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

1. Introduction/Background

This report provides the Executive with an update on the Council's performance for quarter 4 (Q4) 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 C

2.1.1 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 the Council, partners and the residents as a whole about how the local economy is performing.

2.1.2 Notable changes to measures of volume, related to West Berkshire's Local Economy, are:

- The new measure for '*the number of properties subject to business rate*' shows an increasing trend over the last four quarters reaching a total of 5,546 business properties (187 more since the end of June 2017). '*The number of business premises that are empty*' followed an increasing trend too, since March 2017.
- The last two quarters reached levels higher than the quarterly values over the last two financial years (at 241 empty business properties Q4 result is 66% higher than Q4 of last year). Whilst 187 more properties are registered for business rates, 96 additional business properties are empty. The two measures of volume suggest that despite an increase in empty properties, the increase in registered properties subject to business rates is greater.
- Q3 (latest) result for the average house price (£354k) shows that the upward trend continued, even though at a lower rate compared to the increase in Q2 to £349k.

- The numbers of planning applications received during Q3 (confirmed) and Q4 (provisional) are the lowest over the last three financial years.

2.1.3 Notable changes in the local Social Care measures of volume for Q4 are:

- The increasing trend of total annual referrals to Children's Services between 2015 and 2017 has been reversed. The result for the year ending March 2018 (1,540) is also 7% below the total referrals for 2016/17 (1,652).
- The number of child protection plans at 179 at the end of Q4 reached the highest quarterly level over the last three financial years. There is not an obvious reason for this and comparative data suggest that this trend is seen nationally. In contrast, the number of Looked After Children at the end of Q4 reached the second lowest level over the last three years.
- The number of adult safeguarding enquiries opened (113) was the highest quarterly level over the last three financial years (the previous record highest was 90 enquiries opened during Q4 of 2016/17). However, the annual total for 2017/18 (318) is similar to 2016/17 total (316) which reduced the increase year on year seen over the previous three years.
- Adult social care waiting lists at 497 for March 2018 has reduced by 20% compared to when it peaked at 621 in March 2017.

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

2.2.1 Improve Educational Attainment (RAG: Amber/Red)

- Education attainment results for 2017 show improvements in most areas but for Key Stages (KS) 2 and 4 that have not achieved the ambitious target of top quartile nationally given that the other local authorities achieved similar improvements. This makes the delivery of the priority to reach the aspirational 10% ranking nationally by 2020 more challenging.
 - Early Years Foundation Stage - The education attainment results for the 2016/17 academic year show that the target has been achieved for the % of pupils achieving a Good Level of Development at the end of Reception year (top quartile nationally).
 - KS2 expected standard for reading, writing and maths combined – West Berkshire results have improved in all three subjects and the combined result (62%) increased from 53% the previous year and is better than the national average of 61%. However, this places the Council in the second quartile nationally which is below the target of being amongst top 25% of councils nationally. (see Appendix F - exception report).
 - KS4 average attainment 8 score – West Berkshire's result at 47.4 is well above the national average of 44.2 but has just fallen short of the top quartile position nationally. Actions have been taken to improve attainment. (see Appendix F - exception report).

- The % of schools judged 'good' or better by Ofsted has significantly improved from 80% at the end of March 2016 to 95%, exceeding the year end target of 90%.

2.2.2 Close the Educational Attainment Gap (RAG: RED)

- Results of the FSM and disadvantaged cohorts are impacted by a number of factors ranking the District third or bottom quartile nationally:
 - Early Years Foundation Stage Good Level of Development – performance of the Free School Meals (FSM) cohort for 2017 has declined placing West Berkshire in the 3rd quartile nationally against the target of top quartile. The very small number of pupils in this cohort in most of the primary schools impacts on the support that can be provided. Actions have been put in place to improve performance (see Appendix F - exception report).
 - KS2 (for 11 year olds) expected standard for reading, writing and maths combined – the factors described in paragraph 2.2.1 have had an impact on the performance of the disadvantaged pupils' cohort. Despite West Berkshire's improvement in performance of this cohort based on the previous year, greater progress has been made nationally by others, placing the District in the bottom quartile nationally.

Some of the actions being taken to improve this situation include regular monitoring visits to schools, headteachers peer support and the prioritisation of support according to risk and school performance. Some of the actions are already seeing improvements in results (see Appendix F - exception report).

