

Meeting Executive
Portfolio Area All
Date 11 September 2019



CORPORATE PERFORMANCE QUARTER ONE 2019/20

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 2019/20.

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 2019/20, together with the latest achievements, be noted.
- 2.2 That officers are requested to scope a potential new FTFC workstream called "Place of Choice", with a view to feeding this into the wider annual review of FTFC programme projects and deliverables for 2020/21.

- 2.3 That actions to ensure the prompt certification of health and safety compliance of non-domestic/non-commercial council buildings in accordance with the compliance contract are noted and endorsed (para 3.86 and 3.87).
- 2.4 That improved performance in the Customer Service Centre is noted and continuing plans to sustain and improve performance are endorsed (para 3.101 to 3.107).
- 2.5 That the impact of the rise in long term sickness on average sickness absence levels is noted and that ongoing implementation of improved practices to support sickness absence management is endorsed (para 3.117 to 3.121)

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 FTFC Programme was reviewed in March 2018 to ensure that it continued to reflect the Council's priorities. As it was apparent that working in partnership is embedded in the culture of the Council and there is a strong framework for future collaboration with other public sector bodies, the Partner of Choice Programme was closed. Development of partnerships continues as part of day-to-day business and any new shared service proposals will be considered and implemented within the Financial Security Programme.
- 3.3 Following further consideration of the scope of the FTFC programme, it is proposed that officers start to work on a potential new workstream called "Place of Choice". This would incorporate key strategic areas of focus that are key to developing a strong place narrative for the town, such as the Local Plan, economic development, community wealth building, cultural development, improving health and addressing climate change.

- 3.4 Council services are organised into nine Business Units across three themes: Customer, Place and Transformation and Support. This structure is focused on delivering the right services, to the right standards, at the right time for the town's residents and businesses, using the most cost/resource effective delivery models.
- 3.5 In addition to monitoring progress on the delivery of the FTFC Programme, performance across these (Council Service) themes is monitored throughout the year to highlight achievements and identify any areas for improvement.
- 3.6 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 3.80 (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, thirteen measures aligned to FTFC delivery were monitored and reported on for April to June 2019. The overview of FTFC focused results for April 2019 to June 2019 is outlined below:

Number of Measures Reported	Meeting or exceeding target	Amber Status (within a manageable tolerance)	Red Status (urgent improvement action required)
13	13	0	0

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

External Facing Future Town, Future Council Programmes

Stevenage Town Centre Regeneration Programme

3.10 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

3.11 During 2019/20 the programme is primarily focused on:

- Achieving vacant possession of Swingate House
- Advancing the SG1 scheme
- Progressing the bus interchange project in line with milestones
- Beginning works on the Town Square Public Realm and 'North Block' improvements
- Supporting the LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) to ensure there are robust governance arrangements in place for the regeneration of Stevenage
- Launching the fresh marketing brand, 'Stevenage Even Better' and opening the visitor centre to celebrate and promote the regeneration of the town

3.12 **Programme Delivery Update**

3.13 The Regeneration team have worked closely with developer Mace, to progress the development agreement for SG1. The development agreement was signed in April 2019 and contracts exchanged. Work on design development and interdependencies between projects and the programme continues to be monitored by the Regeneration team. Pre-application engagement with the Planning team is on-going, with a focus on design and delivery. An SG1 public consultation event with Mace has taken place since the end of quarter one (19th-21st July) in the former Subway unit, with a wide-ranging publicity campaign to promote the consultation. Engagement events with staff, Members and Stevenage First Board are being planned via an internal working group.

3.14 Construction work has begun on the Queensway North site. Hoarding was erected in May 2019 which will remain in place for approximately 18 months whilst construction takes place. Phase 1 of construction will concentrate on the new retail, leisure and office space that the scheme offers.

3.15 Work continues on the relocation of the bus interchange. Discussions have taken place through the Scape framework regarding the RIBA Stage 4 designs. Approval was granted for the next stage of work with Wilmott Dixon at the Executive meeting in June 2019, with delegated authority given to the Strategic Director to proceed with the full contract.

3.16 Proposals for designs and construction to proceed to the next stage for the Town Square and North Block were approved at the June Executive meeting.

3.17 Construction of a new CCTV control room has nearly completed this quarter to facilitate the move from Swingate House to Cavendish Road. Tenants are in the process of relocating including the Citizens Advice Bureau to Daneshill House and Age Concern to the indoor market. This is anticipated to be completed by the end of quarter two.

- 3.18 Physical works and content have been completed for the visitor centre site. Tri-partite delegates from Ingelheim and Autun were given a guided tour as part of their visit and feedback was used ahead of the official opening in July. The official promotion of both the “Stevenage Even Better” website and social media will follow the Mace public consultation in quarter two. Branded marketing materials have been purchased to support events.

