
Meeting: EXECUTIVE

Agenda Item:

Portfolio Area: All

Date: 5 September 2018

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE QUARTER ONE 2018/19

NON-KEY DECISION

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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To highlight the Council’s performance across key priorities and themes for quarter one 2018/19.

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 one 2018/19 together with the latest achievements be noted.
- 2.2 That the initial implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act and activity to facilitate sustained performance to prevent homelessness in the town are noted and endorsed (para 3.89 to 3.91).
- 2.3 That plans being implemented to ensure that sufficient staff are available to meet the level of customer contacts through the Customer Service Centre to provide a more consistent level of service to customers are endorsed (para 3.109 to 3.114).
- 2.4 That the improvements to performance reporting practice and plans to revise policy and practice to support sickness absence management are noted and endorsed (para 3.120 to 3.123).

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Members approved the 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 five year FTFC Programme initially consisted of nine programmes:
- Five external programmes focused on improving quality of life for residents through regenerating the town centre, building new homes, improving how local people feel about their neighbourhoods, providing high quality housing services, and enhancing the accessibility of Council services and customer experience.
 - Four internal programmes aim to build strong foundations within the Council through improving processes and skill, maintaining financial security and making sure the Council is fit for the future. This aids delivery of the externally focused programmes.
- 3.3 The FTFC Programme was reviewed at March 2018 to ensure that it continued to reflect the Council's priorities. The review highlighted that the Council is part of several shared services and is an active participant in a number of partnerships with several public sector organisations that focus on improving quality of life for residents and visitors to Stevenage. As it is 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 has now been closed. Development of partnerships will still continue as part of day-to-day business and any new shared service proposals will be considered and implemented within the Financial Security Programme.
- 3.4 During 2016/17, the Council's services were reorganised into nine Business Units across three themes: Customer, Place and Transformation and Support. The 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.
- 3.5 In addition to monitoring progress on the delivery of the FTFC Programme, performance across these themes is monitored throughout the year to highlight achievements and identify any areas for improvement. This recognises the critical role all Assistant Directors play in the delivery of the Future Town, Future Council Programme, either as a lead on one or more of

the FTFC programmes or as an enabler, delivering services across the three themes in support.

- 3.6 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 3.8 (FTFC focus) and paragraph 3.83 (Corporate Focus)

Future Town, Future Council Programme progress update

- 3.7 The focus and scope of the FTFC programmes is outlined in Appendix Two. Delivery of the agreed outcomes is monitored to ensure that the Programme remains on track.
- 3.8 In addition to the monitoring of programme milestones, fifteen measures aligned to FTFC delivery were monitored and reported on for April to June 2018. The overview of FTFC focused results for April 2018 to June 2018 is outlined below:

Number of Measures Reported	Meeting or exceeding target	Amber Status (within a manageable tolerance)	Red Status (urgent improvement action required)
15	10	2	3

- 3.9 Improvement activity for the performance measure results that did not achieve target is outlined in the relevant programme - Paragraphs that refer are indicated below:

- Compl4: Percentage of housing complaints that progress to stages 2 or 3 of the complaints process and are assessed as being legitimate, April to June target 40%, achieved 44% - paragraph 3.34 refers
- CNM2g: Garage void rate: April to June 2018 target 12%, achieved 12.62% - paragraphs 3.45/3.46 refer
- CTOC1: Customer complaints responded to within corporate deadline, April to June 2018 target 95%, achieved 83.66% - paragraph 3.54 refers
- EoCInt: Percentage of roles recruited to that were filled by staff within the Council, June 2018 target 20%, achieved 38.3%- paragraph 3.73 refers
- EoC4a: Percentage of apprentices in post as a percentage of the workforce, June 2018 target 2.5%, achieved 1.4%.- paragraph 3.74 refers

- 3.10 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 Centre Town Centre Regeneration Programme

3.11 Programme Outcomes

- A new vibrant town centre delivered through a phased regeneration programme.
- Two major regeneration schemes to advance – one completed by 2021 and one to begin 2019/20.

3.12 During 2018/19 the programme will primarily focus on:

- Signing off the Development Agreement for SG1.
- Working with Mace to develop and consult on plans for SG1.
- Progressing more detailed plans for a public sector hub in the town.
- Completing improvements to the Market Place and wayfinding signage as well as developing plans to improve the Town Square.
- Establishing the “Stevenage Works” local labour market employment & training initiative in conjunction with North Herts College and Job Centre Plus.
- Opening the visitors’ centre to showcase Stevenage history as well as ambitious future plans.

3.13 Programme Delivery Update

- 3.14 Officers are finalising the development agreement with MACE, the development partner for Town Centre regeneration. Mace, the international development and construction company behind some of the world’s landmark developments – will be undertaking the first phase of regeneration (SG1). This ambitious scheme will bring £350million of private investment into the town centre and will see the area covering the Council (Daneshill House) offices, the Plaza, bus station and some of the adjacent car parks redeveloped with new shops, bars and restaurants, homes, new public spaces, and a central public sector hub accommodating the Council offices, a library, exhibition space, and health services.
- 3.15 Planned public realm improvements to Market Place are progressing well. The improvements aim to create a family-fun oriented street that will encourage family visits to the town centre through a new adventure themed layout. Plans include the creation of a play space for families in the town, as well as an attractive space to relax and enjoy the town centre.
- 3.16 The installation of thirty (wayfinder) signs to help residents and visitors find town centre shops and services is expected to be completed by September 2018.

