

Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee

29 September 2020

Council Plan 2020 – 2025 Quarterly Progress Report Period under review: April 2020 to June 2020

Recommendation

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

Considers and comments on the progress of the delivery of the Council Plan 2020 - 2025 for the period as contained in the report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Council Plan Quarter 1 Performance Report for the period April 1st, 2020 to June 30th, 2020 was considered and approved by Cabinet on 10th September 2020. The report provides an overview of progress of the key elements of the Council Plan, specifically in relation to performance against Key Business Measures (KBMs), strategic risks and workforce management. A separate Financial Monitoring report for the period covering both the revenue and capital budgets, reserves and delivery of the savings plan was presented and considered at the same September Cabinet meeting.
- 1.2. This report draws on information extracted from both Cabinet reports to provide this Committee with information relevant to its remit.

2. Council Plan 2020 - 2025: Strategic Context and Performance Commentary

2.1 The Council Plan 2020 – 2025 aims to achieve two high level Outcomes:

- **Warwickshire’s communities and individuals are supported to be safe, healthy and independent;** and,
- **Warwickshire’s economy is vibrant and supported by the right jobs, training, skills and infrastructure.**

Progress to achieve these outcomes is assessed against 64 KBMs.

Outcome	No. of KBMs
Warwickshire’s communities and individuals are supported to be safe, healthy and independent	23
Warwickshire’s economy is vibrant and supported by the right jobs, training, skills and infrastructure	12

In addition, to demonstrate OOP delivery by ensuring that **WCC makes the best use of its resources**, a total of 29 KBMs are monitored.

As the Organisation continues to transform the [Commissioning Intentions Performance Framework](#) was developed and implemented in October 2019 providing a sharpened focus on performance linked to the Organisation's priorities. As part of this transformation several changes to measures were proposed for Cabinet to agree to ensure that the Framework remains fit for purpose and supports delivery of the priorities. The subsequent revised Commissioning Intentions Performance Framework which will be reported on from Quarter 2 can be accessed using this [link](#).

Detailed performance for Quarter 1 for all current KBMs has been visualised utilising the functionality of the Microsoft Power BI system.

- 2.2 At Quarter 1 there has been an improvement in overall performance compared to the 2019/20 year-end position. Several measures, however, have been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and as a consequence there is little or no sign of improvement in these areas. These are fully detailed in 2.5.
- 2.3 Of the 64 KBMs, 11 are in the remit of this Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Of the 64 KBM's, 11 are in the remit of this Overview and Scrutiny Committee and 6 are available for reporting at Quarter 1. Of the 6 reportable KBM's 33% (2) KBM's are reported as being On Track whilst 66% (4) KBM's are reported as not being Not on Track

Chart 1 below summarises KBM status by quarter since the introduction of the Commissioning Intentions Framework.

