

REPORT OF: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

TO: EXECUTIVE

DATE: 20th JULY 2023

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**STRATEGIC MONITORING REPORT:
1ST JANUARY – 31ST MARCH 2023**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide the Executive with performance monitoring information on the Council's Corporate Plan for the period 1ST January – 31st March 2023.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that members of the committee:

- a) Note the progress made on actions identified in the Corporate Plan (as shown at Appendix A – Strategic Monitoring Information).
- b) Comment as appropriate on the performance monitoring information provided.







REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

To inform the Executive of performance monitoring information relating to the Council's services.

ISSUE

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Executive with information on progress made with the delivery of the corporate actions in the current Corporate Plan as at 31st March 2023.
2. The strategic monitoring information is structured around the Council's four strategic objectives as set out in the current Corporate Plan. A summary of progress with actions in each of the strategic objectives is provided together with performance information relating to the 25 key performance indicators (KPIs). Full details are shown in Appendix A.

Corporate Priorities

3. At the end of March 2023, **24 out of the 35 corporate priorities were rated as 'green' and therefore fully completed with 11 not having been completed by the end of March 2023.** A summary of the impacts on the delivery of the individual corporate actions is provided below.
4. **SO 1 – Gib Hill management arrangements in place - **
Progress on this priority was delayed earlier in the year due to issues around the legalities of the site being used as a Local Nature Reserve. This was reported to Members in Quarter 2 2022/23. This issue has now been resolved and a draft Management Plan has been submitted to the Lancashire Wildlife Trust for consultation. Further public consultation will be required post-elections along with the re-introduction of the working group. The planning application is expected to be resubmitted in June/July 2023. This priority has been included in the new Corporate Plan so that arrangements for the nature reserve can be finalised.
5. **SO 2 – Local plan programme delivered (Year 1) - **
This priority was due to be delivered with just a 1-month delay in the issue of the preferred options report (which would have been inside the scope of the current Corporate Plan) but due to the delays caused by the pre-election period this has now become a 3 month delay. Progress is expected immediately after the local elections. This priority has been included in the new Corporate Plan.
6. **SO 2 - Nelson town centre customer service/ technology business relocations secured - **
Lease terms have been broadly agreed with Nelson and Colne College; we are currently waiting for them to complete it. It is expected that this priority will complete in early 2023/24.
7. **SO 2 - Colne, Barnoldswick and Earby masterplans complete - **
Progress on this priority was delayed earlier in the year due to delays in the signing-off of the LERG funding. This was outside of the Council's control and has impacted on delivery throughout the year. Further delays have now been experienced due to the pre-election period. The final masterplan and the required stakeholder engagement will now take place after the Elections in May 2023. This priority has been included in the new Corporate Plan.
8. **SO 2 – Colne Levelling Up programme delivered (Year 1) - **
Progress has been delayed on the Market Hall site element of this priority. As per the original Corporate Plan a viable scheme was created in time; however, this was rejected as it was not in line with Member aspirations and required it to be revisited. Following the local elections, the reviewed scheme will be ready to submit as of June 2023. This priority has been included in the new Corporate Plan.
9. **SO 2 - PEARL/PEARLTogether projects at Northlight, Lomeshaye, Harrison Drive, Further Clough Head and Bankhouse Road delivered – **
This captures several development projects for which some key milestones have been completed, such as the lease now having been signed for Lomeshaye and the land on Clitheroe Road adjoining Northlight having been transferred to PEARL (Brierfield Mill). The Harrison Drive housing development has experienced some delays but is due to complete during June 2023. Some delays have been experienced with the land at Further Clough Head due to waiting for the funding agreement to be varied by Homes England. Bankhouse Road scheme also remains outstanding with work being carried out to determine if it is a viable development.

