

Quarter 3 Corporate Performance & Risks - Strategy & Resources

Strategy & Resources Committee Thursday, 25 March 2021

Report of: Acting Chief Executive

Purpose: For information

Publication status: Open

Wards affected: All

Executive summary:

- The appendices to this report contain data on the Committee's key performance indicators and risks for Quarter 3 2020/21, to enable the Committee to monitor how the Council is delivering the services for which it is responsible.
- The Committee is also invited to review the Strategic Plan update in Section 4.
- A performance indicator summary table has been included in Section 5. The aim is to provide an opportunity for Officers and Members to review and feedback on the current performance indicators (and targets) and put forward any amendments for 2021/22.

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

Contact officer William Mace Performance Specialist
wmace@tandridge.gov.uk –

Recommendation to Committee:

A - That the Quarter 3 2020/21 performance and risks for the Strategy & Resources Committee be noted.

B – That amendments to performance targets as proposed in Section 5 be adopted.

Reason for recommendation:

To support the Committee to monitor and manage its performance and risks.

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. The Council previously reported its performance and risk data across its four policy committees via committee delivery plans. These plans came to an end in March 2020.
- 1.2. Since April 2020 performance and risk reports have been presented to each policy committee at the end of each quarter. The reports include a covering report and an appendix with individual performance charts and commentary for each performance indicator, and the committee's risk register.
- 1.3. A summary table of the committee's key performance indicators and their targets is proposed, in this report, to be included in the Quarter 3 report each year. The aim is to enable officers and Members to provide feedback on the indicators and their targets to inform the following year's performance and risk reports.

2. Notes on performance and risk data

- 2.1. See Appendix A and Appendix B for the Strategy & Resources Quarter 3 (2020/21) performance data and risk register respectively.
- 2.2. Wherever possible the most recent data has been included in the appendices, regardless of whether it technically falls into the reported quarter. However, due to the committee report timelines, there may be occasions where data is not available in time for the committee report. In these cases, the data will be provided in the next scheduled report.

3. Quarter 3 headlines

- 3.1. Performance
 - 3.1.1. Out of 11 performance indicators:
 - 6 are **on target**;
 - 5 are **off target**:
 - staff sickness overall (by 1.45 days);

- the percentage of calls answered within 60 seconds by Customer Services (by 12%);
- number of overdue complaints (by 4);
- number of Freedom of Information Requests (FOIs) (by 20);
- general accounts receivable debt collected (by 12%).

3.1.2. See Appendix A for details.

3.2. Risk

3.2.1. 5 out of 10 Corporate risks are rated as red, they are:

- Inability of Council to make savings as identified in the Medium Term Financial Strategy and to balance the Council Budget in 2021/22 and 2022/23;
- Commercial tenants and businesses unable to make payments to the Council, due to Covid-19;
- No ICT disaster recovery solution in place;
- Local plan is found unsound by the Inspector;
- The Council's Business as Usual capacity is constrained due to lack of resources.

3.2.2. See Appendix B for details.

3.2.3. 10 out of 35 Strategy & Resources Committee risks are rated as red. The ones that are not listed on the corporate risk register are:

- Inability of Council to make savings as identified in the Medium Term Financial Strategy and to balance the Council Budget in 2021/22 and 2022/23;
- Increased demand on the Revenues Team collecting and recovering Council Tax due to increased financial hardship being experienced by significant numbers of Council Tax Payers;
- Commercial tenants and businesses unable to make payments to the Council, due to Covid19;
- Increased demand on the Business & Income Team collecting and recovering Council Tenant Rent and Service Charges due to increased financial hardship being experienced by significant numbers of Council Tenants;
- No ICT disaster recovery solution in place;
- Significant increase in sickness absence levels amongst staff;
- Inadequate resource in emergency planning to deal with the increased demand;
- Increase in unplanned expenditure;
- Inability of residents to contact the Council due to office being closed, IT issues and/or phone lines busy;

- The Council's Business as Usual capacity is constrained due to lack of resources.

