

Meeting: Executive

Portfolio Area: All

Agenda Item:

10

Date: 19 September 2017

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE FOR QUARTER ONE 2017/18

Author – Elaine Wright Ext. 2192

Contributors – Richard Protheroe/Charlie Smith/Chloe Norton Ext. 2938/2457/2501, All Assistant Directors

Lead Officer – Scott Crudginton. Ext 2185

Contact Officer – Richard Protheroe Ext. 2938

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. To highlight the Council's performance across key priorities and themes for quarter one 2017/18.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That the delivery of priorities that form the Future Town, Future Council Programme and performance of the Council across key themes during quarter one 2017/18 together with latest achievements be noted.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. Members approved the new 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.

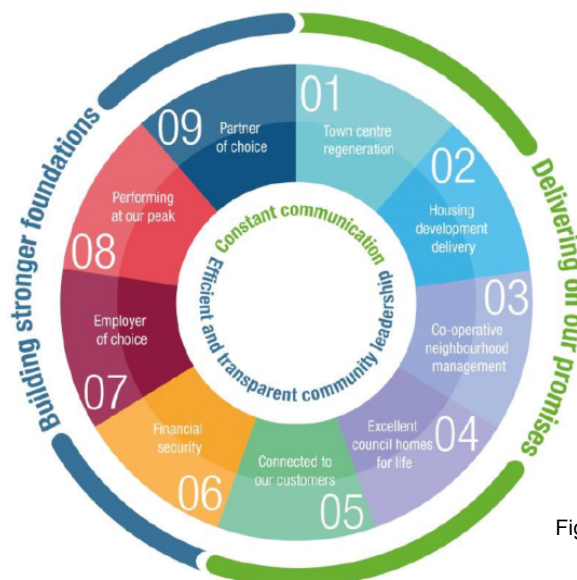


Figure 1: Future Town, Future Council Programme

- 3.2. The FTFC Programme consists of nine programmes with five external programmes focussed on improving the quality of life for Stevenage residents through building houses, regenerating the town centre, improving housing services and how local people feel about their neighbourhoods. Four internal programmes aim to build strong foundations within the Council through improving processes and skills, and making sure the Council is fit for the future. This aids delivery of the externally focused programmes.
- 3.3. During 2016/17, a senior management review was completed that established a more sustainable, customer orientated and commercial operating model. The model focussed 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.
- 3.4. Assistant Directors have now been appointed for all Business Units, with Rob Gregory appointed the new Assistant Director Communities and Neighbourhoods (commenced August 2017) and Craig Miller appointed the new Assistant Director for Stevenage Direct Services (commencing November 2017).
- 3.5. The senior management review resulted in the reorganisation of Business Units across three key delivery themes; Customer, Place, and Transformation and Support.
- 3.6. In addition to monitoring progress on the delivery of the FTFC Programme, performance across these themes is monitored to highlight achievements and identify any areas for improvement. This is in recognition of 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 nine programmes or as an enabler, delivering services across the three themes in support.
- 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 and an overview of the results is provided at paragraph 3.100.
- 3.8. A Policy Development meeting was held on 30 August 2017 with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the Performance Framework. Officers summarised how the performance framework has evolved alongside the organisational transition outlined in the preceding paragraphs. Also discussed were the plans for future reporting to focus on progress against corporate programmes and operational successes together with areas for improvement. The Committee were also provided with an outline of measure and target changes applied to the 2017/18 corporate measure set to provide an opportunity to influence future targets.

Future Town, Future Council programme progress update

- 3.9. The FTFC Programme was reviewed during quarter one to ensure governance arrangements remain effective, as programmes move from a planning to delivery phase during 2017/18. This was to ensure that the focus and scope of programmes will continue to deliver the Council's priorities and ensure a Council fit for the future.

- 3.10. The FTFC programme continues to perform well and is on track with delivery of agreed outcomes. Eleven FTFC measures were reported on for quarter 1 with just one measure narrowly missing its target (EoC4a: Apprentices in post – see paragraph 3.81).

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 2020/21 and one to begin 2019/20.

- 3.12. **Programme Overview** - The Council wants to make Stevenage a destination of choice through delivering a new vibrant town centre, with quality shopping, office and leisure facilities. New homes will be built in the town centre and a new hub for public services will be created.

- 3.13. Regeneration of the town centre is the Council's number one priority and the associated programme progressed well during 2016/17. Stevenage is now the single largest regeneration zone in the East of England. In March 2017, the Council commenced the procurement process to appoint a preferred developer to take forward SG1, which is the first phase of the regeneration scheme. The key building blocks of SG1 include:

- **Stevenage Core** – signature public space, new retail, residential, restaurants and cafes; and other civic uses.
- **New Public Sector Hub** - new health facilities, a library, civic spaces and offices.
- **Southgate Park** – which will include new residential apartments, a linear park and potentially a new urban primary school.

- 3.14. The aim is to have a preferred developer appointed by February 2018.

