



Please ask for: Matt Berry
Extension No.: 4589
Email: mattberry@cannockchasedc.gov.uk

4 December 2024

Dear Councillor,

Responsible Council Scrutiny Committee
6:00pm, Thursday 12 December 2024
Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Cannock

You are invited to attend this meeting for consideration of the matters itemised in the following Agenda.

Yours sincerely,

T. Clegg
Chief Executive

To: Councillors:

Aston, J. (Chair)
Gaye, D. (Vice-Chair)
Bullock, L. Muckley, A.
Hill, J.O. Newbury, J.
Hughes, G. Sutherland, M.
Johnson, J. Thornley, S.
Mawle, D.

Agenda

Part 1

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restriction on Voting by Members**
 - (i) To declare any interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct and any possible contraventions under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
 - (ii) To receive any Party Whip declarations.
3. **Minutes**

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2024 (enclosed).
4. **Climate Change Work Update**

Presentation from the Head of Regulatory Services.
5. **Development of an Executive-Scrutiny Protocol Working Group**

Verbal update from the Head of Law & Governance.
6. **Quarter 2 Performance Update 2024/25**

Report of the Head of Transformation & Assurance (Item 6.1 - 6.12)
The documents included are as considered by the Cabinet on 28 November 2024.
7. **Responsible Council Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2024/25 Update**

Verbal update from the Head of Transformation & Assurance.

Cannock Chase Council
Minutes of the Meeting of the
Responsible Council Scrutiny Committee
Held on Monday 14 October 2024 at 6:00pm
In the Esperance Room, Civic Centre, Cannock

Part 1

Present:

Councillors

Aston, J. (Chair)
Gaye, D. (Vice-Chair)
Bullock, L. Lyons, O. (substitute)
Hill, J.O. Mawle, D.
Hughes, G. Muckley, A
Johnson, J. Thornley, S.

Also in Attendance: Councillor T. Johnson (Leader of the Council).

7. Apologies

Apologies for absence were noted for Councillors J. Newbury and M. Sutherland.
Councillor O. Lyons was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Sutherland.

8. Declarations of Interest of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restrictions on Voting by Members and Party Whip Declarations

No declarations of interests or party whip declarations were received.

9. Minutes

Resolved:

A Member raised that the minutes did not reflect that when climate change matters were discussed at the previous meeting, it had been requested for officers to provide an email update by the end of July, and so asked that the minutes be amended accordingly.

In response to a query from a Member regarding the outcome of the brownfield land funding bid application, the Leader advised that unfortunately it had been unsuccessful and so other potential funding sources were being looked into.

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 July 2024 be approved as a correct record subject to the above amendment.

10. Priority Projects for 2024/25

Consideration was given to the report of the Deputy Chief Executive-Resources (Item 4.1 - 4.24) *(presented by the Leader of the Council, the Chief Executive, and the Head of Transformation & Assurance)*.

The Leader thanked Members for the invite to the meeting, noting Cabinet felt it important to get the views of the Scrutiny Committee before the report was considered formally by Cabinet on 24 October.

The Leader then took Members through the key details as contained in report sections 2 to 6.

Members of the Committee then raised the following questions and comments on the report:

1. *Were the four corporate priorities listed in report paragraph 3.6 shown in order of importance?*

The Leader advised this was not the case as they were in the order agreed back in 2022 when the current Corporate Plan was adopted.

The Head of Transformation & Assurance further confirmed this was the case and advised that the list of individual priorities under each one had been refreshed.

The Leader further noted that part of the reason for bringing the report to the Committee was to enable a discussion on the proposed priorities, including whether the right number was included. There was a high degree of continuity with the existing priorities, but they had been refreshed in the context of where the Council was now and being on track to tackle issues identified by Members.

2. *What process was used to decide on the seventeen priorities listed in report paragraph 3.6?*

The Leader advised it had been a rigorous process guided by capacity and the Council's financial situation. Some of the priorities had to be delivered, such as the value for money action plan and the Cannock town centre regeneration scheme, for which it had to be seen that the funding was being spent wisely. Work also needed doing to deliver an ambitious but worthwhile transformation programme and shared services agenda.

