

Report to: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 6 July 2015

Report Title: Corporate Plan 2015/16 Retrospective Report Back on 2014/15 and Performance Targets 2015/16

Report By: Jane Hartnell
Director of Corporate Services

Purpose of Report

1. To advise Cabinet of the year-end performance for 2014/15 and proposed performance indicator targets for 2015/16 to be published on the Council's website.
2. To receive comments from the Overview and Scrutiny committees on year-end performance for 2014/15 and proposed performance indicator targets for 2015/16.
3. To outline intentions to review the performance process and trial new ways of presenting performance information during the first half of 2015/16

Recommendation(s)

1. That the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny committees be considered.
2. That the year-end performance for 2014/15 and proposed performance indicator targets for 2015/16 be approved for publication (the 25th February Council delegated authority to the Cabinet to approve these).
3. That Cabinet support intentions to review corporate performance and planning arrangements in line with the transformation programme approved by Council on the 25th of February 2015.

Reasons for Recommendations

The Council's Corporate Plan is one of the key documents by which the council is held to account for its performance, therefore honest and transparent reporting back of how well we performed against targets in the previous year is essential.

Local people and staff also need to be aware of the targets and standards we have set ourselves, and where any of these targets have changed from previous years we need to be clear about the reasons why.

Introduction

1. The Council meeting on 25th February 2015 agreed the Corporate Plan for the period 2015/16 to 2017/18 – these documents set out the Council's strategic direction and outlines associated work areas for 2015/16.
2. Appendix A contains a report back against the milestones and targets set out in the previous year's Corporate Plan for 2014/15 and sets out draft performance indicator targets which are proposed for 2015/16.
3. The Cabinet has been given delegated authority by the Council to agree year-end performance for 2014/15 and proposed performance indicator targets for 2015/16 prior to publication on the Council's website.
4. Transforming the Council is a key focus within the Corporate Plan 2015/16 - 2017/18 and part of this agenda is concerned with ensuring our performance management arrangements reflect the changing nature of the Council. This report concludes by outlining intentions to review and test new ways of performance reporting in 2015/16.

Retrospective Performance Report Back – Appendix A

5. Appendix A provides a report back on performance during 2014/15 against the Corporate Plan targets and performance indicators.
6. The status of each target as at 31st March 2015 is described as either:
 - G = Green target achieved
 - A = Amber – target changed, affected by external circumstances or narrowly missed
 - R = Red - did not hit target – also includes description of how we will address this in 2015/16
7. At the end of each service area in appendix A the associated performance indicators are listed along with their prospective targets for 2015/16 (highlighted and underlined) to be approved by Cabinet.
8. Progress against performance indicator targets for the year is shown as either 'Met' or 'Not Met'.
9. 'Direction of travel' shows whether performance for the year is better, worse or same as the previous year. For different indicators better performance may be shown by higher or lower figures (e.g. recycling collection rates vs crime rates). All figures shown in the tables are for the full year from April 1st to March 31st.

Comments

10. The Overview and Scrutiny committees considered the year-end performance for 2014/15 and proposed performance indicator targets for 2015/16 at their meetings on 11th (Services) and 16th June (Resources). Associated comments are set out below.

Overview and Scrutiny Services

11. The Services committee discussed a variety of issues relating to end of year performance. The following comments were made and those that specifically relate to performance indicators are indented:

Comment: Members expressed concern over progress with the waste and street cleansing contract with Kierway.

Response: Members were told that Officers continue to monitor contract arrangements closely and apply rectifications where necessary. It was also noted that with the introduction of the 'My Hastings online' service, this would make it easier for residents to report issues directly to the contractor.

Comment: Members queried the progress of food hygiene inspections.

Response: Members were updated on how specialist contractors had temporarily been recruited to enable the Council to carry out food hygiene inspections, due to staff shortages. They were also informed that the service had been restructured and the staff shortages filled.

Comment: Members recommended that performance indicator target 2.1, the number of people attending White Rock Theatre performances, for March 2016 be increased from 75,000 to 77,000 given that the council had exceeded its target for March 2015 achieving audience figures of 76,743.

Response: Recommendation considered.

Comment: Members discussed the need to create a vibrant evening economy in the town for residents, students and visitors. They suggested a need to ensure that the Council's licensing and saturation policy complemented associated regeneration efforts.

Response: The Council intend to review and refresh its licensing and saturation policy over the coming months, to ensure these were appropriate for the changing nature of the evening economy in Hastings.

Comment: Members suggested that the Council might consider an additional policy to encourage live music and performances at the venues around the town.

Response: Suggestion noted.

Comment: Members were pleased to note the launch of the social letting agency pilot.

