



# Cabinet

Report of: Councillor Joe Orson - Leader of the Council

## Corporate Performance and Progress Report for Quarter 2 2020-21

<b>Corporate Priority:</b>	All Corporate Priorities
<b>Relevant Ward Member(s):</b>	All
<b>Date of consultation with Ward Member(s):</b>	N/A
<b>Exempt Information:</b>	No
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No
<b>Subject to call-in:</b>	No Not key decision

### 1 Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Cabinet on progress in relation to delivery of the Council's Corporate priorities, providing both a set of Corporate Performance Measures alongside key project updates under each priority theme. The report provides details relating to the first and second quarters of the financial year 2020-21.
- 1.2 This will be the first corporate performance report measuring performance against the new Corporate Strategy 2020-24 and includes new and refreshed measures.

### 2 Recommendation(s)

**That Cabinet:**

**2.1 Note the contents of the report and provide any observations or actions to the relevant officers accordingly.**

### 3 Reason for Recommendations

- 3.1 Having established a new Corporate Strategy in September 2020, is it important the Council regularly receives and considers performance information to evaluate progress. The Council's Corporate Performance Measures are used to focus on key priority services and projects and seek to help inform the Cabinet, Members and Officers with regard to the formation of policy and oversight of delivery. This report will be provided to Cabinet twice a

year and will also be provided to the Scrutiny Committee to enable them to consider appropriate areas for their Workplan.

## **4 Background**

4.1 In September 2020, the Council approved a new Corporate Strategy 2020-24. The Strategy has six priority themes and alongside the adoption of this Strategy, a refreshed basket of corporate measures has been created. The purpose of the corporate measures is to ensure that Cabinet and senior managers have effective oversight of key corporate activity, service performance and progress against the Council's aspirations. The corporate measures are supported by a range of service measures overseen by operational managers.

4.2 Appendix 1 to this report sets out the 2020-21 quarter 2 Corporate Performance Measures Dashboard. This provides updates on key corporate projects and sets out the Council's performance against a basket of performance measures mapped to the Council's Corporate Priorities. The reporting involves 2 years' worth of data (8 quarters) and the performance trend of the individual measures is explicitly stated. The Council's Directorates have supplied key explanatory commentary for each of the measures. Where available benchmarking and comparator data is also provided.

4.3 The outturn for quarter 2 2020-21 marks the first report to be presented under the new Corporate Priorities framework of the Corporate Strategy 2020-24. Alongside this report, the Council is also developing a 'State of Melton' framework, as well as ward profiles, which will focus on a range of macro-measures. This will set out a broader range of social and economic measures which will help inform the Council's strategic response, and to which the Council, and its partners, should be working to collectively improve.

### **4.4 Review of Progress against each Corporate Priority**

4.5 **HELPING PEOPLE** – There are 2 Helping People priorities,

1 – Excellent services positively impacting on our communities

2 – Providing high quality Council homes and landlord services.

There are a number of service areas where there has been improving or high performance and a selection from Appendix 1 is shown below:

### **4.6 Priority 1: Excellent services positively impacting on our communities:**

#### **4.6.1 Progress Summary:**

4.6.2 In summary, service delivery has through the period continued to be impacted in terms of the Covid-19 crisis and the requirement to provide new ways of working and additional demands on service areas. As evidenced, below, this impact is most obvious in terms of the Council's homelessness function and pressures on temporary accommodation use.

4.6.3 In terms of the support services offered in response to the Covid-19 impact on residents, the Council's support offer was flexible enough to adapt to the changing needs of the residents. For example, pre-COVID more employment based outcomes were being achieved; however the Council has had to refocus teams and partners on adjusting to the more complex requirements of residents impacted by COVID-19 in terms of financial, physical and social wellbeing. Vulnerabilities are addressed earlier as a result of integrated support services.

