



CAI.28 15/16
Challenge and Improvement Committee
19 November 2015

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Subject: Progress and Delivery Report – Services – 2nd Period Report – April to September 2015

Report by:

Chief Operating Officer

Contact Officer:

Mark Sturgess – Chief Operating Officer.

01427 676687

Mark.sturgess@west-lindsey.gov.uk

Purpose / Summary:

This report deals with the progress and delivery of the services the council provides. It is an “exceptions” report and will deal with those services which are either performing above the required level or are below the target set for them. The report will also update members on those areas which were included in the first quarter report and have subsequently improved and therefore are not included in this report.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1) That the committee examine the responses given to the report by the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee and the Prosperous Communities Committee and assure themselves that the appropriate level of challenge is being made by those committees to the information contained in the report.**

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: None arising from this report

Financial : FIN / REF / 96 / 16 None

Staffing : None arising from this report

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights: None arising from this report.

Risk Assessment : None arising from this report

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities : None arising from this report

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:
Period 1 Report to Committees in June 2015

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

Yes

No

Key Decision:

Yes

No

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Councillors have received progress and delivery reports since 2012. They have sought to give councillors information on how the council is performing through its services, project delivery and finances. This has given councillors the opportunities to question officers on performance and ensure that any rectification measures proposed to remedy poor performance are sufficient to tackle the issues identified.
- 1.2 This report is about the services the council is delivering in order to meet the objectives it has set itself in the corporate plan.
- 1.3 For clarity this report will provide information on those services that are either performing below their target level or have exceeded the performance expected of them. This will be done within certain tolerance levels therefore services which are just below their target performance will not be reported at this stage, but will be monitoring through the council's services leadership team. Generally explanations and rectifications are given where an aspect of a service is performing below the required standard.
- 1.4 In addition the report will contain information on servicing which were included in the last period's exceptions report, but have subsequently improved to the extent that they are not included in this report. This is to demonstrate to members that remedial measures which have been put in place are working.

2.0 Update on Issues Highlighted in the First Period Report

2.1 Complaints Received

Complaints are still running above the target level (baseline 2014/14 = 46, target for 2015/16 second period = 30, actual = 59). So far this year we have received a total of 13 complaints related to the Planning service which is the same for the whole of 2014/15 (figures relate to the end of August 2015).

2.2 Health Trainers

The health trainers have now been recruited and the service is starting to hit the targets set for it.

2.3 Gainsborough Markets

The performance around the Gainsborough Markets are given in the main report.

2.4 Local Land Charges

Local Land Charges performance is improving as a result of interventions which have been implemented in the current period. In the first period report the performance on turnaround time was not

reported, however due to reporting problems in the team the performance should have been reported as it stood at 18 days. The performance reporting issues have now been addressed.

2.5 Development Management

Development management performance is continuing to cause concern. A major improvement programme is underway and the service is due to undergo a "Peer Challenge" in late October.

2.6 Waste Collections

The performance around the collection of missed bins is improving as a result of management interventions in the team.

3.0 Highlighted Areas in the Second Period Report

3.1 The enforcement work continues to hit its targets. A recent audit of the service has given it "substantial assurance" which should give members confidence that the service is well run and delivering what it needs to do for the council.

3.2 Trinity Arts and the council's leisure offer appears to be valued by the customers as they both continue to record high customer satisfaction rates.

3.4 Whilst outside the direct control of the council the unemployment rate for the District is above target at 2.2% above the national rate (this is a figure for August as this is the latest figure which is available).

3.5 The youth unemployment rate is more concerning as we have set a target for it to be no more than 3% above national rate; however the actual rate for July is 5.3% above the national figure (this is the figure for August 2015 as the latest available).

3.6 Another highlight from this period's figures is that the cost of temporary accommodation is well below the target set for it at around £8000 against a target of around £23,000.

4 Policy Committee Consideration

4.1 This report has been considered by both the Policy Committees and the relevant minute from each is attached.

4.2 Extract from Prosperous Communities Cttee – 29 October 2015

53 PROGRESS AND DELIVERY (SERVICES) – PERIOD 2 (PRCC.27 15/16)

Members gave consideration to the second of the newly styled Progress and Delivery reports for 2015/16, which highlighted the areas where services were “off target”, the reasons for this and the proposed rectifications. The report also provided Members with an opportunity to examine the reasons why performance was off track and seek assurance that the measures which had been put in place were sufficient to tackle the issues which had been identified with the service.

