

Meeting Executive
Portfolio Area All
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CORPORATE PERFORMANCE - QUARTER TWO 2020/21

KEY DECISION

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1 PURPOSE

1.1 To highlight the Council’s performance across key priorities and themes for quarter two 2020/21.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the delivery of priorities which form the Future Town, Future Council Programme and performance of the Council across the key themes for quarter two 2020/21, together with the latest achievements, be noted.
- 2.2 That the Executive considers, in accordance with the Council’s Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules and if agreed, to recommend to Council that it continues to adopt the current Co-operative Corporate Plan, subject to further review in Autumn 2022.

- 2.3 That impacts of the Government directive on housing rough sleepers during Covid-19 are noted and that future Housing First plans are endorsed (para 3.97 to 3.102).
- 2.4 That impacts on the Council's Housing Options Service from the Government directive on evictions and the COVID-19 pandemic are noted and that future Housing First Plans are endorsed (para 3.92 to 3.96).
- 2.5 That the impacts of Universal Credit and COVID-19 on rent collection rate are noted and action plans endorsed (para 3.103 to 3.113).
- 2.6 That the impacts of COVID-19 on the following areas are noted and plans endorsed:
- Job Creation/New Business Start Up through the Business Technology Centre (para 3.125 to 3.128)
 - Ability to inspect food establishments (para 3.129 to 3.131)
 - Issues with the letting of council garages (para 3.132 to 3.138)
 - Collection of Council Tax (para 3.165)
 - Ability to identify and remove HRA/GF savings (para 3.166 to 3.168)
- 2.7 That the level of void loss and how voids sheltered and major works impacts this measure is noted, and improvements are endorsed (para 3.114 to 3.122).
- 2.8 That the plans to improve website satisfaction are endorsed (para 3.155 to 3.157)

3 BACKGROUND

Future Town Future Council Programme

- 3.1 Members approved the FTFC Cooperative Corporate Plan in December 2016. It reflects the Council's continuing focus on cooperative working and outlines the key outcomes and priorities for the town over the next five years through the Future Town, Future Council (FTFC) Programme as seen in Figure 1.

Future town future council



Figure 1: Future Town, Future Council Programme

- 3.2 The FTFC Programme was reviewed in March 2018 to ensure that it continued to reflect the Council's priorities. As it was apparent that working in partnership is embedded in the culture of the Council and there is a strong framework for future collaboration with other public sector bodies, the Partner of Choice Programme was closed. Development of partnerships continues as part of day-to-day business and any new shared service proposals will be considered and implemented within the Financial Security Programme. Partnership working is also crucial to the delivery of both the Place of Choice programme and COVID-19 recovery, (para 3.44 to 3.75).
- 3.3 At the Executive meeting on 11 March 2020, the Executive agreed the suite of strategies to be included within the scope of a new FTFC programme, 'Place of Choice'. Progress against the agreed actions has been reported since Quarter 1 of 2020/21. The scope of this strand will develop further over time.
- 3.4 At its meeting on 8 July 2020, the Executive agreed both the deliverables for each of the FTFC programmes and the town and Council's recovery plans which have very strong synergies. Progress against the agreed actions is being monitored and will be reported on through future reports.

Customer, Place and Transformation and Support

- 3.5 Council services are organised into eight Business Units across three themes: Customer, Place and Transformation and Support. This structure is focused on delivering the right services, to the right standards, at the right time for the town's residents and businesses, using the most cost/resource effective delivery models.
- 3.6 In addition to monitoring progress on the delivery of the FTFC Programme, performance across these (Council Service) themes is monitored throughout the year to highlight achievements and identify any areas for improvement.
- 3.7 A complete set of performance measures across all themes (FTFC programme, and the customer, place, and transformation and support themes) is attached as Appendix One. Summaries of performance measure result status are outlined at paragraph 3.11 (FTFC focus) and paragraph 3.87 (Corporate Focus).
- 3.8 Towards the end of Quarter 4 2019/20, COVID-19 began to impact on both FTFC programme activities and on council services. COVID-19 impacts on performance are highlighted throughout this report.

COVID-19

- 3.9 Given the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council’s Directors have provided an overview of current performance. Many services have been adapted to provide support for local people. The effects of the pandemic have required the Council to scale up or adapt support for residents at short notice, for example to scale up the Stevenage Helps and the Local Outbreak teams during the second lockdown. Officers have and continue to strive to put resourcing plans in place to manage the business continuity of vital services in a time of disruption, thereby diverting colleagues into priority areas. This will result in some temporary capacity reduction within lower priority areas. The pandemic is having significant impacts on residents and businesses in the town, which is reflected in areas of increasing demand or pressures in different service areas such as homelessness support and advice, Council Tax and Housing Benefits, income and rents.
- 3.10 The Business Units are striving to remain focussed and engaged on delivery of the agreed priorities, from creating new social and affordable housing, to driving forward the regeneration of the town centre, cooperative neighbourhoods and wealth building.

Future Town, Future Council Programme progress update

- 3.11 The focus and scope of the FTFC programmes for 2020/21 is outlined in Appendix Two. Delivery of the agreed outcomes is monitored to ensure that the Programme remains on track.
- 3.12 In addition to the monitoring of programme milestones, thirteen measures aligned to FTFC delivery were monitored and reported on for April 2020 to September 2020. An overview of FTFC focused performance for April 2020 to September 2020 is outlined below:

Number of Measures Reported	Meeting or exceeding target	Amber Status (within a manageable tolerance)	Red Status (urgent improvement action required)	Missing Data
13	5	1	5	2*

*Missing data: EOC4a: % of apprentices in post, EOCrec: Time to recruit

- 3.13 Programme delivery updates for the FTFC Programmes together with an outline of any focused activity being implemented to keep the programmes on track are set out in the following paragraphs.

External Facing Future Town, Future Council Programmes

Stevenage Town Centre Regeneration Programme

Programme Outcomes

- A new vibrant town centre delivered through a phased regeneration programme.
- Two major regeneration schemes to advance

3.14 During 2020/21 the programme is primarily focused on:

- Developing the Town Fund investment plan which will be overseen by the Stevenage Development board
- Working with the LEP to ensure Growth Deal funding is secured for specific schemes
- Supporting and enabling the start of Phase 1 of the £350m+ SG1 project in conjunction with Mace, including Swingate House and the former police station site
- Completing a business case for bringing forward the Public Sector hub development, to enable acceleration of the broader SG1 scheme
- Completing works on the Town Square and Town Square North Block projects.
- The transformation of Queensway through the completion of the first phases of work as part of the Reef development
- Beginning construction of the new Bus Interchange, subject to permission being granted
- Developing long term plans to support development around the station area
- Developing the funded CITB (Construction Industry Training Board) on-site Training Hub as part of the Stevenage Works initiative in conjunction with Job Centre Plus and North Herts College
- Delivering the 2020/21 Marketing Strategy, focussing on inclusive engagement

Programme Delivery Update

- 3.15 The planning application submitted by Mace was prepared for October planning committee.
- 3.16 Work is underway to prepare options to accelerate the second phase of the SG1 scheme which includes the Civic Hub.
- 3.17 The design works have concluded for the bus interchange and the Council has entered into and signed the enabling works delivery agreement with contractors Willmott Dixon. This package of works is currently on site.
- 3.18 Both Marshgate and the Enterprise centre (Phase 1A) have been listed as a potential projects for to be part funded from the Town Investment Plan (TIP) allocation should the submission successfully result in secured funding.
- 3.19 Physical works to the Town Square projects have continued this quarter, despite the impact of Covid-19. The lift shaft installation work has completed on the North Block site as well as works progressing externally and internally to the building. Additional paving sections in the public realm have been

opened out for public use and works are underway to install bespoke granite cladding on the benches.

