

Somerset West and Taunton Council

Executive – 15 July 2020

Corporate Performance Report 2019/20

This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Member Ross Henley.

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1. Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report

This paper provides the end-of-year performance information for a range of key indicators.

2. Recommendations

Councillors are asked to consider the attached performance report.

3. Risk Assessment (if appropriate)

Failure to regularly monitor performance could lead to the council not delivering on some of its corporate priorities.

4. Background and Full details of the Report

As part of the Councils commitment to transparency and accountability this report provides end-of-year performance information for a number of indicators across a range of council services. The format of this report will be developed further from the start of the 2020/21 financial year in order to monitor progress of the Councils Corporate Strategy.

The table in Appendix 1 includes the councils Key Performance Indicators and shows how the council has performed for 2019/20 financial year.

The majority of indicators have are either met or exceeded the target. For the 2 indicators where performance is significantly below target, and the indicator is rated “Red”, commentary is provided below:

Number of complaints responded to in 10 working days.

This has been an area of focus since last summer and has led to a restructure of the management of complaints. Jess McVie was recruited to manage the process (and support Cllrs with their cases) which has led to significant

improvements. However, some areas of the organisation have struggled to respond to complaints as quickly as needed.

Every complaint is assessed and any that are not actually complaints, such as requests for service and appeals against decisions, are reassigned to the specific process. The council does not want to discourage complaints as they are a valuable source of critical feedback, however, while the organisation has traditionally been effective at correcting mistakes (although sometimes not within the timeframes we would like) we have been less effective at implementing effective preventive action and learning from our mistakes to prevent repeat complaints. This is an area of development that has been receiving additional priority.

Prior to the Coronavirus outbreak we had been preparing a series of development workshops to coach teams in how to deal with complaints with a particular emphasis on effective responses and preventative action. This has been temporarily put on hold but will restart as soon as possible.

FOI requests responded to in 20 working days.

To help improve performance a dedicated case manager was recruited last autumn to manage the FOI process, and a new process for submitting FOI requests has been implemented. This had led to significant improvements in performance and for January, 81% of FOIs were responded to on time.

Since the Coronavirus pandemic, the ICO has formally stated that whilst, as a regulator, they are unable to formally extend time limits under the *GDPR*, *Freedom of Information Act* and *Environmental Information Regulations*, it is taking a more relaxed approach to time limits. It expects that it might take public authorities longer than the statutory timescales to respond to requests, and it will not necessarily take regulatory action where this is unavoidable.

Somerset West and Taunton will continue to deal with FOI requests throughout the Coronavirus pandemic and will endeavour to respond within the statutory deadline wherever possible. It is however expected that some officers who would need to respond to those requests may be engaged with priority work in our efforts to manage the Coronavirus and that this may cause some unavoidable delays.

5. Links to Corporate Strategy

This performance report and future development of it will be a key tool for helping to monitor progress with the implementation of the Corporate Strategy.

6. Finance / Resource Implications

The detailed financial out-turn position will be available in a separate report. Future performance reports will include headline financial indicators and will be presented to Committees alongside financial reports, on a quarterly basis.

