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# **OUR PLAN AND YOUR PART IN IT: SBC'S CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT REPORT QUARTER 3 2021/22**

**Director - People, Performance & Change**

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## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**1 March 2022**

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### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report presents a high level summary of Scottish Borders Council's Quarter 3 2021/22 performance information with more detail contained within Appendix 2 with a summary of the Community Action Team's activity provided in Appendix 5. The report also includes highlights on the progress of change and improvement projects across Scottish Borders Council (SBC), under the Fit for 2024 programme (Appendix 1), and monitors progress of the Recovery Plan (Appendix 3).**
- 1.2 SBC approved a revised Corporate Plan (Our Plan and Your Part in it 2018-2023) in February 2018, with four corporate themes. In order to monitor progress against the four themes, performance and context information will be presented quarterly to Executive Committee, with an annual summary in June each year.
- 1.2 During Quarter 3 2021/22, SBC has continued to press ahead with a range of important initiatives and innovation, including:
- (a) Utilising the technology available to us to automate and streamline processes;
  - (b) Launched a Digital Skills programme aimed at improving the overall digital skills of our workforce;
  - (c) Engagement with Area Partnerships to extend place making opportunities to all Border communities and localities;
  - (d) Engagement with SBC Employees
- 1.4 The information contained within this report will be made available on the SBC website: [www.scotborders.gov.uk/performance](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/performance)

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **2.1 I recommend that the Executive Committee:-**

- (a) Notes the progress update relating to Change and Improvement Projects, referenced in Section 4 and detailed further in Appendix 1;**
- (b) Notes the changes to performance indicators outlined in Section 5 of this report;**
- (c) Notes the performance summarised in Sections 6 and 7, and Approves the Quarterly Reports set out at Appendices 1-4 and the action that is being taken within services to improve or maintain performance.**

### **3 BACKGROUND TO SBC PERFORMANCE REPORTING**

- 3.1 SBC approved a revised Corporate Plan in February 2018 (Our Plan and Your Part in it 2018-2023). Against a continued challenging external context, the plan presented how SBC will focus Services for our communities, set across four corporate themes:
1. Our Services For You
  2. Independent, Achieving People
  3. A Thriving Economy, With Opportunities For Everyone
  4. Empowered, Vibrant Communities.
- 3.2 In order to ensure that the corporate themes are addressed effectively, SBC's Performance Management Framework (PMF) was updated and presented to Council on 30 August 2018. This revised PMF set out how SBC would strengthen its performance management across both SBC Services and Commissioned services.
- 3.3 The Appendices reflect a quarterly reporting format structured around the four corporate themes, and use a mixture of narrative, highlights, performance and context indicators.
- (a) Updates on Fit for 2024, Change and Improvement projects are contained in Appendix 1. These are monitored by Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) and through the SBC Financial Plan and associated monitoring.
  - (b) Appendix 2 contains updates on specific performance and context indicators, structured around SBC's 4 Corporate Themes.
  - (c) Appendix 3 contains updates on monitoring our progress in relation to the Covid-19 Recovery Plan.
  - (d) A schedule of indicators is provided for information at Appendix 4 covering quarterly performance reporting and also annual reporting through the Local Government Benchmarking Framework.
  - (e) To reflect the significant investment made by SBC, an overview of the work and impact of Police Scotland's Community Action Team is provided in Section 7 and within Appendix 5.
- 3.4 It is worth noting that significant changes have taken place since the current Corporate Plan was produced in 2018 and the Council has faced a number of challenges such as Covid-19, Brexit and the global climate crisis. This has led to the need to refresh the Corporate Plan, and re-set our Transformation Programme, to ensure it remains relevant and focussed on delivering the best for the population.
- 3.5 To support the new Plan, we will be developing a revised framework to ensure performance and service planning is fully aligned with the plan, while incorporating a self-evaluation approach to continuously improve services. This will lead to a refresh of this Corporate Performance Report that incorporates key performance indicators better aligned to the SBC's vision and strategic goals.

