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| MEETING: | CABINET – CORPORATE SERVICES |
| MEETING DATE: | 21 NOVEMBER 2013 |
| TITLE OF REPORT: | CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2013/14: QUARTER 2 |
| REPORT BY: | ASSISTANT DIRECTOR ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT |

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 half of 2013-14 and agree any further actions arising to address performance issues.

5. Recommendation(s)

THAT: Performance for the first half of 2013/14 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

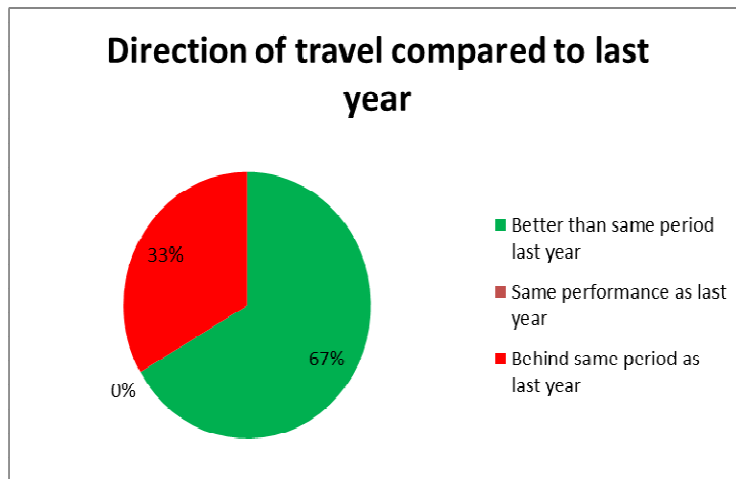
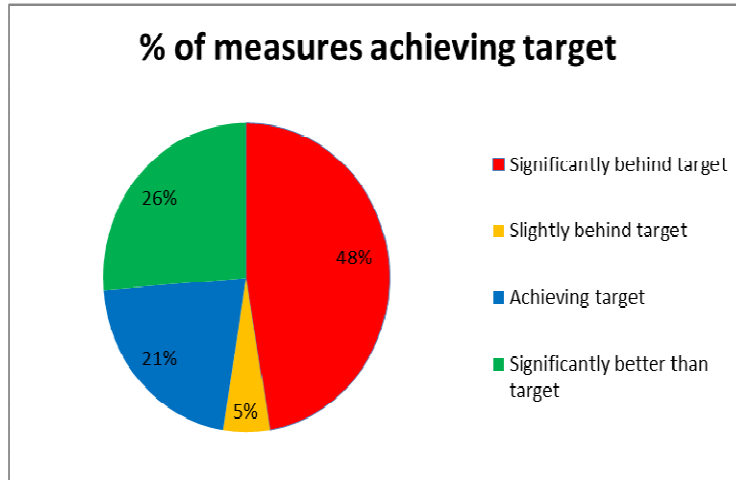
8. Key Considerations

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 performance of those measures reported in-year is attached at Appendix A. An overview of key performance issues within the two corporate priorities and customer service is below.

Overview



- 8.3 For those measures where data is available and targets have been set, 47% are achieving or exceeding target (43% at Q1).
- 8.4 Where comparison can be made with last year's performance, 67% of measures are improving (46% at Q1).
- 8.5 The above performance is being achieved with a predicted overspend of £3.3m at the end of September (£3.9m at end of August).

Create and maintain a successful economy

Performance Challenges

- 8.6 There is an issue with the number of planning applications being dealt with within the timescales. This is being closely monitored. Although the increase in major applications and associated fee income is welcomed, it has, however had an associated impact on capacity. This situation will need to be addressed within the context of the Government's evolving policy position on planning standards and fees.
- 8.7 The performance data for the number of additional homes provided is not yet available, and was expected in July. Work towards an on-going 5 year housing land supply in connection with various planning appeals has delayed progress, therefore

the 2012/13 outturn, along with 2013/14 target will not be available until 31st October.

