

Council Performance & Budget Summary

July 2018

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

Update on actions arising from previous Cabinet Meetings

Update on actions arising from Cabinet – 26 April 2018		
Minute No.	Action	Update
3.	<i>Spend on Consultants</i>	The suggested improvements to the presentation of the information will be incorporated in the next update at October Cabinet.
Update on actions arising from Cabinet – 21 June 2018		
Minute No.	Action	Update
4.	<i>Staffing Levels and Vacancy Rates for Frontline Services</i>	Further information to be included in the performance report to October Cabinet.
4.	<i>Leisure Contract Property Transactions</i>	Leases sent to 1Life for signature. Still expecting completion by end of August.
4.	<i>Information re Council Tax Arrears Accrual for a Long Term Vacant Property</i>	Further information to be included in next performance report to September Cabinet as part of Long Term Vacant Properties Update.
Update on actions arising from Cabinet – 19 July 2018		
Minute No.	Action	Update
4.	<i>Cost of Sickness Absence</i>	Further information to be included in the performance report to October Cabinet.
4.	<i>Detail of the R/A/G status of Priority Projects</i>	This has been noted for inclusion in the next quarterly update to October Cabinet.
4.	<i>Land at Three Cherry Trees Lane</i>	<p>A response to the Commercial & Development Portfolio Holder on the question raised at the meeting has been provided by the Planning Case Officer as follows:</p> <p>‘The delay in finalising the S106 agreement current rests with Hertfordshire County Council. HCC has requested that a Draft Land Transfer Agreement is completed to deal with the transfer of primary school land. This will then be annexed to the S106 agreement but it is taking many months for the applicant and HCC to reach agreement on this document. They are still in discussions at present.</p>

		With regards to affordable housing, there will be a policy compliant level provided across the site as a whole (35% in total). This is being secured in the S106 agreement. The exact number and location of affordable housing would need to be agreed at the reserved matters stage when the applicant would be required to apply to the Local Planning Authority to agree the detailed matters.'
4.	<i>Luton Airport Consultation Events - Lack of Publicity</i>	The Chief Executive wrote to the Chief Operations Officer of London Luton Airport Ltd. on 1 August and received a response on 7 August. Response shared with Group leaders.
4.	<i>Linley Court Redevelopment</i>	The Strategic Housing Manager has confirmed that the units will be at affordable rent. The exact rent levels will be determined when the building is complete. The current contract completion date is October 2019.
4.	<i>Waste Management & Recycling – analysis of recycling rates by ward</i>	The information has been requested from our contract partner, Veolia, and will be shared with Councillors once it has been received.
4.	<i>GDPR Guidance for Members</i>	Guidance on GDPR and handling of personal data was issued on 27 July to Group Leaders, having been reviewed following receipt of HCC's guidance. It was also included in the August Members' Information Bulletin.
9.	<i>Letter from the Leader to the Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service regarding the Police & Crime Commissioner's Local Business Case Addendum</i>	The Leader wrote to the Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service on 9 August 2018.

Visitor Information Performance Indicator

Visitor information performance measures are changing. In the past 'Visits to Visitor Information Centre (VIC)' included anyone who passed the threshold in the VIC and all email and telephone enquiries. This included shoppers, travellers, or print service users, so visits may not have been related to visitor information.

The VIC has now been replaced with three Visitor Information Points (VIP) at St Albans Museum + Gallery, Verulamium Museum and the Cathedral. In recent years, traditional visitor information services have been used less as the internet has become an all-encompassing resource for visitors to research an area. Services at the VIPs are largely self-service to reflect this.

From next month, Cabinet will receive the total visitor numbers at the St Albans Museum + Gallery, Verulamium Museum and the Cathedral (pending availability of this information) monthly. This will provide information on how many people have had access and opportunity to utilise the VIPs during their visit.

Visits to www.enjoystalbans.com will continue to be reported quarterly.

