

Report Title:	2020/21 Q1 Performance Report
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information?	No - Part I
Lead Member:	
Meeting and Date:	Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel, 29 September 2020
Responsible Officer(s):	Adele Taylor, Director of Resources
Wards affected:	All

www.rbwm.gov.uk



REPORT SUMMARY

1. The Council Plan 2017-21 and associated strategic priorities remained current up to the 30 July 2020 when Cabinet approved an Interim Council Strategy 2020/21 for immediate adoption. The Interim Council Strategy was adopted in acknowledgement that the Covid-19 pandemic has significantly altered the context in which the Council is currently operating and that resources are now focused in an entirely different way. The priorities and objectives of the approved Interim Council Strategy therefore supersede those of the original 2017-21 Council Plan.
2. Appendix A sets out Q1 performance for all measures relating to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel's remit under the strategic framework that was current in Q1. Performance of measures related to the Interim Strategy will be reported from Q2 onwards. These reports will also include performance of the measures set out in Appendix A, grouped by the lead service, as it is acknowledged that these measures remain important for the future and so ongoing visibility of trends is desirable.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

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

- i) **Notes the 2020/21 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel Q1 Performance Report in Appendix A.**
- ii) **Notes that from Q2 onwards performance of measures relating to the Interim Council Strategy will be reported, along with the measures included in Appendix A which will be grouped by lead service.**
- iii) **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 relating to Q1 performance reporting and the intentions for reporting in Q2 and beyond. This is the recommended option	This will allow continuing monitoring of performance and trends against the council's agreed priorities and objectives in order to aid decision-making and maintain focus on continuous improvement.
Reject the recommendations in the report.	The failure to use relevant performance information to understand delivery against the council's agreed priorities and objectives impedes the council's ability to make informed decisions and seek continuous improvement.

- 2.1 The Council Plan 2017-21 remained current up to the 30 July 2020 when Cabinet approved an Interim Council Strategy 2020/21 for immediate adoption, acknowledging that the Covid-19 pandemic has significantly altered the context in which the Council is currently operating and that resources are now focused in an entirely different way.
- 2.2 Appendix A sets out Q1 performance for all measures relating to the Panel's remit under the strategic framework that was current in Q1. It shows that:
- 4 of the 9 measures met or exceeded target,
 - 2 measures fell just short of target, although still within the tolerance,
 - 3 measures were out of tolerance and require improvement.
- 2.3 Detailed commentary on all the indicators is included in Appendix A.

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The key implications of this report are set out in table 2.

Table 2: Key Implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
The council is on target to deliver its strategic priorities	< 100% priorities on target	100% priorities on target			30 June 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 3.

Table 3: Impact of risk and mitigation

Risks	Uncontrolled risk	Controls	Controlled risk
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 Ongoing performance of the measures within the Performance Management Framework, alongside other measures and business intelligence information, is regularly reported to the council's four Overview and Scrutiny Panels. Comments from the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel will be 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 4.

Table 4: Implementation timetable

Date	Details
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 Q1 Performance Report.

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

11.1 This report is supported by two background documents:

- Council Plan 2017-21:
https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/downloads/file/3320/2017-2021_-_council_plan
- 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	01.09.20	
Hilary Hall	Director of Adults, Health and Commissioning	01.09.20	
Adele Taylor	Director of Resources	01.09.20	
Nikki Craig	Head of HR, Corporate Projects and IT	01.09.20	04.09.20
Louisa Dean	Communications	01.09.20	11.09.20
Louise Freeth	Head of Revenues, Benefits, Library and Resident Services	01.09.20	02.09.20

REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To Follow item?
Non-key decision	No	No
Report Author: Rachel Kinniburgh, Strategy and Performance Team Leader, 01628 796370		

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Q1 2020-21 Data and Performance Report

Date prepared: 1 July 2020

	Page
1. Executive Summary	2
2. Key activities and milestones achieved	3
3. An excellent customer experience: Detailed Trends and Commentary	
3.1 Customer contact centre calls	5
3.2 Digital customer interactions	7
3.3 Library visits	8
3.4 Processing times for Housing Benefits	10
4. Well-managed resources delivering value for money: Detailed Trends and Commentary	
4.1 Council Tax	12
4.2 Business Rates	13
4.3 Voluntary turnover	15
5. Business Intelligence: RBWM Establishment	16

**Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel:
Q1 2019-20 Performance Report**

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council Plan 2017-21 remained current up to the 30 July 2020 when Cabinet approved an Interim Council Strategy 2020/21 for immediate adoption, acknowledging that the Covid-19 pandemic has significantly altered the context in which the Council is currently operating and that resources are now focused in an entirely different way.
- 1.2 This report sets out Q1 performance for all measures relating to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel's remit under the strategic framework that was current in Q1, and which had been suitably modified to reflect the changed climate during the Covid-19 pandemic. Relevant Business Intelligence is also provided in relation to the workforce Establishment.
- 1.3 As at 1 July 2020 performance of all measures related to the Panel's remit in Q1 can be broadly summarised as:

Q1 RAG Status	No.	Measure
Red (Needs improvement)	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average no. days to process new claims (Housing Benefits) • Average no. days to process changes in circumstances (Housing Benefits) • No. visits (physical and virtual) to libraries
Amber (Near target)	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of council tax collected • Percentage of calls answered within 60 seconds
Green (Succeeding or achieved)	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage voluntary turnover (YTD) • Percentage of calls abandoned after 5 seconds • Percentage of Non Domestic Rates (Business Rates) collected • Percentage of transactions made online
Total	9	

2. Key activities and milestones achieved

Strategic Priority	Item	Q1 Achievements and key milestones
Covid-19	Community response	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 take any action that may be appropriate to ensure that these individuals' needs were met. This role has now been taken on 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 database of all contacts was quickly compiled to support a public-facing online directory of Covid-19 Support Groups to which residents may turn to for particular needs.
	Outbreak Control Plan Summary	The Outbreak Control Plan Summary was published to the RBWM website on 30 June 2020 in line with national instruction from the Department of Health and Social Care. The plan exists to guide our response to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, to put in place measures to identify and contain outbreaks and protect the public's health.
	Parking concession	Free parking of up to 3 hours for Advantage Card holders in all Royal Borough operated car parks was introduced from 15 June to 13 July 2020 inclusive. The purpose of the scheme was to assist the recovery of the town centres and retail outlets.
	Communications	Since lockdown restrictions were announced on Monday 23 March 2020 the Communications Team has delivered key messages to residents across the borough to reiterate central government advice, notify residents of changes to operational service delivery and respond directly to residents' concerns and questions. There has been a significant increase in social media followers, engagement and reach, alongside the expected increase in website visits following the closure of libraries on Wednesday 18 March.

