



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name and date of Committee	Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Wednesday 9 December 2020
Report Number	Agenda Item No. 9
Subject	Council Priorities and Service Performance Report 2020-21 Quarter Two
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	All relevant Cabinet Members
Accountable officer	Giles Hughes, Chief Executive Tel: (01993) 861658 Email: giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	This report provides details of the Council's progress towards achieving its aim and priorities set out in the Council Plan 2020-2024, and service performance during Q2
Annexes	Annex A – Council Priority report Annex B – Performance Indicator report
Recommendation	That the Committee reviews, and challenges as appropriate, performance for 2020-21 Q2
Corporate priorities	Climate Action: Leading the way in protecting and enhancing the environment by taking action locally on climate change and biodiversity Modern Council Services and Sustainable Finance: Delivering excellent modern services whilst ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No

I. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The Council monitors service performance and progress towards achieving the aim and priorities set out in the Corporate Plan.
- 1.2. Each quarter, performance and progress in those service areas relating to the work of this Committee are provided in this report.

2. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK - PERFORMANCE REPORTING

- 2.1. A new Council Plan 2020-2024 was approved by Council in January 2020. Although reporting on progress against the four year Plan commenced in Q1, the main priority for the Council over the last six months was its response to Covid-19, and the subsequent recovery work.
- 2.2. In June 2020, Council approved the recommendation that a Local Recovery Plan should be prepared to complement the delivery of the Council Plan 2020-24. The Cabinet and Council approved the draft Local Recovery Plan in October. The Covid-19 Recovery Themes are Economy, Community, Climate and Council, Service Delivery and Finance, and are closely aligned with the six Council Plan priorities to ensure that actions prioritised as part of the Covid-19 recovery will also positively contribute to the achievement of the Council Plan.
- 2.3. A high level Commissioning Framework was approved by Cabinet in October 2020. The Commissioning Framework identifies that the provision of robust performance data – quantitative and qualitative, together with a robust analysis of that data and evidence – is vital to ensure that the Council has the information to assess whether its commissioned services are being delivered to a high quality.
- 2.4. A new performance management framework is being developed; a much broader framework than previous frameworks. It sets out six key strands of information on which assurance needs to be provided, with a key shift in focus from performance monitoring to performance management:
 - Business analytics and service assurance
 - Place based measures and comparators
 - Publica Business Plan strategic actions
 - Council Plan priority actions
 - Project and programme management assurance
 - Risk and opportunity management
- 2.5. As part of the Business Analytics and Service Assurance strand, a new set of performance indicators was implemented in Q1 as part of a newly styled performance report. The indicator set and performance report will evolve over time based on feedback from senior officers and Members.
- 2.6. The Commissioning Framework also sets out the relationship between Publica and the Council and their respective responsibilities. Publica's Executive Director (Commissioning) is accountable to the Council for the services commissioned from Publica, and also for the services commissioned by Publica from third parties on behalf of the Council. Publica must ensure that it provides the necessary information to the Council so it can assess whether the commissioned services are being delivered in accordance with the agreed quality and

standard. The Council's Chief Executive is responsible for reviewing and approving the information provided in this report prior to its publication.

- 2.7. The Council's Chief Executive has received a report on progress towards achieving the Council's priorities and service performance. He has assessed performance in line with the high level Commissioning Statement, and confirms that overall, services have been delivered to the agreed quality and standard; and he was pleased to note that work has progressed on some of the actions set out in the Council Plan. The Chief Executive has also noted the continued impact of Covid-19 on communities, customers, services, staff, and businesses as they attempted to recover over the summer; and the recent announcement of a second lockdown. He has drawn particular attention to the following:
- i. When the nation went into lockdown in March 2020, a significant number of staff were redeployed to support our communities; following the intense period of activity, seconded staff have returned to their substantive roles. Furthermore, he has noted that during Q2 many services continued to support residents, communities and businesses that have been impacted by Covid-19, together with the recovery of the high street and tourism as part of their every day job;
 - ii. The Local Recovery Plan has been approved and provides a framework to help guide the Council's recovery effort. Our partners will also be developing their recovery plans so it will be important to be flexible in our joint collaborative efforts. It has always been recognised that the Council might need to pivot back and forth between organising a response and community support effort and the recovery effort as the pandemic develops;
 - iii. By August 2020, leisure facilities, parking enforcement and food safety inspections had restarted. The Council agreed a financial package with GLL to reopen on 25 July in a phased approach; the core activities of gym, group exercise, and swimming were operational until 2 November, when they were required to close down again in line with the requirements of the second lockdown;
 - iv. Affordable housing has continued to be delivered in the District and demonstrates the success of the strategic sites included in the local plan in bringing forward housing numbers. The first affordable housing plots at East Chipping Norton Strategic Development Area were completed in Q2. The delivery of affordable housing is on track to exceed the Local Plan target of 274 for the year;
 - v. The number of households living in emergency accommodation has started to decrease; the Housing team has created exit plans to move households into more secure tenancies including private rented, housing association, and supported accommodation. Furthermore, the 'Housing First' project went 'live', the Council has worked with Aspire and Cottsway to place six complex cases into permanent accommodation where they will receive one-to-one support to address their needs.

3. COUNCIL PRIORITY REPORT

- 3.1. Over the last six months, the Council's main priority was the response to Covid-19 and the recovery phase, which continue to be key themes running through this report.
- 3.2. In addition, to the response and recovery work, progress is being made on the actions in the Council Plan including:
 - i. The Climate Action Working Group endorsed the new Sustainability Standards in Planning as a mechanism for reducing carbon levels within new developments; and a net

gain biodiversity mechanism has been developed to ensure that major developments deliver a net gain;

- ii. The fly tipping service has been redesigned based on customer and user need with the introduction of new on-forms and web pages. The new process was introduced in October and will make it easier and quicker for residents to report flytips. It will also reduce duplication and therefore create a more efficient and responsive service.
- iii. The new revenues and benefits system, Civica, is on schedule for 'go live' in mid-January 2021. Data migration work has commenced and the first cut of data was returned to the service during September for testing. Customers will be able to self-serve for the majority of their revenue and benefit transactions.

3.3. A full report is attached at Annex C.

4. SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT

4.1. The services which relate to the work of this Committee are Customer Services and Revenues and Benefits; the relevant indicators are listed at the front of the Performance Indicator report at Annex B with pages [x to y](#) providing the further relevant information.

4.2. The majority of staff have continued to work from home, and some services have had to find new ways of working. Overall, many services have performed well in the current conditions and restrictions with no significant detriment to limiting the delivery of services to online, virtual or phone.

4.3. Of the nine targeted indicators, four indicators achieved their targets (Green), three indicators achieved its target 'within tolerance' (Amber), and two indicators did not achieve their targets (Red). A full report is attached at Annex B.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1. None

6. RISK ASSESSMENT

6.1. None

7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

7.1. None

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1. None