

Corporate Performance Quarter 2 2020-21

Priority 1: Local Services that Work for Local People

Progress Summary

Overall, our performance with a combination of monitoring and target driven indicators for this priority is positive in this quarter but work is underway to impact on the result.

A summary of progress with planned activities for Priority One from the Council Plan 2018-2022 are as follows:-

- **Increase Access to Information;**

- The Council continue to maintain services by encouraging customer self-service via the website, and through effective call centre support. Castle House is open to the public by utilising bookable appointments and self-service. The demand is extremely low, as most contacts can be addressed online or by telephone.

- **Deliver new Recycling and Waste Service:**

During this quarter the new recycling collection service has been fully rolled out to all households, and separate food waste collections were restarted from mid-August, following suspension of this service due to Covid. The rollout has been very successful with higher participation, than the previous service, and maintaining high quality material. There has been very positive feedback from residents who really like the new service, and tonnages have increased by 20.02%.

- **Establish Workforce Strategy:**

- **Develop robust, innovative and efficient work force plans**

Despite the Covid 19 situation, work has continued across services in the development of robust, innovative and efficient work force plans which align to the council vision for the future.

- **Develop organisational culture**

High on the list of priorities is the engagement of staff in the development of organisational values and behaviours; from which recognition and reward, development and learning and leadership strategies will be developed. Work was paused on this toward the end of Qtr. 4 due to significant resource channel to the Covid-19 response, however work to distribute a staff survey and develop a values realisation process to inform the culture commenced in this quarter. HR are continuing to work with all managers to coach and mentor them through all the HR policies to embed good practice and develop their skills in managing staff successfully to enable a positive working culture.

- **Ensure staff wellbeing**





We have continued our focus on staff mental health and wellbeing over the last quarter and are continuing to promote our support and counselling services. In addition we have established, in partnership with the Trade Unions, a Mental Health working group who will work with the staff to develop further our support mechanisms. We are marking World Mental Health day in October with a campaign for staff to 'do one thing' to improve their wellbeing and share their stories. The staff survey which was run in August returned positive results in terms of the support and communication staff are receiving from managers and teams and gave a clear steer to continue the work and promote the services we currently have in place.




Progress Summary continued






- **To review and continue to develop key People policies**

Ongoing discussions with the Trade Unions on Organisation Change and Redeployment have been paused during the Covid-19 outbreak, but the HR team has continued to work with all managers to coach and mentor them through all the HR policies to embed good practice and develop their skills in managing staff successfully to enable a positive working culture.

| Ref | Service Area | Portfolio Holder | Indicator | Good is | Result Qtr 2 2019-20 | Result Qtr 1 2020-21 | Result Qtr 2 2020-21 | Target Qtr 2 2020-21 | How have we performed? | Status |
|---------|----------------------|-----------------------|--|---------|--|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| 1.1 | Environmental Health | Cllr. Trevor Johnson | Percentage of food premises that have a zero or one national food hygiene rating | Low | 1.14% (13 out of 1,136 published premises) | - | - | 5% | Delivery of this planned programme was prevented during the Covid lockdown and has not recommenced due to prioritising Covid activities. In excess of 400 Covid-19 queries and complaints received, and the team continue to communicate with food premises and other licensed premises in order to advise and record future appointments. | - |
| 1.2 New | Environmental Health | Cllr. Trevor Johnson | Percentage of category A and B food business inspections completed on time | High | 100% | - | - | - | | - |
| 1.3 New | Environmental Health | Cllr. Stephen Sweeney | No. Accidents/Incidents reported (RIDDOR) | Low | 1 | 1 | 2 | - | | There have been two incidents, one due to an injury over 7 days, and one from an injury involving a member of public. Both incidents have been investigated and no further action required |

