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1 December 2023

Dear Councillor,

Responsible Council Scrutiny Committee
6:00pm, Monday 11 December 2023
Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Cannock

You are invited to attend this meeting for consideration of the matters itemised in the following Agenda.

Yours sincerely,

T. Clegg
Chief Executive

To: Councillors:

Aston, J. (Chair)
Johnson, J.P. (Vice-Chair)
Bancroft, J.T. Jones, P.G.C.
Boulton, C. Lyons, N.
Boyer, M. Mawle, D.
Frew, C.L. Sutherland, M.
Hill, J. Wilson, L.J.
Johnson, P.

Agenda

Part 1

1. Apologies

2. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restriction on Voting by Members

(i) To declare any interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct and any possible contraventions under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

(ii) To receive any Party Whip declarations.

3. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 October 2023 (enclosed).

4. Quarter 2 Performance Report 2023/24

To receive the quarter 2 2023/24 performance information for the Responsible Council Priority Delivery Plan (Item 4.1 - 4.10).

The documents included are as considered by Cabinet on 9 November 2023.

5. Responsible Council Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2023/24 Update

Cannock Chase Council
Minutes of the Meeting of the
Responsible Council Scrutiny Committee
Held on Tuesday 24 October 2023 at 6:00pm
In the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Cannock

Part 1

Present:

Councillors

Johnson, J.P. (Vice-Chair - in the Chair)

Boulton, C.	Jones, P.G.C.
Boyer, M.	Lyons, N.
Hill, J.	Mawle, D.
Johnson, P.	Sutherland, M.
Jones, P.T. (substitute)	

7. Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillors J. Aston (Chair) and C.L. Frew. Councillor P.T. Jones was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Frew.

In Councillor Aston's absence the meeting was chaired by Councillor J.P. Johnson (Vice-Chair).

8. Declarations of Interest of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restrictions on Voting by Members and Party Whip Declarations

No declarations of interests or party whip declarations were received.

9. Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2023 be approved.

10. Quarter 1 Performance Report 2023/24

Consideration was given to the quarter one performance information for the Responsible Council Priority Delivery Plan 2023/24 (Item 4.1 - 4.10) (*presented by the Head of Transformation & Assurance*).

The Head of Transformation & Assurance reported that of the thirteen projects included within the priority delivery plan (PDP), nine were on target during quarter one and the remaining four slightly behind schedule. The progress updates for each project were as set out in the PDP. In respect of the key performance indicators (KPIs) the position was positive overall with only two not on target, these being 'days taken to process new housing benefit / council tax claims', and 'turnaround times for land charges searches'. The reasons for being below target were set out in the report. In respect of the land charges searches specifically, it was expected that performance would continue to improve as the year progressed.

In response to a query from a Member regarding a new 'civic hub' for Cannock town centre and the future of the existing civic centre building, the Head of Transformation & Assurance reported that this project was separate from the main Levelling Up Fund (LUF) scheme and required a separate business case to be developed before any decisions could be made. The Head of Housing & Corporate Assets further replied that the asset management group had held initial discussions about the existing building as it required significant levels of investment to be brought up to standard. Usage of the civic centre had also changed following the Covid-19 pandemic.

In response to a query from the same Member as to what the likely timescales were for development of the business case, the Head of Housing & Corporate Assets advised that a submission of interest had been submitted to Homes England to fund a feasibility study for the existing site, but unfortunately the bid had been unsuccessful. The Deputy Chief Executive-Resources advised that work on this would ideally need to be completed within the next two years, but it had to be noted internal resource was limited given the need to deliver the LUF scheme and that maintenance works on the current building could not keep being deferred long-term.

In response to a query from a Member regarding the outturn position being used to develop the next budget, the Deputy Chief Executive-Resources advised that this would be 2022/23 financial year outturn.

In response to a query from the same Member as to whether monthly budget monitoring was now possible, the Deputy Chief Executive-Resources advised that a quarter 2 update could be provided with monthly monitoring to commence after that. In addition, the statement of accounts was up to date, although not yet audited, and 'zero based budgeting' exercises had been taking place which would be used to inform the budget setting process for 2024/25.

In response to a query from a Member as to whether the Council was looking to have something ready in future to be apply for green funding opportunities, the Head of Housing & Corporate Assets advised that a funding bid had been submitted for provision of solar panels on the leisure centres, and that the Council would look at what funding opportunities were available throughout its assets review process.

11. Responsible Council Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2023/24

Consideration was given to the updated 2023/24 work programme (Item 5.1).

The Head of Transformation & Assurance advised that it had originally been intended to demonstrate the new customer portal at today's meeting, but the rollout of the portal had been deferred until December. Having spoken with the Chair of the Committee yesterday (Councillor Aston), it was suggested that a task & finish group be established to receive the demonstration of the portal and the new website with a focus on what information the Council provided to the public.

