

## **Appendix 1**

### **Performance Report Quarter 1 – 2020/21**

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## Performance Indicator Tables Explanatory Note

There are two different types of performance tables contained within this report:

1. Summary Performance table – this provides an at glance view of performance in relation to Tier 1 indicators in each priority and;
2. Individual Priority Performance tables – this presents data for both Tier 1 and Tier 2 measures in each priority for the quarter. Further quarter's data will be added into subsequent reports over the year.

A Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rating is used on the Summary table, as well as for the performance figures on the individual priority tables. Where there is data but no colour, this indicates that a target was not previously set as the indicator was not hitherto reported to Cabinet. The RAG rating indicates whether performance has met or exceeded target (green), did not meet target but was within a 5% tolerance (amber), or did not meet target by more than 5% (red).

The Direction of Travel (DOT) symbol compares performance from the last reported period, to the most recent reported performance. This indicates whether the latest reported performance data is either an improvement on the data from when last reported (arrow pointing up), the same as the last reported data (dash symbol), or worse than the last reported data (arrow pointing down).

The colour of the DOT symbol correlates as to whether the target was met (as set out above). For example, a green arrow pointing down would show that an indicator was on target for the month/quarter, but performance was down on the last reported period.

On the individual priority tables, the '% Variance from Target' column shows the percentage variance between the latest reported data and the target for that month.

The Comparative Performance column provided in both the summary and individual priority tables provides a judgment (where available) on the performance of an indicator compared to a suitable family comparator group. On this column, the following applies: Green = First Quartile; Yellow = Second Quartile; Amber = Third Quartile; Red = Fourth Quartile. *It should be noted that the quartile performance does not relate to performance within the quarter but reflects St Helens' position for the indicator against a comparator group when the last nationally verified data was published.*

However, some caution should be applied to comparative performance data. The quartile positions given for St Helens - compared to peer authorities - is at a given moment in time, when the last nationally verified and published information was made available. In most instances within this report the latest comparative data relates to 2018/19. It is possible that since this time the relative performance of St Helens and its comparator authorities may have subsequently changed.

Equally, although 'first quartile' is the preferred outcome, in some instances the quartile comparative position does not necessarily equate to a judgement on good or bad performance. It should therefore be viewed in the context of the performance of other linked measures. For example, top quartile performance in terms of a low rate of children subject to a Child Protection Plan would need to be viewed within the context of other measures such as referral rates and Section 47 rates.






## Priority Performance Summary

Although subject to future review, the Tier 1 performance measures are those reported to Cabinet in 2019/20 recast against the priorities of the Draft Council Plan. The table below provides an overview of performance for those measures where new data was available as at Quarter 1 2020/21.

Tier 1 Performance - Quarter 1 - 2020/21						
Portfolio	Reference	Performance Indicator	Performance vs. Target	DOT	Comparative Performance	
Ensure Children and Young People have a positive start in life	CYP-01	Children in need (CIN)			4th Quartile	<b>KEY - Performance vs Target</b> On or better than target Off target within 5% Off target  <b>KEY - Comparative Target</b> First Quartile Second Quartile Third Quartile Fourth Quartile  <b>KEY - Direction of Travel (DOT)</b> Better than the last reported period Worse than the last reported period No change from last reported period First reported period
	CYP-02	Looked after children (LAC)			4th Quartile	
	CYP-40 (new)	Children subject to a Child Protection Plan (CPP)			3rd Quartile	
	CYP-41 (new)	Referrals to children's social care			3rd Quartile	
	E&S-25a	NEET & Not Known			4th Quartile	
Promote good health, independence and care across our communities	ASC-18	Permanent admissions to residential care			2nd Quartile	
	ASC-20a	All delayed transfer of care	Data collection currently suspended by NHS		1st Quartile	
	PH-25 (new)	Mortality rate due to suicide			4th quartile	
	PH-48	Admissions for alcohol specific conditions	CCG currently unable to provide data		4th quartile	
	PH-52 (new)	Emergency hospital admissions for falls	CCG currently unable to provide data		N/A	
Create safe and strong communities for our residents	SC-01	Repeat MARAC			N/A	
Support a strong, diverse and well-connected local economy	G&P-01	Rate of employment			1st Quartile	
	G&P-06	Town Centre retail vacancies			N/A	
	G&P-09	Increases in dwelling stock			N/A	
Create a green, thriving and vibrant place to be proud of	ENV-02	Percentage of household waste sent for recycling	Quarter 1 Data currently delayed		4th Quartile	
Be a modern, efficient and effective Council	CS-01	Council Tax collection			4th Quartile	
	CS-02	Sickness Absence			1st Quartile	
	CS-03	Business rate collection			4th Quartile	
	CS-14a	Satisfaction with Council Contact Centre			N/A	

## Priority Performance Summary Continued

The table below highlights those measures of performance where the latest comparative performance is either 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> quartile and where direction of travel, from the last reported period to the most recent reported performance in quarter 1, is not showing improvement.

Ref	Performance Indicator	DOT	Comparative Performance	Year of Comparative Data
<b>A Positive Start in Life</b>				
<b>Tier 1</b>				
CYP-02	Number of looked after children per 10,000 children within the Borough		4th Quartile	2018/19
E&S-25a	Percentage of young people academic age 16-17 not in education, employment or training and not known combined		4th Quartile	2019/20
<b>Tier 2</b>				
CYP-24	Average time (in days) between a LA receiving court authority to place a child and the LA deciding on a match to an adoptive family		4th Quartile	2018/19
PH-04	Under 18 conception rate per 1,000 15-17 year old (3 year rolling average)		4th Quartile	2018/19
<b>Green, Thriving, Vibrant</b>				
<b>Tier 2</b>				
ENV-07	Number of flytipping incidents		3rd Quartile	2018/19

## Priority 1 - Ensure children and young people have a positive start in life

### Objectives

- Every child will attend a good school and achieve their potential
- Support children and young people to build their confidence and resilience
- Support children and families with early help
- Safeguard children and young people from risk of harm and improve the lives of children in care.

### Progress against priority

#### *Education and Schools*

- The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on education and schools during Quarter 1 of 2020/21 has been profound, bringing unprecedented disruption to the education of children and young people across the borough.
- The Government announced that for the 2019/20 academic year national curriculum assessments across the primary sector would not take place due to the pandemic. All statutory external moderation duties undertaken by the local authority were therefore cancelled.
- In the secondary school sector, all Key Stage 4 (GCSE) and Post 16 exams (A levels) due to take place in summer 2020 were also cancelled. As a result, the DfES will not publish any school or college level educational performance data based on tests, assessments or exams for the 2019/2020 academic year.
- St Helens Education Recovery Group was quickly established to bring together all stakeholders across the education sector to develop a strategic response to the impact of the pandemic. This was a collaborative effort between the local authority, the education sector and unions. The initial focus of the group was to jointly plan for the phased expansion of children and young people returning to early years settings, schools and colleges and provide support for the most disadvantaged pupils. Several members of staff across Education services were re-deployed into schools to support these aims.
- During the initial phase of lockdown, all schools were able to offer educational provision for those children defined by the DfES as vulnerable, in receipt of an Education Health and Care Plan or those with parents/carers who are recognised key workers. PPE packs were delivered to all schools across the borough.
- Strong support was offered to all disadvantaged pupils. The SEND team was proactive in offering telephone check ins with all families of children with an Education Health and Care Plan which in some cases led to changes in support being offered. The Virtual School also continued to function and effectively champion the needs of Looked After Children. Laptops and routers were delivered to secondary / special schools for disadvantaged pupils in year 10. Provision was also provided to ensure children being educated at home had appropriate resources and were being safeguarded.
- The numbers of pupils attending schools in St Helens increased week on week as the final school term progressed, particularly the number of key worker children attending schools. As guidance from Government shifted in June, the majority of primary schools expanded provision to accommodate additional, non-priority group pupils, with the focus primarily centred on Year 6. Secondary schools in St Helens were also able to increase access to provide support to Year 10 and Year 12 pupils. By the first week in

July a total of 5,267, children and young people were attending a school in St Helens, 20% of the school age population. Approximately 30% of the primary school population, 5% of the secondary population and 30% of the special school population were in attendance. This is strong performance with feedback from the DfES placing St Helens in the top quartile of authorities for numbers of children attending school. St Helens was also ranked first in its statistical neighbour group for numbers of children with Education, Health and Care Plans attending school.

- St Helens Education Recovery Group also initiated planning for the longer-term recovery activity to re-build the resilience and capacity of the sector. A total of 6 workstreams have been established to examine different aspects of the support required for recovery. Action plans have been developed across these 6 areas covering Learning and the Curriculum, Support for Vulnerable Learners, Workforce Support and Planning, Early Learning and Childcare, Transition Planning Post-16 and Business Sustainability. Some of the key actions under development across these workstreams include:
  - Work has been ongoing to ensure all schools have suitable technology to support a blend of high quality on site and remote learning should face to face teaching in classrooms become limited again.
  - Support and resources have been provided to schools to assist the production of 'lost learning' recovery plans.
  - Work is ongoing to identify vulnerable learners who may have faced multiple barriers to learning during the period of school closure and provide additional and appropriate support to maximise their engagement and learning.
  - Resilience programmes, guidance and resources are being produced to support pupil's mental health and wellbeing and access to specialist support. Additional bereavement support services were recently commissioned
  - Pupil level teacher assessment judgements for Year 6 pupils are being collected and transferred to the appropriate secondary school where the pupils are due to attend in September 2020 to support transition. These are voluntary arrangements with schools choosing whether to participate, or not.
  - Work to support the post-16 transition into further education, training or work has been accelerated. This has included the provision of careers advice and guidance, personalised support to those most at risk of becoming NEET and ongoing work to ensure all 16-17-year olds have a September Guarantee offer in place.
  - Governor Forums have been supported to take place virtually to ensure governing bodies are fully updated prior to full opening of schools in September 2020.
  - A programme of work is underway to build parental confidence about risks associated with Covid-19 in educational settings to maximise the number of pupils returning to school in September through a local school attendance campaign.
  - Work is ongoing to ensure that transport is not a barrier to pupils attending school in September and that children and young people arrive at and return from school safely.

