

7. PERFORMANCE MONITORING FOR THE THIRD QUARTER OF 2016/17

REPORT OF: HEAD OF CORPORATE RESOURCES
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Wards Affected: All
Key Decision: No
Report to: Scrutiny Committee for Leader, Resources and Economic Growth
28 February 2017

Purpose of Report

1. This report provides Members with information about the Council's performance for the third Quarter from October to December 2016 using the bundle of performance indicators previously agreed by this Committee. It also includes proposals for changes to the indicators that the Scrutiny Committee will be monitoring in 2017/18.

Summary





2. Performance in the third quarter of 2016/17 has been good overall, with most services performing at or close to target. In the small number of cases where service targets are not being fully met, the reasons for this are clearly understood and appropriate action is being taken

Recommendations

3. **The Committee is recommended to:**
 - (i) **Note the Council's performance in the third Quarter of the year and identify any areas where further reporting or information is required;**
 - (ii) **Advise the Cabinet of any issues that the Committee considers should be given particular consideration at the Cabinet meeting on 27 March; and**
 - (iii) **Agree the changes to the bundle of performance indicators and flagship activities to be monitored by the Committee in 2017/18 as recommended by the Member Performance Indicator Working Group.**
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Introduction

4. One of the functions of the Scrutiny Committee for Leader, Resources and Economic Growth is to regularly monitor the performance of the Council's services, with a view to determining whether any additional scrutiny is required of services, particularly if performance is not at a satisfactory level. To do this, the Committee is provided with performance information on a quarterly basis.
5. Performance information is presented in a standard format across all services. Performance measures have been developed to capture the core areas of each service. Where possible a target is set for the year against which performance is measured. Some performance measures do not have targets as these measures are "health checks" and for monitoring purposes only.
6. Performance information for the second quarter is provided at Appendix A. This is set out in tabular form using a traffic light system as explained below:

-  red – 10 percent or more off target
-  amber – slightly off target (less than 10 percent)
-  green – on or exceeding target
-  health check - indicator for information only

Overall Performance

7. Of the 49 indicators in the performance bundle in the third quarter of 2016/17:
 - 29 indicators were on or exceeded target (74% green)
 - 4 indicators were slightly off target (10% amber)
 - 6 indicators were significantly off target (15% red)
 - 10 indicators were for monitoring only.
8. This compares to the same quarter last year when there were 48 indicators, with 24 Green (63%), 6 Amber (16%), 8 Red (21%) and 10 indicators for monitoring only. The additional indicator for the third quarter 2016/17 is staff turnover, which has been reported by exception due to underperformance.
9. Not all aspects of the Council's work can be measured by formal indicators and in some cases the Council has little or no influence over performance. Therefore this work is measured using health check indicators which are outlined in Appendix A. These are intended to provide Members with a holistic view of the Council's work.

Performance meeting or exceeding targets (green)

9. Of the 39 indicators with targets, 29 met or exceeded their target. This has been achieved despite increased volumes and the need for the Council to continue to make efficient use of resources. This section of the report provides more information about some of these performance achievements.

Speed of processing – change of circumstances for Council Tax Support claims

10. Speed of processing of changes of circumstances for Council Tax Support claims was 8 days in the third quarter of 2016/17 compared to the target of 10 days. There were 2,784 changes in circumstances in respect of Council Tax Support processed in the third quarter. For further information on the performance of this service, please see paragraphs 40 – 41.

The percentage of property not in rent arrears

11. In quarter three, 98% of the rent due from the Council's portfolio was collected, compared to the target of 97%. The amount of rent due for collection in the quarter was £371,598.

