

27 September 2017	ITEM: 12
Council	
Report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Central Services	
Report of: Councillor Deborah Huelin, Cabinet Member for Performance and Central Services	
This report is Public	

Introduction by Cabinet Member

I am delighted to present to colleagues this report which details some of the many achievements and areas of work within my portfolio over the last 12 months. Colleagues will be aware that as of the Cabinet meeting earlier this month, the functions within my portfolio have changed. For clarity, this report covers those areas which were within my remit up until this month.

My teams have agreed and started to embed three new strategies which will be key to the council transforming the way it works. The Customer Services Strategy, Digital Strategy and People Strategy complement one another to develop the capacity, confidence and culture within the workforce and working practices.

Our approach has been endorsed externally with the council retaining Investors in People Gold status and by winning a number of national awards during the year including the industry-standard CIPD Best Employee Relations Award for the transition of Serco staff back to the council, and Skills for Care National Accolade for social worker recruitment and retention. The information governance team also won Gold Performance Award in the Geo Place Awards for the management of address and street data.

I know that some colleagues attended the Staff Awards last December where eight officers or teams were awarded for their over-and-above- the-call-of-duty commitment to their work. 263 nominations were received which highlights the incredible standard of many of our officers. This year's fully-sponsored Staff Awards has now been launched and I would encourage colleagues to consider nominating officers that they have worked with.

A new process was recently agreed which reduced the timeframes in which officers must reply to members enquiries. The previous guidelines stated that officers had 10 working days to respond. From 1 September 2017 this was reduced to 7 working days. However, in order for this streamlined process to work, please can I remind colleagues that all members enquiries must be sent direct to membersenquiries@thurrock.gov.uk.

I have also recently developed a useful checklist to make it clearer to member colleagues how and to whom to report particular issues. This is attached as Appendix 1.

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE

▶ SERVICE OVERVIEW

This part of my portfolio is primarily concerned with ensuring the council is delivering against its objectives through the corporate performance framework.

▶ REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS

During 2016/17, I instigated a full and thorough review of the Corporate KPI (Key Performance Indicator) framework and other performance tools in line with recommendations made by Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2015/16.

The review took into account feedback and intelligence the council receives from residents and other stakeholders. Results from the resident survey which took place in November/December 2016 also fed into this review.

The purpose of the review was to make the performance framework as clear and simple to understand as possible, whilst balancing the need to ensure the council is monitoring those things which are of most importance, both operationally and strategically. This reflects the demand for council services increasing and being ever more complicated and the need for a holistic approach to monitoring data and intelligence. This review also looked closely at target setting.

The increased analysis of internal processes at service level by Directors, which has been embedded throughout 2016/17, will continue. This includes a monthly review of service indicators by Directors and each portfolio holder.

Corporate performance indicators have, for a full year, been reported simply as having “Achieved” or “Failed” to meet their target. This has proved to be much clearer than the previous Red, Amber or Green (RAG status). At the end of 2016/17, 60% of key performance indicators achieved their target and half of them improved since the previous year.

Another change during 2016/17 was to give Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee the opportunity to scrutinise performance reports before they are presented to Cabinet. This has provided good cross party scrutiny and challenge and will continue throughout 2017/18.

▶ FUTURE

Greater focus is being applied to the actions being taken to address failed performance. In addition to this, there will be closer scrutiny of any indicators which are currently achieving their targets, but where their direction of travel shows that they are worse than previously reported.

This monitoring will be at both officer and member level, starting in the individual teams, before being presented to monthly, cross-council officer led Performance Board, then escalated to Directors Board and Portfolio Holders.

Once the work of the Vision and Priorities Working Group has been concluded, the corporate performance framework will be reviewed again to ensure that it is aligned.

Another large piece of work being undertaken by a cross-council group of officers is focusing on how to use research and customer intelligence to better support those services which are demand led, such as children's and adult social care.

► **FINANCIAL INFORMATION 2017/18**

Service Area	Full Year Budget £0	Full Year Forecast £0	Variance £0
Strategy and Performance	402,043	402,043	0
Performance, Quality and Business Intelligence (Children's and Adults)	882,025	882,025	0
Total	1,284,068	1,284,068	0

IMPROVEMENT SERVICE

▶ SERVICE OVERVIEW

The Improvement Service incorporates business improvement, recruitment team and the Executive Support Hub. The primary focus of this service remains to drive process improvement and cost efficiencies across the HR, OD & Transformation directorate and the council.