The report also updated Members on those areas which had been highlighted in the first quarter report, these being: -

- Complaints Received
- Health Trainers
- Gainsborough Markets
- Local Land Charges
- Development Management
- Waste Collections

and further updates were given on each.

It was explained that following previous comments by Members the format had slightly changed in order to make the report more legible, with tables including a red ‘R’ or green ‘G’ to indicate their status.

The figures for the number of complaints received were now available to the end of September and had risen. Members questioned how many of these were related to Development Management. The response was that only 18 of the 77 complaints reported were about Development Management, and a future report would list complaints received by Service Area.

With regard to Development Management, the Chief Operating Officer outlined some immediate and forthcoming changes that had been made within the department as a result of the Peer Challenge held the preceding week, aimed at improving communication. All direct phone lines were now open, as opposed to the duty planner arrangement. The definitive case file for all applications would now be available on line, and the way in which Members would be notified of new applications within their Wards would be changed with effect from 9 November, meaning all Members would receive a list bespoke to them. All of the changes were welcomed by Members.

Referring to page 11 of the report, the Chief Operating Officer provided Members with some updated figures, in respect of major planning applications, minor applications and other applications. Data cleansing had taken place and the revised figures were now 64%, 43% and 55% respectively, which was a much more acceptable level of performance.

Much work was being undertaken on NEETs ('Not in Employment, Education or Training') to address the unemployment statistics which were of concern but Members indicated they were confident in the work being undertaken.

The currently high cost shown for the provision of service to Members was explained as being due to profiling issues, in that some one-off costs had shown in the budget (e.g. webcasting equipment) and by the end of the year this would balance out. The increasing cost of running the Gainsborough markets was due to declining income from stalls and the fixed costs of erecting the stalls on a Tuesday and Saturday.

Attention was also drawn to the Empty Homes Targets and Housing Register Targets, Members expressed concern that referrals were not been readily accepted and expressed concern that this could create problems elsewhere. Assurance was given that Officers were liaising closely with ACIS to tackle this issue.

Finally Members expressed disappointment at the continuing trend of the Market and also the timeline established for the review. Again, capacity was raised as a real concern and there was a view that more creative thinking, such as bespoke markets, was required.

RESOLVED that having given consideration to the matters listed in the report assurance was received that the rectifications proposed would deal with identified issues.

4.3 Extract from Corporate Policy and Resources Cttee – 27 October 2015

40 PROGRESS AND DELIVERY - SERVICES - PERIOD 2 (CPR.27 15/16)

The Chief Operating Officer then introduced the Progress and Delivery Report on Services. As with the Projects report above this was reporting by exception.

It was explained that following previous comments by Members the format had slightly changed in order to make the report more legible, with tables including a red 'R' or green 'G' to indicate their status.

Services listed in the appendix were:

- Complaints Received
- Health Trainers
- Gainsborough Markets
- Local Land Charges
- Development Management
- Waste Collections

and further updates were given on each.

The figures for the number of complaints received were now available to the end of September and had risen. Members questioned how many of these were

related to Development Management. The response was that only 18 of the 77 complaints reported were about Development Management, and a future report would list complaints received by Service Area.

Note Councillor Bridgwood joined the meeting at 6.48pm

The Development Management team had recently undergone a Peer Review which had focused on the performance of the team. Acknowledgement had been made of the importance of availability and responding to telephone calls – this had been addressed immediately. Work was also ongoing to address the handling of the applications caseload at both major level and householder applications. There was a need to benchmark with the top quartile and a visit had been arranged to Blaby District Council which had previously been in special measures but was now performing in the top quartile. Members acknowledged the usefulness of the Peer Review and the importance of a positive attitude to Best Practice. It was noted that the Government had set performance targets and would intervene if it was felt necessary, however the target threshold of 50% of major applications being determined within deadlines was not currently at risk as a good margin of 64% existed. It was acknowledged that the quality of applications could be a determining factor and that the taking up of pre-application advice would help to alleviate this.

Much work was being undertaken on NEETs ('Not in Employment, Education or Training') to address the unemployment statistics which were of concern. It was proposed that dialogue take place with a school in the district which was underperforming. It was also a concern that there could be a knock on effect following the redundancies at nearby Scunthorpe Steel Works.