Housing Development Programme

3.17 Programme Outcomes

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

3.18 During 2018/19 the programme will primarily focus on:

- Completing and letting 54 new homes across a number of schemes.
- Starting work on a further 267 new/replacement homes across a range of planned schemes.
- Consulting with the public and securing planning permission for the Kenilworth Close site, including plans for the flagship older persons housing scheme.
- 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 affordable homes.

3.19 Programme Delivery Update

3.20 Consultation on the Kenilworth Scheme, incorporating a flagship older persons housing scheme, has now been completed. The public consultation event was attended by more than 100 people, with 70% in favour of the development. The planning application has now been submitted that includes changes reflecting both the consultation and architectural and planning officers' advice.

3.21 The six units at the Wedgewood Way site are complete and will be made available for occupation once the remainder of the site has been completed. The Council worked closely with the developer to provide an opportunity for children from the local Broom Barns Primary School to visit the site and learn about site health and safety and about some of the materials used in construction. The Ferrier Road site is also near completion (anticipated during August).

3.22 The Twin Foxes Scheme to deliver 14 units (8 for affordable rent and 6 for social rent) could not be completed by July as anticipated, as a result of a contractor liquidation. The Council was able to mitigate the impact through direct discussion with subcontractors that has led to a reduction in delays and additional costs typically associated with contractor liquidation. Completion is now anticipated Mid-August.

3.23 The March Hare Scheme to deliver fifteen new homes was granted planning permission on 5 December 2017. Initial foundation work is being completed. However, progress has been impacted by the contractual issue affecting the Twin Foxes Scheme. Officers are considering the most appropriate way forward to ensure the scheme is delivered effectively with minimum delay.

- 3.24 Architectural and site preparation work is currently being completed for the three sites prioritised for development during 2018: Symonds Green, Shephall Way, North Road.
- 3.25 The Council's Housing Development programme was established in 2014 and to June 2018 has facilitated the completion of 134 homes.

Excellent Council Homes Programme

3.26 Programme Outcome

- Transforming the Housing and Investment service to better meet the needs of its customers.

3.27 During 2018/19 the programme will primarily focus on:

- Using customer insight information to develop a better understanding of customers' views and requirements, to enable provision of a more bespoke housing service for each individual customer and improved cohesion with services to the neighbourhood.
- Continuing to improve the way staff and customers use technology.
- Commencing implementation of mobile working in order to save time and enable staff to access information whenever and wherever it is needed.
- Beginning to digitalise the housing service offer in order to provide customers with an additional channel of communication and an opportunity to self-serve.
- Working with members of staff to create a lean, efficient and cohesive workforce that will work towards a 'One Team' approach and a 'Customer First' culture.

3.28 Programme Delivery Update

3.29 Housing IT systems are being enhanced to ensure that new services are being captured on the IT modules. This will support customers to self-serve in the future, enabling customers to take responsibility for their Personal Housing Plans which is now a requirement through the Homeless Reduction Act. The following modules are being designed and implemented:

- Task Manager Module– this will enable better workflow management where the right officer is allocated the right task in a timely way. It will enable better casework monitoring and improved customer communication.
- Housing Advice Module - this automates the creation of personal housing plans for customers and enables clients to update their own progress against the plan themselves.
- Key Details Module – will capture customer information in one place and will enable officers to make more informed decisions and provide a more effective response to customer enquiries.

3.30 The implementation of these modules will be complemented by the Northgate self-serve module which will be implemented later in the year allowing

customers to create their own accounts to view information about their council tenancy.

- 3.31 In addition to this the team are looking to make use of the Northgate Customer Service module to streamline a range of processes that are currently run manually.
- 3.32 Supported housing officers are now using mobile devices as are Tenancy support workers to provide a more efficient service to customers and reduce double entry.
- 3.33 Officers in the Housing and Investment team are working with the Human Resources Team to create an improved training and development package that will enhance the delivery of services and support the ambition to provide a 'Customer First' culture. Initial training will focus on strengthening officer customer service skills to encourage a consistent, 'one team' approach that improves the customer's experience.
- 3.34 A customer care programme is being developed to improve the timeliness and quality of complaint responses. An external provider will provide customer care training to relevant staff as part of their personal development plan later in the year.
- Compl4: Percentage of housing complaints that progress to stages 2 or 3 of the complaints process and are assessed as being legitimate, April to June target 40%, achieved 44%.

