

# 2022/23 Performance Report Quarter Three

<b>Committee considering report:</b>	Executive
<b>Date of Committee:</b>	23 March 2023
<b>Portfolio Member:</b>	Councillor Thomas Marino
<b>Date Portfolio Member agreed report:</b>	9 March 2023
<b>Report Author:</b>	Jenny Legge/Catalin Bogos
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	EX4291

## 1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide assurance that the core business and council priorities for improvement measures in the [Council Strategy 2019-2023](#) are being managed effectively, and where performance has fallen below the expected level, present information on the remedial action taken and the impact of that action.

## 2 Recommendation

- 2.1 To note the progress made in delivering the Council Strategy Delivery Plan 2019-2023, a maintained strong performance for the core business areas, good results for the majority of the measures relating to the council's priorities for improvement, and remedial actions taken where performance is below target.

## 3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
<b>Financial:</b>	To be highlighted and managed by individual services.
<b>Human Resource:</b>	To be highlighted and managed by individual services.
<b>Legal:</b>	To be highlighted and managed by individual services.
<b>Risk Management:</b>	To be highlighted and managed by individual services.
<b>Property:</b>	To be highlighted and managed by individual services.
<b>Policy:</b>	To be highlighted and managed by individual services.

	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
<b>Equalities Impact:</b>				
<b>A</b> Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		x		
<b>B</b> Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		x		
<b>Environmental Impact:</b>		x		
<b>Health Impact:</b>		x		
<b>ICT or Digital Services Impact:</b>		x		
<b>Council Strategy Priorities or Business as Usual:</b>	x x			Supports all priorities and core business of the Council Strategy 2019-2023.
<b>Data Impact:</b>		x		
<b>Consultation and Engagement:</b>	The information provided for this report, has been signed off by the relevant Head of Service/Service Director and Portfolio Holder.			

## 4 Executive Summary

4.1 This paper provides updates for each component of the Council Strategy Delivery Plan 2019-2023:

- Non-targeted influencer measures for context.
- Targeted measures for each core business area.
- Targeted measures for each priority for improvement.
- Corporate health measures for internal context.

4.2 This is the first quarter where the data and reporting was produced through our newly implemented Integrated Performance, Risk and Project Management software

(InPhase). This gives stakeholders and residents access to explore the reporting information in more detail from the Citizen's Portal from the following link: <https://westberksperformance.inphase.com/>. A change in process and culture meant that Departments/Services were responsible for ensuring that data, and commentary for measures was entered into the system by the required deadline, rather than depending on the Performance, Research and Risk Team (PRR) for prompting, data entry and content editing.

- 4.3 The majority of the historic data has been imported, however there are some cases where planning patterns have been changed from e.g. quarterly to termly or academic year where past data needs to be quality assured and re-entered. Work is currently underway to ensure the accuracy of the data for these anomalies.
- 4.4 Benchmarking data is not yet available within the system and arrangements are being made to incorporate it for future performance reporting.
- 4.5 The **Influencer measures** indicated that the district continued to fare well. The high demand on our services remained elevated due to Covid-19 pressures. In some cases demand started to decrease compared to the previous quarters, but the main social care demand measures are still increasing.
- 4.6 The economic indicators show strong resilience, with footfall in Newbury Town Centre and the number of parking ticket sales continuing to further recover and improve.
- 4.7 The social care measures highlight increasing pressures and demand on services such as children social care, adult social care and housing.
- 4.8 Delivering our **Core Business activities** remains strong despite some challenges relating to staff retention and recruitment evident across all areas of work.
- 4.9 Of the measures rated Amber or Red, a number of areas to highlight include:
  - Social care visits - staffing challenges impacted our social care services' ability to achieve visit compliance to child protection plan cases
  - Planning applications determined on time – impacted by staff recruitment challenges, additional process requirements and consultation responses' timescales
- 4.10 Improvement activity through the Council Strategy **priorities for improvement** continued to progress, with the majority of measures targeted for this year being achieved. Areas of achievement to note include: successful outcomes from early response support for parents and children, our re-ablement service helping older people to remain in their own homes after being discharged from hospital, a high proportion of care leavers in education, employment or training, above target number of young people (including with special needs) involved in work experience,
- 4.11 Of the measures rated Amber or Red, a number of areas to highlight include:
  - Educational attainment (provisional) – impacted by high levels of staff and pupil absence due to Covid and flu, a higher level of demand for support for pupils with

Special Educational Needs, an increase in the number of exclusions, and difficulties in retaining and recruiting teaching assistants;

4.12 The council's **corporate health indicators** highlight focus on resource management, a controlled approach, which will be further expanded, to manage service demand and inflation pressures on the Council's funding, resulting in an £1m budget overspend forecast and an increase in workforce turnover.

