

Thurrock - An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The meeting will be held at **7.00 pm on 8 June 2021**

Council Chamber, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 6SL.

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Membership:

Councillors Susan Little (Chair), Colin Churchman (Vice-Chair), Adam Carter, James Halden, John Kent and Bukky Okunade

Substitutes:

Councillors Abbie Akinbohun, Gary Collins, Sara Muldowney and Graham Snell

Agenda

Open to Public and Press

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To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 9 March 2021.	
3 Items of Urgent Business	
To receive additional items that the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	

4	Declaration of Interests	
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Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:

Please contact Lucy Tricker, Senior Democratic Services Officer by sending an email to Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk

Agenda published on: **28 May 2021**

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DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

Breaching those parts identified as a pecuniary interest is potentially a criminal offence

Helpful Reminders for Members

- *Is your register of interests up to date?*
- *In particular have you declared to the Monitoring Officer all disclosable pecuniary interests?*
- *Have you checked the register to ensure that they have been recorded correctly?*

When should you declare an interest *at a meeting*?

- **What matters are being discussed at the meeting?** (including Council, Cabinet, Committees, Subs, Joint Committees and Joint Subs); or
- If you are a Cabinet Member making decisions other than in Cabinet **what matter is before you for single member decision?**



Does the business to be transacted at the meeting

- relate to; or
- likely to affect

any of your registered interests and in particular any of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests?

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests shall include your interests or those of:

- your spouse or civil partner's
- a person you are living with as husband/ wife
- a person you are living with as if you were civil partners

where you are aware that this other person has the interest.

A detailed description of a disclosable pecuniary interest is included in the Members Code of Conduct at Chapter 7 of the Constitution. **Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer about disclosable pecuniary interests.**

What is a Non-Pecuniary interest? – this is an interest which is not pecuniary (as defined) but is nonetheless so significant that a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard to be so significant that it would materially impact upon your judgement of the public interest.

Pecuniary

If the interest is not already in the register you must (unless the interest has been agreed by the Monitoring Officer to be sensitive) disclose the existence and nature of the interest to the meeting

If the Interest is not entered in the register and is not the subject of a pending notification you must within 28 days notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest for inclusion in the register

Unless you have received dispensation upon previous application from the Monitoring Officer, you must:

- **Not participate or participate further in any discussion of the matter at a meeting;**
- **Not participate in any vote or further vote taken at the meeting; and**
- **leave the room while the item is being considered/voted upon**

If you are a Cabinet Member you may make arrangements for the matter to be dealt with by a third person but take no further steps

Non- pecuniary

Declare the nature and extent of your interest including enough detail to allow a member of the public to understand its nature



You may participate and vote in the usual way but you should seek advice on Predetermination and Bias from the Monitoring Officer.

Our Vision and Priorities for Thurrock

An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future.

1. **People** – a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay
 - High quality, consistent and accessible public services which are right first time
 - Build on our partnerships with statutory, community, voluntary and faith groups to work together to improve health and wellbeing
 - Communities are empowered to make choices and be safer and stronger together

2. **Place** – a heritage-rich borough which is ambitious for its future
 - Roads, houses and public spaces that connect people and places
 - Clean environments that everyone has reason to take pride in
 - Fewer public buildings with better services

3. **Prosperity** – a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations
 - Attractive opportunities for businesses and investors to enhance the local economy
 - Vocational and academic education, skills and job opportunities for all
 - Commercial, entrepreneurial and connected public services

Minutes of the Meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 9 March 2021 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Oliver Gerrish (Chair), Jack Duffin (Vice-Chair), Colin Churchman, Garry Hague, Shane Ralph and Gerard Rice

Councillor Rob Gledhill, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Public Protection and Anti-Social Behaviour

In attendance: Sean Clark, Corporate Director of Finance, Governance and Property
Mary Patricia Flynn, Communications - Strategic Lead
Ian Hunt, Assistant Director Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer
Karen Wheeler, Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Service
Lucy Tricker, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Before the start of the meeting, all present were advised that the meeting was being recorded, and was being live-streamed onto the Council's webcast.

32. Minutes

Councillor Rice highlighted pages 14 and 15 of the agenda, and stated that he had asked a question regarding the draft capital programme and the Stanford-le-Hope Interchange project, and asked if he could receive an answer. The Corporate Director Finance, Governance and Property replied that this was an outstanding action, but a response would be provided.

The minutes of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 21 January 2021 were approved as a true and correct record.

33. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

34. Declaration of Interests

There were no interests declared.

35. Memorandum of Understanding - Local Government Reorganisation

The Chair stated that Councillor Gledhill would be presenting the report in his role as Leader of the Council, and thanked him for his attendance at the meeting.

Councillor Gledhill introduced the item and stated that a discussion had taken place at the previous Cabinet meeting in February regarding the proposed Memorandum of Understanding with Basildon Council, which related to proposed local government reform. He stated that in between lockdowns in 2020 the government had proposed local government reform and devolution, which had been a long-term manifesto commitment, and had decided upon three trial local authorities in September 2020, which had required full Member consent. He explained that proposed local authority reorganisation now only required majority Member consent, and stated that any potential reorganisation would not take place for the next few years. Councillor Gledhill then described how Thurrock had become a unitary authority in 1998, and as a unitary authority had responsibility for all income and expenditure, including for adult social care. He stated that the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) would open the conversation between Thurrock and Basildon regarding any future reorganisation, and would explore the positives and negatives of any proposed merger. He stated that a merger between the two local authorities would double the resident population, which could increase business rate income, but would also increase expenses for adult social care, as currently Basildon was not responsible for this area of expenditure, and instead paid a precept to Essex County Council.

Councillor Gledhill commented that the MOU would look at all aspects of any proposed merger, including potential costs and impact on services for residents and businesses. He felt that there were currently a lot of unknowns regarding any potential merger, and more information was needed which would be sought through the signing of the MOU. He felt that a merger of the two local authorities could be a positive endeavour, but highlighted that both councils wanted as much information as possible. He explained that any proposed merger would not begin now, but felt that central government were pushing for local government reform, and Thurrock needed to be moving forwards.

The Chair thanked Councillor Gledhill for this presentation and report, and questioned the broader context for a merger. He asked whether the current local government operating processes would not be viable in future. Councillor Gledhill replied and stated that in 2020 central government had felt that unitary authorities should have a resident population of 300-500,000, and Thurrock would be able to reach this figure if a merger took place with Basildon Council. He highlighted that he could not speak for central government, but felt that there was currently no rush for local authority mergers or any central government commitment to scrap current local government organisation. The Chair asked if local government reorganisation would be a medium term goal for central government, and questioned what would happen if the Council did not act immediately. Councillor Gledhill responded and stated that Thurrock wanted to be on the front foot for any government reform, and wanted to be in a strong position which had been carefully evaluated, in case central government began to push local government reform in future. Councillor Gledhill stated that the MOU would mean that Thurrock and Basildon could officially consider the possibility of mergers, but did not mean that Thurrock could not look at other options for

reform. He added that if the MOU found that there would be no benefit merging Thurrock and Basildon then the process could be stopped.