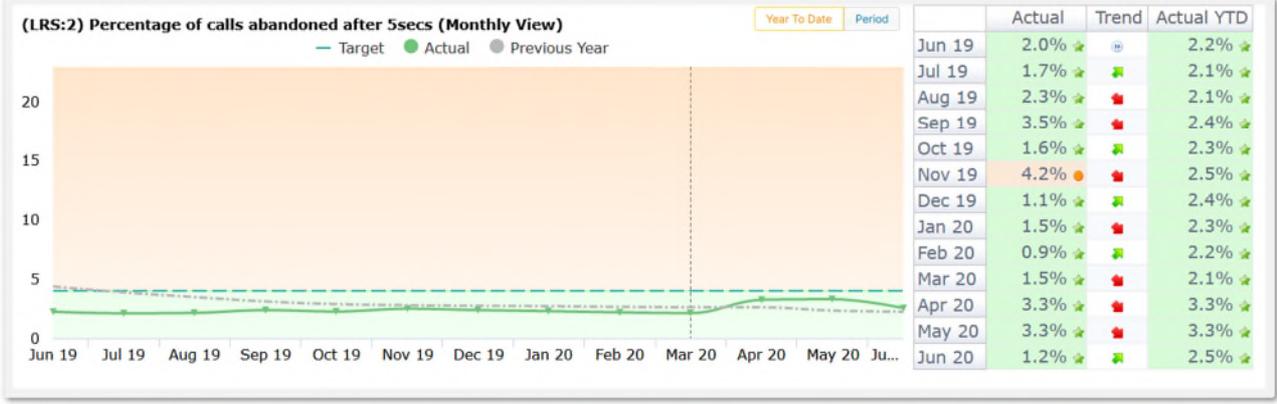
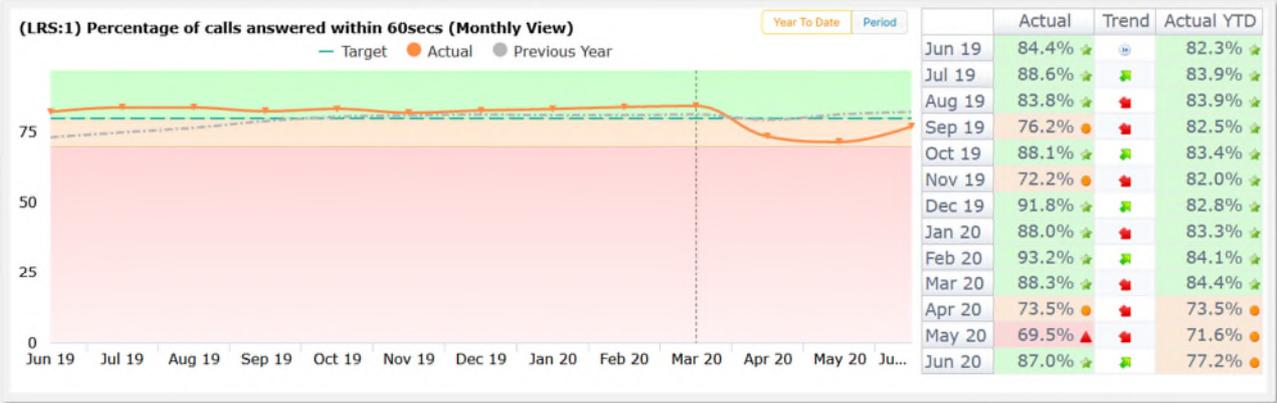
**Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel:
Q1 2019-20 Performance Report**

<p>An excellent customer experience</p>	<p>Libraries</p>	<p>The closure of libraries on Wednesday 18 March 2020 in response to the Covid-19 pandemic meant the immediate suspension of all physical visits. All library fines were waived, and the collection of online services was updated to help keep residents entertained and informed during lockdown. In Q1 the service made preparations to launch a new “select and collect” service with effect from 6 July 2020 and a “select and deliver” service whereby items selected online from the catalogue are then delivered to one of 18 locations.</p>
<p>Well-managed resources delivering value for money</p>	<p>Corporate values</p>	<p>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 agreed to be key in supporting the council to deliver well for residents and partners, and to achieve organisational objectives. The new values are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in strong foundations • Empowered to improve • One team and vision • Respect and openness. <p>An implementation plan is in place to support the embedding of the new values across the organisation.</p>

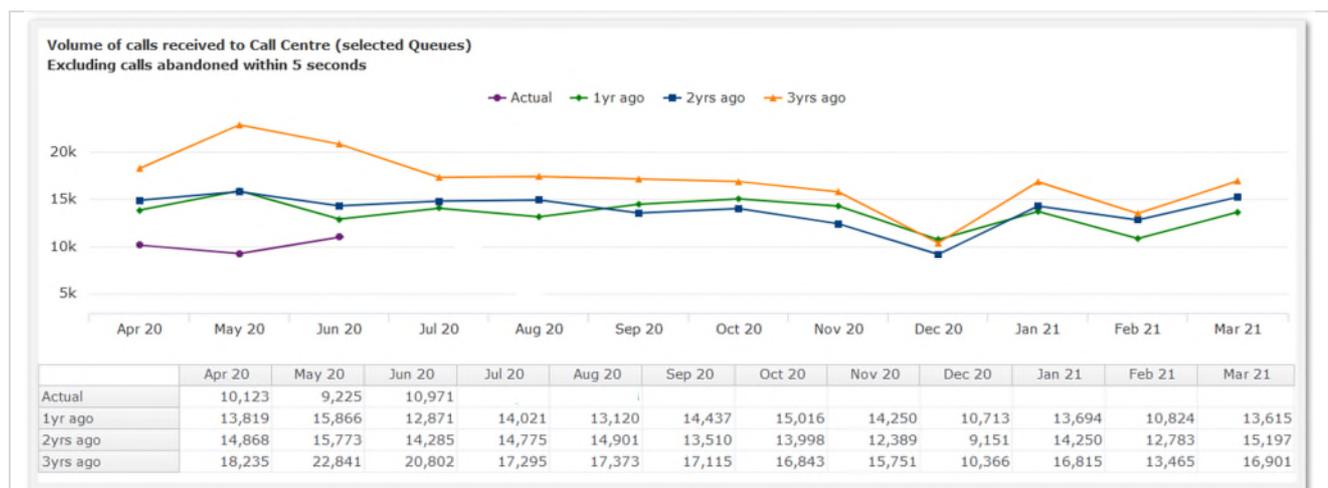
**Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel:
Q1 2019-20 Performance Report**

3. An excellent customer experience: Detailed Trends and Commentary

3.1 Customer contact centre calls



Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel: Q1 2019-20 Performance Report