## **4 CHANGE & IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS – UPDATE**

- 4.1 Change and Improvement projects are now managed and monitored collectively under Fit for 2024. These projects are delivered in support of SBC's Corporate Plan, the SBC Financial Plan and the Health and Social Care Strategic Plan.
- 4.2 Fit for 2024, the Council's new Transformation Programme was agreed by Council on 28th February 2019. Characterised as 'the next generation' of transformation, the programme aims to fundamentally reshape the Council, from our engagement with our citizens and communities to the way we deliver services. The purpose is to deliver a Council that is adaptable, efficient and effective and capable of not only meeting the challenges ahead, but of fully optimising outcomes for the citizens and communities for which it is responsible.
- 4.3 The following highlights are reported:
- (a) The implementation of the Confirm Digital Asset Management System to allow the capture and management of infrastructure assets.
  - (b) The implementation of Total Mobile within the Care at Home Service. The system allows managers to have an overview of all Support Workers within their region and Support Workers to easily view important Service User information on their mobile device.
  - (c) A Better Connected Mobile Workforce which sees the roll out of digital devices to frontline workers. This allows workers to work smarter, improve communication and engage more easily.
  - (d) The launch of our Digital Skills programme which aims to improve the digital skills of our workforce through engagement with Digital Champions and Digital Ambassadors. This initiative will not only focus on improving employee digital skills at work, it also covers foundation skills and skills for life - recognising that there are benefits for SBC colleagues to improve their digital skills overall.
  - (e) How our Place Making approach is supporting a more joined-up, collaborative and participative approach to service delivery in Communities to ensure changes made in a place are relevant and benefit all people.

## **5 ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO SBC PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (PI)**

- 5.1 It has not been possible on this occasion to update a number of indicators within the report:
- (a) Active and progressing community resilience plans. These figures have not been reported since quarter one, although they are received a quarter behind.

- (b) Customer Contact information – system development work is ongoing in order to accurately report these figures. The Customer Advice and Support Service are working with the council's IT partner to progress this work and it is anticipated that recent Officer appointments will support this to move forward.

## **6 PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE THEMES**

### **6.1 Performance measures – summary of successes**

- (a) The average number of weeks to determine Local Development Householder planning permission applications remains positive. At an average 6.7 weeks to determine in Q2 21/22, this remains within the national target of 8 weeks.
- (b) The time to process New Housing Benefit Claims remains positive and well within target.
- (c) The average time to process Escalated Complaints remains positive and within the target of 20 days (17.29 days).
- (d) There has been a significant increase in the social media engagement which evidences that information being put out by the council is reaching more people. This can be seen in both Facebook and Twitter engagements (a 33.5k increase and a 4.9k increase respectively).
- (e) Council Tax Valuation List and Valuation Roll performance continues to improve. Changes in practice throughout 2020/21 have led to an improvement in this area.
- (f) 82% of Looked After Children are cared for in community family based placements rather than residential placements which continues to exceed the 80% target. This has increased slightly since the last quarter and the indicator demonstrates a positive trend over the last 4 quarters.
- (g) Adults receiving Care at Home (aged 65+) and those using the Self Directed Support Approach remains positive.
- (h) Referrals to Domestic Abuse Services continue to increase and show improvement compared to the same period in 20/21. As government measures to combat COVID-19 are eased it is expected that referrals into the Domestic Abuse Advocacy Support service (DAAS) will continue to increase.
- (i) Safer Communities indicators relating to Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) are also positive. With fewer reported incidents of ASB reported in Q3 21/22 when compared to the same period the previous year.
- (j) 92% of industrial and commercial properties that are owned by the council were occupied at the end of Q3 21/22.

- (k) 84 additional affordable homes were provided to the people of the Borders in Q3 21/22. So far, in 2021/22, a total of 200 affordable homes have been provided, which far exceeds the annual target of 128.
- (l) The average rate of people aged 16-64 claiming out-of-work benefits reduced from 4.23% in Q2 to 3.67% in Q3 21/22.

