

Cabinet

13 February 2025

Council Plan 2022-2027 Integrated Performance Report Quarter 3 2024/25

Recommendations

That Cabinet

- 1) Considers and comments on the Quarter 3 2024/25 organisational performance, and
- 2) Agrees to refer the report to Overview and Scrutiny Committees (OSCs) to consider, in detail, the information relevant to their individual remits.

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of the Council's performance at Quarter 3, April – December 2024, against the strategic priorities and Areas of Focus as set out in the Council Plan 2022-2027. The paper sets out a combined picture of the Council's delivery, performance, Human Resources (HR) and risk, enabling scrutiny and transparency for the organisation, partners, and the public:
 - progress against the Council Delivery Plan (CDP) is summarised in Section 2 and more fully presented within Appendix 1;
 - performance is assessed against the Key Business Measures (KBMs) contained within the agreed Performance Management Framework (PMF) in Section 3 and Appendix 2;
 - management of HR 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 enables OSCs to consider performance within their own remits. All Members have access to the CDP and PMF using the Performance Portal in Power BI to monitor performance.
- 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, and emerging national metrics. As such, the Council's performance framework will continue to evolve, and be streamlined to ensure that Members have the most useful performance data.

- 1.4 Implementation of the CDP began in April, with Quarter Three seeing a further project (2%) completed. The overall delivery position has improved since Quarter Two with 50 (88%) On Track, 1 (2%) Complete and 6 (10%) At Risk, it is these actions which are reported on an exception basis in [Appendix 1](#).
- 1.5 The 2024/25 PMF contains 67 KBMs, 63 of which are available for reporting at Quarter 3. Table 1 below indicates the current assessment of performance which remains positive considering the current challenging operating environment and broadly stable across the last 3 quarters:

Status	On Track	Not on Track
Quarter 1	76% (42)	24% (13)
Quarter 2	73% (46)	27% (17)
Quarter 3	75% (47)	25% (16)

Table 1

The forecast position for the next reporting period is that overall, the position will remain stable however a significant proportion (27 measures) will show improvement in their individual performance. [Appendix 2](#) details information for all measures within the PMF. Detailed measure-by-measure performance reporting is accessible through the [Performance Portal](#).

- 1.6 The workforce profile in terms of age, ethnicity, and staff turnover remain stable. Sickness absence has increased over the last quarter and remains outside tolerance. Stress and Mental Health absence continues to be our main reason for absence and is therefore a priority. The key focus has been to address longer term absence which has resulted in a reduction in the number of these cases which will take some time to show in the metric which is a rolling 12 month measure. However, resolution of long-term cases should create more capacity for managers to engage earlier and for the organisation to establish and tackle root causes of long-term absence. We are monitoring the impact from the National Insurance contributions increase on the labour market and what this may mean for our recruitment and retention.
- 1.7 Overall, the strategic risk profile has remained reasonably stable this quarter. Following the start of a 'deep dive exercise' conducted by all Directorate Leadership Teams (DLTs) in December, this report presents the quarterly monitoring of strategic & directorate risks. [Appendix 4](#) provides a full overview of the current Risk position.
- 1.8 The Council continues to operate in a challenging and rapidly changing environment which impacts all aspects of our work. A challenging financial outlook in the short- to medium-term is impacting on the Council's resources. Resourcing challenges are both financial and workforce, reflecting levels of demand, and uncertainty about medium-term national policy direction in several key areas of our work. Performance reporting will continue to track and highlight our delivery and performance and inform prioritisation of activity and resources.

2. Performance against the Council Delivery Plan

- 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 CDP aligns priority activity from across all Service areas against the Areas of Focus within the Council Plan 2022-27. It shows how activity across Services collectively contributes to delivering these priorities.
- 2.2 Detailed information on the performance summary of the CDP is included at Appendix 1. A Power BI reporting dashboard enables Members to track progress by Council Plan Area of Focus.
- 2.3 There are 57 remaining actions within the Council Delivery Plan. Of these, at Quarter 3, 50 (88%) are On Track, 1 (2%) Complete and 6 (10%) are At Risk. It is these actions which are reported on in Appendix 1 on an exception basis.
- 2.4 Table 2 below shows the breakdown of status by Area of Focus as at Quarter 3 2024/2025.

