

NOTICE  
OF  
MEETING

# CORPORATE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

will meet on

**MONDAY, 19TH APRIL, 2021**

**At 6.15 pm**

by

**VIRTUAL MEETING - ONLINE ACCESS ON [RBWM YOUTUBE](#)**

TO: MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

COUNCILLORS CHRIS TARGOWSKI (CHAIRMAN), PHIL HASELER (VICE-CHAIRMAN), JULIAN SHARPE, LYNNE JONES AND SIMON WERNER

SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

COUNCILLORS LEO WALTERS, GEOFF HILL, SHAMSUL SHELMIM, JOSHUA REYNOLDS AND SAYONARA LUXTON

Karen Shepherd – Head of Governance - Issued: 9<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Members of the Press and Public are welcome to attend Part I of this meeting. The agenda is available on the Council's web site at [www.rbwm.gov.uk](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk) or contact the Panel Administrator **Mark Beeley** 01628 796345 / [mark.beeley@rbwm.gov.uk](mailto:mark.beeley@rbwm.gov.uk)

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## **AGENDA**

### **PART I**

<b><u>ITEM</u></b>	<b><u>SUBJECT</u></b>	<b><u>PAGE NO</u></b>
1.	<b><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></b>  To receive any apologies for absence.	-
2.	<b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u></b>  To receive any declarations of interest.	3 - 4
3.	<b><u>MINUTES</u></b>  To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 26 <sup>th</sup> January 2021.	5 - 14
4.	<b><u>Q3 PERFORMANCE REPORT</u></b>  To consider the report.	15 - 40
5.	<b><u>ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT PROGRESS REPORT - VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS</u></b>  To consider the progress report.	41 - 44
6.	<b><u>CIPFA REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE ACTION PLAN - QUARTERLY PROGRESS UPDATE</u></b>  To consider the quarterly progress update report.	45 - 56
7.	<b><u>ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT</u></b>  To confirm the Panel's Annual Scrutiny Report for submission to Full Council.	57 - 60
8.	<b><u>WORK PROGRAMME</u></b>  To consider the Panel's work programme for the remainder of the Municipal year.  To include consideration of items scheduled on the <a href="#">Cabinet Forward Plan</a> .	61 - 62

## MEMBERS' GUIDE TO DECLARING INTERESTS IN MEETINGS

### Disclosure at Meetings

If a Member has not disclosed an interest in their Register of Interests, they **must make** the declaration of interest at the beginning of the meeting, or as soon as they are aware that they have a DPI or Prejudicial Interest. If a Member has already disclosed the interest in their Register of Interests they are still required to disclose this in the meeting if it relates to the matter being discussed.

A member with a DPI or Prejudicial Interest **may make representations at the start of the item but must not take part in the discussion or vote at a meeting.** The speaking time allocated for Members to make representations is at the discretion of the Chairman of the meeting. In order to avoid any accusations of taking part in the discussion or vote, after speaking, Members should move away from the panel table to a public area or, if they wish, leave the room. If the interest declared has not been entered on to a Members' Register of Interests, they must notify the Monitoring Officer in writing within the next 28 days following the meeting.

### Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) (relating to the Member or their partner) include:

- Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
- Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit made in respect of any expenses occurred in carrying out member duties or election expenses.
- Any contract under which goods and services are to be provided/works to be executed which has not been fully discharged.
- Any beneficial interest in land within the area of the relevant authority.
- Any licence to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
- Any tenancy where the landlord is the relevant authority, and the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.
- Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where:
  - a) that body has a piece of business or land in the area of the relevant authority, and
  - b) either (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body **or** (ii) the total nominal value of the shares of any one class belonging to the relevant person exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

Any Member who is unsure if their interest falls within any of the above legal definitions should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

A Member with a DPI should state in the meeting: ***'I declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

Or, if making representations on the item: ***'I declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will make representations, then I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

### Prejudicial Interests

Any interest which a reasonable, fair minded and informed member of the public would reasonably believe is so significant that it harms or impairs the Member's ability to judge the public interest in the item, i.e. a Member's decision making is influenced by their interest so that they are not able to impartially consider relevant issues.

A Member with a Prejudicial interest should state in the meeting: ***'I declare a Prejudicial Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

Or, if making representations in the item: ***'I declare a Prejudicial Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will make representations, then I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

### Personal interests

Any other connection or association which a member of the public may reasonably think may influence a Member when making a decision on council matters.

Members with a Personal Interest should state at the meeting: ***'I wish to declare a Personal Interest in item x because xxx'. As this is a Personal Interest only, I will take part in the discussion and vote on the matter.***

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# Agenda Item 3

## CORPORATE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

TUESDAY, 26 JANUARY 2021

**PRESENT:** Councillors Chris Targowski (Chairman), Phil Haseler (Vice-Chairman), Julian Sharpe, Lynne Jones and Simon Werner

Also in attendance: Councillors Shamsul Shelim, David Hilton, Ross McWilliams, Samantha Rayner, Andrew Johnson, Gurpreet Bhanga, Sayonara Luxton, David Cannon, Mandy Brar, Christine Bateson, Gurch Singh, Clive Baskerville, Amy Tisi, Karen Davies, John Bowden and Maureen Hunt

Officers: Mark Beeley, Nikki Craig, Adele Taylor, Andrew Vallance, Duncan Sharkey, Karen Shepherd, Louisa Dean, Andy Carswell and Louise Freeth

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence received.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

### MINUTES

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Part I minutes of the meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2020 were confirmed as a true and accurate record.**

Councillor L Jones mentioned the comments that the Panel had made on the Maidenhead United Football Club – Request for Relocation report at the last meeting in November 2020. She asked if comments were considered by Cabinet and if the Panel would be receiving a response to the comments that were made.

Mark Beeley, Democratic Services Officer, explained that the comments had been published as a supplement to the main Cabinet agenda where members of Cabinet would have been able to read the comments in advance of the meeting. In terms of a response to the comments made, Cabinet were not required to make a formal response to the Panel's comments but Councillor Johnson, Leader of the Council and Chair of Cabinet, thanked the Panel at the meeting for considering the report and for the comments they had raised.

### BUDGET 2021/22

Councillor Hilton, Lead Member for Finance and Ascot, introduced the report and explained that the Panel's views were sought on the main report and five appendices. Appendix A consisted of the Medium Term Financial Plan and incorporated changes that had been made in the current year's budget. £895,000 had been allocated as a pay increase for all RBWM staff, while £850,000 had been earmarked for use in corporate capacity areas, giving officers greater capacity to fulfil their roles. The impact of Covid was estimated to have a £9.2 million impact on the budget, while £6 million worth of savings had been identified to cover part of this impact.

A member of the public, Andrew Hill, had requested to speak on the item. Mr Hill said that money had been lost from venue licensing as some had chosen not to renew and asked which venues these were. For the registrars, there was reported to be a £25,000 drop in income

predicted in the previous budget but this was inflated in the next budget. Mr Hill asked if these figures were used to try and disguise any financial problems. Concern was raised about the cutting of the audit budget, Mr Hill believed that councillors should be demanding more audit, not less. Regarding schools, they were being charged more and Mr Hill wanted to know what the reason for this was. There was increased data protection support so Mr Hill questioned why a breach was deemed 'likely' if data protection had been enhanced. Mr Hill raised a final concern, that the allowance paid to councillors who chaired council meetings was increasing, but arts funding for venues like Norden Farm was being cut.

Councillor Hilton said that he had been involved in discussions with the relevant Lead Member along with officers. It was going to be challenging for the arts sector but there was money in the budget provided which would support grants for the arts.

Adele Taylor, Director of Resources, said that she would pick up and answer Mr Hill's points as the Panel went through the relevant sections of the budget. The Medium Term Financial Plan, which was Appendix A of the report, was part of the draft budget which was presented in December 2020. The plan showed the movement and changes expected in the budget.

Councillor L Jones asked about the estimated total losses from Covid and how the mitigation funding compared to the income lost. There was payment for services at the point of demand and Councillor L Jones wanted to know how this would work for residents who were on a low income. She asked if the pay award for RBWM staff was in the contingency budget.

Adele Taylor said that Covid losses were the estimated income losses for the current financial year. The next budget monitoring report would be going to Cabinet later in the week, with most of the pressures being around the costs to contractors. Income losses had hit RBWM hard, with further detail provided in the monitoring report. Covid costs were being treated as a one off as they were being covered through one off measures. Earmarked reserves would be able to support the budget. The sales, fees and charges compensation scheme was being utilised by RBWM, the council covered the first 5% of losses and then the government covered 75p in every £1 after that. It was important to ensure that there was affordability in the services provided, costs should be covered and it was important that they were reviewed on a regular basis.

Andrew Vallance, Head of Finance, confirmed that the pay rise for RBWM staff was coming out of the contingency budget.

Councillor L Jones commented on the NNDR in Appendix A, the impact of regeneration and whether business viability had been taken into account.

Adele Taylor said the NNDR was holding up at the moment and it could only be based on information that they knew. The NNDR was managed through the collection fund but it was hard to know the future business viability. She was aware that there was the possibility that business rates could change in the future.

Councillor Werner said that the Medium Term Financial Plan showed a spiral of decline for RBWM and that services were starting to dry up. In his view, a lack of strategy to stop this decline could lead to bankruptcy. Insourcing was important to consider as Councillor Werner had seen evidence that it saved money and improved service. He asked what research had gone into looking at contracts and whether an internal bid had been investigated as a viable option. Councillor Werner mentioned 'invest to save' and asked what analysis had gone into assets to see if they could raise revenue. No CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) being charged for developments in Maidenhead Town Centre was an issue, Councillor Werner said that the new Nicolson's Shopping Centre redevelopment not being charged CIL was a significant amount of money that had been 'given away' by the council. For commercialisation, Councillor Werner asked what analysis had been carried out for any potential commercialisation opportunities available to the council.

Councillor Hilton disagreed with Councillor Werner's comments on RBWM being in a 'spiral of decline'. He said that there was a positive variance of £3.7 million and that the reserves to cover Covid stood at £3 million. Other money was also being put into the reserves, the budget was in a good place before the pandemic. RBWM had done a good job to get to this point with the current financial position and it needed to ensure that Covid costs were managed effectively over the next year.

Councillor Johnson, Leader of the Council, commented that Councillor Werner should familiarise himself with the Asset Management Strategy. The strategy was focussed on retaining valuable assets and disposing of assets that were no longer needed to raise further capital and fund capital projects. There were many risks in the commercial market and the decline was likely to continue for the foreseeable future for the council's commercial portfolio. On the claim about the Nicolson's Shopping Centre, Councillor Johnson said that if Councillor Werner had any evidence of this statement then it should be presented to support his claim. For insourcing, Councillor Johnson explained that at the point of renewal all contracts were assessed and both outsourcing and insourcing options were explored. CIL was an ongoing issue which was largely driven by market viability and increased costs. Councillor Johnson disagreed with Councillor Werner's statement that the council had given away a significant amount of money.

Councillor Rayner, Lead Member for Resident & Leisure Services, HR, IT, Legal, Performance Management & Windsor, also disagreed with the comments about RBWM being in a spiral of decline. There had been lots of innovation that had taken place across the council. The library transformation strategy was delivering what residents wanted, while there had been an increased investment in leisure services with the new Braywick Leisure Centre opening last year. The IT infrastructure had also been upgraded across the council as part of the Modern Workplace Project, this had proven to be particularly important as it allowed all RBWM staff to work from home throughout the course of the pandemic.

Adele Taylor said that a gap had been identified in the budget which could have come from a variety of options. The Transformation Strategy allowed the council to look at how things were done and how they could be done better in the future.

Councillor Luxton joined the meeting.

Councillor Werner said that the council was not looking at insourcing options because an analysis would have been produced, this analysis was not available. He had been informed by a property expert about the valuation of CIL on the Nicolson's Shopping Centre. Councillor Werner had read the Asset Management Strategy but wanted an approach where land was turned into something that could be used rather than just selling it. Councillor Werner believed that this was a Conservative ideological approach to running the council.

The Chairman said that the administration wanted a well-run council.

Councillor Hilton said that CIPFA had done a review of services across the council and made a number of recommendations, with one being to remain with shared services like Optalis and Achieving for Children. These organisations made up around 70% of spending in the council.

Councillor Johnson was disappointed by what he felt was a personal attack from Councillor Werner. He said that there was no ideological vision in his view and that his aim was to deliver the best services possible to RBWM residents. The strategy allowed for land to be repurposed, for example the land next to the Town Hall in Maidenhead or the Magnet Leisure Centre.

Councillor L Jones asked if it was possible to see the net impact of Covid, with the figures split into losses and income losses which would allow her to see what impact it had on the finances. She also asked if the Medium Term Financial Plan required £14 million of savings and where these savings would come from.

Adele Taylor said that the cost and impact of Covid on the current finances of RBWM were available in the latest budget monitoring report but it was a rapidly changing situation.

Councillor Rayner said that the transformation strategy showed the direction of travel that RBWM was looking to head in. The library strategy was achievable and would be going out for consultation so it was still open to adjustments.

Councillor Sharpe said that the allowance for RBWM staff pay rise was important along with the allowance in the budget for any extra staff that would need to join the council.

Adele Taylor confirmed that there was an allowance in the budget for a pay award. In terms of growth to the council, there was also dedicated areas that would improve with new Equalities Officer and Monitoring Officer positions being created.

Councillor Werner said that Councillor Rayner, as the Lead Member for Resident & Leisure Services, HR, IT, Legal, Performance Management & Windsor, had been quoted in a news article saying that the library strategy was 'what the residents wanted'. Councillor Werner did not think residents wanted to see their local libraries be closed.

Councillor Rayner, in response, explained that a consultation had been carried out around the libraries and things like the opening times had been adjusted as a result. Under 24s had been found to use the library most often with remote access now provided for books and other resources.

The Panel moved onto Appendix B – Growth Bids.

Adele Taylor explained that a supplement had been issued as unfortunately some lines had been missed off in the appendix which was included with the original agenda pack.

Councillor Werner said he was concerned that certain activities had stopped due to the current lockdown restrictions but growth issues had been factored in as a result. He expressed concern that decisions on things like licenced venues were taken while the pandemic was still prominent.

Councillor L Jones said that there was a trend seen across the past few years but the target had increased again.

Councillor Rayner explained that there were fewer venues requesting licenses to hold weddings in the borough. Over the past year or two the trend on weddings had decreased.

Adele Taylor said that it was important that trends were noted and connected and that these were then used to form achievable targets. Louise Freeth, Head of Revenues, Benefits, Library and Resident Services, said that licences were awarded on a three year contract. Venues that had chosen not to renew now might still do so in future and this would therefore have an impact on the budget.

Councillor Hilton commented on community grants that were being proposed in the budget. It was important to support the arts sector with grants and workable proposals had been developed. It was proposed to include £50,000 of capital funding and £50,000 of revenue funding to enable the grant scheme to continue, which would allow £100,000 to be made available to local organisations. A growth bid of £21,000 was also proposed for the Berkshire Community Foundation, who administered grants to residents and organisations across RBWM. Councillor Hilton said that this showed that sensible decisions were being made when investing money into organisations.



The Chairman asked why the Berkshire Community Foundation grant was ongoing but community grants was a one off.

Councillor Hilton said that was the position that had been taken, but it would be reviewed at the next budget in a years' time.

The Panel moved on to consider Appendix C – Growth Proposals.

Councillor L Jones asked if the rental income losses were just discounts and waivers and it was nothing related to Covid.

Adele Taylor confirmed that it was a mixture, as commercial income was at risk. Things like discounts could be offered to tenants to keep them in the long term.

Councillor L Jones asked where the loss of income came from in relation to pool cars. Was it because the number of cars was reduced or because it would be used less going forward.

Councillor Werner said that these were real people and businesses and that it was important that this was acknowledged. He said that it was important RBWM did everything it could to help local people and businesses.

The Chairman agreed with these comments and thanked officers for all their work and help so far.

In response to Councillor L Jones question, Adele Taylor said that less cars were needed as the way the council was working had changed.

Councillor Hilton said that there were a number of properties in the council's portfolio. There was a recognition that businesses were going through hard times.

Councillor L Jones commented on the reduced wedding income and that it was ongoing. She asked why it was not estimated to return after Covid.

Adele Taylor explained that there was already issues with growth in this area before Covid. The estimation on reduced income was purely based on the Covid impact at this stage, but the note on this column in the appendix could be amended to explain this.

Councillor Rayner said that a number of weddings had been rebooked for future years but this meant less availability going forward. Louise Freeth confirmed that they had been receiving bookings for as far ahead as 2023 but overall there had been a decline in the number of people choosing to get married. This had been seen in the reduction in the number of weddings hosted by the Guildhall in Windsor pre-Covid.

The Panel considered Appendix D – Savings Proposals.

The Chairman commented on the removal of a benefit assistant post and the possible impact this might have. He asked if appointments would still be offered for both Maidenhead and Windsor despite one post being removed.

Councillor L Jones said that there had been around 1,600 visits to the Benefit Windsor website which was a high number. Given the council's climate change strategy, it did not make sense to her why residents in Windsor may have to drive to Maidenhead to gain access to appointments. Councillor L Jones said there should be a benefits assistant accessible to Windsor residents, even if it was only a few days a week.

Councillor Werner said that from an economic perspective, it made more sense to get the officer to do the travelling between Maidenhead and Windsor rather than having each Windsor resident individually travel to Maidenhead for an appointment.

Councillor Sharpe said that when making savings, the impact on residents needed to be considered. He asked if there were any services in the savings proposals that would have a big impact on residents.

Duncan Sharkey, Managing Director, clarified that the figure Councillor L Jones had quoted was the total number of enquires made to the library.

The Chairman said that it might be good to get an assurance from officers that appointments would still happen in Windsor.

Adele Taylor explained that the post had been vacant for a while and standard advice was available at Windsor Library, it was only the more complex cases which would need a benefit assistant. Residents would still be contacted by the borough for an appointment if they needed it, just this would not be face to face.

