

Cabinet 25 November 2020	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Will Tuckley, Chief Executive	Classification: Unrestricted
Strategic delivery and performance report – quarter 2 2020/21	

Lead Member	John Biggs, Executive Mayor Cllr Asma Begum, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Youth and Equalities
Originating Officer(s)	Sharon Godman, Divisional Director Strategy, Policy & Performance Thorsten Dreyer, Head of Intelligence & Performance
Wards affected	All wards
Key Decision?	No
Forward Plan Notice Published	25 August 2020
Reason for Key Decision	This report has been reviewed as not meeting the Key Decision criteria.
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	All Strategic Plan priorities and outcomes

Executive Summary

This report provides Cabinet with an update on the delivery and implementation of the council's Strategic Plan in quarters 1 and 2 of 2020/21.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Note the strategic delivery and performance report for quarters 1 and 2 2020/21.
2. Review the performance of the strategic measures, including those measures where the minimum expectation has been missed; and
3. Review progress in delivering the council's Strategic Plan.

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

1.1 The council is committed to improving outcomes for residents. Our corporate

priorities and outcomes are found in our Strategic Plan and provide a framework for action.

- 1.2 Our Performance & Accountability Framework sets out the process for monitoring the timely and effective delivery of the Strategic Plan to improve outcomes for residents. In line with the framework, Cabinet receives regular update reports to ensure oversight of pace, delivery, performance and improvement activities.
- 1.3 This report promotes openness, transparency and accountability by enabling Tower Hamlets residents to track progress of activities that impact on their lives and the communities they live in.

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Cabinet can decide not to review the delivery and performance information. This is not recommended as Members have a key role to review and challenge underperformance and to utilise performance information to inform resource allocation.

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

3.1 Background

- 3.2 The Strategic Plan is the councils' main business plan and embeds the priorities of the administration into council delivery. This report provides Cabinet with an update on the delivery and implementation of the council's Strategic Plan to the end of quarter 2 2020/21.
- 3.3 The council is committed to making Tower Hamlets a safer, cleaner, fairer borough. In 2018 we adopted three new corporate priorities and 11 outcomes that provide a framework for action to improve outcomes for our residents.
- 3.4 Our strategic delivery and performance reporting cycle would normally see Cabinet receiving a report at the end of each quarter. However, since March we have been focusing our efforts on responding to the Covid-19 pandemic and protecting those most vulnerable to the impacts of the pandemic. As a result, we have had to delay some of our usual business for a period of time.

3.5 Performance summary

- 3.6 Over the first half of the year, like most councils, we have focused our efforts on responding to the pandemic. We have prioritised protecting the most vulnerable and those most at risk during the height of the pandemic. We have supported more than 8,500 shielding residents by assessing their needs, delivering food or medication and provided social support to tackle loneliness. We have worked with schools to ensure the children of key workers were able to go to school, allowing their parents and carers to provide essential

services. We set up a community volunteering hub to coordinate the enthusiasm more than 2,000 volunteers have shown to support their communities. We have managed support schemes for businesses on behalf of central government, including issuing grants and business rates relief.

- 3.7 Alongside this, we have worked hard to keep other services running where possible in line government guidance and Covid-19 regulations. We have had to change the way we deliver quickly and in some cases this means we had to review how much of what we wanted to deliver can realistically be achieved. We have had to close some services for periods of time during lockdown and some remain closed. Other services had to be reduced or we moved to different delivery models, including online only. All of this has an impact on our strategic delivery and performance.
- 3.8 In July we published an initial pandemic impact report, which has helped us reshape our services and the Strategic Plan for the remainder of the year. We updated our Strategic Plan in July to reflect the changing needs and priorities during an ongoing pandemic and as we move into the recovery phase.
- 3.9 We have amended some of our performance targets in light of the pandemic and to reflect the changed circumstances in which we now operate. This means that in some cases, performance may be lower than last year but is meeting the new targets which take into account the challenges of delivery during the pandemic. We have also changed the way we calculate some indicators to better reflect the nature of the indicator. Examples include indicator that measure percentage of WorkPath customers who share particular protected characteristics. The changes we have had to make means that performance is not always directly comparable to last year.
- 3.10 Some indicators that perform highly must be seen in the context of the pandemic. Where customer numbers have reduced, we may have been able to dedicate more time to those who needed us the most. That may result in higher than usual performance when compared to other periods prior to the pandemic.
- 3.11 Our first quarterly strategic delivery and performance report of 2020/21 summarises what we have delivered, how we have made a difference to people's lives, and how we have performed against our strategic outcome indicators. What we have delivered and how we have made a difference during this very challenging time is set out in the attached report.
- 3.12 At the end of quarter 2 2020/21, 12 performance indicators have met or are exceeding their target and 6 are between the target and the minimum expectation, while 10 are falling short. The remaining 28 indicators are data only measures or they are based on our annual residents' survey which is due to take place in quarter 4. Due to Covid-19 there are also some indicators for which data collection was suspended or not possible and is now resuming. These include school attendance as schools were operating for small numbers of pupils only during much of the summer term.