- 8.8 Key projects relating to waste disposal and waste collection were to be presented to Cabinet in October; however this has been postponed whilst the Council negotiate agreement with HM Treasury and DEFRA on suitable financial arrangements.
- 8.9 The target for the percentage of the working age population in employment, as it currently appears in the Economic Development Strategy 2011-16, is for Herefordshire's outturn to be at least 5% above England's rate each year, moving to 6% by 2015. Whilst employment rates have risen in the last quarter, they are still marginally below levels at the same period last year, and the gap between regional and national rates has reduced. However, it has been recognised that the focus should be on the economic well-being in the County as opposed to whether or not outturn is 5% above the national level. Therefore, as part of the current refresh of the Strategy, a different, more local set of indicators will be produced which will more accurately reflect the proposed way forward in the County.
- 8.10 Whilst the percentage of those in employment is holding relatively steadily at present, the September figures for NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) are exceptional due to young people leaving courses in the summer and the September destinations not yet having been finalised. The November target for unknowns is 6% and the Council has changed its processes with providers to achieve this target. The NEET target for November is 8%. Management Board recognises that this is a key issue for the whole Council, and part of the picture of employment in Herefordshire. This may appear relatively positive, overall, but is a key issue for young adults in Herefordshire and will be addressed by having a whole Council focus on improvement, as part of our approach to the economy.

Risks:

- 8.11 The Welfare Reform Act 2013 introduced a number of changes to benefits / Council Tax support, could negatively impact on the local economy and vulnerable people (children and adults). The impact at an organisational level is being monitored under the following four headings, the impact at an individual level is not currently understood:
- Council Tax Reduction: changes in legislation meant support for Council Tax was localised and central government funding was reduced by 10%. Whilst protection was provided for pensioners, the Council reduced its maximum liability Council Tax Reduction to 91.5%, meaning that every working age claimant had to pay a minimum of 8.5%, higher than in previous years.
As at the end of September overall collection rates have remained broadly unchanged (59.03% against 58.97% as at the end of September 2012). This has been achieved through strong debt management, which has resulted in additional cost due to the increase in summonses.
 - 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'. 1194 households have been affected by the subsidy, reducing Housing Benefit entitlement for those affected, but the consequences are unclear at this stage.
 - Benefit Cap: the aim here is that working age claimants should not receive more in benefits than the average family in work, and if it did Housing Benefit is reduced to bring their benefit income back below that level.
Currently 30 claimants have been affected by the benefit cap, having an average reduction of £55.81 per week in their Housing Benefit entitlement.
 - Discretionary Housing Payment: as a result of the above changes the Government allocated the Council additional funds to help those adversely affected. At the end of September, £65,418 had been paid out compared to £35,052 at the same time last year.

- 8.12 If economic prosperity in Herefordshire declines it will negatively impact the opportunities for children and young people and the reduction in those not in education, employment or training. Actions to mitigate this risk are being developed; this is linked to items 8.10 & 8.11 above.

Achievements:

- 8.13 Good progress is being made on the 10 major projects within the Economic Development Strategy. This includes a significant milestone achieved with the publication of the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) for the Link Road and work to progress this is on-going. Furthermore, the Hereford Enterprise Zone is making progress with the first lead having signed and is now on site. Two further leads are close to finalising on land purchase.
- 8.14 Inward Investment leads are continuing to be sourced from the North American market and opening discussions have now been held with other US and Canadian businesses considering the UK as an investment location. Detailed discussions are lined up with two of these companies.
- 8.15 A councillor working group has met to discuss the conditions for a strong county economy. A business survey has been conducted which will inform this working group and refresh the Economic Development Strategy for the county. The strategy will be influenced by EU Investment Strategy and LEP Growth Deal.
- 8.16 Progress on the Old Market project is progressing largely to schedule with the planned Spring opening still on target. Officers are working with local skills providers to deliver comprehensive training opportunities to people looking to take advantage of the jobs created by the development.
- 8.17 At the instigation of the private sector, Officers are working with partners from within the city centre to investigate the potential to develop a Business Improvement District covering the majority of the existing retail core and encompassing the Old Market development. This scheme would look to develop the shopping and cultural experience for visitors to Hereford and will bring together partners from across the city, helping to develop the concept of the “whole city approach”.
- 8.18 Balfour Beatty Living Places mobilised public realm services for September and member/shareholder meetings have taken place.

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

Adults

Performance Challenges:

- 8.19 The reporting period covers the final four weeks of adult social care operational staff managed through the Wye Valley contract, and a period of significant operational structural change implemented from September 13th 2013. The following performance challenges need to be set within this context.
- 8.20 Overall, self-directed support has improved, however this is still significantly below the target. 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 resulting in less focus on increasing the numbers of people having a review and moving onto self-directed support.
- 8.21 Timeliness of adults 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 continue to affect performance on this indicator until cleared. Additional capacity is been considered to address this issue.

8.22 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 as we move into the winter months due to the continued high demand on Wye Valley NHS Trust due to high numbers of primary care referrals.

Risks:

8.23 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.

8.24 Impact of delays in recruitment and retention to key posts resulting in vacancies in the system could negatively impact performance.