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|------|-------------------|----------------------|---|---------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| 1.4a | Recycling & Fleet | Cllr. Trevor Johnson | Household collections from the kerbside (%):- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dry Recycling | High | 17.50%* | 18.26% | 20.69% | 20% | <p>Dry Recycling and food collection performance significantly affected by Covid. Separate food waste collections were suspended to concentrate resources into refuse, recycling and garden waste, as the department suffered a loss of 25% of its workforce due to Covid self-isolation and shielding. Food waste collection recommenced in mid-August and tonnages are growing steadily back to pre Covid levels. Tonnage of refuse continue to remain high having increased significantly, 26.74% up on Qtr 1 and 2 figures taken over the last three years. Recycling has increased by 22.02% following the introduction of the new service, which has put recycling collections back on target. This trend remains as not unique to NuLBC, with similar patterns experienced throughout the country.</p> |  |
| 1.4b | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food | High | 5%* | 0.10% | 1.34% | 5% | |  |
| 1.4c | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amount of residual Waste per household | Low | 105.55 kgs* | 131.19kgs | 124.37kgs | 107.5kgs (per household) cumulative | |  |
| 1.4d | Operations | Cllr. Trevor Johnson | Number of missed kerbside collections:- Total (per 100,000 collections) | Low | 67 | 119.51 | 162.63 | 80 (per 100,000 collections) | |  |

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|-------------|------------------|----------------------|--|---------|----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|--|---|
| 1.4d cont'd | Operations | Cllr. Trevor Johnson | Number of missed kerbside collections:- Total (per 100,000 collections) | | | | | | Continued:- collections dropped significantly in September for all streams except food. | |
| 1.5 | Operations | Cllr. Trevor Johnson | Levels of street and environment cleanliness (LEQ survey) free / predominantly free of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly-posting) | High | 97.04% 96.86% 100% 100% | - | - | 91% 91% 97% 99% | The surveys were postponed due to Covid situation but have now commenced. The first tranche results will be reported in Qtr 3. | - |
| 1.6 | Customer & ICT | Cllr. Simon Tagg | Percentage of requests resolved at first point of contact | High | 99% | 99.28% | 99.64% | 97% | The result demonstrates continued success in dealing with most contacts at first point of contact. |  |
| 1.7 | Customer & ICT | Cllr. Simon Tagg | % Unmet demand (number of calls not answered as a % of total call handling volume) | Low | 6.79% | 10.29% | 16.46% | 10% | The target has not been met due to an increase of 25% of calls coming through the contact centre. As Services have come to terms with Covid19, they have increased their communication and are back on track in their business areas, thus increasing traffic through digital means or the contact centre. During Q2 the new recycling Service was embedded, affecting 54,000 properties and alongside this an Election canvass of 40,000 residents were dealt with. |  |
| 1.8 | Digital Delivery | Cllr. Simon Tagg | Total number of digital on-line transactions (Jadu). | High | 6,080 | 14,247 | 10,859 | - | There is a reduction in the number of transactions on Q1, but some online activities are seasonal transactions. | - |
| 1.9 | Communication | Cllr. Simon Tagg | Total number of unique users to the website | High | 93,982 | 124,917 | 109,142 | 79,500 | There was a total of 109,142 unique users in this quarter, which is increased from Qtr 2 in 2019-20. |  |

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| 1.10 | Revenues & Benefits | Cllr. Stephen Sweeney | Time taken to process Housing/Council Tax Benefit new claims and change events | Low | 4.91days | 3.73 days | 6.56 days | 10 days | This result remains well within target. |  |
| 1.11 | Revenues & Benefits | Cllr. Stephen Sweeney | Percentage of Council Tax collected | High | 52.9% | 26.5% | 52.4% | 50.11% | The Council Tax and Business Collection rates are now back on track following recovery action being taken for the first time this year in quarter 2. |  |
| 1.12 | Revenues & Benefits | Cllr. Stephen Sweeney | Percentage of National non-domestic rates collected | High | 58.6% | 20.6% | 58% | 52.44% | |  |
| 1.13 | Human Resources | Cllr. Simon Tagg | Average number of days per employee lost to sickness | Low | 4.9 days | 2.45 days | 4.25 days (cumulative) | 4.4 days Qtr 2 (cumulative) | The Qtr 2 sickness figure is 1.81 days and is within the target of 2.2 days. The cumulative result of 4.25 days (April-Sept) is also within the target too. It was anticipated that sickness absence may increase due to Covid-19 but it has not had a dramatic effect on this indicator. |  |
| 1.14 New | Human Resources | Cllr. Simon Tagg | Staff turnover | Low | 8.80% | 0.95% | 1.35% | 10% | The turnover is down on the figure for this quarter last year. |  |
| 1.15 New | Human Resources | Cllr. Simon Tagg | Staff vacancy rates | Low | 11.15% | 0.19% | 1.74% | - | Vacancy rates are low this quarter. | - |