- 3.13 Indicators that are exceeding the target broadly fall into the main areas of the business as set out below. Full details of all indicator performance can be found in appendix 1.

Education, skills, employment and income

- Number of SMEs and new enterprises supported through the council's business programme
- Residents who are female supported into employment by the Workpath service
- Residents who come from deprived postcodes supported into employment by the Workpath service
- Average annual income increase for residents receiving benefit maximisation support
- Resident Universal Credit application support
- Percentage of Idea Store learners who pass their English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) course

Health, social care and safeguarding

- People who are more independent after being supported through reablement services
- Residential and nursing admissions (over 65s)

Environment and sustainability

- Primary school pupils benefiting from a school street at their school (traffic reduction outside the school)
- Level of household recycling (quarterly audited)

Community safety

- Victims of violence against women and girls or hate crime who feel safer after engaging with victim support

Customer service and how we work as a council

- Service user satisfaction with the council's online service offer
- Media and press view of the council

- 3.14 Indicators that are falling short of the minimum expectation broadly fall into the main areas of the business as set out below:

Education, skills, employment and income

- Number of adults supported into employment by the Workpath service
- Residents who have disabilities supported into employment by the Workpath service

- Number of adults supported into employment by the Workpath partnership

Environment and sustainability

- Level of public realm cleanliness (litter)

Housing supply and homelessness

- Homeless households moved into permanent social housing
- Households prevented from becoming homeless

Community safety

- Young people entering the youth justice system for the first time

Customer service and how we work as a council

- Council staff sickness absence rate
- Budget variance for the general fund

3.15 *Setting targets and improving outcomes*

3.16 The council is committed to driving improvement which sees us deliver high performing services and in turn improved outcomes for our residents. As part of our move to becoming an outcomes-based organisation, we have introduced a more mature approach to performance management which seeks improvement while at the same time taking into account more clearly the operating realities we face.

3.17 We need to consider factors affecting local government today. For example, budgetary constraints mean we have to do more with less whilst our population continues to grow, and expectations rise.

3.18 Absolute numerical improvement is often less appropriate now that we have refocussed our activities on improving the life chances of our most vulnerable residents. A focus on numerical improvement can drive the wrong kind of behaviour and place the focus in the wrong area of concern.

3.19 Our improvement journey has been steep, and whilst there is no doubt that we need to continue improving, there is also recognition that sustainability is important. Improvements and new ways of working take time to bed in, and our targets need to reflect this.

3.20 Our target setting principles take these challenges into consideration:

- We will only set targets for performance indicators and not for contextual indicators. Contextual indicators are those less directly in the council's control but which are important for prioritising council investments and actions.

- Targets will be set using a bandwidth approach consisting of a target and a minimum expectation.
- The target (upper bandwidth) should adhere to one or more of the following target setting principles:
- Be aligned to an external target, such as a statutory, national or Mayoral manifesto target, or target in strategies and policies where they have been agreed by Cabinet or a Tower Hamlets Partnership group;
- Aim to improve on our benchmark performance position within the appropriate benchmark family group or maintain a high level of performance where we are among top performing councils;
- Be based on management information evidence, especially for new measures where targets have previously not been set;
- Take account of operational practicalities as described below;
- In relation to perception surveys, we will monitor the direction of travel rather than set specific targets.
- Targets for all measures are set against the operating realities of the service – for example service changes, funding changes, changes in legislation or in local or national policy. These changes may result in the need to re-baseline the targets from one year to the next to reflect the changing circumstances in which the service operates.

