Part I – Release to Press

Agenda item: ##

Meeting Cabinet

Portfolio Area All

Date 10 September 2026

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE QUARTER ONE 2026/27

KEY DECISION

Author Charlotte Bott

Contributor Strategic Leadership Team

Lead Officers Tom Pike

Richard Protheroe

Daryl Jedowski

Contact Officer Richard Protheroe

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To highlight the Council's performance across key priorities and projects for Quarter One 2026/27, following the approval of the new 2026/27 Corporate Performance Suite.

1.2 The report is supported by two appendices that collectively underpin the Council's performance framework:

Appendix A **Quarter One 2026/27 Performance Compendium**

- Summarises actual performance data at the start of the 2026/27 financial year. This includes performance against key indicators and delivery milestones.

Appendix B **Quarter One 2026/27 Ombudsman Determinations**

- Summarises the findings from the Housing Ombudsman and highlighting any upheld complains or learning points for the Council.

1.3 For Member's information, a presentation will be provided at the Cabinet meeting which will cover updates in relation to delivery against Making Stevenage Even Better Priorities and the key themes emerging from the Quarter One performance data.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the service performance against 43 corporate performance measures and delivery of 67 key project milestones in Quarter One 2026/27 through the Making Stevenage Even Better Programme (Appendix A) be noted.

2.2 That the strategic risk updates (section 4.7) be noted.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 In January 2024, the Cabinet agreed the new Making Stevenage Even Better (MSEB) Corporate Plan until 2027. This includes five strategic priorities:

- Transforming Our Town
- More Social, Affordable & Good Quality Homes
- Thriving Neighbourhoods
- Tackling Climate Change
- Balancing the Budget

The plan also includes three cross-cutting themes:

- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
- Health & Wellbeing
- Technology & Innovation

3.2 The plan was subsequently approved at Full Council in February 2024. The Corporate Performance Suite was also updated to reflect existing and future programmes of work, resident priorities and regulatory and legislative housing requirements.

3.3 The Council's approach to performance management demonstrates a clear link between service delivery and the strategic objectives in the MSEB Corporate Plan. By aligning performance measures and projects under the five strategic priorities, a 'golden thread' linking what the Council delivers to the fulfilment of its strategic outcomes can be clearly seen. By taking this approach, the Council can simplify and streamline how performance monitoring and progress are communicated to Members and residents.

Fig 1.

3.4 Each year, the Council agrees it’s key outcomes and priorities for the town and the Council during the coming 12 months. These are framed within the Making Stevenage Even Better (MSEB) Corporate Plan, with delivery driven through service areas and the MSEB programme.

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

3.6 The Corporate Performance Suite for 2026/27 contains 43 measures which are aligned with the five MSEB strategic priorities. The performance measures are complemented by other statutory and local measures which are managed internally, with performance overseen by the Strategic Leadership Team.

3.7 There are ten baseline measures within the Corporate Performance Suite, these reflect areas such as the increased regulation and focus on housing compliance; recent introduction of the new food waste collection; Everyone Active overall footfall; and customer service satisfaction. Baseline measures provide a starting point from which to assess and compare performance in the future. The remaining measures are relevant to the Council’s focus on what matters to residents and progress made against the MSEB objectives.

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED ACTIONS AND OTHER OPTIONS

4.1 QUARTER ONE CORPORATE PERFORMANCE

4.1.1 As outlined in section three, the Corporate Performance Suite has been aligned with the five MSEB priorities set out in Figure 1. Progress against performance measures is presented alongside key projects. By taking this mixed-method approach, the Council is able to present a holistic overview of its performance activity. This helps demonstrate to residents that the Council is on track to deliver key projects, programmes and service improvements associated with MSEB, as well as highlighting performance against key service delivery targets.

4.1.2 Key highlights from the MSEB programmes are summarised in section 4.2. For further information on the aims and objectives of the MSEB programme in 2026/27, please refer to MSEB Priorities & Projects 2026/27, which was presented to the Cabinet in July 2026.