The Chair then questioned how residents would be engaged in the process, and if they would be able to have their say regarding any mergers. Councillor Gledhill stated that although he could not pre-empt central government policies, Thurrock residents would be able to have their say if the Council decided to merge. He explained that the Council needed to consider all costs and benefits, as well as looking at all proposals in a greater level of detail, before asking residents for their opinion, and stated that the MOU would promote openness and transparency throughout the process. The Chair asked what the next steps in the process would be. Councillor Gledhill replied and explained that there was currently not a high enough level of detail to be able to outline any detailed next steps. He felt that all costs and benefits needed to be worked through before any decisions were made, but explained that Thurrock wanted to ensure it was the right size and decisions were still made locally and had a local impact. He stated that there needed to be more discussion between Thurrock and Basildon, but the MOU would outline these discussions and could be used as a national template.

Councillor Duffin thanked Councillor Gledhill for his report and felt that the Council needed to understand all positives and negatives of the proposed merger, and needed as much information as possible. He felt that central government were proposing lots of changes in the next ten years, and Thurrock wanted to be at the forefront of this change. He added that a proposed merger could be a good future opportunity, but highlighted the need to consider all options, as well as what it could look like if Thurrock maintained the status quo. Councillor Ralph agreed that a potential merger could be a good opportunity, but wanted to ensure that residents in the west of the borough would continue to be considered in all decisions. Councillor Ralph also sought assurance that Thurrock would not become the housebuilding area of the new authority, as he felt that other Councils could use Thurrock to meet housebuilding targets, particularly with the news of the successful Freeport bid and the growth this would bring. Councillor Gledhill responded and stated that approximately 30,000 new houses needed to be built within Thurrock, and he understood resident's concerns about new houses being built within their local communities. He stated that if Thurrock and Basildon merged, there would still be a planning regime, as well as a Local Plan, which would ensure Thurrock did not bear the brunt of housebuilding requirements. He stated that the new Freeport would improve infrastructure, the local economy, and the lives of local residents, and felt that a larger unitary authority could maximise this benefit across the south Essex region.

Councillor Rice stated that as Thurrock continued to build houses, the population was predicted to rise from 170,000 to 300,000, which would bring it into line with government's proposed guidelines for the size of a local authority. He felt that Thurrock had experienced lots of growth, including through the Local Plan and housebuilding, and asked if this would be enough so that Thurrock could remain a separate unitary authority. Councillor Gledhill responded that the MOU would look at future aspirations across both

boroughs, and would work to understand both Local Plans and local development schemes, including the impact this could have on housebuilding and local population levels. He agreed that Thurrock had experienced lots of growth, and explained that the MOU could find a merger would not be beneficial and would therefore look at other options. He felt that a merger between Thurrock and Basildon could be a good opportunity as Basildon currently had lots of industry and infrastructure, including the largest tractor plant in Europe, and Thurrock could benefit from this too.

The Chair summarised and thanked Councillor Gledhill for his attendance and presentation.

RESOLVED: That the Committee:

1. Commented on the report and the proposal for consideration by Cabinet at their meeting on 10 March 2021.

Councillor Gledhill left the meeting at 7.59pm

36. Communications Update

The Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Service introduced the report and stated that it provided an update to the Communications Strategy as well as the Local Government Association (LGA) health check and action plan implementation. She stated that the draft strategy would be coming to the Committee in June and welcomed Member comment and feedback which could be included in that report. She explained that the LGA had let independent peers look at the Council's communications approach, including speaking to internal and external stakeholders, as well as helping Thurrock to learn from best practice.

The Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Service highlighted some of the positives from the report, which included good crisis communications; good stakeholder relations during the COVID-19 pandemic; and a flexible team who were proactive, committed and responsive. She added that the health check had also shown that internal communications had improved since 2017 when the last LGA health check had been completed, and communications were now more campaign-led. She stated that the report also included some recommendations for improvement, such as commissioning a 'who reads what' survey to better understand how residents consumed their media and received their information, which would help develop the strategy and provide a deeper level of insight.

The Chair thanked the Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Service for her hard work on the report, and felt it provided a good level of detailed feedback. He thanked the communications team for their hard work during the COVID pandemic, and felt pleased to see constructive feedback and the accompanying action plan. He stated that in previous years the Committee had invited local editors to their meeting, and welcomed the

recommendation to improve the speed of responses and to introduce a more streamlined process. He emphasised how important it was for the communications team to build good relationships with local editors, which could be partly achieved through providing timely responses to their questions. He also felt it was good to see the team were trying new approaches and new ways of working, such as video briefings and the use of social media. The Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Service stated that some other local authorities provided online briefings for local media, for example when there was a drastic change to a service, and explained that this allowed local media editors to do a question and answer session with service representatives, which could provide a more immediate response compared to a press release. She stated that as part of the health check, the LGA had spoken with local media editors to understand what was working well and what areas needed improvement, which was something that the communications team would continue to explore going forward. She added that the team were also considering new ways of using technology, for example technology which had been developed due to the pandemic. The Communications Strategic Lead added that the use of online briefings and video briefings would be considered as an option, and utilised by the team if appropriate, as it provided immediate responses to questions.

The Chair questioned the budget challenges and asked if members of the communications team would be lost due to financial pressures, or if their roles were protected. He felt that the new approach and strategy needed to be deliverable, whilst being aligned with financial pressures. The Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Service replied that the local authority would be considering all areas in regards to financial pressures. She added that the team had worked very hard during the pandemic to communicate government guidelines and changes, and she felt they had been critical during the pandemic. She stated that she had no current plans to make changes to the team, but all directorates would be considering all areas for efficiencies.

Councillor Duffin thanked the communications team, and the director, for their hard work during the pandemic, and felt that more positive news stories needed to be shared with local media outlets and on social media. He added that it was good to see responses being sent to local media outlets within 24 hours, and felt this was a high standard. He also questioned the format of media briefings, and questioned whether Members or Portfolio Holders could be involved, to increase engagement, particularly through video briefings. The Communications Strategic Lead replied that the 'who reads what' survey would look at where residents were getting their information, and the team would then consider which information was distributed to which sources, for example print media, Facebook, Instagram or YouTube. She stated that this would increase engagement and ensure more residents were viewing good news stories. She added that the communications team also needed more examples of good news stories, particularly those which had a direct impact on residents' lives. The Communications Strategic Lead added that the majority of local journalists now had a more modern approach, and also directly received their information from social media. She commented that

Members could play an important role in distributing important messages and content, as Members often were active on social media community pages, and could reach residents who did not want to engage directly with the Council. Councillor Duffin suggested that the communications team could introduce a mailing list, so Members could share any press releases with residents on community forum social media pages, for example road issues in their area. He also stated that any videos should remain short, as people often lost interest.

