
Key Accountable Performance 2017/18: Quarter One – Supporting Information

1 Introduction/Background

1.1 This report provides the Executive with an update on performance of the Council during quarter 1 of 2017/18. Reflecting the Council's Performance Management Framework (see Appendix H for the technical background and conventions), information is provided to cover the following areas:

- Any notable changes to the Measures of Volume
- Delivery of the Council's Strategic priorities and core business areas of activity
- Update on the progress being made with the Corporate Programme
- An overview of the key Corporate Health Measures

2 Supporting Information

2.1 **Measures of Volume (contextual, non-targeted measures)** – See Appendix D

2.2 Attached to this report is a summary dashboard showing a number of “health” of the District indicators (Appendix C). Although the Local economy indicators and some social care contextual measures are not within the Councils control they do provide valuable information to both the Council, partners and the residents as a whole about how the local economy is performing.

2.3 The measures of volume related to West Berkshire's Local Economy to highlight include:

- This quarter there have been 17% less business ‘births’ (new business accounts registrations) compared to the first quarter of 2016/17. The number of closed business accounts (business ‘deaths’) was similar to Q1 last year. However, over the last 12 months a similar number of businesses accounts have been registered (699) and closed (703).
- On a longer term downward trend, the number of working age (16-64) claimants of unemployment benefit (JSA), at quarter 1 is 7.9% higher than 12 months before. This is the third quarter that is slightly higher compared to corresponding quarter of the previous year. This will be monitored to ascertain if a new trend is evident. Younger claimants (16-24) has stopped decreasing after reaching an all time low of 20 (Dec 16) and is still below Q1 2016/17 level.

2.4 Notable changes in the local Social Care contextual measures for quarter 1 are:

- A 30% increase for referrals to Children’s Services (from 351 in q1 2016/17 to 456 for q1 2017/18) (one of the reasons being the consolidation of ‘front door’ arrangements) and a 43% increase (from 121 in Jun 2016 to 173 in June this year) in child protection plans (the reasons for this are being investigated but initial hypotheses relate to a few large siblings groups that required child protection plans, potential impact of the reductions in universal services and a wider evolution evident across Berkshire). However, at 148, the number of Looked After Children (LAC) is the lowest over the last two years.
- It is not possible to compare the number of new Adult Social Care enquires with last year’s level due to changes in recording practice. It is pleasing to note that the previously increasing trend of the waiting lists levels has started to be reversed. The numbers of Long Term Service Clients and of adult safeguarding enquiries has also remained similar to the first quarter of the previous year.

2.5 Performance by Council Strategy Priorities for Improvement (See Appendix E):

(A) Improve Educational Attainment (RAG: AMBER)

2.6 Data for reporting the education attainment results for the 2016/17 academic year (AY) is expected in Q3.

2.7 Two new measures have been introduced for this year:

- The percentage of pupils achieving a Good level of development at Foundation Stage - at 75% for 2015/16 academic year, placed West Berkshire in the top quartile nationally and
- The % of schools judged good of better by Ofsted - has continued the upwards trend, currently at 90.2% exceeding the target of 90%.

(B) Close the Educational Attainment Gap (RAG: AMBER)

2.8 Data for reporting the education attainment gap results for the 2016/17 academic year is expected in Q3.

2.9 The % of FSM (free school meals cohort) achieving a good level of development (GLD) at Foundation Stage is a new measure added to the performance framework this year. The latest result for 2015/16 AY (at 57%) places the District in the second quartile nationally.

(C) Enable the Completion of More Affordable Housing (RAG: RED)

2.10 Based on the new reporting arrangements, affordable housing completions data is expected to be available and reported only at the end of quarters two and four.

2.11 Contextual information shows that house prices increased by 3.4% between March 2016 and March 2017.

(D) Deliver or enable key infrastructure projects in relation to roads, rail, flood prevention, regeneration and the digital economy (RAG: GREEN/RED)

- 2.12 Work to complete the flood prevention and drainage improvement schemes listed in the capital programme is all on track and expected to be completed on time.
- 2.13 Progress reports in relation to the superfast broadband, Market Street Redevelopment, London Road Industrial Estate work and Sterling Cables projects will be made in quarter 2.

