

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director (Customer and Digital) presented by Executive Member for Customer, Streetscene and Environment	Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel	Thursday, 29 June 2023

## Performance Focus: Customer and Digital

Is this report confidential?	No
Is this decision key?	No
Savings or expenditure amounting to greater than £100,000	Yes

### Purpose of the Report

1. To provide the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel with a performance update for the Customer and Digital directorate. This includes:
  - a) An overall directorate summary and budget position at quarter four 2022/23,
  - b) An overview of key performance measures at quarter four 2022/23,
  - c) An update on the Corporate Strategy projects.

### Recommendations

2. That the information contained within this report is discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel to understand and monitor performance within the Customer and Digital directorate.

### Reasons for recommendations

3. To ensure the effective monitoring of performance within the Customer and Digital directorate, delivery of the Corporate Strategy and associated strategic objectives.

### Other options considered and rejected

4. No other options have been considered or rejected. This is because the report does not present any key items for decision.

### Corporate priorities

5. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

<b>Housing where residents can live well</b>	<b>A green and sustainable borough</b>
<b>An enterprising economy with vibrant local centres in urban and rural areas</b>	<b>Healthy, safe, and engaged communities</b>

## Background to the report

6. Each quarter a directorate level performance update is presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel for review. An update for the Customer and Digital directorate has been prepared showing the performance as of quarter four 2022/23 and this directorate was last reviewed the panel in July 2022. The directorate includes the following services:

- Shared ICT
- Shared Customer Services
- Chorley Streetscene and Waste Management

7. This report presents an overview of the directorate's performance up until March 2023 (quarter four), and includes a breakdown of the financial position, corporate and service level indicator performance, and progress against the Corporate Strategy projects.

## Directorate Overview

8. In the Customer and Digital directorate, of the performance indicators that can be reported 11 (79%) are performing on or above target for quarter four 2022/23. There are 39 business plan projects under the Customer and Digital directorate, of these projects 25 (64%) are rated green or completed and 14 (36%) are rated amber. Further details on the business plan progress can be found in the 'Business Plan Progress Update 2022/23' report to the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel in March 2023. There are two Corporate Strategy projects under the directorate, of these both are rated green in quarter four 2022/23.

## Financial Position

9. The below table outlines the General Fund Revenue Budget monitoring provisional outturn 2022/23 for the Customer and Digital Directorate:

<b>Provisional Outturn 2022/23 – Customer and Digital</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Original Budget</b>	5,721,100
<b>Agreed changes</b>	(200,100)
<b>Amended Budget</b>	5,521,000
<b>Current budget</b>	5,521,000
<b>Provisional outturn</b>	5,486,366
<b>Variance</b>	<b>(34,634)</b>




<b>Variance</b>	<b>0.63%</b>
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10. The biggest spend in this directorate is on staffing which is due to the directorate holding all front facing services and the waste contract.

11. The original budget has decreased by £200k in 2022/23 due to transfer of insurance budgets to Policy & Governance and shared services restructure budget realisation.
12. The provisional outturn for Customer and Digital shows an underspend of £35k for 2022/23 giving a 0.63% variance against the amended budget. The key variances to note are:
  - £145k net underspend on staffing costs across the directorate. This reflects the fact that some posts have remained vacant within Customer Transformation and ICT Services, offset to some extent by the costs of agency staff and the pay award for 2022/23 compared to the 2% included in the base budget.
  - £92k reduction in provision for Council Tax bad debts offsetting shortfall in recovery of Council Tax summons income of £39k.
  - £41k unbudgeted income received for New Burdens grants and DWP payments.
  - £36k increase in the bad debt provision for Housing Benefits, based upon an increase in the level of outstanding balances.
  - Overspend in housing benefits payments in comparison to budget. Work to be undertaken to ensure budgets are aligned with Housing Benefits forecasts.

### Performance Indicators



13. A three-colour symbol rating system is used for performance indicators to indicate status as shown in the table below:


	Performance is better than target		Worse than target but within threshold (5%)		Worse than target, outside threshold (5%)
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14. A summary of key performance information for each service within the Customer and Digital directorate is provided below:

### Corporate Strategy Indicators

15. The table below highlights the Key Corporate Strategy measures for Customer and Digital directorate:

Indicator	Polarity	Target	Performance (Q4 2022/23)	Symbol	Trend
Percentage of service requests received online	Bigger is better	40%	59.17%		<b>Better than Q4 2021/22</b>
Percentage of customers dissatisfied with the service they received from the Council	Smaller is better	20%	17.41%		<b>Worse than Q4 2021/22</b>


Indicator	Polarity	Target	Performance (Q4 2022/23)	Symbol	Trend
Percentage of household waste sent for refuse, recycling, or composting	Bigger is better	Better than 20/21 (46.9%)	<b>46.2%*</b> (Q3:2022/23)		<b>Worse than Q3 2021/22</b>

\*This indicator is reported in arrears and reflects quarter three 2022/23 performance.