4.1.3 The total number of measures by Red, Amber & Green (RAG) rating is shown in Figure 3 below. The full set of current corporate performance measures results and MSEB projects are attached at Appendix A.

MSEB Programme	Baseline measure for 2026-27	Meeting or exceeding target	Amber Status (Within a manageable tolerance)	Red Status (Urgent improvement action required)	Projects Reported Qtr. 1
More Social Affordable & Good Quality Homes (19 measures)	**4**	**24**	**0**	**1**	**16**
Transforming Our Town (3 measures)	**0**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**17**
Thriving Neighbourhoods (7 measures)	**3**	**3***	**0**	**1**	**12**
	*The data for ‘NI191: Residual household waste per household (kgs)’ and ‘NI192: Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting’ comes from an external source and is only available a quarter in arrears, therefore they will be reported this way.				
Tackling Climate Change (1 measure)	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	7
Balancing the Budget (10 measures)	**1**	**6**	**3**	**0**	**5**
Cross Cutting (1 measure)	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**7**
Local Government Reorganisation (0 measures)	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**3**
TOTAL (43)	**10**	**37**	**4**	**2**	**67**

Fig 3.

4.1.4 There were several strong areas of performance this quarter which are highlighted below:

- The number of homelessness preventions has remained steady at 31 this quarter, demonstrating continued delivery of positive prevention outcomes despite ongoing pressures and increasing case complexity.
- 99% of homes have been maintained as decent against the national minimum Decent Homes Standard.
- 100% of major planning applications were determined in thirteen weeks for the fifth continuous quarter.
- 99.11% of repairs & inspections completed first time, highlighting continued consistency from 99.47% in quarter four; 99.41% in quarter three and 94.82% in quarter two 2025/26.
- Satisfaction with the Customer Service Centre (CSC) remains high at 95.4%; this has been on an upward trend since the start of the 2025/26 financial year.

4.2 MSEB PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

4.2.1 Alongside performance, the Council also captures quarterly updates on the milestones associated with the strategic priorities set out in the MSEB Corporate Plan and subsequent service planning and priority setting activities.

4.2.2 Further details on the projects included in the MSEB programmes and corporate highlights can be found in Appendix A.

4.2.3 All programmes have made progress on the projects agreed at Cabinet in July 2026, with Quarter One highlights including:

4.2.3.1 More Social, Affordable & Good Quality Homes	
Burwell Phase Two	The building is now at roof height and roof trusses are being installed across the site. The expectation is that the building will become wind and water tight within the next 3 months.
Garage Site Sales	Planning permission has been granted for seven units at the Broadview Garage site, and a programme for up to 40 homes is being developed. Contract documents are currently being drafted for a principal contractor for the site, with the aim to get approval in September 2026.
The Oval	Works are underway across the site, and the expectation is that Roland Court will reach the topping out stage in August 2026.
Key Enablers for Journey to C1	Feedback from the Regulator of Social Housing has been very positive, with recognition that good progress is being made across all areas of the Provider Improvement Plan. The regulator also acknowledged that embedding effective resident engagement is a longer-term endeavour and will take time to become fully established. The migration to the NEC Housing system remains on track for Quarter 3, with regular review meetings in place to monitor progress and manage delivery. Work on the Competency and Conduct programme is progressing well, with a framework now established and a service-wide training matrix currently being developed. In addition, the first cohort of staff for the CIH Level 5 qualification has been identified, and procurement of the training provision is underway.
Targeted Investment in Homes	The Council is nearing completion on all of the phase seven blocks under the Major Refurbishment Programme. Works to all of the remaining blocks are underway.

