

<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>CABINET – CORPORATE SERVICES</b>
<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	<b>10 APRIL 2014</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2013/14: END OF FEBRUARY 2014</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR, ECONOMY, COMMUNITIES &amp; CORPORATE</b>

**1. Classification**

Open

**2. Key Decision**

This is not a key decision.

**3. Wards Affected**

County-wide

**4. Purpose**

To review performance for the first 11 months of 2013/14 and to agree any further actions arising to address performance issues.

**5. Recommendation**

**THAT: Performance be considered.**

**6. Alternative Options**

6.1 Cabinet may choose to review performance more or less frequently than quarterly; Cabinet may request alternative actions to address any identified areas of under-performance, including referral to the relevant overview & scrutiny committee.

**7. Reasons for Recommendations**

7.1 To provide assurance that progress is being made towards achievement of the agreed outcomes and service delivery targets, and that the reasons for important areas of actual or potential under-performance are understood and are being addressed to the Cabinet's satisfaction

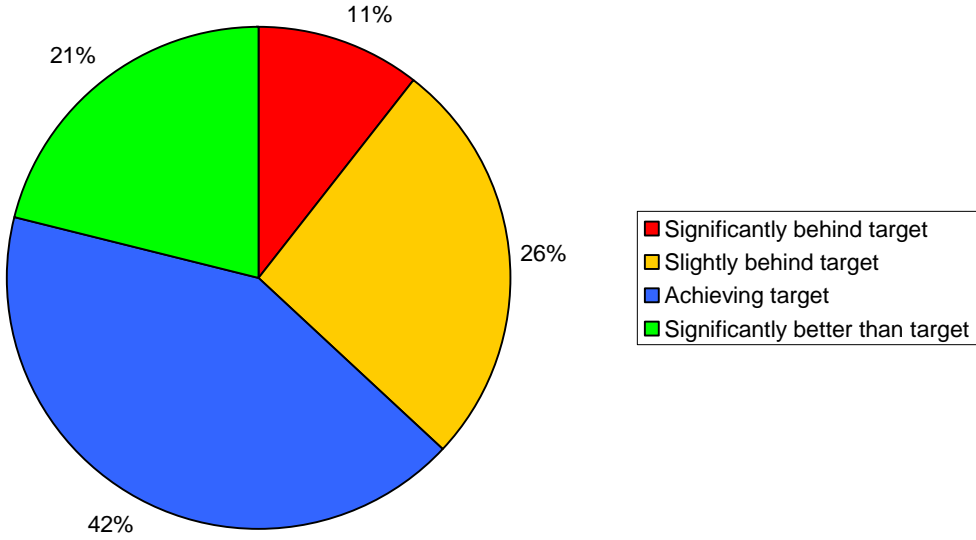
**8. Key Considerations**

8.1 Council approved the 2013-15 Corporate Plan in November 2012, framed around the two key priorities of: creating and maintaining a successful economy; and enabling residents to be independent and lead fulfilling lives with resources focussed on supporting the most vulnerable. The supporting delivery plan for 2013/14 was approved by Cabinet in March 2013.

8.2 Progress is measured through a number of critical performance measures. These have been selected because they demonstrate progress towards achievement of the council's priorities, as well as provide an overview of the council's performance from a resident's perspective. Where monitoring information is available on an annual basis these indicators will only be reported at the point that the information becomes available. A table identifying performance of those measures reported in-year is attached at Appendix A.

**Overview**

*% of measures achieving target*



8.3 Almost 63% of these performance measures are now judged to either achieve or exceed target.

8.4 Furthermore, spend is now forecast to be on budget as at the end of January 2014 (£2.4m overspend at end of October 2013).

**Create and maintain a successful economy**

*Performance Challenges*

8.5 The condition of the county's roads has increasingly become a significant local issue. In July 2013, Cabinet gave approval for investment of an extra £20m in highway maintenance over the next two financial years. However, the recent floods caused considerable further damage to roads across the county, including a significant increase in the number of Category 1 defects. In accordance with the Highway Maintenance Plan, all Category 1 defects are made safe within 24 hours. Furthermore, over 95% are actually fixed within that duration. Data from September 2013 to February 2014 shows that over 92% have been repaired within 24 hours since commencement of the new contract. There has been a marked improvement in performance during 2014 with over 98% of category 1 defects repaired within 24 hours during February.