- 3.20 The Town Fund project group have progressed the development of a comprehensive Town Investment Plan, with significant stakeholder engagement, advice from the Town Deal team appointed by the Government, and the Stevenage Development Board ahead of submission on at the end of October.
- 3.21 Two Full Business cases were submitted to the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for GD3 funding and both have now been approved by the LEP board. These two bids cover the sustainable transport hub and enabling works for the SG1 scheme.

Housing Development Programme

Programme Outcomes

- Increased number of affordable houses in Stevenage
- Improved access to the housing market in Stevenage for a greater number of residents

3.22 During 2020/21 the programme is primarily focused on:

- Completing work on 10 new homes at Ditchmore Lane and continuing to work on delivering a further 240 homes, including sites at Shephall Way, Kenilworth Close, North Road and Symonds Green
- Seeking planning permission on future schemes for approximately 300 more new homes
- Procuring the design team for the Oval scheme masterplan, undertaking consultation on the designs and setting out a timetable for the development
- Exploring the viability of other potential areas of development across the town including opportunities to work in partnership with other providers
- Continuing to work with partners to enable the delivery of additional affordable homes
- Forming a Wholly Owned Company (WOC) to deliver homes outside the HRA

Programme Delivery Update

- 3.23 Work is progressing on the North Road site. The brick and block work is continuing at the site and good progress being made. An initial marketing meeting with Putterills has taken place and the marketing approach to the properties has been confirmed. A grant funding agreement has been signed with Homes England which will secure an element of funding for North Road.

- 3.24 The schemes at Shephall Way (9 Homes) and Symonds Green (29 Homes) have continued to progress this quarter. At Shephall Way the work to the roof is now complete, and the scaffolding has now been mostly removed from the site. At Symonds Green, the basement is now fully cast with brick and blockwork up to the ground floor. Slab work is progressing, including work to the lift and stairwells.
- 3.25 The Project team have completed detailed working drawings for Kenilworth Close with some minor amendments requiring Planning consideration. These will be submitted to the Planning section in the coming weeks. The contractor is now on site for the Malvern Close element of the scheme with initial site preparation underway.
- 3.26 Work is underway with an architect to begin pulling together the material palettes in order to provide a coherent design methodology to masterplan the Oval scheme. Ongoing meetings between the Estates and Housing Development team will ensure a continued monitoring of the retail element of the site.
- 3.27 The report for the Wholly Owned Company (WOC) has been worked on in readiness for presentation to the Executive in Quarter 4.

Co-operative and Neighbourhood Management (CNM) Programme

Programme Outcomes

- Public spaces are more attractive, better cared for by the Council and residents, and help to give people pride in the place they live
 - Residents feel that they can work with the Council and other organisations to help meet the needs of the local area
 - The town's community centres are efficiently run, well-managed and most importantly, meet local needs
 - Staff better understand the town's communities and through doing so are more able to deliver the change that is required
- 3.28 During 2020/21 the programme is primarily focused on:
- Implementing the Co-operative Neighbourhood working model, to enhance co-operative working across council services in neighbourhoods
 - Beginning to roll out elements of the new sustainable model for the provision and management of community centres
 - Public realm investments in Bedwell and Longmeadow, which will be determined by the community and seek co-operation from local groups, businesses and partner agencies, subject to funding becoming available
 - Replacing and installing new litter bins across Roebuck and Old Town
 - Progressing the Garage Programme

Programme Delivery Update

- 3.29 The neighbourhood improvements programme has delivered some projects this quarter, but community engagement continues to be more challenging due to the pandemic. As agreed with Members the capital programme is on hold until April 2021.
- 3.30 Work on the Co-operative Neighbourhoods working model has been progressed this quarter. Six Co-operative Neighbourhoods Teams have now been set up and the Strategic and Operational Leads have now held their first team meetings. Three teams have held their first meetings with Ward Cllrs and the remainder of the meetings will have been held by the end of October. An analysis has been undertaken of the existing and planned activity of all services in the six areas. A key element of this work will be the development of the Community Plans in conjunction with local residents and businesses.
- 3.31 The Community Development team have been providing support to the community centres. The team are also finalising plans to use the centres as regular working hubs where Covid-19 regulations permit, in order to further help build and maintain relationships with centre staff.
- 3.32 The Council led the development of the COVID-19 Action Learning set for the Co-operative Council Innovation Network (CCIN) which was launched on 6th October at the CCIN Annual Conference. This included 2 Stevenage Case Studies focused on the Inclusive Economy Charter and the Healthy Stevenage Partnership.

Excellent Council Homes Programme

Programme Outcome

- Transforming the Housing and Investment service to better meet the needs of its customers
 - Effective investment in council homes through planned programmes of work
- 3.33 During 2020/21 the programme is primarily focused on:
- Finalising the Housing Older People's Strategy in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council
 - Delivering Phase 2 of the 5-year MRC programme
 - Refurbishing a further 4 lifts as part of the lift refurbishment programme
 - Consulting with residents about the sprinkler retro-fitting programme, mobilising the contract and commencing works
 - Continuing to improve services to the customer through the housing on-line application; a review of the end-to-end repairs process; building on the use of mobile working applications; and evaluating the outcome of the innovation labs

- Supporting homeless people by delivering the Homeless and Rough Sleeper Action plan and responding to the Government's initiatives for rough sleepers in light of Covid-19
- Completing recruitment to vacant posts within the new Business Unit structure and evaluating how successful the new structure has been in terms of the service delivery/customer satisfaction and staff satisfaction
- Introducing a series of 'innovation labs' to involve staff in influencing further digitalisation of the housing offer
- Assessing and evaluating the Housing All Under One Roof Transformation programme to inform further service improvement opportunities

Programme Delivery Update

- 3.34 The flatblock refurbishment programme continues to be impacted by the pandemic, but contractors and Council staff have worked to ensure adherence to Government guidance. Throughout quarter two, work remained limited to external areas but towards the end of the quarter it has begun to commence internally.
- 3.35 The lift refurbishment programme has continued at good pace throughout quarter two. Grosvenor Court lifts have been completed and work began and continues at Truro Court.
- 3.36 Throughout quarter two the Sprinkler contract documents were assembled and enabling works commenced on site. Contractors are surveying buildings for asbestos, completing electrical safety checks in every flat, fitting smoke and carbon monoxide alarms and measuring up to produce detailed drawings for design and insulation. The Compliance team, consultants and the contractor are working with Herts Fire and Rescue on enhancements to ensure that the works, when completed, will meet the requirements of the forthcoming Building Safety Act.
- 3.37 Significant progress has been made with regards to the Northgate Self-Serve (Housing Online) with phase 1 services live from May, excluding the 'Contact Us' functions for Repairs and Housing Options due to back office capacity. The functions are ready to go but will remain hidden until resource is available. "How To" videos have been created for customers and training has been provided for internal teams. The Rapid project has continued to progress steadily, with the Caretaking app now live following testing this quarter.
- 3.38 Following amendments being made to the Housing Older People Strategy (HOPS) to incorporate stakeholder feedback, the strategy has been updated. Further work has been identified to determine how development related commitments could be applied in practice and, discussions have begun to address this. Further information was needed regarding Herts County Council's commitment which is also being addressed. It is anticipated that this report will be brought to the Executive in December 2020.
- 3.39 At the end of Quarter 2 bidding applications had been made to Government for funding to support the Council's aspirations to deliver a Housing First

Project. Potential sites have been identified and feasibility work is underway including rent modelling to ensure the long term viability of any scheme.