Councillor Ralph agreed that it was good to see the use of videos being included in the communications strategy, and felt that sometimes communications could be slow, particularly regarding the good news of COVID numbers falling. He also felt it was good to see social media being included in the strategy and its usage increased as the team could push messages more easily on social media, and residents could see important information more quickly. He stated that using social media was also cheaper than other methods of communication, and felt that all team members should develop the skills to use social media well. He also felt it was good to see deadlines for responding to press enquiries.

Councillor Hague added that the Council needed to increase the amount of press releases that were provided digitally, as the majority of people now used social media to view their news. He felt it was important for the 'who reads what' survey to cover a broad range of people, including community groups and forums. Councillor Ralph questioned how the 'who reads what' survey would be distributed to residents to ensure a broad range of views and a high rate of completion. The Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Service replied that the team were currently considering how the survey would be undertaken, but were looking into an independent market research company undertaking the survey on the Council's behalf. She explained that an independent company could get high responses from across the borough, as well as ensuring the responses reflected the population of Thurrock, rather than just people responding who were interested.

RESOLVED: That the Committee:

1. Commented on the LGA report and the progress made on implementing its recommendations through the response and action plan, and made any additional recommendations to inform the development of the new communications strategy.

37. Quarter 3 (April-December 2020) Corporate Performance Report 2020/21

The Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Service introduced the report and stated that it covered the period from April to December 2020, and that 66% of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were on target, and 50% were the same or better than in 2019/20. She highlighted that this report was similar to the Quarter 1 Corporate Performance report as they both covered

periods of lockdown and increased restriction, compared to Quarter 2 when restrictions had been eased. She explained that this would continue into Quarter 4, which began in January 2021 and was again characterised by a period of national lockdown. She described how the report set out which KPIs had been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and these had been provided with a 'route to green' where appropriate. She summarised and stated that this report was not necessarily a reflection on service performance, but was rather a reflection on national circumstances.

The Chair thanked the Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Service for her work on the report, and stated that it was clear to see the impact that COVID-19 had had on some KPIs. He highlighted the KPI on page 57 regarding fixed penalty notices, and felt it was understandable that performance was lower this quarter due to the pandemic and continued leniency, but asked when normal enforcement would return. The Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Service replied that this KPI was currently under review, since the Prime Minister's roadmap announcement. She explained that all services were now considering how their KPIs aligned with the proposed roadmap, and feedback on this would be provided during the End of Year/ Quarter 4 Corporate Performance Report.

Councillor Ralph felt that this was a good report that clearly showed the impact COVID-19 had had on some services. He questioned the KPI on page 53 regarding the number of volunteer placements in the Council, and questioned how volunteers were classified, and if this included COVID specific volunteer roles. The Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Service replied that she would look into this query and reply to the Committee in writing. She stated that staff from some services that had been closed, for example in libraries, had been redeployed to help with the Thurrock Coronavirus Community Action (TCCA), and some services had not been able to offer volunteer placements due to the pandemic.

RESOLVED: That the Committee:

1. Noted and commented upon the performance of the key corporate performance indicators, in particular those areas which are off target and the impact of COVID-19.

2. Identified any areas which required additional consideration.

38. Financial Update

The Corporate Director – Finance, Governance and Property introduced the report and stated that it was the final financial update for the 2020/21 financial year, and reflected previous reports. He explained that Corporate Overview and Scrutiny had the overall remit to look at the budget, but specific service issues would be scrutinised by the relevant overview and scrutiny committee. He then highlighted the table at section 4 of the report, which showed the impact of COVID-19 on various services, and explained that COVID-19 had cost the Council approximately £17million in increased expenses and reduced

income. He stated that the Council had received £14.2million in government grants, and a further £2.1million towards the furlough scheme and income compensation scheme. He explained that some services had underspent this year, but some services had seen service pressures, such as Children's social care which had seen an increased number of high need placements. The Corporate Director Finance, Governance and Property summarised and stated that the Council were currently predicting a breakeven position, but had had to use surpluses to achieve this, and had therefore removed any future surpluses.

The Chair stated that the Committee had regularly reviewed and debated the financial position of the Council, but felt pleased to see new information pertaining to detailed service level spend and their outturns, as it was good to see individual service pressures. He highlighted page 73 of the agenda regarding the Children's social care overspend of £851,000, and the Children and Family Services overspend of £1.5million, and questioned whether these were driven by placement costs. He stated that although the Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee would look at this in detail, he questioned how this position was being managed, and sought assurance that the Council was providing a quality service whilst also getting best value for money. The Corporate Director of Finance, Governance and Property responded that the children's services team was being challenged on their finances both internally and externally. He stated that the children's finance team had been strengthened in terms of numbers and seniority to check and challenge the children's services and procurement teams. He added that the service also held weekly placement meetings with the Corporate Director, who was very hands on with placements, and other senior officers to ensure these were monitored. He stated that there was also a regular independent review of placements, from other officers within the wider directorate. He explained that the communications team were also running regular campaigns to increase the number of Thurrock foster carers, which reduced the need for more expensive external foster care agencies.

The Chair highlighted point 6.5 of the report and questioned whether the recruitment freeze would lead to an increase in the need for expensive agency staff. The Corporate Director Finance, Governance and Property responded that 90% of all current posts which were being recruited came from the Adult Social Care and Children's Social Care teams, as these were seen as essential posts. He explained that social workers were often from agencies, but the team had managed to reduce this to 30 agency social workers. He described how the £4million vacant post savings would be measured by the gross salary level of employees against the entire employee budget, which included both internal and agency staff members. He summarised and stated that the Council were still on track to deliver the £4million vacant post savings, and had reduced agency costs from £11-12million in recent years to circa £7.5million.

RESOLVED: That the Committee:

1. Commented on the MTFs and the forecast outturn position for

2020/21.