#### *Early Help and Children's Centres*

- Over the course of Quarter 1, St Helens Early Help Service and Children's Centres continued to provide ongoing support to children and families during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- To ensure the needs of families continued to be met, a review of all cases took place to inform the level of emotional and practical support provided to families. Plans have continued to be progressed through the continuation, where possible, of multi-agency

family action meetings. Priority has been applied to families who were likely to encounter additional pressure during “lockdown” because of domestic abuse and mental health concerns. The services continued to deliver direct work by adhering to social distancing measures and the use of technology. In addition, packs have been distributed to families providing child friendly information about Covid-19. This has helped greatly in supporting parents in explaining the current situation to children and young people, and alongside this, families have been provided with details of helplines and websites to support positive parenting, reduce family stress and keep children safe.

- Children’s Centres also continued to provide support and responded at very short notice to set up and facilitate emergency creche provision for the children of keyworkers. Programmes have continued to be delivered through virtual sessions, including speech and language and other areas of support, as well as delivering daily activities through the children’s centres Facebook page.

### *Resilience and Wellbeing*

- The PATHS programme (Barnardo’s social and emotional learning programme) continued to be delivered during the first quarter to 8 primary schools. Elements of the programme were extended to all primary schools due to Covid-19. A further 8 primary schools are scheduled to join the programme from September 2020.
- The Educational Psychology Service produced a guide for all schools on Transition and Recovery in the wake of Covid-19. This was also adapted for early years settings and has been shared with parents. The service will be visiting all schools at the beginning of term to offer support and help assess the impact of the pandemic on pupils.
- Public health work has continued despite challenges due to coronavirus. Since the pandemic, antenatal support has been provided virtually and this has been well received. The number of women discharged into infant feeding services increased by 94% between January and April 2020. This has been followed by improved outcomes, with breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks increasing by 10% between January and April 2020. Virtual support groups are now available, and service delivery is due to expand until 8pm on Monday to Friday.

### *Children’s Social Care*

- The priority for Children’s Social care has continued to be promoting the welfare, protection and care of children and young people and their families during the Covid-19 pandemic. Delivering services in this context has led to practice being delivered in new and creative ways, whilst continuing at the same time to meet the full range of statutory duties relating to children in need of help and protection. Examples of new and creative service delivery include:
  - The virtual operation of all multi-agency meetings such as Initial and Review child protection conferences, Looked After Children reviews and LADOs.
  - The adapted delivery model for the Edge of Care service, which has been offering family group conferencing to families.
  - The increased the level of contact with our care leavers and the increased direct and where necessary financial support, particularly to those care leavers who do not have a family and friend support network and may be feeling isolated.
  - The collaborative work on a regional basis to ensure children can access the range of placements needed during the pandemic.



- Social Work teams have continued to offer face to face visits for children looked after and those subject to a Child Protection and Child in Need plan. Compliance with review timescales remains strong at 98%, 99% and 97% respectively. Achieving permanence via adoption has been delayed due to court hearings being suspended which means there are 14 children awaiting a final adoption order and a further 12 awaiting a placement order. Care proceedings hearings have been delayed in a small number of contested cases. Looked After Children reviews and Child protection case conference have taken place within timescales albeit held virtually using the technology that has been made available to the Teams.
- There has been extensive staff engagement during the first quarter, with engagement sessions attended by over a 100 children's social care staff. The sessions focussed on working arrangements in the current Covid-19 context and allowed reflection on the immediate response to the pandemic, what can be taken forward into the new way of working, what has not worked well and the work that needs to be picked up again as soon as it is safe and possible. Discussions were very positive and have helped highlight many issues that are now being considering in future planning. This positive dialogue will be ongoing.
- Stability within the workforce has improved with 90% of social work vacancies filled on a permanent basis. This will provide improved continuity and consistency for the children and the basis on which practice can develop and improve.

## Performance Indicator Summary

### Ensure Children and Young People have a positive start in life - 2020/21

Tier	Ref	Performance Indicator	Higher / Lower is better?	Past Performance			20/21 Target	20/21 target reviewed?	Q1	Q1	Q1	% Variance from Target	DOT	Comparative Performance
				17/18 Outturn	18/19 Outturn	19/20 Outturn			April	May	June			
Tier 1	CYP-01	Rate of Children in Need per 10,000 0-17 population	Lower	429	492.9	478	485		444	454	439	9.48%	↑	4th Quartile
	CYP-02	Number of looked after children per 10,000 children within the Borough	Lower	121	129	134.8	125		133	134	134	-7.20%	↔	4th Quartile
	CYP-40 (new)	Rate of children subject to a Child Protection Plan per 10,000 under 18 year olds	Lower	34.7	59.5	56.3	55	Y	57	59	51	7.27%	↑	3rd Quartile
	CYP-41 (new)	Rate of referrals to children's social care per 10,000 under 18 year olds	Lower	506	589.7	805.4	600		N/A	N/A	152.5	-1.67%	↔	3rd Quartile
	E&S-25a	Percentage of young people academic age 16-17 not in education, employment or training and not known combined	Lower	6.5	6.1	5.6	8.4	Y	5.9	6.6	7	-16.67%	↓	4th Quartile
Tier 2	CYP-04	Rate of S47s per 10,000 population (cumulative)	Lower	148	288.4	255.2	195		20	36	52	-6.12%	↑	4th Quartile
	CYP-09	Percentage of re-referrals to Children's Social Care within 12 months of the previous referral	Lower	18	16	23.5	18		33	32	31	-72.22%	↑	2nd Quartile
	CYP-18	Percentage of children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time	Lower	9.9	19.3	25.9	16		N/A	N/A	17.9	-11.87%	↑	2nd Quartile
	CYP-23	Average number of days between entering care and being placed for adoption	Lower	553	480	572	440		N/A	N/A	541	-22.95%	↑	4th Quartile
	CYP-24	Average time (in days) between a LA receiving court authority to place a child and the LA deciding on a match to an adoptive family	Lower	303	222	272	140		N/A	N/A	282	-101.43%	↓	4th Quartile
	CYP-27a	Percentage of former care leavers aged 19-21 in suitable accommodation	Higher	92.9	89	90	95		N/A	N/A	97	2.11%	↑	1st Quartile
	CYP-28a	Percentage of former care leavers aged 19-21 in employment, education or training	Higher	49	49	47	66		N/A	N/A	76	15.15%	↑	3rd Quartile
	CYP-29	Percentage of Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans completed within a 20 week period	Higher	68.6	15.5	69	50		N/A	N/A	100	100.00%	↑	4th Quartile
	CYP-42	Percentage of S47s progressing on to an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC)	Lower	37	36.3	35	45		N/A	N/A	29	27.50%	↑	2nd Quartile
	CYP-43	Number of foster carers recruited by St Helens Council	Higher	1	6	4	20	Y	N/A	N/A	3	-40.00%	↔	N/A
	PH-04	Under 18 conception rate per 1,000 15-17 year old (3 year rolling average)	Lower	33.4	29.6	32.8	27		N/A	N/A	32.6	-16.43%	↓	4th Quartile
	PH-05	Percentage of infants being breastfed at 6-8 weeks	Higher	22.4	21.8	28.1	25		N/A	N/A	27.4	11.84%	↑	4th Quartile
	PH-22	Under 18 admissions to hospital for alcohol specific reasons per 100,000 population	Lower	99	98.8	73.4	81		CCG currently unable to provide data			-	N/A	4th Quartile

## Overview of Priority Performance

A total of 18 indicators were due to be reported in Quarter 1. Data cannot currently be provided for 1 of these measures as the CCG is currently reporting that they are unable to provide data in relation to hospital admissions for alcohol specific reasons. Of the remaining 17 indicators, 7 are reported as meeting target, whilst 10 are not meeting target, one of which is within a 5% tolerance of target. Of the 15 indicators where direction of travel can be determined, 11 are showing improvement on the previous reporting period in terms of variance from target, 1 is showing the same level of performance and 3 are showing a downturn in performance. The latest available picture of comparative performance relates to verified nationally published data for the financial year 2018/19. The comparators used for the children's social care measures are the 11 local authorities within the DfES family group. The comparators for the public health measures are the 16 authorities within the CIPFA nearest neighbour's family group. The comparative performance position remains challenging with 10 indicators in the 4<sup>th</sup> quartile and 3 in the third quartile. Around half of these measures are showing improvement in their current direction of travel.

## What is performing well

### *Children's Social Care*

- At the 30th June 2020 a total of 188 children and young people were being supported with a Child Protection (CP) Plan, equating to a rate of 51 children per 10,000 under 18-year olds, compared to a rate of 59.5 (219 children) in the same period in 2019/20. Over recent years the St Helens CP population numbers have altered markedly from being well above comparable national averages to well below and now to a position below the local target and in line with statistical neighbour averages. Increased scrutiny by the Conference Chairs and Heads of Service have enabled a more consistent application of thresholds within the department. The targets set for the current year have been set at a rate that the department believes represents a realistic population estimate, one that is aligned to comparable Statistical Neighbours.
- A total of 29 former relevant care leavers turned 19, 20 or 21 years old between April 2020 and June 2020 and the local authority was in touch with all of the young people at the time of their latest birthday. In total, at the time of the birthday for each young person, 28 of the 29 care leavers were living in suitable accommodation, which equates to a provisional performance figure of 97%, better than the same period last year (90%) and better than the most recent published national average of 85% in 2018-19. Performance is also top quartile for the peer group of authorities. A total of 22 of the 29 care leavers were engaged in Education, Employment or Training (EET). This equates to a provisional performance figure of 76% of care leavers, considerably better than the same period last year (52%) and better than the most recent published national average (2018/19), also 52%. Performance is an improving picture. The Council investment into the Care Leavers Service is now positively impacting as demonstrated in the Service performance and improvement.
- Performance in Quarter 1 2020/21 stands at 100% of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) produced within 20 weeks, considerably better than the same period last year (41%). In May, the Government introduced a temporary modification to the legislation regarding EHCPs to allow Covid-19 related exceptions to the 20-week requirement. The latest published comparative performance for the calendar year 2019, places St. Helens in the bottom quartile. However, if performance is maintained as per quarter 1 2020/21, St. Helens comparative position will be top quartile, demonstrating the effort and success of the team in improving performance.
- In the 2020/21 financial year a total of 190 Section 47 enquiries have thus far been initiated by St Helens Children's Social Services with 56 of those enquires completing and progressing to an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC). The proportion of

Section 47 enquiries completed and progressing to ICPC at the end of June 2020 stands at 29%, a lower S47 to ICPC conversion rate than reported in the previous year (36%) and below the local S47 to ICPC conversion target (40%). Performance is second quartile for its peer group. A review of application of S47 thresholds has been completed, actions arising from the review include; learning and development and an increased performance focus. This will continue to drive improved practice in this area.

