

**26 October 2016**

**ITEM: 11**

**Full Council**

**Cabinet Member Report for Performance and Central Services**

**Report of: Councillor Deborah Stewart**

This report is public.

### **Introduction by Performance & Central Services Portfolio Holder**

This is my first report to Council as Portfolio Holder for Performance and Central Services. I am delighted to be able to present this as it encapsulates something about which I am very passionate – supporting teams to deliver good quality services to Thurrock’s residents.

Often people's eyes will gloss over and ears shut at the mention of key performance indicators, targets and statistics. However, these are the very tools by which we can see how the council and its services are performing; if we are maintaining levels and improving or if standards are slipping. The sole purpose of measuring performance is to ensure we are offering the best services possible to Thurrock residents and making people's lives better. We deserve the best, which is why I will do my utmost to highlight and measure performance in a way that strives for continual improvement.

I want our performance results to be clear, transparent and easy to interpret, which is why the style of reporting has changed. For so long services nearly on target but not quite have been recorded as Amber... nearly passing. Well I will not accept mediocrity for Thurrock residents. Being nearly good enough is quite simply just not good enough! The new report design allows us to instantly see service areas that are achieving and improving, but more importantly highlighting the areas that are not. Cabinet members will be informed of failing performance on a monthly basis asking not only for causes of concern but what actions will be taken to improve.

By taking a more holistic approach to performance, by embracing complaints, examining data from our customer contact centre and the KPIs, including our residents’ comments and perceptions from the residents survey, we will strive to be proactive and forward thinking, thus reducing the problems residents experience and aiming to stop the problem from arising in the first place.

And it’s not just for councillors, we want more residents to keep an eye on what’s going on and the best way to do that is to keep it simple and to the point which is a key part of my ongoing review.

This portfolio covers a wide range of support services and it keeps me very busy.

## **CORPORATE PERFORMANCE**

### **▶ SERVICE OVERVIEW**

My portfolio has oversight of the wider corporate performance framework which is primarily concerned with ensuring the council and its services are delivering against its objectives to improve the lives of Thurrock residents.

### **▶ REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS**

Since I took over this portfolio I have changed the reporting format, frequency and scrutiny process to make performance information of the council more transparent and easier to understand.

With the demand for council services increasing and being ever more complex, a more holistic approach to monitoring data and intelligence will be used. This will include scrutiny of the workflow and demand in front line services at the highest level. There will also be increased analysis of internal processes at service level by Directors. This approach will ensure the mixture of data being monitored is most useful and provides proper intelligence for business decision making.

The reports no longer categorise KPI performance against target as Red, Amber or Green (RAG status). Instead there is a simplified Achieved or Failed i.e. performance which is worse than target regardless of the margin they will have “failed” by.

I have also changed the order in which performance is scrutinised, therefore Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee now receive quarterly reports before Cabinet. This enables cross party scrutiny and issues to be raised before Cabinet considers the report. This can only be a good thing for transparency and for the sharing of ideas and recommendations for improvement.

This team expanded to incorporate the Performance Quality and Business Support team supporting Children’s and Adults services which was relocated to the corporate centre following the senior management restructure.

### **▶ PERFORMANCE**

The corporate performance report is presented to Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet on a quarterly basis and as such is available for all to see.

The cross-council officer led Performance Board meets monthly to review, monitor and challenge performance of the key performance indicators which are used to monitor progress against the council priority activities. Directors Board and Portfolio Holders review the information relating to their areas on a monthly basis.

### **▶ FUTURE: CORPORATE PERFORMANCE**

There will be a full and thorough review of existing KPIs and other performance tools in 2016 keeping in line with recommendations made by Corporate Overview and Scrutiny in 2015/16.

This review will also take into account feedback and intelligence the council receives from residents. As part of the review the council will also be looking at the trends in other forms of feedback received including complaints and customer service requests and the resident survey which will be undertaken this Autumn.

