

Cabinet

15th February 2024

Council Plan 2022-2027 Integrated Performance Report Quarter 3 2023/24

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- 1) Considers and comments on the Quarter 3 2023/24 organisational performance; and
- 2) Agrees to refer the report to Overview and Scrutiny Committees to consider, in detail, the information relevant to their individual remits.

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides a retrospective summary of the Council's performance at the end of Quarter 3 (April – December 2023) against the strategic priorities and Areas of Focus set out in the Council Plan 2022-2027. The paper sets out a combined picture of the Council's delivery, performance, HR, and risk:
 - performance is assessed against the Key Business Measures (KBMs) contained within the agreed Performance Management Framework (PMF) in Section 2 and [Appendix 1](#);
 - progress against the Integrated Delivery Plan is summarised in Section 3 and more fully presented within [Appendix 2](#);
 - management of Human Resources is summarised in Section 4 and the summary dashboard is presented in [Appendix 3](#); and
 - management of Risk is summarised in Section 5 and more detailed information is presented in [Appendix 4](#).
- 1.2 This summary report and the detailed performance appendices provide the complete picture of the Council's performance, enabling scrutiny and transparency for the organisation, partners and the public. It enables Overview and Scrutiny Committees to consider performance within their own remits. All Members also have continual access to the Performance Management Framework using the [Performance Portal](#) in Power BI to further monitor performance on an ongoing basis.
- 1.3 The approach to strategic performance reporting continues to evolve and reflect the Council's key priorities and pressures. Members will be aware of the wealth of information and data available at both strategic and service levels. In addition, Government is developing the 'Office for Local Government' (Oflog). As such, the Council's performance framework will

continue to evolve, and be streamlined to ensure that Members have the most useful performance data, including reference to Oflog metrics.

- 1.4 There are key themes that emerged last year that continue to be highlighted by this report, which impact WCC's current operating environment, including:
- increasing demand and costs being reported in Children & Families, Adult Social Care, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Home to School Transport and in the number of applications made through the Local Welfare Scheme;
 - in these areas demand is increasing more quickly than resources, creating capacity, workload and delivery challenges; reflecting staff feedback, addressing this is a high priority for the organisation;
 - continuing recruitment and retention difficulties in specific service teams including Children and Young People, Social Care and Health, Waste & Environment, Schools, Commercial and Contracts, On-Call firefighters and Planning officers; and
 - a small number of services continue to experience specific challenges around staff absence levels particularly Business Support, Customer Contact and Social Care and Health.

- 1.5 The 2023/24 PMF contains 105 KBMs, 97 of which are available for reporting at Quarter 3. The remaining 8 are all new measures to the PMF this year and are scheduled for reporting at Year End. Table 1 below indicates the current assessment of performance:

Status	On Track	Not on Track
Quarter 1	66% (58)	34% (30)
Quarter 2	65% (59)	35% (32)
Quarter 3	67% (65)	33% (32)

Table 1

Table 2 below indicates the Direction of Travel as a retrospective comparison, however, please note not all measures have a status e.g., where they are new and there is insufficient trend data:

Direction of Travel	On Track			Not on Track		
	Improving	Static	Declining	Improving	Static	Declining
Quarter 1	40% (16)	48% (19)	13% (5)	22% (6)	19% (5)	59% (16)
Quarter 2	40% (17)	48% (20)	12% (5)	7% (2)	34%(10)	59% (17)
Quarter 3	37% (21)	54% (31)	9% (5)	10% (3)	30% (9)	60% (18)

Table 2

Table 3 below indicates the future projection forecast for the next reporting period:

Quarter 3	On Track			Not on Track		
Projection	Improving	Static	Declining	Improving	Static	Declining
		40% (26)	57% (37)	3% (2)	29% (9)	45% (14)