Q1 Commentary

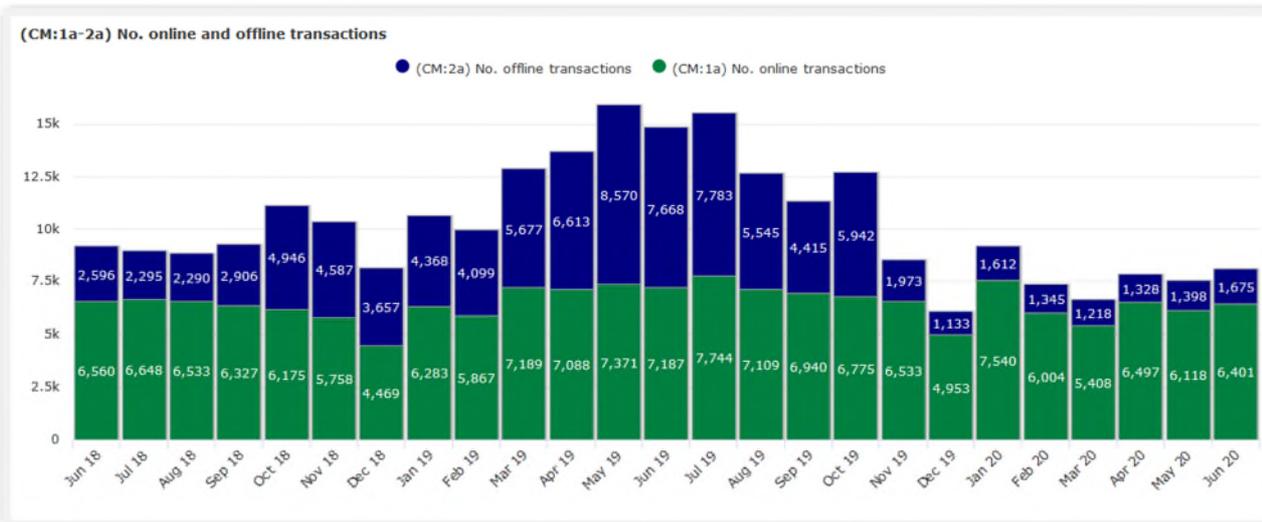
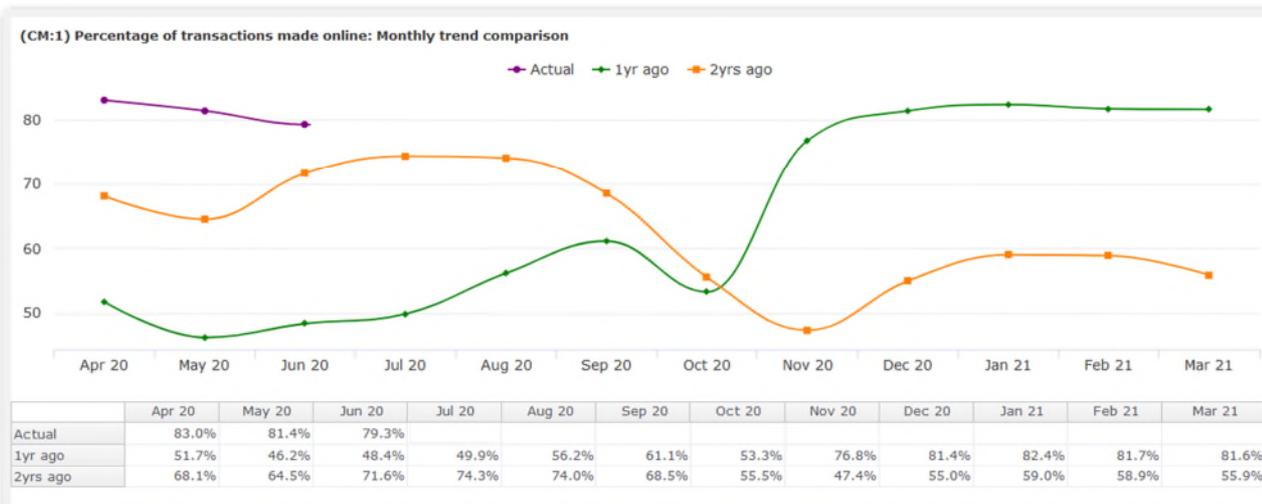
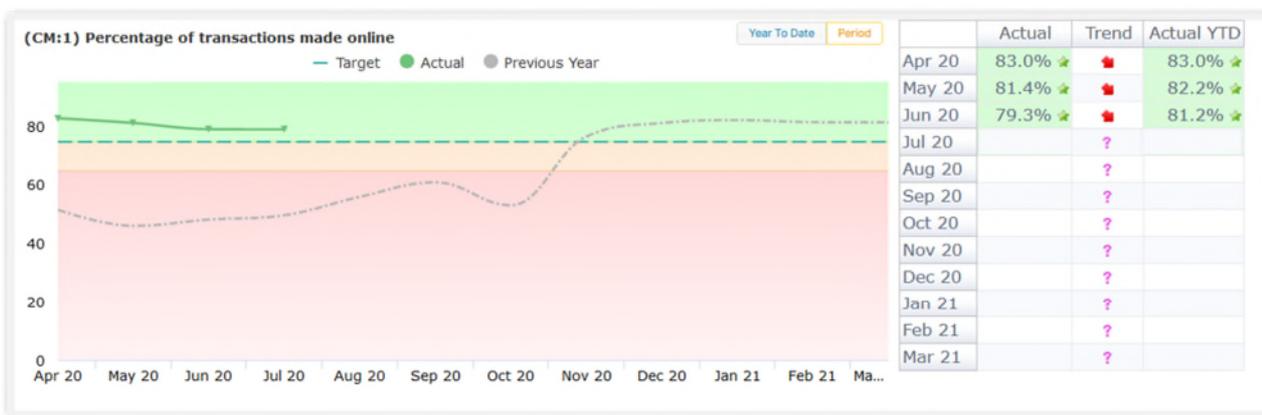
As acknowledged in the Q4 performance report, the council's operations changed considerably as a result of lockdown restrictions in mid-March. Libraries closed on Wednesday 18 March 2020 and business continuity plans necessitated the adoption of new technology to support library and resident contact staff in the continuation of their duties from home where it was possible and appropriate to do so. The council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic has utilised resources from across all council teams, and Library and Resident contact staff in particular have been engaged in setting up and training council staff in the use of new technologies to support engagement with local community groups and also local residents shielding as a result of particular vulnerabilities to the virus. Furthermore the high level of difficulties experienced with Waste Collection led to a significant increase in the length and complexity of calls with many calls having to be escalated through the library and resident contact team's internal structure.

The anticipated detrimental impact of these efforts on call performance in Q1 can be seen in the downturn in performance of the percentage of calls answered within 60 seconds to 77.2% (23,403/30,319), although performance remains within tolerance for this measure. Encouragingly, the percentage of calls abandoned after 5 seconds has remained consistently on target in Q1. As acknowledged in the Q4 2019/20 report, the number of calls received to the call centre continues to fall. 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". Only 30,319 calls were received in Q1 compared to 42,556 in Q1 2019/20, 44,296 in Q1 2018/19 and 61,878 in 2017/18.

It is expected that performance against both measures will improve throughout Q2 as the immediate pressures on the service in Q1 outlined here reduce.

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel: Q1 2019-20 Performance Report

3.2 Digital customer transactions



Q1 Commentary

The “Percentage of transactions made online” is a new measure to the 2020/21 framework and replaces the previous measure “No. digital transactions”. The target for this measure is 75%.

Overall there has been a decline in the total volume of transactions made (both online and offline) in Q1 (23,417) compared to Q1 2019/20 (44,497). It was speculated in the Q4 performance report that from March 2020 residents’ focus on the emerging Covid-19 crisis may have redirected their attention from making routine transactions with the council. The

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel: Q1 2019-20 Performance Report

closure of libraries for the whole of Q1 also restricted opportunities for customers to either digitally “self serve” using library facilities or to make “offline” transactions with council staff. As at the close of Q1 81.2% (19,016 / 23,417) of all council transactions were made online. Whilst the Covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdown restrictions created a dependence on digital interactions across the country where physical contact could be avoided, a review of monthly trends over the last 3 years shows a growing reliance on digital solutions well before the pandemic. Over 70% of all council transactions each month have been digital since November 2019 and it is anticipated that this trend will continue as a result of adapted behaviours over the lockdown period. Going into Q2 it is anticipated that the total volume of council transactions will continue to increase.

3.3 Library visits



Q1 Commentary

The closure of libraries on Wednesday 18 March 2020 (Q4 2019/20) in response to the Covid-19 pandemic meant the immediate suspension of all physical visits. All library fines

**Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel:
Q1 2019-20 Performance Report**

were waived and the collection of online services was updated to help keep residents entertained and informed during lockdown.