Louise Freeth added that a number of appointment slots for complex cases were not taken up, the post had been vacant for quite some time now and RBWM had been able to cope.

Councillor Werner said that he wanted to make sure that the message got through to Cabinet. He did not want residents to have to travel across the Maidenhead to have an appointment.

Councillor L Jones said virtual meetings were good but sometimes they were not enough. She asked officers if it was still possible to keep the option of face to face appointments open.

The Chairman agreed and said that it was ideal to keep the flexibility with there at least being an option there for it.

Looking at the accountancy structure, Councillor Werner commented on the efficiency savings and said it was not defined in the report what they were.

Councillor Hilton said that the Director of Resources had reviewed the situation before making any decisions. There was a long term plan which had been influenced by the CIPFA report.

Adele Taylor said that the processes had been reviewed, a recent resignation had led to the savings. All savings proposals were tested and challenged.

Councillor Werner said it was important that the process was done in a sensible way. Councillor L Jones commented on the internal audit proposals and asked if the number of days were necessary going forward.

Adele Taylor said that RBWM needed to pay for what it received and therefore needed to be satisfied that the number of days was correct. RBWM had more days than other local authorities but it was important to have the right level of audit.

Councillor L Jones said that charges were going up for schools and asked if this could be maintained.

Councillor Rayner said that they had looked carefully at charges to schools and academies, the charges in the budget reflected the services provided. RBWM had a great relationship with schools across the borough.

Nikki Craig, Head of HR, Corporate Projects and IT, said that RBWM sold a lot of HR services to schools. It was important to ensure that the council received what it cost to deliver the

service. The charges were based on ranges, for example the number of staff at the school so that smaller schools would be charged less.

Councillor L Jones asked about the changes to organisational development and also the complaints and compliments team. She asked how the changes would impact the service and if it would still be at a good level.

Councillor Rayner said that the organisation development function was being changed and RBWM would be making a saving of £30,000 this year and £15,000 next year. Complaints would still be handled in the same way, it was just a slight restructuring of the department.

Nikki Craig explained that organisational development covered various tasks and that there could be a reduction in the amount of initiatives undertaken at any time, there would also be a requirement for other areas of the council to support the work. In terms of the compliments and complaints team, the level of resource at contact level with residents was not changing so there would not be any changes in the quality of the service.

Councillor L Jones asked about facility vehicles which were used mostly by the library. However, if libraries were closed as part of the library transformation strategy then this would not be needed.

Councillor Rayner said that it would be considered in conjunction with the library strategy. Karen Shepherd, Head of Governance, added that the lorry was also used by the facilities team on an ad-hoc basis. For example, it was prominently used at elections to move things like polling station equipment.

Councillor Sharpe asked a question on confidential waste. There were less people using the office so therefore less paper was being used, however this meant that the potential for a data breach was greater. He suggested that RBWM staff were properly trained in handling confidential data.

Karen Shepherd explained that regular training was provided for staff to complete, with reminders put in the Borough Bulletin. The international day of data protection was coming up soon and this would be used to raise awareness.

Councillor Werner said that he supported the digitisation of 'Around the Royal Borough', but more should be done to try and cut the number of paper copies further.

Councillor Sharpe said this was something that he felt residents supported but the council needed to be aware of digital exclusion. Councillor L Jones suggested it could be distributed in libraries so that residents could easily access it.

Councillor McWilliams, Lead Member for Housing, Communications and Youth Engagement, said that lots of residents still requested paper copies. Digital exclusion was a good point and something that needed to be avoided. 18,000 residents were subscribed to RBWM social media channels, 19,000 received emails and around 60,000 got 'Around the Royal Borough' updates.

Louisa Dean, Communications and Marketing Manager, said that around £14,000 was spent per issue on Around the Royal Borough which was mostly printing costs. Going digital would produce a saving of double this amount, although advertising revenue would be lost.

The Panel did not have any further questions or comments for Appendix E – proposed fees and charges or Appendix F – proposed new capital schemes.

Councillor L Jones said that she was surprised not to see cash flow included in the agenda report pack. She asked how officers were sure of cash flow figures coming in and whether

they were definite or estimated. It was going to have a big impact on the budget going forward and Councillor L Jones said that she felt the Panel should have sight of it.

Adele Taylor said that some elements of cash flow monitoring would be considered by the Audit and Governance Committee. Cash flow was based on best estimates.

The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel agreed the following comments should be submitted to Cabinet for consideration:

- Revenue and benefit service in Windsor to maintain flexibility and there's an option for it should there need to be.
- To ensure that specialist advice in complex cases was always available from Windsor, whether by phone or face to face.

Councillor L Jones asked for the Equality Impact Assessment links to be included in the report so that they could be easily found.

## Q2 PERFORMANCE REPORT

Adele Taylor introduced the report and said that the performance was based on the new interim strategic framework which had been agreed by Cabinet in July 2020 and was primarily focussed on responding to the current pandemic situation that RBWM found itself in. Three of the targets were green, five were amber and one was red. Despite the impact of the pandemic, business rate collection was above target. The issues with waste and recycling last year had a knock on effect with the number of calls that were received at the customer contact centre. However, since December 2020 the percentage of calls answered had improved.

The Chairman asked about the diversity and inclusion target and said that there was a lot of words in the report but no figures so it was hard to gain an understanding on how diverse the council was.

Nikki Craig said that the annual workforce profile provided the best information on diversity across RBWM. Work on the profile was planned to start in April 2021 and it would be brought to the Panel for consideration in the summer. Links would be made with the new values and the profile would allow a greater understanding of who worked at the council. Improvements could then be made where required.

Councillor L Jones pointed out that the current period was Q4 now so the comments on the Q2 performance would therefore not have much impact. She suggested that it might be better to circulate the report at the time at which it was available for any comments from Panel members, it could then come back to a future meeting at the appropriate time if any issues arose.

The Chairman said that this idea made sense and suggested it was something that officers could have a think about.

Councillor Sharpe agreed with Councillor L Jones comments. He asked officers if there was anything in the report which was a concern.

Councillor Rayner passed on her thanks to Adele Taylor and her team for the report. Services across the council had been able to continue in the current circumstances and had adapted well. She hoped that the report could be considered by the Panel closer to the time period which it was reflecting. Answering Councillor Sharpe's question, Councillor Rayner said that the waste issues had proved to be a challenge, especially with all the extra calls which had been a direct consequence.

Adele Taylor said that a number of the performance indicators related to the delivery of services for businesses and vulnerable residents. She passed on her thanks to Louise Freeth and her team who had been doing a huge amount of work behind the scenes.

The Chairman put forward his and the Panel's thanks to the team and said that it would be good to review the report sooner in future, if possible.

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel noted the report and:**

- i) Noted the 2020/21 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel Q2 Performance Report in Appendix A.**
- ii) Requested relevant Lead Members, Directors and Heads of Service to maintain focus on improving performance.**

### ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT

Councillor Werner said that the report should reflect an independent view of the work of the Panel. He proposed that Councillor L Jones wrote the report and believed that she would provide a non-political view.

The Chairman said that he was happy to work in collaboration with Councillor L Jones on the report.

Councillor L Jones said that she would be happy to be more involved if the Panel agreed.

Councillor Haseler said that it sounded like a good idea as Councillor L Jones had a good amount of experience on the Panel.

Councillor Sharpe agreed and said that the Panel was working and collaborating well.

The Chairman suggested that he would work with Councillor L Jones initially to draft the report, which would then be circulated to the other Panel Members for their comments.

### WORK PROGRAMME

Councillor Werner said that the Task and Finish group on Highways contract outsourcing should be pursued and another meeting arranged soon.

The Chairman informed Councillor Werner that himself and Councillor L Jones would be having a meeting with Simon Dale, Interim Head of Highways, later in the week where the group would be discussed.

Councillor Sharpe commented on the next meeting of the Panel and said that the Q3 performance report should be circulated prior to the meeting. Adele Taylor said she would see what could be done.

Councillor Werner said that it would be useful to add the transformation strategy to the work programme so that it could be analysed.

The Chairman said that this was already on the work programme, for consideration at the meeting in April.

Duncan Sharkey said that it would allow the Panel to examine the strategy and explore it in more depth.

Councillor Sharpe suggested having a review of the savings that were programmed into the budget later in the year to check progress.

Adele Taylor said that savings trackers would be produced as part of the budget monitoring report.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting whilst discussion takes place on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1-7 of part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

The meeting, which began at 7.00 pm, finished at 10.00 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....

Report Title:	2020/21 Q3 Performance Report
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part I
Lead Member:	
Meeting and Date:	Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel, 19 April 2021
Responsible Officer(s):	Adele Taylor, Director of Resources/S151 Officer
Wards affected:	All



## REPORT SUMMARY

- The Council Plan 2017-21 and associated strategic priorities remained current up to 30 July 2020 when Cabinet approved an Interim Council Strategy 2020/21 for immediate adoption on the basis that the Covid-19 pandemic had significantly altered the context in which the council is currently operating.*
- The Interim Council Strategy clarifies the three revised priorities to which the council is responding. The Q3 Performance Report for Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel provides insights into the Interim Council Strategy's delivery as fully as possible, see Appendix A. Performance of measures previously reported to the Panel under the Council Plan 2017-212 are included on the basis that these measures provide insights into current service delivery.*

## 1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel notes the report and:

- Notes the 2020/21 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel Q3 Performance Report in Appendix A.**
- Requests relevant Lead Members, Directors and Heads of Service to maintain focus on improving performance.**

## 2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

### Options

**Table 1: Options arising from this report**

Option	Comments
Accept the recommendations in this report. <b>This is the recommended option</b>	This will allow continuing insight into the delivery of the council's agreed priorities in order to aid decision-making and maintain focus on continuous improvement.

Option	Comments
Reject the recommendations in the report.	The failure to use relevant performance information to understand delivery against the council's agreed priorities impedes the council's ability to make informed decisions and seek continuous improvement.

- 2.1 The Council Plan 2017-21 remained current up to 30 July 2020 when Cabinet approved an Interim Council Strategy 2020/21 for immediate adoption on the basis that the Covid-19 pandemic has significantly altered the context in which the council is currently operating. The Interim Council Strategy clarifies the three revised priorities to which the council is responding, acknowledging that any instances where previous objectives can still be delivered without affecting delivery of interim objectives is a good thing and will be supported.
- 2.2 Appendix A provides insights into the Interim Council Strategy's three priorities and how they are progressing. It details the council's ongoing response to the Covid-19 pandemic and also key updates in relation to major workstreams such as the Transformation Strategy, Environment and Climate Strategy, alongside key corporate developments relating to the People Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 2.3 Appendix A also includes performance of measures previously reported to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel under the Council Plan 2017-21 to maintain visibility of trends. These measures show that the impact of Covid continues to be felt in a number of areas. For example, visits to libraries remain low compared to previous years and changes in people's personal circumstances has led to increased claims for benefit. Encouragingly, there has been a sustained improvement in the average number of days to process new housing benefit claims and changes in circumstances up to the close of Q3. Whilst disruption to household waste and recycling collections was a key issue across the borough in Q2 – and had a knock-on effect on the volume of calls to the customer contact centre and the online "report-it" function – the service continues to improve and there has been a corresponding fall in the volume of calls to the contact centre and an improvement in the percentage of calls answered within 60 seconds and abandoned within 5 seconds.
- 2.4 Table 2 summarises the position of all reported key performance indicators as at the close of Q3. Appendix A sets out performance trends and related commentary for each indicator. All indicators continue to be monitored and reported to relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panels on a quarterly basis as part of an ongoing performance dialogue.



**Table 2: Summary KPI Q3 position**

	<b>Green (Succeeding or achieved)</b>	<b>Amber (Near target)</b>	<b>Red (Needs improvement)</b>
Average days to process changes in circumstances (Housing Benefits)		X	
Average days to process new claims (Housing Benefits)		X	
No. digital forms completed (customer/residents)	X		
No. visits (physical and virtual) to libraries			X
Percentage of calls abandoned after 5 secs	X		
Percentage of calls answered within 60 secs		X	
Percentage of Council Tax collected		X	
Percentage of non-domestic rates (Business Rates) collected		X	
Percentage voluntary turnover (YTD)	X		
<b>TOTAL (9)</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>

### 3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The key implications of this report are set out in table 3.

**Table 3: Key Implications**

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Unmet</b>	<b>Met</b>	<b>Exceeded</b>	<b>Significantly Exceeded</b>	<b>Date of delivery</b>
The council is on target to deliver its strategic priorities	< 100% priorities on target	100% priorities on target			31 December 2020

### 4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations.

### 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations.

## 6. RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 The risks and their control are set out in table 4.

**Table 4: Impact of risk and mitigation**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Level of uncontrolled risk</b>	<b>Controls</b>	<b>Level of controlled risk</b>
Poor performance management practices resulting in lack of progress towards the council's agreed strategic priorities and objectives.	HIGH	Robust performance management within services to embed a performance management culture and effective and timely reporting.	LOW

## 7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

7.1 There are no Equality Impact Assessments or Data Protection Impact Assessments required for this report. There are no climate change or data protection impacts as a result of this report.

## 8. CONSULTATION

8.1 Performance against the strategic priorities is regularly reported to the council's four Overview and Scrutiny Panels. Comments from the Panels are reported to Lead Members and Heads of Service as part of an ongoing performance dialogue.

## 9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

9.1 The full implementation stages are set out in table 5.

**Table 5: Implementation timetable**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>
Ongoing	Comments from the Panel will be reviewed by Lead Members and Heads of Service.

## 10. APPENDICES

10.1 This report is supported by one appendix:

- Appendix A: Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel Q3 Performance Report.

## 11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

11.1 This report is supported by one background document:

- Interim Council Strategy 2020/21:  
<https://rbwm.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=132&MId=7763&Ver=4>

## 12. CONSULTATION (MANDATORY)

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
Duncan Sharkey	Managing Director	03.03.21	03.03.21
Adele Taylor	Director of Resources/S151 Officer	03.03.21	04.03.21
Emma Duncan	Deputy Director of Law and Strategy / Monitoring Officer	03.03.21	
Hilary Hall	Director of Adults, Health and Commissioning	03.03.21	03.03.21
Nikki Craig	Head of HR, Corporate Projects and IT	03.03.21	08.03.21
Louisa Dean	Communications	03.03.21	
Louise Freeth	Head of Revenue, Benefits, Library and Resident Services	03.03.21	

## REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To follow item?
Non-key decision	No	No

Report Author: Report Author: Rachel Kinniburgh, Strategy and Performance Team Leader, 01628 796370
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## **Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel**

### **Q3 2020-21 Data and Performance Report**

Date prepared: 03-Mar-2020

#### **Contents**

<b>1. Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2. Interim Council Strategy: Delivery of priorities .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. Service Performance Summary Report (YTD).....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4. Communications and Marketing.....</b>	<b>8</b>
4.1. Digital Customer Interactions.....	8
<b>5. Revenue, Benefits, Library and Resident Services .....</b>	<b>9</b>
5.1 Council Tax.....	9
5.2 Business Rates .....	10
5.3 Customer contact centre calls.....	11
5.4 Library visits.....	13
5.5 Processing times for housing benefits.....	15
<b>6. Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead .....</b>	<b>17</b>
6.1 Voluntary turnover.....	17
<b>7. Business Intelligence: RBWM Sickness Absence .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>8. Crucial Conversations.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>9. Business Intelligence: Establishment.....</b>	<b>19</b>

## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council Plan 2017-21 remained current up to 30 July 2020 when Cabinet approved an Interim Council Strategy 2020/21 for immediate adoption on the basis that the Covid-19 pandemic has significantly altered the context in which the council is currently operating.
- 1.2 In the interests of good governance and transparency, the Interim Council Strategy gives clarity to the three revised priorities to which the council is responding, acknowledging that any instances where previous objectives can still be delivered without affecting delivery of interim objectives is a good thing and will be supported. The three revised priorities for 2020/21 are:
  - **Covid-19 objectives:** focusing on the immediate response, long-term recovery, and new service requirements.
  - **Interim Focus Objectives 2020-21:** focusing on revised service operating plans, development of the Transformation Strategy, Climate Strategy, Governance, and People Plan.
  - **Revised Medium Term Financial Strategy:** focusing on the impact of Covid-19, economic downturn, and government policy.
- 1.3 With the introduction of the Interim Council Strategy, performance reports for 2020/21 have necessarily been refocused to respond to this strategy as fulsomely as possible at the current time. This report is therefore structured to provide insight into the three priorities and how they are progressing (section 2).
- 1.4 Performance of measures previously reported to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel are also included (section 3) on the basis that these measures provide some insights into service delivery (priority 2) and also remain important for the future, in which case ongoing visibility of trends is desirable. These measures are grouped in this report by the lead service. Additional datasets and key performance indicators will be added over time as new data-sources are set up as part of delivery of the priorities.

## 2. Interim Council Strategy: Delivery of priorities

2.1 This section provides a brief overview of key activities and milestones achieved by the council in the first six months of the financial year.