Table 3

- 1.6 At Quarter 3 the overall position has improved from Quarter 2 where 65% KBMs reported as On Track and 35% as Not on Track, thus continuing a reasonably consistent, strong performance against the PMF. This is an encouraging position given the challenges of the current operating environment, which include prolonged inflation and high interest rates, the impact of global instability, market failures, extremely high demand and market pressures in social care and education services, and wider resourcing challenges. [Appendix 1](#) details information for all measures within the PMF. Detailed measure-by-measure performance reporting is accessible through the [Performance Portal](#).
- 1.7 Implementation of the Integrated Delivery Plan (IDP) continues with Quarter 3 seeing a further nineteen projects (10%) completed. In the context of the current operating environment the overall delivery position is less strong than Quarter 2, with 68% (129) of the actions On Track which is down from 74%, 18% (36) are At Risk/Compromised and 1% (2) are Not Started and it is these actions which are reported on an exception basis in [Appendix 2](#).
- 1.8 The workforce profile in terms of age, ethnicity and staff turnover, remains static. Vacancies overall have reduced again since the last quarter, leading to an increase in our FTE in post which is within the agreed establishment. Sickness absence has increased slightly over the last quarter, attributed mainly to specific areas as covered in 1.4. This increasing trend is in line with the national picture across both public and private sectors. Targeted action in priority service areas to address increasing absence levels aims to stabilise the absence figure and then reduce this trend. However, there are significant specific workforce challenges affecting certain key services which work on strategic workforce planning is addressing.
- 1.9 In January 2024, Cabinet approved the refreshed Strategic Risk Management Framework. The risk management information presented in this performance report, including that related to the seven strategic risks, takes account of the refreshed risk calculation within the Framework. A highlight is provided relating to the high-level strategic risks in Section 5 below.
- 1.10 At a more detailed service level, 85 risks are currently being monitored. Risks are being reviewed and refreshed across the Council to ensure that they are reflective of the current environment, priorities and plans and to ensure that appropriate mitigations are in place. The changes within the refreshed Framework have also been applied to service risks. Further detail relating to service risks is included in Section 5 below.
- 1.11 There is a wider context that continues to impact all aspects of the Council's work, including industrial action across many sectors, the legacy impact of the pandemic, global conflict, high inflation and interest rates and the resulting fiscal challenges are impacting the communities of Warwickshire. Such a combination of events at a global and national level creates a period of significant uncertainty and a very challenging financial outlook in the short- to

medium-term. This volatility is impacting on the Council's resources, both financial and in terms of recruitment and retention, levels of demand, and uncertainty about medium-term national policy direction in a number of key areas of our work. Performance reporting will continue to track and highlight our delivery and performance and inform prioritisation of activity and resources.

- 1.12 A reprioritisation of the IDP is underway and a refresh of the PMF will follow for reporting in 2024/25. It is anticipated that both the IDP and the PMF will be simplified to focus on the key priorities ensuring we grip and improve the drivers of cost pressures to maintain service and financial resilience. Service Business Plans and performance measures will evolve to reflect the more strategic approach at Council level.

2. Performance against the Performance Management Framework

- 2.1 The three strategic priorities set out in the [Council Plan 2022 - 2027](#) are delivered through seven Areas of Focus. In addition, there are three further themes that will help the Council to be known as 'a Great Council and Partner.' The full performance summary is contained in [Appendix 1](#).
- 2.2 Comprehensive performance reporting is enabled through the Power BI [Performance Portal](#) as part of the Performance Management Framework. Where applicable, some performance figures may now have been updated on the Power BI reporting system. The number of reportable measures will change each quarter as the framework considers the availability of new data.
- 2.3 Of the 97 KBMs available for reporting at Quarter 3, 67% (65) are reported as being On Track and 33% (32) being reported as Not on Track. The remaining 8 measures are all new measures to the PMF and are not scheduled for reporting until Year End.
- 2.4 Notable aspects of positive performance for specific measures include:
- The % of 3 and 4 year old children accessing their entitlement to 15 hours per week of government funded early years provision has moved above the target of 96% to 97%. This is in comparison to the estimated national average take up of 94%. This is due to proactive work promoting places and developing new places in line with demand. An increased mix of provision allows more parents to choose the type of provision that they require to meet their families' needs.
 - Warwickshire's latest data on young people participating in education, employment or training is positive. The % of 16–17-year-olds participating in education and training is 94.5%, compared to a target of the national average, which was 92.3%. Through the Council's support to local areas in monitoring figures and developing the offer for young people it is expected that strong performance in this area will continue over the next year.

