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METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

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# Citizen Focus and Engagement

## Portfolio Performance and Resources Mid-Year Report 2021/22



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**ONESTOCKPORT**

Date:	November 2020	Version	1.0	Approved by	DS
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# CITIZEN FOCUS AND ENGAGEMENT - PORTFOLIO OVERVIEW



## Portfolio Summary

I am pleased to say all remaining libraries were reopened over the summer and we have been moving back to a normal pattern of libraries events and activities. For example, 1,772 children took part in the summer reading challenge – an event that aims to help children to maintain their reading standards over the long summer holiday period. In mid-August Open+ was switched on for the first time in Cheadle, Heald Green and Bredbury, extending the total opening hours for these libraries. Open+ is planned to be installed in four more libraries by the end of this year, extending library opening hours even further.



Due to the ongoing pandemic restrictions in Quarter 1 our events team could only provide limited events. However, since the lifting of restrictions, the team have received a huge amount of enquiries and bookings – particularly for weddings where there is pent up demand.

With the unlocking of covid restrictions we have also seen a significant increase in citizen demand for many services, resulting in increased calls to our contact centre, increased numbers of complaints across all areas and increased demand for registrar services. 122 stage 1 corporate complaints were received in the first half of this year compared to 55 for the same period in 2020/21 and 79 in 2019/20, and 72 stage 2 complaints were received in the first half of this year compared to 30 in the same period in 2020/21 and 49 in 2019/20. The impact of this increase is set out in more detail in the commentary provided in this report and improvement plans are in place in all areas where we have seen performance affected over the last two quarters.

Our digital inclusion work goes from strength to strength and all three digital inclusion indicators are forecast to surpass this year's targets. A total of 15 additional organisations have joined the Digiknow network already this year and in excess of 15,000 individuals have been helped to get online or develop their digital skills since the Digiknow network was formed in 2018/19.

We continue to engage and consult with citizens about the way in which their services are designed and delivered – in particular, engagement relating to the Local Plan, the Health and Care Plan and Stockroom received significant public interest. In total, over 5,000 responses were received to consultation and engagement activity that ended in Quarter 1 or Quarter 2.

**Cllr David Sedgwick, Cabinet Member for Citizen Focus & Engagement**

**Revenue Budget 2021/22 (Forecast)**

	<b>£000</b>
Cash Limit	4,808
Forecast	4,808
(Surplus)/Deficit	0

Reserves

Approved use of reserves balance is £0.980m; a draw down from them of £0.763m is assumed in the forecast outturn, together with a notional Covid-19 financial scarring contingency allocation of £0.144m.

**Capital Programme**

There is no capital programme associated with the Citizen Focus and Engagement Portfolio.

# CITIZEN FOCUS AND ENGAGEMENT

## 1. DELIVERING OUR PRIORITIES



This report is based on the **2021/22 Portfolio Agreement**, considered by the Corporate, Resource Management and Governance Scrutiny Committee on 15<sup>th</sup> June and approved by Cabinet on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2021. The link to the Agreement can be [found here](#).

Updates on **key programmes of work and other activities** are referenced within the Portfolio Priorities within this section of the report, alongside the latest available **performance data**. This report reflects the picture as at the end of October where this is available.

**Performance measures** are reported where new data or forecasts are available since the Portfolio Agreement. Latest data across all measures is available via the Portfolio Dashboard and will be included in the Annual Report. These are categorised to reflect the council's influence and responsibility as Council, Partnership or Contextual. These categories are used to determine the type of target used as numerical, comparator, direction of travel or if no target is set. Definitions for these categories and target types are included within the Agreement.

**Highlight and exception commentary** is provided for performance measures. Where performance or progress in delivering priorities has been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and resulting restrictions, this is reflected within the commentary. As highlighted in the Agreements, it has not been possible to set annual targets for some measures due to these impacts, but 'direction of travel' will continue to be shown for these. For those measures reported quarterly, a full-year forecast is included where possible, based on actual performance to date as well as any other factors that are expected to affect performance in future quarters.

The Portfolio Performance Dashboards are being launched alongside these reports, and the Citizen Focus and Engagement Portfolio Dashboard can be [found here](#). This contains further historical trend data in addition to comparative data (where available) the latest of which relates to 2020/21.

