

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	12 July 2023
Subject:	Council Plan Performance Tracker Quarter Four 2022/23
Report of:	Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Head of Service/Director:	Director: Corporate Services
Lead Member:	Leader of the Council
Number of Appendices:	1

Executive Summary:

At Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 13 June 2023, consideration was given to the quarter four performance management information for 2022/23. The observations made by the Committee can be found below in Paragraph 2.1. The supporting documents presented at the Committee can be found in Appendix 1.

Recommendation:

To receive and respond to the findings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's review of the 2022/23 quarter four performance management information.

Financial Implications:

Though the report does not directly impact upon these implications, Finance and Resources is one of the Council's six priorities within the Council Plan. Financial performance monitoring also provides all stakeholders with a good oversight on the Council's financial position.

Legal Implications:

None directly associated with this report.

Environmental and Sustainability Implications:

Though the report does not directly impact upon these implications, Sustainable Environment is one of the Council's six priorities within the Council Plan.

Resource Implications (including impact on equalities):

None directly associated with this report.

Safeguarding Implications:

None directly associated with this report.

Impact on the Customer:

Though the report does not directly impact upon our customers, Customer First is one of the Council's six priorities within the Council Plan. Performance monitoring also provides our customers and residents with a good oversight on the progress being made in delivering the Council Plan priorities, objectives and actions.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** A new Council Plan (2020-24) was approved by Council on 28 January 2020. The approved plan included four existing priorities - finance and resources, economic growth, housing and communities and customer first - plus the approval of two new priorities - garden communities and sustainable environment. Supporting the priorities is a set of objectives and actions. Progress in delivering the objectives and actions are reported through a Council Plan Performance Tracker (Appendix 1). The tracker is a combined document which also includes a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). As in previous years, to ensure the plan remains a 'live' document, all actions are reviewed annually and, where appropriate, they are refreshed. The refreshed plan was adopted by Council on 26 July 2022.
- 1.2** As we continue to recover from the pandemic, for 2022/23 we have incorporated the remaining actions from our COVID-19 Corporate Recovery Plan into the Council Plan so that our focus for 2022/23 falls under one key strategic document. This will mean the report only contains one performance tracker for 2022/23.
- 1.3** Key financial information is usually reported alongside the tracker documents but, given the complexities of year end closedown, this information was not available at the time of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting. The outturn report is on this Executive Committee Agenda.

2.0 Questions raised at Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 12 June 2023

2.1

Questions raised by Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Response from officers
Performance tracker- priority: Finance and Resources	
P46 – Objective 4 – Action a) Deliver the approved trade waste business case to make the service commercially viable – A Member asked whether customers had been informed of the decision to exit the trade waste service.	The Director: Communities indicated that customers had not yet been made aware. The project was quite complex and consultation was currently being undertaken with the staff member impacted which clearly needed to be handled sensitively. A decision was required in terms of what the authority would put in place as an alternative to delivering the trade waste service and that took time. There were approximately 350 customers all of which had a receptacle of some kind which needed to be collected – these varied in size from wheelie bins to Euro bins – so there were issues around resources and storage in relation to that. Following the consultation, Officers would write to customers to withdraw the service; whilst it would not have an impact on the

