

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	12 September 2023
Subject:	Council Plan Performance Tracker - Quarter One 2022/23
Report of:	Director: Corporate Resources
Head of Service/Director:	Director: Corporate Resources
Lead Member:	Leader of the Council
Number of Appendices:	4

Executive Summary:

The Council Plan (2020-24) was approved by Council on 28 January 2020 and is now in its last year. Progress in delivering the objectives and actions within the plan is reported through a Performance Tracker document (Appendix 1). The tracker is a combined document which also reports upon a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

Supporting the tracker is a suite of key financial reports and overall helps give a rounded view of performance information. Attached is the revenue budget summary statement (Appendix 2), capital monitoring statement (Appendix 3) and the reserves position summary (Appendix 4).

This performance information is reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis and the outcome is then reported to the Executive Committee by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Recommendation:

To scrutinise the performance management information and, where appropriate, require action or response from the Executive Committee.

Financial Implications:

Though the report does not directly impact upon these implications, Finance and Resources is a priority within the current Council Plan.

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 a priority within the current 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:

Performance monitoring provides our residents with a good oversight on the progress being made in delivering the Council Plan priorities, objectives and actions.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** The Council Plan (2020-24) was approved by Council on 28 January 2020 and is now in its last year. Progress in delivering the objectives and actions within the plan is reported through a Performance Tracker document (Appendix 1). The tracker is a combined document which also reports upon a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
- 1.2** Key financial information is also reported so Members have a rounded view of overall performance information. Attached is the revenue budget summary statement (Appendix 2), capital monitoring statement (Appendix 3), the reserves position summary (Appendix 4).

2.0 PERFORMANCE TRACKER

- 2.1** Each of the priority themes within the Council Plan is supported by a number of objectives and actions. The tracker document has been developed to provide a transparent summary on delivery and in a format that is easy to understand.
- 2.2** For monitoring the progress of the actions within the performance tracker, the following symbols are used:

😊 – action progressing well

😐 – the action has some issues or delay but there is no significant slippage in the delivery of the action

😞 – significant risk to not achieving the action or there has been significant slippage in the timetable or performance is below target

Grey – project has not yet commenced

✓ – action complete or annual target achieved

For monitoring of key performance indicators, the following symbols are used:

↑ - PI is showing improved performance on previous year

↔ - PI is on par with previous year performance

↓ - PI is showing performance is not as good as previous year

2.3 This report presents the first quarter of the performance tracker. Key successful activities achieved to bring to Members' attention include:

- A revised timetable for the preparation of a single Strategic and Local Plan (SLP) as an alternative to the Joint Strategic Plan approach was resolved at Council in July 2023.
- LDA Design was awarded contract to help develop a Tewkesbury Town Centre Masterplan and Design Code, which will set out a vision and priorities for Tewkesbury town centre for the next 10-15 years.
- Supported 42 Voluntary and Community Sector groups with in depth 1:1 support and advice, a further 10-20 organisations were supported with general queries.
- Great progress is being made on the in-cab technology project with a soft launch due to take place in October. This project will help the waste and recycling crew report issues in real-time helping increase customer satisfaction and help crew staff work safely and efficiently.
- A review on the Section 106 process has commenced, the review will look at the monitoring system, policy towards collection and the governance processes.
- The new corporate website went live on 21 August, enhancing accessibility, more user-friendly design, and significant improvement to the search facility.
- Received £300,000 of funding through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Open Digital Planning fund to implement PlanX product which aims to help residents understand when planning permission is required and what information needs to be submitted for an application to be valid.
- In June 2023, Council approved the project to introduce webcasting for Council meetings.
- A gateway review of the Tewkesbury Garden Town programme has concluded which includes a commitment to increased community engagement – the new approach to delivering the programme will be presented to Council in September for endorsement.
- £708,000 external funding has been secured and Council agreed to a new air source heating systems to help with our carbon reduction objective. Work starts on site in September.
- 14 grants were awarded in Q1 through the new Community Health and Wellbeing Fund which will support biodiversity projects such as community gardens.

2.4 Due to the complex nature of the actions being delivered, inevitably some may not progress as smoothly or quickly as envisaged. Actions with either a 😞 or 😊 are highlighted below:

Action	Status and reason for status
Adopt a revised charging schedule for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) (Page No. 13)	😞 The target date has been slightly amended from January 2025 to April 2025, to take into consideration the delays that occurred with reviewing the findings from the PPR work on the alternative charging schedules.