#### 4.6.4 Focus Areas:

**% of complaints to MBC upheld** – The Council recognises that complaints are a valuable opportunity to gain feedback, learn and improve services. The Council wants to provide a positive response to complaints and encourages feedback so that positive action can be taken. This indicator details the number of complaints that were fully upheld. While no complaints were fully upheld quarters 1 and 2, four complaints were partially upheld in quarter 1 and two were partially upheld in quarter 2. Services will use the lessons learned from complaints to review their approach and the best way to utilise complaints to facilitate this continues to be reviewed and is due to be discussed with the Scrutiny Committee shortly.

**Number days taken for payment to be made after initial application for Housing Benefit** – this has reduced down to 7 days in quarter 2, from 14 days in Q1. Due to the nature of Housing Benefit eligibility the number of applications received on a monthly basis is relatively low in comparison to change of circumstances and this measure is very much driven by the customer's ability to provide the evidence promptly. Unfortunately, if a small number of customers delay in providing this evidence the average can be adversely affected as a result. The number of claims actually processed in quarter 2 (56) was higher than Q1 (44). However the number of claims which took 30 days or more was 8 in Q1 compared to just 2 in quarter 2. Melton's performance for the processing of new claims for housing benefit was showing as top quartile against all English districts for quarter 1 2020/21, at 2 days compared to the mean of 6 days.

There are also some service areas that are not at the required level or need improving:

**Homelessness - % cases where homelessness was prevented** – this had fallen to 14%, as, throughout COVID-19, there have been very few opportunities to prevent homelessness as the focus has been on safely and effectively allocating accommodation to those who need it. Due to the hold applied by government to court cases, there have been very few cases where negotiating with landlords has been required, or possible, leaving those who present to us as the most complex individuals, therefore in most need of housing.

**Number of Households living in temporary accommodation** – this has risen to 52 in quarter 2; the Council has seen a significant increase in presentations to the homelessness team as a result of the COVID-19 situation. This made it a duty to house any person presenting as homeless or at risk of homelessness that day/night. This duty remains. Although the Council is transitioning individuals out of Bed and Breakfast and into more suitable temporary accommodation, it is likely that numbers will stay high for the next quarter. It should be noted that Melton's performance in this area has been close to the mean for all English districts, considered per 1000 households, at 1.5 compared to 1.3 at the end of March 2018.

#### 4.6.5 Priority 1 – Projects and Activities:

**Implementation of customer digital self-service platform (IEG4) and improved processes and customer journeys** - Phase 1 of the IEG4 project was delivered in June 2020 providing residents with a new My Account function and Customer Services with a replacement CRM. Since that launch, steady growth has shown over 6000 new accounts have been created as customers find the online offer meets their needs; it is noticeable over half of new accounts are set up outside working hours the Council now has more than 12,000 registered My Account users. Focus is now on delivering Phase 2 of the

project, which will see the replacement of many online forms as the existing Firmstep contract expires. This phase will be at completion in December 2020.

**Upgrade Council website** - A mandate has been prepared and a bid for funding will go into the budget setting process for 2021/22. In preparation, work has commenced on cleansing the data and content on the current system. A proposal has also been put together to work in partnership with another council to utilise their system and design which will result in savings over the current website content management system. It is expected that the new website will be launched in September 2021.

**Implement new Finance system** - The project is well underway with a range of training already undertaken and the project will shortly be moving into the testing phase. Implementation is still on track for April 2021.

**Development of integrated supporting people offer across the Council** - The Community Hub response has helped to develop even further the integrated teams approach to supporting people. Staff have experienced first-hand the value of shared accountability in providing effective support for residents of the Borough. Vulnerabilities are addressed earlier and messages across teams are more consistent. Learning from the Hub will be incorporated into the broader review of the how the Council undertakes its supporting people work, due to be undertaken in Spring 2021.

#### 4.7 **Priority 2: Providing high quality council homes and landlord services**

##### 4.7.1 **Progress Summary:**

4.8 This period has seen continued progress and improvement across the Council Housing landlord function, with a keen focus on health and safety compliance activities. Ongoing reassurance can be provided through the sustained achievement of 100% gas servicing throughout September and October 2020, and a continued increase in electrical safety certification from less than 60% in April 2020 to over 89% of the stock in October 2020, with no outstanding Category 1 failures. The Housing Improvement Programme Board, established last November and chaired by the Leader, continues to give corporate oversight to the work programme and activities.