(E) Good at Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults (RAG: GREEN)

- 2.14 Between the 8th and 19th of May, Ofsted conducted a re-inspection of West Berkshire's Children's Services. The review covered children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers. The outcome of the inspection was that the Council was deemed to have a 'Good' service. Ofsted recognised the considerable improvements and efforts made in the service over the last two years. The rating of "Good" meant that the Council was the first of its kind in the country to improve their rating by two grades (from 'Inadequate' to 'Good'). Among the achievements highlighted by Ofsted are:
- (i) placement stability of the LAC and their good relationships with their carers,
 - (ii) the adoption process identifies the right adoptive parents and appropriate support is provided to children and families,
 - (iii) good and timely decision making on referrals, the success in creating a more stable workforce and better quality assurance processes etc.
- 2.15 An action plan is being developed which will continue the Council's efforts on the areas for further improvement such as:
- (i) involving health professionals in decision making,
 - (ii) better recording and use of information regarding children's diverse backgrounds
 - (iii) analysing of risk for cases missing from home or care or at risk of sexual exploitation.
- 2.16 A Care Quality Commission (CQC) review of one of the services in Adult Social Care is expected to be completed by September 2017. The service has made improvements aiming to achieve a rating of 'Good' or better in the inspection area of 'Safe'.
- 2.17 The reported timeliness to respond to adult safeguarding concerns was slightly lower than the target during quarter 1 due, in part, to the service re-structure, staff vacancies and recording practice. It is hoped that, following the improvements put in place, the overall annual target will still be achieved. (see Exception report for details).

(F) Support Communities to do More to Help Themselves

- 2.18 Progress has been made on a number of work streams that are part of this priority:
- **The new multi agency Building Communities Together Team** – The second phase of the development of the new multi agency Building Communities Together

Team (BCT Team) commended on 1st June with Problem Solving Officers from Thames Valley Police joining those West Berkshire Council officers already within the Team.

The BCT Team coordinated a Transition Workshop at which members of the Safer Communities Partnership and Brilliant West Berkshire Partnership Board came together to scope the Aim and Objectives of the new Building Communities Together Partnership. The BCT Team will be working together to sustain and develop Community Conversations, problem solve persistent and resistant issues within communities and coordinate partnership work to build community resilience.

- **Community conversations** – activities have continued during quarter one. In Hungerford the engagement of members of the community and local practitioners focused on the challenging issues such of Domestic Abuse and Mental Health.

Over 50 people living and working in Newbury came to Newbury Baptist Church to share food, make connections and to take part in a Conversation on ‘what’s good about Newbury and what could be better’.

In Calcot, a further conversation took place to further develop ideas and potential actions (some already identified at the previous conversation held in March) including the potential for creating a Community Cafe.

- **The devolution agenda** is progressing. The Parish Portal was launched in April 2017 and a number of West Berkshire’s Town and Parish Councils have responded with expressions of interest in the running of local services and taking responsibility for assets. The transfer of responsibility for local libraries, playgrounds and public open spaces will be the first proposals to be considered under the devolution programme.

A Town and Parish Clerks’ Forum was also organised in order to build relationships but also to assist in providing advice on a range of issues including the devolution programme.

2.19 Performance by Council Strategy’s core business areas:

(a) Protecting our children

2.20 The timeliness of single assessments has further improved and is well above the target and the previous year’s results. Similarly, placement stability of LAC is ahead of the agreed target.

2.21 The average number of weeks to conclude care proceedings (35) is higher than the national target of 26 weeks. However, the England average has also increased to 35 weeks (2013-2016). The delays are not attributable to Local Authority planning but work will continue with the judiciary and to Local Family Justice Board to reduce the timescales where possible. (see exception report for details)

2.22 The results for the majority of these measures indicate good improvements and performance above the end of year targets. Work is taking place with the judiciary to reduce the delays in care proceedings.