▶ REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS

The business improvement element of the Improvement Service has developed well in the past year. Key achievements in this area include the re-procurement of the council's Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) which provides 24/7 wellbeing and counselling services for all employees. Occupational Health also sits within this area; the team are triaging referrals received to ensure the process is timely and utilising occupational health placement students to strengthen resource and capacity.

Managers continue to engage with HR and their staff to effectively manage staff wellness and enable them to access the right support which is in place. The implementation of Neyber, a financial wellbeing offer for employees, went live in October 2016. It has been well received by employees to date and has the support of Trade Union representatives too. This is part of the wider comprehensive programme to promote health and wellbeing in employees across the council.

Additionally, the council's managed service provider for agency staff (Matrix SCM) contract has continued to be robustly managed to drive compliance in ensuring agency staffing needs are monitored and managed with a continuous focus on driving down cost, usage and spend where possible. We are compliant with the Eastern Region Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) relating to children's qualified social work agency staff. The additional pressure introduced by revised IR35 legislation has been successfully managed and mitigated.

The recruitment team has built on the successful improvements made in the previous 12 months. The approach being taken by the recruitment team is now one of 'direct sourcing', actively seeking the right talent for the organisation and reducing costs.

The team have successfully on-boarded a number of long term agency workers, and work in Children's Services in relation to qualified social care recruitment has been particularly successful, with a corresponding reduction in agency staff in this area. The team have also gained 'disability confident committed' accreditation in the disability confident employer scheme in relation to recruitment practices and will work toward achieving the highest level accreditation possible in the coming months.

The Executive Support Hub provides dedicated support to the Chief Executive, Directors and Assistant Directors. The remit of the team has expanded in the last few months to adapt to the changing needs of senior management.

► **PERFORMANCE**

KPI Title	2016/17 Outturn	Qtr 1 YTD	Qtr 1 Target	Performance
Average no. of calendar days from successful applicant form to start date to fill vacant roles (incl. DBS* and non-DBS)	52.7	51	50	Failed

*DBS = Disclosure Barring Service (formerly known as Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check)

An online DBS system was introduced recently which has helped to streamline the process and improve on-boarding times. An enhanced online applicant tracking system (ATS) has been implemented and work remains ongoing to ensure the full functionality of this is utilised and integrated with our existing HR systems to streamline and digitalise the recruitment and on-boarding process to ensure a first class service is provided to future employees. Direction of travel is positive for working to achieve target.

KPI Title	2016/17 Outturn	Qtr 1 YTD	Qtr 1 Target	Performance
No of agency FTE staff - whole council	248	252	Reduction	Failed
£ Spend on agency staff -whole council	£9,828,491	£2,509,486	£2,137,500	Failed

Work is ongoing to reduce number of and spend on agency staff across the council. This is monitored monthly at People Board and Performance Board with quarterly reports scrutinised at Directors Board. Robust spend targets have been set and services have support from the improvement team to achieve these.

This has been and will continue to be a key focus for senior officers and the situation is starting to improve. The most recent data (Month 4) is showing a year on year reduction in spend as Directors work towards minimising our use of agency staff to achieve the agreed saving, whilst retaining the flexibility non-permanent staff provide.

Spend on agency in the first quarter is higher than target due to a number of unforeseen circumstances. These include the need to bring some consultancy spend on contract due to revised IR35 legislation, additional staff needed in environment frontline services to fulfil the 'Clean it, Cut it, Fill it' agenda and pressures within commissioned domiciliary care services meaning critical staff have had to transfer directly to the council as agency workers.

Permanent and fixed term staffing opportunities are being used at every opportunity to reduce spend and usage and the aim is to ensure agency staff are only utilised to fill essential requirements in services.