Co-operative and Neighbourhood Management Programme

3.35 Programme Outcomes

- Residents feel that they can work with the Council and other organisations to help meet the needs of the local area.
 - Staff better understand the town's communities and through doing so are more able to facilitate the change that is required.
 - Public spaces are more attractive, better cared for by the Council and residents, and help to give people pride in the place they live.
 - The Council's Community centres are efficiently run, well-managed and most importantly, meet local needs.
- 3.36 During 2018/19 the programme will primarily focus on:
- Responding to priorities identified through engagement with residents of St Nicholas and Martins Wood in 2017/18, by making significant investment in those wards to improve public spaces and the quality of life of local people. The focus will be on youth engagement/ provision, street lighting, parking issues resolution, open spaces and grounds maintenance and health and wellbeing.
 - Engaging with ward Members, partners and communities on the next phase of planned investment in the wards of Bedwell and Longmeadow.

- Investing £230k in outdoor play sites in Bedwell and Longmeadow.
- Seeking Council agreement to a sustainable model for the provision and management of community centres.
- Procuring contractors to launch the Stevenage-wide garage refurbishment programme, with social value requirements being built into the contract.
- Supporting residents in becoming more active members of their community, who make a positive contribution to the town and local area.
- Designing a council-wide framework to support officers and Members in effective and meaningful community engagement.
- Creating a more streamlined approach to increase and enhance volunteering within the Council.

3.37 Programme Delivery Update

3.38 Improvements to play areas have been completed across seven sites, with improved signage provided at each entrance. Local children helped to pick the new play equipment that has now been installed.

3.39 Council officers carried out discussions with partners, local groups and the neighbourhood residents of St Nicholas and Martins Wood to gain a better understanding of local people's priorities for their neighbourhood. Initial focus has included:

- Restoration and enhancement of the Oval Community Garden by local residents.
- Stevenage Borough Council carrying out improvements to the parking areas and paving around Community Centres
- Neighbourhood Wardens, Ward Members, the Fire Service and local residents organised an evening community safety walk in and around the wards to help address concerns and help improve residents' perceptions relating to the safety of their community.
- Neighbourhood Wardens have continued walks in and around the wards to identify and help resolve issues identified and support residents.

3.40 Improvement work in Shephall has continued with shrub beds renewed, road/street signs repaired, replacement of litter bins and repairs to footpaths and fences.

3.41 A review of Community Centres is being undertaken to develop a more sustainable model of operation for the future. Initial analysis has now been completed and a report outlining the direction of travel for the review will be prepared for the November 2018 Executive meeting.

3.42 A volunteering web-page has been set-up on the council's web-site highlighting all of the opportunities available with the Council along with links to other external volunteering portals. The Cooperative and Neighbourhood Management (CNM) programme is working closely with Employer of Choice

programme on a staff volunteering offer as part of a proposed Corporate Social Responsibility programme.

- 3.43 Council officers are working with Members of the Community Select Committee to identify an improved approach to engaging with Stevenage communities in a new Community Engagement Framework, with the aim of encouraging more co-operative working and input to Council decision-making.
- 3.44 To explore the role of social action in local areas. The Universities of Sheffield and Hull will be working with the Communities and Neighbourhoods team to consider the role of community-led social action in the CNM programme in St Nicholas and Martin's Wood over the coming 12 months.
- 3.45 Officers are working to implement the Garage Business Plan to include looking at online service options and improved accessibility to the service.
- 3.46 Dedicated marketing efforts and resource will be put in place to raise awareness of garage availability and seek to mitigate any factors identified from the review of the service offer with a view to increasing take up.
- The garage void rate is slightly higher than projected: April to June 2018 target 12%, achieved 12.62%

Connected to our Customers Programme

3.47 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 will be protected, better used to provide useful insight, and the technology reliable.
 - 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.
- 3.48 During 2018/19 the programme will primarily focus on:
- Improving the online offer by delivering a simple, clearer website and straightforward online self-service options for key routine transactions, helping customers to self-serve.
 - Involving customers and staff in designing and testing new digital products and services before launching them.
 - Launching a new customer strategy that sets out the Council's ambitious plans to improve customer service and promises to deliver a consistent customer service standard across the Council.
 - Supporting the overall customer service offer and efficiency by improving back office processes and technology within the Council, and making sure all personal data is secure.

3.49 Programme Delivery Update

- 3.50 Access to services has been enhanced with the provision of online self-serve options for Revenues and Benefits customers. A suite of Council Tax self-serve forms introduced in April now respond and adapt to the device the customers opt to use such as a mobile phone or tablet. These and future enhancements to the online offer modernise service delivery and allow the Council to be more responsive to customer needs.
- 3.51 Arrangements for an improved Council website are progressing in partnership with East Hertfordshire Council. Senior management have agreed the key development requirements that will guide the procurement process to deliver a website that better meets customer needs.
- 3.52 In Partnership with East Hertfordshire Council, a series of IT Infrastructure enhancements are being implemented to provide a more reliable and secure service that supports delivery of more digital solutions for customers and staff.
- 3.53 Work has been carried out to ensure Stevenage Borough Council is General Data Protection Regulation compliant and to make sure staff are aware of their responsibilities with regards to the management of customer data.
- 3.54 A customer care training programme is being developed to improve the timeliness and quality of complaint responses for officers in the Housing and Investment Business Unit. The training will be offered to relevant staff in other business units later in the year.
- CTOC1: Customer complaints responded to within corporate deadline, April to June 2018 target 95%, achieved 83.66%.

