

Bolton Council

Report to: Executive Cabinet Member
Environmental Services

Date: 10th July 2017

Report of: Director of Place

Report No: ECMES/04/17a

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Report Title: **Departmental Performance Update – Quarter 4 2016/17**

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Non Confidential:
(delete as approp)

(**Non-Confidential**) This report does **not** contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public

Purpose:

This report provides the Environmental Services Executive Cabinet Member with an update on Quarter 4, 2016/17, and the outturn performance as appropriate for the Environmental Services' elements of the Place Department. Additionally, it incorporates Housing Services as part of the portfolio. It also includes the internal departmental position.

Recommendations:

The Executive Cabinet Member is asked to comment upon the performance update set out in this report.

Decision:

Background Doc(s):

Signed:

Leader / Executive Cabinet
Member

Monitoring Officer

Date:

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report summarises Quarter 4, 2016/17 performance and the outturn position as appropriate for the Environmental Services' elements of the Place Department. Additionally, it incorporates Housing Services as part of the portfolio.
- 1.2 Progress is reported against:
- Major strategic priorities.
 - The Department's operational priorities as the provider of a number of large front line and support services.
- 1.3 The divisions included in this report remain on track to deliver their strategic and operational priorities for the Council. Highlights of the report are:
- At the end of Quarter 4, the introduction of slim bins had resulted in avoided waste disposal costs of £2.2 million. This exceeds the waste disposal saving target of £1.25million per year by £0.95million (76%).
 - In performance year 2016/17, the Trade Waste Officers have served 57 Fixed Penalty Notices which will generate £17,100. Following visits, 174 new commercial waste contracts had been taken out with the council at a value of £47,378.
 - Albert Halls will officially re-open in Quarter 1, 2016/17 (21 April 2017). The Christmas 2017 pantomime will be Cinderella, performed by New Pantomime's Productions Ltd.
 - Street lighting energy costs have reduced significantly since the start of the LED street lighting programme. Cumulatively, £1,956,097 in 2014/15 to £1,164,811 in 2016/17 – a reduction of £791,286, a 40.45% decrease.

2.0 Supporting the Council to deliver its strategic priorities

- 2.1 At a strategic level, the Department supports the Cleaner and Greener Partnership, the BSafe Partnership and the Town Centre Regeneration Programme, as part of the delivery of the Community Strategy. Key progress on strategic priorities is highlighted below.

2.2 Waste, Recycling & Fleet Management

2.2.1 Waste, Recycling

The introduction of managed weekly waste collections in 2013 was part of a strategic waste diversion programme where the primary aim was to divert waste away from the residual waste stream and increase recycling rates. Further diversion was required to avoid increasing waste disposal costs and in July 2015 the proposal was approved to **exchange all grey 240 litre wheeled bins for 140 litre wheeled bins** (slim bins), with the continuation of the same frequency of collections. The roll out of the slim bins began on 20 June 2016 and was completed by the end of November 2016.

At the end of Quarter 4, the introduction of slim bins and the subsequent effect of increases in recycling and reduction in grey bin waste – together with customer engagement, education and enforcement - had resulted in **avoided waste disposal costs of £2.2 million**. This exceeds the waste disposal saving target of £1.25million per year by £0.95million (76%).

In Quarter 4, the service has been shortlisted for several awards:

- **MRW National Recycling Awards**
 - Local Authority Innovation category: Introduction of slim bins.
 - Communications – Public/Third Sector category: Primary school recycling campaign.Winners will be announced on 28 June 2017.

- **MJ Awards** finalists for the Behaviour Change category. Winners announced 15 June 2017.
- **Finalist for Awards for Excellence** for Best Local Authority Recycling Initiative.

In the performance year 2016/17:

- 416.76kg **household waste** was collected per household – a 54.54kg per household decrease when compared with 2015/16 (471.29kg).
- Cumulative **domestic (grey bin) waste tonnages** have decreased by 6,699 tonnes when compared with 2015/16.
- The **recycling rate** has increased from 39.06% in 2015/16 to 44.43% in 2016/17 - a 5.37 percentage point increase – and on target to achieve a 47% recycling rate in 2017/18.
- Cumulative **recycling tonnages** have increased by 4,202 tonnes when compared with 2015/16. When compared with the cumulative tonnages for 2015/16, the service collected:
 - 2,354 tonnes more food and garden waste.
 - 1,229 tonnes more glass, cans and plastic bottles.
 - 618 tonnes more pulpables.
- The difference between the decrease in domestic waste tonnages and the increase in recycling can be explained by a number of factors:
 - Changes in residents buying habits as they recycle food and realised how much they waste
 - Waste minimisation
 - Diversion of waste to the Household Waste Recycling Centres – There has been an increase in the tonnage of waste collected at HWRCs in Bolton, but this follows a trend across Greater Manchester and nationally.
- The tonnage of **fly tipped material** collected has reduced by 80 tonnes when compared with 2015/16.
- The amount of **street cleansing material** collected was 2 tonnes higher than in 2015/16.

Also, in performance year 2016/17:

- 17,710 households were door-knocked following the slim bin roll-out, with the aim of raising **awareness** of items which can be recycled. The focus going forward will be on promoting the more 'unusual' recyclable items.
- 4,409 requests for a **waste audit** and 1,245 requests for **support and advice** in performance year 2016/17:
 - 2,475 properties were approved to keep the 240 litre grey bin.
 - A further 799 households have a 240 litre bin and a 140 litre bin and 6 households have 2 x 240 litre bins (approved when managed weekly collections introduced).
 - Recycling Officers are reviewing properties with a greater capacity than 240 litres to ensure that extra capacity is still required and recycling is being maximised.
- There were 25 **roadshows and events**. There were 62 in 2015/16 – the focus has been on conducting waste audits to complement the introduction of slim bins.
- 2,941 **bulky waste collections** in 2016/17 with 31.8% of waste recycled or re-used – as compared with 2,565 in 2015/16, an increase of 376 collections.

