

SCRUTINY COMMISSION – 3 JUNE 2015

QUARTER 4 2014/15 PERFORMANCE REPORT

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Commission with an update on performance at the end of the fourth quarter of 2014/15 (January - March). It provides an overview of performance against the 'Enabling Economic Growth' and 'Safer Communities' themes of the County Council Strategic Plan 2014-18. It also highlights Strategic Plan performance on corporate areas not covered by the other scrutiny committees.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. In May 2014 the County Council agreed a new Strategic Plan to 2018 including a range of new priorities and supporting indicators and targets, to form the basis for future performance management.

Background

3. The report provides an update on performance by way of three dashboards. The first dashboard summarises current overall performance against the Council's Strategic Plan priorities and other key indicators and is attached as Appendix 1. Indicators rated 'red' at quarter 4 are set out in Appendix 2. More detail regarding Strategic Plan theme performance is being reported to the departmental scrutiny committees.
4. A second dashboard covers local economic growth and includes 6 indicators that are available quarterly, and is included as Appendix 3. A wider set of more strategic measures will be reviewed annually as part of the County Council Annual Performance Report covering: productivity and competitiveness; business survival rates; enterprise growth; skills; housing; and tourism
5. The third 'customers and corporate health' dashboard reports on corporate areas not covered by other scrutiny committees and is included as Appendix 4. It incorporates information on:
 - customers and communities;
 - communications and perceptions;
 - people management and equalities;
 - property and environmental performance;
 - strategic commissioning/procurement;
 - information management;
 - risk management and audit.

6. Full end of year actual indicator positions are still being calculated in a number of areas and these, together with comparative performance information, will be reported later in the year as part of the draft Annual Performance Report 2015.

Performance Update – Enabling Economic Growth

Local Economic Growth

7. Organisations from across Leicester and Leicestershire have the chance to benefit from a share of the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership's (LLEP) £111million, six-year European Structural & Investment Funds (ESIF) funding programme. Although the **ESIF Programme** has not yet been officially launched the LLEP has issued a limited number of Calls for Activities for organisations to bid for funding to deliver local business services, and calls for other activities will follow in the ensuing months.
8. There are currently four opportunities for organisations to bid for funding through the ESIF programme, to deliver local business services. Future funding will be available in a range of areas including low carbon initiatives, SMART specialisation, business support, social inclusion, skills development and the rural economy, to deliver services and schemes to boost the local economy.

Unemployment Rate

9. The County **Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)** claimant rate has followed a downward trend since early 2013. This trend mirrors national and regional changes. The County rate remains significantly lower than the regional and national positions of 1.9%. It is in the second quartile when compared to our statistical neighbours.
10. Since March 2014, the ILO **unemployment** rate has followed a similar downward trend to the JSA rate. The latest result of 3.8% (December 2014) brings the County closer to the 2.9% pre-recession low reported in December 2007 and remains lower than the regional/national positions of 5.7% and 6.4% respectively. It is in the second quartile when compared to our statistical neighbours.

Employment Rate

11. Leicestershire's **employment** rate shows a general trend of recovery from a low of 71.4% in 2010 rising to 77.3% in December 2014 - exceeding the target of 75.6%. This remains slightly below the historic high of 80% in 2005-06. Leicestershire's employment rate remains above the regional (73.5%) and national (72.5%) positions.

Investment in Place – Building the Infrastructure for Growth

Key Employment Land and Development Sites

12. In February the Government agreed to extend the area covered by the **Enterprise Zone at MIRA Technology Park**. Work is set to begin on access roads at the site, following the award of nearly £13 million of Government funding. Since development began at MIRA Technology Park, a total of 354 jobs have been created. The aim is to create up to 2,000 high technology jobs at MIRA, while a further 3,000 indirect jobs will be created as a consequence within the Midlands supply chain. The ongoing

development work has proved to have a very positive impact on the construction sector with an ongoing total of over 170 construction workers involved in creating the infrastructure and new R&D facilities.