The criteria for RAG rating and direction of travel status are shown below. The rationale for any variations to this will be clearly highlighted within the commentary.

### Key to symbols used in tables

	Red; Indicator is performing significantly (>5%) below target		Getting worse; The forecast year-end position for this indicator is less favourable than the previous year-end.
	Amber; Indicator is performing slightly (<5%) below target		Stable; The forecast year-end position for this indicator is within 1% either side of the previous year-end.
	Green; Indicator is on track or performing above target		Getting better; The forecast year-end position for this indicator is more favourable than the previous year-end.

**Bold measures** are included in the Greater Manchester Strategy outcomes framework and/or suite of 'headline' measures included in Corporate Report  
*Data in italics is provisional / forecast*

## **Priority 1: Building everything we do around our communities**

### **Delivered by:**

#### **Improving citizens' experience of interacting with the council**

Following changes made to the way in which Citizen Advice services were offered throughout the pandemic, Citizens Advice – who are commissioned by the council to deliver information, advice and guidance services – has been reviewing its delivery model, in consultation with the council, in order to ensure the service takes advantage of phone and digital contact trends whilst also providing face to face support for those who need it. As part of this plan, freephones are being installed in libraries enabling residents to contact Citizen Advice at any time their phone line is open. Library colleagues are also being trained to make direct referrals.

Fred Perry House will continue to offer appointment-based services only for clients who need more specialised support. In person Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) provided via Citizens Advice is also in the process of being restored at several venues across Stockport and plans are in place to offer community-based services with triage and appointments.

The end of Quarter 2 marked 12 months since our web accessibility tool “Recite Me” was added to the council’s webpages. Since it was launched it has been used to view 18,467 pages on our website, an average of 3,693 pages per month. Over 4,000 unique users have made use of this tool, with the majority using it as a screen reader (reading out the text on the page) but others using it for web translations into languages such as Polish, Urdu, Welsh, French and Albanian. 52% of users were using a desktop computer or laptop while 48% were using a mobile device.

One Stockport Hub continues to be a popular destination in the Town Centre. It has attracted in the region of 27,000 visits since opening in March 2021, and hosted pop-up community, wellbeing, and cultural themed events such as: Black History Month, Pie Radio recordings and Get On-Line week to name just a few.

#### **Developing our library offer against the national DCMS libraries taskforce framework**

Library services across all 16 library buildings have been restored, including the use of Open Plus in nine libraries (where residents can access services when library buildings are not staffed). The service is now holding many popular events and has run several campaigns including:

- The Summer Reading Challenge in which 1,772 children participated.
- Contributing to The Ripples of Hope Festival - a multi-agency event led by Disability Stockport.
- Supporting Afghan evacuee families with book packs and activities

The library management team has now been realigned to the outcomes libraries can deliver as set out by the DCMS Libraries Taskforce with development leads each taking individual responsibility for developing one aspect of the library offer: children and schools; digital and business; culture and reading; and health and wellbeing. Stockport Libraries is part of a GM Bid to the Arts Council which has been successful at the first stage. This would fund a confidential digital space at Brinnington Library in which residents will be able to engage with online appointments, undertake job interviews or connect with family and friends.

Office space at Marple Library has been trialled to enable council colleagues to pre-book desk space for individual work or small meetings, allowing colleagues to work in their local area, rather than having to return to offices in Stockport or return to work from home.



Continuation of our outreach work is taking place in Bridgehall and Offerton. We are establishing deposit collections in both areas and continue to develop work with partners to promote our services.

Great Moor, Brinnington, Edgeley, and Reddish libraries have been identified for installation of Open+. Site surveys have been undertaken and the works will take place at each Library between January and March 2022 making the extended opening hours available to residents from April 2022.

**Enabling citizens to influence the way that services are designed through consultation, engagement and co-production**

During the first half of 2021, engagement on developing the One Health and Care plan was undertaken jointly by Stockport Council, Stockport Clinical Commissioning Group and Stockport NHS Foundation Trust. In total, we spoke to 850 people who live or work in Stockport.

A first phase of engagement, that focused on Stockport’s Future High Streets Fund programme, took place between 5<sup>th</sup> July and 1<sup>st</sup> August. This engagement sought views from stakeholders on the possible uses of Stockroom within Merseyway and attracted 5,800 visits to the website with 1,299 responses to the online survey. Face-to-face interviews and attendance at various boards and forums also took place.

