

Report to: Corporate and External Issues
Scrutiny Committee

Date: 21st November 2016

Report of: Director of Place

Report No: CEISC/04/16a

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Report Title: Place Department Performance Report – Quarter 1, 2016/17

Non Confidential:

This report does **not** contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to

- give a current overview of priorities for services within the Place Department, those being Strategic Development, Economic Strategy, Development Management, Libraries and Museum Service and Corporate Property Services;
- provide relevant performance information for Bolton Community Leisure Trust; and
- provide relevant internal departmental information for Quarter 1, 2016/17 for the above-named services.

Recommendations:

The Corporate and External Issues Scrutiny Committee is recommended to note the performance information contained within this report.

Decision

Background Doc(s):

Leader/Executive Cabinet Member

Monitoring Officer

Date:

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This performance report is designed to

- give a current overview of priorities for services within the Place Department, those being Strategic Development, Economic Strategy, Development Management and Corporate Property Services;
- provide relevant performance information for Bolton Community Leisure Trust; and
- provide the 2015/16 internal departmental Quarter 1 position as appropriate for the above-named services.

It includes:

- an update on delivering the strategic and service priorities; and
- an update on operational management priorities.

1.2 The detailed financial aspect will be separately reported (via the quarterly finance report) to the Executive Cabinet Member.

1.3 The services included in this report remain on track to deliver their strategic and operational priorities for the Council. Highlights of the report are:

- Planning consent was granted at 4 town centre locations for a combined total of 55 residential units.
- The development of the restaurant area in the Victorian Vaults continued with the opening of Nandos.
- At March 2016, the proportion of people aged from 16 to 64 in work (the employment rate) was 70.0% - a slight decrease from December's data (70.4%) which was the highest rate since 2008.
- To February 2016, Bolton's worklessness rate was 11.4%, a 1.2 percentage point decrease from a year earlier (12.6%) and the lowest rate since 1999.
- Work to re-develop Horwich Leisure Centre started, 20 June.
- The Working Well Pilot and recently Expanded Programme continues to perform well at getting local residents into sustained employment and is now working with over 700 residents locally.
- Bolton's delivery of the Troubled Families programme – Family First - has recently expanded and is working with over 1,500 families
- There were 327,004 physical visits across the library network. Customers accessed 48,848 computer sessions, equating to 30,460 hours. There were 1,101 events with 17,319 attendees¹.

2.0 Delivery of Strategic and Service Priorities

2.1 Town Centres – Bolton Town Centre

The **Town Centre Strategy and action plan** outlines interventions to stimulate and support the Bolton Vision ambition to 'sustain existing and further develop key employment sites (primarily Bolton town centre and district centres)'. Quarter 1, 2016/17 update:

Construction continued on the:

- **Light Cinema** - due to open, Summer 2016.
- **Bolton Central office development**, fronting Great Moor Street and Newport Street.
- upgrading of the banqueting, conference and events facilities at the **Albert Halls** - anticipated to complete towards the end of 2016.

¹ Figures are across all library and museums service points - not including Neighbourhood Collection sites.

- **Town Centre Interchange** - remains on programme to complete, early 2017. Regular meetings continue with TfGM to ensure both contractors continue to work together in overcoming any interface issues with the Bolton Central Development as they arise.

The **Newport Street shop front improvement scheme** continued with Phase 1A completed other than roof capping, bird wire and manifestations. Phase 1B is due to complete, end of July 2016, pending a decision on some structural mediation works. Phase 1C is due to complete, mid July 2016. Enabling works for the **Public Realm Improvement Programme** continued with preparatory work of tree pits being excavated and ducting work taking place. Paving works will commence once the first phases of the shop front improvement works have been completed.

Planning consent was granted at 4 town centre locations for a combined total of 55 **residential units**. The development of the restaurant area in the **Victorian Vaults** continued with the opening of Nandos. Gourmet Burger is due to open, Summer 2016.

