

Rother District Council

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date:	21 November 2022
Title:	Performance Report: Second Quarter 2022/23
Report of:	Director - Place and Climate Change
Ward(s):	N/A
Purpose of Report:	To monitor the delivery of the Council's Key Performance Indicators
Officer	
Recommendation(s):	It be RESOLVED : That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider these findings and recommend any actions to Cabinet, as necessary.

Introduction

1. For the financial year 2022/23, Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) and Cabinet selected a set of 14 key performance indicators (KPIs). These indicators stand as a barometer of the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan and those service areas that Members wish to scrutinise over the year. This was agreed by [Cabinet on 7 February 2022](#) (Minute CB21/80 refers)
2. For the 2022/23 financial year, the focus had been set on five themes:
 - **Housing and Communities**: four indicators to monitor delivery of the Housing and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
 - **Finance Performance**: three indicators to monitor significant non-tax income as a part of the Council's revenue streams and a cost from the housing strategy.
 - **Economic Development and Poverty**: three indicators to monitor the impact of the pandemic on household incomes, council tax and business rates collection.
 - **Environment**: two indicators to monitor the proportion of household waste collected that is sent for reuse, composting and recycling.
 - **Planning**: two indicators to monitor the processing times of applications.
3. This report is a summary of the Council's performance against the five themes at the end of the second financial quarter (1 July 2022 to 30 September 2022). The report gives Members an opportunity to scrutinise the progress towards the Council's stated aims, outcomes and actions in the Corporate Plan and make any necessary recommendations to Cabinet for future service delivery.
4. A table of the KPI performance can be found at Appendix A. More detailed explanations or definitions on how the KPI is measured can be found at Appendix B.

Housing & Communities Summary

5. **The total number of households in temporary accommodation (TA).** It is recommended that the number of households in TA is considered by the Council as an indicator of performance rather than a targeted performance measure. The Council has a limited ability to influence the various factors that increase homelessness and the number of households in TA. It is recommended that the Council focus on its homelessness prevention measure as a measure of performance for the Housing Service (see below). The current number of households in TA is 129 of which 19 are discretionary placements that are made for rough sleepers.
6. The increase in TA placements overall is significant compared to the same time last year where there were approximately 90 placements with a similar number of rough sleepers placed. The increase correlates with an overall increase in homelessness presentations caused by a combination of factors including, stored-up demand over the pandemic, the Ukraine crisis, rising house prices and rent costs alongside the impact of the ensuing cost of living crisis on the ability of households to afford their rent. In response, the service is embarking on a recruitment drive to bring in additional resources to improve the flow of households out of (TA) and better prevent homelessness.
7. We are reporting the figures differently from previous years, as discretionary placements have now become more commonplace as we work with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to end rough sleeping. We have reviewed the viability of these placements in East Sussex with the DLUHC, as the cost is proving unsustainable in the longer term. We are working with wider partners in East Sussex to secure additional funding to support the cost of these discretionary placements in 2022/23. We are also executing a plan to reduce these discretionary placements in a managed and measured way, utilising the county-wide Rough Sleeping Initiative and locally commissioned services to ensure rough sleeper numbers are minimised.
8. **Average unit cost of TA** – This is a new target and we have set the target at £1,201 that is 10% above the average cost per placement in 2021/22, to allow for the 10.1% CPI rate of inflation for September 2022. We have developed the target to better measure our efforts to reduce the cost of TA per household placed. As Members are aware, the Temporary Accommodation Support Service (TASS) is designed to reduce the cost of TA placements through the purchase of accommodation and the Council now has 24 properties under its management for use as TA. However, the majority of placements are still supplied by third party providers in the private sector.
9. The performance for Q2 is £1,130, which is below the new target and 3% increase on the same quarter last year; however, when we allow for inflation over the period, the average unit cost is less than last year, in real terms. We are still monitoring the impact of inflation on the cost of placements which will form part of future reports. We also expect the figure to be revised downwards once we are reimbursed by East Sussex County Council (ESCC) for the cost of placements under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme.