- 3.15. During 2017/18 the programme focus is:

- Securing a development partner for the first phase of the town centre regeneration.
- Beginning development and progressing more detailed plans for a public sector hub in the town.
- Completing public realm improvements within the town centre.

Programme Delivery Update

- 3.16. The process to secure a development partner for the first phase of the Town Regeneration Scheme launched in quarter one. A large developer engagement event was held that enabled the Council to tell developers about the variety of different opportunities coming forward in Stevenage. There was a high level of positive interest and following an evaluation of submissions received, the Council commenced the competitive dialogue stage of the procurement process which is still ongoing and currently involving four preferred developers.

- 3.17. Engagement with partners that will be occupying a new Public Sector Hub continued and requirements for the new building have been outlined.
- 3.18. Public realm improvements to The Forum and Littlewoods Square continued with completion expected at the end of September. Designs for planned public realm improvements to Market Place are being developed.
- 3.19. Residents are being kept informed of progress and plans through drop-in sessions, articles in Stevenage Central magazine and information campaigns using the Stevenage Central branding.

Housing Development Programme

3.20. Programme Outcomes

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

Programme Overview

- 3.21. Providing decent, affordable homes appropriate to the needs of residents is one of the Council's key priorities. The Council is meeting this priority by establishing a programme of building new homes and buying others on the open market.
- 3.22. Overall the programme remains on track for delivery of 300 homes by 2020. 125 homes have been delivered since the initial programme started (2013/14).
- 3.23. During 2017/18 the programme focus is:
 - Delivering 43 homes across a range of planned schemes.
 - Setting up a Council owned Housing Development Company to provide a variety of housing types across the town and consideration of a joint venture to bring further housing development forward.

Programme Delivery Update

- 3.24. The Archer Road Scheme was completed and all properties have now been made available for letting.
- 3.25. Following a tour of Ditchmore Lane, a new proposal for the second phase of development was discussed and agreed with Members at the 23 June Housing Development Executive meeting.
- 3.26. Affordable housing schemes at March Hare and Twin Foxes are progressing with the four houses at Vincent Gardens handed over on the 10 August 2017.
- 3.27. A scheme with a registered housing provider to access units using Right-to-Buy 1:1 receipts has been agreed with Executive (July).
- 3.28. Residents and staff are being kept informed of progress and plans. In particular the Housing Management Board was taken on a tour of new build schemes. Whilst Officers also held meetings with the community centre manager and local businesses in regards to the Kenilworth Road scheme.

Excellent Council Homes for Life Programme

3.29. Programme Outcomes

- Transforming the housing service (Housing – All under one roof).

Programme Overview

- 3.30. The Council's aim is to provide high quality, efficient and effective housing services. The Council has committed to transform its housing services to better meet the needs of its customers.

Programme Delivery Update

- 3.31. The Excellent Council Homes for Life programme has been reviewed and will now focus purely on the housing transformation element. Elements relating to investing in homes and services for older people are to be taken forward through normal Business Unit operations.
- 3.32. Staff engagement is taking place through focus groups and a Housing Away Day was held in July, at which staff voted to name the housing transformation programme, 'Housing – All under one roof'.
- 3.33. The Assistant Director for Housing and Investment has commenced consultation on a proposal to restructure her 4th Tier Management Team. An Interim Programme Manager and Assistant Programme Manager have also been appointed, which are both critical roles for the programme. These roles will now work with staff from housing to shape the revised programme.
- 3.34. In April the new structure for the Supported Housing and Cleaning team was established. Consultation with managers on further transformation is ongoing.
- 3.35. The Council appointed Northgate Public Services (NPS) to implement 4 new housing management system modules (NPS Housing Advice module, Support Services module, Key Details and Task Manager), in order to enhance service delivery. NPS will also carry out a series of health checks on the Council's use of various NPS modules in order to maximise the use and effectiveness of the housing management system. This programme of work will be carried out over an 18 month period.

Co-operative and Neighbourhood Management Programme

3.36. 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 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.

Programme Overview

- 3.37. The Co-operative Neighbourhood Management programme sets out how the Council will work with communities to improve the neighbourhoods. Through working together with residents and other partners the Council believes public spaces can be made more attractive and in turn help to give people pride in the place they live.
- 3.38. The programme has now begun to deliver against the expected outcomes after a year of planning and implementation. During 2016/17 £10M was allocated by the Council to improve the quality and look of its garage blocks over the next 10 years.
- 3.39. The Council has also allocated £1.5M to be spent on rejuvenating the Council's play areas over the next 5 years.
- 3.40. During 2017/18 the programme will focus on:
- Delivering of £800k of investment (relating to Green Space signage, public realm work, nine play areas, litterbins and hardstanding) into Pin Green and Shephall.
 - Encouraging partner agencies and relevant private sector organisations to work in partnership with us to help improve public spaces and other local assets and engage with communities.
 - Undertaking a Resident Survey to determine future neighbourhood priorities.
 - Reviewing the effectiveness and usage of Community Centres to ensure they are best placed to meet current and future needs.
 - Implement the Garage Improvement Programme
 - Engaging with partners and communities on the next phase of the planned physical improvement works in the wards of St Nicholas and Martins Wood.

