

REPORT TO:	Management Board Overview & Scrutiny Cabinet
DATE:	16 January 2023 30 January 2023 1 February 2023
SERVICE AREA:	Organisational Development & Improvement
REPORTING OFFICER:	Improvement & Development Manager (Sarah Cornforth)
SUBJECT:	CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT, Q3 2022/23
WARDS AFFECTED:	All District
FORWARD PLAN REF:	N/A

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To provide an update on the quarter three progress of the measures within the Corporate Delivery Plan.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 To review the report, recognise good performance and determine whether any interventions need to be put in place to improve performance on those measures that are off target.

2.2 That:

- Management Board (MB) receives the report and provides comments before the report goes to Members
- Overview & Scrutiny receives the report and provides comments before the report goes to Cabinet
- Cabinet receives the report, noting the comments from Overview & Scrutiny and MB

3.0 RECOMMENDED REASONS FOR DECISIONS

3.1 Our [Corporate Plan](#) sets out our long-term vision for the Harrogate district, our aim as an organisation, our corporate priorities and the long term outcomes that we want to achieve. The [Delivery Plan](#) is updated on an annual basis and details what we will do, what our targets are and how we will measure these. This report tracks our progress against the Delivery Plan.

4.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND RECOMMENDED FOR REJECTION

- 4.1 No alternative options were considered as reporting progress on the Council's Corporate Delivery Plan performance is a key part of the Council's performance management arrangements.

5.0 SUMMARY

The Council has continued to operate in challenging circumstances; balancing delivery of its services alongside preparing for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), and dealing with a recruitment issue. Turnover of staff continues to be high, but appears stable when compared with the previous quarter.

The effects of the cost of living crisis continue to be felt locally and this can be seen particularly in certain areas of performance. The cost of living crisis has been compounded with other problems to create a particular problem with our homelessness services, and despite the teams hard work, performance continues to struggle. Proactive work detailed in the previous quarter has seen our benefits team do some particularly impressive work to get performance back to within target to help our residents deal with the cost of living crisis.

Despite the difficult operating environment, overall performance against the Council's Corporate Delivery Plan is positive with the majority of actions and indicators on target.

The quarter has also seen NYCC take a decision to create a single Local Plan for North Yorkshire, and individual reviews be halted, this includes Harrogate's review. It has also seen Destination Harrogate organise another successful Harrogate Christmas Fayre. It has also seen Harrogate named the UK's prettiest winter staycation by a national newspaper.

Examples of key successes and key concerns in performance are reported by exception in this report and full details provided in the Corporate Delivery Plan report at [Appendix 1](#).

6.0 REPORT

- 6.1 This report summarises performance against our Corporate Plan Delivery Plan by each of our four corporate priorities with key successes and key concerns highlighted by exception, along with comments from MB (section 8):

Corporate priority	Status
<i>A strong local economy</i>	We will do all we can to ensure changes to the way local government is structured across the whole of Yorkshire benefit us, our residents and the services we provide
	Maximise the use of land and buildings for growth; enabling local companies to stay and grow, and attracting inward investment into the district
	Attracting investment opportunities into the district
	Work in partnership to address current and future operational barriers to business growth by securing investment and improvements in digital infrastructure
	Promote the Harrogate Convention Centre as widely as possible so we attract new events to the district and grow its income to support our local economy
	Support our town centres and work with others to ensure that there is a strong economic recovery across the district from the impact of COVID19
<i>A sustainable environment</i>	Ensure plans are in place for sustainable development across the district and make the most of available funding opportunities to aid the recovery from the pandemic
	Ensure the implementation of the Council's carbon reduction commitments and promote sustainable choices
	Improve the ambience of our town centres
<i>Supporting our communities</i>	Ensure people have the opportunity to live and work in the district because they have access to high-quality housing which meets their needs and matches their income level
	Work together to halve rough sleeping, prevent and reduce homelessness and assist homeless households in finding long term affordable and sustainable housing
	We'll do all we can to help our residents build secure, safe and healthy lives in thriving communities
	Work with others to ensure that there is a plan in place to support the community as it responds to the impact of COVID19
<i>Excellent public services</i>	As a thriving district council, we will continue to find innovative and effective ways to manage our resources whilst ensuring they reflect our priorities and supporting our members
	Work with our public and voluntary sector partners to ensure that our communities can access inclusive, joined up services to improve the quality of life across the Harrogate district
	Ensure that the council responds to the challenges and impacts of the COVID19 and adapts accordingly

6.2 Exceptions

Exceptions are areas of success or concern that have been identified through the Council's performance reporting software Pentana. For projects this may be through achieving significant milestones or encountering significant delays. For Performance Indicators (PIs) this will include significant over/underperformances.

