

MEETING:	CABINET – CORPORATE & ASSETS
MEETING DATE:	25 JULY 2013
TITLE OF REPORT:	CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2013/15: QUARTER 1
REPORT BY:	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR PEOPLE, POLICY & PARTNERSHIP

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 quarter of 2013-14.

5. Recommendation(s)

THAT:

- (a) performance for the first quarter 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.

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 Corporate Plan 2013-15 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.

- 8.2 Progress is measured through a number of selected critical performance indicators. These critical performance measures have been selected not only because they illustrate progress towards achievement of the priorities, but also because they provide an overview of performance of the council 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 these indicators and performance to date is attached at Appendix A. An overview of key performance issues within the two key corporate priorities and customer service is below.

Create and maintain a successful economy

- 8.3 *Inward investment* - two inward investment enquiries (relating to Model Farm and the Enterprise Zone) have not come to fruition. This is not at all unusual, and no reliance had been placed on the enquiries generating firm development; it is important to note that other development opportunities at the Enterprise Zone are progressing well and works to make Model Farm 'development ready' continue. The Local Development Order for the Enterprise Zone has been completed and is in operation.
- 8.4 *Homelessness* - a slight rise in the numbers in temporary accommodation against a target to decrease numbers has been seen. This is potentially an early indicator of the likely effects of changes to the welfare system combined with ongoing national and local economic conditions. To date the position has been managed without use of high cost bed and breakfast facilities. The situation is being closely monitored to identify underlying causes/trends and inform mitigation actions
- 8.5 *Local Development Framework* – the development of this as the key planning document to support development within the county has continued in line with the agreed timetable and with pleasing levels of engagement.
- 8.6 *Connect2* – following the original contractor going into administration, an alternative contractor has been secured and the project to improve routes for cyclists and pedestrians in the city will now complete with only one month's delay.
- 8.7 *Link Road Compulsory Purchase Order* – there have been delays in central government signing off the relevant statutory instrument to enable the order to be progressed; recovery plans to address the slippage are in development.
- 8.8 *Streetscene* – this significant re-procurement of highways and public area services (such as street cleaning) has been completed to time and to budget. Whilst the mobilisation period for the successful major contractor is challenging, robust project management arrangements are in place to support effective mobilisation.

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

- 8.9 *Children's Safeguarding* - following a promising start, there has been a drop in performance re the timeliness of children's assessments. Quality assurance shows that the quality of casework remains highly variable with too many examples of inadequate practice. There has been a rise in the volume of child protection case work entering the system which is placing very heavy workload demands on social care and legal teams. Some partners are also reporting difficulties with workload. Delivery of the children's safeguarding improvement plan, including the establishment and maintenance of a stable social care workforce, remains a priority for resources and attention in this area.
- 8.10 *Educational attainment* - performance of children eligible for free school meals in Herefordshire is poor; although there has been some improvement, this has been at

the same pace as national improvement, so the gap between their attainment and their peers is not narrowing. This is a matter of local and national attention. The educational environment is changing significantly with increasing autonomy for academy and free schools. The council has significantly reduced its resources supporting schools performance improvement and good progress is being made with a strengthened Governors Association and through a new partnership arrangement with schools. The council retains the statutory responsibility for school and early years improvement including for academy and free schools; good progress has been made with developing a new Herefordshire Improvement Partnership with schools to address improvement issues.

8.11 *Adult Social Care cost reductions* – achievement of cost reductions necessary to deliver a balanced budget remain at risk, particularly in relation to:

- delivery of cost reductions in relation to Home Care services – options for the future direction of procurement and provision of Home Care services will be considered by the Cabinet Member within the next month to guide further consultation and option appraisal prior to a cabinet decision in the autumn.
- achievement of some of the projected in-year savings associated with changes to delivery of day centre facilities currently operated by Wye Valley Trust on behalf of the council will be delayed and may be reduced pending more extensive user engagement.

Good progress is being made in the review being undertaken to ensure the value of major contracts is maximised.

8.12 *Repeat Incidence of Domestic Violence* – performance in this area has previously been reported as an area of concern. The Domestic Violence and Abuse Needs Assessment has been finalised and an action plan is in place. Findings from the needs assessment are to be presented to the Safeguarding Children’s Board in July. Repeat cases heard at MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) will continue to be measured along with a suite of other measures focusing on outcomes for victims and children exposed to domestic abuse and how processes are managed around these.

8.13 *Public Health Contracts Novation* – as previously reported work is ongoing to review and recommission (where appropriate) contracts novated to the council as part of the transfer of the public health service; a robust project plan is in place to manage the completion of this work over a period of two years, with elements being prioritised for early review on a risk basis.

8.14 *NHS Health Checks* – previously poor performance has been turned around and is now exceeding regional benchmarks.

8.15 *Troubled Families approach* – the progress made with the first tranche of families means that Herefordshire is the highest reward grant claimant nationally, for the size of its cohort; the impacts of this approach are being closely monitored.

Customers

8.16 *Website satisfaction* - The percentage of website users who say they are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their visit has sharply increased. While the percentage of website users satisfied or very satisfied with their visit has declined slightly. This coincides with the introduction of a significant change to the look and feel of the website. Analysis of visitor behaviour suggests that it has become easier to complete popular tasks on the site but harder to complete less common tasks. Further work is being undertaken to design, content and functionality to address this.

8.17 *Call handling* – The volume of calls taken by the Council’s customer services team has increased. The team is answering more calls but even so 17% of calls have

been abandoned before being answered. Some of the call volume is related to council tax demands being sent out in June. It is possible that website users experiencing problems with the website have phoned customer services. If so, improvements to the website should result in reduced call volumes.

9. Community Impact

- 9.1 Delivering the Corporate Plan is central to achieving the positive impact the council wishes to make across Herefordshire and all its communities; given the decreasing financial resources available to the council, monitoring performance effectively becomes even more important to ensure that those resources are best directed to meet the agreed priorities and statutory obligations of the council.

10. Equality and Human Rights

- 10.1 There are no specific implications in the report. In demonstrating due regard to the council's Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), in 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; they include 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 overall council budget and will require remedial or mitigating actions to maintain financial stability. A detailed budget monitoring report appears elsewhere on the Cabinet agenda.

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.
- 13.2 The council (and in particular People's Services) has a CQC inspection, a peer challenge and a DfE review in July, two peer reviews in September and November

and a further potential OFSTED inspection likely during the remainder of 2013/14; such inspections and reviews, whilst invaluable to inform performance improvement, place those services under additional pressure at a time when staff resource is already thinly spread. Plans have been developed to prepare for these reviews and inspections.

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.