Area of Focus	Complete	On Track	At Risk	Compromised	Not Started	TOTAL
Create vibrant places with safe and inclusive communities	1	4	0	0	0	5
Deliver major infrastructure, digital connectivity and improved transport options	0	9	0	0	0	9
Promote inclusive, sustainable economic growth, successful business, good quality jobs and future	0	4	0	0	0	4
Tackle climate change, promote biodiversity and deliver on our commitment to Net Zero	0	6	3	0	0	9
Deliver our Child Friendly Warwickshire strategy - Happy, healthy, safe children	0	3	0	0	0	3
Through education, improve life opportunities for children, young people and those with special	0	4	1	0	0	5
Support people to live healthy, happy, and independent lives and work with partners to	0	10	1	0	0	11
Great Council and Partner	0	10	1	0	0	11

Table 2

- 2.5 Notable areas of progress this quarter include:
- The completion and hand over of the Minerva training unit as part of the Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Service (WFRS) 2-year improvement plan. The opening ceremony was held in January 2025.
 - The work on our Home to School Transport Programme is set to move into the delivery phase following the approval of the plan with all Service Area Leads concerned. This will begin to enable the savings and other efficiencies in our transport network.

- 2.6 Challenges being seen this quarter relate to the following:
- A delay to activity within the "Tackle climate change, promote biodiversity and deliver on the Council's commitment to Net Zero" Area of Focus. Specifically the pilot of our planned programme to provide the means for our diesel fleet to be fuelled by Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil, which will potentially reduce emissions by 90%; and
 - The provision of the Teleton Academy, which contributes to our Area of Focus "Through education, improve life opportunities for children, young people and those with special educational needs" is delayed by the Department for Education (DfE), who are responsible for the funding, commissioning and delivery of the school. The Service is engaging the DfE to understand what that means in terms of delivery timescales.

3. Performance against the Performance Management Framework

- 3.1 The Council Delivery Plan outlines deliverables relevant to each Area of Focus and KBMs have been assigned to measure impact; a full performance summary against all KBMs is contained in [Appendix 2](#) and more comprehensive performance reporting is enabled through the [Power BI Performance Portal](#) as part of the PMF. The number of reportable measures will change each quarter as the framework reflects the availability of new data.
- 3.2 Of the 63 KBMs available for reporting at Quarter 3, 75% (47) are reported as being On Track and 25% (16) being reported as Not on Track.
- 3.3 Notable aspects of positive performance for specific measures include:
- In the National Highways Transport (NHT) survey ranking compared to peer authorities, Warwickshire has improved from 4th in 2023 to 2nd in 2024. The NHT survey includes detailed questions to 3,300 randomly selected households across the county about various highway and transport services, such as cycle routes, local taxi services, and community transport;
 - The % of children and young people with an Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan attending a mainstream school has reached 37% (2,549 out of 6,887 children); the highest proportion since 2018. As part of the Delivering Better Value (DBV) programme, the Council continues to promote inclusion in mainstream schools and where appropriate place children with EHC Plans in mainstream settings;
 - The DBV programme also focuses on increasing the use of resourced provision across the county. Resourced provision allows children to attend mainstream school whilst accessing specialist provision. This Quarter 81% (219 out of 272) resourced provision places are being utilised, with places filled in accordance with each child's individual needs;
 - 86% (6 out of 7) of WCC owned children's home placements are occupied. Beechwood House and Acorn Lodge are both at 100% occupancy, and Cherry Tree House is at 75% occupancy, having successfully supported 2

children to return home to their parents' care in December 2024. Utilising WCC owned children's homes means fewer children need to move away from their family and friends when placed in care. It also means WCC can improve the outcomes for children in care; and

- % Net Variation of Outturn Forecasts to Revenue Budget (Whole Council) is reporting performance within the + / - 2% target set as part of the performance framework. This measure had been reporting as Not on Track since the start of the year, so this improved position reflects the impact of the financial recovery strategy and positive work from all Directorates and services.

3.4 There are several performance challenges this Quarter:

- At 30% (67 out of 224), the % of Education Health Care plans (EHCP) completed within 20 weeks remains an area for improvement at Quarter 3, although the percentage figure has slowly increased since Quarter 4 2023/24 from 14%. Performance is due to very significantly increasing demand and a backlog of EHCPs to process. A process review has taken place to optimise ways of working whose recommendations are being implemented, but these can only mitigate the fundamental challenge of the rapidly increasing levels of demand;
- The annual cost of SEND Home to School Transport per child shows a very slight increase, from £11,593 in Quarter 2 to £11,855 in Quarter 3. The trend is still showing an increasing number of children requiring transport due to the numbers of EHCPs being issued, this is reflected in the associated costs which are significantly above budget;
- To date this reporting year 18 additional Safe Accommodation units have been delivered from the baseline, which is behind the forecasted target of 27 units. Regular meetings are taking place with all parties to resolve challenges, to meet the target of 30 units at Year End;
- The % of people open to Adult Social Care with eligible needs living in the community with support over the age of 65 has been consistently below the target of 60% and reached 55.1% in December 2024. There has been a continued increase in demand for services alongside increasing complexity, frailty and carer fatigue;
- Sickness Absence days for Quarter 3 2024/25 has increased again to 10.73 days per FTE and remains over the tolerance of +/- 1 day against the target of 8 days per FTE. The key focus over the last quarter has been to address longer-term absence through case conferences with the occupational health provider and working directly with directorates and managers. As a result, there has been a positive impact with the number of absence cases over 9 months reducing by 40%, which over time should reduce absence levels which are measured over a 12-month rolling period. More details regarding sickness absence are covered in paragraph 4.2; and
- % variation of revenue savings achieved against the agreed Medium Term Financial Strategy (Whole Council) remains as Not on Track. Despite improvements in performance since Quarter 1, this measure is not expected to recover fully in-year due to the scale of financial

pressures but these have been refreshed and factored into the latest refresh of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to be considered by Council in February. The achievement of future savings is critical to the delivery of a balanced budget over the MTFS period and will continue to be closely monitored. The full position and mitigating actions are outlined in the Quarter 3 Finance Monitoring Report.