An early engagement on the Local Plan took place between 3<sup>rd</sup> August and 30<sup>th</sup> September. This engagement sought views from stakeholders on the six key principles that will guide the development of the Local Plan. This additional period of engagement seeks to ensure that our Local Plan is Stockport-led, that it is shaped by our residents and that it captures the views of a broad range of Stockport residents. This engagement received 265 responses to the online survey alongside feedback from 34 engagement sessions, including a number of sessions supported by Planning Aid England. Stage 1 consultation on the Local Plan will take place during winter 2021/22.

The table below gives an overview of consultation and engagement activity during Quarters 1 and 2.



Consultation / Engagement	Number of responses
Call for Brownfield sites	72
Proposed traffic management scheme in Reddish	210
Romiley to Stockport Walking and Cycling Route	467
Stockport to Edgeley Walking and Cycling	90
Armed forces covenant survey	41
One Health and Care Plan	850
A plan for Stockport by Stockport (Local Plan)	265
Marple neighbourhood forum Re-designation	41
Stockport Interchange Park	207
Road safety around schools	14
Safe Streets Save Lives – Marple District Centre	372
Phase 1 – Stockroom Engagement	1299
Public Space Protection Order extension: Responsible Dog Ownership	371
Woodford Garden Village Site Pre-Proposal	299

In addition to engagement and consultation, co-production is key to understanding how services work through the eyes and experiences of those that use them, and to improving citizens’ experience when interacting with the council. Examples of co-design and co-production activity in Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 include:

- The design and delivery of the One Stockport Community Champions approach
- Consultation with young people on their involvement in the Education Health and Care Planning process, Climate Change, messages about Covid as well as developing various strategies.
- Ongoing parent/carer and VCSE involvement in co-development of Holiday Activities and Food Programme for Easter, Summer and Christmas Holidays.
- Ongoing parent/carer involvement in SEND Board, workstream and sub-group activities covering various aspect across the range of SEND improvement work, including SEND weeks of action.



## Measuring Performance and Reporting Progress

**Please note** – Throughout the first half of this year, the volume of demand across many services rose sharply to a level that was not anticipated. This sharp rise is in line with other front-facing services within the council, GM and NW councils. This increase, and the change in customer behaviour, have affected many services' performance in the first half of 2021/22, as demonstrated below.



Council Measures								
PI Code	Short Name	Good Performance	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			
			Actual	Actual	Forecast	Target	Status	Trend
CFE1.1	Freedom of Information (FOI) requests responded to on time (% and number).	High	93.1% (1,288 of 1,384)	90.8% (1,014 of 1,117)	92.0%	95.0%		



In Quarter 1 245/290 (84.5%) of FOI requests were responded to on time. In Quarter 2 234/250 (93.6%) were.

In the first month of Quarter 2 performance was 84% but the team have since implemented an escalation procedure which has successfully increased performance levels across all directorates. A pilot "FOI Champion" role is currently being trialed in the CSS directorate to provide a single point of contact for all requests. It is also hoped that this will provide ownership of the more complex requests. On 13<sup>th</sup> October, use of the corporate CRM Verint started and this will further streamline processes, allow submission of requests via a form on the website, provide better data capture and drive further efficiencies.





PI Code	Short Name	Good Performance	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			
			Actual	Actual	Forecast	Target	Status	Trend
CFE1.2	Stage 1 complaints upheld (% and number).	Low	33.9% (41 of 121)	28.9% (26 of 90)	25%	30.0%		



In Quarter 1 9/44 (20.5%) stage 1 complaints were upheld, and in Quarter 2 10/40 (25%) were upheld. Both actuals were below the target of 30% and the 2020/21 actual figure of 28.9%.



