

## Appendix 2

### Extract from the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 11 November 2021

#### 46 PROGRESS AND DELIVERY QUARTER 2, 2021-22

The Committee heard from the Performance and Programmes Manager with the report containing Progress & Delivery performance information for Quarter 2 2021/22, which covered the months of July through to September. Where Covid-19 had impacted performance, this was identified and explained within the narrative of the report.

The Chairman took the opportunity to extend her thanks to Ellen King, the Officer who had previously presented the P&D reports, and sent congratulations from the Committee on her new role.

Members heard that as well as the discussion of performance information for Quarter 2, it was also recommended to delete the measure EN04 “percentage of licensed properties in the South West Ward” as the selective licensing scheme ended in July 2021 meaning it was no longer possible to collect data for this measure. It would, however, be replaced for the next financial year.

As an exception report, those measures that had performed above or below agreed tolerances for two consecutive periods would be discussed with a pause at the end of each portfolio to allow for any questions to be asked.

Within the quarter two report, 57% measures had exceeded their target, 19% were within tolerance and 24% were performing below agreed target. In addition, 69% of measures had exceeded their target for two quarters or more whilst the remaining 31% had been below target for two quarters or more.

#### Corporate Health

There had been a slight decrease in customer satisfaction compared to the same period last year however performance was still within agreed tolerances. There had been a reduction in calls volume and the performance of answering calls within 21 seconds. A review was to be undertaken to establish the cause of this.

#### Finance & Property Services

Performance was returned as green as rental portfolio voids had performed better than target

#### Homes & Communities

There were five performance measures that had performed better than target for at least two consecutive periods. Conversely, four measures had performed worse than target for two consecutive periods; these measures related to Home Choices and Homes, Health & Wellbeing. For Home Choices the measures below tolerance for two consecutive periods were regarding number of households and the number of nights in B&B accommodation. A plan had been introduced to reduce B&B stay

and produce consistent exit plans for persons within temporary accommodation. It was anticipated that increased monitoring of cases should help to reduce B&B stay, and the team were also working with their partner Framework to reduce complex cases holding up spaces in the leased accommodation. It was expected to see the impact of this plan in next quarter's P&D report.

For Homes, Health & Wellbeing; two measures had performed worse than target for two consecutive periods and these measures included average number of days from DFG referral to completion and long-term empties brought back into use. The number of days taken to complete Disabled Facilities Grant applications was steadily decreasing. A report taken to Overview and Scrutiny committee in September highlighted the issues currently being faced when delivering DFG's which included the availability of both contractors and materials. It was agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny to undertake an internal review of the DFG processes to highlight any areas where timescales could be improved. This work was scheduled to be undertaken during November and December.

The overall number of long-term empty homes remained low and equated to just 1% of the district's housing stock. The focus for empty homes work remained the Viable Housing Solution, which was looking at a specific area within Gainsborough. Complaints in regards to the worst empty properties were still being dealt with reactively using the Council's existing powers. Compulsory Purchase Orders in regards to specific empty properties were in the process of being pursued. It was not believed that at this stage any further interventions are needed to address this.

Members of the Committee enquired as to further details regarding the long-term empty properties and whether the percentage figure could be expressed as a number of houses, instead of or as well as, the percentage figure. Additionally, it was suggested that it would be useful to have statistics as to where the empty properties were located. The Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager explained that 1.5% equated to approximately 500 houses and Gainsborough typically had around a third of the total amount across the district. It was possible to provide numbers and percentages, although this had been moved away from in the past as there had been more focus on the number of properties without recognition of how many could actually be dealt with through enforcement powers.

It was also questioned as to how resources were allocated to bring empty properties back into use, to which it was explained that in the past, there had been a very proactive grant scheme however action was now more through the enforcement route.

#### Operational and Commercial Services

There were six performance measures that had performed better than agreed targets for at least two consecutive quarters. On the flip side; there were four measures whose performance was below target for two consecutive quarters. The first of which was Leisure Facilities usages for the Gainsborough centre. Restrictions had now been lifted and both centres were fully open. SLM were working hard to build up the centres, increase the membership and develop more activities for all age groups. SLM were also working to develop a Social Wellbeing Programme to incorporate a range of suitable activities for the referral scheme.

