

# Minutes

## Performance Management Board

16<sup>th</sup> September 2020



### Present

Councillors	Present	Councillors	Present
J Coleridge	Yes	S Rehman	No
G Courtauld	Yes	B Rose	Yes
Mrs C Dervish	Yes	P Schwier (Vice-Chairman)	Yes
T Everard	Yes	N Unsworth (Chairman)	Apologies
M Radley	Yes		

### 6 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**INFORMATION:** There were no interests declared.

### 7 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

**INFORMATION:** There were no questions asked, or statements made.

### 8 **MINUTES**

**DECISION:** The Minutes of the meeting of the Performance Management Board on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2020 were approved as a correct record by the Vice-Chairman in the Chair.

### 9 **FOURTH QUARTER AND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT 2019/20**

**INFORMATION:** Tracey Headford, Business Solutions Manager, introduced the report and explained that the Fourth Quarter and Annual Performance reports had been combined for the benefit of Members. The report summarised the performance of the Council as at the end of the fourth quarter (1<sup>st</sup> January 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020) and at the end of the financial year. A separate report had also been included in order to provide Members with a comparison between the third quarter, which had been presented at the previous meeting of the Performance Management Board on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2020, and the fourth quarter.

It was advised that the Coronavirus and unprecedented lockdown measures had had an impact on the Council as well as its communities and businesses across the District. The pandemic was a fast moving and developing issue and although the majority of the previous quarter was not affected, there were some projects and performance indicators that were disproportionately impacted on at the end of the quarter.

Members were informed that as at the end of March 2020, 42 of the 54 projects had been completed with a further ten progressing as planned. One project had an amber status and was in relation to the replacement of the artificial pitch at the Halstead Leisure Centre. The project was delayed in part as the third parties involved were furloughed in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, and thus were unable to sign the necessary leases. Furthermore, the leisure centre remained closed throughout this period. It was added that although the project would continue, at the time that the report was composed, the leisure centres remained closed.

In respect of performance indicators, it was reported that ten performance indicators had met or exceeded their targets, and six performance indicators had missed their target. Of the six performance indicators that had missed their target, two had an amber status and were marginally missed, and four had a red status, having missed target by more than 5%. The areas of underperformance were in relation to the recycling rates, average waiting times for disabled facilities grants, participation levels at sport centres, average call answer time in the Customer Service Centre, collection rates for Council Tax and the percentage of invoices paid within 30 days of receipt.

In terms of the Council's financial position, it was reported that there was an overall positive variance for the year of £565,000 against the budget. The net budget approved was £14.540m for the 2019/20 year. The overall efficiency target to be achieved for the year was £200,000.

On the subject of complaints, Members were informed that the Council had received a total of 124 complaints as at the end of the fourth quarter of the year, with an overall total of 504 received for the year.

Further to the report, there were several questions raised by Members which required a written response from officers. The responses were subsequently provided following the meeting and circulated to Members accordingly. The main topics of the questions raised were as follows:-

- The type of waste which was processed at Cordon's Farm.
- The number of agency staff that the Council had been required to employ in response to the Covid-19 emergency.
- In respect of Planning Appeals, it was asked what the expenditure in this area was in the last financial year and how this compared with previous years.

Before the conclusion of the item, the Chairman expressed his appreciation to all officers across the Council for their hard work throughout the year and ability to adapt as necessary to the rapidly changing circumstances that surrounded and continue to emerge from the Covid-19 health emergency.

**DECISION:** Members of the Performance Management Board noted the report.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To inform Members of the performance of the Council.

## 10 **FIRST QUARTER PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT 2020/21**

**INFORMATION:** Members were informed that the First Quarter Performance Report was presented at the meeting of the Cabinet on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020. Prior to the report,

Members were informed that the Council had now implemented its new Corporate Strategy for the period April 2020 to March 2024.

A new Annual Plan was also in place for the period 2020/21; the production of the Plan was delayed due to the need for it to reflect the Council's support for residents and businesses alike in their recovery following the Covid-19 pandemic. The Plan was subsequently agreed at the meeting of the Cabinet on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2020. The progress against activities in the Annual Plan for 2020/21 would commence from the second quarter; the first quarter report instead focused on how the Council had responded to the unprecedented challenges that had emerged from the pandemic, with an emphasis on the organisation's achievements throughout this period.

Members were reminded of a number of the Council's achievements throughout the course of the first quarter, such as the establishment of a Community Hub to take referrals from the Essex Welfare Service; the implementation of the 'Braintree District Together' campaign to celebrate the District's heroes; the transfer to virtual Committee meetings via MS Teams and Zoom; continued engagement with local businesses and communication through tools such as social media to help keep the public informed as to the latest updates on the Council's services. Projects such as the Local Plan, pedestrianisation of the town centre, the regeneration of Manor Street and development of Horizon 120 were able to continue throughout this period. Other projects that were more severely impacted by the onslaught of the pandemic were able to adapt to changing business needs; for example, the regular Street Markets held in the town centre became virtual.

In respect of the Council's finances, there was an overall adverse variance projected for the year of £919,000 against the budget. Across all services, staffing budgets were forecast to be underspent by £425,000; however, after allowance for the corporate efficiency target of £300,000 and provision for a higher than anticipated pay award, this resulted in a net projected overspend of £10,000. Income was projected to be under achieved by £513,000, and with the impact of Covid-19 on the revenue account against the funding received from the Government, a net shortfall was currently estimated for the Council of £1.454m.

**DECISION:** Members of the Performance Management Board noted the report.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To inform Members of the performance of the Council.

## 11 **DECISION PLANNER**

**INFORMATION:** Members considered the Decision Planner for the period of 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021.

**DECISION:** That Members noted the Decision Planner for the period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021.

The meeting commenced at 7.15pm and closed at 8.04pm.

Councillor P Schwier  
(Vice-Chairman in the Chair)