PI Code	Short Name	Good Performance	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			
			Actual	Actual	Forecast	Target	Status	Trend
CFE1.3	Stage 2 complaints upheld (% and number).	Low	29.8% (25 of 84)	31.1% (19 of 61)	37.0%	28.0%		
<p>In Quarter 1 11/27 (40.7%) of stage 2 complaints were upheld, and in Quarter 2 14/42 (33.3%) were upheld. Whilst this is off-target, performance in Quarter 2 was significantly better than in Quarter 1.</p> <p>An upheld complaint is an indication that the council has not delivered services to the standard reasonably expected in relation to our policies and procedures. Complaints do provide an opportunity to understand the resident experience of council services and to identify areas for improvement. The complaints team is in the process of reviewing the causes of the increased numbers of upheld stage 2 complaints and will work with relevant service teams to develop improvement plans where needed.</p> <p>The estimated outturn for 2021/22 of 37% is based on the average across April to September. This measure is dependent upon the nature of future complaints, the quality of service delivery as well as the quality of complaint handling by individual services at stage 1.</p>								



PI Code	Short Name	Good Performance	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			
			Actual	Actual	Forecast	Target	Status	Trend
CFE1.4	Stage 1 complaints responded to on time (% and number).	High	88.4% (107 of 121)	88.9% (80 of 90)	85.0%	90.0%		
<p>In Quarter 1, 38/44 (86.3%) of stage 1 complaints were responded to on time and 33/40 (82.5%) in Quarter 2. There was a significant rise in complaints received at stage 1 in these two quarters (122 in 2021/22 compared to 55 in the same period in 2020/21 and 79 in 2019/20), Based on the assumptions that stage 1 complaints demand will return to normal, performance should be back on track by Quarter 4 and the predicted overall outturn for the year therefore is 85%.</p>								



PI Code	Short Name	Good Performance	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			
			Actual	Actual	Forecast	Target	Status	Trend
CFE1.5	Stage 2 complaints responded to on time (% and number).	High	76.2% (77 of 101)	82.4% (56 of 68)	72.0%	80.0%		
<p>In Quarter 1 18/30 (60.0%) of stage 2 complaints were responded to on time rising to 31/43 (72.1%) in Quarter 2. As with stage 1 complaints, the council has received a significant increase in complaints - broadly similar numbers of stage 2 complaints were received in this half year period as were received for the whole of 2020/21. (73 new cases were received during Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 compared to 75 in total for 2020/21 and 102 in total for 2019/20). It is worth noting that, whilst not reported in this measure, the council has also seen a rise in schools', adults' and children's social care complaints – many of which are complex and are also undertaken by the new complaints team.</p> <p>The new complaints team was formed in April 2021. This team deals with stage 2 corporate complaints, adults and children's social care complaints and support schools with complaints. This team is now fully resourced, providing an additional 2fte in total supporting complaints handling across the council. Officers in the team have been receiving training on corporate and statutory complaints processes and are now each taking on a greater caseload than was possible in Quarter 1 and Quarter 2.</p> <p>If complaints return to a more typical level and given the ongoing training for the team and planned improvements to the digital systems used by the team, we anticipate ongoing improvements in complaint handling time, achieving 80% by Quarter 4. The predicted annual outturn is therefore 72%.</p>								
PI Code	Short Name	Good Performance	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			
			Actual	Actual	Forecast	Target	Status	Trend
CFE1.6	Telephone calls to the Contact Centre that are answered (% and number).	High	80.7% (192,836/ 238,982)	89.3% (167,313/ 187,288)	82.9%	85.0%		
<p>In Quarter 1 43,948/51,230 (85.7%) of calls to the Contact Centre were answered, meeting the 85% target. Performance fell below target in Quarter 2 however with 46,534/57,887 (80.4%) calls answered.</p> <p>As with complaints, the Contact Centre has seen a significant increase in calls from April to September – a pattern mirrored across many other NW authorities. Council Tax is generally the most frequent reason for calls (up 25% in Quarter 1 and 14% in Quarter 2 when compared to the previous year), followed by Public Realm (up by 28% in Quarter 1 before reducing by 11% in Quarter 2).</p> <p>Calls to the switchboard (a general number for connecting to residents to all council services) increased by 2,444 (82%) in Quarter 1 and 2,997 (71%) in Quarter 2. During the remainder of 2021/22, work will be undertaken to create more online forms to divert calls to digital as well as working with services to help reduce calls to the contact centre, especially for those residents calling to enquire and/or to receive an update about services.</p> <p>Based on current performance the forecast for the end of the year is 82.9%.</p>								