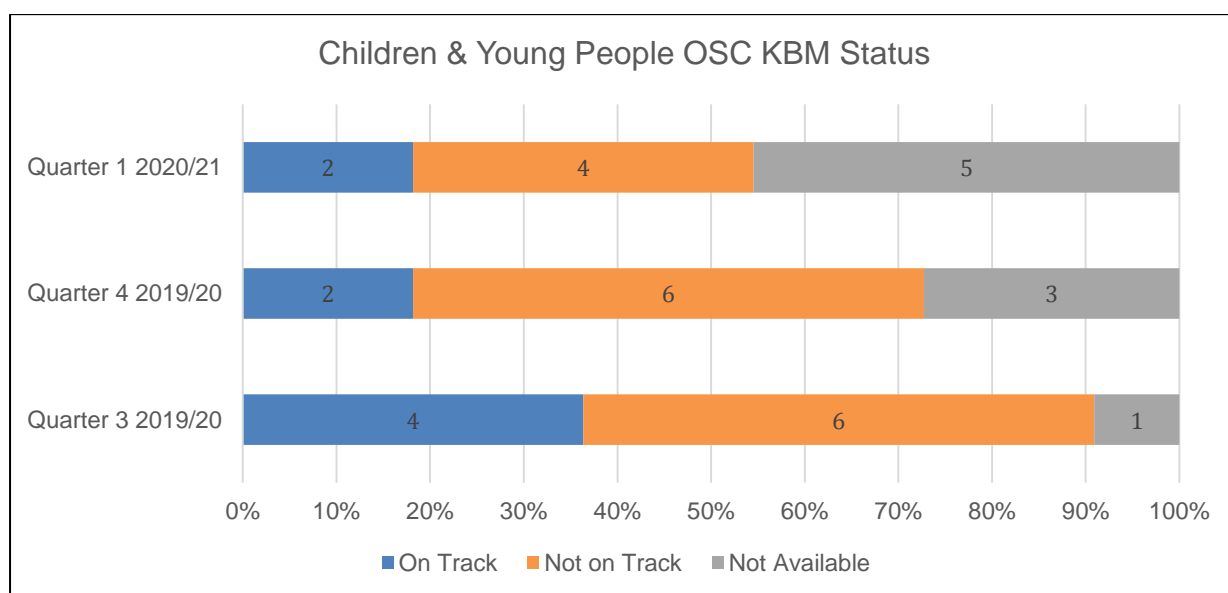


Chart 1

5 KBM's are unavailable for reporting at this quarter.

3 are not available as they are annual measures and reported in arrears:

- % of Year 6 children (aged 10-11 years) in Warwickshire who are classified as obese;
- % of Warwickshire pupils achieving the expected standard for reading, writing and maths at key stages 1 and 2, and level 4 English and maths at key stage 4; and,
- % of disadvantaged pupils in Warwickshire achieving the expected standard for reading, writing and maths at key stages 1 and 2, and level 4 English and maths at key stage 4.

A further 2 KBM's are not currently being reported due to restrictions on service delivery following the Covid-19 situation:

- % of children and young people seen within 18 weeks (Referral to Treatment Time) amalgamated across the three CCGs; and,
- % of children receiving a 6-8 week health check.

2.4 Currently, 2 KBM's are reported as being On Track:

- No. of children open to an Early Help assessment. This KBM remains on track because the redesigned demand led process is much simpler, meaning it is easier for Practitioners to complete for Children, Young People & Families.
- No. of children looked after with a disability (open to Children with Disabilities Team). This KBM is back on track after a decline in performance during Quarter 4. It is now improving because almost all of the children and young people who are in care and open to the Children with Disability team, are in long term care. The vast majority of these care arrangements are joint with Education and almost three quarters also have a health element.

2.5 There are 4 KBMs that are Not on Track at Quarter 1 are included in Table 1 below and details the current performance narrative, improvement activity and explanation of projected trajectory:

Warwickshire's communities and individuals are supported to be safe, healthy and independent

No. of Children in Care (CiC) excluding unaccompanied asylum-seeking children

Current performance narrative:

In light of Covid-19 and lockdown restrictions, there has been a delay in court proceedings and assessments being completed, which has led to a delay in discharging children from care, moving children to adoption or rehabilitating children home. The service has accommodated large sibling groups and have seen an increase in teenage placements during this quarter.

Improvement activity:

There is significant oversight and assurance that the right children are in care, these are working effectively. There has been no increase in children entering care. The throughput or flow of children leaving has increased the number of children in care due to the pandemic. A number of work areas within the Children and Families change programme

will help to reduce the number of children in care, for example expanding and increasing Family Group Conferences, improving support to Special Guardians and increasing support to families. These work areas will start to become operational during 2020/21.

Explanation of the projected trajectory: Not on track – remaining static

Based on current performance, Improvement activity and the current national Covid-19 climate, performance is expected to remain static. Although court proceedings are taking place, delays are likely to continue, which will impact the number of children discharged from care. The service expect performance will improve by March 2021.

