

This Report will be made  
public on 8 November  
2021



Report Number **OS/21/09**

**To:** Finance & Performance Scrutiny Sub committee  
**Date:** 16<sup>th</sup> November 2021  
**Status:** Non Key Decision  
**Director:** Charlotte Spendley – Director for Corporate Services  
**Cabinet Member:** Councillor David Monk

**SUBJECT: HALF YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT (Q1 & Q2) 2021/22**

**SUMMARY:** This report provides an update on the Council's performance for the first two quarters of the year covering 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021. The report enables the Council to assess progress against the approved key performance indicators arising from the Council's new Corporate Action Plan.

Key performance indicators will be monitored during 2021-22 and reported to CLT and Members quarterly.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. To receive and note report OS/21/09.
2. To note the performance information for Quarters 1 & 2 2021/22 in Appendix 1.

## **1. HALF YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020/21**

1.1 The Council's new corporate plan 'Creating Tomorrow Together' 2021-30 was adopted by Full Council on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021 (Report ref: A/20/10).

1.2 The Corporate Plan is built on 4 key service ambitions and 6 guiding principles. Each service ambition has a number of priority areas identified within it, these priorities will be the focus of Council activity over the coming three years to 2024. The service ambitions are set out below:

### **Service Ambitions**

- Positive Community Leadership
- A Thriving Environment
- A Vibrant Economy
- Quality Homes and Infrastructure

1.3 The Plan also adopted 6 Guiding Principles, which would apply to the approach taken by the Council in undertaking its duties and these were Sustainable Recovery; Locally Distinctive; Greener Folkestone & Hythe; Transparent, Stable, Accountable & Accessible; Working Effectively with Partners and Continuous Improvement.

1.4 To support the council in delivering against its priorities documented in the corporate plan, a detailed action plan covering a three year period to 2024 and supporting KPIs for the current financial year was adopted by Cabinet on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021 (Report ref: C/21/40).

1.5 The Quarterly Performance Report (Appendix 1) has been produced to summarise the Council's performance for Quarters 1 and 2 (1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021).

1.6 Quarterly Performance Reports enables Finance & Performance Scrutiny Subcommittee, Cabinet, other Members of the Council and the public to scrutinise the performance of the Council against strategic deliverables and key indicators in accordance with the approved Corporate Action Plan.

1.7 Where the performance indicator is not being met, explanations have been given from the relevant Service leads and noted in the report.

1.8 The performance indicators which have fallen below target are monitored by the Council's Performance & Improvement Specialist who will work with the relevant Service Manager to identify appropriate action that can be taken to resolve the situation.

## **2. PERFORMANCE – EXCEPTION REPORTING**

### **2.1 Service Ambition 1: Positive Community Leadership**

- The average number of days taken to process new claims for Housing Benefit have shown improved positions in both Quarters 1 & 2 compared to last year, achieving 14.7 days and 12.2 days respectively. This is helping

residents on low income understand more quickly what support is available to them for their housing costs.

### To monitor

- No community safety events or projects were delivered during the first half of the year due to Covid-19 lockdown restrictions and the departure of the existing Community Safety Specialist. A new specialist was successfully recruited in August 2021 and work is being planned to deliver a number of events and projects across the district with multi agency partners from Quarter 3 onwards, including: CSU seasonal community safety engagement events, County Line Intensification week, Safeguarding Awareness community event and an awareness session to support the 'Safety in the Night Time Economy' campaign.
- Percentage of Food Premises broadly compliant. The Environmental Health Team re-started the food inspection programme in Quarter 1 as the pandemic lockdown ended. The figures for Quarters 1 & 2 are currently unavailable due to a system communication error between the Food Standards Agency (FSA) website and the Council's own case management system. The error is currently being investigated by the Systems Support team with a resolution to be put in place during Quarter 3 that will enable these figures to be correctly reported. Based on inspections completed so far the EH team expect 3 rating level or above compliance to be high but this can only be formally reported when the link between the FSA and FHDC systems has been resolved.

