



REPORT of CHIEF EXECUTIVE

**to
FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE
14 JUNE 2016**

2015 / 16 REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to supply Members with details of performance against targets set for 2015 / 16 and to ensure that progress is being achieved towards the corporate goals and the outcomes detailed in the Corporate Plan 2015 - 19 adopted by Council in February 2015 (Minute No. 828 refers).
- 1.2 Members should challenge performance or allocation of resources where the Committee feels that the Council's corporate goals have not or may not be achieved.
- 1.3 Where performance or progress is behind schedule or at risk, the reasons why need to be fully understood and decisions taken on what, if any, action is required to bring performance back on track.
- 1.4 Quarterly reviews of performance are undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the position as at the year-end was reviewed at the meeting on 8 June 2016. An annual performance report will also be submitted to the Council on 14 July 2016.
- 1.5 All of the performance information contained within this report is recorded on the Council's Performance and Risk Management system (TEN) to which all Members have access.

2. RECOMMENDATION

Members' views, comments and questions on the information as set out in this report and **APPENDIX 1** are sought.

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 Consistent with the performance reports submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the format of the performance reports to this Committee are on an "exception" basis i.e. only those activities and indicators that are behind schedule, at risk or not on target will be included. This will ensure the focus is on those areas requiring attention and assisting Members to challenge performance or allocation of resources where the Council's corporate goals may not be achieved.

3.2 **APPENDIX 1** to this report details for each of the corporate goals:

- The key corporate activities which are assessed as being “behind schedule” or “at risk of not being achieved”
- Indicators which have not achieved the end of year target.

The activities/indicators aligned with this Committee have been marked  to provide easy identification by Members.

3.3 Members are aware from the Committee Chairman’s “Good news announcements” at previous meetings, successes and achievements during the year include:

- **Two Factor Authentication** - Following a successful pilot earlier this year, the Council is now hosting a new and innovative “2 factor authentication” solution on behalf of the Essex Online Partnership. Three authorities including Maldon District Council (MDC) are live on this solution at the moment, with more joining over the next year. This will replace our aging Cryptocard solution at zero cost to the authority, and provides a shared service across the whole of Essex.
- **Office accommodation** - Of the previous St Cedds tenants, Homestart, Viking Community Transport, the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and Talking Newspapers have all been relocated within the Princes Road office complex. An agreement to store Maldon Museum artefacts as the museum building was agreed and the last of the artefacts was moved to the museum during December. Building work to the Council offices has been completed. Work on the demolition of St Cedds is scheduled to be completed by July.
- **Modern.Gov** – This new Committee Management System was implemented successfully by the Community Services Committee. It was also well received by the Finance and Corporate Services and Audit Committees in January 2016 and the Council in February. The project is progressing well, with some Members now using the Modern.Gov software for all Council business.
- **Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support Performance** - Prompt calculation and payment of housing benefit and council tax support claims can help to prevent rent arrears and homelessness, but also other financial pressures on already vulnerable households. We are pleased to report that despite the overall volumes of work increasing we have been able to exceed our performance targets. Our target for dealing with new benefit claims during 2015/16 was 16 days, and we achieved 14.55 days which is significantly better than the latest national average performance of 23 days. For benefit changes of circumstances the target was 11 days, and we achieved 7.6 days, which again is significantly higher than the latest national average performance of ten days.

We continue to have a sustained focus on preventing and detecting fraudulent claims and discounts, and have been successful in securing additional funding from the Department of Work and Pensions to help us achieve this.

- **Collection of Council Tax and Business Rates** - We continue to have a sustained and robust focus on the collection of both Council tax and Business Rates, resulting in the collection rate for Council Tax being sustained for 2015/16 at 98.3%, and the collection rate for Non Domestic rates increasing to

98.7%, the highest performance since 2007. There has also been a £276, 000 increase in the total rateable values on which business rates are charged from the start of the year together with a decrease in the number of empty properties in the District (10% business premises and 5% council tax).