Resolved:

That a task & finish group be set up to receive demonstrations of the new customer portal and Council website, with a focus on information provided to the public, and that the membership of the group be Councillors Boyer, Hill, J. Johnson, P. Johnson, N. Lyons, and Sutherland.

The meeting closed at 6:28 p.m.

Chair

Quarter 2 Performance Report 2023/24

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	9 November 2023
Report of:	Head of Transformation and Assurance
Portfolio:	Resources and Transformation

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To advise Members on the progress of the Priority Delivery Plans (PDPs) and Council's performance at the end of the second quarter of 2023-24.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the progress at the end of the second quarter relating to the delivery of the Council's priorities as detailed at Appendices 1a-1d and the performance information set out at Appendix 2.
- 2.2 To note that:
- (i) The workforce plan has been deferred to 2024/25; and
 - (ii) A report will be brought to Cabinet outlining a revised timetable for the Local Plan.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.3 The performance information allows Cabinet to monitor progress in delivery of the Council's corporate priorities and operational services.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 The Priority Delivery Plans set out the key projects and actions for delivery in 2023/24. These are based on the Corporate Plan 2022-26 and the supporting four-year delivery plans.
- 3.2 Overall, 62% of the projects have been delivered or are on schedule to be completed. Progress in delivering the PDPs is summarised in section 5 of the report and set out in detail in Appendices 1a to 1d.
- 3.3 With regard to the operational performance of the key services of the Council, 74% of targets have been met or exceeded. Further details can be found at 5.6 and in Appendix 2.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2022-26 was approved by Council on 27 April 2022, setting out the priorities and strategic objectives. The supporting four-year delivery plans were approved on 16 November 2022. The indicators and actions contribute individually to the Council's priorities and objectives.

5 Report Detail

Background

- 5.1 The Priority Delivery Plans (PDPs) set out in Appendices 1a to 1d to this report are the annual documents that set out how the Council will achieve progress against its strategic objectives; these plans establish the actions and timetable for delivery that are the basis of the Council's performance reporting framework.
- 5.2 In addition to the PDPs, performance is also reported against the delivery of key operational services; Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for these services are set out in Appendix 2.
- 5.3 Where applicable, we will also report on new or additional duties undertaken by the Council during the quarter, as part of this report.

Priority Delivery Plans

- 5.4 A commentary on performance and a rating for each of the projects/actions set out in the PDPs is given in Appendices 1a-1d. A summary of progress, by rating, is given in the table below.

Corporate Plan Priority					N/A	Total Number of Projects
	Action completed	Work on target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	Work not yet due to be started	
Economic Prosperity	3	13	4	0		20
Health and Wellbeing	3	8	1	1	2	15
Community		10	1	2	5	18
Responsible Council		4	3	5	1	13
Total	6	35	9	8	8	66

- 5.5 At the end of quarter 2, of the 66 actions planned for delivery in 2023/24:
- 9% have been completed;
 - 53% are on target to be completed;
 - 14% have slipped slightly;
 - 12% are more than 3 months behind schedule; and
 - 12% are not yet due.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

5.6 A dashboard of key performance indicators for the Council's operational services is set out in Appendix 2. In summary:

- 8 indicators show performance above target (42%);
- 6 indicators show performance on target (32%); and
- 5 indicators show performance below target (26%)

The reasons for underperformance and the corrective action to be taken is set out in Appendix 2.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.

The financial management of the PDPs is standard in accordance with Financial Regulations and any measure to address a performance shortfall as reflected in a PDP report will require compensatory savings to be identified in the current year and be referred to the budget process for additional resources in future years.

6.2 Legal

None

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Risk Management

The Council's Strategic Risk Register sets out the risks the Council faces in delivering its priorities.

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

Equality and diversity matters are addressed in individual services areas and by undertaking equality impact assessments for projects and programmes of work where this is necessary and appropriate.

6.6 Health

None

6.7 Climate Change

There are specific objectives within all of the priority areas which address the challenge of climate change.

7 Appendices

Appendix 1d: Responsible Council PDP

Appendix 2: Key Performance Indicators

8 Previous Consideration

None

9 Background Papers

Corporate Plan 2022-26 - Council 27 April 2022





4-Year Delivery Plans 2022-26 - Cabinet 15 September 2022

Contact Officer:	Adrian Marklew
Telephone Number:	01543 464 598
Ward Interest:	All Wards
Report Track:	Cabinet 09/11/23
Key Decision:	No

Priority Delivery Plan for 2023-24

PRIORITY 4 - RESPONSIBLE COUNCIL “To be a modern, forward thinking and responsible Council”

Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 2






				N/A	Total Number of Projects
Action completed	Work on target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	Action not yet due	
	4	3	5	1	13





Summary of Successes as at Quarter 2




Work has commenced on a zero-based budgeting exercise as part of the preparation for the medium term financial strategy and budget process.

