

Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 29 November 2017

Report Title: Performance and Financial Monitoring for Quarter 2 2017/18

Report By: Jane Hartnell, Director of Corporate Services and Governance
and Simon Hubbard, Director of Operational Services

Purpose of Report

To provide members with an update on performance against the targets set out in the corporate plan for 2017/18, and other key activities, during quarter 2 (1 July to 30 September). The report also provides a summary of financial information.

Recommendation(s)

1. That the committees comments on quarter 2 performance be addressed by the relevant Lead Member(s) with appropriate action and report back
2. That staff be thanked for their hard work and achievements in this quarter

Reasons for Recommendations

To assist the council undertake performance management arrangements.

Background

1. The council's corporate plan has been divided into 5 areas, which reflect key priorities for the year ahead. The 5 areas are cleaner and safer, driving economic growth, support when it's needed, providing great services and income generation.
2. The corporate plan lists key activities which will be undertaken throughout the year to meet these objectives. Overview and scrutiny committee will need to monitor how we're doing against these targets throughout the year. The committee will also need to be aware of other activities and projects which, although they may not be listed in the corporate plan, are still significant to the town and organisation.
3. At their annual meeting on 19 July 2017, overview and scrutiny members agreed to continue piloting new ways of reporting performance monitoring information.

Summary of council wide financial information

4. The Council wide financial position as summarised below for the quarter 2 to September 2017

Table 1: Overall Revenue position

Directorate	2017/18 Net Budget	2017/18 Forecast Outturn	Trf to / (Use) of Reserves	Quarter 2 Estimated Outturn Variance	Quarter 1 Estimated Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Operational Services	9,708	9,989	(320)	(39)	(82)
Corporate Resources	4,787	4,845	(157)	(99)	(132)
Total for Hastings Borough Council	14,495	14,834	(477)	(138)	(214)

5. Corporate Services are forecasting a favourable variance (£99,000) to budget which is mainly due additional income in factory units (£49,000) where occupancy is higher than budgeted and the cost of rates relating to void units is lower than expected. Accountancy and Exchequer Services are forecasting a saving of (£49,000) due to vacancies. The use of reserves is expected to be (£157,000).
6. Operational Services are forecasting a favourable variance of (£39,000). There are numerous variances throughout the Directorate but the most notable of which are Off Street car parking forecasting a positive variance of (£144,000) where parking income has been higher than expected. Homelessness are forecasting an adverse

variance £61,000 due to the demand for bed and breakfast accommodation, Local Land Charges £51,000 do to a reduce in demand and an increase in cost of CON 29 questions, Selective Licensing is forecasting a positive variance of (£204,000) but this will be used to repay previous years deficits and to the programme going forward. The use of reserves is expected to be (£320,000).

7. Capital Programme – as Table 2 shows that the gross expenditure to 31 June 2017 was £0.567m with a forecasted outturn of £7.014m against a budget of £7,084m which includes £1.289m of carry forwards.

Table 2 Capital Programme

Directorate	Original Budget 2017/18	In year budget revision	Revised Budget	Spend to date including commitments 2017/18	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance to Budget
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Corporate Resources	500	10,213	10,713	9,907	10,049	(664)
Operational services	5,295	2,139	7,435	1,269	5,288	(2,147)
	5,795	12,353	18,148	11,176	15,337	(2,811)

8. Within the Corporate Directorate the only significant variance (£657,000) is in relation to the conversion of 12/13 York Buildings which relates to a timing delay with works now slipping into 18/19.
9. Within the Operational Services Directorate the Harbour arms and New Groynes are showing a large variance of (£1,220,000) but this is due to timing, a number of factors including bad weather and availability of suitable barges have led to the project being delayed so this expenditure will now fall into 18/19.
10. Also work on the Road and restoration at Pelham Arcade is showing an underspend of (£94,000) and (£207,000) respectively due to the take up of the grant and ongoing discussions with Historic England, therefore this capital project is to be reviewed.
11. The Castle Access / Interpretation is forecasting an underspend of (£206,000). Hastings Borough Council are working with the private sector to improve the interpretation of the castle, but are also preparing a bigger scheme to improve facilities at the top of the West Hill lift, and improve access to the castle.
12. Coastal Space Regeneration Project Phase 2 is forecasting an underspend of (£117,000) due to the reduction in the number of properties in the scheme from 30 to 26.