16. Of the indicators reported in the corporate strategy, two are performing better than target.
17. One indicator (percentage of household waste sent for refuse, recycling, or composting) is performing worse than target but within the 5% threshold with a marginal difference of 0.7%.

### Local Indicators; Customer and Digital

#### Shared ICT

Indicator	Polarity	Target	Performance (Q4 2022/23)	Symbol	Trend
Percentage of ICT strategy projects rated green	Bigger is better	75%	<b>80%</b>		<b>Same as Q4 2021/22</b>

#### Shared Customer Services

Indicator	Polarity	Target	Performance (Q4 2022/23)	Symbol	Trend
Average time taken to process new council tax support, housing benefit claims and change in circumstances	Smaller is better	3.52 Days	<b>3.50</b>		<b>Better than Q4 2021/22</b>
Average days to process a new council tax support and housing benefit claim	Smaller is better	8.67 Days	<b>10.97 Days</b>		<b>Worse than Q4 2021/22</b>
Average days to process change in circumstances	Smaller is better	2.95	<b>2.63</b>		<b>Better than Q4 2021/22</b>
Percentage of Council Tax collected	Bigger is better	97.16%	<b>97.19%</b>		<b>Better than Q4 2021/22</b>

Indicator	Polarity	Target	Performance (Q4 2022/23)	Symbol	Trend
Percentage of Business Rates (NNDR) collected	Bigger is better	96.75%	<b>96.26%</b>	●	<b>Worse than Q4 2021/22</b>

18. The average number of days to process a new council tax support and housing benefit claim performance is below target and rated off track. This can be attributed to the number of complex cases received this year. The complex cases included claims from residents living in supported accommodation and there are often delays in receiving supplementary information to complete assessments from scheme provider. This indicator is reported year to date and performance reflects when benefit processing resources were temporarily diverted in the first and second quarters to manage the increase in customer demand as a result of governments council tax rebates. There has been an increase of 126 claims received when compared to the same time last year (Q4:2021/22). This indicator will continue to be closely monitored and will be further improved through investment in automation.

#### Streetscene and Waste Management

Indicator	Polarity	Target	Performance (Q4 2022/23)	Symbol	Trend
Percentage of litter bins emptied on time	Bigger is better	85%	<b>99.5%</b>	★	<b>Better than Q4 2021/22</b>
Percentage of street cleansing routes completed on time	Bigger is better	85%	<b>100%</b>	★	<b>Better than Q4 2021/22</b>
Percentage of grounds maintenance service requests completed on time	Bigger is better	85%	<b>80.3%</b>	▲	<b>Worse than Q4 2021/22</b>
Percentage of Streetscene service requests completed on time	Bigger is better	85%	<b>100%</b>	★	<b>Better than Q4 2021/22</b>
Percentage of call-backs completed on time	Bigger is better	95%	<b>98.21%</b>	★	<b>New for 2022/23</b>
Percentage of grass cutting work completed on time	Bigger is better	85%	<b>92% (Oct: 2022/23)</b>	N/A	<b>Worse than Oct 2021/22</b>

Indicator	Polarity	Target	Performance (Q4 2022/23)	Symbol	Trend
Percentage of winter work completed on time	Bigger is better	85%	93% (Jan:2022/23)	★	New for 2022/23

19. The percentage of grass cutting work and winter work completed on time are not reported in quarter four as both these indicators are seasonal, and work is dependent on the weather and grass growth.
20. The percentage of grounds maintenance service requests completed on time is influenced by the number of outstanding service requests at the end of March and includes service requests that have been cancelled and are no longer required. These factors have influenced the lower than expected outturn. Historic data shows that this indicator has performance above target for the previous two quarters, indicating that the quarter four performance is an anomaly. Service request will continue to be closely monitored and any outstanding request will be responded to in time.