Delivery of the **Tourism/Visitor Economy Strategy** Year 1 action plan continued, working with partners such as local tourism businesses and Visit Manchester. Work to deliver the 2016 **events programme** continued as part of this strategy - Ironkids/Ironman (16 and 17 July 2016) and the 11th Annual Bolton Food & Drink Festival (26 – 19 August 2016) will be reported in Quarter 2. Support is being provided to the organiser of the Bolton Community Half Marathon which takes place in September 2016.

2.2 **Town Centres – Farnworth Town Centre**

Officers are working with St. Modwen to overcome a number of development issues to enable the development to commence, Summer 2016. St. Modwen is in advanced legal negotiations with a number of occupiers for the retail units they are looking to develop as part of Phase 1a.

2.3 **Development Sites**

At **Logistics North**:

- A planning application for a new Aldi store was approved, April 2016. Team Bolton continue to support staff recruitment to Selector Roles. The store will also act as a training facility to staff.
- Planning permission was submitted, June 2016 for the erection of a restaurant / drinking establishment with ancillary office and residential space above - together with access, car parking, landscaping, servicing and associated works.
- Logistics North Local Link Service - a demand responsive transport service - commenced operation, 18 April 2016.

Work continued with partners at **Rivington Chase** (former Horwich Loco Works) to bring forward a phased delivery.

2.4 **Planning and Building Control**

2.4.1 The start of 2016/17 saw the service continuing to enable the delivery of **strategic development priorities** (Bolton Town Centre, Logistics North Bolton, and Horwich Loco Works) and to provide a high quality, effective and efficient statutory planning and building control and enforcement service, dealing with applications, enquiries and complaints in a professional and timely way.

2.4.2 Live tables for statistics on **planning applications** at national and local planning authority level are published by the DCLG on gov.uk:

- Major applications

- Percentage determined within 13 weeks (16 weeks where an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is involved).
- Bolton's current performance, 90% which includes decisions with an extension of time - exceeding the government's target of above 50%.
- One County Matters application dealt with within the statutory period (100%).
- There was one appeal which was allowed therefore 100% allowed on major applications in Quarter 1.

Planning applications' income for Quarter 1 totalled £292,638 against a budgeted annual income of £740,129. Budgeted annual income will be exceeded if income continues at this level.

- 2.4.3 The number of **building regulations' applications** in Quarter 1 was 340 – an increase of 17% (290) when compared with Quarter 1, 2015/16. Site inspections totalled 1,927 – a decrease of 264 when compared with Quarter 1, 2015/16 (2,191).

Building regulations' income for Quarter 1 totalled £102,903. If income continues at this level the full year income projection will be exceeded – budgeted annual income, £349,353.

2.5 Strategy and Policy Development

AGMA is in the process of reviewing the scope of the **Greater Manchester Spatial Framework** (GMSF). Bolton has contributed to AGMA's analysis. This will feed into the draft GMSF, which is expected to be ready for consultation by the end of 2016.

Consultation on the draft **Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document** took place in Quarter 1 and ended, 27 May.

The annual town centre **footfall survey** and the **vacancy survey** were completed in Quarter 1 – with no significant changes when compared with 2015/16.

76 cabinets were installed by June 2016, under the **Get Digital Faster** high speed fibre broadband programme.

Gold standard has been retained for the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) Improvement Schedule for **Land Charges and Property Search** services.

2.6 Labour Market Performance

- 2.6.1 The Working Age Employment Rate, Worklessness and NVQ levels (released annually) are key indicators used to assess Bolton's labour market performance. **Bolton's Skills Strategy** addresses improvements in the skill and qualification levels alongside measures to remove barriers to employment and support the hardest to help with integrated services.

- 2.6.2 The **Working Age Employment Rate** measures the percentage of the working age population who are 'economically active' and in employment. Higher is therefore better. The latest data to the end of March 2016 details that:

- There were 123,800 people in work in Bolton – 3,800 (127,600) less than December 2015 and 1,300 less (125,100) than a year earlier.
- The proportion of people aged from 16 to 64 in work (the employment rate) was 70.0% - a slight decrease from December's data (70.4%) which was the highest rate since 2008.

