

<b>Minutes of</b>	<b>Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel</b>
<b>Meeting date</b>	<b>Thursday, 27 July 2023</b>
<b>Committee Members present:</b>	Councillor Aidy Riggott (Chair), Councillor Roy Lees (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Sarah Ainsworth, Arjun Singh and Kim Snape
<b>Observers present:</b>	Councillor Julia Berry
<b>Officers:</b>	Victoria Willett (Director of Change and Delivery), Asim Khan (Director of Customer and Digital), Chris Walmsley (Head of Streetscene and Waste), and Matthew Pawlyszyn (Democratic and Member Services Officer).

A video recording of the public session of this meeting is available to view on [YouTube here](#)

**1 Minutes of meeting Thursday, 9 March 2023 of Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel**

**Resolved: That the minutes be approved as a correct record.**

**2 Declarations of Any Interests**

No interests were declared.

**3 Performance Focus: Customer and Digital**

Executive Member Adrian Lowe (Customer, Streetscene and Environment) presented the report with Asim Khan, Director (Customer and Digital) and Chris Walmsley, Head of Streetscene and Waste.

Members were informed of inaccuracies within the report, and that a corrected report would be distributed following the meeting.

11 of the directorate's performance indicators were on or above target. Of the 39 business plan projects, 25 were rated green or completed, and 14 were rated amber. Both Corporate Strategy Projects were rated green.

Financially there was an underspend of £35,000.

Two Corporate Strategy indicators were above target, the 'percentage of household waste sent for refuse, recycling, or composting' was worse than Quarter 3, but within the 5% threshold.

The figure for 'average days to process a new council tax support and housing benefit claim' was worse than Q4 2021/22 due to the number of complex cases received in the year. There were also delays caused by matters outside the control of the council.

The figure for 'percentage of ground maintenance service requests completed on time' was incorrect within the report and was actually above target at 87.8%.

The new Corporate Strategy Project for the year was to deliver improvements to the public transport networks'. The council had possession of 83 bus shelters and there is a 5-year improvement plan for them all. The first year will see 19 bus shelters replaced. The membership of the panel was to be provided the location of all 83 following the meeting.

The Borough had 1219 bins across the borough, and their location and collection number depended upon footfall. This is in addition to litter picking routes which would be shared with the Panel following the meeting.

The council's contract with Dial-a-Ride was near its end, and consideration was underway to review and evaluate available options to ensure that the community car scheme was attractive and accessible to users.

18 vacancies had been filled but there remained outstanding vacancies. There were 4 vacant apprenticeships and 3 other vacant posts.

In relation to the figure of dissatisfaction, there was not a correlation between the increase in online service and dissatisfaction. The online service was designed for convenience, although it was noted that the service could contribute to the delays some faced.

There were ongoing operational issues with the contractor. Recycling had stagnated which impacted the figure for '% of waste recycled'. For additional increase of this figure, there required behavioural changes from residents and certainty from government. There is a delay from central government to conclude waste and recycling initiatives now expected in 2025, in the meantime, and in the absence of the government position, the council was currently in the process of drafting its own waste and recycling strategy.

**Resolved: That the report be noted.**

#### **4 Quarter Four Performance Report**

Victoria Willett, Director of Change and Delivery presented the report, which covered the period from January to March 2023. It was noted by the Chair that following this meeting, the Quarter and Business Plan reports were to be presented by an Executive Member.

Of the 19 projects,

- 2 (11%) were completed,
- 16 (84%) rated green, and
- 1 (5%) rated amber.

For the key measures of organisational performance,

- 4 (67%) performing at or above target,
- 1 (17%) performing below target but within the 5% threshold, and
- 1 (17%) performing below target and outside of threshold

‘Housing where residents can live well’.

Key achievements included Tatton Gardens with the connected GP surgery and café. Following the completion of the scheme, the council continued to commit to the corporate strategy and develop further options for high quality, affordable and green housing.

The amber rated key project was the delivery of the local plan. Reasons explained included vacancies within the team which impacted the capacity to deliver the project. Recruitment was underway and some of the posts had been successfully recruited. It was also noted that the project contained complexity due to working with two other authorities. It was questioned by the Panel if the project should be rated red, however, for a project to be rated red, the project would be stopped, off track with no plan to move forward. Actions were currently in place to bring the project back on track, it was noted that more leeway was provided due to partnership working with two other authorities.

‘A Green and Sustainable Borough’.

Over 117,000 trees had been planted in the borough which exceeded the target, which pleased the members of the panel, and they were open to assisting with ways to increase that number further.

A key priority of the council was to improve parks, open spaces and to enhance the natural environment. All five projects under the Corporate Priority Strategy were green and were progressing according to plan and timescales.

‘An enterprising economy with vibrant local centres in urban and rural areas’

Strawberry Meadows was completed, and the council remained committed to completing improvements to Astley Hall. Within Strawberry Meadows, there was a mix of businesses that sought growth and expansion. A list would be provided to the Membership following the meeting,

The three other projects were green and on track.

A development and job programme event was held in collaboration with local schools and businesses in the borough which was attended by 500 students, job seekers and 30 local businesses.

Members praised the event, but noted that there needed to be a more effective way for such events to be communicated. It was noted that Members would be on the circulation list of the new business newsletter.

‘Healthy, Safe and Engaged Communities’

A key commitment was the early help event, to bring in key partners to support parents and families in the borough.

A Cost of Living Action Plan was underway to support families that were struggling due to the price of food and energy. The project was extended over the summer, and in all, 6,744 households were supported through the fund. The school uniform swap scheme was to continue and be expanded to include more schools. Members praised the uniform swap and sought the addition of schools out of town.

The health and wellbeing programme commenced, and the weight management programme was relaunched.

‘Performance of Corporate Strategy Measures 2022/23’.

14 indicators were on target or better than target, with 5 worse and outside threshold.

Highlighted indicators that were worse and outside threshold included the ‘number of people who participate in volunteering opportunities’. Action was taken to improve the policy, and in June the council endorsed a ‘volunteering week’.

The ‘growth in business rare base’ and ‘number of affordable homes delivered’ were both impacted due to the ongoing review and creation of a new Local Plan.

‘Median workplace earnings better than the North West Average’, this indicator’s performance was viewed to be a symptom of the post pandemic landscape, with an increase in the number of small businesses.

Of the key service measures, four were better than target, one was worse than target but within threshold, ‘percentage of business rates (NNDR) collected’ and one was worse than target and outside of threshold, ‘town centre vacancy rate’. The reason was due to the pandemic. Actions were in place to encourage vibrance in the town centre. The figure for the list of units within the town centre and those earmarked as available would be reported back.

**Resolved: That the report be noted.**

Chair

Date