39. Asset Disposals

The Corporate Director – Finance, Governance and Property introduced the report and stated that the Committee had raised a point regarding capital receipts and Member involvement in January 2021, and this report responded to those comments. He explained that in 2016 the Council had agreed the 3Rs policy, but since then the process had not moved quickly. He stated that because of the financial pressures from COVID-19, this process would now be commenced and assets would be brought forward in three categories which included; operational assets such as the Civic Offices and libraries; community assets such as community halls; and other assets which did not fall into either of these categories. He explained that these other assets were being reviewed now, followed by operational assets in the next few months, and finally community assets, which would be looked at separately. He commented that the team were currently looking at surplus land, and stated that ward members would be informed of any disposals that were being proposed in their area. He stated that the assets included in the report had largely been included as they were assets that current, in-situ tenants wished to purchase. He stated that the site at Dell Road had been included as it had previously been agreed for disposal, but the sale had fallen through, and was now being brought forward again to ensure full transparency. He mentioned that the Constitution had also been changed the remove officer delegation for any disposals, and explained that disposals under £200,000 had to be agreed by the Leader, and disposals over this figure had to be agreed by Cabinet. He summarised and stated that the proposed asset disposals would be brought forward in tranches, and any operational asset disposals would be included as part of the budget, which would be scrutinised by overview and scrutiny before being brought to Cabinet, to ensure full transparency.

The Chair welcomed the report and felt pleased to see that Members were being included in the process. He questioned whether residents would be able to have their say on any disposals, and asked if this would form part of the communications approach. He also questioned whether local amenities such as parks and open spaces would be protected from disposal. The Corporate Director Finance, Governance and Property replied that any asset proposed for disposal would need to go through the relevant consultation. He added that parks were usually protected from disposal without due process and thorough rationalisation, including looking at the state of repair of the park. He stated that the asset disposal team were currently only focussing on surplus assets, as some of these were not being used and costing the council money.

Councillor Ralph thanked the Director for bringing the report to scrutiny, and emphasised the need to get market price on any assets that were being disposed of. He then queried if there was a difference in classification between a park and an open space. The Corporate Director Finance, Governance and Property replied that he would provide a written answer to that question, but stated that any asset brought forward for disposal would be

clearly classified.

The Chair summarised and put emphasis on the need for parks and open spaces to be protected against disposal, as well as ensuring that residents were consulted.

RESOLVED: That the Committee:

1. Commented on the content of the report and proposed policy set out as Appendix 1.

40. Work Programme

The Chair asked for an item regarding future ways of working be included on the Work Programme in the next municipal year, including how to use remote working in the future and learning outcomes.

Councillor Duffin also requested regular updates regarding the Communications Strategy and action plan. The Director of Strategy, Communications and Customer Service replied that detailed report was coming to Committee in June, but regular verbal updates could be provided throughout the next municipal year.

The Corporate Director Finance, Governance and Property stated that the Committee would again consider any financial reports in January 2022, but stated that a report would also be brought before Committee in June 2021 to consider the future financial and budgetary approach. He stated that dependent on when Cabinet and Corporate O&S meetings fell in June, an extraordinary meeting may be necessary to consider this report.

The Chair stated that this would be his last Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting, as he was not standing for election in May. He thanked all the Officers and Members for their hard work throughout the years, and particularly thanked the Senior Democratic Services Officer for her hard work, both with the usual Committee proceedings and also with the scrutiny review. Councillor Duffin thanked the Chair on behalf of the Committee for his hard work and dedication over the past four years, and felt they had been an excellent Chair and Vice-Chair team.

The meeting finished at 8.52 pm

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIR

DATE

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk**

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8 June 2021	ITEM: 5
Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
End of Year (Month 12) Corporate Performance Report 2020/21	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-key
Report of: Karen Wheeler, Director of Strategy, Engagement and Growth	
Accountable Assistant Director: n/a	
Accountable Director: Karen Wheeler, Director of Strategy, Engagement and Growth	
This report is public	

Executive Summary

This is the end of year (Month 12) corporate performance monitoring report for 2020/21. This report provides a final position in relation to the performance of those KPIs, including a focus on some specific highlights and challenges. It details the statistical evidence the council will use to monitor the progress and performance against the council's priorities.

For this unique and unprecedented year, this report shows that 63% of indicators achieved their target and 52% are better than or the same as the outturn for 2019/20. This is understandably lower than the 2019/20 outturns of 74% achieving target and 60% improved direction of travel.

Two thirds of KPIs achieving target is a similar picture to that seen in Quarters 1 and 3 which also coincided with periods of national lockdown/significant restrictions. Whilst performance improved during Quarter 2 for most indicators when restrictions eased over the summer months, the worsening COVID situation during late autumn and running up to Christmas had another adverse impact, and in several cases performance levels did not improve sufficiently in time to meet year end outturn targets.

Many indicators have been directly or indirectly impacted by the coronavirus pandemic and the enforced changes to council services in line with government guidance during this period. Where this has had a negative impact, this is identified in the report. The report also highlights how COVID-19 has disrupted or changed performance and/or priorities and demand levels across a number of services during the year.

Despite the challenging year, the report also identifies some performance highlights for 2020/21.

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 To note and comment upon the performance of the key corporate performance indicators in particular those areas which are off target and the impact of COVID-19

1.2 To identify any areas which require additional consideration during 2021/22

2. Introduction and Background

2.1. The performance of the priority activities of the council is monitored through the Corporate Key Performance Indicator (KPI) framework. This provides a mixture of strategic and operational indicators. The indicators have been chosen to be as clear and simple to understand as possible, whilst balancing the need to ensure the council is monitoring those things which are of most importance, both operationally and strategically.

2.2. This reflects the demand for council services increasing and being ever more complex, not least due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, and the need for a holistic approach to monitoring data and intelligence. Analysis of performance and internal processes at service level by Directors continued monthly throughout 2020/21 and will continue throughout 2021/22.

2.3. These indicators have been reviewed for 2021/22 and will be reported to both Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet on a quarterly basis, throughout 2021/22.

2.4. In line with the recommendation from Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee in June 2019, where performance is below target, commentary will be included to show the intended improvement plan. This is included in Section 3.6 as the "Route to Green".

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 This report is a monitoring report, therefore there is no options analysis.

3.2 Summary of Corporate KPI Performance

End of Year Outturn 2020/21 Performance against target		Direction of Travel compared to 2019/20 Outturn	
Achieved	63% (22) <i>74% in 2019/20</i>	↑ BETTER	30.3% (10) <i>60% in 2019/20</i>
Failed	37% (13) <i>26% in 2019/20</i>	→ STATIC	21.2% (7) <i>13% in 2019/20</i>
		↓ WORSE	48.5% (16) <i>27% in 2019/20</i>

