

FINANCE & RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 5 APRIL 2022

Report Title	Proposed Corporate Plan Performance Indicator Set for Corporate Services 2022/23
Report Author	Guy Holloway, Assistant Chief Executive Email: Guy.holloway@northnorthants.gov.uk
Executive Member	Cllr Jason Smithers Leader of the Council

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Proposed Corporate Plan Performance Indicator Set for Corporate Services 2022/23

Appendix B – Existing Indicators not included in the Corporate Plan Indicator set for Corporate Services 2022/23

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To provide members of the Finance & Resources Scrutiny Committee with the opportunity to review and provide feedback to the Executive on the proposed Corporate Plan Performance Indicators for corporate services 2022/23.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 It is considered good practice for local authorities to have a set of publicly reported performance indicators that show how they are performing against key areas.
- 2.2 The performance indicators that North Northamptonshire Council have measured and reported on during 2021/22 represent an amalgamation of the common indicators that were measured by the local councils prior to the creation of the new unitary council.
- 2.3 It is important that the performance indicators the Council routinely publishes in public are relevant, timely and accurate. It is quite normal for a council to have a public set of data that it reports to show progress against priorities, supported by an internal set of data that it uses for management purposes.
- 2.4 Following the adoption of the Council's Corporate Plan, service areas have been working to identify performance indicators that will help measure how the Council is performing against its key commitments outlined within the adopted Corporate Plan.

- 2.5 As part of this piece of work, the existing set of performance indicators have been reviewed against the key commitments outlined within the Corporate Plan to identify:
- a. Indicators that are considered relevant and to be retained in the future Corporate Plan Indicator Set.
 - b. Indicators that are no longer relevant and therefore not proposed for retention.
 - c. The need for new indicators to help better measure the delivery of the Corporate Plan, especially where there are perceived gaps.
- 2.6 Based on the above piece of work, it is proposed that many of the performance indicators that have been measured and reported within 2021/22 will remain within the Corporate Plan Indicator set for corporate services for 2022/23.
- 2.7 Where gaps have been identified, or where there has been a clear business need, new indicators have been proposed. These existing and new indicators proposed for inclusion within the Corporate Plan Indicator set for corporate services have been provided as **Appendix A**.
- 2.8 Some of the indicators that have been reported on over the last year do not directly measure the performance of the Council's key commitments. Some have been superseded by proposed new indicators. Where these two factors are the case, the measures have not been included within the proposed Corporate Plan Indicator set for corporate services for 2022/23. Many of these however, will be retained as internal performance indicators and will continue to be measured by the Council, particularly where they provide useful management information.
- 2.9 The indicators that have been reported during 2021/22 that are not proposed for inclusion within the Corporate Plan Indicator set for corporate services are provided as **Appendix B**. An explanation of why they are not proposed for inclusion has been provided.
- 2.10 Members should be mindful that performance indicators are just one of the tools the Council can use to measure and understand achievement of its Corporate Plan objectives. Information such as financial performance, project delivery outcomes, customer feedback, committee reports, audit reports, external assessment, along with members own experience of the reality of services all play a vital role in forming this judgement.
- 2.11 The Finance & Resources Scrutiny Committee are invited to provide feedback to the Executive on the proposed Corporate Plan Performance Indicator Set for corporate services 2022/23.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Finance & Resources Scrutiny Committee note the proposed Corporate Plan Indicator set for corporate services 2022/23 and provide feedback to the Executive as appropriate.

4. Report Background

- 4.1 There are a number of factors that have to be considered when developing performance indicators. They should be relevant, specific, measurable and be collectable in a timely fashion. It is inevitable that not all activities will lend themselves to being measured by performance indicators. They should also be seen as just one of the tools that can be used to help form a judgement about the performance of the Council and its services.
- 4.2 This report sets out a new proposed set of indicators that aims to more effectively measure the delivery of the Corporate Plan against its key commitments, specifically in respect of the Council's corporate services. A range of other information will be available to help members understand the progress that is being made in this area.
- 4.3 **Appendix A** outlines the proposed Corporate Plan Indicator Set for corporate services 2022/23. It includes both the existing to be retained and new measures to be added. For ease, information about whether the indicator is new or existing has been included within the table. The name of the indicator, the key commitment it supports, the service owner and target information has also been provided along with a provisional reference number to aid debate.
- 4.4 Appendix B outlines the existing performance indicators that are not proposed for inclusion within the Corporate Plan Indicator Set for corporate services moving forward. The name of the indicator alongside a justification of why it no longer features has been provided. Members may wish to note that some of the indicators that will not be included within the Corporate Plan Indicator Set for corporate services will be maintained as internal indicators which it can use for management purposes.
- 4.5 It is important that the public facing Corporate Plan Indicators only include those indicators most proximate to measuring its Corporate Plan key commitments. There is a danger that if this distinction is not made, then the suite of data reported public becomes unwieldy and difficult to manage.
- 4.6 Members should be mindful that there will still be areas that require further development.
- 4.7 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.
- 4.8 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 and embedding 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.
 - Ensuring we have comparable benchmark data enabling the council to better understand and enhance its performance moving forward.

- 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 monitored to ensure information is reported in the most effective way.

4.9 Executive Members have been consulted with on the proposed suite of Corporate Plan Indicators for 2022/23 and in many cases have contributed to its content.

4.10 Feedback from scrutiny members form a valuable and important part of the process of shaping the Council's future approach. Feedback provided by members of the Finance & Resources Scrutiny Committee will be included within the report to Executive that proposes the new Corporate Plan Indicator Set for 2022/23.

5. Issues and Choices

5.1 Choices have had to be made about which indicators to retain in the proposed new indicator set, which ones to remove. The justification for the choices made have been set out in the appendices.

5.2 The Council could choose not to measure performance indicators. There are some councils that do very little routine performance measurement. North Northamptonshire Council has set out in its Corporate Plan a priority for developing best practices approaches for performance management and so is keen to do all it can to make accurate performance data routinely available to support both policy and operational decision making.

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 is performing. 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 counterproductive. 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 were used to help guide the development of the revised set of Corporate Plan performance indicators for 2022/23.

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. The Council is working hard to develop further indicators and targets for reducing its negative impact on climate change. These, however, fall outside of the scope measured and reported within corporate services.

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 [Corporate Plan](#) adopted by Full Council at their meeting on the 9th December 2021.