CP99 **Cabinet Report - Quarter 3 Performance Management Report**

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The Senior Corporate Governance Officer presented the report and provided information on progress against the Council's Corporate Strategy and Key Performance Indicators and outlined those indicators which had not met target.

The Chair thanked the Senior Corporate Governance Officer for the report and invited questions and comments from the Panel. The relevant Assistant Directors were present at the meeting to provide information on targets as required.

Councillor Jones queried the reduction in outreach activities.

The Assistant Director for Leisure and Culture explained that budget constraints and seasonal attendance dips, particularly over the Christmas period, led to streamlined sessions. She noted plans to adjust profiling of outreach activities in future quarters to better reflect seasonal trends and maximise resource use.

In response to a question from the Chair, the Assistant Director for Leisure and Culture clarified that the cost recovery KPI aims for 100% cost neutrality, with current figures impacted by high utility costs and ageing buildings. The energy usage target was set with expectations from the REFIT programme, but the anticipated benefits have not fully materialised, prompting ongoing work with property services to optimise equipment and improve outcomes.

The Assistant Director for Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer updated the Panel on efforts to improve purchase order compliance, outlining the introduction of stricter enforcement from April and the establishment of a finance task group. Internal communications are underway to ensure spending departments understand and comply with the new requirements. He emphasised that the changes are not intended to harm supplier relationships or delay payments, particularly for local organisations, and that prompt payment remains a priority.

In response to questions from Councillor Ryves, the Assistant Director for Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer explained that while the target was to minimise non-compliance, certain exceptions such as utility bills and professional subscriptions are unavoidable. The task group would clarify and communicate these exceptions, aiming for a realistic target that accounts for legitimate cases.

Councillor Spikings requested an update on the progress of the building condition surveys. The Assistant Director for Property explained the delays in the building condition survey due to software issues, with a new solution pending IT approval. The technical team and inspection programme are ready, and surveys would commence once the software was operational.

In response to a further question from Councillor Spikings, the Assistant Director for Property confirmed there are 81 unregistered land interests, which have caused delays in property transactions. He has proposed hiring a paralegal to address the backlog, particularly in preparation for Local Government Reorganisation.

The Assistant Director for Environment and Planning highlighted that major planning applications with extensions of time have improved from red to green status, though results may fluctuate due to low application volumes. The team was focusing on further speeding up both major and non-major applications.

The Chair, Councillor Long asked for clarification regarding planning fees being returned. The Assistant Director for Environment and Planning explained that if applications exceed statutory timeframes without agreed extensions, fees must be returned, which has financial implications. The team now monitors applications weekly to avoid missing deadlines and incurring penalties.

The Assistant Director for Regeneration, Housing and Place reported that the Hunstanton and Kings Lynn Masterplans are scheduled for cabinet consideration in June and July, respectively, though election-related uncertainties may affect these dates.

The Housing Services Manager confirmed that all major agreements for the West Winch project, including the master plan, infrastructure delivery plan, section 106, and collaboration agreement, are now complete. The final business case was being prepared for submission to the Department for Transport, targeting a 2027 start for road works.

The Assistant Director for Health, Wellbeing and Public Protection updated the Panel on Corporate Health and Safety and explained that delays in contractor availability had temporarily affected the status of corporate health and safety governance, but all work was now complete, and recommendations are being actioned.

The Assistant Director for Transformation and Change provided an update to the Panel on the transformation programme, which has been integrated with LGR readiness efforts, with ongoing work and coordination with Norfolk Leaders and Chief Executives. She confirmed future reports would provide more detailed update.

The Chair and Panel requested an update in six months on the unregistered properties. The Monitoring Officer and Chief of Staff agreed to prioritise registrations, especially for properties likely to be sold or developed, and to provide an assurance update to the committee in six months, acknowledging that full registration would take longer due to Land Registry processing times.

In response to a question from Councillor Ryves, it was clarified that the 81 unregistered interests represent a significant portion of the land portfolio by area, even though the total number of land assets was much higher, as many are small items like lamp posts.

RESOLVED: The Panel supported the onward recommendation of the Performance Management Report to Cabinet.

Cabinet Recommendation: To review the Performance Management Report and comment on the delivery against the Corporate Strategy.