The currently high cost shown for the provision of service to Members was explained as being due to profiling issues, in that some one-off costs had shown in the budget (e.g. webcasting equipment) and by the end of the year this would balance out.

Whilst the good performance being maintained by the Trinity Arts Centre was acknowledged it was noted that three streaming events had not taken place as scheduled. This would be of concern if it continued, as custom and credibility would be lost.

Members of the Committee commented on the improved report.

RESOLVED that having given consideration to the matters listed in the report assurance was received that the rectifications proposed would deal with identified issues.

4.4. A further update, in respect of this item was offered to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee at their meeting on 10 November 2015. This is also set out below: -

"The Chief Operating Officer then updated the Committee on the planning statistics given on page 10 of the report. Updated figures included the percentage of major applications determined within the statutory timescale of 13 weeks. Last year's baseline was 60% with a target of 40%. The actual

cleansed figure was 64%, to the end of August 2015, which would be updated for the next Progress and Delivery report.

For minor applications, the baseline figure for last year was 21%, the target set for this year was 65% the actual performance until the end of August was 43%. Householder applications, which we don't specifically report against stood at 55% within the target time at the end of July 2015."

Service	Baseline	Target	Actual for Period	Explanation	Rectification
Assets and Facilities Management					
Maintenance fund (balance between planned and unplanned maintenance of council property) R	No baseline – new measure for 2015/16	70% - planned 30% - unplanned	44% - planned 56% - unplanned	This is a snap shot of the first six months and is affected by work planning and invoicing in the period. Stock conditions surveys also need to be completed in order to identify the extent of the “planned” maintenance work for the coming years and to build it into a programme of planned maintenance. Members should expect to see this ratio changing as a more managed approach to the maintenance of council owned property is adopted.	None required at this point. Monitor through the rest of the year and develop baselines.
Void rates in council owned properties R	20% - for 2014/15	10%	11%	The actual is slightly above the target, but outside the tolerance limits.	Void rates have been improve through the year. No action required
Benefits					
The volume of housing and council tax support claims that have been waiting longer	22 (September 2014)	30	26	This is better than the target (although not as good as September 2014)	No action

than 30 days for a decision G					
Collection of overpayments as a percentage of those found over the period G	No baseline as it is a new measure	50%	68.73%	Collection rates are significantly above the target. Identified overpayments continued to grow slightly in Q2 as a result of data matching customer information with real time information held at HMRC. However this will fall through the year as will the amount collected.	No action.
Percentage of customers satisfied with the housing and council tax benefits process G	87%	80%	86%	Above target. No explanation needed	No action
Building Control					
Total income received R	£92,318	£108,300	93,274	Loss of market share to competitors and profiling of work.(although still higher than the 2014/15 baseline)	Marketing campaign to promote the value of local authority building control.
Cost of delivering the BC service R	£2,607	£4,977	£8,690	Loss of market share to competitors reducing fee income	Marketing campaign to promote the value of local authority building control

Cost of delivering the building control service per head of population R	New measure no baseline	£0.06	£0.09	Loss of market share to competitors reducing fee income	Marketing campaign to promote the value of LABC. The aim is to deliver a surplus across the range of service building control can offer and new measures will be built into 2015/16 report.
BC – West Lindsey Market share R	77%	85%	79%	More competitive environment for building control services. However it is still ahead of the 2014/15 baseline.	Measures in place to recover market share – marketing campaign to promote LABC
Corporate					
Complaints (cumulative over the period – April/August 2015) R	46	30	77	We have received a total of 18 complaints for planning in the period. The level of complaints in this service was reviewed as part of the peer challenge of the service in October. The peer challenge team did not consider the level of complaints in the planning service to be excessive. The rest are spread over the other services. In future	Work is underway to analyse the nature of the complaints to identify patterns and address the issues in the services on a systematic basis

				versions of this report a breakdown of the complaints by service area will be given.	
Compliments R	62	60	46 (July 2015)	Difficult to give an explanation as compliments tend to relate to specific incidents and are not service related	
Staff Absenteeism G	0.56 (days per month per FTE)	0.65	0.38	Above target	None necessary
Council Tax					
Cost of delivering the council tax service G	£172, 370 (cumulative total April/September 2014)	£101,295	£92,091	Above target	None necessary
Cost of delivering the council tax service per property G	£8.26	£6.87	£4.37	Above target	None necessary
Council Tax in year collection rates R	57.46%	66.5%	57.5	Number of customers paying by 12 instalments increases each month which means their instalments are lower so the sum collected in each month is reduced although more payments are expected in February and March.	No action required