The Chief Executive agreed with the Leader, advising that the priorities had been developed following conversations between heads of services and their individual Cabinet portfolio leaders, and then an overarching conversation between leadership team and the Cabinet. The decision was taken to stay with the existing corporate plan themes and make sure that the proposed priorities were relevant to them. Cabinet had been very clear that its top priority was the town centre regeneration scheme, and had reflected very carefully on the value for money report and the issues in it, wishing for the Council to resolve those issues and seek approval from the new external auditors that they were happy with the progress being made. Many of the issues set out were due to statutory requirements and the priorities of the new Cabinet and the former Cabinet under the previous Conservative Administration.

The Head of Transformation & Assurance advised that the priorities had initially been split between strategic and operation projects, hence why some priorities may be included in the list that Members did not recognise. Some were also of a time sensitive nature, such as the waste contract procurement.

3. *How did the refreshed priorities align with Stafford Borough Council (SBC) given that transformation work was a cross-cutting issue?*

The Chief Executive advised that a similar report would also be considered by SBC's Cabinet shortly. Whilst that report would reflect the priorities of the new SBC Administration, the cross-cutting themes identified applied to both Councils.

4. *It was acknowledged that the Cannock town centre scheme was the top priority in respect of economic growth and regeneration, but the overarching priority was quite broad given the different streams that came into it.*

The Head of Transformation & Assurance advised that the specific delivery plans set out more detail on what was proposed for each priority. Whilst the economic priority was mainly about the town centre regeneration scheme, it also referenced the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and economic growth strategy.

The Chief Executive further advised that the report reflected that the Council had real capacity challenges for what it wanted to deliver, and whilst additional monies from the Government on regeneration schemes were welcomed, the numbers of available staff made it challenging to deliver projects. Linked to this, posts within the Finance and Legal teams had been advertised recently and both Councils had struggled to fill the vacancies.

The Leader advised that the Cabinet had received a first draft of the report six weeks ago and asked for it to be rewritten in parts but felt that input was needed from across the board. It had therefore been a unanimous decision of the Cabinet to bring the report to the Committee today. Work had been undertaken with officers during the six-week period to get the report to a position where it could be presented today.

5. *It had previously been raised that climate change should be one of the key pillars of the Corporate Plan, and that whilst it was said that climate change underpinned everything the Council did, over recent years it had felt like this was not the case, and so there was concern that it was still not listed as a standalone priority at this late stage and that it was number 16 out of 17 in the list of priority projects, and should be listed at the top of each priority area.*

Furthermore, the accompanying narrative in report appendix 1 was too limited and reflected a wider misunderstanding of how important climate change was. If it was considered to underpin everything then it should be part of each scrutiny committee and that it formed part of the responsibilities/portfolios of each member of the leadership team and Cabinet.

6. *What progress had been made with production of the climate change strategy? Climate change should be listed as the top theme above those listed in report paragraph 3.3 as the others should be delivered with climate change in mind.*

The Leader advised that the list of themes was not in a particular order, but noted that climate change was the most important issue facing people globally and the Cabinet/Council had received various climate related reports/updates recently, including the Staffordshire climate emergency shared statement, biodiversity net gain, solar panels, bee friendly schools, food caddies etc. Whilst climate change did not sit as an overarching priority, it did run as a thread throughout everything the Council was doing, and the Cabinet had discussed about what the Council did on climate change.

The Chief Executive confirmed that the list of seventeen priorities was listed by corporate priority rather than the scrutiny committees, but it was not numbered in terms of priority importance. In respect of the climate change strategy, the Head of Regulatory Services had delivered a presentation to leadership team on it a couple of weeks ago, so it was expected to come before Members for consideration imminently.

7. *Whilst it was appreciated that the list of priorities was not in order of importance, it was felt that the list of themes in report paragraph 3.3 was a priority order, so it was concerning that climate change was not mentioned in any of them.*

Having been on the Council since the Climate Emergency Declaration was made in July 2019, there had been no real updates since that time on where things stand, other than the costed action plan report. It was therefore hoped that the adoption of the climate change strategy would help move things forward, but the update asked for at the previous meeting had not been forthcoming and had been chased up twice to the Chair of the Committee.

