Finance and Resources

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Report for:	Finance and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Title of report:	Quarter 4 Performance Report – People Transformation (including CSU and Climate Change) Digital and ICT Communications
Date:	7th June 2022
Report on behalf of:	Councillor Graeme Elliot
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 KPI – Key Performance Indicators

Report Author / Responsible Officer

Jody Nason (Interim Deputy Chief Executive)

Matt Rawdon, Assistant Director (People)

Ben Trueman, Head of Digital

Kelvin Soley, Head of Communications

Hannah Peacock, Head of Transformation

✉ ☎

Matt.Rawdon@dacorum.gov.uk / 01442 228513 (ext. 2513)

Ben.Trueman@dacorum.gov.uk / 01442 228171 (ext. 2171)

Kelvin.Soley@dacorum.gov.uk / 01442 228504 (ext. 2504)

Hannah.Peacock@dacorum.gov.uk / 01442 228037 (ext. 2037)

Corporate Priorities	A clean, safe and enjoyable environment
	Building strong and vibrant communities
	Ensuring economic growth and prosperity
	Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery
	Climate and ecological emergency
Wards affected	All wards
Purpose of the report:	1. To provide the Q4 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 Q4 2021/2022 for People, Transformation (including CSU and Climate and Ecological Emergency), Digital and ICT, Communications and also highlight key achievements over this same period.

2. **People**

   2.1. The total sickness absence outturn for Q4 is higher than in Q3. Both short- and long-term absence has increased.

   2.2. The sickness scrutiny group continues to meet regularly to assess all sickness absence and will look to identify trends and any areas of concern, in these cases they will be escalated to a more formal route via the policy. This group also monitors compliance to return work interviews to ensure staff members returning have a session with their manager to discuss their absence, as well as carrying out spot checks on whether managers are in regular contact with their staff.

   2.3. The HR team has analysed the statistics and there appears to be an increase in stress/anxiety related absence (both home and work) as well as increased absence related to Covid-19 and surgery. HR work with management to assess cases to understand what the reasons for the sickness absence so that a tailored approach to managing the absence is devised. For cases of work-related sickness, mechanisms are in place to identify the 'possible cause', so that managers can find solutions to alleviate these pressures whilst still setting expectations of work delivery. Alternatively, for cases including home life stressors, in these situations there are many support processes in place such as, occupational health, counselling, sign posting to external support, our new mental health first aider programme.

   2.4. We also continue to send out a fortnightly wellness offer which includes courses, webinars, exercise classes, other support. These focus on a dedicated topic which also link into national themes around wellness. The Council continues to promote our mental health first aider programme, where we have a cohort of trained staff who can be the first port of call for our workforce should they need some assistance. We also offer free confidential helpline to staff where they can seek professional advice and counselling in certain cases.

2.5. We also are continuing to run our staff engagement group which is focussing on health and wellbeing issues/solutions as well as how the return to the office is progressing. The Government guidance is now supporting staff back to offices which should help with staff feeling less isolated and in return support their mental wellness.

2.6. The Cabinet Office warned UK Public Sector employers to brace themselves for higher sickness absence due to Covid-19 and Dacorum is experiencing this along with other colleagues across Hertfordshire local authorities. The Council's Incident Management Team is being kept abreast of Covid-19 related absences across the council teams so pressures can be mapped and identified. Proactive action can then be taken to keep our essential services running. The Council has provided clear guidance to staff and management through IMT on how to manage CV- 19 sickness absence and what people need to do if they are infected, along with guidance on how best to reduce risks of infection. Linked to this we have a corporate risk assessment fully endorsed by our H&S team.

2.7. The sickness scrutiny group continues to assess all long-term sickness cases each month to ensure the Council is doing all it can to support staff back to work, by ensuring we have the latest medical information from our Occupational Health team, looking at what adjustments we can make to roles and where cases need to be escalated to a formal process in line with the policy. We work closely with managers to ensure regular contact is made with staff who are absent from work as this is a critical aspect to help staff back to the workplace.

2.8. The staff turnover percentage is lower than the previous quarter. An average staff turnover in the UK is around 15%, so the council this quarter (11%) is below the typical staff turnover rate.

3. Transformation

3.1. Approval to fund a new Head of Transformation post was granted by Cabinet in February 2022. A recruitment process was completed, and Hannah Peacock, previously Innovation and Improvement Team Leader, was appointed for a two-year secondment.