Connected to our Customers Programme

Programme Outcomes

- Use of self-service is encouraged, so more time can be spent with customers that need extra help
- Increased customer satisfaction for residents interacting with key services
- Online customer data protected, and better used to provide useful insight
- The Council uses technology to meet its ambitions and make its workforce more modern, efficient and responsive to customer needs.
- A simple and clearer website with more self-service choices

3.40 During 2020/21 the programme is primarily focused on:

- Improving the online offer for residents and businesses by delivering a simple, clearer website and straightforward online self-service options for key council services
- Developing and implementing the Council's channel management approach and enabling people to use digital services.
- Supporting the overall customer service offer and efficiency by improving back office processes and technology within the Council
- Developing the digital platform to support the Coronavirus response and those who are vulnerable
- Ensuring the new website is compliant with digital accessibility regulations
- Developing a new Digital Strategy that will set out how the Council will embrace digital change to support corporate priorities

Programme Delivery Update

3.41 The Council's new look website was successfully launched on 22 September 2020. It provides an improved, modern website for customers that meets accessibility requirements, is mobile responsive and links with My Account (Digital Platform) and Northgate Housing Online, providing a more efficient customer experience. Ongoing feedback is being gathered using GovMetric's simple, visual tool on each page of the website. This is being monitored and responded to through Customer Services.

3.42 Development to the digital platform has continued this quarter which will act as enablers for future projects. Progress is being made and several features have gone live:

- My Account customer account

- Dash – a back office portal for staff to manage cases raised by customers
- ReportIt – environmental nuisance reporting tool for customers tool for customers to book their own appointments, linked to Customer Services Outlook calendar to show available slots
- Service – a CSC advisor platform
- Waste and recycling processes including missed bin collections
- Pavement license – enabling local businesses to accommodate customers with outdoor seating, a short notice requirement from Government in response to Covid-19.

3.43 During quarter three we will continue to develop the digital platform to provide further self-service options for customers, and build on the success of the new website by continuing to add content, build more community information and improve visual appeal.

Place of Choice Programme

Programme Outcomes

- Working to reduce health inequalities and improve the health and wellbeing of Stevenage residents
- Building resilient communities, reducing crime and disorder and helping people feel safe
- Making Stevenage a ‘destination and creative’ town
- Unlocking opportunities for the local economy and our residents, ensuring that future regeneration and growth in Stevenage works for everyone
- Achieving net zero Council emissions by 2030 and leading work to achieve this aim for the town, its businesses and residents
- Establishing Stevenage as a leader in sustainable transport
- Enhancing Stevenage’s biodiversity by conserving, restoring, recreating and reconnecting wildlife habitats, whilst increasing awareness and appreciation of Stevenage’s wildlife

3.44 During 2020/21 the programme is primarily focused on:

3.45	Healthy Stevenage – 2020/21 Programme Focus
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launching a new Young People’s Healthy Hub project to reduce physical inactivity, improve mental wellbeing, and provide advice and support for residents aged 11-16 years old. • Improving the way we evidence and evaluate the impact of health and wellbeing projects and interventions working closely with the University of Hertfordshire. • Communicating better with local residents and professionals to raise awareness of local health improvement projects and services via a wider variety of communication channels.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to work with health and physical activity partners to deliver the Healthy Stevenage Strategy 2018-2022. • Continuing to collaborate and integrate our work with other key health and wellbeing strategies across Hertfordshire. • Improving the way we work with local communities in co-designing health and wellbeing projects and services.
3.46	Healthy Stevenage – Programme Delivery Update
	<p>3.47 The Healthy Stevenage Partnership has reviewed its key outcomes from 2019/2020 after collating outstanding evidence and data from all partners. This has led the production of a new annual report which will be shared with partners at the end of October 2020 and the development of a refreshed action plan for 2020/2021 that seeks to take COVID-19 related factors including those related to our partners and local communities into account.</p> <p>3.48 Officers from Sport and Leisure and Community Development worked collaboratively with Healthy Stevenage partners to support Bedwell organisations in applying for Active Local emergency funding. This enabled residents to benefit from the delivery of physical activities as part of Covid-19 recovery.</p> <p>3.49 The community response project, So Active, has continued to gather pace this quarter. Revitalising the health and wellbeing of keyworkers, older people, children and adults through a variety of physical activity and digital literacy interventions online and outdoors continues to be its key aim. Between July and September 2020, 32 sessions were delivered with a total of 336 residents participating during this period.</p>
3.50	Community Safety – 2020/21 Programme Focus
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with partners to deliver initiatives to respond to the key Community Safety priorities of Violent Crime, Hate Crime and Community Reassurance. • Cooperatively working to break the cycle of substance misuse and offending. • Tackling perceptions of ASB through a media campaign highlighting how Stevenage is a safe place to live, visit and work in. • Increased cooperative work in the community to tackle ASB. • Improving awareness of safeguarding issues in our community.

3.51	Community Safety – Programme Delivery Update
	<p>3.52 This quarter the Community Safety team have been working together with partners to review the partnership action plan Further to this residents and businesses have been asked for their comments too. The plan has been updated to include recovery activities relating to the pandemic. Surveys are being completed with clients that have used the services or support provided by the Community Safety team and a survey will take place using social media to gather public feedback on the services provided by the team. This will be fed in to the work to update the Community Safety strategy.</p> <p>3.53 An Action Plan has been completed for the No More Service and joint funding bids have been made with Stevenage (also known as Survivors) Against Domestic Abuse (SADA), the Council’s Housing team and Citizens Advice Stevenage to continue with the service after 2021. Collaboration work continues with other districts around the County, to work on projects and collaborate on funding bids. Given the current financial situation there is some uncertainty from other funding sources.</p>
3.54	Stevenage Re-Imagined – 2020/21 Programme Focus
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing arts and heritage installations in the planning phase. • Implementing the Creative Use Scheme pilot in the town centre, giving local artists/artisans/creatives the opportunity to utilise underproductive/ empty buildings in Stevenage town centre. • Developing new cultural proposals and initiatives in the town centre and across neighbourhoods. • Undertaking Hertfordshire Cultural Education Partnership needs analysis & early commissioned delivery. • Piloting new heritage activities as we develop plans for a new museum for Stevenage. • Working co-operatively with the newly formed Junction 7 Creatives and others in the local creative community on the above projects. • Developing a series of options that could potentially form part of the Council’s Town Deal Proposition to Government

3.55	Stevenage Re-Imagined – Programme Delivery Update
	<p>3.56 Planned cultural engagement and installation programme projects resumed throughout quarter two, after a delay due to the pandemic. This included work on a town centre heritage timeline in collaboration with the Council’s Regeneration team and discussions on a community arts project specifically focussing on Stevenage’s communities from ethnic minority backgrounds.</p> <p>3.57 The Stevenage in 100 Objects online exhibition was delivered through the Stevenage Museum and contributions were made by the Mayor and the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People, Leisure & Culture. An exhibition showcasing New Towns across the country is currently in progress with research and delivery set to begin in Stevenage in quarter three.</p>
3.58	Community Wealth Building – 2020/21 Programme Focus
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launching an Inclusive Economy Charter as part of the Council’s commitment to Community Wealth Building, ensuring local people and businesses can benefit from opportunities created. • Supporting Herts Growth Board to develop a policy statement and action plan for community wealth building across Hertfordshire.
3.59	Community Wealth Building – Programme Delivery Update
	<p>3.60 A Cooperative Inclusive Economy Charter was signed off by the Executive at its July meeting. The Charter will be formally launched in November. It will include guidance on how local residents, organisations and businesses can pledge their support.</p> <p>3.61 An updated business case with key milestones has been provided to the Herts Growth Board team aimed at securing Community Wealth Building resources. Related to this, work is now underway with the Communities & Neighbourhoods team to identify pilots for Community Balance Sheets.</p>
3.62	Climate Change – 2020/21 Programme Focus
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopting the new Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, co-produced with the community, and supporting county-wide climate actions through the Herts Climate Change and

