



Cabinet

Report of: Councillor Joe Orson - Leader of the Council

Performance Reporting for Q4 2019-20

Corporate Priority:	OG1 Customer Focus OG3 Financial Sustainability
Relevant Ward Member(s):	N/A
Date of consultation with Ward Member(s):	N/A
Exempt Information:	No
Key Decision:	No
Subject to call-in:	No Not key decision

1 Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this Report is to advise Members of the current state of performance against the defined performance reporting measures for the priority themes within the Council's Corporate Priorities for the fourth quarter of the financial year 2019-20.

2 Recommendation(s)

That Council/Committee:

- 2.1 **Notes the contents of the Report and any observations or actions are highlighted to the relevant officers accordingly.**

3 Reason for Recommendations

- 3.1 The performance information for the fourth quarter of 2019-20 in the Performance Dashboard and the current position with regard to delivery against the Council's priorities is used to help inform the Cabinet, and assist Members and Officers with regard to the formation of policy and oversight of the Council priorities.

4 Background

4.1 Appendix 1 to this Report is formed by the 2019-20 Quarter 4 Corporate Performance Measures Dashboard. This 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). The performance trend of the individual measures is explicitly stated. The Council's Directorates have supplied key explanatory commentary for the measures.

4.2 Key Commentary:

Place Priorities – There are 5 Place priorities. (PL1 – PL5) (e.g. PL1 = Promoting Aspiration and growth in a vibrant economy, attracting quality jobs).

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

PL1 - % major planning decisions taken within 13 weeks = 89% - This was creditable performance considering the impact of the coronavirus pandemic during March 2020, and the non-major planning decisions taken within 8 weeks maintained 88% for a third quarter.

PL1 - Business Rates Collection efficiency – this finished the year in Q4 at 99.12%, compared to 98.5% for Q4 2018-19, and reflects the proactive work by the team throughout the year, including timely issue of bills, engagement with those in arrears, and encouraging Direct Debit as the payment method. PL2 - % Food businesses broadly compliant – this finished at 96.3% for Q4 2019-20, compared to 95.9% last year, maintaining a good level of performance. When carrying out the regular food safety inspections, environmental health staff have to undertake a risk rating of each business. The 'broadly compliant' assessment looks at three areas; the structure of the establishment, the food hygiene practices and the confidence in management. The output percentage is based on a relatively small number of inspections per month (approximately 15-20) so if two or three of those are poor it can significantly affect the total result. The figures are collated by the Food Standards Agency and this performance figure is good on a national basis.

PL3 - Average void time – The performance improved in Q4 to 28.36 days. While this is still just outside the tolerance range, it is a significant reduction on the 50.22 days for Q3. There continue to be issues regarding the capacity of the primary contractor which has been impacted further more recently by the national situation with COVID-19 in terms of reduced staff working on site and the availability of key materials to complete void works with some void work being placed on hold or delayed as a result. Further focus is being given to this key area, including the creation of a cross-Directorate weekly Voids Meeting to drive improvements and ensure that maximum benefit is gained from the roll-out of additional Northgate Housing Management System modules.

PL3 - % Non-decent homes (public) – 24.14%. – This is an improvement in the overall percentage from Q3 is due to the rewiring of homes and replacement of a number of other key components demonstrating a positive trend. The expectation is that this will continue to improve slowly in to 2020-21 with the improvement work which is being undertaken

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

PL2 - Number of town centre vacant units expressed as a % – this figure was rising by Q3 at 5.7, but has been unavailable for Q4 due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

The Footfall figure for Q4 2019-20 has been affected by the severe weather in February 2020 followed by the impact of the coronavirus lockdown in March, dropping to 489696, and a further fall in Q1 2020-21 is to be expected. There is work being undertaken along with town centre partners in re-opening the town centre while still maintain social distancing in order to prioritise public health. Further actions will need to be planned to mitigate the negative impact of the lockdown as part of the long term recovery plan.

PL3 - Net additional dwellings compared with 2011 – these figures are currently unavailable due to the effects of the coronavirus lockdown and the closure of building industry offices.

PL4 - Fly tipping – this has increased in Q4 due to increased waste loads following the Christmas collection period and the commencement of the coronavirus lockdown period with restrictions beginning at household waste tips.

PL4 - % of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting – the reduction in Q3 predominantly due to increased residual waste over the December period and reduction in garden waste tonnage over the same timeframe. The cumulative figure across the first 9 months of 2019-20 was 46.2%. The Christmas period increase in residual waste was a factor in the Kg of residual waste per quarter figure.

People Priorities – There are 3 People Priorities (PP1 – PP3) (e.g. PP1 = Fulfilling potential – helping people fulfil their potential and achieve their ambitions).

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

PP1 - Attendance at physical activity outreach programmes within the community – this was 4154 for Q4, and compares favourably to 4212 for Q4 2018-20, considering the impact of coronavirus restrictions in March 2020.

PP3 - % benefit claims proceeds within 5 working days of all information received now stands at 98, so the good level of performance has been maintained. PP2 - Combined MBC/Police data – total crimes/ASB reported – cumulative – the police have modified the definition of incidents in 2019-20, particularly with reference to digital and cyber incidents. This has affected the comparability of the data with previous years, and council officers have requested that like-for-like data is supplied by the police, to allow accurate comparison with previous years' quarters. This performance measure is expected to be reworked in 2020-21 to remove this problem with the data.

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

PP1 - Attendance at Council Leisure facilities – there was a reduction in Q4 to 76107 with the effect of the coronavirus lockdown being felt in March. The Council has engaged with Sports England and external consultancy support to understand how to best support the leisure contractor through the COVID-19 recovery phases.

