

Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee

25 January 2021

Service Performance

For Decision

Portfolio Holder: Cllr P Wharf, Corporate Development and Change

Local Councillor(s): All

Executive Director: M Prosser, Chief Executive

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Report Status: Public

Recommendation: That the Committee:

1. Note the council's emerging performance framework and discuss proposed improvements to support the scrutiny function in future;
2. Note performance measures rated as red or amber either at the end of October 2020 or at the last time they were reported in 2020/21.

Reason for Recommendation:

To ensure there is effective and timely scrutiny of the council's performance in relation to place and resources.

1. Executive Summary

This report highlights those council performance measures that are relevant to this committee that were classified as red or amber in October 2020, or at the last time they were reported in the 2020/21 reporting year. They are drawn from the overall performance framework used by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). They are also shared with the cabinet and cabinet lead members who meet informally with SLT to discuss performance.

The information is based on the principle of exception reporting, and as such only shows the 20 measures that were identified as red or amber. 44 other measures were identified as green or 'on track'. The proposed development of the performance framework tool will allow committee members to undertake more timely reviews all of the performance measures in a future.

2. Financial Implications

None in relation to this report.

3. Well-being and Health Implications

None in relation to this report. The council's performance framework contains several measures which relate to well-being and health, and new measures are being developed in partnership with Public Health Dorset. Once established these are likely to be considered by the People & Health Scrutiny Committee.

4. Climate implications

None in relation to this report. Performance measures are currently being developed to identify progress against the Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy and Action Plan.

5. Other Implications

None in relation to this report.

6. Risk Assessment

Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

7. Equalities Impact Assessment

Not required as this does not relate to a new policy or project. New performance measures are being developed as part of the council's equality, diversity and inclusion strategy and action plan.

8. Appendices

Appendix 1: Place and Resources scrutiny measures.

9. Background

- 9.1 This is the first performance report to be presented to the Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee since the new scrutiny and overview arrangements were established. It has been developed in discussion with the Chairs of the two scrutiny committees, the Chair of the Audit and governance Committee and the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Development and Change.
- 9.2 The report shows those performance measures relevant to this committee that are contained within the SLT performance framework and were identified as red or amber in October 2020, or at the last time they were reported on in the 2020/21 reporting year. If performance measures are reported into Scrutiny via a different route they are not included within the Annex. For example, Q2's complaints performance data was reported into Places and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 01 December 2020. In the future these reports will be considered alongside performance reports. A similar report, showing measures relevant to the People and Health Scrutiny Committee, is going to that committee at its next meeting on 28 January 2021.
- 9.3 Officers recognise that this reporting arrangement is not ideal. A combination of the normally monthly time-lag in performance reporting, the four-week lead in time required for committee reports, and the variability of committee all mean that information can be several months out of date by the time it reaches scrutiny.
- 9.4 Please note the performance data provided in the Annex is dated from October and therefore reflects a point in time. It lists actions to be taken to address performance issues at that date, which in some instances, has resulted in the measure turning back to green in future months.
- 9.5 To help remove this significant lack in reporting performance into scrutiny, officers are in the process of building new performance dashboards for both scrutiny committees which will allow for the most recent performance information to be scrutinised at future meetings.
- 9.6 The chair of the committee has provided feedback on the set of performance measures seen by Scrutiny. They requested some additional performance measures which related to emergency planning and

highway's infrastructure and assets. The Business Intelligence and Performance team will work with the relevant services to consider what may be feasible and meaningful to report into Scrutiny and will share their findings in due course.

Footnote:

Issues relating to financial, legal, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.