In regards to Markets, quarter two saw traders being able to fully return to the market. Officers were currently working on a Market Traders Grant scheme to help support traders on the general market and farmers market following the impact of the pandemic.

A Member of the Committee highlighted the difficulties at the Trinity Art Centre with ongoing pressure due to staff sickness and sought reassurance that there were contingency plans in place. The Chief Executive explained there was a re-structure underway which would resolve the current issues.

#### Democratic Services

There were no measures where performance was below or above target for two consecutive periods. Apologies were given as there was an error within this section of the report. The performance for attendance at member training events (KPI DS02) should have read as green and not red.

The Chairman highlighted that attendance at development sessions was within the power of Members and asked for Group Leaders to help ensure Members did attend sessions.

#### Planning & Regeneration

There were four measures which had performed better than target for at least two consecutive periods, all of which relate to the Councils Development Management service. There had been no measures that had performed below target for at least two consecutive periods.

There were repeat comments from a Member of both policy committees regarding the performance of the Planning Department and asked for thanks to be passed on.

#### Change Management and Regulatory Services

Nine measures had performed above their targets for two consecutive periods and there were four that had performed below their targets. Of these four; NNDR Collection rate had been below target for the first half of the year due to the award of Emergency Relief Payments as detailed in the quarter one P&D report. This was beginning to show signs of improvement as instalments become due and were either paid or recovery action was able to be taken to secure payment. The Council continued to work with businesses to ensure they received all the reliefs to which they were entitled.

The number of Planning Enforcement reports received continued to exceed the Council's ability to respond. Additional resources were in place and the number of cases opened this year did exceed the number closed, which had resulted in some of the time delays for closure of cases and time taken to provide an initial response. A review of longer-term cases had been undertaken. Temporary agency support had also been brought in to assist

The number of food hygiene inspections was gradually increasing as the volume of Covid-19 related complaints and responsibilities reduced. There was still a general resource challenge in relation to meeting the target number of inspections in the

Food Standards Agency recovery plan and steps were being taken to ensure that additional resources were in place to achieve this. Staff vacancies within Environmental Protection and subsequent issues recruiting into these vacancies had resulted in issues within the service. These vacancies were going out to advert shortly.

Having reached the conclusion of the portfolios, Members of the Committee were invited to make further comments. With regard to Member Development, it was noted by the Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee that the Annual Report had been received that same week and there would be communications in the new year regarding online training options for Councillors, this would allow individuals to undertake sessions as and when it was convenient for them. Additionally, he enquired as to why the P&D report was received at both policy committees when there seemed to be little change between both versions of the presented report.

The Chief Executive explained that historically, there had not been such crossover between committee membership and, as the Prosperous Communities Committee had their own budget, separate to that which was overseen by the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee, there had previously been portfolios that warranted greater scrutiny by one committee or the other. It was acknowledged that this could be reviewed afresh.

There was further discussion regarding the environmental protection requests and whether it was possible to identify any cause for the significant increase. It was explained that the figure predominantly demonstrated the increase in requests but it was important to see whether they were dealt with in time. It would be possible to look at the data in greater detail and ascertain whether there was any preventative work that could be undertaken.

The final comments were in relation to climate change and sustainability and whether there were measures in place as a part of the P&D reporting. It was surmised that, as the strategy had only recently been adopted, performance measures would be incorporated in future years.

Having been moved and seconded it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** that

- a) the performance of the Council's services had been assessed through agreed performance measures and areas where improvements should be made had been indicated, having regard to the remedial measures set out in the report.
- b) the deletion of key performance indicator EN04 "% of licensed properties in the Gainsborough South-West Ward" be approved, as the cessation of the Selective Licensing Scheme in July 2021 means it is no longer possible to collect data for this performance measure. EN04 to be replaced with a new measure to monitor wider activity relating to Selective Licensing as part of the annual

review of the Council's Progress and Delivery measures that is currently underway.