## **2.2. Service Ambition 2: A Thriving Environment**

- A total of 53 enforcement notices were issued by Environmental Enforcement Officers for neighbour noise related issues, including loud music and dogs barking due to more people being in the home environment as result of the pandemic.
- 197 fixed penalty notices were issued for dog fouling, littering, fly-tipping and dogs being walked on controlled beaches and restricted areas (i.e. play parks).
- The Local Area Officer Team have supported a total of 35 community volunteer environmental events working with local community groups including, The Hythe Environment group, Stowting Wombles, Elham and Lyminge Parish Councils, schools and youth organisations. The volunteers attending these events have collected 600 bags of litter to help keep local areas around the district clean and tidy.
- A total of 5,665 See it, Own it, Do it Interventions have been actioned by the Local Area Officer Team to help ensure the district remains a welcoming and attractive place to live, work and visit. The team have undertaken work on clearing the back of The Stade in Folkestone with a local Youth Offending Team, helped keep the triennial trails clean and undertook path clearing on the Road of Remembrance.

- 50% of household was recycled during Quarter 1 up from 48% in the same period last year. The final result for Quarter 2 is to yet be confirmed by Kent County Council and will be published in the Quarter 3 report.
- The 18 air quality monitoring sites across the district are currently in line with DEFRA National Air Quality Objectives during the first half of this year that helps to ensure air quality remains to a high standard for those who live, work and visit our district.

#### To monitor

- The number of missed bin collections per 100,000 increased during the first half of this year due to the implementation of Veolia's new route re-optimisation project that commenced in mid-May 2021 and as a result collection crews were unfamiliar with their new collection rounds. The number of missed collections are now starting to return back towards acceptable levels moving into Quarter 3.

### **2.3 Service Ambition 3: A Vibrant Economy**

- Over £208,000 has been allocated from the Folkestone & Hythe High Streets Fund in the first half of the year that has helped eleven external applications brought forward by businesses from across the district with refurbishment works to their business premises, as well as improvements to the external appearance of high street premises. In addition, the funding has contributed to council-led projects delivered by Folkestone Town Council, including heritage lighting and signage as well as external improvements to the Folca Building.
- A total of 10 businesses have been engaged with in the district by the Economic Development team to help support business growth and retention of local jobs. The business engaged with include: Plamil Foods; SWP; Pentland Homes; Magnox; Church & Dwight; Motis; Saga; Screen South; NIC instruments; and BigJig Toys.
- A total of 3 engagements have been undertaken by the Folkestone & Hythe Place Panel on projects aimed at improving the public realm. The projects the Place Panel have been engaged with so far during the first half of year relate to Otterpool Park Green Infrastructure, Folkestone Seafront (Plot C) and the Place Panel induction.

### **2.4 Service Ambition 4: Quality Homes and Infrastructure**

- Average number of households in Bed and Breakfast Accommodation has significantly fallen compared with same period last year. The Housing Options Team have worked to enable the majority of clients placed in this type of accommodation to move into suitable long-term accommodation within the district.
- 128 private sector homes were improved during the first of half of this year as a result of intervention by the Council and its partner agencies helping to continually improve the standards and compliance of properties within the sector.

- 4 units have been delivered in Folkestone as part of the Next Steps Accommodation Programme that will help support for the most vulnerable rough sleepers.
- A total of 15 Council home new builds and acquisitions have been started on site in Folkestone compared with 6 during the same period last year helping to bring forward further new social homes within the district.
- 99.97% of sample properties surveyed met the decent homes standard. The Housing Service are undertaking a full stock condition survey that will be analysed to determine an accurate position on 100% external and 90% internal properties across the whole of our stock

#### To monitor

- Number of homelessness approaches to the Council have increased compared with the same period last year. This is in part due to the ending of the embargo on evictions that was originally put in place by the government during the lockdown period and also due to the introduction of the new Domestic Abuse Act that places duties on local authorities to provide safe accommodation to victims of abuse.

