



Public Document Pack Housing and Community Overview and Scrutiny Agenda

Scrutiny making a positive difference: Member led and independent, Overview & Scrutiny Committee promote service improvements, influence policy development & hold Executive to account for the benefit of the Community of Dacorum

Wednesday 9 September 2020 at 6.30 pm

Microsoft Teams*

***This meeting will be held remotely via the Microsoft Teams application. Should any members of the public wish to join this meeting, please contact member.support@dacorum.gov.uk by 5pm on Tuesday 8 September.**

The Councillors listed below are requested to attend the above meeting, on the day and at the time and place stated, to consider the business set out in this agenda.

Membership

Councillor Adeleke (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Mrs Bassadone
Councillor England
Councillor Imarni (Chairman)
Councillor Mahmood
Councillor Pringle
Councillor Arslan

Councillor Durrant
Councillor Johnson
Councillor Oguchi
Councillor Hollinghurst
Councillor Barry
Councillor Freedman

For further information, please contact Corporate and Democratic Support

AGENDA

- 1. MINUTES AND ACTION POINTS** (Page 3)
To confirm the minutes from the previous meeting
- 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
To receive any apologies for absence
- 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
To receive any declarations of interest

A member with a disclosable pecuniary interest or a personal interest in a matter who attends a meeting of the authority at which the matter is considered -

- (i) must disclose the interest at the start of the meeting or when the interest becomes apparent

and, if the interest is a disclosable pecuniary interest, or a personal interest which is also prejudicial

- (ii) may not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter (and must withdraw to the public seating area) unless they have been granted a dispensation.

A member who discloses at a meeting a disclosable pecuniary interest which is not registered in the Members' Register of Interests, or is not the subject of a pending notification, must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days of the disclosure.

Disclosable pecuniary interests, personal and prejudicial interests are defined in Part 2 of the Code of Conduct For Members

[If a member is in any doubt as to whether they have an interest which should be declared they should seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer before the start of the meeting]

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

An opportunity for members of the public to make statements or ask questions in accordance with the rules as to public participation

5. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE IN RELATION TO CALL-IN

None

6. BUDGET MONITORING Q1 (Pages 4 - 13)

7. HOUSING PERFORMANCE Q1

Report to follow.

8. CHILDREN SERVICES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP, CUSTOMER SERVICES, THE OLD TOWN HALL, COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS Q1 PERFORMANCE (Pages 14 - 18)

9. OLD TOWN HALL UPDATE (Pages 19 - 25)

10. HOUSING HOUSEMARK COVID IMPACT

Report to follow.

11. WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 26 - 27)

Housing and Community OSC

Actions arising

Date of meeting	Action point	Responsible for action	Date action completed	Update on action point
3 rd June 2020	HC/041/20 – To discuss putting climate change onto the work programme	Cllr Imarni	Ongoing	Cllr Imarni clarified at the meeting on 1 st July that she will contact the new Climate Change Officer when they are settled into their post and will then programme in a report to be presented to the committee
1 st July 2020	HC/047/20 – Cllr Bassadone asked how many garages were currently vacant	L Roberts	27 th July 2020	The number of void garages is 2,263 which is 31% of the stock.
1 st July 2020	HC/047/20 – Cllr England asked how many garages the council had built in the last 10 years	L Roberts	27 th July 2020	No garages have been built in the last 10 years.
1 st July 2020	HC/048/20 – Cllr England asked for the data to be produced in working days	F Williamson		

Agenda Item 6



Report for:	Housing and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting:	9 September 2020
PART:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Budget Monitoring Quarter 1 2020/21
Contact:	Cllr Graeme Elliot, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources Nigel Howcutt, Assistant Director (Finance & Resources) Caroline Souto, Team Leader Financial Planning & Analysis
Purpose of report:	To provide details of the projected outturn for 2020/21 as at Quarter 1 for the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Fund • Housing Revenue Account • Capital Programme
Recommendations	That Committee note the financial position for the Council for 2020/21 as at Quarter 1.
Corporate objectives:	Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery.
Implications:	<u>Financial</u> This report outlines the financial position for the Council for 2020/21 and so summarises the financial implications for service decisions expected to be made for the financial year. <u>Value for Money</u> Regular budget monitoring and reporting supports the effective use of the financial resources available to the Council.
Risk Implications	This reports outlines the financial position for the Council for 2020/21 and in so doing quantifies the financial risk associated with service decisions expected to be made for the financial year.

Community Impact Assessment	The content of this report does not require a Community Impact Assessment to be undertaken.
Health And Safety Implications	There are no Health and Safety implications arising from this report.
Consultees	The position reported within this report has been reviewed and discussed with relevant Council Officers.
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	GF – General Fund HRA – Housing Revenue Account

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 General Fund revenue outturn – the Council is facing significant financial pressures as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. Overall in the General Fund a pressure of £5.8m is forecast, of which £5.5m results from the implications of coronavirus.

At this relatively early stage in the financial year, the majority of the forecast pressures are estimates of how budgets might be affected over the longer-term. As a result, the forecasts are subject to potentially significant change during the course of the financial year.

The forecasts do not include potential funding of income shortages announced by the government on 2nd July to fund 75% of income losses over 5% of budget. Further details on this funding are expected shortly, but it is estimated that circa £1.5m could be reimbursed to the Council under this scheme.