	<p>next financial year, it would run for several months during the current year. In response to a query as to whether customers would be provided with details of alternative trade waste companies, the Director: Communities explained that the Council would be required to go through a procurement process in order to recommend other businesses; as well as being onerous it was unlikely companies would engage given the information they would be required to reveal regarding prices etc. It was proposed to advise customers to carry out a search on the internet and, if they were unable to do that, the Council could do it on their behalf at a charge. A Member asked how many tonnes of trade waste were collected per year and the Director: Communities undertook to provide that information following the meeting. In response to a query regarding the timeframe, Members were advised that a meeting was being held at the end of the week to discuss this but, based on advice from One Legal, he felt it was likely to be less than six months. The Chair indicated that he would like to see a timetable once it was firmed up and the Director: Communities confirmed he would circulate this by email to the Committee when available.</p>
<p>Performance tracker priority: Economic Growth</p>	
<p>P47 – Objective 1 – Action b) Develop and launch the new Economic Development and Tourism Strategy – A Member sought clarification as to whether this would be brought to the Committee for consideration.</p>	<p>The Head of Service: Community and Economic Development confirmed it would be brought to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in September.</p>
<p>P48 – Objective 1 – Action c) Launch a Tewkesbury Borough Council Business Grants Scheme – A Member noted it was intended that the £100,000 which had been set aside for a Tewkesbury Borough Council small grants scheme during COVID but had been negated by the national schemes would be returned to reserves and he asked if this would be ringfenced for businesses.</p>	<p>The Executive Director: Resources and S151 advised that the money would be used to support other reserve areas, for instance, the pay award risk reserve as the offer made had been turned down by the Unions so it was likely this would exceed budget. There were some uncommitted reserves which could potentially be used for businesses if there was something Members wished to support going forward, particularly with the new Economic Development and Tourism Strategy on the horizon.</p>

<p>P50 – Objective 3 – Action b) To deliver projects as part of the Tewkesbury High Street Heritage Action Zone, including Shop Front Scheme, Upper Floors Scheme and Traditional Skills – A Member welcomed the commentary in relation to this action but felt it was light in terms of outcomes.</p>	<p>The Head of Service: Community and Economic Development explained that things were now starting to happen following a period of consultation and engagement with shops and premises coming forward for grants. It was intended to use heritage as a catalyst for the Town Centre, making it more vibrant and attractive, with the outcome being more visitors to the area; however, it would not be an overnight experience. A Member asked if there was an opportunity to ‘green up’, particularly in the centre of the towns, and was reminded that the funding was specific to Tewkesbury but there was support for making green areas; there had been positive feedback regarding Riverside Walk so it was important to ensure people were using that area. In response to a query, Members were informed that the Heritage Action Zone was its own entity but would be part of the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy as well.</p>
<p>P52 – Objective 4 – Action a) Work with Cotswold Tourism and Visit Gloucestershire to promote the borough – A Member noted this action had been marked as complete but felt that did not reflect its ongoing nature.</p>	<p>The Head of Service: Community and Economic Development accepted this point and confirmed that he would be happy to change it if necessary. The Director: Corporate Resources explained that it was considered that enough work had been done throughout 2022/23 to justify the action being marked as complete; however, the action would carry forward into the final year of the Council Plan.</p>
<p>P52 – Objective 4 – Action b) Promote support for the promotion and delivery of the Tour of Britain cycle race – A Member asked if this was a one-off or whether there were plans for the Tour of Britain to return to the borough.</p>	<p>The Head of Service: Community and Economic Development indicated that there were ongoing discussions about whether the Tour of Britain would return to the borough and he would inform Members once known.</p>

Performance tracker priority: Housing and Communities

P56 – Objective 1 – Action a) Work with partners to undertake the required review of the Joint Strategic Plan – A Member noted that the timetable was under further review and was subject to further change; she was concerned about the authority being in this position and sought an update on the latest timetable.

In response, the Head of Development Services confirmed that Officers were working with partners at Cheltenham Borough and Gloucester City Councils to consider the timetable for the review which would need to be approved by all three Councils. The main issue was the potential planning reforms which Officers had been expecting in April but were still awaited. In order for the plan to be examined under the existing planning system, it needed to be submitted by June 2025 and the plan must be determined by December 2026; if that was not achieved, it would need to be examined under the new system and could not be submitted until October 2026.

In response to a query regarding the work done to date, the Head of Development Services provided assurance that this could be taken forward to the new system, should it not be possible for the plan to be examined under the current system.

P57 – Objective 1 – Action d) Carry out housing needs assessments to deliver affordable housing in rural areas – A Member asked when the report from Gloucestershire Rural Community Council would be available.