Commentary

The table below provides commentary for indicators giving more detailed explanation and any action the Council is taking to improve performance where appropriate.

	Measure	Comments
A	Forecast budget variance at the year end (General fund for year in question)	The forecast budget variance for the year currently stands at an overspend of 0.3%, or £61,000. This mainly because the pay award and contract inflation are higher than expected.
R	Average time vacant for current voids (excluding temporary accommodation)	<p>The average time to re-let dwellings has increased over the course of July.</p> <p>There was a spike in the number of voids in July affecting both temporary and permanent accommodation. This is largely because of the impact of the new developments in Batchwood where a number of tenants transferred and applicants were housed. The repairs contractor has moved operatives from another contract to deal with this and our surveyor reports that all voids are being worked on.</p> <p>A cross-departmental meeting has been arranged for early September to map the void processes with the aim of identifying and duplication of work and opportunities to cut timescales.</p>
R	Rent arrears of current tenants as a percentage of rent due	The rent arrears figure has increased this month. The number of Universal Credit (UC) cases continues to increase. There are 415 tenants who are currently claiming, or in the past have claimed UC. There are approximately 1,750 working age customers still to migrate over to UC. The Council is working to secure direct payments from the Department for Work and Pensions, so rent is paid directly to the Council rather than the claimant. The Council received a £60k direct payment for July but there was a delay in allocating this to the correct rent accounts. A Schedule of payments had not been received and therefore the payment was not included in the performance calculation. The payments have now been allocated to the correct accounts. We have requested that the information to match direct payments to rent accounts is sent electronically in future, which should avoid this delay.
A	Average time in temporary accommodation (weeks)	There are 16 properties currently under offer to households in temporary accommodation. When these properties are available, the households will be able to vacate temporary accommodation.
A	Percentage of repairs completed on time	<p>Performance has improved over the last month with the administrative assistance we have given to our main contractor. However, they have had to divert some of their staff to service empty ('void') properties because a higher than usual number of properties were vacated this month. This is due to allocating tenants to the new properties in Batchwood.</p> <p>Regular monitoring meetings discussing performance and on-time completion continue. The contractor is still aiming to be back within target by the end of August.</p>

	Measure	Comments
R	Percentage of Council's planning decisions supported at appeal (cumulative 12 month)	<p>In July 2018 eight appeal decisions were received. Of those, two were dismissed and six were allowed. Five householder appeals were upheld, where the inspector judged the design, neighbour impacts and Conservation Area and Locally Listed building impacts to be acceptable. The sixth appeal related to an application for a new building comprising 24 flats. The arguments in relation to this appeal focused on viability and the provision of affordable housing. Although the appeal was allowed, the negotiations carried out during the appeal process resulted in a significant increase in the financial contribution towards affordable housing provision.</p> <p>The two dismissed appeals included erection of two dwellings following demolition of a bungalow and a Certificate of Lawfulness application.</p>
A	Parking Penalty Charge Notices issued	<p>There was a slight increase in Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued in July 2018 when compared to the previous month. However, there were 5% fewer deployed hours (time spent issuing tickets), and therefore, less cost to the Council. The main reason for the increase is that consistent good weather leads to increased driver activity, which is associated with increased non-compliance.</p> <p>There was a 4% increase in PCNs this July compared to the same period last year. Mobile bike enforcement has been used in higher non-compliance areas during the heatwave resulting in more PCNs issued.</p>
A	Number of missed waste collections per 100,000	<p>Agency staff have been used to provide holiday cover where needed and this has resulted in an expected rise in missed collections. This is because agency staff are less familiar with the rounds. Where possible, to avoid this, the temporary staff are picked from a 'pool' of loaders and drivers who have worked on the contract before.</p>
R	Museum visits	<p>General admission visits to Verulamium increased by around 700 compared to July 2017, when the museum was temporarily closed for repairs. However, there was an overall reduction in school visits with 4 fewer school sessions scheduled compared to July 2017. A trial of a new format took place on two days including Special Educational Needs (SEN) sessions and a Latin-themed day.</p>

Key

The performance information is colour coded associated to the 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 and Red a worse performance.

