Lancaster City Council | Report Cover Sheet

Meeting	Cabinet		Date	9 March 2021
Report	Delivering Our Priorities: Q1-Q3 2020-21			
Report of	Director of Corporate Services			
Purpose of Report				
To provide an update the status of corporate projects and performance indicators; and to set out plans for the future development of monitoring and reporting these.				
Key Decision (Y/N)	N	**Date of Notice**		**Exempt (Y/N)**	N

Report Summary
This report, and its Appendix, provides an update on the progress of key corporate projects and performance measures for the period March-December 2020 (Q1-Q3 2020-21).
During this time, much of the council's activity has been re-focused to support residents and communities during the Covid-19 pandemic; this report provides some information on the impact of this re-alignment on projects and services.
The report also sets out future plans for the development of project, measure and resource monitoring and reporting, including a review of corporate measures, and the establishment of online dashboards containing information relating to each of the council's priorities.

Recommendations of Councillor Anne Whitehead
(1) That Cabinet consider the updates on projects and performance measures from March-December 2020 (Q1-Q3 2020-21) at Appendix A.
(2) That Cabinet approve in principle the approach to developing project, measure and resource monitoring and reporting set out in this report.

Relationship to Policy Framework
Establishing and developing processes for the monitoring of projects and performance measures will support the council's whole range of activity to deliver its priorities and policies.

Conclusion of Impact Assessment(s) where applicable	
Climate	**Wellbeing & Social Value**
Digital	**Health & Safety**
Equality	**Community Safety**
No direct impact arising from this report.	

Details of Consultation
No direct consultation relating to this report, however the future development of this work will include substantial engagement with stakeholders and residents.

Legal Implications

No direct implications arising from this report.
Financial Implications
No direct implications arising from this report.
Other Resource or Risk Implications
No direct implications arising from this report. The proposed activities will be part of the work plans and priorities for existing capacity and resources across the Policy, Projects and Delivery Teams.
Section 151 Officer's Comments
The report has been considered and there are no further comments
Monitoring Officer's Comments
The report has been considered and there are no further comments

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Links to Background Papers	

1.0 Introduction

1.1 In March 2020 the council temporarily shifted its focus in order to support residents and businesses during the Covid-19 pandemic, whilst maintaining the delivery of core services.

1.2 Quarterly updates on corporate projects and performance measures were suspended from March 2020, due to the limited relevance of this information in the context of the council's wider pandemic response.

1.3 This report provides a summarised update on corporate projects and performance measures from March-December 2020 (at Appendix A), whilst also setting out the future vision for monitoring and reporting of this information.

2.0 Updates Q1-Q3 2020-21

2.1 Appendix A provides an integrated Highlight Report, incorporating project and performance measure information categorised against each of the council's four priorities.

2.2 From March 2020, a number of projects and measures were either no longer possible to deliver in the same way, or no longer prioritised in comparison with supporting residents and businesses.

2.3   The wider narrative of the council's overall pandemic response will be reported elsewhere; however, the updates and comments in the Highlight Report provide some insight into the effect on corporate projects and performance measures.

2.4   <u>Project Reporting</u>

The projects shown on the attached Highlight Report were agreed as Corporate Projects in early March 2020. They have not been revised due to the pandemic, and are comparable to reports for previous quarters.

Each project (and performance measure) is mapped to the council priorities it seeks to fulfil. The projects are organised by programme where appropriate, and give a short text update on each project. They clearly show the date at which the update was provided and the status of the project. A key to understanding the project status is included in the top right-hand corner of the report.

3.0   Future Plans for Monitoring and Reporting

3.1   <u>Overall Vision</u>

Moving forward, the council's focus on delivering its four priorities will be well supported by accessible, timely and meaningful information across the whole range of its activities. Regular reporting and monitoring will focus on three key interlinked areas:

1)   Progress of key corporate *projects*, through which the council and its partners will deliver transformational change in our district

2)   Tracking of priority *measures*, to provide a long-term perspective on the real-life impact of all the council's activities

3)   Management of the council's *resources*, to ensure resources are allocated in order to achieve the maximum positive impact

3.1   <u>Alignment with Priorities</u>

Cabinet members participated in a series of discussions in autumn 2020 to begin developing a framework of corporate measures linked to both the council's priorities, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Building on this work, the existing priority measures will be reviewed to create a new set of measures which reflect the council's priorities and link to operational delivery of projects and services.