Internal Facing Future Town, Future Council Programmes

Financial Security Programme

3.55 Programme Outcomes

- 3.56 As set out in Figure 2: Financial Security Work streams.



Figure 2: Financial Security Work streams.

3.57 During 2018/19 the programme will primarily focus on:

- Identifying Financial Security options that meet the three year target (£2.2 million General Fund and £1 million Housing Revenue Account)
- Managing budgetary efficiency through regular monitoring, analysis of trends and robust challenge of spend as part of the efficiency work stream.
- Setting targets and deliver savings against each individual Financial Security work stream including Fees and Charges.

3.58 Programme Delivery Update

3.59 During 2017/18 the Council was able to identify on-going savings of £116k (General Fund) and £7k (Housing Revenue Account) to contribute to the £350K target for the Efficiency savings work stream.

3.60 The total Financial Security Target for 2019/20-2021/22 is £2.13Million, which is in addition to the £200K target for the Commercial Property Investment Fund (which has achieved £49K of the £200K target to date).

3.61 Options to achieve the Financial Security target are being developed.

3.62 The Financial Security package will be considered by the Leaders Financial Security Group and then by the Executive and Scrutiny Committees in November 2018. This report will also include any fees and charges increases and growth options.

Employer of Choice Programme

3.63 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.

3.64 During 2018/19 the programme will primarily focus on:

- Establishing a compelling employer brand with a competitive pay and benefit offer.
- Developing and implementing a competency framework for staff from Grade 1- 9 of the Council's pay structure.
- Managing Organisational Change effectively with a new appraisal process and valuing staff's health and wellbeing.
- Enabling new ways of working to equip staff for the future including policies, practices and culture.
- Developing digital skills and tools to enable staff self-service.

- Creating a new Learning and Development Strategy.

3.65 Programme Delivery Update

- 3.66 'MyView', the employee and manager self-service portal of the new Resource Link HR and Payroll system continues to be enhanced contributing towards the Council's aim of becoming a more modern and paperless Council. Staff were able to access their 2017/18 P60 using the system, can submit payment requests for mileage and expenses, and employee profile pictures and contact details can also be accessed.
- 3.67 Work to build the new Intranet with improved content continues. Service managers were provided with an opportunity to see initial development at the Leadership Forum in July and launch of the new Council Intranet is planned for October 2018.
- 3.68 A new corporate appraisal system has been introduced, 'REAL Conversations', to encourage more dynamic and meaningful performance conversations between managers and employees.
- 3.69 Staff have been provided with an opportunity to share their views about how the Council works and to determine whether staff feel that their contributions are properly valued and rewarded. The organisational staff survey was live between 20 June and 7 August. The views expressed will be assessed and improvement plans developed as appropriate.
- 3.70 A programme of Strategic Leadership Team learning is now in place. The focus of the learning is to deliver the skills required to ensure the delivery of the Council's change programme (Future Town, Future Council) together with planned service enhancements. 360 degree feedback for three Assistant Directors was carried out in June 2018 and will be completed for all of the Senior Leadership Team during quarter two.
- 3.71 Officers in the Human Resources Team attended the National Local Government Graduate Recruitment events, to attract and recruit the 2018 intake of graduates. Stevenage Borough Council received the highest number of applicants this year since joining the programme three years ago. Interviews will take place during quarter two with successful graduates joining the Council in October 2018.
- 3.72 The Council aims to maintain a balance between the development of current staff, retaining existing skills and knowledge and the introduction of new staff with new skills and knowledge. The number of roles recruited to filled by existing staff is currently exceeding a threshold assigned to help achieve this balance. This demonstrates the retention of existing skills and knowledge during the restructure of service teams associated with Business Unit reviews. The implementation of longer term Workforce Plans that are being developed by Assistant Directors will help to achieve the ideal range of performance set and restore the balance.

- 3.73 EoCInt: Percentage of roles recruited to that were filled by staff within the Council, June 2018 target 20%, achieved 38.3%
- 3.74 Assistant Directors are developing workforce plans that will identify apprenticeship opportunities.
- EoC4a: Percentage of apprentices in post as a percentage of the workforce, June 2018 target 2.5%, achieved 1.4%.