KPI Title	2016/17 Outturn	Qtr 1 YTD	Qtr 1 Target	Performance
No of new apprenticeships started (incl. current staff	n/a	8	10	Failed

undertaking new apprentice standards)				
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The apprentice levy commenced in April 2017 so performance in Quarter 1 of 2017/18 was expected to be low, however June 2017 shows the positive trend that is commencing as managers are engaging with the levy project and working with the business improvement team to utilise the opportunity that the levy presents.

► **FUTURE: IMPROVEMENT SERVICE**

The business improvement team will continue to work with FirstCare and Matrix SCM to ensure absence and agency staff, respectively, are addressed and monitored on an ongoing basis with managers. The new employee assistance programme provider will also continue to be managed effectively, ensuring staff across the council are aware of the support on offer. The wellbeing offer to staff is ongoing, aligning with areas in which the council has high sickness. The team are working towards achieving Safe, Effective, Quality, Occupational Health Service (SEQOHS) accreditation for our occupational health service.

A review of the council's people performance management process is also commencing shortly. Reviewing our standard management objectives to ensure they are fit for purpose and ensuring that the way managers' manage performance and reward is in line with best practice and engages staff in the process.

The recruitment team's focus is to ensure the new Applicant Tracking System (ATS) that is utilised to its fullest capabilities to help achieve our time to hire KPI. Work has continued on the council's advertising strategy to ensure that we are attracting, and retaining, staff with the skills that Thurrock needs to deliver its ambitious agenda and priorities. The recruitment service is also developing a commercial focus, selling recruitment advertising to businesses and academies in the borough with the full recruitment offer to be developed to generate income.

The apprentice levy commenced in April 2017 and work is already ongoing to ensure the council makes the most of its contribution and achieves the target number of apprentices set by Government (2.3% of headcount which accounts to 53 for Thurrock), whilst also ensuring they have a valuable and worthwhile apprentice experience and put Thurrock Council on the map as a provider of first-class apprenticeship opportunities. We are focusing on branching outside of the traditional business administration apprenticeship, with a clear focus on ensuring we are workforce planning effectively for the future looking at planning, legal and social care apprenticeships to fill the hard-to-recruit areas and address any skill gaps.

The Executive Support Hub will continue to work with senior management to ensure the service provided is first class and remains flexible to any changing needs or requirements. A business resource review is underway, considering how the council can best use its administration and personal assistant (PA) support services, with efficiencies and process improvements a focus.

▶ FINANCIAL INFORMATION 2017/18

Service Area	Full Year Budget £0	Full Year Forecast £0	Variance £0
Improvement Team	764,174	764,174	0

HUMAN RESOURCES & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (HR OD)

▶ SERVICE OVERVIEW

The focus of the HR OD service is to ensure the council has a confident, competent, high performing and customer focussed workforce.

The Service comprises a People and Organisational Development team with a focus on delivering the people strategy and supporting the organisation to manage change effectively; an HR Advisory team with a focus on ensuring compliance with expected people management standards, policies, and legislation changes; and a payroll team which delivers corporate, schools and academy payrolls.

The service, structure and work delivered have been subject to a comprehensive service review as part of the council's transformation programme - the service has presented proposals to both restructure resources and refocus work delivered to modernise the service, ensure a smarter use of resources and to provide capacity to generate income.

Over 2016/2017 the service has achieved national recognition for excellence in employee relations by winning both the Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development award and the Personnel Today award. The team were also finalists in April's PPMA Excellence in People Management awards recognising the standards of our in-house training provision and the training we give to our volunteers across the borough and working from our Community Hubs. This work has also been recognised by Personnel Today Awards 2017 - winners will be announced in November.

▶ REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS

The People Strategy for 2017-2020 was agreed in April 2017. The strategy serves as a framework for the organisation, describing the workforce we need to develop in order to meet the vision and priorities of the council and the needs of Thurrock residents over the next three years.