Housing Development Programme

3.19 Programme Outcomes

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

- 3.20 During 2019/20 the programme is primarily focused on:

- Completing and letting 54 new affordable homes across a number of schemes and 11 private sale homes
- Starting work on a further 295 new/replacement homes across a range of planned schemes including sites at Shephall Way, North Road and Symonds Green
- 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
- Forming a Wholly Owned Company to support the delivery of new homes

3.21 Programme Delivery Update

- 3.22 The open market acquisitions programme has been scaled up this financial year. The ambition is to purchase properties to be converted for those with additional accessibility requirements as there is a current lack of suitable housing stock. Some larger sized properties will also be purchased in order to meet the housing needs of large families on the waiting list for whom there are very limited housing options available within the Council's current stock. In quarter one a further three open market acquisitions have been completed. Several properties are going through the purchase process and the Housing Development team are working with colleagues from Legal Services to achieve completion on these properties.
- 3.23 The development at Ferrier Road is progressing well. Delays were incurred due to access and material supply issues; however the scheme is still anticipated to complete in quarter two as planned.
- 3.24 The contractor for Burwell Court and Ditchmore Lane is on site and the sites are both progressing well. At Burwell Court the fixtures are almost complete

and internal fittings are due in quarter two. At Ditchmore Lane, the roof is now tiled, windows are fitted, insulation is being installed and internal plastering is in progress.

- 3.25 A contractor for the demolition of buildings in phase one has been appointed for the Kenilworth Close (236 homes) scheme. Since the end of quarter one, a report has been taken to the Executive (July) to seek approval for the procurement approach to the scheme as well as anticipated funding requirements.
- 3.26 The schemes at North Road (21 Homes), Shephall Way (9 Homes) and Symonds Green (29 Homes) were granted planning permission at the 30th of May Planning Committee. At the end of quarter one, all 3 schemes were out to tender for employers agents at each site and there was significant interest from potential suppliers. The deadline for submission was the 5th of July, and Executive reports seeking delegated authority to appoint contractors at these sites were considered at the July Executive meeting. It is anticipated that contractors for all sites will be appointed by the end of quarter two.

Co-operative and Neighbourhood Management (CNM) Programme

3.27 Programme Outcomes

- Public spaces are more attractive, better cared for by the Council, residents and partners, 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 Council's Community centres are efficiently run, well-managed and most importantly, meet local needs
- Staff better understand the town's communities and so are more able to facilitate the change that is required

3.28 During 2019/20 the programme is primarily focused on:

- Developing the Council's approach to co-operative neighbourhood management, working initially with Stevenage Direct Services, Housing and Investment and Communities and Neighbourhoods
- Continuing the planned roll-out of neighbourhood improvements, with consultation and engagement work starting in Bedwell and Longmeadow
- Completing the Community Centre Review
- Progressing the Garage Programme
- Reviewing and reshaping resident involvement activity in response to the Community Engagement Framework

3.29 Programme Delivery Update

- 3.30 Neighbourhood improvements in St Nicholas and Martins Wood continued this quarter. Improvements have been made to the ABC park (formally Wellfield Court play area). Outreach youth work has been developed in

partnership with the Oval Community Centre in Martins Wood and the first session held in quarter one was well attended. A mass clear up of the Oval supported by the Neighbourhood Warden team, brought out 12 volunteers of all ages to clear litter and improve the street scene. Current and past community mapping/engagement exercises will be used to inform participatory budget spend. This is likely to be used in partnership with local businesses and community groups celebrating the diversity of the local area.

- 3.31 A series of ward walkabouts with senior leaders, elected ward members and relevant SBC officers have been carried out to highlight areas in need of attention, inform future projects and celebrate recent successes. A future briefing session will be planned for members to share the findings.
- 3.32 The garage improvement programme is now aligned to the major flat block refurbishment contract. Eight garage sites have been completed to date and these will be used to evaluate the approach and processes in place to ensure the intended outcomes of the garage programme are achieved. In conjunction with the works being completed, the refurbishment team are working with Neighbourhood Wardens and local residents to resolve any known antisocial behaviour issues surrounding these blocks.
- 3.33 Planning is now underway for the roll out of CNM in Bedwell and Longmeadow. The Community Development team have scheduled meetings with ward members to discuss delivery/engagement plans for each ward. They are also focussing weekly walkabouts in both areas to gain a detailed understanding of the communities and to begin building relationships with local partners. The first "Our Neighbourhood" action groups for both wards are scheduled for quarter two.
- 3.34 The community centre review has now progressed to consultation implementation. This phase of delivery will explore community association participation and modelling under a new Cooperative Compact. It will also include wide community consultation and focus groups on the future model development for the delivery of community building services. A number of consultation events were carried out in quarter one, including activities at Stevenage Day, community centre focus groups and via the Customer Service Centre.
- 3.35 The Community Select Committee's review of resident involvement is now complete with clear actions defined in the development of a wider Community Engagement Framework and toolkit for the Council. This will help to inform the development of existing resident involvement groupings linked to Housing and Investment.
- 3.36 Work has begun on developing the model for future Neighbourhood Management. A working group session was held in quarter one and the Community Development Manager worked with Stevenage Direct Services and Housing & Investment exploring joint ways of embedding area based working in practical delivery, with a dedicated workshop held with Housing and Investment staff as part of the Housing and Investment Away Day. Community development areas have now been adjusted to North, Central and South to

reflect existing County Council working boundaries. A Portfolio Holder Advisory Group (PHAG) meeting will be held in quarter three to help inform the model.