*The result is within tolerance

Priority 2: Growing our People and Places

Progress Summary

A summary of progress with planned activities for Priority 2 from the Council Plan 2018-2022 are as follows:-

- **Deliver Joint Local Plan**

In February 2020, the Councils agreed to produce the Joint Local Plan in two parts; Part One Strategy and Policies and Part Two Site Allocations. There were due to be two consultations this year, with Part One being subject to consultation in April/May 2020 and Part Two in the Autumn of this year. Due to the impact of Covid 19, consultation on Part One of the Plan was postponed as it was not possible to carry out the consultation in a way which would have met the Councils obligations set out in the Joint Statement of Community Involvement. Work has continued on the Draft Joint Local Plan aiming to minimise any potential delay to the overall plan timetable despite the ongoing challenges presented by the pandemic. As such, it is proposed that both parts of the Draft Plan will be subject to one 6 week public consultation at the beginning of the year.

- **Delivery of the Economic Development Strategy and action plan**

Progress with delivery of the Economic development Strategy and action plan is set out in more detail below against individual projects – One Public Estate, Prepare a Town Centre Strategy, market, and business support. Establish a Town Centre Communications Group and Develop a Kidsgrove Town Centre Investment Plan. Additionally, in response to Covid-19 the Council addressed the issue of re-opening town centres post-Lockdown through the ‘Back on Track’ recovery plan. The Council also received notification of the Restarting High Street Safely Fund and in Quarter2 has received further clarification on eligible spend. It is anticipated that a revised action plan will be submitted in Quarter 3 based on the further guidance received.

- **Progress University Growth Corridor**

While the UGC masterplan is now completed and has been submitted to the Joint Local Plan team for inclusion in the JLP, work has now turned to the ‘Keele Transport Hub’ a project designed to mitigate the traffic impacts of the development (which is expected to comprise up to 1000 houses on the site of the former municipal golf course and up to 2000 additional university and science park jobs on the university campus). This will focus on putting the conditions in place for encouraging more sustainable modes of travel than the car, including electric buses and cycles and providing the infrastructure which encourages people to use them.

- **Deliver appropriate housing to those in need:**

- **Newcastle Housing Advice to be in-house service**

Midland Heart delivers the Newcastle Housing advice (NHA) service on behalf of the Council, which is the Borough’s provision for homelessness, housing advice and housing register services. The Council has made the decision to bring the service back in-house by 1st April 2021, and over the forthcoming year the Council will be working with the current contractor to transfer the service effectively, including the TUPE of 9 staff. Quarterly performance monitoring for the NHA service is available on request. An internal working group has been created to co-ordinate the delivery of a project plan to ensure that the service can be integrated efficiently into existing Council services, with the support of ICT, HR and Customer Services.

- **Rough Sleepers and temporary accommodation**

The Council was successful in securing funding from MHCLG for the appointment of a Rough Sleeper Navigator, for a 12 month period and this post commenced in May 2020 within the NHA team and working closely with local partners to develop a temporary accommodation unit for rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping with complex needs over the COVID period, because other options previously used such as hostels and bed and breakfasts have not been available. The Council has achieved funding from MHCLG of approx. £125k to contribute to the costs so that the provision

Progress Summary continued

can be extended over the winter period in readiness for a second wave of COVID. A Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) for 2020/21 is currently being developed and includes the identification and preparation of an emergency accommodation unit for those rough sleeping, supported by a local Charity, to be instigated and made available if temperatures fall to 0 degrees or below. In addition, a Housing and Policy Partnerships Officer (former Housing Strategy post) was appointed, who will oversee the use of temporary accommodation and look to develop proposals for housing pathways over the longer term to compliment the work of the NHA and rough Sleepers team and ensure that the Council has housing options for homeless households in priority need.