### **2.5 Transparent, Stable, Accountable & Accessible**

- In first half of the year there has been a 21.25% take up of the My Account Service equating to over 11,000 new customers registered. Since the launch of the service in August 2020, over 24,000 customers have registered helping residents to access a range of council information and services online.
- Data breaches assessed to decide if they are reportable and breaches submitted to the ICO within a 72 hour period were both 100% during the first half of the year. A total four potential breaches were assessed during the period and of these one was deemed severe enough to require reporting to the ICO in line with their guidance. Individual mitigation measures were swiftly put in place in relation to the incidents in order to address any weaknesses.

#### To monitor

- The number of Freedom of Information (FOI)/ Environmental Information Requests (EIR) responded to within statutory timeframes remains below target during the first two quarters of the year, whilst the Case Management and Information Governance teams address some of the historic caseload which accrued over the past 18 months. These difficult cases have now been reduced significantly and we expect to see an upturn in compliance going into Quarter 4. Whilst resources have been a challenge during the past 12 months further cross training and recent recruitment is continuing to provide greater resilience to this area. In addition, further work is being undertaken on both process improvements and the development of the Staff Hub as the Information Governance Management system to yield more positive results going forward.

- No responses to Subject Access Requests (SAR) were provided within the statutory timeframe during the first half of the year. The increase in FOI/EIR case load coupled with the complexity of processing some Subject Access Requests due to their size, manual redaction process and obtaining of permissions by third parties to having their data disclosed have impacted on response times overall. An action plan is being put in place to address these issues going forward and the reduction in the historic work as well as the cross training will free up time to improve compliance.

### 3. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

3.1 The follow risk management issues have been considered as part of this report:

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
The Council's strategic objectives are not met.	High	Medium	Monitor progress against performance indicators and take remedial action for those areas where targets and actions are unlikely to be achieved.
The key performance indicators (KPIs) do not link to the objectives of the Council's Corporate Action Plan.	High	Medium	Monitor progress against key performance indicators and take remedial action for those areas where targets and actions are unlikely to be achieved.
The Council is non-compliant with its statutory key performance indicators (KPIs).	High	Medium	Regular monitoring of statutory key performance indicators with actual or projected non-compliance escalated to Corporate Leadership Team so that prompt remedial action can be taken, and if necessary additional resources allocated, to address poor performance.

### 4. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

4.1 **Legal Officer's Comments (NM)** - There are no legal implications or risks arising directly out of this report. The Key Performance Indicators must continue to take account of both existing and new statutory duties and responsibilities that are imposed on the Council by the Government. Failure to do so will put the Council at risk of legal challenge by affected residents and/or businesses. Whilst reporting on performance is not a statutory

requirement, it is considered best practice to review the Council's progress against the Corporate Plan and Service Plans on a regular basis.

- 4.2 **Human Resources Comments (RB)** - There are no direct Human Resource implications emanating from this report. The council's People Strategy has been created to support the corporate plan and achievement of associated KPIs.
- 4.3 **Finance Officer's Comments (LW)** - There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.
- 4.4 **Diversities and Equalities Implications (GE)** - Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are systematically carried out for any services, projects or other schemes that have the potential to impact on communities and / or staff on the grounds of particular protected characteristics or socio-economic disadvantage. Over the course of the year, performance against some indicators might potentially have equality and social inclusion implications, if performance is not at an acceptable level. These will be highlighted as necessary in the corporate performance reporting, along with details of the steps that will be taken to address these.
- 4.5 **Communications Comments (JW)** - The communications team will use these KPIs as appropriate in their promotion of council services.

## 6. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officer prior to the meeting

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The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report:

### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Quarters 1&2 Key Performance Indicators Report