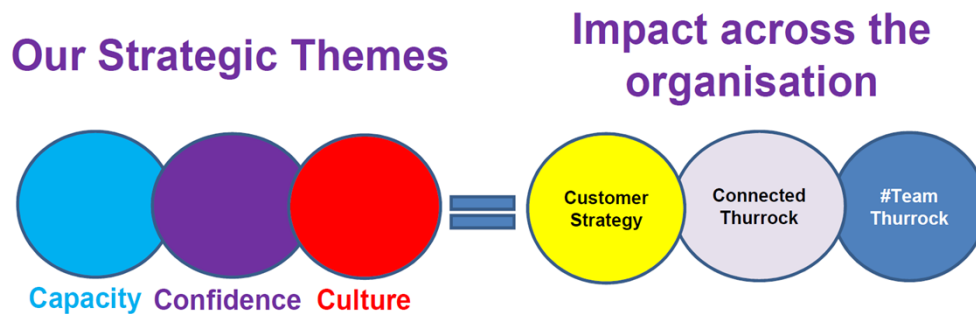
It is built around three strategic themes of **capacity**, **confidence** and **culture**.

Capacity - A customer first approach and a workforce that has the capacity to deliver what is required, multi skilled with flexible structures and agile working practices, our workforce are able to adapt to what is required

Confidence - A confident workforce who are free to innovate and take managed risks, clear on their value, taking new challenges in their stride, remaining resilient and able to adapt, working differently using modern tools and techniques

Culture - A 'one team' culture of inclusion and engagement where people are confident to challenge, resilient in the face of our transforming organisation and where high performance and the delivery of outcomes is the norm. Excellent leadership, management and trust drive a climate of continual improvement and effective use of resources

The actions to delivery these strategic themes has been closely planned and integrated with the themes within other key strategies which impact the way we need council officers to work:



Good progress has already been made on embedding customer services skills training and digital skills. The investment in our workforce has continued with our continuing professional development programme, including a bespoke leadership and management development programme, which ensures we are attractive as an employer to our residents.

There has been a promising level of interest from other local authorities on buying some of our training and this will further inform the re-shaping of the team and our training offer and the services we trade to others as we continue through 2017/18.

Following the high levels of engagement with our staff survey in 2016, a Pulse Survey ran across April. This demonstrated improved results across all priority areas. Follow up workshops with directorates identified local actions and the corporate wide action plan has been refreshed; progress on delivery of this action plan is being monitored and reviewed as we progress through 2017/18.

In line with the People Strategy priorities for 2017 a bespoke leadership and management development programme has been created to provide challenge and ensure the council has the required leadership capacity it needs.

The People and OD team have created a tailored change programme to support teams undertaking their service reviews and change management skills is embedded into the core programme. To ensure managers can support career development for their staff the in-house team are now an accredited Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) centre and are able to offer a broader programme of development, resulting in formal qualifications. This also provides an opportunity to offer these services externally as the year progresses. The team have responded to particular development needs within services and have provided tailored programmes to meet these needs. The bespoke customer services programme for the waste team is being used as a model for others.

The HR Advisory team has made good progress on challenging current processes to ensure the most efficient working practices are in place; employees are directed to the intranet to help support our drive towards digital solutions; work with managers has focused on building their confidence in people management skills to support key areas like managing sickness.

A project team from across the whole service and some line managers from People Board has been established to deliver the actions in the council wide managing absence action plan. This will continue as a major priority for this year.

Payroll processes have been reviewed to drive efficient working practices and the team has spent time to promote their services to schools and academies. From April to August 2017 Payroll has taken on payroll services for three academies and E2BN (a regional broadband consortium). This has generated an income stream for the service.

► PERFORMANCE

KPI Title	2016/17 Outturn	Qtr 1 YTD	Qtr 1 Target	Performance	Direction of Travel
Average sickness absence per FTE employee	10.43	2.32	2.25	FAILED	Better
% of sickness which is long term	n/a	68.83%	50%	FAILED	n/a – new calculation
% staff turnover	12.3%	11.63%	n/a	n/a	Lower

It is recognised that average sickness absence rates continue to be slightly above the KPI target. HR are working closely with managers in respect of raising the profile of timely intervention in terms of those individuals meeting a trigger point with particular emphasis on stage 1's being completed as soon as trigger has been reached. There is ongoing work with Occupational Health to ensure referrals are fast tracked where required. There is also a robust process in place for escalation.

Sickness absence is a key priority for People Board and as such the managing absence action plan is regularly monitored to ensure that the key deliverables are on target. This includes targeted action and support to managers for staff who are on long term sickness.

