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## **Quarterly Corporate Performance Report (Quarter 1, 2015/16)**

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### **Report by Chief Executive**

### **Executive Committee**

**18 August 2015**

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#### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 **This report presents a quarterly performance update for members, as well as information on Audit Scotland's recent assessment of how SBC performance is reported publicly.**
- 1.2 A summary of the main changes made to performance indicators is provided at Section 4 of this report, followed by a high level summary of performance. Appendix 1 provides a more detailed presentation and explanation of each Performance Indicator (PI). Where possible, information that is collected on a *quarterly* basis is presented but this is not possible for all areas of Council business, for example, school attainment. The presentation used in Appendix 1 is consistent with what was presented to Council on 26 June 2014 and to the Executive Committee each quarter thereafter.
- 1.3 All information contained within this report is also made available on the SBC website using the public facing part of SBC's Performance Management software (Covalent). This can be accessed at [http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/691/council\\_performance/1353/our\\_performance\\_as\\_a\\_council](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/691/council_performance/1353/our_performance_as_a_council) and by clicking on "Scottish Borders Performs".
- 1.4 As this report is a key part of SBC's public performance reporting, a summary of Audit Scotland's recent assessment of the Council's public performance reporting is also included within this report.

#### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 **I recommend that the Executive Committee:**
  - (a) **Notes the changes to performance indicators in Section 4 of this report;**
  - (b) **Acknowledges and notes the performance presented within Appendix 1 and the action that is being taken within Services to improve or maintain performance;**
  - (c) **Notes the findings by Audit Scotland in relation to SBC's Public Performance reporting and action being taken to improve.**

### 3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 SBC approved a Corporate Plan in April 2013. Against a challenging external context, the Plan presented a vision for Scottish Borders Council, underpinned by a set of values and standards and eight priorities.
- 3.2 In order to ensure that these eight priorities are addressed effectively, a Performance Management Framework (PMF) was also approved, covering the performance reporting arrangements for both the Council and for its work with Community Planning partners.
- 3.3 Under each of our corporate priorities, a range of performance information is presented within **Appendix 1** and presents a mixture of PIs with targets that have been rated either Red, Amber or Green, based on whether or not targets have been achieved, and PIs that are "for information only" and give Elected Members a sense of performance trends and how well SBC is doing in terms of addressing the agreed corporate priorities.

### 4 CHANGES TO PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (PI)

- 4.1 As stated in previous reports, the PIs used by each service area are continuing to evolve in line with the business planning process, and are being refined to reflect policy and service changes. At the last Executive on 9<sup>th</sup> June, a number of changes were proposed and discussed, and the new financial year also provided a good opportunity to make changes or additions to add value to the reporting process. Changes are outlined below:

**General-** short term trend column has been removed from technical report (as information is easily seen from graphs). Long term trend (trend over the last 4 reporting periods) icon has been made clearer for PIs that SBC can influence;

**Priority 1-** planning PIs now reflect the Scottish Government focus on *average time taken*, with a one quarter lag in planning performance information as a consequence;

**Priority 2-** to better reflect the priorities of the Children and Young People's Services, a range of measure will now be presented each year around Literacy and Numeracy, Qualifications, Health and Well-being, Participation and Inclusion. Each quarter, a particular area will be focused upon;

**Priority 3-** as discussed at the last Executive, a measure around Self Directed Support has now been included and within the service, measures on waiting times and around integration of health and social care will be developed in the near future;

**Priority 4-** the "infographic" map now provides examples of funding awarded within each locality (as opposed to just Resilient Communities progress). PIs in relation to Landfill Communities Fund will be removed going forward as this funding pot is now exhausted, and will be replaced by a new Scottish Landfill Fund;

**Priority 5-** Killed and Seriously Injured(KSI) figures presented will now only be *vetted* figures from Police Scotland, and will lag by a quarter. Waste PIs have been changed to better align with reporting requirements for SEPA and instead of looking at recycling rates on a quarter by quarter basis, cumulative rolling averages are now presented;

**Priority 6-** HR absence data does not now include SB Cares (reports are currently being developed for SB Cares and will be taken

through its governance structure before coming to Executive). Because the Employment Support Service and the SBC Work Opportunities Scheme is now in its second year, "Supported Employees" PI has been removed as there is very little change from quarter to quarter (SBC has 6 employees who are supported e.g. because of a disability). "Advertised modern apprenticeships" PI has also been removed, important only during the first year of implementing the scheme;

**Priority 7-** PIs have now been included on community benefits and capital projects. Instead of only looking at capital receipts, PIs have been added to show total number of surplus properties, those being actively marketed and those under offer. Annual energy consumption and cost figures are also now presented;

**Priority 8-** complaints PIs are now better aligned with the reporting requirements for the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman (SPSO) and a case study has been included to show how complaints have led to service improvement. This will be done on a quarterly basis.

