

<b>BRIEFING</b>	<b>TO:</b>	Improving Places Select Commission
	<b>DATE:</b>	19 December 2019
	<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	Janet Spurling Governance Advisor, Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate 01709 254421
	<b>TITLE:</b>	Outcomes from Workshop on Council Plan Performance Indicators
<b>1. Background</b>		
<b>1.1</b>	In the new approach to scrutiny of the performance measures in the Council Plan from 2019-20, each of the Select Commissions now maintains oversight of the performance measures that link in with their respective terms of reference.	
<b>1.2</b>	The focus will be on exception reporting based around red rated measures or ones with a negative direction of travel.	
<b>2. Key Issues</b>		
<b>2.1</b>	For Improving Places Select Commission (IPSC) the respective measures to consider are those under Priority 3 <i>A strong community in a clean, safe environment</i> and Priority 4 <i>Extending opportunity, prosperity and planning for the future</i> . The exception is with measures 3.A1 to 3.A3 which relate to the work of the Safer Rotherham Partnership, which is scrutinised by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB).	
<b>2.2</b>	A sub-group of the OSMB also considered two measures in depth during the summer, including 3.B2 (a) effective enforcement action taken where evidence is found a) fly tipping (fixed penalty notices and prosecutions).	
<b>2.3</b>	IPSC held a workshop following its formal meeting on 19 September 2019 to discuss all the measures under its remit. Comparing performance in Quarter 1 with that in Quarter 4 identified a small number of measures that met the agreed criteria for exception reporting. These were scrutinised at OSMB on 2 October 2019 and the findings are reported in the next section.	
<b>2.4</b>	Queries emerged about other measures in the Council Plan at the IPSC workshop and these questions and the responses to them are appended to this briefing.	
<b>3. Key Actions and Timelines</b>		
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Measure 3.B4 Missed bins per 100,000 collections</b> Target - 50 Performance - 113 (seasonal effects: data compared to Q1 2018-19 - 43.01)  - Significant changes to the service, such as what is collected and new routes for the crews, were factors in performance not being where the service wanted to be, but the changes needed time to bed in. Although vehicles were fitted with in-cab computers the local knowledge of the crews was really important alongside the IT. The service knew which streets were being missed. Supervisors were out	

with crews and targeted work took place with individual crews if there were higher than expected missed collections.

- In terms of more recent performance, this had improved, as in July the rate was 90 per 100,000, 83 in August and 65 in September. Officers were confident of being under target within the next few months.

### 3.2 **3.A4b Proportion of a) licensed vehicles b) drivers found to be compliant with licensing requirements**

Target – Vehicles 85% Performance 73% (last two quarters 88% and 76%)  
Target – Drivers 85% Performance 77% (previous data was for vehicles only)

- The data for spot inspections related to taxis licensed by RMBC and although the number had gone down, officers highlighted Rotherham's stringent and robust taxi licensing policy introduced four years ago. Generally, policy infringements were ones that did not present a risk to the public and were easily resolved, such as a display plate being slightly wrong, fire extinguisher service sticker or windscreen wipers. In the majority of cases they were resolved at the point of inspection or within a week and if not the vehicle was suspended until the issue was resolved. Compliance with safeguarding requirements was 100% as drivers could not have a licence without a DBS check and safeguarding training.
- In terms of drivers, a very specific issue had emerged from inspections, which was the failure of drivers to wear their badge when driving the vehicle. This part of the policy will be reviewed as it was important for passengers to be able to see the badge but also for it to be practical for the drivers. Licences would be suspended or revoked if issues were not resolved quickly.
- On an encouraging note the trade representatives were positive about the policy and took pride in being compliant in Rotherham. They are not seeking to make the policy less robust in the forthcoming review but wondered about possible ways to reward or recognise the really good drivers.

### 3.3 **4.B1a Number of new homes delivered during the year via direct Council intervention**

Target - 175 Performance 8 year to date (last quarter 19 new homes)

- Delivery of new homes was not a linear process but rather the target had been set based on assessing current sites where work was happening or planned, including with partners. Housing knew the number of homes due to be built on each site and when by, with this aggregated across the sites for the target of 175. An increase in new homes delivered was expected in quarter 2 with the majority anticipated in quarter 3. Sites were monitored monthly to ensure any problems could be foreseen and mitigated against but the service did not see any problems at this point and were confident the target would again be exceeded as last year.
- Construction at key sites included Braithwell Road, Maltby and the Bellows development in Rawmarsh, where a number of units were due to be handed over. Pre-fabricated homes were not included within the target of 175.