Staff turnover rates, whilst not targeted, are monitored monthly to ensure they remain in line with similar organisations and previous trends. A turnover rate of 10-12% is widely considered as healthy in an organisation of this size and type.

► FUTURE: HR & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Looking ahead to respond to the plans for council and the changes needed as part of the wider transformation programme, we will continue to refine the corporate training provision and specific tailored programmes for our leaders and managers to ensure we continue to build the capacity needed; focused change management workshops will ensure the organisation are supported through the changes for their teams; and further income generation opportunities will be scoped and developed.

Directors will be supported by their HR Business Partner who will work to understand the specific needs, requirements and direction for each directorate in order to shape

the most appropriate support from across the HR service to meet their needs. This will ensure that directorates have one key relationship holder to work with them.

In line with the People Strategy priorities each directorate will consider specific people related issues, talent management and career pathways including the use of apprentices and how they will need to engage with the leadership and management programmes. Manager toolkits and digital resources will be rolled out across the organisation.

Payroll will continue to shape its services to schools and academies and work to promote the benefits of our services for a reasonable cost.

► **FINANCIAL INFORMATION 2017/18**

Service Area	Full Year Budget £0	Full Year Forecast £0	Variance £0
HROD	2,008,574	2,008,574	0

CORPORATE PROGRAMME TEAM

▶ SERVICE OVERVIEW

The Corporate Programme Team is responsible for the delivery of the council's Transformation Programme initiatives. This ambitious programme ranges from enhancing the way citizens interact digitally with the council, via Thurrock On-Line, to implementing new ways for employees to work and deliver services more efficiently. Primarily consisting of Project and Programme Managers supported by Project Officers the team is continuously delivering corporate changes that impact the whole organisation with regards the delivery of council services.

In a changing world, any organisation or business that cannot adapt to the new norms, will not survive. This is also true of local authorities such as ours which looks after the people, economy and environment of Thurrock. To help us deliver the best possible services the Corporate Programme Team are actively engaged in a three year council-wide Service Review programme, to look at doing things differently, helping employees work smarter not harder and driving continuous improvement throughout the whole organisation.

▶ REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS

Over the last twelve months one of our key transformational focus areas has been the continued effort to encourage citizens of Thurrock to utilise self-service and online facilities – known as Channel Shift. We can measure this through monitoring individual household registrations on our online portal called MyAccount. We currently have over 56,700 households out of a possible 66,000 registered which equates to an impressive **86%** of all households. As we increase the percentage of households that have MyAccounts the velocity of new sign-ups becomes increasingly slower.

We are now starting to reach areas of the population who are unable, unwilling, or unsure how to get online. To help support the conversion of the remaining 14% of households to online we offer assisted self-service within the Civic Offices in conjunction with offering support at Community Hubs to ensure we minimise online/digital exclusion. Further real-time online assistance will soon be available when web-chat is introduced to key pages on MyAccount.

Other initiatives that deliver broadband access to areas of the borough not currently serviced by mainstream suppliers are also being supported by the Council as part of our Connected Thurrock Digital Strategy.

We already know that technology has transformed everything from interaction and connecting with friends, family and businesses (social media platforms), banking (mobile applications) to parcel deliveries (online tracking systems) and will continue to do so.

The potential efficiencies are significant. The average cost of a digital interaction is 15p. This is much lower than the average cost of dealing with a query via telephone (£2.83) and a face to face meeting (£8.62).

So how do we know this approach is working for Thurrock's residents? Well, since the Thurrock On-Line programme commenced back in 2013 we've seen a significant reduction in call volumes to the Contact Centre relating to key services that have moved online:

BENEFITS calls	down 47%
COUNCIL TAX calls	down 29%
ENVIRONMENT calls	down 45%

More and more of our residents are choosing to interact with us online and we will continue to mutually embrace such changes through our Digital Programme.

