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# Citizen Focus and Engagement

Portfolio Performance  
and Resources  
Third Quarter Update Report  
2021/22



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**ONESTOCKPORT**

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# CITIZEN FOCUS AND ENGAGEMENT – PORTFOLIO OVERVIEW



## Portfolio Summary

I am really pleased to be able to report improvements across a range of citizen services areas where we had seen significant pressures and resulting drops in performance in the first half of the year. In particular, Stage 2 complaint response times for Q3 surpassed the annual target figure and the % calls answered by the contact centre has increased. Visits to museums continue to increase and we have seen more organisations become part of the DigiKnow network.



Our use of digital to improve the citizen experience has continued with the introduction of speech recognition for high volume library enquiries. This aims to improve the timeliness for residents seeking simple information such as library opening hours. Freephones have also been installed in all libraries and Fred Perry House reception allowing residents to access key organisations such as Stockport Homes and Citizen Advice.

During Quarter 3, we saw the reintroduction of one off events in our libraries such as half term “Room on the Broom” family readings delivered in partnership with NK Theatre Arts as well as regular events such as Storytimes and events such as Reading Friends which enables socially isolated residents to meet up. The Fun Palace events held at Bredbury and One Stockport Hub saw a range of partners delivering activities from coding to drumming and crafts to science. As a result, we are now seeing library usage increase to a level that is closer to pre-pandemic usage.

One Stockport Hub continues to fulfil its role as a community and cultural hub. Get Online Week was celebrated in October with a week of activities at both One Stockport Hub and the Central Library. The Seashell Trust’s sculpture exhibition attracted a range of people to the Hub and more recently the Hub was taken over as a Covid vaccination centre, delivering over 9,000 vaccinations, demonstrating the versatility of this space in the town centre.

A total of 17 consultation and engagement activities were concluded during Quarter 3, and these received a total of 3,052 responses - more than half of these related to consultation on the proposal to move services currently based at Central Library to Stockroom.

In relation to digital inclusion, a GM pilot has started with Stockport Homes to develop a sustainable and affordable model of internet and Wi-Fi provision to disadvantaged groups, with additional focus on wider benefits to improve outcomes for those facing various barriers. I am pleased to say that we have engaged Starting Point for two more years to focus on the digital inclusion of our communities. Starting Point are reviewing our Digital Champions initiative, which aims to develop, deliver and support more volunteers. Plans are also in place to engage with Alliance partners to deliver events and activities to help support people of Stockport to be less digitally excluded. My congratulations go to Starting Point and DigiKnow for their well-deserved nomination for the DigiLeaders 2021 Craig Macdonald Award.

**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 £0.390m is assumed in the forecast outturn, together with a notional Covid-19 financial scarring contingency allocation of £0.065m.

**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](#).

The Third Quarter Update Report focuses on the Portfolio **performance measures** which are reported where new data or forecasts are available since the Mid-Year Report. 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 published 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

### 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. Whilst we have seen a number of improvements in Quarter 3, particularly for Stage 2 complaint response times and Call Centre answering rates, the forecasts for year-end remain below target due to the Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 performance.

Council Measures								
PI Code	Short Name	Good Performance	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			
			Actual	Actual	Q3 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 3, 91.5% (193/211) FOI requests were responded to on time (compared to 84.5% (245/290) in Quarter 1 and 93.6% (234/250) in Quarter 2).



To improve future reporting, going forward into the next financial year we will be reporting slightly differently.

- We will report number of cases closed during the quarter and the % of those that were closed on time. A target will be set for the % closed on time.
- We will also report the total number of requests received during the quarter, as this will allow tracking of case numbers and any unusual surge of requests received. We will not however set targets relating to numbers of requests received as this is not something the council can control.



PI Code	Short Name	Good Performance	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			
			Actual	Actual	Q3 Forecast	Target	Status	Trend
CFE1.2	Stage 1 complaints upheld (% and number).	Low	33.9% (41 of 121)	28.9% (26 of 90)	28.0%	30.0%		

When comparing Quarter 3 (23) to Quarters 1 (44) and 2 (40), the council received fewer corporate complaints by almost half. Of the 23 complaints investigated at Stage 1 in Quarter 3, nine (39.1%) were upheld (20.4% in Quarter 1; 25.0% in Quarter 2). Whilst this shows an increase in the percentage of complaints upheld, there were no trends or common issues to report. The common causes raised by residents for complaints related to delays in receiving a service and/or the quality of service received.





PI Code	Short Name	Good Performance	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			
			Actual	Actual	Q3 Forecast	Target	Status	Trend
CFE1.3	Stage 2 complaints upheld (% and number).	Low	29.8% (25 of 84)	31.1% (19 of 61)	34.0%	28.0%		



Seven out of 26 Stage 2 complaints (26.9%) were upheld in Quarter 3 (40.7% in Quarter 1 and 33.3% in Quarter 2). Mirroring stage 1 complaints, in Q3 there were fewer Stage 2 complaints investigated. A lower % of Stage 2 complaints were upheld in Q3 than in Q1 or Q2. This suggests that the quality of complaints handling at Stage 1 has been improving and the team will continue to monitor this.