Carry out a full review of the Licensing service. (Page No. 22)	☹️ The target date has been amended from September 2023 to April 2024 . This is due to the resources required from the Business Transformation Team to complete the in-cab technology project.
Carry out a review of our litter pickers' scheme. (Page No. 36)	☹️ The target date has been amended from August 2023 to September 2023 . Work has progressed and the volunteer litter pickers privacy notice, as well as data processing consent statements, have been reviewed and updated. The Environmental Health team is continuing to undertake a data cleanse of the schemes registration information to ensure that records are accurate and up to date. A new database for capturing this information has been established.

2.5 It is inevitable that not everything can be delivered at once. Any actions which have yet to commence are 'greyed out' in the tracker with indicative dates for commencement stated.

3.0 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

3.1 The set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are a combination of contextual indicators and target related indicators. The set of KPIs must remain flexible to ensure they meet our needs. The data reported is the position at end of quarter one (June 2023).

3.2 Of the **24** indicators with targets, their status as at the end of quarter one for 2023/24 is:

☺️ (on target)	☹️ (below target but confident annual target will be achieved)	☹️ (below target)
17	6	1

In terms of the direction of travel i.e. performance compared to last year, for all indicators the status is:

↑ (better performance than last year)	↓ (not as good as last year)	↔️ (on par with previous year performance)
19	11	1

3.3

KPIs where the direction of travel is down and/ or KPI is ☹️ are highlighted below:

KPI No.	KPI description	Reason for ☹️ or ↓
11	Total number of homeless relief cases held at the end of the quarter. (Page No. 15)	↓ The number of homeless relief cases held at the end of Q1 was 56 - this is an increase when compared to Q1 last year which was 39. If the figures remain this level each quarter, cumulatively it will not be as good as the outturn of last year, which was 152.
12	Total number of homeless applications with main duty accepted held at end of the quarter. (Page No. 16)	↓ The number of homeless applications with a main duty accepted at the end of Q1 was 25. Similar to the above KPI, if the figure continues the performance of last year's outturn (86 applications) will be exceeded.
17	Percentage of 'major' applications determined within 13 weeks or 16 weeks where an EIA is required, or alternative period agreed with the applicant. (Page No. 17)	↓ Whilst the national threshold of 60% for this KPI has been achieved, we are below the outturn of last year which is 64.86%. The target has also not been met but it is hoped this will improve throughout the year.
19	Percentage of 'major' planning applications overturned at appeal. (Page No. 18)	↓ Performance this quarter is not as good as last years outturn of 7.5%. This KPI is measured over a two-year period nationally with data only available online until March 2022. Based on Q1 alone, taking into the decisions made decision made in Q1 the this will increase this to 9.3%.
21	Enforcement - Investigate category A* cases within 24 hours (without prompt action, material risk of further harm which could be reduced by early intervention. (Page No. 19)	↓ The total figure for Q1 was 50% of cases were investigated within the timescale, this is below the outturn of 100% for 2022/23. Note: 1 of 2 cases so not a significant number.
30	Average number of days to process new housing benefit claims. (Page No. 27)	↓ There has been an increase in the number of days from 7.4 days to 14.03 days, this is due to the level of resource. Three positions are being recruited which will help reduce this throughout the year. Performance is still positive when compared nationally.

34	Average number of sick days per full time equivalent. (Page No. 28)	↓ Q1 figure of 2.3 days whilst low, if on projection throughout the year the outturn from last year of 9.84 and target of 8 days may not be achieved.
35	Average voluntary staff turnover. (Page No. 29)	↓ Q1 (3.1%) has seen an increase in the voluntary turnover rate when compared to Q4 which was 0.9% as a result of recent management restructure. This is in line with a significant rise in voluntary resignations seen across industries.
39	Number of reported enviro crimes. (Page No. 39)	↓ 😞 The overall figure of enviro-crimes reported in Q1 is 305, when compared to Q1 (237) in 2022/24 this is an increase. If figures continue at this rate throughout the year the target of 1000 and outturn from last year (1,076) will not be achieved.

3.4 Key successful KPIs to bring to Members' attention include:

- KPI 1 - Employment rate (85.6%) for Tewkesbury borough is above the national rate of 78.4%. (Page 7)
- KPI 15 – 84 new affordable housing properties have been delivered by tenure type in Q1, an increase when compared to Q1 in 2022/23 (59). (Page 16)
- KPI 22 and 24 - Improvement in investigating planning enforcement B and D continue to reach 100% performance in Q1. (Page 20 and 21)
- KPI 36 - Food established hygiene ratings remains good – 2.2% have a rating of two or below which is beneath the 5% target. (Page No. 29)
- KPI 37- 150 Freedom of Information requests were received of these 95% were answered on time. (Page 29)
- KPI 38 – A significant improvement of the number of formal complaints (97%) answered on time during Q1 compared to the outturn of the year of 70%. (Page 30)
- KPI 40 - 54.1% of waste was reused, recycled or composted this is above our local target of 52% and the outturn of last year of 51.06%. (Page 40)

4.0 FINANCIAL SUMMARY - REVENUE POSITION

4.1 The financial budget summary for Q1 shows a projected deficit of £54,595 for the full year against the approved budget. The following table highlights the forecast outturn position for service provision, the net position on corporate income and expenditure and the resulting deficit.