8.6 In light of the damage to our roads, Herefordshire has been awarded additional funding of over £3.5m to make repairs during 2014/15. Furthermore, under the Bellwin scheme, it is anticipated that works to the highway totalling up to £3m will be included in the Council's claim. Further funding has also been announced for local authorities to bid for to fund more maintenance in 2014/15. It is hoped that these works will help return part of our highways network to an acceptable standard. Investment in highway maintenance will be targeted in accordance with best practice and the delivery of this programme will be monitored during the coming financial year.

8.7 The percentage of those in employment is holding relatively steadily at present, the February figures for NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) has exceeded the target of less than 8%. Management Board continues to recognise that this is a key issue for the whole Council, and part of the picture of employment in Herefordshire. This is relatively positive, overall, but is a key issue for young adults in Herefordshire and is being addressed by having a whole Council focus on improvement, as part of our approach to the economy

Risks:

8.8 The Council does not currently have a 5 year housing land supply. A 5 year housing land supply together with an adopted local plan is increasingly the governments' key measure for an effective planning service. The lack of a 5 year housing land supply is an increasingly important political matter locally.

By definition, a 5 year housing land supply is a variable matter. In particular it is largely made up (or not as the case may be) by a combination of sites under construction and those with extant planning permissions. This situation in the county has changed significantly in recent years. The adoption of the LDF (the new style Local Plan), along with the granting of planning permission for the required number of houses will give us a 5 year housing land supply.

In particular, the risks are as follows:

1. The council will be left in a position where it will have no choice other than to grant planning permissions for sites not specifically allocated in the LDF.
2. There will be particular pressure/scrutiny on the decision of the Planning Committee on residential schemes.
3. The coordinated and phased release of land for housing development in the LDF will be undermined.
4. The uncoordinated granting of planning permissions for residential development will affect the council's ability to secure infrastructure improvements through the means currently anticipated.

8.9 The target for the number of high risk food inspections undertaken by Environmental Health is lower than the statutory minimum. However, despite this, the target cannot be reached with 206 high risk inspections achieved year to date compared to a target of 1220.

8.10 **Welfare Reform – Update**

- **Council Tax Reduction**

- Due to in changes in legislation, support for Council Tax was localised from April 2013 and, at the same time, central government funding was reduced by 10%. Whilst protection was provided for pensioners, each Local Authority had considerable discretion over its own Reduction Scheme for working age claimants. Herefordshire Council decided to reduce the maximum liability Council Tax Reduction (CTR) to 91.5% meaning that every working age claimant had to pay a minimum of 8.5%. Second Adult Rebate was also abolished. The outcome of this was that all working age claimants in receipt of CTR had to pay a higher Council Tax proportion of their council tax than in previous years.

Statistics

Council Tax Benefit expenditure 2012/13	£13,081,502
Council Tax Reduction awarded 2013/14	£12,418,294
Total CTR caseload	14,275
	49% pensioners

	51% working age
Working age subject to 8.5% reduction in CTR compared to CTB	7270
Working age previously in receipt of 100% CTB	5000 approx

- In addition, changes, approved by the council will further reduce support available for working age claimants from April 2014.
- From this date, CTR for working age claimants will be based on 84% of liability. This means that all working age claimants will have to pay at least 16% of their Council Tax. There will also be a further reduction for working age claimants who live in a property banded, E,F,G and H. In these cases CTR will be based on 84% of a Band D equivalent property.
- Customers were also advised of the change in law to allow CTAX to be paid by 12 instalments upon request. Approximately 1,500 customers responded and opted to change from 10 to 12 instalments.
- 12 cash instalments dates - 15th and 26<sup>th</sup> of each month
- The net effect of the above has been that collection rates have remained broadly unchanged. 98.2% as at the end of February 2014, compared to 98% as at the end of February 2013.

- **Spare room subsidy**

- From April 2013, claimants of working age who rented in the social sector became subject to the size criteria regulations, otherwise known as the 'spare room subsidy' or 'bedroom tax'

Statistics

Number of households affected	1002	
Under occupation 1 Room 14% reduction	833	Average reduction £13.29 wkly
Under occupation 2 Room 25% reduction	169	Average reduction £24.17 wkly

- This has reduced Housing Benefit entitlement for those affected by these rules but the consequences are unclear at this stage

- **Benefit Cap**

- The national roll out of the Benefit Cap took place on 15 July 2013 and its aim was that working age claimants should not be in receipt of more benefit than the income of an average family in work. Where benefit exceeds this, Housing Benefit is reduced to bring their benefit income back below that level.
- As of February 2014, 31 of our claimants were affected by the benefit cap and they had an average reduction of £45.74 per week in their Housing Benefit entitlement.

