

Note of HEB committee performance session, 15 November 2018, 7-8pm, Civic Offices

Attendees: Cllr Jayne McCoy, Cllr Sam Weatherlake, Cllr Jake Short, Cllr David Bartolucci, Cllr Trish Fivey

Apologies: Cllr David Hicks, Mary Morrissey (Strategic Director for Environment, Housing and Regeneration), Simon Latham (Assistant Director of Housing, Planning and Regeneration)

Invited: Cllr Joyce Melican, Cllr Eric Allen, Cllr Catherine Gray, Cllr Nick Matthey

Officers present: Mark Halls (Processing and Transactions Manager), Trevor Hart (Housing Strategy and Commissioning Manager), Jennifer Sibley (Environment Strategy Manager), Scott Funnell (Head of Environment Strategy), Kevin Hoey (Business Systems Design Officer), Nick Smales (Assistant Director for Economic Development)

Current performance - Red performance indicators

SHP: Non-communal repairs: Cllr Short asked about the August 2018 performance dip. Cllr Bartolucci asked for assurances on data quality if the council is reliant on the contractor providing it. Trevor Hart said that SHP is able to access the contractor's systems (Mears) and the Council does a quarterly audit of a range of indicators to try to understand the underlying issues. Cllr Bartolucci asked what repairs could indicate in terms of the future of estates. It was important to avoid a perception that the council was 'running down' an estate for renewal. Trevor Hart said SHP were doing regular estate walkabouts, and in response to a question from Cllr McCoy, confirmed ward councillors are invited to attend these too. Trevor Hart reminded members that this satisfaction measure reflects residents' perception of the quality of repairs carried out. Cllr McCoy said there could be a different approach to workmanship of a communal repair to one undertaken in someone's house. She requested this be explored with SHP when they bring their 2019/20 delivery plan to HEB Ctte in March (**Action: Trevor Hart to convey this to SHP**).

SHP: Local authority relets: Trevor Hart explained the relet time is also affected by applicants refusing properties. Councillors asked why the overall void turnaround target was set at 15 days for 2018/19. Trevor Hart explained that SHP had proposed 15 days and this was agreed by HEB Ctte as part of the SHP delivery plan. [Post-meeting note: Pentana was incorrectly showing a target of 24 days at the meeting, and this has been corrected. The SHP delivery plan for 2019/20 which is being discussed at HEB Ctte on 29 January 2019 includes a new target for re-lets.]

Current performance - Amber performance indicators

SHP: Repairs requested: Cllr Bartolucci asked if there were fluctuations between sites. Trevor Hart said that repairs involving multiple trades typically took longer.

Current performance - Green performing indicators

Rent collection from tenants not on universal credit: Cllr Bartolucci queried how the collection rate could be 102%. Mark Halls explained that this included arrears.

NNDR: Cllr Bartolucci asked how a target could be set for this given there was a fluctuating base. Mark Halls explained the target didn't change but the amount of income collected did. The same would be true for new housing and therefore collection tax collection. Cllr Bartolucci asked how the staffing worked on this. Mark Halls said the staff were flexible and trained to work on both council tax and NNDR, wherever the demand was greatest at the time.

Aged debt: Mark Halls said the team had focused on this and there was £8.5m uncollected at the start of 2018/19, of which approximately £6.8m was council tax and £1.7m NNDR. The target was for 30% reduction in aged debt this year but he was hopeful of closer to 40%. Whilst some aged debt was always collected each year through scheduled payment plans, the team had been particularly proactive this year in reducing this. Changes to business rates retention, where the council now retained more business rates income, also meant the amounts recovered were higher. Comparing council tax was a better indicator of the team's efforts.

Current performance - data only indicators

Temporary accommodation: the long term trends show a steady increase over time. Cllr Bartolucci asked if the data was available about how many people (rather than households) were homeless. Cllr McCoy asked for a split between single households and those that are families. **(Action: Trevor Hart to obtain a breakdown from Encompass).**

Councillors asked for clarification between households approaching the authority where a homelessness application is taken; and number of accepted homelessness applications. Trevor Hart said there were tests for homelessness for those approaching the council; the figure was lower because not all approaches were accepted. This figure is cumulative throughout the year, and resets to zero in April each year. Compared with previous years, the long-term trend is a fall in the number of accepted homelessness applications. Trevor Hart said this reflected socio-economic factors as well as the preventative work Encompass was doing. Overall more people require temporary accommodation than the number of people who are moved out of temporary accommodation into permanent housing.

New performance indicators

Cllr McCoy proposed an annual performance report for the HEB Ctte, that would be reviewed at each June committee meeting. A briefing could be offered to councillors in advance. Councillors could indicate the areas they particularly wanted explanation on through the voting form circulated with the papers.

Councillors said they welcomed the opportunity to drill down into the detail and wanted to retain the ability to ask for information on specific indicators.

The voting form would be recirculated. (**Action: Scott Funnell**).

This page is intentionally left blank