3.21 The Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent and ongoing recovery has had a significant impact on many services. Our target setting principles take these challenges into consideration.

3.22 Changes that have had occurred as a result of Covid-19 can be taken into consideration under the last principle. Where services have had to cease or significantly alter operations in response to government guidelines we have adjusted existing targets accordingly, where needed, to ensure they remain realistic. For example, cumulative targets will not take into periods during which services were suspended. Targets also take into consideration, where possible, any further impacts Covid-19 may have on services.

4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The council's Strategic Plan is focused on meeting the needs of the diverse communities living in Tower Hamlets and ensuring that everyone can play their part in a vibrant and cohesive community. The strategic outcomes and supporting activities are designed to reduce inequalities and the foster community cohesion. Equalities considerations are embedded in all outcomes of the Strategic Plan with specific actions focusing on areas of inequality identified through the Borough Needs Assessment being addressed under Outcome 4 - Inequality is reduced and people feel that they fairly share the benefits from growth.

5 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are

required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:

- Best Value Implications,
- Consultations,
- Environmental (including air quality),
- Risk Management,
- Crime Reduction,
- Safeguarding.
- Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

5.2 *Best Value (BV) Implications*

5.3 Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 requires the council as a best value authority to “make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness”. Monitoring of performance information and acting on the findings is an important way in which that obligation is being fulfilled.

5.4 *Sustainable action for a greener environment*

5.5 Outcome 5 - People live in a borough that is clean and green is dedicated to taking sustainable action for a cleaner environment. It focuses on key areas of sustainability, including air quality, waste and carbon emission. Key activities include work to drive up the borough’s recycling rate, reducing CO2 emissions, and implementing a number of initiatives to improve air quality, including making Tower Hamlets one of the best boroughs for walking and cycling through our Liveable Streets programme.

5.6 *Risk management implications*

5.7 In line with the council’s risk management strategy, the information contained within the strategic indicator monitoring will assist Cabinet, Corporate Directors and relevant service managers in delivering the ambitious targets set out in the Strategic Plan. Regular monitoring reports will enable Members and Corporate Directors to keep progress under regular review.

5.8 *Crime and disorder reduction implications*

5.9 Strategic Plan Outcome 7 - People feel safer in their neighbourhoods and anti-social behaviour is tackled and Outcome 8 – People feel they are part of a vibrant and cohesive community are dedicated to crime and disorder reductions. Activities under these outcomes are designed to improve safety, the perception of safety and community cohesion.

5.10 *Safeguarding implications*

5.11 Strategic Plan Outcome 2 - Children and young people are protected so they get the best start in life and can realise their potential is dedicated to keeping children and young people safe from harm. The activities under this outcome seek to safeguard children and build on our Ofsted success.

5.12 Outcome 3 - People access joined-up services when they need them and feel healthier and more independent is our key outcome in relation to safeguarding vulnerable people. Key activities include projects to address childhood obesity and improve nutrition, as well as supporting greater choice and independence for those requiring adult social care.

6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

6.1 This report sets out the delivery, performance and improvement position for the Strategic Plan at the end of quarter 2 2020/21. There are no additional financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report

7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

7.1 The report provides performance information. It is consistent with good administration for the council to consider performance related monitoring information. This also assists the council achieve Best Value and may demonstrate continuing improvement.

7.2 When considering its performance, the council must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful conduct under the Equality Act 2010, the need to advance equality of opportunity and the need to foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not (the public sector equality duty). The council's targets are formulated by reference to its public sector equality duty and monitoring performance against those targets should help to ensure they are delivered.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- None

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Strategic delivery and performance report – quarter 2 2020/21

Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012

- None

Officer contact details for documents:

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