- The % of Adult Social Care users with long term support who have received an assessment or review in the last 12 months has reached 84% and is continuing to exceed the target of 80%. This is a new measure introduced at the start of the financial year and has been steadily increasing each month. This is positive as regular reviews benefit customers and carers by ensuring needs are continuously met and crises are pre-empted. Warwickshire is performing above national and regional benchmarks for this metric. Alongside this, the number of carer assessments and reviews completed this Quarter were above target. Figures in this area have been steadily increasing, from 67 in January 2023, to now reaching an average of 161 assessments in Quarter 3. This is due to the completion of carers' assessments and reviews by the Carers' Trust now being fully embedded.

A broader area of positive performance relates to the "Promote inclusive, sustainable economic growth, successful business, good quality jobs and future skills" Area of Focus which is encouraging with all 9 reportable KBMs On Track at Quarter 3, as has been the case throughout the year; full details can be found within [Appendix 1](#) and the [Performance Portal](#). 6 of the 9 KBMs are also forecasting an improved position for Quarter 4.

2.5 There are a number of performance challenges this Quarter:

- The two measures for the % of in-year applications with a school place offered within the target of 10 school days and within the statutory deadline of 15 school days have both moved to Not on Track, despite being On Track last Quarter. This is due to the necessary use of the Fair Access Protocol leading to timescales being extended in some cases. The Fair Access Protocol is a Local Authority requirement and is utilised when places are not available at schools within a reasonable distance (approximately 3 miles or less).
- Linked to rapidly increasing demand for SEND provision, Home to School transport costs for SEND have further increased from the Quarter 2 position. Cost per SEND student journey (£) has increased from £27.44 to £28.04 as more students are transported to non-local schools. The Education Service is actively investigating options to place these students at appropriate, more local mainstream schools. Cost per mainstream student journey (£) has decreased from £5.06 to £4.53, which is the lowest since Quarter 4 2021/22. The improvement in this measure is as a result of the continuing fall in the Retail Price Index which is starting to become evident as Mainstream Transport contracts are being renewed.

- There is a national upward trend in the percentage of children who are overweight or very overweight in year 6. With 35.2% of all year 6 children being overweight, including obese, Warwickshire was slightly better than the England average of 36.6%. The highest figures in Warwickshire are seen in Nuneaton & Bedworth (40.7%) and North Warwickshire (38.3%). There is a support offer for children in Warwickshire delivered through Health Visiting and the School Health and Wellbeing Services, targeted at high priority families, communities and schools. This includes a pilot offering free school meals using Tackling Social Inequalities Funding to all primary school aged children in Creating Opportunities area schools. Creating Opportunities is Warwickshire County Council's unique brand name used for projects and plans associated with Levelling Up, reducing inequalities, increased social mobility and Community Powered Warwickshire. There is also an enhanced offer of support for high-priority schools (based on Body Mass Index and Indices of Multiple Deprivation scores) through the school health and wellbeing service, Connect for Health's, Healthy Lifestyles offer. It is expected that the impact of Covid-19 and the cost-of-living crisis on child activity levels and nutrition will show in the national and regional weight data for several years.
- The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs % overspend compared to DSG recovery plan is at 260.74% and remains a significant challenge due to demand and individual unit costs continuing to rise above expectations, and the wider national systemic issues relating to SEND. There are a variety of contributing reasons including increased expenditure on Special Schools top up funding, Independent School places and Alternative Provision. Although the Council continues to work with the Department for Education on the Delivering Better Value programme to mitigate this risk, it is highly unlikely it will prevent growing long-term overspends in the absence of a fundamental national solution to the SEND system and its funding.
- Demand for social care for those over 65 is still rising. The No. of people currently in residential or nursing placement over 65 reached 1,926 this Quarter against a target of 1,600, and a figure of 1,656 in December 2022. Alongside this the % of people open to Adult Social Care with eligible needs living in the community with support over the age of 65 has been slowly declining and has been consistently below the target for a year, at 56% compared to a target of 60% this Quarter. This is in part due to increased frailty and carer strain. Action being taken includes work looking at the support needs of people with more complex needs, including dementia, increased reviews and improved joint working with Health colleagues. Further information can be found within the Financial Monitoring Report.

