

To: Finance and Performance Panel
Date: 08 July 2021
Report of: Head of Law and Governance
Title of Report: Scrutiny Performance Monitoring

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To support the Finance and Performance Panel in selecting the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) it wishes to monitor over the coming year.
Key decision:	No
Scrutiny Lead Member	Councillor James Fry, Chair of the Finance and Performance Panel
Corporate Priority:	All
Policy Framework:	Council Strategy 2020-24
Recommendation(s): That the Finance Panel resolves to:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. AGREE to have Performance Monitoring as a standing item on the agenda, where written questions or invitations to relevant officers to attend the next meeting can be agreed, and previous written responses considered. 2. AGREE fifteen to twenty-five KPIs for consideration throughout the civic year. 	

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Example of previous performance monitoring reports
Appendix 2	List of current service-area KPIs
Appendix 3	List of corporate KPIs

Introduction and background

1. At its meeting of 08 June 2021 the Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish the Finance and Performance Panel for the civic year 2021/22. The remit agreed was 'finance and budgetary issues and decisions, annual review of the Council's budget, quarterly monitoring of finance and performance'.
2. Each quarter an Integrated Performance Report goes to Cabinet detailing the financial, performance and risk performance of the Council. Where the timings of

the reports and the meetings of the Finance and Performance Panel coincide this report is usually heard by the Finance and Performance Panel.

3. On top of the Integrated Performance Report, however, the Scrutiny function has historically selected a number of specific service-area KPIs which it has particular interest in, usually around a dozen. An example of a previous report is attached as Appendix 1.
4. The impact of Covid meant that last year such performance monitoring was difficult to undertake meaningfully. Many of the KPIs became impossible to achieve; the closure of the Council's leisure facilities meant that the KPI around numbers of people attending its facilities was rendered nugatory. Likewise, the Council had to pivot a lot of its energy into work to manage the needs of the organisation and the local community in responding to the pandemic, rather than focusing on previously-set KPIs. Whilst the situation of the Council still does not remain 'normal', corporately it is believed that there is sufficient stability for new KPIs to be worked to and a new series were set as part of the work plan for the Council's Business Plan for the year. The opportunity for Scrutiny to re-engage with this process is therefore available, and it is for the Panel to decide how exactly to fulfil its performance monitoring remit.

Managing Performance Monitoring at the Finance Panel

5. Historically, the Scrutiny-commissioned performance monitoring report has been presented as a report to the Panel by one officer, usually from the Business Improvement team. This, however, has not necessarily always been conducive to in-depth scrutiny; the officer presenting the report was oftentimes not in the same service area as the items being discussed and did not have sufficient knowledge of the detail to respond to Panel member questions.
6. To improve the level of performance monitoring it is necessary that the relevant officers respond to Panel questions. However, even with remote meetings held on Zoom it is not an efficient use of time to invite all the different officers to each meeting at which performance monitoring is considered. Instead, it is recommended that performance monitoring reports are included as a standing item on the agenda but that they are not presented by an officer. If the Panel identifies an issue it wishes to seek further information on it can ask for a written response to be provided to the next meeting or invite that particular officer to attend to answer questions.

Selecting KPIs

7. Appendix 2 is the full list of service level KPIs within the Council, and Appendix 3 the corporate KPIs. These KPIs are being monitored on a regular basis.
8. Appendix 1 shows the Panel what reports previously look like. Targets are amended to reflect the proportion of the year that has passed, and performance against that target reported on alongside a RAG (red, amber, green) rating. A short commentary on the performance to date is also included.
9. Although the precise number and allocation of KPIs to monitor is a matter for the Panel it is advised that the number be limited to provide focus on key areas of performance that the Panel considers of particular importance. It is recommended that the Panel select between 15 and 25 KPIs to monitor. The Scrutiny Committee

often makes reference to the TOPIC criteria. Not all letters of the acronym are useful in this instance, but questions of timeliness, public interest and cost are of particular relevance in deciding useful KPIs to monitor.

10. Whilst the Panel may have areas it wishes to give greater focus to than others, it is advised that its ultimate choice maintains broad oversight of the operations of the Council and does not focus in on its priorities exclusively whilst ignoring other areas.
11. Highlighted in the list in Appendices 2 and 3 are those KPIs the Scrutiny Officer recommends. However, it is stressed that the Panel is responsible for choosing its own measures and may wish to disregard this suggestion. Items related directly to Housing have been overlooked purely for the reason that Scrutiny has its own Housing and Homelessness Panel, which would be expected to be monitoring such activity. A number of the possible choices are very important and relevant to Scrutiny but have not been included on the basis that some are baseline figures which would be better to consider when there is a context to them, although this principle has not been followed rigorously within the suggested list.
12. It should be noted that amongst the highlighted items are a series of items in blue, rather than the rest which are in yellow. These are highlighted differently to draw attention to the fact it appears that the actual measures and targets have not yet been finalised. There are some highlighted in yellow which have targets but which do still merit further clarification; for example, *RE010: Percentage of projects that are proceeding to the agreed programme* has a target of 0.7%.

Legal issues

13. The Scrutiny Committee has agreed that the remit of the Finance and Performance Panel includes performance management. Whilst consideration of the Council's Integrated Performance Report would fulfil its remit, this is an opportunity for Scrutiny to exercise its independence in specifically identifying the areas it feels are necessary to consider rather than simply relying on those reports going to Cabinet. The Panel is strongly recommended, therefore, to avail itself of this opportunity to identify its own performance monitoring priorities.

Financial issues

14. Aside from the opportunity cost of staff time there are no financial issues to consider in relation to this report.

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Background Papers: None