## What requires improvement and what action is being taken

### *Children's Social Care*

- At 30th June 2020, the total number of children and young people open to and receiving support from statutory children's social care was 1,616, equating to a rate of 439 children per 10,000 aged under 18. The number of Children in Need (CiN) supported by St Helens Children's Social Services has reduced gradually over recent months and now stands below the number reported at the end of the previous two financial years. However, it remains the case that the numbers of CiN reported for St Helens, when expressed as a rate per 10,000 under 18-year-old, remain well above comparable average rates in the region (389) and at national level (334) as reported in March 2019. The department is undertaking a range of improvement actions as part of its wider improvement plan for children's social care.
- At the end of June 2020, St Helens had 493 children in care and a CLA population, when expressed as a rate per 10,000 under 18-year old, that continues to be well above than comparable regional and national averages. The numbers of children cared for at 30th June 2020 (493) is broadly the same as that reported at the end of 2019-20 financial year. However, in October 2019, as anticipated due to legacy issues, the number of children had risen substantially to 535; the number we are now seeing reflects a gradual and safe reduction in children entering care which we expect to continue.
- In the current 2020/21 financial year, a total of 561 referrals to St Helens Children's Social Care have been received. The number of referrals, when expressed as a rate, equates to 152.5 children per 10,000 aged under 18 and is nearly in line with the local target for the end of June 2020. Should the current rate of incoming referrals continue at its current rate for the remainder of the financial year then it is projected that St Helens will receive approximately 2,250 referrals over the year as a whole, which will, if realised, represent a reduction on the high number of referrals received in the previous 2019/2020 financial year (2,900). Comparative performance at the end of March 2019 places St. Helens below the median average for its group of statistical neighbours. The department, in conjunction with the Safeguarding Children Partnership, is undertaking a range of improvement actions as part of its wider improvement plan for children's social care including the understanding and application of consistent threshold and progressing the actions found in a recent audit into referrals.
- Since 1st April 2020 a total of 190 Section 47 enquiries were initiated a cumulative rate of 52 per 100,000 population. This demonstrates a level of Section 47 activity that is marginally below activity reported in the corresponding period in the previous year. The most recent comparative data (2018/19) places St. Helens performance significantly higher than comparable regional, statistical neighbour and national averages. This potentially indicates an internal issue with thresholds. The department is currently auditing this area of practice to better understand and address the presenting issues.
- Over the course of Quarter 1, a total of 561 referrals to St Helen's Children's Social Services have thus far been made. 173 (or 31%) of the referrals in the period were re-

referrals to St Helen's Children's Social Services, that occurred within 12 months of the current referral. This is higher than the percentage of rereferrals during Quarter 1 in 2019/20 which stood at 28.9%. The current re-referral rate (31%) stands well above comparable regional and national averages. The Department have completed and presented an audit into re-referrals to the Improvement Board. Close oversight and scrutiny continue to be placed on re-referral activity.

- Between 1 April and 30 June 2020, a total of 56 children and young people became the subject of a Child Protection (CP) Plan with 10 of the children in the group (or 17.9% of children) having previously been on a CP Plan at some time in the past. The percentage of children who were the subject of a CP Plan for a second or subsequent time (17.9%) is much lower than the activity reported during 2019-20 financial year (26%) and also below the most recently published 2018-19 comparable regional (22%), statistical neighbour (19%) and national (21%) average. The department continues to monitor this area of practice and it has been noted that a significant number of second time plans correlate with families experiencing domestic abuse.
- In the current 2020/21 financial year no children have been thus far adopted from care which is, in part, due to the current Covid-19 national public health crisis, with Family Court closures resulting in delays in proceedings. In terms of adoption timeliness, the cumulative 2018-2021 (3 year) performance for the average number of days between a child entering care and being placed for adoption now stands at 541 days for the 30 children adopted over the three years in question. The average timeliness (in days) between a child entering care and being placed with their adoptive family (541 days) is outside the local target (440 days). The average timeliness (in days) between the local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family (282 days) is outside the local target (140 days). Performance is 4<sup>th</sup> quartile for both indicators. The department continues to monitor timescales and there is a drive to improve. However, St Helens has achieved adoption for sibling groups, older children and those considered to be harder to place; staying with the plan of adoption for these children inevitably impacts on timescales for achievement of permanence.
- At the end of June 2020, a total of three foster carers had been recruited by St. Helens Council, missing the target of 5. Performance is marginally better than the same period the previous year. Over recent years, recruitment of foster carers has become more challenging for local authorities, which combined with a growth in the number of Children Looked After, requires the need for a greater focus on how the Authority can attract and retain carers. Various marketing methods are being employed to advertise and recruit more foster carers.

### *Education and Attainment*

- The 16-17-year-old combined NEET and Not Known performance at the end of Quarter 1 was 7%, which was higher than the target 6% and higher than the previous year's performance in Quarter 1 (6.3%). The recently published national data for 2019/20 shows that St Helens performance at 5.6% remains bottom quartile for the statistical neighbour group but only marginally higher than the North West and England averages of 5.4% and 5.5% respectively. This represents the "pre-Covid" position. The drop-in performance this quarter can largely be attributed to the impact of Covid-19, with the percentage of young people whose destination is not known increasing by 0.5% since April. In this period, young people would normally be visited by our Career Connect Service, and as this has been unable to take place, contact details are being tracked for these young people utilising various local authority data bases.
- The context for NEET is anticipated to be increasingly challenging, with growing unemployment as a result of the economic impact of Covid-19. Partners in St Helens

have been meeting weekly to co-ordinate efforts to support young people into or to remain in education, employment or training, whilst the Career Connect team are currently working through the September Guarantee offers for young people in year 11 and year 12. At this stage the picture in terms of the September Guarantee for year 11's looks positive. A co-ordinated approach to highlight opportunities and sources of support and advice for young people is being undertaken. The NEET Prevention Officer is currently working with 40 young people identified by schools as at risk of becoming NEET. A collaborative bid saw the Combined Authority awarded £1.5m to support vulnerable young people which includes further capacity in St Helens for NEET Prevention and the Ways to Work Programme. Recruitment is underway for these new posts. The NEET Taskforce is ensuring that there is a safety net for young people who do not get the results they need or who are at risk of disengaging. This group is also identifying any emerging gaps in provision that could become barriers for young people to engage. Individual young people will also be case-conferenced where necessary to provide wrap around support to engage in EET. Local authorities are working across Liverpool City Region to champion the needs of our young people. A range of initiatives are under discussion, including a multi-million-pound bid to deliver a Kickstart Programme for young people aged 16-25. The DWP are in the process of finalising plans to establish a Youth Hub, initially in the form of on-line advice and guidance, but are also finalising plans for a presence in the Town Centre.

### *Public Health*

- The latest data for Quarter 1 shows that the 3-year rolling rate for teenage conceptions reduced slightly to 32.6 per 1,000 compared with the previous quarter, though this remains worse than target and a high rate nationally. In December 2019 the national lead from Public Health England attended St. Helens multiagency task group to advise on priority actions. A strategy and action plan have been drafted. Initial actions include:
  - We have developed a local system to be able to estimate up to date trends as the Public Health England data is 15 - 18 months behind.
  - We have identified the schools with the highest number of pregnancies, and we are working with them and local services to increase interventions
  - We are working with four 'early adopter' schools and the faith sector on implementing the new national guidance on Relationship and Sex Education in preparation for mandatory roll out to all schools from September 2020.
  - The Family Nurse Partnership have completed insight work with teenage parents about access to contraception and attitudes towards teenage pregnancy to help inform the strategy.
- The latest available data shows that 27.4% of St Helens mothers are continuing to breastfeed their babies 6-8 weeks from birth. This remains one of the highest rates recorded for St Helens, although this remains significantly below the national average rate of 48.2%. Actions to improve performance have included baby cafes, volunteer peer support and the successful 'Your Milk Your Story' social media campaign. The Infant Feeding Partnership Group meet on a quarterly basis and an action plan is in place. The group also align and link in with Liverpool City Region Breast Feeding activity and strategy meetings.

## Priority 2 - Promote good health, independence and care across our communities

### Objectives

- Provide people with a positive experience of health and care services
- Support people to lead healthy lives and improve their wellbeing
- Promote good mental health to improve people's lives
- Support people with health and care services to remain independent in their community

### Progress against priority

#### *Adult Social Care*

- The first quarter of 2020/21 has been dominated by the Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent Council response.
- The Council has an obligation to ensure that contracted adult social care services remain financially sustainable within the requirements of the Care Act (2014). Service user preferences may change as the effect of Covid-19 across the sector are felt. This could result in a rebalancing of the service profile across the market, for example a greater use of care at home such as domiciliary care, direct payments or other care models rather than care in residential settings. In progressing against this priority, it's imperative to ensure:
  - There is a sustainable care market in St Helens;
  - There is enough market capacity to meet demand;
  - Good quality care is provided.
- During the Covid-19 pandemic the department has striven to ensure this priority continues to be met and has undertaken the following via the Contact Cares function:
  - Made 24,403 calls to individuals;
  - Delivered 112 emergency parcels delivered to 93 residents;
  - 169 residents supported with Hospital and Brookfield discharges, outpatient appointments and Care Home transfers;
  - 6,000 shielding residents called and provided with food, medicine, care services and signposting.
- The Social Work team has ensured:
  - 4,190 Assessments and reviews were undertaken;
  - 7,237 Care plans are currently in place.
- Mental Health Services have continued to be provided:
  - A 24/7 mental health crisis line has taken 1,890 calls;
  - The Mental Health Floating Support Team have continued to visit all service users.
- The Department has continued to provide services to enable people to maintain their independence and has:
  - Made 1,000 welfare calls to everyone registered and follow up calls to those in greatest need;

- Ensured telephone assessments continued throughout and equipment delivered;
- Undertaken daily calls and support to all providers;
- Undertaken weekly conference calls with providers;
- Seen 683 people currently supported by St Helens in Care Homes;
- Seen 1,755 people currently supported by Domiciliary Care Services;
- Undertaken daily monitoring of Care Homes with outbreaks.;
- Secured access to the national emergency PPE supplies and develop a system to fairly allocate;
- As well as dealing with the pandemic, the department has continued the development of strategies to increase independence and improve services for individuals in the following areas:
  - *Care Homes* - Enhanced 'Care Home Support' developed during the pandemic is being retained so that residents can be supported safely and out of borough placements reduced.
  - *Homes for Life* - Extra Care Housing is being maximised to continue to reduce demand for traditional Care Home beds. Alternative Housing options that are future proof will be developed.
  - *Day Services* - To reduce dependence on buildings, outreach support is being developed for people who require care and volunteers and community solutions are supporting people who are isolated, lonely and require support to take part in activities or provide a break for a carer. Alongside this, planning has commenced for community activities peer support and 'virtual' day services to be provided through "digital days" which could be an alternative to building based services and an opportunity to stay in touch, socialise and even exercise.
  - *Market Strategy* - The department has undertaken wide-ranging consultation with providers to understand the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the market and by consequence service users.
  - *Financial Strategy* - The department continues to take a robust approach to dealing with the financial position and providing scrutiny with a view to finding solutions. This is in conjunction with the wider savings strategy. An adult services finance group has been established to consider the financial position and the savings strategy.
  - *Quality Assurance* - The department is committed to providing services of the highest standard and to that end have recently undergone robust scrutiny from the LGA utilising the TEASC (Towards Excellence in Adult Social Care) monitoring tool. This involved producing a revised TEASC report and the department met with LGA representatives who subsequently produced a report from the LGA allowing the departments to consider the findings.

