

Report to:	Cabinet
Date:	22 September 2022
Title:	Portfolio progress and performance report 2022/23 - Quarter 1
Report of:	Ian Fitzpatrick, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning
Cabinet member:	Councillor Chris Collier, Cabinet member for performance and people
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of report:	To consider the council's progress and performance in respect of service areas for the First Quarter of the year (April-June 2022) as shown in Appendix 1
Decision type:	Non-key
Officer recommendation(s):	To note progress and performance for Quarter 1 2022/23
Reasons for recommendations:	To enable Cabinet 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.

2 Corporate Plan and council policies

- 2.1 This report sets out the council's performance in the First Quarter of 2022/23 against its aspirations as set out in the Corporate Plan 2020-24. As was agreed previously by Cabinet, the report also provides a summary of work to date relating to the Recovery and Reset programme.

3 Recovery and Reset

3.1 Since the Recovery and Reset programme commenced in 2020, considerable benefits have been delivered in pursuit of the overall aims. In addition to those previously reported to Cabinet, the benefits delivered include:

- Work to implement new technology to automate a range of transactional processes within Customer First went live in early March 2022. A new generation chat bot was implemented on the council's website and, in its first six months of operation, has performed well:
 - The bot has responded to over 30,000 queries from residents, with 21% of the responses being provided out of hours.
 - The system is currently operating at a 93% accuracy rate when compared with a fully-trained member of staff – this is above average performance at this stage of the bot's development and will continue to improve as lessons are learned.
 - Livechat (real time, web-enabled staff discussions with customers) volumes have reduced by approximately 75% as a result of the bot answering customer enquiries.

The next phase of the project is to implement the chat bot on the contact centre phone line, and the goal is that, over time, it will reduce the volumes of queries into the contact centre, enabling the team to provide more in-depth support to those customers in the greatest need and to focus on more value-adding activity.

- The project to implement a new revenues and benefits system continues to progress well beyond the decision, last year, to purchase the NPS system from NEC. Significant work is underway to implement the system in 2023 (working around the peak period of year-end related activity).
- The project to explore options for the identification of a single system to manage environmental health and licensing activity recently identified IDOX as the preferred supplier. The project will move into its implementation phase once the commercial discussions to finalise the terms of the contract are completed.
- As the council's website was launched nearly 5 years ago, a project is launching to explore the latest technology to support better online delivery of services to and engagement with customers. The timeline to replace the website will be confirmed once resources to lead the activity are appointed.
- A review of internal communications is currently underway and progressing well. A survey seeking the views and opinions of all staff recently closed and analysis of the results will inform a new Internal Communications Strategy.

4 Solution Sprints

4.1 The council made use of solutions sprints (SS) prior to the Covid-19 pandemic as a way of realising service and performance improvements. Work is underway to relaunch SS and activity this Quarter has included:

- liaising with lead councillors to understand their ideas and aspirations for SS,
- engaging with representatives from the Managers' Reference and Staff Experience Groups to understand what worked well and less well with previous SS and seeking their ideas for improvements,

- Bringing together performance data with feedback received from customers within the Business Transformation Unit to identify additional areas of search for the refreshed SS.

Over the next Quarter, the process for relaunching SS will be finalised and the new approach will be piloted.

5 Financial appraisal

- 5.1 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.

6 Legal implications

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

7 Risk management implications

- 7.1 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.

8 Equality analysis

- 8.1 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.

9 Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Portfolio Progress and Performance Report (Quarter 1 2022/23)
- Appendix 2 – Corporate Plan Progress Update