

Cabinet



Wednesday, 13 December 2023 at 5.30 p.m.

Council Chamber - Town Hall, Whitechapel

Scrutiny questions and responses

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5.1 Chair's Advice of Key Issues or Questions

Pre decision scrutiny questions and responses.

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Questions	Response
6.2 Strategic Performance & Delivery Reporting Q2 2023-24	
<p>Will the Mayor and Chief Executive explain why they have introduced a new Key Performance Indicator for missed refuse and recycling collections that staff in the Waste Services Team say cannot be measured?</p>	<p>The performance reporting that has been used historically was reviewed by new service management and found to be unfit for purpose and misleading. The missed bin collection report only logged incidents of collection failure and not the number of households affected by that failure. Consequently, a missed bin collection for a 50-unit residential block with a communal waste system could be logged as a single missed bin collection and could not be distinguished from a missed collection from a single house.</p> <p>Furthermore, it was not a standard industry reporting approach and prevented meaningful benchmarking. The new measure will allow for accurate reporting of service performance providing a true picture of the number of households being impacted. It will also assist in more effective benchmarking and improved accountability. Switching back to the industry standard reporting approach requires new systems to be developed and implemented. Work is urgently underway to get these in place as quickly as possible. The service is considering short term reporting options whilst this development work is completed, and the new reporting regime established.</p>
<p>Further to the questions raised at Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 23rd October 2023, will the Mayor and Chief Executive now publish the performance data for street cleansing over the past 18 months?</p>	<p>Previous discussion at Overview and Scrutiny touched on performance data being made available based on routine inspections of streets which then graded each based on their cleanliness.</p> <p>The contract for implementing the task of independently inspecting and grading streets to provide this form of performance data was terminated in 2021 and replaced with methodology using resident reporting for identifying resident issues in relation to Litter Bins, Detritus, Dirty Streets, Fly Posting, Fly Tipping and Graffiti. Whilst this data is currently being used to inform the services regarding hot spots it is not considered</p>

Questions	Response
	<p>consistent or reliable and it is not currently gathered in publishable form. For these reasons street cleansing was not included into the 23/24 Annual Delivery Plan set of measures and there is no intention to publish the data at this time. The original decision to terminate the contract appears to have been driven primarily as a cost cutting measure. Given the impact this has had on the quality-of-service data available to the service and to the Council from the perspective of accountability the grounds for moving back to independently assessed evaluation methods are being actively assessed with a view to publishing more reliable data as soon as possible.</p>
<p>What contribution do the Mayor and Chief Executive believe the collective grievance submitted by staff in the Housing Options Service is having on the underperformance noted in KPIs 003 and 004 on supporting homeless people?</p>	<p>The grievance mentioned has not affected performance, we are grateful to officers for their continued commitment. In fact performance is linked to the pressures in the house market making it more challenging for the service to prevent homelessness and to find suitable alternative accommodation to temporary accommodation for those who find them homeless and requiring assistance from the council. Despite the external market pressures in the housing market and cost of living crisis the service is on target to meet the same outturn on these two measures that was achieved last year which indicates that the service offer is holding up under extreme pressure.</p>
<p>Why the significant reduction in the proportion of residents reporting Tower Hamlets Council involves them in decision-making (KPI 50) and of being kept informed (KPI 51) has not resulted in these indicators being classified as Red?</p>	<p>These two indicators are different from others in the list, as they come from the Annual Residents Survey and are a measure of public opinion, rather than a direct record of council performance. They are contextual indicators and we do not set targets or minimum expectations for contextual indicators. Contextual indicators are used to help us to understand the operational context for our services, which can impact on performance.</p> <p>Contextual indicators are generally:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • available less frequently, for example annually • societal or population level measures which are influenced by a wide range of factors

Questions	Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • often linked to longer term outcomes which require a range of central and local government agencies and other partners to work collaboratively in order to achieve change • not directly in the sphere of control of the council but important to enable prioritisation of council investment and intervention. <p>Both indicators have already been reported to the Council as part of the wider Annual Residents Survey results. In the light of this separate reporting channel and as part of a wider review of council performance management arrangements recommended by the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Review Team, we will be reviewing the extent to which these survey results are relevant to quarterly performance reporting going forward.</p>
<p>Can I also request that we are now provided with a response to my PDSQ last month whether the Mayor will meet with the Victoria Group Friends Group to listen to their concerns about his plans to increase the number of commercial events in Victoria Park and explain the rationale for his decision?</p>	<p>The Mayor explained his logic and reasoning for the decision in Cabinet, and the paper outlines the strategy behind the review in full detail. The Mayor therefore feels that any further information required can be found in the paper or cabinet meeting minutes, and therefore no further meeting is necessary.</p>

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