

TITLE OF REPORT: Performance Management and Improvement Framework –
6 - Month Performance Report 2022/23

REPORT OF: Darren Collins, Strategic Director, Resources and Digital

SUMMARY

This report provides the Committee with the Council's Performance Management and Improvement Framework, reporting performance on the delivery of Council priorities for the period April 2021 to 30 September 2022. It also provides an overview of performance relevant to the role and remit of this committee.

Purpose of the Performance Management and Improvement Framework (PMIF)

1. The Performance Management and Improvement Framework (PMIF) enables the Council to know how it is delivering on its Thrive policy. It has a clear focus on priorities, delivery, measurement and analysis of impact. It is based on Thrive and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and incorporates an organisational 'health check' Balanced Scorecard.

Background

2. The Council's performance framework was reviewed and a new approach was agreed by Council on 27 May 2021. The draft measures were considered and agreed by Cabinet in October 2021. The reporting of 6-month performance, which was considered by Overview & Scrutiny Committees at the end of January and agreed by Cabinet in March 2022, was the first-time performance was reported using the new approach.
3. The PMIF aims to:
 - Enable the Council to know whether it is achieving its priorities. (Thrive Policy)
 - Ensure that the Council's resources are being deployed effectively
 - Make both short and long-term effective decisions
 - A whole systems approach – embedded in our partnership working to deliver the Health and Wellbeing Strategy

6-Month Performance Reporting

4. The analysis of performance for 1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022, against each of the 6 policy objectives of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy and the Balanced Scorecard is set out at Appendix 1. Areas of particular relevance to this Committee are highlighted in this report alone, however the full Performance Management & Improvement Framework is provided to enable members to see the full picture of performance across all priority areas.

5. The report outlines the challenges, achievements, actions, and resources for each policy objective. It also contains performance data including strategic and operational measures and is informed by qualitative and quantitative assessment to inform policy and resource decisions.
6. Some data is not available at 6-month stage. Indicators are released throughout the year, some annually which do not coincide with this reporting cycle. Where provisional data is available this has been provided and noted. The report sets out the current performance for the strategic and operational measures where data is available at the 6-month stage.
7. Cross-cutting key emerging areas already being highlighted are:
 - Budget pressures continue to provide a significant challenge. There is an increased level of uncertainty around the government financial settlement however, it is not anticipated the settlement will address the gap in Council budgets and future demand pressures.
 - Continuing demand pressures being faced by services, particularly across social care.
 - The continued impact of Brexit and the increasing outcomes from the current conflict in Ukraine impacting on costs facing local people as well as in the delivery of council services. The continuing legacy impact of Covid 19 on performance.
 - Widening inequalities, income and the longer term anticipated impact for the future on issues such as health. Latest data shows an increase of over 2 percentage point increase in those people who are considered vulnerable.
 - Staffing pressures across the Council including recruitment and retention, and sickness, continues to present challenges in delivering services.
 - Steady progress in key areas such as climate change strategy and engagement.
 - Continuing increase in the access of digital and online services.
 - Levels of support being provided to local people and businesses such as through various grants e.g., DWP Household Support Fund which was aimed to prevent people from going cold or hungry.

Update Since the Year End Stage

8. Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the year end performance in June 2022. The overall report at Appendix 1 identifies a number of performance challenges, areas of excellence and activities for improvement. Key highlights relevant for this committee include:

Areas of excellence and achievements include:

- There are now 75 Warm Spaces registered in Gateshead.
- A Strategic Locality Lead, Co-ordinator, and the Connector for Locality Working have all been recruited.
- Strategic Account Management Programme engaging key employers to attract and retain investment and jobs and to promote responsible business practices.

- Council led Growth Fund, a £4.5m grant programme operating across Gateshead, Sunderland, and South Tyneside to support business investment projects that lead to job creation.
- Launched a social enterprise accelerator working with a cohort of 12 social enterprises to help scale them up to deliver services to meet local need and address gaps in local supply chains
- 251 residents have started work with help from Working Gateshead. This is double the number for the same period in 2021/22. This has been boosted through targeted activity in communities, partnership working, flexible personalised support and a multi-agency approach.
- Around 28 businesses received support to create Kickstart job placements, resulting in 56 young people at risk of long-term unemployment starting work in high quality roles at the beginning of their careers.
- A 'skills hub' in partnership has been established with the Department for Work & Pensions at the Metrocentre Jobcentre Plus unit. Around 15 residents per week have been engaged and have benefited from one-to-one information, advice and guidance upon becoming unemployed. This has included an event focused on Ukrainians welcomed into Gateshead who were otherwise not accessing mainstream employment and skills support.

