



**REPORT of  
DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY AND RESOURCES**

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**to  
PERFORMANCE, GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE  
7 MARCH 2024**

**BALANCE SCORECARD EXCEPTIONS**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To report exceptions to operational service reporting for Committee review and discussion.
- 1.2 The Corporate Performance and Governance framework requires this Committee to be given visibility of any identified Balance Scorecard Key Performance Indicators (KPI) that have met their threshold, supported by an action plan to ensure targets are met. This gives assurance that Operational performance is being managed proactively and effectively.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (i) That the Committee review and comment on exceptions to service reporting provided in this report;
- (ii) That Members note the additional performance in **APPENDIX 1**;
- (iii) That Members confirm they are assured through this review, that operational performance is being managed effectively.

**3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 Services have been monitoring performance data, and officers have centralised this into an internal 'Balance Scorecard' that is reviewed monthly by the Extended Leadership Team to operationally track our performance.
- 3.2 It was agreed that this Committee would receive a bi-annual exceptions report where operational KPIs are under/ over performing to give Member's oversight alongside the Corporate Plan Measures.
- 3.3 Exceptions cover the period of July to December 2023; the following KPIs are **underperforming**.

| Area                            | Measure  | Current Data       | Target                                       | Explanation   | Action  |
|---------------------------------|--|--------------------|--|---|---|
| Across Authority                | Monthly Service area reporting (highlight / lowlights)                           | 3 / 12 areas       | Non-compliance (twice in a 6 monthly period) | Of the 12 service plan areas, three (community engagement, revenues and benefits, customer services) had missed two or more reporting months between July and December 2023.  | <p>Assistant Directors are responsible for the delivery of the monthly highlight reporting. This information has been fed back to the management team, as this is a new process since May, and compliance will continue to be monitored.</p> <p>Overall compliance for service plan reporting was 86% in the 6-month period.</p>  |
| Service Delivery - Homelessness | Temporary Accommodation (TA) cases that breach government timescales (6 weeks+). | 6 months breached. | 0 breaches                                   | <p>New indicator being monitored since September 2022, due to the increase in housing pressures.</p> <p>There is presently 1 family in TA for over 6 months. While this is in breach of Government timescales Maldon District Council (MDC) is not alone in lack of suitable settled family accommodation.</p> <p>Typically, the cases that have breached statutory timescales are ones with complex needs or family make up that is beyond the scope of normal property availability. As such, the lack of settled accommodation means that use of non-typical dwellings must continue until a suitable long-term home is found.</p> | <p>Currently reviewing ways to increase emergency supplies of accommodation in the district and increasing partner output. Additionally review the long-term approach for provision of housing in the district, including housing solutions being bought forward.</p> <p>Additionally, Housing Development continues to look at options to increase settled accommodation – either through ensuring Section106 requirements are met, or through affordable housing development opportunities.</p> |

| Area                                      | Measure           | Current Data   | Target  | Explanation   | Action  |
|---|-------------------|--|---------|---|---|
| Service Delivery – Homelessness / Housing | Homeless Caseload | Monthly increase since July (Dec snapshot: 87 cases) | Monitor | <p>Homeless cases have been steadily increasing since July. December saw 43 more cases than June.</p> <p>The drivers behind the rise in homeless approaches includes factor such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of living crisis</li> <li>• Increases in asylum / refugee cohorts now being passed to Local Authorities</li> <li>• Outward London Migration / placements</li> <li>• Private Rented evictions</li> </ul> <p>These housing pressures are also compounded by the housing register steadily rising. December saw 1,203 people registered which is 126 more than June, although there has been a slight decrease in the number of new applications.</p> <p>The Housing Solutions Team has also been operating under high stress, with the loss of frontline Officers which has slowed service delivery.</p> | <p>Complete recruitment to vacant posts</p> <p>Continue to join regional partners in calling for extra Government assistance.</p> <p>Work with Housing Partners to ensure prompt availability of rented properties.</p> <p>Creation of strategies to increase Affordable Housing provision which will aid in providing homes for homeless applicants.</p> <p>Consider appropriate use of out of District Placements in a manner which supports Homeless applicants while allowing efficient management of housing resources</p> |