- **Discretionary Housing Payment**

- As a result of these changes, the government has allocated Herefordshire Council additional funds via DHPs to help those adversely affected by these changes. As at 28<sup>th</sup> February £144,920 DHP had been paid, compared to £81,665 for all of 2012/13.

Achievements:

- 8.11 The number of major planning applications dealt with within the 13 week requirement fell from 75% in December to 46% in January. However, as the statutory target to report to DCLG is now 30% (previously 60%), the year to date target is being met

(54%).

8.12 Good progress is being made on the 10 major projects within the Economic Development Strategy.

- The Hereford Enterprise Zone (HEZ) site masterplan has been produced and delivered a site wide schematic for site layouts and infrastructure. This element of the plan has been completed. A series of more detailed works are being undertaken on specific issues such as landscaping, plot specific infrastructure requirements, and transport interventions.
- The Economic Summit held in late February 2014 was an opportunity to engage with the business community and establish some of their priorities to assist the county's growth. This information will be used to inform the production of an Economic Development Masterplan. Senior officers from representative services are meeting in March to plan the production and scope of the Masterplan.
- The Inward Investment contract has achieved a significant number of active enquires for the Enterprise Zone in specific business sectors that match with the Zone priorities. This has produced a pipeline of enquires that are being actively managed. The future focus of the contract is being considered by the Zone team to ensure that the rest of the contract delivers maximum value. Over 20 detailed discussions with foreign based businesses have been held. This number exceeds the current contracted arrangement.
- The Marches Strategic Economic Plan was submitted at the end of March. A consultation exercise has been completed with over 90 organisations attending a business summit at the end of February. Business Support forms a significant element of the emerging EU Strategic Investment Fund. Officers from Herefordshire, Shropshire, and Telford & Wrekin are meeting on a regular basis to determine the basis for the new EU funded business support programme. Issues being discussed include delivery mechanisms, provision of grants and other financial support, access to business information, encouragement of innovation and entrepreneurship. A new programme will be drawn up by September 2014.
- Officers are working with colleagues from across the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to draw together proposals for the LEP Strategic Economic Plan and the EU Investment Strategy. This will maximise the amount of external funding brought into the county.
- The delivery of affordable housing has seen an increase over the last 12 months, with 35% being negotiated successfully with private developers as a standard provision. During 2013/14, 98 homes were completed in Hereford City, 9 in market towns and 8 in rural villages. Within this, 15 homes have been delivered specifically to meet the needs of more complex vulnerable households for older persons, those with learning disabilities and single people under 35 years.
- The City Link Road programme continues to progress. The Compulsory Purchase Order Statement of Case was submitted on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2014. The Public Inquiry is scheduled to commence on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2014.
- The Destination Hereford project is progressing with planned activities for 2014 underway, including the promotion of sustainable modes of transport and the delivery of new cycle lanes. A schools travel officer has recently been appointed in partnership with Sustrans to intensify our work with schools. Works have started to upgrade Newmarket Street in advance of the new development opening in April. Weekly meetings continue to be held between Herefordshire Council, Balfour Beatty Living Places, Sir Robert McAlpine, Fitzgeralds and Emergency Services to manage and monitor traffic management so as to ensure minimal impact to the public.
- Development of the Herefordshire Archive and Research Centre (HARC) is progressing and is due to be completed in September 2014.
- An application has been submitted to DECC's Green Deal Communities Fund

seeking £1m capital funding to develop a Green Deal in Herefordshire. The proposal is for community led promotion and the provision on financial incentives to take up Green Deal plans. A decision is awaited.

- Plans to develop a joint Energy from Waste facility with Worcestershire County Council to treat residual waste were approved by Cabinet in December. This is progressing with financial close expected by May 2014. Although a change to the EPC contractor (the design and construction company) is expected, financial close should not be significantly delayed.