- There were 1,710 **trade waste contracts** ^[1] held by the council at 31 March 2017; as compared with 1,487 at 31 March 2016 (a 15% increase between 2016 and 2017) and 1,359 at 31 March 2015 (a 9% increase between 2016 and 2015). Income for trade waste has increased significantly between the years, following the appointment of a Trade Waste Officer and the Trade Waste Enforcement Officers. Budget outturns:
 - 2016/17: £144,368
(+ £73,116 - a 103% increase between 2015/16 and 2016/17).
 - 2015/16: £ 71,252
(+ £52,187 - a 274% increase between 2014/15 and 2015/16).
 - 2014/15: £ 19,065
- **New contracts** for wheeled bins and food liners have been set up.

2.2.2 Fleet Management

Co² emissions for the Council's vehicle fleet are monitored – and have been reported since Quarter 1, 2015/16 - with the aim of reducing emissions over time to minimise pollution and reduce the impact of the Council's vehicle fleet:

- There has been a further reduction of 30.04 tonnes since Quarter 3, 2016/17 (44 tonnes).
- There has been a reduction of over 74.04 tonnes of CO₂ emissions from the fleet in performance year 2016/17 (2,446.58) as compared with 2015/16 (2520.62).

Also, in fleet management during performance year 2016/17:

- 354 **private MOTs** were carried out.
- 175 drivers attended **training** - Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) module on 'Defensive Driving' & 'Reversing/Manoeuvring'.
- 10 new **waste collection vehicles** purchased.
- 8 **new pavement sweepers** on a 3 year contract hire were delivered.

2.3 Neighbourhood and Regulatory Services

2.3.1 Neighbourhood Management and Area Working

The service supports the delivery of the Council's strategic objectives of narrowing the gap between the most and least well off in Bolton and ensuring economic prosperity. The service also supports, where possible, other strategic priorities of the Council such as reducing litter and waste and improving recycling rates through the commissioning and delivery of local projects.

In Quarter 4:

Area Forums

70 members of the public attended 4 Area Forums - giving an average attendance of 20 for the round. Topics included a 'Men in Sheds' project update, services provided at Winifred Kettle House and the positive differences made in areas through community volunteering.

Great Lever

Friday night youth sessions at Heywood Park had a consistent attendance of 35 young people each Friday.

¹ See Cleaner Bolton and Behaviour Change information on Trade Waste Contracts in Section 2.3.3

Farnworth

Farnworth and Kearsley Foodbank received funding from the Council's anti-poverty programme, which was 25% match funded. The foodbank works in partnership with 99 referring agencies giving beneficiaries increased options for obtaining a voucher.

In performance year 2016/17 the foodbank fed:

- 4,016 people – an increase of 22% (716 people) as compared with 2015/16.
- 2,251 children – an increase of 65% compared with 1,367 children in 2015/16 (an indication that child poverty is increasing).

In addition, 65 active volunteer staff gave over 200 hours of volunteer work per week to the foodbank, with the total cost benefit equating to £123,760 per year.

Halliwell UCAN

- Overall attendance: 7,098.
 - Computer use: 3,735.
 - Phone use: 1,007.
 - Library use: 90 book issues.
 - Work club attendance: 48.
 - Total UCAN voluntary group attendance (knit and natter, arts and crafts, gardening): 331.
 - Total clients supported into employment: 1.
 - Number of voluntary groups: 10.
 - Number of services: 11
- These services include: ACIS, CAB, Community Safety, Environmental, H/Vs, ITC, Library, Think Positive, Work Club, Money Skills and Hoot.

Rumworth Neighbourhood Management

provides funding to the activities delivered from the Deane UCAN centre.

- A grant provided support for the Oromo community - resulting in activities between August 2016 and March 2017 and purchase of IT equipment.
- Provided for 300+ people - including drop in, home-work club, ESOL classes and IT support to help with integration and employment.
- Community café - supports integration by bringing together people of many different nationalities – at the Willows Centre continued with support from Neighbourhood Management.

Deane UCAN (Urban Care and Neighbourhood Centre)

- 1,678 customers have visited the UCAN.
- 41 new customers onto the workclub.
- 54 into training.
- 34 received career advice.
- 3 into volunteering.
- 3 into Education.
- 56 back into paid work.
- 72 ESOL students from all provisions, from February 2017.

2.3.2 Greener Bolton

The **Greenspace Investment Programme** continued with work to complete the car park element of the facilities at Hulton Lane. Drainage work on the playing fields at Green Lane, Horwich will be completed in 2017/18. Work has been completed on the new play area at Kearsley Park.

2.3.3 Cleaner Bolton and Behaviour Change

The council and partners took the decision in 2010 to fundamentally shift away from just cleaning up after communities, to introducing a **behaviour change approach** aimed at tackling the root cause of environmental issues.