## *Public Health*

### *Coronavirus*

- There has been extensive work in Public Health in response to the coronavirus pandemic, both within St Helens, and across Cheshire and Merseyside. This has included work such as public health advice, support for vulnerable people, infection control, and data management and intelligence.



- Public Health have supported the Merseyside LRF on a range of cells, including test and tracing, intelligence and vulnerable people. Work was undertaken with the CCG to secure swabbing for vulnerable cohorts to support outbreak management.
- Work on outbreak management has been significant, with the rapid development of a team of staff from environmental health, sexual health, public health, infection control and admin support set up and trained to manage complex local outbreaks and undertake contact tracing. This was the first such response team developed in Cheshire and Merseyside. We also have a single point of contact for outbreaks from Public Health England with Contact Cares.
- A Cheshire and Merseyside central hub was subsequently developed with support from St Helens staff. A range of complex outbreaks have been supported so far, with locations including care homes and homeless shelters.
- An outbreak management plan has been produced and a proactive communications plan is under development.
- Data and intelligence activity has progressed in a fast-changing environment. Work locally has supported colleagues in the hospital to plan capacity and outbreak management teams to estimate demand and plan staffing cover. Public Health have also worked with public health academics across the North West to model future demand on the health and social care system. A range of data sources are compiled and analysed to inform on disease progression and system demand for the health protection board.
- Financial allocations have been received for the local track and trace function and St. Helens received £1.3m, which will be needed to operate the system over the next 2 years.
- Public Health have been supporting HR and the Communications team to communicate important information to the council workforce and the wider community. A range of health and wellbeing messages have been communicated to staff including working from home, physical activity, healthy eating, reducing harmful drinking, and mental and emotional wellbeing. Workplace activities have been implemented to encourage better health and wellbeing for Council employees and a workplace health champions network has been created. Equally important has been the broad range of advice and support communicated to allow the reopening of both council services and services within the community and business sector.

#### *Other health issues*

- In other areas of health, reducing smoking remains an important priority to both improve health overall and reduce inequalities in health within the Borough. Stop smoking support remains an important part of this, and the service has continued despite the current challenges with support now given virtually. Following this, Public Health England have recently released 2019 smoking rates across England. The results for St Helens are very positive, with the proportion of adults who are smokers falling from 15.8% in 2018 to 13.0% in 2019. The value is now even lower than the England average of 13.9%.
- Activity to promote mental health and prevent suicide continues locally, with a range of projects highlighted in the performance update for mortality due to suicide and undetermined injury.

## Performance Indicator Summary

### Promote good health, independence and care across our communities - 2020/21

Tier	Ref	Performance Indicator	Higher / Lower is better?	Past Performance			20/21 Target	20/21 target reviewed?	Q1	Q1	Q1	% Variance from Target	DOT	Comparative Performance
				17/18 Outturn	18/19 Outturn	19/20 Outturn			April	May	June			
Tier 1	ASC-18	Number of older people aged 65 or over admitted on a permanent basis in the year to residential or nursing care per 100,00 population aged 65 or over	Lower	630.9	570	669	660	Y	26.0	35.3	62.5	62.11%	↓	2nd Quartile
	ASC-20a	All delayed transfer of care (number of delayed days per 100,000 population aged 18 and over)	Lower	250.6	172.3	219	220	Y	Data collection currently suspended by NHS			N/A	N/A	1st Quartile
	PH-25	Mortality rate due to suicide and injury of undetermined intent per 100,000 population	Lower	17.9	15.9	14.4	16.5	Y	N/A	N/A	12.9	0.77%	↑	4th quartile
	PH-48	Admission episodes for alcohol specific conditions, all ages, per 100,000 population	Lower	1,110	1,125	1,059	1034		CCG currently unable to provide data			N/A	N/A	4th quartile
	PH-52	Emergency hospital admissions for falls for aged 65+ per 100,000 population	Lower	2,692	2,484	2,438	2484		CCG currently unable to provide data			N/A	N/A	N/A
Tier 2	ASC-11	Percentage of adults aged 18-69 with learning disabilities known to ASCH in settled accommodation at the time of their most recent assessment, formal review or other MDT planning meeting	Higher	96.5	97	96.6	96	Y	97.6	97.6	97.4	1.46%	↓	1st Quartile
	ASC-12	Percentage of adults aged 18-64 with learning disabilities in employment	Higher	6.6	7.7	7.4	8	Y	7.8	7.6	7.2	-10.00%	↓	1st Quartile
	ASC-13	Number of adults, receiving self-directed support in the year to 31st March, as a percentage of clients accessing long-term community support	Higher	87.9	77.8	84.8	88	Y	90.0	89.4	88.8	0.91%	↓	3rd Quartile
	ASC-17	Percentage of older people discharged from hospital to their own home or to a residential or nursing home or extra care housing bed for rehabilitation who are still at their place of residence 91 days after discharge	Higher	87	93.3	90.6	93	Y	87.0	88.5	90.1	-3.12%	↑	1st Quartile
	ASC-19	Number of adults aged 18-64 admitted on a permanent basis in the year to residential or nursing care per 100,000 population	Lower	12.2	11.3	16	12	Y	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.00%	↔	2nd Quartile
	ASC-22	Percentage of initial strategy discussions undertaken within 1 working day of an adult safeguarding alert being made to the contact centre.	Higher	97.8	98	84	99	Y	100.0	96.0	96.0	-3.03%	↔	N/A
	ASC-23	Percentage of visits to an adult safeguarding victim undertaken within 2 working days of the initial strategy discussion unless requested otherwise by service user or family.	Higher	100	100	100	98	Y	100.0	100.0	100.0	2.04%	↔	N/A
	ASC-26	The outcome of short-term services	Higher	76.7	78.1	89.6	85	Y	N/A	N/A	87.5	2.94%	↓	2nd Quartile

## Overview of Priority Performance

A total of 13 indicators are due to be reported in Quarter 1. Data cannot currently be provided for 3 of these measures. The reporting of delayed transfers of care has been temporarily suspended by the NHS. The CCG are currently reporting that they are unable to provide data in relation to hospital admissions for falls and alcohol specific conditions. Of the remaining 10 indicators, 7 are reported as meeting target, whilst 3 are not meeting target. Of the 3 measures not meeting target, 2 are within a 5% tolerance of target. Of the 10 indicators where data is available, 2 are showing improvement on the previous reporting period in terms of variance from target, 3 are showing the same performance and 5 are showing a downturn in performance. The latest available picture of comparative performance relates to verified nationally published data for the financial year 2018/19. The comparators used for the social care measures are the 23 local authorities within the ADASS North West family group. The comparators for the public health measures are the 16 authorities within the CIPFA nearest neighbour's family group. The comparative performance of the adult social care measures is generally strong, with all but one either first or second quartile. The comparative performance of the public health measures for suicide and alcohol specific admissions to hospital are both 4<sup>th</sup> quartile, however recent local performance trends are showing some improvement.

## What is performing well

### *Adult Social Care*

- As of the end of June 2020, there have been 23 permanent admissions to residential or nursing care giving a rate of 62.5 per 100,000 of the over 65 population. This is less than the target of 165 at this stage in the year. The low figure may be showing the effect of Covid-19 and service users / families' reluctance to be placed in a residential or nursing home at this time. This effect may continue in the short term, but we will need to monitor the figures once the numbers of infections decreases and the country is released from lockdown. There have been no recorded permanent admissions for the 18-64 years age group in this period. Comparative performance (2018/19) is second quartile for both indicators.
- At the end of June 2020, a total of 577 clients (97.4%), with a learning disability, out of 592 are identified as being in settled accommodation, which is better than the target set. Comparative performance (2018/19) is top quartile for this indicator. St Helens consistently reports at a high level for this indicator and is usually in the top 3 in the North West.
- As of the end of June 2020, a total of 2,326 clients out of 2,620 in receipt of services had been through the self-directed support process, which equates to 88.8%. Performance is better than the same period last year (83.7%), although the latest comparative performance puts St. Helens in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter for its peer group. Close monitoring of this indicator is required during 2020/21 to improve performance further.
- Out of 13 adult safeguarding investigations commenced since the start of April 2020, all received a visit within two working days. This indicates that those enquiries leading to investigation are being commenced in a timely manner following the initial strategy meeting and this evidences consistent positive practice.
- Since April 2020 a total of 77 out of 88 people who received short term involvement did not go onto access long term services. This gives a performance position of 87.5%, which is better than target and positive performance as this is a measure of the success of short-term services. Performance is slightly below the same period last year (90%) but comparatively is still performing strongly (2<sup>nd</sup> quartile in 2018/19).

## What requires improvement and what action is being taken

### *Adult Social Care*

- As of the end of June 2020, there are 43 people out of 592 (7.2%) with a learning disability in paid employment. This is slightly below target and will require monitoring and checking with the Supported Employment Team and All Ages Team, to ensure recording is accurate. A report will be built to identify those service users with no employment status recorded. The reduction in performance may be due to the impact of Covid-19 and the closing of a number of workplaces. The latest comparative data (2018/19) places St. Helens in the top quartile for this indicator.
- As of the end of June 2020, out of 304 people receiving a reablement service on discharge from hospital a total of 274 were still at home 91 days after discharge. This gives an actual for the period of 90.1%. Performance is similar to the same period last year (89.4%). Although below target, performance has increased each month over the course of Quarter 1. Performance will continue to be closely monitored each month. If the current rise slows, the department will consider actions with the Reablement Team. The latest comparative performance (2018/19) places St. Helens in the top quartile for its peer group.
- As of the end of June 2020, there had been 203 adult safeguarding initial strategy discussions undertaken within 1 working day out 212 enquiries received during the period, giving an outturn of 96%, slightly below target. This may be due to the 50% increase in the number of strategy discussions required during June compared to the first 2 months. Performance is better than the same period last year (82%). However, the measure will require close monitoring over the next 3 months to ensure initial strategy discussions undertaken within timescale.