	Budget	Full Year Projection	Full Year Variance
<u>Services expenditure</u>			
Employees	£12,782,225	£12,256,606	£525,619
Premises	£697,810	£716,677	-£18,867
Transport	£71,479	£53,394	£18,085
Supplies & Services	£2,498,577	£2,512,188	-£13,611
Payments to Third Parties	£7,653,391	£7,558,947	£94,444
Transfer Payments - Benefits	£11,608,229	£11,608,539	-£310
Central Recharges	-£3,738	-£3,738	£0
Projects Funded Externally	£220,000	£220,234	-£234
Income	-£20,264,923	-£19,879,352	-£385,571
Services Sub Total	£15,263,050	£15,043,495	£219,555
<u>Corporate expenditure</u>			
Treasury – Interest Received	-£1,000,000	-£1,000,000	£0
Treasury – Borrowing Costs	£633,641	£633,641	£0
Investment Properties	-£3,330,500	-£3,395,723	£65,233
Corporate Savings Targets	-£208,522	£0	-£208,522
Core Government funding	-£2,022,525	-£2,022,525	£0
New Homes Bonus	-£1,240,366	-£1,240,366	£0
Business Rates	-£4,498,258	-£4,492,671	-£5,587
Council Tax Surplus	-£160,899	-£160,899	£0
Parish precept	£2,600,442	£2,600,442	£0
Use of reserves & MRP	£1,690,229	£1,690,229	£0
Corporate Sub Total	-£7,536,758	-£7,387,872	-£148,886
Transfer to reserves (externally ringfenced funding)			-£125,264
Surplus / (deficit)			-£54,595

4.2 Service Expenditure

4.2.1 The quarter one full year projection highlights a full year cost of service provision totalling £15.04m, resulting in a surplus against the approved budget of £219,555. The following paragraphs highlight the main reasons for this projected surplus. In addition, Appendix 2 provides detail at a service level with notes on variances over £10,000.

- 4.2.2** The full year projection for employees highlights a potential gross surplus of £525,619. It should however be noted that within the council's corporate expenditure is a target to save £209k from employment costs across the Council. The net position is therefore a surplus against target of £317k. The majority of the overall surplus is being accrued by One Legal. This is matched off by a reduction in third party income. The national pay award has not yet been agreed for the majority of officers and therefore we have forecast an increase of 4% for all employees which matches our budget allocation. Ubico have also forecast a pay award matching budget (5%). Any settlement in excess of these forecasts will result in an overspend but the Council has an approved reserve to cover the risk.
- 4.2.3** There is a projected overspend of £18,867 for premises costs. The main reason for this is due to maintenance work to be carried out at the homeless properties, some of these costs will be recovered through the rental charges.
- 4.2.4** A saving of £18k is expected within Transport costs which is due to reduced travel across the Council and only 4 pool cars being used when 5 were budgeted.
- 4.2.5** The projected outturn for Supplies & Services highlights a potential overspend of £14k. This is across stationery, postage and PDQ terminal bank charges for the car parking machines.
- 4.2.6** Payments to third parties highlights a projected surplus of £94,444. The Ubico contract is forecast to be underspent by £45k due to expected savings in employment and diesel costs of £119k, although this saving is reduced by the rental increase of Swindon Road depot of £76k. Emergency homeless accommodation is anticipated to be £60k over budget due to the increased demand in temporary housing, 85% of these costs will be recovered from housing benefit which is included within income. The MRF gate fee is expected to be £100k over budget which is due to a significant increase in the gate fee per tonne being paid, increasing from £38 per tonne to £67 per tonne. The third party payment saving from the cessation of the trade waste service is estimated to be approximately £146k for 2023/24. This is supplemented by further direct employee savings at the Council but is offset by reductions in expected income. The cessation of the trade waste service is predicted to save over £100k annually in net terms from 2024/25, assuming savings from Ubico's corporate support and support services recharge. There will be no saving this year due to Ubico's budget for indirect costs already being set. Swindon Road Depot running costs are estimated to be £115k less than budget based upon quarter 1 actual expenditure. These costs were previously borne by Cheltenham, are in relation to the day-to-day running costs and maintenance requirements for the depot.
- 4.2.7** Income is expected to be below budget by £386k. This is mainly due to the cessation of the trade waste service where income is estimated to be £190k below target. Income from Tewkesbury Leisure Centre will be £78k lower than budget as a reduced management fee has been agreed. Due to vacant space in the council offices, rental income is predicted to be £37k down on budget. In addition, One Legal income is significantly below target, although this is offset against savings within employee. Planning fees are expected to exceed budget by £100k and recovery of emergency accommodation is estimated to be £60k greater than budget.