What are we doing?

13. This is how we're doing against the key activities set out in this year's corporate plan:

Cleaner and safer	RAG
Improving the cleanliness of the town, working closely with our waste, street cleansing and grounds maintenance contractors	
Supporting community safety and working with the Safer Hastings and Rother Community Safety Partnership	
Delivering fair and proportionate enforcement services in relation to off street parking, enviro-crime and environmental health	

Driving economic growth	RAG
Working with regional and county partnerships to attract investment to the area including improved rail links and support to business	
Building on the opening of The Source, Hastings Pier and our widely recognised cultural programme we will promote Hastings as an exciting place to live, visit, work and invest	
Continue to support higher education provision in the town and the development of provision to succeed the University of Brighton	
Taking forward the development of a town centre and White Rock action plan to lay the basis and spread the benefits of regeneration along and adjacent to the seafront	
Subject to funding will deliver schemes to help some of the most excluded communities in the borough into economic activity and training	
Seek to enhance sports and leisure activity through new contracts for our facilities and encouraging others to invest in new provision	
Maximise the level of occupancy of the council's business premises and support the provision of new employment space by Sea Change or ourselves as appropriate	
Work with the town centre management committee and its successor Love Hastings to deliver an enhanced and mores sustainable town centre	

Support when its needed	RAG
Supporting local people during the transition to Universal Credit and other welfare changes	
Look to support as far as possible those affected by welfare changes	
Maintaining and further developing our approach to improving standards in housing through licensing and proactive enforcement activity	
Releasing land for residential development that caters for a range of housing needs (Year-end reporting only)	
Continuing our innovative approach to housing regeneration through the Coastal Space Programme, grot busting and empty homes programmes	
Extending our housing offer through the new housing company	

Working with developers and housing associations to improve the supply of new affordable homes	
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Providing great services	RAG
Reviewing all our services and activities and considering the best ways of delivering these in the future	
Finishing our transformation programme to make sure our processes and systems are as efficient as possible and our services are designed to be delivered online	
Striving to continuously improve our performance and customer care	
Working with partnerships to get the best for local people	

Income generation	RAG
<p>We will develop the financial, staffing and other policies that will enable us to put a more commercial approach at the centre of everything we do. At the heart of this will be a new Income Generation Strategy that will influence our planning and thinking for the future.</p> <p>We will bring forward proposals for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing investment – having set up a housing company • Generating energy low carbon initiatives and involvement in the energy market • Expanding seafront assets, like beach huts and glamping • Purchasing commercial property where this is profitable and economically beneficial • Using our parks and open spaces for new events that generate income and add to our cultural and community life • Collecting our council tax and business rates efficiently • Reviewing fees and charges 	

Wards Affected

Insert the list of wards affected

Policy Implications

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness No
 Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17) No
 Risk Management Yes
 Environmental Issues No
 Economic/Financial Implications Yes
 Human Rights Act No
 Organisational Consequences Yes

Local People's Views No
Anti-Poverty No

Additional Information

Insert a list of appendices and/or additional documents. Report writers are encouraged to use links to existing information, rather than appending large documents.

Officer to Contact

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Cleaner and safer

What's happened in Quarter 2?

- Constitution of the new [Joint Waste and Recycling Committee](#) adopted by Cabinet
- Following a [resolution](#) by Full Council in July, the fees and charges for Hastings Cemetery and Crematorium were updated
- 2 prosecutions for dog off lead and 4 for breaches of noise abatement
- The council retained its Green Flag awards for Alexandra Park, Hastings Country Park Nature Reserve and St Leonards Gardens

The summer season was very successful this year, bringing an increased number of visitors to the town. However, members will be aware of street cleansing issues on the beach. The litter and detritus results from the NI195 audits carried out in April and September were also well below the required standard. Kier had already begun implementing a recovery plan to address these issues. However, since then, the council has escalated this issue to Kier's senior management team, arranging a meeting with the Managing Director in September. The team have also been working closely with the local management at Kier to improve the standard of street cleansing during busy periods. The contractor acknowledged a need for improved supervision by their staff during these periods. Subsequent events have run more

smoothly, and this is an encouraging sign that the new plan is beginning to take effect.