4.9 A key component of the relationship between any landlord and tenant is the tenancy agreement. The existing Melton tenancy agreement requires considerable update – a new proposed tenancy agreement has been developed in consultation with the Tenant Forum Executive Committee (TFEC) and shared with all Melton tenants through a statutory consultation period; this closed on 08 November 2020. Together with a new Tenant Handbook, a report will be submitted for Cabinet approval in the New Year, seeking adoption from April 2021. Work has also continued in the period on the consultation and development of housing policies covering some key risk areas.

##### 4.10 **Focus Areas:**

**The % of homes meeting the Decent Homes standard** has increased to 76.11% in quarter 2. Whilst still well below where the Council would like it to be, it shows continuing progress is being made as part of the Housing Improvement Plan. Planned maintenance programmes are now being generated with a view to replacing some key components noted as failing under Decent Homes Standard due to age alone. Anticipated commencement in late quarter 2/early quarter 3. Rewire programme in place to assist with

improving this overall figure has been on hold for quarter 1 due to COVID-19. Anticipate possible restart during quarter 2.

There are also some service areas that are not at the required level or need improving:

**Average void time (Excluding Development Voids) in days** – the level of grip in relation to the management of voids has improved significantly however performance will inevitably be impacted due to the need to address some long term voids; requiring significant work. Performance in quarter 2 has fallen back to 34.61 days. Contractor performance has been an issue, resulting in some delays in void works completion and return for re-let. This is very much in the spotlight now, with regular discussions with the repairs contractor's management team with the aim of improving performance. This has resulted in some improvement from quarter 4 last year. Close monitoring is in place with the aim of seeing this positive trend continue. It is possible performance will continue to fluctuate given some longer-term voids are in the process of being brought back into use.

#### **4.7.4 Priority 2 – Projects and Activities:**

**Progress towards implementation of Housing Improvement Plan** – A comprehensive update on the Housing Improvement Plan was provided to Council at the end of November 2020. The restructure of the landlord function we be completed by December 2020. Tenancy agreement consultation closes November 2020 with a report due to Cabinet for adoption in January 2021. Five draft policies have been developed and shared with Scrutiny for input and suggestion. These cover key risk areas and will be adopted early in 2021. Work in relation to the landlord compliance function continues, as shown within the corporate performance measures and reported to Council in November. Fire safety works at Gretton Court due to commence November 2020.

**Implementation of new integrated housing system (Northgate)** - Work is progressing in terms of system set up (estates and property components); Choice-Based Lettings integration; and income workflows and processes. This will significantly improve the Council's ability to retain data and information regarding its assets.

**Update on delivery of programme of new Council Homes** - All in-year spend targets have been met; Right to Buy receipts will be used to purchase 2x new build units, meeting the year end spend target. Work continues with a developer in relation to the option of ten units in a rural location. The establishment of a new Development Team by Council in November, will provide greater impetus and resource to focus on existing site appraisal and build-out. Recruitment will commence shortly for these roles.

**Delivering better temporary accommodation for those who need it** - The use of the Council's own housing stock continues to provide self-contained accommodation for households in need. Options of purchase in the private sector are being considered, with more work on this project needed and a natural fit for the newly established development team.

#### **4.11 SHAPING PLACES – There are 2 Shaping Places priorities**

3 – Delivering sustainable and inclusive growth in Melton

4 - Protect our climate and enhance our rural natural environment.

There are a number of service areas where there has been improving or high performance and a selection from Appendix 1 is shown below:

## 4.12 **Priority 3: Delivering sustainable and inclusive growth in Melton**

### 4.12.1 **Progress Summary:**

4.13 The key focus for service delivery under this priority has been in response to COVID\_19 as well as towards the recovery from the lockdown. An organisation wide operation to support businesses affected by the two stages of lockdown as well as tier three arrangements has been led by the Regeneration team in distributing grants to eligible businesses. In parallel, work has progressed on all focus areas for this priority as evident from the detailed update below with progress made on asset development, tourism and in progressing the planning services review.