Performance in answering telephone calls

12. All of the indicators relating to answering of the telephone met or exceeded their performance targets in quarter 3. For calls received and answered in the contact centre, performance was at 98% against the target of 88%. This amounts to 19,768 calls answered out of 20,273 received. The percentage of all calls answered within 40 seconds in the third quarter of 2016/17 was at the target level of 90%. This relates to 17,858 calls out of 19,786 answered within 40 seconds and is an improvement on the same quarter last year. "All calls" refer to those calls received by the Customer

Services for the ten services they handle directly as well as those to the switchboard. For the percentage of calls to the switchboard answered in 40 seconds, this was at 92% in the third quarter compared to the target of 90% and relates to 8,830 out of 9,547 calls answered within 40 seconds.

13. The focus for the further ongoing implementation of the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system continues to be resolving more enquiries at the first point of contact. Customer Service staff are able to deal with customers who need advice across a range of Council services. The average time taken to answer calls in the third quarter was 19 seconds. This compares to 33 seconds in the third quarter of 2015/16. In addition to telephone calls, the Customer Services Team dealt with 8,183 visitors to reception during the third quarter.

Percentage of complaints responded to within published deadlines

14. 100% of complaints were dealt with within the deadline. This relates to the 36 complaints received. Generally the deadline is to deal with complaints within 10 working days of sending an acknowledgement to the complainant.
15. Members will also be interested to note that 109 compliments were received in this period. The main services in receipt of compliments were:
 - Planning 36
 - Customer Services 29
 - Waste Management 16
 - Performance and Partnerships 11

Staff turnover

16. This is one of the indicators that are reported to the Committee quarterly by exception, recognising that staff turnover can be affected by a number of factors, many of which are out of the control of the Council. Staff turnover in the third quarter was 2.22% compared to the target of 3%. This relates to 8 staff leaving the Council. Although on target for the quarter, the cumulative turnover figure for the year is 11% against the target of 9%.
17. Staff turnover is largely a reflection of the state of the local economy and job market. Exit interviews continue to indicate that there is a high level of satisfaction with being employed by Mid Sussex District Council.

The percentage of ICT help desk service requests completed within the target time agreed with the customer

18. During the third quarter, 96% of services requests to the ICT help desk service were dealt with in the target time, which was above the 85% target. 1,633 service requests were received in the quarter. Please see paragraph 42 for more information about this service.

The number of visits made to the Leisure Centres and Civic Halls

19. The number of visits to the Council's Leisure Centres and halls continues to exceed targets, with 427,011 visits in the third quarter compared to the target of 424,490. Leisure Centre membership now stands at 11,694, which is a reflection of the investment already made by the Council and Places for People in improvements to the facilities.

20. Work to implement the £3.1 million further investment in facilities at the leisure centres is proceeding to schedule. The latest improvements to have been completed include the tiling of the Kings Centre wet change floors and pool surround. The 450 new wet change lockers at The Triangle are now installed and operational. The new gym at The Triangle is due to be completed by the end of February. Other improvement works are scheduled for completion by the end of June 2017.

Amount of waste per household which is disposed of in landfill sites (kilos)

21. In the third quarter of 2016/17, 107.92kgs of waste per household was sent to landfill compared to the target of 117 kgs. Further information relevant to this service is included in paragraphs 43 to 44.

Proportion of Environmental Health service requests which are actioned and resolved within 3 months of receipt

22. Performance in the third quarter was at the target level of 96%, with 774 service requests actioned and resolved.

Environmental Health service requests that are responded to within five working days

23. 97% of service requests were responded to within five working days in the third quarter, which was at the target level. This relates to 1,004 service requests received. Requests for service cover the range of Environmental Health activities, including licensing, housing standards, environmental protection and food hygiene.

Number of health and wellbeing interventions

24. The Wellbeing service supports and advises people who wish to make improvement to their lifestyle, such as losing weight, taking more exercise, improving their diet, reducing alcohol consumption or stopping smoking. The service delivered 369 interventions in the third quarter against the target of 249.
25. Of the people who responded to requests for feedback, 85% of those assisted by the Wellbeing service reported a health improvement against a target of 66%. These calls are made 3 months after the intervention to monitor whether the intervention has led to a sustained improvement.
26. "Weight off" workshops provided by the Wellbeing Team have proved to be particularly popular, with 174 participants in the year to date. There is a waiting list for this service and additional workshops are being added to the programme.