PI Code	Short Name	Good Performance	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			
			Actual	Actual	Q3 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)	80.0%	90.0%		



Sixteen of the 23 Stage 1 complaints (69.6%) in Quarter 3 were responded to on time (86.3% in Quarter 1; 82.5% Quarter 2). Though there were fewer complaints received in Quarter 3, for 30% of Stage 1 complaints investigated, service managers took longer to respond. A combination of high service demand and staffing pressures in some service areas has contributed to the drop in stage 1 complaints responded to on time in Quarter 3.

PI Code	Short Name	Good Performance	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			
			Actual	Actual	Q3 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)	75.0%	80.0%		



Twenty-two out of 26 Stage 2 complaints (84.6%) were responded to on time in Quarter 3 (60.0% Quarter 1; 72.1% Quarter 2). There has been a positive improvement in response times for the second quarter running and during Quarter 3, the council complaints team exceeded the annual target by achieving 84.6%. However, due to the performance in Quarters 1 and 2, a downwards trend remains, with the cumulative year-end forecast to fall shy of the target.

PI Code	Short Name	Good Performance	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			
			Actual	Actual	Q3 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)	85.0%	85.0%		

During Quarter 3, we have seen call volumes return to a more typical level and there has been a positive improvement to call response rates with the target exceeded at 87.7% (85.7% Quarter 1; 80.4% Quarter 2). Assuming call levels remain at a more typical figure throughout Quarter 4 we anticipate achieving the year-end target.

PI Code	Short Name	Good Performance	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			
			Actual	Actual	Q3 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)	84.0%	84.0%		



In Quarter 3, 85.5% of contacts were made by digital means (82.7% Quarter 1; 84.7% Quarter 2). The target was therefore met this quarter. Digital contacts are particularly affected by bin finder visits (which are 100% digital). For bin collection day visits, these are currently stable at circa 40,000 per month. Whilst we anticipate achieving the year-end target, the trend is a downwards trend when compared to last year's exceptionally high figure, the reasons for which have been explained in previous performance reports.

PI Code	Short Name	Good Performance	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			
			Actual	Actual	Q3 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)	92.0%	98.0%		

In Quarter 3 722 out of 800 (90.2%) of births were registered in time (92.7% Quarter 1; 92.6% Quarter 2). Whilst the % registered was lower than in Quarter 2 (as well as the nationally-set 98% target), this continues to be an improvement when compared to the outturn for 2020/21.

The bank holidays over the Christmas period have had some impact on Quarter 3 performance, as has a reduction on capacity within the team due to sickness and leavers. Recruitment and training have been a focus in Quarter 3 to ensure the team can operate at full capacity.

Assuming death registration and ceremony demand returns to a steady rate over the next quarters, the forecasted outturn for this target is 92%

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)	40.0%	90.0%		

A total of 174 out of 567 deaths (30.6%) were registered in time in Quarter 3 (60.3% Quarter 1; 29.2% Quarter 2).

As with the registration of births, recruitment and training have been a focus in Quarter 3 to ensure the team operates at full capacity. However, registering any death is also dependent on the timely receipt of medical certificates from GPs in the community and the hospital, and we continue to see delays. The issue of timely receipt of medical certificates has been escalated with the relevant organisations.

Whilst the service continues to experience delays in receiving the necessary paperwork, this measure is unlikely to significantly improve. A 40% year-end outturn is therefore forecasted.


The General Register Office (GRO), continues to temporarily pause performance monitoring of local authority register offices.



**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.



**Measuring Performance and Reporting Progress**

Council Measures								
PI Code	Short Name	Good Performance	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			
			Actual	Actual	Q3 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	22,000	15,000		



This figure consists of all interactions recorded by delivery and other DigiKnow partners, including phone calls, device loan and support to local and national organisations. There were additional interactions (1,958) during the Get Online Week 21 where over 70 events took place at venues across Stockport.

Progress has been made with extending the delivery partner's contract to cover 2022/23. This will enable further development and delivery of ongoing digital inclusion activities, including the digital champions programme and supporting other new initiatives.

The cumulative total (21,505) of individuals supported already significantly exceeds the 15,000 year-end target.

PI Code	Short Name	Good Performance	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			
			Actual	Actual	Q3 Forecast	Target	Status	Trend
CFE2.2	Number of community groups to join the DigiKnow network (cumulative)	High	35	40	60	60		



More organisations are being identified through collaboration with partners and services. With restrictions easing, more active recruitment will be targeted from voluntary and community groups in 2022/23. A total of 59 had joined by the end of Quarter 3.