- **Joint allocation policy and procurement of a Choice Based Lettings system**

The Council has adopted a new Joint Housing Allocations Policy in-conjunction with Aspire Housing. This joint policy will allow customers of the Borough to access social housing owned and managed by Aspire Housing and other Private Registered Providers to whom the Council has partnerships within the Borough. The Council and Aspire Housing is procuring a joint Choice Based Letting (CBL) system during 2020/21 that will deliver the platform for the administration function of the housing register. This will allow our customers to make one application for social housing, a greatly improved approach compared to our current systems requiring 2 applications. During the first quarter the specification was developed and Locata were chosen to deliver the IT system through a framework agreement. Work more recently has been undertaken by a multi-disciplinary team as part of a working group to co-ordinate the introduction of the new system and policy and testing thereof prior to the official launch, which is planned for February 2021.

- **One Public Estate**

The Borough Council have received a sum of £50,000 from 'One Public Estate', (a body set up to encourage public agencies to work together to make better use of their property assets), to cover the cost of undertaking the masterplanning of Knutton Village. This will involve preparing proposals for the use or development of a number of cleared sites around the centre of Knutton in the ownership of the Borough and County Councils and Aspire Housing. The objective is to bring forward new housing development in the area and to assess the potential for investing in the improvement and consolidation of community facilities. Aspire Housing is also contributing to the resources of the Study with a view to it reviewing its role as a provider of affordable housing in the area, including that of housing for the elderly. In Quarter 2, White Young Green completed a draft final report which has taken into account the physical, financial and practicalities of the viability of development and considered the views of local stakeholders and ward members, and this is now being reviewed by the Borough and County Councils and Aspire Housing (all of which are significant landowners in the area). Officers are now preparing for public consultation on the proposals which will start in Quarter 4. There will be financial implications for the Council and our partners which will need to be considered. The bid for Town Deal funding may consider helping to address some of the abnormal costs of bringing forward a suitable scheme.

- **Consideration of a property investment model and Property Diversification**

Consideration is being given to the Borough Council taking a more active role in developing its sites (i.e. by way of forming a property development company or similar) either on its own or in a partnership arrangement. The Commercial Strategy 2019-24 was approved by Cabinet and commercial investment advisors appointed to review and advise in respect of the Council's commercial portfolio. Work on this is currently ongoing.






Progress Summary continued

- **Masterplan of land at:- Chatterley Close area by Bradwell crematorium; off Liverpool Road, Keele Golf Course and Birchenwood**

The masterplan in respect of land in the Chatterley Close area, Bradwell, has now been completed and is to be considered by Cabinet, along with the next steps in respect of the extension of the Crematorium, at its November meeting. . Keele masterplan was approved in principle last year and is subject to consideration as part of the development of the Joint Local Plan. Following the Phase 1 environmental impact assessment for Birchenwood, a preliminary ground investigation survey has now been completed and next steps are currently being considered.

- **Planning Consent – Sidmouth Avenue**

Planning approval was granted in December 2019 for the partial demolition and change of use of the former Registry Office into a single dwelling and the provision of three new detached dwelling in Sidmouth Avenue. In Qtr 4 2019/20 alternative options were considered in respect of developing the site, in quarter 1 2020/21 the decision was taken to market the site and in quarter 2 2020/21 the site was marketed and terms are currently being finalised for disposal.