### 3.4 **3.B3 Number of customer contacts by service area for a) official complaints**

Target – 10% reduction – cumulative target of approx. 190  
Performance 72 with 31 upheld (seasonal effects: data compared to Q1 2018-19 - 52)

- Although many complaints had not been upheld, the majority of the 72 were in relation to waste management. It was clarified that rather than being particular

	<p>areas which had more complaints than others, most were in relation to the garden waste collection, which services were working to address. In the last year more activity had moved into the contact centre and many complaints related to not getting through and having queries answered regarding garden waste. Demand had been higher than planned but it was not expected to be an issue this year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discussion at OSMB ensued on the Compliments and Complaints Annual Report. It was clarified that telephone contact for housing services would be looked at. Housing were aware of the volume of calls coming through and were looking to improve technology and encourage self-serve. Assurance was sought that complaints by email or on-line would also have as quick a response as by phone call.</li> <li>- Customer Services receive complaints through various channels and pass them on if they relate to another specific service. More joining up between back office processes to avoid hand offs is needed and will be facilitated through the new website and new processes. This should also include people being able to log in and see progress on a request or an issue they have raised, but would be undertaken step by step, service by service. Work to reduce avoidable contact and the call volume was also another area to look at overall.</li> </ul>
<b>3.5</b>	<p><b>Measure 3.A5b How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the Rotherham Borough as a place to live?</b></p> <p>Target - greater than 69% Performance 58% (data compared to Q1 in 2018-19 - 57%)</p> <p>This measure was not discussed at OSMB but is covered in question 1 in Appendix 1.</p>
<b>4. Recommendations</b>	
<b>4.1</b>	<p>Members of IPSC are asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Note the outcomes of scrutiny at OSMB on the exception report.</li> <li>2. Note the responses to the questions raised at the workshop session.</li> <li>3. Continue to scrutinise performance on the relevant Council Plan measures under Priorities 3 and 4, with a focus on those meeting the criteria outlined above for exception reporting.</li> </ol>

## **Council Plan performance queries from Improving Places Select Commission**

This appendix provides responses to specific issues discussed by IPSC in the workshop session on Council plan performance measures held on 19 September 2019. The questions related to measures which did not meet the exception reporting criteria for discussion at OSMB but were still of interest to the Select Commission.

### **1. How scientific is the satisfaction survey for where you live and what does it actually measure – infrastructure, quality of life, services, sense of pride?**

During 2015 and 2016, the LGA undertook four polling surveys to find out what residents of Rotherham Borough thought about Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC) and the Borough in general. The survey formed part of the improvement activity within the authority which began in May 2015, with the first survey taking place in June 2015. The survey asked about satisfaction with the Council, perceptions of value for money, responsiveness, trust and confidence in the Council, and satisfaction with aspects of life in Rotherham.

Following the ending of the LGA's support related to resident satisfaction, the Council continued the surveys, on a six-monthly basis, to monitor satisfaction levels and the extent to which the views of residents have changed over time. The Council also wished to explore residents' perceptions of safety, optimism about the future of the borough and town centre, and their views on community cohesion. A statistically representative random sample of around 500 Rotherham residents (aged 18 or over) have been polled, mainly by landline telephone using quotas set by age and gender, on a six-monthly basis.

Whilst the results of the polling in Rotherham provides a good high-level indication of resident views of Rotherham and its council, it is important that they are seen as complementary to a wider approach to understanding and responding to communities at the local level. The relatively small sample size in Rotherham means that small variations from one survey wave to another should not be interpreted as indicating a significant change in opinion. The results should be seen in the wider context provided by the patterns of all surveys since 2015.

The most recent survey took place between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> June 2019 and previous surveys took place in June 2015, December 2015, June 2016, December 2016, June 2017, February 2018, June 2018 and December 2018.

Survey questions include:

- Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area (within a 15-20 minute walk from your home) as a place to live?
- Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council runs things?
- To what extent do you think that the Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council provides value for money?
- To what extent do you think that the Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council acts on the concerns of local residents?
- Overall, how well informed do you think Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides?
- How much do you trust Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council?
- To what extent would you say that you have confidence in Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council?
- How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area during the day? How safe do you feel when outside in your local area after dark?