Appendix 1

Indicator	Service	Period	Unit	Monthly / Quarterly / Annual	Data	RAG	D.O.T.	Target	Last year	Commentary	Action
Percentage of council tax collected (cumulative)	Finance & Commercial	Oct-20	%	Monthly	65.29	Red	Worsening		67.21	The continuing impacts of Covid 19 have not lessened therefore this will continue to be the trend locally and nationally. Monthly monitoring, reviewing of suitable, available and achievable recovery action and Head of Revenues & Benefits is taking an updated briefing note to the Council's internal Commercial Cell in Q3.	Monthly monitoring, reviewing of suitable, available and achievable recovery action and Head of Revenues & Benefits is taking an updated briefing note to the Council's internal Commercial Cell in Q3
Percentage of business rates collected (cumulative)	Finance & Commercial	Oct-20	%	Monthly	59.59	Red	Worsening		66.93	The continuing impacts of Covid 19 have not lessened therefore this will continue to be the trend locally and nationally. Monthly monitoring, reviewing of suitable, available and achievable recovery action and Head of Revenues & Benefits is taking an updated briefing note to the Council's internal Commercial Cell in Q3.	Monthly monitoring, reviewing of suitable, available and achievable recovery action and Head of Revenues & Benefits is taking an updated briefing note to the Council's internal Commercial Cell in Q3.
Percentage of FOI requests answered on time (DC Overall)	Legal Services (Assurance)	Oct-20	%	Monthly	75.63	Red	Same	90.00	86.67	Significant rise in the number of new requests - now back to pre-Covid levels. Service Manager for Assurance raised overdue requests with the Directors; this has produced a positive response from 2 Directorates, which have both halved their respective lists of overdue requests and put in measures for tracking the status of requests.	Service Manager for Assurance raised over due requests with the directors; this produced a positive response from 2 Directorates, which have both halved their respective lists of overdue requests and put in measures for tracking the status of requests. Assurance Service Manager to keep in dialogue with Corporate Directors.
Percentage of subject access requests answered on time (DC Overall)	Legal Services (Assurance)	Oct-20	%	Monthly	37.50	Red	Worsening		31.25	Children's Services have recently reduced their backlog and cleared a number of overdue requests, hopefully this will lead to an increased proportion of Subject Access Requests answered on time. The output of the service design workshop (held with childrens and information compliance colleagues) will be shared with the relevant management teams for consideration.	The output of the service design workshop (held with children's and information compliance colleagues) will be shared with the relevant management teams for consideration.
Average number of days to process local land charges	Legal Services	Oct-20	No. (Days)	Monthly	14.50	Red	Worsening	10.00	4.94	Searches within Purbeck and East are being processed within 10 working days (Purbeck 4.5 and East 2.9). North response times are 27 working days, West are 22, Weymouth and Portland are 16, all of which are due to ongoing high levels of search requests being received (3 to 4 times the numbers for the same time last year), capacity issues (new staff have been recruited to replace leavers and vacancies and additional staff taken on but they all must be trained before they can assist clearing the backlogs), some post go live issues with North and the migration of West to the new planning system. The Landcharges team are part of the MasterGov, single system work which will bring planning, building control and land charges all onto the same system: MasterGov. To support the next phase of the single system project, the land charges team have paused processing new searches received after 31 October in relation to the former West Dorset area. This is because West Dorset data will be transferring to MasterGov in early December and they need to clear the old system of searches before then. All customers have been informed in advance and details were included in the Members and Town and Parish newsletters and there are details on the website. The Council's Monitoring Officer and Chief Executive are aware. When the new system goes live in early December we will start to process searches received after 31 October in the date order they were received. Staff have been recruited and are being trained in November ready to assist with this to keep any further delays to a minimum.	When the new system goes live in early December we will start to process searches received after 31 October in the date order they were received. Staff have been recruited and are being trained in November ready to assist with this to keep any further delays to a minimum.

