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Housing and Community Overview and Scrutiny

Report for:	Housing and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Title of report:	Quarter 3 Performance Report – Customer Services, The Old Town Hall, Communications, Community Safety & Children Services and Community Partnerships
Date:	2 nd March 2022
Report on behalf of:	Councillor Julie Banks, Portfolio Holder for Community and Regulatory Services
Part:	I
If Part II, reason:	N/A
Appendices:	N/A
Background papers:	
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	CSU – Customer Service Unit HCEP - Herts Cultural Education Partnership KPI – Key Performance Indicators

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Corporate Priorities	<p>A clean, safe and enjoyable environment</p> <p>Building strong and vibrant communities</p> <p>Ensuring economic growth and prosperity</p> <p>Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery</p> <p>Climate and ecological emergency</p>
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Wards affected	All wards
Purpose of the report:	1. To provide the Q3 performance information for monitoring and information
Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s):	1. That Members note the report and identify any areas where they require additional information
Period for post policy/project review:	N/A

1. Introduction

1.1. This paper will provide an update on service performance over Q3 2021/2022 for Customer Services, the Old Town Hall, Communications, Community Safety & Children Services and Community Partnerships and also highlight key achievements over this same period.

2. Customer Services Unit (CSU)

2.1. All key performance indicators were achieved this quarter. There is no data available currently for face to face meetings but we aim to remedy this longer term with the work planned to review Customer Services and implement the Customer Strategy.

2.2. Customer Services continue to cover reception at the Forum and offer essential face to face pre booked appointments for those unable to use other channels but the requirement of appointments continues to be very low.

2.3. The service is working alongside the Revenues and Benefits Team to prepare for training for the new Enterprise system alongside the introduction of Citizens Access system (Council Tax). Additionally, the Service is working with colleagues to prepare for annual billing and rent increases.

3. The Old Town Hall

3.1. During Quarter 3 (Q3), the Old Town Hall has seen a positive response to reopening with two sell out shows and half of all shows for the period with audiences over 50% capacity. Given the uncertainty around COVID and the theatre industry, customers have shown strong support for the venue and the programme.

3.2. There is continued growth in new customers at the Old Town Hall with 46% of tickets purchased being first time customers versus 44% in the same period in 2019 (pre-covid).

3.3. The Old Town Hall saw the start of the new website project during November which is due to be completed at the beginning of March 2022. This will provide customers and staff with improved functionality, information around the programme/venue and a smoother purchase path for ticket purchases.

3.4. The Old Town Hall Satisfaction Survey is underway with customers receiving feedback surveys one day after attending an event. These surveys are made up of twenty five questions in total covering topics

ranging from customer service to venue satisfaction. Events covered by this survey would have taken place in the Main Theatre or The Cellar Club. Current feedback and performance is outlined below;

- Old Town Hall Front of House stewarding staff received a 97.7% excellent/good rating from our customers over the quarter
- Customer rating on the range of events on offer was 65.9% excellent; 24.2% very good; 8.8% good; 1.1% fair.
- Overall customer satisfaction for the events staged this quarter was 82% excellent rating; 17% very good rating and 1% good rating.

4. Communications

4.1. External communications (across all channels) - have delivered on external Public Relations (PR) campaigns and projects including the COVID-19 memorial tree planting in Gadebridge Park; fly-tipping prosecutions; Local Plan (call for sites); RSPCA Awards; Green Flag Awards; PSPOs (District Enforcement launch); Dacorum Climate Action Network (CAN) event; Halloween trail (LoyalFree App); Digital initiatives – Dacorum awarded £100k (The PropTech Engagement Fund was launched in August 2021. Local Planning Authorities were invited to submit bids for up to £100,000 to run pilots to boost engagement in Local Plan consultations, better publicise proposed developments, or to analyse consultation responses; new crematorium (Hemel Hempstead); Tring Skate Park consultation; SW Herts website launch; Green Community Grants; Tap to Donate scheme (Homelessness); Article 4 direction for Hemel Hempstead Town Centre, redevelopment of Paradise Depot site; and issued 30 press/media releases.

4.2. Internal communications – design and implementation of internal campaigns and projects including the launch of the new intranet; inclusion calendar and White Ribbon campaign. There were 48 internal campaigns (service information campaigns and COVID-specific campaigns and messaging for staff) completed; and five IMT information cascades for Managers of People were issued.

4.3. Publications and design – content management, design and delivery of 12 issues of Dacorum Life (11,600+ subscribers), 12 issues of Members News; and distributed the winter version of Dacorum Life, issued to every household in the borough by Royal Mail.

4.4. Covid-19 Communications – Ongoing support during the Covid-19 pandemic. This includes public information campaigns from the Cabinet Office; public health campaigns from Public Health England and Local Resilience Forum; and service specific campaigns and updates from DBC services.