| Ref | Service Area | Portfolio Holder | Indicator | Good is | Result Qtr 2 2019-20 | Result Qtr 1 2020-21 | Result Qtr 2 2020-21 | Target Qtr 2 2020-21 | How have we performed? | Status |
|-----|------------------------|----------------------|---|---------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|--|---|
| 2.1 | Property | Cllr. Paul Northcott | Percentage of investment portfolio vacant (NBC owned) | Low | 8.3% | 7% | 6% | 12% | This indicator remains well within target. |  |
| 2.2 | Planning & Development | Cllr. Paul Northcott | Speed of major development applications (P151a) | High | 74.6% (Oct 17- Sept 19) | 84.6% (Jul 18 – Jun 20) | 89.5% (Oct 18- Sept 20) | 60% | These indicators remain well within target and are improving or being maintained at an acceptable level. |  |
| 2.3 | | | Quality of major development applications (P152a) | Low | 1.5% (July 16 - June 18) | 3% (Apr 17 – Mar 19) | 3.4% (July 17- June 19) | 10% | |  |
| 2.4 | | | Speed of non-major development applications (P153) | High | 82.9% (Oct 17 - Sept 19) | 88.7% (Jul 18– Jun 20) | 90.9% (Oct 18- Sept 20) | 70% | |  |
| 2.5 | | | Quality of non-major development applications (P154) | Low | 1% (July 16 - June 18) | 1% (Apr 17 – Mar 19) | 1.1% (July 17- June 19) | 10% | |  |

Priority 3: A Healthy, Active & Safe Borough

Progress Summary

Overall the performance for this priority advises the progress where possible, however the impact of Covid 19 is considerable to service provision or where facilities have had to close during this period.

A summary of progress with planned activities for Priority 3 from the Council Plan 2018-2022 are as follows:-

- **Secure J2 Remedial works**

Following consultation with Cabinet the Aqua Sauna is now being redesigned as a Pilates room. This will enhance the health and wellbeing offer at Jubilee2 and create a unique customer experience. It is envisaged that this project will be completed in the Autumn of 2020. Towards the end of quarter 2, the service experienced a failure of the main pool which had to be closed. The original contractor continues to work with the Council on this and the issue with the roof leaks.

- **Secure J2 commercialisation**

Membership numbers are circa 25% down on pre Covid numbers, which is in part due to the closure of the swimming pool. It is envisaged that the swimming pool will reopen at the end of October 2020 which will have a supportive impact on retaining members. A marketing plan is now in place until the end of this financial year to grow and retain the number of members. However due to social distancing measures operational capacity has been reduced by approximately two thirds.

- **Kidsgrove Sports Centre**

Work has continued with WDC and the community group to secure a financially viable scope of works for a budget £6m which now suits both the needs of the community groups' business model and the budgetary constraints of the Council. Additional funding opportunities have been secured in the form of Town Deal Advance Monies for advance strip out works at the centre and further Town Deal contributions are being investigated also. Advance works / internal strip out works by WDC will now commence in December upon completion of the property transfer from Staffordshire County Council.

- **Secure funds for Museum Extension**

Permission to Start from the National Lottery Heritage Fund has been obtained. The building work has been out to tender and the tenders are being assessed against the project budget.

- **Open Space Strategy**

Due to the pandemic, the Heart of England in Bloom campaign and all local Newcastle in Bloom competitions and activities have been suspended for 2020 – the intention is to roll most of the planned activities forward to 2021. The Green Flag Awards scheme is proceeding on a desktop assessment basis with a mystery shop site visit. The Council has entered 7 sites.

- **Streetscene Fleet procurement**

Procurement of fleet and equipment for Streetscene is progressing, with tenders invited for 2 x large road sweepers.

- **Feasibility study for Crematorium extension**

An officer working group was established to progress the feasibility study and this work was linked into the masterplanning commission for the Chatterley Close area which has been completed. A report has been prepared for consideration by Cabinet in October 2020.

Progress Summary continued

- **Affordable Funeral Scheme**

A suite of tender documents was prepared for issue to local suppliers. However, the pandemic meant there was a delay due to other priorities and capacity issues across the whole sector so the timeline has been reviewed and it is intended to report progress to Cabinet in November. An option for Direct Cremation will be explored for inclusion in the tender package.