Excellent Council Homes Programme

3.37 Programme Outcome

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

3.38 During 2019/20 the programme is primarily focused on:

- Delivery of a major refurbishment programme to our flat blocks (incorporating the MRC, lift replacements and retrofitting of sprinklers)
- Implementation of a new area-based co-operative neighbourhood management approach in conjunction with staff from Stevenage Direct Services and Communities and Neighbourhoods
- The launch of a new online account where customers will be able to access housing services 24/7
- Providing staff with the right business tools and software to enable them to work more effectively out in the community
- Completing the final phases of the Housing and Investment Future Council Business Unit Review
- Delivery of the Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Initiative Strategy and Housing Older Persons Strategy

3.39 Programme Delivery Update

3.40 The surveys for the blocks identified for work to be carried out in year 2 of the Major Refurbishment Contract (MRC) have begun. Each block has a resident consultation meeting scheduled where the residents are invited to come along, meet their contractor and are able to find out more details about what they can expect.

3.41 A review has been carried out on the work undertaken in year 1 and the standard of works completed to date is considered high. Resident feedback on the standard of work will be captured on completion of works to the block.

3.42 With regard to the lift refurbishment programme, further work is being carried out to identify the costs associated with the blocks where there is only one lift. Work is underway on the lifts at Brent and Harrow Court. Residents are being kept informed of progress as there have been some delays.

3.43 Delays in the procurement process for work on the sprinkler systems have been experienced, however it is anticipated that these works will be on site during Q1 2020/21.

3.44 The development of a new area-based co-operative neighbourhood management approach with Communities & Neighbourhoods and SDS has begun. More details on progress can be seen in paragraph 3.36.

- 3.45 Work has progressed with the customer self service module of the Northgate system. A test area has been created by the Systems Administration team and the development of individual pages to access customer housing information such as contact details, rent account and repairs are being configured. It is anticipated that the system will go live in quarter four.
- 3.46 The focus on mobile working has continued this quarter. A digital application that is integrated with housing back office systems, RAPID, allows officers to spend more time on site and have all information at the ready. Workshops on RAPID were held in May for Housing and Investment team members that are interested in using the application. The Housing Supply team are currently exploring how it can help them undertake property surveys more quickly and upload related photos straight into the Northgate housing system.
- 3.47 Preparatory work on the final phases of the Housing and Investment Future Council Business Unit Review was undertaken throughout quarter one. Support is being provided by HR colleagues with a view to launch the review in late September 2019. The Housing and Investment teams continue to be kept informed about changes and progress to the programme via regular newsletters, blogs on the intranet as well as away days.
- 3.48 Consultation on the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2019-2024 took place in quarter one and is continuing in quarter two, with feedback being incorporated into the document. The strategy will be presented to the Executive in October 2019. Guidelines received from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government have stated that all local authorities must publish their homelessness strategies on their websites by 31 December 2019.
- 3.49 Consultation and research on the Housing for Older Persons Strategy was undertaken throughout quarter one and continued into quarter two. Work has now started to bring the research and consultation together to produce the strategy and action plan. The strategy is expected to be recommended to the Executive in December 2019.

Connected to our Customers Programme

3.50 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

- 3.51 During 2019/20 the programme is primarily focused on:

- New website testing and launch
- Finalising procurement of the digital platform and plans for implementation.
- Phased implementation of digital platform capabilities starting with replacement CRM and quick wins for self-serve options
- Customer and Business Account functionality placed into the new website, providing a single view of the customer and establishing a new centralised digital customer relationship
- Developing a service redesign approach that will optimise new technology and new ways of working
- Developing a Channel Shift Strategy which will clearly set out the Council's approach to optimising the take-up of the new digital services whilst ensuring access for everyone, so that no-one is left behind
- Implementation of the Environmental Services case management system; integration into the digital platform to enable self-serve
- Working with services to understand desired new ways of working and technology to support mobile, agile and area working.
- Planning for how the Council wants to work from the new Public Sector Hub

3.52 Programme Delivery Update

- 3.53 Content of the current website has been reviewed in readiness for the launch of the improved website. The Digital team have also been working closely with officers to review existing microsites linked to Stevenage Borough Council. A supplier has been selected to undertake accessibility testing of all the Council's website pages and content. Members have been engaged in starting to test the website. The website is due to be launched in quarter three.
- 3.54 A preferred supplier of a new digital platform has been selected. The new software platform will enable a new customer record management system to be developed and will assist in integrating back office systems with customer facing online service channels.
- 3.55 Project management training was given to 15 officers across the Digital, Business Improvement and Housing & Investment teams. This will ensure that projects within the Connected to our Customers (CTOC) programme follow the same approach.
- 3.56 Stevenage Borough Council hosted a "Digital Herts" event in June. This gave delegates from across the Hertfordshire districts an opportunity to discuss digital transformation, accessibility, other digital related topics and a chance to network and share information. The event was very successful with the majority of districts being represented.
- 3.57 The programme sponsor (AD for Digital and Transformation) is currently reviewing the programme following the agreed revised re-scope in quarter one. A governance review is underway which will make sure there are robust measures in place to monitor the progress of the programme.