- 1.2 Housing Revenue Account outturn – The HRA is currently forecasting a surplus of c£900k. The major variances are an increase to the bad debt provision of £1.1m, and reduced expenditure of £2.2m on the repairs budgets.
- 1.3 Housing and Community General Fund Capital budgets are currently reporting to budget.
- 1.4 HRA Capital - £7.3m of slippage is expected in the HRA capital budgets, predominantly in Planned Fixed Expenditure where internal works have been reprogrammed to future years due to accessibility issues.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Council's forecast outturn for 2020/21 as at the 30 June 2020. The report covers the following budgets with associated appendices:
- General Fund - Appendix A. A pressure against budget of £5.8m is forecast.
 - Housing Revenue Account (HRA) - Appendix B. A surplus of £0.9m is forecast.

- Capital Programme - Appendix C. General Fund capital budgets are reporting on budget. In the HRA, budget re-phasing to future years of £7.3m is forecast, which is 21% of Housing and Community capital budgets. This is due to the necessary suspension of internal works under Covid-19.

3. General Fund Revenue Account

- 3.1 The General Fund revenue account records the income and expenditure associated with all Council functions, except the management of the Council's own housing stock, which is accounted for within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).
- 3.2 Appendix A provides an overview of the General Fund forecast outturn position.
- 3.3 The table below provides an overview by Scrutiny area of the current forecast outturn for controllable budgets within the General Fund.

Table 1	Current Budget £000	Forecast Outturn £000	Variance	
			£000	%
Finance & Resources	11,988	14,545	2,557	21.3%
Housing & Community	1,686	2,670	984	58.4%
Strategic Planning and Environment	11,098	12,753	1,655	14.9%
Total Operating Cost	24,772	29,968	5,196	21.0%
Investment Property	(4,374)	(1,674)	2,700	(61.7%)
Core Funding	(20,399)	(22,480)	(2,081)	10.2%
Contribution (to)/ from General Fund Working Balance	(1)	5,814	5,815	

3.4 Core Funding - £2m additional funding

Additional government grant income has been received as follows:

- £1.8m of Covid-19 support grant has been received from MHCLG. There is currently no indication that further funding will be received, other than reimbursement of 75% of sales, fees and charges income as mentioned in paragraph 1.1.
 - New burdens funding of £170k, to support administration of the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Grants and Small Business Grants.
 - £72k of new burdens funding relating to the Revenues and Benefits service.
- 3.5 The following sections provide an analysis of the projected outturn and major budget variances for the Housing and Community Scrutiny area.

4. Housing and Community

Table 2 Housing and Community	Current Budget	Forecast Outturn	Variance	
	£000	£000	£000	%
Employees	4,098	4,097	(1)	(0.0%)
Premises	1,003	1,094	91	9.1%
Transport	14	14	0	0.0%
Supplies & Services	1,148	1,163	15	1.3%
Transfer Payments	5	5	0	0.0%
Income	(5,680)	(4,801)	879	(15.5%)
Capital Charges	1,083	1,083	0	0.0%
Earmarked Reserves	15	15	0	0.0%
Total	1,686	2,670	984	58.4%

4.1 Premises - £91k overspend against budget

Pressure of £65k from the cost of providing emergency Bed and Breakfast Accommodation to those at risk of sleeping rough during the Covid-19 pandemic.

4.2 Income - £879k pressure against budget

Pressure of £900k in Garages income. Although the current void level is at 30.5%, it is envisaged that the void level will increase, as will the level of bad debt, as a result of the recession. There is a risk that garages may represent an early cost saving for a household in financial difficulties.

5. Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

5.1 The HRA is a ring-fenced account relating to the Council's Landlord functions. A guiding principle of the HRA is that revenue raised from rents and service charges must be sufficient to fund expenditure incurred. The forecast outturn position for the HRA is shown at Appendix B.

5.2 The projected HRA balance at the end of 2020/21 is a surplus of £887k. A balanced outturn position for the HRA can be achieved by either increasing (in the case of an overall surplus) or decreasing (in the case of an overall deficit) the final revenue contribution to capital for the HRA. This will be a decision for Members to take once the final outturn position for 2020/21 is confirmed later in the financial year.

5.3 Repairs and Maintenance - £2.2m under budget

This variance has arisen due to the Covid-19 pandemic, as internal or intrusive works cannot take place under the prevailing circumstances. Workstreams have

been re-prioritised and non-essential internal works will be reduced for the first 6 months of year. At this stage, it is not expected that contractors will have the capacity to catch up later in the year with planned works.

5.4 Provision for Bad Debts - £1.1m over budget

It is expected that an increase in arrears of rental income will be seen this financial year, due to an increasing number of tenants in financial hardship. At this stage, it is very difficult to predict the level of arrears, as more tenants are moving on to Universal Credit, which may cause an initial delay in rental income being received. The Income team are working very closely with tenants to support them during this time, to arrange payment terms and assist with accessing benefits if appropriate.

6. Capital Programme

6.1 Appendix C shows the projected capital outturn in detail by scheme.

The table below summarises the overall capital outturn position for Housing and Community Scrutiny area.

The current budget is the original budget approved by Cabinet in February 2020, plus approved amendments.

The 'rephasing' column refers to projects where expenditure is still expected to be incurred, but will now be in 2021/22 rather than 2020/21 ('slippage'), or conversely, where expenditure planned initially for 2021/22 has been incurred in 2020/21 ('accelerated spend').

The 'Variance' column refers to projects which are expected to come in under or over budget and projects which are no longer required.

	Current Budget £000	Rephasing £000	Revised Budget £000	Forecast Outturn £000	Variance	
					£000	%
Housing & Community	3,913	0	3,913	3,913	0	0.00%
Total	3,913	0	3,913	3,913	0	0.00%
HRA Total	30,538	(7,262)	23,276	23,574	298	0.98%
Grand Total	34,452	(7,262)	27,189	27,487	298	0.87%

6.2 General Fund Major Variances

General Fund capital budgets are currently reporting to budget.

6.3 Housing Revenue Account Major Variances

There is estimated slippage of £7.3m in the HRA capital programme, and forecast additional spend of £0.3m.