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	Bigger or Smaller is Better	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	TARGET	
Finance	Forecast budget variance at the year end (General fund for year in question)	Smaller	-3.6%	-3.8%	-4.4%	-3.9%	-3.4%	-3.6%	-4.0%	-3.3%	-7.0%	0.0%	*	1.2%	0.3%	0.0%
Housing	Average time to re-let dwellings (excluding temporary accommodation) (days)	Smaller	34	36	35	35	34	33	33	33	34	27	25	28	26	
	Average time vacant for current voids (excluding temporary accommodation) (days)	Smaller	24	25	26	28	33	25	24	25	24	27	22	15	33	26
	Percentage of rent loss due to voids	Smaller	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.9%	0.9%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.8%	Trend
	Rent arrears of current tenants as a percentage of rent due	Smaller	3.1%	3.2%	3.2%	3.4%	3.3%	2.8%	3.0%	3.1%	3.1%	3.5%	3.4%	3.4%	3.7%	3.1%**
	Number of households in temporary accommodation	Smaller	129	128	129	130	137	131	125	117	117	118	118	123	119	Trend
	Average time in temporary accommodation (weeks)	Smaller	25	24	25	24	26	27	27	26	26	25	27	26	26	Trend
	Percentage of repairs completed on time	Bigger	99%	97%	92%	100%	100%	97%	100%	99%	100%	95%	88%	86%	93%	98%
	Total number of households in receipt of Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax support	Smaller	6,861	6,836	6,831	6,812	6,778	6,678	6,705	6,642	6,640	6,640	6,654	6,645	6,664	
	Days to process Housing Benefit new claims	Smaller	17.4	26.3	23.1	24.6	24.1	28.6	17.9	15.5	17.2	10.2	14.9	14.3	10.9	22
	Days to process Housing Benefit change in circumstances	Smaller	6.0	7.7	8.6	10.3	9.0	8.1	5.6	2.3	5.7	5.1	8.3	3.6	7.0	7
Planning & Building Control	Planning and Building Control applications received (including pre-app, trees and condition discharge)		517	444	351	510	515	346	400	430	511	482	406	480	493	
	Percentage of Council's planning decisions supported at appeal (cumulative 12 month)	Bigger	60%	58%	59%	57%	57%	62%	62%	65%	67%	66%	61%	61%	57%	66%
	Percentage of planning applications not determined (within time limits or agreed timescale)	Smaller	5%	7%	11%	13%	11%	10%	6%	11%	5%	5%	7%	12%	13%	25%
	Number of planning applications at end of month that have not been determined in time	Smaller	18	17	23	23	12	21	29	21	14	22	21	30	36	50
Community Services	Parking Penalty Charge Notices issued	Smaller	1,575	1,660	1,610	1,969	1,910	1,488	1,386	1,448	1,464	1,442	1,865	1,613	1,633	Trend
	Percentage of Parking Penalty Charge Notices paid	Bigger	87%	90%	91%	81%	88%	99%	89%	90%	88%	82%	82%	85%	86%	80%
	Fly-tipping incidents	Smaller	125	105	97	80	88	57	82	90	100	103	124	74	111	Year-on-year Trend
	Number of missed waste collections per 100,000	Smaller	32	32	35	34	30	29	33	29	35	33	30	33	34	32***
Commercial & Development	Museum visits	Bigger	14,378	16,073	14,714	14,441	10,914	4,407	11,745	11,557	11,213	12,121	13,763	14,870	12,542	Year-on-year Trend
External	Claimant count	Smaller	820	810	825	810	805	835	845	960	1,010	1,120	1,095	1,125	1,130^	****

* Data not available

** Target changed from 2.6% to 3.1% from April 2018.

*** Target changed from 40 to 32 from April 2018.

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

^ Data subject to ONS revisions.

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