<i>A strong local economy</i>	<p>Key successes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HBC staff are proactively helping to shape new systems and processes for the new North Yorkshire Council as work progresses to delivery stages. Both Harrogate Convention Centre (HCC) performance indicators are on target and HCC associated actions are
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	<p>all on track with the exception of the business model review which is on hold as we await a new strategic board to be agreed as part of the move to the new council.</p>
	<p>Key concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ripon Renewal work is still paused whilst a contract variation is agreed.
<p><i>A sustainable environment</i></p>	<p>Key successes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clothholme Urban Village is on target, resolving outstanding issues with ambitions of taking an application to Planning Committee in 2023. • We are considering the responses to the public consultation of the new settlement DPD. • All recycling KPIs are performing better than target and better than the same period last year. • HBC achieved 3 platinum awards in Yorkshire in Bloom and supported a number of gold and silver gilt awards across the district. • We continue to develop the commercial side of the nursery with successful winter sales of plants, Christmas trees and workshops. • All 85 electric vehicle charging points in phase 1 of the ULEV Action plan have now been installed. <p>Key concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving the energy efficiency of council housing pilot has not had the uptake that was expected based on the amount of interest. An alternative method to achieve results is being developed.
<p><i>Supporting our communities</i></p>	<p>Key successes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 66 affordable homes were delivered in Q3, 38 of which are for affordable rent and 28 for shared-ownership. 24 of the homes are in rural locations. • A strong housing market has enabled Bracewell Homes to stay on track with its development plan. <p>Key concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We did not complete the 3 homes we expected to in Q3. This was due to delays to securing drainage approvals. The 5 we expected to complete in Q4 are also delayed and now expected to complete in Q1 2023/24. • Homelessness statistics continue to show the impact of the cost of living crisis within the district. We have seen an increase in the number of households presenting as homeless and requiring accommodation. This has resulted in an increase in B&B stays as alternative accommodation has proved difficult to find. • We have also seen a significant increase in the numbers living in temporary accommodation, which is reflective of an increased number of single people being asked to leave family accommodation. • Average time taken to re-let local authority housing performance continues to deteriorate to some of the longest re-let times on record. The service is proactively reviewing how this work is carried out and have addressed staffing problems in Q3.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst currently on target, pressures are mounting within the average length of stay in temporary accommodation, performance has worsened since last quarter and should be monitored. • The COVID19 Environmental Health backlog continues to be delivered, but is under significant pressure due to vacancies and LGR work demands.
<i>Excellent public services</i>	Key successes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A plan for the migration and deployment of Office365 is being drawn up. • We are in the final stages of the essential technology refresh/replacement of core ICT infrastructure. • The People Strategy is almost complete. • Over 9,000 wheelie bins for recycling have now been rolled out as part of the trial. • Green garden waste rounds have been reviewed to increase resilience and reduce the overall number of rounds required.
	Key concerns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • n/a

6.3 Corporate Health Indicators

Corporate Health Indicators are broken down into workforce, customer, finance and governance indicators and are reported here by Exception – a full list can be found in the **Appendix 2**.