Performing at our Peak Programme

3.75 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.
- 3.76 During 2018/19 the programme will primarily focus on:
- Enhancing business insight through data connectivity and ensuring service managers have the right skills to use the performance management tool robustly to analyse information and make informed decisions that result in improved services for customers.
 - Embedding the performance culture through the effective use of new tools and procedures, to enable lasting performance improvement.
 - Completing a review of arrangements for decision making (scheme of delegation) to ensure continued robust and efficient decision-making by council officers at the appropriate level of seniority.
- 3.77 Continuing the Council's aim to have a strong performance culture and streamlined reporting of performance information, Housing and Investment performance data is now being captured and reported through the performance and governance system (InPhase). InPhase is now the primary source of performance information across all services.
- 3.78 Arrangements for the update of business unit risk and associated mitigation activity through InPhase are progressing. Implementation will enhance organisation-wide transparency that will inform decision making.
- 3.79 The capture of service data without manual intervention that will provide more up-to-date information to inform decisions has been delayed as a result of difficulties recruiting a data analyst with the appropriate skills. The programme sponsor and manager are working closely to resolve the issue.
- 3.80 The major upgrade to InPhase has been rescheduled to August 2018 due to internal resourcing issues following the retirement of a key officer. The upgrade will provide new functionality and features.
- 3.81 The arrangements in place for decision making (scheme of delegation) are being outlined for approval at Council in October. The Scheme of Delegation

will ensure continued robust and efficient decision-making by Council officers at the appropriate level of seniority.

3.82 Corporate Performance highlights and areas for improvement

3.83 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 2018 to June 2018 is outlined below:

Number of Measures Reported	Meeting or exceeding target	Amber Status (within a manageable tolerance)	Red Status (urgent improvement action required)
40	30	0	8

(Results for two measures relating to Community Safety are not available – paragraph 3.97)

3.84 A summary of highlights and areas for improvement for April 2018 to June 2018 is set out in the following paragraphs across the three key delivery themes: Customer, Place, and Transformation and Support.

A: Customer Theme

3.85 The Customer Theme incorporates the following Business Units:

- Housing and Investment
- Communities and Neighbourhood

Housing and Investment

3.86 Council tenants in properties that are bigger than their needs have started to bid for properties with fewer rooms following a change to the allocation policy. This will help to free up larger homes for families on the waiting list.

3.87 The Council has consulted with all tenants affected by the initial maintenance plans for flat blocks. Officers started visiting tenants from end July 2018 to advise plans and address residents' concerns.

3.88 Plans are being developed to introduce charging for services associated with leasehold requests for assignments and transfers. Some leases restrict the charges that can be made. Accordingly officers are considering how the charges can be adjusted to meet the related administrative costs.

Spotlight: Homelessness Preventions (BV213)

3.89 The result for June 2018 includes results from the Council Teams – The Citizens Advice Bureau is experiencing temporary resource difficulties and results have not yet been advised.

- BV213: Homelessness preventions, April to June 2018, target 90, full results not yet reported – to date achieved 62.

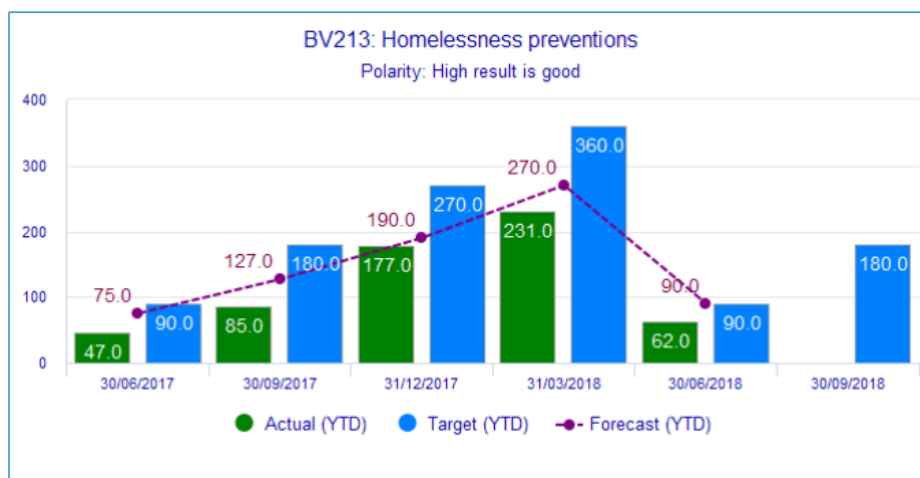


Figure 3: BV213
– The number of homelessness preventions

- 3.90 The service has been subject to ongoing staff changes that include recruitment of an interim Housing Manager – Operations to cover maternity leave.
- 3.91 Council officers continue to monitor the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act and the use of new IT software. The service has taken a number of actions forward:
- A training programme for all housing advice staff was carried out during quarter 1 2018/19.
 - Training on the Homelessness Reduction Act which came into force 3 April 2018 was provided for other housing teams and services during quarter 1 2018/19.
 - Stevenage Borough Council is collaborating county wide to meet the demand of the new legislation through the Hertfordshire Heads of Housing Group meetings.
 - Consultation on service redesign has been undertaken.

Future plans to improve performance include:

- A review of the IT Housing Advice module project 12 months post implementation (Q4 2018/19) to ensure arrangements to comply with the Homelessness Reduction Act has been effective.

Health and Safety compliant Council buildings

- 3.92 The Council's new Compliance Manager is reviewing contractual arrangements for the management of health and safety compliance which may result in proposals to improve both performance and how this is reported.
- 3.93 The Corporate Health and Safety Group will carry out a scrutiny role in relation to future improvement proposals.

