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**Quarterly Corporate Performance Report  
(Quarter 3, 2014/15)**

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**Report by Chief Executive**

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**SBC Executive Committee**

**10 March 2015**

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**1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 **This report presents a quarterly performance update for members.**
- 1.2 A high level summary of performance is provided at Section 3 of this report and 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. Where quarterly information is not available, annual PIs have been used. The presentation used in Appendix 1 is consistent with what was presented to Council on 26 June 2014 and to the Executive Committee on 30 September 2014 and 9 December 2014.
- 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. 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 The Local Government Benchmarking Framework data was publicly released on 30 January and where appropriate, SBC performance in relation to other Councils has been highlighted with Appendix 1. Data can be accessed at the new [My Local Council](#) website.

**2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 **I recommend that the Executive Committee notes the performance presented within Appendix 1 and the action that is being taken within Services to improve or maintain performance.**

### **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 partner.

### **4 CURRENT PERFORMANCE AGAINST OUR CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 Below is a high level summary of performance and details of what is being done to either improve or maintain performance are provided in Appendix 1.
- 4.3 **Performance measures - key successes**
  - (a) Economic indicators (JSA claimants, employment rate, Business Gateway, loans and grants) are all showing a positive trend. In addition, occupancy rates in Council-owned industrial and commercial property remain high;
  - (b) SBC invoice payment within 30 days is slightly above target, helping the local economy;
  - (c) The % of pupils going into a "Positive Destination" is amongst the best in Scotland at 94.2% (4<sup>th</sup> in Scotland);
  - (d) Social Work continues to exceed targets in relation to people receiving their assessment within six weeks of contacting the service;
  - (e) The Welfare Benefits Service continues to ensure that people receive the benefits they are entitled to;
  - (f) In line with national trends, crime rates are lower than in Quarter 3 last year;
  - (g) With over 1700 people registered at the end of December, SB Alert is receiving very positive feedback from message recipients;
  - (h) Of all the street lighting faults reported in Quarter 3, 98.3% were repaired within seven days;
  - (i) Community Recycling Centre recycling rates now sit at 57.61%, showing a significant improvement since Quarter 3 last year;
  - (j) The Employment Support Service's proactive work with Council departments is currently supporting students (5), those with specific support needs (6) and apprentices (25);
  - (k) SBC staff absence rates are now below the 4% target and the long-term trend is positive; and
  - (l) Council Tax collection rates are on target, and for 2013/14 were amongst the best in Scotland.

#### 4.4 Performance measures- below target

- (a) The % of planning applications determined within two months has fallen from 69% in quarter 2 to 65% in quarter 3. Actions are currently being taken to improve speed, particularly through the more efficient processing of legal agreements relating to planning applications;
  - (b) As Social Work client are being offered and are moved to Self-Directed Support (SDS), giving them much more choice over the services they receive, the % of people over 65 receiving care at home services is showing a downward trend. To more accurately reflect the work being done to increase uptake of SDS, a measure will be introduced for future reports;
  - (c) Children accommodated with family rather than residential placements continues to be lower than target and is dependent on the needs of the children and the availability of suitably matched placements which is out with the direct control of SBC;
  - (d) Still thought to reflect significant historical under-reporting, the number of domestic abuse incidents reported to date in 2014/15 is higher than it was this time last year. The Pathway Project continues to address the needs of high risk victims;
  - (e) There were sadly four fatal accidents on our roads between Oct and Dec, and our ongoing work with partners such as Police Scotland is vital for tackling this very important issue;
  - (f) Although still slightly below our ambitious target of 100%, the % of FOIs dealt with on time is almost back to levels achieved during 2013/14 and is showing significant improvement each quarter; and
  - (g) The % of complex complaints responded to within target times is below our target of 100%, but those responded to within 20 working days is improving steadily each quarter. The Council continues to use complaints information to drive service improvement, as reported to the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman in our annual report in January.
- 4.5 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 report as defined in the Local Government in Scotland Act 1992.
- 4.6 The Performance Indicators used by each service area are evolving in line with the business planning process and it is therefore anticipated that PIs will be refined over the coming months and changes may be made to reflect policy and service changes.

## 5 LOCAL GOVERNMENT BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK – HOW WE COMPARE TO OTHERS

- 5.1 The Improvement Service has been working with all councils for the last three years to improve the use and availability of benchmarking data across a variety of service areas. On 30 January 2015, the Improvement

Service published its overview report on the 2013/14 data and on the national trends over the last three years. A new national website has also been developed, [My Local Council](#), to host the benchmarking data and make it easily accessible to members of the public. All councils are required to provide clear links to this site from relevant pages within their own website.

- 5.2 In order to explain the local context and the reasons for any variation in cost or performance for each of the benchmarked indicators, each Council has also been asked to construct webpages around a number of themes, for example, "what we are doing to improve services". This can be accessed at [http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/691/council\\_performance/1352/how\\_we\\_compare\\_to\\_others](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/691/council_performance/1352/how_we_compare_to_others)
- 5.3 A key part of the Local Government Benchmarking Framework is the sharing of best practice amongst similar local authorities. Within relevant family groups, i.e. those local authorities who share similar geographic characteristics, population etc., officers are already taking part in meetings to explore and share best practice. Phase 1 of this work covers more detailed discussions on Waste Management, Looked After Children and Council Tax and Phase 2 will cover Museums, Street Cleaning, Equalities and Human Resources.

## **6 IMPLICATIONS**

### **6.1 Financial**

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

### **6.2 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.

### **6.3 Equalities**

- (a) It is 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. The Corporate Equalities and Diversity Officer and the Corporate Performance and Information Manager are working to ensure that the recommendations in the Equalities Review Group report are taken forward and reflected in future reporting to the SBC Executive Committee.
- (b) To start this process, all Heads of Service were recently asked to complete a self-evaluation exercise in which they evaluated their service areas performance of the Equality Duty. The information gathered will be used to inform business planning and the development of suitable performance indicators.

### **6.4 Acting Sustainably**

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

### **6.5 Carbon Management**

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

### **6.6 Rural Proofing**

Not applicable.

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

There are no changes to be made.

## 7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 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 ...Tracey Logan.....**

### Author(s)

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

**Previous Minute Reference:** Scottish Borders Council Executive, 9<sup>th</sup> December 2014.

**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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