- **Deliver Capital Programme projects**

Work is in progress on a number of sites to repair railing/fencing and footpaths, and replace play equipment.

- **Protect our communities by delivering priority community safety, food safety & licensing projects:**

- **Taxi Licensing Policy**

In the first quarter of 2019-20, members of the Licensing and Public Protection Committee approved the content of the taxi policy. The policy document is a wide scale reform of the current policy, to ensure that the Council has a policy that is fit for purpose in respect of the legislative framework and administration of the service. Members of the Licensing and Public Protection Committee approved the policy resulting in full implementation of the policy in January 2020. Statutory guidance was published in July 2020, this has resulted in amendments to the taxi policy being proposed to Licensing and Public Protection committee for consideration in October 2020.

- **Environmental Health & Licensing**

A new responsibility for the authority this quarter is for the team to ensure the Covid 19 restrictions were applied and in place as directed by Government. Also the new pavement licensing regime has been implemented by the service, this is a temporary licence which allows premises to apply for a licence for tables & chairs and other furniture on the pavement outside of their premises. In addition, the service is supporting the County Council in the Covid outbreak controls for high risk premises and is continuing with advising business, responding to complaints and undertaking enforcement for non-compliance with Covid controls. It is unknown at present how long these responsibilities will remain in place.

- **Commission new CCTV Service**

Following approval by Cabinet and the Business Improvement District Board for the commissioning of the CCTV service with Stoke City Council significant work has been undertaken to make the service live by 1st April 2020. A new CCTV Policy has also been approved alongside the development of a range of documents which form the legal contract with Stoke City Council. The replacement CCTV cameras in the town centre and Midway have been successfully installed and are operational. The new cameras in Bridge Street need additional electricity supply which unfortunately was not completed prior to the Covid-19 lockdown. This will be picked up by the relevant contractors once the businesses are back operating. Work is ongoing to develop additional CCTV enhancements to the service as part of the Town Deal funding delivery.

Progress Summary continued

- **Town Centre ASB enforcement**

A range of Partnership activity continues to be co-ordinated this quarter, including; the CCTV implementation and monitoring; identifying ASB hotspot areas to target harden and make more secure; working closely with partners to identify individuals in need of support, working with the rough sleepers team to ensure that appropriate support is provided, utilising the Council's civil enforcement powers such as Community Protection Notice Warnings (CPNWs), Community Protection Notices and Injunctions, continued enforcement of PSPOs for the Town Centre and Queen Elizabeth Park, working with the Police to encourage use of Section 34/35/59 powers (criminal powers), and developing a range of community safety projects to improve the aesthetics of the town centre and contribute to improving perceptions of safety. The council has an appointed Rough Sleeper Co-ordinator to assist in galvanising partnership activity with some of our vulnerable residents. As part of the Covid-19 Everyone In response, the Council provided additional accommodation and support to Rough Sleepers to encourage engagement where possible.

- **Air Quality Local Development Plan**

Work is continuing with Stoke-on-Trent City Council and Staffordshire County Council to create the North Staffordshire Local Air Quality Plan to bring about improvements in Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) levels. This quarter has seen progress with development of all the business cases and drafting outline business case. This will be presented to Economy, Environment and Place Scrutiny Committee in November and Cabinet in December. Subject to approval, work upon preparation of the Full Business Case will be progressed.

