

# Bolton Council

**Report to:** Executive Cabinet Member -  
Regeneration and Resources

**Date:** 12 March 2018

**Report of:** Director of Place

**Report No:** ECMRR/38/18

**Contact Officer:** John Morrissy – Assistant Director for  
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Place-based Integration **Tel No:** 331010

**Report Title:** Place Department Performance Report – Quarter 3, 2017/18

**Non Confidential:** This report does **not** contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this report is to

- give an overview of priorities for services within the Place Department; those being Strategic Development, Economic Strategy, Planning and Building Control, Libraries and Museum Service and Corporate Property Services;
- provide relevant performance information for Bolton Community Leisure Trust; and
- provide relevant internal departmental information for Quarter 3, 2017/18.

**Recommendations:** The Executive Cabinet Member is recommended to note the performance information contained within this report.

**Decision**

**Background Doc(s):**

Leader/Executive Cabinet Member

Monitoring Officer

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 This performance report is designed to

- give an overview of priorities for services within the Place Department; those being Economic Development, Development Management and Corporate Property Services;
- provide relevant performance information for Bolton Community Leisure Trust; and
- provide the internal departmental Quarter 3 2017/18 position for the above-named services.

It includes:

- an update on delivering the strategic and service priorities; and
- an update on operational management priorities.

1.2 The detailed financial aspect will be separately reported (via the quarterly finance report) to the Executive Cabinet Member.

1.3 The services included in this report remain on track to deliver their strategic and operational priorities for the Council.

## **2.0 Delivery of Strategic and Service Priorities**

### **2.1 Town Centres – Bolton Town Centre**

In Quarter 3:

The implementation started on the 5 intervention areas of the Bolton Town Centre Masterplan Framework. The University of Bolton took its first intake of students at Bolton Central Development.

All public realm works along Newport Street - with the exception of Bold Street and the Arcade - were completed. The main paving works (including Bold Street) were also completed in November 2017. The public realm works on Knowsley Street and Oxford Street were tendered using the Highways Framework and a contractor was formally appointed to undertake the works. Work is on-going to complete the shop front improvement works to Phase 2A & 2B properties (6-16; 2-4, 24-42) and a new Phase D was created (incorporating properties 18-22 NPS and the arcade area)

The events programme In Quarters 3 and 4 saw the successful delivery of Winterwonderland. A full update will be provided in Quarter 4.

### **2.2 Town Centres – Farnworth Town Centre**

In Quarter 3, a contractor was appointed by TfGM to deliver the new bus station in Farnworth Town Centre. Councillors agreed the new design for public realm improvement works to Brackley Street, with work to commence in Quarter 4.

### **2.3 Development Sites**

In Quarter 3:

Bellway's planning application was approved for the first 112 houses to be developed at Rivington Chase and associated Section 106 signed off.

At Logistics North, Amazon were announced as the new occupier. A sector based work academy supported recruitment at Aldi, with the work experience element completed with guaranteed interviews as part of this scheme – successful candidates were appointed in December 2017. Lidl has started ground works on Plot G1.

## 2.4 Planning and Building Control

2.4.1 Live tables for statistics on planning applications at national and local planning authority level are published by the DCLG on gov.uk. In Quarter 3:

- Major applications indicator: Percentage determined within 13 weeks (16 weeks where an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is involved) or over 13 weeks within an agreed extension of time. Bolton's current performance, 100% which includes decisions with an extension of time - exceeding the government's target of above 50%.
- There were no County Matters applications.
- There was one major application appeal.
- Minor applications determined within 8 weeks or within an agreed extension of time, 99%.

2.4.2 In Building Control in Quarter 3 there were:

- 181 building regulations' applications – a decrease of 19 applications (200) when compared with Quarter 3, 2016/17.
- 130 Approved Inspector<sup>1</sup> applications – an increase of 21 (109) when compared with Quarter 3, 2016/17.
- Site inspections totalled 1,532 – a decrease of 294 when compared with Quarter 3, 2016/17 (1,826).

## 2.5 Strategy and Policy Development

### 2.5.1 Economic Growth Priorities

Business Bolton continues to work with local businesses and employment and skills partners to support economic growth and quality training and employment opportunities for local people. In Quarter 3, approximately 150 businesses were engaged with on a range of areas, which included working closely with 2 companies to recruit long term unemployed residents. In November, Business Bolton delivered a Skills Summit attended by 80 local businesses, which has resulted in the team working with these employers on giving careers advice and guidance in schools and colleges; and offering work experience.

The Bolton Business Growth Advisor provided a minimum of 12 hours assistance to 4 businesses; and engaged with and provided support to 33 businesses. As a result:

- 8 jobs were safeguarded.
- 6 new, Full Time jobs were created.
- Increased business sales of £300,000 were generated.