% of Children in Care (CiC) aged under 16 who have been looked after continuously for at least 2.5 years, who were living in the same placement for at least 2 years or are placed for adoption

Current performance narrative:

Performance has improved marginally since the start of the year.

Of the percentage of children who have not been living in the same placement for at least 2 years, 10 children with an average foster placement length of 5 years saw placement breakdowns in the last 15 months. If these children had continued in their long-term placement then performance would stand at 66.1% rather than 61.5%. The majority of these children were aged between 12-15 years of age. Most of the remaining children in this cohort have not been in a placement for over 2 years.

The service has continued to see a significant demand for placements, with large sibling groups, teenagers and young people with complex needs.

During Covid-19 many residential homes were not accepting placements due to staffing issues and foster carers have been reluctant to have children move into their households. This has made it difficult to identify placements, and the service have had to provide emergency placements which has resulted in children moving between placements. During the quarter some providers have given notice on placements due to safety risks when some children have not adhered to social-distancing measures.

Positively, the service has seen an increase in the use of internal placements.

Improvement activity:

- The service has seen an increase in foster career applications during this quarter, as such have re-organised the team to ensure assessments are completed in a timely manner (15 applications during Quarter 1 2020/21 compared to 7 during Quarter 1 2019/20);
- Commissioned a marketing agency to recruit foster carers, the contract will start August 2020;
- Commissioned a crisis bed to support young people before they move onto a longer-term placement or home;
- The service is currently working on a proposal to establish a four-bedroom residential home.

Explanation of the projected trajectory: Not on track – remaining static

Based on current performance, Improvement activity and the current national Covid-19 climate, performance is expected to remain static. With an increased number of foster care applications, the introduction of the new crisis and residential placements becoming available the service are expecting performance will improve by January 2021.

% of care leavers (Relevant and Former Relevant 16-21) who are not in education, employment and training (NEET)

Current performance narrative:

The service recognises that Warwickshire levels are slightly higher than the national average of 39% for 2018/19 and follows national trends of higher unemployment and a subsequent increase in young people becoming NEET.

Due to Covid-19 and lock down restrictions the service has not been able to run the weekly NEET drop-in groups. In February 2020 three drop-in NEET groups a week took place across the county. Since the start of the year (April 2020) the percentage of care leavers who are NEET has increased, this is likely due to the impact of Covid-19 and a reduction of employment opportunities for young people.

Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) are part of this cohort, and these Young People are not able to legally work until they receive leave to remain status in the country. However, the younger co-hort of this group are keen to access education.

Improvement activity:

- Online NEET groups have started and numbers attending have started to increase;
- Covid-19 risk assessments are being completed to help re-start small NEET drops in from September onwards;
- Continue to work with colleges and adult education to support UASC from September onwards;
- Re-commissioned Prospects to work with young people from the age 16-year-old, this work is currently being completed by phone, email or video chat;
- The service will also be appointing an additional Careers Officer;
- The Care Leaver Local Offer has been extended to pay university bursary of up to £1,000 for young people up to the age of 25 years old; and
- An agreement to increase care experienced partnerships across the council.

Explanation of the projected trajectory: Not on track – remaining static

Based on current performance, Improvement activity and the current national Covid-19 climate, performance is expected to remain static with a possible increase.

Warwickshire's economy is vibrant and supported by the right jobs, training and skills and infrastructure

% of Warwickshire pupils attending schools (including nursery schools) judged Good or Outstanding by Ofsted

Current performance narrative:

Ofsted inspections ceased when schools closed due to Covid-19 at the end of March 2020. Ofsted have confirmed they will be carrying out a phased return to inspection, starting with an interim period of visits during the autumn term. They intend to resume full inspections in January 2021, and are keeping the exact timing under review. Visits, not inspections, will take place to a selection of schools in the autumn term to discuss with leaders their response to Covid-19 and how they plan to overcome the challenges they have faced and will continue to face over coming months. The visits will be piloted in September with volunteer schools and will be rolled out at the end of September. There will be no judgements and no report, but a brief letter will be published.

