

Corporate Performance Quarter 4 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 continues to maintain services by encouraging customer self-service via the website, and through effective call centre support to answer questions, provide information and support residents of the Borough at this difficult time. During Qtr. 4 Customer Services at Castle House was closed to the public, but all customer enquiries were handled efficiently with all the digital processes in place.

- **Customer Services Activity**

Quarter 4 is normally a very busy period in Customer Services due to the volumes of documents that are legally required to be issued with regards to Council Tax, Business Rates and Housing Benefits. However, this quarter we have increased traffic with regards to the Census, Elections, Landfill complaints, Covid Business Grants (including the restart grants) and the Taxi Driver grants. With the return of Newcastle Housing Advice, back to the Borough Council, from 1/4/2021, we have created a digital process for the 1500 registrations but further customer support has been required.

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

The new recycling service has been fully operational for nearly nine months, to households across the borough, and continues to prove very popular with residents. Participation and tonnage of material collected has continued to rise, with January and March seeing the highest tonnage collected since 2010. This means the tonnage of recycling material collected is 23.18% higher than that collected with the previous service. The quality of the material collected remains excellent, with very little contamination, and the Council receiving excellent feedback from the re-processing contractors used to recycle the various material streams. During this quarter we have seen the value of the separately collected paper and card increase significantly in value, reflecting again the excellent quality of the material collected from residents.

- **Establish Workforce Strategy:**

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

Work has continued across services in the development of this area of work. As work develops towards detailed design of the One Council transformation, the People Team will continue the focus on alignment of vision and people processes in partnership with the Trades Unions.

- **Develop organisational culture**

HR have commenced a programme of cultural development, working with cross sections of the organisation and with Trade Union colleagues, in line with the principles of One Council.




- **Ensure staff wellbeing**





Due to the changed working conditions for many staff this year, the focus has been to ensure the support of mental health and wellbeing of staff during this time continues and our support and counselling services are available. In partnership with the Trade Unions, the Mental Health working group has continued to develop initiatives to support its agenda.







Progress Summary continued

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

We continue to develop our People Policies in discussion with the Trade Unions and have agreed policies on Dying to Work and Attendance Management.

Ref	Service Area	Portfolio Holder	Indicator	Good is	Result Qtr. 4 2019-20	Result Qtr. 3 2020-21	Result Qtr. 4 2020-21	Target Qtr. 4 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	088% (10 out of 1138 published premises)	-	-	5%	Delivery of this planned programme was prevented during the Covid lockdown. It has recommenced on a limited programme due to prioritising Covid activities, in excess of 60 Food inspections have now been completed. In excess of 1,356 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	97%	-	-	-		-
1.3 New	Environmental Health	Cllr. Stephen Sweeney	No. Accidents/Incidents reported (RIDDOR)	Low	1	0	1	-	There has only been one incident reported this quarter.	-
1.4a	Recycling & Fleet	Cllr. Trevor Johnson	Household collections from the kerbside (%):- • Dry Recycling	High	20.24%	23.19%	28.06%	20%	Quarter 4 has seen collected tonnage of recycling increase further and residual waste return to more normal levels following the impact of Covid which significantly affected performance in the first two quarters. However levels are around 11% higher than in the previous year, a trend which is in line with many other LA collection services. Separate food waste collections were re-introduced part way through quarter 2, and tonnages are rising steadily towards pre Covid levels.	
1.4b			• Food	High	5.86%	3.38%	4.28%	5%		
1.4c			• Amount of residual Waste per household	Low	103.64 kg's	108.45	112.21kg's	107.5kgs (per household) cumulative		