Communities and Neighbourhood

- 3.94 The Council successfully hosted the Tour Series over the late May bank holiday as part of the Stevenage Cycling Festival. The event was televised on ITV with an estimated 10,000 people in attendance. The Stevenage Cycling Festival included both the launch of the Cycle Hub at Fairlands Valley Park and Fun Day at Hampson Park. It is estimated that over 1,000 residents engaged in this year's cycle festival.
- 3.95 The 59th Stevenage Day was held on 17th June on King George V Playing Fields, with an estimated 30,000 people attending over the course of the day and an array of local organisations taking part. The event also included Rock in the Park showcasing local bands and music talent.
- 3.96 The Council also won an Excellence in Public Health Award for its work on creating the town's first Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Community Safety

- 3.97 The Police have been implementing a new Crime Recording System called ATHENA and a revised approach to reporting. Complete results for April to June 2018 have not yet been advised. An update is not expected until quarter two.
- 3.98 The Community Safety Team completed their police accreditation training and are now able to issue fixed penalty notices, caution individuals, have authorisation for the removal of abandoned vehicles, and to pursue perpetrators through the courts for fly tipping. Two people have been caught fly tipping by CCTV and they will receive fixed penalty notices.

B: Place Theme

- 3.99 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 3.14 to 3.16 and 3.20 to 3.25 respectively.)

Planning and Regulation

- 3.100 Planning applications continue to be determined within corporate and statutory targets.
- 3.101 As of June 2018, 97% of food establishments in the area are assessed as broadly compliant with food hygiene law. This means that, as a minimum, they are considered 'generally satisfactory' in the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme

that assesses the hygiene, structure and confidence in management of the premises.

Stevenage Direct Services

- 3.102 The Business Unit successfully retained the council's coveted green flag awards following inspection at Fairland's Valley Park, Hampson Park and Town Centre Gardens. This was achieved in conjunction with the volunteer groups of each park.
- 3.103 The Street Scene team has successfully integrated three brand new town centre sweeping vehicles onto the Council's fleet. These units and a new pavement scrubbing attachment will greatly assist in keeping the town centre up to standard.
- 3.104 The Environmental Performance & Development team has successfully launched their events season with an interactive stand at Stevenage Day and by working with pupils from Woolenwick School who put on two performances of their adaptation of the Council's Gordon the Greedy Goose story.
- 3.105 **Repairs and Voids**
- 3.106 Turn-around times for property repairs and voids remain a major area of focus for the team. The time taken to re-let general needs standard voids (requiring minor works prior to re-let) has improved (Target 32 days, April to June achieved 29 days, July achieved 23 days). However, turn-around times for general needs properties requiring major works and sheltered properties continue to exceed target. The challenges have affected void loss figures as reported in the Quarter One Revenue Report.
- 3.107 Officers have introduced a number of initiatives to reduce these void times including:
- Seeking to relet properties (that meet the lettable standard) and schedule major works while the tenant is in the property and not when void.
 - Collaborative approach between investment and empty homes teams, including relocating repairs and voids team to Daneshill House to improve communication.
 - General Needs Voids – Major Works, April to June 2018 target 65 days, achieved 72.25 days.

C: Transformation and Support Theme

- 3.108 The Transformation and Support Theme incorporates the following Business Units:
- Corporate Projects, Customer Services and Technology
 - Corporate Services and Transformation
 - Finance and Estates

Corporate Projects, Customer Services and Technology

Spotlight: Customer Services

- 3.109 Service delivery through the Customer Service Centre (CSC) was identified as a focus for improvement (spotlight) at quarter 3 (March 2018 Executive). This focus will be retained until performance improves across the full set of CSC measures. The Assistant Director (Corporate Services and Transformation) is now working with the CSC and back office service teams to identify additional governance and operational interventions that could further strengthen the CSC Improvement Plan.
- 3.110 Historical performance data demonstrates performance in the Customer Service Centre (CSC) is closely related to the amount of skilled advisers available. Resourcing remains a significant challenge and the high turnover of advisers during 2017/2018 has had lasting impact on performance to date.
- 3.111 Activities to recruit, train and on-board specialist skills have taken place during quarter one 2018/19. Evidence has shown that performance improves when more time is spent developing adviser skills, knowledge and efficiency.
- 3.112 A new establishment model is being implemented to increase the number of multi-skilled advisers and stabilise performance. Additional management roles (Fixed Term Resource Planning Manager and an additional Team Leader) will provide training and development of the team, implement changes associated with transformation projects and develop a resource planning model.
- 3.113 Effective resource planning will help ensure that sufficient staff are available to meet the rise and demand of customer contacts to provide a more consistent level of service to customers.
- CSC4: Percentage of telephone calls to the Customer Service Centre answered within 20 seconds, April to June 2018 target 55%, achieved 39.8%.
 - CSC5: Percentage of walk-in customers to the Customer Service Centre served within 20 minutes, April to June 2018 target 80%, achieved 69.7%.
 - CSC12: Percentage of calls abandoned in the Customer Service Centre, April to June 2018 target 8%, achieved 13.9%.