Regionally, March 2016 figures show that Bolton's performance is slightly below the GM Rate (70.3%), but has been consistently equalling or exceeding the GM rate for a sustained period prior to this. Bolton's performance:

- Year to March 2012, 67.0%.
- Year to March 2013, 66.0%.
- Year to March 2014, 66.7%.
- Year to March 2015, 69.2%.
- Latest: Year to March 2016, 70.0%.

2.6.3 **Worklessness** measures the percentage of the working age population on key out of work benefits (including Job Seekers Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)/Incapacity Benefit, Lone Parents and other income related benefits). Lower is therefore better. To February 2016, Bolton's worklessness rate was 11.4%, a 1.2 percentage point decrease from a year earlier (12.6%) and the lowest rate since 1999. Regionally, Bolton's performance is mirroring GM performance; though slightly above the February 2016 GM rate (10.9%). Bolton's performance:

- February 2012, 15.7%.
- February 2013, 15.2%.
- February 2014, 14.3%.
- February 2015, 12.6%.
- Latest: February 2016, 11.4% (16 year low, 19,940).

2.6.4 The Workshop delivers the **Work Programme** G4S contract in Bolton. The service, for Quarter 1, saw a 100% compliance rate for its MSO (Minimum Standard Offer) and a zero return rate for DMA (Decision Making and Appeals) activity – zero return is best – putting Bolton as leaders for compliance in the supply chain.

Total number of people currently on the programme is 253. These figures show the continuing net impact of people finding work, thus the decrease of referrals to the programme. In Quarter 1 at the Workshop:

- 36 were attached to the programme.
- 39 were assisted into employment.
- 19 Job Outcomes were achieved.
- 304 continual sustainments (people staying in work) were achieved over the period.

2.6.5 The SFA (Skills Funding Agency) **Community Learning Contract** shows a total of 8,764 enrolments against the council's annual target of 7,448 individual learners – set at the end of the academic year, 2015/16 – which exceeds target.

Curriculum planning has been completed to start the delivery of the Adult Education Budget (AEB) funding which will be performance paid and closely aligned to employability training - supporting skills and employment growth in Bolton. All provision will be mapped against Local Enterprise Partnership, Skills Enterprise Partnership and Council priorities. The delivery year of 2016/17 will be considered a transition year for AEB funding which is planned to then come under GM devolution in 2018. The implementation of the Community Learning website has been well accepted. It is hoped that it will be able to offer some short on-line courses in 2016/17, but this will be dependent on available resources and finance.

OFSTED action planning continues to be revised weekly for the pending inspection which is overdue and likely to take place in the new academic year of 2016/17. The property inspections and observations of teaching and learning are also continuing in preparation for the OFSTED inspection.

The development and writing of the Community Learning Self-Assessment report for 2015/16 will commence in November 2016. The learner destination project for 2015/16 will start, November 2016 to be completed, January 2017.

2.7 Public Service Reform (PSR)

The Department has responsibility for delivering key public service reform programmes including Complex Dependency programmes, Family First and Working Well and, more recently Place Based Integration. Local programme delivery is focussed on a whole system approach to managing need with the aim that more residents are enabled to manage their lives and to be active, connected and able to access the opportunities that economic growth brings.

The Family First and Working Well Programmes are focused on providing participants - with multiple and complex social and health needs – with access to integrated and appropriately sequenced packages of support. This approach is aimed at supporting greater independence and resilience for some of Bolton's most vulnerable residents including improved employment outcomes and reduced demand on services.