4.5. Social media and website statistics

Dacorum Facebook – October to December 2021
Connections – 9,619 (increase of 193 from Q2 2021/22)
Link clicks – 7,722 (increase of 1,972 from Q2 2021/22)
Posts - 323 (increase of 87 from Q2 2020/21)

Dacorum Twitter – October to December 2021
Connections – 8,681 (increase of 61 from Q2 2021/22)
Link clicks – 1,090 (decrease of 9 from Q2 2021/22)
Posts - 286 (increase of 60 from Q2 2021/22)

4.6. Top five posts by clicks (from 609 posts during Q3 2021/22)

View post

dacorum f 01 Nov 2021 | 10:38

Work starts today on a new crematorium based in Hemel Hempstead that will serve the needs of residents in Dacorum, Watford, Three Rivers, St Albans and Hertsmere...

73
14
16
1.1K

11.2K
11.2K
10.4

1
1.1K
CLICKS

View post

dacorum f 03 Nov 2021 | 09:00

Your October 2021 - March 2022 Waste Collection Calendars are now available. You can download your copy and check your waste collection dates here...

19
20
13
769

10.5K
11.1K
7.42

2
769
CLICKS

View post

dacorum f 10 Nov 2021 | 09:00

Have you downloaded your October 2021 - March 2022 Waste Collection Calendar yet? You can download your copy and check your waste collection dates, including...

9
14
5
496

10K
10.6K
4.94

3
496
CLICKS

View post

dacorum f 06 Nov 2021 | 09:00

Your 2021 garden waste collections will soon be suspended for the winter. The last collections are between 22 November - 3 December. You can find your last garden...

11
11
2
284

7.8K
8.2K
3.76

View post

dacorum f 01 Dec 2021 | 09:01

Your bin collections will change over the next month due to the Christmas and New Year bank holidays. Please see the image below for details. Your Waste Collection...

19
74
51
178

40.3K
43.2K
0.75

4.7. Website analytics Q3 2021/22

Page Title	Page Views ↓	Unique Page Views
	1,063,180 % of Total: 100.00% (1,063,180)	738,655 % of Total: 100.00% (738,655)
1. My Bin Collections	165,980 (15.61%)	69,142 (9.36%)
2. Council Services - Payment Portal	133,587 (12.56%)	58,958 (7.98%)
3. Dacorum Borough Council Home Page	96,730 (9.10%)	79,978 (10.83%)
4. When are my bins collected	43,697 (4.11%)	39,601 (5.36%)
5. Payment summary - Payment Portal	37,062 (3.49%)	27,790 (3.76%)
6. Search planning applications	36,016 (3.39%)	26,486 (3.59%)
7. Transaction complete - Payment Portal	32,770 (3.08%)	30,469 (4.12%)
8. Complete your shopping - Payment Portal	32,158 (3.02%)	27,140 (3.67%)
9. Search Dacorum Borough Council	30,147 (2.84%)	26,362 (3.57%)
10. Rent	23,529 (2.21%)	21,050 (2.85%)

5. Community Safety Partnership and Children Services

- 5.1. There were 12 safeguarding referrals made from Dacorum Borough Council staff in Q3. This is a decrease of 33% from Q2 which had 18 referrals. 5 of these relate to concerns about adults who are subjected to emotional abuse, financial abuse or neglect, 5 relate to children due to threat of homelessness, substance misuse and/or mental health, and 2 for Domestic Abuse. These numbers are relatively consistent with previous years
- 5.2. Members of the Community Safety team have continued to work in partnership to address issues of anti-social behaviour. There were 40 reports relating to non-DBC housing tenants received in Q3 with the main themes focusing on drug use, nuisance youths and parking. Where warning letters, face to face appointments and mediation are unsuccessful, 2 Community Protection Warnings and 3 Community Protection Notices were issued by the team.
- 5.3. A community trigger was received in Q3. This is a tool that allows a resident to request a review of their case if they believe that no action has been taken in response to reports of anti-social behaviour. The Community Safety team are responsible for receiving these requests and agencies including DBC, Police, local health teams and registered providers of social housing have a duty to carry out a case review if a request is received and meets the criteria.
- 5.4. The Adventure Playgrounds have entered the winter closure period which commenced at the end of October 2021, so can only report on 1 months figure of 3450 children. Numbers for this period are higher than October 2019, pre-pandemic figure of 1895, which is encouraging for this time of the year. During the winter closure youth clubs are still operating for 11 to 16 year olds and saw 527 young people attend during this period and provide an important and safe space for young people during the darker winter months.
- 5.5. Income is still increasing due to the improvements made to Grovehill and Adeyfield, with Q3 nearing £18,000. Enquiries and bookings have been made for sports pitch and building hire including providing space and staff to run a learning hub for children who are part of Afghan resettlement programme on behalf of Hertfordshire County Council. This included facilitating outdoor activities, providing lunch and learning support until school places could be provided.