2.5.2 In Quarter 3:

- Bolton is contributing to work for consultation on a further draft of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework in Quarter 1, 2018/19.
- The Town Centre Vacancy survey was carried out.
- The Authority Monitoring Report was reported to Executive Member.
- The brownfield register was published.
- The applications were approved for neighbourhood area and neighbourhood forum for Over Hulton.

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<sup>1</sup> Approved Inspector applications are those which go to a competitor.

- Monitoring information shows that take up of Bolton's Get Digital Faster infrastructure has increased to 30.8% in November 2017 from 25.5% in February 2017.
- Targets were met for the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) Improvement Schedule for Land Charges and Property Search services.

## 2.6 Labour Market Performance

2.6.1 The Working Age Employment Rate, Worklessness and NVQ levels<sup>2</sup> are key indicators used to assess Bolton's labour market performance. Bolton's Skills Strategy addresses improvements in the skill and qualification levels alongside measures to remove barriers to employment and support the hardest to help with integrated services.

2.6.2 The Working Age Employment Rate measures the percentage of the working age population who are 'economically active' and in employment. Higher is therefore better. The latest data to the end of September 2017 details that:

- There were 130,300 people in work in Bolton – 5,800 (124,500) more than June 2017 and 7,900 more (122,400) than a year earlier.
- The proportion of people aged from 16 to 64 in work (the employment rate) was 71.5% - a 0.6 percentage point increase from June 2017 (70.9%).

Regionally, Bolton's September 2017 figures mirror the GM rate – both at 71.5%. Bolton's performance also shows an overall sustainment of the employment rate over 69% since 2014:

- Year to September 2013, 65.8%.
- Year to September 2014, 69.0%.
- Year to September 2015, 69.9%.
- Year to September 2016, 69.2%.
- Latest: Year to September 2017, 71.5%.

2.6.3 The worklessness specific dataset (DWP (Department of Work and Pensions) benefits working age client group)) has been discontinued from November 2016 (Quarter 1, 2017/18). Data on individual benefits is still being published separately once a quarter. This will be reported in future reports, however investigation is currently taking place to ascertain how the DWP recommend the continued monitoring of this specific group.

2.6.4 The Workshop delivers the Work Programme G4S contract in Bolton. In Quarter 3:

- Bolton was:
  - Ranked within the top 3 out of 25 providers for audit & compliance.
  - Ranked 6<sup>th</sup> out of 25 providers for supporting people into sustained employment.
- 31 people were assisted into employment

In Quarter 3, for Bolton Council's Skills for Employment Programme:

- Bolton was ranked 2nd within the supply chain for securing employment for clients.
- 6 people secured employment through the programme.
- 21 people gained a work experience placement.
- 29 people gained a qualification.

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<sup>2</sup> Next ONS published data on NVQ levels will be December 2017. December 2016 release reported in Quarter 4, 2016/17.

## 2.6.5 Community Learning

Following a revision of the curriculum offer for 2017/18 against the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) rules, the contract is offering longer courses and an increase in accredited provision. At the end of the Winter term there was 1,436 enrolments on longer Community Learning courses.

The Council's Adult Education Budget has supported 6 Bolton's Sector Based Work Academies (SBWAs) against the ring fenced funding of 15 SBWAs for the academic year. This employability provision continues to be strength and was commended by the OFSTED inspector in November 2016.

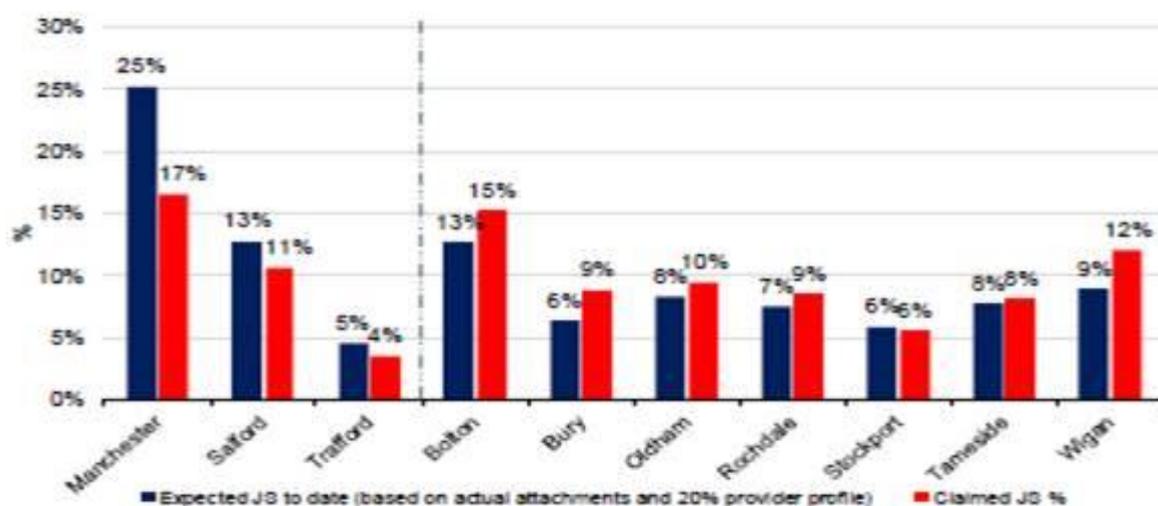
Every aspect of the quality of the AEB provision is under scrutiny to support a move towards outstanding provision and achievement for the learners. The Council's Adult Education Manager will continue to work closely with Bolton College's Director of Quality in preparation for the next OFSTED inspection and the next monitoring visit in February; and to monitor and ensure Community Learning performance and achievement.

