

Report to:	Cabinet
Date:	13 July 2023
Title:	Portfolio progress and performance report 2022/23 - Quarter 4
Report of:	Homira Javadi, Director of Finance and Performance (Chief Finance Officer)
Cabinet member:	Councillor Chris Collier, Cabinet member for performance and people
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of report:	To consider the council's progress and performance in respect of service areas for the Fourth Quarter of the year (January-March 2023) as shown in Appendix 1
Decision type:	Non-key
Officer recommendation(s):	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To note progress and performance across council services for Quarter 4 and for the 22/23 year as a whole 2) To note delivery of corporate plan priorities to date 3) To agree arrangements for the establishment of a new Corporate Plan to run from 2024 to 2028. 4) To agree the suite of PIs to be reported in 2023/24 (Appendix 2)
Reasons for recommendations:	To enable Cabinet members to consider specific aspects of the council's progress and performance and to initiate the preparation of a new Corporate Plan.
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1 Introduction

- 1.1 The council has an annual cycle for the preparation, implementation and monitoring of its business plans and budgets. This cycle enables us regularly to review the council's work, and the targets it sets for performance, to ensure these continue to reflect customer needs and council aspirations.
- 1.2 It is important to monitor and assess progress and performance on a regular basis, to ensure the council continues to deliver priority outcomes and excellent services to its customers and communities.

2 Corporate Plan

- 2.1 This report sets out the council's performance in the fourth Quarter of 2022/23 against its aspirations as set out in the Corporate Plan 2020-24 (appendix 1)
- 2.2 The second appendix sets out the proposed set of performance measures for 2023/24, for Cabinet's endorsement. A small number of changes are proposed, primarily to customer service indicators, where the intention is to provide more meaningful measures for members' consideration.
- 2.3 The report also provides, as is usual on an annual basis, a progress update for the Corporate Plan. This is set out at appendix 3. It should be noted that the current Corporate Plan will reach its end date in March 2024. Cabinet is therefore asked to agree the commencement of preparations for a new corporate plan. It is suggested that a draft be prepared for members consideration in the early autumn, which can then be subject to consultation ahead of formal approval in February 2024.

3 Recovery and Reset

- 3.1 Alongside reporting on corporate performance, it has been usual for this report to provide Cabinet with an update on the council's Recovery and Reset programme.

This programme, the purpose of which is to address in a sustainable way the challenges of the new operational context, and to respond to the changing needs and demands of the district's residents – continues to explore new ways to use council assets to the benefit of communities, residents and businesses, and to provide services to customers.

- 3.2 Services are systematically being reshaped to meet the changed needs of the council and its customers, and opportunities to make the best use of technology to deliver efficiencies continue to be implemented. In its 1st year, since its launch on the council's website in March 2022, ELLIS, a next generation chat bot has answered over 70,000 customer queries, 25% of which were answered out of hours. ELLIS was launched on a number of the council's phone lines in October 2022, and the performance within the quarter has identified that ELLIS on the phone lines will be an effective solution for the council. Plans are being finalised to implement ELLIS on more phone lines over the coming months.
- 3.3 A project to design a new website for the council commenced in January. This project will enable an updated and refreshed offer for customers, making the best use of technology. Opportunities for staff, members and customers to engage in the project will be confirmed in the Q1 performance report.
- 3.4 Projects to deliver new solutions to support delivery of a range of services – revenues and benefits, environmental health and licensing and planning – are progressing well with current plans for implementation in 2023/24.

4 Solution Sprints

- 4.1 In order to help drive performance improvement across the council, LDC has a programme of Solution Sprints. These were originally deployed pre-pandemic to realise service improvements and have been relaunched this year. Quarters 1 and 2 saw the soft re-launch of SS and approval of revised governance arrangements. Quarter 2 activities involved piloting SS approaches resulting in the launch of a new 'contact us' form on the council's website. Since the launch of this form in September 2022, 3,044 customer queries have been reported via this form and 85% (2,594) have been closed/completed. The new form is helping to streamline and speed up customer emails getting to the appropriate service areas and freeing up Customer First colleagues, to prioritise those customers with the greatest need.
- 4.2 The techniques applied to the contact us form development sprint have also been used to support the identification of requirements for the new Planning system project with Planning First colleagues during Quarters 3 and 4. As a result, requirements have now been captured to inform the procurement of a new system and the potential for a chatbot to streamline planning application submissions is also under exploration.
- 4.3 A range of SS ideas have also been identified and progressed. Several of these involve improvements to the council's website and these are being progressed via the project to redesign the council's website. Other ideas have been considered and successfully closed as 'quick wins', such as enabling tenants to track repairs requests – resolved by a system upgrade. Associated progress and governance continue to be monitored by the Accelerating Change Steering Group.
- 4.4 SS activity scheduled for the next reporting period includes: further process mapping in Planning First to improve current service provision; arrangements to update and refresh the Scheme of Delegations through member engagement; review of the Incident Liaison and out of hours emergency arrangements; exploring economies of scale in addressing housing need through cross-authority working; and, exploration of opportunities to progress performance against the targets in the Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy. Associated progress on these will be reported as part of the Q1 2023/24 update.

5 Financial appraisal

- 5.1 Project and performance monitoring and reporting arrangements are contained within existing estimates. Corporate performance information should also be considered alongside the council's financial update reports (also reported to Cabinet each Quarter) as there is a clear link between performance and budgets/resources.

6 Legal implications

- 6.1 Comment from the Legal Services Team is not necessary for this routine monitoring report.

7 Risk management implications

- 7.1 It is important that corporate performance is monitored regularly otherwise there is a risk that reductions in service levels, or projects falling behind schedule, are not addressed in a timely way.

8 Equality analysis

- 8.1 The equality implications of individual decisions relating to the projects/services covered in this report are addressed within other relevant council reports or as part of programmed equality analysis.

9 Appendices

- Appendix 1- Portfolio Progress and Performance Report (Quarter 4 2022/23)
- Appendix 2- Corporate Proposed Performance Measures (Annual 2022/23)
- Appendix 3- Corporate Plan Update 2022/23