| Ref | Service Area | Portfolio Holder | Indicator | Good is | Result Qtr 2 2019-20 | Result Qtr 1 2020-21 | Result Qtr 2 2020-21 | Target Qtr 2 2020-21 | How have we performed? | Status |
|------|------------------|-----------------------|--|---------|------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|---|--------|
| 3.1a | Community Safety | Cllr. Helena Maxfield | Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) cases:- | | | | | | There are currently 21 cases discussed at the ASB, Youth Violence and Gangs Case conference. | - |
| | | | -New cases received during the quarter | Low | 95 | 107 | 165 | - | | - |
| 3.1b | | | -Current open cases at the end of the quarter | Low | 17 | 11 | 21 | - | | - |
| 3.1c | | | -Cases closed in the quarter | High | 106 | 102 | 155 | - | | - |
| 3.2 | Community Safety | Cllr. Helena Maxfield | Number of referrals made regarding vulnerability by participating organisations at the Daily Hub | High | 32 | 36 | 36 | - | A total number of 36 referrals were made from Daily Hub meetings that have taken place over the period 1 July – 30 September 2020. | - |
| 3.3 | Culture & Arts | Cllr. Jill Waring | Number of people visiting the museum | High | 21,847 Qtr 2 (38,622 cumulative) | 0 | 1577 | (59,000 cumulative) | The museum closed due to COVID-19 on March 20th and therefore there were no visitors until its reopening on July 27. The museum is currently open 4 hours each weekday and is having an average of 30 visitors each afternoon. Similarly, the swimming pool remains closed at J2 too. | - |
| 3.4 | Leisure | Cllr. Jill Waring | Number of people accessing leisure and recreational facilities | High | 146,029 Qtr 2 (287,608 cumulative) | - | - | (600,000 cumulative) | | - |
| 3.5 | Leisure | Cllr. Jill Waring | Net growth in J2 Membership (Quarterly) | High | -2.35% (2955) | - | - | (3,250 members) 6.31% Annual | | - |

Priority 4: A Town Centre for All

Progress Summary

For this quarter, the results demonstrate a varying level of activity and further comments are detailed in this report.

A summary of progress with planned activities for this priority from the Council Plan 2018-2022 are as follows:-

- **Prepare a Town Centre Strategy**

The Council was successful in progressing to the full Business Case stage of the Future High Street Fund and has also been invited to take part in the Town Deal. For the Future High Streets Fund the Council commissioned Stantec to assist in the development of the Business Case in line with MHCLG requirements. The final bid was approved and submitted at the end of July 2020. At the end of Quarter 2, MHCLG asked for further information to be submitted and this is due to be submitted in Quarter 3, when notification of the bid outcome is also anticipated.

In Quarter 2, the partners have come together to establish the Town Deal Board and continued to work with the appointed consultants AECOM on development of the Town Investment Plan. At this time, the Town Deal Board agreed that it would submit the Town Investment Plan as a part of cohort 3 in January 2021. This is to allow for the notification of the Future High Street Fund bid and also to allow further refinement of project proposals. The Government has also offered all Town Deal additional 'accelerated funding' to deliver quick win projects, which have to be completed by end March 2021. The council and Newcastle Town Deal Board have been working with AECOM to develop a suite of early interventions to use this additional funding in a way that is in line with the Town investment Plan proposals.

- **Market**

The Service Improvement Plan for the market was presented at the June 2019 Cabinet and the Economic Development & Enterprise Scrutiny Committee where it was approved with recommendations noted and for delivery in 12 months. The Town Centre Officer has been appointed and progress made in delivering the improvement plan, this has included moving some of the stalls to the southern side of the Guildhall where there is greater footfall and to enable use of the stalls for the farmers market. Plans were also made to focus on specialist markets such as the successful Continental Market. During Quarter 1 market activity was suspended and with the absence of the market, an opportunity was taken to appoint a contractor to install lighting on market stalls in the upper market area. Unused market stalls at the lower end of the market were also removed to condense the market to the more popular northern area. Six weeks free rent was given to traders by the Council when they returned from Lockdown restrictions upon the reduced-day market opening in June. An additional Visiting Market of a new Sunday Record Fair attended July, August and September. The Town Centre action group continues to meet on a quarterly basis.