PRIORITY:	COVID-19 OBJECTIVES
Item	Achievements and key milestones
<b>Response (immediate)</b>	<b>Community response:</b> The Covid-19 Community Response was established to support residents across the borough during the Covid-19 pandemic. A coordinated team of staff drawn from all services in the council maintained regular contact with residents who were shielding and took any action that may be appropriate to ensure that these individuals' needs were met. This role is now delivered by the Library and Residents service, who continue to make contact with residents and to be a helpline to any vulnerable service users in the borough. Using community groups, either already established or newly formed, in response to the pandemic has helped to identify where we can help the vulnerable. A <a href="#">public-facing online directory of Covid-19 Support Groups</a> to which residents may turn to for particular needs was quickly developed.
<b>Response (immediate)</b>	<b>Outbreak Control Plan and Local Outbreak Engagement Board:</b> The <a href="#">Outbreak Control Plan Summary</a> was published on the RBWM website on 30 June 2020 in line with national instruction from the Department of Health and Social Care. The plan was produced in collaboration with the NHS and Public Health to guide our response to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, to put in place measures to identify and contain outbreaks and to protect the public's health. The first public meeting of the Local Outbreak Engagement Board, a time-limited subgroup of the Health and Wellbeing Board and established to provide public-facing engagement and communication for outbreak response, was held on 18 January 2021.
<b>Response (immediate)</b>	<b>Community champions:</b> In October 2020 a "community influencers" group was established. The aim of the group is to engage and communicate key Covid-19 messages to the wider community, whilst targeting messaging to different demographic groups based on analysis of key data-sets. To date, a network of 126 Community Information Champions has been established, each of whom receive regular information from the council which they can then forward on to their family, friends and other contacts. Community Information Champions can also feedback to the council any questions or points of clarity from the community in order to help the council refine its messages and also "myth-bust". Through securing funding, 36 community groups have also been supported in their ongoing projects of collecting prescriptions, befriending clients, running shopping services and winter support schemes. In addition, a series of radio interviews have been delivered.
<b>Recovery (long-term)</b>	The council has worked in partnership with organisations across the Thames Valley to develop a recovery framework across the region. A set of actions for Berkshire is being developed to enable sharing of best practice and coordination of activity where it is most appropriately undertaken at a county-level.  <b>Recovery Strategy:</b> On 24 September 2020 Cabinet approved the <a href="#">RBWM Recovery Strategy</a> (targeted at borough-level) to move into

	delivery phase. The strategy sets out the council's approach to supporting residents and businesses, empowering communities to thrive and building lasting partnerships with businesses.
<b>Recovery (long-term)</b>	<b>Supporting the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable:</b> A new database (Lyon 2.0) has been developed. It is a free online platform and app to manage interactions with the clinically extremely vulnerable and anyone seeking help and support. The system has been deployed for internal use and is being used operationally by Library and Residents' staff making calls. The system also enables registration of individuals who wish to volunteer their time to the community effort. The community-facing platform and app remains in soft-testing. The system enables the council to make data returns to central government and, overall, brings all related activities into one consolidated database.
<b>Recovery (long-term)</b>	<b>Local Contact Tracing Service:</b> The council has set up a local contact tracing service to complement the national NHS Test and Trace service. Operating 7 days a week, contact tracers contact residents who have tested positive for Covid-19 but who have not been successfully contacted by the national NHS Test and Trace system within 24hrs. The purpose of the service is to reduce the delay between a person testing positive for Covid-19 and a contact tracing call successfully taking place, therefore potentially reducing further transmission with the community.
<b>Recovery (long-term)</b>	<b>Lateral flow tests:</b> From 8 February 2021 rapid Covid-19 test centres opened in Braywick Leisure Centre and Windsor Leisure Centre. These centres offer 30-minute lateral flow tests for people who work in public-facing roles and who do not have Covid-19 symptoms. The purpose is to identify asymptomatic carriers of the virus. In the first week of operation 1,210 people were tested across both sites. Tests are available via the <a href="#">booking link</a> on the council's website.

<b>PRIORITY:</b>	<b>INTERIM FOCUS OBJECTIVES 2020-21</b>
<b>Item</b>	<b>Achievements and key milestones</b>
<b>Revised Service Operating Plans</b>	<p>As part of the organisational recovery strategy, service-level step-up plans were implemented, as were changes to existing operating models to allow services to continue in a socially distanced and safe way.</p> <p>One example has been our new alternative operation in the library service to be able to provide a COVID-safe environment for both our service-users and residents and our staff. We introduced a phased opening up of services focussing on a "click and collect" and "click and deliver" service initially alongside a resumption of home delivery services. There has been a further opening up of services in two main sites including bookable access to PCs and browsing for books to ensure there is a balance between accessing services whilst protecting the health and wellbeing of our residents and staff.</p> <p>A key concern across the borough has been the disruption to household waste and recycling collections. The impact on residents has had a knock-on effect on the volume of calls to the customer contact centre and the online "report it" function. The council continues to work with its contractor to improve the service.</p>
<b>Transformation Strategy</b>	The <a href="#">Transformation Strategy 2020-2025</a> was unanimously approved by the Cabinet Transformation Sub-Committee on 22 September 2020.

## Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel: Q3 Data and Performance Report

	<p>Setting out a vision of “building a community-centric borough of opportunity and innovation”, the Strategy aims to deliver radical changes to the way in which the council operates and identifies 6 key areas for transformation (finance, culture, environment, prevention, digital and process redesign).</p> <p>The strategy’s development is the council’s response to key challenges around its financial position and builds upon the strong foundations of innovation and community-empowerment that quickly developed in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Action plans by which to deliver the Strategy are presently being developed.</p> <p>Whilst Covid-19 has impacted progress, we have innovated and implemented a number of projects with a very quick turnaround, proving that designing and innovating can be done quickly and in an agile fashion. This ethos needs to be embraced as part of the strategic programme moving forward, allowing new ways of delivering to be tried without large bureaucracy and process to stifle and hold things back.</p> <p>Asset Based Community Development methods have been used to deliver the Embedding Community Response project in Clewer and Dedworth. This project has created a blueprint for the council to work with communities to co-produce and co-design ways of delivering community projects. As the year progresses this will be rolled out in all areas of the borough. The Transformation Team is also engaging with other strategies to inform and understand how the framework can help with delivery of corporate plans.</p>
<b>Environment and Climate Strategy</b>	<p>Following a public consultation, the updated Environment and Climate Strategy was approved by Cabinet on 17 December 2020. We are now working across different council services and with stakeholders to develop the actions set out within the strategy into a delivery plan for the next five years.</p>
<b>Governance</b>	<p>We have an agreed governance action plan arising from the Annual Governance Statement with updates coming forward to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel throughout the year. In addition, the Council engaged CIPFA during 2019/20 to undertake a review of financial governance. An action plan addressing outstanding issues has been developed and was reported via the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel on a quarterly basis from November with updates to future meetings.</p> <p>A new full-time Monitoring Officer has been appointed to bolster the governance capability of the Council. A Statutory Officers Group has been formed and meets on a regular basis to action issues of concern and promote a strong governance and decision-making culture at the authority. This Group reviews the effectiveness of current arrangements and champions best practice whilst feeding into the Annual Governance Statement.</p>
<b>People Plan</b>	<p>A key foundation of the council’s future People Plan is the agreement of organisational values. Following extensive consultation with employees a suite of new organisational values was launched on 19 June 2020. Each value is underpinned by positive behaviours illustrative of each value. These values and associated behaviours are key in supporting the council to deliver well for residents and partners, and to achieve organisational objectives. The new values are:</p>



## Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel: Q3 Data and Performance Report

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest in strong foundations</li> <li>• Empowered to improve</li> <li>• One team and vision</li> <li>• Respect and openness.</li> </ul> <p>An implementation plan to support embedding these values across the organisation is currently underway. This includes delivery of key training initiatives. Crucial Conversations training on how to challenge behaviours contrary to our values was rolled out for all staff in the months of November, December and January. A staff survey was also conducted in November 2020 and the results analysed to support the Plan's development.</p>
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<b>PRIORITY:</b>	<b>REVISED MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY</b>
<b>Item</b>	<b>Achievements and key milestones</b>
<b>Revised Medium Term Financial Strategy</b>	<p>An extraordinary Council meeting was held on the 14 October 2020 to discuss a refreshed Medium Term Financial Strategy. The actual strategy had not been changed (other than to update any factual changes around dates and technical updates) but the financial modelling was updated to reflect the latest information as we currently know it, changes in assumptions around central government funding, inflation assumptions and other emerging issues. This formed the start of the budget-setting process for 2021/22 and the supporting Medium term financial plan.</p> <p>The draft budget for 2021/22 was discussed at Cabinet on 17 December 2020 and subsequently published on 22 December 2020 for consultation. This draft budget was also considered by all Overview and Scrutiny Panels in January 2021 and approved at Full Council on 23 February 2021 having been recommended by Cabinet on 4 February 2021.</p>

### 3. Service Performance Summary Report (YTD)

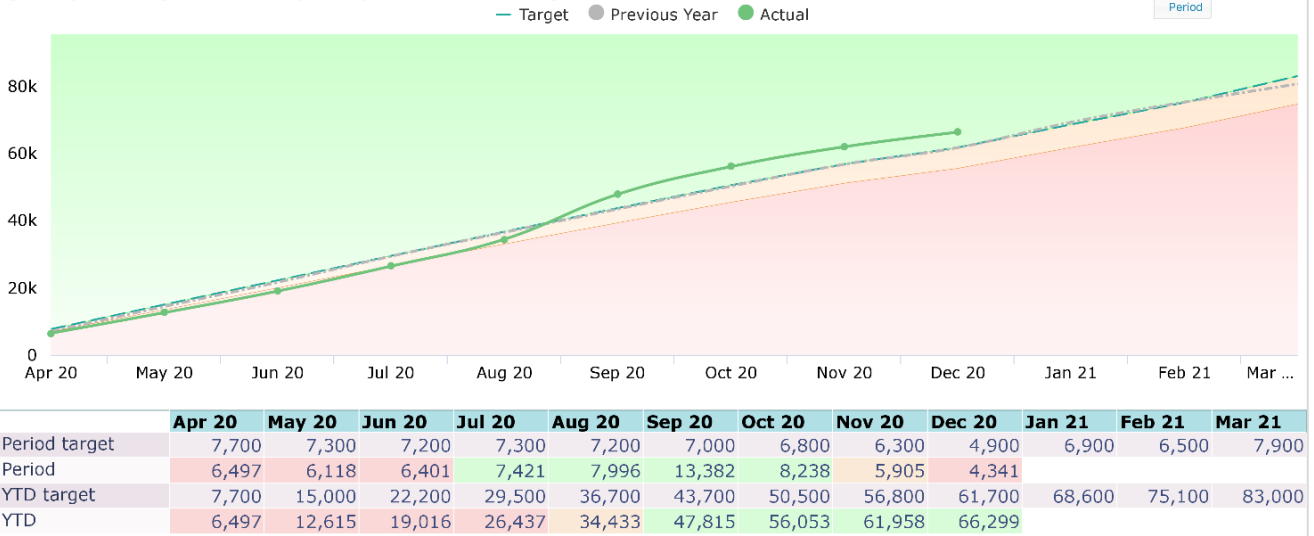
- 3.1 Performance of measures previously reported to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel are set out here on the basis that these measures provide some insights into service delivery (priority 2) and also remain important for the future, in which case ongoing visibility of trends is desirable.

	<b>Green (Succeeding or achieved)</b>	<b>Amber (Near target)</b>	<b>Red (Needs improvement)</b>
Average days to process changes in circumstances (Housing Benefits)		X	
Average days to process new claims (Housing Benefits)		X	
No. digital forms completed (customer/residents)	X		
No. visits (physical and virtual) to libraries			X
Percentage of calls abandoned after 5 secs	X		
Percentage of calls answered within 60 secs		X	
Percentage of Council Tax collected		X	
Percentage of non-domestic rates (Business Rates) collected		X	
Percentage voluntary turnover (YTD)	X		
<b>TOTAL (9)</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>

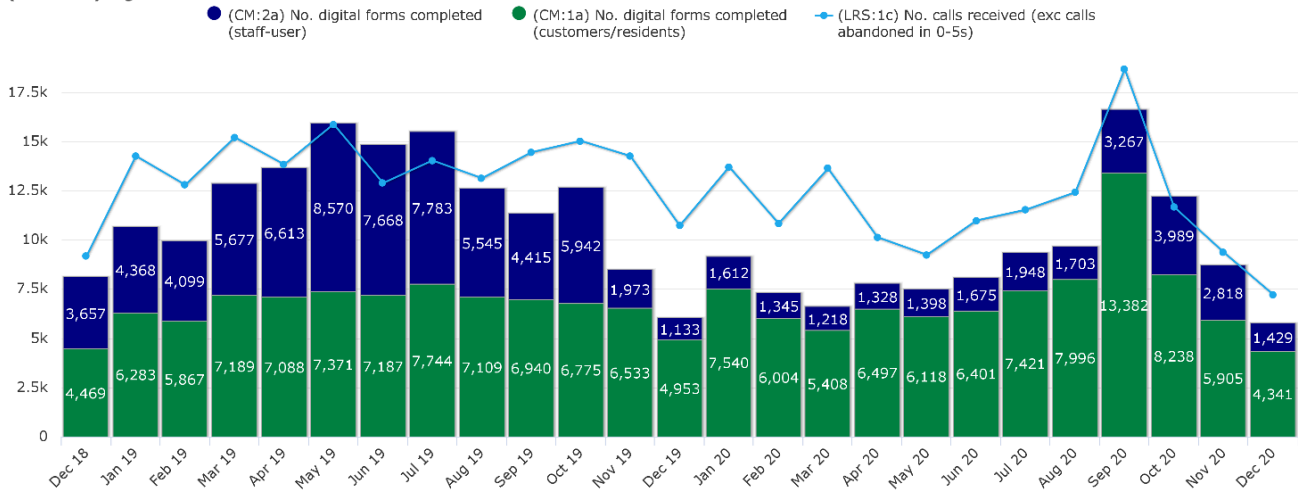
## 4. Communications and Marketing

### 4.1. Digital Customer Interactions

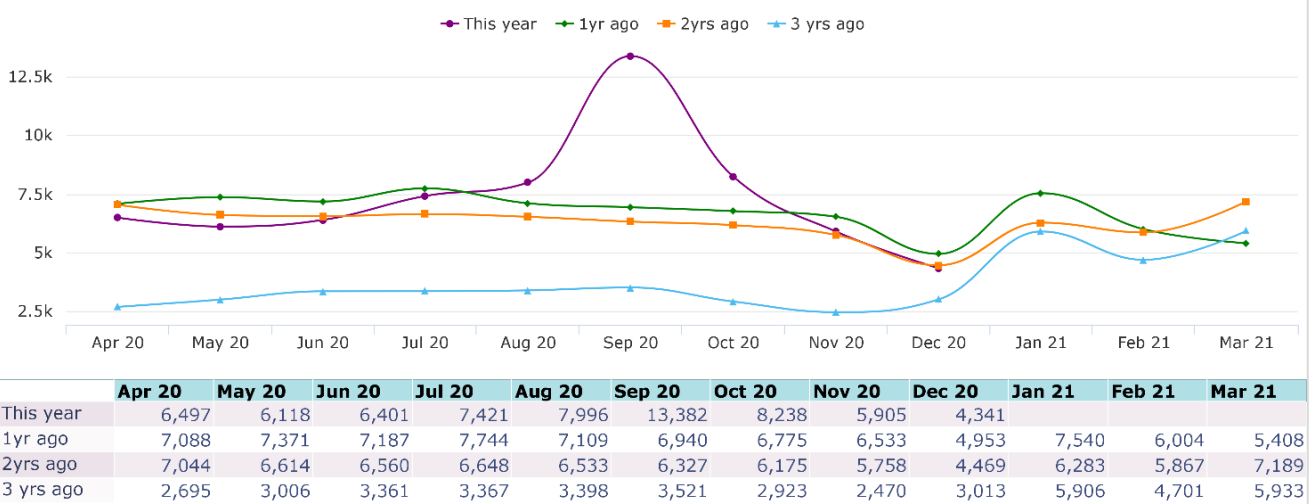
(CM:1a) No. of digital forms completed (customers/residents)



(CM:1a-2a) Digital form submissions



No. of digital forms completed (customers/residents): Monthly trend comparison



### Q3 Commentary

*The year-end target for this measure is 83,000 profiled monthly. A red flag is raised if the value is at/falls below 10% of the target.*

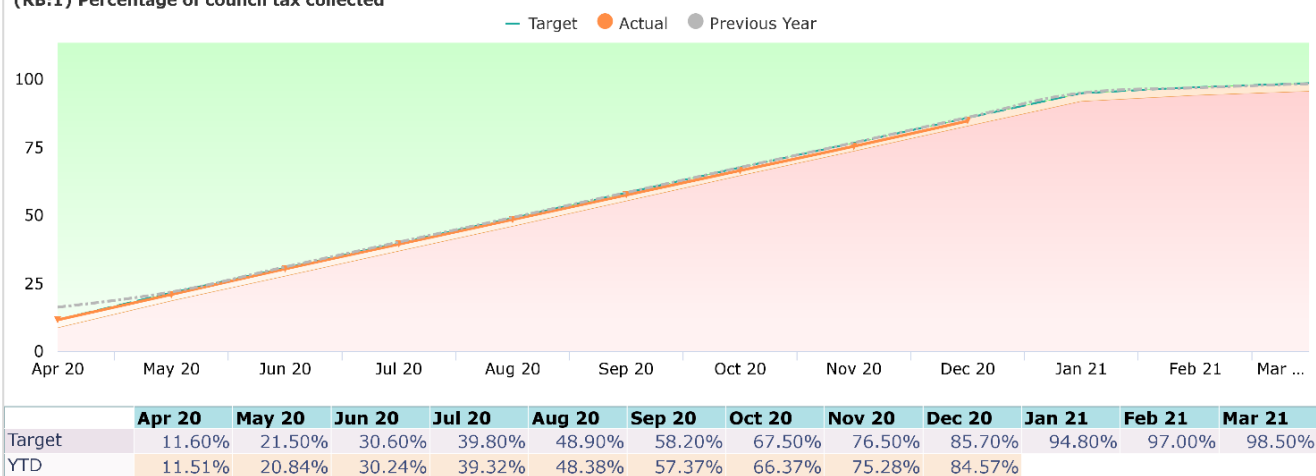
The service tracks the volume of digital forms submitted through the council's website. A distinction is made between whether the form was completed by a staff-user or a customer/resident for the purposes of monitoring the take-up of digital self-service across our customers/residents. We would therefore expect the volume of digital forms submitted by staff-users to follow an overall downward trend over time. As at the close of Q3, 77.2% (66,299 / 85,854) of digital forms have been submitted by customers/residents compared to 55.4% (61,700/111,342) in 2019/20 up to the end of December 2019.