This includes the following items:

- Lines 169-173: £6.4m of slippage on Property and Place budgets. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, non-essential intrusive works such as kitchen and bathroom replacements are not able to be carried out in the first half of the year, apart from in void properties. Where possible external works are being re-prioritised such as roofing and estate improvements.
- Line 174: £0.85m of slippage on Special Projects. This scheme is for extension works to sheltered schemes including provision of additional units. The project has been subject to delay as the initial tender is no longer valid, and in the current Coronavirus environment additional works to sheltered accommodation is not considered wise. The scheme will be re-worked and a tender re-let in due course.
- Line 179: £0.2m under budget on Martindale. As the scheme nears completion, it is expected that the full contingency will not be required.
- Line 180: overspend of £0.4m on Stationers Place. This includes £0.2m of additional costs relating to safety measures around Covid-19, and change controls regarding drainage, planning and ground conditions.
- Line 182 Coniston Road: £0.8m of slippage. The tender period has been extended due to Covid-19 as a number of contractors had furloughed key staff. The tender award is now planned for September Cabinet rather than July.
- Line 184 St Margaret's Way: accelerated spend of £0.15m. Preparatory work on this site is ahead of schedule.
- Line 185 Paradise Fields: accelerated spend of £0.8m. This includes an overage payment on the site which was always known about and factored into budgets, however the payment is now expected earlier, as more clarity has been gained on the legalities of the overage.
- Line 192 Cherry Bounce: slippage of £0.1m. The scheme is still in its early stage and some slippage is foreseen.


7. Conclusions and recommendations

- 7.1** As at Quarter 1 2020/21, there is a forecast pressure of £5.8m against General Fund budgets and a forecast surplus of £0.9m against Housing Revenue Account budgets.
- 7.2** As at Quarter 1 2020/21, against Housing Revenue Account capital schemes, budget rephasing of £7.3m is forecast and outturn is expected to be £0.3m over budget.
- 7.3** Members are asked to note the financial position for the Council for 2020/21 as at Quarter 1.



Dacorum Borough Council
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report for June 2020 (Cost of Services Analysis By Scrutiny Committee)

	Month			Year-to-Date			Full Year		
	Budget £000	Actuals £000	Variance £000	Budget £000	Actuals £000	Variance £000	Budget £000	Forecast Outturn £000	Variance £000
Cost of Services									
Finance and Resources	4,863	(967)	(5,830)	6,502	4,005	(2,497)	11,988	14,545	2,557
Housing and Community	198	78	(120)	519	201	(318)	1,686	2,670	984
Strategic Planning and Environment	604	(49)	(653)	2,263	2,428	165	11,098	12,753	1,655
Net Cost of Services	5,665	(938)	(6,603)	9,284	6,634	(2,650)	24,772	29,968	5,196
Other Items									
Investment Property	(166)	(139)	27	(2,059)	(2,157)	(98)	(4,374)	(1,674)	2,700
Investment Income	(25)	(42)	(17)	(75)	64	139	(300)	(300)	0
Interest Payments and MRP	76	0	(76)	229	0	(229)	916	916	0
Parish Precept Payments	0	0	0	972	972	0	972	972	0
Government Grants	(148)	(1,098)	(950)	(445)	(6,542)	(6,097)	(1,779)	(3,860)	(2,081)
Taxation (Council Tax and Business Rates)	(1,319)	2,061	3,380	(3,956)	6,183	10,139	(15,824)	(15,824)	0
Surplus / Deficit on Provision of Services	(1,553)	782	2,335	(5,246)	(1,480)	3,766	(20,389)	(19,770)	619
Transfers between Reserves / Funds									
Net Recharge to the HRA	(365)	(36)	329	(1,096)	243	1,339	(4,384)	(4,384)	0
Net Movement on General Fund Working Balance	3,759	(192)	(3,951)	2,977	5,397	2,420	(1)	5,814	5,815

 Housing Revenue Account 2020/21 Outturn Revenue Budget Monitoring Report				
	Adjusted Budget £000	Outturn £000	Variance £000	%
Income:				
Dwelling Rents	(54,435)	(54,435)	0	0.0%
Non-Dwelling Rents	(102)	(102)	0	0.0%
Tenants Charges	(1,517)	(1,517)	0	0.0%
Leaseholder Charges	(593)	(593)	0	0.0%
Interest and Investment Income	(192)	(192)	0	0.0%
Contribution towards Expenditure	(645)	(551)	94	-14.6%
Total Income	(57,484)	(57,390)	94	-0.2%
Expenditure:				
Repairs & Maintenance	12,068	9,883	(2,185)	-18.1%
Supervision & Management	14,196	14,236	40	0.3%
Rent, Rates, Taxes & Other Charges	36	100	64	177.8%
Interest Payable	11,586	11,586	0	0.0%
Provision for Bad Debts	975	2,075	1,100	112.8%
Depreciation	12,866	12,866	0	0.0%
HRA Democratic Recharges	335	335	0	0.0%
Revenue Contribution to Capital	5,855	5,855	0	0.0%
Total Expenditure	57,917	56,936	(981)	-1.7%
Transfer to / (from) Housing Reserves	(433)	(433)	0	0.0%
HRA Deficit / (Surplus)	0	(887)	(887)	0.0%
Housing Revenue Account Balance:				
Opening Balance at 1 April 2020	(2,892)	(2,892)	0	0.0%
Deficit / (Surplus) for year	0	(887)	(887)	0.0%
Proposed Contributions to Reserves	0	0	0	
Closing Balance at 31 March 2021	(2,892)	(3,779)	(887)	

CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING BY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR JUNE 2020