- How optimistic do you feel about the future of Rotherham as a place to live? And, more specifically, how optimistic do you feel about the future of Rotherham town centre?
- To what extent do you agree or disagree that Rotherham is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together?
- Overall, all things considered, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Rotherham Borough as a place to live?

All surveys are published on the RMBC website:

[https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/downloads/download/250/lga\\_resident\\_satisfaction\\_survey](https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/downloads/download/250/lga_resident_satisfaction_survey)

The next resident survey will be conducted in June 2020, following a decision to move from twice-yearly to annual surveys. The sample size will roughly double, meaning a broader section of the borough's residents will be involved in the survey. This is to bring both aspects of the survey more closely in line with local authorities across the country, against whom the Council benchmarks.

## 2. RotherFed ask these types of questions re satisfaction when they knock on doors, does it link in or could it?

Rotherham Federation of Communities does not currently undertake any satisfaction surveys on the Council's behalf.

Following a competitive tendering process recently, Kwest Research Ltd have been appointed to carry out bespoke surveys on the Council's behalf which includes surveys such as the Tenants Satisfaction Surveys and Employee Opinion Survey. The service specification required that the appointed organisation will be able to provide a personal touch and bespoke surveys to the directorate's specific needs as and when required, by using a range of assorted, digital, modern and innovative tools. An introductory meeting was held with Kwest on 29<sup>th</sup> October to discuss the Council's requirements.

The Council has moved away from the overall Housing Service STAR postal survey completed in previous years following feedback that the survey was too long, outdated and expensive. Housemark are currently reviewing the future of the STAR Survey and the Council has inputted as part of the consultation process. The Council will ensure that the future tenant satisfaction surveys complies with the new STAR Survey framework. Previously the results have been used to drive forward service improvements and monitor housing key performance indicators.

## 3. Measure 3.A7 Parks and Open Spaces - lowest satisfaction rating for this category. Where/when are people asked the questions and will it be across the board or just in relation to their own local park?

Green Spaces undertakes visitor surveys at Clifton Park, Rother Valley Country Park and Thrybergh Country Park in Quarter 2 every other year. One of the questions relates to satisfaction of the relevant park where the question is being asked and another question asks about general satisfaction with people's local parks. Satisfaction ratings for the three specific parks are between 89% and 98% but the general satisfaction is lower at 82.5%. However, of those surveyed at Clifton and Rother Valley, up to 75% are non-Rotherham residents, which is likely to at best reduce the sample size as most will not have an opinion of other Rotherham parks and green spaces.

4. Measure 3.A8 Country Parks Is there a view that increased car parking charges have been a factor in reduced attendance?

There was a large increase (from £3.50 to £5.00) at Rother Valley in 2016/17. There were no large increases between 2017/18 and 2018/19 at either Rother Valley or Thrybergh Country Park so this would not have been a factor. Records show a reduction in visitors in Quarter 4 of 2018/19 due to poor weather (wet and windy); this compares the previous spring which was warm and dry and coincided with the Easter school holidays.

5. Measure 4.A3 Vacant Floor Space in town centre - how is this calculated and does it include markets? If sites are under development are they included or removed? Does it count as vacant if a business relocates elsewhere?

Following adoption of the Local Plan Sites and Policies document a revised approach to monitoring vacancies in town centres has been introduced. This approach continues to monitor vacancies at ground floor level but excludes derelict buildings or buildings which are unoccupied and where redevelopment is expected to take place within a reasonable period of time. This approach reflects the fact that these premises are not available to come back into use within a reasonable period of time and as such more accurately identifies where units are vacant (and could come back into use) as opposed to being unavailable.

The approach measures vacancy rates based on estimated floorspace of units, or the actual floorspace data where this is known. Units are counted as vacant where businesses have relocated as the data is derived from surveys of individual premises.

The indoor and covered outdoor markets are included in the survey data. This is based on overall floorspace for these markets rather than individual stalls / trading areas, as it is not practical to monitor vacancies down to this detailed level.

6. Measure 4.B3 Selective Licensing compliance – will the target need to be reviewed in light of the changes to existing designated areas and planned new ones? And for staffing?

Yes, this will need to be reviewed, however this will not be until there has been a Cabinet decision.