	<p>Sustainability Partnership.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing commitment from local businesses and residents through the Climate Change Business Charter and Community Pledge list. • Developing and implementing the SBC Carbon Management Plan.
3.63	Climate Change – Programme Delivery Update
	<p>3.64 The Climate Change strategy was approved by the Executive during Quarter 2. The report has been amended to reflect the impacts of the pandemic and also includes reference to extensive consultation which took place in the first half of 2020.</p> <p>3.65 An external organisation has been appointed to support the establishment of the citizens panel. Officers consulted with “Involve”, who ran the parliamentary climate emergency citizens assembly, and academics to advise on how best to use outcomes and design sessions. A virtual event is due to be held in quarter three following the recruitment of a random sample.</p>
3.66	Sustainable Transport – 2020/21 Programme Focus
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refreshing the Future Town Future Transport Strategy. • Working towards the designation of Stevenage as a ‘Sustainable Transport town’. • Delivery of sustainable transport projects included the Town Centre Regeneration Programme (permission for the bus interchange as referred to in paragraph 3.15; and scoping options for the multi-storey car park, cycle hub and cycleway improvements). • Updating the Parking and Sustainable Transport Supplementary Planning Document and Strategy. • Developing the options for the cycle hire scheme.
3.67	Sustainable Transport – Programme Delivery Update
	<p>3.68 The new Parking and Sustainable Transport Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted after the September meeting of the Executive and a subsequent presentation to</p>

	<p>Planning and Development Committee. The document sets the new parking requirements expected of proposals for new retail and non-retail development. The SPD is a key project stated within Future Town, Future Transport and will help to reduce the level of car-use by residents and users of new developments by reducing the provision of parking spaces where appropriate. The SPD will be a material consideration for all planning applications from now on.</p> <p>3.69 The results of a feasibility study into the potential for a cycle hire scheme in Stevenage have been received. The study uses industry best practice and experience of other schemes nationwide to give an indication of the size, scale and phasing for a potential scheme in Stevenage. The next stages are for officers to engage the bike supplier market before determining whether to initiate market procurement for suppliers to show how they would provide a hire scheme to meet the findings of the feasibility study.</p> <p>3.70 A submission was made to Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) Sustainable Travel Towns (STT) programme. Stevenage Borough Council has been very keen for Stevenage to be accepted onto the programme and has submitted all information requested during the application process. It is hoped that the STT programme will help to deliver a range of projects to help initiate a modal shift in transportation use in the borough. It is anticipated that HCC will make an announcement on this in December 2020. A progress report on the strategy is due at Executive in January 2021.</p>
3.71	Biodiversity – 2020/21 Programme Focus
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing Shackledeell Grassland as a designated local nature reserve. • Developing site specific hedgerow management plans. • Protecting woodland sites through improved vertical structure in woodlands (subject to being able to work on-site in the autumn/winter months). • Developing new orchard and grassland habitats (subject to being able to work on-site in the autumn/winter months).
3.72	Biodiversity – Programme Delivery Update
	<p>3.73 An application has been submitted along with supporting documents, for Local Nature Reserve designation for Shackledeell Grassland. The Grassland already has Local Wildlife Site status, but being a Local Nature Reserve will offer the site a higher status and greater protection.</p>

Further Recovery Actions (outside of FTFC)

- 3.74 Discussions have been held with partners to re-galvanise the Social Inclusion Partnership. The focus of the partnership will be on emerging needs around skills and pathways to work and will work to identify opportunities to tackle these. The partnership will also be exploring ways of attracting inward investment for Stevenage based Community, Voluntary and Social Enterprise organisations and the Council. This work will be in collaboration with the newly formed Stevenage Economic Taskforce and feed into the recovery plans for the town. This will be monitored by the Stevenage Co-operative Economic Recovery Taskforce.
- 3.75 An advert has been placed for the recruitment of an independent chair for the Council's equalities commission. Black History Month has in part been used to undertake a listening exercise with black communities across Stevenage. This will continue into November and December to provide the Equalities Commission with feedback directly from local people.

Internal Facing Future Town, Future Council Programmes

Financial Security Programme

Programme Outcomes

- To meet the Financial Security three year savings target
- To ensure that the General Fund expenditure equals income without the use of balances from 2022/23 onwards
- To ensure the Housing Revenue Account has sufficient funding to meet the capital needs of the Housing Asset Management Strategy and identified revenue needs
- To identify Financial Security options using the three revised workstreams (efficiency, commercial and improved processes), before recommending any service rationalisation options, as summarised below.

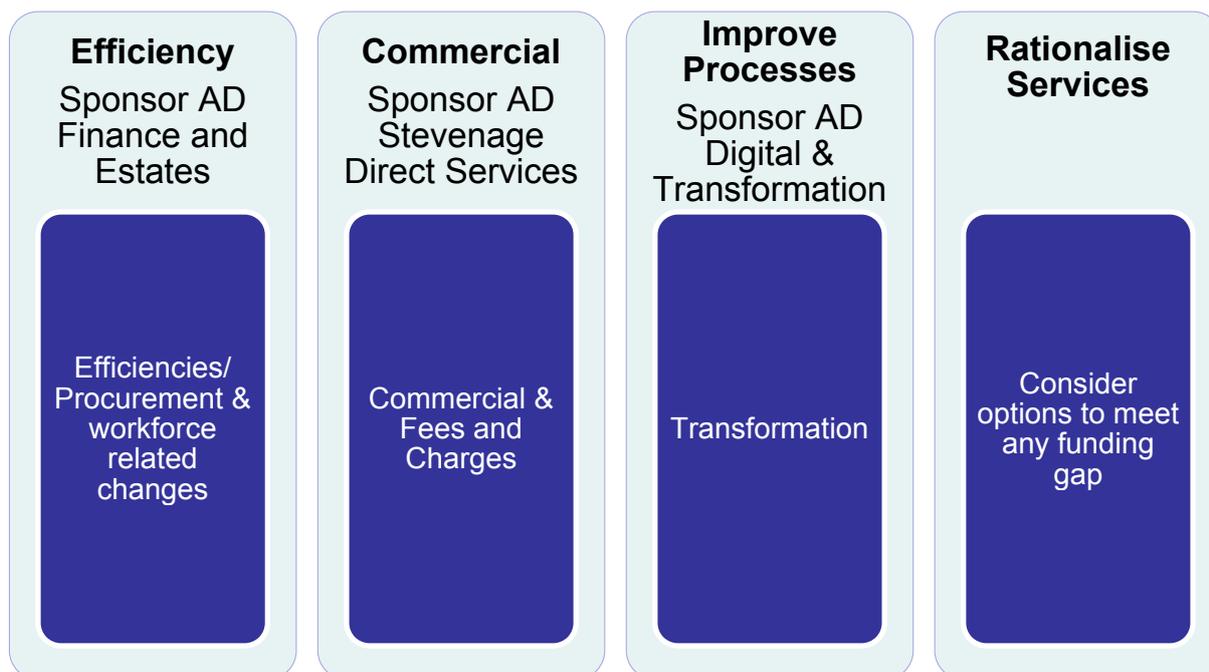


Figure 2: Financial Security Work streams.