PI Code	Short Name	Good Performance	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			
			Actual	Actual	Forecast	Target	Status	Trend
CFE1.7	Number and % of Digital Contacts	High	74.4% (884,427/ 1,188,424)	90.2% (2,260,047/ 2,506,774)	83.7%	92.0%		
<p>In Quarter 1, 82.7% (297,095 out of 359,270) contacts with the council were made digitally. In Quarter 2 this was 84.7% (298,328 out of 352,414).</p> <p>A significant factor in the 2020/21 outturn of 90.2% was a substantial increase in the number of “Find Your Bin Collection Day” enquiries via the council’s website due to several changes to bin collection schedules. In 2019-20 (during which time pandemic restrictions were in place for only one week), the average number of such contacts was around 18,000 per month. In 2020/21 however there was an average of 133,000 per month. This has now dropped back to around 43,000 per month – still significantly higher than pre-pandemic levels but much lower than in 2020/21.</p> <p>The 2020/21 outturn for % of digital contacts was therefore considerably inflated by the volume of “Find Your Bin Collection Day” enquiries. The 2021/22 improvement target was set before the impact of this increase was fully understood and in retrospect, it is now clear this target was set at an inappropriately high level as the large increase in the number of bin-related digital enquiries was a specific time-limited incident, caused by revised schedules during lockdowns, which skewed data in 2020/21.</p> <p>Based on the current monthly averages, the forecast outturn for the year is 83.7%, which is still a significant improvement on pre-pandemic levels. Based on post-lockdown trends, a revised target of <b>84%</b> is therefore suggested.</p>								

PI Code	Short Name	Good Performance	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			
			Actual	Actual	Forecast	Target	Status	Trend
CFE1.9	Number (and %) of births registered on time (within 42 days).	High	98% (2872 of 2930)	74.2% (2,562 of 3,452)	92.6%	98.0%		
<p>In Quarter 1 746 out of 805 (92.7%) births were registered in time. In Quarter 2 this was 783 out of 846 (92.6%). Performance in both quarters therefore fell below the nationally set 98% target but is a significant improvement on 2020/21.</p> <p>This has largely been due to the ongoing impact of the pandemic on the service (and is mirrored across many other local authorities). The factors that have contributed to this measure include continued restrictions in Quarter 1, self-isolation for residents which impacted their ability to visit the Register Office for births within the statutory 42 days and a shortage of resources to undertake the birth registrations due to the focus of staffing towards the high levels of demand for death registrations and ceremonies (please see further detail provided in the commentary for CFE1.10).</p> <p>Assuming death registration and ceremony demand returns to a steady rate over the next two quarters, the forecasted outturn for this target is 92.6% (the average rate over the first half of the year).</p>								

PI Code	Short Name	Good Performance	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			
			Actual	Actual	Forecast	Target	Status	Trend
CFE1.10	Number (and %) of deaths registered on time (within 5 days).	High	87% (1,590 of 1823)	81.5% (1,798 of 2,205)	43.3%	90.0%		

In Quarter 1, 275 of 456 (60.3%) deaths were registered in time. In Quarter 2 this was 162 out of 554 (29.2%). Performance in both quarters therefore fell significantly below the nationally set 90% target.

The ability to register any death is dependent on the timely receipt of a doctor's medical certificate. During the first half of this year, 45% of all medical certificates have been received four or more days later than the death occurred. The average time to receive this paperwork from Stepping Hill Hospital was 4.7 days and at times was up to 14 days. The team has established good working relationships with the CCG and local hospital and it is believed that the time delay is two-fold - due to staffing pressures and implementation of the new Medical Examiner authorisation process. This delay in receiving the necessary paperwork has significantly affected the ability of the service to register deaths within the statutory timescale of five days.

In addition, staffing changes in our own team have meant there are a higher level of inductions and increased levels of training taking place. This is to ensure everyone in the team can carry out the full range of registration tasks required – the initial priority however is to focus on death registrations.

The level of enquiries for ceremonies and notices have increased by 38% compared to the same period in 2020/21. This is due to the pandemic where lockdowns and restrictions led to many postponing events until now. This rise in demand is affecting our ability to meet targets and mirrors other authorities who are experiencing similar pressures.

These factors are significantly affecting registration services and whilst the service continues to experience delays in receiving the necessary paperwork, this measure is unlikely to significantly improve, therefore a 43% outturn is forecast.