The team have also been seeking improvements to the standard of street cleansing outside the main town centres. Regular meetings are being held with Optivo to address street scene issues identified earlier in the year, and to develop an action plan to improve cleansing on social housing estates and reduce fly-tipping. Measures implemented during the summer have had a positive effect, and an action plan is being finalised including longer term measures to maintain and build on the early successes. For example Optivo plan to launch a campaign to raise awareness amongst their residents about how to dispose of their waste. The council will also support this by taking enforcement action where suitable evidence of fly tipping and littering is secured, and continuing to liaise closely with colleagues from Optivo and the Council's waste and cleansing contractor Kier.

Kier have also been developing proposals to improve the efficiency of garden waste bin collections. However, the initial changes proposed were considered to be too extensive and Kier have been asked to re-consider them. A new proposal will be presented to the council in January 2018.

The procurement of a new waste contract is proceeding on schedule. The council is also preparing a specification for both an in-house street cleansing model and an outsourced model, which will be included in the tendering exercise for the new waste contract. This is to ensure the council can consider issues of best value when deciding which delivery model to follow. The IT team have also been helping to design the technical specification for the new contract, in relation to back office and customer service request systems.

Members will recall that the CCTV equipment in the town was recently upgraded. The new equipment has proved to be a valuable tool in helping to apprehend offenders. New LED lighting has also been installed in the car park at Carlisle Parade, which improves the quality of the CCTV images further. The car park is also due to be re-decorated in the new year, which will make the space lighter and further reduce instances of anti-social behaviour. A member of the council's CCTV monitoring team recently received a Divisional Commendation from Sussex Police for their work supporting community safety in the town.

The procurement exercise for the new visitor centre at Hastings Country Park, which took place in quarter 1, was unsuccessful. One tender was received, which was significantly over-budget. This is the second time the procurement has been unsuccessful. The reason for this is that traditional construction companies have no experience or expertise in straw bale construction and probably inflate their costs to reflect the additional risk they perceive from using this innovative construction technique. Further, straw bale

companies tend to be small artisan companies who do not engage with public procurement. Similar challenges have been faced by our Interreg partners throughout Europe working on similar straw bale projects. The council is now exploring the idea of working with a consortium of specialist straw bale builders to realise our new centre. Members of the public are being kept up to date on the project through Fairlight Parish Council, The Friends of Hastings Country Park Newsletter and the volunteers at the existing visitor centre.

The Community Safety Manager is continuing to work closely with the police and housing services to monitor compliance with the new Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs). Some interactions between the police and street community have resulted in Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) being issued. Fourteen FPNs have been issued since the PSPOs were introduced in June. However, the council is keen that any enforcement action is also coupled with an appropriate package of support for street drinkers. The council is also working with partner agencies to develop support mechanisms for drug users. The introduction of PSPOs has led to the displacement of some anti-social behaviour, and it is anticipated that enforcement action may need to be escalated in the case of some persistent offenders. The Human Resources team are also working with the council's warden service to gain Police Community Safety Accreditation, which will enable our Wardens to use some additional enforcement powers, usually only available to the Police.

An earlier overview and scrutiny review of community safety highlighted that as the evening economy in Hastings grows, there will be a need to provide support to young people to prevent any safety issues arising. The council has worked with partners to develop a local version of a safe places scheme that has worked well in several other town and city centres, such as Swansea. As a result a new scheme will start in the town centre from December to support people who may become at risk during a night out. The safe spaces scheme, which is funded by Hastings and Rother Clinical Commissioning Group, will be provided at His Place in Robertson Street and run by the National Social Marketing Centre and a national medical provider.

The Licensing team continue to support the work of the Local Alcohol Action Area (LAAA). A project is due to begin shortly, based in the Ore Valley area, which aims to address alcohol abuse issues amongst young people. The Community Safety Manager has also received an award for his work to support the Hastings Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP) and tackle underage drinking. The CAP has been highlighted as an excellent example of multi-agency partnership working, bringing together a number of different strands of work to address problem-drinking and improve the quality of life of residents.

The pilot litter and dog fouling enforcement service delivered by Kingdom Services Group Ltd has been operating for 3 months, and around 850 FPNs have been issued during this time. Kingdom initially experienced some challenges regarding the recruitment and retention of staff in Hastings, although these have

now been addressed. So far, there has been a low rate of successful appeals against the FPNs issued; the next phase of the pilot will involve the Legal Services team taking enforcement action against unpaid tickets. A new online payment option for FPNs issued by council wardens and Kingdom was launched on My Hastings in quarter 2.