3.2. DBC recognised the need for a dedicated Project Management Office (PMO) to coordinate and oversee the major programmes currently underway in the organisation as part of the existing Transformation portfolio.

3.3. A temporary external resource was brought in to establish the PMO, provide visibility of programmes and projects across the organisation, and develop a strong project management methodology, and finally to support the new Head of Transformation in resourcing a permanent PMO presence.

3.4. The Transformation Board has been refreshed with support from the new PMO, and has been meeting regularly to review programme and project progress.

3.5. The delivery of Phase 2 of the Customer Strategy is a major project within the Transformation portfolio, this project will implement the recently approved Customer Strategy across the organisation and gather the requirements for a CRM system. Cabinet gave approval in February 2022 to procure appropriate external resource to deliver Phase 2. During this quarter the Transformation Service worked with Procurement to plan and initiate the procurement process, with the contract to be awarded next quarter.

3.6. The Transformation service has also supported Service Planning for this year. In this quarter, the service completed a review of previous Service Plans, brought together a Service Planning Working Group to project manage the process, developed and had approved a new Service Plan template. The new Service Plans will be approved in the next quarter.

3.7. During the Service Plan development, services have taken the opportunity to review their Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) with the aim to streamline where possible. Further details on proposed KPI changes will be brought to members in the next quarter.

4. **Customer Services Unit (CSU)**

4.1. Not all key performance indicators were achieved this quarter, with wait times being longer. Face to face stats will be reviewed as work starts on the Customer Strategy, and in line with new operating practices outlined below.

4.2. Tring and Berkhamsted Customer Services have re-opened on a reduced part time basis. Pre-booked appointments are available to mirror the service at the Forum, however take-up is very low. This will be monitored over the coming months.

4.3. The service worked with the Planning Department to ensure phone scripts and telephone messages were delivered to customers regarding the Chiltern Beechwood SAC.

4.4. CSU handled higher than expected volumes of calls during February and March to manage Housing Rent increase and Council Tax Annual billing enquiries. Enquiries continue in relation to the Government Energy Rebate.

4.5. Staff received training on the new Revenue & Benefits system (Enterprise), a new system coinciding with annual billing was a challenge but staff adapted well ensuring customer enquiries were responded to.

5. **Climate and Ecological Emergency**

5.1. Completed the Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy which is in final stages of review and approval and will be published publicly in Q1.

5.2. Ran the second round of the Green Community Grant scheme and delivered £20,000 of funding to local community groups to deliver a variety of environmental projects.

5.3. Launched the Hertfordshire Energy Advice Tool (HEAT) - a free app that enables residents to get tailored advice to reduce the amount of energy they use at home. Dacorum took the lead on this on behalf of the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership and as such this is available to all Hertfordshire residents. We were the first council in the UK to work with the Energy Saving Trust to develop this.

5.4. Have completed compiling the necessary data in order to create our organisational greenhouse gas emissions reports.

5.5. We have worked with a consultant to survey our owned and operated built assets and are in the process of reviewing the final reports which outline the recommended actions and costs in order to make the buildings are energy efficient as possible.

5.6. An Electric Vehicle Strategy has been drafted ready for review and approval. The roll out of EV charge points in Council owned car parks is progressing well – companies have been selected and contracts are in the process of being signed, suitable locations have been identified and charge points are expected to be installed within the 2022/23 financial year.

5.7. Dacorum were successful with a joint consortium bid for the Green Homes Grant LAD2 and Sustainable Warmth funding. To promote this to eligible residents that meet the criteria, a targeted mail out of 11,000 letters was sent out.

6. Digital and ICT

6.1. IT Systems availability (99.67%) continued to be positive within the quarter demonstrating the fundamental reliability of the Council's technology infrastructure. We did, however, experience two short outages: one, in January, affected users of a limited set of applications provided by "Remote Desktop Services"; the other, in February, affected some telephony and applications for office-based workers, with people working remotely unaffected. In both cases the root cause was identified and rapidly corrected.

6.2. The primary performance indicator (ICT01 - Percentage of incidents resolved in less than 2 days) was red within the quarter at 61.98%. However, this was a significant improvement over the previous quarter at 49.31%.

6.3. The ICT Service Desk continued to be affected by short staffing in the quarter but the position improved with the appointment of a new Lead Officer in March. Performance is expected to improve as new officers join the team, although it will take some time for them to be fully trained and the resolution of a backlog of older calls is likely to affect KPIs for some time yet.