Processing of planning applications

27. The speed of determining planning applications remains good, with performance exceeding targets in the third quarter for majors, minors and other planning applications. This is despite an increase of 269 (15%) in applications in the year to date compared to the same period last year- 2,057 compared to 1,788 in 2015/16.
28. During the third quarter of the year, performance in processing major planning applications within 13 weeks (or with an agreed extension of time) was 100% compared to the target at 79%. All 14 major applications were processed within the 13 week target.
29. For processing of minor applications, performance was at 96% compared to a target of 84%. This relates to 98 out of 102 minor applications processed within 8 weeks.

- 30. 278 out of 282 “other” applications were processed within 8 weeks, which represents performance of 98% compared to the target of 94%. “Other” planning applications refers mainly to residential development by householders.
- 31. The indicator showing the level of costs awarded against the Council where the decision of the Council is overturned at Planning Appeal, has a figure of £6,767 for November. This relates to an application for 14 dwellings at Sunte House, Birchen Lane, Haywards Heath, which was refused against the advice of Historic England and the Council’s Conservation Officer. The Inspector stated that the Council had acted unreasonably in giving insufficient weight to this advice and a partial award of costs was made to the appellant.

Validation of planning applications within 5 working days

- 32. In order to support Development Management in meeting their targets for processing planning applications, the Council aims to validate planning applications within 5 working days of submission in 98% of cases. Performance in the third quarter of 2016/17 was 99%, with 659 applications received.

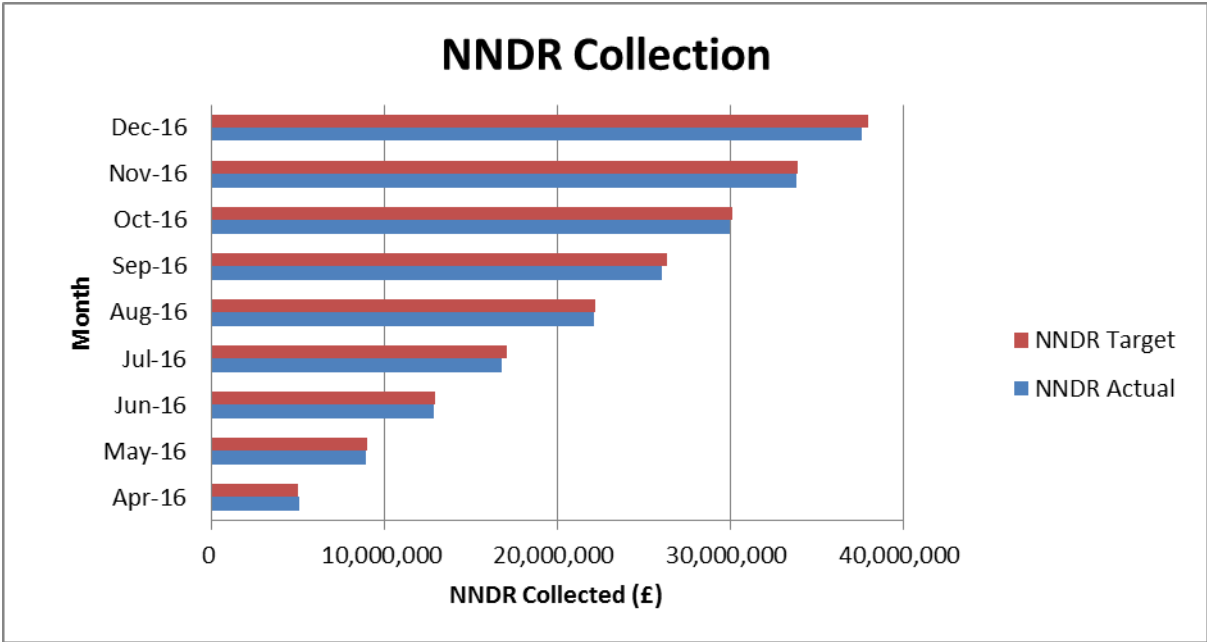
Performance slightly below target (amber)

- 33. 4 of the indicators fell only slightly below their targets (within 10%) in the third quarter of 2016/17. Information about these is set out in this section of the report.