It is worth noting that the monthly total volume of digital form submissions in 2020/21 is considerably less than 2019/20 volumes, and this is attributed to the Customer Contact Centre resolving queries "right first time" when they are contacted, thereby avoiding further follow up through digital forms. In Q2, disruption to household waste and recycling collections resulted in high volumes of calls to the customer contact centre (18,671 in September), with a knock-on effect to digital form submissions. As waste collections resumed normal service, both calls to the Contact Centre and digital form submissions have reduced in Q3 and again track broadly in line with previous years.

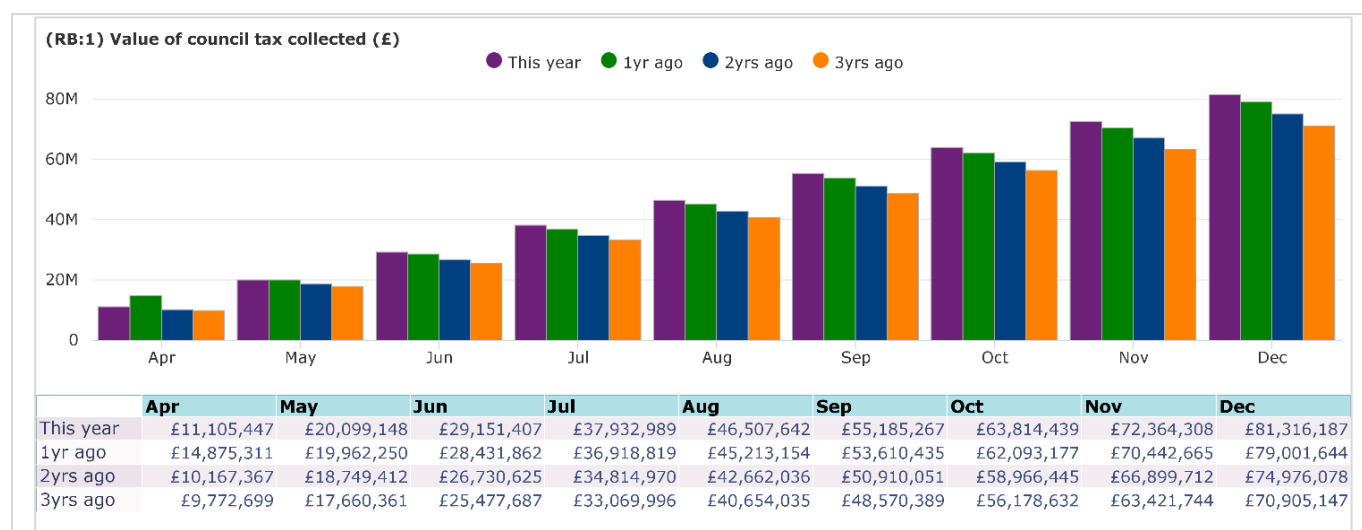
## 5. Revenue, Benefits, Library and Resident Services

### 5.1 Council Tax

(RB:1) Percentage of council tax collected



## Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel: Q3 Data and Performance Report

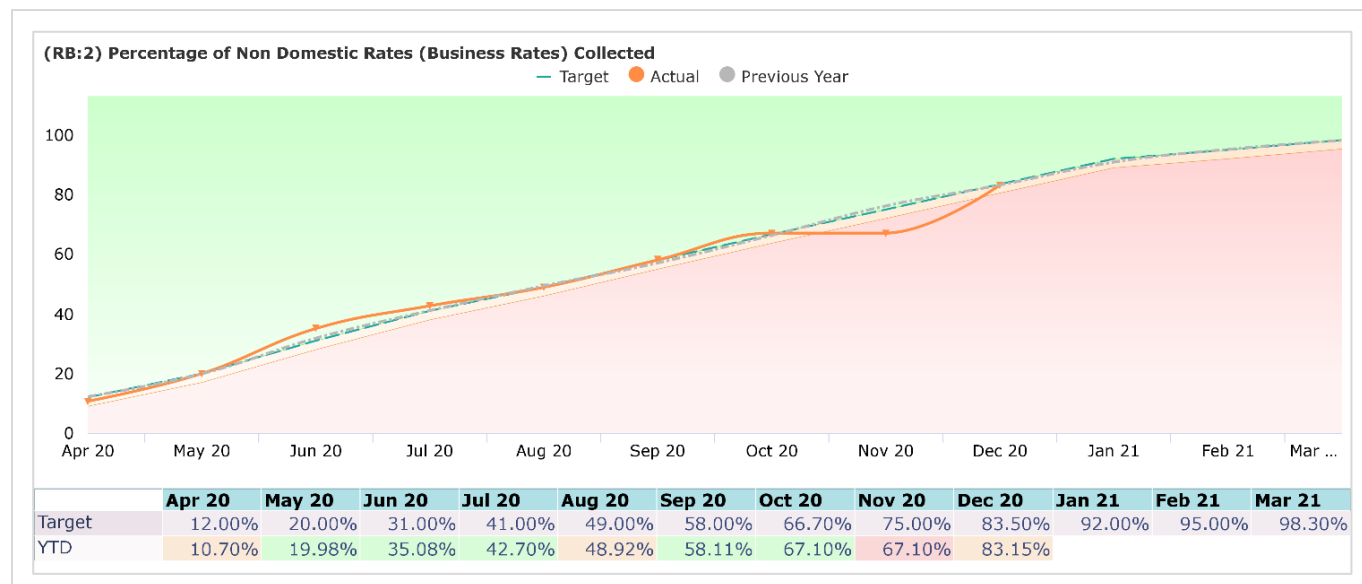


### Q3 Commentary

The year-end target for this measure is 98.50% profiled monthly. A red flag is raised if the year-end value is at/falls below 95.50%.

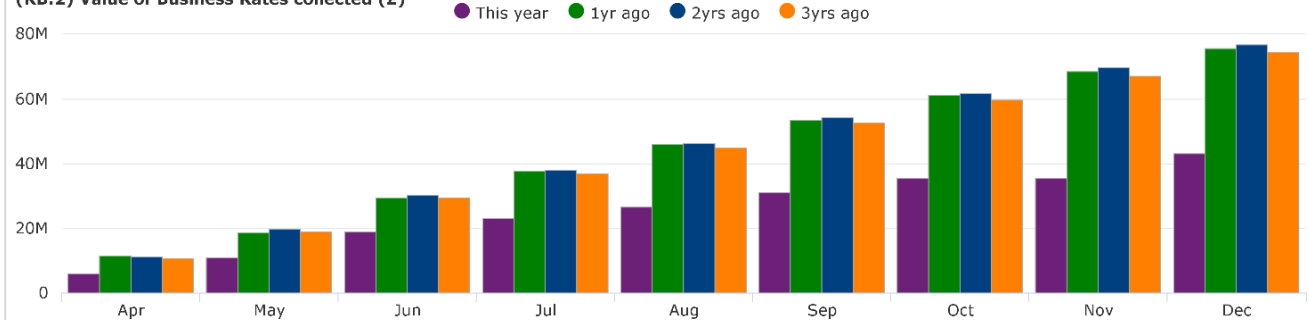
As at the close of Q3 performance of this measure stands at 84.57%, below target (85.70%) by 1.13% though within tolerance for the measure. Whilst the collection rate as at the end of December 2020 is lower than that in December 2019 (85.90%), the value of council tax collected by the close of December 2020 (£81,316,187) is the highest collection value for that period in the last 3 years despite the detrimental effects of the pandemic.

## 5.2 Business Rates



## Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel: Q3 Data and Performance Report

(RB:2) Value of Business Rates collected (£)



	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
This year	£5,960,082	£10,831,149	£18,849,149	£22,994,146	£26,473,401	£31,139,042	£35,426,867	£35,426,867	£43,073,275
1yr ago	£11,452,289	£18,555,526	£29,437,980	£37,492,968	£46,040,499	£53,432,610	£61,058,715	£68,381,347	£75,517,684
2yrs ago	£11,146,018	£19,619,759	£30,343,993	£37,836,796	£46,310,680	£54,234,610	£61,716,466	£69,424,592	£76,564,581
3yrs ago	£10,653,395	£18,843,339	£29,352,763	£36,793,897	£44,879,528	£52,436,633	£59,574,956	£67,013,530	£74,378,644

### Q3 Commentary

The year-end target for this measure is 98.30% profiled monthly. A red flag is raised if the year-end value is at/falls below 95.30%.

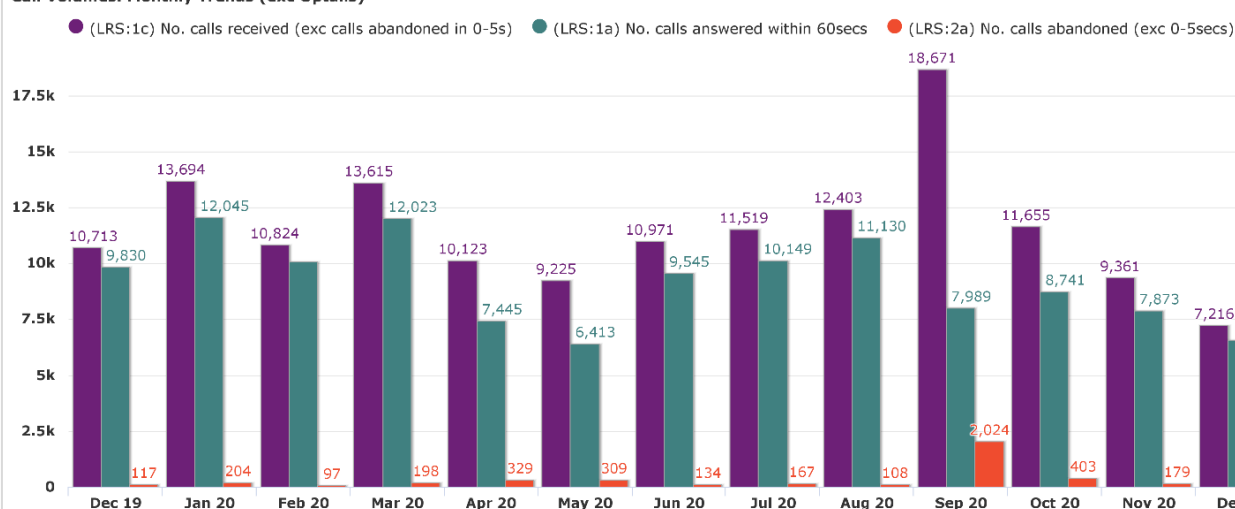
At the close of Q3 performance for this measure stands at 83.15% below the target (83.50%) by 0.35 though within tolerance and is marginally less by 0.05 when compared to same period last year (83.20%).

Central government announced that with effect from 1 April 2020, two new forms of Business Rates Relief would apply to qualifying Businesses i.e. Nursery Relief and Expanded Retail Relief. As a result, the net collectible debit has reduced significantly. However, the collection rate reflects sums collected by businesses not entitled to these new forms of relief.

In addition, a variety of Grant schemes have been announced to cover both the initial lockdown and those announced since as well as the Tiered restrictions. It is anticipated that collection rates might not meet the target by end of Q4 with these challenges.

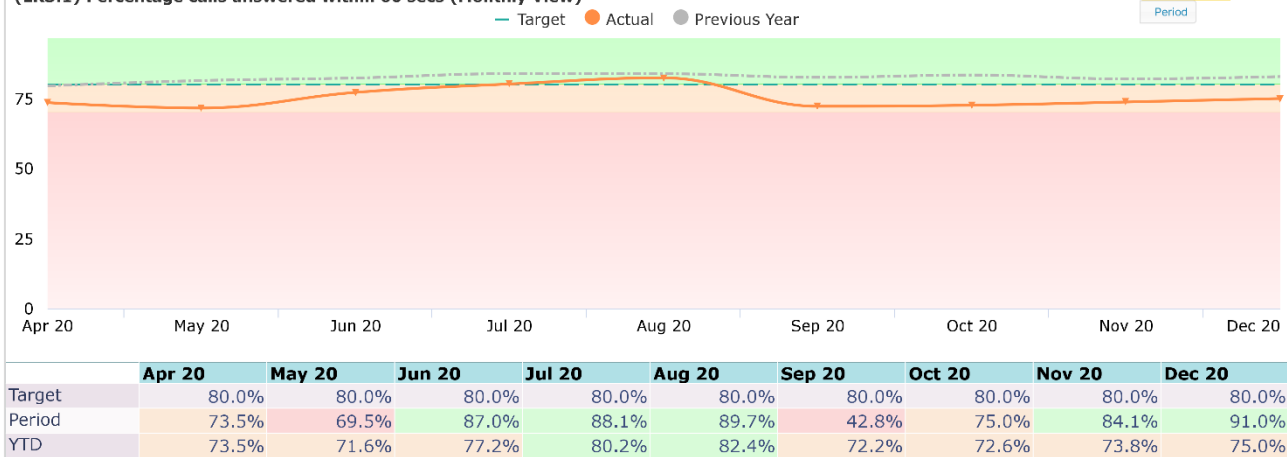
## 5.3 Customer contact centre calls

Call Volumes: Monthly Trends (exc Optalis)

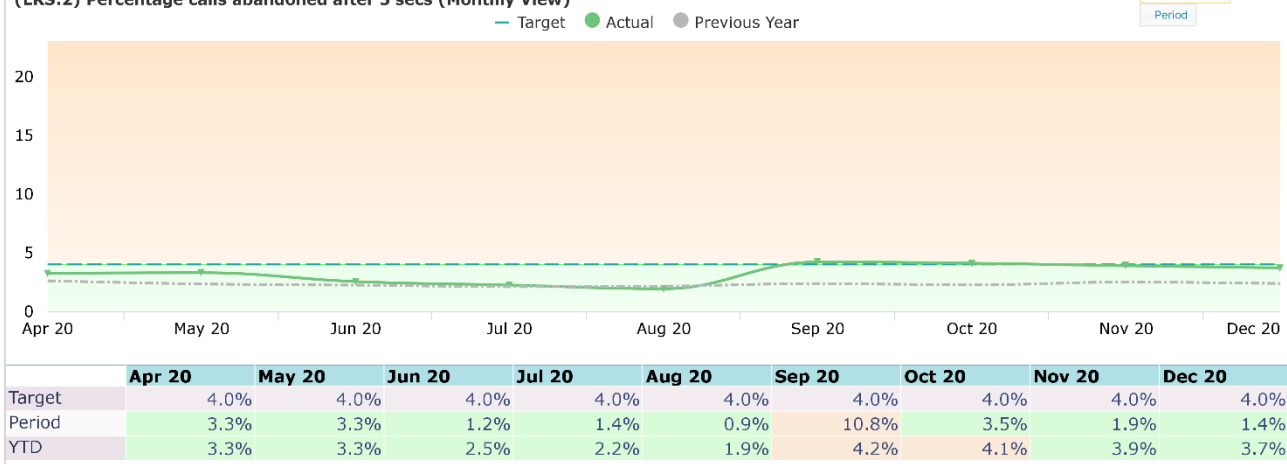


## Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel: Q3 Data and Performance Report

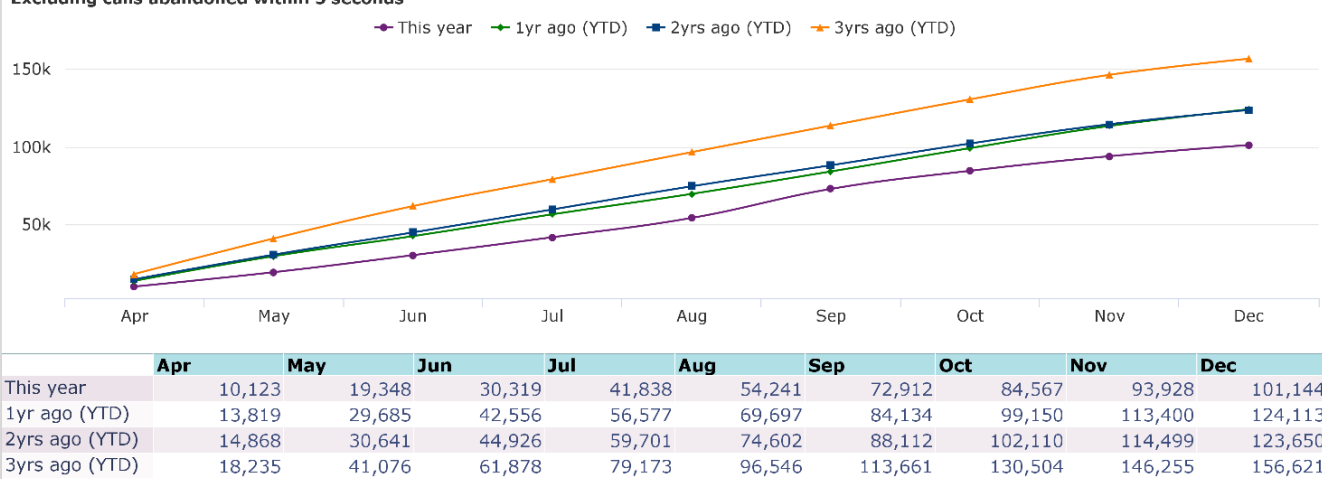
(LRS:1) Percentage calls answered within 60 secs (Monthly View)



(LRS:2) Percentage calls abandoned after 5 secs (Monthly View)



Volume of calls received to Call Centre (YTD)  
Excluding calls abandoned within 5 seconds



### Q3 Commentary

The monthly and year-end target for percentage calls answered within 60s is 80%. A red flag is raised if percentage is at/falls below 70%. The monthly and year-end target for percentage calls abandoned (excluding calls abandoned within 0-5 secs) is 4% and red flag is raised if percentage is at/exceeds 20%.

As at the close of Q3, year-to-date performance in relation to percentage of calls answered within 60 seconds stands at 75% (75,852 / 101,144), short of target (80%) by 5% though within

tolerance for the measure. Year-to-date performance in relation to percentage of calls abandoned after 5 seconds is 3.7% (3,753 / 101,144), below target (4%) by 0.3%.

In Q2 high volumes of incoming calls in September (18,671) relating to difficulties experienced with waste collection impacted that month's performance also bringing down the year-to-date performance figures. However, the service performance has improved since then performing above target in the months of November (84.1%, 7,873 / 9,361) and December (91%, 6,567 / 7,216). Even though call volumes have returned to normal expected volumes in Q3, its impact will make it difficult to reach the target by year end for percentage of calls answered with 60 seconds.

