

**Public
Key Decision – No**

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Corporate Performance Report, 2020/21 Quarter 4

Meeting/Date: Cabinet, 17 June 2021

Executive Portfolio: Councillor Jon Neish, Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning

Report by: Business Intelligence & Performance Manager

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to brief Members on results at the end of the financial year for the Key Actions and Corporate Indicators listed in the Council's Corporate Plan 2018/22 and progress 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.

Recommendations:

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 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 the year end results.
- 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 26 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 4 will be added to section 4 of this report following the Overview and Scrutiny meeting on 2 June 2021.
- 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 4. **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 final outturn progress in delivering Key Actions for 2020/21:

Status of Key Actions	Number	Percentage
Green (on track)	27	71%
Amber (within acceptable variance)	9	24%
Red (behind schedule)	2	5%
Awaiting progress update	0	0%
Not applicable	1	

Most key actions were on track at the year end, with two significantly behind schedule. Both 'Red' actions were due to the impact of the lockdown requiring the leisure centres to close. Without these facilities open, the Council's ability to work with partners to provide greater leisure and health opportunities (KA 1) and to take actions to aid recovery from the pandemic around promotion of health and wellbeing, sport and fitness activities, weight loss and healthy eating (KA 3) was significantly hampered.

Actions which had positive progress in 2020/21 include:

- KA 2. A Healthy Open Spaces Strategy and Plan were approved in October 2020.
- KA 4. We awarded £287k from the Discretionary Hardship Fund to help people in need with their housing costs in addition to £632k in Hardship Fund payments to working aged people claiming Council Tax Support.
- KAs 5-7. Strategic and practical work has helped to reduce homelessness, with a new Lettings Policy adopted in March 2021, action taken to house rough sleepers as part of the 'Everyone In' pandemic response and efforts with a range of partners continuing to identify early intervention opportunities to prevent homelessness.
- KA 8. Six community-based job clubs are due to be launched across the district.
- KA 10-12. Support for voluntary and community organisations has been invaluable in delivering local, community-led responses to the impacts of Covid-19.
- KA 15. A new Waste Minimisation Strategy and Action Plan have been approved.
- KA 16. Electric vehicle charging points have now been installed in car parks in St Neots, St Ives and Huntingdon, with energy supplying over 3,000 miles of cleaner travel enabled in the first 5-6 weeks of operation.
- KA 21. An Economic Growth Strategy for Huntingdonshire has been adopted.
- KA 22-25 & KA 27. The Growth team continues to work with partners including the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and key transport providers to secure funding and delivery of projects to support the development of infrastructure to enable growth. This includes over £6m of funding for Future High Streets Fund projects in St Neots. Masterplanning continues in other market towns.
- KAs 30 & 31. Work to improve the supply of new and affordable housing has included approval gained for the sale of Council-owned land to deliver affordable homes and the adoption of a new Housing Strategy in October 2020.
- KAs 33, 34, 37 & 38. Progress has continued with actions to improve the Council's use of data, digital skills and understanding of residents and customers, including the transition of the contact centre onto a new digital platform alongside the creation of more self-service forms to improve efficiency and customer experience.

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, including the need to divert resources from planned activities to aid emergency and recovery work. The pandemic has been a factor in delays to KA 11 (working with partners to improve opportunities for residents in the Oxmoor area), KA 14 (planning to protect and increase biodiversity in our parks and open spaces), KA 26 (preparing and implementing an updated Section 106 Supplementary Planning Document and Community Infrastructure Levy charging schedule) and KA 32 (managing non-operational assets), KA 36 (developing a workforce strategy).

3.5 Final outturn results for 2020/21 Corporate Indicators are shown in the following table:

Corporate Indicator results	Number	Percentage
Green (achieved)	21	60%
Amber (within acceptable variance)	12	34%
Red (below acceptable variance)	2	6%
Awaiting progress update	0	0%
Not applicable (data/target unavailable)	2	

This shows the Council achieved the majority of its targets in 2020/21, while only two indicators had a Red status due to performance being below an acceptable variance.

A summary of the performance indicators follows below with more detail provided in Appendix B. It should be noted that some targets had previously been revised to account for the impacts of the pandemic/lockdown on services, where possible.