(b) Bin collection and street cleaning

2.23 The estimated result for the household waste recycled, composted, reused or recovered (74%) is below the year end target of 80%. Performance was impacted by the Energy from Waste facility being closed for the month of April but it is still expected that the annual target will be achieved.

(c) Providing benefits

2.24 The average number of days to make a decision on a new benefit claims and to make a decision on changes in a benefit claimant's circumstances have improved compared to the results at the end of 2016/17. At 21.13 days and 12.55 days respectively, for quarter 1, further improvement are planned to achieve the year end targets. (see exception reports)

2.25 The service is also expecting an increase in workload as a result of the full roll out of the Universal Credit in December 2017.

(d) Collecting Council Tax and Business rates

2.26 Despite an increase in demand for the Revenues and Benefits service, first quarter's results for the percentage of 'in year' collection of Council Tax and Business rates are similar to quarter 1 2016/17 and expected to achieve the end of year targets.

(e) Wellbeing of older people and vulnerable adults

2.27 The timeliness to undertake financial assessments referred to the Financial Assessment & Charging team and the measures relating to reablement/rehabilitation service continued to perform highly from last year and are all above the targets.

2.28 At 65.1%, the timeliness of reviews of adult social care clients with a long term service has remained below the target of 75%. As the measure is based on the reviews completed over a 12 months period, the result for the current quarter is impacted by the overdue reviews from quarter 4 of last year. The exception report re-states the reasons for the overdue reviews at the end of last year and the actions being taken to address the challenges. This area, including the improvement actions, was already referred for consideration at the OSMC.

(f) Planning and housing

2.29 The majority of the measures in this area of activity, including the timeliness of determining planning applications (major, minor and other) and the timeliness of the Disabled Facilities Grant's approval were all above target.

2.30 The adoption of the Housing Site Allocation Development Plan Document (HAS DPD) has been completed in May 2017. The activities to submit the New Local plan for examination are on track. Similarly the Minerals and Waste Local plan will be submitted to the Secretary of State for examination by the due date.

2.31 Homelessness has been relieved or prevented in 50% of cases during the quarter. However, the service is reporting, based on the financial resources available, that the end of year target (75%) is unlikely to be met. (see exception report for details)

2.32 The service is asking for the measure on 'timeliness for determining the claims for Discretionary Housing Payments' to be removed from this year's basket of measures

due to identified issues in collecting, processing and reporting data on a quarterly basis.

2.33 Corporate Programme's performance part of the Overarching aim: Become a More effective council

2.34 Corporate Programme Board is monitoring a range of initiatives that support the aim of becoming a more effective council. The key updates for quarter one relating to these initiatives are:

- **Service Transformation** – A Financial Challenge Review Panel has been established to identify ways in which the £4.5m funding gap in the Council's finances can be closed. Work has begun on the preparation of data packs that cover each of the authority's services that will be considered by the Panel.

The methodology for the New Ways of Working reviews, initially to be piloted in the Development & Planning and Education Services, has been agreed. These reviews will begin in Q2.

Work on digitising bookings, courses, payments, virtual meetings and case management continues. There is some overlap between this work and the waste savings project which is developing specific actions to realise anticipated savings of £1.7m.

The shared service project for Public Protection has concluded, while good progress is being made on a proposed county-wide Emergency Planning service and a joint Legal services arrangement with Bracknell Forest.

- **New Investment and Income Opportunities** – The Property team is working to identify suitable property investments to recommend to the recently established 'Property Investment Board'.

The purchase of temporary accommodation at Fountain Gardens (10 units) and 2 other flats is progressing and the issue previously raised around a grant from the Homes & Communities Agency has been resolved with the council now registering as a social housing provider. The project team is now exploring the business case for purchasing general accommodation to prevent people becoming homeless.

A Steering Group has been set up to look at the opportunities arising from and the approach towards trading with schools and academies to ensure that all work is undertaken consistently. The Council would need to be ready to go out to schools in the summer with trading options, although the advice is to run from September given the academic year.