4.2.3.2 Transforming Our Town	
Adult Cohorts Pilot Project	The Council has worked with North Herts College to develop a Workforce Transition and Employability pilot, due to begin in the new academic year. The programme will support adults experiencing organisational change, including redundancy, to strengthen their employability, confidence and readiness for new opportunities. Two cohorts will be delivered through short, focused learning sessions, with individual coaching available where needed.
Pioneering Young STEM Futures Phase Two	Four Pioneering Young STEM Futures projects have been delivered during the quarter: Access to All, Primary Science Quality Mark, Science Academy Challenge and Zero Gravity Mentoring. Through practical STEM activities, careers experiences, mentoring and support for primary science teaching, the projects have reached more than 250 secondary students, 1,000 primary pupils and 45 teachers. The Youth Advisory Board has also been established with 12 members aged 13 to 18, who have begun gathering young people's views at community events ahead of their first formal meeting in August 2026.

Forster Country Park	The handover of Phase One of the Country Park has been delayed until a number of outstanding issues are resolved. Officers remain in discussions with the developer to ensure the site meets the required standards before transfer to the Council.
Sports and Leisure Centre	The new Sports & Leisure Centre development continues to progress at pace. Works associated with the new entrance and exit on Fairlands Way have now been completed, representing an important milestone in preparing the site for the main phase of construction. The new pedestrian crossing on St George's Way, delivered as part of the Towns Fund Cycling and Pedestrian Connectivity programme in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council, is now complete and operational. The crossing provides a safer and more direct route for pedestrians, creating an accessible link between the town centre, the existing Swimming Centre and the future Sports & Leisure Centre. Enabling works have continued across the site, with the construction compound fully established and preparatory activities progressing in line with the programme. These works are helping to ensure the site is ready for the commencement of major construction activity. Following a period of detailed negotiations, the main construction contract has now been signed. This represents a significant milestone for the project and provides a firm foundation for the delivery of a modern, high-quality Sports & Leisure Centre that will serve residents and communities for many years to come
Station Gateway	Under the Development Agreement, Muse and ECF have appointed their external consultant team during the quarter and have commenced early-stage design work for the first phase of the wider masterplan. This marks an important step forward in translating the vision for the area into deliverable proposals and establishing the foundations for future investment and development. In addition, the ECF Board has approved funding to develop a Strategic Outline Business Case.

4.2.3.3 Thriving Neighbourhoods	
Pride in Place	Neighbourhood research, baseline analysis and asset mapping are underway to support the St Nicholas Pride in Place programme. In July, Cabinet approved the programme approach and timetable. An independent Chair has now been appointed, with the Neighbourhood Board and programme geography due to be confirmed by the end of August. Preparations are also underway for a representative resident survey and wider community engagement to inform the resident-led Pride in Place Plan, due for submission to Government in February 2027.
Renters' Rights Act	Supporting Policies were approved by Cabinet in June 2026 and Council in July 2026 and are now being implemented. Staff have all received training on the new Act, although more is planned in Q3. An Environmental Health Officer joined in May 2026 to assist with the implementation of the Act, and plans are in place to bring in additional resource in late 2026/early 2027 when the landlord database is introduced.
County Lines	The Council has recently partnered with Evolve Productions to support the creation of *Blurred Lines*, a powerful short film exploring the hidden reality of county lines and child criminal exploitation in the UK.
Ridlins 2027/28 Preparations	The feasibility study has been completed and is informing the specification for the planned works. Soft market testing has identified nine interested accredited contractors, with procurement expected to begin in autumn 2026. Works are currently planned to start in early 2027 and complete by mid-summer, subject to weather conditions. Local athletics clubs have been informed of the temporary

	closure required during construction and are making alternative arrangements for this period.
Stevenage 80th Celebrations	The Stevenage 80 programme remains on track following its launch at Stevenage Day on 14 June 2026. The year-long programme marks 80 years since Stevenage was designated the UK's first New Town, bringing together civic events, community-led activities and new initiatives to celebrate the town's heritage and communities. A wide range of events and activities will provide opportunities for residents, businesses, schools and local organisations to get involved, culminating in the Mayor's Stevenage Birthday Show on 11 November 2026.