Scheme	Budget Holder	Original Budget	Prior Year Slippage	Adj's, Supps, Virements	In-Year Adjustments	Current Budget	YTD Spend	Projected Outturn	Forecast Slippage	Projected Over / (Under)
General Fund										
Housing and Community										
Procurement and Contracted Services										
116 Rolling Programme - CCTV Cameras	Ben Hosier	25,000	1,745	0	0	26,745	6,106	26,745	0	0
117 Alarm Receiving Centre	Ben Hosier	0	33,627	0	0	33,627	0	33,627	0	0
118 CCTV Equipment Refresh	Ben Hosier	(380,000)	490,000	0	0	110,000	95,822	110,000	0	0
		(355,000)	525,372	0	0	170,372	101,928	170,372	0	0
People										
122 Verge Hardening Programme	Matt Rawdon	450,000	79,884	0	0	529,884	61,746	529,884	0	0
124 Capital Grants - Community Groups	Matt Rawdon	20,000	0	0	0	20,000	0	20,000	0	0
		470,000	79,884	0	0	549,884	61,746	549,884	0	0
Strategic Housing										
128 Affordable Housing Development Fund	David Barrett	2,691,000	0	0	0	2,691,000	(45)	2,691,000	0	0
129 Westerdale (Garage Development)	David Barrett	0	385,885	0	0	385,885	72,327	385,885	0	0
130 Temporary Accommodation - creation of new units	David Barrett	50,000	0	0	0	50,000	0	50,000	0	0
131 Upgrade to Civica Abrisas system (Housing Options)	David Barrett	66,000	0	0	0	66,000	37,100	66,000	0	0
		2,807,000	385,885	0	0	3,192,885	109,382	3,192,885	0	0
Totals: Housing and Community		2,922,000	991,141	0	0	3,913,141	273,056	3,913,141	0	0

CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING BY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR JUNE 2020

APPENDIX C

Scheme	Budget Holder	Original Budget	Prior Year Slippage	Adj's, Supps, Virements	In-Year Adjustments	Current Budget	YTD Spend	Projected Outturn	Forecast Slippage	Projected Over / (Under)
Housing Revenue Account										
Housing and Community										
Property & Place										
169 Planned Fixed Expenditure	Jason Grace	17,057,000	0	(3,700,000)	(3,700,000)	13,357,000	294,937	7,579,000	(4,977,000)	(801,000)
170 Pain/Gain Share (Planned Fixed Expenditure)	Jason Grace	0	0	0	0	0	82,190	0	0	0
171 M&E Contracted Works	Jason Grace	0	0	700,000	700,000	700,000	37,959	400,000	(300,000)	0
172 Communal Gas & Heating	Jason Grace	0	0	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	183,517	2,000,000	(1,000,000)	0
173 DBC Commissioned Capital Works	Jason Grace	750,000	901,068	0	0	1,651,068	129,596	2,389,230	(62,838)	801,000
174 Special Projects	Jason Grace	0	909,653	0	0	909,653	0	59,653	(850,000)	0
		17,807,000	1,810,721	0	0	19,617,721	728,199	12,427,883	(7,189,838)	0
Strategic Housing										
178 New Build - General Expenditure	David Barrett	(318,608)	318,608	0	0	0	0	75,000	0	75,000
179 Martindale	David Barrett	2,035,454	2,031,700	0	0	4,067,154	367,163	3,886,000	0	(181,154)
180 Stationers Place / Apsley Paper Mill	David Barrett	0	1,450,785	0	0	1,450,785	105,234	1,855,000	0	404,215
181 Bulbourne	David Barrett	(689,700)	828,391	0	0	138,691	0	76,691	(62,000)	0
182 Coniston Road	David Barrett	1,705,800	(342,708)	0	0	1,363,092	7,476	578,092	(785,000)	0
183 Eastwick Row	David Barrett	1,084,951	(66,725)	0	0	1,018,226	26,736	1,018,226	0	0
184 St Margaret's Way	David Barrett	(324,148)	440,648	0	0	116,500	17,861	262,250	145,750	0
185 Paradise Fields	David Barrett	150,000	0	0	0	150,000	111,437	956,700	806,700	0
186 Gaddesden Row	David Barrett	964,679	(319,651)	0	0	645,028	18,859	645,028	0	0
187 Randalls Ride	David Barrett	80,000	112,451	0	0	192,451	7,593	192,451	0	0
188 Garage Sites - New Build Developments	David Barrett	525,000	490,270	0	0	1,015,270	17,288	1,015,270	0	0
189 Wilstone	David Barrett	33,438	105,013	0	0	138,451	2,130	100,451	(38,000)	0
190 Marchmont Fields	David Barrett	100,000	0	0	0	100,000	6,834	100,000	0	0
191 Paradise Depot	David Barrett	225,000	0	0	0	225,000	14,177	200,000	(25,000)	0
192 Cherry Bounce	David Barrett	300,000	0	0	0	300,000	4,107	185,000	(115,000)	0
		5,871,866	5,048,782	0	0	10,920,648	706,894	11,146,159	(72,550)	298,061
Totals: Housing and Community		23,678,866	6,859,503	0	0	30,538,369	1,435,092	23,574,042	(7,262,388)	298,061
Totals - Fund: Housing Revenue Account		23,678,866	6,859,503	0	0	30,538,369	1,435,092	23,574,042	(7,262,388)	298,061
Totals		26,600,866	7,850,644	0	0	34,451,510	1,708,148	27,487,183	(7,262,388)	298,061

