

SCRUTINY COMMISSION

25 January 2022

Report Title	Performance Indicator Report 2021/22 (Period 7)
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Executive Member	Cllr Jason Smithers Leader of the Council

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Summary Performance Indicator Report for Period 7 (October 2021)

Appendix B – Detailed Performance Indicator Report for Period 7 (October 2021)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To provide members with an update on the Council's performance across a wide range of services, as measured by performance indicators, with the aim of informing scrutiny.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Commission identified the need for regular performance reports on the Council's services and key local outcomes at its Scrutiny Conference back in October 2021. Performance reporting has been built into the Scrutiny Work Programme as a routine and regular feature.
- 2.2 The performance information presented to the Scrutiny Commission via this report mirrors that which is considered at meetings of the Executive. This report includes two appendices: Appendix A provides a summary of the performance of Council services; Appendix B provides more detail, including trend lines and exception reports.
- 2.3 Members of the Scrutiny Commission are advised to flag up areas they wish to understand in further detail with the report author at least three working days prior to the meeting. This is by no means essential but given the broad range of information included within the appendices of this report, it will help ensure a more thorough answer is provided at the meeting.
- 2.4 The content and format of the Council's performance reports are in development. In particular, performance measures are being developed to better reflect the desired outcomes set out at a high level through the Council's recently adopted Corporate Plan. It is envisaged that a revised set of indicators

will be put in place and measured from April 2022. In reality, the revised dataset is likely to include many of the indicators set out within the appendices of this report. The majority of these already provide important information about the performance of the Council's services as well as other key outcomes for the local area.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Scrutiny Commission note the performance of the Council and its services as outlined in the appendices of this report, and use the information provided to aid the process of scrutiny.

4. Report Background

- 4.1 The availability of accurate, timely and relevant information about the performance of services is good practice. It enables operational and policy decisions to be made, and it informs healthy debate and scrutiny of services.
- 4.2 The Council's approach to performance monitoring is developing. The first priority was to ensure that important performance data is collected across services, presented in a legible way, and reported routinely and regularly where it is needed.
- 4.3 Performance monitoring at North Northamptonshire will continue to be developed. Development activities include:
- Working with service areas to ensure that they are aware of and using performance data to understand and improve services.
 - Developing the suite of indicators that are measured to ensure that they reflect the Council's vision, values, key commitments and priorities – those areas that matter the most to the Council.
 - Utilise data to build up insights as to what is happening and also likely to happen in the future. Members may hear this approach being referred to as 'data intelligent'. The aim, in relevant cases, is to predict what may happen in the future and take pre-emptive action. There are clearly significant benefits to this approach.
 - The way performance data is presented will continue to be developed to make information easier to understand.
- 4.4 The Performance reports included as Appendix A and B mirror those that are reported to the Council's Executive. They have been developed following a review of the approaches of a number of councils, with the best bits from each being replicated.

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1 Perhaps one of the choices for Members to consider is distinguishing between those indicators that relate to areas of performance that the Council is solely responsible for, and those that are impacted by the wider efforts of partner agencies. In some cases, national policy will be a factor. A varied approach could be adopted to the scrutiny of these different areas and this could help inform the future Scrutiny Work Programme.

6. Implications (including financial implications)

6.1 Resources and Financial

6.1.1 There are no direct resource or financial implications arising from this report. However, the financial performance of the Council is an important metric when gauging how the Council performs. The scarcity of resources inevitably means there is a trade-off between performance and affordability. The goal is to ensure that efficiency, economy and effectiveness are maximised within realistic parameters.

6.2 Legal

6.2.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6.3 Risk

6.3.1 There are no significant risks associated with the recommendations of this report.

6.3.2 There are risks associated with not scrutinising the performance of the Council as measured by performance indicators. The indicators and associated reporting regime form an important part of the Council's corporate governance arrangements. A laissez-faire approach to the Council's performance would be counter-productive. Robust scrutiny and challenge is considered a healthy feature of any large, outcome-focused organisation.

6.3.3 There are other risks associated with performance indicators. Data quality, for example, is an important consideration. The decisions the Council makes will be impaired by poor quality information. The Council is therefore working to ensure that data quality arrangements are built into the chain of information that underpins performance reporting. This will nevertheless continue to be an area of careful focus for the Council as it further beds down and develops its performance management arrangements.

6.4 Consultation

6.4.1 The Council carried out a public consultation on its vision, values, key commitments and priorities during the Autumn of 2021. These will be used as a basis to help guide the development of a revised set of Corporate Plan performance indicators.

6.5 Climate Impact

6.5.1 A Council that is performing well is likely to be more efficient and effective in what it does. This will inevitably yield a range of benefits, including reducing the negative impact on the environment. It is envisaged that this link will be strengthened moving forward as the Council develops indicators and targets for reducing its negative impact on climate change.

6.6 **Community Impact**

- 6.6.1 Council services that are performing well will have a significant positive impact on the local community. The monitoring and scrutiny of the Council's performance plays an important role in both understanding this impact and in driving future performance improvement.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 None