4.2.3.4 Tackling Climate Change	
Reviewing Fleet Options	An electrification strategy is currently being developed to inform future fleet replacement and investment decisions, supporting the Council's wider sustainability and carbon reduction objectives. Alongside this work, opportunities to secure external funding from the UK Government are being actively explored to support the delivery of electric vehicle infrastructure and minimise the financial impact on the Council.
Simpler Recycling (including Flat Block Recycling)	Structural works to flat blocks to provide enhanced recycling facilities have now been completed. Improvements to recycling provision at flats above commercial units are continuing, with a tender for purpose-built bin stores due to be launched next month. The Council will also undertake a review of all flat blocks to ensure signage is clear and bin allocations remain appropriate, helping to improve recycling participation and service efficiency.

4.2.3.5 Balancing the Budget	
Business Change & Digital – Financial Returns	Alongside ongoing benefits tracking, work continues to identify and implement service improvements that modernise processes while delivering financial savings. Following successful changes to the Garages service, early scoping is underway to digitise Housing Management letters and reduce postage costs. Preparatory work has also commenced to clear the Archive Store, supporting more efficient use of council assets and resources.
General Fund 2026/27	All proposals approved through the 2026/27 budget-setting process have been incorporated into service budgets, with delivery of savings monitored through quarterly budget reporting. Work is progressing on the development of a balanced General Fund budget for 2027/28, including the development of savings proposals, reviews of Fees and Charges and a comprehensive assessment of key budget assumptions, including inflation, emerging pressures and other financial planning factors. This work will inform the Council's 2027/28 budget proposals as they are developed through the remainder of the financial year.
HRA Savings 2026/27	The approved 2026/27 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) savings programme is being delivered, with budget monitoring in place to track achievement of planned savings and financial performance. Work is also underway to develop a balanced HRA budget for 2027/28 and the medium term, with a comprehensive savings plan being prepared to identify and deliver the substantial level of savings required. This includes reviewing expenditure, efficiencies, service delivery models and key financial assumptions to ensure the long-term sustainability of the HRA and support a balanced financial position over the medium-term planning period.

4.3 PERFORMANCE MEASURES – AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

4.3.1 As aforementioned, there are two measures that are red this quarter. The table below outlines the actual performance and the target that was set for the performance measures. The paragraphs that follow set out areas for improvement in Quarter One.

MEASURE NAME	BUSINESS UNIT	Actual - Quarter 1 2024/25 YTD	Actual - Quarter 2 2025/26 YTD	Actual - Quarter 3 2025/26 YTD	Actual – Quarter 4 2025/26 YTD	Actual - Quarter 1 2026/27 YTD	Target - Quarter 1 2026/27 YTD	Target - Quarter 2 2026/27 YTD
More Social, Affordable and Good Quality Homes								
% of standard damp & mould investigations completed within 10 working days of tenant report (AWAABs)	Building Safety and Housing Property Services			92.42%	86.00%	76.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Thriving Neighbourhoods								
% of Graffiti Clearances completed	Environment & Leisure	100.00%	66.00%	100.00%	74.00%	53.00%	80.00%	80.00%

Fig.4

Awaab's Law

4.3.2 In quarter one, the percentage of standard damp & mould investigations completed within 10 working days of tenant report was highlighted as a key area for improvement.

4.3.3 A total of 112 of 147 reported cases were met, equating to 76%. This means that 76% of investigations were completed inside of the 10 working day period. However, it should be noted that on several occasions some appointments were arranged outside of the 10 day target with mutual arrangement from the tenant that the investigation is resolved according to their availability and not objective level of urgency. Some cases did also require extended efforts to secure access and ensure appointments were kept as scheduled, even once agreed.

Graffiti Clearance

4.3.4 Eight of the 15 reported graffiti incidents were cleared during Quarter 1.

4.3.5 Performance has continued to be impacted by vacancies and seasonal leave, with agency staff being used where necessary to maintain service delivery. Quarter 1 figures currently include only jobs submitted through the Report It system; however, technical issues affecting internal job recording have now been resolved. As a result, Quarter 2 data will provide a more complete picture of graffiti removal activity and is expected to show higher levels of completed work.