## **5 CURRENT PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

### **5.1 Performance measures – summary of key successes**

- (a) Economic indicators (JSA claimants, employment rate, Business Gateway, loans and grants) continue to show a positive trend. In addition, occupancy rates in Council-owned industrial and commercial property remain high;
- (b) Average time taken to process planning applications is showing long term improvements for major developments and householders compared to same period last year;
- (c) This year's school leavers have recorded a best ever performance of 34% of young people leaving school with five or more Highers, an increase of 4% from 2014;
- (d) The % of school leavers maintaining a positive destination (6 months on) is 94% (2.5pp higher than the national average) and higher than it was last year (92.1%);
- (e) School attendance continues to track at or above target for primary (96%) and secondary (92%), and exclusion numbers remain low;
- (f) Social Work continues to exceed targets in relation to people receiving a service within 6 weeks of their assessment, as well as in relation to adults with self-directed support arrangements;
- (g) Welfare Benefits Service continues to ensure that people receive the benefits they are entitled to, with monetary gains ahead of target;
- (h) Although Q1 saw a slight increase from same time last year, crimes have been decreasing month on month since April 2015 (Feb 293 – June 230) and if trend continues target position should be maintained or improved in the coming months;
- (i) National Lottery funding in Q1 was higher than the same time last year due to 3 large projects receiving grants (Brothers of Charity; Tweedsmuir Community Company; SBC for Selkirk 2G facility);
- (j) SBC continues to repair, within 7 days, just over 99% of all street lighting faults reported, with the roll out of LED lamps reducing the number of faults;

- (k) The SBC Employment Support Service's proactive work with Council services is currently supporting 22 students and 25 apprentices, with many new opportunities planned for the current financial year;
- (l) SBC's "Adding Value to communities through procurement" policy is already creating benefits, for example employment opportunities created through the Selkirk Flood protection scheme
- (m) The number of complaints received has come down and average time taken to respond is within target times set.

## 5.2 **Performance measures- summary of measures below target**

- (a) Children accommodated within a family rather than residential setting continues to be lower than the ambitious target of 80%. Continued action is underway to increase the number of children in family-based placements, including increasing kinship care and the ongoing recruitment of foster carers;
- (b) Cost of utilities rose in 2014/15, along with increases in gas and electricity consumption (although overall consumption was down slightly). This was predominantly due to:
  - Modifications to maximise the use of the Ground Source Heat Pump heating system at Clovenfords Primary School
  - A full year of operation of the new West Linton primary School;
  - Switch off of the biomass in the 3 PPP High Schools resulting in a rise in gas consumption (however, it should be noted that the increase in gas costs are and will be less than the cost of biomass);
  - Being locked in to national energy contracts;
- (c) SB Alert has only seen a very slight increase in uptake since the last quarter and renewed promotion is being undertaken including work with businesses;
- (d) Council Tax collection rates are down slightly compared to the same period in 2014. Steps will be taken over the coming months to target arrears and ensure collection rates are maximised;
- (e) % of FOIs dealt with within timescales has fallen slightly to 92% but is well above the same quarter last year;
- (f) The number of complaints closed at stage two within 20 working days as a % of the total number of stage two complaints is below target (at 82.6%) but is improved from Q4 14/15 and from Q1 last year. Ongoing reviews and analysis of previous quarter's complaints are being used to inform and drive forward service improvements across the Council.

- 5.3 The technical report at Appendix 1 provides detail against every PI for both Elected Members and for members of the public. This information can also now be accessed at [http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/691/council\\_performance/1353/our\\_performance\\_as\\_a\\_council](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/691/council_performance/1353/our_performance_as_a_council) and then by clicking on "Scottish Borders Performs". Not only does this improve accessibility to performance information, it ensures that Scottish Borders Council responds effectively to recommendations made by Audit Scotland around public performance reporting and helps us fulfil our duty more effectively in relation to public performance reporting, as defined in the Local Government in Scotland Act 1992.