- KS4 (for 16 year olds pupils) average attainment 8 score – Attainment of the disadvantaged pupils cohort followed the national trend but the District's result is still bottom quartile nationally. The very small cohort numbers in the schools, a higher percentage of the cohort than nationally being double disadvantaged due to special educational needs or disability are factors identified as impacting on performance. Support is provided through the LA organised pupil premium network and concerns have been raised directly with the relevant schools and with the Regional Schools Commissioner in the case of academies. (see Appendix F - exception report).

2.2.3 Enable the Completion of Additional Affordable Housing (RAG: AMBER)

- The total number of affordable homes completions during 2017/18 at 171 units, exceeded the annual results of the previous two financial years but is below the target of 225 units. The number of units completed since the start of 2015/16 is 412 units which is below the expected trajectory set out in the Council Strategy priority to facilitate the completion of 1000 units by 2020 but planning permission was granted to over 700 additional units yet to be built by the development industry (see Appendix F - exception report).

- Contextual information shows that house prices in the District increased by 4.4% from £339,050 in December 2016 to £353,815 in December 2017.

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

- All 17 flood prevention and drainage improvement schemes, listed in the capital programme for this year, have been completed. Schemes completed include: Winterbourne flood alleviation scheme; Station Road, Woolhampton surface water drainage improvements; Willow Close/Paddock Road, Newbury surface water drainage improvements and Compton Culvert replacement (enlargement of two culverts on the River Pang).
- Work is on track regarding the key infrastructure projects including the Market Street redevelopment (against revised target) and the Sterling Cables redevelopment. For Sterling Cables, the Council has been successful in securing £1.2m in funding as a result of a bid to central government for Marginal funding and thereby reducing the viability issues previously reported.
- London Road Industrial Estate project work is delayed due to ongoing court action. (see Appendix F - exception report).
- Work is on schedule for increasing the number of West Berkshire properties connected to reach the revised target of 96.6% of properties by December 2018. Once this project is completed it is expected that West Berkshire will become one of the best superfast broadband connected areas in the UK.

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

- Good outcomes of Ofsted inspection of Children's Services and of CQC inspection of regulated adult social care services have already been detailed in previous quarterly performance reports and there are no changes this quarter.
- The reported timeliness of responding to adult safeguarding concerns has improved and exceeded the target during last two quarters. However, the cumulative, annual target was not met due to lower performance levels for the first two quarters of this year. The improvements achieved since Q3 are due to actions taken by the service, including the change to the new recording system (Care Director), management and operational level work to improve practice, processes and activity recording. (See Appendix F - exception report).
- Provisional adult social care users' survey data (86.7%) show performance better than target (85%) for % of respondents reporting that the services have made them feel safe and secure.

2.2.6 Support Communities to do More to Help Themselves (RAG: GREEN/AMBER) - Progress has continued on a number of work streams that are part of this priority:

- **Community conversations:** From the beginning of the financial year, the total number of community conversation undertaken is 15 which exceeds the

year end target of 10 community conversations. During Q4 community conversations were held at Bucklebury and Lambourn School with their Year 5 and 6 pupils. The following question was asked 'what is it like living in your community'.

67% (10/15) of identified communities have agreed what actions will be undertaken to address locally identified needs which is below the 100% target. 2017/18 was the first year when a target on actions following community conversation was established. It is now clear that, as the purpose of having community led conversation is for each community to decide if and what actions are going to be progressed, the Building Communities Together Team has limited direct control on achieving such a target (See Appendix E - exception report).

- **The devolution agenda:** The Executive agreed devolution deals with both Hungerford Town Council and Thatcham Town Council. The Hungerford Library building will be transferred to Hungerford Town Council with the library continuing to operate out of this building. Three playgrounds/open spaces have also been devolved to Thatcham Town Council.

2.3 Performance by Council Strategy's core business areas:

2.3.1 Protecting our children

- Further improvements have been achieved on the already good levels of performance from 2016/17 for the timeliness of single assessments (98.3% within timescales versus 95% target) and for placement stability of LAC (only 3.5% of cases with three or more placement moves this year versus a maximum 10% target).
- The average number of weeks to conclude care proceedings has maintained the slightly improved results achieved in quarter 3 (from 35 to 32 weeks) but remains higher than the national target of maximum 26 weeks. As previously reported, the delays are not attributable to Local Authority case planning. Work will continue with the judiciary to reduce the timescales, where possible. (see Appendix F exception report for details).

2.3.2 Bin collection and street cleaning

- The estimated result for the household waste recycled, composted, reused or recovered at 83.2% has further improved from previous year 82.5% and exceeded the year end target of 80%.
- Better performance (rating of 'good') is estimated against the target (rating 'satisfactory') in relation to maintaining an acceptable level of litter, detritus and graffiti.