Challenges include

- Rising cost of doing business – business investment delays and small businesses concerned they do not have the resource to continue trading. Demand for certain key sectors for business workspace is out-stripping supply.
- Disruption in provision of business support programmes due to the current transition from EU funding.
- Economic inactivity is at its highest level since 2013. This means tens of thousands of residents aged 16-64 are not participating in the labour market. Nearly a third of economic inactivity is reported as due to long-term sickness.
- Decrease in apprentice figures due to several factors. In addition to the legacy of the pandemic but also for financial reasons around businesses closing; staff redundancies; recruiting fewer new employees; staff with insufficient capacity to spend time on an apprenticeship; and young people choosing to stay on at school, rather than entering an apprenticeship.
- Helping people understand how changes to Universal Credit will impact upon their work and the requirements for them to look for work as 'managed migration' from legacy benefits is rolled out and the administrative earning threshold is raised.
- Cost of living crisis is having significant impact on some residents' ability to thrive and sustain tenancies.
- Rent collection is reducing. Direct debits have previously been a more stable source of rent income, but we have seen a large increase in DD failures. Rent collection is expected to remain a significant challenge and rent income will be impacted upon because of the cost-of-living crisis.

- The period of COVID had an impact on recorded crime. In 2020/21, there was a reduction of around 10% in recorded crime, particularly burglary, theft-related offences and vehicle crime as people spent more time at home. This has started to increase again, and we are expecting further increases in recorded crime as the cost-of-living crisis starts to bite. It's likely we'll see an increase in theft-related offences and violent crime.
- Violent crime has been steadily increasing over the last few years, so the Home Office funded the creation of a Violence Reduction Unit back in 2019. It's Northumbria-wide but there are some localised initiatives.
- It should be noted that there is generally a perception that ASB involves youths gathering and causing a nuisance. The data collected on recorded instances shows youth-related reports to police over the last three years have accounted for less than one fifth of all ASB (Youth ASB has made up 15% of all ASB reports to police since April 2019). Most of the reports to police tends to refer to neighbour disputes or neighbour nuisance and that tends to be very localised and impacts only a handful of people/households.

Actions being undertaken include

- Energy roadshows have delivered in partnership between the council, CAG and others support to approximately 200 residents over several weeks.
- Ongoing work to develop a fuel poverty action plan for Gateshead.
- Commissioning activity to accelerate business formation rates and improve business reliance and growth through UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- Implementation of the Economic Development Strategy and the establishment of a Business Support Hub to help business impacted by cost of doing business.
- Delivery of specialised employment support for care-experienced young people to help them navigate the world of work and achieve sustainable economic security.
- Working with national, regional, and local employment related services providers, training providers and specialist support organisations to connect and align employment and skills support.

Further development

9. This is the second cycle of the 6-month performance against the new framework. While some data is still not yet available, these are areas that are important to measure as part of the framework, so they have continued to be included. A review of measures will be undertaken to understand where changes may be needed to ensure the PMIF remains robust.
10. Work continues to develop the framework further to ensure it is best placed to enable the Council to understand its performance against priorities.
11. The impact of the pandemic and recent economic events may influence and inform future priorities of the Council which would then inform the performance content of the framework. It is important the PMIF is flexible and able to evolve to ensure it remains relevant.

12. An overview document has been developed at Appendix 2. This document outlines the importance of performance management at the Council and provides details of the background and purpose of the PMIF, including its links to the wider policy framework of Thrive and the Health & Wellbeing Strategy. The document also details the outcomes and interventions, which underpin the performance measures for each of the six Policy Objectives, and it explains the purpose of the balanced scorecard. The document also demonstrates the newly developed branding for the Performance Management & Improvement Framework.
13. The overview document will be placed in the Performance Management section of the Intranet and internet pages. This document could be provided to members as part of performance reporting in response to the request to improve the presentation of performance information.
14. An online/digital format is also being considered with a pilot approach being developed. This will aim to cluster measures around key priority areas and present a visual representation of the performance data to be used alongside the analysis. This is a complex task and will involve areas across the Council, link to existing data approaches such as Local Index of Need (LloN) but will provide performance data at different levels from strategic to operational in an accessible way.
15. A glossary has been developed of terms used in the creation of this report and within the PMIF, for ease of reference. This is included at Appendix 3.

Recommendations

16. Housing, Environment & Healthy Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:
 - Comment on the 6-month report at Appendix 1 and identify any areas for further scrutiny.
 - Recommend the performance report to Cabinet for consideration in January 2023.

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