- **Workforce Projects** – The changes to the Essential Car user allowances have now been made and the staff mileage rate has been reduced to 45p per mile (in line with HMRC rates). Work continues on the car leasing scheme.

Awareness raising across the authority has been followed by a number of actions to ensure compliance with and maximise the opportunities arising from the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy.

General Data Protection Regulations compliance work has begun, with the specific requirements being communicated across the Council.

- **Other Programme Activity** – The Programme Office continues to monitor a range of projects dealing with matters such as SEND Ofsted preparation, demand management, the Sandford and Grazeley developments and infrastructure improvement.

2.35 Under the aim of ‘A more effective council’, an analysis of the basket of the key accountable measures used to monitor the delivery of the Council Strategy 2015-2019, indicates that 76% (19/25) of them were RAG rated Green, 20% (5/25) Amber and 4% (1/25) Red compared to 80% (16/20) Green for quarter one 2016/17.

2.36 Corporate Health Measures (see Council Performance Scorecard).

2.37 The Corporate Health Measures, which are applicable for all services, focus on human resources measures which are useful from a management perspective. The forecast net revenue budget variance was £870k at the end of June against a net revenue budget of £117.4m. The staff turnover is now at 1% but due to the change in the organisation’s structure was calculated only for Apr-Jun 2017 rather than on a rolling 12 months basis.

3 Conclusion

- 3.1 In spite of the Council’s continuing financial challenges, quarter 1 performance is good. The most notable improvement is with the Children’s and Family Services, specifically for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers rated as good by Ofsted. This result meant that this Council was the first Unitary Council in the country to progress two grades under an Ofsted inspection.
- 3.2 Improvements or maintaining high performance was achieved in the following areas:
- Improve educational attainment – more schools in West Berkshire are judged Good or better at their Ofsted inspections
 - Protecting our children – further improved the timeliness of assessments;
 - Collecting Council Tax and Business Rates – following performance just below targets at the end of last year, results are now on the expected trajectory to achieve the end of year targets.
 - Older people and vulnerable adults’ wellbeing – maintained the outcomes of reablement services (after discharge from hospital) and good timeliness of financial assessments.
 - Planning and housing – exceeding targets relating to the timeliness of determining planning applications and timeliness of Disabled Facilities Grants approval.
- 3.3 An analysis of the measures RAG rated Amber shows that actions have been implemented to improve performance, which in many of the cases was just below the targets/thresholds set:

- Timeliness to conclude care proceedings – the service has assessed all the cases and ensures that the delays are not attributable to the local authority and is working with the judiciary to indentify solutions to reduce timescales more generally.
- Timeliness of responding to adult social care safeguarding concerns – there is reassurance that concerns are addressed swiftly but there seems to be some recording practices that result in lower reported results. These are being addressed.
- Timeliness of reviews of clients with a Long Term Adult Social Care Service – continued to be impacted by the change in resources available for the service. In addition to the improvement actions already planned by the service, the Executive agreed to refer this area for further scrutiny by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission.

3.4 Based on the analysis of the available information at Corporate Board, it is proposed that the following measures RAG rated Amber or Red are considered by the Executive for further scrutiny:

- Timeliness of decisions on new Benefits claims or on changes in a Benefit claimants circumstances – last year’s results have not achieved the targets. Further actions have been taken during quarter one to reduce the average number of days during the subsequent quarters. However, there is an expectation that demand will increase towards the end of the year as a result of the full roll out of Universal Credit (UC).
- % of people presented homeless where the homelessness has been relieved or prevented – performance has dipped as a result of a reduction in resources and staff sickness. An impact is expected on the more expensive ‘Bed & Breakfast’ spend. In addition, an increased financial pressure is expected as a result of a new Prevention Duty which is due to be implemented under the Homelessness Reduction Act.