- **Apprenticeships** – the People, Performance and Policy Team have been working to increase the visibility and take up of the Council’s apprenticeship programme by attending the Plume School Careers Fair and contributing to a Personal Development Programme at Ormiston Rivers Academy in 2015. Engaging directly with young people allows the benefits of taking up an apprenticeship to be highlighted. The actual number of apprentices within the Council has increased with two currently employed within the Revenues and Benefits team (to date a total of seven apprentices have secured permanent full time roles within the Council) and one being recruited into both Customer Services and the Human Resources teams as at April 2016. Work is also underway to develop further horticultural apprenticeships within the Parks team. Other opportunities will be explored as they arise.
- **SelectHR** - the core system has been implemented and is operational in Human Resources. There are some outstanding areas requiring assistance from our suppliers, but these will be resolved soon. The benefits of the system to date include:
 - Reports can now be generated once configured at a click of a button, whereas usual timescales would be 1 - 2 days.
 - The accuracy of data is improved using real time data and one source.
 - Providing information to staff is far quicker.
 - Absence monitoring improved and more effective.
 - The ability to allocate post numbers and ensure effective establishment control (which link to budget codes) and to report at all organisational levels for a number of different dimensions such as headcount, Full Time Equivalent (FTE), turnover etc.
 - The ability to be able to easily report on equality related dimensions e.g. race, sex, ethnicity, religion etc.
- **Filming in the District** - Filming recently took part in Maldon for ITV’s ‘Tales of the Coast’ a new programme presented by Robson Green and involved him taking part in smaller version of the Maldon Mud Race. The production team and Robson Green were extremely impressed and appreciative of the way in which their many requests had been met and commended the Council for being so film friendly.

3.4 **Complaints and Compliments Received**

- 3.3.1 22 complaints and one compliment about services that report to this Committee were received by the Council between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2016:

| Service Area | Total no. of compliments for service | Total no. of complaints for service | No. per specific complaint | Subject of complaint/compliment |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Legal and Democratic Services | | 8 | 4 | Elections |
| | | | 1 | Unhelpful staff when calling regarding a query |
| | | | 2 | Dissatisfaction with administration process |
| | | | 1 | Late response to FOI request |
| Facilities | 1 | | | Thanks for help in providing room for Lace Circle |
| Revenues and Benefits | 5 | 14 | 1 | Lack of facilities to pay by cash at front desk |
| | | | 1 | Staff attitude and not sent correspondence advising of higher payment |
| | | | 1 | Lack of call back |
| | | | 3 | Lack of response to letters / emails |
| | | | 1 | Unhappy with arrangements for reclaiming council tax |
| | | | 1 | Payment taken in error & delay in refund |
| | | | 1 | Difficulty setting up direct debit |
| | | | 5 | Details not available |

3.3.2 All complaints received are investigated and action taken to improve service delivery where learnings are identified.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 Good progress has been made on a number of activities and successes achieved which will contribute to some of the Council's corporate goals and desired outcomes. However, there are areas where a number of key corporate activities are considered as being at risk or behind schedule and some performance indicators which failed to achieve the end of year target.

5. IMPACT ON CORPORATE GOALS

5.1 The Council stated its corporate goals and desired outcomes in the Corporate Plan for 2015 - 19.

5.2 In turn, the services agreed actions (Key Corporate Activities) that they will take forward in 2015 / 16 to contribute to the achievement of these outcomes. Performance indicators and measures have been established to monitor the impact of these actions and to provide evidence of achievements.

- 5.3 To ensure that MDC progresses towards or achieves the goals and outcomes stated in the Corporate Plan, it is important that performance is monitored and managed against targets and milestones.
- 5.4 It is also important as the Council is accountable to the community that it is able to demonstrate it is monitoring and managing performance effectively.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – Performance Management is about agreeing and achieving objectives and priorities, monitoring our performance against agreed targets and timescales, identifying opportunities for improvement, making necessary changes and ultimately delivering quality public services.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – For the Council “Equalities” means understanding our staff and customers and making sure that our policies and services are designed to meet their needs and implemented appropriately.

MDC is committed to providing equal opportunity of access to services, and level of service provided, and developing communities that are free from discrimination.

- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – If performance is not managed effectively by the Council at both Committee and management level, there is a risk that the Council will not achieve its stated priorities and outcomes.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial and human)** – If action is needed to bring key activities or indicators back on track to meet the targets set, a reallocation of resources may be required to ensure that objectives and priorities are achieved.
- (v) **Impact on the Environment** – None.

Background Papers: None.

Enquiries to: Fiona Marshall, Chief Executive, (Tel: 01621 875711) or
Julia Bawden, Performance and Risk Officer, (Tel: 01621 876223).