The council has also supported two traders in temporary units at the roundel in York Gardens. This approach has been successful in dispersing anti-social behaviour in that part of the town centre. The traders are due to remain in their current units until October 2018, and the council is looking to develop long term improvements in this area.

Although air quality in most of Hastings and St Leonards meets the national standard, since 2003 a small part of Bexhill Road had been designated as an [Air Quality Management Area](#). This is because the levels of particulate matter were above the required standard. Particulate matter is a very fine dust and comes from industry, road traffic debris, sea salt and biological particles. However, since 2011 the levels of particulate matter have remained below annual air quality limit values. The Air Quality Management Area has therefore been [revoked](#). The Environmental Health team produce an [annual status report](#) on air quality in the town, and this is available to view on the council's website.

What to look out for in Quarter 3

- Safe spaces to be introduced in the town centre from December
- Works to complete [off-street parking infrastructure improvements](#) due to be completed. Capital funding for this project had been approved by Cabinet in March.

How will we know if it's working?

Target Number		Target	Performance
1.	Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of litter, dog fouling, detritus, graffiti and flyposting)	Q1 – 5% Q2 – 5%	Q1 – 7% Q2 – 5%
2.	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	Q1 – 30% Q2 – 30%	Q1 – 31.8% Q2 – 30.6%
3.	Percentage of food establishments which are broadly compliant with food hygiene law	Q1 – 92% Q2 – 92%	Q1 – 98% Q2 – 98%
4.	The average number of failed bin collections (per 100,000 collections)	Q1 – 110 Q2 – 110	Q1 – 74 Q2 – 84
5.	Green Flag status retained for our key parks and open spaces	Green flag status retained	Green flag status retained

Driving economic growth

What's happened in Quarter 2?

- Cabinet approved a report to carry out further investigation for a potential [new harbour development](#)
- St Leonards Festival, Coastal Currents and Stade Saturday's programmes delivered
- Community Led Local Development (CLLD) approved by European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) on 28 September, awaiting final approval by Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
- Hastings Pride delivered through the Youth Council
- East Global event held in July, a Black Minority Ethnic (BME) business forum is also due to be set up
- Walkabout to identify properties on the seafront for Grotbusting

A number of successful events have taken place in the town over the summer season, building on the success of the celebrations to mark the 950th anniversary of the Battle of Hastings last year. The council continues to meet regularly with the Arts Council England to explore new ways to develop the cultural offer in the town. The council's involvement in the Arts Council England's funded Coasters project resulted in the addition of world class circus and street arts work to this year's successful Stade Saturdays programme.

The [St Leonards Festival](#) took place on 1 July. Over the years, the festival organisers have been able to develop close links with the Kings Road Street Market and other local businesses.

The [Coastal Currents](#) festival took place over the summer. The theme of this year's festival was the notion of changing how we view our spaces. Popular projects from the festival included an installation in Bottle Alley called wave length. Local artists Zeroh are also working with the council to look at options for a creative lighting scheme for the space. This was the first year that the festival had been run as an independent project by Sweet and Dandy, with support from the Arts Council England.

Both the Mid-Summer Fish Festival and the Seafood and Wine Festival attracted large numbers of visitors. An entry charge had been introduced this year for the Mid-Summer Fish Festival, although this did not affect visitor numbers. Excellent feedback was received from traders and visitors at both events.

A celebration took place on 16 August to mark the 125th anniversary of the opening of Hastings Museum. The event, which was based on the original opening ceremony for the museum, was very successful thanks to the hard work of museum staff and volunteers. The anniversary celebrations were attended by 1000 people and received coverage by the local media and on social media. A recent exhibition of work



by Eric Slater and Arthur Rigden Read has also been very popular. The latest exhibition, Changing Places, began on 18 September, and continues a year of cultural exchange between the UK and India.

The museum is also nearing the end of a resilience project, which looked at the future sustainability and development of the facility. The report would be submitted to the Museums Committee later in the year.

A pilot project for a lifeguard service operated by the RNLI came to an end in September. Officers met with the RNLI informally at the end of the season to review the pilot and will now look to develop proposals for a 3 year plan for the service.