The **Working Well** Pilot and recently Expanded Programme continues to perform well at getting local residents into sustained employment and is now working with over 700 residents locally with numbers likely to reach c2000 by mid 2017. The expansion of Working Well from March 2016 has meant working with a broader range of unemployed residents who typically experience different barriers to employment to those on the pilot. For example, long term health problems were the primary barrier to employment for residents on the pilot programme whereas childcare concerns and lack of work experience are issues more prevalent amongst those on the expanded programme. Consequently a wider range of local services such as early years and childcare services are now working with the programme to provide support to residents. End of June figures show that Bolton had exceeded its target for job starts by 5% for both programmes and continues to perform well when compared to other areas.

Bolton's delivery of the Troubled Families programme - **Family First** - continues to provide support to some of the more complex families within the Borough. The programmes' lead professional approach is now embedded across a variety of council services - ranging from Youth Offending to Work and Skills. The programme has recently expanded and is working with over 1,500 families. Recent developments have seen the appointment of a dedicated Mental Health Social Worker (MHSW) to work with families who have low level anxiety and depression issues. The MHSW works closely with employment advisors with the aim of facilitating the journey into work.

Family First is currently directly funded by the National Troubled Family Unit based on an initial attachment fee and 'payment by results' element which is based on a successful turnaround. Bolton is currently one of the best performing authorities within Greater Manchester. Officers work very closely with other organisations to ensure a seamless delivery of support to families with complex needs across the borough and this process is being embedded within the new **Public Service Hub**.

In June, Bolton began developing its approach to delivery of **Place Based Integration**. This followed agreement by the Combined Authority in May that Place Based Integration should be a key strand of public service reform. Place based approaches are intended to support the management of demand for services by establishing an integrated multi-agency neighbourhood team to proactively manage residents' needs. There are two main stages to delivery:

- identifying an early adopter site to test the local approach and
- developing a full roll out plan within each area drawing on the learning from the early adopter site.

The aim is for all Local Authorities to have a roll-out plan in place by April 2017. Bolton's approach to place based integration draws on a strong record of neighbourhood working and aligns with key local priorities as set out in Vision 2030 and the Health and Social Care Locality Plan. In particular, support offered by an integrated team will need to build on early help processes to prevent need escalating with a focus on moving residents into quality employment. Activity has initially focussed on ensuring that the council's definition of Bolton's neighbourhoods synchronises with communities' and practitioners' notions and experience of place and space. Information on service prioritisation; need and demand data and assets including key networks, community groups and buildings has been gathered from partner organisations as part of the mapping exercise. This is being used to inform the local approach and selection of the neighbourhood adopter site. A multi-agency working group is supporting delivery including agreeing the operating model and resources for the integrated team with the intention that the neighbourhood adopter site goes live in October.

2.8 Libraries and Museum Service

In Quarter 1:

There were 327,004 physical visits across the library network. Customers accessed 48,848 computer sessions, equating to 30,460 hours. There were 1,101 events with 17,319 attendees₂.

Quarter 1's main focus was to continue to deliver the services' regular offer whilst implementing the **staffing restructure** agreed in a recent service review. The restructure included the overall reduction of 14 Full Time Equivalents and the introduction of new timetables based on 6 hour shifts.

The **staff training programme** has also been updated and improved as part of an on-going commitment to workforce development. It includes leadership training, apprenticeship schemes and customer service skills – aiming to support staff in adapting to new ways of working to deliver a high quality customer experience.

English Heritage approved contractors began work to address structural issues at **Hall I'Th' Wood**. Work also started on the restoration of **Smithills Hall's Devey Room**.

The **'We are Bolton' exhibition** opened in the Museum, 4 June and will run until 30 September. This is a celebration of the people and places of Bolton through photography - inspired by the former Mayor of Bolton, Councillor Carole Swarbrick. It showcases portraits and images of local residents and workers in the town by University of Bolton students. The exhibition also includes photographs from the museum collection from celebrated names such as Humphrey Spender, John McDonald and Caroline Edge.

64 people **volunteered** 878 hours of their time to Library and Museum Services and 9 new volunteers were recruited. Positive feedback on the volunteering offer has shown how valuable it is in building confidence and helping people to progress into paid employment and into further and higher education. An event was held at Smithills Hall as part of National Volunteers' Week to celebrate volunteers' work and generosity.