Programme Delivery Update

- 3.41. The Co-operative and Neighbourhood Management programme was formally launched at Stevenage Day in June 2017, giving the local community an opportunity to hear about the programme aims and to meet the Neighbourhood Wardens.
- 3.42. A potential joint project with the community to enhance the environment around Archer Road Squares is being explored. Engagement with residents will be carried out to determine community interest in this venture.
- 3.43. The Assistant Director for Communities and Neighbourhoods is now in post and is considering the capacity and skills required to deliver the CNM programme effectively.
- 3.44. The garage improvement pilot projects have been completed. A Member session is to be held to review the result of the pilot schemes and determine the future level of investment. A programme manager for garages has also now been recruited and has started to develop the improvement programme.
- 3.45. Residents and staff are being kept informed through the launch of the 'Our Neighbourhood' webpage and media coverage of events such as the afternoon tea held during National Volunteers Week to celebrate and thank the regular volunteers.

Connected to our Customers Programme

3.46. Programme Outcomes

- Increase customer satisfaction with key services.
- One resident, one account 24/7 customer access to key services.

Programme Overview

- 3.47. The 'Connected to our Customers' programme aims to improve the way residents can access Council services through increasing the use of digital options. The programme will specifically target high cost / low value transactional activities. It will ensure that the Council will use technology to meet its ambitions and make the workforce more modern, efficient and responsive to customer needs. The programme will encourage use of self-service so more time can be spent with customers that need extra help and will see the development of a much improved website with more self-service choices.
- 3.48. During 2016/17 the programme started to deliver against its key aims following a year of scoping and planning. A new digital strategy was completed which sets out the Council's approach to delivering new online services and the Executive approved more than £2m capital funding for the new digital change programme which will fund the required team and works to deliver digital services.
- 3.49. During 2017/18 the programme focus is:
- Upgrading the Council's IT infrastructure so it can support a range of new digital applications and services.
 - The design and commission of a new customer account.
 - The launch of a new website and intranet.
 - Expanding the accessibility of services through use of digital technologies including a new online Council Tax and Business Rates account.
 - Implementation of the Council's cyber security action plan.
 - Completing the telephony software upgrade.

Programme Delivery Update

- 3.50. The Assistant Director Corporate Projects, Customer Services and Technology is now the programme sponsor. This will improve synergies with ICT and the development of the Public Sector Hub. The programme now includes additional aspects of ICT security and infrastructure improvements that are essential to ensuring the Council can deliver high performance and sustainable digital services that will facilitate the modern working practices required for the Public Sector Hub. The Future Council Business Review will identify the resources required for the revised programme.
- 3.51. Plans are being developed to enhance the already robust arrangements to ensure that customer and staff data remains secure and the Council can continue to give confidence to the users of the Council's digital services.

- 3.52. In partnership with East Hertfordshire Council, work has started on a replacement staff Intranet, which is considered a high priority improvement action by managers across the council.
- 3.53. The Modern.Gov committee management system went live for the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) on 1 August and has subsequently been rolled out to a number of other officer groups including FTFC Programme Board. The system allows paperless management of agendas, minutes and reports. To support the use of paperless solutions, all members of SLT have been provided with a tablet. Modern.Gov will also be used for the first time for Member committees during October 2017.

Partner of Choice Programme

3.54. Programme Outcomes

- Delivery of shared services.
- Shared partnership culture.
- Develop the best deal for Stevenage for county-wide devolution.

Programme Overview

- 3.55. The Council believes that through working with partners it can achieve better outcomes for the town and deliver services more efficiently. The Council has a proven track record of developing a range of partnerships such as those under the Stevenage Together umbrella. As a partner of choice the Council continues to proactively work with partners from across all sectors to deliver projects that make a difference to the lives of Stevenage residents.
- 3.56. During 2017/18 the programme focus is:
- Finalising the legal shared services arrangements.
 - Setting out further potential shared service options.
 - Continuing to work in partnership through Stevenage Together.
 - Working in partnership with voluntary agencies to help reduce Child Poverty.

Programme Delivery Update

- 3.57. The Shared Legal Service was approved and went live on 1 August 2017. Mary Cormack was appointed as Monitoring Officer and Borough Solicitor.
- 3.58. The consideration of further shared service opportunities was proposed by the Senior Leadership Team as part of Future Council Business Review. Initial discussions with senior management have identified further options to consider. Informal engagement will now proceed with Members and key partner organisations.

Performing at our Peak Programme

3.59. Programme Outcomes

- Achieve better business outcomes through delivering actionable strategic insight.