Another broader challenging area is the 'Deliver our Child Friendly Warwickshire strategy - Happy, healthy, safe children' Area of Focus. This has been highlighted at every Quarter in the 2023/24 reporting year, and this Quarter 6 of the 7 measures in the area are Not on Track. This follows a period of previously improving performance related to numbers of Children in

Care and those with an open Child in Need category over the 2022/23 reporting year. The decline in performance can be attributed to an increase in demand from people requesting and accessing services within the period due to the cost-of-living crisis, alongside rising numbers of teenagers with social, emotional and mental health needs. This increased demand is expected to continue. This has resulted in a rise in caseloads for some key teams.

- 2.6 There are 87 measures of the 97 available for reporting where there is enough trend data available to ascertain a Direction of Travel. 66% (57) of measures have a Direction of Travel that is On Track, the majority of which are either improving or static. Conversely, 34% (30) are Not on Track, the majority of which are declining (see table 2).
- 2.7 A total of 96 KBMs have a forecast projection from the responsible service for the forthcoming period (see table 3). Of the measures that are forecast to be On Track at Year End, the majority are forecast to improve or remain static in that position. Of those that are forecast to be Not on Track, the majority are forecast to remain static, however, the following are forecast to decline further at the next reporting period, full details can be found within [Appendix 1](#) and the [Performance Portal](#):
- % of in year applications that have a school place offered within the target deadline of 10 school days;
 - % of in year applications that have a school place offered within the statutory deadline of 15 school days;
 - % of Year 6 children (aged 10-11 years) who are overweight including obese;
 - Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs Block (HNB) in year forecast % overspend compared to the DSG Recovery Plan;
 - % of Maintained Schools with a Deficit Budget;
 - No. of documents being printed by the organisation; and
 - % Net Variation of Outturn Forecasts to Revenue Budget (Whole Council).

Previous experience illustrates that projections provided by services between quarters are broadly accurate so it is anticipated that this level of accurate projection remains for Year End.

- 2.8 A set of high-level, cross-cutting, long-term Warwickshire Outcome Measures, which the Council can influence but is not solely responsible for, are reported in a State of Warwickshire reporting [dashboard](#) which includes Levelling Up and Cost-of-Living metrics. A summary position will be included in the Year End Integrated Performance Report.

3. Performance against the Integrated Delivery Plan

- 3.1 The recently updated [Integrated Delivery Plan](#) aligns priority activity from across all Service areas against the Areas of Focus within the Council Plan 2022-27. The Plan shows how activity across Services collectively contributes to delivering these priorities.

- 3.2 Detailed information on the performance summary of the Integrated Delivery Plan is included at [Appendix 2](#). A new [Power BI reporting dashboard](#) is now available and enables Members to track progress by service, status, Council Plan Area of Focus, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Portfolio Holder.
- 3.3 There are 190 actions remaining within the Integrated Delivery Plan, with nineteen of these closing this Quarter. At Quarter 3, 68% (129) are On Track and 10% (19) Complete, 18% (36) are At Risk/Compromised and 1% (2) Not Started. There are four (2%) actions that are being reviewed and potentially replanned this Quarter, therefore a new status has been introduced so that it is clear which are affected, and it is these actions which are reported on in [Appendix 2](#) on an exception basis.
- 3.4 Table 4 below shows the breakdown of statuses by Area of Focus:

Area of Focus	Complete	On Track	At Risk	Compromised	Subject to Replanning	Not Started	TOTAL
Create vibrant places with safe and inclusive communities	3	12	1	1	1	0	18
Deliver major infrastructure, digital connectivity and improved transport options	4	16	1	2	0	0	23
Promote inclusive, sustainable economic growth, successful business, good quality jobs and future	0	14	10	2	0	0	26
Tackle climate change, promote biodiversity and deliver on our commitment to Net Zero	4	11	3	0	2	1	21
Deliver our Child Friendly Warwickshire strategy - Happy, healthy, safe children	1	10	3	3	0	0	17
Through education, improve life opportunities for children, young people and those with special	5	15	0	3	0	1	24
Support people to live healthy, happy, and independent lives and work with partners to reduce	0	23	0	0	0	0	23
Great Council and Partner - Harnessing Community Power	0	11	0	0	0	0	11
Great Council and Partner - Using our data and digital solutions to improve service delivery	1	8	5	1	1	0	16
Great Council and Partner - Our people and the way we work	1	9	1	0	0	0	11

Table 4

- 3.5 Chart 1 below shows a comparison of the delivery status of activities (%) at Quarter 3 against Quarters 1 and 2.

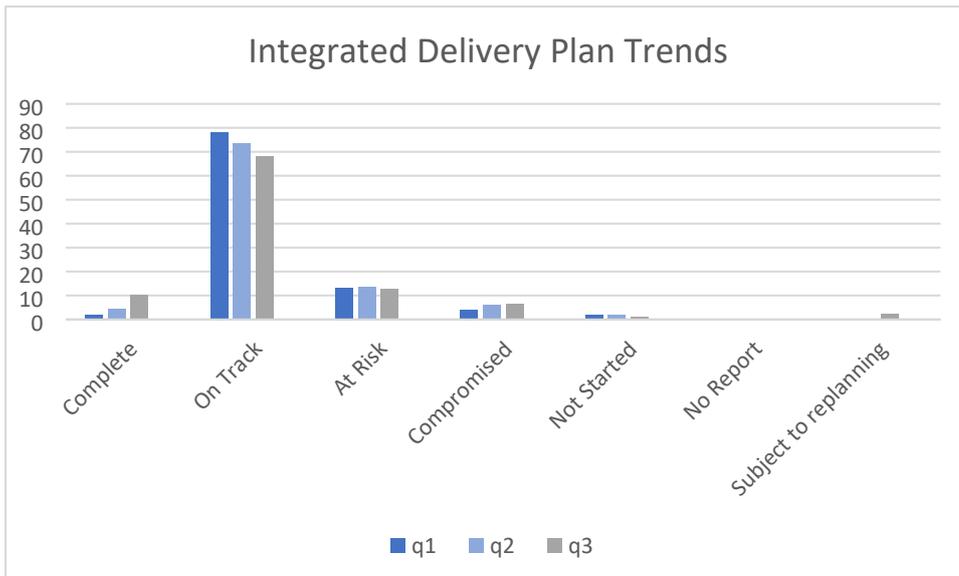


Chart 1

- 3.6 Several actions remain At Risk relating to capital programmes and projects where current inflation levels and supply chain challenges are creating significant levels of risk and uncertainty about capacity to deliver as planned within available resources. Scheme-by-scheme due diligence is underway to review inflationary pressures on the existing capital programme to help inform decisions about allocation of the £15m inflation contingency fund agreed at Council in September 2022.

4. Management of Human Resources (HR)

- 4.1 The HR performance reporting dashboard is included at [Appendix 3](#).

4.2 Sickness Absence:

- Overall, there has been a slight increase in absence across the third quarter.
- The outturn of 9.43 days per FTE means that the tolerance level of the target of 8 days per FTE (+/- 1 day) continues to be exceeded.
- The highest reason for sickness absence remains stress and mental health, which has increased again ending Quarter 3 with 3.2 days per FTE (2.98 at the end of last quarter) which is above the target of 2.5 days per FTE. The key focus areas continue to include targeting activity to reduce high areas of absence and ensure long-term sickness absentees are supported with individual action plans and absences resolved in a timely way. Work towards achieving Silver Thrive at Work continues and the latest wellbeing check shows positive overall wellbeing in the workplace has increased to 82% from 78% (2022/23). Results have been reviewed and priority areas have been identified and progressed. We are linking with Public Health and the Occupational Health Provider on how they can support with further improvement activity.