► **DIGITAL PROGRAMME: Completed elements**

Thurrock On Line:

- The school admissions single-sign-on was completed in Aug 2016 and proved highly successful
- Planning portal payment integration was completed October 2016
- My Account's integrated benefit change of circumstance product deployed
- Council tax mover integration
- Council Tax eBilling went live in 2017 allowing residents to receive electronic Council Tax bills rather than receiving paper ones

Business Improvement – Oracle

- Improved management reporting for budget holders
- Improved payroll bulk data upload capability in Waste & Recycling team
- Improved HR 'new post' creation process
- Improved organisational hierarchy data structure and related workflows
- Implemented external payroll capability to take on academy payrolls

EDRMS phase 2:

- Further integration with Line of Business Applications
- In November 2016 Thurrock won a Document Management award for Public Sector project of the year for its deployment of the Objective EDRMS system

► **SERVICE REVIEWS:**

The three year service review programme began in July 2016 to improve efficiencies across the council. There are currently 58 service reviews on the programme with 24 reviews going through the process following 7 service review design principles. These principles underpin every review and form the basis of checks and challenges to ensure every service is running as efficiently as possible.

Each service review is coordinated by a Senior Project Manager from the Corporate Programme Team and aligned with representatives from HR in conjunction with a Business Analyst and an independent Critical Friend from a separate service to provide an element of additional, independent, check and challenge.

► PERFORMANCE

KPI Title	2016/17 Outturn	Latest Data	End of Year Target	Performance	Direction of Travel
No of people registered for My Account	51,201	56,700	56,000	ACHIEVED	Better

► FUTURE:

Innovation and new ways of working are constantly on our radar in order to deliver the best possible services to the residents and businesses of Thurrock. Through the very active Service Review programme we will continue to strive for more operational efficiencies and increased productivity. Ground breaking projects such as using data analytics to predict early help for our younger residents and assistive technology to help support and care for our older residents will continue to dominate our appetite to transform the council and manage demand more effectively.

Other key initiatives that are currently under consideration, development or in early stages of project commencement are:

Business Improvement – Oracle

- Semi-automated on-boarding process for new staff
- Improved bulk payroll data upload capability in Collins House residential team
- Improvements to employee self-serve capability
- Improvements to on-boarding of external payroll and other associated traded service capabilities

Thurrock On-Line:

- Web chat (currently in test/training phase)
- Registrar appointments single-sign-on
- Single view of debt
- Adult Social Care resource allocation system
- Licensing
- Benefit claim evidence upload
- Carers assessment – self assessment of care
- AD Insight – a My Account management information tool
- Registrar copy certificate ordering service

Electronic Document and Records Management - phase 2:

- Digital mailroom (inbound mail) proof of concept
- Continued integration with Line of Business Applications
- Bulk document scanning and archiving

Information Portal

The ongoing development of a citizen facing Information Portal to publish a variety of facts and statistics in order to reduce/speed up the response to FOI requests and provide a central point for self-service access. Released earlier in 2017 the aim is to

further broaden the information available on this portal as and when it becomes available. The portal is at www.thurrock.gov.uk/thurrock-facts-and-statistics/overview

Agile working

A refreshed approach to agile working is also underway. This will ensure that the council's staff have opportunity to work wherever it allows them to be the most productive whilst maximising the use of office space in the most efficient way possible.

► FINANCIAL INFORMATION 2017/18

Service Area	Full Year Budget £0	Full Year Forecast £0	Variance £0
Transformation	729,104	729,104	0

CUSTOMER SERVICES

▶ SERVICE OVERVIEW

This part of the portfolio includes all front line customer contact including contact centre, Careline, out-of-hours and the Face to Face on the ground floor of the Civic Offices.

▶ REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS

A key success for this part of my portfolio in 2016/17 was the launch of the Customer Services strategy (agreed by Cabinet in April 2017) and the work of the Customer and Demand Management Board.

The Customer Services Strategy sets out where the council wants to be and how it will get there. It provides a strategic overview that will lead the direction of travel through service plans and other council documents and procedures. The strategy is part of a wider programme of projects and links closely to the Digital and People Strategies. It creates a comprehensive plan of how we will improve service to our customers across all access channels.

The quality of the customer service team is well regarded and the performance data shows consistent achievement of targets. This has again been recognised externally with the reaccreditation of the CCA (Customer Contact Association) Version 6 status. This is an independent audit of our customer services operation against industry developed and approved requirements.