Internal Facing Future Town, Future Council Programmes

Financial Security Programme

3.58 Programme Outcomes

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

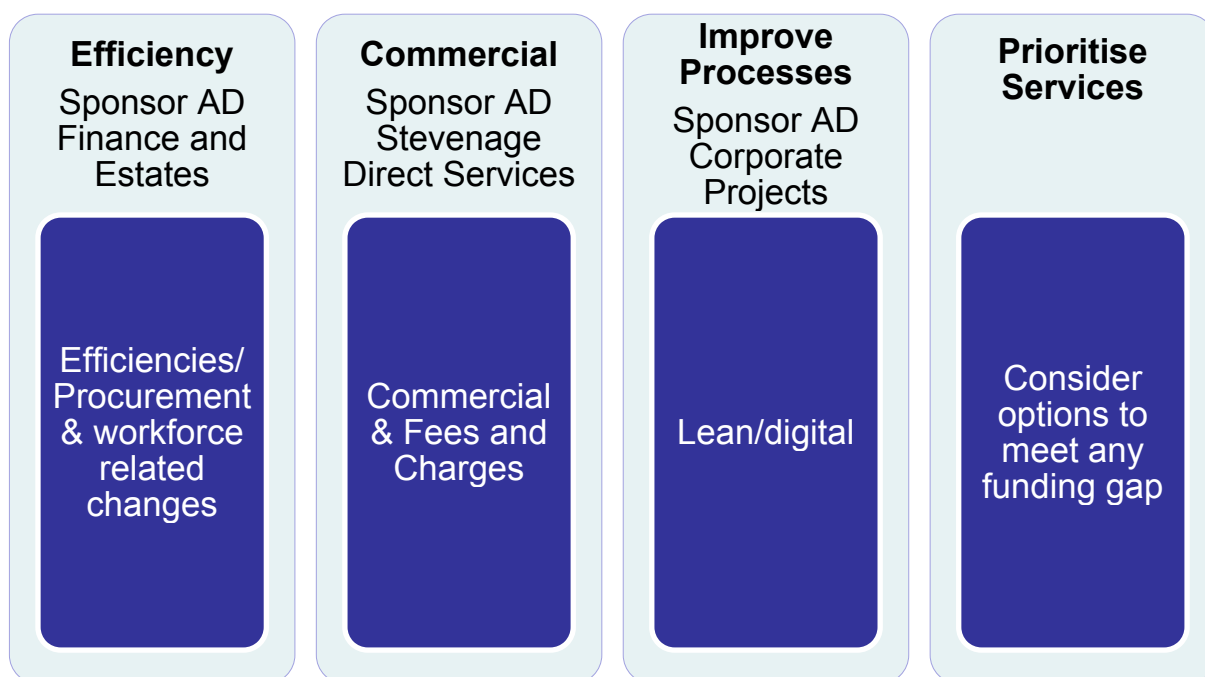


Figure 2: Financial Security Work streams.

3.59 During 2019/20 the programme is primarily focused on:

- Identifying Financial Security options that meet the three year target (£2.2 million General Fund and £1 million Housing Revenue Account) and as amended by the report to the September Executive for the General Fund MTFS and the November Executive for the HRA.
- Identification of Financial Security options to meet the General Fund and HRA funding gap for the period 2020/21-2022/23 via the Financial Security workstreams
- The financial security options should include the output from the review of leases for the Commercial Portfolio, to ensure they are reviewed in a timely manner to protect the Council's revenues

- Purchase of Investment Properties to meet the General Fund target of £200,000
- Completion of Locality Reviews to meet the objectives of the General Fund Asset Management Strategy
- Review of fee-earning services to determine fee versus cost
- Identify options to improve productivity via use of digital interventions
- Review of budgets for cross-cutting reviews
- Presentation of Financial Security options to the Leader's Financial Security Group before approval by the Executive in November 2019

Programme Delivery Update

- 3.60 The Financial Security programme has been redesigned into three main strands (from an original five) with three Assistant Directors taking key leads in these areas.
- 3.61 The 2019/20 savings packages approved in January/February Council have been implemented and currently the vast majority of these savings are expected to be achieved during 2019/20. As at the end of the quarter, £12k of savings options (split 50/50 between HRA and GF) were not expected to be achieved in year but officers are currently looking at any mitigations. This is reviewed on a monthly basis and reported to the Strategic Leadership Team.
- 3.62 The Financial Security Group met with Assistant Directors to discuss early ideas for options for the 2020/21 budget and beyond. Initial ideas were discussed by the Senior Leadership Team in July 2019; however the options identified do not reach the target or cover the additional pressures identified in the MTFs to the September Executive. These ideas are being followed up and explored in more depth.