The Chief Executive apologised for the lack of update, advising he would follow this up with the Head of Regulatory Services. The Chair noted that when the update has been requested, some of the relevant officers were on leave so all of the required information could not be brought together at that point.

The Leader took on board the points raised by the Member and would look at when the strategy was due to come forward.

8. *It was pleasing to see that a S106 review and play areas investment / rationalisation had been included in the list of priorities given some issues that had occurred recently. Concern was however noted about the progression of phase 2 of the Cannock town centre regeneration scheme as people had waited a long time for things to start happening and so there would be disappointment if this phase did not happen.*

The Leader advised that phase 2 of the Cannock town centre scheme was an integral part of the process, and a meeting had been held earlier in the day to discuss what needed doing to progress matters. Along with the previous Regeneration & High Streets Portfolio Leader, he attended a conference earlier in the year at which private developers had shown a lot of interest in the scheme.

9. *In reference to the review of leisure service provision would the location of the Museum of Cannock Chase be discussed as part of that work?*

In July 2023, the relevant Cabinet member stated that an options appraisal for the future of the Museum would be considered by Cabinet in autumn 2023 and nothing happened by that time, with the Head of Wellbeing providing an update in January 2024 that the options appraisal was still being worked on. The priority delivery plan now appeared to show that a decision would be made in quarter 4 2024/25, which would be nearly two years since the matter was first raised without knowing what was happening.

The Leader advised that the current contract with Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles was due to end in March 2027, so procurement of a new contract had to happen soon. A meeting had been held with the Coalfields Regeneration Trust in January 2024 to discuss potential options for the Museum and a report would be coming forward fairly soon. Work was going on behind the scenes to work up concrete proposals.

10. *Capacity was referenced in the report as a risk and cross-cutting theme and the answer to every question seemed to link back to capacity issues, so was there an overarching plan to recruit talent to support the priorities, and if not able to do so, were the priorities flexible enough to account for that and should there be any key performance indicators (KPIs) to report on and monitor this issue?*

The Chief Executive replied as follows:

- There were capacity issues in specific areas and recruitment issues, such as in Finance where senior posts had recently been advertised but no candidates strong enough to interview. There was a shortage of suitably qualified people across the country, and this was a common issue across the public sector as it did not pay as well as the private sector. The job descriptions for the posts were evaluated using national standards and an adopted methodology, but there was now a need to step back and look at other ways of recruiting and reviewing pay scales which would create its own challenges. There was also the added issue of county and unitary authorities being able to pay more than districts.
- The Legal Services team also faced recruitment and retention issues, with people being hired as trainees but then leaving once fully trained up and so there was a reliance on consultants and agency roles which the Government was trying to discourage councils from using.
- There was a wider issue of staff availability across all areas however, including manual roles. The Council needed to get better at apprenticeship recruitment and making sure it was an organisation that people wanted to work for.

The Head of Transformation & Assurance further advised that she was working with the HR Manager on workforce planning, which would culminate in the production of the workforce strategy. Recruitment and pay aspects, including market supplements, would be looked at as part of that work, along with flexible working practices and learning & development etc. It would take a few years to deliver the entirety of the plan, but recruitment was one key aspect of it. KPIs were aimed for, but the current HR system did not hold all the required information on vacancies, agency staff etc, so it was being looked into for how to bring this data together in one place.

11. *At the previous meeting Members had agreed that workforce and succession planning be included on the Committee's work programme for the year, but this work did not appear in the proposed list of priorities.*

The Head of Transformation & Assurance advised that it was not referenced in the report as it was embedded in the value for money improvement plan with a separate plan being developed behind the scenes on what else could be done before the strategy work could be delivered.

12. *As part of the procurement process for the new leisure contract, would be the Council be considering the option of bringing the service back in-house?*

The Council should look at the in-house option as there were young people in the District looking for work in that sector who had the relevant talent and experience to help deliver it.

The Leader advised he did not see this being the case at the moment as it would be financially difficult to do so but hoped this position could change in future. One of the reasons it had been set up via a charitable trust was because of VAT and business rates savings. It was hoped the procurement process would rectify some of the current issues and make delivery of the leisure services more attractive for people in the District.