► **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Full Year Budget £0</b>	<b>Full Year Forecast £0</b>	<b>Variance £0</b>
Strategy and Performance	401,244	401,244	0
Performance Quality and Business Support (Children's and Adults)	805,512	805,512	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,206,756</b>	<b>1,206,756</b>	<b>0</b>

## **IMPROVEMENT SERVICE**

### **▶ SERVICE OVERVIEW**

The Improvement Service incorporates business improvement, recruitment team and the Executive Support Hub. This service was newly established back in February 2015 with the primary focus of driving process improvements 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 managed service provider for agency staff (Matrix SCM) which has been implemented successfully and enables the council to robustly monitor spend and use of agency staff with a continuous focus on driving down cost, usage and spend where possible. The team has also worked to ensure any off-contract spend in this area has been addressed, with figures recently showing that spend on temporary staff outside of the Matrix contract, which is sometimes necessary for hard to recruit roles, has decreased.

Also re-procured in the last 12 months, is the council's absence management system, now with FirstCare which has provided an enhanced front-end service and better management information. Occupational Health administration and the council's wellbeing offer also sits within this area; referrals have been simplified to ensure quicker access to the service and the support needed to return to work. Occupational Health referrals have increased in recent months, whilst of concern at first glance, this does also indicate that Managers are effectively managing staff wellness and are enabling them to access the right support.

The recruitment team was absorbed into the service in October 2015 prior to the official transition of Serco services back to the council as it was a failing service. A red audit report for recruitment was published recently, which considered new starters in the period April – September 2015. However a focussed re-audit clearly demonstrated the extensive improvements that have taken place since the service returned to the council, these include:

- The implementation of an applicant tracking system (ATS) in October 2015 has provided an online solution for applicants, improved the timeliness of the service and streamlined processes across the organisation.
- The recruitment team is now fully resourced, is managing the recruitment process across the council efficiently, has received a number of compliments over recent months and is progressing well with its commercial aspirations.

The Executive Support Hub provides dedicated support to the Chief Executive, Directors and Heads of Service. The remit of their team has expanded in the last few months to incorporate a number of additional Heads of Service into the support structure and this has been done without any increase in resource.

## ► PERFORMANCE

KPI Title	2015/16 Outturn	Qtr 1 Data	Qtr 1 Target	Performance	Direction of Travel
Average no. of calendar days from advert to starting date to fill vacant DBS* roles	n/a	60.3	60	FAILED	n/a
Average no. of calendar days from advert to starting date to fill vacant non-DBS roles	n/a	65	30	FAILED	n/a

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

**Performance Commentary:** Quarter 1 saw high levels of recruitment – a new online DBS system is being brought in which should reduce time to recruit as it is typically DBS checks that delay the on-boarding of new starters ; team now fully resourced and expecting to continue reduction in time to recruit. Whilst performance shows failing, the team have not previously been able to measure time to recruit so this is the first year which will give us indicative data to work against going forward. Additionally, the recruitment service was recently acknowledged by the audit team of having made good improvements to the process since the transition of the service back from Serco last year. With these targets recently set the service are confident these will be achieved at the end of 2016/17 with the revised system / processes in place and setting standards for actions on both the recruitment team and manager side in relation to the recruitment process.

KPI Title	2015/16 Outturn	Qtr 1 Data	Qtr 1 Target	Performance	Direction of Travel
No of agency FTE staff - whole council	210	227	220	FAILED	Higher
£ Spend on agency staff - whole council	8,861K	2,421K	Lower than 2015/16	FAILED	Higher

**Performance Commentary:** Work is ongoing to reduce numbers of and spend on agency staff across the council and is being monitored closely at People Board and Directors Board. With support from the improvement team directorates are working to achieve these targets. Spend on agency staff remains high, and whilst this was expected due to the transition of a number of agency staff from Serco , we are undertaking work to reduce this spend through permanent recruitment to vacancies where possible and ensuring agency staff are only used to fill essential requirements in services.

## ► 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. A number of additional contracts are also due for re-procurement, including the council's employee assistance programme, so ensuring best value for money and a quality service will be a priority. The implementation of Neyber, a financial wellbeing offer for employees, will be a priority project aiming for go-live in October 2016.

The recruitment team's focus is the re-procurement of the Applicant Tracking System which is expected to go live in December 2016, this will enable further process improvements to be made and allow us to develop our commercial aspirations further. Additionally they will start to consider the council's advertising strategy, ensuring that Thurrock Council is on the map!