Additional resources of £1.3million revenue were allocated from April 2015 over 2 years (2015/16 and 2016/17), in addition to £200,000 capital for environmental improvements. As a result of the behaviour change strategy, the **operational behaviour change teams and enforcement officers** in performance year 2016/17 have:

- Leafleted 261 streets, with **2,808** residents spoken to/given educational leaflets.
- Dealt with **5,116** instances of back street waste (bags/furniture/white goods/rubble) – **38.92%** moved by the public, the estimated cost for the council to remove, **£226,980**.
- Carried out enforcement activity ^[2] (**5,832** cases) with:
 - **£42,305** generated in fines/costs as a result of cases taken to Court.
 - **538** Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) generating **£25,705**.

In performance year 2016/17, the **Trade Waste Officers** have:

- Inspected **1,471** businesses.
- Served **57** Fixed Penalty Notices which will generate **£17,100**.

Following visits, **174** new commercial waste contracts^[3] have been taken out with the council at a value of **£47,378**.

2.3.4 Regulatory Services

Trading Standards

In Quarter 4:

- A successful prosecution was brought against a shop found to be selling illicit cigarettes and tobacco. Fines and costs of nearly £20,000 were imposed on the business. Around 7,000 cigarettes and 2kg of hand rolling tobacco were forfeited for destruction.
- A year-long prosecution case was successfully concluded against a rogue trader who had targeted elderly residents within Bolton. The trader, who ran a paving business, pleaded guilty to twelve criminal offences including aggressive and misleading trading practices. He was sentenced to 12 weeks imprisonment suspended for two years and 120 hours unpaid work plus £850 compensation to his victims

Licensing

In Quarter 4:

- 3 private hire driver revocations (including 1 emergency decision).
- 6 private hire driver refusals.
- 3 private hire driver licences granted by Committee.

^[2] Figures relate to enforcement activity funded by the additional resources, not core activity

^[3] See Waste and Fleet Management's information on Trade Waste Contracts in Section 2.2.1.

- 6 private hire driver appeals refused (1 at Crown Court) and 2 successful private hire driver appeals (1 at Crown Court).
- 3 Licensing Act hearings.
- Re-tender completed for the approved garages for start date of 18 February 2017, including updated manual published – 1 new garage provided with training and commenced testing from March 2017.
- First block of Child Sexual Exploitation awareness training rolled out to the private hire and hackney carriage trade by the EXIT team.
- Domestic Abuse Victim training provided to Members.
- Underage Sales Visits' results – 4 refusals and 1 sale.

In performance year 2016/17:

- 20 private hire driver revocations (including 5 emergency decisions).
- 16 private hire driver refusals.
- 4 private hire driver licences granted by Committee.
- 18 private hire driver appeals refused.
- 2 private hire driver appeals allowed.
- 8 Licensing Act hearings.
- Underage Sales Visits' results – 32 refusals and 7 sales.
- 8 unlawful ply for hire prosecutions commenced
- 12 month licence rolled out.
- New livery introduced and completed.
- 3 year driver licences introduced.
- Retender for approved garages commenced and completed.
- Over 400 vehicle tested by our approved garages.
- Over 700 first grant licences issued for vehicles.

2.3.5 Community Safety

Be Safe Strategic Partnership is made up of statutory and non-statutory agencies; co-ordinating plans to reduce crime and disorder, reduce re-offending and improve community safety in Bolton.

Quarter 4 saw an increase in all victim-based crime of 27% when compared with Quarter 4, 2015/16. Greater Manchester (GM) as a whole saw an increase of 32%.

When comparing Quarter 4, 2016/17 with Quarter 4, 2015/16, there was an increase in violent crime recorded in Bolton, but this was not to the extent experienced across GM as a whole (an increase of 38% and 59% respectively).

Quarter 4 saw increases in recorded instances of burglary, robbery and theft offences in Bolton - which all exceeded the increases seen across GM as a whole.

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) has shown a decrease in Bolton in Quarter 4 continuing the downward movement seen in Quarter 3. GM however, continues to report greater percentage decreases in ASB in Quarter 4.

Hate crime rose by 23% in Quarter 4 in Bolton compared to the same period in 2015/16, but this was not to the extent experienced across the rest of GM, where it rose by 43%. Increased recorded incidents of hate crime are seen as a positive indicator as this crime is recognised as being severely under-reported. Similarly, recorded instances of domestic abuse in Bolton did not meet the increases seen across Greater Manchester in Quarter 4.

Looking at performance year 2016/17 as a whole compared to 2015/16, broadly similar increases in victim-based crime were experienced in Bolton and GM (12% and 15% respectively). Acquisitive crime (burglary, theft, robbery) increased in both GM and Bolton in 2016/17 and, whilst violent offences increased to a greater extent in GM than Bolton (33% and 20%) respectively, the opposite was evident for sexual offences (18% increase in GM but a 21% increase in Bolton).

ASB decreased in both GM and Bolton to a similar extent in 2016/17, but recorded instances of domestic abuse saw a greater increase across GM as a whole compared to Bolton. Hate crime in Bolton during 2016/17 saw a 1% decrease compared to 2015/16; across Greater Manchester there was a 21% increase. As mentioned previously, this trend in hate crime in Bolton is seen as problematic given increased recorded incidents of hate crime are considered a positive indicator.

Evaluation of these crimes, and reasons for increases and decreases, is undertaken by GM Police – any relevant issues can be reported in future performance reports once evaluation has taken place.