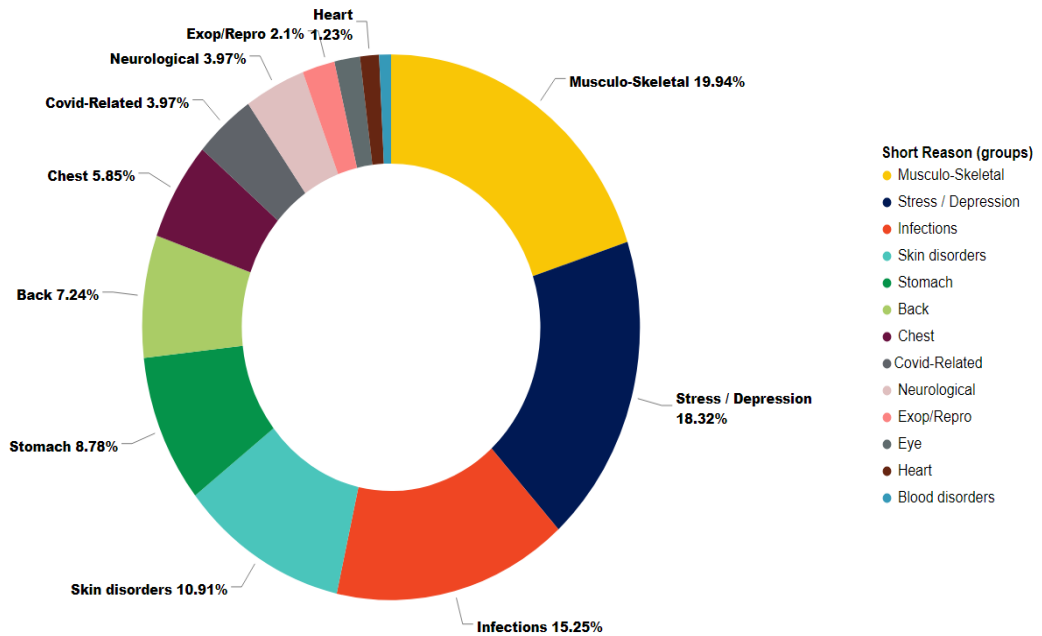
6.4 Workforce Indicators

This sickness report comes from the Council's HR system iTrent and looks at the breakdown of sickness by type and sickness levels for the whole council.

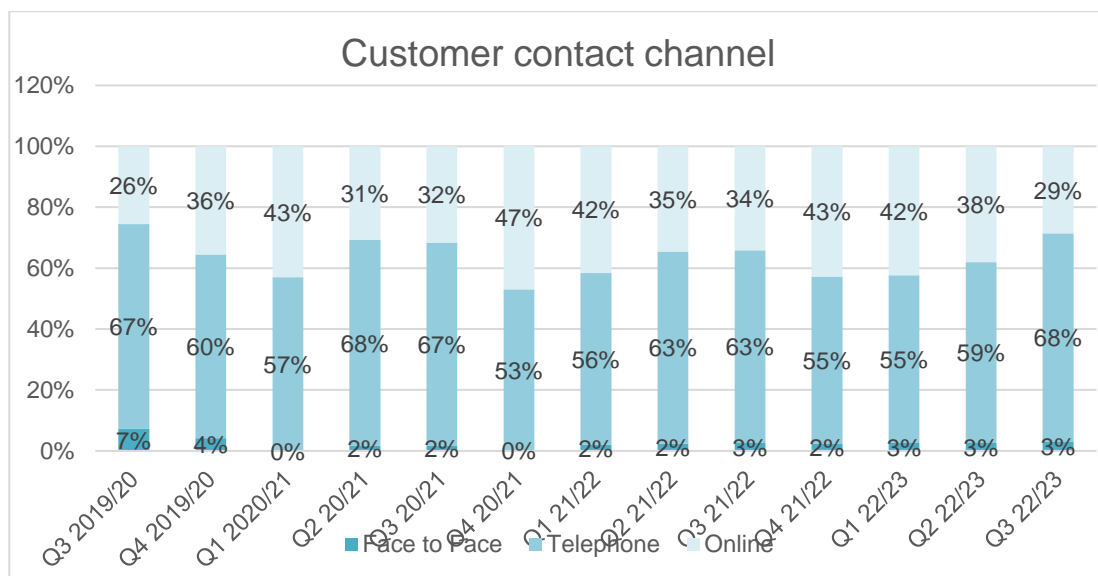
Days lost per FTE increased from 1.18 in Q2 to 1.42 in Q3. It performing better than the council's target of 2.05 days lost per FTE.

This is primarily driven by an increase in the number of infections recorded (cold/flu). Some of these cases may be covid related, although it is difficult to say now that national testing has wound down.

The top three causes of days lost per FTE were musculo-skeletal first with 19.9% of days lost per FTE, followed by stress/depression in second with 18.3%. The actual number of days lost due to stress was 177, which is an improvement on the previous quarter at 192. HBC does not record the difference between home and work related stress. Infections (colds/flu) came in third at 15.3% after a long period of time with relatively few cases recorded. Compared to the previous quarter, there were only 28 infection cases recorded, which has increased to 82 cases. This is in line with national trends as hospitals are seeing an increase in flu patients, which is seasonally surging alongside Covid. Fortunately, these cases are largely short-term with the vast majority of cases being closed by the end of the year.