4.3 Establishment:

- Recruitment and retention activity has led to a reduced number of vacancies. With the continued focus on recruitment and retention, and

reduction in turnover, it is anticipated that FTE in post may continue to rise over the coming year, but this will remain within the overall budgeted Council establishment.

4.4 Age profile:

- The age profile of the organisation remains static, with over half of the workforce, 54.3%, being aged between 25 and 50 which is a positive position we are looking to build upon as we develop our strategic workforce planning approach.

4.5 Ethnicity:

- The ethnicity profile of the organisation remains relatively static.

4.6 Staff turnover:

- Turnover, at 11% for the rolling 12 months, is lower than for the same period in 2022/23 (13.4%). This is encouraging, although there are continuing recruitment challenges in several areas as detailed in 1.4 but most notably in Children and Young People and Social Care and Health. The Local Government pay award for 2023/2024 has been agreed and the changes along with associated back pay, were made in November payroll.
- 59% of leavers are due to resignations, which is a slight decrease compared with 60% in Quarter 2. This could be attributed to a higher percentage of end of fixed term contracts and retirements at the end of Quarter 2 (2023/24) compared to the end of this Quarter.
- The Our People Strategy is currently being reviewed considering achievements, performance and the priority actions for 2024/2025, identifying the following emerging themes:
 - Strategic Workforce Planning;
 - Recruitment and retention;
 - Reward and Recognition;
 - Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and wellbeing; and
 - Leadership.

5. Management of Risk

5.1 The refreshed strategic risks are highlighted in [Appendix 4](#) and these are now scored using the approach, which was presented to Cabinet in January 2024. The following three risks, out of seven, have a red/high status after allowing for mitigating controls:

- mismatch between demand and resources;
- lack of movement towards sustainable futures; and
- successful cyber-attack.

5.2 Risk registers are also maintained at Service (Director) level, with 85 risks currently being monitored across 13 Services at the end of Quarter 3. Key service risks are highlighted in two ways:

- by a red/amber/green rating signifying low through to high risk: at Quarter 3, nine risks out of 85 are classified as net red risks after mitigating controls; and
- by comparing the current assessed risk with the respective target level of risk: at Quarter 3, nine risks (13 at Quarter 2 and 18 at Quarter 1) have been exceeding their target for 3 quarters or more and are currently exceeding the target by a score of more than 3.

Risk targets were introduced to help the Council operate in a more risk-aware way; for example, it may be necessary to accept certain risks to access certain opportunities to deliver service outcomes (such as supporting economic recovery), or it may be prohibitively expensive to resource a service or process to operate at zero risk.

5.3 A summary performance reporting dashboard for risk is included at [Appendix 4](#) showing:

- Appendix 4a is a summary of the strategic risk register analysed by risk likelihood and risk impact shown in a heatmap; and
- Appendix 4b is a summary of service risks highlighting red risks and risks consistently above target for 3 quarters or more and scoring more than 3 points higher than the target risk.

5.4 Risks that are identified have mitigation activity highlighted, including controls and actions, which are reviewed and updated periodically by relevant managers.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are none specific to this report, but Cabinet is referred to the associated finance performance report.

7. Environmental Implications

7.1 There are none rising directly from this report.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – [Quarterly Performance Report](#)

Appendix 2 – [Progress on Integrated Delivery Plan](#)

Appendix 3 – [Management of Human Resources dashboard](#)

Appendix 4 – [Management of Strategic Risk](#)

Background Papers

Role	Name	Contact Information
Report Author	Vanessa Belton, Business Intelligence Service Manager (Performance and Quality)	vanessabelton@warwickshire.gov.uk
Director	Craig Cusack, Director of Enabling Services	craigcusack@warwickshire.gov.uk
Executive Director	Rob Powell, Executive Director for Resources	robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Yousef Dahmash, Portfolio Holder Customer and Transformation	yousefdahmash@warwickshire.gov.uk

The report was circulated to the following Members prior to publication:

Local Member(s):

Other Members: OSC chairs