

POLICY AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY PANEL

Thursday, 24 November 2022

CABINET

Thursday, 8 December 2022

CORPORATE SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT

Report of the Resource Manager

Recommendations

For Policy and Performance:

- (1) It is recommended that the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Panel note the service performance position of the Council for the second quarter of the year making any recommendations to Cabinet as appropriate.**

For Cabinet:

- (2) It is recommended that Cabinet note the service performance of the Council for the second quarter of 2022/23 and consider any recommendations from Policy and Performance Scrutiny Panel.**
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Summary

This report presents the Council's operational performance position for the second quarter (Q2) of 2022/23 and highlights significant and emerging performance issues. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for service areas are outlined in Appendix A of the report.

Statutory Powers

Local Government and Housing Act 1989, Sections 41 and 42 Local Government Act 1972, Section 151 Local Government Act 1972

Strategic Implications

1. Regular monitoring and management of the Council's performance is key to ensuring delivery against strategic objectives set out in the Council's

Corporate Plan 2015-2025, delivery of actions in the Corporate Action Plan 22/23, and contributes to the management of corporate risk. This report details key performance indicators which allow the monitoring of performance trends. Individual performance measures are being actively managed by service managers with the support of the Resource Management team.

Introduction

2. This report brings together the context of the Council's strategic ambitions and its performance working towards them. Appendix A details individual key performance measures (KPI) for each service area categorised into 5 themes: Environment, Economy, Health & Wellbeing, Housing Development and Organisation. The Corporate KPI Review for 2022/23 was scrutinised by the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Panel in July 2022 and approved by Cabinet in September 2022. The implementation of the recommendations is underway and performance reporting will be adjusted from the third quarter of 2022/23.
3. Traditionally, this report draws together both financial and qualitative performance. With recent increases to the continuous improvement target, as reported to Cabinet in October 2022, revised budgets are being worked on to reflect emerging efficiencies that can be included. This includes looking at removing vacant posts where possible and making other savings and maximising income in 2022/23 where possible. Whilst this work is ongoing, financial monitoring will be reported to Cabinet alongside monitoring of the achievement of the continuous improvement target plans.

Performance Overview

4. Performance is balanced, with some services performing well considering the difficult economic environment and continued challenges in the labour market, with other services needing further support. The Waste and Recycling service area continues to be challenged by the difficulty in recruiting operational staff, which is a nationwide problem. Where areas of challenge have been identified, action is being taken to mitigate impacts and improve performance in the short and longer term.
5. The Council continues to maintain performance whilst addressing immediate external threats, as well as focusing a considerable amount of effort in the continual improvement of services (Case Management, Assets, recruitment and retention). Whilst responding to imminent challenges, the Council continues to refine its strategic and service planning for 2023/24 and remains committed to improving its approach to prioritising and planning.
6. During the quarter, the Council carried out Operation Bridge, following the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The response required a cross-Council combined effort and implications from the additional bank holiday were well managed.
7. The 'Cost of Living Crisis', which is pushing more residents into poverty, and the pressure on welfare services for the most vulnerable is greater than ever.

All homelessness prevention, housing and community development services are seeing higher demand and a greater complexity of cases.

8. The occupancy rate for tenable space at Eastleigh Business Centre remains lower than 65% and as such, a red status. This is having a continued financial impact and the necessary actions to improve the position are being considered.
9. The number of Customers with outstanding Council Tax account queries older than 15 days continues to rise. The position was driven by an increase in demand and staff changes within the area. The service is considering alternative resource provisions and is seeking to carefully balance its competing demands. Following the completion of the Case Management review, the Revenues Specialist team will be undertaking a full process review to identify further improvements which will improve performance for the customer.
10. Attendance and participation performance has been varied across the range of activities provided. The number of visits to Places Leisure Eastleigh and the attendance at HealthWorks sessions remains impacted by the recovery from COVID-19, particularly with the slower return to normal activities for some of the targeted customer base. The agreed changes from the recent KPI review will help to provide further clarity from the third quarter of 2022/23.
11. The average number of working days lost due to sickness absence during the second quarter is a concern and has remained red for this period. The biggest area affected by staff sickness levels is Neighbourhood Services. This is to be expected, due to the physical nature of the role, with many of the cases relating to muscular-skeletal issues. Managers continue to work with staff on wellness plans and the Human Resources team provide regular wellness bulletins and support to the staff impacted.
12. The percentage of invoices paid within 10 days during the second quarter of 2022/23 reflects the service improvements made. The impact of putting in place detailed training and processing targets for staff has seen the percentage of invoices paid in 10 days increased to 85% in July, 77% during August and 83% in September, all of which result in a green status.
13. The average case duration for cases raised via the Member's Hub does fluctuate, dependant on the nature of the enquiries which is shown through the difference in performance across the quarter. Further reminders have been given to staff concerning efficient action, and to request that cases are closed promptly once the resolution has been confirmed, with Councillor agreement.

Recruitment and Retention

14. The impact of staff turnover continues to be felt and the Council is having to work flexibly to maintain service provision given the challenging environment. Part of the Continuous Improvement work is considering service delivery against resources and prioritising to ensure outputs needed match resources

employed. This could result in changes to service provision. Corporate turnover has started to fall slightly following the plateau earlier in the year. Career advancement remains the main reason for resigning and the extremely buoyant employment market means there are a lot of opportunities for people to apply for, often at a higher salary.

15. Difficulty in recruiting to some vacancies does risk a negative impact on service performance and the delivery of some projects. Services are managing where necessary with short-term measures, such as agency staff or a temporary reprioritisation of workload. The training and development of existing staff is a key priority.
16. Work on the revised People Strategy continues and the project seeks to improve the recruitment position. Targeted recruitment campaigns for posts that have proved hard to fill have continued and the Council has made changes to its website to clearly highlight the benefits of working for the Council to potential applicants. The Council continues to focus on improving its retention position to reduce the need for recruitment and to support the career development of existing staff. The Chief Executive intends to initiate a Pay and Progression Review on the various issues listed above including the revitalisation of in-house training and career development, with consultation starting in December.

Risk Assessment

17. The purpose of the performance monitoring process is to give Councillors and the public the assurance that the Council's performance is closely monitored and is performing broadly in line with service targets. Risks to service performance are identified through the monitoring of performance indicators, with mitigations put in place if performance deteriorates.

Equality and Diversity Implications

18. The Equality Act is not relevant to the decision in this report because the decision does not relate to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, or fostering good relations between different people. Therefore, it is considered that for this decision the Equality Duty does not need to be addressed and an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has not been carried out.

Climate Change and Environmental Implications

19. There is no direct impact, positive or negative, to climate change or the environment. However, effective performance enables the delivery of the Council's Strategic Objectives which include supporting the Climate Change Programme.

Conclusion

20. The significant performance areas outlined within this report, together with the overview of service KPIs contained within Appendix A, give Councillors an

opportunity to understand current performance and risks affecting the delivery of services to customers. Whilst the Council is continuing to deliver a comprehensive range of services, there are some performance areas needing attention, and rectification of these issues is important in ensuring the Council is continuing to meet customer needs.

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RESOURCE MANAGER

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Appendices Attached: 1

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - SECTION 100D

The following is a list of documents which disclose facts or matters on which this report or an important part of it is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. This list does not include any published works or documents which would disclose exempt or confidential information.

* List Background Papers or state None.