Background Papers:

Council Strategy 2015-2019 (refreshed March 2016)

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval

Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council

Delays in implementation could compromise the Council’s position

Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or

associated Task Groups within preceding six months

Item is Urgent Key Decision

Report is to note only

Wards affected:

All

Strategic Aims and Priorities Supported:

The proposals will help achieve the following Council Strategy aims:

- BEC – Better educated communities**
- SLE – A stronger local economy**
- P&S – Protect and support those who need it**
- HQL – Maintain a high quality of life within our communities**
- MEC – Become an even more effective Council**

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Strategy priorities:

- BEC1 – Improve educational attainment**
- BEC2 – Close the educational attainment gap**
- SLE1 – Enable the completion of more affordable housing**
- SLE2 – Deliver or enable key infrastructure improvements in relation to roads, rail, flood prevention, regeneration and the digital economy**
- P&S1 – Good at safeguarding children and vulnerable adults**
- HQL1 – Support communities to do more to help themselves**
- MEC1 – Become an even more effective Council**

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Strategy aims and priorities by providing evidence on progress and inform any additional or remedial actions.

Officer details:

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Appendix B

Equality Impact Assessment - Stage One

We need to ensure that our strategies, policies, functions and services, current and proposed have given due regard to equality and diversity as set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act), which states:

- “(1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:**
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;**
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; This includes the need to:**
 - (i) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;**
 - (ii) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;**
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, with due regard, in particular, to the need to be aware that compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.**
- (2) The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.**
- (3) Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.”**

The following list of questions may help to establish whether the decision is relevant to equality:

- Does the decision affect service users, employees or the wider community?
- (The relevance of a decision to equality depends not just on the number of those affected but on the significance of the impact on them)
- Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?
- Is it a major policy, or a major change to an existing policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?
- Will the decision have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?
- Does the decision relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?
- Does the decision relate to an area with known inequalities?
- Does the decision relate to any equality objectives that have been set by the council?

Please complete the following questions to determine whether a full Stage Two, Equality Impact Assessment is required.

What is the proposed decision that you are asking the Executive to make:	To note performance levels achieved and to review any remedial actions proposed.
Summary of relevant legislation:	
Does the proposed decision conflict with any of the Council's key strategy priorities?	No
Name of assessor:	Catalin Bogos
Date of assessment:	28/07/2017

Is this a:		Is this:	
Policy	No	New or proposed	No
Strategy	No	Already exists and is being reviewed	No
Function	Yes	Is changing	Yes
Service	No		

1. What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed decision and who is likely to benefit from it?	
Aims:	To inform about progress in delivering the Council Strategy priorities and core business areas.
Objectives:	Decision making bodies are up to date about the progress to deliver the priorities and core business related objectives of the Council Strategy.
Outcomes:	Corporate Board and Executive to note performance levels and review the actions to address any under-performance.
Benefits:	All beneficiaries of the Council's services should indirectly benefit from better outcomes delivered as highlighted in the Council's Strategy.

2. Note which groups may be affected by the proposed decision. Consider how they may be affected, whether it is positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this.		
(Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.)		
Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this

Age		
Disability		
Gender Reassignment		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		
Pregnancy and Maternity		
Race		
Religion or Belief		
Sex		
Sexual Orientation		
Further Comments relating to the item:		
It is not expected that the above categories of beneficiaries are directly impacted by the proposed decision.		

3. Result	
Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?	No
Please provide an explanation for your answer: Any changes to services as a result of performance reporting are managed at service level if necessary taking in consideration all the implications including the inequalities.	
Will the proposed decision have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?	No
Please provide an explanation for your answer: Any changes to the services that impact on people’s lives are being made at service level if necessary taking in consideration all the implications.	

If your answers to question 2 have identified potential adverse impacts and you have answered ‘yes’ to either of the sections at question 3, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment.

If a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the Assessment with service managers in your area. You will also need to refer to the [Equality Impact Assessment guidance and Stage Two template](#).

4. Identify next steps as appropriate:	
Stage Two required	No
Owner of Stage Two assessment:	

Timescale for Stage Two assessment:	
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Name: Catalin Bogos

Date: 28/07/2017

Please now forward this completed form to Rachel Craggs, Principal Policy Officer (Equality and Diversity) (rachel.craggs@westberks.gov.uk), for publication on the WBC website.