3.3 Impact of COVID-19

- 3.3.1 The end of year overall outturn of 63% is similar to the overall percentage of KPIs achieving target experienced throughout the year, with the exception of Quarter 2 (July to September) where performance overall was 75%, coinciding with the easing of national restrictions. Quarter 1 (April – June), Quarter 3 (September to December) and Quarter 4 (January to March) all coincided with national lockdowns or the tiered system of restrictions including when Thurrock was placed in Tier 4, plus other winter pressures. As predicted in the Quarter 3 report this has had a direct impact on some of the indicators ending this year under target. The narrative in section 3.6 highlights where performance has been affected during 2020/21.
- 3.3.2 In some cases data has not been available to report for the whole year either because the data has not been recorded due to other priorities e.g. for Public Health and school attainment or because that service/activity has not operated in line with government guidance e.g. face to face in Customer Services. This is summarised in section 3.7.
- 3.3.3 As confirmed in the previous quarterly reports, in most cases the targets for 2020/21 have been set based on “normal” circumstances, even where COVID has prevented normal performance levels from being achieved. This is highlighted by there being nearly half of indicators where the direction of travel is shown to be worse than last year. The decision to keep most targets comparable with last year is to more clearly analyse the impact of the disruption caused by the pandemic. Where an indicator has failed to reach its target, the commentary provided clearly identifies if this is related to COVID-19 impacts.
- 3.3.4 It is difficult to predict accurately how long and to what extent service delivery in some areas will continue to be impacted. Some will continue to be affected during the first half of 2021/22 especially in Quarter 1, although restrictions have begun to ease in line with the government’s roadmap. This is being further affected by the need to mitigate against the wider capacity and financial pressures which COVID has brought about, including the need to hold vacant posts and the ongoing recruitment restrictions. This is likely to have an increasingly significant impact on service delivery going into 2021/22. This will be kept under close monitoring.
- 3.3.5 Any targets for health and social care indicators which would normally be part of the Better Care Fund were not agreed with NHS England for 2020/21 as this process was suspended due to COVID-19 priorities. For these indicators, therefore, the targets for 2020/21 were locally set.

3.4 Highlights of 2020/21

Despite the challenges that 2020/21 has created there are many performance highlights to share, including:

- Thurrock Coronavirus Community Action (TCCA) – mobilising council and community partners to set up TCCA in just 9 days
- Agile working – enabling the council's workforce and members to be able to work from home with access to IT equipment and MS Teams
- Keeping the streets free of litter - since 2018/19 when the score was 10.06%, the Keep Britain Tidy survey results have shown a consistent improvement with 2019/20 being 6.56% and this year's outturn being 4.61%
- Overall satisfaction with housing services is higher than it has been in recent years
- Filling over 4,000 potholes throughout the year at a rate of 98% within agreed timeframe. In March 2021 alone, 700 repairs took place, which is a record for the team, who have been consistent in achieving target throughout the year
- Transforming the way library and community hubs events and activities were available from face-to-face to online and delivering 437 sessions during the year
- 100% of minor planning applications were processed within agreed deadlines
- Short term sickness absence improved significantly
- Over three quarters of pupils (77.1%) will be able to attend their first choice of school from September 2021 – up from 72.1% in 2020
- Twenty-two Thurrock households were given the keys to high-quality, affordable council homes in the final handover phase of the council's Claudian Way development
- Thurrock Council supported the successful bid by DP World and Forth Ports in partnership with Ford for a Thames Freeport
- Distributed more than £35 million in government grants and local assistance to businesses to help them cope with the pressures and additional expenses they have faced as a result of the pandemic
- Delivered approximately 2,000 Christmas presents to children known to social care teams donated online by Thurrock residents and businesses for Give a Gift
- Completion of 85 units of new build Housing Revenue Account (HRA) accommodation across the award winning Alma Court in Grays and Claudian Way in Chadwell St Mary.
- Commenced delivery of Purfleet-on-Thames project for which the council received £75m external funding from the Housing Infrastructure Fund
- Developed Town Boards in Tilbury and Grays and submitted Towns Fund applications totalling £50m for both areas
- Won national awards for counter fraud, single view of debt, street and address data and were shortlisted for many others including human resources, enforcement, parking, micro-enterprises, affordable housing and regeneration.

3.5 On target performance

63% of available corporate KPIs achieved their targets.

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder 2020/21	2019/20 Outturn	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	In month Jan	In month Feb	In month March	2020/21 Outturn	End of Year Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	2020/21 Target
Permanent admissions of older people (aged 65+) to residential and nursing care homes per 100,000 population (<i>population figure 24,063 published May 2020</i>)	Cllr Halden	739.7 <i>per 100,000</i>	87.3 (21)	261.8 (63)	436.4 (105)	490.4 (118)	548.6 (132)	619.2 (149)	619.2 (149) <i>(Provisional)</i>	ACHIEVED	↑	739.7 (178)
Number of applicants with family commitments in Bed & Breakfast for six weeks or more (ie those presenting as homeless who have dependent child(ren) or are pregnant)	Cllr Johnson	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	ACHIEVED	↑	0
% General tenant satisfaction with neighbourhoods/services provided by Housing	Cllr Johnson	74.9%	75.5%	74.1%	74.9%	74.7%	76.2%	81.0%	75.5%	ACHIEVED	↑	75%
Successful completion of treatment in Young People's Drug & Alcohol service (YTD)	Cllr Mayes	88%	78%	80%	85%				90%	ACHIEVED	↑	70%
Street Cleanliness - a) Litter	Cllr Watkins	6.56%	3.67%	5.00%	5.17%				4.61%	ACHIEVED	↑	9%
Average time (in days) for a child to be adopted (3 year average) (ie time between entering care and moving in with adoptive family)	Cllr Halden	426 <i>(2017-20)</i>	426	426	341				341	ACHIEVED	↑	426 days
% of young people who reoffend after a previously recorded offence (quarter in arrears)	Cllr Halden	11.0%	13% (Q4)	3% (Q1)	7% (Q2)				10% (Q3)	ACHIEVED	↑	13%

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder 2020/21	2019/20 Outturn	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	In month Jan	In month Feb	In month March	2020/21 Outturn	End of Year Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	2020/21 Target
% of repairs completed within target	Cllr Johnson	98.3%	99.5%	99.1%	98.5%	97.5%	97.3%	97.1%	98.3%	ACHIEVED	→	95%
% Rent collected	Cllr Johnson	98.5%	88.9%	93.35%	95.3%	96.3%	96.2%	98.3%	98.3%	ACHIEVED	→	98%
Tenant satisfaction with Transforming Homes	Cllr Johnson	86.9%	83.3%	85.3%	85.7%	93.8%	77.8%	91.4%	86.5%	ACHIEVED	→	85%
Overall spend to budget on HRA (£K variance)	Cllr Johnson	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	ACHIEVED	→	£0
% of Minor planning applications processed in 8 weeks	Cllr Coxshall	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	ACHIEVED	→	90%
% of volunteer placements filled within council	Cllr Huelin	96%	100%	92%	94%				96%	ACHIEVED	→	96%
% occupancy of commercial properties	Cllr Coxshall	92%	88%	92%	92%				92%	ACHIEVED	→	88%
Proportion of people using social care who receive direct payments	Cllr Halden	36.2%	36.6%	34.7%	35.6%	35.3%	34.6%	34.4%	34.4%	ACHIEVED	↓	34%
% of Major planning applications processed in 13 weeks	Cllr Coxshall	100%	89%	94%	97%	100%	100%	100%	97%	ACHIEVED	↓	90%
% of potholes repaired within policy and agreed timeframe	Cllr Maney	99.33%	100%	100%	100%	100%	81%	100%	98%	ACHIEVED	↓	98%
Number of new Micro Enterprises started since 1 April 2020	Cllr Huelin	44	5	10	15				20	ACHIEVED	↓	20
No of placements available within council for volunteers	Cllr Huelin	225	205	230	223				224	ACHIEVED	↓	210
Proportion of older people (65+) still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/ rehabilitation	Cllr Halden	87.40%	93.1%	89.6%	85.7%				86.4%	ACHIEVED	↓	86.30%
No of events/activities that support engagement in range of cultural, social and learning opportunities to support well-being and strengthen community connections (total sessions provided)	Cllr Huelin	<i>new KPI</i>	0	104	219				437	ACHIEVED	n/a	300
Value of business rate base (ANNUAL)	Cllr Coxshall	<i>new KPI</i>							£2.83m	ACHIEVED	n/a	£277.5m