6.5 Customers & Complaints Indicators



How our customers contact us has remained broadly in line for Q3 in previous years. We normally see a reduction in the portion that contact us online in Q3. Whilst there has been a 9% drop in the number of contacts online this has been proportionate for the amount of contact we have received. Total number of contact by customers across all methods fell by about 25,000.

<h1>40</h1> <p>Stage 1 and 2 complaints received</p>	<p>We do not put a target against the number of complaints received, but the customer services team have been doing proactive work to ensure that only true complaints are logged. This ensures a more efficient process and that officer resource can be better focused on providing quality responses and a better service for customers.</p>
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<h1 style="color: red;">67%</h1> <p>Stage one complaints responded to within 10 working days</p>	<p>Stage 1 response rate is similar to the previous quarter. 21 Stage 1 responses were sent in Q3, 14 of which were sent within 10 working days. In the majority of the out of time cases there was contact between officers and the customer before the case became overdue and/or closed. Additional time had been needed as a result of staff absence, complexity and to allow for a meeting to be set up.</p>
<h1 style="color: green;">82%</h1> <p>Stage two complaints responded to within 20 working days</p>	<p>Stage 2 complaints are performing just above target (80%) at 82%. This is an improvement on the previous quarter and a particular success given the new Complaints Policy has reduced the target response date from 30 days to 20 days for all services except housing, which was already set to 20 days. 9 of the 11 Stage 2 responses were within time. Both of the customers whose responses fell outside of this time had received a holding response which was issued due to the case being complicated and requiring longer to resolve.</p>

Due to limitations of the system, the Council's current process does not allow for 'stopping the clock' where we are waiting for additional information from the customer, or revising the deadline when an extension of time is agreed. This artificially inflates poor performance, especially at Stage 1 of the process. This is something which the new authority's policy explicitly allows, and will help address this issue.

Whilst Stage 1 responses are still off target, it is important to note that the Council has an overall effective process whereby the customer services team deal with the majority of cases at the point of contact, and service areas effectively deal with the majority of issues before they reach Stage 1 of the complaints process.

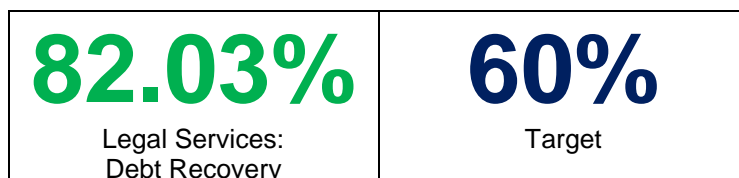
Of those who recorded a complaint remedy into Firmstep an 'apology' or 'a reminder to staff to follow policy/procedures/standards of behaviour' or to 'take specific actions' or 'other' remedies were the most common in Q3.

<h1 style="color: green;">20.12 days</h1> <p>Time taken to process new council tax reduction benefit claims</p>	<h1 style="color: green;">19.27 days</h1> <p>Time taken to process new housing benefit claims</p>
<h1 style="color: green;">3.5 days</h1> <p>Time taken to process changes to council tax reduction benefit</p>	<h1 style="color: green;">5.55 days</h1> <p>Time taken to process changes to housing benefit</p>

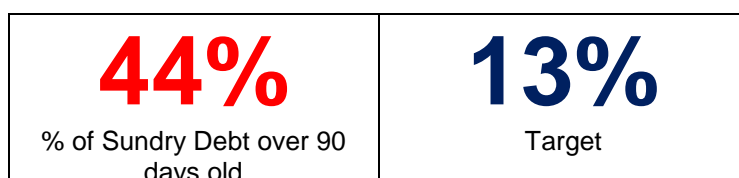
The time taken to process new benefit claims for council tax is on target for the first time since Q3 20/21. This strong performance has been due to building on the new work plan and increased resources mentioned in the Q2

performance report as well as a good effort by the team. The time taken to process changes to council tax reduction benefit was significantly better than its target of 6. This is a big improvement on the previous quarter which was 7.28 days cutting the processing time in half to 3.5 days. These changes have also meant that housing benefit processing times have improved to better than target (6 days). This is vital for helping Harrogate residents weather the ongoing cost of living crisis.