- 3.76 During 2020/21 the programme is primarily focused on:
- Reviewing the Medium Term Financial Strategies, including assessments of the impact of Covid-19 on General Fund and HRA budgets and identification and implementation of mitigating actions.
 - Identification of Financial Security options to meet the General Fund and HRA funding gap for the period 2021/22-2023/24 via the Financial Security workstreams
 - Further developing and implementing the Council's Commercial and Insourcing Strategy
 - Continuing to undertake an appraisal of the Council's assets across all Stevenage neighbourhoods, to meet the objectives of the General Fund Asset Management Strategy
 - Undertaking a Transformation Opportunity Assessment as a key first stage in the transformational approach to addressing the funding challenge
 - Identifying options to improve productivity via use of digital interventions

Programme Delivery Update

- 3.77 A meeting was held with Executive members to identify the shortfall in the ongoing budget and the savings options identified to meet the anticipated gap. A decision was made to focus on a one year saving package (as opposed to the usual three years) due to the exceptional circumstances and uncertainty surrounding the medium to longer pandemic.
- 3.78 Fees & Charges preparation began in September with relevant managers/ADs engaged to discuss options for next year's fees. Meetings were held in early October to discuss options in more detail.

- 3.79 The Council's Commercialisation & Insourcing strategy is being taken forward post it being signed off by the Executive in August 2020. An update will be provided to the newly formed Commercial and Investment Executive Committee in October. This strategy is focussing on ideas to find savings to contribute to the one year budget package. A consultant has been engaged with the Strategic Leadership Team to focus on ideas to find savings/generate income, and the outcome from this work will be fed into the subsequent work of the strategy.
- 3.80 Work is underway to consider options and concepts for the future Transformation of the organisation to help deliver the Council's Financial Security programme and also assessing opportunities to enhance customer experience.

Employer of Choice Programme

Programme Outcomes

- Improved employee engagement
- Right person, right place, right time – recruiting/retaining staff to hard to fill posts
- Improved managerial competency
- Improved reputation as a place to work
- Evidence of staff progressing to higher grades and new roles

- 3.81 During 2020/21 the programme is primarily focused on:

- Developing a new Workforce strategy and supporting work programme to ensure that our workforce and workplace are developed and engaged to deliver our services now and in the future. The strategy will focus on ways of working, workforce communication, workforce inclusion and diversity and workforce development
- Working closely with the business to ensure that our workforce have the appropriate skills and knowledge to deliver now and in the future
- Preparing for new ways of working having learned from the experience of operating the services during the Covid-19 pandemic and also to prepare the council for its planned move to the public sector hub
- A renewed focus on branding of SBC as an employer through on-boarding and external recognition
- Continuing to support areas of the organisation as they go through business unit reviews
- Refresh of induction and introduction of on-boarding concepts
- Developing tools to enable staff self-service
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the Firstcare absence management system

Programme Delivery Update

- 3.82 Activities throughout quarter two continue to focus on supporting the Council's response to COVID-19 and the associated recovery planning, which has

resulted in the temporary pausing of some elements of the Employer of Choice Programme.

- 3.83 Extensive work has been undertaken on the Workforce and OD strategy during quarter 2, including SLT, staff, trade union and Portfolio Holder Advisory Group (PHAG) engagement. The strategy will be presented to the Executive for approval in quarter three.
- 3.84 Work recommenced on the development of a leadership programme under the apprentice levy framework late in quarter two and proposals will come forward during quarter three. During quarter two the first online virtual officer leadership forum was hosted with generally positive feedback.

Performing at our Peak Programme

Programme Outcomes

- The provision of high quality performance management tools
- Streamlined governance structures that ensure effective and timely decision making
- A strong performance culture is embedded across the organisation

3.85 During 2020/21 the programme is primarily focused on:

- Ongoing development of the use of the Inphase system
- Reviewing the scheme of officer delegations in respect of Executive powers

Programme Delivery Update

3.86 All reporting targets have been met in respect of performance, governance and risk management this quarter. However, there has been insufficient capacity to undertake development work in relation to this programme due to resource being diverted to Resilience activities associated with the response to Covid-19. Improvements will be made to the Inphase system during quarter 3, but it is anticipated that the main focus of the corporate performance/governance function will be on 'business as usual' activity for the remainder of the year.

Corporate Performance highlights and areas for improvement

3.87 Results for the full set of current corporate performance measures across all themes (FTFC programme and the Customer, Place and Transformation and Support themes) are attached as Appendix One. The overview of corporate focused results for April 2020 to September 2020 is outlined below:

3.88

Number of Measures Reported	Meeting or exceeding target	Amber Status (within a manageable tolerance)	Red Status (urgent improvement action required)	Missing Data
41	22	2	8	9*

*CSC13a: % of calls to the CSC resolved within the CSC, is unable to report due to COVID-19 delaying development of the new digital platform, Firmstep. Other developments have taken priority e.g. CSC online appointments system, All 4 HR measures missing data, 3 x Community Safety measures missing data (awaiting police data), ECHFL5: Repairs satisfaction missing

3.89 A summary of highlights and areas for improvement for April 2020 to September 2020 is set out in the following paragraphs across the three key delivery themes: Customer, Place, and Transformation and Support.

A: Customer Theme

3.90 The Customer Theme incorporates the following Business Units:

- Housing and Investment
- Communities and Neighbourhood

Housing and Investment

Health and Safety compliant non-domestic/non-commercial Council buildings (falling under the compliance contract)

3.91 These measures were removed from the corporate performance suite for 2020/21 due to issues with the quality of data from the contractor. The compliance team are working to develop a suite of measures for compliance works.

Spotlight: Households in Emergency/Temporary Accommodation

3.92 Due to the impact of COVID-19 there are a number of clients residing in hotels. The team are working to move as many clients out of the hotels in order to reduce costs. This is being achieved by direct letting social housing to accepted households that are in the Council's temporary accommodation, therefore freeing up stock for the clients in hotels to move into. A number of clients have also been assisted by the team to move into the private rented sector.

3.93 Key officers are meeting every 6 weeks to review B&B spend, monitor B&B usage and to agree what actions are being taken to reduce this. Having additional staff to assist with achieving preventions for a backlog of cases that built up during lockdown should also assist to ease the numbers in emergency/temporary accommodation.

- 3.94 The Housing Options team have seen 121 rough sleepers approach for assistance since the 'Everyone In' directive was put in place on 26 March 2020. Many are still being accommodated; however, some have left the accommodation provided due to non-occupation, eviction or refusal.
- 3.95 The team are continuing to source accommodation at pace. This is evident by the Housing Supply team having rehoused 22 rough sleepers into the private rented sector in Quarter 2 and also continuing to source additional accommodation.
- 3.96 More details concerning the new Housing First model will be brought to Executive in Quarter 3. The team put forward successful proposals for the MHCLG Next Steps revenue and capital funding which totals approximately £1.3million for accommodation, security and Severe Weather Emergency Provision.
- NI156: Number of households in temporary/emergency accommodation at end of quarter, September 2020 target 120, achieved 150

Spotlight: Homelessness Preventions

- 3.97 Due to the service demand on the Housing Options Service having to accommodate a significant number of rough sleepers since 23rd of March, the team have not been able to achieve the target for the quarter.
- 3.98 There has been less stock available in the private sector, due to a lack of turnaround despite the ban on evictions. The team have however seen a similar level of approaches for service as at the same quarter last year.
- 3.99 The current number of cases being managed is 689. This includes those who are seeking housing advice, but who may not currently be threatened with homelessness.
- 3.100 During Quarter 2 additional resource has been allocated to increase capacity to deal with the increasing caseload. The team has eight Housing Options Caseworkers with two of these funded from the Flexible Homeless Support Grant. This equates to each officer having circa 84 cases. This has resulted in the need for funding to be identified for two additional temporary members of staff to assist with the case volume.
- 3.101 Analysis has been undertaken which shows a significant increase in demand for the service since the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act. This continues to show year on year growth. Approaches to the service are detailed below;
- Full year 2018 to 19 there were 1314 approaches to the service
 - Full year 2019 to 20 there were 1571 approaches to the service this is equivalent to a year on year increase of 20%
- 3.102 As mentioned in para 3.96 the Housing First proposals will be brought forward to Executive in Quarter 3.