### 4.13.1 **Focus Areas:**

**% Non-major planning decisions taken within 8 weeks, or agreed timetable** – 90%; this is a very good achievement and above the national target. This is testament to the engagement of planning officers with planning applicants as they drive the applications through the process and seek to resolve problems and/or negotiate improvements within timetables acceptable to and agreed by the applicants. Melton's performance continues to be good for this measure, 90% in quarter 2 2020-21 improving on Melton's 89% compared to the all English districts mean of 86% at the end of quarter 1 2019-20.

Following the adoption of the Planning Services review, further work to strengthen engagement and improve processes has commenced. A members' reference group and use of an external expert critical friend will support and oversee progress.

There are also some service areas that are not at the required level or need improving:

**% Major planning decisions taken within 13 weeks, or agreed timetable** – this has fallen to 67%, but it should be noted that the actual numbers are 4 out of 6 in time and only 2 out of time. Melton's performance here has been variable, but actual numbers are low; 67% improves on the 60% for Q1 2019-20, against the all English districts mean of 88%. As above the implementation of the Planning Services Review will assist in enabling improvements to be made to the service provided.

### 4.13.2 **Priority 3 – Projects and Activities**

**Implementation of planning services review update** - The Cabinet approved the actions and resources required to support implementation of the Planning Service review recommendations in September 2020. The Planning Development team is working with HR, Finance, IT and Communications colleagues to implement the actions as agreed. The new process and service structure is due to be up and running from January 2021 and a member reference group and utilisation of an external expert critical friend will provide oversight of implementation, similar to that used effectively within housing services.

**Supplementary Planning Documents (Developers contributions, Design, Open Space, Neighbourhood plans)** - Work is underway for the developers' contributions SPD. Member engagement took place in July 2020. The next step is to incorporate the local requirements into the wider body of the SPD. Draft documents are due to be considered at the Cabinet in January 2021 for subsequent consultation. Work on this SPD has been delayed due to COVID-19 and the team being asked to help with other corporate priorities such as supporting the Business Grants scheme, preparing the Housing Strategy, assist the Planning Development team with applications process etc. An Open Space strategy and action plan have been produced and were considered by the Cabinet in November 2020. This provides for a more strategic approach to the provision and maintenance of

open spaces, including collection of developer contributions towards strategic and off site provision of greater value, and took effect immediately. The Design SPD is now progressing well and we anticipate a draft document in mid- January.

**Progress update on delivering the Northern and Southern Sustainable Neighbourhoods and Melton Mowbray Distributor Road** - The Planning team is working with the stakeholders, landowners and developers to prepare a masterplan for the North Neighbourhood. This was due to be considered by the Cabinet in November 2020 but was deferred in order to enable further engagement with Leicestershire County Council's (LCC).. This is now progressing and it is anticipated Cabinet will receive and consider the updated masterplan early in 2021. . Alongside the masterplan development, planning permission is in place for circa 700 dwellings on the west side of Scaford Rd pursuant to Planning Committee's decision on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2019, and 'reserved matters' proposals have been received for half of this area.

Regarding the South Neighbourhood, officers are currently involved in intense work with the County Council and all developers/stakeholders, working to establish any further revisions to the approved Masterplan in which could further strengthen viability and support the conditions set for acceptance of the Housing Infrastructure Fund award of £15 million for the road. Whilst a number of issues are still to be resolved, the Council will continue to do all it can to support the County Council in delivering the required infrastructure within Melton. Homes England require the conditions to be met by the end of December and a separate report on the Cabinet agenda will provide a more detailed update.

**Launch new Discover Melton brand, website and supporting events and prepare a tourism sector support package** - The work for the branding and website has been commissioned and it is anticipated the new Discover Melton website will be ready to launch in support of the new tourism season starting from Spring 2021.

**Develop a package for support to rural pubs and farming sector** - £30k has been allocated in the Capital Programme for a capital grant scheme to support rural pubs in diversification of uses to become hubs in their communities. This will be revisited and re-launched in April 2021, subject to considerations relating to COVID-19 at the time.