### *Public Health*

- Although St Helens is still significantly higher than the England average, the rate of mortality due to suicide and undetermined injury continues to fall, which is positive. The latest local provisional data is a 3 year-rolling-rate up to the end of March 2020 at a rate of 12.9 per 100,000, corresponding to 60 deaths. This is a noticeable reduction on the Quarter 1 value 12 months previously, when the rate of 14.7 per 100,000 corresponded to 69 deaths. This continues the very significant reduction in deaths by suicide in St Helens since 2015-17, when the rate of 17.9 deaths per 100,000 was the highest in England.
- There is a range of action continuing to support further improvements in these figures, and local mental wellbeing generally. The 'OK to Ask' campaign has been providing resources to help maintain good mental health during the Covid-19 pandemic. There has also been work on a campaign on the links between mental health and domestic abuse.
- The 'Kind to Your Mind' campaign was run jointly across Cheshire and Merseyside. A number of marketing and communications channels were used to promote the campaign, including radio partnerships, a campaign website, social media, PR and a dedicated podcast series. The project was evaluated and was successful in its objectives, leading to 2,246 people visiting the ALMA wellbeing portal, 239 users completing online therapy and 1.1 million people reached through radio.
- Finally, Cheshire and Merseyside were rated as a Suicide Safer Community by Living Works, a prestigious award that has taken two years to complete and shows the joined-up efforts across the sub-region.

## Priority 3 - Create safe and strong communities for our residents

### Objectives

- Work with partners and communities to create strong and safe neighbourhoods
- Reduce the impact of domestic abuse in our communities
- Work as a partnership to prevent and reduce harm to our most vulnerable residents

### Progress against priority

- A Safer St Helens Executive has been established to take forward the partnership activity to deliver safer communities in St Helens. The Executive will be supported by a number of thematic sub-groups. The Executive will report to the People's Board as a standing item for future meetings.
- The Domestic Abuse Strategy was approved in March 2020 and work has commenced across the partnership to implement the key actions within this. A sub-group has been established that will take forward areas of work such as training and development of initiatives across the borough and will report progress to the Safer St Helens Executive. The service has also worked with SafeLives (a national domestic abuse charity) to develop a Survivor Panel, which will meet when lockdown restrictions are eased.
- During Quarter 1, activity to address domestic abuse has focused on specific campaigns during the pandemic due to concerns regarding the impact of lockdown on people experiencing domestic abuse. The Council has supported the national campaigns on domestic abuse but has also developed specific local campaigns including a campaign promoting Childline for young people and the promotion of the helpline numbers on pharmacy bags.
- Additional support for the Safe2Speak service was secured during Quarter 1 to increase Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) capacity from funding made available by the Ministry of Justice. The Council has also confirmed additional funding for the Safe2Speak Service to preserve existing IDVA capacity for 2020/21.
- The Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner has also confirmed funding of £175,000 for St Helens to support crime prevention and to support victims of crime. This funding will support domestic abuse services, preventing re-offending and supporting the Youth Justice Service.
- St Helens Community Safety Partnership received notification of an allocation of £120,000 from the Merseyside Violence Reduction Partnership to deliver local initiatives to support the wider objectives of reducing serious violence in the area. During Quarter 1, a small grants programme has been developed in partnership with the support of Halton & St Helens VCA to support local organisations delivering youth mentoring and diversionary activities. The current landscape presents a challenge for the delivery of traditional programmes and projects; however, the services will commence from September 2020.
- In addition to the campaigns on domestic abuse and hate crime, the Community Safety Team has delivered a number of other campaigns during this quarter, including advice to residents on the dangers of Open Water Swimming and a campaign on the dangers of off road vehicles / scrambler bikes, including information on how to report concerns.
- From the commencement of the lockdown period in March 2020, there was a significant increase in reports of anti-social behaviour to both the Council and Merseyside Police. Initial reports during the first few weeks of the lockdown focused

on neighbour issues and non-compliance with Covid-19 regulations. The nature of the anti-social behaviour reported has changed alongside the easing of restrictions, with alcohol related anti-social behaviour and concerns regarding large gatherings increasing. In response to this, the Council co-ordinated a #ReadytoRespect campaign regarding neighbour issues during the first period of lockdown and has worked with partners including Merseyside Fire & Rescue on delivering outreach services to parks and open spaces. The Council has also worked to support Merseyside Police on the implementation of Dispersal Orders in two specific sites over recent weeks. The Community Safety Team continues to respond to reports on an individual case basis and to also co-ordinate responses across the Safer St Helens partnership.

- Finally, during Quarter 1 the service has provided additional support to a number of wider initiatives relating to the response to the pandemic, including assisting with the 'Everyone In' approach to Rough Sleeping and Homelessness and in supporting both the Licensing and the Town Centre services in the planning for the re-opening of the night time economy.

## Performance Indicator Summary

### Create safe and strong communities for our residents - 2020/21

Tier	Ref	Performance Indicator	Higher / Lower is better?	Past Performance			20/21 Target	20/21 target reviewed?	Q1	Q1	Q1	% Variance from Target	DOT	Comparative Performance
				17/18 Outturn	18/19 Outturn	19/20 Outturn			April	May	June			
Tier 1	SC-01	Percentage rate in repeat victimisation for those domestic violence cases being managed by a MARAC	Lower	27.5	29.2	38.5	41	Y	48.0	36.0	34.2	16.56%	↑	N/A
Tier 2	SC-07	Number of hate crime incidents report to agencies	Higher	211	245	314	290	Y	N/A	N/A	74.0	1.37%	■	N/A
	SC-08	Number of incidents of anti-social behaviour	Lower	6,065	4,470	4,196	6,400	Y	N/A	N/A	2014.0	-25.87%	■	N/A
	SC-12	The percentage of children re-offending	Lower	57	50.8	40.7	45.3	Y	Data collection currently suspended by Ministry of Justice			N/A	N/A	3rd Quartile
	SC-19	Serious violence offences per 1,000 population (New)	Lower	N/A	N/A	N/A	Targets to be set following Police data		Data awaited from Police			N/A	N/A	N/A

## Overview of Priority Performance

A total of 5 indicators were due to be reported in Quarter 1. The Youth Justice measure which relies on national data has been temporarily suspended by the Ministry of Justice. Data in relation to the serious violence measure which is a local new indicator for 2020/21 is awaited from the Police. Targets will be set once this is received. Of the 3 indicators where data is available 2 of the measures are currently meeting target, whilst 1 is not. Direction of travel can be determined for 1 measure in Quarter 1 and this is showing improvement on the previous reporting period in terms of variance from target, Comparative performance can be determined for 1 indicator as the remainder are all local measures of performance. The Youth Justice measure is shown as 3<sup>rd</sup> quartile, however performance improved significantly in 2019/20 and this position is anticipated to change for the better when national data for 2019/20 is published.

## What is performing well

- The performance in relation to the number of repeat cases managed by the MARAC has recorded an improvement from April 2020. The MARAC has continued to function on a virtual basis during the lockdown period. The MARAC Steering Group has continued to oversee the performance of the MARAC in St Helens, including reviewing the levels of referrals and repeat cases.
- The Quarter 1 period has seen a rise in recorded reports of hate crime to agencies despite lower levels of recording during April 2020. The target within the framework seeks to see an increase in reporting of hate crime incidents as this is an area that has traditionally remained under-reported. Locally, during Quarter 1, the service has promoted the #Betterthanthat campaign to tackle hate crime and seek local support for a pledge to be 'better than that'. The Council also lit the Steve Prescott bridge during this period to remember George Floyd and has also promoted the 'No Place for Hate' message.

## What requires improvement and what action is being taken

- There has been a significant rise in the incidence of anti-social behaviour during Quarter 1. This follows a period of lower rates of reporting over previous periods and is reflective of the impact of the lockdown. An estimated 50-60% of all calls during this period related to adherence to Covid-19 regulations. Given that this has been an unprecedented three months, comparison to levels of anti-social behaviour in previous quarters is problematic, as non-compliance with social distancing and social gatherings restrictions would not previously have been considered as anti-social behaviour. To address the wide range of issues over the period, the service has worked in partnership with Merseyside Police on a specific response programme, including providing additional funding resources to Merseyside Police. Outreach services continue to target specific locations and the service has also recruited to a new post of Anti-Social Behaviour Officer, commencing in role during August 2020 and providing additional capacity for the service. The levels and nature of reporting of anti-social behaviour will continue to be monitored closely over the next quarter and the service will respond to any emerging challenges relating to the easing of lockdown restrictions.



## Priority 4 - Support a strong, diverse and well-connected local economy

### Objectives

- Invest to grow, attract and create more businesses and jobs
- Improve skills and access to employment
- Redevelop our town and district centres
- Provide the right homes, in the right place, at the right cost

### Progress against priority

#### *Business and the Economy*

- The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on our business community and the local economy has been catastrophic with premises forced to close, furloughing of staff and the increase in financial hardship as a result. During this period, our Business Support Team has worked tirelessly to provide appropriate advice and signposting to ensure that local companies have been able to access all relevant financial and advisory support. Our Ways to Work Team have also worked hard to ensure that all employment opportunities are actively promoted, and assistance has also been provided to those facing redundancy. The feedback from our Business Community has been extremely positive referencing the help and support that has been provided by the Council and the speed at which we have reacted to their needs.
- The Council has dispensed over £25m of business grants and has also made a further £1.5m available through its Discretionary Fund to support local businesses that may not have received financial support previously. This fund has so far received over 200 applications with almost £1m having been distributed.
- The delivery of the Glass Futures project moves ever closer with pre-development funding having been made available through the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority during this quarter. The project partners which include St Helens Council, Network Space and Glass Futures are now heavily focused on progressing a detailed design with a planning application expected before the end of 2020.
- The regeneration of our Town Centres remains a key priority and work continues to progress the partnership with English Cities Fund with the focus being to deliver significant redevelopment of both St Helens and Earlestown Town Centres.