10. **Homelessness prevented or relieved** - The new homelessness prevention target is proposed at 120 per year or 30 per quarter. This is based on a performance average of 25 preventions per quarter in 2021/22. The performance in Q2 2022/23 was 30 preventions and reliefs, which is an increase of 20% on the average in 2021/22. We are improving our rate of preventions and reliefs through the work of the Rother Tenant Finder service, which offers landlord incentives and support for tenants to access rent in advance and deposit. We have also begun to lease accommodation from landlords to increase our performance.
11. **Number on the Housing Register** - The number on the housing register will reduce significantly once the new process of migrating households to the new Allocations Scheme is completed within 2022/23. The number on the register is as much a measure of the relative inclusivity of the criteria within the Allocations Policy as it is an indicator of the level of housing need in the district.
12. **Affordable homes built** - At end of quarter two, there are 64 new homes built. This is 61% of the year end supply target. In the second quarter there were completed 15 units for rent and 6 for shared ownership. This included 15 units at our first Community Led Housing scheme at Orchard Close, Icklesham (12 rented, 3 shared ownership). We remain on track to meet the supply target for 2022/23.

Finance Performance

13. The acquisition of the Sainsbury's site at Buckhurst Place, Bexhill has meant that the estimated income for this will significantly out-perform the anticipated income target. The Property Investment Strategy originally made available £35m with a £2.1m gross income target and the ambition of generating £700k of net additional income after borrowing costs. The full £35m has now been either spent or allocated and is already generating an annual income of £1.687m. Due to lower than anticipated borrowing costs, the net income from investments so far is £850k per year. Three of the acquired sites are development sites and are yet to produce an income.
14. The Council Tax collection rate was at 57.31% at the end of September compared to 57.17% for the same period last year. Although collection is becoming more challenging as yet this has not been reflected in the recovery rates. However, this will continue to be closely monitored.
15. The Business Rates collection rate was at 59.17% at the end of September compared to 46.16% up to September last year (2021).

Economic Development and Poverty Summary

16. The number of Council Tax Reduction (CTR) scheme claimants has not significantly changed from the Q1 numbers. In total there are 6,548 CTR claimants made up of 2,852 pensioners households (44%) and 3,696 working age households (56%). Numbers are closely monitored to try and identify any significant changes as soon as possible.
17. The Council Tax collection rate was at 57.31% at the end of September compared to 57.17% for the same period last year. Although collection is

becoming more challenging as yet this has not been reflected in the recovery rates. However, this will continue to be closely monitored over the winter period as household bills continue to rise.

18. The Business Rates collection was at 59.17% at the end of September compared to 46.68% for the same period last year. However, with the number of different reliefs available to businesses over the past few years it is difficult to compare collection year on year. The last time we had similar reliefs available to businesses was during 2019/20 and our current collection rate is in line with this period.

Environment Summary

19. The current waste collection system is based on collecting recycling materials co-mingled. That is collecting glass bottles, plastic bottles, plastic packaging, drinks cans, yoghurt pots, and cardboard, all mixed together in the resident's green bin and collected by Biffa at the resident's kerbside.
20. The most effective method of collecting these items accurately is at the kerbside, where the waste crews can do a superficial check on each bin for contamination.
21. The recycling rate is measured by the tonnage collected of co-mingled recyclable material versus total refuse and is translated into percentage.
22. We currently have 20,641 garden waste subscribers whose garden waste tonnages is included in the recycling tonnages and so very much contributes to the overall recycling percentage, as garden waste weighs more than dry recycling.
23. Residents also have had access to various recycling 'bring sites' across the district which offered the same co-mingling recycling facilities. Despite concerted efforts to enforce accurate use of the containers, including officer monitoring, use of CCTV and posters, these sites all suffer from excessive contamination i.e. people mixing general refuse in with the recycling. This has meant that these contaminated 'bring site' containers have had to be emptied as refuse rather than recycling.
24. As mentioned previously, a far better quality of material is collected at the resident's kerbside and so the bring sites are gradually being phased out over a period of time. The Ravenside 'bring site' - one of the most heavily contaminated sites - was closed on 19 October 2022. These closures will encourage people to use their green containers more, and excess recycling material can be presented alongside their green container on recycling collection days, suitably contained in a clear plastic bag. There is no restriction on the amount of recycling material that can be presented on recycling collection days.
25. Alternatively, it may encourage people to use their local tips more. This will also improve the quality of recycling as tips are closely monitored by East Sussex

County Council (ESCC). But the tonnages collected will not count towards the RDC recycling percentage.