**Delivery of Manufacturing Zones masterplans** - £70k grant from Midlands Engine has been used to prepare masterplans and development options for three key clusters of employment sites, allocated in the Local Plan. Work is continuing in partnership with land owners to resolve infrastructure and access issues and attract prospective occupiers.

**Establishment of Food Enterprise Centre** - A grant agreement has been signed with the LLEP following the Cabinet approval for receiving £100,000 Business Rate Pool money to prepare a detailed and evidence based business case for Food Enterprise Centre in Melton. Cabinet is due to consider an update report in December 2020 and it is intended that the Council will launch the new Food Enterprise Centre in early 2021 further strengthening the Melton's reputation as the Rural Capital of Food.

**Update on feasibility of establishing a Health and Leisure Park and securing a sustainable future for leisure provision** - A grant agreement has been signed with the LLEP following the Cabinet approval for receiving £100,000 Business Rate Pool money to prepare a detailed business case for the health and leisure provision in Melton. The scope of this work will include establishing a viable proposition for leisure services within Melton, alongside the potential co-location of health provision and a potential second GP surgery. Initial discussions with the CCG on this aspiration have been positive and they are fully

engaged in the development of proposals, with procurement of consultants underway. A detailed project plan will be prepared by the appointed consultants in March 2021.

- 4.14 **Update on utilisation of assets to generate capital and build homes and establishment of a housing company** - Following the appointment of the Corporate Property and Assets service manager in May 2020, a health and safety diagnostics of all our corporate assets has been undertaken and actions have been implemented to achieve 100% compliance for property health and safety legislation. An asset register is being put together with updated information of all our corporate assets including location, mapping, physical condition, rents, leases, values and so on. Level of occupancy in the Council's commercial units has gone up even in the face of COVID-19 crisis. A senior asset surveyor has started in December 2020 and recruitment of a building surveyor is underway. Condition surveys for key large assets have started which will inform a planned maintenance programme. Following Cabinet approval in April 2020 to receive £500,000 grant funding from LLEP for the development of Council owned sites and commitment to match the funding with Council's resources, further work has been undertaken to form concrete proposals for rationalisation of our assets with development potential. Cabinet is due to consider a report seeking approval for an ambitious Asset development Programme and phase 1 proposals for next steps using £285,000 of the funding allocated for this purpose in December 2020.

#### 4.15 **Priority 4: Protect our climate and enhance our rural natural environment.**

##### 4.15.1 **Progress Summary:**

4.15.2 The Climate Emergency Policy Development Group has resumed its activity and met in late October after interruption related to the Covid-19 pandemic. The proposed Baseline Study and Improvement Pathways is in the process of being procured

4.15.3 The Group is looking at the role of Local Plan policy EN9 with an analysis of application to inform whether and how there is scope for it to secure greater benefits. Work with LRF recovery group continues to look for joint bids for potential electric car charging points in public carparks and de-carbonising our vehicles as there is initial discussion regarding the potential opportunity for a joint bid with other Councils for funding for carbon neutral retrofitting to our housing stock.

##### 4.15.4 **Focus Areas:**

4.15.5 **% waste recycled/composted** – 45.19% which is an improvement on the previous 2 quarters. Increase is likely as a result of increased throughput of recyclable material in the kerbside collections as opposed to through the household waste sites which have been subject to restrictions during the pandemic. Additionally, it is likely that households have been disposing of more paper and cardboard materials due to home schooling and home deliveries over this period and a campaign to encourage recycling is planned in the run-up to Christmas. This is an improvement on Melton's performance at the end of 2018-19, when it reached 44.00% compared to a mean value of 41.58% for all East Midlands districts, with Melton being at the higher end of the second quartile. Melton is now closer to the top quartile, with a communications campaign planned in the run-up to Christmas

There are also some service areas that are not at the required level or need improving:

**Kg of residual waste per household – quarterly** – this rose to 129.81. The quarter 1 increase is thought to be the result of a general increase in general waste, as residents

spent more time at home undertaking clearance work. The proportion of recyclable materials collected also increased. This trend is in line with the national picture. The annual mean performance for all English districts at the end of 2018-19 was 454.46 (giving a quarterly rate of 116.615), with Melton being at 495.1 at that point. Melton is therefore currently above the national average and this should therefore be an area of continuing focus.