10. **SO 3 - Transfer of Assets programme complete with lessons learned review delivered - ▲**
Progress has been delayed slightly. We are working to transfer all agreed outstanding assets. Progress is expected in early 2023/24 with the lessons learned review to take place soon after.
11. **SO 4 - Liberata service provision re-imagined - ▲**
Some progress has been made with the Joint Partnership Board meeting on 23/03/2023 and some savings having been realised. Additional discussions with Liberata are needed in order to finalise savings and potential changes in service delivery / provision on some of the more complex areas. Therefore, work will continue into 2023/24. This priority has been included in the new Corporate Plan.
12. **SO 4 - New Vision and Corporate Plan 2023-27 in place linked to MTFP - ▲**
The Corporate Plan was produced on time following a full consultation programme. Final amendments were made to this following feedback from Policy & Resources Committee on 09/02/23 and taken to Council on 23/02/23. Council did not approve this version, further final endorsement was delayed until after the Election.
13. **SO 4 - Corporate values refreshed, linked to employee engagement and new employee recognition scheme - ▲**
This priority has been delayed as the Learning and Development officer has been on maternity leave with the post not being backfilled for the duration. This has resulted in a one-off saving for the Council but does mean that this priority will need to be carried forward in to 2023/24. In the interim, further consultation work with staff will be undertaken in advance of the Learning & Development Officer returning to work.
14. **SO 4 - Climate Emergency engagement plan delivered to revise the strategy and action plan with Year 1 actions delivered - ▲**
Whilst the development of an action plan has been delayed, a lot of work has been undertaken, such as:
- an Officer Working Group being established.
 - introducing a pilot HVO fleet and infrastructure at Fleet Street depot.
 - Ribble Rivers Trust partnership to enhance our tree planting programme.
 - Implementation of a one-off community small grants programme.
 - delivering several recycling campaigns.
- The Climate Change agenda and the action plan forms part of the new Corporate Plan.
15. There are three corporate priorities that would have been completed on time if no elections had been held. Two additional priorities have been delayed due to legal discussions but have had significant progress made.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

16. A basket of 25 corporate key performance indicators (KPIs) is used to provide the Council with a gauge of performance representing a range of services delivered by and on behalf of the Council (i.e., these include some Liberata and PLT PIs).
17. We currently have 10 KPIs which are 'Red' (i.e., falling below the expected service levels / targets) and 1 KPI which is 'Amber' (i.e., falling slightly below the expected service levels / targets). The reasons for this are summarised below:

18. **Customer Services** – Contact Centre performance (TS 1b and TS 2b) has fallen short of Council expectations throughout the year. Resource levels and increased call durations are all impacting on service levels and is something which is being experienced across several clients. We reported previously that Liberata were undertaking a large recruitment drive to address the performance issues being experienced but it was acknowledged that this was not an immediate solution given the time taken to get a member of staff fully trained and operational. Whilst service levels have started to improve throughout the latter part of the year (particularly in Dec and Feb where the SLA was above 80%) performance is inconsistent. There is currently a review of all Liberata services underway which will consider ways to realise efficiencies and transform service delivery.
19. **Planning – non-major applications:** Performance has consistently been below standard targets in relation to the processing of ‘non-major applications (PBC 6 and PBC 7) with targets not being hit since the start of 2020.

However, performance has improved significantly in the last two quarters of 2022/23 with the target in Q4 being exceeded for both PIs. Despite this improvement the cumulative target for the year could not be reached.

This rapid improvement in performance for the final two quarters of 2022/23 can be attributed to the transformation of the service, improvement to workflow and improvement in staffing levels. It is expected that this improvement in performance should continue in to 2023/24 and it is likely that targets will be met consistently.

20. **Waste Collection** – The waste collection figures reported represent the data submitted to WasteDataFlow in March 2023 for the rolling year January to December 2022. Performance on the total amount of waste recycled and composted (WM 8c & WM 8d) continues to reflect the national downward trend in recycling percentages. Performance in both PI's has been trending downward since the end of lockdown and is likely a result of artificial highs in performance due to people having more time during lockdowns. In a bid to increase our recycling tonnages we have introduced a new kerbside battery recycling scheme and promoted the recycling of aluminium foil and the improved facilities at Fleet Street depot.

However, some external factors can impact on these rates, such as weather, for which we have no control over. We have also seen 400 less bins subscribed to the garden waste recycling scheme this year, which could be attributed to residents spending habits changing in response to the cost-of-living crisis.

21. **Human Resources** – Sickness absence (BV 12) continues to be above the desired target position. The greatest single reason for sick days has been Stress/depression/fatigue/mental health problems with 88 days lost; with chest and respiratory next on the list – with 28 days lost to this reason. In mitigation, sickness case management remains a priority with meetings taking place as required throughout the quarter. Disciplinary investigations and attendance case management have taken place with the disciplinary issues being resolved without hearings. Work on supporting wellbeing continues with monthly newsletters, promoting the Employee Assistance Programme and physio services.
22. **Non-domestic Rates Collection** – (BV10) – the ongoing reliefs offered by Central Government have skewed the collection rates year-on-year and the rate to fluctuate. The reliefs have been removed from the figure reported for the year. However, the prevailing trend shows a continued fall year-on-year as businesses struggle to pay for NNDR.