Democratic Services					
Total cost of delivering member support services R	£341,899	£330,000	£361,000	Profiling issues- the service has incurred much of its costs in the first six months of the year. The figure should be back on target by the end of the financial year.	No action
Economic Develop					
Total Cost of Providing the Economic Development Service per head of population R	No baseline	£0.34	£0.50	Additional capacity has been brought into the service and this has resulted in increased expenditure. [NB the costs are described like this to allow benchmarking nationally]	No action
Unemployment rate within West Lindsey R	2.7% (above national rate August 2015)	0.3% (above national rate)	2.2% (above national rate – figure for July)	The general unemployment rate is falling however it is still above target. Lack of basic skills in the workforce is inhibiting job opportunities.	No further action is being taken at this time as the focus is on NEETs.
Youth Unemployment rate within West Lindsey R	6.8% (above national rate)	3% (above national rate)	5.3% above national rate – figure for July	Poor educational attainment by children at Gainsborough schools is effecting their opportunities in the jobs market	A bespoke skills programme targeted at NEETs has just been commenced. We are also working with the GLLEP to address the issue as this is also a county problem.

Enforcement					
Average time taken to resolve a housing enforcement request. R	58 (days)	60 (days)	109 (days)	2 long standing case closures for removals of improvement notices have distorted the data – average resolution time is dropping	None necessary
Average time taken to resolve a planning enforcement request G	57 (days)	90 (days)	76 (days)	Above target	None necessary
Food Safety					
Cost of delivering the food safety service G	£62,667	£62,904	£43,563	Above target	None necessary
Percentage of food premises receiving a proactive inspection G	100%	94%	103%	This month there were more inspections done than targeted, this is to be expected if in other months the number of inspections has been correspondingly lower	None necessary
Healthy Districts					
Customer Satisfaction with West Lindsey facilities and activities G	89%	80%	97%	None	None necessary

Cost of leisure management fee per user G	No baseline	£1.20	£0.85	None	None necessary
Percentage of client support programmes that are completed R	New measure for 2015/16	75%	56%	The remaining 44% are ongoing clients. Plans are individually tailored and some clients require ongoing support.	None necessary
Percentage of people who are from the most deprived areas taking part in the health trainer programme G	71.1%	70%	78%	None	None Necessary
Housing					
Number of long term empty properties brought back into use R	30	38	29	The main focus has been the project to bring empty properties into use in the south west ward of Gainsborough. Whilst the target has not been met in this period the total number of empty properties in the District has fallen considerably year on year – total 2014/15 = 748, total at second quarter 2015/16 = 571	Whilst this is below target the trend is downwards and it is likely that this will continue given such things as the change in the council tax regime for empty properties and continuing work by the council to address this issue.

Total spend on Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) R	£180, 950	£168.498	£128,661	This expenditure cannot be profiled and is dependent upon the number of cases and the speed they are processed. The amount available for DFGs will be spent by the end of the year.	None necessary
Average number of days from DFG referral to approval R	New measure	90	105	Number of complex cases are increasing number of days slightly	Monitor and assess the resources needed
Average days number of days from DFG approval to completion R	New measure	60	67	Small variance against target	Monitor and assess the resources needed
Home Choices					
Cost of temporary accommodation G	£7,179	£23,802	£8393	There was a spike in costs at the end of the last financial year upon which the costs were based. This year costs have come down to a more normal level	None necessary
Number of applicants rehoused per year from the housing register R	157	185	166	The figures are dependent upon how many properties are made available/advertised and ready to let. Difficulties with housing providers accepting applicants. Delays in updating registers and no new builds so far this year.	We are working with our housing provider partners to ensure that we maximise the use of the stock available to house those in housing need.