Ref	Service Area	Portfolio Holder	Indicator	Good is	Result Qtr. 4 2019-20	Result Qtr. 3 2020-21	Result Qtr. 4 2020-21	Target Qtr. 4 2020-21	How have we performed?	Status
1.4d	Operations	Cllr. Trevor Johnson	Number of missed kerbside collections:- Total (per 100,000 collections)	Low	76.54	90.41	103.54	80 (per 100,000 collections)	In this quarter there were a total of 1,573,376 collections of residual, garden waste, recycling and food. Missed collections of Residual- 419, Garden Waste – 86, Recycling- 587, and food waste - 537. The rates have risen slightly this quarter, particularly in January when we had bad weather and snow. Figures for March are very low, and hopefully this performance will continue downwards. That said the percentage of successful collections for this quarter is 99.897%	
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	93.77% 93.56% 99.78% 100%	95.44% 95.83% 99.05% 100%	97.53% 95.76% 99.47% 100%	91% 91% 97% 99%	The surveys were postponed earlier in the year due to Covid situation The first and second tranche results are detailed here.	
1.6	Customer & ICT	Cllr. Simon Tagg	Percentage of requests resolved at first point of contact	High	99%	99.66%	99.66%	97%	With improved digital processes, customers continue to receive an excellent service, with most contacts dealt with 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	12.15%	18.03%	18.06%	10%	This quarter has seen increased activity due to the Census, Annual Council Tax bills and benefit notification, Business Rates, Elections and the new Housing Advice Service with over 43,000 calls answered. Added to this we are the first point of contact for all Covid type enquiries and support the Business Grants and Test & Trace programme of work. Compared to Qtr 4 2019-20, the number of calls to Customer Services this quarter has increased by 21.2%,	

Ref	Service Area	Portfolio Holder	Indicator	Good is	Result Qtr. 4 2019-20	Result Qtr. 3 2020-21	Result Qtr. 4 2020-21	Target Qtr. 4 2020-21	How have we performed?	Status
1.7	Customer & ICT	Cllr. Simon Tagg	% Unmet demand (number of calls not answered as a % of total call handling volume)	-	-	-	-	-	Continued:- and it should be noted that the number of calls answered also increased by 21.8% - nearly 8,000 more.	-
1.8	Digital Delivery	Cllr. Simon Tagg	Total number of digital on-line transactions (Jadu).	High	20,581	20,096	23,516	-	The number of transactions have increased significantly this quarter.	-
1.9	Communication	Cllr. Simon Tagg	Total number of unique users to the website	High	107,005	136,869	107,288	79,500	There was a total of 107,288 unique users in this quarter, which is similar to 107,005 in Qtr 4, 2019-20.	
1.10	Revenues & Benefits	Cllr. Stephen Sweeney	Time taken to process Housing/Council Tax Benefit new claims and change events	Low	2.56 days	4.6 days	9.45 days	10 days	This result continues to be on target.	
1.11	Revenues & Benefits	Cllr. Stephen Sweeney	Percentage of Council Tax collected	High	97.3%*	76.6%	96.8%	76.08%	The rate for Council Tax collection and Business rates is well above target	
1.12	Revenues & Benefits	Cllr. Stephen Sweeney	Percentage of National non-domestic rates collected	High	99.47%	75.2%*	89.2%	78.66%		
1.13	Human Resources	Cllr. Simon Tagg	Average number of days per employee lost to sickness	Low	8.62 days	2.25 days* Qtr. 3 6.51 days (cumulative)	1.48 days Qtr. 4 7.99 days (cumulative)	2.2 days Qtr. 3 6.6 days (cumulative)	The result for Qtr. 4 sickness figure is 1.48 days, well within tolerance of the target of 2.2 days. The cumulative result of 7.99 days for the 12 months is well within target. The short term and long term sickness results for the quarter are 0.26 and 1.22 days respectively. It was anticipated that sickness absence may increase due to Covid-19 but that has not been the case.	
1.14 New	Human Resources	Cllr. Simon Tagg	Staff turnover	Low	4.19%	1.27%	1.47%	10%	The annual turnover rate is 5.04%.	

1.15 New	Human Resources	Cllr. Simon Tagg	Staff vacancy rates	Low	5.08%	6.94%	7.14%	-	-
-------------	--------------------	---------------------	---------------------	-----	-------	-------	-------	---	---

*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**

Following a review of continued working on the Joint Local Plan with Stoke at the end of 2020 and into the beginning of 2021, the Council decided to cease work on that document and commence a Local Plan for the Borough. No further work is proposed for the old plan.