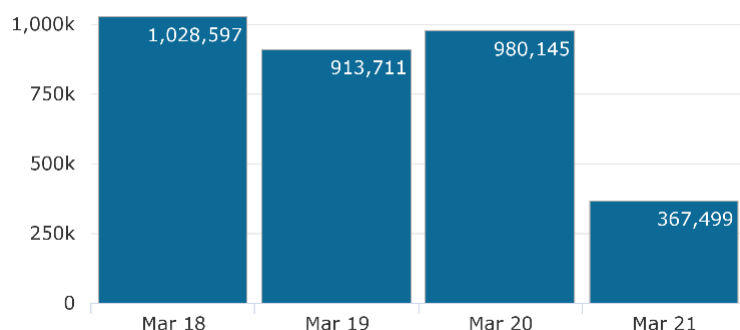
The service is migrating to an 8X8 telephony system by the end of Q4 to enable staff to work from home. This new platform will also allow full integration of different contact methods including webchat, email and social media, streamlining the Call Centre and ensuring customers are dealt with in a uniform way regardless of whichever contact option they choose.

A comparison of Q3 YTD call volumes (excluding calls abandoned within 5 seconds) with previous years shows that, overall, the council is receiving fewer calls to the customer contact centre in 2020/21. As at the close of December a total of 101,144 calls have been received in 2020/21 compared to 124,113 in 2019/20, 123,650 in 2018/19 and 156,621 in 2017/18. This is largely attributed to the availability of online services and information via the council's website and also overall reductions in avoidable contact by addressing customers' enquiries "right first time".

### 5.4 Library visits

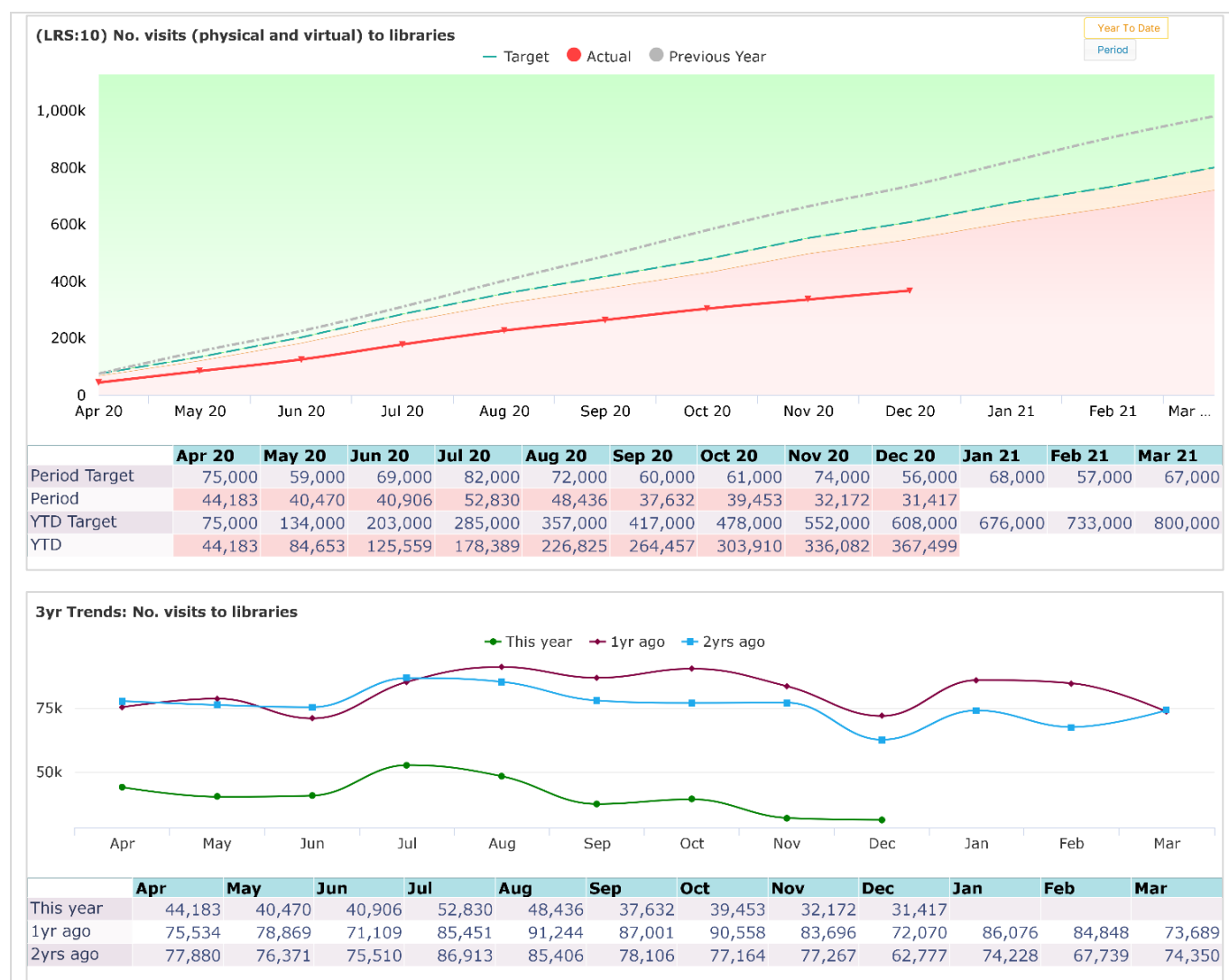
**(LRS:10) No. visits (physical and virtual) to libraries**

Annual totals





## Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel: Q3 Data and Performance Report



### Q3 Commentary

*The year-end target for this measure is 800,000 and profiled monthly. A red flag is raised if volumes are at/fall below 10% of the target. The targets remain unchanged from 2019/20 and the service continues to innovate to achieve as close to target by March 2021 as possible.*

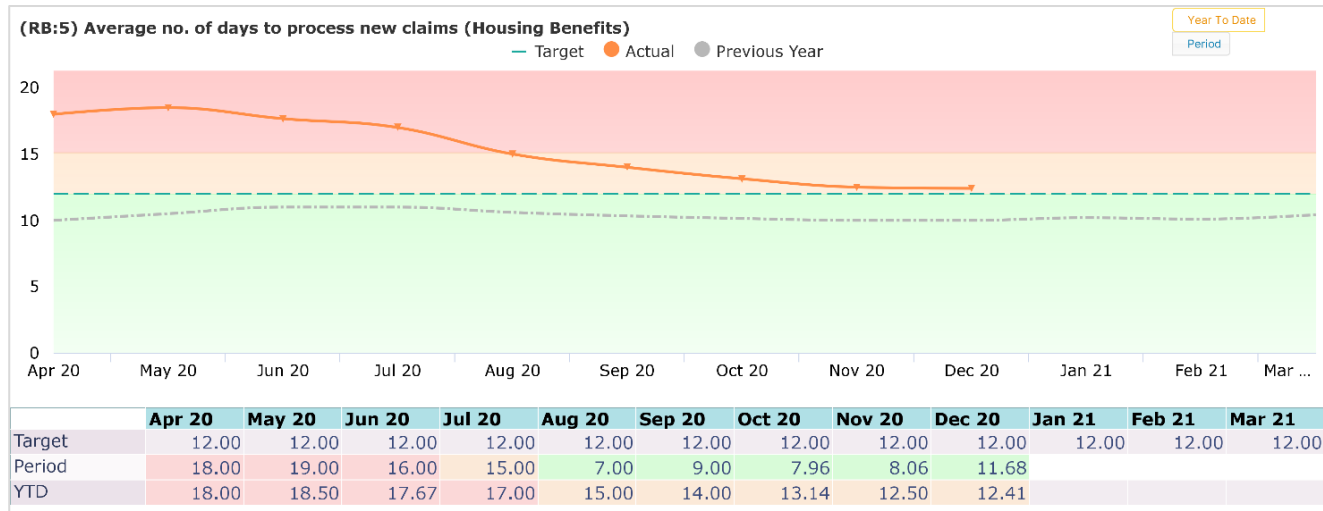
As at the close of Q3 the year-to-date performance is 367,499, below target (608,000) by 240,501. A comparison with same period last year (735,532 visits) shows a decrease by 50% (-368,033 visits).

Following a second national lockdown from 5 November 2020 – 2 December 2020, Maidenhead and Windsor libraries were open for “click and collect” service only. An additional “click and deliver” service was introduced in the summer. A range of online resources have been made available to learn and develop skills during lockdown, including: Niche Academy (online video tutorials), Access to Research (Academic journals and research papers), Future Learn (online courses from top universities), Learn My Way (free courses on basic IT such as internet browsing, setting up an email account), Encyclopaedia Britannica (for all ages and abilities) and a “How to” guide for claiming Universal Credit. Extensive digital video, music, newspaper and magazine collections have been very popular, and the E-book offer was increased. A variety of online activities were hosted on the library Facebook page during the Christmas period, including story time, rhyme time and craft activities.

## Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel: Q3 Data and Performance Report

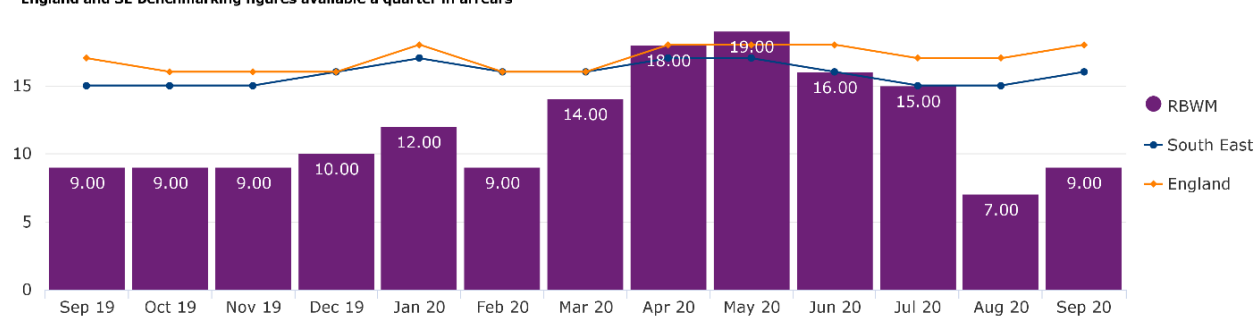
The libraries were open for a short while for residents to visit until the Government declared a third lockdown effective from 4 January 2021. Whilst the digital offer will continue to grow, it is unlikely that the year-end targets could be achieved.

### 5.5 Processing times for housing benefits



#### Benchmarking: Trends: (RB:5) Average no. of days to process new claims (Housing Benefits)

\*England and SE Benchmarking figures available a quarter in arrears\*

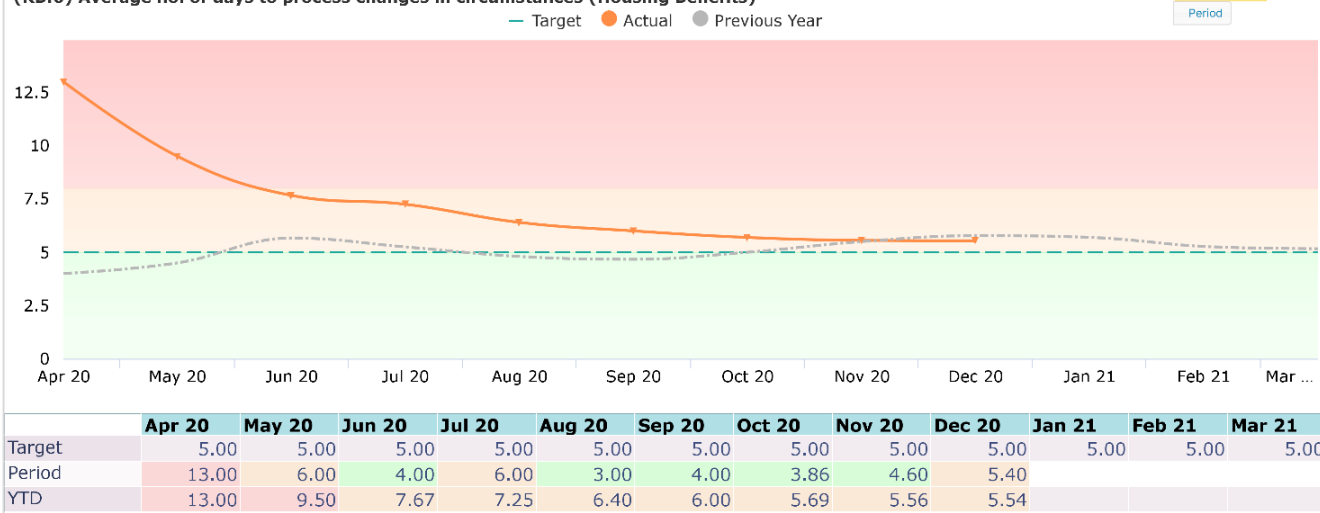


Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/housing-benefit-statistics-on-speed-of-processing-2020-to-2021>

	Sep 19	Oct 19	Nov 19	Dec 19	Jan 20	Feb 20	Mar 20	Apr 20	May 20	Jun 20	Jul 20	Aug 20	Sep 20
RBWM	9.00	9.00	9.00	10.00	12.00	9.00	14.00	18.00	19.00	16.00	15.00	7.00	9.00
South East	15.00	15.00	15.00	16.00	17.00	16.00	16.00	17.00	17.00	16.00	15.00	15.00	16.00
England	17.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	18.00	16.00	16.00	18.00	18.00	18.00	17.00	17.00	18.00

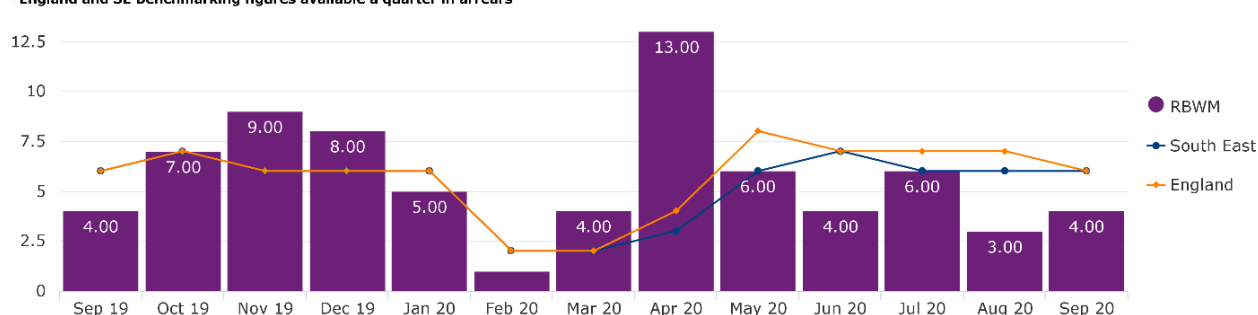
## Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel: Q3 Data and Performance Report

(RB:6) Average no. of days to process changes in circumstances (Housing Benefits)



Benchmarking: Trends: (RB:6) Average no. of days to process changes in circumstances (Housing Benefits)

\*England and SE Benchmarking figures available a quarter in arrears\*



Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/housing-benefit-statistics-on-speed-of-processing-2020-to-2021>

### Q3 Commentary

Please note that Q2 figures for both measures have been updated following the official data-release by the Department for Work and Pensions. The Q2 YTD figure for RB:5 has been updated from 14.78 (amber) to 14.00 (amber). The Q2 YTD figure for RB:6 has been updated from 5.74 (amber) to 6.00 (amber).

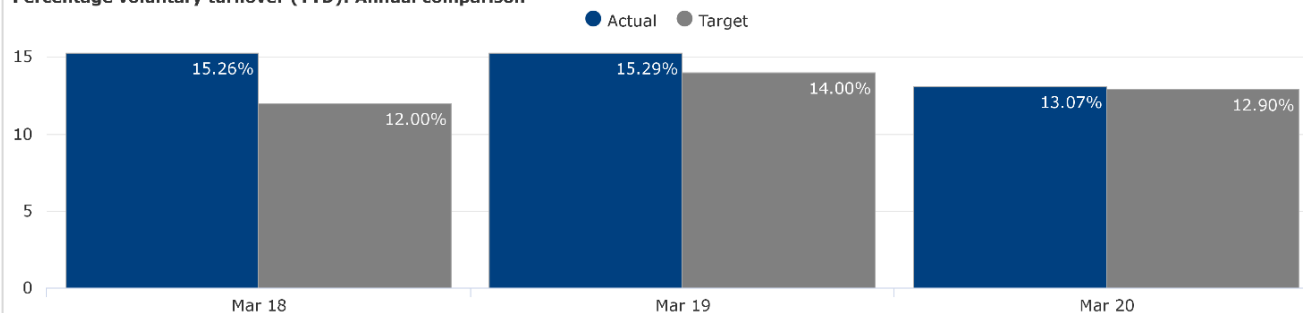
Based on internal reports, at the close of Q3 the year-to-date performance of both measures is short of target but within accepted tolerance thresholds (12.41 days for new claims, 5.54 days for changes in circumstances). There has been an unprecedented demand for services as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic however service staff worked to meet the challenges of this increased demand whilst adapting to new remote working arrangements. Encouragingly, performance has improved from the April position to bring both measures within tolerance at the close of December 2020, and it is anticipated that performance will continue to improve across Q4.

Available benchmarking data up to the end of September 2020 (please note that South East and England benchmarking figures are available a quarter in arrears) shows RBWM's performance to be significantly above the reported figures for the South East and England in relation to processing new claims (RB:5) towards the end of Q2. Performance in relation to processing changes in circumstances (RB:6) across Q2 was in line with South East and England reported figures in July but improved across August and September to bring performance above the South East and England.