The Executive Delivery Group of the Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG) met to consider thirteen expressions of interest in funding. FLAG funding is used to support the sustainability of the Hastings fishing fleet. Eight applications have proceeded to the full application stage for FLAG, three projects have been advised to go through core European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), one project is awaiting further development and one application was rejected.

A draft masterplan for the White Rock area has been published on the council's website. The plan will be tested as part of the first round of public consultation on the Town Centre and White Rock Area Action Plan, which is due to take

place in 2018. Work on key documents which will underpin the area action plan, including the sustainability appraisal, strategic flood risk and traffic modelling, is also underway.

A new member of staff joined the planning policy team in August and has begun work to develop a brownfield land register. The register is a statutory requirement and lists brownfield sites suitable for housing and housing led development. It is intended to help developers understand the opportunities available in the area. The register must be published by 31 December 2017, and will then need to be kept up to date on a rolling basis. The council is also responding to changes in legislation around self and custom build housing.

The government is considering legislation to introduce a new type of planning permission called permission in principle and technical consents. Permission in principle is similar to outline permission and will be gained through part 2 of the brownfield register. Technical consent (which will apply to tree works, flooding etc.), will be required before works can proceed. The purpose of the legislation is to stimulate new development.

A two year rolling government target for dealing with major developments has recently come to an end, with the council meeting the required standard (see performance indicator 11). It is important that the council continues to meet this target in order to maintain good working relationships with housing

developers and secure income from application fees. However, the council's capacity to meet these targets will be impacted by a number of factors, including staff absence, recruitment and the number of applications received, which means this situation will need to be regularly reviewed.

This year, a total of 6 major planning applications have been received (2 in quarter 1 and 4 in quarter 2), 4 of the applications were determined within the agreed time (see performance indicator number 8).

Following a recent re-valuation of business premises, many businesses were faced with a significant increase in the amount of business rates they must pay. The government announced a grant to provide discretionary rate relief to small and medium sized business affected by the re-valuation of their premises. The council needs to develop a bespoke policy which will enable it to administer the grant consistently over a 4 year period, ensuring it provides support to protect the local economy. A draft policy will be considered by Cabinet in December. In the meantime, the council has postponed some recovery action for un-paid business rates as a number of the businesses may be eligible for support under the new scheme.

By the end of quarter 2, 206,212 people had visited council-owned leisure centres against a target of 217,500. This target is cumulative across the year. There is a strong seasonal

trend with this indicator and the quarterly profiles are based on the previous year's attendance figures.

What to look out for in Quarter 3

- [Hastings Storytelling Festival](#)
- A new exhibition by Paula Rego at the [Jerwood Gallery](#)
- Black Huts festival of writing, music and film
- Prioritising recommendations from the recent venues review
- Report recommending adoption of the Hastings Central conservation area appraisal and management plan to be considered by Cabinet in December
- Informal public workshop for a new conservation area in St Leonards to take place at the end of the year
- 3 community consultation events on the new Sports Village development are to be held in October. It is hoped that a further report can be brought to Cabinet in Quarter 3 or 4
- High Speed Rail Summit on 6 October
- Decision on CLLD funding by DWP and DCLG expected
- Draft policy for administering non-domestic rate relief to be considered by Cabinet in December
- [Education Opportunities Board](#) to meet

How will we know if it's working?

Target Number		Target	Performance
	Number of visitors to the White Rock Theatre	No targets set, for monitoring only	Q1 - 16,926 Q2 – 30,149
6.	Increased number of visitors to Hastings Museum and Art Gallery	Q1 - 10,100 Q2 - 24,800 Q3 - 36,200 Q4 - 46,500	Q1 - 11,967 Q2 – 26,320
7.	Increased number of people using council Leisure Centres	Q1 - 107,500 Q2 - 217,500 Q3 - 312,500 Q4 - 420,000	Q1 - 103,531 Q2 – 206,212
8.	Major Planning Applications determined within 13 weeks or as agreed with applicants	Q1 - 80% Q2 - 80% Q3 - 80% Q4 - 80%	Q1 - 100% Q2 – 67%
9.	Non-major planning applications determined within 8 weeks or as agreed with the applicant	Q1 - 80% Q2 - 80% Q3 - 80% Q4 - 80%	Q1 - 99% Q2 – 90%
10.	Householder planning applications determined within 8 weeks or as agreed with the applicant	Q1 - 80% Q2 - 80% Q3 - 80% Q4 - 80%	Q1 – 100% Q2 – 92%
11.	Major planning applications determined within 13 weeks or as agreed with the applicants between	Q1 - 60% Q2 - 60%	Q1 - 88% Q2 – 84%



	October 2015 and September 2017	Q3 - 60% Q4 - 60%	
12.	Non-major planning applications determined within 8 weeks or as agreed with the applicant between October 2015 and September 2017	Q1 - 70% Q2 - 70% Q3 - 70% Q4 - 70%	Q1 - 91% Q2 - 90%

Support when it's needed

What's happened in Quarter 2?