#### *Housing Services*

- A key focus for the Housing Options and Advice Service during this quarter was on ensuring that all rough sleepers in the Borough were provided with an offer of accommodation under the Government's 'Everyone In' initiative. Aimed at those who were street homeless or staying in communal night shelters, the Council worked with hostel providers and a local hotel to ensure that all those identified as rough sleeping or sharing facilities were offered self-contained accommodation to reduce the risk of infection and allow vulnerable people to stay safe and self-isolate. During this quarter, 87 people who were either street homeless or who had been asked to leave shared accommodation were helped with offers of accommodation. Joint working with public health, St Helens CCG and St Helens Together as well as charitable organisations ensured that a holistic response was developed to not only address the housing needs of this group but their wider support needs. Individual rehousing plans and options have been identified for those accommodated under this initiative.

## Performance Indicator Summary

### Support a strong, diverse and well-connected local economy - 2020/21

Tier	Ref	Performance Indicator	Higher / Lower is better?	Past Performance			20/21 Target	20/21 target reviewed?	Q1	Q1	Q1	% Variance from Target	DOT	Comparative Performance
				17/18 Outturn	18/19 Outturn	19/20 Outturn			April	May	June			
Tier 1	G&P-01	Rate of employment (working age)	Higher	70.1	72.7	74.5	74		N/A	N/A	74.0	0.00%		1st Quartile
	G&P-06	Town Centre retail vacancies as a proportion of total stock	Lower	11.8	13.4	20.9	14		N/A	N/A	20.9	-49.30%		N/A
	G&P-09	Number of net increases in dwelling stock	Higher	408	775	758	434	Y	N/A	N/A	98.0	-9.26%		N/A
Tier 2	G&P-12	Percentage of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks or within an agreed extension in time	Higher	100	100	100	100		N/A	N/A	100.0	0.00%		1st Quartile
	G&P-12a	Percentage of minor and other applications determined within 8 weeks	Higher	N/A	N/A	96.8	94		N/A	N/A	96.5	2.66%		N/A
	HS-03	Number of private sector vacant dwellings that are returned into occupation or demolished as a direct result of action by the local authority	Higher	161	93	102	50	Y	1.0	6.0	9.0	-10.00%		N/A
	HS-06	Number of households that are families with children living in temporary accommodation.	Lower	44	61	63	64	Y	N/A	N/A	21.0	-31.25%		N/A
	HS-08a	Average number of weeks spent in B&B accommodation for all households who are in priority need and owed the main housing duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017	Lower	1	10.4	0	12	Y	N/A	N/A	0.0	100.00%		N/A
	HS-08b	Total number of weeks spent in temporary accommodation provided by the LA (not B&B/refuge) for all households who have been assessed as being owed the relief duty under the Housing Act 1996, where these duties ended during the quarter and the Council discharged their duty to the household	Lower	N/A	N/A	12.7	16	Y	N/A	N/A	14.0	12.50%		N/A
	HS-09	Number of households assisted to reduce fuel poverty	Higher	496	506	861	450		N/A	N/A	135.0	35.00%		N/A

## Overview of Priority Performance

A total of 10 indicators are reported in Quarter 1. Of these 10 indicators, 6 are reported as meeting target, whilst 4 are not meeting target. Of the 5 indicators where direction of travel can be shown, 1 is showing improvement or the same performance on the previous reporting period in terms of variance from target, 2 are showing the same performance and 2 are showing a downturn in performance. The latest available picture of comparative performance available for 2 indicators relates to verified nationally published data for the financial year 2018/19. The comparators used are the 16 authorities within the CIPFA nearest neighbour's family group. The latest employment rate continues to be top quartile within the family group, but the rate has fallen since last reported. Planning performance remains strong comparatively and locally, performing at its maximum level.

## What is performing well

### *Economy and Planning*

- The rate of employment stands equal to target at 74%. The latest data relates to the period April 2019 to March 2020. The employment rate has shown a 0.5% reduction since the last reported period, January 2019 to December 2019. St Helens current rate is below the North West average of 74.9% and the England average of 76.2%. Performance continues to compare favourably to St Helens' group of comparator authorities. The latest data will not reflect the impact of Covid-19 on the economy. However, it is inevitable that the employment rate will be impacted by the pandemic and the measure will be carefully monitored going forward.
- The performance of Planning services continues to be strong over the first quarter with 100% of major planning applications determined within timescale and 96.5% of minor and other applications determined within timescale.

### *Housing and Housing Services*

- There was a total of 98 net dwellings completed during the first quarter, approximately 14% of which were affordable. The measure is currently below the target of 108 for the first quarter, however significant housing construction continues across the borough with 578 units under construction and it is anticipated that the year-end target will be exceeded.
- The Empty Homes Service has continued to deliver positive outcomes despite a reduction in the availability of the service to carry out site visits during lockdown. During Quarter 1, the Council successfully brought 9 empty homes back into use through ongoing support and liaison provided to property owners. This was only 1 less than the target of 10 and the service continues to contribute to meeting the housing needs of the Borough and supporting the housing market.
- During Quarter 1 the Council's Homelessness Team were able to meet the needs of homeless households (both single people and families) through the provision of temporary accommodation to protect them during the initial Covid-19 period. The Team have been successful at finding accommodation solutions for homeless households at an early stage. No homeless households needed to be accommodated in B&B accommodation during the period. The indicator measuring the number of weeks spent time in temporary accommodation (not B&B/refuge) during this period was also within target.
- During Quarter 1, the Affordable Warmth & Welfare team adapted to allow continued service delivery during lockdown without needing to undertake home visits. The team reduced fuel poverty through emergency heating repairs/boiler replacements, income maximisation, price comparisons for gas and electricity to reduce fuel bills and

providing general energy efficiency/affordable warmth advice. The 135 assisted was above the anticipated target due to successful integration of Affordable Warmth and Welfare Benefits teams in order to include income maximisation within Fuel Poverty reduction work.

### *Economy*

- The town centre vacancy rate stands at 20.88% with 62 vacancies against a total of 297 units. Given the global pandemic, it is hard to ascertain the full future impact that Covid-19 will have on the High Street. Whilst many of the shops have re-opened, the footfall for the town centre is low, due to most of the office-based staff in the town centre working remotely, consumers not yet fully returning to the town centre due to confidence issues and changes in consumer behaviour with the growth of on-line shopping. This is potentially likely to have a real negative effect in the coming months. Businesses are currently assessing their workforce, with many employees still on furlough, and reviewing their estate in light of the pandemic, which will potentially lead to further closures in the coming months. Virgin Media have already made a national decision to close their high street shops and it is anticipated more will follow. However, enquiries for food & drink and barbers & hairdressers premises continue to be received, as well as proposed alternative uses for shops or former retail units in the town centre. The position will continue to be closely monitored.

## What requires improvement and what action is being taken

### *Housing Services*

- The number of households with children in temporary accommodation on the last day of the quarter was higher than expected when compared with earlier years. 14 of these households had offers of accommodation via local Registered Housing Providers and would, in normal circumstances, have signed up and moved into their tenancy. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic however, there were delays with lettings as void works were on hold for a significant period of time leading to reduced 'flow' in the housing allocations and lettings system. The Council's Homelessness Team have worked closely with Torus and the other Registered Providers to overcome this. Void works, allocations and lettings have recommenced, and households are now moving out of temporary accommodation into permanent properties.

## Priority 5 - Create a green, thriving and vibrant place to be proud of

### Objectives

- Reduce our carbon footprint and impact on the local environment
- Provide green and attractive open spaces for people to visit and enjoy
- Create a thriving, diverse cultural offer and pride in our Borough

### Progress against priority

- The Covid-19 pandemic and how the Council has responded to this dominated the first quarter of the financial year. There was significant disruption to most services resulting in the closure of library and leisure facilities and the temporary suspension of some services, for example recycling and green waste services for several weeks. However, the response to the pandemic has been overwhelmingly positive and services have adapted and have introduced new and innovative ways of delivering services as we have looked to maintain service delivery and support our residents and communities.
- Although buildings were closed, the libraries team continued to operate as new on-line digital services were introduced which have ensured that residents can continue to access the service but in different ways. At the end of the first quarter, there had been 20,243 visits to on-line services, including e-book platforms, a 98% increase compared to the 10,239 visits in the same quarter last year. The promotion of the Library Home Delivery Service resulted in 66 new residents, most of whom are shielding, benefitting from this service.
- The Council's Schools Library Service was the only service in the North West that continued to operate during lockdown and during this time continued to provide books and other resources to schools supporting vulnerable children and children of key workers.
- In May, Cabinet approved the St Helens Borough Heritage Opportunities document and endorsed a proposal to produce a coordinated delivery plan for Culture bringing together recommendations of the Heritage Strategy, the future Arts, Events and Voluntary Sector Strategies and to align these to the regeneration work of the Town Centre Deal Board and the Council's wider reset and recovery plans. The Heritage Opportunities document presents an ambitious and bold vision for heritage in the Borough, setting out our aspirations for the next ten years to develop a thriving heritage visitor economy based on our heritage industrial and outdoors assets so that communities will feel that their heritage and identity is respected and celebrated.
- Work continued on the development of an Arts Strategy for the Borough following extensive consultation with partners and stakeholders. It is intended that the St Helens Arts Strategy will align with Arts Council England's new ten-year national strategy, the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Cultural Compact and the Council's own strategic objectives for the Borough. The delivery aspect of the strategy will form part of the Cultural Delivery Plan mentioned above. It is intended that a draft Arts Strategy will be presented to Cabinet in the third quarter.
- Organisers of the Rugby League World Cup 2021 announced that games involving the men's teams from Tonga and Italy will take place at the Saints stadium. The teams will be based in Liverpool but will travel to St Helens to use the rugby league training facilities available in the Borough and during their stay the squads will engage with schools, clubs and local communities. Community rugby league clubs in the Borough

have already started to benefit from the World Cup's legacy fund with grants totalling £443K awarded for projects at six clubs.

- In early May, the Department for Transport announced the Emergency Active Travel Fund to support local authorities to further develop and enhance cycling and walking currently being developed and infrastructure. The aim of this fund is to promote 'active' travel as an alternative to the use of private cars. Funding for schemes is provided in two tranches. The Council was successful in securing £340k tranche 1 funding to be spent by 28 August 2020 to deliver cycling measures at Chester Lane/Jubits Lane and Clock Face Road. A second tranche of £7.896m has been allocated to the Liverpool City Region for the delivery of medium to longer term cycling and walking projects. Proposals for St Helens to access this second round of funding are currently being developed and will then be submitted for consideration to the City Region. Projects approved for this funding will need to be delivered by 31 March 2021.