## 5 Supporting Information

### Influencer measures

5.2 Non-targeted measures of influence are monitored to provide context to the work being carried out across Council services.

5.3 The major focus for the district continued to be on responding to a number of international and national challenges (supporting displaced people due to conflict, economic challenges) which impact at local level too.

5.4 Overall, the local **economy has remained strong**. Business rated industrial properties remained at consistent level, but for the quarter non-industrial units had declined. More people visited Newbury Town Centre than in the last seven quarters with footfall, and the sale of parking tickets in WBC managed car parks more than doubling on the same period in 2021. However, the number of planning applications fell overall, with 9% fewer being submitted.

5.5 Within the local **social indicators**, on the background of low crime rates, criminal activity increased slightly in all categories, but based on the information available is not associated to a particular causal factor. Incidents of anti-social behaviour returned to normal levels after a spike at September 2022 caused by the usual seasonal increase and it being the summer after Covid restrictions were lifted.

5.6 The demand to children's services although higher than previous years returned to more usual levels with regards to referrals and enquiries. However, the number of children in need continued to rise, due to ongoing challenges to recruit staff which increased the time taken to process the high number of referrals.

5.7 In adult social care (ASC), the rise in the number of new adult safeguarding enquiries remained higher than pre-Covid, but continued to decrease from its peak in March 2022.

5.8 The number of ASC clients requiring Long Term support increased 4.7% compared to the same period last year, continuing a steady increasing trend over the last two years.

5.9 Borrowing from libraries continued to rise, being 14.5% higher than at the end of December 2021.

### Core Business and Priorities for Improvement Performance

*Additional performance information is available from the Citizens' Portal by accessing the following link: <https://westberkperformance.inphase.com/>*

*Please note the legend for the tiles included on the Citizens' Portal:*

*Red, Amber, Green rating is based on a 5% tolerance from target.*

*Planned – refers to tasks/milestones in progress*

*Completed with a green star – refers to tasks/milestones which are completed and ahead of schedule*

*Completed with a red triangle – refers to tasks/milestones which are completed but after the deadline*

*? - means no actual value has been recorded*

*n/r - means actual value is not expected to be reported e.g. annual measure*

## **Core Business Activities**

5.10 Five of the eleven core business areas have achieved strong (Green) performance results against challenging targets and on a background of increasing demand on most of the Council's services:

- **Collecting bins and keeping streets clean** – strong reduction of household waste land filled and better than target recycling levels at Q3;
- **Countryside and open spaces** – progressing the survey of the highway verge network for the wildlife verges project, retained green flag status for Goldwell and Linear Parks
- **Culture, Leisure and libraries** – visits to libraries, Museum, Shaw House and West Berkshire's sports and leisure centres above targets
- **Economic Development** – delivered the quarterly business engagement events to provide advice and guidance
- **Providing benefits** – timely decisions on new and on changes to benefits claims

5.11 A further four of the eleven core business areas have achieved good performance, within the Amber threshold:

- **Council Tax and Business Rates collection** – better than target collection of Business Rates, but Council Tax collection is just under the target (impacted by Covid and Cost of Living crisis)
- **Ensuring the Wellbeing of Older People and Vulnerable Adults** – Impacted by the QCQ rating of one of the care homes, for which improvement measures are in place and being monitored, whilst within threshold (Amber) performance was achieved for timeliness of financial assessments.
- **Planning and Housing** – timeliness of planning application determination remained below local ambitious targets (Red), even if better than national standards, and continued to be impacted by vacancies in the service, consultations responses and additional processing requirements. The service is progressing an improvement plan to ensure the customers' aspirations are met. However, other measures for this core business area shows timeliness of assessment of Housing register application at 100% within timescales.
- **Supporting Education** – at 93.8% the % of schools judged good or better is just below (amber) the target of 95%. Targets achieved for parents receiving one of their preferred school places for their children.