***Enable residents to be independent and lead fulfilling lives with resources focussed on supporting the most vulnerable***

***Adults***

*Performance Challenges:*

- 8.13 The reporting period covers the reintegration of social care operational staff from Wye Valley Trust and wider restructure of the Adult Wellbeing directorate
- 8.14 Overall, self-directed support continues to improve, however this is still below the target. More clients have been offered personal budgets or direct payments month on month, but performance is held back by the numbers of clients receiving short term or simple services such as telecare or equipment that does not go through the personalisation assessment or review process. Whilst improvements have been made to the workflow to aid accurate recording, a significant challenge is social work capacity which has increasingly had to focus on supporting the urgent care system and hospital discharges. This has resulted in less focus on increasing the numbers of people having a review and moving onto self-directed support.
- 8.15 Timeliness of adult assessments' performance continues to improve. However, as part of the transfer back to the council of operational staff, it has become evident that a backlog of assessments exist which will need to be worked through and will therefore continue to affect performance on this indicator until cleared. Additional capacity is being considered to address this issue. In addition, the assessment process has been redesigned to reduce the number of steps required which will help improve performance from April 2014.
- 8.16 Delayed transfers of care linked to hospital discharges relate to the whole system, not just to those specifically linked to adult social care. Performance in this area is monitored closely by the multi-agency Urgent Care Board; the current performance is likely to come under further pressure due to the continued high demand on the Wye Valley NHS Trust as a result of high numbers of primary care referrals.

*Risks:*

- 8.17 That increased pressure on adult social care capacity, due to the pressures within the urgent care system will continue to negatively impact on other performance indicators.
- 8.18 Impact of delays in recruitment and retention to key posts resulting in vacancies in the system and a focus on specific projects supporting savings and quality improvement delivery has meant improved achievement of performance.
- 8.19 Complex safeguarding and care home investigations requiring significant managerial and social worker practitioner capacity. This again reduces our ability to respond effectively to meet demand and therefore affects achievement of performance targets.
- 8.20 Accuracy of data and lack of performance analysis capacity focused on adult social care is slowing improvements in performance reporting and management. This is being addressed through the refocusing of resources.

*Achievements:*

- 8.21 Significant services, such as homecare and community equipment have been re-commissioned to offer improved value for money from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014.
- 8.22 Manual collection of data relating to social care productivity showing improvements in assessment and review.

- 8.23 'Making it Real' is a programme to increase personalisation and self-directed support. This has included a survey on service user satisfaction and early analysis indicates some positive responses.
- 8.24 Data quality improvements have been made and sustained, this requires continued focus.
- 8.25 The recent Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment has highlighted that there is a high volume of repeat cases heard at the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) that continue to be heard within a 12 month period. The way these repeat cases are managed may change in future which could affect the MARAC outturn data.

### ***Children***

- 8.26 Performance within this priority area of children, and more specifically vulnerable children, needs to be considered within the following context:
- Around 40,000 children live in Herefordshire;
  - 2,500 children in Herefordshire receive free school meals;
  - 4,500 children live in poverty in Herefordshire;
  - 2,500 children in Herefordshire have special educational needs;
  - 2,000 children are supported by our safeguarding services and 450 of those need the highest levels of protection from harm.

### ***Performance Challenges:***

- 8.27 As regards effective decision making and numbers of initial and core assessments being completed within timescales, there has been a steady improvement in the number of new assessments in month being completed since October with further improved performance reported for February. This has been addressed through a substantial revision of workflow and decision making processes; movement of more qualified staff into both the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and the Children in Need teams; and a review of resourcing and targeted performance plans in the Looked After Children Teams. Early improvements include action on all contacts to the MASH within 2 hours of receipt; more disciplined decision making processes; and management changes. There still remains a backlog of work within the Children in Need and Looked After Children teams. Resource has been commissioned and commenced on 17th March to address the outstanding assessments. These outstanding assessments are being closely monitored separately.
- 8.28 Recent reports from Ofsted indicate that primary schools are ranked 62 with 83.4% of schools judged as Good or Outstanding. We have a smaller percentage of outstanding schools (13.0%) than regionally (14.6%) and nationally (18.2%), bearing in mind that this is a mixture of judgements under the old and new framework. Furthermore, secondary schools are ranked 26 with 88.5% of schools judged as Good or Outstanding. Similar to primary, we have a smaller percentage of outstanding schools (9.0%) than regionally (24.2%) and nationally (25.8%), again the mix of frameworks applies.
- 8.29 Herefordshire continues to have a significantly higher rate of First Time Entrants into the Youth Justice System. It is thought that is explained by the sustained significantly higher detection rate, coupled with a lower use of community resolutions. This is also thought to influence performance throughout the youth justice system. Additional analysis regarding FTEs in Herefordshire has been commissioned by the YOS Management Board. The number of FTEs in the year ending June 2013 was 110. (Further information is contained within the West Mercia Youth Offending Performance Framework report).

