

Quarter 3 Performance Exceptions

Audit & Scrutiny Committee - Thursday 11 April 2024

Report of: Head of Policy & Communications

Purpose: For information

Publication status: Open

Wards affected: All

Executive summary:

This is an exception report about the Council's four policy committees' performance and risk management. The aim is to support the Audit & Scrutiny Committee to monitor the Council's performance and delivery of services.

This report supports the Council's priority of: Building a better council.

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Recommendation to committee:

To review and note the policy committees' performance exceptions for Quarter 3 2023-2024 and the committee and corporate risks.

Reason for recommendation:

To help the committee monitor performance and risk.

Introduction and background

1. Part of the committee's role is to review and scrutinise the decisions and performance of the Council.
2. The committee receives a performance and risk exception update for each policy committee: Community Services, Planning Policy, Housing and Strategy and Resources.
3. The following performance information has been included on the basis the indicator targets have not been met.

Community Services

4. The most recent Key Performance Indicators report can be found on the [Community Services Committee](#) agenda.
5. The performance indicator for the percentage of roads, footpaths and public open spaces which the Council is responsible for maintaining and which meet the environment cleanliness standard, is off target by 5% at 90%. The target is 95%. The Council is continuing to review the level of resources appropriate for the service.

Planning Policy

6. The most recent Key Performance Indicators report can be found on the [Planning Policy Committee](#) agenda.
7. There were no exceptions in the most recent report, with all targets for nationally set planning indicators met.

Housing

8. The most recent Key Performance Indicators can be found on the [Housing Committee](#) agenda.
9. HO2b: The average time taken to re-let local authority sheltered housing was 33.5 days against a target of 30 days. While slightly over target by 3.5 days, it is a significant reduction of 33.7 days when compared to the same period in 2022/2023 when the average re-let time was 67.2 days.
10. HO4: The number of households living in temporary accommodation is currently 62, so off target by 32 households. The target is 30 households. The increase in the number of households in temporary accommodation reflects the current difficulties being experienced in successfully preventing or relieving homelessness and the lack of affordable housing.
11. HO5: The number of households in urgent need (bands A&B) on the Housing Register is currently 475, which is off target by 200 households. The target is 275.

Strategy and Resources

12. The most recent Key Performance Indicators report can be found on the [Strategy & Resources Committee](#) agenda.
13. Three KPIs did not meet their target for the quarter, SR4, SR5 and SR10.
14. SR4: Days taken to process housing benefit/council tax change events was off target at 15.33 days. The target is 12 days. The target has not been met in this quarter due to an issue in the NEC system, which has now been fixed. As a result, there were a higher number of more complex cases to resolve. The service is currently on target for the current quarter.
15. SR5: The number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence (long and short-term) was just off target by 0.83 days at 7.93 days. This figure continues to reduce each quarter, for the same quarter last year sickness absence was 11.36 days. The target is 7.1 days.
16. SR10: The percentage of calls answered within 60 seconds by Customer Services was off target by 16.40% at 63.60%. The target is 80%. This was an improvement on the previous quarter.

Risk headlines

17. The policy committees and [Corporate Risk Register](#) have details of actions taken and being taken to mitigate against risk. Details of current red risks are provided below.

[Planning Policy Committee Risk Register](#)

- P1: Lack of up-to-date adopted district wide local plan makes resisting inappropriate green belt applications more challenging.
- P2: Lack of five year housing land supply, including gypsy and traveller land.
- P3: Lack of capacity in planning team, difficulty in recruiting permanent staff and issues with IT systems negatively impacts performance.

[Housing Committee Risk Register](#)

- H1: Council fails to deliver the target number of properties in the Council House Building Programme, due to poor performance of the contractor, planning delays, unplanned costs, availability of materials and utility providers.

[Community Services Committee Risk Register](#)

- CS2: Loss of Goods Vehicle Operating Licence at the depot (due to lack of resilience)

- CS3: Delays in monitoring council owned trees and impact of Ash dieback creates greater risk of tree falls.

[Strategy and Resources Risk Register](#)

- There are no red risks.

18. A new [Risk Management Strategy](#) was approved by the Strategy and Resources Committee in January. The risk registers will be updated for the next committee cycle to reflect the agreed changes.

Key implications

Comments of the Chief Finance Officer

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The risks identified in the corporate risk registers reported to individual policy committees and their mitigating actions may lead to additional resources and cost implications for the Council if they materialise. Once identified, the financial impact of any additional cost pressures to reduce risk and / or improve performance will be shown in the monthly budget monitoring reports.

Budget monitoring reports will also identify and quantify where possible financial risks to delivering the budget, along with mitigating actions. Ensuring the Council has adequate reserves and contingencies to respond to these risks is a key element of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

Comments of the Head of Legal Services

There is no statutory duty to report regularly to councillors on the Council's performance, but as a best value authority under the Local Government Act 1999, the Council has a statutory duty to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness. Regular reporting of performance can assist the Council to demonstrate best value.

Equality

This report contains no proposals that would disadvantage any particular minority groups.

Climate change

This report contains no proposals that would impact on the Council's commitment to climate change.

Appendices

None

Background papers

None

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