

**Public
Key Decision - No**

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Corporate Plan Targets, 2024/25

Meeting/Date: Overview and Scrutiny (Performance and Growth) Panel, 5 June 2024

Executive Portfolio: Councillor Stephen Ferguson, Executive Councillor for Resident Services and Corporate Performance

Report by: Business Intelligence and Performance Manager
Performance and Data Analyst

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

This paper presents the performance targets and intervention levels to be set for the Council's operational performance measures for 2024/25. These key metrics will be used to track delivery against the outcomes identified within the Corporate Plan.

Outturn data showing performance in 2023/24 has been collated and has informed target setting. Targets have also been informed by benchmark data, resources available, external factors and risks, and have been reviewed by senior Officers and Cabinet Members.

RECOMMENDATION

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel is invited to comment on the 2024/25 targets and intervention levels for the Council's operational performance indicators.

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 Members of the Panel informed our [Corporate Plan 2024/25](#) which was approved by Council on 27th March 2024.
- 1.2 To demonstrate transparency in our approach to performance management, we are sharing 2024/25 targets and intervention levels that results for operational performance indicators featured in the Corporate Plan will be assessed against.
- 1.3 At the time of approving the Corporate Plan 2024/25, final outturn data for 2023/24 was not available, meaning that setting realistic targets at that time was not possible. Now that outturn data is available it has been possible to set targets and intervention levels for all performance indicators.
- 1.4 For each measure there is:
 - A target that sets the level of performance which services are aiming to achieve. Results that achieve or are better than the target will be reported as Green.
 - An intervention level to allow for natural variation in results and allow us to clearly identify where additional resources or spend may be needed to manage performance. Results between the target level and intervention level will be reported as Amber, while results worse than the intervention level will be Red.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Corporate Plan has three priorities, with each priority having outcomes described for it. There are seven outcomes in total. The plan sets out the concepts of 'do/enable/influence' to describe the activities the Council will deliver to achieve the outcomes set out in the document.
- 2.2 A key element of the 'do' aspect of the Plan is the 32 key operational performance measures that specify outputs the Council will measure as indicators of performance.
- 2.3 The Council's [Performance Management Framework](#) explains how we will manage, report and scrutinise our performance and outlines our approach to target setting. Measuring performance against targets helps the Council to focus on meeting set standards and delivering against our outcomes, as well as identifying where improvements are needed.
- 2.4 Historic data shows that, for the measures where it is possible to compare to previous years, 75% of 2023/24 performance indicators had better results than in 2021/22. Compared to 2022/23, 61% of results were better in 2023/24. While we aim to deliver continuous improvement in all services, targets need to be balanced between our aspirations to deliver improved outcomes for residents and what is realistically achievable given the resources available and other external factors.
- 2.5 As part of the target setting process, we have reviewed benchmark data available for other Local Authorities where possible. For example data is reported for some performance indicators via the [Oflog](#) (Office for Local Government) Local Authority Data Explorer Tool or from other sources such as DLUHC (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) or DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food & Rural

Affairs). National averages, our position compared to the median and how we compare with local and statistically similar districts have informed the targets developed.

2.6 We have followed a similar approach taken to develop targets for measures last year by creating a transparent and collaborative environment for stakeholders to inform and shape how we measure performance against our Corporate Plan.

3. ANALYSIS

3.1 The targets, intervention levels and commentary on rationale for each recommendation is shown in Appendix 1. These have been developed by following a process that involved service managers proposing target and intervention levels, which were reviewed by senior Officers and then assessed with relevant Cabinet Members.

- All 32 performance indicators have a target and intervention level set, meaning that there will be a high level of consistency when assessing performance against these throughout the year. See paragraph 1.4 for details of how differing levels of performance will be reported.
- Each performance indicator will be presented as a line chart, enabling readers to view performance each month, with commentary to provide contextual insight. Different coloured lines allow readers to visualise targets and interventions to identify whether performance is heading off track, is within an agreed variance or is meeting/exceeding the target. Historic data is also included where possible to show how latest results compare with results at the same stage of previous years.
- Targets and interventions are modelled to take seasonality into account where possible to allow for fairer comparison across time periods and to provide a consistent baseline to evaluate performance.

3.2 As a result of this process, all targets and intervention levels originally proposed by service managers were reviewed and more challenging levels have now been agreed in 15 cases (nearly half of all PIs). The reviewers also identified one indicator where the proposed target was unrealistic and therefore reduced this to a more achievable, but still ambitious, level. This demonstrates that the process has made a difference and that we are seeking continuous improvement in how our services are delivered.

3.3 Summary analysis shows that for the 32 performance indicators:

- 16 PIs have more challenging targets and/or intervention levels than last year:
 - 14 have more challenging targets than last year
 - 2 have the same target but a reduced gap to the intervention level
- 8 PIs have the same target and intervention level as last year:
 - 3 did not meet the target last year so this year's target is a stretch target
 - 5 did meet or exceed the target last year but the targets and interventions have been kept at the same level due to risks relating to external factors and changes to service delivery (e.g. impacts of changes to our Council Tax Support scheme)
- 4 PIs have reduced targets/intervention levels due to changed circumstances:
 - 3 are linked to an expected reduction in the number of new homes being built
 - The other is linked to the implementation of a garden waste subscription service, with the Cabinet report advising that recycling rates would reduce as a result
- 4 PIs are new/amended measures which did not have corporate targets last year

Of the 28 PIs with corporate targets last year, 57% have more challenging targets and/or intervention levels and 29% have the same targets/intervention levels. While a small number of targets have been set at a lower level due to various internal/external factors, these are mainly due to anticipated risks rather than any plans to reduce the quality of services provided.

4. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANELS

4.1 The Overview and Scrutiny (Performance & Growth) Panel is due to receive this report at its meeting on 5 June 2024. Comments are sought on the targets and intervention levels for 2024/25.

5. KEY RISKS

5.1 There are a number of risks when setting targets for operational performance. These are shown alongside appropriate mitigations:

- The targets may not be achievable – use of previous data, benchmarking and assessment of the wider operational context has been used to guide the approach.
- The targets may be too easy to achieve – the balance on stretching services against the need to motivate staff has been considered and the analysis in Section 3 shows a balanced approach to setting targets has been taken.
- Targets may be influenced by external factors that are hard to control and there can be interconnectivity between some measures. For example, homelessness preventions, the number of people in temporary accommodation and the number of households housed through the housing register or Home-Link are dependent on the number of affordable homes available. The supply of new homes and new affordable homes in particular is expected to decrease this year compared to the very high numbers achieved in recent years. This has been taken into account when reviewing the targets and intervention levels proposed for these indicators.

6. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND/OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

6.1 This work is an essential element of the Corporate Plan, it details how key operational performance will be assessed by Officers and Members.

7. RECOMMENDATION

7.1 Reporting on operational performance against a set of key performance measures and agreed targets and intervention levels enables the Council to ensure the outcomes in the Corporate Plan are being tracked and managed. Comments from the Panel on 2024/25 targets and intervention levels for the Council's operational performance indicators are welcomed.

8. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

8.1 Appendix 1 – Corporate Plan 2024/25 performance measures, targets and intervention levels.

8.2 CONTACT OFFICERS

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