



PART B:	RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL
REPORT TO:	POLICY AND RESOURCES
DATE:	17 MARCH 2022
REPORT OF THE:	STRATEGY & PERFORMANCE MANAGER LYNNE BAYES
TITLE OF REPORT:	COUNCIL PERFORMANCE – QUARTER 3 2021-2022
WARDS AFFECTED:	ALL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide a progress update on Council performance up to the end of quarter 3 of the reporting cycle (October – December 2021) for 2021-22.
- 1.2 The update covers delivery of the Council Plan 2020-2024 and progress against key performance indicators (KPIs) and data only indicators.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 It is recommended to Council that:
- (i) The progress report is noted.

3.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 3.1 To inform Elected Members of progress in delivering the Council's objectives and key performance indicators.
- 3.2 Where applicable, any specific areas where progress for individual KPIs has not been achieved are highlighted with an explanation of planned development actions to make improvements moving forward, as detailed below.

4.0 SIGNIFICANT RISKS

- 4.1 Quarter 3 saw the continuation of increasing numbers in new cases of Covid-19 across the county as a whole. A new variant of the disease, Omicron, first detected in South Africa in November, quickly spread to the UK and across the world. The Government swiftly introduced new measures in relation to compulsory face coverings, testing and self-isolation for all international arrivals and self-isolation as a contact. Towards the end of the quarter, the booster vaccination programme was significantly accelerated,

the requirement to wear face coverings in indoor public spaces was reintroduced and once again, all those who could work from home, were asked to do so. Delivery of Council Plan objectives such as combating social isolation, processing benefits quickly and supporting the economy is continuing to help people and businesses across Ryedale to deal with the impact of Covid-19. This means that Covid-19 continued to have a significant impact on workloads during quarter 3 (October – December 2021).

- 4.2 Ahead of an anticipated gradual return to an increased level of office based working, substantial office refurbishment took place at Ryedale House during quarter 3, to ensure the health and safety of all staff and visitors to the building. However, following the unexpected outbreak of the new Covid-19 variant, Omicron, all staff who can work from home, have continued to do so. The Council continues to fulfil its obligations in line with the Health and Safety Executive and new ways of office based working to minimise the spread of Covid-19 have been communicated across the Council, in preparation for when it is safe to return.
- 4.3 Further disruption to people, communities and businesses came towards the end of the quarter, with Storm Arwen affecting the whole of the UK and causing many people and businesses throughout the District to be left without power and water supplies in freezing cold temperatures. This had a significant impact on workload and resources, to ensure all those affected, received the help and assistance required to maintain their health and wellbeing.
- 4.4 The impact on performance of local government reorganisation during quarter 3 has continued at pace and the organisation has now started to see the impact of losing key staff and expertise as we move forward with this process. The risk associated with the need to pull on staff resources to meet the required timelines and the continuing uncertainty for staff resulting in a higher staff turnover, is likely to continue to increase moving forward.
- 4.5 However, despite the ongoing and the unforeseen challenges during quarter 3 (October – December 2021), the commitment and resilience of staff across Ryedale, has meant that key services across the organisation have been sufficiently maintained to support residents and communities. This means, the majority of key performance indicators continue to be at target.
- 4.6 As full delivery of the 2020-24 Council Plan will not be possible by the time Ryedale District Council ceases to exist in April 2023, a reprioritisation process is being conducted to determine priorities for delivery between now and this date.

5.0 POLICY CONTEXT AND CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Quarter 3 2021/2022 report shows progress across all of the Council's corporate priorities: Our Communities, Our Economy, Our Environment and Our Organisation.
- 5.2 Key performance indicators continue to be largely on track.

6.0 REPORT DETAILS

Introduction and background

- 6.1 Performance reporting of progress against the Council's priorities – as set out in the Council Plan 2020-24 – is a key element of performance management arrangements.

- 6.2 Ongoing successful delivery of the Council's priorities is demonstrated by a combination of:
- Progress against priority projects/high level actions (are we meeting/expecting to meet delivery timescales); and
 - Performance against relevant key performance indicators and data only indicators (are targets being met; are we getting better)

This report covers the period October to December 2021.

- 6.3 This report includes the following detail:
- Actions and project activities completed against the aims and objectives set out under each theme of the Council's objectives in the Council Plan 2020-24.
 - Relevant key performance indicator statistics measured against the Council's priorities.
 - Future activities planned to address the areas requiring some improvement.

