

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	30 March 2022
Subject:	Council Plan Performance Tracker and Covid-19 Recovery Plan Tracker 2021/22 (Qtr3)
Report of:	Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Corporate Lead:	Chief Executive
Lead Members:	Leader of the Council
Number of Appendices:	One

Executive Summary:

At Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 8 March 2022, consideration was given to 2021/22, quarter three performance management and COVID-19 recovery plan information. The observations made by the Committee can be found below in Section 2.1. The supporting documents presented at the Committee can be found in Appendix 1.

Recommendation:

To receive and respond to the findings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's review of the quarter three performance management and recovery information.

Reasons for Recommendation:

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference require it to review and scrutinise the decisions and performance of the Council and its Committees. The outcome of each quarterly review is then reported to Executive Committee.

Resource Implications:

None directly associated with this report other than to note that a number of actions have been impacted by the Council's response to COVID-19.

Legal Implications:

None directly associated with this report.

Risk Management Implications:

If delivery of the Council's priorities is not effectively monitored, then the Council cannot identify where it is performing strongly or where improvement in performance is necessary. The impact of COVID-19 has been commented upon in relation to a number of Council Plan actions. A separate corporate recovery plan has been developed to assist in risk identification and risk management in relation to COVID-19 and the Council's responsibilities in relation to recovery.

Performance Management Follow-up:

Performance management information is reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis. The outcome of each quarterly review is then reported to Executive Committee.

Environmental Implications:

None directly associated with this report.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** The Council Plan (2020-24) was approved by Council on 28 January 2020. The approved plan included four existing priorities i.e. finance and resources, economic growth, housing and communities and customer first plus the approval of two new priorities i.e. garden communities and sustainable environment. Supporting the priorities is a set of objectives and actions. Progress in delivering the objectives and actions are reported through a Council Plan Performance Tracker. The tracker is a combined document which also includes a set of key performance indicators. As in previous years, to ensure the plan remains a 'live' document, all actions are reviewed annually and where appropriate they are refreshed. The refreshed plan was approved by Council on 20 October 2021.
- 1.2** Since the approval of the Council Plan, the Council's response to the COVID-19 pandemic has meant that resources have been prioritised and deployed to support staff, residents, businesses and communities whilst maintaining core service delivery. Whilst COVID-19 continues to present the Council with significant challenges, a corporate COVID-19 recovery plan has been established to address those challenges. The plan has been designed around the six priorities of the Council plan. Despite COVID-19 the strategic priorities of the Council remain the same. Similar to the Council plan, the recovery plan has a number of objectives and actions. The recovery plan was approved by Executive Committee on 5 August 2020. A recovery plan tracker has been created to monitor progress in delivering those objectives and actions. Similar to the Council Plan, the Recovery Plan actions have also been refreshed.
- 1.3** Given the synergies of the two tracker documents, they are reported together. For example, given that resources have been deployed in response to the pandemic, this will inevitably mean that some of the actions within the Council plan will not have progressed as intended. It could also mean that those actions remain undeliverable as prioritisation is given to actions within the recovery plan.
- 1.4** Key financial information is also reported at the same time, so Members have a rounded view of overall performance information. This includes the revenue budget summary statement, capital monitoring statement and the reserves position summary.

2.0 OBSERVATIONS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

- 2.1** At Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 8 March 2022, consideration was given to quarter three performance management and recovery information for the 2021/22 financial year.

A summary of the questions raised at its meeting can be found below:

Questions raised by Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Response from officers
Performance tracker- priority: Finance and Resources	
<p>P48 – Objective 4 – Action a) Deliver the approved trade waste business case to make the service commercially viable – A Member noted that the target was March 2022 and he asked if this would be achieved by the end of the month.</p>	<p>The Head of Community Services explained that the service would be reviewed and a project plan in place by the end of March 2022 but there would be no change to the service at that point.</p>
Performance tracker- priority: Economic Growth	
<p>P50 – Objective 1 – Action a) To deliver an economic assessment of businesses within Tewkesbury Borough – A Member asked whether the target date of June 2022 was realistic if quotes were still being obtained to carry out the assessment in the spring.</p>	<p>The Economic and Community Development Manager explained that Gloucester City Council was leading on the assessment, which would include a business survey and survey of economic data in the borough, and it was hoped the work would be completed within six weeks with the key recommendations being made by June 2022.</p>
Performance tracker priority: Housing and Communities	
<p>P58 – Objective 1 – Action a) Work with partners to undertake the required review of the Joint Core Strategy – A Member noted this had first been due for completion in autumn 2019 and the commentary started that a revised timetable was expected to be presented to Members in March 2022. She raised concern that this was a considerable delay and questioned whether the March deadline was achievable.</p>	<p>The Planning Policy Manager confirmed that the revised timetable was being taken to the Executive Committee on 30 March 2022.</p>
Performance tracker KPI's priority: Housing and Communities	
<p>P66-68 – KPIs 8-15 – A Member noted there were several new KPIs in relation to housing and she asked when the direction of travel and traffic light icons would be available as it was currently difficult to understand whether performance was good or bad.</p>	<p>The Head of Community Services advised that the KPIs were being reviewed for 2022/23 and would be updated to reflect the new Housing and Homelessness Strategy so he would ensure this was taken into consideration.</p>
<p>P69-70 – KPIs 18, 19 and 21 – Determination of 'other'</p>	<p>The Interim Development Manager explained that Officers were working hard to address the backlog of</p>