8.25 Complex safeguarding and care home investigations requiring significant managerial and social worker practitioner capacity again reducing ability to respond effectively to meet demand and therefore affecting achievement of performance.

8.26 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:

8.27 Manual collection of data relating to social care productivity showing improvements in assessment and review.

8.28 Making it Real a programme to increase personalisation and self-directed support has included a survey on service user satisfaction; early analysis indicates some positive responses.

8.29 Data quality improvements have been made and sustained, this requires continued focus.

8.30 The outturn for the 12-month rolling period to September 2013 for repeat incidents of domestic violence was 31% which represents a positive direction of travel for this critical performance indicator. 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

8.31 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:

8.32 Effective decision making and numbers of initial and core assessments being completed within timescales is a significant concern. During July, August and September there has been a significant and unacceptable reduction in performance on the key performance measures regarding the speed and clarity of decision making and assessments. This has been caused by volume, turnover of staff, and the implementation stages of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and matching of resources to workload. This has been addressed through a substantial revision of

workflow and decision making processes; movement of more qualified staff into both the MASH and the Children in Need teams; and a review of resourcing. Early improvements include action on all contacts to the MASH within 2 hours of receipt; more disciplined decision making processes; external challenge via the Peer Review and management changes.

- 8.33 Education attainment for Herefordshire overall remains at or below national average and is not improving. For vulnerable pupils, particularly those eligible for free school meals or those where English is an Additional Language, the gap in attainment is in the fourth quartile. There is significant variation in performance between schools, with some schools achieving outstanding results. There are also variations by individual schools in performance year on year.

Risks:

- 8.34 Significant numbers of interim staff are operating at the front door of the service which could potentially impact the initial assessment.
- 8.35 The new model of school improvement may be challenged by the number of school issues.
- 8.36 Some schools may not engage with the collaborative approach to achieving performance improvement.

Achievements:

- 8.37 Herefordshire School Improvement Partnership established across schools to focus support and school to school collaboration. Particular focus is on closing the gap, with Ofsted involved in addressing the issue in Herefordshire.
- 8.38 Provided 200+ more nursery places for vulnerable 2 year olds than target as part of early help offer.
- 8.39 Have commenced a new Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub approach.
- 8.40 Recruitment of 8 newly qualified social workers and a number of experienced social workers and social work managers, some of whom commenced in October.
- 8.41 Peer Review of children's safeguarding has taken place to shape next stage of improvement.

Customers

Performance Challenges:

- 8.42 The abandoned call rate in the customer contact centre has been pretty steady in April, June, August and September at around 20%, though May was 12.05% and July was 14.30%. Since introducing the CRM system it takes staff longer to go through the script process and actually log a call. This is being addressed.
- Additionally calls have come in due to the contact centre number being listed on the website and people calling if they have problems with navigating the sites and finding what they are after. This is going to be removed and a sample web page has been produced and due to go live. Due to staff shortages (people leaving, demand, holiday and sickness) it has been a challenge to answer all the calls.
- This indicator will continue to be monitored closely; it is not necessarily going to improve considering the reduction in service.
- 8.43 Following further analysis of website use, satisfaction levels have started to improve, although are not at the same levels as last year. This is an important performance area to improve so that residents can interact with the Council at a time and place to suit them which is via the internet. Some of the issues are related to technical aspects of web design (such as the navigation); improvements will be deployed over the next few weeks and satisfaction should start to climb after that. We are also improving the range of transactional services available through our website.

Users can now report problems with their waste collection and request related services such as additional bins <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/environmental-protection/waste-management/refuse-household-bin-collection/>

Details of potholes that have been reported to us and their status is now available to view <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-highways/maintenance/potholes/potholes-map/>

We've improved the content around procurement by working with local businesses <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/procurement>

Risks:

- 8.44 In the current financial climate ensuring that sufficient resources are available for the implementation of web programmes linked to service delivery.
- 8.45 Large areas of the council's web real estate are not under the management of the web team and have not been designed to address user need. Satisfaction can only be radically improved if all parts of the council design their services around user need.
- 8.46 High usage areas of the council's website are not in areas seen as a priority for the council. If we do not invest effort in meeting user need in these areas satisfaction will not increase. If we do it will reduce the resource available to support priority areas. We are exploring mitigation options in these areas.

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. The on-going 'priorities' work to redefine the Councils core functions, operating within significantly reduced budgets is critical to managing this risk. This is being managed as part of the service and budget planning process with the budget proposals currently out for public consultation.

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.