Summary of progress

- 6.4 This report shows the ongoing strong performance of this Council in the third quarter of 2021-22, across all its ambitions. The Council continues to support people, communities and businesses despite the ongoing challenges brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic, Storm Arwen and local government reorganisation.
- 6.5 Overall, out of the 12 key performance indicators with targets, 7 are showing a green status, 4 as an amber status and 1 as a red status when analysing quarter 3 performance. Particular highlights are as follows:
- The speed of processing new claims for both housing benefit and council tax support continued to improve during quarter 3 and remains significantly higher than target, placing this Council as the best performing authority in North Yorkshire for processing housing benefit new claims.
 - The processing of minor planning applications has improved from an amber status in quarters 1 and 2, to a green status in quarter 3, now operating at the cumulative target of 80% processed within the 13 week time period.
 - The processing of major planning applications continues to operate above target at 88% cumulative processed within the 13 week time period during quarter 3, against a target of 70%.

Red Indicators

- 6.6 Red indicators mean that performance is below where we would want it to be. The areas where this has occurred are summarised below along with explanations for this status. Covid-19 has continued to affect the progress against this indicator significantly, due ongoing workforce absences due to sickness and self-isolation requirements.

Standard searches

- 6.7 As a result of backlogs caused by lockdowns and other Covid-19 restrictions, in quarter 1, NYCC had seen the volume of searches received from all North Yorkshire authorities almost doubling from the previous year. As a consequence, this authority experienced substantial delays in the processing of searches by NYCC. However, throughout quarters 2 and 3, Ryedale has seen a substantial improvement in the speed of processing searches at NYCC. This is evidenced by the huge improvement in the individual quarterly figure rising from 55.7% in quarter 1 to 96.4% in quarter 3. The cumulative figure as at quarter 3 is 80.4%, and now falling just short of the amber status. Following the discussion around a review of the 100% target for this performance indicator at Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20 January 2022, the target has been reviewed to reflect a more current, realistic figure, taking into account the impact on resources due to Covid-19 and Local Government Reorganisation.

Following this review and alongside indications that the issues at NYCC have now been resolved, the expectation is to see continued improvement in this area of performance moving forward.

Amber Indicators

- 6.8 Amber indicators are important to highlight as they show where the Council must maintain a level of vigilance to ensure that performance does not slip further. The number of amber indicators has increased in quarter 3, due to a combination of factors including increased demand for services and workforce absences due to sickness and self-isolation, the impact of the winter period on waste collection services and time taken to complete on lengthier, more complex projects as detailed below.

New affordable homes

- 6.9 Larger, complex and longer term projects, will inevitably take longer to progress and as such, overall completion will not always be reached during some quarters of the reporting year. Based on the number of affordable homes due for completion by the end of this financial year, the target of 75 per annum is expected to be met by the end of quarter 4.

Properties back in use

- 6.10 Work to bring empty properties back into use is often a complicated and lengthy process and involves working with reluctant landlords or those landlords who are refurbishing their properties over a period of time with our help and guidance. The council is currently working with a number of landlords with the aim of completing at least 3 properties to achieve the target of 6 per annum by the end of quarter 4.

Other planning applications

- 6.11 The combination of a large increase in applications being received, with the impact of Covid-19 and LGR related work, has resulted in delays in processing these applications within target. Additional staffing capacity has been secured and against a target of 90%, the percentage of these planning applications processed within 8 weeks has significantly improved from 81% in quarter 1 to 88% cumulative in quarter 3, with quarter 3 alone at 92%.

As explained at Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20 January 2022, with the gap in resources now resolved and effective workload planning taking place to ensure sufficient staff are continuing to work on these applications, further improvement in this area of performance is expected to continue moving forward.

Household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting

6.12 Overall, 44.39% of household waste was sent for reuse, recycling or composting in quarter 3. This was composed of 22.82% kerbside dry recycling and 21.57% garden waste composting. Both measures are consistent with expected seasonal variation with garden waste tonnages inevitably falling between the months of October and December due to residents spending less time gardening in colder, wetter weather. The cumulative recycling performance figure for the year to date stands at 49.31% (21.32% kerbside dry recycling and 28% garden waste composting), which is just below the annual target of 50% (-0.68%). Although quarter 4 of this reporting cycle is likely to reflect a similar outcome, the expectation is to see significant improvement in this indicator as we move into spring, when the weather starts to improve again.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The following implications have been identified:

- a) Financial
Delivery of Council Plan priorities is reflected in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- b) Legal
The organisation complies with all relevant statutory, legislative and constitutional matters when executing the delivery of its Council Plan and delivering against key performance indicators.
- c) Resource
Performance reporting highlights where we can explore opportunities to adjust resources to support effective implementation of the Council Plan as part of our on-going business and budget planning.
- d) Other
Equalities, staffing, health and safety, and policy matters such as environmental and climate change inform the content and execution of the Council Plan and performance priorities on an ongoing basis. Anyone requiring this information in an alternative format, may contact the report author to request this.

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Background Papers:

Council Plan 2020 – 2024

<https://www.ryedale.gov.uk/resources/council-plan/>