26. During COVID, the general household waste tonnages increased as people shopped and worked from home; pre-COVID (2019-2020) from 18K tonnes to 20.5K tonnes in 2021-2022. During the same pre-COVID period recycling was at 18K tonnes and increased to 19.5K tonnes in 2021-2022. This is largely due to the increase in garden waste subscribers. The amount of dry recycling tonnages has remained static throughout the period.
27. The important focus is to work both on improving the quality of the recycling material collected as well as the amount of recycling material collected.
28. For 2021/2022, RDC achieved an overall annual recycling rate of 48.52%. It peaked at 54.39% in July 2021 and hit its lowest of 39.35% in February 2022. The previous year averaged 47.07% 2020/2021.
29. For the first quarter April 2022 to June 2022 recycling percentage was at 52.49% compared with 50.79% for the same quarter 2021/2022.
30. A number of actions are being taken to improve recycling and re-use. As reported above, the first steps have been taken in closing the most contaminated recycling 'bring sites'. Further banners and social media were used during the summer to encourage visitors to the tourist beaches and towns to 'take their litter home with them' to aid recycling using their green bin.
31. The current focus being worked on across the waste partnership and ESCC is with regards to the separate kerbside collection available for the recycling of small electrical items and batteries, often termed small WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment). Residents are encouraged to present small electrical items such as toasters, power drills, hair dryers etc in a plastic bag on top of their bin on their collections days and Biffa will collect these items and store in them in a separate compartment on the waste vehicle. If collected separately, these items are managed and disposed by Light Brothers who are specialists in recycling these items, stripping down metal for reuse and separating out hazardous waste.
32. The above actions all make significant contributions towards the quality of recycling but may not necessarily be reflected in an increase in the recycling percentage rate, which this year (2022/2023) may well drop due to the summer drought affecting garden waste tonnages.
33. Going forward, the waste industry is still waiting for further directives from Government on secondary legislation regarding the impact of the UK Environment Bill on the future of recycling. The main impact will be the anticipated separate collection of food waste; the introduction of extended producer responsibility whereby producers are made responsible for the entire life of the products they introduce on the market; and the 'deposit return scheme' whereby people are encouraged to return drinks containers for recycling in return for a small amount of money.

34. Officers have been investigating the request from Members to add to the KPIs a measurement of a carbon baseline. There are two possible measurements, one for the operations of the Council and one for the whole district. Members may wish to consider whether they wish to monitor one or both.
35. The advantage of using the measurement of the Council's own CO2 emissions are that emissions are under its direct control. This measurement is calculated by the Council's own staff using a national approach and can be reported annually as each financial year ends. Based on the creation data and subsequent delivery of the Environment Strategy, the baseline year was selected as 2019/20 because it was the year before the strategy was adopted. RDC's Scope 1 and 2 emissions for the baseline year of 2019/20 up to 2021/22 are as follows:

Scope	Emissions Type	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22	
		Emissions (tCO2e)	Percentage of Total	Emissions (tCO2e)	Percentage of Total	Emissions (tCO2e)	Percentage of Total
Scope 1	Heating	57.61	21.6%	66.68	33.6%	74.97	34.29%
	Fleet	9.55	3.6%	8.71	4.4%	8.77	4.01%
Scope 2	Electricity	199.42	74.8%	123.07	62%	134.92	61.70%
Total		266.58	100%	198.46	100%	218.66	100%