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 2019/20 the programme is primarily focused on:

- Establishing a compelling employer brand with a competitive pay and benefit offer, including development of the new e-recruitment module of the HR System
- Developing and implementing a competency framework for staff from Grade 1- 9 of the Council's pay structure
- 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 Work continues on the new Corporate Intranet, including the development of Single Sign On functionality. This will mean that the intranet will immediately launch, without the requirement for a password, when employees log on. This is currently in test phase and expected to go live in quarter two.
- 3.67 During this quarter, progress has been made with the Council's Competency Framework for grades 1-9, the Customer Charter and the re-launch of Corporate Values. A communications plan has been developed and agreed and will link to the Council's employer brand.
- 3.68 Market analysis and review of the Council's current pay options offer are underway. The review of Standby and Callout is now agreed and consultation is complete with Trade Unions. Work is now progressing with individual employees and Business Units to introduce the new ways of working.
- 3.69 A draft Annual Leave Purchase Scheme Policy has been prepared and consultation with Trade Unions has completed. Resolution of some technical tax and pension queries are being dealt with by the Legal team, but it is anticipated the policy will launch in late September.
- 3.70 Learning needs analysis has now been collated from Business Units and plans are being made to engage other key stakeholders (Information Governance, Safeguarding, Health and Safety etc.) to identify all corporate learning needs to develop a comprehensive Learning & Development offer. Development programmes for the Strategic Leadership Team and 4th tier leaders for 2019/20 have also been agreed this quarter.
- 3.71 The development and test of the Learning and Development Module for staff is now complete and available on the "MyView" system.
- 3.72 The current framework for recruiting agency staff is due to expire in 2020. An options appraisal for the procurement of a new framework has been prepared.
- 3.73 Progress has been made in preparing for the launch of First Care (Third Party Sickness Reporting Facility) in quarter three of 2019/20. Work is also underway to procure a new digital Health and Safety System.

Performing at our Peak Programme

3.74 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

- 3.75 During 2019/20 the programme is primarily focused on:

- Enhancing our business insight through data connectivity, 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 our customers
- Developing our insight culture through the effective engagement and use of our new tools and procedures, to enable lasting performance improvement
- Delivering a new scheme of delegations to officers in respect of Executive powers

3.76 Programme Delivery Update

- 3.77 A new data analyst started in post this quarter and is working with performance measure 'owners' to review the potential to extract performance data automatically from systems and to input it directly into the Inphase performance management system. Automatic data extraction and connectivity will enable Business Units to focus more on performance improvement planning and less on data entry in future. This is also in line with the recommendations of an Internal Audit on Data Quality carried out in 2018/19.
- 3.78 An initial scoping meeting for the development of the Scheme of Delegations was held in April. Progress on this project was subsequently affected by the extended election period. Arrangements for the scheme to be reported to the Executive are under review.

Corporate Performance highlights and areas for improvement

- 3.79 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 2019 to June 2019 is outlined below:

3.80

Number of Measures Reported	Meeting or exceeding target	Amber Status (within a manageable tolerance)	Red Status (urgent improvement action required)	No Data
42	36	2	2	2*

* BTC1a New jobs created through the Business & Technology Centre (BTC) & BTC1b New business start up in BTC: The new BTC contract went live in July 2019 and these measures will therefore be reported from Q2 onwards. Targets will be provided per quarter, reflecting the new contract.

- 3.81 A summary of highlights and areas for improvement for April 2019 to June 2019 is set out in the following paragraphs across the three key delivery themes: Customer, Place, and Transformation and Support.

A: Customer Theme

- 3.82 The Customer Theme incorporates the following Business Units:

- Housing and Investment
- Communities and Neighbourhood

Housing and Investment

Highlights and Achievements

- 3.83 A successful event was held to celebrate 100 years of social housing. Visits were arranged with those council tenants who will become 100 years old this year and also to the 100th letting. A time capsule was also buried at a new build scheme, which will be named after Christopher Addison, the minister responsible for the introduction of key housing legislation in 1919.
- 3.84 The Housing team, alongside colleagues in Stevenage Direct Services and Environmental Health, were finalists in the Chartered Institute of Housing's "Housing Heroes" team of the year award. This was to recognise the collaborative approach taken to resolve issues at Brent Court earlier in the year.
- 3.85 Delivery of a major refurbishment programme to the Council's flat blocks (incorporating the MRC, lift replacements and retrofitting of sprinklers) is now included in the scope of the Excellent Council Homes programme and delivery updates on these aspects are summarised in paragraphs 3.40 to 3.43. Progress in relation to other elements of the overall housing major works investment programme includes the following:
- 246 street properties have been completed to date and there has been 100% satisfaction based on the 171 returns received
 - Standard window, door and insulation works have been identified, which will be delivered across the town
 - In terms of the heating refurbishment programme, works have progressed well at Pinewoods, Wellfield Court and Grosvenor Court despite some difficulties encountered due to additional fire stopping works being required. The lessons learned from this this will be applied to future works.