## 6.2 Performance measures – summary of challenges

- (a) Complaints – the percentage of complaints closed at Stages One and Two and, escalated complaints remain out with target in Q3 21/22. The time to process complaints at Stage One shows a significant increase when compared to the previous quarter. The Complaints Management System is being developed and it is anticipated the new processes will improve performance against these measures.
- (b) The percentage of Freedom of Information requests completed on time remains below target at 82% (against a 100% target), although this is a slight increase on Q2. It is envisaged that a review of the FOI process will be taken forward under the second phase of the Digital Customer Access project.
- (c) There has been a stabilisation in the number of referrals for mediation within the Safer Communities team in Q3 21/22, however, the number in Q2 was a decrease. The decrease is largely due to the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown meaning there is little opportunity to conduct mediation through face-to-face contact, which can also be attributed to the reduction in cases showing agreement or improvement following mediation. Where possible mediation is being conducted through other than face-to-face contact.

## 6.3 Monitoring of the Covid-19 Recovery Plan

- (a) SBC has developed a Recovery Plan that identifies key actions to lead the organisation through its recovery from the pandemic whilst supporting the delivery of our Strategic Aims set out in the Corporate Plan. The Recovery Plan, along with the Corporate Plan, will shape and support ongoing service improvement as agreed at Council on 27 May 2021.
- (b) It is important that we keep track of the difference this Recovery Plan is making over the next 12 months and, in order to do this, we will collect data and organise it in a way that gives us a clear measure of our success and Appendix 3 outlines the indicators we are using to do this.
- (c) Further work is required to develop additional indicators to allow us to fully monitor progress of the Recovery Plan. This work will be undertaken over the next few months in order to provide a fuller picture of our progress in our Q4 21/22 performance report.

## **7 COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM – SUMMARY OF ACTIVITY AND IMPACT**

7.1 An infographic summary on the impact of the Community Action Team (CAT) is provided at Appendix 5.

During Q3 2021/22 the CAT has:

- Carried out 126 hours of High Visibility foot patrols and 1,077 hours of mobile patrols;
- Carried out 38 static road checks;
- Issued 11 parking tickets;
- Carried out 28 Person Drug searches (57% positive) and 6 Premises Drug searches (100% positive);

## **8 IMPLICATIONS**

### **8.1 Financial**

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

### **8.2 Risk and Mitigations**

Effective performance management arrangements will ensure that services, and those providing services on behalf of SBC, are aware of any weaknesses and can take corrective action in a timely manner, therefore mitigating any risks more effectively. The Council's Risk Management Policy and framework ensures that all services, and services delivered by third parties, identify and manage risks to the achievement of their objectives, with senior management providing appropriate levels of oversight. Performance should be enhanced by having robust risk management arrangements in place. In response to the Best Value Assurance Audit of SBC during 2019, a Best Value Audit Action Plan was created. Progress with this Action Plan, designed for strengthening SBC's approach to performance reporting, has been previously reported to the Audit Committee and continues to be prioritised by the Strategic Leadership Team.

### **8.3 Integrated Impact Assessment**

There are no adverse equality/diversity implications. Performance reporting may help the Council to identify and address any equality / diversity issues and improve processes and procedures.

### **8.4 Sustainable Development Goals**

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

### **8.5 Climate Change**

There are no significant Climate Change effects arising from the proposals contained in this report.

## 8.6 Rural Proofing

This report does not relate to new or amended policy or strategy and as a result rural proofing is not an applicable consideration.

## 8.7 Data Protection Impact Assessment

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

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

There are no changes to be made to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals contained in this report.

## 9 CONSULTATION

9.1 The Director - Finance & Corporate Governance, the Monitoring Officer/Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director – People, Performance & Change, the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

9.2 The Strategic Leadership Team have been consulted on this report and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

### Approved by

**Clair Hepburn**

**Director - People, Performance & Change Signature .....**

### Author(s)

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### Background Papers:

**Previous Minute Reference:** 16 November 2021

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

Contact us at Policy, Planning & Performance, Scottish Borders Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, [performance@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:performance@scotborders.gov.uk)