Programme Overview

- 3.60. The Council aims to become an insightful Council with improved service performance and slimmed down decision-making processes. The programme will improve the organisation's insight, analysis and intelligence to help us to make better informed business decisions. This is being achieved through more timely coordination of data and the adoption of tools to support ongoing strategic and operational analysis.
- 3.61. During 2016/17 a new software tool has been developed to help managers access up-to-date service information and data, and work has been completed to create 'live' performance dashboards for the Senior Leadership Team.
- 3.62. During 2017/18 the programme focus is:
- Continuing to build performance dashboards at a business unit level and ensuring service managers have the right skills to use the tool robustly to analyse information and make informed decisions that result in improved services for the Council's customers.
 - The introduction of a new devolved governance and performance framework, including a new scheme of delegation, to help improve decision making and accountability at a business unit level.

Programme Delivery Update

- 3.63. Performance dashboards have been established at business unit level and will be enhanced throughout 2017/18.
- 3.64. Information relating to strategic risks has been incorporated into the new system and is being used to provide information through strategic level dashboards. As business unit performance dashboards are enhanced, risks identified at business unit level will be incorporated into the system.
- 3.65. A successful trial of obtaining performance results by pulling data direct from key business software systems has been completed. This is a positive step towards being able to capture service data that will provide more up-to-date information to inform decisions.

Financial Security Programme

- 3.66. **Programme Outcomes**

- As set out in Figure 2: Financial Security Workstreams.

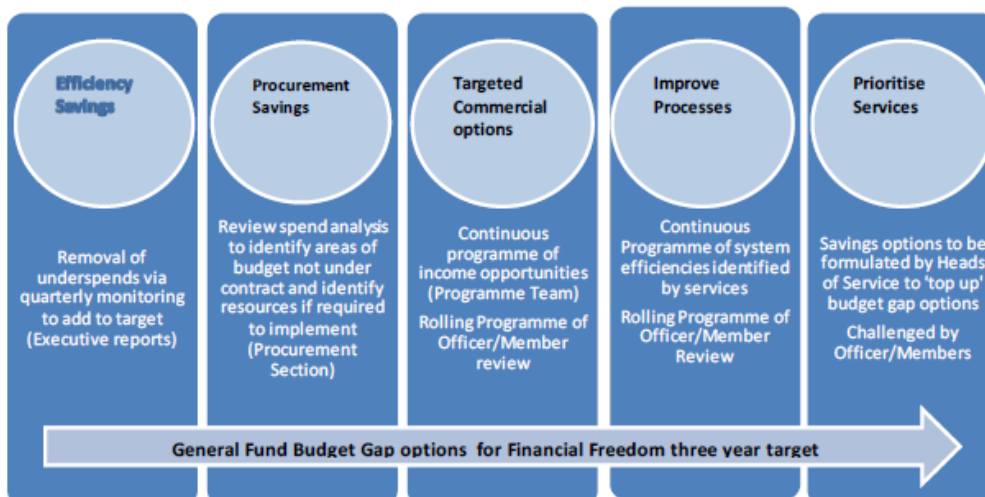


Figure 2: Financial Security Workstreams

Programme Overview

- 3.67. This programme aims to ensure that the Council has sufficient funds available to deliver quality services that residents want and need. The aim is to break away from the cycle of dependency on Government Grant through becoming more efficient in processes and developing new and innovative funding streams to ensure the Council has the resources it needs to be a Council fit for the future and build a vibrant town that residents deserve.
- 3.68. Despite continued national government austerity the Council has managed to balance the books whilst protecting the much valued front line services and providing funding to support the FTFC programme.
- 3.69. The Executive approved the allocation of £15m towards a Commercial Property strategy in March 2017 to enable the purchase of commercial assets that yield a financial return.
- 3.70. During 2017/18 the programme will focus on:
- Generating significant savings from the leisure management contract.
 - Finalising savings of approximately £40k per annum through a move to a digital post solution.
 - The prioritisation of services to generate further savings and ensure a balanced budget.

Programme Delivery Update

- 3.71. Current year financial security targets were achieved for quarter 1 contributing to the delivery of a balanced budget for 2018/19.

- 3.72. The Assistant Director Finance and Estates carried out service review meetings with all Assistant Directors during August 2017 to identify future potential financial security options.
- 3.73. The programme team have been carrying out a series of interactive engagement meetings with senior management in order to identify potential efficiency savings, commercial opportunities and procurement savings.

Employer of Choice Programme

3.74. Programme Outcomes

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

Programme Overview

- 3.75. The Council aims to create a flexible, collaborative, creative and modern workforce to ensure the Council can deliver the priorities set out in the FTFC programme and give residents the standard of services they expect. This programme aims to transform the way the Council works; ensuring that staff have the skills, abilities and experience to deliver excellence. The Council must become an employer of choice so that it can compete in today's market place and attract and retain the best staff to build for the future.
- 3.76. During 2016/17 the Senior Management Review was completed and a new leadership team is now in place. Through Future Council Business Reviews, work has begun on shaping the next stage of the transformation programme to ensure the Council has the right structures, teams and people in place.
- 3.77. During 2017/18 the programme focus is:
- Further rollout of online services for staff, including a new e-learning system and intranet.
 - Creation of new leadership and management development programmes.
 - Development and implementation of a competency framework for staff up to Grade 9 of the Council's pay structure.
 - Introduction of new performance management policies, tools and processes.