The Head of Service: Housing advised that there was no firm date as it was a rolling programme of housing needs assessments. In response to a query about how the information was collected, he explained that Gloucestershire Rural Community Council carried out the assessment on behalf of Tewkesbury Borough Council using data from Council Tax to send a survey to every household in the borough. A Member queried how information was captured from people who did not have an address and the Head of Service: Housing indicated that this was not possible currently but Officers were working with Gloucestershire Rural Community Council to find better ways to interact with people – this was difficult as it was important to avoid duplicate responses which would be an issue if people were contacted in multiple ways e.g. online, telephone, post. Another Member questioned who the survey was addressed to and if a reply envelope was provided and was advised it was addressed to 'The Occupier' as opposed to a particular person and the intention was to collect information about households. He recognised it was not a perfect system but it was necessary to find another way of gathering data without

	inflating the figures which would stand up to appeal.
P60-61 – Objective 3 – Action a) Work with partners, infrastructure providers and developers to progress the delivery of key sites – A Member asked for an update in relation to North West Cheltenham and West Cheltenham.	In the absence of the Head of Development Services who had left the meeting when this point was raised, the Chair indicated that an action would be taken forward regarding provision of an update for relevant Members.
Performance tracker KPI'S- priority: Housing and Communities	
P66 – KPI 18 – Percentage of non-major applications determined within 8 weeks or alternative period agreed with the applicant – A Member noted this KPI had a non-smiley face and asked what was being done in relation to that.	The Head of Development Services explained that, whilst it did have an unsmiley face, she was extremely proud of the outturn given the issues faced by the Development Management team in recent years. She appreciated that new Members may not be aware of the history and explained that the Development Management review was now in its second year, with one of the main areas of focus being the Planning Committee and the Scheme of Delegation, and she stressed that a significant amount of work was being done throughout the department to improve processes and efficiency. The Member thanked the Head of Development Services for her explanation and indicated that it would have been helpful for that to have been included in the narrative.
Performance tracker priority: Customer First	
P78 – KPI 34 – Average number of sick days per full time equivalent – A Member asked if any information was available regarding the distribution of sickness, for instance, whether the increase was due to a few long term sickness absences or several shorter absences throughout the year.	The Director: Corporate Resources explained that, at year end, there were five employees absent due to long term sickness and this had impacted on the figures – two of those cases had been resolved and the average number of sick days had now reduced to 9.83 from 11.51 with further improvement expected. The Member suggested that consideration could be given to providing separate figures for long and short term sickness going forward. The Chair asked if further detail could be included as part of the Annual Workforce Development Strategy Review which was due to be considered at the next meeting of the Committee and the Director: Corporate Resources undertook to ensure it was provided.

Performance tracker priority: Garden Communities	
P81 – Objective 1 – Action c) Finalise the design and launch the construction phase of the Ashchurch and Northway Bridge Over Rail – A Member asked what was happening regarding the grant money received following the outcome of the Judicial Review.	The Executive Director: Resources and S151 advised that discussions were taking place with the appropriate boards to recover the funding and the indicative view was that it would be payable to the Council.
Performance Tracker KPI: Sustainable Environment	
P90 – KPI 40 – Percentage of waste reused, recycled or composted – A Member asked if the reduction was an ongoing trend which was being investigated.	The Director: Communities advised that there was always a slight reduction in the last quarter of the year which may be attributed to less garden waste accumulating over the winter months. In terms of the outturn for 2022/23, this reduction was an anomaly and the reasons were unclear. There had been a corresponding increase in residual waste, which was a shame, but he provided assurance that the Council was committed to encouraging people to recycle with new campaigns being run across the county.

3.0 CONSULTATION

3.1 None.

4.0 ASSOCIATED RISKS

4.1 There are no associated risks in relation to the report itself. A number of actions within the Council Plan are included within the Council's Corporate Risk Register. For example, financial sustainability, climate change, delivery of the Garden Town.

5.0 MONITORING

5.1 Progress on delivery of Council Plan actions is monitored on a quarterly basis by Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

6.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITIES/COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

6.1 Council Plan 2020-2024 (Yr 3) approved by Council on 26 July 2022

Background Papers: None.

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Appendices: Appendix 1 – Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report – Council Plan Performance Tracker Q4 2022/23 Council Plan re: Council Plan performance.