Summary of Slippage as at Quarter 2

While work is in progress, a number of the actions are behind schedule. This is partly due to capacity issues and partly due to the need to align some of the work with other associated projects. One action regarding the workforce plan has been deferred to 2024/25 to allow work on organisational culture to be progressed first.






Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
Improve our customers' access to services							
Develop a new customer portal to deliver better access to services online	Implementation of new system - Phase 1		X			While work is progressing well, the go live date has been pushed back to Q3	
	Development of new e-forms and processes - Phase 2			X	X	Work on phase 2 will commence in January to allow for `lessons learned` to take place on Phase 1	
Enhance the use of technology and new ways of working							
Update our digital technology strategy and plan future improvements	Review of digital strategy and development of action plan	X				The strategy has been drafted and is being reviewed alongside the zero-based budgeting exercise	
Develop our workforce to ensure they are suitably skilled							
Develop and deliver a workforce plan	Overarching framework for workforce plan to be developed		X			This has been deferred to 2024/25 to focus on other work which needs to be completed before the framework can be drafted	
	Review of the trial of the hybrid working model and policy development	X				A report is being drafted and is scheduled to be considered by Leadership Team in November.	




Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
Be a responsible Council that lives within its means and is accountable for its actions							
Set a Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A rolling MTFS produced each year 	X	X	X	X	The medium-term financial strategy will be reviewed as part of the budget setting process due to take place between October to January.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of savings for the budgets for 23/24 and 24/25 	X	X	X	X	These are continuing to be reviewed as part of the zero-based budgeting exercise. This will then inform future savings needs/delivery as many of the savings identified are permanent reductions in base budget need.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation and transformation of shared services, including the delivery of savings 	X	X	X	X	Work is in progress on the preparation for the management tier restructure. This will now be implemented in 2024. A transformation strategy has been drafted and will be considered by the Shared Services Board in Q3.	
Make the best use of our assets							
Undertake a corporate wide review of our assets and develop a new Asset Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a programme of strategic review of the Council's non-HRA land and property assets 	X	X			Through the Asset Management Group asset reviews are now starting to progress. This will now be an ongoing process.	

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the business case to create a new Civic Hub in Cannock town centre as part of the Levelling Up Fund scheme 		X			Business case and RIBA 1 design work currently being finalised.	
Identify opportunities for funding for green initiatives to improve energy efficiency of our buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an Energy Management Strategy 	X				An Energy Management Strategy has been drafted and is under the consideration of Leadership Team.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop asset management plans 			X	X	Action not yet due	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify `green` funding opportunities to support asset requirements 	X	X	X	X	<p>Initial research has into opportunities for green funding has been undertaken.</p> <p>Current funding opportunities tend to have restricted bidding windows and hence for a funding application to be successful, a project will need to be already developed and specified, ready for submission at the requisite times.</p> <p>A bid has been prepared for funding towards PV panels for the Leisure Centres.</p>	

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2023/24 - as at end of Quarter 2

KPIs for Priority 4 - The Council

Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year	Symbol	Comments
Local Taxation and Benefits								
Days taken to process new HB/CT Claims	20 days	37.6	40.2					Agency staff to help clear our backlog have been difficult to find and so improvement to our processing times has been slower than we had hoped. We have recently recruited the temporary support and backlogs are now reducing.
Days taken to process new HB/CT change of circumstances	9 days	8.3	7.8					
% of Council Tax collected annually	98% by year end	28.0%	54.7%					Figure extracted at 25 September represents slight improvement on last year
% National non-domestic rates (NNDR) collected	98% by year end	25.7%	54.2%					Figure extracted at 25 September represents slight improvement on last year
Land Charges Searches								
Turnaround time for land charges searches (excluding personal searches) – average no. of working days	10 working days	12.54	11.62					Performance has continued to improve but ongoing technical issues in accessing the data from the County Council's system has had an impact on turnaround times

Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year	Symbol	Comments
Calls, Complaints and FOI requests								
% of calls answered	94%	94.9%	93.7%					
Average call wait time	2 min	1.02min	1.18min					
Complaints received and upheld:								
Total stage 1 complaints		15	15				N/A	
<i>Upheld in full</i>		3	3					
<i>Upheld in part</i>		0	3					
Total stage 2 complaints		3	3					
<i>Upheld in full</i>		0	1					
<i>Upheld in part</i>		1	1					
FOI requests within time i.e., 20 working days	85%	89%	79%					Performance has dipped due to a staff leave slowing response times over the summer holiday period