

*PART A

Report to: Outsourced Services Scrutiny Panel
Date of meeting: 26 November 2014
Report of: Partnerships and Performance Section Head
Title: Outsourced services performance data and information –
Quarter 2 2014/15

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 Watford BC's Corporate Plan 2014-18 sets out the council's priority areas for delivery over the next four years. These are supported by a suite of performance measures. These measures support the delivery of good quality services by ensuring they are performing at an acceptable standard, highlighting areas of strong performance and, more importantly, which areas might require some additional focus to improve performance. In these latter cases, consideration needs to be given to the reasons for under-performance and to steps that might support improvement.
- 1.2 A significant number of key performance measures are now collected for services that have been outsourced to external providers. These measures play a critical role in ensuring that the contracts governing the relationship between the council and the external contractor are well managed and delivering the quality of service expected.
- 1.3 This report focuses specifically on the performance information obtained from the providers of the council's externalised service as of quarter 2 2014/15.
- 1.4 There are a number of new measures included within the report for 2014/15, which means that, for quarter 2, it has not been possible to undertake trend analysis in every case, particularly from last year. This will, however, be addressed in future reports (i.e. from 2015/16) as trend data is established.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Panel to note and comment on the performance of the identified outsourced service indicators at the end of quarter 2 (July - September) 2014/15 - Appendix A.

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3.0 **Background information**

Watford BC regularly collects and monitors performance data for a wide range of its service areas. This is to ensure that services are performing at an acceptable standard. It helps highlight areas of good performance as well as those areas which might require some additional focus to improve performance. This performance data and information is reported to the council's Leadership Team on a regular basis and to Cabinet and either Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Outsourced Services Scrutiny Panel on a quarterly basis.

3.1 **Current outsourced services**

3.1.1 Over the last few years, Watford BC has outsourced a range of its services. Within the contracts associated with these services is a requirement to collect and report performance information to the council to support its role as 'client' or 'commissioner'. The range and scope of this information is defined within each contract and would be relevant to the area of service delivery.

3.1.2 Whilst Overview and Scrutiny Committee continues to scrutinise performance relating to services retained 'in-house', Outsourced Services Scrutiny Panel established that performance information relating to the following outsourced contracts was to be reported to the Panel in 2014/15:

- Veolia
 - Street cleansing
 - Waste and recycling
 - Parks and open spaces

- SLM
 - Watford Leisure Centre – Woodside
 - Watford Leisure Centre - Central

- HQ Theatres
 - Watford Colosseum

- Vinci
 - Parking

- Capita
 - ICT

- Three Rivers District Council (lead authority)
 - Revenues and Benefits

- Watford Borough Council (lead authority)
 - Human Resources

3.1.3 Performance information available at Quarter 2 2014/15 that relates to the areas outlined in 3.1.2 is included in this report to Panel at Appendix A.

3.2 Review of performance at end of Quarter 2

- 3.2.1 Overall, the council's outsourced services shows steady improvement and sustained levels of performance in most areas during Q2 2014/15.
- 3.2.2 Recycling performance is strong and residual waste collected is reducing. The reduction in residual household waste is particularly good and has a significant impact on the waste Watford sends to landfill. Street cleaning performance for Q2 cannot be reported as Veolia is establishing a baseline with the support of external advice.
- 3.2.3 SLM's performance remains relatively stable from Q1. Q2 covers summer months and this traditionally impacts on visits. In addition memberships tend to decline as students relinquish their membership on leaving home. It should also be noted that throughput at Watford Leisure Centre - Central, whilst showing a significant increase from Q1, was not recorded accurately by SLM in Q1 (group bookings were being recorded as 1 visit), which accounts for the increase. The picture on throughput will be clearer from Q3.
- 3.2.4 Capita performance reflects the issues experienced with ICT in Q2 with the unanticipated virus attack. Panel will note the downtime in the ICT service has also had an impact across a range of council work - most notably in the Benefits' measures.
- 3.2.5 Revenues performance in this report to Panel for the first time so that the Panel has a more rounded picture of the service's performance. The measures included are: collection of council tax and business rates.
- 3.2.6 Sickness absence is now performing within the council's 'stretch' target of 5 days and is showing the council's best performance to date.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS.

4.1 Financial

- 4.1.1 There are no financial implications within this report.

4.2 Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)

- 4.2.1 There are no legal implications within this report.

Appendices

Appendix A

WATFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL – MEASURES OF PERFORMANCE - Outsourced Services Quarter 2 (July - September) 2014/15