

Council Performance & Budget Summary

May 2020



The monthly performance summary outlines trends in information the Council uses to monitor and manage service delivery. It shows performance against relevant targets.

Recommendation

That Cabinet notes the Council Performance and Budget Summary (May 2020).

Due to the circumstances surrounding the outbreak of **Covid-19** and the declaration of a 'major incident' by the Hertfordshire Local Resilience Forum in line with UK Government guidelines, the Council and its contractors/partners are not operating on a 'business as usual' basis. Changes to service delivery are reflected in this report.

	Measure	Comments
R	Forecast budget variance at the year end (General Fund for year in question)	As discussed in April's Performance Report, the Council has incurred some additional costs due to the Covid-19 pandemic but the predominant financial effect is on income. The Council loses about £150k a week during lockdown. As lockdown is eased, this loss will reduce, although it is not yet clear at what level income will stabilise. The forecast is for an overspend of £3.6m – 25% of budget. This figure will be lowered if there is further Government grant beyond the £1.5m the Council has been given. The figure will be raised if income levels stabilise at a higher level than assumed (80% of budgeted levels).
R	<p>Average time to re-let dwellings (excluding temporary accommodation) (days)</p> <p>Void properties as a percentage of total stock</p>	<p>The calculation of the void (empty property) turnaround time has changed as a result of an Audit report into voids and lettings. The figure now includes the 'buyback' properties which are not strictly re-let voids. There has been a marked improvement in the contractor performance. However, we continue to experience issues with utilities, as detailed in April's report. Pressure on the contractors to resolve these issues has been maintained.</p> <p>While there has been a decrease in the contractor turnaround time, there has been a marked increase in the time spent allocating and letting properties. This has caused the increase in the number of properties which are void and awaiting letting. This is largely because of the Covid-19 pandemic and Government restrictions on allocations and lettings.</p> <p>There are 38 properties with the Lettings Team which are ready to let. Of these: 3 have been set aside for temporary accommodation; 9 are elderly designated (so will remain unoccupied); 2 are covered by a Local Lettings Policy; 23 are for general needs awaiting allocation; 1 is undergoing fire safety assessment prior to letting and will be returned to contractors for some additional works.</p>

		<p>There is a backlog of void properties where tenants have passed away. We are waiting to receive keys from relatives who have been unable to clear the properties due to restrictions on movement or because of their own health concerns. There could be a spike in new voids towards the latter part of summer.</p> <p>The supply chain issues previously reported by the contractor appear to be easing.</p>
A	Number of voids over target	A trend target has been introduced to ensure consistency with that of the 'number of voids over 3 months' performance indicator.
G	Number of households in temporary accommodation	The reduction in the number of households in temporary accommodation reflects the prioritisation of allocating properties to homeless households as a result of the Covid-19 lockdown.
R	Average time in temporary accommodation (weeks)	Despite property allocations to homeless households continuing, some customers have experienced delays in arranging removal services. Some properties have been hard to let, leading to some delays in making appropriate allocations.
R	Percentage of planning applications not determined (within time limits or agreed timescale)	The Covid-19 pandemic has introduced some difficulties in planning. For example, the availability of agents to respond has been slower, or in some cases where agents have been furloughed, not possible at all. Remote working is slowed because the planning system uses legacy technology which does not easily support remote working for sustained periods. This is impacting the productivity of staff. The Planning team is working with the IT team to identify solutions fixes that will improve the performance of our existing system while we consider the longer-term replacement of the planning system. In addition, extended parental leave has reduced the number of senior staff available to sign off applications.
R	Number of planning applications that have not been determined in time (at end of month)	Throughout May, there has been a reduced number of senior staff available which has prevented expired cases being prioritised for sign-off. Priority has been given to signing off cases in time. The greater availability of senior staff throughout June will help to improve this figure. All officers have been reminded of the importance of ensuring that application status is communicated to applicants.
	Parking Penalty Charge Notices issued	<p>The Council suspended the enforcement of some parking restrictions in March to support residents as the lockdown began. This was maintained throughout April and May. Civil Enforcement Officers – formerly known as traffic wardens – only took action in residential areas against unsafe or inconsiderate parking. To reflect this change in circumstances, a RAG rating has not been assigned to the figure for this indicator.</p> <p>On Monday 8 June, enforcement resumed for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay and display bays along with limited-waiting free bays in non-residential areas;

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas where Hertfordshire County Council has made changes to car parking rules to encourage social distancing, including the High Street, Market Place, George Street and Hatfield Road, St Albans, and Bowers Parade, Harpenden; • Off-street car parks where vehicle owners have failed to display or purchase a valid ticket although some free parking will remain available for key workers. <p>On Wednesday 1 July, enforcement resumes for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Controlled Parking Zones in residential areas across the District; • Off-street car parks which will fully return to normal. <p>NHS and care workers will continue to be allowed free parking.</p>
R	Percentage of spoiled Parking Penalty Charge Notices against the total number of Notices issued	There were three spoiled Parking Penalty Charge Notices in May. The percentage increase is attributable to the small number of Parking Penalty Charge Notices issued within the month.
R	Fly-tipping incidents	An increase in 'clear-out' waste, as households use the Covid-19 lockdown period to declutter their properties, has contributed to the increase in fly-tipping incidents. The Council's contractor, Veolia, continues to operate its clean-up service as usual. The removal of hazardous waste, such as asbestos, may take additional time as the services of a third-party contractor are required to deal with this. With the recent reopening of some of Hertfordshire County Council's waste recycling centres across the District, it is hoped that a reduction in fly-tipping incidents will be reported in June.
	Percentage of household waste recycled (graph)	The reported figure for May (65.3%) is less than the corresponding figure for May 2019 (66.6%). This is due to a change in the calculation period for all waste managed by Hertfordshire County Council. The difference will be offset by June's results and the calculation for the first quarter, which should show an increase in recycling performance for the period.