36. As expected, the pandemic caused quite a decrease in emissions in 2020/21 and this rose slightly as we emerged from this the following year. However, emissions were still 18% lower in 2021/22 than our baseline year.
37. Our current Environment Strategy was published in September 2020. The policy is being reviewed and an action plan drawn up that will set out a pathway to Net Zero by 2030, with scientifically based reduction targets for the Council's own emissions year on year.
38. There is a second measurement that there are district-wide carbon emission figures for Rother here. These figures come from the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS). These would be a reasonable and consistent base to report because they are Government figures and nationally recognised. In addition, the current work on the Local Plan is looking at these figures in more detail from a local perspective to identify what is unique about Rother and where we should focus the Local Plan's efforts to reduce CO2 emissions. Another advantage of this measurement is that we can make comparison to other local authorities and the county and national results. It is even more comparable if we use emissions per capita or the average tonnes for each person in the district.
39. There are drawbacks to using this measurement. The most recent data available is for 2020 and there will always be a reporting lag. No matter what the Environment Strategy may deliver, the impact will not be visible in the data for at least two years. The main reason the national emissions have dropped year on year is that the UK has phased out coal and the renewables sector has grown. The table below shows that Rother's emissions are higher than the East Sussex average per person, but lower than for the South East and England. As reported above, due to the pandemic, the year 2020 was not an average year and setting any target should take that into account.

All sectors	Emissions in Kt		Emissions per person t	
	2019	2020	2019	2020
Rother	384	341	3.7	3.2
East Sussex	1,880	1,672	3.4	3.0
South East	40,240	35,657	4.4	3.9
England	274,433	245,713	4.9	4.3

40. Members may wish to consider making a recommendation to Cabinet on whether it should be monitoring one of these measurements or splitting this KPI into a part a) for the Council's own emissions and a part b) for the emissions for the whole district. The targets for a) would be the same as those in the action plan of our Environment Strategy.

Planning Processing Summary

41. The returns show a continued downward trend in the average number of days processing Major applications for the quarter, because there are relatively few Major decisions. With a dedicated pre-application and Planning Performance Agreements (PPA) service, it is anticipated that the management of Major applications, including the actual application phase, will result in continued improved times for processing planning applications. Although, with most permissions subject to legal agreements and ongoing delays in statutory consultee responses, the timescale is, to considerable extent, outside of the service's control.
42. From July to September inclusive, again a downward trend in the average number of days to process a Non-Major application is demonstrated. It is considered that, with reduced applications on hand, removed validation backlogs and controlled application backlogs, the figures should see further improvement.
43. The improved time to validate applications is expected to continue to improve with the knock-on effect of these applications getting to case officers sooner, giving them more time to process planning applications and reduce the need to seek extensions of time.

Conclusion

44. This report sets our performance against the agreed key performance indicators for the five themes for the second quarter of 2022/23.
45. Members are requested to consider performance against targets or forecasts, as well as potential new targets, and pass recommendations for action to Cabinet for consideration.

Other Implications	Applies?	Other Implications	Applies?
Human Rights	No	Equalities and Diversity	No
Crime and Disorder	No	External Consultation	No
Environmental	No	Access to Information	No

Risk Management	Yes	Exempt from publication	No
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Appendices:	A – Summary KPI Table B – KPI Definitions		
Relevant previous Minutes:	CB21/7		
Background Papers:	None		
Reference Documents:	None		

Summary of All KPIs

A summary of the KPI performance is set out in the table below. Performance is compared to the previous quarter result and to the same quarter the previous year.

Housing & Communities	Status	Target	Q2 Result	Compared to Q2 2021/22	Compared to previous quarter
Number of all households in temporary accommodation		60	136		
Number of households on the housing register		1,200	2,068		
Number of affordable homes delivered (gross) (supply target: end of year)		106	64		
Homelessness Prevented and Homelessness Relieved (new KPI)		No target	Prvt: 14 Relv: 14		
Cost of temporary accommodation (new for 2022/23)		£1,201	£1,130		
Finance Performance					
Net income from all investment assets		£1,850,000	£2,566,126		
Additional income generation		£107,000	£55,200		
Economic Development and Poverty					
Number of Council Tax reduction claimants: Total, Pensioners and Working Age		T: 6,960 P: 3,041 W: 3,919	T: 6,548 P: 2852 W: 3,696		
Council Tax collection rates (income received as a % of collectable debit)		98.3%	57.31%		
Business Rates collection rates (income received as a % of collectable debit)		98%	59.17%		
Waste Collection					
ESCC Waste re-used, composted and recycled (reported one quarter in arrears)		54%	Q1: 52.28%		
Carbon baseline (new for 2022/23) (no target yet)					
Planning Processing					
Major applications: weeks to process or calendar days to process		13 weeks 91 days	26 w & 4d: 186 days		
Minor applications: days to process		8 weeks 56 days	19w & 4d: 137 days		