Agenda Item 8



Report for:	Housing and Community Overview & Scrutiny
Date of meeting:	9 September 2020
PART:	
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Quarter 1 Performance Report – Children Services & Community Safety Partnership, Customer Services, The Old Town Hall, Communications and Community Partnerships
Contact:	Cllr Julie Banks, Portfolio Holder for Community and Regulatory Services Author/Responsible Officers: Linda Roberts (Assistant Director – People, Performance and Innovation) Matt Rawdon (Group Manager – People and Communities) Joe Guiton (Community Safety and Children Team Leader) Sara Railson (Arts Team Leader) Alex Care (Community Partnerships Team Leader) Kelvin Soley (Communications Team Leader) Tracy Lancashire (Customer Service Team Leader)
Purpose of report:	Monitoring and information
Recommendations	That Members note the report and identify any areas where they require additional information
Corporate objectives:	Building strong and vibrant communities Delivering an efficient and modern council
Implications:	<u>Financial</u> Within existing budgets
'Value For Money Implications'	<u>Value for Money</u> Services are regularly reviewed to ensure they are efficiently delivered and commercial opportunities are actively sought.
Risk Implications	None at this stage.
Equalities Implications	None at this stage.
Health And Safety Implications	None at this stage.
Consultees:	Service Team Leaders

1. Introduction

1.1 This paper will provide an update on service performance over Q1 2020/2021 and also highlight key achievements over this same period.

2. Performance Reports 2020/21 – Quarter 1

2.1 Quarter 1 performance is detailed below. Members will note that overall performance is positive for quarter 1. Clearly some data is not available for this quarter due to the service not being available during pandemic.

2.2 The Customer Service Unit (CSU) had a positive quarter with three measureable targets being achieved. We were able to mobilise our staff quickly to receive calls from home, which enabled all operators to focus efforts solely on phone calls. This resulted in the team being able to keep the wait times down and achieve the targets. The decision last year to introduce part home working for our CSU workforce has helped the team deal with responding to the crisis.

OSC Report - Housing & Community - Performance, People and Innovation Jun-2020					
Indicator Name	Results Jun-2020	Last Months Results Mar-20	Last Years Results Jun-19	RAG	Comments
Building Community Capacity - Empower local community action and delivery					
CYP01a - Number of children attending Adventure Playgrounds	No Data Info Only	2102 Attendances Info Only	10155 Attendances Info Only		Approver Comments: The APGs have been closed during this period due to CV-19 guidance.
Dacorum Delivers - Performance excellence					
CSU10 - Call Handling: Average wait time	79.33 Second(s) Target: 300 Second(s)	325 Second(s) Target: 300 Second(s)	314.33 Second(s) Target: 300 Second(s)	0 2 2	Approver Comments: KPI Achieved.
CSU11 - Call Handling: Abandoned Call Rate	3.28% 640 / 19498 Target: 20%	10.94% 3077 / 28131 Target: 20%	12.52% 3528 / 28174 Target: 20%	0 0 4	Approver Comments: KPI Achieved.
CSU12 - Face to Face; Average Wait Time	0 Second(s) Target: 450 Second(s)	203 Second(s) Target: 450 Second(s)	195 Second(s) Target: 450 Second(s)	0 0 4	Approver Comments: No face to face meetings during the lockdown period.
Dacorum Delivers - Reputation and profile delivery					
CSU06 - Percentage of customers satisfied with service received from the Customer Service unit	99.87% 1489 / 1491 Target: 80%	100% 634 / 634 Target: 80%	99.76% 2530 / 2536 Target: 80%	0 0 4	Approver Comments: KPI Achieved

3. Quarter 1 Achievements

The following achievements are a sample of the projects/work undertaken by this group of services during the quarter 1 in 2020/2021.

3.1 Children Services and Community Safety Partnership

- 3.1.1 The Community Safety Team made 275 food parcel deliveries to households in the borough and supported 3 charities with over 150 parcels, Hospice of St Francis, Age Dacorum and The South Hill Centre, during the Coronavirus Pandemic.
- 3.1.2 The Adventure Playground staff were redeployed to assist with the contacting, cleaning and sanitising of Elderly Person Dwellings.
- 3.1.3 Staff from the community safety team were also redeployed to support the council's post room.
- 3.1.4 The works to install the new 3G pitch will commence in September.
- 3.1.5 The community safety public meeting was postponed due to Covid-19 and has been re-arranged for the autumn.
- 3.1.6 We have had additional pressure on the service due to Domestic Abuse approaches (victims and perpetrators). Data from Families first shows that last year in a 7 week snapshot (first quarter) there were 40 new reports of Domestic Abuse.

3.2 The Old Town Hall

- 3.2.1 Due to the Coronavirus pandemic – the Old Town Hall along with all other arts and entertainment venues in England closed its doors on Tuesday 17th March 2020. For 8 weeks the building was locked to both staff and public alike.
- 3.2.2 When staff were allowed back into the building in May the following works to the building were achieved:
 - Completion of an essential water quality test following the re-opening of the building.
 - The installation of the new theatre seating went ahead.
 - The Old Town Hall roof (above the auditorium) fixed the water ingress issue. Scaffolding has gone up front and back of the building to get urgent roofing works done.
 - Monthly water temperature checks and Legionella testing. Old Town Hall technician conducts weekly tests – Orion water engineers conduct monthly checks
 - Replacement of water heater in the Cellar – Orion engineers / Building
 - Installation of new dosing point on second main water tap.
 - Removal of theatre tabs (curtains) for cleaning and application of Fire Retardant – in line with HSE regulations.
 - Removal of pigeons and guava from roof void above the Gallery bar / café
 - Replacement of broken radiator
 - Replacement of broken window that looks out onto the High Street

- In addition our cleaning staff are engaged in full and robust programme of 'deep cleans' in all areas of the building.