- **Deliver Borough Local Plan**

In January, work commenced on the creation of a new Borough Local Plan. The three key milestones are the publication of the Issues and Options Paper in September 2021; the first draft of the Local Plan in autumn 2022 and the submission of the amended draft to the Planning Inspectorate in the summer of 2023 with the aim of securing adoption by the end of that year. An updated Local Development Scheme (LDS) which sets out the new programme has been published and an update to the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is out to consultation.

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

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 has agreed a grant action plan with MHCLG.

- **Progress University Growth Corridor**

The Council has revised its plans for the consultancy support that was reported last quarter and are now looking into how a development partner might be procured with a view to that partner developing and being directly involved in the sustainable energy provision and future home standards infrastructure on the site as well as assisting on the master planning work. Homes England continue to be involved and are showing an interest in our progress with an eye on how they contribute to the process.

- **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 year the Council worked 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 and Officers propose to incorporate future reporting on activity of the statutory functions delivered by the NHA service into future reporting. An internal working group was created to manage the transition back to the Council and will be continued to ensure that continuous improvement can be made, with the support of ICT, HR and Customer Services. The NHA service is being managed within the Partnerships Team and has a strategic fit with the Council’s work around vulnerability. The Council is ensuring that the service can be supported by Customer Services and it will be actively participating in the One Council agenda to identify service efficiencies. The NHA service has also recently launched a new Joint Housing register and Allocations Policy in partnership with Aspire Housing, branded as NHA Options (see below).

Progress Summary continued

- **Rough Sleepers and temporary accommodation**

The Navigator role continues to be successful supporting rough sleepers and navigating them into appropriate support pathways and accommodation. The Council have been notified by MHCLG to expect continued funding for this role and as such the role has been advertised as a 12 months opportunity and recruitment is currently underway. Using the MHCLG funding, the Council are also working with the City Council to recruit a shared Rough Sleepers Co-ordinator and Healthcare Worker. Following approval of the Council's Temporary Accommodation Policy, Officers are working with MHCLG and partners on the development of a range of options for the coming year. Two units of unsupported emergency temporary accommodation have been created with Aspire Housing and a further two units are being pursued. The exclusive arrangement for intensive temporary accommodation for single complex needs over the initial COVID period, in response to the Everyone in instruction have now come to an end and Officers are exploring alternative options with partners, subject to available budgets, available external funding and satisfying procurement and financial regulation principles. The SWEP protocol has now come to an end for the year and will be hibernated until October.

- **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. The joint policy enables customers 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 has procured a joint Choice Based Letting (CBL) system during 2020/21 that will deliver the platform for the administration function of the housing register and advertising available housing stock. This allows customers to make one application for social housing, a greatly improved approach compared to our current systems requiring 2 applications.

- **One Public Estate**

The Borough Council received a grant from 'One Public Estate' to cover the cost of undertaking the masterplanning of Knutton Village. This involved 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 also contributed to the Study with a view to reviewing provision of affordable housing in the area, including housing for the elderly. Consultation on the draft masterplan has been completed and the results are currently being reviewed by the project team. Once complete, a further report will provide the results and detail the financial implications arising from the proposals. Elements of the Knutton masterplan are included in the draft Town Deal Town Investment Plan which will be submitted in January 2021.

- **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; Keele Golf Course and Birchenwood**

The masterplan in respect of land in the Chatterley Close area, Bradwell was considered by Cabinet in November 2020. The scheme to extend the Crematorium was approved in principle and approval was given to consult with appropriate stakeholders. The consultation is now complete and the results will be reported to the Cabinet meeting in July. Keele masterplan was approved in principle last year and is subject to consideration as part of the development of the Borough Local Plan. Bev I think this is covered in University Growth Corridor above 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 negotiations are ongoing to dispose of the site.