PI Status		Long Term Trends		Short Term Trends	
	Alert		Improving		Improving
	Warning		No Change		No Change
	OK		Getting Worse		Getting Worse
	Unknown				

Notes on KPI Measurement Definitions

Number of all Households in Temporary Accommodation

1. This measurement is the number of households that the Council has placed in temporary accommodation (TA) and are resident in TA on the last day of the quarter. Mainly these are households either waiting for a decision on their application for homelessness or accepted as homeless and waiting for suitable permanent accommodation.

Average Weeks in Temporary Accommodation

2. This measurement is the average number of weeks that the households who are in temporary accommodation have been living in temporary accommodation.

Number of Households on the Housing Register

3. This measurement is the number of households on the housing register on the last day of the quarter. This list covers all households who have met the criteria to be able to join the register.

Additional Homes Provided

4. This measurement counts the number of all new homes in Rother, allowing for demolitions and change of use to give a net gain. This measurement monitors the delivery of the Corporate Plan outcomes to manage spatial development and the provision of affordable and decent housing stock.
5. As the Core Strategy is now more than five years old, the Local Plan target has been replaced with a Local Housing Need figure based on the standard method (until a new Local Plan is adopted).
6. This indicator has two components: the supply target and the Local Housing Need figure. The supply target is based on the projected delivery for the year, as set out in the April 2022 Housing Land Supply and Trajectory report.

Affordable Homes Built

7. This measurement is the gross number of new affordable homes that have been completed in the district. By completed we mean that the home has been built and handed over from the developer to the provider for occupation by a tenant or purchaser. The home may not yet be occupied. This measurement monitors the delivery of the Corporate Plan outcome for affordable and decent housing stock, specifically the action to support the development of affordable accommodation.
8. The indicator has two targets: the supply target and the Local Plan target. The supply target is based on anticipated delivery from planned sites that we knew about at the time of setting the target.

Number of Council Tax Reduction Claimants

9. This measurement monitors the total number of council tax reduction (CTR) claimants (working age and pensioner) in a receipt of a reduced council tax bill.

Council Tax Collection Rates

10. This measurement monitors the percentage of collected council tax as a percentage of the estimated collectable debt in the year.

Business Rates Collection rates

11. This measurement monitors the percentage of business rates collected of the estimated collectable debt in the year.

Household waste Re-used, Composted and Recycled

12. This measurement is the percentage of collected household waste sent to be re-used, recycled and composted.
13. This is based on data reported by East Sussex County Council (ESCC), which includes all waste collection streams and is reported one quarter in arrears. The target in each quarter varies, depending on the time of year, leading to an average of 52%.

Net Income from All Investment Assets

14. This measurement is forecast annual net income from investments calculated from gross income less expenditure, excluding borrowing and interest payments.
15. The Asset Income total does not include 'community' assets which might also generate an income, such as sports facilities, allotments etc.

Additional Income Generation

16. This measures additional income generation through increased or new fees for discretionary services.

Days to Process Major Housing Development Applications

17. This measurement is the average number of weeks, or calendar days, to determine 'major' planning applications from the date of receipt of the application to the date that the council made a decision. Major planning applications is a reference to major or larger housing developments.

Days to Process Minor Housing Development Planning Applications

18. This measurement is the average number of calendar days to determine 'minor' planning applications. Minor applications is a reference to smaller housing developments. It does not include changes to single homes.