The apprentice levy that comes into force in 2017 is also a focus to ensure the council makes the most of its contribution and work on achieving the target number of apprentices whilst ensuring they have a valuable and worthwhile experience in Thurrock.

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.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (HR OD)**

### **▶ SERVICE OVERVIEW**

The HR OD Service came together following the transition of ex Serco staff into the Council on 1 December 2015. The service now comprises an organisational development team with a focus on delivering people strategy, HR Advisory team with a focus on ensuring compliance with people management standards, policies and legislation, and Payroll services which delivers both corporate and schools payroll.

The way the Serco transition was managed and the support that was put in place for the people transferring in has been recognised with the achievement of a national award from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development for 'Best Employee Relations Initiative 2016'.

The team alongside colleagues in the Improvement team were also finalists in the PPMA Excellence in People Management Awards in the Health & Well Being and Recruitment, Reward & Retention categories and are also finalists for the November Personnel Today awards in the HR Impact; Employee Relations and Excellence in Public Sector HR categories.

### **▶ REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS**

The Organisational Development (OD) team have progressed well over the past 12 months: shaping and delivering a staff survey to measure employee engagement and overseeing the organisational wide action plans to address key areas; delivered Investors in People process and achieved reaccreditation at Gold status; as well as redefining our corporate people development programme to ensure services have access to a modern, forward thinking workforce.

We have seen an increase in requests for support and training from other local authorities over the last 12 months and are in a good position to shape a traded OD consultancy service as well as from selling individual training programmes. We will be actively seeking to do this and generate income from this service to reduce the need for savings in other areas important to residents.

Since the transition the HR Advisory team have embedded well and have been focussing on aligning process and policy and providing managers with effective support across all employee relations matters.

Since the transition the Payroll team have seen a number of changes and have made good progress with embedding online processes – this has been absorbed into the Oracle Improvement project.

Our Payroll services to schools have been a focus for the team and we are adapting our services to incorporate the changes they require in moving to Academy status.

► **PERFORMANCE DATA**

KPI Title	2015/16 Outturn	Qtr 1 Data	Qtr 1 Target	Performance	Direction of Travel
Average sickness days per FTE	9.69	2.22	2.25	ACHIEVED	Better
No of FTE	1659	1653	n/a	n/a	lower
No of new starters	256	107	n/a	n/a	lower
No of leavers	263	72	n/a	n/a	lower

► **FUTURE: HR & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM**

The People Strategy is currently being shaped and the OD team will deliver the key priorities identified; we will continue to refine the corporate development programme to meet the training needs of all Directorates; we are currently scoping a leadership and management development programme to capture key skills that the organisation needs to deliver its priorities e.g. commercialism, customer service, generic skills that can be deployed flexibly. The OD team will continue to work with services to address the actions identified from their Staff Survey results and will coordinate the actions identified in the Investor in People continuous Improvement plan.

We will continue to align the HR Advisory team to support the directorates and services as they change as part of the Service Reviews which will be ongoing throughout 2016 /17 and beyond.

We will continue to refine our traded services offer to ensure we can take advantage of the interest from other authorities, schools and academies on buying training, HR advice and support and Payroll services.

► **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

Service Area	Full Year Budget £0	Full Year Forecast £0	Variance £0
Improvement	895,252	895,252	0
HR & Organisational Development	1,653,093	1,653,093	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,548,345</b>	<b>2,548,345</b>	<b>0</b>



## **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 its employees to work and deliver services. 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.

Balancing demand, technology and budget is an everyday task for this team and operational efficiency requirements have increased in complexity over the years giving us plenty of challenges.