## 2.7 Public Service Reform (PSR)

The Department has responsibility for delivering high profile Greater Manchester reform programmes including Family First, Working Well and Place Based Integration.

The Working Well programme is now working with over 1,800 residents locally and performs well at getting local residents into sustained employment and supporting overall improved wellbeing across a range of health and social measures. During Quarter 3, the Department's Local Lead for the programme worked closely with the GMCA and InWork GM Alliance to prepare for the Work and Health Programme's commencement in January, 2018. Approximately 2,900 residents are due to move onto the programme over the next five years and work is taking place with other key Council departments, social landlords, health and employment and skills providers to ensure that the programme provides timely support for local participants. This takes the successful principles of the Working Well Programme's holistic support for long term unemployed residents, to focus on supporting those people with a disability back into quality employment; ensuring that we move people, wherever possible, into employment that pays the living wage.

### Working Well job start performance across GM at the end of December, 2017



The testing of Bolton's approach to Place Based Integration has continued during Quarter 3. Delivery began across the two Early Adopter sites (Johnson Fold Estate and Halliwell) during Quarter 1. The multi-agency teams, consistently of housing, police, environmental enforcement and mental health professionals, are currently working with 35 cases across the two adopter sites. 19 of

these cases are already showing improved health and social outcomes for these residents who have historically placed high demand on public services and have complex needs. On-going evaluation of both adopters is underway to understand the barriers and 'system issues' which impede effective joint working and to ultimately understand the effect the local approach has on residents' lives and overall demand on services.

## 2.8 Libraries and Museum Service

Bolton Library and Museum Services are responsible for managing and delivering the Council's cultural offer across the Borough. In Quarter 3, there were:

- 270,089 visits.
- 46,575 computer sessions with 29,970 hours of use.
- 1,413 events and activities with 22,395 attendees.

Quarter 3 2017/18 update:

### Capital Projects

- Gallery development – construction work is on target. Bolton's Egypt events programme continued.
- Joint meetings have taken place to progress the new Little Lever Library and Health Centre.

### Participation and Learning

- 120 guests attended the Summer Reading Challenge awards ceremony. This was scheduled as the conclusion to a programme of events recognising National Libraries Week.
- Approximately 200 people attended the Bolton Library Comic Day organised by the Imaginators (young volunteers).
- 150 people attended Gill Sims' 'Why Mummy Drinks' event.
- 90 people attended the History Centre's family history day.
- 200 people attended free performances of 'Beauty and the Beast' at Horwich and Farnworth libraries. providing a live theatre performance for children who otherwise might not have had an opportunity.
- Events also took place recognising Archive Awareness Week, the 200th anniversary of Jane Austen's death and the culture-supporting 'Fun Palaces'. Christmas events were also delivered across the network.

As part of the Start Schools 'Light' programme, 2 Horwich School clusters have been given a menu of cultural engagement activities with partners, which included participation in the lantern parade, alongside the Town Centre Christmas lights switch on. During the 3 year project, the schools will be supported towards their Artsmark as well as pupils working towards their own arts awards.

### Health and Wellbeing

Funding has been secured from the Carnegie UK Trust and the Wellcome Trust for the 'Travelling Happiness Bar' project, in partnership with Bolton at Home and Breakdown Bolton. The funding will deliver an interactive, travelling exhibit to engage and challenge people and communities to explore major health and wellbeing issues including stress, obesity, body image and even death in creative ways. It is expected to be launched in May 2018.

### Greater Manchester Shared Working

Several events and workshops were held as part of Greater Manchester's Arts Council funded Big Ideas Generator project which aims to support innovation and enterprise in libraries.

## 2.9 Leisure

Bolton Community Leisure Trust (BCLT) and its managing agent, Serco Leisure Operating Limited is responsible for the day to day operation of five leisure centres in the Borough.