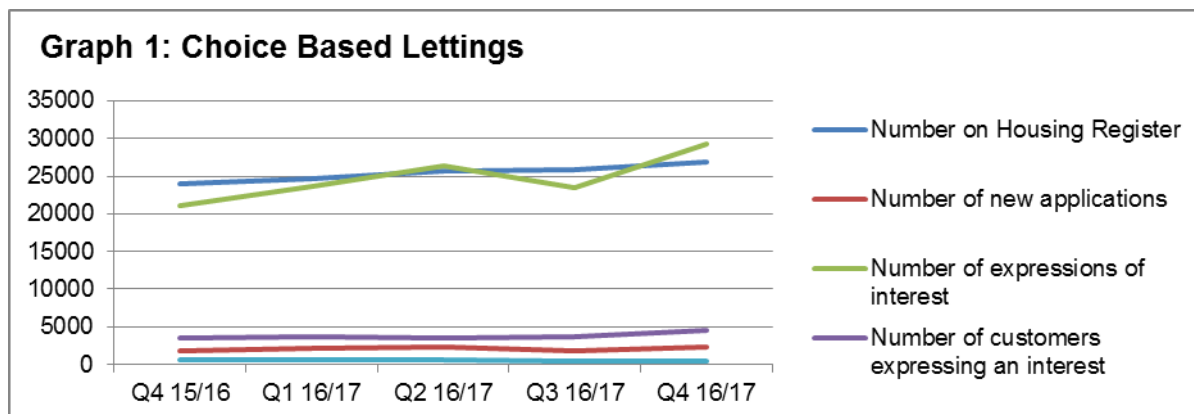
Bolton took part in Hate Crime Awareness Week, 6 - 12 February 2017. A host of activities took place during the week across Bolton in partnership with GM Police and community and voluntary sector groups. A total of 11 projects (community and voluntary sector groups) received grant funding for activities to take place during the year to support the aims and objectives of the Hate Crime Strategy.

2.4 Housing Services

2.4.1 To provide housing that is affordable and offers choice whilst meeting the needs and demands of the future.

Need and Demand for Housing

Affordable housing continues to be in demand.



Graph 1 shows the trends in activity for **choice based lettings** from January 2016. In Quarter 4, 2016/17:

- Applications received increased from 1,861, Quarter 3 to 2,349.
- Properties advertised increased from 498, Quarter 3 to 514.
Bolton at Home is recording an extremely low level of voids, which impacts on the availability of properties for advert.
- Expressions of interest increased from 23,470, Quarter 3 to 29,209.
- The number of customers expressing interest increased from 3,626, Quarter 3 to 4,525.
- The average number of expressions per property was 57 – an increase when compared with Quarter 4, 2015/16 - 31 per property.

In performance year 2016/17:

- Expressions of interest for the performance year 2016/17 totalled 102,600 - a 33% increase on 2015/16 (77,194).
This data is in keeping with the increase in registered applicants and shows increased demand for social housing – the increase in number of expressions whilst properties advertised have decreased slightly.
- The number of customers expressing interest peaked at 3,449 for year 2015/16. Performance year 2016/17 saw an increase of 31% to 4,525.

Delivery of affordable housing

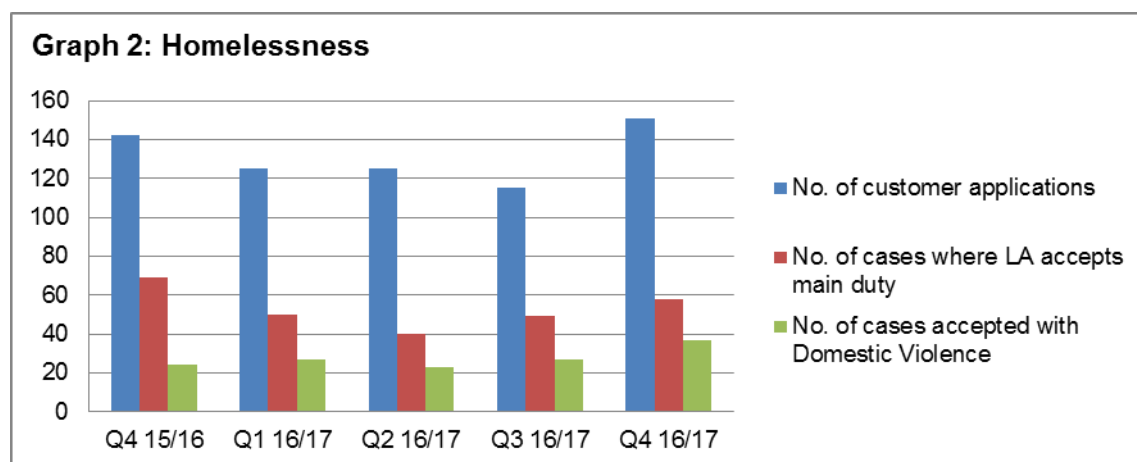
2013/17 and 2015/18 **Affordable Housing Grant** and **Affordable Housing** programmes will see a further 304 affordable homes built across 12 sites (including 25 former right to buy backs).

The **Homes and Communities Agency Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme 2016/21** (SOAHP) will deliver 136 affordable homes across 9 sites. The SOAHP marks a decisive shift towards support for home ownership. Bolton Community Homes will continue to support developing partners to bring forward these schemes.

In Quarter 4, across all programmes, 4 schemes were completed, 2 secured planning and 7 are expected to start on site.

Right to Buy sales for performance year 2016/17 totalled 129 - an increase of 16% (18) from 2015/16 (111). Applications remain high at 49, Quarter 4 - 6 of these are Right to Acquire rather than Right to Buy.

