

REPORT TO: Policy and Performance Review Committee

MEETING DATE: 28 January 2014

BY: Depute Chief Executive – Partnerships and Community Services

SUBJECT: Performance Report, Q2 2013/14

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide PPRC with information regarding the performance of Council services during Q2 (July – September) 2013/14.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 PPRC is asked to use the information provided in this report to consider whether any aspect of the Council's performance is in need of improvement or further investigation.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council has established a set of Key Performance Indicators to help monitor progress towards the outcomes contained in the Council Plan and Single Outcome Agreement. The indicators are updated on a quarterly basis and the results are reported to the Policy and Performance Review Committee. Members of the Committee also attend a briefing prior to the Committee meeting itself. Members use the briefing to develop lines of enquiry, which enable officers to provide more detailed reports explaining performance issues to the Committee meeting.
- 3.2 Members of the Committee attended the performance briefing for Q2 2013/14 on 3 December 2013. Appendix A displays the quarterly Key Performance Indicators for Q2 that are below target. The Appendix also includes any annual indicators that have recently been updated.
- 3.3 Members reviewed the performance of the Council and raised several questions regarding the indicators. Responses to the questions are provided in the following paragraphs.

Number of attendances at pool and the number of attendances at indoor sports and leisure facilities

- 3.4 Members questioned why the attendance levels at pools and indoor sports and leisure facilities appeared to have fallen sharply over the past 12 months. Officers at Enjoy Leisure were asked to provide an explanation and it transpired that the data had been calculated incorrectly. The results for the past three quarters have been re-calculated and are now broadly consistent with the results that have been reported for previous periods.

% of homelessness assessments completed in under 28 days

- 3.5 Members asked for a further explanation of why this indicator is gradually declining in performance, especially as the number of homelessness assessments has fallen in recent years. The impact of homelessness legislation is an item on the agenda for this meeting.

% of calls within contact centre (excluding switchboard) answered

- 3.6 Eileen Morrison, Service Manager - Customer Service, has provided a further explanation of the reasons why performance on this measure has declined.

- 3.7 During 2013 the Contact Team took on the handling of calls relating to:

- Council Tax,
- Property Maintenance,
- free special uplifts; and
- Human Resources

- 3.8 The volume of calls for each of these services (with the exception of Human Resources) has increased since being transferred to the Contact Centre. Employees were transferred to the Contact Centre to deal with some of these services; however, staff numbers have proven to be insufficient to deal with the increased call volumes. The Contact Centre received no additional resources to deal with free special uplifts, for which the volume of calls has increased significantly since the decision was taken not to charge for the service.

- 3.9 Council Tax calls and Property Maintenance calls have taken longer than anticipated to deal with. There is also a backlog of work within the Council Tax team, which means that it is difficult to transfer calls to the back office leading to an increase in repeat calls. No additional resources were transferred to the Contact Team to deal with Property Maintenance calls as it was anticipated that the number of follow-up calls would decrease. However, there has been little reduction in calls and the length of each call has increased by 25%. In both instances employees have required additional training on how to deal with the calls.

- 3.10 The Contact Centre has also experienced a high degree of long-term sickness absence over the course of the last year. 3 employees (or approximately 20% of the staff establishment) were on long term sickness absence for many months. The outcome of these long term sickness absences was that one member of staff was dismissed on ill health capability, one member of staff retired and one member of staff retired through ill health.
- 3.11 Despite the increase in calls to the Contact Centre, the overall volume of calls to the switchboard has fallen by 70% since the implementation of the automated switchboard. The reduction in calls allowed the service to give up an agency member of staff that was being used for the switchboard (above establishment) and all staff within the Contact Centre can now pick up switchboard calls.
- 3.12 Over the past year there have been a number of recruitment campaigns to fill existing vacancies and to fill new posts where funding has been transferred from services. Seven staff out of a total team complement of 12 call handlers are relatively new recruits. Employing so many new staff means that more training needs to be provided, leading to less time answering calls not only for those new staff but also the staff conducting the training. It takes between 9 months and one year for a member of staff to become proficient in dealing with all call enquiries.
- 3.13 In December 2012 a SOCITM Channel benchmarking survey identified that the number of calls dealt with by the Contact Centre was far higher than most other Councils – the 3rd highest out of 11 Councils. Call volumes have subsequently increased to the extent that the service estimates that it has four fewer staff than required for the call volume which the Contact Centre is dealing with. In addition, when employees are trying to transfer calls to service areas, they get voicemail or the member of staff has left. This issue has recently been highlighted from the stress assessment recently undertaken.

% of pupils achieving 5+ awards at SCQF Level 4 or better at the end of S4 and the % of pupils achieving 5+ awards at SCQF Level 5 or better by the end of S4

- 3.14 Members agreed that a joint session should be held involving members of the Education Committee and the Policy & Performance Review Committee.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Reporting performance helps the Council demonstrate that it is achieving Best Value in regard to 'Commitment and Leadership', 'Sound Governance at a strategic, financial and operational level' and 'Accountability'.

4.2 The scrutiny of performance by Elected Members is part of 'Commitment and Leadership'. The Best Value Guidance explains that the scrutiny of performance means 'That members are involved in setting the strategic direction for Best Value and there is a mechanism for internal scrutiny by members of performance and service outcomes.' Reporting the performance indicators for each service every quarter is intended to aid this process.

5 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 This report is not applicable to the well being of equalities groups and an Equalities Impact Assessment is not required.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial – none.