13. *When the District-wide and organisational climate change targets were decoupled, the organisational target was kept at 2030. Would this still be the case or looked at again given the review of the climate change strategy was scheduled for the 2025/26 financial year?*

The Chief Executive advised that the 2030 target was very ambitious and would require significant change across all services, which was partly why the priorities had been written as they were. The Head of Regulatory Services was having discussions with senior colleagues on bringing the strategy together, so Members would be able to consider better whether the 2030 target was still achievable once the draft strategy had been produced.

14. *The previous Conservative Administration had undertaken a cost-savings exercise as part of the budget plan with that work continuing into the current budget. Had the same exercise already been done to align with the transformation work?*

The Chief Executive advised that the S151 Officer was undertaking budget setting work now, being conscious of the need to seek savings as part of the transformation process. Although the process was not as far along as hoped, the leadership team restructure had met its savings target, and the service management restructure had achieved above target. There was a need to make sure that the Council was still a well-functioning and effective organisation.

The Head of Transformation & Assurance further advised that the strategy acknowledged the savings need along with capacity issues and would come alongside the digital strategy. Both documents had been drafted and would be presented to leadership shortly before being considered by Cabinet.

15. *For the priority on the District's approach to health, different actions were scheduled for completion different quarters. Did this work reflect the wider strategy being developed at a county-wide level?*

The Chief Executive advised that the actions reflected the level of understanding at the current time and that the Committee could suggest changes that could influence the number of priorities and when they could be delivered. Leadership team was doing more detailed work on how to deliver the priorities as some may be seen to be quite ambitious.

In respect of the specific health priority, the Chief Executive advised he had been working with his counterpart at South Staffordshire District Council on health inequalities work at a county-level with the Integrated Care Board and they had been successful in securing funding for this work at each borough/district council which may help move things forward.

16. *The proposed team restructures to deliver further savings and efficiencies could potentially mean job losses in the long-term. Given earlier comments made about recruitment to senior skilled roles and bringing services in-house, could internal people be recruited to those posts?*

Whilst hiring apprentices would be great, this meant having people in place to provide the necessary training. As such, could people from the middle levels of the organisation be trained up to the senior roles and thereby feel more invested in the organisation?

The Chief Executive clarified that talk of restructures was not short-hand for redundancies but was about bringing teams together across both CCDC and SBC to look at how best to deliver services and significant redundancies were not anticipated. Whilst the Council was good at developing internal talent, the difficulty with the specialist roles was that they needed to be filled now, and it took time for people to gain the right qualifications and experience.

The Leader advised the immediate issue was to recruit to the vacant posts but appreciated the Member's point about planning for the future.

17. *It was acknowledged that time taken to try and fill the posts was clearly an issue, so was there a way to look at investing in the workforce to resolve such problems?*

The Chief Executive advised this was already happening but there were still some gaps in place and the Council had to evidence that it was providing value for money for the public. The roles had been externally assessed by West Midlands Employers (WME) and the Council had to show it had actively tried to recruit people to those roles.

The Head of Transformation & Assurance advised that Finance had several vacancies at senior levels and the S151 Officer had plans to hire apprentices, but the senior roles needed to be filled to provide the relevant support/training.

18. *Was the Council getting much interest from its job adverts?*

The Head of Transformation & Assurance advised this was unfortunately not the case, with the posts also being advertised in relevant journals and on the WME jobs website, but the key issue appeared to be salary offer compared to neighbouring authorities.

19. *What was the 'placed based housing strategy' about?*

The Chief Executive advised that it was for the Council to make sure it could work with the private sector to build houses that met the needs of the local population, providing a mix of housing at the right scale and right price and number of bedrooms.

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets further advised that this work had been raised as part of the value for money report, as although the Council had a housing strategy in place, criticism had been received that it was not a place-based approach and so the scope of the strategy had to be widened. This work was being led by the Head of Wellbeing as the relevant head of service for housing strategy.

The Leader noted that one of the major housing shortages in the District was of single-occupancy units and one of the ways to deal with this was to build more council housing.