13. **Loughborough University Science and Enterprise Parks (LUSEP)**: The first phase of construction of the new Advanced Technology Innovation Centre (ATIC) at Loughborough University began in November 2014 with the construction of associated infrastructure commencing in January 2015. The Centre will provide high specification office, studio and rent-a-desk space for up to 50 companies, ranging from early-stage businesses to large SMEs. When it formally opens in September 2015, it is anticipated that ATIC will have over 50% occupancy, based on current firm expressions of interest. ATIC's development is supported by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)¹. The County contributed £450,000 towards this scheme as part of a funding package that also includes Government City Deal funding and Charnwood Borough Council funding.
14. Plans are under development to significantly expand LUSEP. When fully developed, the site will provide up to 200,000 sq m (2.15m sq ft) of floor space and will be home to businesses employing as many as 6,000 people.

Broadband Connectivity

15. At the end of quarter 4 an estimated 87% of Leicestershire premises have access to fibre broadband connectivity, an increase of 6% since the previous quarter. There are now 35,165 additional premises with access to high speed fibre broadband. Based upon BT reporting, c.94% of connected premises are able to access superfast broadband speeds of greater than 24Mbps. In March 2015, the take-up rate for superfast broadband where the Council has invested was 12.3%. This is an increase of 4.2% on the last quarter. The local demand stimulation campaign for communities and businesses is working to ensure increased take-up in deployed areas.
16. In March, the County Council signed a new contract with BT to increase superfast broadband coverage as part of the Government's Superfast Extension Programme (SEP). Through this it is expected that an additional 10,000 premises will be able to access high-speed fibre broadband, with 'go live' dates from late 2016 until autumn 2018. The County Council is exploring opportunities to accelerate the deployment.
17. The County Council is continuing to explore a range of solutions to deliver the 100% coverage vision, working with a range of partners. This includes the following:-
 - Additional commercial deployment;
 - Deployment savings and gain-share (based on high levels of adoption) within existing BT contracts;
 - Additional public sector investment, including potentially, Government, district and parish councils. This could include loan investment;
 - Future Government plans for deployment in the 'final 5%';
 - Broadband Connectivity vouchers for businesses (as part of the governments Super Connected Cities Programme covering Leicester City and parts of the County adjacent to the City);
 - Support for community-led schemes using £0.5m allocated investment. Assessments are underway to determine viability of different models.

Investment in Business – Business Growth and Business Support

Enterprising Leicestershire Scheme

18. The 2014/15 **Enterprising Leicestershire** scheme supported 59 businesses in the County, with almost £880,000 Regional Growth Fund capital grant being made available to support business growth and job creation. The total value of project costs supported through the programme totals just under £3m, with approximately 150 new jobs forecast, plus a further 50 existing jobs safeguarded.

Business Growth Hub

19. Following the successful launch of the '**The 'Business Gateway'**' in November 2014, staff have now been appointed. This scheme will continue to promote business growth and survival by providing links to local sources of support for business start-up, growth and development. Further development of the scheme is subject to £0.75m ERDF funding beyond March 2016.

Business Loans

20. The **business loan scheme** has a fund of up to £1m over 2 years and is resourced from Council funds earmarked for economic growth. It is administered by Funding Circle (a peer-to-peer lending organisation) and will improve funding available to local businesses. By the end of April 2015, £1.83m loans were made available benefiting 39 businesses. The Council invested almost £360,000, which has been matched by over £1.47m of private sector co-investment. The estimated net return on the Council's investment is 5.7%

Social Enterprise Grant Fund

21. The Social Enterprise Grant Fund was established in 2012/13. It is administered by CASE (Cooperative & Social Development Agency) which has subcontracted the grant fund administration to the Leicestershire and Rutland Community Foundation. CASE are also contracted to support social enterprise development across the county and to support the Council's approach to social enterprise including employee mutual development.

22. The scheme aims to support existing and emerging social enterprises with grants of up to £3,000. The intended focus is vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities, older people and worklessness. Eight grants were awarded to different social enterprises this quarter, amounting to £13,955. This brings the total grant funding allocated during 2014/15 to £20,000, which was the amount originally made available for the year.