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Percentage of land charge searches processed on time	Legal Services	Oct-20	%	Monthly	41.30	Red	Worsening	100.00	100.00	90% of Purbeck searches and 100% of East searches are being processed within 10 working days. North, West and Weymouth % are between 1-13% within 10 working days, due to ongoing high levels of search requests being received (3 to 4 times the numbers for the same time last year), capacity issues (new staff have been recruited to replace leavers and vacancies and additional staff taken on but they all must be trained before they can assist clearing the backlogs), some post go live issues with North and the migration of West to the new planning system. The Landcharges team are part of the MasterGov, single system work which will bring planning, building control and land charges all onto the same system: MasterGov. To support the next phase of the single system project, the land charges team have paused processing new searches received after 31 October in relation to the former West Dorset area. This is because West Dorset data will be transferring to MasterGov in early December and they need to clear the old system of searches before then. All customers have been informed in advance and details were included in the Members and Town and Parish news letters and there are details on our website. The Council's Monitoring Officer and Chief Executive are aware. When the new system goes live in early December we will start to process searches received after 31 October in the date order they were received. Staff have been recruited and are being trained in November ready to assist with this to keep any further delays to a minimum.	When the new system goes live in early December we will start to process searches received after 31 October in the date order they were received. Staff have been recruited and are being trained in November ready to assist with this to keep any further delays to a minimum.
Percentage of principal roads requiring urgent attention	Highways	Oct-20	%	Annual	1.68	Red	Worsening	1.00	1.20	ANNUAL Performance measure- this was considered at August's SLT and Performance Leadership meeting. Figures provided from annual condition survey carried out in May. Overall condition has declined as a result of continued under investment in carriageway maintenance. Since this data was collected, we have received a one off additional £9.1m from the Department for Transport (DfT) that will now help to reduce the % of the network where maintenance should be planned. However, to maintain this indicator in the future, significant further investment will be required. In addition to the DfT funding, we have also moved to an approach of carrying out early intervention thin surface treatment programmes, this will also contribute to an improvement in performance. COVID-19 has interrupted the delivery of some of our targeted work for this part of the network but we are working with our partners to rectify this, skid resistance on roads has been generally maintained in recent years and our next SCRIM surveys were carried out in October 2020 we are awaiting data to be uploaded to our Asset Management System.	Since this data was collected, we have received a one off additional £9.1m from DfT that will now help to reduce the % of the network where maintenance should be planned. However, to maintain this indicator in the future, significant further investment will be required. In addition to the DfT funding, we have also moved to an approach of carrying out early intervention thin surface treatment programmes, this will also contribute to an improvement in performance.
Percentage of non-principal roads requiring urgent attention	Highways	Oct-20	%	Annual	4.93	Red	Worsening	4.00	3.37	ANNUAL Performance measure- this was considered at August's SLT and Performance Leadership meeting Figures provided from annual condition survey carried out in May. Similar to principal roads, some of the additional funding has been targeted to our non-principal and unclassified roads allowing us to address issues and make them suitable for thin surface treatments in future programmes in an effort to hold carriageway condition. COVID-19 has interrupted the delivery of some of our targeted work for this part of the network but we are working with our partners to deliver works as soon as operationally viable.	Similar to Principal roads, some of the additional funding has been targeted to our non-principal and unclassified roads allowing us to address issues and make them suitable for thin surface treatments in future programmes in an effort to hold carriageway condition. COVID-19 has interrupted the delivery of some of our targeted work for this part of the network but we are working with our partners to deliver works as soon as operationally viable.