Key

The performance information colour coding relates to the measure's target or trend.

For indicators with a target: Green is where a target is achieved, Amber is up to 10% worse than target and Red is worse than 10% from target. For indicators with trend analysis: Green highlights an improved performance; Red a worse performance.

Contact

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		Bigger or Smaller is Better	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19	Jan-20	Feb-20	Mar-20	Apr-20	May-20	TARGET
Finance	Forecast budget variance at the year end (General Fund for year in question)	Smaller	0.9%	0.0%	-0.5%	0.8%	2.7%	1.9%	1.3%	-0.1%	-0.5%	-0.5%	1.6%	23.0%	25.0%	0.0%
Housing	Average time to re-let dwellings (excluding temporary accommodation) (days)	Smaller	28	35	54	65	77	67	61	74	69	69	63.5	60	71	26
	Number of voids over target	Smaller	51	22	19	29	26	24	19	13	21	29	21	18	27	Trend
	Number of voids over 3 months	Smaller	24	25	33	25	14	15	16	14	8	8	8	11	17	Trend
	Number of properties let	Bigger												12	15	Trend
	Void properties as a percentage of total stock	Smaller												0.90%	1.10%	1%
	Rent arrears of current tenants as a percentage of rent due	Smaller	3.7%	4.0%	4.0%	4.1%	4.5%	4.0%	3.8%	3.6%	3.8%	4.1%	4.3%	4.5%	5.0%	5%†
	Percentage of tenants in receipt of Universal Credit	Smaller	12.9%	13.3%	13.9%	14.2%	14.9%	15.4%	15.8%	16.3%	16.6%	17.2%	17.7%	20.8%	22.5%	
	Number of households in temporary accommodation	Smaller	130	130	140	132	132	130	129	129	125	131	129	133	124	Trend
	Average time in temporary accommodation (weeks)	Smaller	32	31.3	28	29.7	24	27	29	29.9	29	27.2	28	30.7	32.5	Trend
	Percentage of repairs completed within target	Bigger	93%	89%	95%	97%	96%	97%	94%	94%	93%	94%	93%	95%	97%	95%
	Percentage of repairs completed at first visit	Bigger	87%	91%	92%	92%	88%	88%	89%	90%	88%	85%	89%	91%	95%	80%
	Total number of households in receipt of Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax support		6,605	6,614	6,588	6,579	6,577	6,531	6,527	6,521	6,522	6,507	6,827	7,143	7,284	
	Days to process Housing Benefit new claims (12 month average)	Smaller	15.0	14.9	15.3	15.2	15.1	15.1	15.1	14.8	14.6	14.6	14.3	13.6	13.1	21
	Days to process Housing Benefit change in circumstances (12 month average)	Smaller	5.6	5.6	4.2	5.2	4.5	4.6	4.4	4.1	4.0	3.9	3.9	3.9	4.1	6
Planning & Building Control	Planning and Building Control applications received (including pre-app, trees and condition discharge)		344	409	480	383	371	478	393	340	445	418	391	327	304	
	Percentage of Council's planning decisions supported at appeal (cumulative 12 month)	Bigger	72%	72%	76%	78%	81%	85%	86%	87%	88%	88%	92%	76%	78%	66%
	Percentage of planning applications not determined (within time limits or agreed timescale)	Smaller	29%	30%	29%	29%	26%	22%	19%	13%	29%	21%	30%	18%	35%	25%
	Number of planning applications that have not been determined in time (at end of month)	Smaller	70	73	70	96	75	52	53	29	74	50	54	23	65	40
Community Services	Parking Penalty Charge Notices issued	Smaller	1,177	961	894	1,035	738	624	976	776	861	877	876	36	89	Trend
	Percentage of Parking Penalty Charge Notices paid three months previously	Bigger												81%	83%	TBD
	Number of spoiled Parking Penalty Charge Notices	Smaller												0	3	TBD
	Percentage of spoiled Parking Penalty Charge Notices against the total number of Notices issued	Smaller												0.00%	3.37%	Less than 1%
	Parking Enforcement Officer deployed hours	Bigger												1,175	1,158	TBD
	Fly-tipping incidents (latest month data provisional)	Smaller	69	68	103	62	56	69	70	43	43	41	48	58	81	Year-on-year trend
	Number of missed waste collections per 100,000 (latest month data provisional)	Smaller	29	34	27	33	28	26	26	26	29	29	19	20	18	32
External	Claimant count	Smaller	1,225	1,275	1,320	1,335	1,350	1,400	1,405	1,410	1,410	1,500	1,465	2,440	3,765^	****

† Quarterly target to reflect seasonal variation.

^ Data subject to ONS revisions.

****ONS Experimental Indicator – may not accurately reflect labour market.

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