4.3 Corporate Expenditure

- 4.3.1** The expenditure associated with corporate activities as well as the financing of the Council is shown in the second section and highlights an estimated deficit of £148,886 for the financial year.

- 4.3.2** Treasury activities are currently in-line with budget expectations. Interest rates are continuing to rise but this will not impact our borrowing costs as the interest rate was fixed and no additional borrowing is expected. The Council may see a small gain in investment activity given current forecasts and this will be monitored and reported as the year moves forward.
- 4.3.3** The favourable variance within investment properties is due to a reduction in costs associated with managing our portfolio.
- 4.3.4** The overall projected position on retained business rates is currently in line with expectations. The valuation list was reset in 2023/24 financial year, making it more difficult to predict the level income and reliefs for businesses.
- 4.3.5** The Q1 report has now separately identified the external grant funding that is unlikely to be spent by year end and must be ringfenced to a particular project or service. This is estimated at £126k and whilst it will increase our year end reserves, we do not have discretion as to where it can be spent. It is therefore excluded from our reported position.
- 4.3.6** Bringing together both the surplus on net service expenditure and surplus on net corporate expenditure results in an overall budget deficit projection of £55k for the year. Whilst it is disappointing to project a small deficit at the end of the first quarter, no corrective action is recommended at this stage given the small size of the deficit and the lack of certainty in our projections. The budget will continue to be monitored, with the Q2 forecast being reported in November.

4.4 CAPITAL BUDGET POSITION

- 4.4.1** Appendix 3 shows the capital budget position as at Q1. This is currently showing an underspend of £174k against the profiled budget of £419k. The capital programme estimates total expenditure for the year to be circa £1.65m. The main elements of this year's forecast include:
- Vehicle replacement programme
 - High Street Heritage Action Zone
 - Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG)
- 4.4.2** The Council has purchased various equipment for the office refurbishment and new tablets and mobiles for new Members, which is in-line with the capital programme.
- 4.4.3** The capital budget for vehicles is currently underspent due to no vehicles being purchased this quarter. It is planned that new vehicles will be acquired by the end of this financial year.

4.5. RESERVES POSITION

- 4.5.1** Appendix 4 provides a summary of the current usage of available reserves and supporting notes are provided for reserves where expenditure is high. As at 1 April 2023, these reserves stood at £17.54m, which is a decrease of £587k on the previous year. The decrease reflects the fact that expenditure of reserves in 2022/23 exceeded the transfer to reserves at outturn.

4.5.2 Reserves have been set aside from previous years to fund known future costs, Council priorities and the strategic planning of the authority's operation. The information in the appendix reflects only expenditure incurred to date and does not take account of reserves which have been committed but not yet paid or are awaiting capital financing at year end. Such expenditure will include:

- Place Programme Reserve – to support the development of the place planning approach.
- Temporary staff support for Revenues & Benefits.
- Policy and Performance Support – to provide temporary capacity to develop the Council's approach to performance management and ensure the Council is responding to and planning for changes in government policy.
- Upgrade of the income management system.

4.5.3 Actual expenditure of £337,738 has been made against reserves at Q1. This mostly consists of expenditure relating to the digitalisation team, temporary posts in Revenue and Benefits and the first quarter costs of the Garden Town Team. The full breakdown is provided in Appendix 4.

5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 None.

6.0 ASSOCIATED RISKS

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

7.0 MONITORING

7.1 Progress on delivery of actions is monitored on a quarterly basis by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Budget monitoring occurs on a monthly basis and is formally reported quarterly.

8.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITIES/COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

8.1 Council Plan 2020-2024 approved by Council on 26 July 2022

Budget monitoring is on the approved annual revenue and capital budget for 2023/24 which has been prepared in line with the Medium Term Financial Strategy

Background Papers: None.

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Appendices: Appendix 1 - Council Plan Performance Tracker Qtr 1 2023/24
Appendix 2 - Revenue Budget
Appendix 3 - Capital Budget
Appendix 4 - Reserves