20. *What would the proposed 'planning obligations working group' be for?*

The Chief Executive advised that planning obligations funding came from sources such as S106 agreements, Community Infrastructure Levy monies and biodiversity net gain. The priority action was about the Council getting best value from this work, making sure that projects were not taken on that would just increase the costs of the Council but rather getting funding to support what was already in place. The Development & Policy Manager would be the lead officer for this work, but wanted to engage with Members to ensure the Council was getting the best out of income received, hence the proposed working group. Information about the proposed group would be requested from the service manager and circulated to the Committee for reference.

21. *Referring back to recruitment and workforce planning, the leadership team and Cabinet had taken the opportunity to review the priorities in light of capacity issues and other influencing factors. Had any delivery timeframes been looked at as part of this work?*

The Chief Executive advised that the priorities may change depending on this meeting and discussions held with the Cabinet, and the timeframes may change when the detailed planning work for each priority had been completed by leadership team. The impact of any proposals from the new Government, such as housing targets, also had to be factored into any considerations. There had been some optimism when writing the plans, but some realism may be needed on what could actually be delivered.

22. *Did the revised priority delivery plans account for full officer capacity or were they based on the current capacity issues?*

The Chief Executive advised they were a best estimate of what could be done with the resources available.

The Head of Transformation & Assurance agreed with this point, advised that each head of service will have factored in available capacity, but this position could change at any point.

The Leader further advised that the report was about the Council cutting its cloth according to need and recognising what it could do.

23. *If climate change underpinned everything and was the most important thing for the Council, would there be any harm in including it at the top of the list in report paragraph 3.3 as there was concern about how this work would be delivered if it was not included.*

The Leader advised that the Committee could put this forward as a formal recommendation to Cabinet if it so wished.

The Head of Transformation & Assurance advised that climate change was referenced in each of the current Corporate Plan priorities and this report was about reviewing the projects already in place. Climate change had been included in this report under the responsible council priority as it linked to this Committee and was a cross-cutting piece of work but would sit under individual actions.

The Chief Executive clarified that the overall Corporate Plan was not being changed and that climate change retained an overarching importance. The report could be amended to reflect the importance of climate change to the Council.

24. *Climate change references should be more prominent in the report and be an overarching element recognised earlier in it.*

The Leader advised that the report was about addressing the issues faced by the Council at the moment and the priorities set out would enable the Council to do, but climate change was not being seen a back seat issue.

25. *Climate change was a very important issue for residents and the Council needed to take a lead on it, so not including it as a priority theme would be doing people a disservice.*

The Head of Transformation & Assurance advised that the climate change strategy would have its own detailed action plan setting out a programme of delivery over the next few years, so was being managed in a slightly different way from the other projects listed.

26. *Climate change was not a specific project, but consideration of it informed all the other priorities.*

It could not sit as a standalone priority given it was a cross-cutting issue.

Including it on its own would be too abstract, but it was important to recognise the cross-cutting impact and being a responsible council in this context.

The Chief Executive advised that report paragraph 3.2 referenced the existing corporate priorities and clarified that the Corporate Plan did include reference to climate change across all the priority areas, but this was not referenced in the report. As such, the report could be amended to reflect this position. *The Member who raised the initial point was happy that this amendment would go some way to acknowledging the importance of climate change to the Council.*

27. *If reference to climate change was included before the list of corporate priorities in report paragraph 3.2, then people would have climate change in mind when reading each of the priorities.*

28. *Several of the priorities and delivery plans were strategic matters and that linked to this, communications from the Council could be modernised, not necessarily as a standalone priority but linked with each key action so there was a communications strategy in place for when key projects would be delivered and how the public would be made aware of this.*

The Leader thanked the Committee for their engagement and discussion on the report, noting it was worthwhile doing again in the future for other vital reports.

(The Leader of the Council left the meeting at the end of this item.)

11. Responsible Council Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2024/25 Update

A Member referred to the following matters which were referenced in the minutes of the previous meeting:

- *Consolidation of staff onto fewer floors in the Civic Centre to conserve energy:*

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised this has been discussed by leadership team, but it was considered not practically possible at the moment. The outcome of the brownfield land bid had been awaited and now the decision was known, the approach to future use of the building was being revisited.

There was a need to avoid moving people unnecessarily but a headcount of people in the building was still being kept, along with waiting for the outcome of the hybrid working trial.