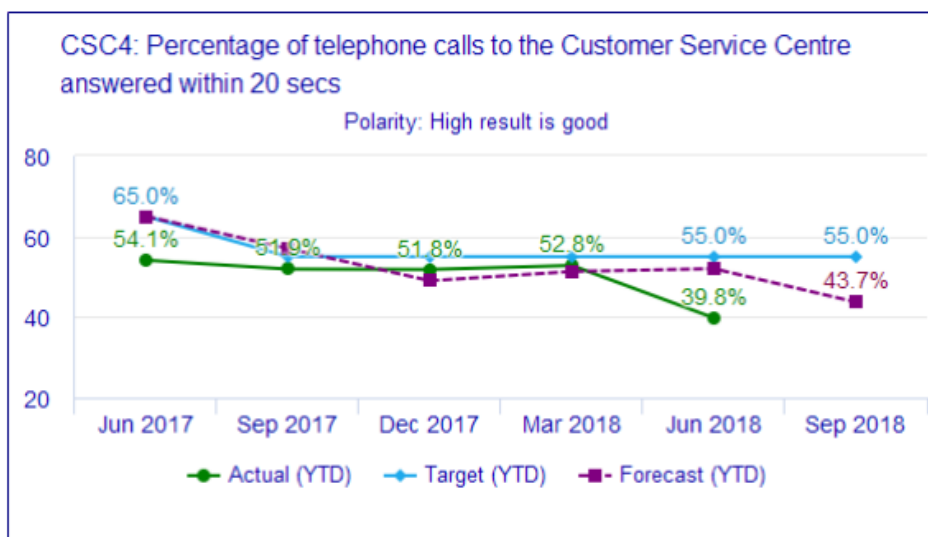


Figure 4: CSC4 – Percentage of telephone calls to the CSC answered within 20 seconds



Figure 5:
CSC5:
Percentage of
walk-in
customers to
the CSC served
within 20
minutes

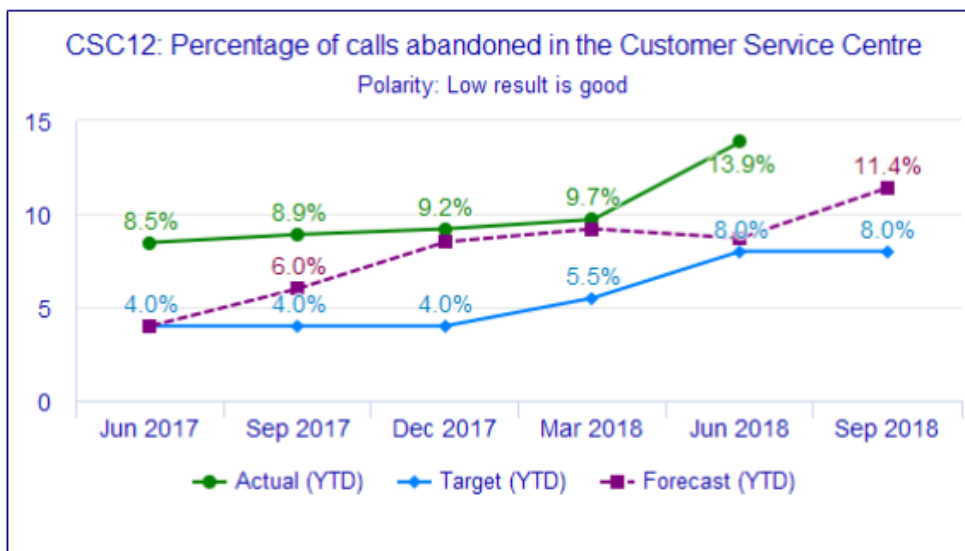


Figure 6:
CSC12 –
Percentage of
calls
abandoned in
the Customer
Service
Centre.

3.114 Customer satisfaction with Customer Service Centre remains high (89.7%). Customers like how they are treated by advisers and appreciate the time given to them during calls.

Technology

3.115 During 2017/18, new Strategic Directors and officers were appointed to the Shared IT Partnership Board. The governance of the Board has been enhanced to streamline decision making and a new IT Programme Management Office (IT PMO) function facilitates delivery of the projects that support delivery of the Council's Future Town, Future Council programme and the Council's Business Unit Reviews (and their equivalent programmes at East Herts Council) alongside the day to day IT service.

3.116 The Shared Services Partnership Board will oversee the development and implementation of a single IT strategy that will deliver the Council's digital transformation ambitions and ensure that services are delivered that meet customer needs and are fit for the future.

3.117 Performance management arrangements are being assessed and revised to ensure that they provide robust information to support delivery of the Council's digital transformation ambitions, operational frameworks to drive forward service improvement using International IT Service Management Standards and core service delivery across the Council. Revised performance measure(s) will be incorporated into the corporate set from quarter two to inform resource needs and monitor efficiency.

Corporate Services and Transformation

Our staff

3.118 The Senior Leadership Team are monitoring service completion rates for appraisals and the Council's Human Resources Team continue to work with service managers to ensure that all Council staff appraisals and objective setting meetings are completed.