**Number of reported fly-tips** – the average number of fly-tips for 3 months rose from 27.6 in quarter 1 to 38 in quarter 2. Fly-tipping has seen an increase on both public and private land. It is thought this is as a result of reduced disposal options for businesses and residents over the past 8 months, including the temporary closure of the household waste sites.

Since April the Regulatory Services Team have investigated 34 fly-tipping cases. They have issued 7 warning notices. 8 formal interviews under caution have been conducted. One fixed penalty notice has been paid. There has been one successful prosecution with a guilty plea, and two further Court cases pending.

In addition to this there have been a number of successful environmental improvement cases. 42 community protection warning notices have been served. 27 of the warning notices were complied with, the remaining 15 progressed to a Community Protection Notice. Of these eight complied, six were in breach and one is outstanding. Other successful results were achieved through advice, liaison and persuasion. A recent example in Newport ward was a totally inaccessible garden due to overgrown weeds etc. being completely cleared.

#### 4.16 **GREAT COUNCIL** - There are 2 Great Council priorities,

5 - Ensuring the right conditions to support delivery

6 - Connected with and led by our community.

There are a number of service areas where there has been improving or high performance and a selection from Appendix 1 is shown below:

#### 4.17 **Priority 5: Ensuring the right conditions to support delivery**

##### 4.17.1 **Progress Summary:**

4.17.2 The direction of travel with regard to performance for priority 5 and 6 has been good with no indicators not at the required level. However focus will still be maintained on improvement. There are a number of new measures where baselines are still to be set.

4.17.3 Despite capacity having to be diverted to Covid-19 progress on projects is still good with a the crisis becoming a catalyst for change in terms of the new operating model for the council in conjunction with the development of the Melton Deal setting out how we will engage with our communities.

##### 4.17.4 **Focus Areas:**

There are a number of service areas where there has been improving or high performance and a selection from Appendix 1 is shown below:

**Staff absence – days' sickness per employee** – this had reduced significantly compared to the same quarter in the previous year, from 3.57 days to 1.3 days. An

employee survey was undertaken in the summer which indicated employees felt well supported through the pandemic response. While some identified that Mental Wellbeing was of concern most recognised there were good and not so good days rather than ongoing poor mental health; and they recognised the Council has provided good support. Working from home has enabled more people to work through days that they would normally not feel able to come into the office and there is overwhelming support from the survey to maintain more home working opportunities in the future.

**% of occupied commercial units in Council ownership** – this had risen to 95% in quarter 2.

**% Undisputed invoices paid within 30 days** – performance had risen to 86.73% from 84.1%, and work continues to improve this further with services. Finance is providing additional advice and support to services and new team members to educate and ensure they are aware of the financial processes and procedures.

**% Requests for information responded to within statutory deadlines** – 100% was maintained in quarter 2.

#### 4.17.5 **Priority 5 – Projects and Activities:**

**Developing a new operating model - redefining how we work to be more flexible and responsive** - A draft model has been designed and is being considered by management. This now needs to link to the work on the Melton Deal being undertaken on Priority 6 to ensure the two are linked.

**Progress to establish new ICT provision post-December 2021** - A report is being submitted to Cabinet in December to approve an extension to the existing delegation agreement with Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council with the service being provided through in-sourcing.

#### 4.18 **Priority 6: Connected with and led by our Community**

##### 4.18.1 **Progress Summary:**

4.18.2 Throughout Covid-19, the Council and community representatives have worked closely together to support those in need. As part of this priority, the Council is keen to establish a new 'deal' that builds on this community spirit and re-orientates the Council away from an agency that 'does to', to one that 'does with' the community. Linking to priority 5, and establishing the right kind of culture, work has commenced on how the aspirations within this priority might be achieved. Through the community safety partnership work is underway on a neighbourhood model, with officers working in community, alongside partners in priority neighbourhoods. It is envisaged this will be considered by Council in Spring 2021.