Percentage of Non-Domestic Rates Collected

- 34. Collection of Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) at the end of the third quarter had reached 82.54% against the target of 83.40%. As reported to the last meeting, analysis of our collection procedures shows no obvious reasons for this and NDR collection is down across the whole of Sussex and large parts of the country. In monetary terms, £1.8 million more has been collected by the end of the third quarter of 2016/17 compared to the same period last year- £37,627,771 against £35,824,794. This is largely due to increased rateable values.

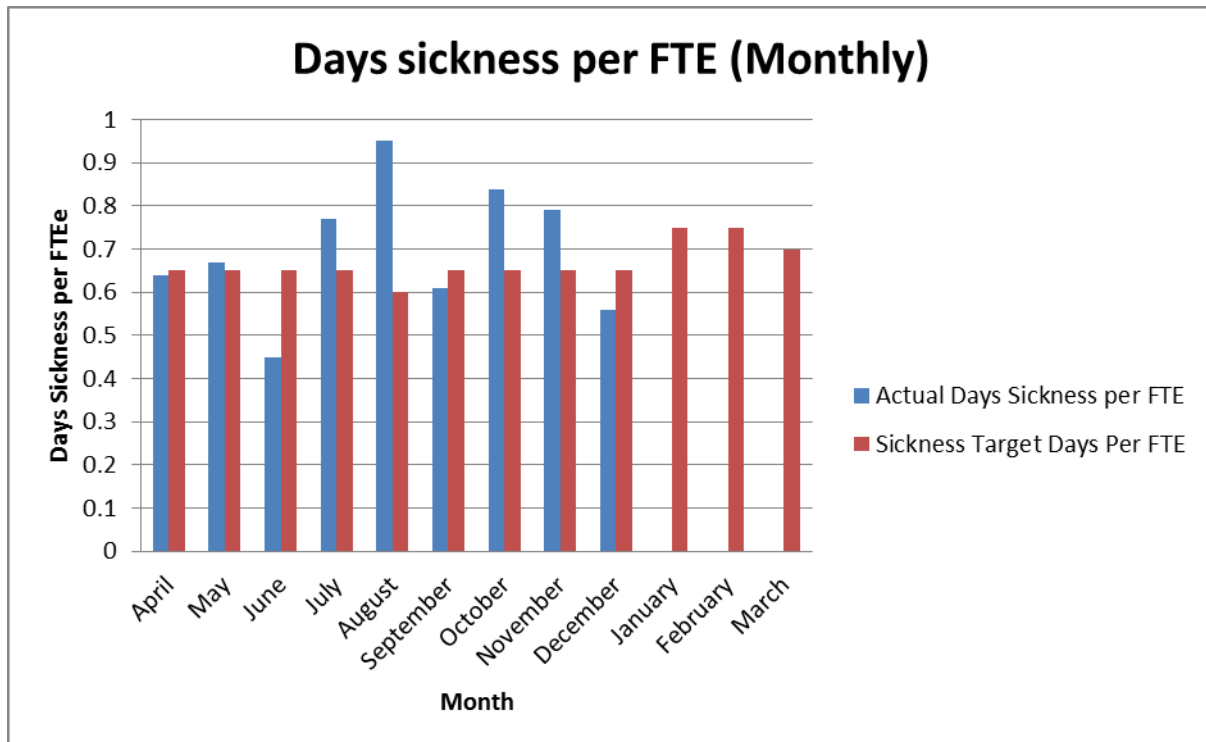
Figure 1 below shows monthly collection against targets for the year to date



Staff sickness absence rate

35. The cumulative staff sickness rate at the end of quarter 3 was 6.28 days per full-time equivalent (FTE), which is above the target of 5.75 days. However there has been a decrease in the number of medium and long term absences and therefore it is hoped that the situation may improve in Quarter 4. The 6.28 days is an improvement on the quarter 3 figure for 2015/16 which was 6.67 days. Information has been obtained from three other Sussex councils to the end of the third quarter, which shows sickness rates at 7 days, 6.38 days and 6.11 days per FTE respectively.