2.4.2 To create and promote communities that are sustainable and inclusive



Graph 2 shows the trends in homeless cases since January 2016:

- Statutory homeless duty cases increased from 115, Quarter 3 to 151, Quarter 4, with a rise in the number of acceptances under part VII of the Housing Act 1996.
- There were 516 homeless presentations during performance year 2016/17.
- 245 of the 516 presentations in 2016/17 were from single people - 47% of presentations (the same percentage as 2015/16). Single people presented with a wide variety of complex needs, including domestic abuse, mental and physical health issues and substance misuse. 77 single people out of 197 acceptances were accepted as owed a main duty as being homeless, threatened with homelessness, in priority need and unintentionally homeless and were provided with assistance to access suitable accommodation.
- Cases presenting and accepted as owed a main duty due to domestic abuse increased from 27, Quarter 3 to 37, Quarter 4.

- Cases presenting as owed a main duty due to domestic abuse in performance year 2016/17 was 197 with 114 accepted as owed a main duty – so 58% of cases when compared with 42% during 2015/16, - an increase of 16 percentage points. A large number of these were provided with temporary accommodation.

The service continues to work closely with Domestic Abuse Services to ensure support and interventions for families (to remain in their homes or move if necessary) ensuring their safety at all times.

Quarter 4 saw the seasonal pick up in terms of homeless presentations coming through the service at Benjamin Court.

- In January and February 2017, void rates were both 9% compared to the same periods last year averaging 24.5%. The reason the service has voids at present is due to property turnaround times, and not a lack of presentations.
- 203 homeless cases came through Benjamin Court - either at the core unit or dispersed properties - during performance year 2016/17. This equated to each property being used for approximately 4.4 cases in the year. The Benjamin Court team also managed 165 statutory placements into alternative accommodation other than our own temporary. This includes Bed and Breakfast accommodation. The average stay in this accommodation was 6.52 days before moving on to council accommodation. Presentations also continue via the out of hours' social work team and the Police.

2.4.3 To improve the quality of private sector housing

The **Safe, Warm and Dry** approach was introduced in June 2013, and it involves targeting private sector properties that have been identified by the BRE (Building Research Establishment) stock condition model as at risk of failing decency standards. The approach is also targeted at those properties that are lived in by a vulnerable person. In Quarter 4:

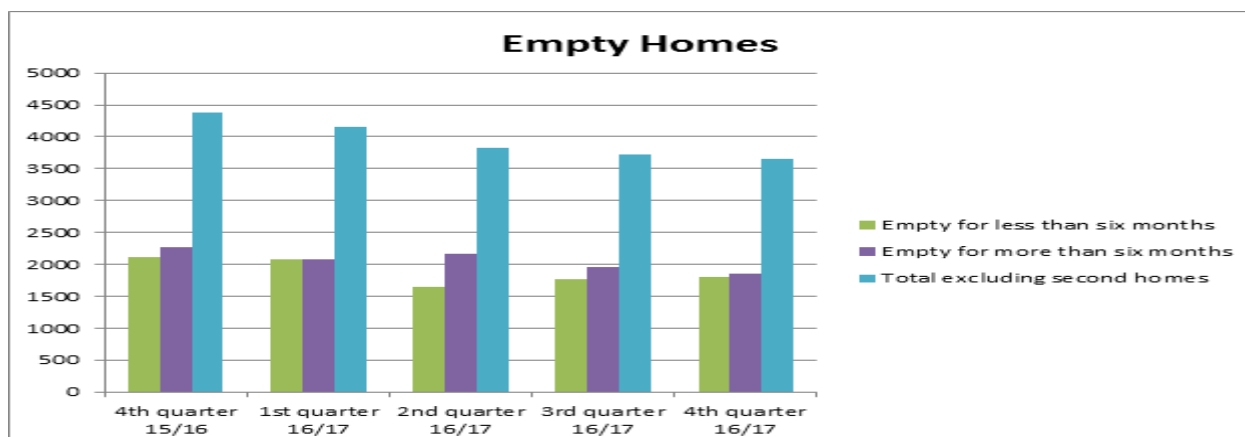
- 25 customers have work on-going or are waiting for work to begin, which is a decrease from Quarter 3 (35).
- 13 cases have been completed - a decrease from Quarter 3 (8).
- 100% of works have been completed by Bolton contractors.

Tackling poor property conditions and management of the private rented sector is becoming increasingly important as the sector continues to expand and house more vulnerable people. The following work has been undertaken in Quarter 4:

- There was a significant increase in service requests - 1,608 representing a 53% increase from Quarter 3 (1,048).
- 80 housing, health and safety inspections have been completed, resulting in 72 category 1 hazards and 277 category 2 hazards being identified.
- 77 owners were made aware of hazards in their properties via a hazard awareness notice.
- Out of the 77 inspections, officers identified 103 hazards relating to excess cold and damp and mould growth and requested works in these properties to reduce the risk these issues pose.
- Formal action: 9 owners had notices served on them (which continued the trend from Quarter 3); 6 suspended improvement notices, 1 prohibition order and 2 emergency remedial action orders. 209 re-visits were made to check on progress of works and to discuss issues with landlords.
- 201 requests were received in relation to other types of nuisance work - increased due to Bolton at Home's gas safety work.
- 181 abatement notices were served for other nuisance work.

Bringing empty properties back into use remains a priority for the Council as it not only increases the number of available homes in the borough but also provides revenue through Council Tax and New Homes Bonus.

