

Resources, Fire & Rescue Service Overview & Scrutiny Committee

26th June 2024

Council Plan 2022-2027 Integrated Performance Report Year End 2023/24

Recommendations

That the Resources, Fire and Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers and comments on Year End 2023/24 organisational performance, progress against the Integrated Delivery Plan, management of finances and risk.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides a retrospective summary of the Council's performance at the Year End position (April 2023 – March 2024) against the strategic priorities and Areas of Focus set out in the Council Plan 2022-2027. All information contained within this report has been taken from the Year End Integrated Performance and Finance reports presented to Cabinet on 13th June. The paper sets out a combined picture of the Council's delivery, performance, HR, and risk.
- Performance is assessed against the Key Business Measures (KBM) 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 Finance is summarised in Section 4 and the summary dashboard is presented in [Appendix 3](#).
 - 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 the opportunity 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, Oflog (Office for Local Government) is developing a suite of

metrics for the sector. 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; the challenges in these areas reflect systemic national issues;
 - in these areas demand is increasing more quickly than resources, creating capacity, workload and delivery challenges, addressing this is a high priority for the organisation;
 - continuing recruitment and retention difficulties in specific areas including Children and Adults Social Care, Highways, Planners, Legal and Finance, which are important drivers of ongoing strategic workforce planning activity; and
 - a small number of services continue to experience specific challenges around staff absence levels particularly Business Support, Customer Contact, Children and Families and Social Care and Support, which are reflected in increasing overall sickness rates.
- 1.5 The 2023/24 PMF contains 105 KBMs, 105 of which are available for reporting at Year End. There are 29 KBMs within the remit of this Committee, all of which are available at the Year End position. Table 1 below indicators the current assessment of performance.

Status	On Track	Not on Track
Quarter 1	61% (17)	39% (11)
Quarter 2	48% (13)	52% (14)
Quarter 3	64% (16)	36% (9)
Year End	55% (16)	45% (13)

Table 1

- 1.6 At Year End the position has seen an overall decline in overall percentage terms as all the Year End measures are due for reporting, compared to Quarter 3 where 64% KBMs were reported as On Track and 36% as Not on Track. This is set against the challenges of the current operating environment, which include a prolonged period of inflation which is now easing, 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 The position is slightly less positive in terms of delivery of the 52 actions within the remit of the Resources, Fire and Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as set out in the Integrated Delivery Plan. Fifty eight percent (down from 64%) of actions are On Track, 13% are At Risk, 2% are Compromised and 10% are subject to replanning. It is these actions which are reported on by exception in Appendix 2.
- 1.8 At the end of the financial year the services reporting to Resources and Fire and Rescue Services OSC overspent by £4.8m, equivalent to 5.4% of their combined revenue budget. Once planned transfers from earmarked reserves are accounted for the position alters to a £2.6m overspend, equivalent to 2.9% of the net revenue budget. 93.8% of the current year's saving target of £1.863m has been delivered. Of the approved capital programme 35% of the schemes have been delayed and now forecast to be completed in future years.
- 1.9 During 2023-24, a risk working group was convened to review and refresh the strategic risks that face the Council in the pursuit of its priorities. This work has resulted in a smaller number of high-level cross cutting risks being established. In Quarter 4, those risks have been reviewed, the mitigations updated and two new risks added. Strategic risks which are aligned, but not exclusively, to the work of this Committee include:
- Mismatch between demand and resources (high);
 - Failure to operate (medium);
 - Insufficient skilled & experienced workforce (medium);
 - Successful cyber-attack (high);
 - A safe environment may not be maintained (medium) (new); and
 - Breakdown in governance (Low) (new).
- 1.10 At a more detailed service level, 83 risks are currently being monitored, 32 of which relate to the work of this Committee. 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. Further detail relating to strategic and 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 such as NHS, 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 In April Cabinet agreed the new Council Delivery Plan and PMF which have been simplified to focus on the key priorities ensuring we grip and improve the drivers of cost pressures to maintain service and financial resilience. Reporting against these will commence from Quarter 1 2024/25. 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 to these, there are three further areas to support the Council to be known for 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 of the 29 KBMs available for reporting at Year End, 55% (16) are reported as being On Track and 45% (13) being reported as Not on Track.
- 2.4 Notable aspects of positive performance for specific measures include:
- The YourSay survey results has seen an increase in both our engagement scores and our completion rate. Where it is possible to benchmark our scores against other public sector bodies, our scores are significantly higher. Whilst these results are pleasing, it is important that we continue to ensure that action is taken as a result of the feedback, with demand, workload and capacity being key themes to be addressed.
- 2.5 There are a number of performance challenges this Quarter including:
- Absence days for Quarter 4 2023/24 have increased slightly again to 9.86 days per FTE. Several service areas across the organisation have a significant impact on the overall absence figure, and resources and