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

- 3.86 The percentage of health and safety compliant assets (statutory definition) has improved significantly since last quarter. The compliance team is now working with the contractor to ensure this level is maintained.
- 3.87 The percentage of assets known to be health and safety compliant (SBC definition) is under target in quarter one. Whilst there is evidence that the servicing and inspection of assets have improved (visits to complete both statutory and SBC-defined activities are undertaken at the same time), the contractor has not produced the required certification or supporting documentation. The compliance team is working with the contractor to ensure that the necessary assurance is given, to enable performance to be fully reported in future months.

- Assets 5a: Percentage of (Council) assets known to be Health and Safety compliant (statutory): target 100%, March 2019 achieved 91%, June 2019 achieved 99.6%
- Assets5b: Percentage of (Council) assets known to be Health and Safety compliant (as per SBC enhanced definition): target 100%, March 2019 achieved 91%, June 2019 achieved 91%

3.88 It should be noted that performance measures ‘assets 5a’ and ‘assets 5b’ relate to council premises such as civic offices, community centres, play centres, pavilions, cemetery buildings, depots etc. and refer to Compliance Services via the ComplyFirst Framework. These services relate to the provision of regular compliance servicing and related maintenance of fire, water, electrical, gas, air conditioning and minor building works. Officers are currently working on a corporate landlord project to map the management of compliance across all council buildings and this could impact on the future definition of these measures.

Communities and Neighbourhoods

Highlights and Achievements

- 3.89 The Youth Council launched the Co-operative Youth Work Fund, which will provide small grants determined by young people to meet local needs.
- 3.90 Stevenage Day marked its 60th anniversary in June and was a success, with an estimated 30,000 attendees over the course of the day. The Council’s presence was enhanced this year, with a central SBC village and associated Council sponsored activities.
- 3.91 The official launch of the Cultural Strategy took place in the town square, supported by the Arts Council and coinciding with the 25th anniversary of Stevenage Festival.
- 3.92 Stevenage Against Domestic Abuse launched its first “Safe Space” in North Hertfordshire, building on the success of the Stevenage model and further developing the Council’s partnership with North Hertfordshire District Council.

B: Place Theme

- 3.93 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 3.18 and 3.19 to 3.26 respectively)

Planning and Regulation

Highlights and Achievements

- 3.94 After over a decade in the making and over a year being held by the Security of State, in May 2019 SBC proudly adopted its new Local Plan for Stevenage. The Plan sets the planning policies up until 2031 for 7,600 new homes and space for over 2,000 new jobs; a revitalised town centre; 3 new sustainable neighbourhoods with the protection of our green infrastructure.
- 3.95 The Council completed the second round of the statutory consultation on the potential Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in May 2019. CIL would be a mandatory floor space charge on new development in the borough which would be used to fund key infrastructure to support growth in Stevenage. Officers are now working towards the 5th September Examination in Public on the rates.
- 3.96 Planning applications continue to be determined within corporate and statutory targets.

Stevenage Direct Services (SDS)

Highlights and Achievements

- 3.97 Significant focus has been placed on reviewing and enhancing health and safety arrangements at the Cavendish Road Depot. Governance mechanisms, risk assessment and working practices have been reviewed. This work has been informed by independent external audits of the main workstreams in the unit. Follow up external audits have confirmed the improvements made and compliance with assessment thresholds for all areas audited. Ongoing monitoring and action plans are now implemented to ensure this position is maintained.
- 3.98 Repairs are being fixed promptly and time taken to complete them continues to be better than the target level. The team have placed major focus on a case management approach to each case dealt with. This, coupled with efforts to review and improve processes, has improved performance and productivity.
- RepTime1: Emergency Repairs - Average end to end repairs time (days), June 2019: target 1 day, achieved 0.79 days.
 - RepTime2: Urgent Repairs - Average end to end repairs time (days), June 2019: target 5 days, achieved 2.83 days.
 - RepTime3: Routine Repairs - Average end to end repairs time (days), June 2019: target 20 days, achieved 6.45 days.
- 3.99 The changes within the Repairs and Voids service continue to have a positive impact on the turnaround times of both standard General Needs voids and Major Works general need voids. Major works voids were an area of focus for improvement in 2018/19 and re-let times have continued to reduce during quarter one, now being well below the target. Successful collaborative work is taking place between the Project Officers and the Lettings Team to reduce unnecessary work.