6.6 Finance Indicators



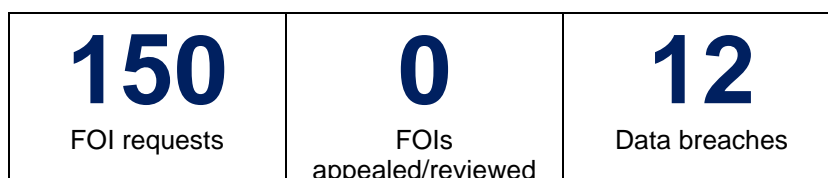
Debt recovery from Legal Services has performed strongly this quarter at 82.03% against a target of 60%. This is a major improvement on the 6.16% recovered in the previous quarter and represents the highest percentage recorded since 2017/18.



Despite being off target, performance has improved significantly since last quarter (70%) and is better than the same period last year (54%). The performance has been off target since Q4 2020/21.

6.7 Governance Indicators

FOI and Data Breach Figures for Q1



7.0 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 MB are asked to consider the risk of not achieving the Delivery Plan Supporting Projects highlighted in [Appendix 1](#) and flagged as areas of concern in section 6 of this report.

7.2 High risk:

- Homelessness Indicators
- Number of new homes delivered
- Time taken to re-let Council homes

Medium risk:

- Ripon Renewal
- Improve Energy Efficiency of all council houses
- COVID19 Environmental Health Backlog Recovery Plan

7.3 MB are asked to consider the Corporate Health performance reported within this report. Although we have missed internal targets in some areas there are clear reasons for this. MB should pay attention to:

- Percentage of stage 1 complaints responded to within 10 working days
- Percentage of total Sundry Debt over 90 days old

7.4 This report is focussed on the delivery of the priorities within our Corporate Delivery Plan. However, in addition to this, there has also been a number of other achievements that contribute to our corporate priorities, including:

<i>A strong local economy</i>	Visit Harrogate delivered a packed festive programme this year. With a busy schedule of events and Christmas markets gave the whole of the Harrogate a festive feel. The town centre temporarily gained a ferris wheel and ice skating rink as festive shoppers got into the spirit of Christmas.
<i>A sustainable environment</i>	We have launched a “Green Harrogate” intranet site to empower our staff with the knowledge of what we are already doing and how they can get involved with our efforts.
<i>Supporting our communities</i>	In November, the charity Our Angels was presented with a cheque for £12,000. This money was raised by our Bereavement Services Team who recycle the metals recovered from cremations with the permission from the bereaved families.
<i>Excellent public services</i>	Hosted ‘let’s talk’ events at various locations across the district to encourage the public to have their say about the new council for North Yorkshire. Over the winter period, Let’s Talk events focussed on all things local and the budget of the new council.

8.0 MB COMMENTS

8.1 Management Board would like to record its thanks to staff for their continued effort and hard work, ensuring that business as usual is delivered despite the challenging environment in which they work. This is particularly so considering the challenge of local government reorganisation and the continued recruitment issues that we, and the sector as a whole, continue to face.

We recognise the impact of those indicators in Housing which are off target, especially to those who are affected by the performance. We understand that this is, at least in part, due to the cost of living crisis, and we will continue to monitor these indicators and the wider impact of the cost of living crisis on council services.

It is pleasing that the majority of performance has held up well, despite the circumstances. We are particularly pleased with colleagues in the Revenue and Benefits team for their efforts in getting the turnaround times on both new claims and change of circumstances for both housing benefit and council tax reduction to be better than target.

9.0 REQUIRED ASSESSMENTS AND IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The following were considered: Financial Implications; Human Resources Implications; Legal Implications; ICT Implications; Strategic Property/Asset Management Considerations; Risk Assessment; Equality and Diversity (the Public Sector Equality Duty and impact upon people with protected characteristics). If applicable, the outcomes of any consultations, assessments, considerations and implications considered necessary during preparation of this report are detailed below.

Risk Statement

9.2 MB can also consider the interventions in place to mitigate against these risks and confirm if these are adequate. In future these reports could include risk assessments for those individual actions that have been rated as 'Red' and will include an overall summary of Service Plan risks as well as the Corporate Delivery Plan.

Background Papers – None

OFFICER CONTACT: Please contact Sarah Cornforth, Improvement & Development Manager, Lawrence Fontana, Business Intelligence & Performance Officer or Chris Watson, Business Intelligence & Performance Officer, if you require any further information on the contents of this report. The officer can be contacted at on 01423 500600 ext 56823, ext 58468 or by e-mail – sarah.cornforth@harrogate.gov.uk, lawrence.fontana@harrogate.gov.uk, christopher.watson@harrogate.gov.uk