- BV213: Homelessness Preventions, September 2020 target 180, achieved 151

Spotlight: Rent Collection Rate

- 3.103 Income collection for the end of September is below target due to unprecedented challenges from the impacts of COVID-19.
- 3.104 There has been an increase in Universal Credit cases since the end of March 2020 (329). The number of UC claimants stood at 1465 at the end of Quarter 2, of these accounts 1078 are in arrears totalling £765,753.39, which equated to over 64.85% of the overall gross arrears. This number is expected to increase for at least the next 18 months, with a sharp spike expected when the Government support measures end due to unemployment and redundancies.
- 3.105 The number of tenants in receipt of Housing Benefit has continued to decrease since March 2020, at the end of Quarter 2 this stood at 38.28% of total number of current tenants. This reduction is a direct result of the increase in tenants in receipt of UC.
- 3.106 It is projected that more tenants are likely to migrate to full service UC over the next 12 months; however this projection could be increased further dependent on the impacts of furlough. Work to mitigate the impact will continue to focus on sustaining income collection, arrears recovery and tenancy sustainment.
- 3.107 According to the Government website, 'Stat Xplore', in North and East Hertfordshire as at 24 September there were 40,462 UC claims, of those 49.43% are households in Stevenage.
- 3.108 There are 259 cases on alternative payment arrangements (APA) with total arrears of £368,283.37 and 39 cases on direct payments still in receipt of legacy benefits with total arrears of £49,575.
- 3.109 There has been an increase in emergency and temporary accommodation arrears. The total number of cases is 150, of those 126 are in arrears totalling £66,048.05. This is due to the recent increase in homeless presentations.
- 3.110 The Government suspension of legal proceedings in court was lifted at the end of August 2020 and the Income team have resumed taking cases to court. However there are still some restrictions on eviction action and this impacts the level of arrears.
- 3.111 Arrears levels continue to rise during the pandemic, is underway to mitigate the impacts. This includes providing targeted support to tenants facing financial difficulties.
- 3.112 Following the approval of the income recovery action plan in Quarter 1, key progress this quarter includes:
- Mobyssoft undertook an analysis exercise of the council's arrears data in September 2020 and benchmarked against data for other

social landlords. The outcome was that Average Non-UC Arrears per tenant (£196.20) are lower than most organisations that the council was benchmarked with. Average UC Arrears per tenant were £726.61

- From October 2020, the Alternative Payment Arrangement (APA) to the council will be aligned to when the tenant received their UC, removing the delays in most payments. The council will be receiving UC payments daily. It is expected that within 8 weeks most skipped payments will be caught up.
- The income team have now got access to view expected payments on the DWP portal. This will inform case management and the true arrears for UC cases.
- The income team have gained approval for additional resources and have started the recruitment process. The resources will continue work to target and support UC cases to maximise income collection and minimise the level of arrears for this group of tenants.

3.113 It is expected that at the end of Quarter 3 and 4 income collection and recovery rates will still be below the expected targets as this will be the end of some of the Government COVID-19 measures

- BV66a: Rent Collection Rate, September 2020 target 96.3%, achieved 93.4%

Spotlight: Void Loss, Voids Sheltered & Voids Sheltered Major Works

3.114 The figure for void loss this quarter is above target. The sheltered housing stock is having a high impact on this measure.

3.115 A new working group has been established with an aim to reduce void loss and improve turnaround times for both standard sheltered voids and major sheltered voids.

3.116 The Repairs Team are hitting their target for turnaround time, but the overall KPI is being heavily impacted by voids that have historically been hard to let. General needs voids are achieving target.

3.117 For voids sheltered, 8 out of the 26 properties let took over 100 days from key to key, two of which took over 300 days against a target of 70 days.

3.118 For major works sheltered voids, one property in July took over 200 days to let, this impact is likely to continue while the older and long term voids are let. There have only been 3 sheltered major works voids, which means the long term properties have a more significant impact on the performance measure.

3.119 Sheltered properties make up 33% of all properties let in Quarter 2, however account for almost 50% of all void loss attributed to properties let in the same period. One property (long standing void considered for development/demolition/sale) has now been let, after accumulating £24,171.62 of void loss.

- 3.120 The list of historic properties not yet let (mostly sheltered) is accumulating approximately £17,000 per month in rent loss, this equates to approximately 62% of the overall monthly void loss figure.
- 3.121 It should be noted that although the void loss target hasn't been met, the figure for Quarter 2 is £7,308 better than the last financial year.
- 3.122 Once the longer term voids are cleared, the longer term benefits for these KPI's will be seen.
- VoidLoss1: Void Loss in year (£), September 2020 target £164,594, achieved £224,901
 - VoidsSheltered: The time taken to relet standard sheltered voids, September 2020 target 70 days, achieved 108.88 days
 - VoidsShelteredMW: The time taken to relet major works sheltered voids, September 2020 target 70 days, achieved 127 days

Communities and Neighbourhoods

Spotlight: Community Safety

- 3.123 Due to Police data not being available the Community Safety team have been unable to provide data for Quarter 2. This is due to capacity issues within the police team.

B: Place Theme

- 3.124 The Place Theme incorporates the following Business Units:
- Planning and Regulation
 - Stevenage Direct Services
 - Regeneration
 - Housing Development

(The Regeneration and Housing Development Business Units are primarily focused on delivery of the Stevenage Town Centre Regeneration and Housing Development Programmes of FTFC. Delivery updates for these programmes are summarised in paragraphs 3.13 to 3.21 and 3.23 to 3.27 respectively)

Planning and Regulation

Jobs Created and New Business start-ups through the Business Technology Centre

- 3.125 During Quarter 2 the jobs created and new business start-up through the Business Technology Centre (BTC) did not meet the target, however they still managed to create 5 jobs and supported 4 new businesses starting up during a difficult economic time.

- 3.126 The target output for jobs created for the whole of this financial year is 60 and for new businesses is 24. These figures relate to a funding agreement between the council and EEDA for the second phase, to support an extension at the BTC. EEDA are no longer in existence and responsibility now lies with Homes England. The agreement ceases November 2022.
- 3.127 There is more evidence that more self-employed people are taking on paid employment currently, as certain types of businesses have not been supported by Government measures. The BTC has seen the number of enquiries for start-up decreases quite dramatically for these reasons.
- 3.128 Businesses are currently concerned with safeguarding the jobs they currently provide, rather than recruitment. This can be evidenced by national data on the number of job vacancies since the pandemic began.
- BTC1a: New jobs created through the BTC, September 2020 target 30, achieved 12
 - BTC1b: New business start-up in BTC, September 2020 target 12, achieved 10

Spotlight: Food Establishments Compliance

- 3.129 Food safety inspections were largely paused at the instruction of the Food Standards Agency (FSA), in all but the highest risk cases, at the start of the pandemic. This, coupled with a surge in new businesses registering with the Council, has diluted the overall number of food businesses that are broadly compliant.
- 3.130 During quarter 3, the Commercial Team will be prioritising inspections in premises that are new and at existing non-broadly compliant premises, in accordance with the priorities outlined by FSA.
- 3.131 As inspection activity assumes a more regular profile, probably during quarter 3, subject to FSA instruction, performance should stabilise at pre-pandemic levels.
- NI184: Food establishments in the area broadly compliant with food hygiene law, September 2020 target 95%, achieved 92.9%

Stevenage Direct Services (SDS)

Spotlight: Garage Voids

- 3.132 Since December 2019 the garages performance measure has been red.
- 3.133 Repossessions were paused between June and September meaning it was not possible to get the related garages back online for rental. The Customer Service Centre was also closed for key collection until the start of September, slowing down the process for dropping keys off and therefore getting garages rented.