## Projects

### Corporate Strategy Projects

21. Under the Customer and Digital directorate there are a total of two Corporate Strategy 2021/22 projects. These include:
  - Deliver an even better customer experience and increase access to services for everyone
  - Deliver street level improvements to ensure cleaner, greener streets and neighbourhoods across the borough
22. In the table below, an update on each Corporate Strategy project position for can be found below:

Project	Position Update
Deliver an even better customer experience and increase access to services for everyone	<p>This project was commissioned to improve the customer experience by redeveloping the customer environment and transforming the way that services are delivered. Through making the best use of technology and self-service this allows more focus to be on customers who need the most help and support accessing services.</p> <p>The project has achieved the following in 2021/22:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new telephony system has been implemented providing greater resilience at peak period within the service,</li> <li>• A Customer Access Charter has been adopted to replace the Customer Care Policy and sets out our approach to customer services and outlines</li> </ul>

Project	Position Update
	<p>what customers can expect from us when accessing our services,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate training to embed the Charter has been developed and will be delivered across the organisation,</li> <li>• Automation continued to deliver improved services to customers and efficiencies for the council. Examples of enhancements include increased automation for housing benefit decisions and online Single Person Discount form,</li> <li>• Service improvements continue to be developed through the alignment of systems, policies, and processes to enable a consistent customer experience across both councils,</li> <li>• A Training and Development Officer has been appointed. This role provides ongoing and sustained support to the whole team with any training and development needs.</li> </ul> <p>Any key on-going actions will be rolled into the Shared Customer Services Business Plan for 2023/24 or transferred into business as usual activity.</p>
<p>Deliver street level improvements to ensure cleaner, greener streets and neighbourhoods across the borough</p>	<p>This project has delivered key street level improvements in 2021/22, these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tackling grot spot areas across the 103 streets litter picking routes within the borough. Areas have been identified using service data and intelligence to ensure that the litter picking schedule targets the appropriate areas and they are kept clean,</li> <li>• Undertaking a recycling bins trail in the Town Centre and Astley Park, where 18 new recycling litter bins were installed on a trial basis during 2022. Following the successful trial, the recycle bins have remained in place with recyclable waste being collected weekly improve recycling within the Town Centre,</li> <li>• A programme of work was successfully delivered to create and manage wildlife corridors, plant wildflower bulbs and sow wildflower meadows. 17 meadow sites have been changed from annual to perennial flowers and 9 new sites will be sown in 2023 including planting of 10, 000 new bulbs.</li> <li>• To address weed growth, a new method of weed control has been introduced across the borough to limit the impact of herbicides. The alternative product contains up to a third less glyphosate,</li> </ul>

Project	Position Update
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data collection of waste volumes in street litter bins has been carried out and a review of waste volumes completed in February 2023. A draft report is being prepared for presentation to the Executive Member (Customer, Streetscene and Environment).</li> </ul> <p>All ongoing longer-term objectives of the project will be delivered through the business plans 2023/24.</p>

23. The Corporate Strategy 2022 has undergone a complete review and refresh to reflect the future aspirations and intentions of the Council. The Corporate Strategy 2023 was approved at Council in November 2022 and revised to focus on ensuring that Chorley is in the best possible position for the future with four new corporate priorities. These are:

- Housing where residents can live well,
- A green and sustainable borough,
- An enterprising economy with vibrant local centres in urban and rural areas,
- Healthy, safe, and engaged communities.

24. As part of the Corporate Strategy 2023/24 the following projects fall under the Customer and Digital directorate:

Project	Scope (2023/24)
Deliver improvements to public transport networks	This project will deliver year 1 of a five-year bus shelter improvement plan across the borough. Improving the look and feel of the area and providing better facilities to encourage public transport, including the potential implementation of 'living roof' bus shelters. The project will also bring forward an options paper identifying opportunities for a community car-based scheme for areas where bus services are limited.

### Climate change and air quality

25. The work noted in this report impacts the climate change and sustainability targets of the Councils Green Agenda and all environmental considerations and measures are applied to development projects.

### Equality and diversity

26. Equality and Diversity is embedded within the corporate strategy and how the council acts. An equality impact assessment was undertaken as part of the corporate plan refresh and should be carried out for each respective project.

### Risk

27. There are service level risk registers contained with the GRACE risk management system recording risk for the directorate. These are regularly monitored through



Directorate Management Team, where risks are discussed, reviewed, and updated according to service needs and the current risk context.

### **Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer**

28. The financial performance is as reported in points 9 to 12 and is consistent with that reported to Executive Cabinet as part of the Council's outturn report.

### **Comments of the Monitoring Officer**

29. This report is for information and noting. As such there are no direct legal implications arising. There are no concerns from a Monitoring officer perspective.

### **Background documents**

30. The following documents are key background items for this report:
- Corporate Strategy 2022/23
  - Business Plan Progress Update 2021/22
  - Quarter 4 performance Report 2022/23

### **Appendices**

31. There are no appendices that accompany this report.

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This decision will come into force and may be implemented five working days after its publication date, subject to being called in in accordance with the Council's Constitution.