Ref	Service Area	Portfolio Holder	Indicator	Good is	Result Qtr. 4 2019-20	Result Qtr. 3 2020-21	Result Qtr. 4 2020-21	Target Qtr. 4 2020-21	How have we performed?	Status
2.1	Property	Cllr Stephen Sweeney	Percentage of investment portfolio vacant (NBC owned)	Low	8.3%	5.1%	5.1%	12%	This indicator remains well within target.	
2.2	Planning & Development	Cllr. Paul Northcott	Speed of major development applications (P151a)	High	80% (Apr 2018-Mar 2020)	90.9% (Jan 19 - Dec 20)	92.6% (Apr 19 – Mar 21)	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	1.6% (Jan 2017 – Dec 2018)	5.1% (Oct 17 - Sept 19)	5.4% (Jan 18 – Dec 20)	10%		
2.4			Speed of non-major development applications (P153)	High	87.5% (Apr 2018 – Mar 2020)	93.0% (Jan 19 - Dec 20)	95.6% (Apr 19 – Mar 21)	70%		
2.5			Quality of non-major development applications (P154)	Low	0.9% (Jan 2017 – Dec 2018)	1.0% (Oct 17 - Sept 19)	0.9% (Jan 18 – Dec 20)	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**

The main pool has now been repaired and this has resulted in a positive uptake of public swimming sessions and swim lessons. Significant works to the roof at Jubilee2 have been completed by Morgan Sindall and the impact of these will be monitored over the next few months, to ensure the integrity of the repairs.

- **Jubilee2 moving forward**

The service has secured funding to be part of Sport England's National Leisure Recovery Fund and use of the Moving Communities project to measure impact. This will enable the benching marking id Jubilee2 using qualitative and quantitative data. Officers will prepare a report on this as the information becomes available on a quarterly basis with effect from the 2nd quarter of 2021." More information can be found at : <https://youtu.be/E3oixmYVDNA>

- **Secure J2 commercialisation**

Despite the Covid 19- pandemic, the impact on the membership at Jubilee2 is in line with the local and national average. A detailed business recovery plan has now been completed which identifies opportunities to increase income and or reduce operating costs, subject to a detailed business case for each opportunity these will be implemented over the next twelve months.

- **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 commenced in December as planned after completion of the property transfer from Staffordshire County Council in November. Hopefully, the main works will commence in April 2021 subject to budget / costs being satisfactory, with completion scheduled in early 2022.

- **Secure funds for Museum Extension**

The contractor started on site on March 1st. The work should take 21 weeks. Once it is complete the redesign of the museum ground floor display, installation of new stores and public spaces will begin. The museum will reopen to the public in late 21/early 22 (COVID allowing). The museum have a presence in J2 from May 19.

- **Open Space Strategy**

Due to the pandemic, the Heart of England in Bloom campaign and all local Newcastle in Bloom competitions and activities were suspended for 2020. However, sponsorship from local businesses continued at near-normal levels and the intention is to roll most of the planned activities forward to 2021, depending on Covid 19 restrictions. Digital judging will take place in 2021, and the council intends to participate in the campaign in the amended format, as well as running the Newcastle in Bloom competitions digitally. A total of 6 of the Borough's strategic parks and cemeteries achieved Green Flag status this year, and 7 have been entered for 2021.

Progress Summary continued

- **Streetscene Fleet procurement**

Procurement of fleet and equipment for Streetscene is progressing, with tenders invited for 1 large road sweeper and another procured.

- **Feasibility study for Crematorium extension**

The feasibility study for the crematorium extension was linked into the masterplanning commission for the Chatterley Close area which has been completed. A report was considered by Cabinet and public consultation took place on the proposals in early 2021. The results will be considered by the Finance, Assets and Scrutiny Committee at their June meeting.

- **Affordable Funeral Scheme**

Cabinet have approved a Resident Funeral scheme and a suite of tender documents has been issued to local suppliers. An option for Direct Cremation has been included in the tender package and it is intended to launch the scheme in summer 2021, subject to suitable tenders being received in June.

