



Minutes of	Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel
Meeting date	Wednesday, 27 July 2022
Committee Members present:	Councillor John Walker (Chair), and Councillors Sarah Ainsworth, Michelle Le Marinel and Arjun Singh
Other Members	Councillor Adrian Lowe - Executive Member (Customer, Streetscene and Environment)
Officers:	Asim Khan (Director (Customer and Digital) Shared Services), Howard Anthony (Interim Service Lead Performance and Partnerships), Michael Johnson (Policy Officer (Engagement)), and Matthew Pawlyszyn (Democratic and Member Services Officer)
Apologies:	Councillor Roy Lees

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

1 Minutes of meeting Thursday, 10 March 2022 of Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel

Decision: The minutes were approved as a correct record.

2 Declarations of Any Interests

No interests were declared.

3 Performance Focus: Customer and Digital

Executive Member for Customer, Streetscene and Environment, Councillor Adrian Lowe presented the Performance Focus: Customer and Digital Report that provided an overall summary, budget position, key performance measures and an update on the corporate strategies relevant to the directorate.

The Customer and Digital directorate covered Neighborhoods, Streetscene and Waste Services, and the shared services of ICT and Customer Services.

Three quarters of the corporate service level performance measures were performing at or above target at the end of quarter four.

Of 8 business plan projects, five have been completed, and three were amber. The reason for the amber was a result of the challenges faced by ICT and customer services with the next phase of shared services and number of vacant positions.

Street cleaning and ground maintenance targets were increased from the previous year due to the performance of the team.

Work was identified and completed towards two corporate strategy objectives. Extending improvement to street services and improvements to deliver a better customer service providing greener, cleaner streets and neighborhoods.

Issues were acknowledged with customer services and the contact centre, but efforts were underway to correct and improve the service provided.

The new Members of the council on the Committee praised the support provided by ICT during and since their new member induction.

It was explained that the wait times and abandonment rates for users calling 515151 was due to the impact of the restructure and the vacant posts.

Covid-19 did not cause a decrease in staff, however had been impacted with the ongoing difficulty to recruit staff. Customer Services were also required to resolve requests that related additional delegated responsibilities from central government, an example was the £150 Council Tax rebate. Residents were encouraged to complete the application online, but many would chase up their applications over the phone. 90% of eligible residents have received their rebate, the remainder was primarily those that did not pay council tax by direct debit.

As part of the Shared Services, customer services operated across both Chorley and South Ribble, this allowed for greater flexibility to share resources and capacity to allow both organisations to meet and achieve their targets.

Within the directorate, 12 apprenticeships were created, and recruitment was ongoing.

Financially, the directorate had 1.6% variance in the budget.

The grey bin subscription service increased in cost from £30 a year to £32.50 a year, with earnings estimated at £815,000 for the year. The latest figures suggested that the subscription generated £812,000 and was on track to meet the estimated figure. This subscription was budgeted for and was essential to make up the one-million-pound shortfall from the County Council. Without the subscription service, significant cuts to the service and would have been required.

Union Street remained open but was briefly closed during the pandemic upon government advice and currently operated on both a pop in service and appointment service for customers.

Plans to close Union Street and refurbish the Town Hall and the White Hart remained under consideration.

Proposals were being explored relating to the expanding the implementation of the AV system in the Town Hall, to include Committee Room 1.

In relation to grass cutting, 98% was completed on time for both May and June 2022. Members praised the mini meadows and the look of the town centre. The Executive Member gave praise to the member of staff that put in unpaid time working on the town centre.

Litter bin collection was 98% for May and 99% for June. It was expressed that the whole directorate had worked hard across all departments to provide exemplary service.

Decision: The report was noted.

4 Quarter Four Performance Monitoring Report 2021/22

Howard Anthony, Interim Service Lead Performance and Partnerships presented the Quarter Four Performance Monitoring Report 2021/22.

Performance was broadly considered to be good, with 71% of corporate strategy projects classed as green. 71% of the corporate strategy measures were reported as on target or within. 67% of key service delivery, identified to be projects outside of the corporate strategy were green.

A number of performance indicators were off target that would be addressed in the Quarter 1 Report to Cabinet in September, and detail the progress made.

The Tatton Project was designated amber and would receive a further update with the Quarter 1 Report in addition to an Exception Report confirming timescales to return the project on track.

It was confirmed that the Tatton project would factor into the targeted 100 affordable homes figure, which was currently below target. An update to be forthcoming at a later date.

The employment figure was down. The Covid pandemic changed the circumstance of many, leading to an increase in those that withdrew from the employment market. The council had access to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund from central government, to address business support, skills, and employment. The unemployment figures were due to be released in August 2022 and would feature in the Quarter 1 Report.

There was a growth in the annual business rates received, which came from the production or construction of business premises and construction sites. The action plan in place explored what was forthcoming in construction and commercial business floor space.

Strawberry Fields observed an improved performance from the previous year. Members expressed concern with the levels of vacant shops in the town centre. It was added that work was completed refurbishing the market cabins, and formal offers received. There was also interest in the return of pop up units to utilise the empty space.

It was clarified and explained that Lancashire Adult Learning and Moving Forward were two of the local partners that would provide digital skills training.

Decision: The report was noted.

Chair

Date