Indicators where services met or exceeded their targets last year include the following:

- PIs 1 & 2. The Benefits Team's processing times for new claims and changes of circumstance remained within target despite significant increases in volume.
- PI 3. The number of homelessness preventions was higher than in 2019/20 despite court action being suspended and the pandemic/lockdown restrictions limiting some prevention activities.
- PI 9. 90% of areas sampled were clean or predominately clean, with continued regular cleaning and additional resource leading to high levels of cleanliness in open spaces and rural areas despite an increase in use of open spaces.
- PI 10. A combination of the new in-cab technology system and monitoring from waste managers resulted in a reduction in the number of missed bin collections.
- PI 15. There were no costs awards against the Council from planning appeals.
- PIs 17-19. There were improvements in the processing speeds of all types (major, minor, household extensions) of planning application when compared to 2019-20.
- PI 22. The amount of energy used in Council buildings in 2020/21 was significantly lower than in previous years. While much of this related to the closure of leisure centres due to lockdown restrictions, both Pathfinder House and Eastfield House used less energy despite remaining open throughout the year.
- PI 26. Satisfaction with ICT support services remained on target despite service outages in Q3 which had been expected to affect performance.
- PI 28. The annual staff sickness rate is the lowest ever reported, although non-sickness absences related to Covid-19 are not included in this figure.
- PI 29. Estate rental income remained above the revised target with better than expected letting numbers but was lower than the performance reported in 2019/20.
- PIs 30, 33, 35 & 36. Customer Services have reported good performance in several areas, including 89% of calls to the Call Centre answered in the year, although there are concerns about the accuracy of the data recorded which will be resolved through a move to a new system by October 2021. The target for responding to Stage 1 complaints was met, the number of avoidable contacts was reduced and there are now over 24,000 accounts on our customer portal, equivalent to over 30% of households if each account relates to a separate household.

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

- PI 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8. Lockdown restrictions and closures affected Leisure Centre and Active Lifestyles activities throughout most of 2020/21. While reduced targets had been met at the end of Quarter 3 for most of these performance indicators, the third lockdown prevented most activities and classes from taking place during Quarter 4.
- PI 13. Lockdown has resulted in fewer taxi/hackney carriage/private hire vehicle licence applications, so fewer newer vehicles licensed has meant fewer meeting low vehicle emission standards than expected when the target was set.
- PI 20. Covid-19 is said to have affected the number of new affordable homes built.

- PI 23. Despite significant issues affecting many local businesses during the year, the target to collect 99% of Business Rates in year was only just missed (98%) while the team was also able to award around £22m of reliefs to qualifying firms.

There was one Red indicator with performance below acceptable variance that was not directly linked to Covid-19 or the impact of the lockdown on services:

- PI 27. Only 76% of invoices from suppliers were paid within 30 days, with a significant number of invoices still not issued according to the agreed process. Retrospective invoicing (not raising a purchase order until after the invoice has arrived) and non-timely receipting of goods/services received are the key issues.

3.6 The status of corporate projects at the end of March is shown in the following table.

Corporate project status	Number	Percentage
Green (progress on track)	11	42%
Amber (progress behind schedule, project may be recoverable)	15	58%
Red (significantly behind schedule, serious risks/issues)	0	0%
Pending closure	0	
Closed (completed)	0	
Awaiting progress update	0	

There are no projects showing as Red at the end of Quarter 4.

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

4. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANELS

- 4.1 The panel discussed the Corporate Performance Report 2020/21 (Quarter 4) at its meeting on 2nd June 2021.
- 4.2 The Panel welcomed the report and thanked officers for their hard work and diligence over the course of the challenging year.
- 4.3 Members noted that the transparency of the figures was good to see. It was also observed that any red actions were due to unprecedented circumstances.
- 4.4 The Panel praised the work that has been undertaken to prevent homelessness over the past year. It was noted that although it was hoped that this would have a positive long-term impact, the Council would continue to support all residents in homelessness prevention.
- 4.5 Members were reassured that a recovery plan is in place for One Leisure and Active Lifestyles.
- 4.6 The reduction in staff sickness absence was noted. Following a question regarding long term plans for working practices, it was assured that working practices are being considered alongside the business needs of the Council.

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, Quarter 4, 2020/21

Appendix B – Corporate Plan Performance Report, Quarter 4, 2020/21

Appendix C – Project Performance, March 2021

CONTACT OFFICERS

Corporate Plan Performance Monitoring (Appendices A and B)

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Project Performance (Appendix C)

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