- 3.134 Although the Garage Improvement Programme was operational from July to September 2020, no new garages came back online during this period. However as of November 2020 Valley Way will be on line for rental (29 garages).
- 3.135 An application review of all garage applications was completed in September and will allow greater matching of garages with tenants. This will be complimented by Choice Based Lettings, due to be implemented in April 2021. During Quarter 2 the uptake of garages was low (acceptance was averaging about 30% of offers), however the team have changed the way that offers are made and have reverted back to postal offers – this has seen an increase in conversion rates from 30% to 80% over 2 weeks.
- 3.136 A list of high demand garages that are void has been produced, individual targets have been set for reducing these until choice based lettings is implemented.
- 3.137 The Garages team have forecasted a void rate of 14.46% for the end of the financial year. The forecast has been based on the following:
- There are currently 857 voids and 19 weeks until the end of March 2021
 - 59 voids will be returned following refurbishment works (Valley Way – 29 voids, Spring Drive – 13 voids, Ridlins End – 17 voids)
 - Factoring in all current challenges e.g. moving the asbestos identified garages to alternatives and the pending rent increase letter that will be issued in February 2021 to announce a 52 week year and increase, the team believe it is sensible to forecast a reduction in the voids by 4 per week allowing for a reduction of 76 voids overall
 - This reduction will come from the voids shown above in the completed sites and working on old high demand garages that are believed to be 'easily let' and shift the focus of trying to turn around the weekly terminations that come in which is how the team currently operate. The introduction of a temporary staff member for a 16 week period will enable the team to aim for this target
 - To note there are 212 voids in the Bedwell area which the team have been advised not to let until further notice due to an Asbestos issue
- 3.138 This approach will allow the team to reduce the current voids from 857 to 781 whilst maintain a steady number of offers per week, factoring in the unknown number of terminations that maybe received.

- CNM2g: Garage Voids as a percentage of stock, September 2020 target 11.58%, achieved 15.38%

Waste and Recycling

- 3.139 The impact of the lockdown with residents being at home either through furlough or home working has increased our tonnages collected for waste and

recycling. Recycling tonnages remained high through July however overall tonnages have reduced to normal levels as the quarter progressed.

3.140 The Waste and Recycling team supported the front line refuse and recycling crews with additional resource whilst observing measures introduced regarding social distancing, hygiene etc. This on the whole was done through redeployment of SDS operatives from other areas such as Street Scene. These services were impacted due to the measures in place and having the ability to deploy staff safely, and it was also recognised some of these areas were not essential services, hence the 'diversion' from non-essential to essential (one of the benefits of an in-house operation).

3.141 In the event of any future local lockdowns the same principles will be applied, with redeployment of staff to support front line critical services either because the tonnages dictate and resource is required to complete workloads or due to staffing levels reduce due to COVID-19/sickness absence.

C: Transformation and Support Theme

3.142 The Transformation and Support Theme incorporates the following Business Units:

- Corporate Services
- Digital and Transformation
- Finance and Estates

Corporate Services/Digital and Transformation

Spotlight: Customer Services

3.143 In response to the pandemic and Government guidelines the operating model for customer services has changed significantly. In turn there has been a shift in customer behaviour with a 10% decrease in telephone contact and increased online transactions, particularly online payments.

3.144 Service delivery through the Customer Service Centre (CSC) remains an ongoing focus area for improvement.

- CSC12: Percentage of calls abandoned in the Customer Service Centre: target 10.4%, April 2020 to September 2020 achieved 5.8%
- CSC13a: Percentage of calls to the CSC resolved within the CSC (by CSC advisors): target 61.8%, April 2019 to September 2020 unable to report due to reporting from the new systems being delayed due to the Covid-19 response. Calculations have been based on historical data
- EAA1: Customer satisfaction with CSC services, target 90%, April to September 2020 achieved 96%

3.145 Performance measures achieved targets in Quarter 2.

- 3.146 In Quarter 2 many advisers continued to work from home. The CSC team continue to deliver front-line services using a blended delivery model. The team are predominantly working from home with a small office presence to deliver; reception services, customer appointments, scanning of documents and administering post. Those working in the office are doing so using a bubble approach.
- 3.147 The figures for CS13a are unable to be reported. The team are currently reviewing how performance is measured within the CSC, alongside the existing reported measures of calls answered and customer satisfaction. The measure for resolution needs updating to take account of new process and system changes. The aim is to report on resolution within the CSC by the end of Quarter 4. The team will also be tracking take up of online services in order to help to improve our offer, and so we can continue to sustain performance levels with reduced staffing levels.
- 3.148 Historical performance data demonstrates performance in the Customer Service Centre is closely related to the amount of skilled advisers available.
- 3.149 As at 30 September 2020 there were 27.6 FTE's in post, with available resource of 24.1 FTE's, the difference being related to maternity leave and secondments.
- 3.150 Forecasting performance for the next quarter is reliant on the path of recovery from the pandemic. There is no evidence available that suggests we will be unable to achieve our targets. This will be reviewed as guidance changes and recovery progresses.

Measure	Target	Q2 forecast
CSC 12 – Percentage of calls abandoned	<15.1%	11.2%
CSC 13a – Calls resolved at first point of contact	>65%	Forecast unavailable
EAA1 - Customer satisfaction with CSC services	> 90%	92%

- 3.151 At present the team are on a track for a broadly similar volume to Quarter 3.
- 3.152 The key focus for Quarter 2 is recovery, ensuring safety measures are in place for staff and ensuring those customers most in need of critical services are prioritised.

3.153 Recovery planning is heavily reliant on engagement with other back office services; therefore the CSC team will be working on a collaborative approach. Key areas of contribution include:

- Working with service areas to ensure the CSC is able to facilitate service delivery
- Working through the recovery plan to increase access to services in all areas
- Delivering self-service provision that is easy and convenient for customers

3.154 The focus on this service area will be retained until it is performance improvement can be sustained across the full set of CSC measures.

Spotlight: Website Satisfaction

3.155 Govmetrics is a benchmarking tool used across approximately 10 local authorities to measure customer satisfaction. The measure is the average rating users give (1 being a smiley face, 0 being neutral face, -1 being a negative face). So a score of above 0 means that the website received more positive than negative ratings. For example:

- 1 green and 1 amber response would total 1, so the average score we use as a performance measure would be 0.5
- 3 green, 1 amber and 1 red score a total of 2, so the measure would be 0.25.

Govmetric performance scores close to 1 mean that nearly all feedback is positive. Close to 0 means that it's neutral and/or a balance of good and bad. While a score close to -1 would mean that nearly all feedback is negative. The response rate on the website is much lower than for telephony (or face to face in normal times). Consequently it tends to be biased by negative comments as people are typically more likely to put effort in to complain rather than compliment. This results in website Govmetric scores that are consistently lower than for telephone or face to face. National data shows this is the case for all local authorities.

3.156 Performance was on target in July and August but dipped in September due to issues with the payments system (a separate system to the web platform itself) as well as some teething issues with the new site which meant the "Find" feature used for residents to find their waste collection day was not available.

3.157 The new website launched on 23rd September. The issues that caused the dip in performance are now resolved and we will closely monitor performance over the next quarter and will continue to use insight from Gov Metrics to identify and fix issues.