23. **Payments made online by the customer** – The percentage of payments made online by the customer (CA 10a) has underperformed against the target throughout 2022/23 but nevertheless has consistently increased year-on-year. To encourage further improvement in how our customers transact with us online, further changes to the customer experience and user interface needs to take place and this is being explored as part of the service transformation of customer services. For example, changes to how payments by cheque are accepted is being considered as this method of payment is highly inefficient.

It is also important to note that this PI is felt to be outdated and as a result is being reviewed. This is to ensure we have the correct performance measure in place to effectively measure how our customers transact with us.

24. **Pendle Leisure Trust** – Whilst the number of live memberships (PLT 01) and dry side facility attendances (PLT 07a(i)) are below the aspirational targets set (which are based on pre-pandemic figures), this reflects the national trend which indicates that most leisure organisations are struggling to retain their members. The cost-of-living crisis has impacted on people's spending habits with fitness memberships generally being considered a luxury rather than a necessity. On a positive note, the figures have seen some improvement during Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 with the dry side facility attendances increasing with more classes now taking place, more schools making regular bookings and the Up and Active walking sessions seeing increased participation. The Trust continue to promote existing and new sessions and facilities and continue to devise and introduce new offers to encourage the use of facilities at quieter times.

Risk Management Arrangements

25. It is good management practice to keep under review the key risks we face to the delivery of our Strategic Objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan. As the Council operates within a dynamic environment the risks facing the Council, and indeed their threat level, do change over time and never more so than recently.
26. Further to the adoption of the Council's updated Risk Management Strategy and Policy Statement by Council in December 2022 and following the comments from the Accounts & Audit Committee on the previous update presented, the format and content of the current Strategic Risk Register (SRR) is now under review by the Corporate Governance Steering Group (CGWG) and Council's Performance Team.
27. In brief we have:
- Developed new risk themes.
These were introduced as it was felt they are more relevant to the current climate and issues facing the Council whilst also being much easier to digest, providing an immediate understanding of the areas of risk facing the Council.
 - Alignment of Risks to Service Plans.
We asked Services to provide mitigating risk actions whilst developing their service plans to ensure more alignment with the Council's Corporate Actions. This area does need further development and discussions are ongoing with services to progress this.
 - Developed a new format.
We have updated the format of the SRR to provide what we feel is a much more user-friendly, at a glance view of our risks. The format is in draft and will be reviewed as the development of the SRR progresses, particularly in terms of the information required by senior management and Members to enable effective and informed

decision making. We have also recently changed the Risk Matrix Model to that of a fully numeric model rather than the alpha-numeric model in use previously.

- Enhanced monitoring and reporting process.
The SRR will be uploaded into the Council's performance management software system, Pentana. This will provide a central repository which enables efficient, regular review and update by Risk Owners which will easily and quickly generate reports as required. Pentana also has a 'trigger' process which alerts Risk Owners to due dates on actions and milestones and can also inform members of the CGWG / Performance Team when a Risk Score changes.
- Risk Management Training for staff delivered.
The scheduled Risk Management training workshop took place on 6th September 2022. The Corporate Governance Working Group is now working on developing the new Strategic Risk Register (SRR). Zurich will also be providing the Council with support in terms of an external review and advice on the development of the SRR, with the training having been used as an opportunity to further refine the content / risk themes.

28. Once this review is complete, the updated SRR will be presented to a future meeting of this committee.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy:

29. There are no policy implications arising directly from the recommendations of this report.

Financial:

30. There are no financial implications arising directly from the recommendations of this report.

Legal:

31. There are no legal implications arising directly from the recommendations of this report.

Risk Management:

32. There are no risk management implications arising directly from the recommendations of this report.

Health and Safety:

33. There are no health and safety issues arising directly from the recommendations of this report.

Climate Change:

34. There are no sustainability issues arising directly from the recommendations of this report.

Community Safety:

35. There are no community safety issues arising directly from the recommendations of this report.

Equality and Diversity:

36. There are no equality and diversity issues arising directly from the recommendations of this report.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Strategic performance summary for the period ending 31st March 2023.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

None