actions are being targeted to provide support to them. This increasing trend appears to be in line with national trends.

- 2.6 There are 24 measures of the 29 available for reporting, where there is enough trend data available to ascertain a Direction of Travel. 58% (14) of measures have a Direction of Travel that is On Track, of which 6 are improving, 6 are remaining static and 2 are declining. Conversely, 42% (10) are Not on Track, half of which are remaining static with the other half declining.
- 2.7 28 of the 29 reportable KBMs have a forecast projection from the responsible service for the forthcoming period. The remaining measure has a projection of Not Applicable as it's difficult to make a judgement on future performance. Of the measures that are forecast to be On Track at Year End, 3 are forecast to improve further, with 12 to remain static. Of the 13 that are forecast to be Not on Track, the majority (11) are projected to remain static, with the other 2 to improve. Full details can be found within [Appendix 1](#) and the [Performance Portal](#).
Previous experience illustrates that projections provided by services between quarters are broadly accurate so it is anticipated that this level of accurate projection continues.
- 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. Current performance at Year End is being reported as a summary within Appendix 1b.

3. Progress against the Integrated Delivery Plan

- 3.1 The 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 [Power BI reporting dashboard](#) is now available and will enable Members to track progress by Service, status, Council Plan Area of Focus, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Portfolio Holder.
- 3.3 Of the 175 actions within the Integrated Delivery Plan, 52 are attributable to the Resources, Fire and Rescue OSC. The position is less positive in terms of delivery this quarter, with 58% (down from 64%) being On Track, 13% At Risk, and 2% Compromised. There are also 10% of actions that are being reviewed and potentially replanned this Quarter. 17% of activities have closed at Quarter 3, these actions are reported on in [Appendix 2](#) on an exception basis.

4. Management of Finance

- 4.1 The key metrics of financial management are summarised below with further information providing context available in [Appendix 3](#) and in the Finance Outturn Report presented to Cabinet on 13th June 2024.
- 4.2 The headline revenue forecast at the end of the financial year is £4.792m (5.4%) overspend however, specific funding has been set aside to be transferred from earmarked reserves. Once these factors are considered the adjusted forecast position is £2.556m (2.9%) overspend.

Metric	Target	Service	Performance at Q4 2023/24
Performance against the latest approved revenue budget as measured by forecast under/overspend after application of reserves	On budget or no more than 2% underspent	Workforce & Local Services	0.9%
		Enabling Services	10.27%
		Finance	(1.00%)
		Strategy, Planning & Governance	(3.37%)
		Fire & Rescue	(0.40%)
Performance against the approved savings target as measured by forecast under/overachievement	100%	Workforce & Local Services	43%
		Enabling Services	94%
		Finance	100%
		Strategy, Planning and Governance	100%
		Fire & Rescue	100%
Performance against the approved capital programme as measured by forecast delays in delivery	No more than 5% delay	Workforce & Local Services	32.09%
		Enabling Services	28.19%
		Strategy, Planning & Governance	0%
		Fire & Rescue	64.85%

5. Management of Risk

- 5.1 During 2023-24, strategic risks and elements of the Strategic Risk Management Framework (the Framework) were reviewed and refreshed. A smaller number of high level cross cutting strategic risks was developed and then agreed by Corporate Board. During Quarter 4, the strategic risks have been reviewed, adjustments made to refine and enhance the mitigations and two new risks added.