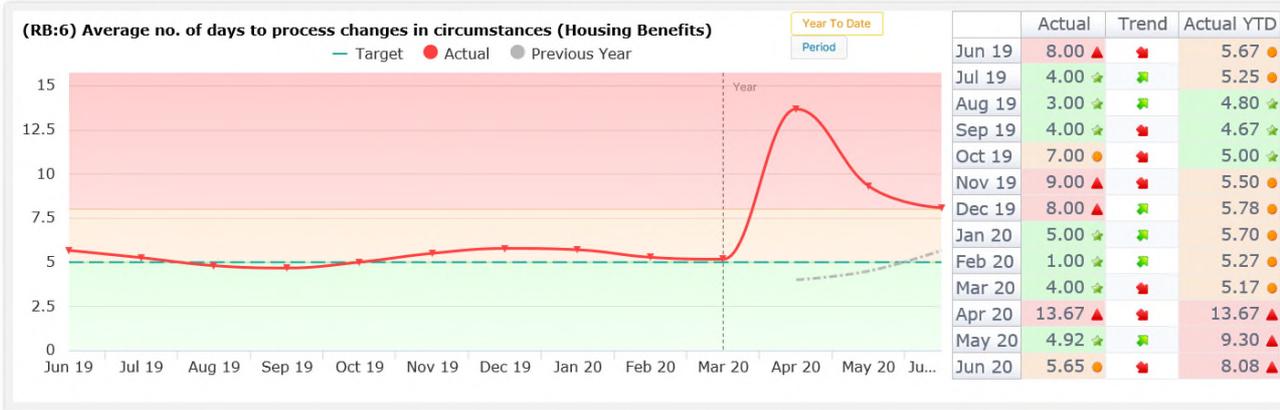
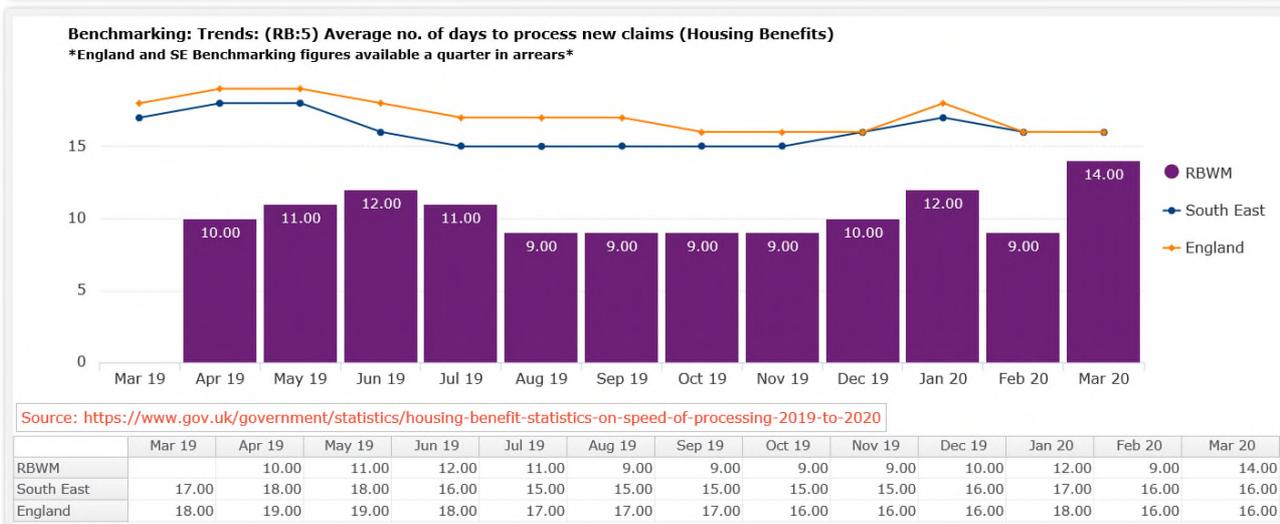
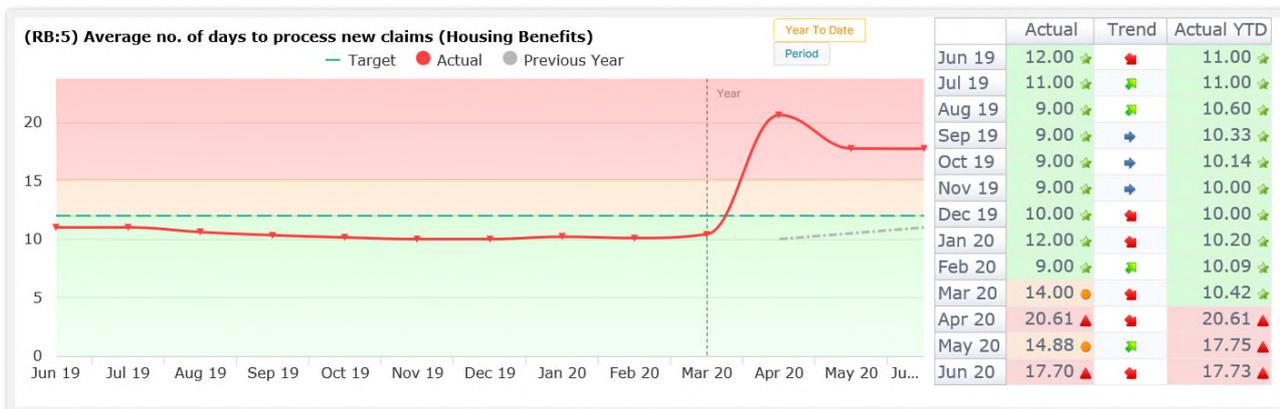
Kanopy, a new video streaming service, launched in mid-April and proved to be an enormous success. Pressreader, which allows access to online newspapers, also attracted increased uptake achieving Q1 performance which was higher than the use for the whole of the previous year. Niche Academy launched in May, enabling customers to learn how to make better use of all of our e-resources, and access to Ancestry was granted to allow customers to use from home. Therefore, Q1 performance, 2,358 hits, significantly exceeded access levels for the whole of the previous year (652 hits).

There was an average monthly increase of 38% compared with previous months for OverDrive. There was the introduction of ebooks and audio via RBDigital, in which there were 408 audio issues a month on average. Moreover, the “Libraries in Lockdown” Facebook page and “RBWM Libraries” YouTube channel were created, in which the top viewed feature received 464 views.

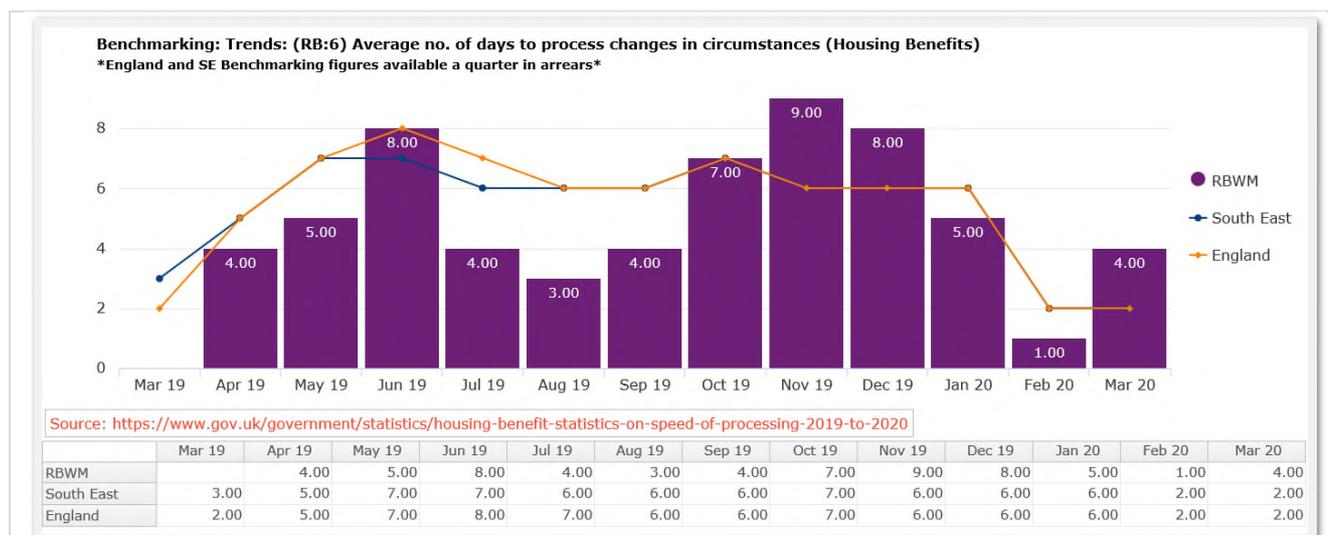
In Q1 the total number of virtual visits to libraries was 125,559 against a target of 203,000. A comparison to the same period in the previous year (225,512 visits) shows a 44.3% decrease (-99,953). The service has retained its original targets for this measure in 2020/21 and continues to innovate to achieve 800,000 visits by March 2021 and to recover the current 44.3% decrease on 2019/20 figures. In Q1 the service made preparations to launch a new “select and collect” service with effect from 6 July 2020 and a “select and deliver” service whereby items selected online from the catalogue are then delivered to one of 18 locations. The impact of these innovations on this measure will start to be seen in Q2.

**Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel:
Q1 2019-20 Performance Report**

3.4 Processing times for Housing Benefits



Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel: Q1 2019-20 Performance Report



Q1 Commentary

Essential note: Monthly figures for these measures are derived from internal reports which are then submitted to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). In some cases the DWP's calculations of performance modifies the original value submitted by a local authority. All 2019/20 data in the council's reporting system has been updated to the official published DWP figures, which are published in arrears. Full details of the changes can be obtained from the Strategy and Performance Team. For clarity, the 2019/20 end of year figure is unchanged for RB:5 (10.42, green), and for RB:6 the end of year figure was 5.50 (amber) and is now 5.17 (amber).

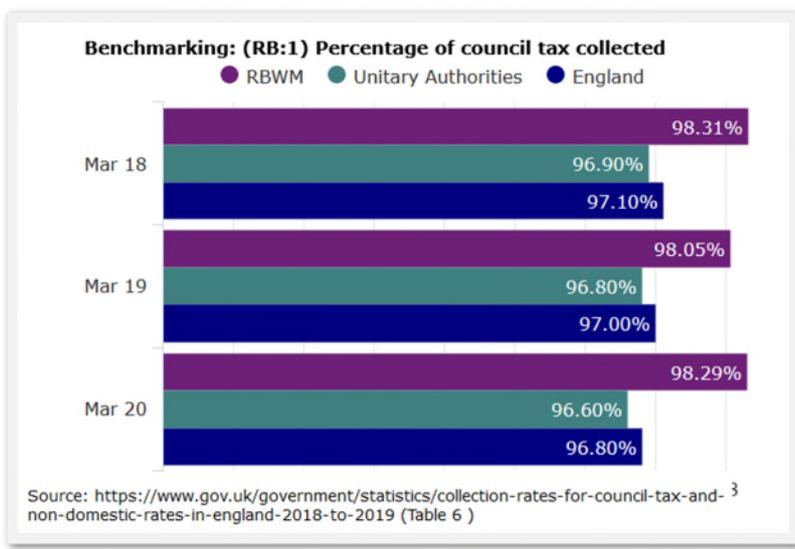
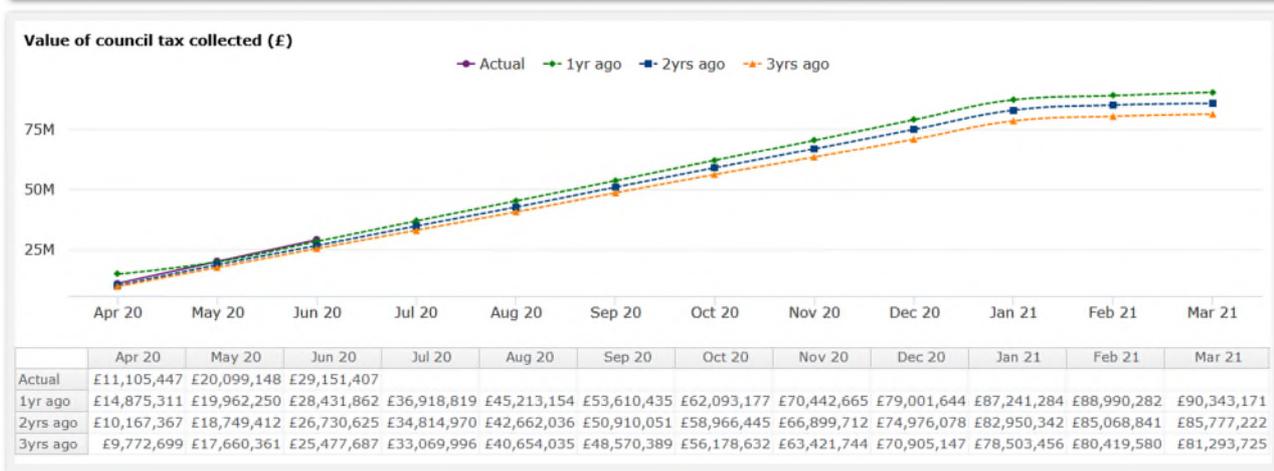
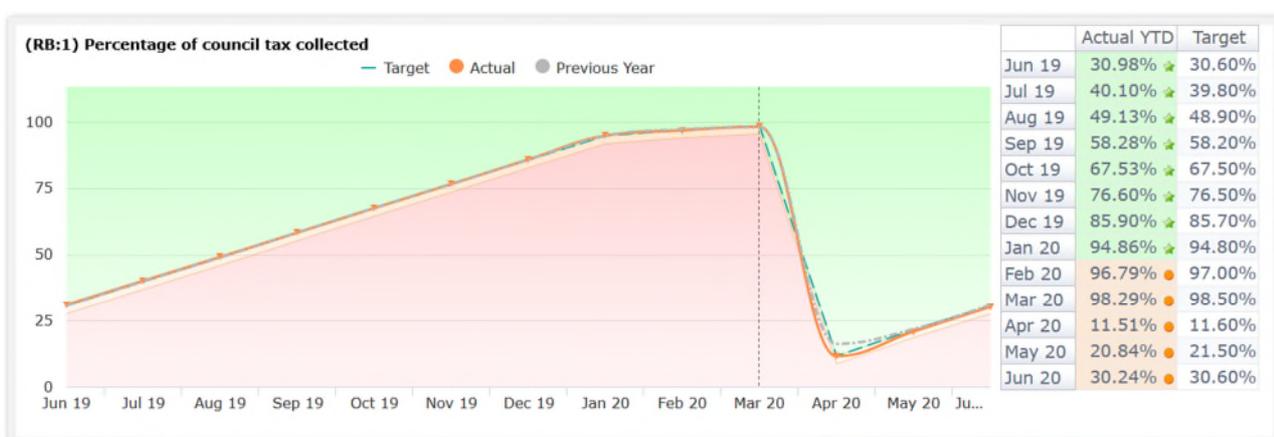
The detrimental impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on performance against these measure that was anticipated in Q4 2019/20 is reflected in Q1 figures for 2020/21 based on internal reports. From the end of March 2020 the council's operations changed considerably as part of coordinated measures to keep both customers and staff safe. The unprecedented demand for services was reflected on by the Secretary of State for the Department for Work and Pensions in a statement to Parliament, and the downturn in performance that started in March 2020 for each measure and fell to an all-time low in April (20.61 days for new claims, 13.67 days for changes in circumstances) was therefore expected and unavoidable as service staff worked to meet the challenges of this increased demand whilst adapting to new remote working arrangements.

Encouragingly, performance has improved on the April position across both May and June for both measures. Available benchmarking data up to the end of March 2020 (please note that South East and England benchmarking figures are available a quarter in arrears) shows that RBWM performed better than the South East and England in relation to processing new claims (RB:5). Performance in relation to processing changes in circumstances (RB:6) was lower than the South East and England in January and February, but higher in March.

**Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel:
Q1 2019-20 Performance Report**

4. Well-managed resources delivering value for money

4.1 Council Tax

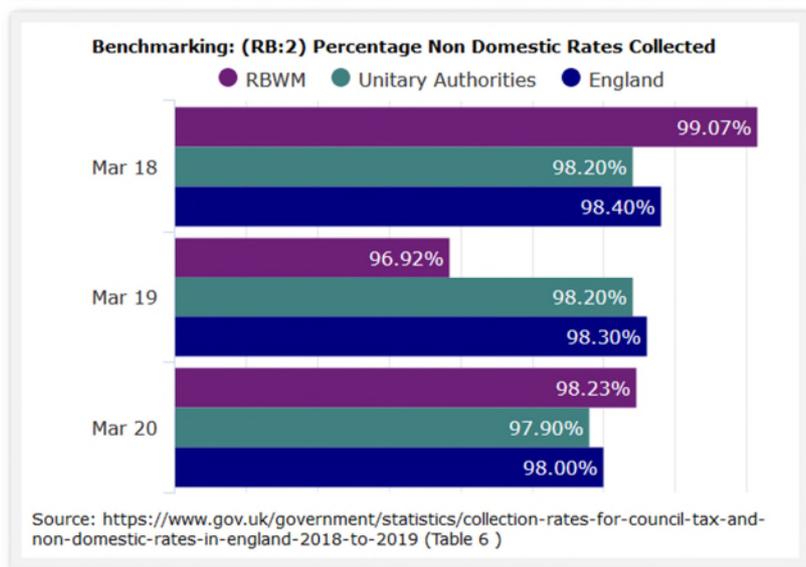
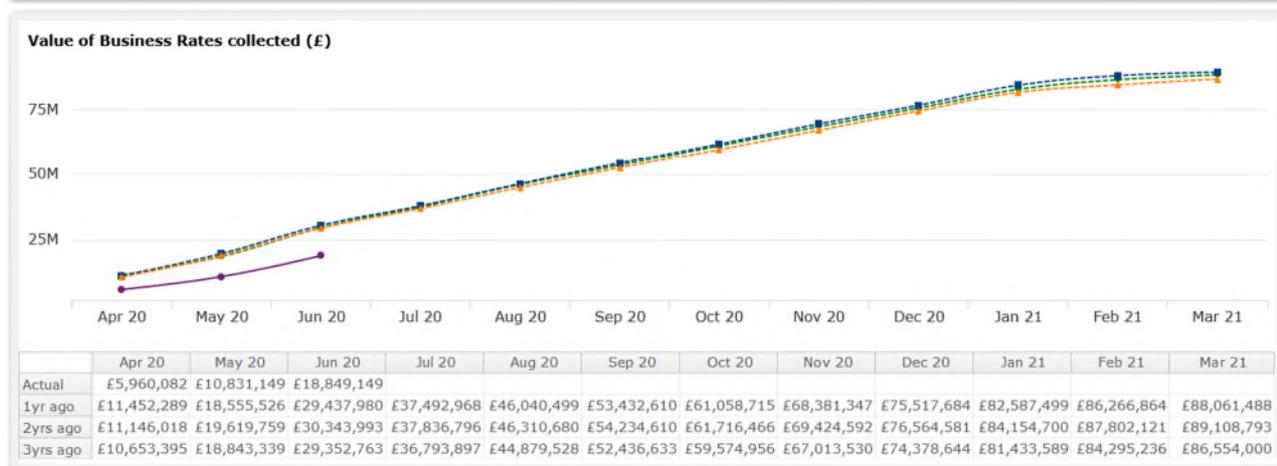
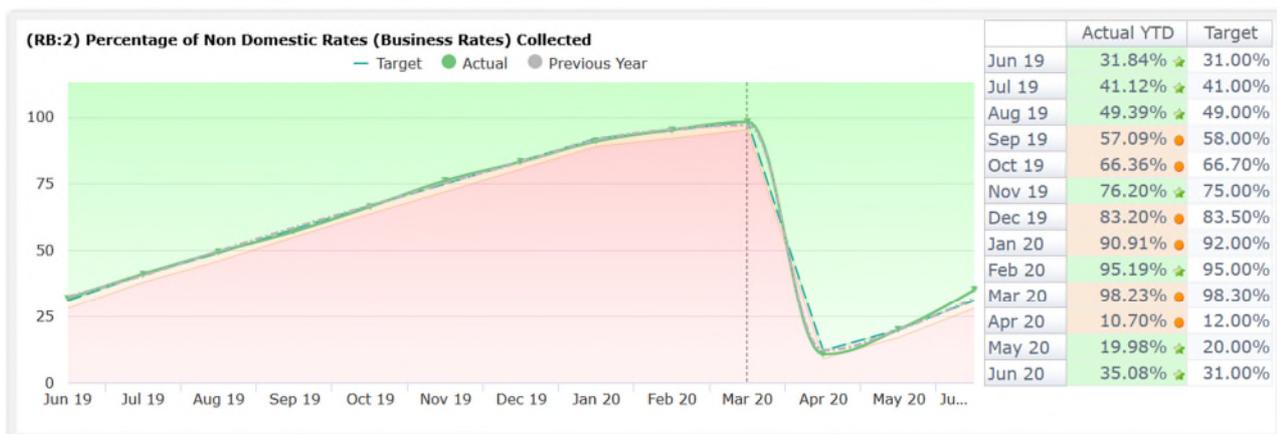


Q1 Commentary

As at the end of Q1, performance of this measure stands at 30.24%, below target (30.60%) by 0.36 though within tolerance for the measure. The value of council tax collected by the close of Q1 (£29,151,407) is the highest collection value for that period in the last 4 years. Available benchmarking data shows RBWM performance to be consistently higher than Unitary Authorities and England across the last 3 financial years 2017/18 and 2018/19.

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel: Q1 2019-20 Performance Report

4.2 Business Rates



Q1 Commentary

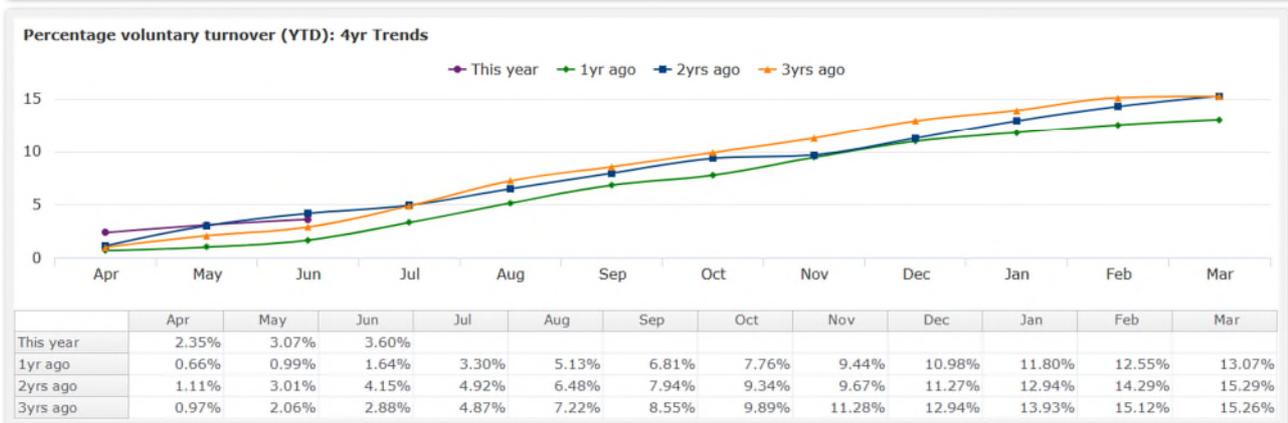
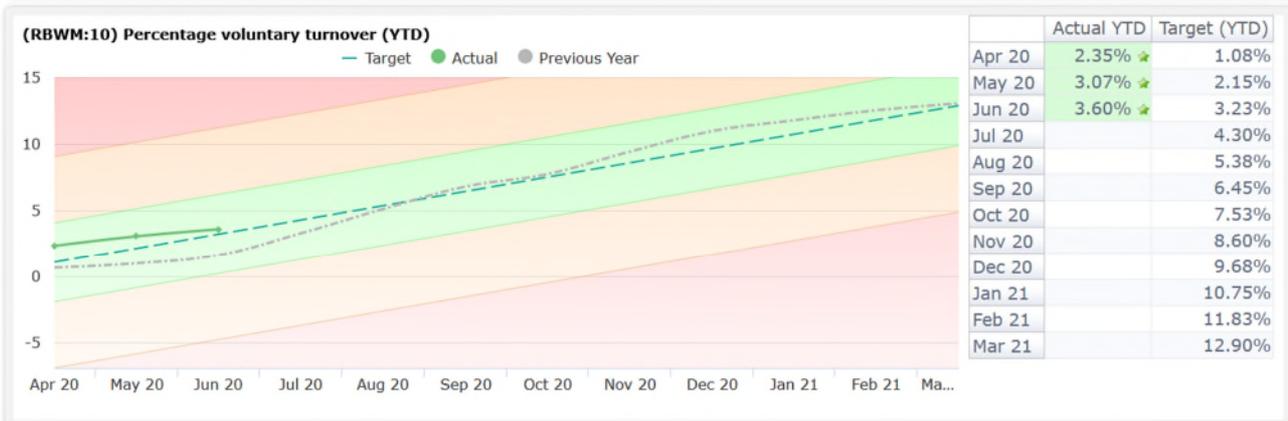
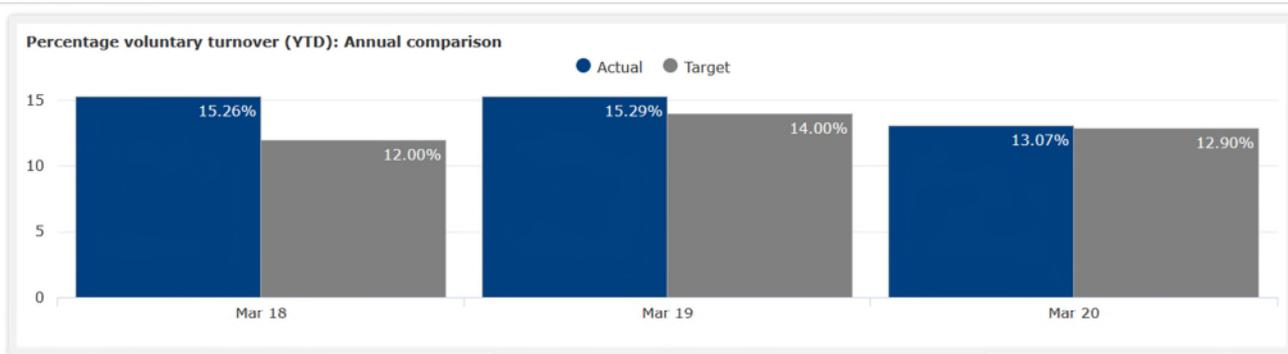
As at the close of Q1 performance for this measure stands at 35.08%, above target (31.00%) by 4.08, and meaning that the detrimental impact of Covid-19 on collection rates that was anticipated in Q4 2019/20 has not yet been seen. A comparison with collection rates as at the close of Q1 2019/20 (31.84%) shows a performance improvement in 2020/21 of 3.24. 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

**Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel:
Q1 2019-20 Performance Report**

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, two Grant Schemes were announced to assist businesses which fit the qualifying criteria: The Small Business, Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Grant scheme and the Local Authority Discretionary Grant Fund. Central Government has recently announced that both schemes will close on 28 August 2020.

**Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel:
Q1 2019-20 Performance Report**

4.3 Voluntary turnover



Q1 Commentary

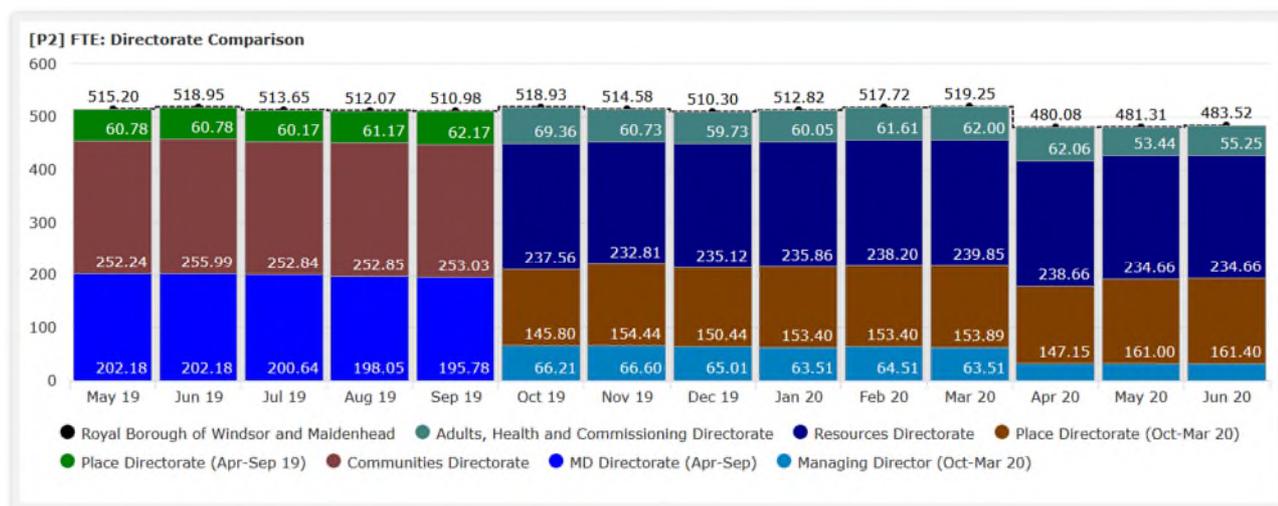
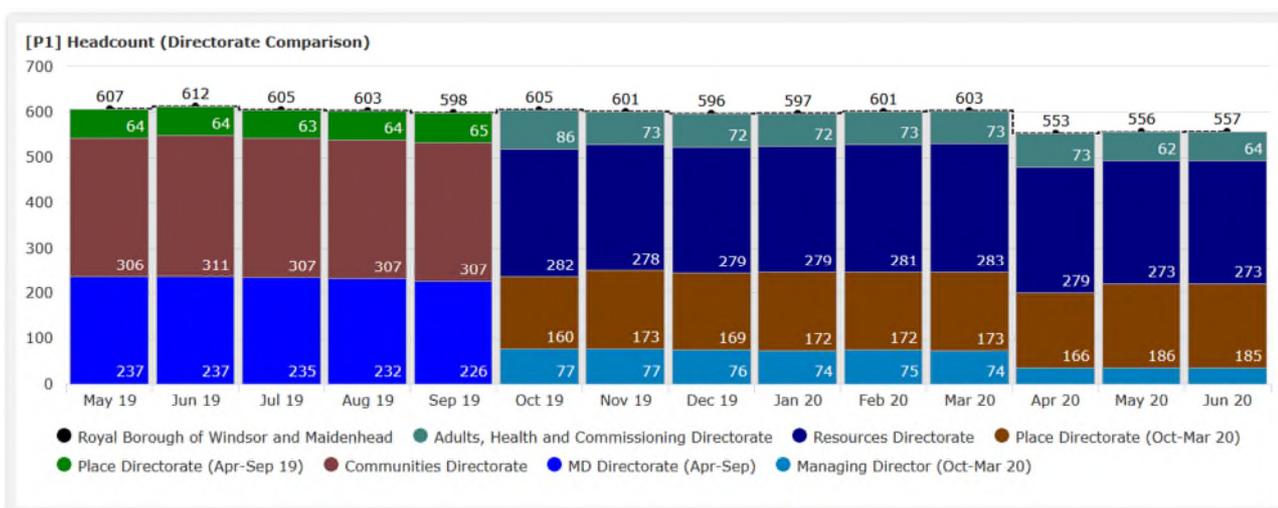
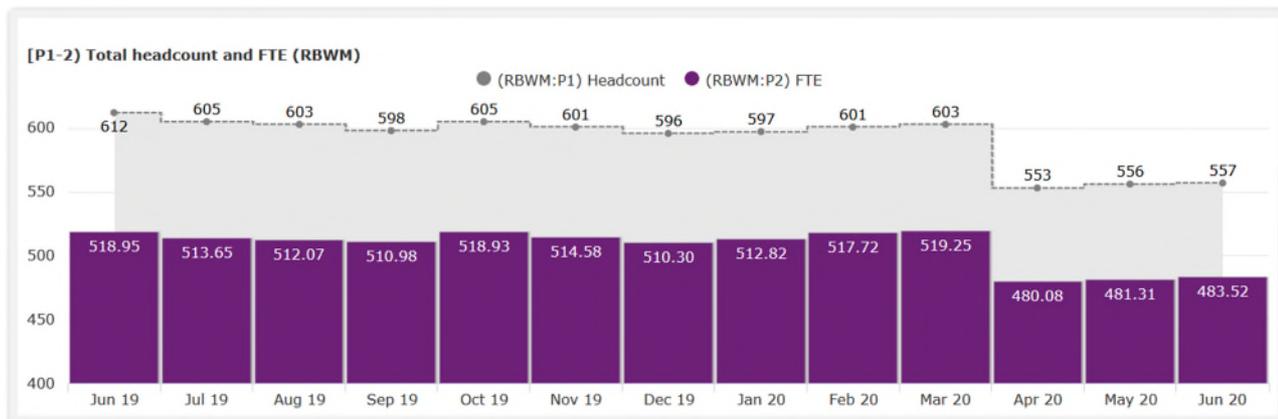
RBWM voluntary turnover includes those who choose to resign or retire. Turnover is calculated by dividing voluntary leavers by the average headcount (headcount at start and end of period / 2). It is acknowledged that some staff-churn is healthy for any organisation and so this measure is configured as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