2.3.3 Providing benefits

- Good performance levels achieved since quarter 2 for the timeliness of making decisions on new benefit claims measures has been sustained and the year end result (19.5 days average) was better than the target of 20 days and better than the previous year's 22.7 days.

- The improving trend for the ‘timeliness of making decisions on changes in a benefit claimant’s circumstances’ has continued and the result at quarter 4 (average 6.23 days) is better than the target for the end of year (less than 9 days) and better than the previous year’s 8.7 days. This was an area highlighted by the Executive and scrutinised in greater detail by the OSMC (Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission) at quarter one.

2.3.4 Collecting Council Tax and Business rates

- Good performance was achieved by the Revenues and Benefits service regarding ‘in year’ collection of Council Tax and Business rates. This was another area that was scrutinised by the OSMC.

2.3.5 Wellbeing of older people and vulnerable adults

- Performance better than target (97%) is reported for the timeliness to undertake financial assessments referred to the Financial Assessment & Charging team (Q4 result 99.7%).
- Performance for ‘the reduction of the number of bed days due to delayed transfer of care (DTC, new measure) has improved (provisional result: 573 bed days) compared to the end of the previous year (808 bed days) but has not achieved the target (446 bed days) for the end of Q4. Factors impacting on performance include the high volume of referrals, limited capacity in the care at home providers’ market and challenges to find suitable placements to support complex users’ mental health needs. (see Appendix F – exception report).
- The proportion of older people still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement services is based on low numbers which results in a higher level of volatility of quarterly results. Following better than target performance for the first three quarters of the year, Q4 result (80.5%) was below target (83%). The complexity of service users’ needs and the impact of DTC are also factors considered as impacting on performance and will be considered as part of the LGA peer review.
- The timeliness of reviews of adult social care clients with a long term service, has been scrutinised by the OSMC at quarter 1. A number of actions put in place to address underperformance has resulted in improved results, from 65.1% in quarter 1 to 71.4 for quarter 2 and 72.8% in quarter 3. However, these improvements combined with other factors, such as the service not being able to retain the additional specialist staffing resource, have not been sufficient to ensure that the end of year target of 75% was met - actual end of year result 69% (see Appendix F – exception report).

2.3.6 Planning and housing

- The timeliness of determining planning applications (major, minor and other) and the timeliness of approving Disabled Facilities Grant’s achieved performance results better than their targets.
- The activities to submit the New Local Plan for examination are reported ‘behind schedule’ against the target of December 2019. Similarly, it is

estimated that the submission of the Minerals and Waste Local plan is 'behind schedule' against the due date (December 2019) for submitting it to the Secretary of State for examination. A new target of April 2020 was proposed by the service for both measures (see Appendix F - exception report).

- Homelessness has been relieved or prevented in 76.9% of cases by the end of quarter 4 which is an improvement from previous quarters and achieved the end of year target. The circumstances for quarter 1 performance below target have been considered in more details at OSMC.

2.4 Corporate Programme's performance - part of the Overarching aim: Become a More Effective Council

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

- **Service Transformation** – During 2017/18 the Financial Challenge Review process was initiated and completed a first phase of work to identify ways in which the £4.5m funding gap in the Council's finances to 2019/20 could be closed. Approximately, £1.5m of savings was identified for 2018/19. Further work has begun for future years and a methodology for achieving this has been developed.

The New Ways of Working reviews for Development & Planning and Education Services began, although progress was limited by the requirement to focus on the Financial Challenge reviews. SWOT analyses were carried out, with the views of staff, management and elected members being captured. Detailed data analysis and benchmarking for these services began which will continue into the new municipal year.

Work on digitising bookings, courses, payments, virtual meetings and case management has continued. There has been and remains some overlap between this work and the waste savings project, which has been developing specific actions to realise anticipated savings of £3m.

- **New Investment and Income Opportunities** – A process has been established to allow the Property team to identify suitable property investments to recommend to Property Investment Board. This activity has now become business as usual.

A project team has been and continues to be exploring the business case for purchasing general residential accommodation to prevent people becoming homeless, and initial work has been begun on a joint venture with Sovereign Housing to pursue this aim.

Arising from the Financial Challenge Reviews, a working group was established to coordinate the Council's commercialisation activity. The work of the group will continue into 2018/19.

The Steering Group examining the opportunities arising from and the approach towards trading with schools and academies, had its work

significantly informed by the actions arising from the Financial Challenge process.