Tourism

23. The Council supports the **visitor economy** through a contract with Leicester Shire Promotions Limited. 'Evidence of bed nights booked' increased from 21,726 (2013 calendar year) to 36,498 in 2014, a significant 68% increase. The rise is largely attributed to people using the 'Stay, Play and Explore' website and taking advantage of the new tourism package offers available. It also reflects an improvement in the economy generally. During October 2014, the number of bed nights booked reached

capacity, and an extra hotel has since been added in order to meet demand. It is anticipated that tourism will increase further following the national and international interest in the re-interment of King Richard III in Leicester Cathedral during spring 2015. The impact of this event will be evident in the next quarter report.

Investment in People – Employment and Skills support

Wheels to Work

24. The **Wheels to Work** project started in 2006 and is delivered by Melton Borough Council in partnership with the County Council and is now the largest scheme in the country. The scheme loans out scooters for up to 6 months at low rates to people travelling to employment or education, who are not already benefiting from other transport bursaries. Currently 150 scooters are available to hire. The quarter 4 usage figures were consistent with Q3, with 41 bikes allocated to participants in this quarter.

Jobs Fairs

25. A Loughborough **Jobs Fair** was held in January 2015 and its aim was to help people access new careers and training. A significant number of jobs were on offer and the day had a focus on the care sector, although other sectors were also represented. The fair attracted 575 attendees which generated over 660 enquiries to the 40 stand holders; 64 gained an interview with 11 securing employment and 9 obtaining training and educational places. The three jobs fairs held in the County during 2014/15 attracted over 1,200 attendees.

Increasing Skills and Minimising Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs)

26. **NEET** (16-18 year olds) rates follow a seasonal pattern linked to the academic year, with a typical rise during September. March 2015 shows the County (2.8%) continuing to perform well compared to regional (4.3%) and national (4.8%) results. The County continued to compare well against its statistical neighbours, performing in the top quartile. Within the County, Harborough District performed well with the lowest rate (2%) and Melton the highest (3.1%) in March 2015. Further details are available in the [online dashboard](#).

Talent Match Programme

27. The 5 year Princes Trust **Talent Match Programme** is continuing to provide bespoke employment support for 18-24 year olds who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) in the Coalville area. During 2014, 27 participants gained work experience placements, exceeding the programme target of 25. To date, 4 participants have moved into permanent employment since the programme began in January 2014.

28. Participants progress included:

- 18 engaged in skills development (mainly workshops delivered by partner groups including Worth It Projects, our main sub-contractor);
- all had undertaken work experience, many in a supported setting with our partner groups e.g. Hermitage FM (Community Radio) and Marlene Reid Centre;

- 8 had undertaken and achieved qualifications;
- 4 had begun volunteering with other projects to build their skills and confidence;
- many had undertaken the Princes Trust Team programme, The Princes Trust Get Started Programme and/or East Midlands Homes Group Academy Traineeship Scheme.

29. The latest round of the Prince's Trust **Get Into Programmes** are being held in Construction; Hospital Services and Retail as well as a Get Started with Football. Of the 17 young people finishing the Get Into Retail with Marks & Spencer, 12 of them were offered a minimum contract of 12 weeks, where they have had opportunities to show their customer skills, attendance and commitment, which is designed to help them to secure a permanent position.

Adult Learning Programmes

30. There were 8,451 enrolments for all **Adult Learning** Programmes during the academic year to 31 March 2015. Over a third of participants (2014) have enrolled in programmes with vocational outcomes or English and Maths provision.

31. The Council's Adult Learning Service traineeship programme for 16-24 year old 'NEETs' has enrolled 39 candidates to date. The participants have been engaged through a variety of partner organisations including the Prince's Trust and Connexions, and are currently in training, on work placement or have completed the programme.

Recruitment of Apprentices

32. The County Council currently has 67 **apprentices** working across all departments in roles such as administration, finance and customer services. The Adult Learning Service has a further 124 apprentices enrolled on apprenticeship programmes working for other public and private sector employers in Leicestershire.

