

**PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY PANEL
19TH FEBRUARY 2019**

PRESENT: The Chair (Councillor Fryer)
The Vice Chair (Councillor Bebbington)
Councillors Campsall, Huddleston, Hunt, Paling and
Rattray

Strategic Director of Corporate Services
Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods and Community
Wellbeing
Head of Customer Experience
Head of Finance and Property Services
Head of Landlord Services
Head of Neighbourhood Services
Head of Strategic Support
Repairs and Investment Manager
Corporate Improvement and Policy Officer
Principal Officer, Tenancy and Income Management
Democratic Services Officer (NC)

APOLOGIES: none

The Chair stated that the meeting would be recorded and the sound recording subsequently made available via the Council's website. She also advised that, under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, other people may film, record, tweet or blog from this meeting, and the use of any such images or sound recordings was not under the Council's control.

45. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 22nd January 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed.

It was noted that the additional information requested by the Panel at its meeting on 22nd January 2019 had been circulated to the Panel.

46. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY AND PERSONAL INTEREST

Councillor Fryer disclosed a personal interest in item 6 - Supporting Leicestershire Families as a Leicestershire County Councillor.

47. DECLARATIONS - THE PARTY WHIP

No declarations of the existence of the Party Whip were made.

48. QUESTIONS UNDER SCRUTINY COMMITTEE PROCEDURE 11.6

No questions had been submitted.

49. SUPPORTING LEICESTERSHIRE FAMILIES

A report of the Head of Neighbourhood Services providing an update on the progress of the Supporting Leicestershire Families (SLF) Programme in Charnwood was submitted (agenda item 6 filed with these minutes).

The Cabinet Lead Member for Communities, Safety and Wellbeing, the Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods, and Community Wellbeing, the Head of Neighbourhood Services and SLF Services Manager attended the meeting to assist the Panel with its consideration of the item.

In response to comments by the Panel the Cabinet Lead Member for Communities, Safety and Wellbeing, the Head of Neighbourhood Services and SLF Services Manager stated that:

- the target of 2770 families had been set by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and was based on a 'payment by results' methodology.
- although the funding would cease after 2018-2019 and the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) had not yet released any future plans, the knowledge gained from the programme would be utilised and be incorporated into other services.
- the Lead Member and Director for Children Services from Leicestershire County Council were actively engaged with the MHCLG and had shared the case study in Appendix A as an example of good practice.
- Mountsorrel, a key area for deprivation in the borough, was showing as average on the heat maps in Appendix B and C. As the maps showed the number of referrals and were dependant on families engaging voluntarily with the Trouble Families Programme (TFP), it was likely that other services were active in providing support to families which may not meet the TFP threshold, for example the primary school had a family support worker assigned. It was also noted that Mountsorrel had not indicated concerns regarding crime and anti-social behaviour in the last 12 months.

Members of the Panel wished to pass on its thanks to the teams at Charnwood and the County Council and to note their excellent work.

RESOLVED that the Panel notes the report.

Reason

The Panel were satisfied with the information contained in the report.

50. 2018-2019 QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

A report of the Head of Strategic Support providing performance information for the third quarter of 2018-2019 in respect of the Corporate Plan objectives and key performance indicators was submitted (item 7 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Corporate Improvement and Policy Officer and Head of Strategic Support attended to assist the Panel with the consideration of the item. At the invitation of the Panel the relevant Cabinet Lead Members and Officers also attended to assist the Panel.

The Cabinet Lead Member for Customer Services sent his apologies.

With respect to amber key performance indicator SLE4 LC (3) (*deliver a vision for Loughborough Market*), in response to a question by the Panel, the Corporate Improvement and Policy Officer explained that it had been recognised that the quarterly targets were not being met due to profiling issues, although the annual target for the number of market stalls would likely be met. The profiling of the target was being addressed as part of the new business plan for 2019-20 using different methodology for distributing the target more effectively across the quarters.

With respect to red key performance indicator ERM2 – LS (1) (*invest in our housing stock to provide high quality homes for Council tenants*) in response to issues raised by the Panel, the Head of Landlord Services stated that the target not being met did not impact the level of decency.

With respect to amber key performance indicator ERM5 – SS (*undertake satisfaction surveys with members of the public to ensure improvement in the web service they receive*) Members of the Panel noted that a less than 1% response rate was not statistically significant and raised concerns about the validity of conclusions reached using such a small response rate and how members of the public were being encouraged to respond.

With respect to key performance indicator ERM5 – CIS (2) (*undertake regular satisfaction surveys with members of the public to ensure improvement in those services that use Govmetric and the Contact/Customer Service Centre*) Members of the Panel were pleased to see this indicator had moved from amber to green.

With respect to red key performance indicator DES2-CIS (*explore and evaluate opportunities to offer webchat and call recording*), the Cabinet Lead Member for Equalities, Member and Strategic Services and the Head of Customer Experience stated that a number of issues had been identified from when the telephony system had been implemented, which were delaying the introduction of webchat and call recording, as the Service wished to resolve these first.

With respect to red key performance indicator DES3-PROG (*Deliver the Customer Service Programme online with the project milestones in Quarter 3*), the Strategic Director of Corporate Services stated that a review of the programme was being undertaken after the recommendations from the Peer Challenge.

With respect to red key performance indicator DES3-FP (*development of an Investment Strategy setting out the Council's approach to investment decisions and detailing the evaluation criteria to be used*), the Strategic Director of Corporate Services and the Head of Finance and Property Services stated that the Investment Strategy would be presented to Cabinet in July 2019.

