

**Questions raised by Overview and Scrutiny Committee at meeting held on
12 March 2019**

Questions raised by Overview and Scrutiny	Response from Officers
Performance Tracker - Priority: Finance and Resources	
<p>Objective 1 – Action a) Deliver the Council’s transformation programme to deliver a balanced budget – A Member welcomed the roll-out of the car pool pilot but questioned what the Council was doing in terms of the provision of charging points, given that the majority of the vehicles would be electric – he had been informed that the closest points were currently in Gloucester and Strensham.</p>	<p>The Head of Finance and Asset Management advised that it was intended to install charging points at the Public Services Centre which would be available for public use, as well as by staff. A communication plan for this would be produced in the new financial year once it had been properly scoped. In response to a query as to when the charging points might be available, he advised that this was likely to be during the second quarter of 2019/20.</p>
Performance Tracker – Priority: Promoting and Supporting Economic Growth	
<p>Objective 5 – Action a) Explore with partners – including the Battlefield Society – the potential to increase the heritage offer at the Battlefield site – A Member questioned whether this should be removed from the performance tracker, given that it was reliant on third parties, and if it would be more appropriate for the Committee to receive separate update reports as it progressed.</p>	<p>The Head of Development Services confirmed that a meeting had been held with the Battlefield Society the previous day to discuss the project. The Council had a more facilitative role as many of the issues affecting the site, and the timeframe for delivery, were outside of its control. Notwithstanding this, it was beneficial for the project to be included within the performance tracker in order to demonstrate the Council’s commitment to the other parties and, whilst progress could not be guaranteed, it was important to have a project plan.</p>
<p>Objective 5 – Action b) Develop a programme to work with existing tourism attractions within the borough to promote historic heritage – A Member was disappointed that little was being done to promote Gwinnett’s Tomb as an important heritage and tourist attraction.</p>	<p>The Head of Development Services advised that Officers were working with Cotswold Tourism and other key agencies on how best to promote the tourism offering within the borough and she assured Members that all attractions were being discussed in that context, including Gwinnett’s Tomb. She undertook to ensure Members were updated on the details as this progressed.</p>

<p>Objective 5 – Action c) Review the tourism resources to maximise the tourist provisions in the borough – A Member sought an update on the delivery of the Tewkesbury Tourist Information Centre (TIC).</p>	<p>The Head of Development Services explained that this was part of the overall strategy for tourism which would be presented to Members shortly. There had been various conversations in relation to the TIC and the opportunity for a service agreement with Tewkesbury Abbey; however, there were issues around the use of the Hat Shop building, where the TIC was currently situated, and how this fitted with the conditions of the grant, so Officers had been working to ensure compliance.</p>
<p>Performance Tracker – Priority: Growing and Supporting Communities</p>	
<p>Objective 1 – Action e) With partners, explore options for the provision of modular and innovative housing to meet housing needs – A Member considered it unfair to give this action a sad face given that two to three modular housing projects were being progressed.</p>	<p>The Head of Community Services thanked the Member for this comment and agreed that a straight face would be a more accurate assessment.</p>
<p>Objective 3 - Action c) Produce a business case for improvements to the A40 at Longford, including improvements to Longford roundabout – A Member queried how the plans for Longford roundabout were progressing.</p>	<p>The Head of Development Services confirmed that this was progressing well; consultation had taken place at the end of 2018 and a business case was being worked up, so it was anticipated the target date would be achieved.</p>
<p>Performance Tracker – Priority: Customer-focused services</p>	
<p>KPI 18 – Number of reported enviro-crimes – A Member indicated that Radio Gloucestershire had recently reported on the amount of enviro-crime, particularly fly-tipping, around the county and he had been pleased to note that Tewkesbury Borough Council was the only authority which had not been mentioned.</p>	<p>The Head of Community Services advised that the Environmental Health team had been working hard to address fly-tipping and to publicise any prosecutions; however, these reports were not always picked up by the press so he welcomed this comment.</p>

<p>KPI 20 – Benefits Caseload and KPI 21 - Average number of days to process new benefit claims – A Member noted that the housing benefit caseload continued to fall following the roll-out of Universal Credit with large scale movement unlikely to begin until November 2020; however, in terms of processing new benefits claims, the comments stated that the team continued to face an increasing workload. He expected the workload to continue to increase given the amount of additional affordable housing and new development that would be coming forward in the borough via the Joint Core Strategy and questioned whether the team could be supported.</p>	<p>The Head of Corporate Services explained that, whilst caseloads had fallen, this was not to the extent that had been predicted and the council tax reduction scheme element meant that change of circumstances still had to be processed. He reassured Members that he was monitoring performance and would raise any potential resourcing issues with Management Team.</p>
<p>Key Performance Indicators for Priority: Customer-focused Services</p>	
<p>KPI 25 – Number of anti-social behaviour incidents – A Member was shocked that the number of incidents had reduced by 14.78% given that anti-social behaviour was generally increasing across the county. He questioned whether this was because incidents were not being reported and if there was anything that could be done to encourage reporting.</p>	<p>The Head of Community Services explained that it was not unusual to see a dip in the number of anti-social behaviour incidents during the winter but he undertook to investigate this following the meeting. He confirmed that the Tewkesbury Borough Community Safety Partnership had been reconvened and Safer Gloucestershire had set its priorities which would be launched in the summer and would include considering how anti-social behaviour could be better recorded.</p>
<p>KPI 27 – Average number of sick days per full time equivalent – A Member noted from the figures that there had been a slight decrease in quarter three but that the target was unlikely to be achieved for the year and questioned if she had understood this correctly.</p>	<p>The Head of Corporate Services confirmed that was the case – although several members of staff who had been on long-term sick leave had returned to work during the quarter, and more positive figures were expected for quarter four, it would still be above target.</p>
<p>KPI 30 – Food establishment hygiene ratings – A Member questioned whether food establishments with a hygiene rating of three or below were re-visited and whether there was any correlation between the size of the establishment and the score.</p>	<p>The Head of Community Services clarified that there was a set period within which establishments were re-checked depending on the level of risk. He confirmed that the programme of food inspections was being achieved each year and the number of lower scores were reducing. Whilst some larger companies had better strategies in place for food hygiene, there was generally no correlation between the size of establishment and the score.</p>

Questions Raised on Financial Performance	
<p>There were a large number of questions raised by various members of the committee regarding the significant overspend on the Ubico budget</p>	<p>There were a combination of responses from Officers to give assurance this is currently being investigated and controls put in place to manage the budget going forward. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Financial Controller appointed at Ubico, regular meetings have been arranged with them. • Three weekly meetings now in place with the Managing Director of Ubico and senior officers at Tewkesbury Borough Council. • Detailed analysis of overspend being undertaken. • Officers working to get to the bottom of the number of areas with overspends and information would be brought back to members. • Ubico's audit team and the council's internal audit team worked closely together and time would be put aside to offer assistance if there were any gaps in the Ubico audit plan. • Officers will work with Ubico to ensure it had proper controls in place.
<p>A Member noted that income from car parking and permits was higher than budgeted and indicated there was an expectation from the public that some money would be re-invested in maintaining the car parks and ensuring they were safe and secure.</p>	<p>The Head of Finance and Asset Management confirmed the car parking policy was due for review in 2019/20 and this would be picked up at that time.</p>