### **▶ REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS**

Over the last twelve months we have been focussing on continuing to deliver against the digital programme with a number of successfully completed and in-flight projects:

#### **Completed**

- Tilbury and Purfleet Community Hubs refurbishment
- Lync for business phase 2 (audio conferencing and screen sharing)
- Digital Documents phase 1 - Electronic Document Records Management System (EDRMS) roll-out
- Thurrock On Line:
  - Online school admissions
  - AD Contact
  - Enhanced "report it" capability: pothole, street lighting
  - Web Survey
  - Registrar bookings
  - Bulky Waste bookings

#### **In progress**

- Business Improvement – Oracle
  - Data cleansing
  - Improved management Reporting
  - Enhanced HR & Payroll processes and services
- Data Analytics / early intervention (Children's Services)
- Thurrock On Line:
  - Council Tax eBilling
  - Web chat
  - Licencing (various)
- EDRMS phase 2:
  - Integration with Line of Business Applications
  - Bulk document scanning and archiving

## ► PERFORMANCE DATA

Currently our main focus is to drive citizens of Thurrock to utilise self-service and online facilities through individual household registration with MyAccount. The target was 61% by 2016 - we currently have 66% of households registered on MyAccount. We have not forgotten residents who are unable or unsure how to get online and offer assisted self-service within the Civic Offices as well as support at Community Hubs to ensure we minimise online/digital exclusion. Further online assistance will be available live when web-chat is introduced later this year.

KPI Title	2015/16 Outturn	Qtr 1 Data	Qtr1 Target	Performance	Direction of Travel
No of people registered for My Account	31,561	36,035	35,000	ACHIEVED	Better

## ► FUTURE:

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

- The development of a citizen facing Data Portal to publish a variety of data feeds in order to reduce/speed up the response to FOI requests and provide a central point for self-service public facing data access.
- Digital Documents Phase 2 – enhanced electronic document workflow to minimise internal paper handling.
- Civic Offices Phase 3 – Transformation of Ground Floor to reflect a more modern approach to citizen services, such as self-service kiosks, supporting document scanning facilities etc.
- Integrated Data Solution & Service Data Analytics (NHS & Social Services) – predictive modelling of data to allow early health care intervention.
- Cashless council – further integration of ad-hoc on-line payments (certificate re-prints, library fines etc.) to minimise cash handling costs/risks across the council.
- Bi-directional online reporting of missed bin collections – to allow citizens to see online why their bins may have been missed before calling us (we will tell them they did not put it out or it was contaminated). It also allows citizens to report missed bins online rather than make a phone call.

## ► FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Service Area	Full Year Budget £0	Full Year Forecast £0	Variance £0
Transformation	481,671	481,671	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>481,671</b>	<b>481,671</b>	<b>0</b>

## CUSTOMER SERVICES

### ▶ SERVICE OVERVIEW

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

A key part of this portfolio for 2016/17 will be the development of a new customer services strategy and the work of the Customer and Demand Management Board.

### ▶ REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS

Customer Services colleagues transferred from Serco in December 2015. Recently the team have taken over the receipt of calls to the HR and Payroll service, to provide a better and more timely response to staff and external callers.

The quality of the customer service is well regarded and the performance data shows consistent achievement of targets. This has been recognised externally as well and earlier this year the Customer Services team were awarded the CCA (Customer Contact Association) Version 6 accreditation. This is a great achievement and I am really proud of the staff.

This was an independent audit of our customer services operation against industry developed and approved requirements. Version 6 provides a platform for excellence in customer service and we will be looking to embed this ethos across the council through the development of the new strategy and culture supported by training.

### ▶ PERFORMANCE

KPI Title	2015/16 Outturn	Qtr 1 Data	Qtr 1 Target	Performance	Direction of Travel
No of phone calls made to the Contact Centre	420,737	107,861	n/a	n/a	Fewer
Customer Service call quality	96.5%	97%	85%	ACHIEVED	Better
No of Face to face visits to Civic Offices	85,416	24,634	n/a	n/a	Higher
Average waiting time for Face to Face (mins:sec)	8:23	7:27	<10	ACHIEVED	Better
No of emails received	14,691	2151	n/a	n/a	Fewer
% of emails responded to within 2 days	100%	100%	100%	ACHIEVED	Same

### ▶ FUTURE: CUSTOMER STRATEGY

One of the ways that the council is going to reduce its reliance on the general fund is through looking at more efficient ways of delivering our customer services and generating income to protect other areas. A new Customer Strategy is being developed, which ties in all forms of direct contact with our residents, and supports

channel shift, but goes further to embed the “getting it right first time” principle. This is a wide ranging piece of work, as there are so many aspects to it, from analysis of customer requests and queries through the contact centre, monitoring of trends in complaints, usage of website to a whole scale look at the quality of the correspondence we send out. This strategy will also recognise the valuable role Community Hubs play in supporting residents who need to help to access online services.