3.6 Off target indicators

At year end, 13 of the available indicators failed to meet their target.

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder 2020/21	2019/20 Outturn	Tranche 1	Tranche 2	Tranche 3	2020/21 Outturn	End of Year Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	2020/21 Target
Street Cleanliness - Graffiti	Cllr Watkins	4.67%	6.00%	1.33%	3.67%	3.67%	FAILED	↑	3.00%
<p>Whilst the target was not quite reached, there has been a dramatic improvement in the amount of graffiti within the borough. The Clean and Green teams have been carrying out large scale clearances and will continue to do so into the next financial year. The team have been working closely with the enforcement team and this continues to have a positive impact.</p>									
Route to GREEN									
<p>In addition, the Enforcement team continues to work in partnership with Essex Police, having identified criminal damage/racially aggravated graffiti that has led to the arrest of a prolific offender. More than 2,000 graffiti tags have been identified and removed. Joint operations relating to graffiti are planned to continue.</p>									

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder 2020/21	2019/20 Outturn	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	In month Jan	In month Feb	In month March	2020/21 Outturn	End of Year Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	2020/21 Target
% Household waste reused/ recycled/ composted	Cllr Watkins	33.23%	31.8%	33.9%	28.4%	24.3%	23.9%	35.5%	30.6%	FAILED	↑	41%
<p>The through-put levels at the Household Waste and Recycling Centre (HWRC) at Linford have been lower than seasonally expected as residents have not been visiting the site as much due to the national and local lockdown measures. The HWRC is a key source of recycling materials. Additionally, both refuse and recycling collections saw increased levels as residents continued to remain at home through the lockdown periods. Whilst tonnages of both waste streams have increased, there has been more residual waste collected from households than recycling which has adversely impacted performance against this indicator.</p>												
Route to GREEN												
<p>The renewed Waste Strategy approved in 2020 outlines a number of changes to the service as well as non-collection related initiatives - such as the development of a re-use centre - that are all planned specifically to address the low recycling rate in Thurrock. Some of the key work that is already underway relates to the introduction of recycling facilities for those residents living in flats.</p>												

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder 2020/21	2019/20 Outturn	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	In month Jan	In month Feb	In month March	2020/21 Outturn	End of Year Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	2020/21 Target
Average time to turnaround/re-let voids (in days)	Cllr Johnson	25.6 days	61.17	54.40	50.0	51.7	50.40	30.50	47.50	FAILED	↓	28
<p>Owing to COVID impacts, the resulting period of national lockdown and the associated restrictions, standard void re-let times have been critically affected this year. Choice based lettings were suspended for a number of months, coinciding with the first national lockdown, which meant the properties which were void before or during the period of suspension could not be let and remained void for a much longer period of time than usual with only a very small number of lettings through direct offers taking place in May 2020. Since the reinstatement of choice based letting in June 2020, as affected voids have been let, this has inflated the averages and void re-let times have been considerably higher than usual. This has been the main issue which has impacted performance during 2020/21.</p> <p>After choice based lettings were re-instated in June, re-let times for general needs voids which account for around 90% of the housing stock began to improve. However sheltered housing voids continued to prove difficult to let, took much longer to re-let and adversely affected the overall average until recently.</p>												
Route to GREEN												
<p>Void re-let time performance is currently on the route to green with a substantial improvement observed in performance between February and March 2021. Following the implementation of an action plan for hard to let sheltered housing voids - which included actions on downsizing, advertising and communications - re-let times for sheltered housing voids have improved significantly from an average of 92 days in February to an average of 35.5 days in March and continues to improve into 2021/22.</p> <p>In order to improve performance further across both general needs and sheltered voids, new performance dashboards have been developed which provide team managers with granular performance information on the most important parts of the void process enabling them to identify process bottlenecks more easily.</p>												

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder 2020/21	2019/20 Outturn	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	In month Jan	In month Feb	In month March	2020/21 Outturn	End of Year Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	2020/21 Target
No of health hazards removed as a direct result of private sector housing team intervention	Cllr Johnson	1,000	8	212	522	90	61	73	746	FAILED	↓	1000
<p>COVID-19 restrictions have affected property inspections in private rented homes. The service following MHCLG guidance for local authorities to enforce standards in private rented properties and carrying out Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) part 1 inspections to keep rented properties safe. The service has received fewer complaints about private landlords overall during this period, which anecdotally is partly due to residents worries about COVID-19 and some tenants are preferring housing staff to carry out inspections by telephone, photographic evidence and video calls.</p>												
Route to GREEN												
<p>The Private Housing Service is continuing to monitor housing conditions digitally and carrying out essential HHSRS inspections when we find the most serious category 1 hazards. The council has powers of entry which it can use to gain access to properties and carry out inspections where there is imminent harm to the tenant's health due to a serious hazard and there is a duty to inspect. Presently, the route to green remains challenging and beyond the council's direct control in the current climate.</p>												

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder 2020/21	2019/20 Outturn	Summer Term	Autumn Term	Spring Term	2020/21 Outturn	End of Year Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	2020/21 Target
% of places accessed for two year olds for early years education	Cllr Jefferies	73.0%	61.8	71.3%	70%	70%	FAILED	↓	73% (prov)
<p>During the third lockdown private, voluntary and independent (PVI) providers have remained open, with Two Year Entitlement (2YE) school settings re-opening later in the term. COVID has continued to have a significant impact on the take up of 2YE primarily because some parents have declined or delayed accessing their funding. There is no evidence of insufficient places available apart from where one large provider has not been able to offer 2YE due to an Inadequate Ofsted. By the end of spring term 2021 early years funding claims had been made for a total of 545 children. This equates to 70% when measured against 778 families on the November 2020 Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) list. This is a similar outturn across the whole Eastern region with many reporting even lower take ups.</p>									
Route to GREEN									
<p>Once COVID restrictions are no longer impacting the take up rates, it is anticipated that these will rise again. The service will continue to monitor and manage the impact of COVID.</p>									

