable (annual/data unavailable/ targets TBC)	7	

While the majority of performance indicators were on track at the end of Quarter 2, three were given a Red status because performance was below an acceptable variance. A summary of the performance indicators follows on the next page with more detail provided in Appendix B. It should be noted that following the decision to postpone the Corporate Plan refresh to allow it to reflect the impacts of Covid-19, targets have been revised to account for these impacts where possible. In some cases, the full extent of the impact of the pandemic/lockdown on services is still being assessed and final targets are still to be confirmed. These targets are marked as TBC in Appendix B, with the indicators where performance cannot be assessed included in the 'Not applicable' category in the table above.

Indicators where services are meeting or exceeding their targets include the following:

- Pls 1 & 2. Despite high numbers of new claims and change events arising from the impacts of Covid-19 on local residents, the speed of processing new claims and changes of circumstances remains within the target.
- PI 3. The number of people prevented from becoming homeless to the end of Quarter 2 was above target despite the impact of lockdown limiting prevention activities. Court action on evictions was also suspended during this period.
- Pls 9, 10 & 11. Performance of street cleansing and waste collection teams has remained high, with less litter to clear in urban areas, a reduction in the number of bins not collected and an improvement in waste recycled/reused/composted.
- PI 12. Complaints about food premises remain low due to closure during lockdown.
- Pls 14, 15 & 25. Numbers of appeals allowed against licensing and planning decisions remain low, with no cost awards against the Council where a planning application was refused contrary to the officer recommendation so far this year.
- PI 28. Staff sickness remains low although there is uncertainty about the further impacts of Covid-19 on employee health this winter. This is expected to be discussed when the Quarter 2 Workforce Report goes to Employment Committee.
- Pls 33, 34 & 36. The speed of resolving complaints at both Stage 1 and Stage 2 has improved and there has also been an increase in the number of customer portal accounts set up by residents.

Indicators where services are below their targets as a direct result of the impact of Covid-19 are:

- Pls 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8. One Leisure centre and Active Lifestyles activities and participant numbers were significantly affected by closure during lockdown and changes to how they operate and customer behaviours since. Predicted volumes at the year end are expected to be significantly lower than achieved in 2019/20 as a result.
- PI 20. The number of new affordable homes delivered was below target at 124 against a target of 162. Forecasts for the year end from Registered Providers are also down on the previous expectation for the whole of 2020/21.
- Pls 23 & 24. Collection rates for both Business Rates and Council Tax have been significantly affected despite efforts to ensure all appropriate grants and discounts for businesses, and Council Tax Support and hardship payments for residents, are applied. The collection rates are not expected to recover by the end of the year.

Indicators where services are below their targets as they are likely to have been impacted as result of the impact of Covid-19 are:

- PI 27. Invoice payment within 30 days remains well below target, with Finance reporting that it has been moderately impacted by working from home arrangements for staff. Performance has started to improve through the Quarter.

There were no Red indicators with performance below acceptable variance that were not linked to Covid-19 or the impact of the lockdown on services.

3.6 The status of corporate projects at the end of September is shown in the following table. With a Programme Delivery Manager now in place, a programme-based approach to delivery is due to be applied for projects within the Customer Portal, Market Town Strategies and Covid Recovery umbrellas. The latter two are being scoped out and the Customer Portal project has been split into a series of projects.

Corporate project status	Number	Percentage
Green (progress on track)	9	53%
Amber (progress behind schedule, project may be recoverable)	4	24%
Red (significantly behind schedule, serious risks/issues)	4	24%
Pending closure	0	
Closed (completed)	0	

There are four projects showing as Amber and another four were Red at the end of Quarter 2. Two of these are projects previously reported under a single Customer Portal project, which had been at Red status since the last quarter of 2019/20 before being split into four separate projects which form the Customer Service programme. The St Benedicts Court Regeneration project requires further discussion before next steps can be taken and the start date for the 3G Artificial Pitch at One Leisure Ramsey has now been delayed to help manage risks associated with the archaeological works.

Details of all projects can be found in **Appendix C**.

4. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANELS

- 4.1 The Panel received the Corporate Performance Report 2020/21, Quarter 2 at its meeting on 4th November 2020. Overall, the performance of the Council has been commended, particularly the low number of Key Actions and Performance Indicators rated Red.
- 4.2 Members have discussed the mental health of employees and have established that the Council has introduced a number of initiatives in this area including: the provision of Mental Health First Aiders for confidential one-to-one conversations, virtual drop-in sessions and ensuring managers regularly check on the wellbeing of their staff.
- 4.3 The Panel had addressed the potential effect of the second lockdown on Key Actions currently rated Amber. An undertaking has been provided that the Council had already been planning for the predicted second lockdown with a view to mitigating the effects on all its priority areas of activity.
- 4.4 Going into more detail, the Panel has considered whether the Council had exceeded the target on Performance Indicator 3 following the suspension of Court Action during the Covid-19 pandemic. It is recognised that this has assisted the Council in this area, but it is important to note that proactive action has also been taken. In addition, work with vulnerable people has been highly effective.
- 4.5 Regarding the affordable homes target, the Council is taking steps to increase the number of affordable homes built in the District, including through the planning system using policies on affordable homes and collaborating with a Registered Housing partner to build affordable homes on Council owned sites. However, there can be a time lag between the grant of planning permission and the construction of affordable housing being completed and available for occupation.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The Cabinet is invited to consider and comment on progress made against Key Actions and Corporate Indicators in the Corporate Plan and current projects, as summarised in **Appendix A** and detailed in **Appendices B and C**.

6. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix A – Corporate Performance Summary 2020/21, Quarter 2

Appendix B – Corporate Plan Performance Report 2020/21, Quarter 2

Appendix C – Project Performance, September 2020

CONTACT OFFICERS

Corporate Plan Performance Monitoring (Appendices A and B)

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