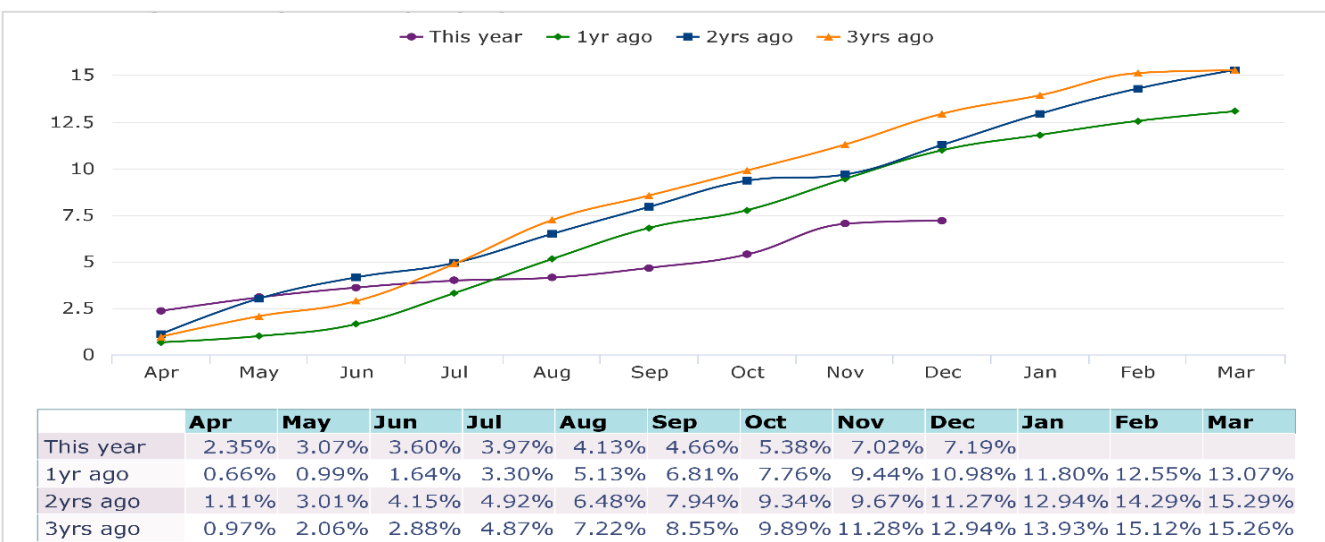
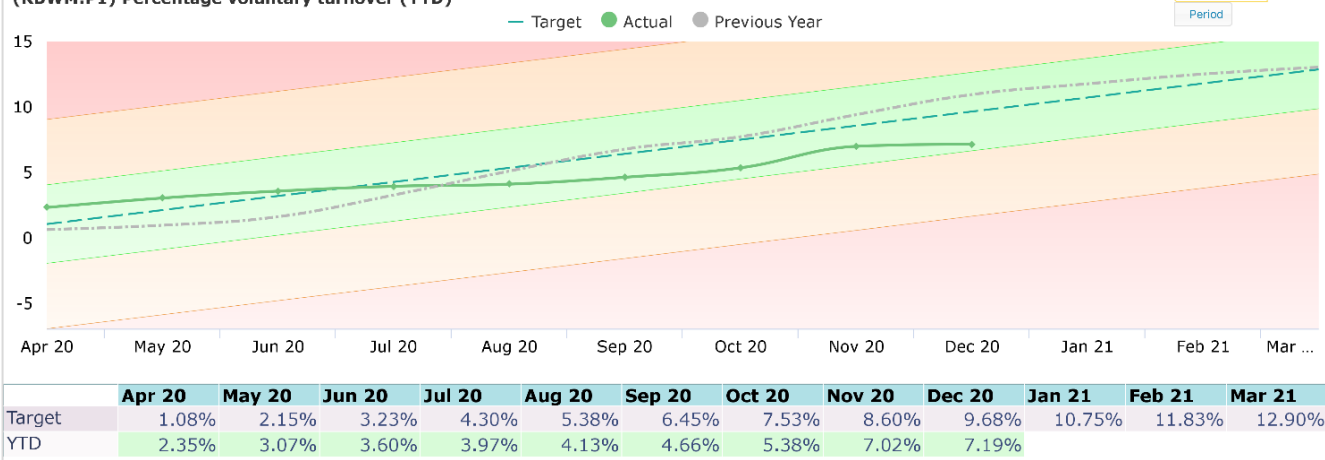
## 6. Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

### 6.1 Voluntary turnover

Percentage voluntary turnover (YTD): Annual comparison



(RBWM:P1) Percentage voluntary turnover (YTD)



### Q3 Commentary

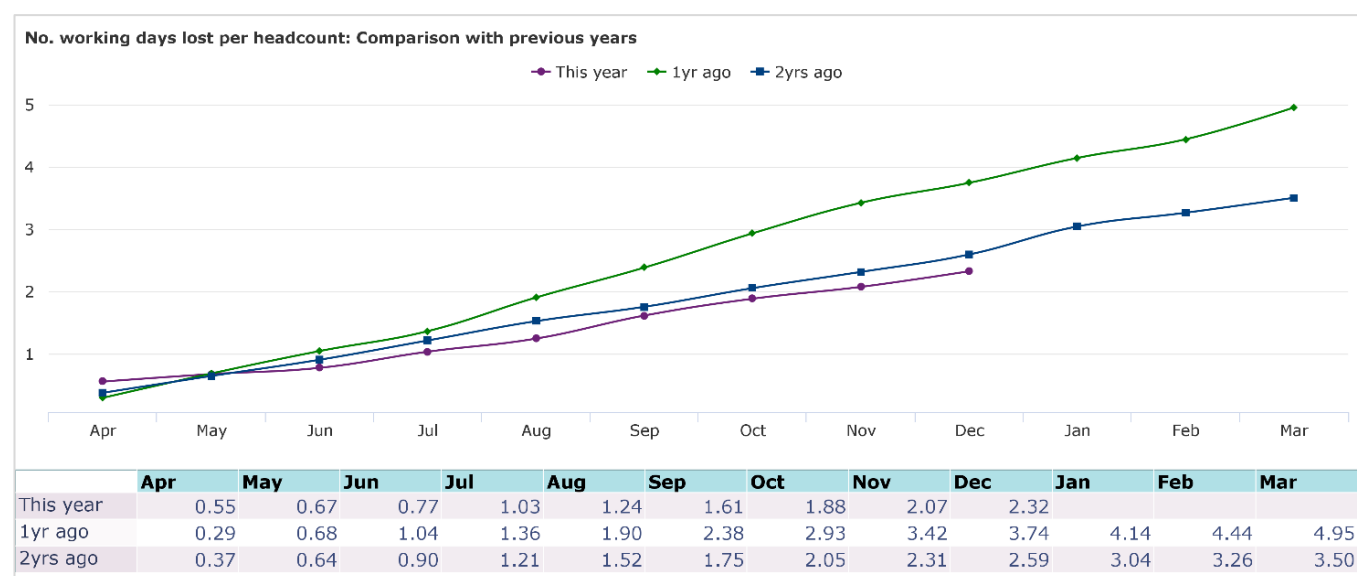
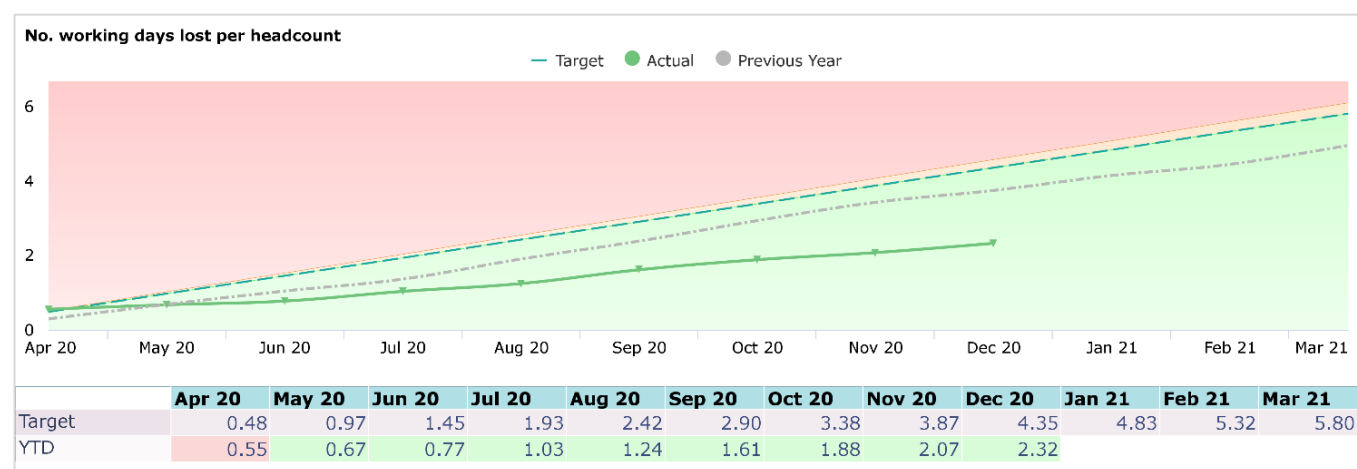
RBWM voluntary turnover includes those who choose to resign or retire. Turnover is calculated by dividing voluntary leavers by the average headcount (headcount at start and end of period / 2). It is acknowledged that some staff-churn is healthy for any organisation and so this measure is configured as a fixed target each month with appropriate tolerance-bandings both above and below the monthly target.

## Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel: Q3 Data and Performance Report

At the end of Q3, the year-to-date percentage voluntary turnover is 7.19% and tracks consistently within the profiled tolerance thresholds. A comparison with previous year shows a significant reduction in voluntary turnover and this can be attributed to current climate where staff are more reluctant to move.

## 7. Business Intelligence: RBWM Sickness Absence

7.1 Reporting of sickness absence is based on working days lost per headcount. At the close of Q3 working days lost due to sickness per headcount is 2.32 and within target of 4.35. Comparison with last two years shows working days lost per headcount to be lesser this year, which could be attributed to staff working from home due to Covid restrictions.



## 8. Crucial Conversations

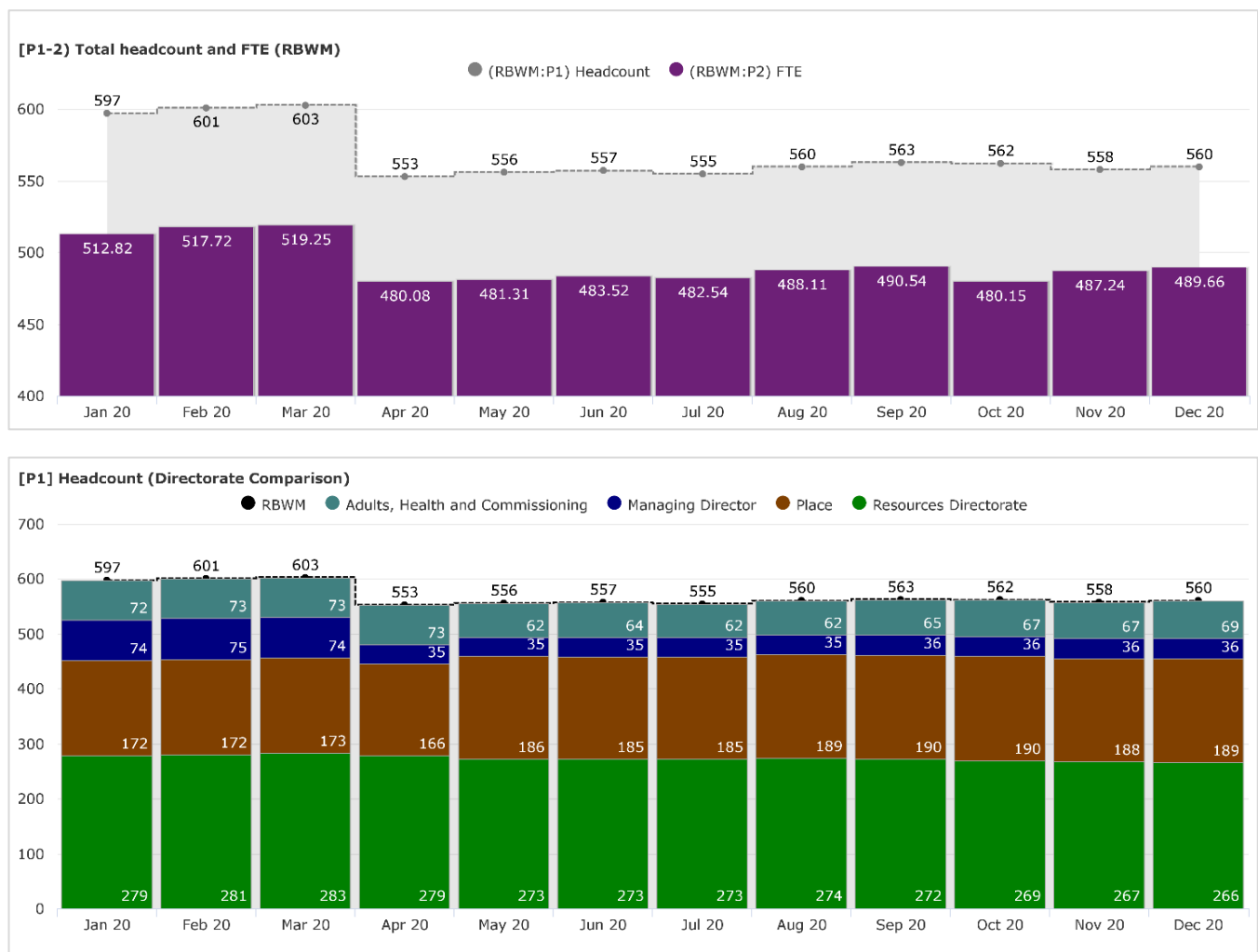
- 9.1 New council values were implemented on 19 June 2020. These values aim to make this a kinder place to work. It's therefore essential for staff to exhibit the values always and to feel empowered to challenge those individuals not demonstrating them.
- 9.2 A council wide mandatory workshop on Crucial Conversations was launched aiming at improving conversations and work relations, holding sessions in small batches to

## Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel: Q3 Data and Performance Report

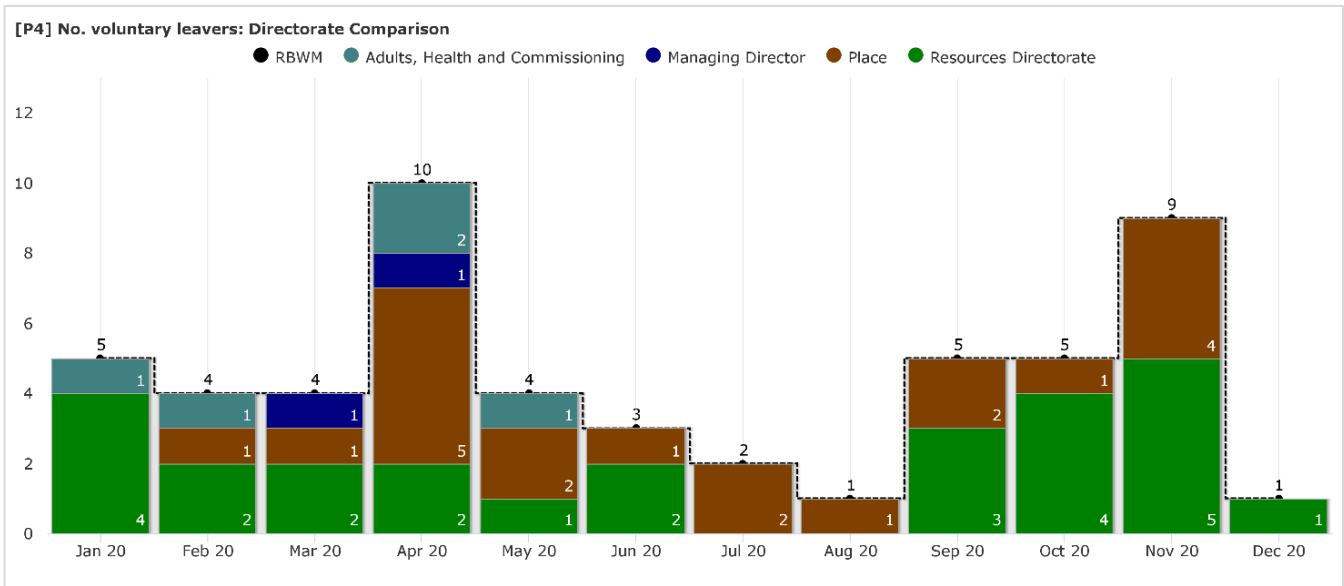
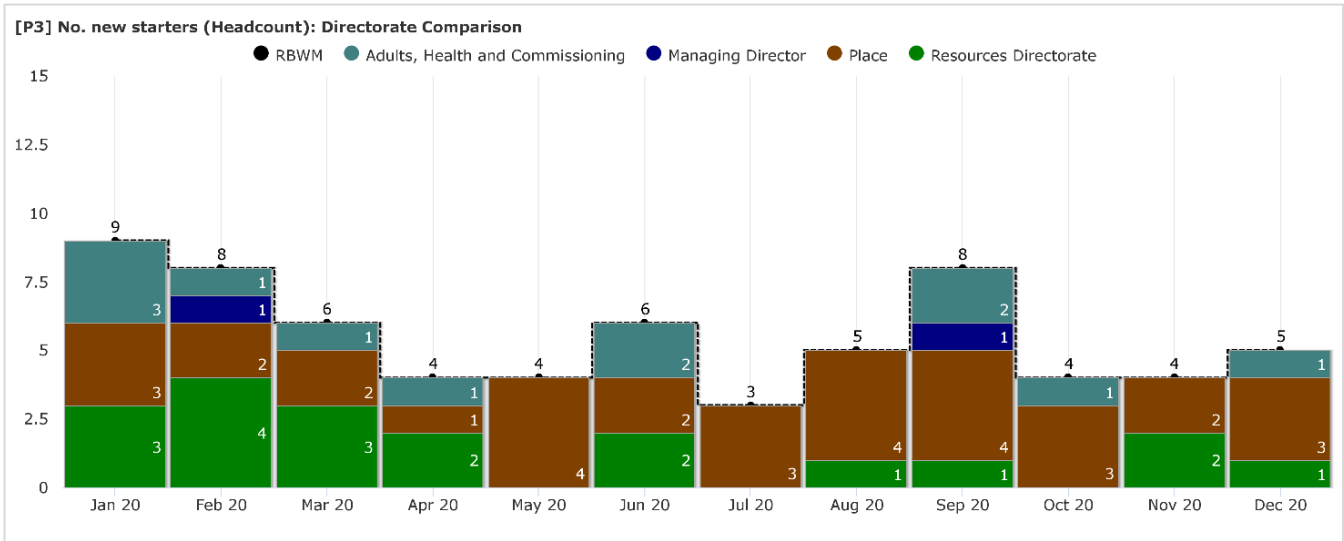
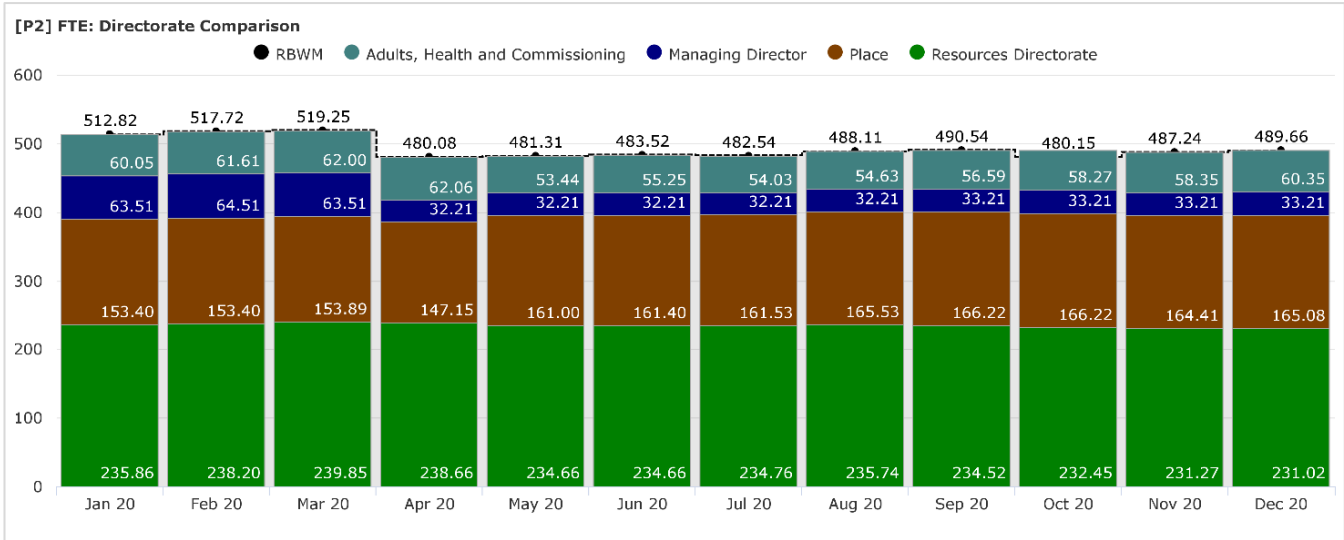
effectively deliver the training. Between November 2020 and February 2021, 61 Crucial Conversations Workshops took place, with over 73% of employee attendance.