### ***Risks:***

- 8.30 Turnover of interim staff in the Child Protection Teams.
- 8.31 The improvement plan does not bring about the required changes in practice rapidly

- 8.32 There is an increased number of looked after children within the care system which may lead to an increased number of high cost placements that are required to meet their needs. A tender has just been published to commission a Herefordshire Intensive Placement Service to establish a more cost effective local solution to meet the need of the most vulnerable children.

Achievements:

- 8.33 The appointment of a number of senior managers for Safeguarding & Early Help is ensuring that there is consistency in decision making and challenge, providing strong leadership and a more stable management group.
- 8.34 Revised business processes have been implemented within MASH and this has resulted in an improvement in the decision making for contacts received into the organisation within timescale; this has resulted in 99.34% of contacts being screened by a qualified practitioner within 24 hours.
- 8.35 The adoption scorecard has been published and this shows that Herefordshire is well below the national average between children entering care and being placed with adoptive family. Herefordshire is also well below the national average in the time taken in receiving court authority and matching with an adoptive family. In addition, the county has a lower than national average number of weeks for care proceedings (43 weeks in Herefordshire compared to a national average of 51 weeks).

**Customers**

Achievements:

- 8.36 New structures within Customer Services were implemented with effect from 3rd February. Consequently, all Contact Centre and Switchboard calls are now handled by one team.

As a result of the recent flooding experienced by Herefordshire, the call volume handled by the team increased significantly. Despite this, the team has been effective in managing this call volume and has reduced the abandonment rate month on month (14% in February compared to 19% in January. Work being carried out to improve website functionality will help to continue to reduce the overall number of calls received.

## **9. Community Impact**

- 9.1 Delivering the Corporate Plan is key to the council achieving the positive impact it wishes to make across Herefordshire and all its communities. Given the decreasing financial resources available to the council, monitoring performance is likely to become even more important so as to ensure that resources are best directed to meet the council's agreed priorities and statutory obligations.

## **10. Equality and Human Rights**

- 10.1 There are no specific implications in the report. As regards demonstrating due regard to the council's Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), as part of our decision making processes we ensure that individual directorates and service areas assess the potential impact of any proposed project, leading to fairer, transparent and informed decisions being made.

## **11. Financial Implications**

- 11.1 Projects and activity within the delivery plan must be delivered within the budget agreed by Council in February 2013. This includes projects and activity to deliver the cost reductions required for a balanced budget.
- 11.2 Slippage in projects and activity to deliver cost reductions will impact on the council's overall budget and will require remedial or mitigating actions to maintain financial stability.

## **12. Legal Implications**



- 12.1 When service managers seek to remodel services it is essential that a proper process is followed if the council's decision making is not to be overturned by legal challenges. This means managers must understand the needs of their customers and how changes will affect them; particularly if there will be any disproportionate impact on any group sharing a protected characteristic. All reports seeking approval for service change must include sufficient information on impact and mitigation measures to enable the decision maker to have due regard to the council's PSED and other legal obligations. It is important that legal advice is sought early on in service change projects if the risk of challenge in the courts is to be mitigated.

### **13. Risk Management**

- 13.1 The corporate plan and its delivery plan are integral elements of the council's risk management framework. Risks associated with each objective and project are entered onto the relevant service or directorate risk register and escalated to the corporate register as appropriate. Risks are reviewed by the Management Board at the regular performance meetings and any significant risks are outlined below.
- 13.2 The financial challenge and capacity to deliver the transformation necessary to both improve outcomes for people and deliver savings remains the most significant risk. This is a particular challenge in the areas of adult social care and children's safeguarding where change must be made at a pace which ensures that vulnerable people remain safe. The on-going 'priorities' work to redefine the Councils core functions, operating within significantly reduced budgets is critical to managing this risk.

### **14. Consultees**

- 14.1 None in relation to this report. The development of the delivery plan was informed by the evidence base already gathered during the year and which includes user, resident and partner feedback where available, and which this year includes the outcome of the Your Community Your Say engagement undertaken throughout the autumn/winter period and building on the Quality of Life survey results in 2012. The consultation undertaken immediately before Council set the budget in February provided a range of views which included insights into opportunities for meeting the budget pressures as well as ways in which proposals may need to be implemented to minimise any adverse impacts; these views will continue to inform delivery planning and implementation through the year, further enhanced by specific stakeholder consultations on individual projects as appropriate.

### **15. Appendices**

- 15.1 Appendix A – Critical Performance Indicators

### **16. Background Papers**

- 16.1 None identified.