







Report to:	Scrutiny
Date:	13 September 2018
Title:	Portfolio Progress and Performance Report 2018/19 - Quarter 1 (April - June 2018)
Report of:	Ian Fitzpatrick, Director of Regeneration and Planning
Cabinet member:	Councillor Elayne Merry, Portfolio Holder
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of report:	To consider the Council's progress and performance in respect of key projects and targets for the first quarter of the year (April to June 2018 (Quarter 1)) as shown in Appendix 1.
Officer recommendation(s):	Consider progress and performance for Quarter 1 and make any relevant recommendations to Cabinet.
Reasons for recommendations:	To enable Scrutiny and Cabinet 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 The Scrutiny Committee has a key role in terms of oversight of the Council's progress and performance and challenging areas of under-performance. This report sets out the Council's performance against its targets and projects for the first quarter of 2018/19 (the period running from 1st April to 30th June 2018).

2 Performance in the First Quarter of 2018/19

- 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 Detailed project/performance tracking information is recorded in the Council's performance management information system (Pentana (formerly known as Covalent)). The system uses the following symbols to indicate the current status of projects and performance targets:

-  = Performance that is at or above target;
-  = Project is on track;
-  = Performance that is slightly below target but is within an acceptable tolerance/projects where there are issues causing significant delay or change to planned activities;
-  = Performance that is below target/projects that are not expected to be completed in time or within requirements;
-  = Project has changed or been discontinued;
-  = Data with no performance target.

3 **Scrutiny Annual Report 2017/18**

- 3.1 2017/18 was once again a productive year for the Lewes Scrutiny Committee. The Council performance was reviewed on a quarterly basis ahead of Cabinet, and this has been helpful in providing Members with early information about any performance issues/concerns, as well as assuring Members that such issues are being addressed by robust management actions.
- 3.2 Performance and budget monitoring remains an integral part of the work of the Scrutiny Committee, and along with a thorough assessment of the Council's performance every quarter, the Scrutiny Committee has also given consideration to various other issues as part of its overview and scrutiny function. These have included:
- Scrutiny of the Chair of the Council's Civic Programme
 - Scrutiny of North Street Quarter Due Diligence
 - Scrutiny of the Annual Lewes District Community Safety Partnership Report
 - Scrutiny of the Annual Equalities Report
 - Scrutiny of the Voluntary Sector Support
 - Scrutiny of the Draft Lewes Tourism Strategy 2018-2021
 - Scrutiny of the Council's Budget Overview and Tax base Setting
 - Scrutiny of the Council's Sickness/Absence statistics within the

Council

- Participation in a Q&A session with external representatives regarding the reinstatement of the Lewes to Uckfield railway line, and invite discussion regarding their existing strategy and proposal

3.3

The Scrutiny Committee continued to consider significant issues within the community and engaged external witnesses. The Committee were pleased to welcome the following representatives to their meetings:

- Mr Adam Chugg, Chief Executive of 3VA
- Ms Teresa Gittins, Deputy Chief Executive and Head of Services of Action in Rural Sussex
- Mr Rob Whitehead, Advice & Inclusion Services Programme Manager of Sompriti
- Ms Jackie Wilkes, District Manager of Lewes District Citizens Advice Bureau
- Mr Jonathan Knight, Chief Financial Officer of MAS REI
- Mr Roger Blake, National Board Vice-Chair, London & South East regional branch of Railfuture
- Mr Chris Page, National Board Chair of Railfuture

3.4

During 2017/2018 two Panel Groups were established to scrutinise particular aspects of the Council's work:

- Establishment of a scrutiny review to investigate the impact of transport options within Lewes District and their effect on the local economy, also taking into account the Air Quality motion. This review is currently underway.
- Establishment of a scrutiny review to investigate the supply of low-cost and affordable workspace in the Lewes District, and with specific attention to the employment space requirements of the creative sector. This review is currently underway and will report back to the Committee in February 2019.