6.2 Personnel - none.

6.3 Other – none.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Appendix A: Key Performance Indicators – Q2 2013/14, by exception

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Appendix A: Key Performance Indicators – Q2 2013/14, by exception

Growing the Capacity of the Council – annual measures

	2011/12 result	2012/13 result	2012/13 target	RAG status	Range (over past 5 years)	Notes
Percentage of adults agreeing with the statement 'I can influence decisions affecting my local area'	16%	24%	23%	Green	16 – 32.6	<p>The most recent result is drawn from the Scottish Household Survey 2012. The results of the Survey are published some time after the survey is undertaken and have only recently become available for East Lothian. The Scottish average for this question was 21%.</p> <p>The same question was asked in the East Lothian Resident's Survey 2011, in which 16% of resident's agreed with the statement. However, comparisons between the Scottish Household Survey and East Lothian Resident's Survey should be treated with caution as the methodology and sample size of the surveys are different.</p>

Growing the Capacity of the Council – quarterly

	Q1 2013/14 result	Q2 2013/14 result	Q2 2013/14 target	RAG status	Range (over previous 4 quarters)	Notes
% of calls within contact centre (excluding switchboard) answered	82.66%	83.05%	90.00%	Red	82.66 – 90.22	<p>Moving more calls into the Contact Centre during 2013 has come at a time when there is more demand on certain services i.e. Council Tax, Property Maintenance and Waste Services. The consequence has been more abandoned calls and call performance reducing. However, calls continue to be answered and complaints about the Contact Centre are few. The main complaint coming through the call survey module is the length of wait for a Special uplift appointment.</p>
% of calls answered in contact centre within 7 rings	45.00%	44.31%	70.00%	Red	44.31 – 73.33	
Average number of days to fill a vacancy	85.00 days	109.00 days	98.00 days	Amber	85 - 124	

Growing our Communities – annual measures

	2011/12 result	2012/13 result	2012/13 target	RAG status	Range (over past 5 years)	Notes
% of adult residents stating their neighbourhood is a “very good” or “fairly good” place to live	99%	95%	97%	Amber	95% - 99%	<p>The most recent result is drawn from the Scottish Household Survey 2012. The Scottish average for this question was 94%.</p> <p>The same question was asked in the East Lothian Resident’s Survey 2011, in which 99% of resident’s agreed with the statement. However, comparisons between the Scottish Household Survey and East Lothian Resident’s Survey should be treated with caution as the methodology and sample size of the surveys are different.</p>
Housing completions – all sectors	410	243			243 - 464	<p>Of the 243 houses completed in East Lothian during 2012/13 210 were private sector completions, 24 houses were completed by the Council and 9 were completed by Housing Associations.</p> <p>The number of private sector completions actually increased by 40 from the previous year; however, the number of Council completions decreased by 163. Private sector completions remain at a relatively low level despite the increase.</p>
Number of killed & serious injury (KSI) casualties in road accidents	30	23	See note	Green	23 - 55	Figure for the calendar year 2012. The results are provisional at 24 August 2013. All the 2015 national road casualty targets have been met however, in the cases of the Child KSI figures and Slight Casualty rates the 2020 national road casualty targets have already been exceeded. East Lothian’s roads have never been safer.
Number of slight injury casualties	205	195	See note	Green	186 - 220	Figure for calendar year 2012. All the 2015 national road casualty targets have been met however, in the cases of the Child KSI figures and Slight Casualty rates the 2020 national road casualty targets have already been exceeded. Nationally slight casualty reduction performance is now measured by comparing the annual casualty rate (slight casualty number/ million vehicle km) against the 2004/08 average.

Growing our Communities - quarterly

	Q1 2013/14 result	Q2 2013/14 result	Q2 2013/14 target	RAG status	Range (over previous 4 quarters)	Notes
Trading Standards Business Advice Requests - % response within 14 days	96.00%	93.00%	100.00%	Amber	89 - 100	Dealing with advice on more in depth issues that took longer to close
Trading Standards Consumer complaints - % response within 14 days	91.00%	92.00%	100.00%	Amber	85 - 93	Dealing with complaints with a more complex nature that took a greater amount of time to complete
% Food Standards Inspections on time - medium risk	77.00%	85.00%	100.00%	Red	77 - 97	Although the indicator is below target, the result only reflects one inspection that was completed outwith the time period.
% of homelessness assessments completed in under 28 days	75.00%	74.00%	80.00%	Red	74 - 80	Performance affected by staffing difficulties in the quarter
% of current tenants owing more than 13 weeks rent excluding those that owe less than £250	9.44%	10.55%	9.47%	Red	8.96 – 10.55	

Growing our Economy - quarterly

	Q1 2013/14 result	Q2 2013/14 result	Q2 2013/14 target	RAG status	Range (over previous 4 quarters)	Notes
% of new businesses supported by East Lothian Council grants and loans surviving after 12 months	75.80%	75.30%	85.00%	Amber	75.3 – 80.5	Sample of 89 but 18% no response, 3.4% found work and 3.4% have ceased trading.

Growing our People – annual measures

	2011/12 result	2012/13 result	2012/13 target	RAG status	Range (over past 5 years)	Notes
5+ awards at SCQF Level 4 or better at the end of S4	82%	81%	83%	Amber	81 - 84	The percentage of pupils who gained 5+ Level 4 awards in 2013 dropped to 1% below the national average and a further NCD placing on the previous year to the 6th decile for the first time in 5 years
5+ awards at SCQF Level 5 or better by the end of S4	38%	37%	41%	Red	37 - 39	The percentage of pupils who gained 5+ Level 5 awards in 2013 dropped to 1% below the national average and a further NCD placing on the previous year to the 6th decile for the first time in 5 years

Growing our People - quarterly

	Q1 2013/14 result	Q2 2013/14 result	Q2 2013/14 target	RAG status	Range (over previous 4 quarters)	Notes
Number of delayed discharge patients waiting over 4 weeks	8.00	3.00	0.00	Red	3 - 8	The four week target came into effect from April 2013. The target was six weeks prior to that date.