The Head of Transformation & Assurance further advised that moving to hotdesking arrangements was a complex piece of work and lots of teams were still tied to their current locations due to holding paper records and using specialist equipment. The hybrid working review had slipped, but a report was being drafted for consideration by leadership team soon. A wider discussion was needed on the use of assets and the Council's estate as the two issues needed to be considered together.

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets further advised that energy use could not be zoned off in individual sections of the building. A Member noted that lights could be switched off in specific areas on each floor.

A Member noted that hotdesking was not as simple as clearing desks, with culture change and change management needed to deliver and costs of moving / reconfiguration could be significant.

- *Installation of solar panels at Rugeley Leisure Centre:*

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised this work was being led by the Head of Wellbeing and the Deputy Chief Executive-Resources so they would be asked to provide a response separately.

- *Working Group for the development of an executive-scrutiny protocol:*

The Democratic Services Team Leader advised that the first meeting had been held on 4 September but owing to low attendance another meeting needed to be arranged for a full discussion to take place.

- *Update from heads of service on climate change work in their service areas:*

The Head of Transformation & Assurance advised it was proposed to bring the draft climate change strategy to the Committee for consideration alongside the retrospective look at work undertaken so far.

It was requested that the Head of Regulatory Services provide an update at the December meeting on what was happening with climate change work even in the strategy was not quite ready.

- *Update on workforce planning and succession planning*

The Head of Transformation & Assurance advised it would be a struggle to bring any useful information to the Committee during 2024/25 as the work focus was on the value for money improvement plan and the transformation programme. Work had not started on vacancies in service areas, but this could be looked into further if the Committee still wished to receive some information.

A Member reiterated earlier concerns raised about not receiving updates on requested information and matters being kicked down the road, and Members priorities did not seem to be meshing with what officers wanted to do. Work could not be effectively scrutinised when Members were being given nothing to look at. Continual silence from officers on issues was extremely concerning.

Another Member noted that workforce and succession planning had been raised at the last meeting in the context of it being about identifying pressure points and understanding where issues were being experienced in the organisation and what impact the lack of capacity was having. There was a general lack of understanding between Councillors as to what the pressure points were and feeding on from that, what could be improved. It was appreciated the point had been made that data was held by individual services so was not easy to collate and that this would be discussed by leadership team.

The Chief Executive advised he took seriously the comments made and that it was useful to have an exchange of information on the pressure points and how priorities were impacted. The issue was about having that information readily available and so it would be better to tease out from Members what they would be interested in knowing rather than just identifying where the vacancies were. There was also a need to look back at the minutes of previous scrutiny meetings to see what Members want and consider how better to feedback to Members on issues raised and how these were discussed by leadership team.

The Head of Transformation & Assurance noted that if Members were happy to receive some updates on workforce planning that may not provide the full level of detail, then this could be arranged, and the climate change update would be picked up separately with the Head of Regulatory Services.

The Chief Executive further advised that part of the workforce planning also had to factor in the need to deliver statutory services and requirements. The value for money report had been valuable in this regard but responding to the challenges raised was a big exercise in itself and would be picked up in future reports.

A Member raised that an update report was exactly that and not a conclusion to a process, noting sympathy with officers as local government had been hollowed out in recent years and that whilst it was all and well and good for Members to ask for updates, their needed to be recognition of what officers could feasibly do.

The Chair thanked Members and officers for their attendance and for the level of discussion and input into the items on the agenda.

The meeting closed at 8:02 p.m.

Chair

Quarter 2 Performance Report 2024/25

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	28 November 2024
Report of:	Head of Transformation and Assurance
Portfolio:	Resources and Transformation

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To advise Members on the progress of the Priority Delivery Plans and Council's performance at the end of the first quarter of 2024-25.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the progress at the end of the second quarter relating to the delivery of the Council's priorities as detailed at Appendices 1a-1d and the performance information set out at Appendix 2.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.2 The performance information allows Cabinet to monitor progress in delivery of the Council's corporate priorities and operational services.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 The original Priority Delivery Plans (PDPs) for 2024/25, based on the Corporate Plan 2022-26, have been superseded. The revised delivery plans are designed to focus on key strategic and operational priorities.
- 3.2 Overall, 78% of the projects have been delivered or are on schedule to be completed. Progress in delivering the PDPs is summarised in 5.3 of the report and set out in detail in Appendices 1a to 1d.
- 3.3 With regard to the operational performance of the key services of the Council, 71% of targets have been met or exceeded. Further details can be found at 5.6 and in Appendix 2.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The Priority Delivery Plans set out key strategic and operational projects which support the delivery of the Council's priorities.