A comparison of the end of year percentage voluntary turnover across the last 3 years shows a consistent decrease in voluntary turnover each year. In Q1 2020/21 performance this trend continues, and for each month in Q1 voluntary turnover tracks consistently within the profiled tolerance thresholds.

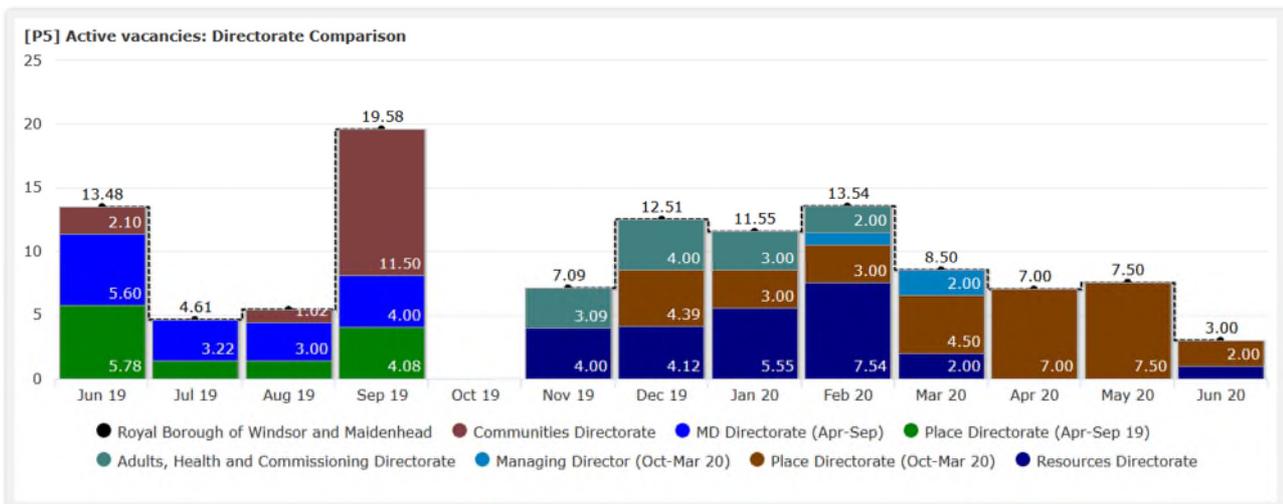
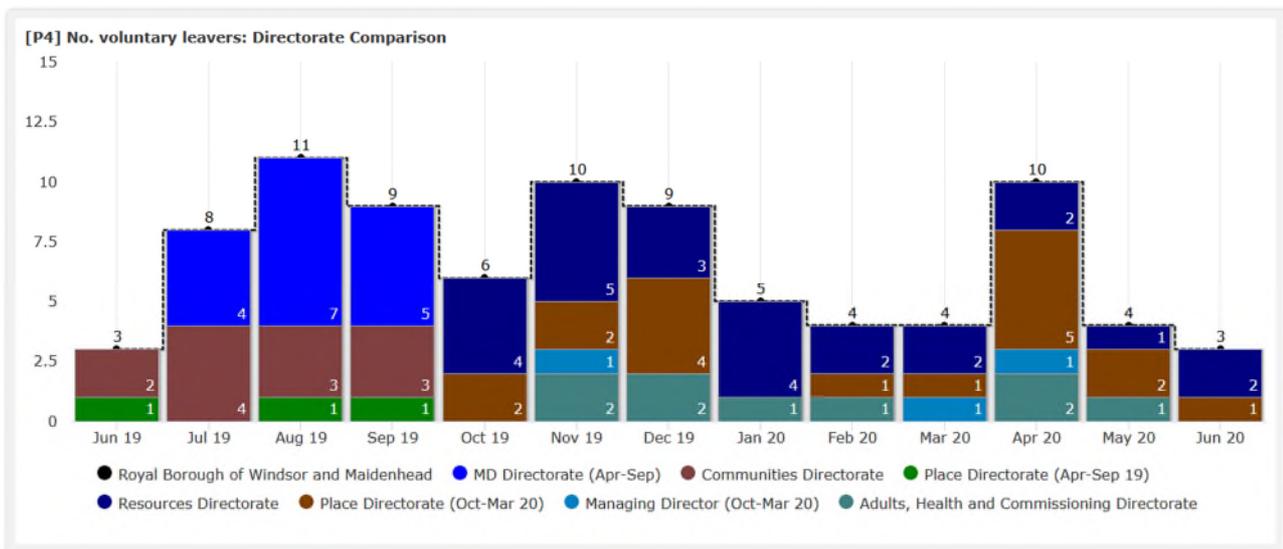
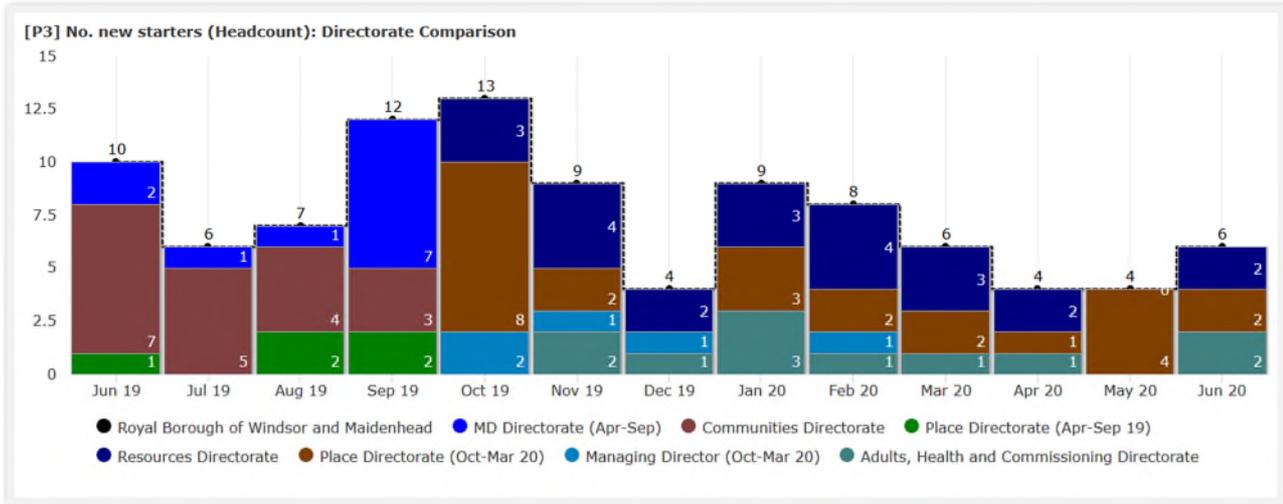
Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel: Q1 2019-20 Performance Report

5. Business Intelligence: RBWM Staff Establishment

5.1 The organisation structure changed with effect from 1 October 2019 and all charts shown here reflect that change.



Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel: Q1 2019-20 Performance Report



Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel: Q1 2019-20 Performance Report