Improvement activity:

Vulnerable maintained schools will continue to be supported as part of Warwickshire's School Improvement offer. In addition, the School Improvement Team have revised the school improvement offer for the next 12 months to one that has a new focus on schools not coping with the current pandemic situation.

Explanation of the projection trajectory: Not on target - remaining static

At this point in time the position is unclear as to when Ofsted inspections will restart therefore performance cannot improve until clarification is provided.

Table 1

These measures have been recorded as not being on track since first reported through this Commissioning Intentions Framework at Quarter 3 2019/20 and no improving trend has been experienced so far and it is projected that this will remain the case for the next reporting period. The Covid-19 pandemic has adversely impacted all of the measures and the improvement activity has not seen the expected result due to extra pressures and demand of the pandemic on services. Improvement activity needs time to embed and positive results to be realised.

2.5 Chart 2 below illustrates the considered forecast performance projection over the forthcoming reporting period as well as 2 previous periods.

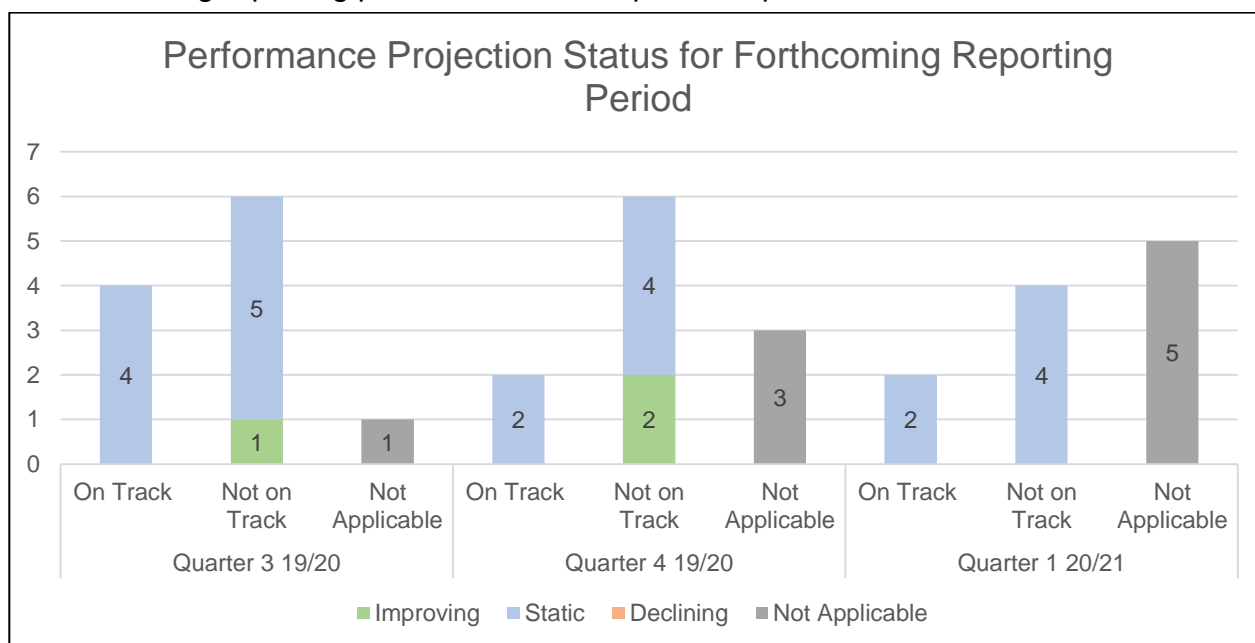


Chart 2

Of the 11 KBM's, 6 KBM's have a forecast performance projection for the forthcoming reporting period, the other 5 are annual measures, or have no update at this time and therefore it is not appropriate to give a performance projection. 2 of the measures have a forecast performance projection of being On Track and remaining static. 4 KBMs have a forecast of being Not on Track and are expected to remain Not on Track during the next Quarter and these have been fully detailed in 2.5.