6. Community Partnerships

Physical activity, Wellbeing, Arts and Culture

- 6.1. The Dacorum Fun Palace, a programme of free activities for the community took place over the national Fun Palaces weekend, 1-2 October 2021. This was delivered in partnership with Hemel Hempstead library and 18 other local organisations and artists/creatives. It was the first large hybrid event the team delivered, offering a total of 23 free arts, cultural and physical activities in-person and online for all ages and in venues in Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted and Tring.
- 6.2. 887 members of the community engaged and participated in activities either in-person or online and the Dacorum Fun Palace webpage had the most visits worldwide for the second year running. With a number of activities around the Hemel town centre, feedback was received from Humphrey Mwanza the General Manager of the Marlowes Shopping Centre who said:

'The Fun Palace weekend was definitely our best week and weekend since full re-opening back in April. Great feedback from both guests and the site team, as it felt like the good old busy days. In short the success of the event, brought more guests to the centre, they stayed longer and in turn spent some money in some shops, which is a Win-Win'.

- 6.3. As part of the Herts Cultural Education Partnership (HCEP) Partner Investment Programme, two test and trial creative projects were co-created and delivered for 2 local secondary schools, Longdean and Kings Langley, with funding from Royal Opera House Bridge. Longdean's project culminated in an outstanding performance by yr. 8 students at The Old Town Hall in December after working with a local professional theatre production company. Kings Langley School's project has been delayed due to Omicron and COVID issues within the school before Christmas. The remainder of the project will be delivered at a suitable and safe time for the school.
- 6.4. Other elements of the project, which officially concluded in December included a youth voice cultural survey, cultural mapping research, continuous personal development for creative teachers and cultural providers and beatboxing workshops for local youth groups
- 6.5. Over the Christmas holidays a number of activities took place to engage with children and support low income families to tackle inequalities, social isolation and promote physical and healthy activities. The HAPpy camps followed from the 12 days of festivities run by the Community Partnerships team through Active Dacorum.
- 6.6. Tickets have been launched for Your Town 5k Hemel 2022. This was a success in 2021 with the highest turn out so far and anyone wanting to take part can access tickets and more information using the link below. <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/mayors-office-dacorum-borough-council/t-rmkkr>

Healthy Hub

- 6.7. The number of residents who have been in contact with the Healthy Hub remained steady in Q3 with 430 people being directly supported by the hub and referred to local partners. This is a slight decrease of 8% on last month however Dacorum has consistently had the most referrals per quarter in comparison to other local authorities and their hubs. This is massively supported by our projects with Herts Mind Network, Citizens Advice Dacorum and the South Hill Centre which we recently extended until March 2022
- 6.8. The Q2 figures of the hub can be seen below. The decrease in online engagement is likely due to the opening of the face to face sessions which saw 350 attend in person at the Southill Centre.

Healthy Hub October – end of December 2021

Referrals - 430 (decrease from 470 in Q2 2021)

Website – 270 (increase from 265 in Q2 2021)

Facebook reach – 9,227 (decrease from 12,215 in Q2 2021)

- 6.9. Since the launch in June 2020 1936 residents have been positively impacted by the work of the healthy hub and the partnerships linked to this. Confirmation has been received from Public Health colleagues that the funding behind the project will be extended by a further two years following the benefit that has been seen for residents in Hertfordshire in particular to mitigate the impact from the pandemic.

Community Grants

7. The Community Partnership Team were successful in obtaining funding from the Health Protection Board to run a scheme to help community and voluntary organisations to re-open following the lockdown earlier this year. A Covid Recovery Grant was offered by DBC for any Dacorum organisation to help cover additional costs they faced as a consequence of Covid and help fund additional safety measures to protect residents, staff and volunteers. Applications for these grants closed on Friday 29 October. The panel have agreed to fund ten of these applications, with a total awarded in round 2 of £56,647.12.

7.1 The winter 2021 Community Grants round closed for applications on 30 November. Nine applications for the main grants scheme and six for the small grants fund were received. The panel agreed to fund five larger grant applications, five smaller grants and one small grant deferred from the summer 2021 round. This totals a grant spend this round of £18,590, with the remaining £4,500 in the capital grant budget being taken as slippage into the 2022-23 financial year to pay a £10,000 grant to Potten End Cricket Club after the PH approval process has been completed. More information about this scheme can be found at [Grants \(dacorum.gov.uk\)](https://www.dacorum.gov.uk)