<p>applications and enforcement investigation of Category A and Category C cases – A Member noted these KPIs still had unhappy faces. She understood that the planning service was being reviewed and asked whether there had actually been any improvement to date.</p>	<p>applications and it was hoped that an upturn would be reflected in the figures over the next two months. He provided assurance that new applications were being dealt with in a timely manner.</p> <p>A Member pointed out that there had been a dramatic improvement in terms of Category C and Category D cases being investigated within 10 working days during quarter three compared with previous quarters and the 2020/21 outturn which was positive.</p>
<p>Performance tracker priority: Customer First</p>	
<p>P73 – Objective 2 – Action b) Implement an online offering for the licensing service – A Member noted this had been delayed a number of times - the new target date of December 2022 would be the fifth change - and he questioned whether there was enough resource to deliver by the new date and if there was any scope for it to be done sooner.</p>	<p>The Head of Community Services advised that the current paper-based system was very antiquated and did need to be replaced. This was being overseen by the Business Transformation team and, whilst he did not think it could be brought forward, he saw no reason why it would not be achieved by the new deadline, in accordance with the project plan which had been agreed.</p> <p>The Head of Corporate Services clarified that the project went beyond the implementation of an online service with a complete review of the licensing function being undertaken. The project contained four workstreams: IT; governance; HR and the team structure; and finance with support for each element being provided by the relevant departments. He was confident the December deadline would be achieved with the resources backing the project.</p>
<p>Performance tracker KPI'S- priority: Customer First</p>	
<p>P80 – KPI 34 – Average number of sick days per full time equivalent – A Member noted that long term illnesses were increasing once again and she queried whether this was for similar reasons as previously or if it was as a result of COVID.</p>	<p>The Head of Corporate Services confirmed that long term sickness had increased from 292 days to 501 days in quarter three; this was not COVID related but was due to significant long-term illnesses among six to eight members of staff for reasons similar to those which had been reported before.</p>
<p>P81 – KPI 37 – Percentage of formal complaints answered on time – A Member noted there was a downward trend with 80% of formal complaints answered in time during quarter one, 68% in quarter two and 65% in quarter three which was 73% overall against a target of 90%. He asked whether this was linked to the increased number of sick days and if plans had been put in place to turn it around.</p>	<p>The Head of Corporate Services confirmed this was a cross-service issue so he did not believe it was connected to sickness absence; however, complaints could be complex and services were under pressure. The downturn had been discussed by Management Team and improvement was anticipated during quarter four. Top tips for dealing with complaints were communicated to staff, for instance, agreeing an extension of time with the complainant at an early stage if the complaint could not be resolved quickly. Although the demand on services was recognised, it was important that complaints were being dealt with in a timely manner.</p> <p>A Member asked whether there was any way to</p>

	improve the customer experience in relation to general queries as he was aware of residents finding it difficult to get a response from Officers. In response, the Head of Corporate Services explained there was no system for monitoring every piece of email communication which was received by the Council; however, there were customer service standards in place and he encouraged Members to speak to him if they had any particular issues so he could investigate these further.
Performance tracker- priority: Sustainable Environment	
P88 – Objective 3 – Action a) Take a robust approach towards fly-tipping and other enviro-crimes – A Member queried whether consultation on the Public Space Protection Order had commenced at the start of the year as planned.	The Head of Community Services advised that the team had been extremely busy; however, he provided assurance that the consultation was ready to go and would commence shortly.
COVID-19 Recovery Tracker Priority: Economic Growth	
P100 – Action – Recover b) Develop a bid to host a Department of Work and Pensions Youth Hub within the Tewkesbury Growth Hub – A Member asked when the draft bid was due to be submitted and how successful it was likely to be.	The Economic and Community Development Manager confirmed that the bid had been submitted and, whilst it was hoped it would be successful, there were no certainties until funding had been secured. Initial feedback was anticipated within the next two weeks.

3.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

3.1 None.

4.0 CONSULTATION

4.1 None.

5.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

5.1 Council Plan 2020-24.
COVID-19 Corporate Recovery Plan 2020.

6.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

6.1 None directly.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

7.1 None directly.

8.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social/Community Safety/Cultural/ Economic/ Environment)

8.1 Linked to individual Council Plan and COVID-19 Corporate Recovery Plan actions.

9.0 IMPACT UPON (Value For Money/Equalities/E-Government/Human Rights/Health And Safety)

9.1 Linked to individual Council Plan and COVID-19 Corporate Recovery Plan actions.

10.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

10.1 Council Plan 2020-24 approved by Council 28 January 2020.

Covid-19 Corporate Recovery Plan 2020 approved by Executive Committee 8 August 2020.

Background Papers: None

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Appendices: 1. Overview and Scrutiny Committee report of Q3 2021/2022 Council Plan, recovery plan and financial performance information.