
Meeting: Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date: 17 March 2016
Subject: Quarter 2 Performance Report
Report of: Cllr Nigel Young , Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development and
Cllr Brian Spurr, Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services
Summary: The report highlights the Quarter 2 performance from Community Services and Regeneration and Business

Advising Officer: Marcel Coffait, Director of Community Services
Jason Longhurst, Director of Regeneration and Business
Contact Officer: Heather Price – Head of Business Performance
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

1. The quarterly Medium Term Plan performance report underpins the delivery of all Council priorities.

Financial:

2. The indicator set monitors a wide range of indicators, which help to provide an understanding of the Council's effective use of resources.

Legal:

3. None.

Risk Management:

4. Any areas of ongoing underperformance would be a risk to both service delivery and the reputation of the Council.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

5. None.

Equalities/Human Rights:

6. This report highlights performance in respect of how the Council and its services impact across all communities within Central Bedfordshire, so the specific areas of underperformance can be highlighted for further analysis/drilling down as necessary.

Public Health:

7. Active recreation is included in the indicator set.

Community Safety:

8. The levels of Serious Acquisitive Crime and anti-social behaviour are included in the indicator set.

Sustainability:

9. Included in the indicator set are a broad range of indicators relating to sustainability including those covering employment, access to broadband, library usage, active recreation and waste.

Procurement:

10. None.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

The Committee is asked to acknowledge the continuing overall strong performance in Quarter 2 for the indicators being used to help support monitoring of progress against the Medium Term Plan priorities and to recommend officers to further investigate and resolve underperforming indicators as appropriate.

Background

11. This report focuses on a set of indicators that support the monitoring of progress against the priorities in the Medium Term Plan (MTP).
12. The Directors' Summaries for Quarter 2 are set out below. Appendix A provides the detailed performance data.
13. Serious Acquisitive Crime (SAC) offences have increased in Central Bedfordshire during Q2 2015/16 compared to the same period last year. 730 SAC offences were recorded, which is 63 more offences than were recorded in Q2 2014/-15, an increase of 10%. This is due to an increase in all three areas of SAC compared to Quarter 2 of last year. Theft from motor vehicle offences have increased by 31%, theft of motor vehicle offences has increased by 41% and there was one more robbery offence (4% increase). The increase seen in vehicle crime offences is linked to an organised crime group who are targeting a specific make of vehicle. Domestic Burglary offences are 36% lower in this quarter than in the previous year, with 78 fewer offences recorded.
14. In Q2 2015-16 there were 2294 ASB incidents reported to Bedfordshire Police for Central Bedfordshire. This is an increase of 342 incidents on Q2 last year, an increase of 17.5%. This is a continuing issue, predominantly due to the increase in reporting of nuisance motorcycles in the south of the area, although numbers have dropped off significantly in the last month with 200 fewer incidents reported in September compared to August.

15. Despite an increase in NNDR expenditure, commercial performance has been maintained in Quarter 2 at 8.2%, due to an offset by increased revenue from industrial property. Industrial property underpins the strong commercial return as income increases from new lettings. Farm performance has improved slightly compared to Quarter 1 as back rent has been recovered following a rent review settlement and regularisation of leases.
16. **Regeneration**
17. Record levels of enquiries are being received following the launch of the new Be Central Bedfordshire website. New interactive maps and developments have now been added to the website, and have had over 5000 visits. Since April 2015 we have managed 87 new enquiries, which is more than the whole of last year. To date this year, confirmed successes will support approximately 580 new jobs.
18. The Superfast Broadband Project continues to deliver to plan and plans are being developed to accelerate deployment and extend coverage further. 6,781 premises were connected in the last quarter. Overall, 13,131 homes and business out of 15,500 premises have been connected. This is 85% of the overall local target, with 52 cabinets having gone live
19. Planning performance has continued to fluctuate slightly during Quarter 2 due to resource pressures on the service, which is a national issue, but a targeted recruitment campaign is now underway and is set to resolve this.
20. Both the overall and youth unemployment rates in Central Bedfordshire have continued to fall, along with the number of people claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA), and all remain low compared to national rates.
21. Performance continues to be strong and reflects the realignment of the Directorates services and resources. This is ongoing as the Directorate acts upon the challenges that resulted from the Government announcements regarding changes to Planning that has an impact on the service. The changes to the welfare system, particularly around expectations on young people claiming Universal Credit, has also presented challenges and ongoing pressures that the Employment & Skills service have to meet. Regeneration & Business will actively work to encourage the growth of suitable businesses in Central Bedfordshire; influencing this through effective use of our assets, sector development and a package of support from Central Bedfordshire Council aligned to our key businesses, sectors and potential investors.

Conclusion and Next Steps

22. Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider this report and make any recommendations to Executive.

Appendices:

Appendix A – (Quarter 2 Performance Indicators)

Background papers and their location: (open to public inspection)

Executive: 12th January 2016