4 Portfolio Progress and Performance – Quarter 1

4.1

An overview of the Council's performance for the year as at the end of the 1st quarter is set out below:

- 79% of the Council's key projects were either completed or on track at the end of the 1st quarter.
- 68% of the Council's performance targets were either met, exceeded or within acceptable levels during the 1st quarter.
- 9 indicators did not meet their planned targets during the 1st quarter (see paragraph seven below).

5 The Good News for Quarter 1 –  Notable project milestones or service performance achieved

5.1 This section of the report provides specific highlights by portfolio in terms of notable project progress or performance achievements.

5.2 Regeneration and Business

The **Newhaven Town Centre** project aiming to deliver the mixed use regeneration of the town centre was allocated funding by Cabinet in quarter one, and consultation is expected in the autumn.

5.3 People and Performance

The year on year performance for **Average days lost per FTE employee due to sickness** during Quarter one has improved from 2.15 days (2017/18 Q1) to 1.62 days (2018/19 Q1).

5.4 Environmental Impact

Lewes District Council is leading in the fight against single use plastics, successfully launching the **Single use plastic reduction in council offices** project in Quarter One which seeks to significantly reduce their use across council sites.

5.5 Housing

In the **Welfare reform project**, in Q1 the Job CentrePlus presentation for staff, RSLs and Voluntary Sector on Universal Credit was arranged (took place on 24/25 July).

Lewes CABs delivering Assisted Digital Support and Personal Budgeting Support on Councils' behalf.

BHT awarded £30k to recruit a benefits advisor to work 25 hours a week alongside the Homes First team to identify those Lewes residents most in need of support to claim Universal Credit and will provide practical 1:1 support to customers through the whole claims process and to ensure they are able to maintain their claim in the longer term. Further details are in the annexe.

5.6 Planning

The **Neighbourhood Planning** project has now “made” Neighbourhood Plans for *Plumpton* and for *Ditchling, Streat & Westmeston*, and continues to lead and contribute to six more Plans in the District.

5.7 Waste and Recycling Transformation

The roll-out of the **LDC co-mingled recycling** service was completed in Quarter One, with increases in recycling already being reported.

5.8 Customer and Partners

Performance for **Number of people registering for our email service** continues to out-perform expectations, delivering over half the annual target in the first three months of 2018/19 (1,235 against a target of 2,004).

6 **Areas for Improvement** – Project/performance is slightly off track (but within acceptable/5% tolerance). The 'amber' warning flags up performance that has fallen very slightly below target or projects that are slipping behind schedule or going slightly off-track.

6.1 The following performance indicators which fell into this category during the first quarter included:

- **Percentage of Council Tax collected during the year - Lewes:** The collection rate for Quarter One is down on the quarter target by 0.26%. On 6th June 2018, the revenues service transitioned in to the future model. As we are now establishing the new ways of working, collection has been affected but it is anticipated that as the structure beds in, collection performance will return to projected levels.
- **Percentage of Business Rates collected during the year - Lewes:** The collection rate for Quarter One is down on the quarter target by 0.59%. Business Rates was also effected by the revenues service transition in June, but it is anticipated that collection performance will return to projected levels.
- **Percentage of Rent Collected During the Year (Cumulative):** Quarter 1 performance is below the profiled target. This is mainly due to the cross skilling training that is being delivered within the team in order to create future service resilience across both Councils. As a result this has meant that there has been a slight reduction in the number of officers available to process work, however this is being carefully managed to minimise the impact on performance which we expect to improve as more staff are cross-skilled'.

6.2 The following projects are being reported as amber at the end of the second quarter.

Newhaven Port Access Road (ESCC Project): The final formatting of business and strategic cases was prepared in Q1 and submitted in July. Positive conversations are being held between ESCC and DfT


The contractor is lined up and ready to start as soon as authorisation is received.

6.3 **Devolution of Open Spaces:** Lewes Town Council: The devolution of Landport Bottom successfully completed.

Newhaven Town Council: The first "wave" of transfers was being processed by LDC and NTC solicitors includes a) East Side Recreation Ground, b) Avis Road Recreation Ground, c) Drove Park Recreation Ground, d) Lewes Road Recreation Ground, and e) Valley Road Recreation Ground.