Programme Delivery Update

- 3.78. 'My View', the self-service portal of the new Resource Link HR and Payroll system went live for staff and members in April. The system provides the ability to manage payslips online and enables staff to book and manage annual leave. Further developments of 'My View' are planned, including the ability to record and manage sickness absence.

- 3.79. A comprehensive Equality and Diversity training package was delivered to all staff based at Cavendish Road.
- 3.80. The programme has been supporting the developing Future Council Business Reviews by putting in place the necessary HR support arrangements. The Future Council Business Reviews will shape the way in which the Council delivers services in the future.
- 3.81. A further two apprentices are due to join the organisation in quarter two. (EoC4a: Percentage of apprentices in post as a percentage of the workforce, target 2.3%, achieved 2.1%).

Corporate Performance highlights and areas for improvement

- 3.82. 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 and the overview of results for quarter 1 2017/18 is:

Number of Measures Reported	Meeting or exceeding target	Amber Status (within an acceptable tolerance)	Red Status (urgent improvement action required)
47	30	4	13

- 3.83. The Strategic Leadership Team has requested that Assistant Directors identify improvement activity for performance measures that did not meet the target set.
- 3.84. A summary of highlights and areas for improvement is set out in the following paragraphs across the three key delivery themes; Customer, Place, and Transformation and Support (the one FTFC theme measure that missed target is referred to in paragraphs 3.98).

Key Business Unit Themes Update

- 3.85. Thirty-six measures were reported on for quarter 1 aligned to the three business unit themes of Customer, Place, and Transformation and Support.

Customer Theme

- 3.86. The Customer Theme incorporates the following Business Units:

- Housing and Investment
- Communities and Neighbourhood

Housing and Investment

- 3.87. Tenancy Support Advisors helped their customers access £12,000 income between April and the end of July 2017.
- 3.88. Following development, 28 properties were made available for letting at Archer Road in July 2017 and all were let to residents within one week.

3.89. Letters that are required to be sent to Leaseholders to outline service charges were sent well within the legislative deadline (end September) - 1400 letters were sent by Mid-August.

Voids

3.90. VoidsSheltered: The time taken to re-let standard sheltered voids

3.91. As reported to July Executive, performance continues to be affected by low demand for some Sheltered Units.

3.92. On a positive note, a focus on the advertisement of particular void properties resulted in some increased demand during quarter one. However, properties which were let that had been void for a significant period has had a negative impact on the performance result.

- Voids sheltered: the time taken to re-let standard sheltered voids, quarter 1 2017/18 target 70 days, achieved 89.84 days.
- Additional information measure - Voids-Shelt-a: Time taken from tenancy termination to ready to let for standard sheltered voids, achieved 16.66 days.

3.93. Further opportunities to increase awareness of available properties are being explored. This will involve an assessment of the most effective method of communication, liaison with other registered service providers and property open days.

3.94. Studies have been completed for a set of hard to let properties that could potentially have their layouts redesigned to improve their future lettable. The studies will help to determine which properties will be prioritised for remodelling in the future and those that will continue to be advertised or removed from management.

3.95. The number of voids and associated void loss for sheltered voids has remained relatively steady over the past two years.

Period	All tenure void loss including service charges	Sheltered Voids loss
15/16 April to July -	£81,683	£40,469
16/17 April to July -	£90,414	£46,428
17/18 April to July -	£117,643	£48,646

3.96. A review of the Allocations Policy is being carried out that will consider three areas that could expand the customer base:

- Include access to sheltered housing for homeowners (The allocation policy was amended in January 2015 and excluded homeowners being allowed to join the Housing register).
- Revise the eligibility criteria.
- Identifying current tenants that may have a preference for sheltered housing.

3.97. The Senior Leadership Team has endorsed the planned improvement activity.

- 3.98. VoidsGN: The time taken to re-let standard general needs voids, quarter 1 2017/18 target 30 days, achieved 38.59 days.
- 3.99. An informal discussion with the Executive on repairs performance took place on 12 July 2017 and the Senior Leadership Team is monitoring delivery of the Empty Homes action plan.
- 3.100. It is though encouraging to note that monthly performance has been improving during 2017/18 as the following table shows:

	Monthly	Cumulative
April 2017	38.38	38.38
May 2017	43.67	40.94
June 2017	34.56	38.59

- 3.101. Performance for July 2017 is 25 days. As a result of the performance level in quarter one the Senior Leadership Team has reviewed the voids position and has identified that further performance improvements should materialise.