6.4. Q4 saw the formal confirmation of the Council's reaccreditation to the Public Sector Network (PSN). This followed extensive work from the ICT Infrastructure Team to ensure that the Cabinet Office were satisfied with our response to a report on the Council's network provided by third-party consultants who had tested (i.e. attempted "ethically hacking" of) Dacorum's technical environment.

6.5. Numbers of Website Users (132,871) is a drop from the previous quarter's figure of 149,804. The number of registered MyDacorum users, however, continued to rise, standing at 8679, an increase of 5.6% over the previous quarter. As customer journeys are mapped as part of the project to implement Customer Strategy opportunities for enhancements to the website are expected to be identified.

7. Communications

7.1. External communications (across all channels) - have delivered on external Public Relations (PR) campaigns and projects including the additional green waste collection service; fly-tipping prosecutions; Berkhamsted Leisure Centre consultation; launch of the Hertfordshire Energy Advice Tool (HEAT) app; Hemel New Town 75th anniversary; PSPOs (District Enforcement) litter enforcement at sports pitches; funding for energy efficiency improvements to council homes; The Big Hoot owl art trail; Walk with the dinosaurs in Tring; local journeys transport survey; promotion of online business events; refurbishment of Northridge Way Basketball court; ground-breaking at new crematorium; Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation; Netflix's Afterlife bench donation; Dacorum's Den launch; and issued 29 press/media releases.

7.2. Internal communications – design and implementation of internal campaigns and projects including the return to the office/new ways of working; inclusion calendar and creation of Commercial Hub on the intranet. There were 39 internal campaigns (service information campaigns and COVID-specific campaigns and messaging for staff) completed; staff update session held online; and five IMT information cascades for Managers of People/All staff were issued.

7.3. Publications and design – content management, design and delivery of 14 issues of Dacorum Life (12,000+ subscribers) and 12 issues of Members News.

7.4. 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.

7.5. Social media and website statistics

Dacorum Facebook – January to March 2022
Connections – 11,317 (increase of 1,698 from Q3 2021/22)
Link clicks – 9,471 (increase of 2,213 from Q3 2021/22)
Posts – 236 (decrease of 78 from Q3 2020/21)

Dacorum Twitter – October to December 2021
Connections – 8,790 (increase of 109 from Q3 2021/22)
Link clicks – 1,750 (increase of 743 from Q3 2021/22)
Posts - 226 (decrease of 55from Q3 2021/22)

7.6. Top five posts by clicks (from 462 posts during Q4 2021/22)

View post

dacorum f 16 Feb 2022 | 11:02
Over the last 12 months, we've been investigating the potential of replacing Berkhamsted Leisure Centre with a new, modern leisure facility within the existing…

♡ 196   📢 23.8K   1
⊰ 37   👁 27.8K
💬 11   ☑ 4.44   988
⤴ 988   CLICKS

View post

dacorum f 16 Mar 2022 | 11:00
Your March - November 2022 Waste Collection Calendars are now available. You can download your copy and check your waste collection dates here:…

♡ 18   📢 7.3K   2
⊰ 11   👁 7.5K
💬 5   ☑ 7.21   505
⤴ 505   CLICKS

View post

dacorum f 04 Feb 2022 | 09:02
#Hemelat75 Today is Hemel Hempstead New Town's 75th anniversary. Take a look at this film from the 1960s which shows how the town developed since 1947 https://orlo.uk/pZbe7

♡ 113   📢 5K   3
⊰ 10   👁 5K
💬 12   ☑ 11.08   416
⤴ 416   CLICKS

View post

dacorum f 04 Jan 2022 | 12:01
NEW HOME ENERGY APP LAUNCHED: exclusively for Hertfordshire residents. Download the new app to see where you could save energy and money at home Sear…

♡ 7   📢 3.4K
⊰ 3   👁 3.9K
💬 4   ☑ 10.08
⤴ 375

View post

DacorumBC 🐦 12 Jan 2022 | 09:00
Want to save energy at home? Download the new Hertfordshire Energy Advice Tool (HEAT) app to discover the changes you can make at home to reduce your carbon…

♡ 1   📢 110.3K
⤶ 1   👁 3.2K
💬 1   ☑ 9.56
⤴ 306