3.3 Customer Services Unit (CSU)

- 3.3.1 All staff are working from home – our response to phone call enquiries has not been negatively impacted by the closure of the Forum. All KPI's met for telephone call response.
- 3.3.2 Worked with all service areas to amend processes due to no face to face provision available to ensure there was as little negative impact to customers as possible.
- 3.3.3 Carried out over 7,500 outbound calls to vulnerable residents on behalf of Hertfordshire County Council to offer support during lockdown. Undertook this exercise twice in the quarter.
- 3.3.4 Worked with Electoral Registration to prepare for the Annual canvass.
- 3.3.5 Worked with Pest Control to prepare for the transfer of Pest Control calls to the Customer Service unit from August.
- 3.3.6 Discussions with the Food Safety team for the CSU to assist with making outbound calls to premises throughout July in line with their opening and COVID-19 guidelines.

3.4 Community Partnerships

- 3.4.1 Hertfordshire Year of Culture 2020 – Selected highlights in this Q1 include:
- VE day at home – worked with Mayor's Secretary to put together a celebrate at home package online
 - Three online campaigns – 64 millions artists Creative Challenges, Creativity and Wellbeing week, and Mental Health awareness week in May
 - #TAG dance intergenerational partner project – successful with Arts Council England emergency funding to adapt project as an online offer. Delivered and completed community dance workshops and a film showing on the Town Centre Screen.
 - Herts Cultural Education Partnership (HCEP) Investment programme for young people – needs analysis research report completed and published.
- 3.4.2 Sports and Physical Wellbeing activities – Highlights in this Q1 include:
- Active Dacorum Hub at Cupid Green Playing Fields – signage completed and work ongoing for launch / opening of the hub and the wellness festival.
 - Confirmed Tennis Courts resurfacing
 - Set up Football Working Group, working with DBC colleagues, Herts FA, the Football Foundation and DSN.
 - Continued planning for the Your Town event in October

- Where possible planned physical activities have been moved to appropriate online versions.

3.4.3 Healthy Hub

- The Healthy Hub Dacorum (public health funding) has recently launched as a one stop shop for residents, aiming to provide guidance on the services that will support your health and wellbeing needs.
- As we are expected to run virtually until 2021, recently the Healthy Hub has introduced an online enquiry form on our website for our clients to get in contact.
- Seeing growth within our social media platforms as we start to promote ourselves and our partners to Dacorum residents through Facebook and Twitter.
- Whilst we transition out of lockdown, we are also developing partnerships to create physical centres within Hemel Hempstead, Tring and Berkhamsted, which will allow us to provide face to face support albeit in a safe environment.

3.4.4 VE Day events on 8th May were limited by lockdown, but our team worked with communications and the Mayors team to publicise ways of celebrating VE Day safely, with decorations, a toast, singing 'We'll meet again' and watching a plane fly over Dacorum with a VE Day banner.

3.4.5 The Armed Forces Day event in Gadebridge Park that was intended to be held on June 27th 2020 was postponed until June 2021. A tribute to the Armed Forces was created on-line, using the portraits and stories of four Dacorum residents who support the armed forces. In addition to this, there was a raising of the Armed Forces Day flag at The Forum to mark the start of Armed Forces Week and Cllr Julie Banks, Armed Forces Covenant Champion, arranged for war memorials to be cleaned.

3.5 Communications

3.5.1 External communications – support and delivery on external campaigns and projects such as VE Day 75, Armed Forces Day, A41 Spring Clean, Hertfordshire Year of Culture 2020, Annual Canvass, EU Settlement Scheme, 'You are not alone (domestic violence) campaign' and Hemel Garden Communities.

3.5.2 Internal communications – design and implementation of internal campaigns and projects including the launch of a 'Covid-19 Information Hub on the intranet, Covid-19: Staff Health and Wellbeing Survey, launch of the new HR system (iTrent), Staff WhatsApp group promotion (over 330 staff signed-up) and ongoing internal communications and staff engagement programmes. Results from the Covid-19 staff survey showed that only 13% (344 respondents) of staff felt that they had not been kept up to date on Covid-19 developments.

3.5.3 Covid-19 Communications support – Ongoing support during the Covid-19 pandemic. This includes dedicated campaigns including the various grant schemes and discretionary grant fund, public information campaigns from the Cabinet Office and Public Health England and service specific campaigns and updates.



Report for:	Housing and Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting:	9 September 2020
PART:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Old Town Hall – Status Report
Contact:	Julie Banks, Portfolio Holder Community & Regulatory Services Author/Responsible Officer: Linda Roberts (Assistant Director – Performance , People and Innovation), Matt Rawdon (Group Manager – People and Communities) and Sara Railson (Arts Team Leader)
Purpose of report:	To provide the Committee with a status report on the Old Town Hall
Recommendations	That the Committee notes the contents of the report.
Corporate objectives:	Building strong and vibrant communities
Implications:	<u>Financial –</u> There are financial implications on the Council the longer the OTH remains closed to the public as it is not receiving any income
‘Value For Money Implications’	<u>Value for Money</u> Whilst the OTH is closed we are unable to offer an arts and culture programme to our community. We are still liable for overhead costs during this closed period.
Risk Implications	There could be reputational risks if the Council does not re-open the OTH to the public.
Equalities Implications	There are no equalities implications arising from this report.
Health And Safety	There are no health and safety implications arising from this

Implications	report.
Consultees:	Corporate Health and Safety team, Building Services team,
Background papers:	
Historical background <i>(please give a brief background to this report to enable it to be considered in the right context).</i>	This report was requested at the June OSC meeting as the committee wished to better understand the impact of the Coronavirus on the Old Town Hall.
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OTH – Old Town Hall

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report is to update members of the current status of the Old Town Hall in relation to the building, the service and its staff as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. It also sets out a re-opening plan and a future direction of the arts/entertainment programme.

2. Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the OTH

- 2.1. The Old Town Hall, as with every other theatre / entertainment venue in England, closed its doors to the public on Tuesday 17th March 2020. This was in response to HM Government advice in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2.2. As a direct result of closure and with immediate effect the entire Old Town Hall spring/summer 2020 programme was cancelled, along with all private hires. Further announcements regarding the hospitality and entertainments sector saw the cancelling and / or re-scheduling of our autumn performances. An announcement by the Government in July stated that venues would be allowed to re-open under social distance guidelines. An initial re-opening date of 1st August was then pushed back to 15th August.
- 2.3. In the first few weeks of lockdown all Old Town Hall staff were asked to work from home. In early May, following Government guidance, staff went back into the building for the first time in over 8 weeks. This allowed for essential checks and maintenance to be carried out to ensure that the building met our normal safety and security standards. It also allowed for the installation of the new seating that had been agreed earlier this year.

3. Current Position

Re-opening the building

Maintenance

- 3.1. Operational staff have been back in the building for nearly 4 months and have been and continue to work to a robust cleaning / maintenance schedule. In addition they have worked with a variety of contractors to ensure access to the building for essential and on-going upkeep of the building and its services. This included:
 - Completion of an essential water quality test following the re-opening of the building (which by this point had been closed for 2 months was to have the mains water tank disinfected and water samples taken for legionella and other water borne diseases. The water in the building tested negative.
 - The delayed installation of the new theatre seating went ahead. The works were agreed in February 2020
 - The Old Town Hall roof (above the auditorium) -water ingress issue. Scaffolding has gone up front and back of the building to get urgent roofing works done.
 - Monthly water temperature checks and Legionella testing. Old Town Hall technician conducts weekly tests – Orion water engineers conduct monthly checks

- Replacement of water heater in the Cellar – Orion engineers / Building Services – job raised as urgent (works pending)
- Installation of new dosing point on second main water tap. Completed, though remedial works pending
- Removal of theatre tabs (curtains) for cleaning and application of Fire Retardant – in line with HSE regulations. Completed
- Removal of pigeons and guava from roof void above the Gallery bar / café
- Replacement of broken radiator
- Replacement of broken window that looks out onto the High Street
- In addition our cleaning staff are engaged in full and robust programme of 'deep cleans' in all areas of the building.

Unfortunately due to bad weather during August, the Old Town Hall suffered quite serious flooding which led to power outages. This has caused some immediate and on-going issues with regard to water damage to the building

4. Re-opening the building to the staff

- 4.1. As with all theatres, the Old Town Hall team is committed to a safe and speedy re-opening of its services as soon as we are allowed. In line with making the Old Town Hall COVID-19 secure for staff, we created risk assessment in respect of OTH staff working practices which was reviewed by Corporate Health and Safety Team.
- 4.2. In regard to other changes we have implemented, as would be expected, we have purchased and fitted additional hand sanitising 'stations' at building entrances / exits. We have purchased comprehensive signage for the staff (and in due course the public) to maintain social distancing and to encourage regular hand washing and the use of face coverings.
- 4.3. Casual front of House staff training has been undertaken to also ensure all staff fully understand future operations.

5. Options for re-opening the building to customers

- 5.1. Current government advice regarding theatre performances is that as of 15th August 2020, live indoor performances are allowed but only under social distancing circumstances. For the Old Town Hall this means that of the 110 seats available for sale, 45 seats can be occupied - using the 1m+ social distance with mitigation (i.e. face coverings).
- 5.2. In response the Old Town Hall team have created a workable and safe plan to allow customers back into the building. The OTH could offer the following service options taking into account the current Covid-19 restrictions:

Exhibition Viewings

- 5.3. Customers wishing to view exhibitions would purchase (free of charge) a timed entry ticket for the gallery. This would allow time enough to view the exhibition but also enjoy a light refreshment of drinks and snacks. Our café /bar has been re-modelled with less seating, to allow for social distancing, a one way system, transparent screens and an on-line or table service ordering system. By allowing each customer an allocated slot to view the exhibitions, we are

maintaining safe numbers of people in the space. Initially exhibitions would only be available to view Monday to Friday, 11am and 3pm.

Film Screenings

- 5.4. Film screenings have already opened up at cinemas across the country. By maintaining at 1m+ social distance and the now mandatory use of face coverings – the model appears to be working well. The OTH subject to feedback from the Corporate Health and safety team on our – film screening risk assessment feel this could be offered to the community.
- 5.5. The OTH guidance is similar to that of other venues showing film; a restricted number of tickets are available (to allow for social distancing), in our case 45 seats are available for sale (of the 110 seat capacity). Seating configurations allow for couples, groups of four and one set of seats for up to 5 persons. All tickets must be purchased on-line and customers have the option of pre-ordering refreshments at the same time. Customer entry is timed to stop people gathering in larger groups. Customers are admitted, their temperature is checked, their tickets are checked and they are seated at tables for refreshment / to wait for admittance to the theatre. At an appointed time, customers are seated by row to limit any criss-crossing. Customers must wear their face covering throughout the film unless eating or drinking. After the film, customers are asked to leave by row.

We understand that this is incredibly prescriptive but the Old Town Hall is small building with narrow pinch-points in the corridors and waiting spaces – so we are acting under the additional restrictions of the building itself.

- 5.6. We are currently making our ‘welcome back video’ which when produced will be a visual walk through guide for customers; from booking a ticket to buying a drink. Every element of their experience at the Old Town Hall, whether viewing an exhibition or seeing a film will be clearly mapped out. We hope that this will re-kindle customer confidence for those who may need that extra assurance, but more importantly it will ensure that both staff and customers are kept safe.