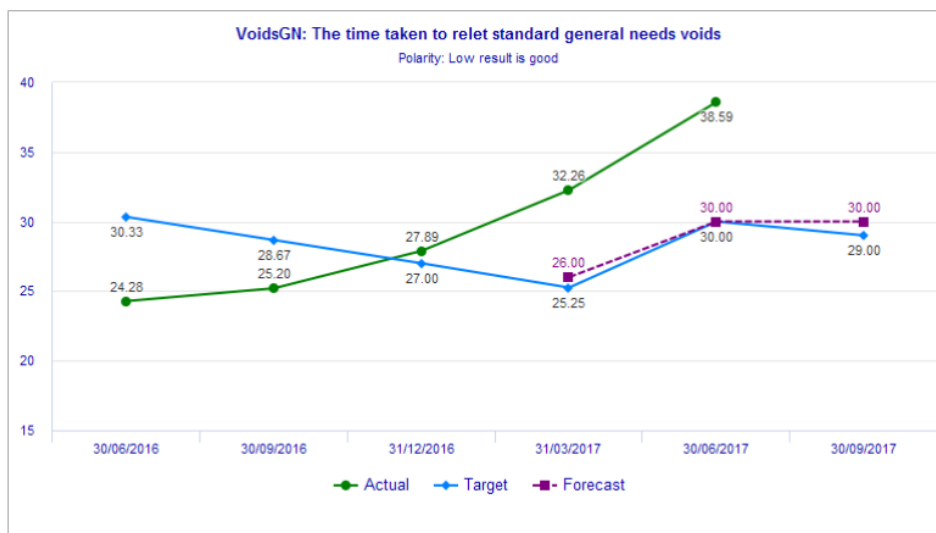


Figure 3: VoidsGN - The time taken to re-let standard general needs voids.

Homelessness preventions (BV213)

- 3.102. The Housing Service is supported by two key partnership organisations; the Citizens Advice Bureau and Herts Young Homeless in delivering homelessness prevention services. Unexpectedly both of these organisations experienced issues such as a shortage of resource which has impacted quarter one performance. The Housing Service is liaising with both organisations and expects performance to improve in quarter two.
- 3.103. In addition, performance has been affected by ongoing Housing Service staffing matters which are also likely to affect quarter two performance. New staff are in the process of being recruited to help bolster the service.
- BV213: Homelessness preventions, quarter 1 2017/18 target 90, achieved 47.

3.104. On a positive note, the number of households in temporary accommodation at the end of quarter one has reduced and no families were placed in bed and breakfast accommodation during this period.

Communities and Neighbourhoods

3.105. 50 years of play-work in Stevenage was celebrated with a series of events:

- In memory of “Denis” the Play bus, staff delivered play on wheels sessions at some of the Play Bus’ old community parking spots.
- The Mayor attended the Pavement Art event on the Joy Ride in the Town Centre.
- At Stevenage Day a beach area was created for the children to play, in addition to giant games, penny farthing bikes and various toys.
- A flash mob event was staged in the town centre involving playworkers and more than 34 children from dance-beat.
- The Playworkers in Stevenage celebration event, attracted playworkers from the first employed Play workers in Stevenage 1967 to the newest young volunteer.
- As part of the ‘volunteering 50 mins for 50 years’ play initiative, the Chief Executive along with other staff helped to rebuild and extend the sandpit at the Bandley Hill Playcentre.

3.106. External funding was used to revamp the tree house at Pin Green and to build a sensory garden at St Nicholas Playcentre.

3.107. A range of specialist training was completed by officers to provide them with the skills to support vulnerable residents.

3.108. New Homes Bonus funding allocated to address child poverty has enabled the Herts Money Advice Unit to provide targeted advice and support to Stevenage families with disabled children to ensure they receive the correct benefits and that they are protected when Universal Credit is imposed.

3.109. A Service Level Agreement between the Council, CAB and Stevenage Children’s Centres to provide financial advice and budgeting guidance to vulnerable families in 2017 has already delivered positive financial outcomes for families.

Community Safety

3.110. Partner organisations have worked together through SoSafe partnership events, street meets and the development of a poster campaign to reassure residents that Stevenage remains a safe town. Residents have been encouraged to report incidents of anti-social behaviour and/or criminal damage and advised of the various reporting methods available.

- Anti-social behaviour rates remain up against threshold and slightly above the 2016/17 level (CS8: Anti-social behaviour per 1,000 population, quarter 1 2016/17: 10.16 incidents per 1,000 population, quarter 1 2017/18: 11.72 incidents per 1,000 population against threshold of 10.00).
- The number of criminal damage incidents is slightly lower than the same quarter of 2016/17 (CS9: Criminal damage per 1,000 population, quarter 1 2016/17: 3.61 incidents per 1,000 population, 2017/18: 3.58 incidents per 1,000 population against a threshold of 3.21).

- The incidents of violent crime have increased on 2016/17 levels. However, the scope of crimes now classified as 'violent' has been expanded (NI15b: the rate of violence against the person (victim based crime) per 1,000 population, quarter 1 2016/17: 6.81 incidents per 1,000 population, quarter 1 2017/18: 8.53 incidents per 1,000 population against a threshold of 6.16).

Place Theme

3.111. 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 3.10 to 3.20 and 3.21 to 3.33 respectively).

Planning and Regulation

3.112. Planning is dealing with a record number of planning applications and continues to do so within corporate and statutory targets.