2.6 Comprehensive performance reporting is now enabled through the following link to the Communities [CYP Quarter 1 2020/21 Performance Report](#).

The [CYP OSC Quarter 1 2020/21 Warwickshire's Communities Dashboard](#) contains KBMs which fall under the OOP outcome Warwickshire's communities and individuals are supported to be safe, healthy and independent.

The [CYP Quarter 1 2020/21 Warwickshire's Economy Dashboard](#) contains KBMs which fall under the OOP outcome Warwickshire's economy is vibrant and supported by the right jobs, training and skills and infrastructure.

3. Financial Commentary – relevant finance information taken from Cabinet report

3.1 Revenue Budget

3.1.1 The Council has set the following performance threshold in relation to revenue spend: a tolerance has been set of zero overspend and no more than a 2% underspend. The following table shows the forecast position for the Services concerned.

	2020/21 Budget £'000	2020/21 Outturn '000	Revenue Variance £'000 %	Retained Reserves £'000	Financial Standing £'000
Children and Families	63,834	66,471	2,637 4.13%		2,637

The major Covid pressures include the follows:

- £1m additional placement costs;
- £0.388m for additional staffing costs;
- £0.189m for Youth Justice Remand placement;
- £0.146m for loss of income related to the 4 Youth Centres;
- £0.389m for increased Fostercare/emergency/care leaver and UASC payments.

After removing the Covid-19 related pressures, the net variance for Children & Families is a £0.389m overspend. This headline overspend is masked by a number of earmarked funding streams (see reserves table) which, when taken account of, change the variance to an underlying overspend to £1.275m. The major contributors to this underlying position are:

- £2.076m Children in Care Placements overspend mostly related to increased numbers and complexity (affecting average unit cost);
- £0.180m unfunded Agency T3 post;

- Forecasted grant in excess of budget (due to notified in year increases & grant maximisation) of £0.882m.

Education Services	34,197	37,208	3,011 8.80%		3,011
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- Covid-19 Pressures consist of £0.690m Early Years Hubs, £0.300 Home to School Transport refunds and £1.538m traded income pressures;
- The traded income pressures include over £1.1m of pressures relating to Warwickshire Attendance Service, County Music Service and Marle Hall;
- Of the non-Covid-19 net overspend of £0.483m, £0.258m of this overspend is relating to the cost of placements for Children with Disabilities in residential care. The remaining £0.225m net overspend relates to minor variances on operational expenditure;
- Not included in the current forecast is the potential cost of implementing social distancing rules within the Home to School Transport service. Based on a crude methodology (and an assumption of a 1 metre social distancing rules) this could be in the region of £2.750m.

3.2. Delivery of the Savings Plan

3.2.1. The savings targets and forecast outturn for the Services concerned are shown in the table below.

	2020/21 Target £'000	2020/21 Actual to Date £'000	2020/21 Outturn £'000
Children and Families	194	194	194
Education Services	279	279	279

3.3 Capital Programme

3.3.1. The table below shows the approved capital budget for the Services and any slippage into future years.

	Approved budget for all current and future years (£'000)	Slippage from 2020/21 into Future Years £'000	Slippage from 2020/21 into Future Years (%)	Current quarter - new approved funding / schemes (£'000)	Newly resourced spend included in slippage figures (£'000)	All Current and Future Years Forecast (£'000)
Children and Families	230	257	3.04%	27		257
Education Services	12,484	15,898	0.17%	3,393		15,877
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delays to the new School in Rugby (£2.830m) and Champion School expansion (£1.767m) have been offset by two other projects completing earlier than expected. • The schemes completing ahead of schedule are High Meadow £1.787m and Heathcote Primary School £2.605m. • The remainder is small changes in time frames on a number of other projects, please see the annex. 						

4. Supporting Papers

4.1 A copy of the full report and supporting documents that went to Cabinet on the 10th September is available via the committee system.

5. Environmental Implications

None specific to this report.

6. Background Papers

None

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