## 6 AUDIT SCOTLAND ASSESSMENT OF SBC'S PUBLIC PERFORMANCE REPORTING (FOR REPORTING PERIOD 2013/14)

- 6.1 The Accounts Commission now expects Councils to report a range of performance information publicly, including benchmarking. Taking a flexible approach, the Commission now expects councils to move away from merely reporting on the previously specified 25 indicators to presenting a range of information in a variety of ways to demonstrate best value.
- 6.2 Audit Scotland now prepares an annual report for the Accounts Commission to assess how well councils are publicly reporting performance on a range of topics, from responsiveness to communities and sustainable development to specific service areas e.g. waste and lighting as well as making comparison with other local authorities. This assessment is predominantly a desk based exercise, with signposting from councils. A report was presented to the Account Commission on 11<sup>th</sup> June and is available through papers published on Audit Scotland's website [http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/about/docs/ac\\_150611\\_papers.pdf](http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/about/docs/ac_150611_papers.pdf) , pages 17-58.

(Note: Since the summary report on PPR was considered by the Accounts Commission, Audit Scotland has identified a small number of errata in the individual assessment for certain councils – but not for Scottish Borders. The changes to the data do not affect the key issues identified in the summary report. Where necessary, relevant councils will shortly be sent an updated individual assessment).

- 6.3 The assessment process has changed from last year. Instead of 3 ratings being used (*fully*, *partially* or *not meeting* requirements), Audit Scotland is now rating each of the topic areas examined as "Yes" (meeting the requirements) or "Area for Improvement" (AFI), as well as making a *summary judgement* and detailed comment on each topic area examined.
- 6.4 Key changes over time are as follows, demonstrating considerable and ongoing improvements in this area:
- For the reporting period 2011/12, SBC did not *fully* meet any of the requirements against the topic areas assessed;
  - For the reporting period 2012/13, SBC fully met 62% of requirements, partially met 33%, and did not met 5%;
  - Using this new assessment process for the reporting period 2013/14, 69% of topic areas assessed (under the following four categories; *Overall Quality Themes*, SPI1, SPI2, and SPI3) were rated as "Yes" (fully meeting the requirements), and 31% were rated as "Area for Improvement".
- 6.5 Audit Scotland has commended the Council for its structured approach to Public performance reporting (PPR), with clear presentation of information. It states:  
*"PPR material is set out clearly, in a consistent, uncluttered manner; A high-level pdf public performance report exists for each quarter and corporate priority; Each document has graphs, trend information, infographics and explanatory narrative. There is clear layering and signposting of information, making it easy for the reader to navigate"*
- 6.6 However areas where SBC's public performance reporting has been rated as requiring improvement are:

- customer satisfaction
- user of comparators (beyond just the Local Government Benchmarking)
- benefits administration
- criminal justice social work
- cultural & community services
- employees
- assets
- protective services (environmental health and trading standards)

6.7 This year's assessment has been more rigorous and much more feedback has now been provided to individual Councils. This means that many of the topic areas assessed as requiring improvement can be rectified fairly quickly using the feedback provided, and looking to other areas identified as having good practice. The Corporate Performance and Information team is currently developing an improvement plan, divided into short, medium and long term actions, that help SBC make the necessary improvements to the way it reports performance publicly.

## **7 IMPLICATIONS**

### **7.1 Financial**

There are no costs attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report.

### **7.2 Risk and Mitigations**

Effective performance management arrangements will ensure that services are aware of any weaknesses and can take corrective action in a timely manner therefore mitigating any risks more effectively.

### **7.3 Equalities**

- (a) It was recognised within the "Report of the Equalities Review Group" (SBC, 29 May 2014) that more effective performance indicators in relation to equalities need to be developed. A Corporate Equalities Officers Forum (CEOFF), chaired by the Service Director Neighbourhood Services, is working to ensure that the recommendations in the Equalities Review Group report are taken forward.
- (b) The CEOFF is currently reviewing all the performance indicators that sit under the SBC Equalities Outcomes (part of the Equalities Mainstreaming report 2013-17) with a view to improving performance information and will ensure that relevant information is pulled through into performance reports for the Council's Executive Committee. In addition, performance indicators around officer training in Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) processes and around number of EIAs undertaken will now be reported within services and to Corporate Management Team.

### **7.4 Acting Sustainably**

Economic, social and environmental impact of SBC actions can be monitored more effectively if there is effective performance reporting arrangements in place.

### **7.5 Carbon Management**

There are no effects on carbon emissions as a result of this report.

### **7.6 Rural Proofing**

Not applicable.

## 7.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes to be made.

## 8 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Service Director Regulatory Services as Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Service Director Strategy and Policy, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Chief Officer HR and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and their comments have been incorporated into the final report.

### Approved by

**Tracey Logan**  
**Chief Executive**

**Signature .....**

### Author(s)

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**Background Papers:** Scottish Borders Council Corporate Plan 2012/13-2017/18 & Annex 2: Performance Management Framework

**Previous Minute Reference:** Scottish Borders Council Executive, 10<sup>th</sup> March 2015

**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Sarah Watters can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

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