Average time for a person in band 1 accommodation to be rehoused (how quickly do we respond to people in high housing need) R	52	No target set by the service	99	Applicant placed in band 2 for lacking 2 bedrooms. Not homeless accepted. Waiting for suitable property to come available in Market Rasen	
Licensing					
Customer satisfaction with the licensing service G	81%	96%	100%	Above target	None necessary
Local Land Charges					
Income received for the delivery of the LCC service G	£69,182	£62,502	£73,761	Above target	None necessary
Income lost to private search companies R	£54,600	£52,248	£62,100	This figure fluctuates with the volume of searches being requested in the District.	Continue to improve the performance of the LCC service so it is competitive with the private search companies
LLC West Lindsey market share R	67%	70%	66%	Slight increase in Personal Searches as a result of slow turnaround times from WLDC although not as badly affected as anticipated.	Continue to improve the performance of the LCC service so it is competitive with the

					private search companies
Time taken to process searches G	21 days	10 days	8 days	Service has been resourced in order to strengthen its resilience.	Long term planning is under way to ensure the service has the resources it needs and a fit for purpose technology solution
Localism and Community Safety					
External Funds Levered in through the Community Action Officers G	£14, 581	No target set by the Team	£1,122,923	Funds levered in for Gainsborough	None necessary
Gainsborough Markets					
Cost of delivering the markets in Gainsborough R	None set by the team	£46,530	£73,753	Fall in the take up of stalls on Tuesday and Saturday. The fixed costs associated with the erection of the market stalls has remained the same whilst the income received from renting stalls has fallen, due to falling take up of stalls, primarily on a Saturday.	Market and promote the availability of market stalls
The number of additional/special markets held G	0	2	3	Above target	None necessary
The number of occupied market stalls on a Saturday	None set by the team	180	122	Less traders due to lower footfall and trade in town centre	Market and promote the market

R					
Development Management (Planning)					
Total cost of delivering the planning service G	None set by the team – (fees received in 2014/15 were just under £1.2million)	-£105,540	-£145,513	The volume of high fee earning/complex planning applications received by the council has been maintained during the year. Therefore the fees received for processing planning applications is being maintained. Whilst this service is making a positive contribution the council financially the type of application is continuing to put pressure on other areas of performance.	Major improvement programme is underway in the service
Percentage of appeals that are allowed R	No baseline	20%	38.8%	Small numbers of appeals distort the percentages the target should be achieved by the end of the period. Generally the council is good at defending its planning decisions at appeal.	Monitor
Planning – Invalid planning applications received R	92% (September 2014)	30%	67%	The figure is still above target, however it has been falling over the three months of this period. This is a reflection of the additional resources that have been put into the planning applications validation team.	Work is still to be done with the applicants and agents to ensure they understand what is required of them when they submit an

					application for planning permission.
Percentage of major planning applications determined with statutory timescales G	60%	40%	64% (at the end of August 2015)	<p>The balance of applications received by the council has changed. So that it is receiving more major, more complex planning applications.</p> <p>This figure is given to the end of August 2015. As part of the improvement programme in planning the data used by the service is undergoing a major “cleansing” programme to ensure that it is focused on the right things.</p>	<p>The service is currently being reviewed to ensure that the principal officers concentrate on the determination of major planning applications.</p> <p>Performance management arrangements are being reviewed to give greater focus to the determination of major planning applications</p>
Percentage of minor applications determined within target timescales R	21%	65%	43%(at the end of August 2015)	The volume of complex applications and the need to recruit experienced planners is having an effect on performance in this area.	The principal officers are being released to concentrate on the major applications and short term recruitment is underway to ensure that the team is resourced to tackle

					other types of application such as the minors
Percentage of "other" applications determined within target timescales R	72%	80%	6% (members are asked to treat this figure with caution as it is being reviewed due to the way all figures have been reported in the past – householder applications which are part of this figure were at 55% in July 2015)	The volume of complex applications and the need to recruit experienced planners is having an effect on performance in this area.	The principal officers are being released to concentrate on the major applications and short term recruitment is underway to ensure that the team is resourced to tackle other types of application such as the others
Trinity Arts Centre					
Total cost of delivering the Trinity Arts Centre G	2014/15 figure at six months	£40,002	£30,008	Above target	None necessary
Increase in audience figures G	8040	4800	7614	Above target	None necessary
The cost of providing TAC per service user (subsidy) G	No baseline (new measure)	£7.07	£2.31	Above target	None necessary

Auditorium event occupancy R	44%	50%	44%	Following the pattern of occupancy of previous years	None necessary
Waste					
The number of collections missed during the reporting period G	None set	822	804	Above target	None necessary
Income generated through the trade waste service G	New service – will be set after the first year of operation	£37,998	£51,634	Above target	None necessary
The net cost of delivering the Waste Collection service per household G	£34.65	£36	£31.66	Above target	None necessary
Percentage of collected household waste that is recycled G	60%	52%	55%	Above target	None necessary