PP3 – Homelessness - % applications where homelessness has been prevented – this was 16% in Q4, having fallen to 15% in Q3. This was impacted by the number of new presentations in the lead up to the COVID-19 lockdown, where there was an intensive move to providing temporary accommodation for those at risk of rough sleeping. Proactive work is being undertaken to engage with landlords in the Private Rented Sector to reduce the likelihood of presentations when the embargo on possession action is lifted.

PP3 - Homelessness - number of households in temporary accommodation – this stood at 35 in Q4, a slight increase from 34 in Q3 due to the number of sofa surfers accommodated

as a result of government guidance regarding COVID-19. Work being undertaken in this area (in addition to the proactive work with private landlords to reduce demand) includes a review of the supply of temporary accommodation within the Council's own housing stock, to reduce the need for nightly paid accommodation. This complements the work on void turnaround times.

PP3 - Revenues – number of customers in arrears and in receipt of Universal Credit – this has increased further to 263 in Q4, up from 177 at Q4 2018-19. This has been significantly affected by the financial package to alleviate the effects of COVID-19.

Organisational priorities - There are 4 organisational priorities (OG1 – OG4) (e.g. OG1 = Customer Focus - Delivering quality services to businesses and residents; understanding what really matters to our customers).

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

OG1 - % Requests for information responded to within the statutory deadlines – This has been above 99% for the last 2 quarters (99.83 for Q3, 99.33 for Q4), slightly down from the 100% for the first 2 quarters of the financial year, but remains good performance, notably during Q4 with the impact of coronavirus.

OG2 - % total contacts which are self-serve – the quarterly figure had risen to 8% by the end of Q4. The recent increase was as a result of coronavirus response, specifically with regard to the business and community hubs. (The specific figure for March had risen to 11%). The enhanced digital offer for customers that will be achieved through the IEG4 project will be delivered from late June 2020, and accompanied by strong promotion to continue to increase self-serve transactions.

OG3 - Council Tax collection efficiency – at 98.33% for Q4, and Business Rates Collection efficiency – this stands at 99.12% for Q4, and these maintain the improvements in performance that were begun last year.

OG4 - % of staff turnover per annum – the turnover rate has come down significantly over the past 3 years from 18% in 2017-18 to 14% in 2018-19 and now 11%. This is below average for the public sector and shows a slowdown in the number of voluntary resignations. This is mainly as a result of the Workforce Strategy which was implemented in 2018 and put a direct focus on recruitment and retention.

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

OG1 - Undisputed invoices paid within 30 days – this dropped to 85.73% in Q4 from 95.4% for Q4 2018-19. Performance has dipped during the year due to late processing of invoices in housing repairs due to unplanned staff absence, work on the voids process, and Housing Improvement Plan as well as support required for elections affecting the level of administration available to deal with invoice processing. Additional administrative support is being sourced and the team is working hard to deal with the backlog and it is anticipated that the performance will improve next year.

OG1 - % Calls received by the contact centre which are answered – this had dropped to 81% for Q4, down from 89.67% for Q4 2018-19. Long term sickness of 3 experienced advisors put a strain on the service as did an increase in failure demand around repairs with multiple repeat calls. Towards the end of the period, figures improved dramatically as a result of staff returning to work (March 2020 rose to 83, from 75 in January).

OG1 – Number of Ombudsman complaints upheld – there was 1 case again in 2019-20, as at the end of 2018-19. This related to a failure to advertise a planning application. The Ombudsman concluded that there was fault in the way the Council made its decision, but it made no difference to the outcome of its planning decision.

OG3 - Sickness – number of days per FTE employees – the cumulative figure was 7.5 at Q4. Sickness rates were particularly higher than previous years for Q2 and Q4. The main reason is a small number of employees on long term absence: Q2 saw a slight increase in absence due to mental health but this was not sustained in the rest of the year. While this is a higher return for Melton compared to previous years it is still below the national average for central and local government which was 9.7 days per employee based on 2018 figures.

- 4.3 The outturn for Q4 2019-20 marks the culmination of the Corporate Strategy 2018-20 Corporate Priorities framework. Q1 2020-21 will be the first quarter to be measured under the new Corporate Priorities framework of the Corporate Strategy 2020-24, and existing performance measures that are to be continued into future years will be remapped to the new priorities. There will also be the opportunity for directorates to refresh their baskets of performance measures with new or amended measures as the new Corporate Strategy and new directorate structures enable the refocussing of the Council's work.
- 4.4 Issues arising from the performance identified in the Q4 2019-20 Report will be addressed under the new Corporate Strategy framework, with the first report being Q1 2020-21 which will go to SLT in August 2020.

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 its 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 proper 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: S151 Officer – 5 June 2020

10 Legal and Governance Implications

10.1 There are no specific Legal and Governance implications in the Report.

Legal Implications reviewed by: Monitoring Officer – 8 June 2020

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.

13 Environmental and Climate Change Implications

13.1 There are no specific Environmental and Climate Change implications in the Report.

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.

No background papers are included with this report.

17 Appendices

17.1 Appendix 1 – Corporate Performance Measures Dashboard, Quarter 4, 2019-20.

Report Author:	Martyn Bowen , Corporate Improvement Manager
Report Author Contact Details:	01664 502462 Martyn.Bowen@melton.gov.uk

Chief Officer Responsible:	Dawn Garton , Director for Corporate Services
Chief Officer Contact Details:	01664 502444 DGarton@melton.gov.uk