Figure 2 below shows the monthly figures for sickness rates against the target.



The percentage of enquiries relating to enforcement within Parking Services which are dealt with within 10 days

36. Performance in the third quarter was at 95%, compared to the target of 100%. There were 700 out of 737 enforcement enquiries dealt with within 10 days over the three month period. This was due to a period of staff sickness and maternity leave in the Parking Office. The service is now fully staffed and performance for December was back on track at 100% dealt with within 10 days.

Number of households living in temporary accommodation

37. The number of households in temporary accommodation was 47 at the end of December, compared to the target of 45. This is a reflection of factors previously reported to this Committee including the difficulties in accessing properties in the private rented sector and a lack of available Housing Association properties.
38. As advised at the last meeting of the Committee, discussions are taking place with Affinity Sutton to improve the time taken to turnaround voids in both their temporary and general needs housing in order to reduce the time households spend in

temporary accommodation. Please see paragraph 45-46 for more information about this service.

Performance not achieving targets (red)

39. There were 6 performance indicators in the third quarter of 2016/17 that were 10% or more off target.

Speed of processing – new Housing and Council Tax Support claims

40. The average speed of processing new Housing Benefit claims in the third quarter was at 20 days against the target of 18 days with 851 claims processed. For new Council Tax Support claims, performance at 22 days was above the target level of 20 days with 363 claims processed. Staff sickness has had an impact on performance in the third quarter. For the year to date, the speed of processing is at 19 days for Housing Benefit and 21 days for new Council Tax Support claims. The latest figures from the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) show that the national average for processing new claims is 22 days.

Speed of processing – changes of circumstances for Housing Benefit claims

41. Speed of processing change of circumstances for Housing Benefit claims was 11 days against the target of 10 days. This relates to 3,189 changes of circumstances claims processed in the third quarter. For the year to date performance is at 10 days. The latest figures from the DWP show that the national average for changes of circumstances is 9 days.

Percentage of ICT helpdesk calls outstanding

42. At the end of the third quarter, there were 23% of ICT helpdesk calls outstanding against the target of 20%. Calls are broken down into incidents which have a minimum completion time of 3 days, as they affect user's day to day working, and service requests which can have long completion times due to some of them needing 30 days waiting time. Out of 80 work requests, 63 were on long timescales which pushed the outstanding call percentage up whilst these calls were on hold. These calls have since been closed bringing the percentage back down again. At the end of January, the percentage of ICT helpdesk calls outstanding was 14%.

Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting

43. The third quarter performance was 39.41% against the target of 44%. This is largely due to the seasonal reduction in the amount of green waste collected. There has been further expansion of the garden waste service, with approximately 16,000 subscriptions at mid-January.
44. As previously reported to the Committee, a strategic waste review is taking place to consider long term options for improving recycling and waste reduction. This is in the context of the mid- point review of the Council's waste management, recycling and street services contract with Serco. A report considering the mid-term review was taken to the Scrutiny Committee for Customer Services and Service Delivery on 8 February. The Committee's recommendations are to be considered by Cabinet.

Number of households accepted as homeless

45. At 13, the number of households accepted as homeless by the Council is above the target level of 10. For the financial year so far, there have been 33 households accepted as homeless, compared to 28 in the same period last year.

