

Chichester District Council

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

19 November 2019

Report from the Corporate Plan Task & Finish Group

1. Contacts

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2. Recommendation

The Committee is requested to note this report from the Corporate Plan Task and Finish Group and to confirm that it is satisfied the Council is achieving satisfactory levels of performance against the targets and activities in the 2019/20 Corporate Plan mid-year progress report.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Task and Finish Group met on 29 October 2019 to consider the Corporate Plan mid-year progress report from April to September 2019. The aim was to review the council's performance, identifying individual areas where performance was below that expected, and to reduce risks to an acceptable level.
- 3.2 Members were Mr A Sutton (Chairman), Mrs C Apel and Mr A Moss.
- 3.3 Members used the council's Pentana performance management system report to review progress on key projects and performance indicators that support the Corporate Plan 2018-2021. Only those projects that had a status of 'amber' or 'red', and were therefore in a state of 'exception', were considered by the Task and Finish Group.

4. Monitoring and Review

- 4.1 The Group discussed in detail the three projects or performance indicators that had a status of 'red', indicating they are either off target or overdue. The appropriate Divisional Managers were asked to attend to provide a full explanation and to answer the Group's questions..
- 4.2 The Group first discussed reported crime, a performance indicator with a red status. Pam Bushby, Divisional Manager for Communities and Wellbeing, gave a detailed update on reported crime across the District. Rural crime has been a significant issue with one prolific offender largely responsible for an overall increase in reported crime statistics. However, reported crime remains relatively low compared to other areas and our District remains a low-crime area.
- 4.3 The Group felt that although the current target of a 0% increase in crime was laudable it was in reality reliant upon too many outside factors, and that the threshold for this should be amended to allow an increase in reported crime of between 0% and 4.99% to show as 'green', an increase of between 5% and 9.99%

to show as 'amber' and an increase of 10% or more to show as 'red'. The Group were also provided with an update around the national changes and regional initiatives such as the investment in Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and the 'Country Watch' scheme that seeks specifically to tackle rural crime.

- 4.4 The Group then discussed Choose Work, another 'red' performance indicator. Ms Bushby was again able to provide detail and answer questions. Choose Work is divided into two parts, the first relating to the number of clients helped by the service and the second being the number of clients securing employment at the end of the programme. The first element is currently below target with 27 clients having been engaged in the reporting period (April-September 2019) against a target to date of 40, rising to 80 by the end of the year.
- 4.5 Ms Bushby explained that although the number of clients had reduced, the complexity of the issues meant that more time was being spent with some clients. In addition to this there had been a vacancy in the team. Even when fully staffed the team only has two part-time Officers, so this has clearly impacted upon the number of clients the service were able to interact with. The vacancy has now been filled, and Ms Bushby was confident that the service would achieve their annual target of interacting with 80 clients by the end of the year. The Group understood the reason for the red PI at this stage and were reassured that the trend was now moving back in the right direction.
- 4.6 The final 'red' project that the Group looked at related to Retail Training and Shop Front Grants. Vicki McKay, Divisional Manager for Growth, attended for this item and explained that the project was made up of two distinct but linked elements; the retail training programme and shop front grants. The training is within the Council's control and remains on target, but the grants, which can't be applied for until the training has been given, were behind target due to a slower than expected take-up of the funding.
- 4.7 The Economic Development service continue to encourage grant claims but the Group emphasised they would like to see an extra push with potential recipients whilst funding remains securely in place. The Group also recommended that in future the training and grants elements of the project should be split to allow areas outside our control to be monitored separately.
- 4.8 Having reviewed all of the 'red' items the Group then discussed items with an 'amber' status and noted there were more this year than in previous years. Having looked at them all in detail the Group found no significant causes for concern and did not feel that any warranted bringing to the attention of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Group did request that Lead Officers for projects ensure that their milestones are regularly reviewed and updated to avoid projects unnecessarily falling into 'exception'. Andy Buckley, Corporate Improvement and Facilities Manager, confirmed that he would ensure that Lead Officers were reminded of their responsibilities to proactively manage their project milestones.
- 4.9 Overall the Group considered that there were satisfactory explanations for areas of the Corporate Plan where targets had not been met; some were outside the council's control and others simply needed some more time.

5. **Consultation**

5.1 There was no requirement for consultation as officers were able to answer all concerns satisfactorily.

6. **Community impact and corporate risks**

6.1 The increased number of 'amber' projects should have been addressed, at least in part, through Lead Officers proactively seeking authorisation to update their project milestones. Mr Buckley was tasked with taking that message back to key staff with a view to minimising the corporate risk by ensuring strict adherence to the project monitoring and management processes adopted by the Council.

7. **Other Implications**

	Yes	No
Crime & Disorder:		X
Climate Change and Biodiversity:		X
Human Rights and Equality Impact:		X
Safeguarding and Early Help:		X
General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)		X
Health and Wellbeing:		X
Other (please specify):		X

The boxes above have been marked as 'No' because this report does not specifically propose any new areas of work or revisions to existing work. However, it should be noted that the range of projects and performance indicators reviewed by the Group do address many of the different headings included within the table.

8. **Appendices**

None

9. **Background Papers**

Minutes - Corporate Plan Mid-year Task and Finish Group