4.4 OMBUDSMAN COMPLAINT HANDLING

4.4.1 As set out within the Council's Complaints Policy, residents are able to contact either the Housing Ombudsman Service, mainly for issues which relate to the Council as a landlord; or the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO), for other service areas.

4.4.2 Both Ombudsmen services will independently consider cases where they have been approached by residents and will then come to a determination concerning the matters which have been raised.

4.4.3 In line with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, the Council is required to report the outcomes of Ombudsman cases to the Cabinet.

4.4.4 Appendix B provides details of the two Ombudsman determinations received during Quarter 1, comprising one case from the Housing Ombudsman Service and one from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. In both cases, all required actions and recommendations have been completed

4.5 VOIDS IMPROVEMENTS PLAN

4.5.1 In quarter one, 15 General Needs Standard void properties were relet against the new 45-day target, achieving an average turnaround of 38 days. Of these, eight were completed by the in-house team in an average of 11.5 days, exceeding the 12-day contractor-stage target, with the remaining seven completed by interim contractors.

4.5.2 Although the 2026/2027 quarter one volumes for the General Needs Standard void properties are lower than the 43 voids relet in quarter one 2025/26, progress has been made against the Void Improvement Plan with weekly cross-service meetings continuing to proactively address potential delays and ensure improvements are sustained.

4.5.3 Asbestos turnaround times have also reduced, while surveying properties during notice periods and securing early key returns has enabled void works to commence from day one of termination.

4.5.4 The In-House Voids Pilot has now reached the four-month stage of its six-month pilot period. A formal review will be undertaken to assess the pilot's overall performance and inform recommendations on the future operating model closer to the end of the pilot. Performance to date has been encouraging, with both void turnaround times and quality of completed works demonstrating positive outcomes. The remaining focus of the pilot is to determine whether these operational benefits can be delivered on a sustainable and cost-effective basis when compared with external contractors. The final evaluation will consider both service performance and value for money to support an evidence-based decision on the future delivery model.

4.6 TENANT SATISFACTION MEASURES

4.6.1 Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) were introduced in 2023/24 as a regulatory requirement for all Registered Social Landlords in England.

4.6.2 The Council completed the first phase of Tenant Satisfaction Measure (TSM) surveys for 2026/27, with 250 responses collected via telephone interviews. While the results represent an early-year position and are not yet fully representative of the wider tenant population, they provide a useful indicator of current resident perceptions and emerging trends.

4.6.3 Encouragingly, the positive trajectory seen over recent reporting periods has been maintained. Overall tenant satisfaction has increased to 70.0%, up from 68.1% in 2025/26. This improvement is supported by stronger performance across several key measures, including satisfaction with the repairs service, the condition of tenants' homes and perceptions of the local neighbourhood.

4.6.4 A small number of measures showed a decline compared with the previous year, including satisfaction with communal area maintenance, complaint handling and perceptions of home safety. Although these changes are relatively modest and some degree of fluctuation is expected across survey periods, performance will continue to be monitored closely throughout the year, with reviews and service improvements already underway in a number of these areas.

4.6.5 Benchmarking against peer organisations indicates that performance remains broadly in line with the sector median. Analysis of the results highlights several areas where there is opportunity to strengthen performance further, particularly around complaint handling, demonstrating that tenant feedback is listened to and acted upon, and improving communication with residents. These themes are closely linked to tenant trust and confidence and will continue to be prioritised through ongoing service improvement activity.

4.6.6 As additional survey responses are gathered throughout the year, performance will continue to be monitored to identify emerging trends, validate these early findings and ensure improvement actions remain targeted on the issues that matter most to tenants.

4.6.7 There are two types of TSMs, the first are satisfaction measures that are described above and listed in detail below, then the second are management measures that are monitored as part of the Council's quarterly performance suite.