Graph 3: Empty Homes



Graph 3 shows the trend in empty homes in Bolton since January 2016. In Quarter 4:

- 4,246 properties are registered with the council as being empty - a decrease of 71 properties since Quarter 3 (4,317).
The reduction is likely due to the mail-outs that have been conducted during the quarter, which has highlighted a number of properties that have been brought back into use but details hadn't been provided to the council.
- Excluding second homes, 3,652 properties remain empty and of these, 1,799 have been left empty for less than 6 months and 1,853 for more than 6 months. 1,309 have been empty for over 2 years and will be paying a premium council tax at 150%. For the first time the number of properties that have been empty for over 6 months are below a 1,000 (these do not include exempted empty properties).
- 389 properties are owned by registered providers. There are 1,099 (including the RSLs) properties which have exemptions for a variety of reasons.

2.4.4 To promote health, well-being and quality of life

The Care and Repair service in Quarter 4:

- Received an increase in enquiries from 597, Quarter 3 to 757.
This may be a result of promotional activity that has taken place such as adverts in the Scene, Bolton News and on buses.
- Assisted 352 customers to remain in their own home - a decrease of 10 from Quarter 3.
- 21 people are undergoing works under the Safe Warm and Dry scheme - work includes roofing, rewiring, heating systems, windows and doors. These works are not covered by any other programme and ensure that homes are decent to remain living in.

Also in Quarter 4:

- Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) cases passed to Bolton at Home for processing increased – 61, Quarter 3 to 126.
- Cases completed decreased – 66, Quarter 3 to 50.
- Overall waiting times have decreased – 298 days, Quarter 3 to 280 days. Waiting times continue to be monitored. The service works with Bolton at Home to ensure waiting times reduce.

In performance year 2016/17:

- Total enquiries were 399, as compared with 517 for 2015/16.
This may be being influenced by changes in the approach taken by Independent living Service (ILS) as they process the initial enquiries and assessments.
- Completions remained consistent (222), as compared with 226 in 2015/16.

3.0 Departmental Strategic Priorities

3.1 Community Services

Albert Halls will officially re-open in Quarter 1, 2016/17 (21 April 2017). The venue however has hosted 66 events/meetings since the formal hand over on 5 December 2016. The Christmas 2017 pantomime will be Cinderella, performed by New Pantomime's Productions Ltd – with 40 bookings already made. The 2018 entertainment programme is currently being discussed with cultural partners. The Albert Halls website and marketing literature will follow over the next 3 to 4 months.

The Social Needs Transport service, March 2017 was providing transport for approximately 166 adult passengers per day - this number has remained largely unchanged over the past 12 months. There has been an increase in the number of children requiring home to school transport each day – 769 pupils at the end of 2016/17, as compared to 710 pupils, March 2015 – an increase of 8.3%.

Community meals deliver 384 meals per day on weekdays and 262 meals each day at weekend – numbers have remained constant over the performance year 2016/17.

The occupancy rate at Bolton Market was 94% at the end of March. The sale of Westhoughton Market is nearing completion. Bolton Market hosted a regional meeting of NABMA (National Association of British Markets Authorities) attended by 40 Market Managers / Officers from the North West region.

In Bereavement Services the installation of the Webcast and Photo Tributes Display facility at Overdale Crematorium Chapels is nearing completion. The road and path improvements in Heaton Cemetery were completed. Repairs have been completed to Westhoughton Cemetery office, which will allow the Probation Service Community Payback Team to use the building as a welfare facility over the summer months. St James' Churchyard, Brightmet will be added to the closed churchyard grounds maintenance responsibility commencing April 2017.

Site improvements continued at Heaton Fold Garden Centre - a new covered walkway was completed and a gravelled area has been returned to grass. Annual income was comparable with 2015/16.

In Security and Response:

- Building Support, Couriers and Building Cleaning retained their NQA (National Quality Assurance) ISO9001:2008 accreditation.
- Preparations are on-going to meet an upgrade of accreditation to ISO9001:2015 Quality Assurance – the audit for Security is scheduled, June 2017. All other areas will be audited, January 2018.
- An upgrade to the Town Centre CCTV command, control and recording equipment is scheduled to start, April/May 2017.

3.2 Services to Schools

School Meals

The benchmarked performance 2016/17 for Bolton's School Meals is excellent - with a Best Performer shortlisting likely again this autumn. Formal Benchmarking (132 councils) is carried out with the Association of Public Sector Excellence (APSE) performance networks:

- From 58 meaningful benchmarks around uptake, service cost and productivity, Bolton Council achieved the top 30 (or 52%) of the scores with 74.4% either top or in the top quartile and 13 measures in the second quartile.

Performance year 2016/17 saw 199 'feeding days'. Quarter 4 related to the spring term of the academic year.

The overall uptake picture has been very consistent with Quarter 3, 2016/17, and also closely reflects 2015/16. This is good news as a significant drop in uptake has not been reported 3 years into the government's Universal Infant Free School Meal (UIFSM). The discounted £1.25 meal also supports the overall high uptake and compares so much better to neighbouring boroughs including the larger city councils.

Table 1 shows the uptake trends in **primary** school meals uptake for Quarter 4 2016/17 as compared with the same period of 2015/16.

Table 1: School Meals Uptake in Primary Schools Spring Term 2017 – to financial year end		
Type of Meals Uptake %	Year to Quarter 4, 2016/17	Year to Quarter 4, 2015/16
Whole School uptake	72.6% of total school roll	73.5% of total school roll
Statutory Free	77.0% of eligible	74.7% of eligible
UIFSM – KS 1	89.8% of possible	89.8% of possible
Paid - KS 2 * Disc £1.25	58.6% of possible	61.8% of possible
Whole Year uptake	71.9% of possible	71.8% of possible

Technology – The service continues to embed Cypad and is mentoring and advising a number of other interested councils. The Menu Selector module to allow pupils to pre-order their meal is being trialled in 3 schools.