We will be proactively engaging with our residents more through the website, social media and new e-newsletter. These channels will be used to promote the good things we do as well as encourage residents to get involved through the Hubs, timebanking and other volunteering.

▶ **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Full Year Budget £0</b>	<b>Full Year Forecast £0</b>	<b>Variance £0</b>
Customer Services	1,839,218	1,839,218	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,839,218</b>	<b>1,839,218</b>	<b>0</b>

## **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), complaints and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) including Local Land & Property Gazetteer (LLPG) /Local Street Gazetteer (LSG).

### **▶ REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS**

During 2015/16, the council processed 98% of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests within the legal timeframe. This is based on 980 FOI requests that were processed. The reporting period shows an increase in FOI requests received compared with 2014/15. It has been estimated that the average FOI request takes 2 hours 45 minutes to process.

During 2015/16 the council received 43 Subject Access Requests under the Data Protection legislation. 93% of these requests were processed within timeframe. This is a performance improvement compared with 2014/15.

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.

There has been a great deal of analysis done on the volume and issues relating to complaints received by the council.

In 2015/16, there were a total of 4,506 complaints/concerns received. 50% of those complaints were upheld. 98% of complaints were responded to in timeframe. During that period the top five expressions of dissatisfaction related to:

- Housing Repairs
- Missed Bins
- Estate Management
- Council Tax
- Housing Solutions

Reducing upheld complaints is a key area of focus. The mechanism to achieve this is the completion of Learning Action Plans (LAPs) for those services who are reporting a high percentage of upheld complaints. LAPs will:

- Confirm what went wrong in the service and identify the cause of the problem
- Explain what action, targeted to address the cause of the problem, will be taken to stop it happening again and who will be responsible for ensuring this happens
- Provide a timescale for when that action took place or will take place
- Provide objective evidence of those actions

A review of the council’s complaints process has also been undertaken and a few changes have been brought in including the removal of the “concerns” stage – now dealt with as a Stage 1 complaint – and the shortening of timeframes for responding to complaints.

► **PERFORMANCE DATA**

KPI Title	2015/16 Outturn	Qtr 1 Data	Qtr 1 Target	Performance	Direction of Travel
% timeliness of response to all complaints (all services exc. social care)	98.1	99	98	ACHIEVED	Better
% of complaints upheld (all services except social care)	50	46	40	FAILED	Better
No of complaints (all) - whole council (excluding social care)	1516	346	Reduction	ACHIEVED	Better
No of member enquiries	3536	1148	n/a	n/a	Higher
No of Ombudsman enquiries received	17	4	n/a	n/a	Same
% Ombudsman notices upheld	24	0	Reduction	ACHIEVED	Better
No of FOI requests received	980	290	n/a	n/a	Higher
No of information governance incidents	37	15	Reduction	FAILED	Higher

► **FUTURE:**

The team is currently working on the following:

- To produce monthly reports to Performance Board and the Customer and Demand Board providing top level and service specific information on all complaints handled by the services. These reports will contain complaint performance information, trends and detail on upheld complaints. This will then allow services to use the information to identify and share any learning from complaints and to inform their service planning process.
- To hold complaint review meetings with services to discuss complaint volumes and trends and to agree actions for improving complaint performance.
- To continue to review the complaints procedure to ensure it best meets the needs of our residents and customers; including reviewing our existing channels open to receiving complaints at Thurrock to ensure all complaints are captured for reporting purposes.
- To explore solutions aimed at providing a more digital approach to complaints. This will include the provision for complainants to log complaints directly and to track progress/status.

► **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

Service Area	Full Year Budget £0	Full Year Forecast £0	Variance £0
Information Management	436,508	436,508	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>436,508</b>	<b>436,508</b>	<b>0</b>