6. Live performances at the Old Town Hall.

- 6.1. In terms of how audiences purchase tickets, arrive at the venue and the wearing of masks - there is very little difference to the model of attending a film screening. However, for the Old Town Hall staff and the performers, there are different risk assessments that need to be drawn up and worked through in regard to maintaining social distance between performers and staff, performers and audience and general use of backstage facilities by performers.
- 6.2. There has been much discussion in the theatre community about the financial viability and sustainability of socially distanced performances. The result of reducing seating capacity has an instantaneous effect on box office income. In terms of the Old Town Hall, our seating capacity has always been small; and there was a time when the arts programme was subsidised because of it – but in recent years we have achieved or exceeded our income target for the shows in our season. But due to building maintenance, staffing costs, overheads, fuel charges etc. The service as a whole remains subsidised.

- 6.3. Under the current social distancing regulations, the Old Town Hall capacity is now 45 seats, as an example on how this affects our income – a show that cost £700 last year, that sold 70% capacity (77 seats) would have returned a gross box office income of £1,001 (based on a £13 ticket yield). That same show today, allowing for no increase in company fee or ticket price would give us £598 gross (if it sold out) at a £13 ticket yield. If the show did not sell out, then clearly the gross income is reduced and the show runs at a loss. Balancing inflated ticket price against customer confidence and willingness to come out to the theatre is always a challenge.
- 6.4. Customer confidence is key in ensuring that audiences return to the Old Town Hall and to the live arts in general. A recent national audience survey that polled over 103,000 respondents found that 66% of respondents would return to socially distanced performances although only 18% are actively booking for live performances from November 2020 onwards. In terms of what audiences are looking for to feel confident when at the theatre - it is the COVID-safe 'kite mark' – assurances from the venue of the additional cleaning, training and safety plans in place, the ability for households to be seated together, a limit on the numbers in the theatre and that there is adequate space between seats.

7. Staffing update

- 7.1. We currently have 3 FTE vacancies in the service including key roles such as operations team leader and a support / duty manager. These post holders would be key in ensuring our health and safety responsibilities are maintained and due to the pandemic are enhanced.
- 7.2. Our casual front of house team will need to have covid-19 secure training before re-introducing them to the new ways of working. A result of the pandemic have seen some of our staff leaving the casual front of house role – so recruitment will need to be a priority for us in the coming weeks.

8. Post Covid-19 OTH programme

- 8.1. Whilst our main priority is to safely re-open the Old Town Hall to our customers and visitors, there has been discussion surrounding what our programme may look like post COVID. Our belief is that the Old Town Hall may need to offer a more balanced offer, between:
- a workable, financially viable professional arts programme,
 - a venue for hire - meetings, conferences, workshops as well as celebratory events
 - a youth and community creative hub – concentrating on a learning and participation programme for a wide range of groups and users from across the borough.

9. Conclusions

- 9.1. This paper highlights the challenges that Covid-19 has had on the OTH and provides details of our response so far. The OTH service has demonstrated

what the arts and entertainment programme could look like if we are to open under existing Covid-19 guidance. Clearly there is a lot of work still to do and the income will be lower if we are to re-open, but we would still be able to offer a limited programme which could be welcomed by our residents in these troubled times.

- 9.2. Views from the committee are welcomed on our possible re-opening plan and the future arts/entertainment programme.

Agenda Item 11

Housing & Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee: Work Programme 2020/21

Scrutiny making a positive difference: Member led and independent, Overview & Scrutiny Committee promote service improvements, influence policy development & hold Executive to account for the benefit of the Community of Dacorum.

Meeting Date	Report Deadline	Items	Contact Details	Background information
7 October 2020	25 September 2020	ASB Update	Assistant Director for Housing Fiona.williamson@dacorum.gov.uk	
		Housing Income Collection	Assistant Director for Housing Fiona.williamson@dacorum.gov.uk	
4 November 2020	23 October 2020	Budget Monitoring Q2 report	Group Manager for Financial Services Fiona.jump@dacorum.gov.uk	<i>To review and scrutinise quarterly performance</i>
		Children Services and Community Safety Partnership, Customer Services, The Old Town Hall, Communications and Community Partnerships Q2 Performance Report	Assistant Director for Performance, People and Innovation linda.roberts@dacorum.gov.uk	<i>To review and scrutinise quarterly performance</i>
		Housing Performance Q2 report	Assistant Director for Housing Fiona.williamson@dacorum.gov.uk	<i>To review and scrutinise quarterly performance</i>
		Supported Housing Review	Assistant Director for Housing Fiona.williamson@dacorum.gov.uk	<i>To review proposals for the Supported Housing Charges and improvements to schemes.</i>

		Garages	Assistant Director for Performance, People and Innovation linda.roberts@dacorum.gov.uk	<i>To present the proposed Investment Strategy for DBC's garage stock</i>
1 December 2020	20 November 2020	Joint Budget <i>Ideally no further items to be added</i>		
5 January 2021	25 December 2021			
2 February 2021	22 January 2021	Joint Budget <i>Ideally no further items to be added</i>		
3 March 2021	19 February 2021	Budget Monitoring Q3 report	Group Manager for Financial Services Fiona.jump@dacorum.gov.uk	<i>To review and scrutinise quarterly performance</i>
		Children Services and Community Safety Partnership, Customer Services, The Old Town Hall, Communications and Community Partnerships Q3 Performance Report	Assistant Director for Performance, People and Innovation linda.roberts@dacorum.gov.uk	<i>To review and scrutinise quarterly performance</i>
		Housing Performance Q3 report	Assistant Director for Housing Fiona.williamson@dacorum.gov.uk	<i>To review and scrutinise quarterly performance</i>