- WebSat1: % Customer satisfaction with the Council website, September 2020 target 0.3, achieved 0.15

Technology

- 3.158 In Quarter 2 IT have been busy continuing to support all staff in line with the continuation of high levels of homeworking due to the ongoing Covid-19 situation.
- 3.159 Zoom training continued throughout the quarter for Members who needed support to attend virtual meetings.
- 3.160 Progress has continued with the Microwave link hardware now successfully installed following the delays in the previous quarter due to Covid-19 Lock-down.
- 3.161 Work has progressed on the Microsoft 365 Pilot with planning and preparations complete for the pilot to roll out during Quarter 3. The network replacement project is on track for completion in Quarter 4.
- 3.162 During August, the ICT team were impacted by a major incident as a result of exceptionally heavy rainfall leading to a significant water ingress at Cavendish Road. The water was centred around the Cavendish data centre, the power to the air conditioning units needed to be powered down for safety reasons. This meant that the servers were at risk of overheating and would imminently shut-off. If the risk materialised, it would have meant the loss of several critical IT services. Steps were quickly taken to move critical systems over to Daneshill in order to protect the service. The ICT team worked around the clock to manage and monitor the situation, which was successfully resolved with no impact to services.

Our staff

- 3.163 The HR KPI's were not produced for this quarter's report, due to staff resources being required to cover the vacant Payroll Manager duties. The Lead HR Manager recognises the importance of these indicators to Members particularly at the current time, but commits to giving an update on in particular the level of sickness absence before the next quarters report.
- 3.164 Members should be aware that all Assistant Directors can access the sickness KPI's for their own business unit online through the HR system, so they can monitor trends in their own Business Units.

Finance and Estates

Spotlight: Council Tax

- 3.165 As a result of COVID-19 the Shared Revenues service has agreed a number of changes to instalment arrangements for residents to reflect their financial circumstances; this is estimated to be on 4,856 accounts to 5 November 2020. This has had a knock on impact on the collection rate to date for 2020/21.
- BV9: % Council Tax collected (amber), September 2020 target 61%, achieved 59.9%

Spotlight: GF/HRA Savings Identified and Savings Removed from Budget

- 3.166 As a result of the financial impact of COVID-19 on the Council in this and future years, (as reported in the June and September General Fund MTFS, the Chief Financial Officer has recommended that the General Fund and HRA three year target will be a "one year savings target" ; for the GF and HRA.
- 3.167 A Financial Security report will be presented to the December Executive, setting out options for 2021/22. The 2021/22 target for the General Fund (as set out in the September MTFS) is £1Million and the HRA 2021/22 target (as set out in the HRA MTFS) of £366K.
- 3.168 Savings are being continually reviewed and brought forward where possible.
- FS1A: Percentage of GF approved savings removed from GF budget for current year, September 2020 target 92%, achieved 77%
 - FS2A: Percentage of HRA approved savings removed from HRA budget for current year, September 2020 target 91%, achieved 30%
 - FS3: Percentage of GF savings identified to meet three year target, September 2020 target 30%, achieved 0%
 - FS4: Percentage of HRA savings identified to meet three year target, September 2020 target 30%, achieved 0%

Next Quarter Focus

- 3.169 The Assistant Directors are responsible for improving the performance of measures that fall within their Business Units.
- 3.170 Following a number of assessments, and the new red and amber measures arising at September 2020, the following improvement plans have been identified for ongoing monitoring by the Senior Leadership Team:
- Continuing to embed the new service model in the Customer Service Centre (para 3.143 to 3.154)
 - Continue to monitor satisfaction with the new Council website after introduction of the new site (para 3.155 to 3.157)
 - Continuing to implement recovery plans for Temporary/Emergency accommodation use caused by Covid-19 (paragraphs 3.92 to 3.96)
 - Continuing to implement Housing First plans to assist with Homelessness Preventions (para 3.97 to 3.102)
 - Continuing to implement recovery plans for Rent Collection (para 3.103 to 3.113)
 - Continuing to implement plans and improve processes for Void loss, Sheltered Voids and Sheltered Major Works Voids (para 3.114 to 3.122)
 - Continuing to work with/follow advice from WENTA about BTC job creation and new business start-up (para 3.125 to 3.128)
 - Ensuring that compliance checks for food establishments resume (para 3.129 to 3.131)

- Ensuring that issues with the letting of council garages due to Covid-19 are recognised and performance is monitored closely. Implement plans to improve the process of garages lettings (paragraphs 3.132 to 3.138)
- Ensuring that improvement plans for collection of Council Tax are in place (para 3.165)
- Ensuring that General Fund and HRA savings are closely monitored (para 3.166 to 3.168)

3.171 In addition, the development and implementation of the IT strategy will continue to be monitored by the IT Shared Service Partnership Board to ensure that services are delivered that meet customer needs and are fit for the future.

3.172 The Senior Leadership Team will also closely monitor the impact of Covid-19 on performance across all service areas during 2020/21 and most performance results will be compared to actuals or targets in the equivalent period last year. This will help to establish the level of impact and inform where activity and resources need to be allocated.

3.173 The Council's approach to performance management and monitoring allows the organisation to proactively identify issues and challenges and ensure prompt management intervention. The fluid nature of the framework enables the Senior Leadership Team to amend targets to ensure that they continue to reflect revisions to service delivery models where necessary and to support and drive forward additional improvements in services for the benefit of internal and external customers.

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS

4.1 The information presented in this report is collated from the information provided to monitor delivery of the Future Town, Future Council Programme and corporate performance for the quarter. It aims to give Executive an overview of the achievements the Council has made for the year to date, with a focus on the previous quarter and identifies plans for continued improvements in some areas to ensure the Council is fit for the future.

4.2 The Senior Leadership Team and Service Managers have been consulted to determine the appropriate content and to identify the key achievements.

4.3 A number of areas have been identified in section 3 of this report where a particular focus on improvement or COVID-19 recovery is required and outline plans have been set out. The Executive is recommended to note and endorse these improvement plans.

4.4 The FTFC Co-operative Corporate Plan was approved as a 5 year plan from 2016 to 2021 and is therefore due for revision. At the present time Member and officer focus continues to be on responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, and EU transition. The aforementioned recovery plans agreed in July 2020 will help shape the Council's priorities and programmes for the coming financial year. In this context, officers propose that the current plan and existing FTFC

programmes are extended into 2022/23. This will provide officers and Members with the opportunity to thoroughly review the plan. The review process could be supported by a further LGA peer challenge and completion of the Resident Survey, both of which would inform future priorities and programmes. The FTFC Co-operative Corporate Plan is a Budget & Policy Framework item, and it is proposed that the recommendation to extend the current plan is incorporated into the budget setting reports to full Council.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial Implications

5.1.1 There are no direct financial implications from the recommendations contained in this report. However, officers responsible for improvement activity identified will need to identify and consider any resulting financial implications.

5.2 Legal Implications

5.2.1 There are no direct legal implications from the recommendations contained in this report. However, officers responsible for improvement activity identified will need to identify and consider any resulting legal implications.

5.3 Equalities and Diversity Implications

5.3.1 The report outlines performance against key priorities that form the Future Town, Future Council Programme and performance of the Council across key business unit themes. Where necessary, Equality Impact Assessments will be completed for improvement activity identified.

5.4 Risk Implications

5.4.1 There are no direct significant risks to the Council in agreeing the recommendation(s). Officers responsible for developing performance improvement plans will need to consider any risk implications from the improvement activity identified.

5.4.2 The Council has an embedded approach to risk management that mitigates any adverse effect on delivery of the Council's objectives and internal control processes and also provides good governance assurance.

5.5 Other Corporate implications

5.5.1 Improvement activity outlined may impact on the development of future policy or procedure.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Executive Report 10 July 2019: 2018/19 Annual Report & Performance Overview

APPENDICES

- Appendix One: Compendium of Performance Results
- Appendix Two: Future Town, Future Council Programme Scope/Focus for 2020/21