- **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 approved by Licensing and Public Protection committee for implementation from April 2021.

- **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, but it will continue into 2021/22.

- **Town Centre ASB enforcement**

A range of Partnership activity continued to be co-ordinated this quarter, including; the CCTV implementation and monitoring; identifying ASB hotspot areas and target hardening to make more secure and increase perceptions of safety for the public. Activity is co-ordinated by the Partnerships Team working closely with partners such as the Police and Rough Sleepers Team to identify individuals in need of support and 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, as appropriate. As part of the Covid-19 'Everyone In' response, the Council provided additional accommodation and support to Rough Sleepers to encourage engagement where possible, which is being co-ordinated by the new Navigator post.

Progress Summary

- **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, the system is now live in Newcastle town centre with further enhancements planned using town deal funding for additional coverage in the subways.

- **Vulnerability Hub and MARAC**

The Partnerships team regularly actively co-ordinate and contribute to the Vulnerability Hub and MARAC multi agency forums, which are designed to collaboratively de-escalate risk to our most vulnerable households, to prevent death and serious harm and to encourage appropriate support and assistance from the most relevant partners.

- **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. The outline business case has been presented to Economy, Environment and Place Scrutiny Committee and approved at Cabinet. Subject to approval by partners and the Joint Air Quality Unit at Government, work upon preparation of the Full Business Case will be progressed. Work on the retrofitting of busses operating on the A53 is well underway and is nearing completion.

Ref	Service Area	Portfolio Holder	Indicator	Good is	Result Qtr. 4 2019-20	Result Qtr. 3 2020-21	Result Qtr. 4 2020-21	Target Qtr. 4 2020-21	How have we performed?	Status
3.1a	Community Safety	Cllr. Gill Heesom	Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) cases:-						There are currently 33 cases discussed at the ASB, Youth Violence and Gangs Case conference.	-
			-New cases received during the quarter	Low	71	106	82	-		-
3.1b			-Current open cases at the end of the quarter	Low	6	37	33	-		-
3.1c			-Cases closed in the quarter	High	71	90	87	-		-
3.2	Community Safety	Cllr. Gill Heesom	Number of referrals made regarding vulnerability by participating organisations at the Daily Hub	High	27	50	47	-	A total number of 47 referrals were made from Daily Hub meetings that have taken place over the last quarter.	-
3.3	Culture & Arts	Cllr. Jill Waring	Number of people visiting the museum	High	8599* Qtr 4 (57300 cumulative)	-	-	(59,000 cumulative)	Third lockdown started on January 5 and building work started at the museum on March 1 so no visits were recorded for this quarter.	-
3.4	Leisure	Cllr. Jill Waring	Number of people accessing leisure and recreational facilities	High	118,667 Qtr 4 (545,516 cumulative)	-	-	(600,000 cumulative)	Similarly, the activities at the J2 leisure facility were affected too. Despite the Covid 19 pandemic, the impact on the membership at Jubilee2 is in line with the local and national average.	-
3.5	Leisure	Cllr. Jill Waring	Net growth in J2 Membership (Quarterly)	High	-5.17% (2899 members)	-	-	(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 has successfully bid for Future High Street Funding and has received an in principle offer letter for £11 million, further information is to be submitted to MHCLG in this quarter, following which a funding agreement will be reached. This will enable redevelopment of the Ryecroft area of the town centre. For Town Deal, the Town Deal Board, which was established with partners has worked with the appointed consultants AECOM to develop a Town Investment Plan which was submitted at the end of January 2021. The draft town Investment Plan includes projects in the key strands of digital, transport, gateway sites and culture. The Government also offered all Town Deals additional 'accelerated funding' to deliver quick win projects, which have demonstrated early progress on project delivery.