5 Report Detail

Background

- 5.1 The Priority Delivery Plans (PDPs) set out in Appendices 1a to 1d to this report are the revised set of plans setting out how the Council will achieve progress against its strategic objectives; these plans establish the actions and timetable for delivery that are the basis of the Council's performance reporting framework.

- 5.2 In addition to the PDPs, performance is also reported against the delivery of key operational services; Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for these services are set out in Appendix 2.

Priority Delivery Plans (PDPs)

- 5.3 A commentary on performance and a rating for each of the projects/actions set out in the PDPs is given in Appendices 1a-1d. A summary of progress, by rating, is given in the table below.

Table 1: Summary of progress in delivery of key projects/actions for Quarter 1

	Action completed	Work on Target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	Actions due in Quarter 2	Action not yet due	Total Number of Actions
Corporate Plan Priority	★	✓	▲	✘		N/A	
Economic Prosperity	2		2		4	9	13
Health and Wellbeing	1	2			3	4	7
Community	1				1	12	13
Responsible Council	5	3	2		10	16	26
Total	9	5	4		18	41	59

- 5.4 At the end of quarter 2, of the 18 actions planned for delivery in this period:
- 14 (78%) have been completed or are on target to be completed; and;
 - 4 (22%) are behind schedule.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- 5.5 In addition to the Delivery Plans, performance is also reported against the delivery of key operational services. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for these services are set out in Appendix 2 and are summarised in Table 2:

Table 2 - Summary of key performance indicators for Quarter 1

	★	✓	▲	✘	N/A	
Corporate Plan Priority	Performance exceeds target	Performance on target	Performance < 5% below target	Performance > 5% below target	Not Applicable / Annual	Total Number of KPIs
Economy Prosperity	5			2		7
Health & Wellbeing					1	1
Community	3	2	3	2	5	15
Community (Housing)	1	11	2	3	7	24
Responsible Council	5	2			6	13
Total	14	15	5	7	19	60

5.6 Of the 41 indicators due to be reported on in quarter 2:

- 29 (71%) show performance on or above target; and
- 12 (29%) show performance below target.

The reasons for underperformance and the corrective action to be taken is set out in Appendix 2.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

There are no direct financial implications arising from the report. The financial management of the PDPs is standard in accordance with Financial Regulations and any measure to address a performance shortfall as reflected in a PDP report will require compensatory savings to be identified in the current year and be referred to the budget process for additional resources in future years.

6.2 Legal

None

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Risk Management

The Council's Strategic Risk Register sets out the risks the Council faces in delivering its priorities.

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

Equality and diversity matters are addressed in individual services areas and by undertaking equality impact assessments for projects and programmes of work where this is necessary and appropriate.

6.6 Health

None

6.7 Climate Change

None

7 Appendices

Appendix 1d: Responsible Council PDP

Appendix 2: Key Performance Indicators

8 Previous Consideration

None

9 Background Papers





Corporate Plan 2022-26 - Council 27 April 2022

4-Year Delivery Plans 2022-26 - Cabinet 15 September 2022

Contact Officer: Judith Aupers
Telephone Number: 01543 464411
Ward Interest: All Wards
Report Track: Cabinet: 28/11/24
Key Decision: No

Priority Delivery Plan for 2024-25

Priority 4 - Responsible Council
Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 2

Quarter					Total Number of Projects
	Action completed	Work on target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	
1&2	5	3	2		10
3					8
4					8
TOTAL	5	3	2		10 to Q2

Summary of Successes as at Quarter 2





Work on upgrading the Council's infrastructure has commenced. The new switches have been procured and work is underway to plan for their installation.

The Land Charges service review has been completed and a review of the IT systems carried out.