- **Workforce Projects** – Changes to the staff car leasing scheme were effected during 2017/18.

Work continued to ensure compliance with and maximise the opportunities arising from the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy. This activity has now become business as usual.

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) compliance work across the Council was carried out. GDPR will become effective in May 2018 and the authority is well on track to meet its statutory requirements.

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

- 2.4.2 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 62.5% (25/40) of them were RAG rated Green and 37.5% (15/40) Red compared to 64% (25/39) Green and 36% (14/39) Red for quarter four 2016/17. The targets for 2017/18 were at least the same or more challenging than for the previous year for the majority of the measures which suggests that improvements have been achieved in the overall level of performance.
- 2.4.3 An analysis of the absolute results achieved in 2017/18 compared to 2016/17 shows that for the majority (65% or 24/37) of the key accountable measures results have further improved.

2.5 Corporate Health Measures (see Council Performance Scorecard).

The Corporate Health Measures, which are applicable for all services, focus on human resources measures which are useful from a management perspective. The net revenue expenditure in 2017/18 was £117.7m against a budget of £117.4m resulting in a provisional year end over spend of £276k or 0.23% of net budget. The staff turnover is now at 14% compared to 16% for the previous year.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 The end of year results show that performance levels have been maintained at good levels on most of the areas and some have achieved further improvements. Of the remaining measures, some of the results are better than national averages but still RAG rated Red against very challenging local targets. Comparing with previous year, the results achieved for the majority of the key accountable measures have further improved.
- 3.2 Improvements or maintaining high performance have been achieved in the following areas:

- Infrastructure improvements – on schedule progress with key redevelopments (Sterling Cables and, against revised target, Market Street,), with good performance for the status of the principal road network (A roads) and the progress (against revised target) for the coverage of the Superfast Broadband availability.
- Good at Safeguarding children and adults – good outcomes following service inspections by Ofsted and CQC have been maintained.
- Supporting communities – the number of expected community conversations delivered has been exceeded.
- Protecting our children – high performance was maintained for the timeliness of assessments, placement stability;
- Bin collection and street cleaning – levels of recycling have further improved and local environment's cleanliness was maintained to 'good'.
- Timeliness of decisions on benefit claims – good performance was achieved for new claims' and for changes in circumstances' timeliness of response. This was an area scrutinised by OSMC at the beginning of the financial year.
- Collecting Council Tax and Business Rates – achieved the end of year targets.
- Planning and housing – exceeding targets relating to the timeliness of determining planning applications, timeliness of approving Disabled Facilities Grants and homelessness prevention/alleviation (OSMC has considered homelessness area in detail earlier in the year).

3.3 An analysis of the measures RAG rated Red, shows that actions have been implemented to improve performance, which in many of the cases were just below the targets/thresholds originally set:

- Education attainment – improvements have been achieved at KS2 and KS4 and results above the national averages but short of the local target of achieving top quartile this year.
- Timeliness to respond to adult safeguarding concerns – good improvements have been made (due to change in practice and processes) in the second part of the financial years but the end of year results were impacted by performance in the earlier part of the year.
- Timeliness to conclude care proceedings – performance has improved but still remains below target. The delays are not attributable to the Local Authority. Work with the judiciary to reduce timescales continues.
- London Road Industrial Estate – to note ongoing dependencies on court action.
- Enable the completion of affordable housing – improvements are evident compared to previous years. In terms of the actual units built, the annual result was still short of the required annual levels to achieve the priority within timescales as development industry is yet to build over 700 units for which

planning permission was granted (see Appendix F - exception report). This area has been scrutinised in depth during 2017/18.

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

- Educational attainment of the FSM and for disadvantaged pupils' cohorts – a number of factors including the very low cohorts in some of the schools and, as a result, the level of their engagement in improvement and support activities meant that West Berkshire results are bottom quartile nationally. This has been looked at in depth via the social mobility report at OSMC in April 2018.
- Older people and vulnerable adults' wellbeing – performance for most of the measures for this core business area (timeliness of reviews of clients with a Long Term Adult Social Care Service, % of people still at home after 91 days from discharge from hospital) has been impacted by factors such as the complexity of the needs of the service users, availability of internal resources or within the home care providers market, volatility of size and circumstances of the cohort.
- Local plan and Mineral & Waste Local plans are reported as behind schedule – amended targets are proposed by the Service (see Appendix F - exception report).

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	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position	<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months	<input type="checkbox"/>
Item is Urgent Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Report is to note only	<input type="checkbox"/>

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**
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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.

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