The General Register Office (GRO), which sets national performance targets, has informed the council that due to the difficulties many register offices are facing it has temporarily paused performance monitoring of Local Authority register offices. This is expected to be the case until the new financial year.

## Priority 2: Maximising the opportunities of digital and increasing inclusion

Working towards our ambition to be a radically digital council by supporting citizens to access and benefit from digital technologies.

### Delivered by:

#### Developing and delivering a digital strategy for Stockport

Work has continued to progress on developing our Digital Strategy - a draft of which will be presented to Scrutiny in the new year. The draft strategy is framed around three core pillars and will be delivered in partnership with all portfolios:

- Digital Communities.
- Digital Place.
- Digital Council.

Within the three pillars outlined above, ongoing progress has been made against ambitions outlined in this portfolio earlier in the year:

- **Digital Communities** – Stockport’s DigiKnow Alliance continues to progress well with an ongoing focus on digital champions, helpline, lending library and community computers. A detailed update is provided later in the Priority.2 section. The Citizen Focus and Engagement Portfolio also notes the continued progress of the St Thomas’s ‘All Age Living’ site and specifically the work to roll out and embed tech enabled care, led by the Adult Care and Health portfolio.
- **Digital Place** - The Citizen Focus and Engagement Portfolio notes that the planning and development of a new innovation centre in Merseyway (led by the Economy and Regeneration portfolio) continues to proceed with a view to the centre opening in mid-2023. European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) funding has been secured and detailed costings and architects designs are now being considered.
- **Digital Council** – As well as the updates outlined under Priority.1 earlier in this PPRR. Significant progress continues to be made around the joining up and development of interactive dashboards. The Citizen Focus and Engagement portfolio notes the work of the Resources, Commissioning and Governance portfolio in the development of new self-service interactive dashboards to assist colleagues with decision-making and planning. Recent examples of newly published dashboards include Early Help, Adult Social Care “Basics” (ARCH, CLDT, Mental Health & Neighbourhoods) & Demographics. Dashboards continue to be useful and popular, for example there has been over 10,000 views of the Stockport Family dashboards since April 2021. Further to this the council launched its new open data portal (Big Stockport Picture) in June 2021, with a number of demographic, health and wellbeing and other datasets. By openly publishing data, it provides opportunities for transparency, collaboration and innovation. More datasets will be added, and a publication schedule is being developed.

**Maximising digital opportunities to enable citizens to lead happy, healthy, independent lives**

Detailed analysis and design of multiple digital referral processes has taken place, a specific example being Safeguarding referrals for both adults and children. A joined-up approach across the Design team will result in clear and consistent language and user behaviour for both the public and professionals. Development of the improved processes are the first to take place in our newly acquired Liquidlogic web portals with releases expected in 2021.

Following this release, the team will review and design other support services that can be accessed through our website and other publicly accessible digital platforms, including those that bring together community activity across the borough, so our residents feel connected with others.

More widely, work continues to ensure the organisation is meeting new standards for digital accessibility.

**Enhancing our digital inclusion offer, including growing our lending library**

The preparations for Get Online Week (18<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2021) took place in Quarter 2, with a calendar of events developed for the week, primarily based at the One Stockport Hub. This included drop-in sessions, themed support, training, talks and family fun activities, including a photo competition. Get Online Week was delivered collaboratively with partners across the DigiKnow alliance including: Starting Point; Stockport Homes; Cooperative and Renewal NW as well as council services such as the Library service.

In terms of the key areas of focus for DigiKnow:

- **Lending Library** – loans have stabilised and the lending library is now seeing a return of kits from initial phases of loans.
- **DigiKnow helpline** – requests for digital inclusion support continue to be triaged via the DigiKnow helpline.
- **Digital Champions** – the Digital Champions programme will be repurposed during 2022/23 to include targeted digital champion volunteering opportunities, training provisions and community group and partner “train the trainer” provisions.
- **Community Computers scheme** - the promotion of our Community Computers scheme has seen 1,113 devices donated (by businesses and individuals) for refurbishment since April 2021. In addition, up to August 2021, 114 devices had been sold, 44 at low-cost to people on low incomes, with the remainder bringing in income to help sustain the project

Other relevant areas that have been addressed during this period include:



- Whilst not within the direct remit of this portfolio. The Citizen Focus and Engagement portfolio notes the ongoing developments by the GM Full Fibre programme – as outlined within the PPRR for the Resources, Commissioning and Governance portfolio – are also progressing positively supporting longer term infrastructure requirements which facilitate improved access to good quality internet.
- Our delivery partner Starting Point and DigiKnow have been nominated for an award - <https://digileaders100.com/craig-macdonald>.