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Overall - Number of homes built in Dorset Council area	Planning	Oct-20	No.	Annual	1,440	Red	Worsening	1,806	1,514	This is an annual performance measure subject to a reporting delay, 2019/20's performance data was reported in September 2020. 2020/21's performance data will be reported around September 2021.	
North Dorset - Number of homes built in Dorset Council area	Planning	Oct-20	No.	Annual	96	Red	Worsening	285	223	This is an annual performance measure subject to a reporting delay, 2019/20's performance data was reported in September 2020. 2020/21's performance data will be reported around September 2021.	
Dorset Direct (excluding Adult Access team) cost to serve (i.e. how much it costs per transaction)	Customer Services, Libraries & Archives	Oct-20	£	Monthly	5.32	Red	Improving	4.80	5.33	Cost to serve was above target in October, the use of casual contracts has increased the cost to serve. Casual contracts have been used to meet the increased demands on the service generated by our COVID-19 response. The focus this month has been on Test & Trace. Casual contracts used to proactively call people who have tested positive for Covid-19 or who have come into close contact with someone who has tested positive for Covid-19.	It was agreed to redeploy staff from within the Council's complaints team to temporarily bolster Dorset Direct staff numbers. Helping Dorset Direct to meet the increased demands without having to use as many contracted staff. The internal staff redeployment was agreed for the period of the lockdown, ending on 02 December 2020. The cost to serve calculation (including employee costs) will be updated to reflect this approach.
Purbeck - Number of homes built in Dorset Council area	Planning	Oct-20	No.	Annual	148	Amber	Improving	180	73	This is an annual performance measure subject to a reporting delay, 2019/20's performance data was reported in September 2020. 2020/21's performance data will be reported around September 2021.	
West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland - Number of homes built in Dorset Council area	Planning	Oct-20	No.	Annual	697	Amber	Worsening	775	929	This is an annual performance measure subject to a reporting delay, 2019/20's performance data was reported in September 2020. 2020/21's performance data will be reported around September 2021.	
Unemployment - claimant count rate (%)	Growth & Economic Regeneration	Oct-20	%	Monthly	4.20	Amber	Same		1.60	The figure for this same period last year was 1.6. The increase in claimant count rate is reflecting covid impacts and associated job loses. Dorset's worsening trend is reflecting national trends, England's claimant count rate for October is 6.3.	No action to be taken at this stage, this measure is reported as a contextual performance measure.
Number of staff near misses - incl. schools (Place)	HR & OD	Sep-20	No.	Quarterly	19	Amber			0	This data is drawn from the automated reporting system used by: Dorset Highways, Parking services and Dorset Travel. No data is available to benchmark against the same period for the previous year. Work continues to improve digital near miss reporting processes across the Place Directorate and the rest of the authority in the future.	
Percentage of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks or agreed time extensions	Planning	Sep-20	%	Quarterly	66.00	Amber	Improving	70.00	68.81	There are currently backlogs in the validation and determination of applications, which officers are working to reduce. Additional resource has been secured to reduce this, and the ongoing planning transformation project will improve performance in the longer term. Anticipated that performance will begin to improve during 2021. DOT: improvement on last quarter (where score was 62%).	Officers will continue to address the backlog of applications. The improvements being delivered through the planning transformation project will reduce the risk of backlogs arising again in the future
Staff turnover as a % of total headcount	HR & OD	Oct-20	%	Monthly	0.82	Amber	Improving				

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Average number of working days lost to sickness per FTE (DC Overall)	HR & OD	Oct-20	No. (Days)	Monthly	8.54	Amber	Same	8.00	9.50	Slight increase in sickness absence since last month but overall a downward trend with a decrease of 1 working day lost to sickness absence per employee compared to same period last year.	
Average number of working days lost to long term sickness per FTE (DC Overall)	HR & OD	Oct-20	No. (Days)	Monthly	5.10	Amber	Worsening	4.00	4.87	Increase in LTA from last month and the same period last year. Children's has the highest sickness rate of all directorates, up at 7.09, Corporate Development directorate has the lowest at 3.25. Further analysis within directorates required to establish causes and possible interventions.	
Number of staff near misses - incl. schools (DC Overall)	HR & OD	Sep-20	No.	Quarterly	19	Amber			0	This near miss data is drawn from the automated reporting system used by: Dorset Highways, Parking services and Dorset Travel. No data is available to benchmark against the same period for the previous year. Work continues to improve digital near miss reporting processes across the whole Place Directorate and the rest of the authority in the future.	