Get Set Project

33. The **Get Set Project** supports young people aged 16-25 into 3-6 month voluntary work experience placements across a range of departments within the County Council. The aim is to tackle youth unemployment through bespoke opportunities directly tailored to the individual's career aspirations and personal needs. Headline results to date are:

- 77 young people have been supported into placements, significantly over achieving on the two year target of 60. A further 7 have been provided with Information, advice and guidance whilst we try and source them a placement;
- Two-thirds of the young people participating in the project have additional support needs (e.g. learning difficulties, mental health conditions or physical disabilities) or face social exclusion;
- 38 young people have successfully completed their 3-6 month placement. Of these:
 - 53% have gone on to secure part or full time employment;

- 13% have gone on to secure apprenticeships;
- 11% have gone on to further education or training;
- Those that are not yet ready for full time employment continue to receive pre-employability support from the Get Set team whilst they to search for employment.

Performance Update - Safer Communities

34. The **vehicle crime** rate (theft of & theft from vehicles) increased significantly during quarter 4. The rate is now 6.35 per 1,000 population, above the target of 4.91, and is rated 'red.' The main issues regarding vehicle crime include theft of motorcycles and mopeds, thefts of tools from vans, insecure vehicles and items on display. Community Safety Partnerships are working to respond to this.
35. The live tracking element of the **reducing re-offending** toolkit is supporting a reduction in re-offending by young people on community penalties. However, overall re-offending by young people has increased in the second quarter of 2014/15.

Performance Update - Customers and Communities (Appendix 4)

36. The Customers Dashboard includes data from the cmetrix **customer perception** system, for which 1,453 responses were received during quarter 3. A total of 6 out of 7 indicators met the satisfaction target of 80%, while the remaining indicator (satisfaction with explanation of when queries will be resolved) only narrowly missed this target.
37. In the Customer Service Centre, the proportion of **calls** answered within 60 seconds dropped to 69% at quarter 4, below the target of 80%. Performance during the quarter has been impacted by a high level of long, complex calls relating to carer assessments, and concerns for welfare, as a result of the Care Act and associated publicity.
38. **Digital delivery** - the Council website star rating improved from 2 to 3 stars in SOCITM's 2015 ratings (out of a maximum of 4 stars). The ratings are based on four factors: customer journeys for top tasks; usability criteria; an overall reviewer rating; and mobile experience.

Performance Update - Corporate Health (Appendix 4)

39. The number of days lost per FTE to **sickness absence** during 2014/15 was 9.79 days, which is above the corporate target of 7.5 days. This issue will continue to be the subject of reports to the Employment Committee.
40. There has been a reduction in the % of **employees with a disability** at grade 13 or above. In the year to November 2014, the number of post holders at grade 13+ with a disability reduced by 7. Of these, 4 left the organisation (2 redundancies; 2 resignations), while 3 either completed honorariums or secondments, transferred to lower graded posts or changed their disability status. During the period in question, no leavers' questionnaires were submitted which were identified as being completed by employees of Grade 13 or above. The issue highlights the importance of Equality Impact Assessments in relation to HR Action Plans, and line managers encouraging employees to complete Leavers' Questionnaires prior to departure. Initial results from

the recent staff survey suggest an improvement in staff perception that the Council is committed to equality and diversity.

41. The **internal recycling** rate for the Council's office waste has reduced, with a result of 54% for 2014/15. The potential causes of this, including the impact of the change to a new contractor, will be analysed further in September 2015 after a year under the new arrangements. The contractor carries out additional sorting of waste for recycling and the Council's total office waste has continued to reduce, which means that the amount of office waste going to landfill is still reducing.

Background Papers

Leicestershire County Council Strategic Plan 2014-18

http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/your_council/council_plans_policies/our_priorities_and_objectives.htm

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None

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Strategic Plan Dashboard

Appendix 2 - Strategic Plan indicators rated red

Appendix 3 - Economic Performance Dashboard

Appendix 4 - Customers and Corporate Health Dashboard

Equality and Human Rights Implications

42. A number of areas of the report highlight performance on equalities issues. Equalities performance will continue to be monitored and feed into actions to improve performance where required.