Ref	Question	Q1 2026/27	Previous Year - 2025/26	Difference (+/-)
TP01	Overall satisfaction	70.0%	68.1%	**+1.9%**
TP02	Repairs service overall	73.8%	72.4%	**+1.4%**
TP03	Speed of repairs	68.4%	67.2%	**+1.2%**
TP04	Home is well-maintained	74.4%	68.1%	**+6.3%**
TP05	Home is safe	77.7%	78.2%	**-0.5%**
TP06	Listens to views and acts	57.8%	57.7%	**+0.1%**
TP07	Keeps tenants informed	68.1%	66.6%	**+1.5%**
TP08	Treats tenants fairly and with respect	77.1%	76.9%	**+0.2%**
TP09	Complaint handling	33.3%	34.5%	**-1.2%**
TP10	Communal areas are clean and well-maintained	64.1%	66.2%	**-2.1%**

Ref	Question	Q1 2026/27	Previous Year - 2025/26	Difference (+/-)
TP11	Contribution to neighbourhood	70.8%	67.6%	**+3.2%**
TP12	ASB handling	61.9%	61.8%	**+0.1%**

Fig. 5

4.7 STRATEGIC RISK

4.7.1 The strategic risks were considered by Corporate Risk Group on 12 August 2026 and are due to be considered by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 16 September 2026.

4.7.2 The Audit Committee receives a detailed Strategic Risk Report each quarter. The report to the Audit Committee considers the actions which have been identified to mitigate each of the identified risks and the progress of those actions. Changes to the way risk is managed at the Council are also highlighted and considered by the Audit Committee. Where the Committee raises specific concerns about the risks or the process for managing them, these are highlighted to the Cabinet within this quarterly report.

4.8 HIGHLIGHTED RISKS

4.8.1 A number of changes to the Strategic Risk Register are proposed this quarter as part of a move towards a more thematic and consolidated register. These include merging the three existing housing property risks into a single Building Safety and Housing Property risk; merging the Information Governance and Cyber Security risks; and removing the Commercialisation and Business and Commercial Development risks following de-escalation.

4.8.2 The Digital Switchover risk score is proposed to reduce from 15 to 10, reflecting good progress and the absence of concerns raised by IT. The risk will remain rated High due to its potential impact.

4.8.3 The lithium-ion battery fire risk is also proposed to move from the Strategic Risk Register to operational risk registers from next quarter, with ongoing consideration through the Health and Safety risk process.

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 delivering the priorities over the coming year and implementing any improvement activity set out within this report will need to identify and consider any resulting financial implications. Any financial impact of the under/over achievement of Corporate Performance Indicators will be reported as part of the Quarterly Monitoring report.

5.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.2.1 There are no direct legal implications from the recommendations contained in this report. However, officers responsible for delivering the priorities over the coming year and implementing any improvement activity set out within this report will need to identify and consider any resulting legal implications.

5.3 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

5.3.1 There are no direct equality, diversity and inclusion implications arising from this report. Where required, Equality Impact Assessments will be completed for programmes, projects, service changes and improvement activity identified.

5.4 RISK IMPLICATIONS

5.4.1 There are no direct significant risks to the Council in agreeing the recommendation(s). However, officers responsible for implementing any improvement activity set out within this report will need to consider any risk implications that arise.

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 provides good governance assurance.

5.5 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

5.5.1 The Council declared a climate change emergency in June 2019 with a resolution to work towards a target of achieving net zero emissions by 2030. There are no direct climate change implications arising from this report, except for those activities that seek to have a positive impact in this area, and the officers responsible for delivering the improvements are charged with identifying and addressing any related climate change considerations.

5.6 OTHER CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

5.6.1 Implementing the priorities and improvement activity outlined in this report may impact on the development of future policy or procedure, which will be monitored through the formal policy/procedure sign-off process via the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

6 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- MSEB Plan on a Page 2024/25
- Local Outcomes Framework

7 APPENDICES

- Appendix A: Quarter One 2026-27 Performance Compendium
- Appendix B: Quarter One 2026-27 Housing Ombudsman Determinations