Market

- Plans are focussed on increasing the number of specialist visiting markets such as the successful Continental Market, and late 2020 a Castle Artisan Market and a Record Fair were held on a Sunday with high take up of stalls and excellent visitor numbers, both have remained popular monthly markets. The "Love Local" evening market was held in December and explored the feasibility of running later markets in the Town Centre. Discussions remain with Stafford's "Walking Street" organiser to bring a monthly evening market to our town. During Quarter 4 market activity was reduced due to a second Lockdown. Work commenced on installing lighting to lower market stalls which will create a fully lit market and power output to enable entertainment where unused stalls have been removed.

- **Business Support**

The Council has joined a partnership with Staffordshire County Council to support the £5 million 'Staffordshire Means back to Business' package of support for small businesses and apprentices and additionally to support up to 27 local micro businesses with a year's membership of the Federation of Small Business. 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.. The Covid-19 Business Support pages on the website are revised as necessary for updates on business support grants. Additionally links on the business page were refreshed for businesses looking for information on the end of the Brexit Transition Period. A specific business information Twitter account has also been set up. The Business Boost competition did not go 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.

- **Parking Policy**

The Council adopted a new Car Parking Strategy in 2019/20. Twelve new ticket machines were due to be installed at the end of March however the manufacturer had unfortunately placed production on hold due to Covid. This quarter, the installations were completed and in operation by the end of October 2020, with the facility to pay by card – either chip or contactless, as well as by cash. The contract to pay for parking by phone happened as planned too in October. This service is now with one of the leading providers in the country, PaybyPhone.

Progress Summary continued

- **Establish Town Centre Communications Group**

The Town Centre Communication Group continues following the Head of Communication leaving his post. Zoom meetings are scheduled each quarter with the most recent being in March. The group consists of Borough Council (both Town Centre Officer and Communications Manager), Business Improvement District, Hitmix Radio, Newcastle College (NSCG), New Vic Theatre, and BaBaBaboon. Two additions to the group are Elaine Needham, Head of Communications at Aspire and Heather Dowler, General Manager at Appetite.

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

Partners formed a Kidsgrove Town Deal Board (KTDB) which was supported by the appointed consultants, AECOM, to develop the Kidsgrove Town Investment Plan. 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 Kidsgrove town Investment Plan was submitted to MHCLG at the end of October 2020 and in March 2021 confirmation of a £16.9 million award was received. The Council is currently working with stakeholders to submit necessary paperwork back to MHCLG to proceed to the next steps of delivery on the Town investment Plan. . The Government has also offered all Town Deal additional 'accelerated funding' to deliver quick win projects, which has been used to deliver a suite of early interventions to enhance the projects included in the Investment Plan

Ref	Service Area	Portfolio Holder	Indicator	Good is	Result Qtr. 4 2019-20	Result Qtr. 3 2020-21	Result Qtr. 4 2020-21	Target Qtr. 4 2020-21	How have we performed?	Status
4.1	Regeneration & Economic Development	Cllr. Stephen Sweeney	Car parking usage:-Number of tickets purchased	High	100,209	59,019	30,077	-	Lockdown in Qtr. 4 impacted on ticket sales for this period.	-
4.2	Regeneration & Economic Development	Cllr. Simon Tagg	Footfall	High	675,820	502,880	209,441	-	Footfall for this quarter is nearly 31% of the figure for the same quarter last year due to the lockdown in Qtr 4 of this year.	-
4.3	Regeneration & Economic Development	Cllr. Stephen Sweeney	Average stall occupancy rate for markets	High	-	Monday GM 17% Tuesday AFG 94% Wednesday GM 18% Thursday AFG 76% Friday GM 44% Farmers Mkt 73% Saturday GM 42% Castle Artisan Market 100%	Monday GM 4% Tuesday AFG nil* Wednesday GM 4% Thursday AFG nil* Friday GM 13% Saturday GM 15% *Antique Market closed for duration of Q4 due to Lockdown restrictions	-	Due to Government restrictions on the sale of non-essential goods, some of the markets were reduced such as the Tuesday and Thursday Antique Markets, When considering the overall average for all trading days it must be remembered that some markets are monthly and others four times a week.	-

*The result is within tolerance

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