##### 4.18.3 **Priority 6 – Projects and Activities:**

**Establishment of the Melton Deal and implementation of local pilots** - A project plan and approach is being developed and once finalised will be discussed with the portfolio holder and wider membership prior to implementation. The Deal will influence the way the council works, putting the community at the heart of what we do. It will look at how we work in partnership with our community, strengthening relationship and maximising the shared impact that we have.

**Impact of community grants scheme** - The Community Grants scheme went through a complete overhaul through the introduction of a policy which was approved last year following a full and thorough consultation with members, partners and residents. 2020/21 was the first year of implementing the grants through this process. This year saw a wider range and greater number of organisations benefitting from the grant across themes such as mental & physical health, digital access, social wellbeing, advice services across a whole life course (0-100yrs). The new approach ensured a clear and transparent allocation of funds as well as value for money. It should be noted that the community grants budget was significantly reduced for this financial year but helped a wider range of organisations.

#### 4.19 **Corporate Complaints**

4.20 The Council recognises that complaints are a valuable opportunity to gain feedback, learn and improve services. The Council wants to provide a positive response to complaints and encourages feedback so that positive action can be taken.

4.21 The Corporate Complaints process comprises a two stage internal process comprising stage one complaints which are dealt with by Service Managers and stage two complaints where the stage one response is reviewed by a Director.

4.21.1 The appendix shows a breakdown of the number of corporate complaints received during quarters 1 and 2 for the financial year 2020/21.

4.21.2 Some service areas have seen a reduction or no increase in complaints received:

<b>Directorate / Service Area</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
<b>Housing &amp; Communities:</b>			
Intensive Housing Management	1	0	Q2 shows a reduction in complaints which is positive
ASB	2	2	Complaints have remained the same and will be reviewed with Departmental managers.
<b>Growth &amp; Regeneration:</b>			
Planning	9	8	Complaints have challenged decisions made by the Planning Authority. No complaints were upheld as they were made in accordance with the processes and procedures in place. The Service is continuing to make improvements to its internal processes/procedures in response to feedback received.
Building Control	1	1	Complaints relate to delays on a street numbering request. In response, the Building Control Partnership were commissioned to support this function and the delays have been minimised.

Environmental Health	2	0	Q2 shows a reduction in complaints which is positive
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4.21.3 Some areas have seen an increase in the number of complaints received:

Directorate / Service Area	Q1	Q2	Commentary
<b>Housing &amp; Communities:</b>			
Tenancy Management	3	15	As the categories for complaints reporting for this Directorate have changed to reflect the service areas, trend reporting is still tentative. The number of complaints received may be a result of the public experience of COVID-19 and lockdown.
Housing Repairs	4	6	
Housing Options	1	3	
Revenues (Council Tax)	1	2	
Waste Management	1	3	

4.21.4 Whilst it is acknowledged there has been an increase in complaints, the % of partially upheld complaints has reduced from Quarter 1 (16%) to Quarter 2 (7%) showing a downward trend demonstrating the quality of service is being maintained across the service areas.

4.21.5 **Root causes:**

- a) The corporate Complaints policy identifies 6 categories of complaints, namely:
  - i) Poor quality services
  - ii) Unreasonable behaviour by an Officer(s)
  - iii) Unreasonable delay
  - iv) An informal response failed to resolve an issue
  - v) Correct processes not followed
  - vi) Compliments / feedback (see 4.4.8 below)
- b) For Quarter 1 & Quarter 2 the breakdown of the root causes for the complaints received was:

Root Cause	Q1	Q2
Poor quality services	6	12
Unreasonable behaviour by an Officer(s)	3	7
Unreasonable Delay	0	2
An informal response failed to resolve an issue	4	13
Correct Processes not followed	9	11

- c) The Senior Leadership Team received quarterly reports which show how many corporate complaints have been received for each Directorate. To ensure good governance, these are compared with performance data so that the Council can analyse performance in its service areas. From this analysis, service areas will be able

to identify any lessons learnt and identify what (if any) service improvements are required and this be overseen by the Senior Leadership Team.