- Business planning underway for a replacement scheme for Letstart Letting
- Further units of accommodation have been found to support the Syrian refugee resettlement programme
- [Active Hastings](#) summer programme delivered
- Fitness Rave on the pier attracted 233 participants (20% of participants lived in areas that fall within the 10% most deprived nationally)
- Street Play / Street Games outreach programme attracted 231 participants

The upward trend in homelessness has continued in quarter 2. This has in turn increased the council's use of temporary accommodation. Similar trends have been reported by other local authorities around the country. It is anticipated that officers will report to Cabinet later in the year on opportunities for the council to purchase its own temporary accommodation. This would enable the council to ensure a supply of temporary accommodation locally and provide more effective support to assist households finding permanent accommodation. Housing staff have also been working closely with social housing providers to arrange placements for larger households.

The council is also seeking to carry out further homelessness prevention work. This includes commissioning a Family Group Conferencing (FGC) and mediation service using funding from the [Flexible Homelessness Support Grant](#). FGC aims to reduce the number of young people presenting as homeless by seeking to resolve disputes with family members. Two new homelessness reduction officers and a temporary accommodation officer have also been recruited using the grant funding.

The Hastings Street Community Partnership is due to meet in October. The purpose of the meeting will be to form an action plan of activities and begin a piece of work to review assets and services available in the town to support the street community. This will enable the partnership to identify any gaps in service provision, which can help inform future commissioning exercises. The Hastings Housing and Wellbeing Hub is now in its second year. In 2016/17, 43 rough sleepers were permanently housed and temporary accommodation was found for an additional 21 people who would otherwise have been sleeping rough. This work is part of the package of support referred to earlier in the report as part of the introduction of PSPOs.

A partnership project between the council, Homeworks and East Sussex County Council to prevent rough sleeping was launched in April. The project has introduced a new way of working which aims to identify individuals who may be at risk

of becoming rough sleepers and intervening at an early stage to prevent this.

The council has also reviewed all fire safety arrangements for all the properties it manages directly through the Social Lettings Agency, temporary accommodation and the Syrian refugee resettlement programme and remains satisfied that these properties meet the required standard. These arrangements will continue to be reviewed on an annual basis. The council has also been working closely with East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (ESFRS) and local housing associations to develop an action plan of priority buildings across the private and social sector which will require assessment. The cladding of the Four Courts tower blocks has already been tested and found not to present a significant fire risk. Inspections are being carried out on all blocks of 3 storeys or more in the Borough. Safety measures are also being considered for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and this will be a priority for the new additional licensing scheme.

Following changes to government funding arrangements, the Housing team have been reviewing the social lettings agency model and developing plans for the future of the scheme. These will be presented later in the year. This will include the option of the council operating a management-only service on commercial terms.

Members will be aware that the council has been exploring new ways of working proactively with households who may be at risk of falling behind with their council tax payments, this includes reducing the use of bailiffs to recover debts. In 2015, 3134 council tax records were sent to bailiffs for recovery, this was reduced to 971 records in 2016, so far this year 199 records have been sent to the bailiff. This approach also reduces court costs to the council.

The government have advised that the roll out of Universal Credit will not be delayed. A number of neighbouring authorities in East Sussex are due to go live with a full service shortly, this may reduce the DWP's capacity to resolve issues in Hastings. Delays have also been experienced in the council receiving funding from the DWP.

Staff in the Community Contact Centre have been undertaking training with the Hastings Advice and Representation Centre (HARC). The purpose of the training is to ensure the team can provide advice to residents affected by changes to the welfare system and refer them to other agencies, where appropriate.

The annual target for processing new housing benefit claims has been met (14 days against a target of 15 days). However, the target for processing change of circumstances was missed (6.5 days against a target of 5 days). These figures still compare favourably with other authorities, some of which

are reporting delays of up to 31 days to publish new applications and 8 days for change of circumstances.