Summary of Slippage as at Quarter 2

There has been some slippage on the Transformation and Digital strategies. Both strategies have been drafted and considered by Leadership Team. They are being amended and will be submitted to Cabinet for approval in quarter 3.

Priority 4 - The Council





Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Closure of the Accounts	Closure of the accounts 23/24				X		
	Catch up on closure of previous years accounts			X			
Transformation Strategy & Plan	Approval of the Transformation Strategy and Plan		X			The strategy has been drafted and considered by Leadership Team. Strategy to be amended and submitted to Cabinet early in Q3	
	Brief Senior Management Team on the strategy		X			Completed	
	Complete scoping work to support development of the Transformation work programme			X			
	Develop the Transformation work programme				X		
Digital Strategy (incl. replacement of IT Systems)	Finalise the digital technology strategy		X			The strategy has been drafted and considered by Leadership Team. Strategy to be amended and submitted to Cabinet early in Q3	
	Procurement of switches for Infrastructure Upgrade	X				Procurement completed.	

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
	Plan for installation of new switches		X			Planning has commenced for the installation of the new switches	✓
	Installation of new switches				X		
	Identify IT systems in need of replacing over next 3 years		X			Completed - systems have been identified	★
	Assessment and prioritisation of systems to be replaced		X			The list of systems to be replaced has been reviewed and priorities agreed for the next 3 years. To be discussed and agreed with the Technology Board and Leadership Team	✓
	Technology Board to approve systems to be replaced			X			
	Project plans will be developed for each system once prioritisation has been agreed and the PDP will be updated accordingly						
Climate Change Strategy	Revised Climate Change Strategy developed and in place			X			
	Recruitment of staff to support delivery of strategy and monitor operational delivery			X			
	New Governance Structure in place to track operational delivery			X			

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Land Charges	Full review of Land Charges Service to include a review of current processes and IT systems		X			Land Charges service review complete. Review of IT systems carried out and recommendations made for replacement system. Processes under review to align with replacement system	★
	Transformation of Land Charges scoped and timeline in place to drive this forward			X			
	Procure replacement IT System				X		
	Working towards transformed service				X		
Strategic asset management including the review of key assets	Building Condition Surveys						
	Appoint Interim Building Surveyor		X			Completed	★
	Undertake Building Condition Surveys, including HRA Shops				X		
	Corporate Assets ICT System						
	Research Systems available and draft specification		X			Alternative systems are being explored - 2 systems demos have been completed	✓
	Draft specification for new system				X		

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
	Insurance Reinstatement Valuations						
	Secure Budget			X			
	Commission Service Provider to complete Valuations				X		

KPIs for Priority 4 - Responsible Council

Symbol	Description	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	End of Year
	Performance exceeds target	5			
	Performance on target	2			
	Performance < 5% below target				
	Performance > 5% below target				
N/A	Reported Annually / Not Applicable	6			
	TOTAL	13			

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
Local Taxation and Benefits									
Days taken to process new HB/CT Claims	27.0	20 days	25.1	18.5				★	
Days taken to process new HB/CT change of circumstances	6.2	9 days	7.3	3.0				★	
% of Council Tax collected annually	96.8%	98% by year end	28.0%	54.6				✓	
% National non-domestic rates (NNDR) collected	97.3%	98% by year end	26.7%	54.9				✓	
Transformation & Assurance									
% of calls answered	88.8%	94%	94%	95.9%				★	
Average call wait time	1.55 min	2 min	1.15 min	00.49				★	
Number of calls answered	New	N/A	20,971	20,716				N/A	This is not a measure but gives context to the performance in call handling

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
Law & Governance									
FOI requests within time i.e. 20 working days	88.8%	85%	85%	87%				★	
Corporate Assets									
% of buildings with a valid annual landlord Gas Safety Record	New	100%						N/A	Not previously reported on - Annual Target
% of buildings with a valid Electrical Certificate (within 5 years)	New	100%						N/A	Not previously reported on - Annual Target
% of passenger lifts that have a valid 6 monthly thorough examination record	New	100%						N/A	Not previously reported on - Annual Target
% of buildings that have a current Legionella risk assessment	New	100%						N/A	Not previously reported on - Annual Target
% of buildings that have a current Fire risk assessment	New	100%						N/A	Not previously reported on - Annual Target