- NI157a: Percentage of major planning applications determined in 13 weeks, quarter 1 2017/18 target 60%, achieved 100%
- NI157b: Percentage of minor planning application determined within 8 weeks, quarter 1 2017/18 target 65%, achieved 93.1%
- NI157c: Percentage of other planning applications determined within 8 weeks, quarter 1 2017/18 target 80%, achieved 93.8%

3.113. As of June 2017, 100% of known Houses of Multiple Occupation were free from category 1 hazards (as set in the Housing Act 2004, Housing Health and Safety Rating System).

3.114. In addition, 96.9% of food establishments in the area were assessed as broadly compliant with food hygiene law.

Stevenage Direct Services

3.115. Both the Town Centre and the Old Town received a deep clean focused on clearing any build-up of plant debris. This has raised the pride of the staff and improved the appearance of the areas concerned. In addition, the visitor experience in the town centre has been improved with the addition of many new floral displays.

3.116. The programme to carry out internal works on properties was delayed resulting in the number of homes made decent being slightly lower than projected. The issues are being resolved and officers expect to achieve the target for the year (ECHFL1: percentage of homes maintained as decent, quarter 1 2017/18 target 81.2%, achieved 81%)

- 3.117. As discussed with the Executive in July 2017, the completion of repairs by the in-house team is meeting the repair targets set. However, external contractors have struggled to deal with the increase in fencing repairs as a result of Storm Doris that took place in February 2017. This resulted in the average time taken to complete a housing repair from time of reporting to be 14.7 days in quarter one compared to a target of 10 days.
- 3.118. Repairs satisfaction surveys are currently recorded from e-forms and feedback cards. A team of resident inspectors is being established that will carry out telephone surveys in future. Customers advised a 90.8% satisfaction level against a target of 95% during quarter one. A primary reason for some customers' expectations not being met was the long waiting time for fence repairs following Storm Doris in February 2017. A large proportion of fencing repair works has now been contracted out to address this matter. In addition, this will facilitate completion of new repairs within an acceptable timeframe.
- 3.119. The repairs measures achieving target are:
- ECH-Rep3: Percentage repairs appointments made and kept, quarter 1 2017/18 target 95%, achieved 95.65%.
 - ECH-Rep4: Percentage repairs fixed first time, quarter 1 2017/18 target 87.5%, achieved 92%.

Transformation and Support Theme

- 3.120. 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

Customer Services

- 3.121. Customer satisfaction with the Customer Service Centre (CSC) continues to remain high at 90%. The CSC has been able to maintain this level of performance for a considerable time.
- 3.122. The performance of the Customer Service Centre has unfortunately been affected by a shortage of resources and associated skills gap. Recruitment and upskilling are taking place but it is likely that the impact on performance will continue into quarter two. CSC Team leaders are supporting CSC advisors to ensure they are able to maximise the amount of time spent answering telephone calls, particularly during peak periods.
- CSC4: Percentage of telephone calls to the Customer Service Centre answered within 20 seconds, quarter 1 2017/18 target 65%, quarter 1 result achieved 54.1%.
 - CSC12: Percentage of calls abandoned in the Customer Service Centre, quarter 1 2017/18 target 4%, quarter 1 result achieved 8.5%.

- CSC5: Percentage of walk-in customers to the Customer Service Centre served within 20 minutes, quarter 1 2017/18 target 85%, quarter 1 result achieved 76.6%.

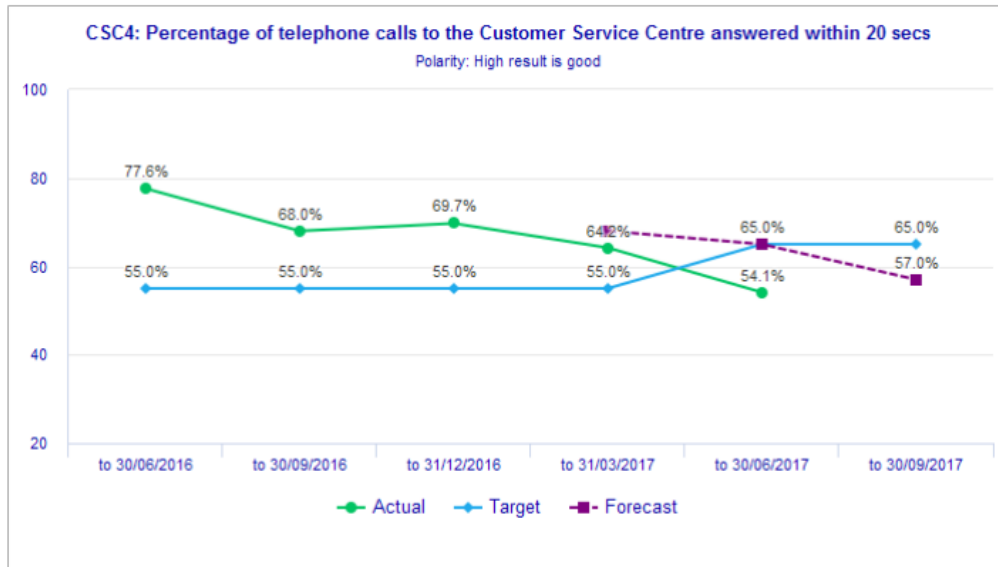


Figure 4: CSC4 – Percentage of telephone calls to the CSC answered within 20 seconds.