## Performance Indicator Summary

Create a green, thriving and vibrant place to be proud of - 2020/21

Tier	Ref	Performance Indicator	Higher / Lower is better?	Past Performance			20/21 Target	20/21 target reviewed?	Q1	Q1	Q1	% Variance from Target	DOT	Comparative Performance
				17/18 Outturn	18/19 Outturn	19/20 Outturn			April	May	June			
Tier 1	ENV-02	Percentage of household waste arisings which have been sent for recycling	Higher	36.35	36.53	38.39	37	Y	Quarter 1 data is currently unavailable			-	N/A	N/A
Tier 2	CC-01	Number of library visits per 1,000 population	Higher	3,238	3,289	3,058	1,000	Y	N/A	N/A	115.0	-54.00%		3rd Quartile
	CC-02	Number of active library members per 1,000 population	Higher	194	135	141	50	Y	N/A	N/A	135.0	170.00%		1st Quartile
	CC-16	Number of visits to sports centres	Higher	1,088,131	1,297,825	1,200,295	1,350,000		All sports centres remained closed during Quarter 1			-	N/A	N/A
	ENV-03	Kilograms of residual household waste collected per household	Lower	498.8	494.3	468.05	490	Y	Quarter 1 data is currently unavailable			-	N/A	2nd Quartile
	ENV-06	Percentage of relevant land and highways that is assessed as having deposits of litter at an acceptable level	Higher	91.8	95	95	95	Y	91.8	90.9	94.0	-1.05%		N/A
	ENV-07	Number of flytipping incidents	Lower	2,005	1,959	1,817	1,900		219.0	401.0	593.0	-22.02%		3rd Quartile

## Overview of Priority Performance

A total of 7 indicators were due to be reported in Quarter 1. Data is currently unavailable for the recycling and household waste measures. This information is provided on a quarterly basis from the National Waste Dataflow system and Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority but has been delayed. Data cannot be reported for visits to Leisure / Sports Centres as they remained closed over the course of Quarter 1. Of the remaining 4 indicators 1 indicator is reported as meeting target, whilst 3 are not meeting target, one of which is within a 5% tolerance of target. Of the 3 indicators where direction of travel can be determined, 1 is showing improvement on the previous reporting period in terms of variance from target, whilst 2 are showing a downturn in performance. The latest available picture of comparative performance relates to verified nationally published data for the financial year 2018/19. The comparators used are the 16 authorities within the CIPFA nearest neighbour's family group. The latest comparative picture of performance for the 4 indicators, where this can be determined, is mixed, with 1 indicator in the first quartile, 1 in the second and 2 in the third. It is difficult to determine how current direction of travel will impact the future quartile performance of these measures, which is to a large degree dependent on the performance of other authorities within the family group when the 2019/20 nationally published data is made available later in the year.

### What is performing well

- The number of active library members remained better than target during this quarter. Although library buildings were closed library members accessing digital services significantly increased in this quarter compared to 2019.

### What requires improvement and what action is being taken

- The number of visits to libraries is below target and reflects the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, which saw all library buildings closed at the end of March. In response, the service has seen increased take up of on-line digital services with numbers accessing services in this way up by 98% compared to the same quarter in 2019. Proposals have been developed and approved for a gradual and phased re-opening of library buildings from 27 July in line with Government guidance. Initially, libraries at Parr, Eccleston and Chester Lane will re-open from 27 July. Although it is positive that residents are making more use of the library digital services, it is recognised that the target will need to be amended to reflect the impact of the pandemic lockdown and the phased re-opening of the service from 27 July.
- All leisure centres remained closed during this quarter. The target for visitor numbers to sports centres will be adjusted to reflect the impact of this and the phased re-opening of leisure centres from 27 July. The revised target will also need to reflect the risk assessments that have been completed for all leisure centres and the Covid-19 mitigation measures that have been implemented at all centres in response to risk assessments. This will mean centres will be able to accommodate fewer visitors whilst social distancing and other measures remain in place.
- The number of fly tipping incidents saw a significant increase during this quarter. This reflects the impact of the closure of all recycling centres across from the end of March until 4 May and the suspension of the bulk rubbish collection service. This indicator will continue to be monitored closely following the re-opening of recycling centres and the resumption of the bulk waste collection.



## Priority 6- Be a modern, efficient and effective Council

### Objectives

- **One Resident** - We will deliver an improved customer experience for residents, businesses and partners, ensuring that the culture of the whole council places the customer at the centre of all we do.
- **One Digital** - We will invest to create a modern, digital workplace and infrastructure capable of changing the way we work and the services we deliver to better serve our customers, residents and communities.
- **One People** - We will ensure our workforce is fully valued, empowered and supported; being equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to support the delivery of our strategic priorities.
- **One Message** - We will work together as one council to communicate effectively to build and support meaningful, positive relations within the council, with our customers and across communities.
- **One Space** - We will work collaboratively with partners to ensure that the buildings, land and spaces that we have are used effectively and efficiently to promote positive change within the council and across our communities.
- **One Budget** - We will look to deliver a sustainable budget strategy focussed on the delivery of our strategic priorities and the outcomes and services that matter most to our residents and communities.
- **One Practice** - We will ensure modern, transparent, and clear governance arrangements that support strong political leadership, decision making and new collaborative ways of working.
- **One Outcome** - We will promote a culture that prioritises performance management and in which everyone takes responsibility for performance improvement at individual, service and organisational level.

### Progress against priority

#### *One Resident*

- The contract to provide an integrated CRM, website, online forms, customer portal and intranet platform was finalised in May. The new platform will significantly improve customer service and transactions between the customer and the Council. The customer will be kept informed throughout the process of the request and be able to see the progress on the portal. Officers responding to customer requests will be assigned jobs directly on their devices, attend to the issue and update the contact and the resident at the same time. The platform also has applications including Streetscene, Registrars, Freedom of Information Requests, Subject Access Requests and Complaints, amongst others. The project will embrace all relevant services as it starts to move forwards. Project development has now started. Implementation of phase 1 of the project covering the CRM, new website, online forms and Customer Portal is anticipated for April 2021.
- Work has been completed to allow our residents to use assistive technology (Amazon Alexa) various questions related to our Recycling service, such as 'When is my collection'. Examples of this type of functionality is important in assisting people with visual impairment, or mobility issues and Customer Services will explore the possibilities of doing this in other services. Alongside this are developments from Amazon, which allow contact between users of Council services, which again if

explored, could assist in addressing issues of social isolation for some of our more vulnerable residents.

- During the first quarter there has been effective joint working between the Contact Centre and Contact Cares, with a call overflow system to manage call demands and peaks.
- Work is ongoing to develop a new Customer Service Strategy, which commits to providing a responsive, easy to use, and consistent experience for our residents and external customers alike. The Strategy will align with revisions to Customer Service standards, which apply to all Council Officers and compliment the work we are carrying out on the integrated CRM, website, online forms, customer portal and intranet platform.
- A review of Customer Service Standards is underway to reflect how service delivery, in particular face to face service, is changing following the Covid-19 pandemic. The Customer Service Standards relate to Contact Centre officers, and a wider Workforce element, which tries to cover all aspects of customer/officer interactions. The Contact Centre document is all but complete but requires some refinement to reflect how we deliver our reception service. The Workforce element still requires further work and collaboration to complete. It is anticipated that both the new Customer Service Strategy and Customer Service Standards will be completed for approval by the end of the second quarter.

### *One Digital*

The One Digital stream of the One Council programme has seen huge progress since its inception with some of its fundamental deliverables being expedited by the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic to assist the Council to operate in a different way.

- *IT Strategy* - The Council's IT Strategy is being redeveloped, building not only on the core components of One Digital, but taking account of the changes brought about by the pandemic and the new way IT is used under the new normal. The IT strategy will be finalised over the Summer of 2020 and be ready for review in the Autumn and if approved can be adopted in the December.
- *Cloud adoption* - The Council's move to cloud platforms for the hosting all its systems and service, is offering greater flexibility in terms of cost and collaborative opportunities as we move forward. A significant piece of work has been undertaken with a Microsoft partner to provide an economic assessment of the move to cloud of the remaining on-premise systems. This is now being analysed and the plan with anticipated costs will be available in the Autumn of 2020.
- *Mobile Worker (Home, Agile, Office)* - An extensive programme of work has been implemented to assist the Council's move towards agile and mobile working, which has been critical during the pandemic to allow us to operate a home working environment. Microsoft Surface Tablets and Laptops have been deployed along with additional kit including screens. The ability to print, copy and scan services away from the office will be enabled through a network upgrade in August 2020. In some cases, access to appropriate connectivity can be problematic. A central print, copy and scan facility using the Councils Multi-Function-Devices (MFD's) will be introduced into a new agile working hub once a decision is taken on where that will be.
- *Microsoft 365* - Microsoft 365 (M365) is the suite of applications that the Council is deploying to enhance agile working. Outlook Webmail, the Outlook Client, Teams, Teams Live, and SharePoint have now been deployed across the Council with the latter transforming the way we use documents by allowing multiple officers to update them simultaneously. The M365 platform is vast and we are beginning to unlock and exploit its potential. A programme of awareness is being developed to make officers

aware of what is available currently and to look at the potential for the use of other applications in the suite. Work is also underway to facilitate the use of other collaborative tools to enhance working arrangements with external partners, such as Zoom and Google Meetings. As part of M365, Power BI will be deployed as a visual dashboard and reporting tool. Power BI has been successfully deployed in Revenues and Benefits. Training has been arranged for further roll out to cover the Contact Centre and Performance Management.

- *Unified Communications* - The Council has deployed a soft phone which allows users to take their phone with them on their device wherever they are without the need for fixed office-based telephony. The soft phone has now been deployed to over 2,000 officers with only the Contact Centre and Contact Cares yet to come on board.
- *Wi-Fi* - Prior to the pandemic assessments were carried out to determine the cost of deploying Wi-Fi to our corporate buildings. A model and costs have been determined for the Town Hall, Wesley House and Atlas House. This model covers public and council Wi-Fi across buildings and will support agile working environments to be created and greatly enhance public connectivity. In light of the transformation in the way of the Council working, cyber security is being reviewed to ensure that the Council's systems and data continue to be protected.
- *Digital Training* - A new IT Learning Hub has been established accessible from the Council's Intranet. This hub contains the latest information about how the new technologies work and is being regularly updated to enable officers to exploit them. Further developments will see "bite size" learning focusing on the more commonly asked questions.
- *Business Partnership Management* - IT has engaged with staff over the past year to enhance relationship with them and to better understand and respond to their IT needs. Following analysis of the findings, a set of next steps has been agreed to deliver a more user-centric approach.