₂ Figures are across all library and museums service points - not including Neighbourhood Collection sites.

2.9 Leisure

Bolton Community Leisure Trust (BCLT) and its managing agent, Serco Leisure Operating Limited is responsible for the day to day operation of seven leisure centres in the Borough. In Quarter 1, overall **patronage** showed a slight decrease when compared with Quarter 1, 2015/16 – affected by preparatory work in the planned exit of Harper Green and Sharples scheduled for Quarter 2.

Health and Fitness membership sales have seen a downturn during Quarter 1, with the majority of the deficit appertaining to Horwich and Farnworth Leisure Centres. A business case is being developed around the ‘Boditrax’ system to aid retention, enhance the neighbourhood life offering across Horwich, Farnworth and Jason Kenny centres and to introduce a ‘virtual’ spinning concept at Horwich Leisure Centre. Further growth in **swimming lesson enrolments** was seen – continuing the success of 2015.

Work to **re-develop Horwich Leisure Centre** started, 20 June. Proposals were approved in Quarter 4 to build a brand new leisure centre on the current Horwich Leisure Centre’s multi-storey car park footprint. The new centre will open, August 2017. The current centre will remain open until the new centre is ready. The old centre will then be demolished to make way for a Health Hub – housing multiple General Practitioners’ surgeries and localised health services. Stage 1 includes the creation of temporary car parking spaces and demolition of the existing multi storey car park. Further updates on this project will be provided in Quarter 2.

The ‘**This Girl Can Funding**’ programme continued with ladies only swimming sessions still fully funded. Adult only lessons at Horwich and Jason Kenny centres continue at half price for an additional 12 weeks.

‘**Finding Dory**’ sessions will be run at all pools over the summer holidays. These will be parent and sibling sessions overseen by an activator who tells a story using story cards and swimming equipment.

2.10 Low Carbon and Environmental

Heat Network Delivery funding of £67k was confirmed in July for business plan development for the Bolton Town Centre / Raikes Lane **heat network feasibility study**.

GLO (**Green Liaison Officer**) activity has continued and walking events arranged.

According to figures issued in August 2016, the overall total of **CO₂ emissions** per head in Bolton has declined from 6.9 tonnes in 2005 to 4.8 tonnes in 2014.

2.11 Corporate Property Services

Corporate Property Services (CPS) is leading on the delivery of the **Accommodation Strategy**. In Quarter 1:

- The majority of staff based in the refurbished Town Hall.
- Howell Croft and most floors of Le Mans Crescent office accommodation have been vacated.
- The refurbishment project on the Albert Halls is well underway with a completion date of December 2016. Some areas of the Wellsprings are currently being utilised until this work is finished when the majority of staff will return to the Town Hall with others transferring to Paderborn House.
- Paderborn House will be retained but council usage will be rationalised down to one floor with others being utilised by the Coroners Court or leased out.

Other major schemes with which CPS is involved include Newport Street Public Realm detailed in section 2.1; the re-development of Horwich Leisure Centre detailed in Section 2.9 and:

- **Bolton Central** - the Grade A office building development - is well underway with interest already being shown by potential occupiers.
- The development of '**Eternal Egypt**' (a conversion scheme within the Central Library and Museum to house the returning Egyptian collection currently on tour,) is progressing well.
- Discussions are underway to progress the extension and further development of the **Octagon Theatre** in partnership with the Trust.
- As part of the **primary school expansion programme**, proposals are being developed for the re-building of a Chorley New Rd Primary School. This will alleviate some of the anticipated pressure from the Rivington Chase housing development.