- Voids General Needs: The time taken to re-let standard general needs voids (days) June 2019: target 32 days, achieved 31.39 days
- Voids General Needs Major Works: The time taken to re-let major works general needs voids (days), June 2019: target 65 days, achieved 51.92 days

C: Transformation and Support Theme

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

- Corporate Services
- Digital and Transformation
- Finance and Estates

Corporate Services/Digital and Transformation

Highlights and Achievements

Customer Services

3.101 Service delivery through the Customer Service Centre (CSC) was first identified as a focus for improvement (spotlight) at quarter three 2017/18 (March 2018 Executive). Since then, the CSC Improvement Plan has supported the recovery of performance levels and in quarter one 2019, the CSC achieved its corporate performance measure targets

- CSC4: Percentage of telephone calls to the Customer Service Centre answered within 20 seconds: target 50%, April to June 2019 achieved 61.3%
- CSC12: Percentage of calls abandoned in the Customer Service Centre: target 10%, April to June 2019 achieved 7.2%
- CSC5: Percentage of walk-in customers to the Customer Service Centre served within 20 minutes: target 75%, April to June 2019 achieved 81.2%

3.102 Historical performance data demonstrates performance in the Customer Service Centre is closely related to the amount of skilled advisers available.

3.103 Activities to recruit, train and on-board specialist skills has reduced the number of vacancies. The improved training delivery and upskilling of CSC advisers is having a positive impact on performance.

3.104 In addition, effective resource planning is helping to ensure that sufficient staff are available to meet customer demand and to provide a more consistent level of service to customers.

3.105 Collaborative working with other service areas across the organisation is also key to driving further improvements in performance.

3.106 Self service facilities through the Connected to our Customers Programme are being planned to help meet service demand for walk-in customers.

- 3.107 The focus on this service area will be retained until initial performance improvement can be seen to be sustained across the full set of CSC measures.

Technology

- 3.108 Progress has been made on the joint ICT strategy during quarter one and the strategy is now in draft format. Staff and members from across the IT partnership are being consulted, to ensure a united vision for the IT service over the next three years.
- 3.109 The security & network team have begun to implement a new email and website security software which will go live in quarter two. This will improve the Council's security regarding all email and web traffic.
- 3.110 Software to enable the management of mobile devices and laptop security arrangements has also been installed this quarter and setup will continue through quarter two. This is part of the software enhancement needed to assist with the Council's rollout of Office 365.
- 3.111 Azure AD has been implemented this quarter, which is the first step to applying the Council's network for the 'Cloud'. This has enabled the IT team to start applying 'Single Sign On' (SSO) for a number of applications and will also allow the use of two factor authentications (2FA) in the future.

Our staff

- 3.112 Following the introduction of a new appraisal approach, 'REAL Conversations', council business units have achieved the target of 100% of employees engaging in regular and meaningful REAL conversations with their managers. These conversations typically include objectives, development, engagement and wellbeing, but they are also tailored to individuals.
- Appraisal completion rate to corporate deadlines: target 100%, April to June 2019 achieved 100%

Spotlight: Agency Usage

- 3.113 There are three types of agency use within the Council. Firstly, there are a number of short term assignments within SDS to cover sickness and leave. It is anticipated that this will be resolved through the next phase of the SDS Business Unit Review. The second category is interim assignments to cover key strategic roles within the establishment whilst the Council progresses through the change programme of Business Unit Reviews. These will conclude when the permanent appointments are made. The third category comprises one-off project based agency assignments.
- 3.114 As explained above, agency usage is likely to remain slightly higher whilst the programme of Business Unit Reviews continues. The current status of this measure is amber.
- Agency usage as a percentage of the total workforce: target 12%, April to June 2019 achieved 13.2%

3.115 The figure of 13.2% agency usage is profiled as follows:

- 5.2% are workers covering on an ad-hoc basis at Cavendish Road
- 6.04% are agency workers covering established posts
- 1.97% are covering key strategic projects

3.116 Recruitment is underway for a number of key posts across the Council that will enhance capacity and key skills.

Spotlight: Sickness Absence

3.117 Sickness Absence has increased slightly this quarter; however it is 0.22 days per FTE less than the same time last year.

- Sickness absence rate for the current workforce (per FTE): target 8 days, twelve months to March 2019 achieved 8.86 days; twelve months to June 2019 achieved 9.49 days

3.118 The rise in sickness has been due to an increase in the number of complex long term sickness absences (60% of sickness).

3.119 At June 2019, 4 out of 10 business units were achieving their individual sickness absence service targets. Stevenage Direct Services sickness absence levels have also decreased to an average of 11.96 days and are now only slightly above the unit's target of 11 days. Service managers are provided with access to real time sickness information to support absence management through the HR system 'MyView'.

3.120 The Council is currently working to introduce a third party sickness reporting service, which is due to go live in quarter three. This service will provide advice and challenge on fitness for work to both individuals and managers and ensure consistency of approach/advice on sickness absence. They will also follow up to ensure appropriate application of policy and return to work and provide regular and timely management information.

3.121 The Senior Leadership Team will continue to monitor the performance and management of sickness absence until revised policy and practice results in a sustained reduction in levels of sickness absence.

Finance and Estates

3.122 The Revenues and Benefits service continues to exceed targets for Council Tax collection rates.

- Percentage of Council Tax collected: April to June 2019 target 33%, achieved 33.3%.