- Appraisal completion rate to corporate deadlines, April to June 2018 target 100%, achieved 73.3%

3.119 Agency Usage: The primary reason for the use of agency staff is to ensure continuous service delivery where there are staff vacancies or sickness absence, particularly for refuse and grounds maintenance services. The Stevenage Direct Services Business Unit Review (Autumn 2018) will aim to reduce the need to engage agency staff.

- Agency usage as a percentage of the total workforce, April to June 2018 target 10%, achieved 13%.

Spotlight: Sickness Absence

3.120 The Senior Leadership Team continues to monitor the performance and management of sickness absence. Focus will be retained until revised policy and practice results in a sustained reduction in levels of sickness absence.

3.121 Sickness absence recording using the HR system 'MyView' has improved the accuracy of reporting and is able to provide service managers with access to real time sickness information to support absence management.

3.122 At June 2018, 3 out of 10 business units were achieving their new individual sickness absence service targets.

3.123 The significant levels of staff restructuring through the Future Council Business Unit Reviews is believed to be impacting on sickness absence levels. Staff affected through the reviews are offered support and advice and are consulted on the proposals that are presented. Officers from the Human Resources Team are supporting managers with managing sickness absence cases and have organised health and wellbeing events to support and promote employee wellbeing. In addition a third party reporter service will be introduced organisation wide in October 2018 that will ensure staff and managers receive timely advice and support to improve attendance levels.

- Sickness absence rate threshold for twelve months to June 2018 per fte 8 days, achieved 9.7 days.

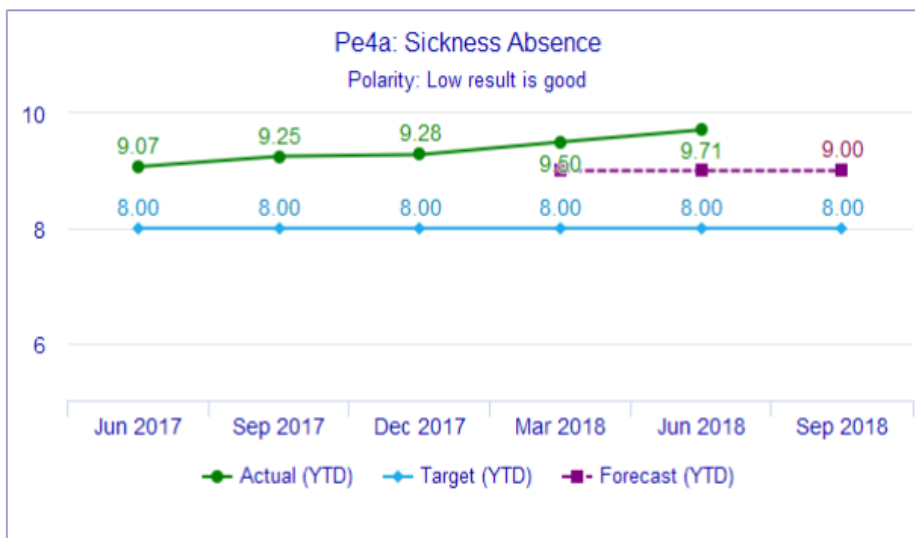


Figure 7: Pe4a: Sickness Absence rate for the current workforce (days per fte)

Finance and Estates

3.124 The Revenues and Benefits service continue to exceed targets for the collection rate of local taxes and Housing Benefit processing times.

- Time taken to process Housing Benefit new claims and change events (NI181), April to June 2018 target 14 days, achieved 10.35 days.
- Council Tax collection rate, April to June 2018 target 33%, achieved 33.7%.
- Non-domestic rates collection rate, April to June 2018 target 36%, achieved 36.4%.

Senior Leadership Team perspective

3.125 High levels of performance across all three key delivery themes (Customer, Place, Transformation and Support) that were evident at the end of 2017/18 have been sustained for April to June 18, to include the following:

- The number of households in temporary accommodation has been maintained below the thresholds set.
- The determination of planning applications exceeded national targets.
- Collection rates for Council Tax and non-domestic rates continue to meet or exceed target.

3.126 The Senior Leadership Team request that the Assistant Directors responsible for areas of improvement focus assess the factors impacting on performance and develop/implement robust improvement plans.

3.127 At March 2018, the following improvement plans were identified for ongoing focused monitoring by the Senior Leadership Team :

- Implementation and application of the Homelessness Reduction Act.

- Improving the performance in the Customer Service Centre through a revised service model that will enhance resilience and increase the availability, skills and knowledge of customer service advisers.
- The management of sickness absence and alignment to council health and well-being policy.

3.128 These areas will continue to be monitored until sustained performance improvement is evident.

3.129 In addition, the development and implementation of the IT strategy will 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.

3.130 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 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 current 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 is required and outline plans have been set out. The Executive is recommended to note and endorse these improvement plans.

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 11 July 2018: Annual Report and Performance Overview

APPENDICES

- Appendix One: Compendium of performance results
- Appendix Two: Future Town, Future Council Programme Scope/Focus