- **Modular Housing:** Feasibility appraisals are being completed on a range of Council owned and non-Council owned sites – legal searches and initial capacity studies will be undertaken and potential contractors have been identified, who can fulfil the criteria of accelerated delivery. A Cabinet report is planned for the end of October, with consultation with Ward and Town Councillors, as well as local residents before any sites move to the construction phase. The report to Cabinet will include the outcome of options appraisals.

7

Areas for Improvement –  Performance well below target and/or project significantly off-schedule or revised. Where service performance falls well below target levels, or a project is significantly off track or has been significantly revised or cancelled, priority is given to addressing these issues.

- **Average number of days to re-let LDC Council homes (excluding temporary lets):** The average re-let time for Q1 was 27.5 days. This exceeds the voids target of 25 days. During June we re-let 13 properties. Low numbers are skewing this PI and we expect this to return within target shortly.
- **Performance Improvement Plan**
There was one late unexpected re-allocation required that led to an extended period of re-let delay. The target is closely monitored and the Neighbourhood Housing Team continue to let the properties promptly upon completion of the void works.
- **The Local Plan (Part 2):** The concurrent 'Call for Sites' to deliver the Gypsy and Traveller pitches yielded no results, however further options identified are being considered, with no final decision made. The identification within Local Plan Part 2 of suitable site(s) for the delivery of 5 permanent pitches is established within Core Policy 3 of the Local Plan Part 1, the Core Strategy.
- **Percentage of major applications determined within 13 weeks (LDC only):** It is acknowledged that this PI poses significant swings given the very low volume of applications determined. For Quarter One two applications were determined out of time. Going forward extension of time agreements and close scrutiny of caseload by the SSA's will support an improvement in performance.

- **Percentage of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks (LDC/SDNP combined):** 17 out of 56 minor planning applications did not meet the deadline. Resource has been assigned to cover knowledge transfer and the processing of applications. This should see an upturn in performance by the end of Quarter Two.
- **The number of days taken to process new housing/council tax benefit claims:** The average days to process new claims for Quarter One was 48.4 days against a target of 20 days. The activity involved in the transition of the benefits service to the new ways of working, which was successfully completed on 6 June, coupled with several new starters led to a dip in performance during April, May and June. It is expected the target to be met from August onwards.
- **Days to process change of circs. (Housing / Council Tax Benefit):** The average days to process changes for Quarter One was 10.5 days against a target of 8 days. As with the PI for *The number of days taken to process new housing/council tax benefit claims* The activity involved in the transition of the benefits service to the new ways of working, which was successfully completed on 6 June, coupled with several new starters led to a dip in performance during April, May and June. It is expected the target to be met from August onwards.
- **Increase the percentage of calls to the contact centre answered within 60 seconds – Lewes:** The speed of answer has increased during Quarter One due to the implementation of revenues and benefits as a new service for Customer Advisors with an additional 7,000+ calls, and the ongoing induction into the new ways of working.

A significant amount of time has been spent training the team to handle these new calls, and queue busting has been implemented to provide customers with alternatives to waiting on the line including going online, using automated services or calling back at less busy times. A recruitment drive was launched in May with eight candidates being offered roles, all of whom are anticipated to be in place and training by the middle of Quarter Two. There are still 6 vacancies with interviews and recruitment underway. Residents who call and have an active enquiry with a back office case worker are also being directed straight through rather than having to wait for call-backs or chasing multiple times.

- **Reduce the numbers of abandoned calls to the contact centre – Lewes:** Higher than normal call volumes resulted in a spike in abandoned call at the start of Quarter One, but the number of abandoned calls has decreased across the quarter. Queue busting continues to take place to answer calls within 5mins to reduce the amount of abandoned calls. A recruitment drive was completed with 8 preferred candidates offered roles, all of whom are expected to start by the end of August.

8 Financial Appraisal

- 8.1 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.

9 Legal Implications

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

10 Risk Management Implications

- 10.1 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.

11 Equality Analysis

- 11.1 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.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Portfolio Progress and Performance Report (Quarter One 2018/19).

Background Papers

[Council Plan 2016 to 2020](#)