

Report to: Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 16 December 2021

Report author: Business Intelligence Manager

Title: Council Performance Report: Quarter 2 2021/22

1.0 Summary

- 1.1. Watford Borough Council's Council Plan sets out the council's ambitions and commitments from 2020 to 2024. Underpinning the Council Plan is an 18 month Delivery Plan, which is supported by a suite of key performance indicators. These measures support the delivery of good quality services (both internal and external) by highlighting areas of good performance and, more importantly, under performance.
- 1.2. The attached report (Appendix A) shows the results for the current set of key performance indicators for Quarter 2 2021/22. The report, therefore, shows:
- The results for the end of Quarter 2 (unless highlighted otherwise)
 - The results for Quarter 1 – 2021/22 (where relevant).
 - The results for Quarter 2 – 2020/21 (shown where the comparison is deemed useful when taking in to account the Covid impact). For some indicators, a comparison has been made with Quarter 2 - 2019/20.
 - The target that has been set for 2021/22
 - Whether the indicator result is above, below or on target, shown by the green (above target), red (below target) or orange arrows (on target).

2.0 Risks

Nature of risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (treat, tolerate, terminate or transfer)	Risk Rating (combination of severity and likelihood)
Failure to scrutinise organisational performance	Potential for performance to slip with consequences for quality of service delivery	Robust scrutiny and challenge	Treat	6

3.0 Recommendations

3.1. It is recommended that Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

1. Note the key performance indicator results for Quarter 2 2021/22, appended at Appendix A.
2. Note that the KPIs will continue to be reviewed as part of the Business Intelligence Strategy, and Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be kept up to date with any changes to the KPI's, or the process for collecting, analysing or presenting KPI data.

Further information:

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Appendices

Appendix A – QUARTER 2 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2021/22

4.0 Quarter 1 KPI Review

4.1. Key indicators to particularly highlight for the Committee's attention are:

1. Average time to process housing benefit claims and time to process change of circumstances remained outside of target, although the latter did improve by 3 days compared with Q1.
2. Delivery of channel shift from phone and face-to-face contact to digital self-service is progressing well. In Q2, there 8,637 forms submitted online relating to 77 processes. 74.7% of these were self-served by customers.
3. Long wait calls to the CSC, and the percentage of all calls answered were below target, both affected by 45,000 Election canvassing emails sent in July, meaning that the targets were not able to be met with the available resourcing. This indicator does fluctuate depending on a number of factors such as service changes or bulk emails sent to residents, e.g. Council Tax reminders. As a comparison, the 2020/21 Q2 result for long wait calls was significantly outside of the target, however the outturn figure for last year was within target due to performance gains later in the year, therefore the results for this quarter are not a concern at this stage.

4. The number of households in temporary accommodation remains steady, and within target. The service is expecting a significant increase in the near future due to benefit changes, end of furlough and evictions which are not yet feeding through.
5. Waste and recycling continues to show good results. All indicators are within target and all show improvement when compared with the previous quarter with significantly better performance than with the previous waste collection model.
6. Annual street cleansing indicators were well within target for levels of litter, detritus and graffiti. There was a marked improvement for levels of detritus, particularly when compared with Q1 figures. Levels of fly-posting remained outside of the target, and may reflect increased economic activity this year. Other Retail and Commercial and Main Road areas remain the most affected locations and efforts will continue to be directed at these areas. The main issues were estate agents 'for sale' boards placed on public highways, circus posters and a banner on Tolpits Lane.
7. There has been excellent progress with regard to the number of Green Flag awards achieved for Watford parks and green spaces. Although the known number of Green Flag parks during Q2 remained at 12, judging has been underway throughout the year and included five new Watford sites. In October 2021, results were announced, and the council was successful in achieving Green Flag Awards for all of the five new sites in addition to our existing 12 sites. We now have a total of 17 Green Flag parks, which exceeds our 2021/22 target of 16.
8. Staff satisfaction and motivation remain reasonably steady, and a comparison of the last 4 years has been included in Appendix A. Return to work interview rates and the completion of Annual Performance Reviews were not within target. The completion rates for Annual Performance Reviews are discussed at Leadership Board and discussions held regarding improving the result. It is acknowledged that some front line services have delayed starting their annual appraisals due to Covid and their work supporting the community. While completion rates are low, appraisals have been carried out with staff but may be waiting to be signed off at an employee or management level. There have been some technical issues with the system which have now been corrected. In addition, the HR service is investigating whether iTrent, the new HR and payroll system, can provide a more streamlined appraisal process for next year. Absences due to staff sickness have been steadily rising since July, although the result is still exceptionally low. Staff working from home and generally low rates of absence overall is thought to be contributing to this result.

9. The new ICT support service commenced with Littlefish at the beginning of July 2021, and results from Q2 are extremely positive. There are currently 8 indicators for ICT. 6 of the indicators were above target for Q2, with missed calls to the helpdesk and percentage of first time fixes showing huge improvement when compared with Q1. Core system uptime was on target, and only 1 indicator was slightly below target – tickets against service levels. Changes to the way this indicator is measured in future are likely to positively impact results going forward. There has been a particularly good response to the new Littlefish LIVE service, where users can chat with an engineer over an instant messenger type interface. W3RICT will be working with Littlefish to increase adoption rates for that channel. Considering the Littlefish service is still bedding in, these results are very promising.
10. The collection rate for Council Tax is slightly above the result recorded for the same quarter last year. The collection rate for NNDR is outside of the target, and slightly lower than last year's result. The service is continuing to pursue arrears and have now recommenced enforcement.
11. Leisure Centres fully reopened in April 2021 following lockdown, with all services restarted from July 2021. All areas are seeing steady growth, and a comparison with pre-Covid figures has been included in the Appendix.
12. Parking enforcement levels are up, with more penalty charge notices issued compared with pre-Covid levels. Over the past year, there have been two new controlled parking zones introduced in Oxhey and North Watford. Any introduction of new areas, particularly where shopping areas are located, will inevitably result in an increase in PCN numbers. Over time it's expected that compliancy will increase and the issue numbers will begin to fall. In addition, the move to NSL as an enforcement contractor, together with the move to new mobile ANPR enabled enforcement devices have increased efficiency.