- As part of additional investment for digital inclusion further capacity will be recruited during Quarter 3 to support digital inclusion ambitions. This will sit within the DigiKnow Alliance.
- DigiKnow also supported Afghan evacuees with the provision of tablets and phones.



## Measuring Performance and Reporting Progress

### Council Measures



PI Code	Short Name	Good Performance	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			
			Actual	Actual	Forecast	Target	Status	Trend
CFE2.1	Cumulative number of individuals supported to get online or improve their digital confidence and skills since the establishment of the Digital Alliance in 2018/19	High	8,425	9,387	16,000	15,000		

This measures the number of people supported by initiatives such as Digiknow helpline, lending library and one-to-one and group sessions. By the end of September 2021, a total of 15,168 people had received assistance from the scheme since it started in 2018/19.

In 2021/22, we have been working to improve the data capture of interactions with our partners (commissioned and non-commissioned). We are also working on strengthening connections between local organisations to support new opportunities and ensure continued assessment of need and support offers.

PI Code	Short Name	Good Performance	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			
			Actual	Actual	Forecast	Target	Status	Trend
CFE2.2	Number of community groups to join the DigiKnow network (cumulative)	High	35	40	70	60		

As at the end of September 2021, 55 organisations were part of the Digiknow Network. The number of projected member organisations by year-end is now forecast to be 60.

PI Code	Short Name	Good Performance	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			
			Actual	Actual	Forecast	Target	Status	Trend
CFE2.3	Number of active digital champions	High	35	32	100	60		

By the end of September 2021, there were 49 active digital champions and a total of 100 are forecast to be operating by the end of March 2022.

### **Priority 3: Embracing our heritage and culture**

Facilitating a cultural offer which improves our citizens' health and wellbeing, sense of place and community, and contributes to economic prosperity.

#### **Delivered by:**

#### **Driving forward our Cultural Strategy**

The first draft of cultural strategy, "The Place That Makes Itself", has been produced and design work has been commissioned to enable wider dissemination for the purposes of ongoing engagement and development of the strategy. A programme of Year 1 projects has been agreed and is in the process of development. Projects include

- Stockport Arts & Health Week (11<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> October 2021).
- Stockport War Memorial Art Gallery is looking to increase stakeholder involvement in management and programming to maximise benefit of site to the local creative economy.
- Development of a local theatres network and/or collaborative project
- "The Place That Makes Itself" is a community arts project aimed at raising awareness of local creativity and engagement with the cultural strategy.

#### **Supporting the development of cultural networks across the VCFSE sector.**



The projects outlined above are designed to build engagement with the cultural strategy and to encourage self-supporting networks to develop to support the growth of the creative and cultural sector in the borough. The council has invested in capacity to support the growth of appropriate networks of interested parties. Work, led by Arc, has taken place to establish an arts and health network and the feasibility of a theatres/performing arts network is also being assessed. This work is being led on by NK Theatre Arts.

#### **Delivering the Museums and Collections Forward Plan**

The majority of work within the museums team in Quarters 1 and 2 has been focused on safely reopening our sites to the public following extended periods of closure. The refurbishment of Hatworks continues with a view to reopening the machinery floor in early 2022 and reopening the Gallery of Hats later in the year. A wider Museums Forward Plan will be developed in 2022 to rebuild engagement with local audiences and maximise the opportunities that museums and collections offer for developing the creative economy, connecting communities and improving health and wellbeing.