PI Code	Short Name	Good Performance	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			
			Actual	Actual	Q3 Forecast	Target	Status	Trend
CFE2.3	Number of active digital champions	High	35	32	54	60		
<p>The Digital Champions programme is being reviewed with Starting Point. All champions have been contacted to discuss their role and identify possible opportunities going forward. The current figure includes SMBC staff trained as Digital Champions as well as Starting Point champions. As we emerge from the pandemic, volunteering opportunities and capacity has reduced slightly – for example, as champions have gone back to work. A new role has been planned with Starting Point – called ‘digi-friends’ to focus on organised and supported volunteering. We anticipate an increase in champions during 2022/23 Quarter1.</p>								

### 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.

### Measuring Performance and Reporting Progress

Council Measures								
PI Code	Short Name	Good Performance	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			
			Actual	Actual	Q3 Forecast	Target	Status	Trend
CFE3.1	Number of visits to Stockport museums.	High	156,557	3,484	70,000	100,000		
<p>A total of 21,250 visits were recorded in Quarter 3 (3,773 Quarter 1; 18,159 Quarter 2), giving a cumulative total of 43,188 in the year to date. The number of visits to museums continues to increase, as customer confidence returns. The Quarter 3 figures have been boosted by strong pre-Christmas performance across Bramall Hall and town centre sites as a result of special programme of festive activities and events. School visits at the Air Raid Shelters continue to perform strongly.</p>								

# CITIZEN FOCUS AND ENGAGEMENT

## 2. FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND MONITORING



### 2.1 Revenue – Cash limit

	Previously Reported (Q2+)	Increase/ (Reduction)	Budget at Q3
	£000	£000	£000
<b>Cash Limit Budget</b>	4,808	0	4,808

#### Budget Changes since previously reported at Quarter 2+

Budget changes and updated outturn forecasts between Quarter 2 and Quarter 2+ were reported as part of the 2021/22 Quarter 2+ Budget Monitoring Update taken to Corporate Resource Management and Governance Scrutiny Group (CRMG) held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2022 and the Cabinet on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2022. For further information, please see agenda item 7 at this link:

<https://democracy.stockport.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1015&MId=27529&Ver=4>

There have been no changes made to this Portfolio's cash limit budget.

#### Outturn Forecast

Net Cash Limit	Forecast Net Expenditure	Forecast Appropriations	Forecast Outturn
£000	£000	£000	£000
4,808	5,198	(390)	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 £0.065m to compensate for Covid-19 related loss of income, down by £0.009m from the Quarter 2+ position following a minor revision to the income forecast in Museums and Arts. Other than this, there have been no other changes made to the forecast since Quarter 2+, prepared just before the Omicron variant and Plan B restrictions developments in December. As caution was exercised in that forecast, the subsequent effects on trade were already effectively priced in, particularly regarding the Events Service.

As noted in previous reports, the portfolio's income streams have been affected over the course of the year, but cost savings and slower recruiting throughout the year, and of course when facilities were closed, have mitigated the net losses. Therefore, it is expected that a relatively modest allocation of the scarring contingency, set aside by the council in the 2021/22 to mitigate Covid-19 income losses, will be needed to balance the portfolio.

## 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 21st 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	(129)	371
Strategic Priority	Cabinet Positive Investment	Cultural Services to Support Our Residents (***)	50	(50)	0
Strategic Priority	Cabinet Positive Investment	Libraries Open Plus (**)	300	(290)	10
Directorate Reserve	Flexibility	Museums Air Raid Shelter & Hatworks	130	(50)	80
TOTAL			980	(519)	461

(\*) The Cabinet Positive Investment addressing Digital Inclusion and Financial Inclusion to support residents will be used to engage Starting Point a locally Stockport based social enterprise, to deliver 'Digiknow' and other community work. Payments to Starting Point will span this financial year and 2022/23. The rest of the investment is not currently committed due to uncertainty about ongoing national financial support to vulnerable residents such as the Household Support Grant which ends on 31<sup>st</sup> March. With the backdrop of increasing cost of living and energy price rises the financial resilience of residents will be challenged. This funding can be used alongside other funding such as COMF (Contain Outbreak Management Fund) to maximise the resources available to support the political commitments for digital and financial inclusion in 2022/23 and support vulnerable residents in the borough.

(\*\*) The Libraries Open Plus Cabinet Investment Priority is expected to outturn at £0.290m by year end. Great Moor Library has reopened with the added capacity for Open+ opening hours. Work on

Edgeley Library has commenced during the quarter, and the plan is for the work on Reddish to be done in February and Brinnington in March. The total cost of the Open+ conversions is around £0.175m. A further £0.115m is forecast to be spent to enable greater access of digital resources for residents when visiting libraries. This includes a tablet project, information screens, an online payments project and biodegradable library cards

(\*\*\*) The Cabinet Investment Priority regarding cultural support continues with the development of the Cultural Network and Strategy and projects, and the full £0.050m is expected to be used in 2021/22.

## 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.