Spotlight: New Housing Benefit Claims and Change Events

3.123 In quarter one, on average the time taken to process new housing benefit claims and change events was 1.45 days above target (amber measure). The

continuing impact of Universal Credit means that claims are more complicated and more time is being spent on individual claims. This is partly as a result of officer time being allocated to the annual audit process. However, cumulative performance improved in July 2019 (11.78 days) and it is anticipated that the measure will be within target at the end of quarter 2.

- Time taken to process Housing Benefit new claims and change events: April to June 2019 target 12 days, achieved 13.45 days.

Senior Leadership Team Perspective

3.124 Good performance across all three key delivery themes (Customer, Place, Transformation and Support) has been achieved in quarter one, with the majority of corporate performance measures meeting or exceeding targets. Outcomes that significantly exceed expectations (measures achieving 'green plus' status) include the following:

- % telephone calls to the CSC answered within 20 seconds and CSC walk-in customers served within 20 minutes
- % of tenants satisfied with internal and external works
- % repairs fixed first time and average responsive repair end-to-end times
- time taken to re-let general needs major works voids
- % houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) that are broadly compliant
- % planning applications determined within national target timescales

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

3.126 At the end of 2018/2019, the following improvement plans were identified for ongoing focused monitoring by the Senior Leadership Team:

- Embedding the new service model in the Customer Service Centre to continue to enhance resilience and increase the availability, skills and knowledge of customer service advisers
- Implementing actions to ensure that compliance of non-domestic council buildings with Health and Safety regulations is effectively monitored and recorded
- Improving practices in relation to sickness absence management
- Sustaining and enhancing improvements to the repairs and voids service

Customer Service Centre

3.127 As reported in paragraph 3.101, new improvement measures in place from 2018/19 have improved and stabilised CSC performance results. There are some key activities that have supported recovery:

- Implementation of a new resource planning function
- New recruitment practices and training to upskill CSC advisers
- Review and re-design of the CSC's performance framework
- Re-focus on sickness management
- Additional management posts – increased available resource for both service and team development

3.128 Based on historical performance trends and known challenges in relation to management capacity during July and August, it is anticipated that cumulative results in quarter two may be lower than in quarter one, although performance is still forecast to meet target levels. Performance is expected to be back on track throughout September and into quarter three, subject to sickness absence reducing in line with expectations and provided there are no reductions in resource or significant increases in contact volumes. The CSC continues to work with back office services to ensure that avoidable contact from customers is reduced.

Health and Safety Compliance of non-domestic/non-commercial Council Buildings (under the compliance contract)

3.129 It is positive to report that in quarter one the contractor achieved 99.60% compliance in respect of servicing and inspecting assets that have a statutory health and safety requirement, with the two tasks they failed to complete in time being completed on 1st July. However, concerns continue with regard to the provision of certification and documentation associated with servicing and inspection in accordance with the Council's enhanced definition, resulting in no change to reported performance (91% of properties are known to comply). Officers are continuing to work with the contractor to ensure performance levels are maintained in relation to both performance measure Asset 5a (statutory definition) and Asset 5b (SBC definition).

Repairs and Voids Service

3.130 As noted above, high levels of performance in the repairs service have been sustained into 2019/20. A key focus during 2018/19 was on re-let times for major works voids, which were classified as having a 'red' status throughout the year. Performance has significantly improved in this area, with the time taken in quarter one being 51.92 days compared to 80.67 days at March 2019.

Sickness Absence

3.131 The management of sickness absence was initially identified as a 'spotlight' area at March 2018 Executive and has continued to be a focus for the Senior Leadership Team. Whilst sickness absence improved throughout the year to December 2018, an increase was observed in quarter 4 of 2018/19 and this trend has continued into 2019/20, in the main associated with an increase in the number of complex long term sickness absences. Improvement plans advised in previous performance reports continue to be implemented.

3.132 In view of the above assessment, at June 2019, the following improvement plans have been identified for ongoing focused monitoring by the Senior Leadership Team:

- Ensuring that pressure continues to be applied to the contractor to enable compliance with Health and Safety regulations to be effectively monitored and recorded (paragraph 3.86-3.87 refers)
- Continuing to embed the new service model in the Customer Service Centre (paragraphs 3.101 to 3.107 refer)
- Managing sickness absence more effectively and aligning it to council health and well-being policy. (paragraphs 3.117 to 3.121 refer)

3.133 The Senior Leadership Team will also keep a watching brief on two measures that have moved from a green to amber status in the first quarter of 2019/20. These are the use of agency staff and the average the time taken to process new housing benefit claims and change events.

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

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

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS

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

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

4.3 As referred to in paragraph 3.3, officers propose that consideration be given to adding a further workstream – "Place of Choice" - to the FTFC programme. Subject to the Executive agreeing to this proposal in principle, further detail will follow in a future performance report regarding key projects and deliverables that would fall within this new element of FTFC, with a view to incorporating these into an update of the Corporate Plan.

- 4.4 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 10 July 2019: 2018/19 Annual Report&Performance Overview

APPENDICES

- Appendix One: Compendium of Performance Results
- Appendix Two: Future Town, Future Council Programme Scope/Focus for 2019/20