Compliance and Monitoring – Allergen legislation is still requiring focussed developments to achieve the best fit for the schools operational model. Having bought new software, the system boasts an allergen portal for customers and schools to check compliance and good practise aligned to the specific menus.

Building Cleaning

Building Cleaning has seen significant contract change over the last 2 years. It is therefore difficult to directly compare trading periods between quarters or past years. Significant change to income levels from 2016/17 performance saw a marked reduction in the one-off ad hoc deep cleans wooden floor restoration and other specialist requests.

Review, Technology, improvements and efficiencies

Further review of this service is required to meet future delivery and capacity challenges:

- New SLAs are being compiled to modernise and update contractual relationships and the delivery offer so that the Council is assured of consistent, competitive and realistic income recovery.

- A Remote Management IT system has been trialled in Quarter 4 which monitors staff attendance improves communications generally and allows automated reminder messages. This cost effective development links to mobile or landline telephones and especially supports lone workers and more isolated personnel working unsocial hours.
- Quality Assurance has been identified as needing review. Electronic monitoring continued to be developed alongside school meals. 2 developments include client calling cards to evidence client contact and a wall-mounted Customer Assurance Checklist to evidence visits and cleans.
- Administration systems, stock control and product review are other areas of focus for this service to examine efficiencies as part of service review.

3.3 Highways and Engineering Division

In Quarter 4, paving work from the drainage channel to the shop fronts was completed for the sections from 18-38/40 and 29-53 Newport Street as part of the **Public Realm Improvement Programme**. Other paving work continues, with full completion expected by the summer of 2017. Access to businesses will be maintained during this work.

Progress continued to be made with the 3 year **LED street-lighting programme** which was introduced in April 2015. Approximately 26,000 street lamps on residential streets and main roads are being replaced with lower carbon LED lanterns across Bolton. The programme, which is costing £10m, should save the council £14m over 20 years and reduce energy use by around 50%. The programme won the recycling award for its partnership working at the national Lux Awards 2015. In this performance year (2016/17) the programme was finalist in the APSE Awards for innovation.

Replacement work continues throughout the borough and, at end of performance year 2016/17, almost 21,666 lights in 3,529 streets had been upgraded since the rollout began in April 2015. 70 tonnes – 75% recycled – of existing lanterns had been recycled, complying with the current Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive (WEEE) regulations. Street lighting energy costs have reduced significantly since the start of the programme:

- From 2014/15 to 2015/16 – 22.87% decrease
- From 2015/16 to 2016/17 – 22.79% decrease
- From 2014/15 to 2016/17 – 40.45% decrease (cumulative)

Customer satisfaction of the programme had also been well evidenced – 280 customer complaints had been received since the start of the roll out, which equated to 1.3% of the 21,666 installations. All the complaints related to LED lanterns being too bright – 99% of these complaints were resolved satisfactorily following the introduction of variable lighting profiles (dimming as appropriate) through the Central Management System.

Work is on target to finish in 2018. The LEDs are currently being fitted in the district of Turton which covers Egerton, Bromley Cross and Harwood. The next scheduled area will be Kearsley; followed by Brightmet and Farnworth.

Capital Programme – end of performance year 2016/17

The major carriageway works of the £7.3M A666 **St Peters Way** major maintenance project took place over the year together with associated bridgeworks. The scheme funded by a Department for Transport Grant of £5.3M and Bolton Council continues into 2017/18 with further major junction works linking to the road.

The Transport for Greater Manchester funded Salford and Bolton Network Improvements programme has seen **3 junction improvement schemes** totalling £2M completed. Included in these were the £0.6M Longcauseway / Market St project in Farnworth and two schemes on Manchester Rd, Bolton at Raikes Lane and Green Lane valued at £0.9M and £0.5M respectively.

The Council funded budget for **Road Safety near Schools** was completed and extended by the Road Warning Signs budget - which will continue into 2017/18.

The first major scheme from the flood damage programme at **Forest Road** was completed in 2016/17 (total value £0.8M). Further works are planned in 2017/18 now that the risks associated with this scheme have been addressed and the remaining budget can be allocated.

The **LED lantern and concrete column replacement programme** continued alongside each other with two thirds of lamps now converted to LED lighting. The remaining conversions are expected to be completed by 2018.

Strategic investment on carriageway and footpaths overachieved its forecast at quarter 3 but is within overall approved funding levels. The programme of highways works is adjusted throughout the year to fit timescales and resources. Budgets for work in progress and outstanding schemes are carried forward into 2017/18.

3.4 **Civil Contingencies**

Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, the council has a statutory duty to have contingency plans in place to ensure the borough is equipped to deal with a crisis situation effectively, while continuing to provide the usual day-to-day services of the council. Response and intervention relies on effective **partnership working**. In Quarter 4, officers attended 3 emergency multi-agency exercises. During performance year 2016/17, Bolton took part in the largest multi-agency exercise ever held in Greater Manchester; in order to further increase resilience when responding to emergencies. Bolton's participation involved the activation of the Emergency Control Centre in order to co-ordinate the response to the emergency, and a live test of our rest centre procedures. A newly identified rest centre was used to test its suitability. It also gave newly-trained rest centre volunteers an opportunity to practice their roles and responsibilities in the safe environment of an exercise.