Optivo recently completed the purchase of Leolyn House as part of phase three of the Coastal Space project. The council is finalising legal agreements with Optivo which will release funding from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) to support the refurbishment of the building to provide social housing.

Hastings and Rother Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) recently appointed the University of Brighton to undertake a study of health interventions as part of the major measures project. This forms part of a wider piece of partnership work between the council and CCG to reduce health inequalities. The report will be published in March 2019 and will help guide future funding decisions.

A new project, Street Bites, was launched to address holiday hunger and nutrition issues for children who receive free school meals. The project, which is funded by Orbit, Optivo, Sussex Police, the Big Local and Street Games UK, was delivered at the adventure playground in Ore and as part of an outreach programme in areas of deprivation. Seventy six young people had been involved in the project, 56% of participants lived within areas that fall within the 10% most deprived nationally and 74% lived within the 0-20% most deprived.

The Climate Active Neighbourhoods (CAN) and Sustainable Homes in Inclusive Neighbourhoods (SHINE) project, both of which aim to reduce fuel poverty by improving the energy efficiency of properties in Central St Leonards and Ore Valley are progressing well. The council recently hosted other European partners at an event in St Leonards.

What to look out for in Quarter 3

- Report on [new licensing scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupation \(HMOs\)](#) to be considered by Cabinet in October
- First full board meeting for the new Building Control partnership due to take place in October
- Housing company established (see income generation area)

How will we know if it's working?

Target Number		Target	Performance
13.	Number of homelessness cases prevented (bigger is better)	Q1 - 375 Q2 - 750 Q3 - 1,125 Q4 - 1,500	Q1 – 426 Q2 - 841
14.	% of homeless applications resulting in a placement in emergency accommodation (smaller is better)	Q1 - 50% Q2 - 50% Q3 - 50% Q4 - 50%	Q1 – 47% Q2 – 48%
15.	Private sector homes meeting the required standard	Q1 - 50 Q2 - 100 Q3 - 150 Q4 - 200	Q1 – 43 Q2 - 109
16.	Number of affordable homes created	Not reported until yearend	Reported at year end
17.	Number of long term (2+ years) empty properties bought back into use (bigger is better)	Q1 - 18 Q2 - 35 Q3 - 53 Q4 - 70	Q1 - 25 Q2 - 32
18.	Number of neglected buildings improved (bigger is better)	Q1 – 12 Q2 - 25 Q3 - 37 Q4 - 50	Q1 – 20 Q2 - 38
19.	Number of new homes built	Not reported until yearend	Reported at year end
20.	Average number of days to process new housing	Q1 - 15	Q1 - 13.7

Report Template v29.0



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	benefit claims (smaller is better)	Q2 - 15 Q3 - 15 Q4 - 15	Q2 – 14.6
21.	Average number of days to process changes to housing benefit claims (smaller is better)	Q1 - 5 Q2 - 5 Q3 - 5 Q4 - 5	Q1 - 5.6 Q2 – 7.0
22.	Average number of days to process new Council Tax Reduction claims	Q1 - 15 Q2 - 15 Q3 - 15 Q4 - 15	Q1 - 13.2 Q2 – 13.7
23.	Average number of days to process changes to Council Tax Reduction claims	Q1 - 5 Q2 - 5 Q3 - 5 Q4 - 5	Q1 – 5.4 Q2 – 5.9

Providing great services

What's happened in Quarter 2?

- Customer first, commercial awareness and workplace relations management training completed
- A report on a [hybrid mail room](#) solution was approved by Cabinet in September 2017

The Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) project, which will replace the existing HR and Finance systems, has now entered the design and build phase. Developing the new system continues to take up a significant amount of capacity for the Human Resources, Finance, IT and Transformation teams. The teams have been process mapping their activities and designing a template for the new system. A data cleansing exercise was also undertaken before data can be transferred from the old systems to the new ERP system.

The Human Resources team have also been developing a new e-learning package. The package offers short online courses on a range of topics; including customer first, safeguarding and data protection. A number of other local authorities use similar systems and this approach will achieve cost savings to the council. Senior managers are also considering the council's future training requirements, this may include further courses on project management, data

protection and management skills. The council is also working in partnership with other local authorities in East Sussex and Sussex Coast College Hastings to develop a new apprenticeship scheme.