- **Business Support**

Work continues in signposting business queries to the Growth Hub and maintenance of Business support pages on website. The Business pages on the website continue to be updated in the light of Covid-19 to signpost businesses to sources of information and support. Around 900 business have contacted the council for business advice via the online form since March 2020, plus additional queries by phone. In June, all contacts were sent a copy of the council's re-opening checklist, a link to add their details to the Shop Local page and a request to hold their contact details on file if they were interested in receiving a regular e-newsletter. Over 100 responded to this request, which gives an excellent starting point to keeping business updated in the future. Additionally, a Business Recovery page has been set up on the website, as well as a 'Shop Local' page aimed at giving consumers information about the re-opening of local businesses and the steps they are taking to protect customers. A specific business information Twitter account has also been set up. The Business Boost competition will not be going ahead in 2020 but will be re-launched in 2021 with a revised format, focusing on businesses who have survived and thrived during the pandemic.

Progress Summary continued

▪ **Parking Policy**

The Council adopted a new Car Parking Strategy in 2019/20. The Council is working to establish card payments on the pay and display car parks which has included the purchase of 12 ticket machines, these were due to be installed at the end of March however the manufacturer had unfortunately placed production on hold due to Covid. Four of the new machines have now been installed and will be commissioned on 12th October, with the other 8 anticipated to follow shortly afterwards. The Council has also commenced in quarter 1 the procurement of a new contractor for the delivery of a mobile phone APP to enable drivers to pay for their parking and extend without the need to return to their cars. The 3 month notice has been served on the current contractor with the intention of the new service commencing in Quarter 3. This replacement service is running to programme, with the changeover taking place on 24th October.

▪ **Establish Town Centre Communications Group**

The Town Centre Communication Group has recommenced following the Head of Communication leaving their post. A Zoom meeting is scheduled each quarter with the first meeting held on Tuesday 29 September. The group consists of Borough Council (both Town Centre Officer and Communications Manager), Business Improvement District, Hitmix Radio, Newcastle College (NSCG), New Vic Theatre, Babababoon. Hitmix attended all three Record Fairs held in July, August and September and promoted the event on their radio broadcasts.

▪ **Develop a Kidsgrove Town Centre Investment Plan**

Partners have come together to form a Kidsgrove Town Deal Board (KTDB) which has continued to meet monthly. This is supported by the appointed consultants, AECOM, who continue to lead and develop the Kidsgrove Town Investment Plan with the Town Deal Board. The Investment Plan will review and build on existing plans where appropriate; create the conditions for further investment; and realise lasting and sustainable benefits for the area's residents and businesses. The Government has also offered all Town Deal additional 'accelerated funding' to deliver quick win projects, which have to be completed by end March 2021. The council and KTDB have been working with AECOM to develop a suite of early interventions to use this additional funding in a way that will enhance the projects being included in the Investment Plan.

| Ref | Service Area | Portfolio Holder | Indicator | Good is | Result Qtr 2 2019-20 | Result Qtr 1 2020-21 | Result Qtr 2 2020-21 | Target Qtr 2 2020-21 | How have we performed? | Status |
|-----|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|--|---------|----------------------|----------------------|---|----------------------|--|--------|
| 4.1 | Regeneration & Economic Development | Cllr. Stephen Sweeney | Car parking usage:- Number of tickets purchased | High | 119,779 | - | 67,649 | - | Charges for car parking were suspended in Qtr 1 due to COVID-19. | - |
| 4.2 | Regeneration & Economic Development | Cllr. Simon Tagg | Footfall (data provided by Newcastle BID) | High | 822,302 | 211,612 | 541,658 | - | Footfall for this quarter is 66% of the figure for the same quarter last year. | - |
| 4.3 | Regeneration & Economic Development | Cllr. Stephen Sweeney | Average stall occupancy rate for markets | High | 42% | - | Overall 61% Monday GM 17% Tuesday AFG 93% Wednesday GM 18% Thursday AFG 74% Friday GM 52% Farmers Mkt 93% Saturday GM 51% Record Fair Mkt 87% | 60% | The markets were suspended at the beginning of lockdown but have recommenced now. When considering the overall average for all trading days it must be remembered that some markets are monthly and others four times a week. | - |

N/A Performance information not available at this time or due to be provided at a later date



Performance is not on target but direction of travel is positive



Performance is not on target where targets have been set



Performance is on or above target