3.2.4. See Appendix C for details.

4. Strategic Plan update

- 4.1 Strategic Plan actions within the remit of this Committee have been reviewed to ensure that all are on track for delivery. The following new or additional milestones have been identified:
- (i) A workshop to consider new Values and Behaviours for Members and Officers is being scheduled for March 2021;
 - (ii) A detailed plan in relation to commercial opportunities will be developed by Autumn 2021, as part of the budget process;
 - (iii) The potential for sharing with other authorities will be reviewed in relation to all services as part of the budget process for 2022/23;
 - (iv) All HR benefits will be reviewed by the end of March 2022;
 - (v) A strategy for economic recovery will be developed by the end of November 2021.
- 4.2 An update report on progress in delivering the Strategic Plan will be brought back to the first full Committee meeting of the new municipal year.

5. Performance indicator summary table

- 5.1. The Performance Specialist and other officers will take notes on Members feedback during the committee meeting, and feedback as necessary
- 5.2. Strategy & Resources 2020/21 key performance indicators:

Indicator	Directorate	What does it measure?	Why is it a useful?	Current target	Rationale for target	Comments	Proposed amendments for next year
Percentage of Council Tax Collected	Communities <i>Specialist Services</i>	Percentage of council tax collected: calculated as a cumulative year-to-date figure, from the total council tax payments received compared to the total amounts payable in that year.	Allows for monthly performance monitoring and benchmarking against other Surrey District & Brough Councils.	98.7% (annual target)	This is a historic target but still remains relevant given the current collection restrictions brought about by the COVID legislation.	None.	None.
Non-domestic rates collected	Communities <i>Specialist Services</i>	The percentage of non-domestic rates due for the financial year which were received by the Council: Percentage calculated, as a cumulative year-to-date figure, from the total	Allows for monthly performance monitoring and benchmarking against other Surrey District & Brough Councils	98.6% (annual target)	This is a historic target but remains relevant given the current collection restrictions brought about by the COVID legislation.	None.	None.

Indicator	Directorate	What does it measure?	Why is it a useful?	Current target	Rationale for target	Comments	Proposed amendments for next year
		business rates payments received compared to the total amounts payable in that year.					
General Accounts Receivable Debt Collected	Finance	Percentage calculated, as a cumulative year-to-date figure, from the total Accounts Receivable payments received compared with the cumulative year to date amounts invoiced/billed in.	To ensure that overdue debts are recovered consistently in a timely manner in accordance with policy.	81%	Historical target based on previous years debt collection.	A recent audit has highlighted improvements in the reporting capability of Agresso to provide more proactive data.	None.
Days taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit new claims	Communities <i>Specialist Services</i>	Days taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit new claims.	Ensures claims are administered within statutory timeframes.	30 days	National target.	None.	None.

Indicator	Directorate	What does it measure?	Why is it a useful?	Current target	Rationale for target	Comments	Proposed amendments for next year
Days taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax change events	Communities <i>Specialist Services</i>	Days taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax change events.	Ensures claims are administered within statutory timeframes.	12 days	National target.	None.	None.
The number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence (long and short-term)	Resources <i>HR</i>	The number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence (long and short-term). The figure reflects performance over the previous 12 months, i.e. a rolling annual figure.	Sickness absence is a cost to the Council. Identifying genuine absence helps to put preventative measures in place and ensure early return to work.	7.1 days	Aim is to reduce sickness absence year on year.	None.	None.
The number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence (short-term only – 20 days or less)	Resources <i>HR</i>	The number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence (short-term only – 20 days or less). This figure reflects performance	Sickness absence is a cost to the Council. Identifying genuine absence helps to put preventative measures in	4.1 days	Aim is to reduce sickness absence year on year.	The impact of the pandemic continues to affect sickness absence due to remote working and social isolation. The Council offers support	None.