### 9. Business Intelligence: Establishment

10.1 The charts below show council workforce's figures with trends over 12-month period. Effective 1 February 2021, the council's organisation structure changed with an addition of new Law and Strategy Directorate and some services moving across directorates. Future reports will reflect the new organisation structure. A new full-time Monitoring Officer has been appointed to bolster the governance capability of the Council and lead the Law and Strategy Directorate.

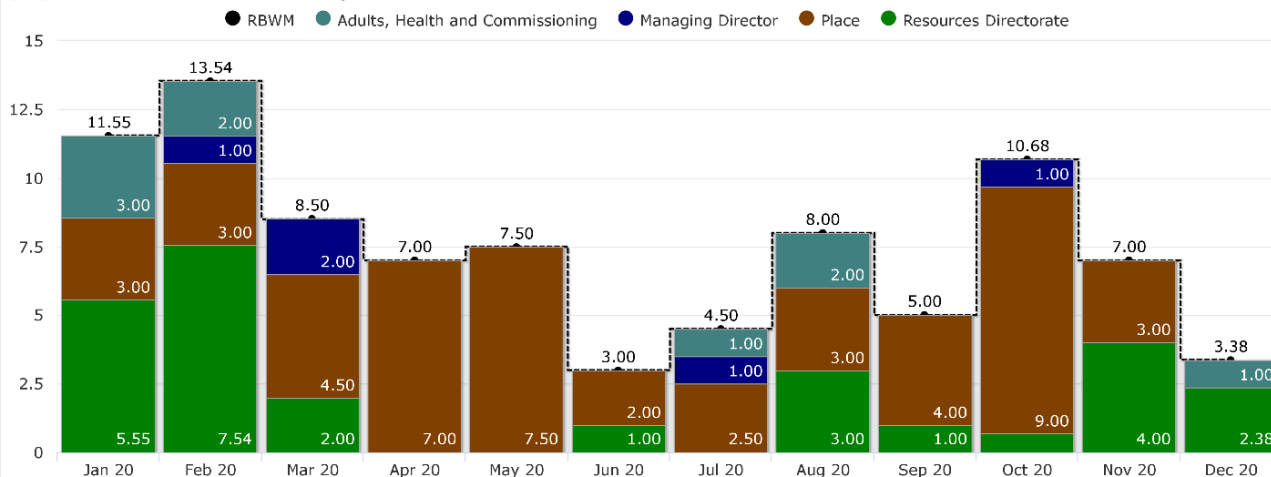


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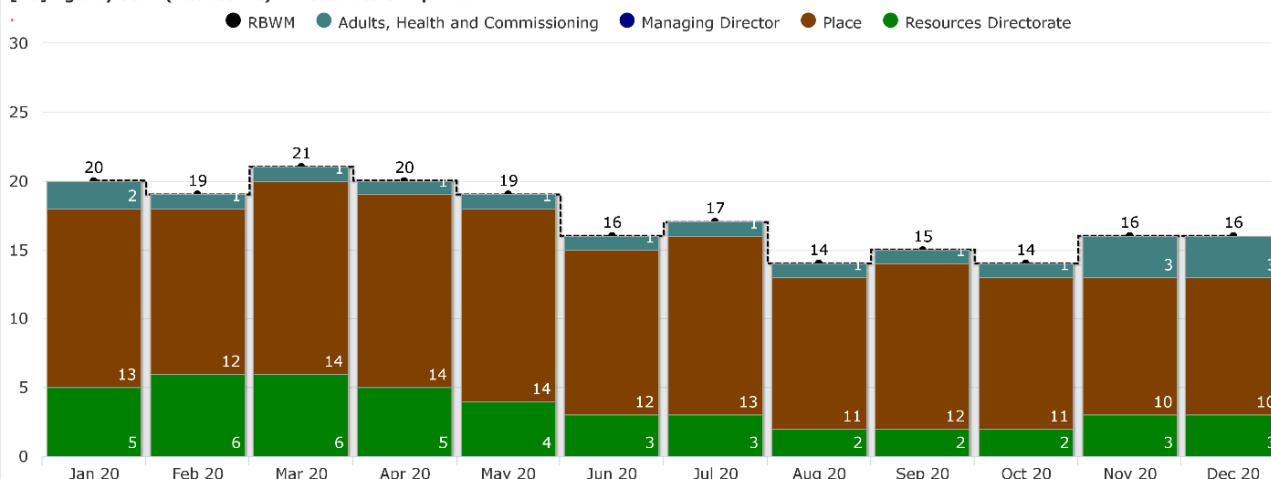


## Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel: Q3 Data and Performance Report

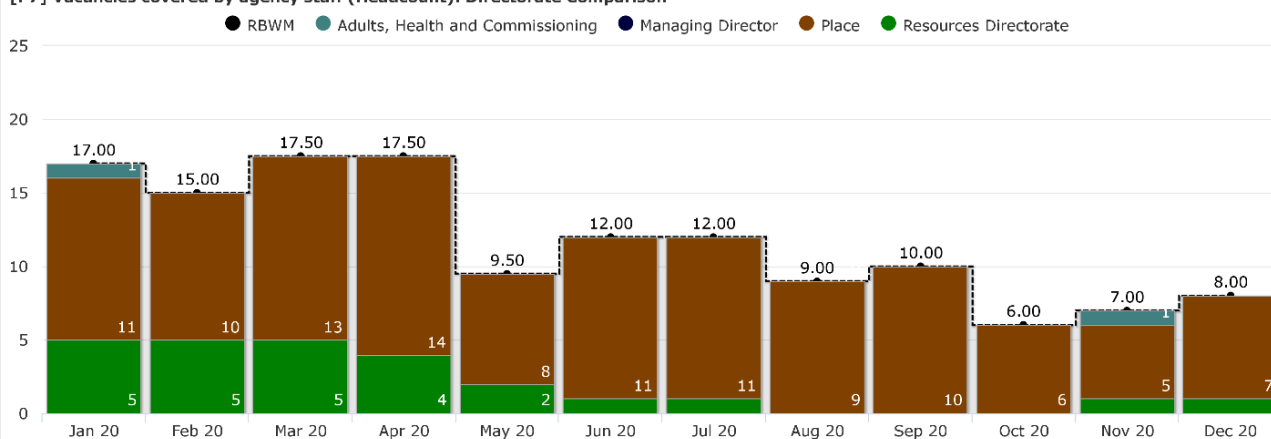
[P5] Active vacancies: Directorate Comparison



[P6] Agency Staff (Headcount): Directorate Comparison



[P7] Vacancies covered by agency staff (Headcount): Directorate Comparison





<b>Subject:</b>	Values and Behaviours Progress Update
<b>Reason for briefing note:</b>	To provide a progress update to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel on AGS item 20.9 Values and Behaviours.
<b>Responsible officer(s):</b>	Nikki Craig, Head of HR, Corporate Projects and IT
<b>Senior leader sponsor:</b>	Duncan Sharkey, Managing Director
<b>Date:</b>	Monday 19 April 2021

## SUMMARY

*This note provides an update regarding item 20.9 of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) Action Plan which relates to values and behaviours.*

## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Item 20.9 of the AGS Action Plan focuses on values and behaviours: Continuing the progress of improving the culture of the organisation and ensuring compliance with relevant procedures and ethical standards.
- 1.2 The agreed actions against this item are as follows:
  1. Clear articulation of the Values and behaviours expected of Officers and Members including the mechanism for reporting concerns.
  2. Refresh the appraisal system in line with the new Values
  3. Raise the visibility of the whistleblowing process and ensure data (anonymised) is available to demonstrate the use of the this or other ways of raising concerns

## 2. KEY IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 The required improvement outcomes associated with AGS item 20.9 are a clear demonstration by all of improved behaviours and improved scoring in staff surveys around culture and improved knowledge of whistleblowing procedures and outcomes.

## 3. DETAILS

- 3.1 A set of new organisational values were developed through direct engagement with staff and launched to the workforce in June 2020. These were shared with Cabinet for their endorsement in July 2020. Examples of positive and negative behaviours accompany each value. An action plan was also produced to support the embedding of the values throughout the organisation and progress against these items is on track.
- 3.2 A key activity to support the embedding of the new values was the roll out of a programme of Crucial Conversations training to all staff. The purpose of the training was to equip staff with the skills to have difficult conversations

vertically within their reporting lines and also horizontally with peers to challenge behaviour not in accordance with the values and to support their adoption across the council. Volunteers from across the organisation were trained to deliver the workshops to groups of their colleagues via MS Teams. The programme commenced in late November and concluded recently with 426 staff having attended a session.

- 3.3 Work has been carried out to integrate the new values into the council's appraisal system. The council will be moving the timing of the appraisal cycle to coincide with the municipal year and therefore the revised scheme will launch to staff in May 2021. The new scheme incorporates a way for employees to demonstrate they are living the values.
- 3.4 The council's staff survey was carried out between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and achieved a response rate of 68% which is the highest to date. The survey included a number of questions on values allowing a comparison with the 2018 results (surveys alternate between a full and a mini survey each year). The results are summarised below.

Question	2020 positive response	Direction of travel	2018 positive response
My <b>manager</b> exhibits the council's values the majority of the time	75%	↑	68%
The <b>CLT</b> consistently exhibit the council's values	40%	↑	31%
<b>Members</b> consistently exhibit the council's values when I interact with them	21%	↑	18%
The <b>people I work</b> with exhibit the council's values on a regular basis	67%	↓	69%

- 3.5 Whilst three of the four areas show an increase in positive responses compared to two years ago it is recognised that there is significant scope for improvement. It should also be noted that the Crucial Conversations are a key tool in improving behaviour in accordance with the values and these only started during the last few days of the survey so responses will not take any benefit as a result of the sessions into account.
- 3.6 The whistleblowing procedure is available to staff on the council's intranet. Details of disclosures made under the whistleblowing procedure are recorded and an anonymised summary is available. Details of any whistleblowing procedures received will be submitted to Statutory Officers Group to ensure oversight.

#### 4. RISKS

- 4.1 The specific actions against item 20.9 are complete and therefore there are no direct risks associated with these activities. However, taking a wider view, it

should be recognised that changing culture can take at least three years and therefore caution should be taken not to expect too much change too quickly. If values aren't embedded in day to day activities and it can lead to disengaged employees and so it is really important to ensure the values are discussed regularly and openly at meetings. Behaviour at any level of the organisation, particularly the top, that is not aligned with the values will undermine their embedding and impede the culture change that is being sought. The Crucial Conversations workshops and the ongoing action plan referred to in section 5 below should assist in mitigating these risks.

## **5. NEXT STEPS**

- 5.1 With it being under a year since the new values were launched, we are at a relatively early stage in our culture change journey. The values need to underpin all that we do as an organisation. We have already seen an example of this with their incorporation into the council's Transformation Strategy and they are also informing the development of the updated People Strategy. The launch of the values was accompanied by an action plan which includes activities, in addition to those referred to in this note, designed to support adoption and embedding. These items are in progress and will be reviewed and added to. Shortly the actions will be incorporated into a People Action Plan which will sit alongside the People Strategy and hold all our people related activities with each one contributing directly or indirectly to supporting the values.

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Report Title:	<b>CIPFA Review of Governance Action Plan – Quarterly Progress Update</b>
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part I
Lead Member:	Councillor Hilton, Lead Member for Finance and Ascot
Meeting and Date:	Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel 19 April 2021
Responsible Officer(s):	Adele Taylor – Director of Resources
Wards affected:	None



## REPORT SUMMARY

1. In response to the review of governance undertaken by CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) and presented to Cabinet in June 2020, an action plan was developed which identified appropriate actions to resolve the remaining, outstanding issues.
2. Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel reviewed that draft action plan in July 2020 and agreed that quarterly progress reports should be presented to the Panel going forward.
3. This report provides the second of these updates, following the first update at the meeting in November. It sets out progress made against the actions identified in the plan.

## 1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

**RECOMMENDATION:** That Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel reviews the report and:

- i) **Notes the actions already taken in respect of the objectives set out, and those planned for the next quarter.**

## 2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

### Options

**Table 1: Options arising from this report**

Option	Comments
Note the contents of the progress report. <b>This is the recommended option</b>	This will allow the Council to continue to make improvements and learn lessons from the CIPFA review.
Provide no commentary on the report and action plan.	Not recommended. The Panel will have failed to undertake its role in scrutinising the actions of the Council.

### **3. KEY IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The CIPFA Governance Review identified a number of areas for improvement which were therefore included in the Action Plan. This report updates on the action taken to address these issues.
- 3.2 The Action Plan sets out six areas for improvement and these are summarised below:
- Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and development of budget proposals for 2021/22
  - Transformation
  - Capital Programme Management
  - Financial Management Improvements including reconciliations, debt management and collection fund management
  - Management of Partnership Arrangements
  - Member Oversight
- 3.3 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and development of budget proposals for 2021/22 - a clear understanding is required of what resources the Council has to manage its services and address its priorities. A legal, balanced budget should be proposed and agreed to statutory deadlines.
- 3.4 Transformation - a dynamic approach to identifying potential opportunities to transform services should be developed, with clearly defined benefits identified and delivered. Savings identified should form part of actions to close the budget gap.
- 3.5 Capital Programme Management - management of the whole of the capital programme must be improved, including a greater understanding of the impact of decisions on the financial sustainability and wider aims of the Council. Improved reporting should be integrated as part of the budget monitoring process, ensuring there is a good understanding of the impact of the progress of the overall capital programme.
- 3.6 Financial Management Improvements including reconciliations, debt management and collection fund management - budget managers should be clear about their roles and responsibilities and therefore should be able to manage the resources they have to deliver their services successfully. Sound underlying processes should be in place to ensure that our resources are clearly understood, managed and processes are efficiently managed. Roles and responsibilities for all officers involved in the financial management process should be defined, understood and appropriate checks, balances and verifications should be in place to minimise fraud and error. All officers of the council should have a sound understanding of the financial resources of the council and of how to support decision-making appropriately.

- 3.7 Management of Partnership Arrangements – a clear shared agreement and understanding should be defined with our partners and joint owners of what we wish to achieve through delivering services through these arrangements.
- 3.8 Member Oversight – a clear understanding should be established of the respective roles and responsibilities of members and officers and clarity for decision-making purposes. Both members and officers should receive up-to-date training on governance issues that impact on their ability to undertake their roles successfully, so that they feel confident in how they make decisions. Full scrutiny should be undertaken, through separate committees/panels, relevant to the roles and responsibilities of the two entities.
- 3.9 An internal officer group has been established and last met on 10th February to ensure that progress continues to be made and plans are in place for the next quarter.
- 3.10 Appendix A sets out the progress made so far against each of these objectives. It is important that delivery of the action plan remains transparent and officers recommend that Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel continue to review progress against the action plan on a quarterly basis. If any concerns are raised about non-delivery or if it does not feel adequate progress has been made it could then refer the matter on to Cabinet.