The new-build **Horwich Leisure Centre** was completed 24 November 2017. Promotional information, leaflets and graphics were created and the website updated. The 'Buy now, pay nothing until December' was run for Horwich to support the transition between centres - with 59 joiners tracked. The buy one, get one half price and buy a membership online with a third off the annual membership price Black Friday offers resulted in 60 joiners. Tours of the new centre were given over the Black Friday weekend which played an important part in people's decision to join.

Quarter 3 saw:

- a growth in overall **patronage** – a 5.3% increase (63,374) end December 2017 (1,250,967) with end December 2016 (1,187,593) – and patronage numbers exceeding all previous years.
- An increase in **health and fitness memberships** (315) when comparing Quarter 3, 2017 with Quarter 3, 2016. This increase being largely due to the investments made at Leverhulme and Horwich centres; and the response to the Black Friday and December campaigns.
- the continued, albeit slight, growth of enrolments to the **swimming lesson programme**.

## 3.0 Delivery of Operational Priorities

### 3.1 Managing Sickness

Staff absence within the whole Place Department at Quarter 3, 2017/18 is 3.8 days per FTE and is detailed in Table 1. Total staff absence at Quarter 3 is 10.1 days per FTE, an increase when compared with Quarter 3, 2016/17 (9.1 days).

<b>Quarter 1 2017/18</b>	<b>Quarter 2 2017/18</b>	<b>Quarter 3 2017/18</b>	<b>Quarter 4 2017/18</b>	<b>Total 2016/17</b>	<b>Total 2017/18</b>
3.0 days per FTE	3.3 days per FTE	3.8 days per FTE		9.1 days per FTE	10.1 days per FTE

At present there are 52 on-going long term absence cases in the Place Department, the principal causes of which are stress-related, musculoskeletal/neck or back problems and post-operative recovery.

There were 491 occasions (accounting for 32.3% of the total days lost) of short term absence in the Place Department during Quarter 3, the principal causes of which are viral infections and chest/respiratory conditions.

The Department has undertaken significant management action on attendance during Quarter 3:

- 87 informal counselling meetings.
- 81 Occupational Health referrals.
- 4 warnings were issued.
- 1 Ill Health Retirement.
- 1 Medical Incapacity dismissal.

All current cases, both long and short term are managed in accordance with the Managing Sickness Absence Framework.

Staff absence in the Economic Development and Regeneration Division<sup>3</sup>, Quarter 3, 2017/18 is 3.3 days per FTE and is detailed in Table 2. Total staff absence at Quarter 3 is 9.7 days per FTE – an increase when compared with Quarter 3 2016/17 (8.3 days).

<b>Division</b>	<b>Quarter 1 2017/18</b>	<b>Quarter 2 2017/18</b>	<b>Quarter 3 2017/18</b>	<b>Quarter 4 2017/18</b>	<b>Total 2016/17</b>	<b>Total 2017/18</b>
<b>Economic Development and Regeneration</b>	3.2	3.2	3.3		8.3	9.7

The increase is, in the main, due to long term absence in the Housing and Corporate Property sections.

### 3.2 **Health and Safety**

The department continues to deliver a programme of training and site assessments to ensure that all services operate in a safe environment. There were 0 incidents in Quarter 3. Management will continue to monitor the number of incidents within the department and deliver important health and safety training to all staff.

### 3.3 **Managing Information: Freedom of Information, Environmental Information Regulation and Subject Access Requests**

**Information requests** are answered under the **Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000**, the **Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) 2004** or the **Data Protection Act 1998**. The Council is required to respond to requests within 20 working days and Subject Access Requests within 40 days.

New system implementation for information governance has now been completed. Data for Quarters 1, 2 and 3 follows:

- 51 requests were received during **Quarter 1** - 47 were for the department alone and 4 were cross cutting. The largest proportion of requests received by the services was for Development Management who received 26 requests.
- 82% of requests were answered on time.

Working on an average of 4.3 officer hours per request, the department allocated 219.3 hours of officer time on information requests during **Quarter 1**.

- 29 requests were received during **Quarter 2** - 25 were for the department alone and 4 were cross cutting. The largest proportion of requests received by the services was for Development Management who received 12 requests.

<sup>3</sup> This does not incorporate the Libraries and Museum service

- 93% of requests were answered on time.

Working on an average of 4.3 officer hours per request, the department allocated 124.7 hours of officer time on information requests during **Quarter 2**.

- 35 requests were received during **Quarter 3** - 28 of these were for the department alone and 7 were cross-cutting. The largest proportion of requests received by the services was for Development Management who received 19 requests.
- 91% of requests were answered on time.

Working on an average of 4.3 officer hours per request, the department allocated 150.5 hours of officer time on information requests during **Quarter 3**.

## **4.0 Recommendation**

- 4.1 The Executive Cabinet Member is recommended to note the performance information contained within this report.