Indicator	Directorate	What does it measure?	Why is it a useful?	Current target	Rationale for target	Comments	Proposed amendments for next year
		over the previous 12 months, i.e. a rolling annual figure.	place and ensure early return to work.			to all employees via the Mental Health First Aid scheme and Employee Assistance Programme, as well as occupational health referrals as required.	
Staff turnover	Resources <i>HR</i>	Percentage of voluntary leavers. The figure reflects performance over the previous 12 months, i.e. a rolling annual figure.	Employee turnover can have negative impact on an organisation's performance. Understanding the reasons behind staff turnover can inform recruitment and retention initiatives and increase employee retention.	15%	Aim is to reduce voluntary staff turnover figures year on year.	Voluntary staff turnover figure is down when compared to 2019/20. However, the impact of the pandemic may be impacting, as staff reluctant to move jobs in uncertain times.	None.

Indicator	Directorate	What does it measure?	Why is it a useful?	Current target	Rationale for target	Comments	Proposed amendments for next year
The percentage of calls answered within 60 seconds by Customer Services	Resources <i>Customer Services</i>	The percentage of calls answered within 60 seconds by Customer Services & Case Teams.	Measures the response time that customers have to wait to speak to an advisor.	80%	The target of 80% within 1 minute was set prior to the Customer First project. It was set in line with other District and Boroughs across Surrey.	In the current climate and with the budgeted resources, it is unlikely that we will ever achieve this target. To meet the target would require significantly increasing the resources in the team and reducing the volume of calls considerably.	Consequently we propose setting a more realistic target of 65% of calls answered within 60 seconds, and set a level of abandoned calls under 10%. This will need to be supported in conjunction with the business to improve the number of online forms to enable residents to be able to self-serve more.
Number of overdue complaints	Resources <i>Business Improvement & Service Delivery</i>	Number of overdue complaints at the beginning of each month.	To ensure compliance with the complaints policy.	1	New indicator: currently baselined to 10% of November 2020 data.	A cohort of staff are receiving effective complaints handling training in March 2021.	None.

Indicator	Directorate	What does it measure?	Why is it a useful?	Current target	Rationale for target	Comments	Proposed amendments for next year
Number of overdue Freedom of Information Requests (FOIs)	Resources <i>Business Improvement & Service Delivery</i>	Number of overdue FOIs at the beginning of each month	To ensure compliance with the FOI policy.	4	New indicator: currently baselined to 10% of November 2020 data.	Additional training on redaction is currently being undertaken across the case teams.	None.

6. Key implications

6.1. Comments of the Chief Finance Officer

- 6.1.1. Costings for projects are individually costed as projects come forward and monitored throughout the life of the project. It is possible that the impact of Covid-19 will add additional costs to projects and delay the speed of implementation. The key risks, their likelihood, impact and mitigation are identified in the Risk section of the appendix.

6.2. Comments of the Head of Legal Services

- 6.2.1. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report, but the report does provide Members with an overview of the achievement of targets in the past quarter and highlights risk management considerations where appropriate.
- 6.2.2. Freedom of Information remains an important element of the Council's commitment to transparency and accountability. Performance has undoubtedly been impacted by the increase in lengthy requests during the pandemic and as a consequence is off target by twenty. There appears to be a resource issue in relation to staff who are willing and able to take on the redaction process in the FOI workstream. This has also fed into a delay in responses. The Freedom of Information Officer changed in January 2021 from Legal Specialist to the Head of Legal and Monitoring Officer, due to the departure of the previous post holder. It is hoped that ongoing work on policy, training and systems can improve the Council's performance in this area.

6.3. Other corporate implications

- 6.3.1. Not applicable.

6.4. Equality

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

6.5. Climate change

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

7. Appendices

- 7.1. Appendix 'A' – Quarter 3 2020/21 Strategy & Resources Performance Charts
- 7.2. Appendix 'B' – Quarter 3 2020/21 Corporate Risk Register

7.3. Appendix 'C' – Quarter 3 2020/21 Strategy & Resources Committee Risk Register

8. Background papers

8.1. None.

----- end of report -----