46. The focus of the Housing Needs Team continues to be the prevention of homelessness. 73 households have been assisted to access private sector accommodation so far this financial year, through measures such as the Council's Rent in Advance and Deposit Guarantee Scheme, which helps those without sufficient upfront funds to rent privately. The Council is also in the process of recruiting a new Private Tenancy Negotiation and Sustainment Officer to increase the supply of private rented properties available to clients of the Housing Needs Team.

Other performance information

47. It has previously been agreed at this Committee that some performance indicators should have an annual target and only be reported on a quarterly basis by exception, where there are concerns about performance. These are generally indicators that the Council has little control over. In addition to staff turnover (which is reported in paragraphs 16-17) these are:
- The number of affordable homes delivered (currently at 138 affordable homes delivered so far this year against the target for the year of 128).
 - The number of Disabled Facilities Grants completed (currently at 69 against the target for the year of 120).
48. No concerns have been raised regarding these two performance measures in Quarter 3.
49. One of the monitoring indicators included in the Performance and Partnerships Performance Indicators is the current number of families worked with by the Early Intervention Project. This has been zero for the last three months due to a gap between the previous Early Intervention Officer leaving and the appointment of a new member of staff. The new postholder commenced work in December and is currently working with ten families.

Recommendations from the Performance Indicator Review Working Group

50. It was agreed at the last meeting of the Scrutiny Committee that the Performance Indicator Review Working Group should be established to consider changes to the Performance Indicators to be monitored in 2017/18. The Group met in January and February and comprised of 5 members of this Scrutiny Committee and a Member from each of the other two Scrutiny Committees.
51. The review included the consideration of a new set of performance indicators for customer services and communications, designed to provide more measures of the quality of service provided by the Council. Other changes considered came from Member suggestions previously made at this Committee and from the Service Plans for 2017/18. The Performance Indicator Review Working Group were concerned not to impose any additional costs on the Council by requesting performance information that is not already collected.
52. In addition to changes to Performance Indicators, the Working Group supported the suggestion that this Scrutiny Committee should also monitor progress of the "flagship activities" associated with the revised set of Council priorities contained in the Corporate Plan and Budget Report 2017/18. The new Council Priorities and flagship activities are included at Appendix B to this report. Progress with the flagship activities will be reported to the Committee quarterly through a brief commentary on projects and updates on relevant performance indicators.
53. Specific changes to Performance Indicators for next year recommended by the Working Group are:

54. Indicators to be deleted

- Percentage of calls received and answered in the contact centre
- Percentage of all calls answered in 40 seconds
- Percentage of calls to the switchboard answered in 40 seconds

New indicators to be monitored

- Monthly customer satisfaction scores
- Percentage of enquiries resolved at point of contact
- Average time for answering all calls to the contact centre
- Number of compliments received
- Number of e-forms submitted directly by the public
- Number of households assisted to access the private rented sector. This is a measure of the Council's homelessness prevention activity.
- The average time that households are spending in temporary accommodation.
- Cancellation rate of Penalty Charge Notices. This is a measure of Parking Services' performance in on-street parking in relation to the Service Level Agreement with West Sussex County Council.
- Percentage of planning appeals allowed.
- The number of subscriptions to the green waste service.

55. The Working Group decided to continue to monitor the percentage of invoices paid within 10 days of receipt as an indicator of the Council's support for the local economy. As the Council has consistently exceeded its 90% target it was agreed to increase the target to 95% for 2017/18.

Conclusions

56. The Council's services continued to perform well in the third Quarter of 2016/17 despite increases in workload in many services areas. Where performance is below target, corrective action aimed at improvement has been planned and is being delivered.

Risk Management Implications

57. There are no risk management implications. Performance across the Council was seen as a strategic risk in the past but the Council has a proven track record in performance management and it is no longer seen as a risk.

Equalities Implications

58. There are no direct equality implications contained within this report. Equality impact assessments are undertaken within each individual service.

Financial Implications

59. There are no direct financial implications contained within this report.

Background papers

None.