A working group was also formed in this quarter to oversee the introduction of the new GDPR data protection legislation. The working group are currently developing project and implementation plans, which will include full briefings on the new requirements for staff and members. Senior managers will be kept up to date on progress throughout the process. An audit will also be undertaken over the coming months to assess what data the council holds and on what basis.

Members will be aware of the challenges the council has faced recruiting to some professional posts. One of the ways this is being addressed is to offer training opportunities for existing staff to gain professional qualifications. A member of the Environmental Health team recently qualified as an Environmental Health Officer, and another member of the team is currently undertaking the training.

Following on from earlier resolutions passed by Full Council, staff in the Human Resources and Housing teams have been undertaking accredited mental health first aider training. The purpose of the training is to enable them to provide effective support to staff on mental health issues and sign post them to relevant professional agencies, when appropriate.



Teams across the council have been taking part in business continuity planning. This is to ensure that the council has sufficient contingency plans in place to cope with a break in services. As part of this project, the IT have also been reviewing the council's data storage requirements with a view to creating a new storage area network, to securely house all the data collected across the organisation.

Over recent months, the council has been making more of its services available online. The web team are always looking for new ways to improve the usability of the website. The team is piloting a new tool which scans the sites for errors and tests the readability of content.

A new version of the online report it service is also due to be launched later this year. The new service is faster and includes better mapping capabilities. The proportion of customers using the online self-service option has recently

stabilised at around 52%, a marketing campaign is therefore required to encourage further channel shift. The marketing campaign will begin in January 2018. By providing services online, the council is also able to gather information about the demand for its services which it can use to help shape its policies and delivery plans in the future.

What to look out for in Quarter 3

- Refreshed social media policy to be considered by Cabinet in November
- Work to build the new ERP system continues



How will we know if it's working?

Target Number		Target	Performance
24.	% of customers self-serving online	Year-end target – 60%	Q1 – 52.2% Q2 – 55.9%
25.	The proportion of working days / shifts lost due to sickness absence	Q1 - 1.55 Q2 - 3.15 Q3 - 4.70 Q4 - 6.25	Q1 – 1.38 Q2 – 3.62



Income generation

What's happened in Quarter 2?

- Draft income generation strategy, commercial property investment strategy and business plan for the Hastings Borough Council Housing Company recommended to Full Council for adoption by Cabinet

At its meeting in September, Cabinet recommended a draft [income generation strategy](#) to Full Council for adoption. The draft strategy sets out three key themes for investment; residential property, commercial property and energy generation. At the meeting, Cabinet also recommended a strategy for [commercial property investment](#) and a business plan for the [Hastings Borough Council Housing Company](#). These documents will provide a strategic framework for the council's income generation activities over the years to come.

Earlier in the year, the council had commissioned an energy options study. The study has now been completed and a number of work packages identified for further investigation. The first work package, which looked to improve the energy efficiency of the council's estate, was approved by the Income Generation Board as an invest to save measure. These works are due to be completed by the end of March. Cabinet is due to consider a report at its meeting in December about the possibility of installing energy generation technology on the council's assets in the town. A further work package about

larger-scale energy generation is also under development. This is potentially a very significant piece of work, which would require a review of the relevant planning policies before it could be implemented. The council is continuing to explore external funding opportunities which may support the development of these projects.

The Income Generation Board is also developing a project pipeline, which will enable it to assess the viability of suggested income generation opportunities and prioritise them alongside its existing commitments.

Council tax collections are currently below projections. This is because many households are now opting to pay their council tax over 12 months, rather than 10 months. Council tax collections are reviewed each month, and it is still considered that the year end targets remain achievable.

What to look out for in Quarter 3

- Report on energy generation opportunities to be considered by Cabinet in December
- First property purchases by the Housing Company



How will we know if it's working?

Target Number		Target	Performance
26.	% Council Tax collected in year (bigger is better)	Q1 - 35.4% Q2 - 63.1% Q3 - 90.2% Q4 - 96.3%	Q1 - 33.8% Q2 - 60.4%
27.	% Non domestic rates collected in year (bigger is better)	Q1 - 35.0% Q2 - 59.5% Q3 - 84.1% Q4 - 98.0%	Q1 - 33.1% Q2 - 58.4%