3.0 Delivery of Operational Priorities

3.1 Service Investment Update and Divisional Savings and Efficiency Targets

Revenue expenditure for Development and Regeneration (excluding Housing Services, but including Property Services), is projected to underspend against the budget by £45,000 after reserve movements. Capital expenditure for Development & Regeneration at Quarter 1 was £0.519m against a revised projection at Quarter 1 of £9,499m. Capital expenditure for Property Services at Quarter 1 was £0.152m against a revised projection at Quarter 1 of £2.648m. The budgeted efficiency savings for 2016/17 for Development & Regeneration and Property Services of £1.358m are all planned to be achieved.

3.2 Risk Register

The Department's risk registers were last reviewed in August 2015 and reported in Quarter 1. Forty six risks were identified:

- 24 risks have been identified as operational, 21 as corporate and 1 as both.
- 32 risks are categorised as green, 13 as amber and 1 as red.

All the risks are reviewed according to their assigned review dates and categorisation. They are managed in accordance with the processes outlined in the risk register.

3.3 Managing Customer Care

The number of **complaints** received by services included in this report are monitored and compared with 2015/16 data. Complaints are answered within twenty working days (standard) – a timescale set locally to Bolton. Forty two complaints were received for Quarter 1, 2016/17:

- There were 26 more complaints received than in Quarter 1, 2015/16.
- Development Management division received the majority of complaints (26).

Further analysis of the 42 complaints received shows that:

- The main reason that complainants identified for making their complaints was 'customer unhappy with outcome / decision', of which there were 20.
- 2 complaints were upheld (i.e. the Department found in the customer's favour); 1 was partially upheld (i.e. the Department found partially in the customer's favour); 4 were deferred and 35 were not upheld.

The Libraries and Museum Service received the 2 upheld complaints. The first was regarding lack of WI-FI signal which has now been resolved. The second related to a customer upset by the noise being made during a Toddler Tales session – the customer has been notified of when these sessions are. The benefits of these sessions provide young children with access to books and encourage early reading.

Corporate Property Services received the single complaint which was partially upheld in Quarter 1. It was with regard to fly tipping - which has subsequently been removed.

Recording of **compliments** is also an important indicator within customer care. 9 compliments were logged by the services in Quarter 1 - all for the Libraries and Museum Service. 5 complimented the knowledge and helpfulness of staff and 4 complimented services provided – including events.

3.4 Managing Sickness

Staff absence within the whole Place Department, Quarter 1 2016/17 is 2.8 days per FTE, compared to 3.6 days at Quarter 1, 2015/16.

All divisions within the Place Department have seen a decrease in sickness absence when compared to Quarter 1, 2015/16 - the largest decrease being in the Economic Development and Regeneration Division (see Table 1), which has seen a significant reduction in the number of long term absentees.

The Department continues to experience issues with long term absence, the principal causes of which are stress-related, musculoskeletal / neck or back problems and post-operative recovery. At present there are 41 on-going long term absence cases. The Department has undertaken significant management action on attendance during Quarter 1:

- 84 informal counselling meetings.
- 56 Occupational Health referrals.
- 2 warnings were issued.

All current cases, both long and short term are managed in accordance with the Managing Sickness Absence Framework.

Table 1: Average Days Sickness Per FTE in 2016/17 – Economic Development & Regeneration Division							
Division	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Cumulative 2015/16	Cumulative 2016/17	Projected Days Sickness per FTE
ED & Regeneration	2.0				3.9	2.0	8.0

3.5 Managing Information: Freedom of Information, Environmental Information Regulation and Subject Access Requests

Information requests are answered under the **Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000**, the **Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) 2004** or the **Data Protection Act 1998**. The Council is required to respond to requests within 20 working days and Subject Access Requests within 40 days.

- 50 requests were received for Quarter 1 - 44 of these were for the department alone and 6 were cross cutting across the council. The largest proportion of requests received by the services was for Development Management who received 16 requests.
- 98% of requests were answered on time.

Working on an average of 4.3 officer hours per request, the department allocated 215 hours of officer time on information requests during Quarter 1.

4.0 Recommendation

- 4.1 The Corporate and External Issues Scrutiny Committee is recommended to note the performance information contained within this report.