Response: The agency had let four properties, the tenants of which may otherwise have been unable to access affordable, high quality accommodation in the private rented sector.

Comment: Members welcomed the update that the target to determine major residential and commercial planning applications had been exceeded, 96.9% of applications had been determined within 13 weeks by March 2015.

Response: Noted.

Comment: Members discussed the amber status of the CCTV cross cutting target.

Response: The Council had recently upgraded its CCTV facilities and an all Member site visit to the CCTV control room would be scheduled, once the works had been completed.

Overview and Scrutiny Resources

12. The Resources committee discussed a variety of issues relating to end of year performance. The following comments were made and those that specifically relate to performance indicators are indented:

Comment: Members questioned the delay in the completion of the benefits review.

Response: The complexity of the review and unforeseen staff absence at Shelter (leading the review) had created delays in the original timescale and it was now anticipated that Shelter would present their recommendations in September 2015.

Comment: Members queried progress of the revised Anti-Poverty Strategy.

Response: The revised draft action plan is due to be submitted to the Local Strategic Partnership at its July meeting, presentations would also be given at the meeting on efforts to tackle family poverty and health inequalities.

Comment: The committee welcomed the update that the Council had received an unqualified audit opinion for the annual statement of accounts.

Response: Noted.

Comment: The committee questioned how the introduction of Universal Credit might impact the Council's grant settlement?

Response: The grant the Council receives to administer housing benefits may be reduced in the future, once a more significant number of claimants had transferred to Universal Credit (only one claimant at present).

Comment: Members raised concern about the local focus on fraud reduction given the transfer of responsibility to the Department of Work and Pensions.

Response: The Assistant Director of Finance continues to monitor this and has written to the Department for Work and Pensions regarding this matter to ensure that the requirements of the council's service level agreement with the Department for Work and Pensions are met.

Comment: The committee thanked the input from the East Sussex Procurement hub during the year.

Response: Thanks noted and will be forwarded to the hub.

Comment: Members welcomed the continued good performance in the collection of council tax and non-domestic rates (Performance Indicators 6.1 & 6.2).

Response: Noted.

Comment: Members queried the progress of Individual Electoral Registration (IER).

Response: IER is more complex than the previous registration system. It was therefore more difficult for electors to register in the run-up to an election. A canvass of electors will take place in the autumn to help maximise the number of residents on the register of electors.

Comment: Members queried the cascading of learning from the Future Cities and associated projects in the context of improving the town's housing stock.

Response: The Council would continue to explore options to improve the stock in Hastings, particularly by drawing on examples of good practice from other areas.

Comment: Members sought an update on the activities of the Council's legal team in relation to the number of cases that had not been defended at year end.

Response: Details would be circulated to the committee.

Comment: Members were pleased that levels of sickness had declined over the years and were keen to thank staff in the community contact centre for dealing with a range of complex enquiries in a sensitive and professional manner.

Response: Thanks would be extended to staff.

2015/16 Performance management arrangements

13. Members and officers are keen to ensure that as the Council changes, performance management arrangements adapt to reflect these changes. During the first half of 2015/16, work will be undertaken to review the performance process and support senior officers to test a suite of tools designed to assist in planning and presentation of existing and future targets and workloads.
14. It is intended that these tools where used and applicable, will give Members an alternative way of viewing performance information alongside the familiar format of recent years. Member's input on the effectiveness of new ways of presenting performance information will be much appreciated as we trial these approaches.

Policy Implications

15. The Corporate Plan details how the council meets its objectives. The values and vision are expressed in our commitments and policies, these underpin the way we work and prioritise activity. Individual projects and service delivery decisions will reference how we are addressing policy implications throughout the year. This retrospective review of performance identifies our progress across a range of policies and values.

Wards Affected

Ashdown, Baird, Braybrooke, Castle, Central St. Leonards, Conquest, Gensing, Hollington, Maze Hill, Old Hastings, Ore, Silverhill, St. Helens, Tressell, West St. Leonards, Wishing Tree

Policy Implications

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

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness	Yes
Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)	Yes
Risk Management	Yes
Environmental Issues	Yes
Economic/Financial Implications	Yes
Human Rights Act	Yes
Organisational Consequences	Yes
Local People's Views	Yes
Anti-Poverty	Yes

Additional Information

Corporate Plan Part II 2013/14 – 2015/16

Corporate Plan Part II 2015/16 – 2017/18

Available here:

http://www.hastings.gov.uk/decisions_democracy/how_we_make_decisions/policies_strategies/corporate_plan/

Officer to Contact

Officer Name Mark Horan

Officer Email Address mhoran@hastings.gov.uk

Officer Telephone Number 01424 451485
