

Classification: Part 1 – Public

Key Decision: No

Gravesham Borough Council

Report to: Report to the Performance & Administration Committee

Date: 03 June 2014

Reporting officer: Stuart Bobby, Assistant Director, Corporate Performance
Mike Bytheway, Service Manager, Revenues and Benefits
Darren Everden, Service Manager, IT Services

Subject: Performance Update - Quarter Four 2013-14
(January 2014 to March 2014)

Purpose and summary of report:

To provide Members of the Performance & Administration Committee with a report on the progress made by the council in delivering the Strategic Objective and Measures of Accountability, relevant to the committee, as set out within the Corporate Plan 2011-15 (Mid-term review).

Recommendations:

Members are requested to note the information contained within the report appendix.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In February 2014, the council adopted a revised Corporate Plan which set out five strategic objectives for the council along with the plans for the activities the council will undertake in order to work towards these objectives. These objectives are supported by a number of measures of accountability and information only indicators.

2. Performance Data report

- 2.1 Appendix two provides an update for Members on performance in the fourth quarter of 2013-14 against the strategic objective and eight Measures of Accountability that fall within the remit of the Performance & Administration Committee.

- 2.2 The appendix is set out as follows:
- 2.2.1 Strategic Objective update – this provides an update for Members on work that has been undertaken by the council from January 2014 to March 2014 in relation to the strategic objective within the council’s Corporate Plan (Mid-term Review), relevant to the committee.
 - 2.2.2 Measures of Accountability – this provides Members with details of performance from January 2014 to March 2014 against the measures of accountability set out in the council’s Corporate Plan (Mid-term Review). Information on performance over the last quarter is presented both graphically and in tabular form. The table also provides a ‘traffic light system’ to enable Members to assess how the council is performing against the target it has set for the measure. A commentary on performance has been provided where considered necessary.
- 2.3 Members are requested to note the information contained within the report appendix.

3. Executive Performance Summary

- 3.1 Key areas of improvement/good performance:
- 3.1.1 **CBP 31a-d – Self-help (pay-me, e-billing, direct debits and web forms)**
Performance in respect of CBPs 31a-d was successful as each recorded outturns ahead of their respective 2013-14 quarter three targets.
 - 3.1.2 **CBP 33 – Collection of council tax**
Despite the current economic climate, council tax collection at year-end for 2013-14 was 96.77%. Although only slightly below 2012-13’s equivalent outturn of 97.05%, the figure for 2013-14 is particularly pleasing given that the Council Tax Reduction Scheme was introduced on 1 April 2013. In addition, council tax arrears prior to 1 April 2013 have also been reduced by just over £1.5million.
 - 3.1.3 **CBP 35 – Benefits New Claims**
At year-end, the average processing time taken for New Claims had fallen to 23 days, the lowest figure recorded through the year and ahead of the equivalent 2012-13 year-end figure of 24 days. The performance outturn has improved even though there was an increase in workload from 66,737 pieces of correspondence received as at 1 April 2013 compared with 68,148 received as at 1 April 2014.
 - 3.1.4 **CBP 36 - Benefits Change of Circumstances**
The average processing time taken for Change of Circumstances of 5.3 days is better than the set target of 10 days and is a significant improvement on the 2012-13 performance of 7.4 days. It is also better than the Kent (9 days) and national (11 days) averages for quarter three.

3.2 Potential areas for review:

3.2.1 **CBP 34 – Collection of non-domestic rates**

Despite the challenging economic climate, the annual outturn for Business Rates collection was recorded as 97.9%. This figure fell below the set year-end target by only 0.1% and is only 0.01% below the figure achieved for 2012-13.

In addition, Business Rates arrears were reduced by £750,000.

4. **Background Papers**

4.1 There are no background papers pertaining to this report.

IMPLICATIONS		APPENDIX 1	
Legal	There are no legal implications arising from the discussions taking place as a result of this report.		
Finance and Value for Money	Quarterly reporting and review of the council's progress against its strategic priorities provides an important opportunity to influence performance. Such action will also help to ensure that council resources are being directed in an efficient and effective manner and to the benefit of the Gravesham community.		
Risk Assessment	The specific targets set for each of the measures of accountability are designed to be realistic but challenging to the council; resultantly there are likely to be instances when target performance may not be achieved. Quarterly reporting and review of performance against the measures of accountability and the council's progress against its strategic priorities enables managers and Members to identify risks to the achievement of the council's priorities, enabling action to be taken to mitigate or manage risks and/or influence council performance at the earliest opportunity.		
Equality Impact Assessment	Screening for Equality Impacts		
	Question	Answer	Explanation
	a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	The report is intended to provide an update on the council's performance in delivering the priorities for the community as set out in the Corporate Plan (Mid-term Review).
	b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	No	The report is intended to provide an update on the council's performance in delivering the priorities for the community as set out in the Corporate Plan (Mid-term Review).
	c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?	N/A	--
<i>In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above</i>			
Corporate Plan Objectives	The Corporate Plan (Mid-term Review) 2011-15 which details the council's strategic priorities and measures of accountability considered in this report, forms part of the council's Policy Framework.		

IMPLICATIONS**APPENDIX 1****Crime and Disorder**

The full Corporate Plan – Mid-term Review document incorporates Community Safety into Strategic Objective One – Community Well-being. Whilst the work of the Performance and Administration Committee is not directly related to Community Safety, there may be aspects of the Committee’s work that will need to take community safety issues into consideration.