## Measuring Performance and Reporting Progress

### Council Measures

PI Code	Short Name	Good Performance	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			
			Actual	Actual	Forecast	Target	Status	Trend
CFE3.1	Number of visits to Stockport museums.	High	156,557	3,484	70,000	100,000		

There were 3,779 visits to our museums in Quarter 1 and 18,159 in Quarter 2. Museums' limited capacity due to periods of lockdown and safety measures meant that visitor figures were well below expectations in the first half of the year. The Quarter 2 improvement is encouraging, but numbers are still down on Quarter 2 in 2019/20 and suggest that it will take time to rebuild to pre-Covid visitor figures. A significant proportion of our visitors are organised school trips, and these have been severely impacted by restrictions and schools' focus on recovery and catch-up. We are now beginning to see the schools programme build back towards pre-Covid levels, particularly at Air Raid Shelters. The service is considering how it can re-engage audiences most effectively through the development of a Forward Plan which will be ready in early 2022.

# CITIZEN FOCUS AND ENGAGEMENT

## 2. FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND MONITORING



### 2.1 Revenue – Cash limit

	Previously Reported (Q1.5)	Increase/ (Reduction)	Budget at Q2
	£000	£000	£000
<b>Cash Limit Budget</b>	4,703	105	4,808

#### Budget Changes since previously reported at Quarter 1.5

The cash limit budget has increased by £0.105m from the figure previously reported, reflecting the transfer of staffing from Adult Care and Health and Education statutory elements into the Citizen Focus Service reflecting the creation of a centralised team for complaints management.

#### Outturn Forecast

Net Cash Limit	Forecast Net Expenditure	Forecast Appropriations	Forecast Outturn
£000	£000	£000	£000
4,808	5,571	(763)	0

The Portfolio is reporting a breakeven position, on a budget of £4.808m in 2021/22; this includes a notional Covid-19 financial scarring contingency allocation of £0.144m to compensate for Covid-19 related loss of income.

The Portfolio does have a degree of reliance on fees and charges income streams in services such as Registrars, Museums and Arts; and the Events (running of) Team. The predicted net income shortfall is giving rise to the underlying deficit that is being ameliorated by the Covid-19 financial scarring support. Some improvement in activity is now forecast, though this, in part, will depend on actual performance in December; any changes to government advice and public appetite will be constraining factors.

Some cost savings have been applied that mitigate some of the income losses including casual staffing savings, secondments onto track and trace and in general slower recruiting processes particularly in the early months of the year before the summer re-opening.

## 2.2 Earmarked Reserves

Most earmarked reserves are held at a corporate level and services produce a business case to draw down funds, which is approved through Corporate Leadership Team and Members. This strategic approach is designed to provide financial resilience for the council and to ensure that council reserves are used on an invest-to-save basis and to support council priorities. The exceptions to this are ringfenced reserves and the Directorate Flexibility Reserve.

The table below reflects any approved revised balances in reserves, aligned to the 2021/22 Reserves Policy approved by Cabinet on the 21<sup>st</sup> September.

Reserve Category	Reserve Narration	To be used for	Balance of Reserve/ "Approved Use" £000	Planned use of Reserves / "Approved Use" 2021/22 £000	Balance of Reserve/ "Approved Use" £000
Strategic Priority	Cabinet Positive Investment	Digital Inclusion and Financial Inclusion to Support Residents	500	(363)	137
Strategic Priority	Cabinet Positive Investment	Cultural Services to Support Our Residents	50	(50)	0
Strategic Priority	Cabinet Positive Investment	Libraries Open Plus	300	(300)	0
Directorate Reserve	Flexibility	Museums Air Raid Shelter & Hatworks	130	(50)	80
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>980</b>	<b>(763)</b>	<b>217</b>



## 2.3 Portfolio Savings Programme

Proposal	Risk Rating	Value £000	Additional Information
Registrars Income Yield	Green	50	Yield increase from nationally set registration certification fees.
Information, Advice and Guidance	Green	124	A range of measures including dis-establishing vacant posts, removing duplication, and creating a more streamlined user experience.
Citizen Service Management Restructure	Green	20	A revision to the management structure.
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>194</b>	

### Risk rating

**Green** – good confidence (90% plus) the saving is/will be delivered or minor variances (<£0.050m) that will be contained within the portfolio.

**Amber** – progressing at a reasonable pace, action plan being pursued may be some slippage across years and/or the final position may also be a little unclear.

**Red** – Significant issues arising, or further detailed consultation required which may be complex/contentious.

## 2.4 Capital Programme

There is no capital programme associated with this portfolio.