#### **4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY**

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications of the actions taken to progress delivery of the action plan. It is expected that any such actions will be contained within existing resources.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Authority is a creature of statute and must obey legislation, act within the guidance and regulations issued, and ensure probity and compliance with ethical behaviour. The CIPFA report highlighted a number of issues of governance that demonstrate the Authority has not lived up to the standards required. Progress against this action plan seeks to rectify this position.

#### **6. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 6.1 There are no known risks associated with the delivery of this action plan to date.

#### **7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS**

- 7.1 This is not a decision-making report so there are no direct impacts as a result of noting the report.
- 7.2 Equalities.

There are no implications arising from the recommendation.

### 7.3 Climate change/sustainability

There are no implications arising from the recommendation.

### 7.4 Data Protection/GDPR.

There are no implications arising from the recommendation.

## 8. CONSULTATION

8.1 Not applicable

## 9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

9.1 Ongoing – details in Appendix A

## 10. APPENDICES

10.1 This report is supported by one appendix

- Appendix A – Action Plan Update

## 11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

11.1 This report is supported by 3 background documents:

- CIPFA Review of Governance Final Report - Cabinet 25 June 2020
- CIPFA Review of Governance – Corporate O&S Panel 27 July 2020
- CIPFA Review of Governance – Response to the Final Report and Development of an Action Plan - Cabinet 30 July 2020

## 12. CONSULTATION (MANDATORY)

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
Cllr Hilton	Lead Member for Finance	6/04/21	8/04/21
Duncan Sharkey	Managing Director	6/04/21	
Adele Taylor	Director of Resources/S151 Officer	2/04/21	6/04/21
Andrew Durrant	Director of Place	6/04/21	
Kevin McDaniel	Director of Children's Services	6/04/21	
Hilary Hall	Director of Adults, Health and Commissioning	6/04/21	6/04/21



Elaine Browne	Head of Law	6/04/21	7/04/21
Emma Duncan	Deputy Director of Law and Strategy / Monitoring Officer	6/04/21	
Nikki Craig	Head of HR Corporate Projects and IT	6/04/21	6/04/21
Louisa Dean	Communications	6/04/21	8/04/21
Karen Shepherd	Head of Governance	6/04/21	6/04/21

## REPORT HISTORY

<b>Decision type:</b>	<b>Urgency item?</b>	<b>To follow item?</b>
For information	No	No

Report Author: Andrew Vallance, Head of Finance
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Area	Issues Identified	Actions	Timeline	Lead Officer(s)	What Success will look like	Progress to date
<p>Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and development of budget proposals for 2021/22</p> <p>50</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update of MTFS to take account of impact of COVID-19 and decisions by government to delay implementation of Fair Funding required. Clear link between the MTFS and the Council's corporate plan</li> <li>Need to have clarity of budget gap going forward</li> <li>A reserve management strategy needs to be in place as part of MTFS</li> <li>Equalities impacts were produced for each of the budget proposals but a cumulative equality impact assessment was only completed for the first time for 2020/21 budget.</li> </ul>	<p>MTFS to be reviewed in year to identify a revised budget gap for 2021/22 to 2024/25 to assist with budget setting process for 2021/22. Consideration to be given to any additional areas of investment in resources needed including additional services arising from COVID-19, equalities and other engagement resources</p> <p>Identification of steps to address the budget gap across the MTFS and preparation of a balanced budget for 2021/22 including a strategy for managing the Council's reserves to be in place as part of the MTFS</p> <p>Ensure that there is further embedding of equalities impact assessments as part of the overall budget proposals.</p>	<p>October 2020</p> <p>February 2021</p>	<p>Director of Resources &amp; Head of Finance</p>	<p>A clear understanding of what resources the Council has to manage its services and address its priorities.</p> <p>A legal, balanced budget proposed and agreed to statutory deadlines</p>	<p><b>COMPLETED</b></p> <p>MTFS approved by Council 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020. Identified budget gap of £8m.</p> <p>Legal, balanced budget approved at full Council on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021.</p> <p>All budget growth and savings were accompanied by EQIAs. Overall budget had an EQIA. EQIAs were revised after budget consultation in February 2021.</p>

Area	Issues Identified	Actions	Timeline	Lead Officer(s)	What Success will look like	Progress to date
51 Transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council needs to embed the work around transformation to identify new ways of working and identify additional efficiencies</li> </ul>	<p>Transformation plan developed to identify the framework within which opportunities can be identified</p> <p>Sub-committee of cabinet formed to have oversight of transformation work</p>	<p>August 2020</p> <p>August 2020</p>	Transformation lead	A dynamic approach to identifying potential opportunities to transform services with clearly defined benefits identified and delivered. Savings identified will form part of actions to close the budget gap.	<p><b>COMPLETED</b></p> <p>Transformation Strategy agreed by Sub-Committee in September 2020</p> <p>Action plan has been developed and will be considered by the Transformation Sub-Committee in May 2021.</p>
Capital Programme Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need to establish a Capital Programme board to improve Capital governance</li> <li>Overall capital programme needs to be reviewed to ensure robust business cases with clear delivery outcomes and risks appropriately managed.</li> <li>More active challenge of capital spending needs to be undertaken including pro-active challenge from finance on slippage</li> </ul>	<p>Establishment of a Capital Programme Board (officer board) with a remit including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of existing capital schemes to ensure proper management of budget, timescales and outcomes</li> <li>Consider the annual review and refresh of the capital strategy</li> <li>Consider potential new projects and provide challenge</li> </ol>	First meeting held June 2020	Head of Finance	<p>Improved management of the whole of the capital programme including a greater understanding of the impact of decisions on the financial sustainability and wider aims of the Council.</p> <p>I</p>	<p><b>COMPLETED</b></p> <p>Capital Programme Board has met regularly. Reviews include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing schemes</li> <li>Slippage</li> <li>Allocation of grants</li> <li>Allocation of s106/CIL</li> <li>21/22 capital budgets</li> </ul> <p>Capital strategy approved by Council as part of Budget papers on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021.</p>

Area	Issues Identified	Actions	Timeline	Lead Officer(s)	What Success will look like	Progress to date
52		<p>prior to commencement</p> <p>4. Consider the overall funding of the capital programme including review of S106, CIL, grants and borrowing levels</p> <p>5. Undertake post implementation reviews of major capital schemes (including Braywick leisure centre)</p> <p>6. Ensure regular monitoring reporting is included in cabinet finance reports</p>	Budget monitoring from July 2020		Improved reporting as part of the budget monitoring process ensuring there is a good understanding of the impact of the progress of the overall capital programme	<p>Post implementation reviews to be introduced from April 2021.</p> <p>Cabinet finance reports now include improved and expanded monitoring of capital.</p>
Financial Management Improvements including reconciliations, debt management and collection fund management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training programmes on the IT system already underway but need to continue to be embedded</li> <li>• Only 25% of transactions have a purchase order raised</li> <li>• The current model for building the MTFS needs to be reviewed</li> <li>• There were two unreconciled balances (bank reconciliation and Housing Benefits) that</li> </ul>	<p>Training for budget managers has already been started but this needs to continue to be embedded.</p> <p>Specific project to identify opportunities to increase the use of purchase orders which will help with overall budget management</p> <p>Model for the MTFS reviewed and refreshed .</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>October 2021</p> <p>COMPLETE</p>	<p>Head of Finance</p> <p>Head of Finance</p> <p>COMPLETE</p>	<p>Budget managers are clear about their roles and responsibilities and therefore are able to manage the resources they have to deliver their services successfully.</p>	<p>Training programme to continue, adapted to new ways of working.</p> <p>PO project ongoing</p> <p>MTFS reviewed and approved by Council on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020.</p>

Area	Issues Identified	Actions	Timeline	Lead Officer(s)	What Success will look like	Progress to date
53	<p>needed to be written back and reported to members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further review of other control accounts and bank reconciliation</li> <li>• Limited reporting and review of debt management by services and wider finance team and provisions for bad debt are not regularly reviewed</li> <li>• There is not a clear understanding of how the collection funds operate which is a technical area of work.</li> </ul>	<p>Unreconciled balances – RESOLVED (Council report June 2020)</p> <p>Internal audit currently underway of all reconciliations. Following completion, appropriate actions to be put in place.</p> <p>Improved reporting of debt management to be included in budget monitoring reports and a process for reviewing all bad debt provisions to be identified</p> <p>Review of collection funds has been commissioned separately to identify any areas where we may need to address skills and knowledge gaps. Actions identified to be addressed through appropriate technical support, training and guidance.</p>	<p>COMPLETE</p> <p>September 2021</p> <p>September 2021</p> <p>COMPLETE</p>	<p>COMPLETE</p> <p>Head of Finance</p> <p>Head of Finance</p> <p>COMPLETE</p>	<p>There are sound underlying processes in place to ensure that our resources are clearly understood, managed and processes are efficiently managed.</p> <p>Roles and responsibilities for all officers involved in the financial management process are defined, understood and appropriate checks, balances and verifications are in place to minimise fraud and error</p> <p>All officers of the council have a sound understanding of the financial</p>	<p>Resolved</p> <p>Await internal audit results</p> <p>Reports include debt management. Ongoing work to review bad debt provisions in the light of pandemic restrictions. This is part of usual budget management processes</p> <p>Collection fund skills and knowledge gaps addressed with support from LG Futures.</p>

Area	Issues Identified	Actions	Timeline	Lead Officer(s)	What Success will look like	Progress to date
					resources of the council and understand how to support decision-making appropriately	
54 Management of Partnership Arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviews of the Pension Fund, Optalis and AfC be completed and recommendations implemented</li> <li>Consider our other partnership arrangements that are not subject to procurement and consider a value for money review (including Property Company and Internal Audit Service)</li> </ul>	<p>Optalis and AfC review completed and any actions arising identified and implemented</p> <p>Review of Pension Fund governance completed and all governance issues identified and actioned. This will include engagement with other pension fund bodies</p> <p>Review current partnership arrangements with the property company and to identify common purpose and goals for both partners</p>	<p>COMPLETE</p> <p>COMPLETE</p> <p>December 2020 (Revised to July 2021 to include report of findings)</p>	<p>COMPLETE</p> <p>COMPLETE</p> <p>Director of Resources &amp; Head of Finance</p>	<p>Clear shared agreement and understanding with our partners and joint owners of what we wish to achieve through delivering services through these arrangements.</p>	<p>Reviews reported to Cabinet on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2020. Action plans in place and monitored by the Head of Commissioning - People. These are reviewed by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panels.</p> <p>Revised Pension Fund Governance arrangements agreed by Council in October 2020. Now implemented.</p> <p>Property Company Review by external consultants has commenced. Delayed start to ensure inclusion of new Executive Director of Place and Deputy Director of Law and Governance.</p>

Area	Issues Identified	Actions	Timeline	Lead Officer(s)	What Success will look like	Progress to date
		Review current arrangements around our Internal Audit service to ensure that these are fit for purpose	March 2021	Director of Resources & Head of Finance  (Please note that the identified officers here are the RBWM officers only)		Completion date revised to include formal report findings  Internal Audit partnership arrangements review has commenced. Current arrangements to continue for 2021/22 but further review in year for future year arrangements
5 Member Oversight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a lack of clarity between member and officer roles</li> </ul>	<p>A revised code of conduct has been developed for members and was approved by Council in June</p> <p>Member and officer training programmes on finance and governance issues should be regularly reviewed and updated. Training on Member/Officer roles and responsibilities proposed for September 2020</p>	<p>COMPLETE</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Head of Governance</p> <p>Head of Governance and Head of Finance</p>	<p>Clear understanding of the respective roles and responsibilities of members and officers and clarity for decision-making purposes.</p> <p>Both members and officers receive up-to-date training on governance issues that impact on their ability to</p>	<p>Training undertaken in September 2020. Further training from the LGA may be available.</p>

Area	Issues Identified	Actions	Timeline	Lead Officer(s)	What Success will look like	Progress to date
56	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The merging of the audit committee and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel has meant that the different roles of the two functions may not be possible given the need to manage the number of financial governance issues</li> </ul>	A review of the committees to be undertaken to split the functions and create a separate Audit and Governance committee from a corporate overview and scrutiny panel was considered by full Council on 28 July 2020	COMPLETE	COMPLETE	<p>undertake their roles successfully, so that they feel confident in how they make decisions.</p> <p>Through separate committees/panels, full scrutiny can be undertaken relevant to the roles and responsibilities of the two entities.</p>	Audit and Governance Committee now established and has met regularly.



Report Title:	<b>Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel - Annual Report 2020/21</b>
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part I
Member reporting:	Councillor Chris Targowski, Chairman of the Panel
Lead Officers:	Duncan Sharkey, Managing Director
Meeting and Date:	Full Council – June 2021



## REPORT SUMMARY

Part 9A B4 of the [council constitution](#) requires an Overview and Scrutiny Panel to report annually to full Council on 'its workings and make recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate'.

### 1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

**RECOMMENDATION:** That full Council notes the annual report of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

### 2. CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny panel met five times and scrutinised (complete number of reports after April meeting) separate reports
- 2.2 The Chairman would like to thank all members of the panel and Officers of the Council for the time and effort that they have put into the successful running of the panel.
- 2.3 The terms of reference for the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny panel can be found in Part 4 B of the Council Constitution.

### 3. TOPICS SCRUTINISED DURING THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2020/21

- 3.1 The XXX reports scrutinised included:
  - CIPFA Report
  - Annual Complaints Report
  - Budget Monitoring Report
  - Corporate Transformation Paper
  - Maidenhead United – Request for Relocation
- 3.2 Details of topics scrutinised can be found here: <https://rbwm.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=594>

### 4. CALL-INS CONSIDERED DURING THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2020/21

- 4.1 N/A

## **5. RESIDENT SUGGESTIONS CONSIDERED DURING THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2020/21**

5.1 N/A

## **6. TASK AND FINISH GROUPS ESTABLISHED DURING THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2020/21**

6.1 Will update when outcomes of the T&F established

6.2 Highways Contract T&F agreed July 2019. No T&F established during municipal year. Minuted suggestion of T&F with a focus on the Customer journey within services provided was not addressed. (Minuted July 2019)

6.3 “Members discussed a need to focus on the customer journey for residents and to look at the way in which each service performs.

6.4 Members also discussed the need for a separate task and finish group to focus on contracts and procurement process. This group would look at ways to review and monitor existing and new contract performance. It was agreed that this working group would have a particular focus on highways and to provide a visible audit of these contracts.”

## **7. PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVED WORKING METHODS**

7.1 Be more proactive in requesting early sight of relevant reports that are on the Cabinet forward plan

7.2 Distribute ‘to note’ reports to panel members electronically. Bring to meeting only if necessary or requested by panel members for debate or in depth questions.

7.3 Work more closely with Cabinet to ensure panel is more involved with policy development, rather than only once the report has been finalised.

7.4 Monitor ‘value for money’ aspect of the panel. What changes, improvements have we instigated.

## **8. THANKS**

8.1 The Panel would like to thank the following individuals and organisations for their involvement in the scrutiny process this year:

- Mark Beeley
- CIPFA

## **9. PROPOSED WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2021/22**

9.1 The Panel proposes to consider the following topic areas for scrutiny in the coming municipal year:

Topics already in progress/carried over from 2020/21:

- Will update after April meeting

New topics:

- Will update April meeting

## 10. APPENDICES

10.1 This report is supported by one appendix:

- Appendix A – Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel Work Programme 2020/2021

### REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To follow item?
For information	No	No

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# Agenda Item 8

## WORK PROGRAMME - CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

<b>DIRECTORS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Duncan Sharkey (Managing Director)</li> <li>• Andrew Durrant (Director of Place)</li> <li>• Adele Taylor (Director of Resources)</li> <li>• Emma Duncan (Monitoring Officer and Deputy Director of Law and Strategy)</li> </ul>
<b>LINK OFFICERS &amp; HEADS OF SERVICES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elaine Browne (Head of Law)</li> <li>• Nikki Craig (Head of HR, Corporate Projects &amp; ICT)</li> <li>• Barbara Richardson (Managing Director RBWM Property Co)</li> <li>• Ruth Watkins (Chief Accountant)</li> <li>• Karen Shepherd (Head of Governance)</li> <li>• Andrew Vallance (Head of Finance and Deputy S151 Officer)</li> </ul>

### MEETING: 23<sup>rd</sup> JUNE 2021

ITEM	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
Corporate Transformation Strategy and Action Plan	<b>Hilary Hall</b> , <i>Director of Adults, Health and Commissioning</i>
Workforce Profile	<b>Nikki Craig</b> , <i>Head of HR, Corporate Projects and ICT</i>
Task and Finish Group - Report	<b>Chairman and Panel Members</b>
Work Programme	Panel clerk

### MEETING: 26<sup>th</sup> JULY 2021

ITEM	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
Work Programme	Panel clerk

### MEETING: 4<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2021

ITEM	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
Q1 Performance Report	<b>Adele Taylor</b> , <i>Director of Resources</i>
Annual Complaints and Compliments Report	<b>Nikki Craig</b> , <i>Head of HR, Corporate Projects and ICT</i>
Work Programme	Panel Clerk

### MEETING: 29<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2021

ITEM	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
Work Programme	Panel clerk

### MEETING: 26<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2021

ITEM	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
Budget 2022/23	<b>Lead Officers and Finance</b>
Q2 Performance Report	<b>Nikki Craig</b> , <i>Head of HR, Corporate Projects and ICT</i>
Annual Scrutiny Report (Draft)	<b>Chairman and Panel</b>
Work Programme	Panel clerk

**MEETING: 4<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2021**

ITEM	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
Q3 Performance Report	<b>Nikki Craig</b> , <i>Head of HR, Corporate Projects and ICT</i>
Annual Scrutiny Report (Final Version)	<b>Chairman and Panel</b>
Work Programme	Panel Clerk

**ITEMS SUGGESTED BUT NOT YET PROGRAMMED**

ITEM	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

[Terms of Reference for the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel](#)