#### *One People*

- Work on the Council's Agile Working Strategy has been accelerated and progressed during the first quarter following the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. It is now proposed that all employees, that were previously office based, become agile workers by default, with criteria being developed for agreement to determine which employees would not be in this category. It is envisaged that future agile working arrangements will be complimented by agile workspace to support team meetings, social interaction, and staff well-being. The development of the strategy and action to achieve its aims is being taken forward by an Agile Working Sub-Group reporting back to the Reset and Recovery Strategic Group. Intelligence has been gathered from across the Council to develop agile working arrangements through initial impact assessments, a specific survey to capture workforce requirements and conversations / engagement sessions with staff. This information is being analysed and work has begun on the review of a whole series of policies and procedures in relation to supporting staff and managers within a new agile working environment. A series of initiatives have been put in place, including a daily staff email briefing, to support staff working from home. Managers have been asked to ensure frequent and regular contact with all their staff.
- A report has been developed to seek approval for a replacement of the current in-house HR System to compliment agile working arrangements, modernise processes and practice and provide better information access to managers and employees. Once a preferred supplier for the Human Resources System is identified approval will be sought to award the contract.

- The Workplace Health and Wellbeing Group was reconvened in June with strong representation from 26 managers across the Council's workforce. The group is working positively to engage with staff and provide support on key issues including mental health and physical health, managing the work life balance, managing staff, agile working arrangements and accommodation proposals. An internal campaign using workforce champions to promote social activities including virtual coffee mornings, virtual book club and virtual keep fit classes is about to commence. The group is providing valuable feedback for the Recovery and Reset group to consider and address.
- To add capacity to deliver the One People Agenda a new post of Organisational Design and Development Manager was created and successfully recruited to. The post holder commenced on 1 July 2020.

### *One Space*

- Linked to the Council's Agile Working Strategy and the assessment of workforce / workplace requirements, work is underway on the development of an Accommodation Strategy. The Strategy will look to determine, in the light of the significant change in working arrangements brought about by the onset of the pandemic, the Council's workplace building needs in the short, medium and long term. This will cover spaces to accommodate staff that require essential office space to fulfil their role, spaces so that staff are able to collaborate effectively over short periods and spaces to accommodate front line service delivery and customer / resident contact. The Strategy will link closely with the One Public Estate Programme and Asset Management Strategy.

### *One Message*

- A St Helens Together Community Engagement Strategy 2020-2025 is under development. The Strategy aims to support strong, active and inclusive communities capable of influencing and shaping the borough, whilst creating a more transparent and accountable council. The starting point has been the initial consultation around a new Borough Strategy which will run until the end of August. The Borough Strategy will set out a long-term vision for the borough, an understanding of the key challenges faced in achieving that vision and exploration of opportunities available. A digital survey has been released to residents, partners and council staff allowing them to present their views and focus groups with staff, residents and specific groups are being scheduled to take place. The response will inform the long-term view about what the borough should like and how the Council should refocus resources and deliver future services.
- Over Quarter 1 the Communications team have communicated messages and guidance in relation to Covid-19 effectively and regularly with residents and communities across the borough. Communication plans were developed to assist with the easing of lockdown restrictions and convey messages around testing and prevention. The 'St Helens is Open' campaign successfully supported the reopening of town and district centres within the borough.
- A new branding style for St Helens Council that seeks to strengthen the bonds between the distinct local towns and villages of our borough has been developed. The word 'borough' has been added below the crest to encompass all the distinct towns and villages across St Helens. The rebranding is now being rolled out / phased in across the Council. A review of the council and partners other brands is also underway, together with the further development of branding for St Helens Together.

- A draft Social Media Strategy is under development with proposals to rationalise existing social media accounts and a business case process for any proposed future accounts. A draft Media Protocol is also being developed.
- Communications with staff and Members have been stepped up over the course of the first quarter due to the pandemic. Covid-19 Policy briefings have been produced weekly for senior officers and Cabinet members and a monthly bulletin produced for all Members. Daily Covid-19 Staff email briefings have been produced by the Communications team and the Chief Executive has initiated a series of staff engagement sessions to facilitate open conversations with employees across all service areas.

#### *One Budget*

- Work has been ongoing to determine the Council's financial position given the impact of Covid-19. A report was produced for Cabinet on the 24<sup>th</sup> of June, which showed a modelled outline position reflecting significant pressures and budget shortfalls. The report requested the progression during the year of an Emergency Budget. Work will continue to determine the Council's future financial position and regular reporting to Government is being undertaken to set out the additional costs and loss of income as a result of the pandemic.
- Financial reporting to Cabinet continued over the course of the first quarter with the completion of the Revenue and Capital Outturn Report 2019/20 and the Financial Monitoring Report Period 1 – 2020/21. Work is ongoing on finalising the draft Statement of Accounts for 2019/20 to comply with the statutory completion date of the 31<sup>st</sup> August.
- The Government has provided the Council with a £1.9m Hardship Fund to support economically vulnerable people and households in their local area. In line with Government guidance, an additional council tax discount of up to £150 has been applied to over 9,300 working age residents in receipt of Council Tax Reduction. This discount will also apply to new working-age recipients of Council Tax Reduction during the year.

#### *One Practice / One Outcome*

- New governance structures were quickly established during the quarter in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. A Covid-19 Strategic Group is coordinating the Council response to the pandemic in the context of the Merseyside Resilience Forum and its constituent groups. A Local Reset and Recovery Group led by the Assistant Chief Executive and themed sub-groups have also been established. Impact assessments have been completed that include recommendations on embedding new practices and system change, exploring and sharing good practice, and identifying where there have been significant impacts on service delivery due to Covid-19. The impact assessments are informing Reset and Recovery Plans, which continue to be progressed across the 6 priority areas of the Council Plan / Borough Strategy. Recovery plans will identify what success looks like under each priority, action required to deliver this and a robust set of performance measures which will form the basis for the Council's new performance management / reporting framework to measure success.
- The Council's Draft Annual Governance Statement was completed in accordance with the Code of Corporate Governance and based on the principles in the CIPFA /SOLACE Delivering Good Governance Framework. This statement explains how St Helens Borough Council complies with the Code and meets the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations. The Draft Statement was presented to the Audit and Governance Committee for approval in July.



## Performance Indicator Summary

### Be a modern, efficient and effective Council - 2020/21

Tier	Ref	Performance Indicator	Higher / Lower is better?	Past Performance			20/21 Target	20/21 target reviewed?	Q1	Q1	Q1	% Variance from Target	DOT	Comparative Performance
				17/18 Outturn	18/19 Outturn	19/20 Outturn			April	May	June			
Tier 1	CS-01	Percentage of council tax collected	Higher	95.5	95.2	94.8	95.7		9.5	18.0	26.8	-2.55%	↑	4th Quartile
	CS-02	Number of working days/shifts lost to sickness absence per employee	Lower	8.61	8.96	9.25	9.1	Y	0.72	1.31	1.86	24.39%	↑	1st Quartile
	CS-03	Percentage of non-domestic rates due for the financial year which were received by the authority	Higher	96.7	96.2	95	97		6.9	22.2	30.9	-2.22%	↑	4th Quartile
	CS-14a	The percentage of customers satisfied with their first point contact with the Council through its Contact Centre	Higher	N/A	79	78.7	85	Y	N/A	N/A	76.4	-10.12%	↓	N/A

## Overview of Priority Performance

A total of 4 indicators are reported in Quarter 1. 3 of the 4 indicators are reported as not meeting target. 2 of the 4 measures are within a 5% tolerance of target. Of these 4 indicators, 3 are showing improvement on the previous reporting period in terms of variance from target, whilst 1 is showing a downturn in performance. The latest available picture of comparative performance for the Council Tax and Business Rates collection relates to verified nationally published data for the financial year 2019/20, with St. Helens' performance in the 4<sup>th</sup> quartile for both indicators. The comparators used are the 16 authorities within the CIPFA nearest neighbour's family group. The latest published comparative data for sickness absence relates to 2017/18.

### What is performing well

- The number of working days lost to sickness absence was 1.86 days at the end of the first quarter. Based on the revised target, this is better than the 2.04 days over the same period in the previous year. Performance in the first quarter has been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and the target has been reviewed and amended to reflect this. The new target for the year has been set at 9.1 days, which still represents an improvement on 2019/20 outturn performance. Given the current circumstances, however, it is extremely difficult to accurately predict what will happen over the remaining course of the year and targets may need to be reviewed accordingly. Significant effort to monitor absence data continues to ensure that absences are effectively managed in accordance with the agreed procedures. Resources are now focusing on Covid-19 related absences. Support and reinforcement of the effective application of the Attendance Management policy, including appropriate escalation will continue to assist in the effective control of regular attendance.

### What requires improvement and what action is being taken

- The Council Tax collection rate is performing 2.5% below target at the end of quarter 1. Collection has been affected by Covid-19, as all recovery and enforcement activity has been suspended since lockdown commenced. A total of £1.46 million of Council Tax discretionary payments were posted in June, with a single payment of £150 made to all working age claimants eligible for Council Tax Reduction. The service will look to re-engage with customers in July/August.
- The Non-domestic Business Rate collection is performing 2.2% below target at the end of quarter 1. Again, collection has been severely impacted by Covid-19 with many businesses being forced to close and great uncertainty remaining about the future. A total of £21.2 million of additional Retail Relief has been applied, the bulk of which has come from the national Retail Hospitality and Leisure Relief Fund. This has had the effect of reducing the amount of debt to be collected. Again, all recovery activity has been suspended since the start of lockdown and the service is looking to re-engage with ratepayers in July/August.
- The percentage of customers satisfied with their first point contact with the Council through its Contact Centre is currently performing below the required target. Our survey is responded to by a fairly small cohort of residents but does reflect a general feeling about how we respond to requests across the Council. The impression of first contact with the Council could be multiple and very dependent upon the issue the resident is raising and how important it is to them. If the Council is not able to give them the response that they require, or the service requested is not delivered to their satisfaction, this could reflect their overarching response to our service. Overall, the measure remains below target, but within the quarter we have experienced the standing down and then reinstatement of our recycling services with the onset of the pandemic. Call volumes were massively increased over the period and at times the



wait for an adviser was longer than we would like it to be due to the sheer volume of calls. Most respondents to the survey indicated that they had contacted us in relation to recycling or waste services, and their response to the survey could reflect the situation with the service during the first months of the pandemic. There is an ongoing challenge to improve customer satisfaction through the One Resident strand of the One Council modernisation programme. The delivery of the new CRM system will assist in the provision of better intelligence to improve customer service and relations.