▶ PERFORMANCE

KPI Title	2016/17 Outturn	Qtr 1 YTD	Qtr 1 Target	Performance	Direction of Travel
No of phone calls made to the Contact Centre	384,700	97,954	n/a	n/a	Fewer
Customer Service call quality	97.68%	97%	85%	ACHIEVED	In line
No of Face to face visits to Civic Offices	101,913	19,960	n/a	n/a	Fewer
Average waiting time for Face to Face (mins:sec)	6:53	8:07	<10:00	ACHIEVED	Worse
No of emails received	8,811	3,499	n/a	n/a	More
% of emails responded to within 2 days	100%	100%	100%	ACHIEVED	In line
No of phone calls made to Careline	162,000	39,662	n/a	n/a	Fewer

▶ FUTURE

One of the key priorities for this team over 2017/18 is the delivery of the customer services strategy. The action planning is being aligned very closely with the delivery plans for both the digital and people strategies.

Part of this plan includes the development and delivery of some bespoke customer services training and support for front line services.

Other initiatives include a council wide review of external letters and making the best use out of the expertise of the dedicated telephony staff within the contact centre. The implementation of this strategy is also linked with delivery of savings as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

▶ **FINANCIAL INFORMATION 2017/18**

Service Area	Full Year Budget £0	Full Year Forecast £0	Variance £0
Customer Services	851,986	851,986	0

INFORMATION TEAM

▶ SERVICE OVERVIEW

This team is responsible for ensuring compliance with information governance regulations and protection of the council's reputation, including information security (policies and procedures), data protection, Freedom of Information (FOI), Records Management, Complaints and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) including Local Land & Property Gazetteer (LLPG) /Local Street Gazetteer (LSG).

▶ REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS

During 2016/17, the council processed 97% of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests within the legal timeframe. This is based on 1046 FOI requests that were processed. 2016/17 has seen an increase in FOI requests received compared with 2015/16 (980 received). However 388 requests were refused and/or part supplied by the council.

The council challenge and/or refuse requests when it is believed that the requestor has used a false name, where we have reasonable grounds to believe the applicant is acting as part of a campaign or in consort with others, or where their questions do not meet the other validity requirements for FOI. The council refuse requests where it is estimated that the time taken to process the request exceeds 18 hours.

During 2016/17 the council received 47 Subject Access Requests under the Data Protection legislation. 83% of these requests were processed within the timeframe.

The Information Governance Team is continuing to ensure an increased amount of data is identified for routine publication online. This work forms part of the Transparency Agenda and aims to increase openness and accountability; whilst reducing unnecessary processing of FOI requests.

A review of the complaints procedure took place in 2016/17, which resulted in the removal of the concerns stage and shorter timeframes for responding to complaints across all stages. These changes were introduced from 1 August 2016.

The combined total of complaints and concerns received for 2016/17 is 2890. The combined total for 2015/16 was 4506.

During 2016/17, 38% of complaints were upheld. This is an improvement compared with 2015/16 which identified 50% of complaints as being upheld.

For the reporting period, 90% of complaints were responded to within timeframe. Performance has dipped compared to the previous year (98%) and is due to a combination of shorter complaint timeframes that were introduced on the 1 August 2016 and the introduction of the requirement for a senior officer sign for complaints within certain areas.

A total of 752 MP/MEP enquiries were received, of which 97% were responded to within the timeframe.

A total of 4065 members enquiries were received, of which 97% were responded to within the timeframe. The average time taken to respond to members enquiries across all Directorates was 5 days.

▶ **PERFORMANCE**

KPI Title	2016/17 Outturn	Qtr 1 YTD	Qtr 1 Target	Performance	Direction of Travel
% timeliness of response to all complaints (all services except social care)	90	79	95	FAILED	Worse
% of all complaints upheld (based on closed complaints)	38	37	35	FAILED	Better

▶ **FUTURE**

The focus for the team in 2017/18 will be on the following:

- To continue to drive forward a learning from complaints culture with robust learning action plans across council services
- To implement changes required as part of the General Data Protection Regulation
- Align and embed statutory complaints process changes to improve the end to end process
- Reduce manual records storage costs with the delivery of the corporate wide manual records project

▶ **FINANCIAL INFORMATION 2017/18**

Service Area	Full Year Budget £0	Full Year Forecast £0	Variance £0
Information Management	608,133	608,133	0