| Area                        | Measure   | Current Data   | Target               | Explanation  | Action   |
|-----------------------------|---|--|----------------------|--|--|
| Strategy and Resources – HR | HR Sickness Data (rolling 12months)                       | <p>Long Term Sick as of Q3: 3.14days</p> <p>Short term sick as of Q3: 4.98days</p> <p><u>Total:</u> 8.12days</p> | 8 days               | <p>Sickness levels are just exceeding the 8 days target as well as an increase in comparison to the previous year. However overall Sickness has been slowly declining this year reducing from 10.31 in Q1, to 9.66 Q2 and now 8.12.</p> <p>National sickness levels are noted to be higher than `normal` in the last year. Sickness levels dropped during covid as staff were isolated and covid was agreed at a national level to not be categorized as sick days for statistical purposes but were monitored separately by Government. With the Gov. removal of restrictions, more social mixing, and their decision to start recording covid as sickness, national and MDC levels have increased. There have also been some increases in mental health issues nationally and in Maldon.</p> | <p>The HR team have worked consistently with managers and staff to reduce levels. Over the last few months, they have achieved positive outcomes to get back long-term sickness cases back into work.</p> <p>Short term sickness is monitored monthly by triggers through the Bradford score reporting system and any staff member hitting triggers have focused HR interventions with their manager to reduce their levels and support staff in regular attendance at work.</p> <p>These actions have resulted in the reduction in sickness and will continue with the aim to reduce sickness levels to target in Q4 and during 2024 / 25</p> |
| Resources - Procurement     | Contracts not extended or renewed by end date of contract | Q3 - 11 contracts  | Not Applicable (N/A) | Intensive analysis, work and training with contract managers has been undertaken to ensure MDC meets all procurement requirements. This work has made visible contracts that have not been renewed or re-commissioned within time.   | An action plan is in place to address these contract issues and procurement are working closely with contract managers, Assistant Directors (ADs) and the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) to ensure procurement compliance and track the outcomes.   |

3.4 The following KPIs are **overperforming**.

| Area                                 | Measure  | Current Data | Target                     | Explanation  | Action  |
|--------------------------------------|--|--------------|----------------------------|--|---|
| Strategy and Resources – Resources   | Fresh Services Tickets within Service Level Agreement (SLA)              | 96%          | 90%                        | Continued increase of tickets being completed within SLA.  | Ongoing reviews of SLA data and task management for each fresh service process.   |
| Service Delivery – Customer Services | Percentage of calls handled  | 98%          | 95%                        | Continued high rate of calls handled by customer services.   | Continue with service management and regular monitoring.  |
| Across Authority                     | Overdue contact us cases.  | 63 Cases     | Reduction of overdue cases | Continued decrease of overdue contact us cases, due a significant number of reviews and housekeeping being undertaken. Lowest figure seen 2020 / 21. | Continue with housekeeping exercise for historic cases, and regular monitoring for new cases.   |
| Across Authority                     | Percentage of Freedom of Information (FOI) actioned within SLA (20 days) | 98%          | 95%                        | Continued increase of cases being worked within SLA.   | Housekeeping work is ongoing to focus activity on any overdue cases, and address system constraints.<br><br>Process Improvement delivered to improved form data quality, team ownership and overall process monitoring. |

3.5 The following Key Performance Indicators (KPI) have been noted for **closer monitoring**.

| Area   | Measure  | Current Data   | Target  | Explanation  |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| Service Delivery – Customer Services         | % of enquires handled at 1 <sup>st</sup> point of contact: Contact us forms and Calls. | Calls:<br>Average 93%<br>December 95%<br><br>Forms:<br>Average 31%<br>December 39% | Calls: Establish baseline and customer charter to inform target<br><br>Forms: 25% | <u>Calls:</u> Continued monthly increase in calls being actioned by the customer services team (1 <sup>st</sup> point of contact), preventing cases taking longer to resolve or being referred into service areas.<br><br><u>Forms:</u> Continued monthly increase in cases being actioned but the customer services team (1 <sup>st</sup> point of contact), preventing cases taking longer to resolve or being referred into service areas. Average case closure +3% compared to the first half of the year. |
| Strategy and Resources – Process Improvement | Number of process Improvements delivered   | 21   | Continue to improve processes   | Increased number of process improvements delivered.<br><br>21 delivered so far in 23/24, an increase of 9 improvements compared to same period in 2022 / 23.   |
| Strategy and Resources – Finance             | Value of overall debt owed to MDC  | £178,699.00 (November)   | N/A   | Value of debt owed to Maldon Council has been on a steady decline since June, being approximately £300k less in November. This is due to invoice monitoring from both services and finance, as well as timing of some substantial invoices being raised and settled in a timely manner.  |

#### 4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The exceptions reported in this paper are provided for Member review. Where thresholds have been met, the supporting action will be executed to enable KPIs to be bought back on track.

#### 5. IMPACT ON PRIORITIES AS SET OUT IN THE CORPORATE PLAN 2023 - 2027

- 5.1 It is important that performance is monitored and managed effectively, to ensure that Maldon District Council progresses towards and/ or achieves its stated priorities.

#### 6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – Performance management covers the monitoring of key operational performance indicators to support customer service and delivery of our corporate plan which includes delivery for our customers.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk (including Fraud implications)** – If performance is not managed effectively by the Council, it puts the Council's corporate outcomes delivery at risk and increases unnecessary exposure to potential, operational, reputational, or regulatory consequences.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – All performance management is undertaken within existing planned budgets.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – All performance management is undertaken within existing planned budgets.

Background Papers: None.

Enquiries to:

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