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder 2020/21	2019/20 Outturn	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	In month Jan	In month Feb	In month March	2020/21 Outturn	End of Year Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	2020/21 Target
No of new apprenticeships started (inc. staff undertaking apprenticeship)(exc. LA maintained schools)	Cllr Huelin	69	4	9 (13)	12 (24)	22	3	7	56	FAILED	↓	2.3% of workforce = 67
<p>There were 56 apprenticeship starts in 2020/21. This is 84% of the apprenticeship target of 67, a shortfall of 11. 2020/21 has been a uniquely challenging year with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Lockdown and social distancing detrimentally affected both the supply and demand of apprenticeships. Training providers temporarily halted delivery and the enrolment of new apprentices whilst they adapted their business models. Equally, council resources were diverted into responding to the pandemic which meant teams were unable to provide the support and supervision required to consider offering a new apprenticeship. Early indicators from the LGA show that this outturn, whilst under target, compares favourably to that of other local authorities in the Eastern Region which is expected to be just above 50%.</p>												
Route to GREEN												
<p>Looking forward to 2021/22, directorates have already been given internal targets for apprenticeship recruitment, including upskilling of existing staff and there are already positions in the pipeline which will be reported on during the year. The team are also utilising LGA resources and tools to help identify types of apprenticeship opportunities.</p>												

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder 2020/21	2019/20 Outturn	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	In month Jan	In month Feb	In month March	2020/21 Outturn	End of Year Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	2020/21 Target
% occupancy of council-owned business centres	Cllr Coxshall	91%	90%	93%	83%				71%	FAILED	↓	80%
<p>The pandemic has had a direct impact on many businesses across the country. That impact has been felt at the Thurrock Business Centres and the loss of one tenant in a larger unit has had an impact on the figure for this final quarter.</p>												
Route to GREEN												
<p>Vacant units are being marketed in a number of ways including direct marketing campaigns and advertising vacant space. The opportunity to create co-working space in vacant units is also being explored.</p>												

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder 2020/21	2019/20 Outturn	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	In month Jan	In month Feb	In month March	2020/21 Outturn	End of Year Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	2020/21 Target
Payment rate of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs)	Cllr Gledhill	55.97%	52.2%	50.5%	49.9%	42.1%	46%	39%	49%	FAILED	↓	70%
<p>Payment rates have been low all year as many recipients of FPNs are either stating that they are unable to pay due to being furloughed with lower income or recently being made unemployed. The council has also received a significant amount of requests for extensions to payments which we have been approving. Where fixed penalty notices are not paid, these are processed through the court.</p>												
Route to GREEN												
<p>The service continues to work with recipients of FPNs by allowing extension periods to make payment. The situation will continue to be closely monitored throughout 2021/22 with plans to revert to the processes relating to chasing payments for FPNs as the pressures of COVID 19 begin to reduce. In the interim the service continue to sensitively chase payment, and ultimately progress the cases to court when payment terms are not met.</p>												
Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder 2020/21	2019/20 Outturn	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	In month Jan	In month Feb	In month March	2020/21 Outturn	End of Year Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	2020/21 Target
% of refuse bins emptied on correct day	Cllr Watkins	98.91%	97.0%	72.9%	98.3%	99.8%	97.7%	97.9%	97.31%	FAILED	↓	99%
<p>The continued impacts of Covid-19 on staff-availability levels due to self-isolating throughout the year has contributed to difficulties in maintaining delivery of service. This resulted in the temporary forced suspension of garden waste collections earlier in the year until such time as resource-levels returned. The intention being to prioritise and preserve service delivery for residual waste and recycling collections. Furthermore, with residents working from home during the lockdown, there has been increased levels of waste presented. These increased tonnage levels impacted on the available capacity within the service e.g. multiple drops off being required which sometimes resulted in roads not being collected on the scheduled collection days.</p>												
Route to GREEN												
<p>Recycling collections improved through securing a local disposal option that ensured resources were available to complete collection rounds daily. Residents being at home has continued to challenge vehicular access into more roads each day, support from Parking Services to address some of the issues was sought, with other roads requiring more permanent measures including parking restrictions. Longer term, residual bin weights are expected to be addressed via use of larger waste collection vehicles, the introduction of a separate food waste collection and targeted communications messaging around improving recycling performance.</p>												

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder 2020/21	2019/20 Outturn	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	In month Jan	In month Feb	In month March	2020/21 Outturn	End of Year Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	2020/21 Target
Total number of homes permitted through Planning (Annual)	Cllr Coxshall	3,323							195	FAILED	↓	950

The council's ability to achieve housing targets is largely dependent upon the availability of sites and developers who are prepared to implement planning permissions. The suppressed housing delivery rates experienced this year can be attributed to the global pandemic and also site availability.

Route to GREEN

The planning team is actively working with site owners in the urban area (Grays Shopping Centre for example). Site availability will significantly improve once the Local Plan is adopted.

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder 2020/21	2019/20 Outturn	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	In month Jan	In month Feb	In month March	2020/21 Outturn	End of Year Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	2020/21 Target
Forecast Council Tax collected	Cllr Hebb	98.9%							97.96%	FAILED	↓	98.9%
Forecast National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) collected	Cllr Hebb	99.3%							96.8%	FAILED	↓	99.3%

Whilst the standard collection processes for both of these KPIs is slightly below the year-end target, this outturn is better than initially predicted earlier in the year given the curtailment by the pandemic. The impact on collection performance has been largely mitigated by the various support packages and initiatives put in place to assist residents and businesses through the pandemic.

Route to GREEN

Figures represent collection performance at year end. Any uncollected balances are rolled forward for collection in the new financial year.

Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder 2020/21	2019/20 Outturn	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	In month Jan	In month Feb	In month March	2020/21 Outturn	End of Year Target Status	Direction of Travel since 2019/20	2020/21 Target
% Initial Health Assessment (IHA) completed within 28 days (20 working days) of child becoming Looked After	Cllr Halden	40.3%	41%	38%	80%	60%	78%	85%	57%	FAILED	↑	80%
<p>This is an indicator for which Children's Services are jointly responsible along with health colleagues who complete the assessment process. For the assessment completion, an improvement has been seen throughout the quarterly reporting from 41% Quarter 1 to 75% Quarter 4 being completed within 28 days and our year to date outturn figure stands at 57% (78 of 137 completed in timescale). Some delays in this indicator are influenced by delayed referrals (due to approvals being needed by a parent), the impact of COVID on the availability of health colleagues to complete the assessment (particularly for out of borough placements) and availability of the child (and carer) to attend the assessment process.</p> <p>There is an additional locally monitored indicator in relation to the referrals being made within 5 working days. For 2020/21 81% of those referrals were within timescale.</p>												
Route to GREEN												
<p>The improvement throughout 2020/21 has been realised through an increased focus in this area, including monitoring of timescales to trigger referrals being sent within timescales, which impacts the achievability of this indicator and regular meetings to monitor demand and allocate resources. This performance indicator is also reported and monitored through the directorate performance framework on a monthly basis.</p>												

3.7 Other key indicators

Throughout the year the council also monitors some other indicators as part of the corporate scorecard which, whilst not performance related, are important to keep under review

Demand Indicator Definition	Portfolio Holder 2020/21	2019/20 Outturn	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	End of Year Outturn	Direction of Travel since 2019/20
No of households at risk of homelessness approaching the Council for assistance	Cllr Johnson	1,934	348	844	1,278	548	1,826	↓
No of homeless cases accepted	Cllr Johnson	107	72	111	167	44	211	↑
Value (£) of council owned property disposals	Cllr Coxshall	£470k	£350k	£460k	£460k	£460k	£460k	↓
Average weekly household earnings (Thurrock resident) (data from ONS/NOMIS) (ANNUAL)	Cllr Coxshall	£631.70 (2019)					£631.70 (2020)	→
Total number of employee jobs in Thurrock (data from ONS/NOMIS) (ANNUAL)	Cllr Coxshall	67,000 (2018)					66,000 (2019)	↓

Performance indicators for which data has not been available due to COVID-19 disruption

Number of delayed transfers of care (DToC) - days from hospital (attrib. to NHS, ASC & Joint)	The collection and publication of official DToC figures were suspended for the whole year by NHS England.
Number of GP practices with automated screening protocol in place for depression and anxiety amongst LTC (long-term conditions) patients	Data has not been available from GP practices throughout this year
Contact Centre - Face to Face average waiting times (minutes)	Face to Face has not been operating since 23 March 2020 due to COVID-19 lockdown.
Contact Centre - Face to Face - no of visitors	
KS2 Attainment – % Achieving the National Standard in Reading, Writing & Maths	Annual Outturns. Government is not publishing attainment data for schools this year
KS2 Attainment - % Achieving Expected or Better Progress in Reading, Writing & Maths	
KS4 Attainment – Progress 8 score	
Achievement of Level 2 qualification at 19 years old	
Achievement of Level 3 qualification at 19 years old	
Children Looked After KS2 – % Achieving the National Standard in Reading, Writing & Maths	
Children Looked After KS4 – Progress 8 score	
% of primary schools judged "good" or better	
% of secondary schools judged "good" or better	

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The corporate priorities and associated performance framework are fundamental to articulating what the council is aiming to achieve. It is best practice to report on the performance of the council. It shows effective levels of governance and transparency and showcases strong performance as well as an acknowledgement of where we need to improve.
- 4.2 This report highlights what the council focussed on during 2020/21 and confirms the governance and monitoring mechanisms which were in place to ensure that priorities are delivered.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 Performance against the corporate priorities was monitored through Performance Board, a cross-council officer group of performance experts representing each service. Performance Board will continue to consider the corporate KPIs on a monthly basis, highlighting areas of particular focus to Directors Board.
- 5.2 Each quarter a report will continue to be presented to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and finally reported to Cabinet.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

- 6.1 The vision and priorities cascade into every bit of the council and further to our partners, through key strategies, service plans, team plans and individual objectives.
- 6.2 This report will help decision makers and other interested parties, form a view of the success of the council's actions in working towards achieving the vision and priority ambitions.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Jo Freeman**
Finance Manager

The report provides the final year outturn on performance against corporate priorities. There are financial KPIs within the corporate scorecard, the performance of which are included in the report.

Where there are issues of underperformance, any recovery planning commissioned by the council may entail future financial implications, and will need to be considered as appropriate.

The council is still assessing the full financial impact of COVID-19 and this is being regularly reported to members.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Tim Hallam**
Deputy Head of Law and Deputy Monitoring Officer

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. However, where there are issues of underperformance, any recovery planning commissioned by the council or associated individual priority projects may have legal implications, and as such will need to be addressed separately as decisions relating to those specific activities are considered.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**
Team Manager, Community Development and Equalities

The Corporate Performance Framework for 2020/21 contains measures that help determine the level of progress with meeting wider diversity and equality ambitions, including youth employment and attainment, independent living, vulnerable adults, volunteering etc. Individual commentary has been given throughout the year within the regular monitoring reports regarding progress and actions.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

The Corporate Performance Framework includes areas which affect a wide variety of issues, including those noted above in the body of the report. Where applicable these are covered in the appendix.

8. Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

N/A

9. Appendices to the report

- None

Report Author:

Sarah Welton, Strategy Manager

Work Programme

Committee: Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Year: 2021/22

Dates of Meetings: 8 June 2021, 7 September 2021, 16 November 2021, 18 January 2022, 8 March 2022

Topic	Lead Officer	Requested by Officer/Member
8 June 2021		
End of Year Corporate Performance Summary 2020/21	Sarah Welton/ Karen Wheeler	Officer
Work Programme	Democratic Services Officer	Standard Item
7 September 2021		
Quarter 1 (April to June 2021) Corporate Performance Report 2021/22	Sarah Welton/Karen Wheeler	Officer
Capital Programme Update	Sean Clark	Officer
Communications Strategy	Karen Wheeler	Officer
Work Programme	Democratic Services Officer	Standard Item
16 November 2021		
Scrutiny Review Update	Lucy Tricker/Matthew Boulter	Member
Mid-Year/Quarter 2 (April-September 2021) Corporate Performance Report 2021/22	Sarah Welton/Karen Wheeler	Officer
Communications Strategy Update – Verbal Report	Karen Wheeler	Member
Work Programme	Democratic Services Officer	Standard Item

Work Programme

Topic	Lead Officer	Requested by Officer/Member
18 January 2022		
Draft General Fund Budget & Medium Term Financial Strategy Update	Jonathan Wilson/Sean Clark	Officer
Capital Strategy 2022/23	Jonathan Wilson/Sean Clark	Officer
Draft Capital Programme 2022/23	Jonathan Wilson/ Sean Clark	Officer
Work Programme	Democratic Services Officer	Standard Item
8 March 2022		
Quarter 3 (April-December 2021) Corporate Performance Report 2021/22	Sarah Welton/Karen Wheeler	Officer
Communications Strategy Update – Verbal Report	Karen Wheeler	Member
Work Programme	Work Programme	Work Programme

Clerk: Lucy Tricker

Updated: 27th May 2021