

Report to: Policy and Performance Advisory Committee

Date: 29 June 2020

Title: Portfolio Progress and Performance Report 2019/20- Quarter 4 (1 January-31 March 2020)

Report of: Ian Fitzpatrick, Director of Regeneration and Planning

Cabinet member: Councillor Chris Collier, Portfolio Holder

Ward(s): All

Purpose of report: To consider the Council's progress and performance for the fourth quarter of the year (January-March 2020) as shown in Appendix 1 and make recommendations to Cabinet.

Decision type: Non-key

Officer recommendation(s): Note progress and performance for Quarter 4.

Reasons for recommendations: To enable this committee's members to consider specific aspects of the Council's progress and performance.

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council has an annual cycle for the preparation, implementation and monitoring of its business plans and budgets. This cycle enables us regularly to review the Council's work, and the targets it sets for performance, to ensure these continue to reflect customer needs and Council aspirations.
- 1.2 It is important to monitor and assess progress and performance on a regular basis, to ensure the Council continues to deliver priority outcomes and excellent services to its customers and communities.
- 1.3 This report sets out the Council's performance in the fourth quarter of 2019/20 against its aspirations as set out in the Corporate Plan 2016-20.
- 1.4 The Corporate Plan 2020-24 was adopted by Full Council in February 2020. Future reports will measure performance against the new plan's 4 year goals and key areas of focus.

2 Q4 Performance and Covid-19

- 2.1 Appendix 1 provides a high level summary of progress and performance arranged by Cabinet portfolio. The summary shows where performance and projects are 'on track/on target' and where there are areas of risk, concern or under-performance. Where performance or projects are 'off track/below target', an explanation of the management action being taken to address this is also provided.
- 2.2 At the end of this quarter, the Covid-19 pandemic started to significantly affect the district and lockdown measures were introduced by the Prime Minister. Performance out-turn was affected by this to some degree, however for the most part, services were able to maintain their performance levels. This was achieved whilst at the same time quickly rolling out revised ways of working and new services to support the district's communities with the impact of Covid-19.
- 2.3 How this authority responded to Covid-19 and supported the community was reported at the Extraordinary Cabinet meeting of 7 May. Some of the headline achievements include:
- In partnership with the voluntary sector, setting up a Community Hub to help connect people with local voluntary and community organisations;
 - Establishment of a Coronavirus helpline and increased the number of customer service staff to ensure a prompt and high quality service
 - Redeploying 110 staff to provide additional support in business critical service areas which came under pressure including benefits assessment and business grants;
 - Increased support for our tenants including daily welfare checks;
 - Rough sleepers in Lewes District were provided accommodation by 29 March.
 - Payment of £20,145,000 in grants to 1,647 local businesses as at 31 May 2020.
 - Processing twice as many benefits claims compared to pre Covid-19

Full performance information relating to this period will be contained within the performance report for the first quarter of 2020/21, to be reported in September.

2.4 2019/20 Overview

In 2019/20, the council, through change and improvement interventions, significantly improved its service and response times in a number of areas including:

Benefit processing times: improved from a low of 51.6 days in 2018/19 to just over 16 days by the end of 2019/20)

Call handling times: improved from a low of 19% in 2018/19 to just under 90% by the end of 2019/20

Disabled Facilities Grant approvals: improved from an average of 10 days in 2018/19 to 4 days in 2019/20

Challenges

In 2019/20, we experienced challenges in our revenue collection areas (rent arrears, council tax collection and business rate collection). These have been compounded by the pressures brought about Covid-19 with no statutory debt collection so the council have established an income maximisation work stream utilising ethical debt recovery methods to further improve our revenue collection performance.

2020/21

- 2.5 Performance indicators for 2020/21 are undergoing a process of review and confirmation in light of Covid-19. This is a joint process undertaken by members and officers. Further information will be provided at the Cabinet meeting of 9 July.

3 Financial Appraisal

- 3.1 Project and performance monitoring and reporting arrangements are contained within existing estimates. Corporate performance information should also be considered alongside the Council's financial update reports (also reported to Cabinet each quarter) as there is a clear link between performance and budgets/resources.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 Comment from the Legal Services Team is not necessary for this routine monitoring report.

5 Risk Management Implications

- 5.1 It is important that corporate performance is monitored regularly otherwise there is a risk that reductions in service levels, or projects falling behind schedule, are not addressed in a timely way.

6 Equality Analysis

- 6.1 The equality implications of individual decisions relating to the projects/services covered in this report are addressed within other relevant Council reports or as part of programmed equality analysis. The equality implications of projects that form part of the Joint Transformation Programme are addressed through separate Equality and Fairness assessments.

7 Appendices

7.1 Appendix 1 – Portfolio Progress and Performance Report (Quarter 4 2019/20)