4.0 **Supporting the Council to deliver its operational priorities**

This section gives an update on some of the major operational priorities.

4.1 **Managing the Department's Budget**

The department was tasked with finding savings of £2,470,000 within Environmental Services and Housing Services in 2016/17 - 100% of these targets have been achieved. Revenue expenditure achieved an underspend against the budget of £15,000 after planned reserve movements. Capital expenditure for 2016/17 was £28,353,000 against a revised projection at Quarter 3 of £35,244,000. The services have a general reserve of £22,463 for the end of the year.

4.2 **Health and Safety**

The department is continuing to deliver a programme of training and site assessments to ensure that all services operate in a safe environment. In Quarter 4 the number of staff related incidents (excluding Housing Services) were 46 – 1 less than Quarter 3 (47). Management will continue to monitor the number of incidents within the department and deliver important health and safety training to all staff.

4.3 **Managing Sickness**

Staff absence within the whole Place Department, Quarter 4 2016/17 is 3.4 days per FTE and is detailed in Table 4. Cumulative absence for performance year 2016/17 has improved when comparing it to 2015/16 - 12.5 days, compared to 13.2 days for 2015/16.

Table 4 Average Days Sickness Per FTE in 2016/17 – Place Department					
Quarter 1 2016/17	Quarter 2 2016/17	Quarter 3 2016/17	Quarter 4 2016/17	Total 2015/16	Total 2016/17
2.8 days per FTE	2.7 days per FTE	3.8 days per FTE	3.4 days per FTE	13.2 days per FTE	12.5 days per FTE

At present there are 49 on-going long term absence cases in the Place Department, the principal causes of which are stress-related, musculoskeletal / neck or back problems and post-operative recovery. The Department has undertaken significant management action on attendance during Quarter 4:

- 122 informal counselling meetings
- 54 OH referrals
- 8 warnings were issued, 4 of which were final warnings
- 2 Ill Health Retirements

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

Staff absence for the 4 divisions included in this report averaged at 13.18 days per FTE in performance year, 2016/17. Cumulative average absence for the 4 divisions has improved when comparing with 2015/16 – 14.45 days, 2016/17 compared with 13.2 days, 2015/16 – a 1.27 day per FTE improvement.

Table 5 Average Days Sickness Per FTE in 2016/17		
Division	Total 2015/16	Total 2016/17
Community Services	10.4	12.1
Highways and Engineering	16.1	13.8
Neighbourhood and Regulatory Services	13.6	13.2
Waste and Fleet Management	17.7	13.6
Average for 4 Divisions	14.45	13.18

Community Services has seen an increase in sickness absence when comparing 2015/16 with 2016/17. This is, in the main, due to long term absence in the School Meals and Building Cleaning sections. There has however been a comparative decrease in the other 3 divisions - the largest decrease being in the Waste and Fleet Management division, which has seen a significant reduction in the number of long term absentees.

4.4 Requests for Information

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.

- 168 requests were received during Quarter 4 - 156 of these were for the department alone and 12 were cross-cutting across the council. The largest proportion of requests received by the department was for Regulatory Services who received 49 requests.
- 95% of requests were answered on time.

Working on an average of 4.3 officer hours per request, the department allocated 722 hours of officer time on information requests during Quarter 4.

4.5 Managing Customer Care

The number of **complaints** received by the divisions of the department covered by this report are monitored and compared with 2015/16 data (which excluded Community Housing data*). Complaints are answered within twenty working days 'standard' – a timescale set locally to Bolton. 93 complaints were received for Quarter 3, 2016/17:

- 1 less complaint* was received than in Quarter 3, 2015/16 (94).
- 89 complaints were answered in 'standard' (95%) and 4 were answered out of 'standard'.

Further analysis of the 93 complaints shows that:

- 6 complaints were upheld (i.e. the Department found in the customer's favour); 5 were partially upheld (i.e. the Department found partially in the customer's favour); 1 was deferred and 81 (87%) were not upheld.
- The main reason that complainants identified for making their complaints was 'unsatisfactory/sub-standard level of service', of which there were 75 (80%).

Recording of **compliments** is also an important indicator within customer care. 8 compliments were logged in Quarter 4.

- 2 for Waste and Fleet Management.
- 2 for Community Services.
- 1 for Highways and Engineering.
- 3 for Neighbourhood and Regulatory Services.

5. Conclusions

5.1 This report summarises Quarter 4, 2016/17 performance, and the outturn position as appropriate for the Environmental Services' elements of the Place Department. Additionally, it incorporates Housing Services as part of the portfolio. It also includes the internal departmental position. The services remain on track to deliver their strategic and operational priorities for the council. Highlights of the report are:

- At the end of Quarter 4, the introduction of slim bins had resulted in avoided waste disposal costs of £2.2 million. This exceeds the waste disposal saving target of £1.25million per year by £0.95million (76%).
- In performance year 2016/17, the Trade Waste Officers have served 57 Fixed Penalty Notices which will generate £17,100. Following visits, 174 new commercial waste contracts had been taken out with the council at a value of £47,378.
- Albert Halls will officially re-open in Quarter 1, 2016/17 (21 April 2017). The Christmas 2017 pantomime will be Cinderella, performed by New Pantomime's Productions Ltd.
- Street lighting energy costs have reduced significantly since the start of the LED street lighting programme. Cumulatively, £1,956,097 in 2014/15 to £1,164,811 in 2016/17 – a reduction of £791,286, a 40.45% decrease.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 The Executive Cabinet Member is asked to comment upon the performance update set out in this report.