5.12 Two of the eleven core business areas have are rated overall Red:

- **Maintaining our roads** – as this is an annual measure already reported in Q4 last year, there is no more up to date information about the % of A roads in need of repair which at 3% was below the challenging target of maximum 2%.
- **Protecting our children** – Increasing demand regarding the number of Child Protection Plans, staff turnover impacted workloads and recording of timely Core Group meetings, plus timely visits to Child Protection cases. The service is focusing on recruitment and on recording training. Targets are achieved or exceeded for Ofsted rating of our Children's Services and the timeliness of assessments.

### **Council Strategy Priorities for Improvement:**

5.13 Results at the end of quarter three show that progress continued to be made to deliver the Council Strategy priorities for improvement with five of the six being RAG rated Green.

- **Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes** – Strong results have been achieved regarding 100% of rough sleepers being offered accommodation, care leavers in education, employment and training, support for families from the Early Support Hub and for vulnerable adults from Adult Social Care services.

The number of staff enrolled on apprenticeship levy funded courses proved difficult to increase as staff returned to their normal routine post Covid-19. Work was carried out to promote WBC as an employer of choice e.g. careers fair, mock interviews in schools, however it will take time for new starters to impact on the take up of apprenticeships.

Supporting more vulnerable young adults into employment resulted in nearly three quarters of our care leavers aged 19 to 21 benefiting of employment, education or training, compared to the national figure of 52%, and above our target of 60%.

Almost 120 families successfully achieved the objectives of the Supporting Families Programme, which is a whole family approach to overcome disadvantages.

- **Support everyone to reach their full potential** - Provisional educational attainment results were impacted by high levels of staff and pupil absence due to Covid and flu, a higher level of demand for support for pupils with Special Educational Needs, an increase in the number of exclusions, and difficulties in retaining and recruiting teaching assistants. The evidence base for our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework was completed, and the framework was due for completion during purdah, so finalisation and publication was delayed until after the local elections. The number of residents supported by a Befriender and the number of Befrienders are exceeding targets.
- **Support businesses to start develop and thrive in West Berkshire** - The Berkshire Business Growth Hub supported many more businesses than expected. A proposal for the Newbury Masterplan project: Wharf redesign has been completed. Activities to develop a Thatcham town centre study and a Hungerford town centre

study were on track. The review of the Economic Development Strategy has been completed.

- **Develop local infrastructure including housing to support and grow the local economy** - Work was reported to be on track for connecting West Berkshire premises to Full Fibre with an increase from 25% to 80.2%. Whilst the number of affordable homes granted planning permission is below target, the actual number of completions at 169 has exceeded the target of 125.
- **Maintain a green district** - EV charging infrastructure was available in 32% of WBC public car park. Work with the Natural Solutions Delivery Partnership (NSD), to commence at least 2 pilot projects to help inform the best way for the Natural Solutions Delivery Partnership to support and facilitate projects is on track.
- **Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships** - By encouraging clients to use assistive technology and telecare, we increased the number of people who feel able to remain in their homes, but know that they can let others know when they need help.

## Corporate Health

5.14 The provisional revenue outturn is a £1m forecast overspend which is being managed through a range of measures including deployment of reserves.

5.15 Staff turnover continued to rise to 19.0%, which was well above the WBC average rate.

## Proposals

5.16 To note the progress made in delivering the Council Strategy Delivery Plan, a maintained strong performance for the core business areas (in particularly challenging circumstances primarily due to recruitment difficulties in a number of areas), good results for the majority of the measures relating to the Council's priorities for improvement and remedial actions taken where performance was below target.

## 6 Other options considered

None considered.

## 7 Conclusion

7.1 Quarter three results show that strong performance levels have been maintained and key services delivered to residents as part of the activities in the Core Business category.

7.2 Action plans are in place to address performance measures rated "Amber" and "Red" and the Executive is asked to note these actions and the overall performance reported.

## 8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix A - Influencer Measures

8.2 Note: Access to additional performance management information is available from the Citizens' Portal which can be accessed at <https://westberksperformance.inphase.com/>.

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**Subject to Call-In:**

Yes:  No:

- The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval
- Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council
- Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position
- Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee or associated Task Groups within preceding six months
- Item is Urgent Key Decision
- Report is to note only

**Officer details:**

Name: Catalin Bogos  
Job Title: Performance, Research and Risk Manager  
Tel No: (01635) 519102  
E-mail: [Catalin.Bogos@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:Catalin.Bogos@westberks.gov.uk)

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