5.2 Risks are monitored in risk registers at a strategic level and at service level. At a strategic level the following risks are more related to this Committee, whilst also being relevant for other committees:

- Mismatch between demand and resources (high);
- Failure to operate (medium);
- Insufficient skilled & experienced workforce (medium);
- Successful cyber-attack (high);
- A safe environment may not be maintained (medium and new); and
- Breakdown in governance (Low and new).

5.3 Mitigating controls are in place in respect of these risks however, demand continues to increase and there are also market pricing pressures in some areas. The existing controls include the Medium Term Financial Strategy and financial monitoring, review and reporting through Corporate Board and the Committee structure. Operational areas are adapting and applying additional mitigations including participation in the DfE's Delivering Better Value programme aimed at SEND and sustainable service. The Council has also been successful in its application to the DfE Wave 2 Pathfinder programme to rebalance children's social care from costly crisis intervention to more meaningful and effective early support.

5.4 Further controls that are in place include a generic emergency plan incorporating a response structure to be enacted in emergency circumstances. Our People Strategy is being reconsidered by the Director of Workforce and Local Services and team, with strategic workforce planning underway, pilots have been operated within high priority areas to address general and specialist recruitment challenges.

5.5 In relation to the risk relating to cyber-attack being successful, information security policies and mandatory training for all employees are in place and there are multiple technical mitigating controls. The volume of nationwide attacks continues to cause concern and the Council is vigilant and aims to learn from incidents elsewhere.

5.6 At a service level there are 32 risks recorded, which relate to the work of this Committee. Key risks are highlighted where they are red risks (high risk) and where a risk has been higher than the risk target for 3 quarters or more and is 3 points or more over target. To highlight the key risks a table of both red risks and risks significantly above target is provided at [Appendix 4](#).

5.7 The risks that are both red/high and significantly above target for three quarters or more and more than three points above target are the most significant risks, these are highlighted below. Further detail is held in [Appendix 4](#):

- Insufficient resources to deliver the Authority's Council Plan and priorities (Finance);
- Cyber-attack is successful and personal data and systems are compromised (Enabling Services);

- Unable to meet the service expectations prior to Resourcing to Risk implementation (Fire and Rescue Services); and
 - Weaknesses in light rescue pumps impact service delivery.
- 5.8 Mitigating controls are in place including the MTFs refresh for 2024-25 which was considered by Council in February and delivers a balanced and sustainable position over the medium-term, in line with the Council’s statutory duties. Revenue pressures remain in some service areas (e.g. SEND, children and families, adult social care and home to school transport), and a capital funding gap exists for the schools programme. We continue to acutely monitor the position.
- 5.9 The risk of *successful cyber-attack* is mitigated corporately as highlighted above. The *reduced on call availability* risk has been refreshed to *being unable to meet expectations prior to Resourcing to Risk (R2R) implementation* and is being managed in Fire and Rescue Services (FRS). R2R consultation completed in March. There is a plan in place to report the proposed operating model to Cabinet in the summer. FRS have plans to replace the light rescue pumps over a two year timeframe and a maintenance programme is in place for the interim period.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 None arising directly from this report.

7. Environmental Implications

7.1 None arising directly from this report.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Quarterly Performance Report and Warwickshire Outcome Measures

Appendix 2 – Progress on the Integrated Delivery Plan

Appendix 3 – Management of Financial Risk

Appendix 4 – Management of Risk

Background Papers

Cabinet Report 13th June 2024

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