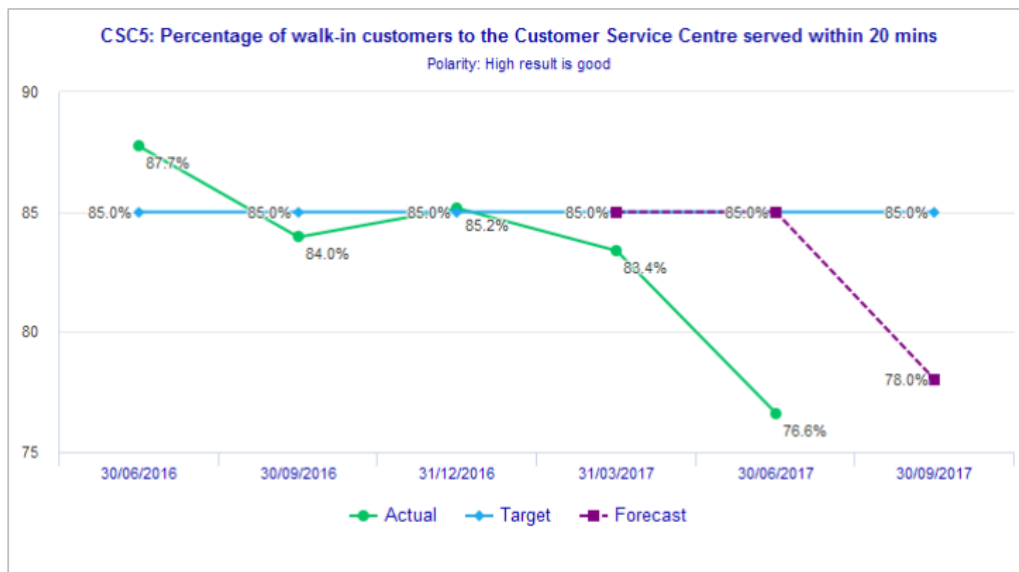


Figure 5: CSC5 – Percentage of walk-in customers to the CSC served within 20 minutes.

- 3.123. When 2017/18 targets were set for the Customer Service Centre resourcing concerns were not evident and stretch targets were put in place to reflect the focus on continuous improvement.
- 3.124. Issues in meeting customer complaint response times reported to July Executive have now been resolved. The Council is now responding to 96.7% of complaints within service standard timeframes, exceeding the target (95%).
- 3.125. Cust1: Percentage of complaints progressing to stage two and three that are upheld
- 3.126. The percentage of complaints that progressed to stage 2 or 3 and were upheld has increased on 2016/17 levels (quarter 1 2017/18 target 40%, quarter 1 2017/18 level:

51.6%, quarter 1 2016/17 level: 33.3%). The Customer Feedback Team continues to deliver training to enhance the quality of initial complaint responses.

Corporate Services and Transformation

Our staff

- 3.127. As at 16 August 2017, 88% of staff appraisals due were completed. The Council's Human Resources team is continuing to work with service managers to increase this to 100%. (Pe6: Appraisal completion rate quarter 1 2017/18 target 75%, achieved 65.2%, achieved at 16 August 2017 88%)
- 3.128. Active management of sickness absence is continuing across all Business Units (Pe4: Sickness Absence rate quarter 1 2017/18 target per full time equivalent was 8 days, 8.74 days was achieved)

Finance and Estates

Housing Benefits

- 3.129. Though resource issues impacted on performance for the first quarter, performance for July was better than target at 8.25 days, which has had a positive impact on the performance level for April to July (12.61 days) and this improvement is expected to continue. (NI181: Time Taken to process Housing Benefit new claims and change events, quarter 1 target 2017/18 12 days, achieved 13.94 days, result to July 12.61 days).

Senior Leadership Team perspective

- 3.130. The new approach to performance management and monitoring is allowing the organisation to proactively identify issues and challenges and ensure earlier management intervention. The fluid nature of the new performance framework enables the Senior Leadership Team to amend targets in year to drive forward additional improvement in services and processes. Although there is no guarantee services will meet these increased targets, it is important for the Council to aspire to improve performance levels and standards for the benefit of internal and external customers.
- 3.131. The Senior Leadership Team requested that the Assistant Directors responsible for the two main areas of improvement focus; void re-let times and Customer Service Centre performance assess and if deemed necessary adjust current planned activities to improve performance.

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 and corporate performance for the quarter. It aims to give Executive an overview of the achievements the Council

has made this 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.

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. Risk Implications

- 5.3.1. 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.
- 5.3.2. 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.

5.4. Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 5.4.1. 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.

5.5. Other Corporate Implications

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

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

BD1 - [Annual Report - 17 July 2017](#)

APPENDICES

[Appendix 1: Compendium of performance results](#)