- 3.5 Within the current PMF there are 50 measures of the 63 available for reporting where there is enough trend data available to ascertain a direction of travel. For 97% (35) of currently reported On Track measures performance for is either improving or static. Conversely, for the Not on Track measures, for the majority performance is static or declining.
- 3.6 Within the current PMF, 61 reportable KBMs have a forecast projection from the responsible service for the forthcoming period. Of the measures that have a status of On Track, 98% are forecast or remain static or improve over the next reporting period.
- 3.7 Of those that have a status of Not on Track, just under half (7 out of 15) of the measures are forecast to remain static, and the same amount again are forecast to improve. One measure is forecast to decline, as referenced below:
- No. of days sick absence per FTE (rolling 12 months) – further detail is available in paragraph 3.4 and the management of Human Resources section.
- 3.8 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 Creating Opportunities and Cost-of-Living metrics.

4. Management of Human Resources (HR)

- 4.1 The HR performance reporting dashboard is included at Appendix 3. This provides an overview of our key HR metrics. Whilst our workforce profile remains stable there are a couple of key points to highlight.
- 4.2 Sickness Absence:
- Overall, there has been an increase in absence across the third quarter.
 - Absence days for Quarter 3 are at 10.73 days per FTE which compares to 10.38 days at the end of Quarter 2, meaning 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, this has increased slightly again ending Quarter 3 at 3.73 days per FTE (3.47 at the end of quarter 2) but remains above the target of 2.5 days per FTE.
 - Targeted activity continues to be focused on teams with particularly high levels of stress and mental health absence and longer-term absences. The focus will now move to better understanding the root cause for our

long-term absence and earlier intervention by managers during sickness absence.

- Specific work undertaken in Quarter 3 included:
 - Undertaking cases conferences with our occupational health provider;
 - Working directly with directorates and managers on absence cases over 9 months which led to the number of these cases reducing by 40%, from 30 to 18;
 - Work within Health & Safety to develop a stress and mental health inspections approach with services;
 - Achievement of our Thrive at Work silver award accreditation.

Recruitment:

- The impact of spending controls continues to reflect in both the number of roles advertised and the number of people joining the organisation compared to the previous quarter.
- Quarter 3 saw 75 new starters to WCC. This represents a 56% reduction on new starters in Quarter 2. Whilst Quarter 3 covers the Christmas period, which is traditionally quieter, the impact of the spending controls will also be a contributor to this. Whilst new starters joined services across the organisation, one third joined Children and Families. Advertised roles reduced by 14% on Quarter 2.
- We are monitoring the impact from changes to employer National Insurance contributions on the labour market. Market data is showing that in December, vacancies for permanent roles declined at their fastest rate in four years. With less vacancies in the market the talent pool for some of our harder to fill roles may increase.

5. Management of Risk

- 5.1 A new approach and reporting format for risk was adopted in Quarter 2. Following the first phase of a 'deep dive exercise' conducted by all DLTs in December, this report presents the quarterly monitoring of strategic and directorate risks, and a summary of the key findings and messages from the deep dive.
- 5.2 **Strategic Risks** - There continues to be a significant amount of change in the external policy environment, but the strategic risks align well to these. There has been no change in risk ratings this quarter (see [Appendix 4](#)).
- 5.3 **Directorate Risks** – A number of controls have been updated because of the deep dives, however the controls will be kept under review and further updated as necessary during Quarter 4. The table below summarises the overall risk position across the Directorates at Quarter 3:

	Red	Amber	Green	TOTAL
Children & Young People	1	5	3	9
Social Care & Health	2	7	5	14

Communities	2	13	8	23
Resources	1	6	6	13
TOTAL	6	31	22	59

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are none specific to this report, but Cabinet is referred to the associated 2024/25 Financial Monitoring – Forecast position at Quarter 3 report.

7. Environmental Implications

- 7.1 There are none rising directly from this report.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Progress on the Council Delivery Plan
Appendix 2 – Quarterly Performance Report
Appendix 3 – Management of Human Resources dashboard
Appendix 4 – Management of Strategic Risk

Background Papers

None.

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

Local Member(s):

Other Members: OSC chairs