- d) The Council is undertaking a number of strategic process reviews in key service areas to improve the customer experience and connection between customer services and service areas. Alongside this the Council's Issues' Tracker is being refreshed to ensure more effective logging and tracking of complaints and issues and to enable effective oversight from managers and directors.
- e) Cabinet will continue to have strategic oversight to ensure continuous service improvement through these quarterly performance reports. In addition, Scrutiny Committee will be receiving performance reports for review as part of their role and to support considerations regarding the most appropriate areas for their workplan

#### 4.21.6 Compliments / Feedback:

4.21.7 The Council has also received compliments and feedback over the past two quarters:

	Q1	QUARTER 2
Corporate Services	2	2
Growth & Regeneration	1	0
Housing & Communities	8	5

4.21.8 For Quarter 2, the Council received six compliments:

Service	Compliment / Feedback	Text:
Legal	Compliment	Thank you for the RFI response fulfils my request completely, effort much appreciated.
Customer Services	Compliment	XX has just called and wished to thank the person who dealt with her query and thought that the response was very fast and much appreciated.
Customer Services	Compliment	The customer said they had spoken to XX last week and had a very positive experience. XX stated she would call the customer back and this was followed through and gave good information to her.
Customer Services	Compliment	I've just received a call from a customer called XXX, she has recently applied for HB/CTS so has spoken to quite a few of us – she wanted me to pass on her thanks to the whole customer service team. She would like to say that she is very grateful for how lovely, supportive and patient everyone has been with her over the past few weeks and that we have all really helped to minimise the stress of her change in circumstances.
Housing Repairs	Compliment	I would like to say the clients you hire to do repair works to the flats and houses are absolutely brilliant. They are always friendly,

		on time, they do a brilliant job and you are always left with satisfaction.
Housing Repairs	Compliment	We believe XXX took our concerns very seriously and went above and beyond to do everything within his power to get the problem rectified immediately. We couldn't have asked for a more efficient and nicer guy.

## 5 Main Considerations

- 5.1 Cabinet Portfolio holders should ensure that any issues or concerns arising from the background content reported above are communicated to Directors and thence to relevant officers to take any necessary actions regarding matters highlighted by reported performance.

## 6 Options Considered

- 6.1 No alternatives were considered as a decision is not required.

## 7 Consultation

- 7.1 The performance data contained in the report and the appendix are to inform the Cabinet. Individual performance items may be taken up by the Scrutiny Committee, such as housing voids, as part of their enquiries into the effective operations of the Council.

## 8 Next Steps – Implementation and Communication

- 8.1 The current position with regard to performance and delivery of the Corporate Priorities will be communicated to all members and will be placed on the Council's website.

## 9 Financial Implications

- 9.1 There are no specific Financial implications in the Report.

**Financial Implications reviewed by: Dawn Garton Director for Corporate Services**

## 10 Legal and Governance Implications

- 10.1 There are no specific Legal and Governance implications in the Report.
- 10.2 Regular reporting on an agreed performance dashboard is to be welcomed from a governance point of view, as it provides a transparent mechanism for reporting on performance.

**Legal Implications reviewed by: Kieran Stockley, Monitoring Officer**

## 11 Equality and Safeguarding Implications

- 11.1 There are no specific Equality and Safeguarding implications in the Report.

## 12 Community Safety Implications

- 12.1 There are no specific Community Safety implications in the Report, however there are specific indicators reporting on Community Safety performance.

## 13 Environmental and Climate Change Implications

- 13.1 There are no specific Environmental and Climate Change implications in the report, however as part of priority 4 there are Environment and Climate Change targets monitored as part of the corporate performance measures.

## 14 Other Implications (where significant)

- 14.1 The performance shown against the performance measures in Appendix 1 is important performance feedback information for directorates and their services, which is intended to provide them with data to enable them to take action towards the improvement of the operation of their services, or to provide confirmatory evidence of what is currently working.

## 15 Risk & Mitigation

- 15.1 There are no direct risks arising from this report, all risks from the individual projects/activities will be managed through individual projects and by the relevant Directorates

## 16 Background Papers

- 16.1 No background papers are included with this report.

## 17 Appendices

- 17.1 Appendix 1 – Corporate Performance Measures Dashboard, Quarter 2, 2020-21.

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