3.2   <u>Structure</u>

Setting out information in a clear and consistent structure is essential to providing meaningful insights for members, officers, partners and residents.

It is proposed that information on projects, measures and resources follow the below structure:

- *Priority:* the overall strategic aims of the council adopted in January 2020
  e.g. *A Sustainable District*

- *Outcome:* high-level statements describing the desired impact of the council's activity
  e.g. *Reduce Waste*

- *Measure:* indicators of success covering a specific aspect of the Priorities and Outcomes
  e.g. *KG of Residual Waste Collected per Household*

3.3 Performance Measures

As well as aligning to the Priorities and Outcomes, the measures will provide a view of *'what does success look like?'* in each priority area. Each measure will be accompanied by a relevant comparator - such as the direction of travel over time, performance against a SMART target or best-practice figures from other authorities or other relevant organisations - to give a contextual view alongside the measure itself.

Measures will also be derived from existing sources where possible, to provide like-for-like comparison; sources are likely to include the SDG measures, Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) standards, and Local Government Association (LGA) benchmarking resources. However, there remains scope to reflect unique or specific local priorities and matters of community interest in these too.

3.3 Access & Format

The current schedule of quarterly reporting provides Cabinet and Budget & Performance Panel with a regular update and opportunity to discuss the information, and it is envisaged that this approach will continue.

However, it is also proposed that an accessible source of information on projects and performance measures be developed, via online dashboards relating to each of the Priorities. The dashboards would be updated in real time as the latest information becomes available, and would be accessible at any time to support discussions and decision-making.

Where appropriate, dashboard information could also be made available publicly via the council's website.

3.5 Accountability

Project, performance and resource reporting provides a consolidated view of the council's priority activity, but the overall accountability for successful delivery of projects and services is distributed across the organisation.

The Corporate Services team responsible for collating the information will provide a point of liaison between Heads of Service, the Executive Team and

Cabinet and Budget & Performance Panel members. Specific queries regarding the progress of projects or performance measures can be raised with the relevant Director.

3.6   Collaboration

As the council seeks to embrace and develop its role as part of a network of partners pursuing similar priorities for our district, opportunities will be sought to integrate information, projects and resources with our partners for maximum impact.

An example of this is an emerging project with Lancaster University to collate a wide range of datasets from across sectors and partners into an accessible platform, including maps and other visualisations to support meaningful insight. The ambition is for this platform to be made publicly available, and used as the basis for further successful collaboration between partners. We are exploring a new Office of National Statistics Local Portal as a means of sharing data with our stakeholders and communities.

3.7   Future Project Reporting

The projects which are included in the quarterly report will be reviewed so capital plan projects all feature within the report, unless the capital spend is for maintenance work, rather than a project of strategic importance to the Council. We are also considering how best to present on revenue projects of particular interest to the Council.

Where appropriate the projects will be organised into programmes, to aid the readability of the report. Short updates, which include progress against the dates agreed on the project plan will be included, as will an indicator stating whether the project is currently on-track, over or underspent. Each project will be given a status in accordance with the key in the top right corner.

The project reports will be closely aligned with the Project Appraisal Framework, so that the performance of a project and its expected impact on the four dimensions of the SDGs should be clearly visible, enabling Portfolio holders to use the same report in order to see the likely impact of all projects on their interest area.

Hyperlinks will be included which point to the council's Intranet pages, accessible to members and officers who may wish to seek further information on a specific project. In the longer term, additional information on project timescales, outcomes and benefits will be available to members by request.

3.8   Next Steps

Officers will work with the Cabinet sub groups, advisory groups and external stakeholders during Q1 and Q2 2021/22 to put in place the new reporting framework and report back on progress each quarter. The changes will be iterative, and existing reporting will be improved to accommodate the new priorities, outcomes and measures.