Business Plan Indicators were discussed as part of the key performance indicators above, there were no red Key Corporate Indicators to be considered and the Corporate Improvement and Policy Officer stated that it had been noted that the miscellaneous category for sickness was potentially being used inaccurately and this was being reviewed

RESOLVED that the performance results, associated commentary and the explanations provided be noted;

Reason

To record the information contained in the 2018-19 Quarter 3 Performance Monitoring report.

51. GENERAL FUND AND HRA REVENUE MONITORING REPORT

A report of the Head of Finance and Property Services providing an update to the General Fund and HRA year-end forecast outturn position for the financial year 2018/2019 was submitted (agenda item 8 filed with these minutes). The report also included additional information concerning the age of cumulative debt for tenant arrears as requested by the Panel at its meeting on 22nd January 2019.

The Cabinet Lead Member for Finance and Property Services sent his apologies. The Head of Finance and Property Services and the Head of Landlord Services attended the meeting to assist the Panel with its consideration of the item.

In response to issues raised by the Panel, the Head of Finance and Property Services, the Head of Landlord Services and the Head of Strategic Support stated that:

- the overspend in election costs reflected the number of recent by-elections which, as it was difficult to predict when they might occur, were not part of the budget.
- the empty homes legal fees underspend had been requested to be carried over and was due to a number of projected compulsory purchase orders which would require complex legal support.
- in relation to the salaries overspend of £140K for Planning agency staff there were concerns with recruitment of permanent staff, but there was a national shortage of Plans Officers and the salaries provided by local authorities were not competitive with private sector salaries.
- the Council was meeting the target on the number of days lost to Voids; the overspend of £148K in Void Capitalisations was due to the work the in-house repairs team were undertaking on major Voids being recorded in the revenue budget.

- the collection fund statistics did not represent a failure of collection but were cumulative figures, showing 83% of the annual figure.
- although the Planning Service showed a general shortfall of approximately £0.5 million, the matter was being considered by Cabinet in April 2019 and alternative service delivery models and working partnerships were being considered with two other district councils.

The Panel considered the additional information provided by the Head of Landlord Services. In response to issues raised by the Panel, the Head of Landlord Services stated that if there was a reasonable prospect to recover debt, current tenant arrears were not written off. The average age of debt indicated that most residents who registered for Universal Credit (UC) had pre-existing debt prior to being on UC.

RESOLVED that the information contained in the report be noted.

Reason

The Panel were satisfied with the information provided.

52. TENANCY SUPPORT

A report of the Head of Landlord Services considering the performance data in relation to tenancy support and tenancy sustainment and the reasons for tenancy failure was submitted, (agenda item 9 filed with these minutes).

The Cabinet Lead Member for Housing sent his apologies. The Head of Landlord Services and the Principal Officer, Tenancy and Income Management attended the meeting to assist the Panel with its consideration of the item.

In response to issues raised by the Panel the Head of Landlord Services and the Principal Officer, Tenancy and Income Management stated that:

- the number of vacation reasons with respect to anti-social behaviour (ASB) had fluctuated over the last few years due to using closure orders and the number of court orders. The Service managed ASB at a low level if possible and worked in conjunction with the Police to secure possession of the property.
- residents with complex needs moving into the borough were often supported initially by the Tenancy Support team whilst waiting for other services to help with matters such as accommodation.

RESOLVED

1. that the Head of Strategic and Private Sector Housing be asked to provide the criteria for how residents are added to the waiting list for council properties and what the waiting time is;
2. that the content of the report be noted.

Reasons

1. Members of the Panel wished to understand in more detail how council properties were allocated to the residents of the Borough.
2. The Panel was satisfied with the information provided.

53. HOUSING REPAIRS COMPLAINTS

A report of the Head of Landlord Services considering the complaint trends for housing repairs and asset management was submitted, (agenda item 10 filed with these minutes).

The Cabinet Lead Member for Housing sent his apologies. The Head of Landlord Services and the Repairs and Investment Manager attended the meeting to assist the Panel with its consideration of the item.

There were no questions during the consideration of this item.

RESOLVED that the content of the report be noted.

Reason

The Panel was satisfied with the information provided.

54. WORK PROGRAMME

A report of the Head of Strategic Support was submitted to enable the Panel to consider its work programme and to propose to the Scrutiny Management Board any additions, deletions and amendments as appropriate (item 11 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

Members of the Panel discussed the proposed new scrutiny committee structure and that recommendations put forward by the Panel at this meeting to the Scrutiny Management Board could be considered for the new scrutiny committee work programmes.

RESOLVED

1. that scrutiny of the new service model replacing the Troubled Families Programme (Supporting Leicestershire Families) be recommended to the Scrutiny Management Board for inclusion in the appropriate scrutiny committee's work programme;
2. that items considered during this meeting be added to the Panel's work programme for February 2020;
3. that the current position of the Panel's Work Programme be noted.

Reasons

1. The Panel wished to highlight the importance of continued scrutiny of this service, particularly as partner contributions would cease after this civic year to the Troubled Families Programme, and that the replacement Children and Family Wellbeing Service which would become operational in April 2019 would benefit from review.
2. The Panel requested items considered at this meeting to be added to its current work programme to ensure allocation to the proposed new scrutiny committee work programmes by the Scrutiny Management Board.
3. To make the Panel aware of the current position with its Work Programme.

NOTES:

1. No reference may be made to these minutes at the Council meeting on 25th March 2019 unless notice to that effect is given to the Democratic Services Manager by five members of the Council by noon on the fifth working day following publication of these minutes.
2. These minutes are subject to confirmation as a correct record at the next meeting of the Performance Scrutiny Panel.