TITLE	**Quarter 3 23/24 Performance Monitoring Report**
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee on 6th March 2024
WARD	(All Wards);
LEAD POLITICIAN	Stephen Conway – Leader of the Council
LEAD OFFICER	Sally Watkins - Chief Operating Officer

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

This report provides accountability and transparency against the Council's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for service areas and provision of these to our customers.

RECOMMENDATION

To note the performance of the KPIs relevant to this committee.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

Quarter 3 KPIs shows continued good performance despite significant continued challenges to delivery. The highlights of quarter 3 for the Council include:

- Bid for Planning Skills Delivery Grant successful, winning £92k to support specific work around sustainable building and biodiversity net gain.
- The Council was successful in a regional bid submitted to the DfE to implement a number of improvements to boost the number of foster carers and experience of prospective foster carers.
- Wokingham Borough has ranked number one in England for the proportion of adults with a learning disability in paid employment for 2022/23.

Looking forward, whilst inflation has decreased its effects continue to be felt with the increase in the cost of delivering services running ahead of the increase in funding available. Inflation drives up the costs of everything the council does, and higher interest rates make borrowing money for capital investment more expensive.

The council is also seeing increasing demand to many services which is compounded with more complex issues. Positively the revenue monitoring position has held at the same position as last quarter, stopping the previous trend. The end of the year forecast is running with an overspend of approximately £3.6 million.

Further details of all KPIs are listed in Appendix A which accompanies this report.

Background

- The Council's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) measure how well each service is delivering against its current objectives.
- This performance report and appendix covers Q3 2023/24 (October, November and December 2023).
- Where available benchmarking information is included to give greater context.
- Each KPI should have a SMART target (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely), which takes into account historic trend information and benchmarking to compare Wokingham Borough performance with national trends.
- KPIs are assigned a RAG status (Red, Amber, Green) to indicate whether performance is on target (Green), close to target (Amber) or missing the target (Red).

Indicators are assigned to a Director and Lead Executive Member. Commentary including highlights, focuses for the future and potential challenges from the CEO, Deputy CEO and each Director can be found in Appendix A, which accompanies this report.

Analysis

The Council provides a wide range of services to its residents and so the reporting of a single bottom line is not possible. For this reason, the Council uses a balanced scorecard approach, reporting a mixture of KPIs covering service activity, financial performance, indicators on the health of the work force and customer excellence scores.   The following analysis is intended to give a picture of the overall health of the Councils performance at the top level and to highlight areas performing below target, the actions being taken to improve this, and the challenges faced.

Quarter 3 23/24 Performance
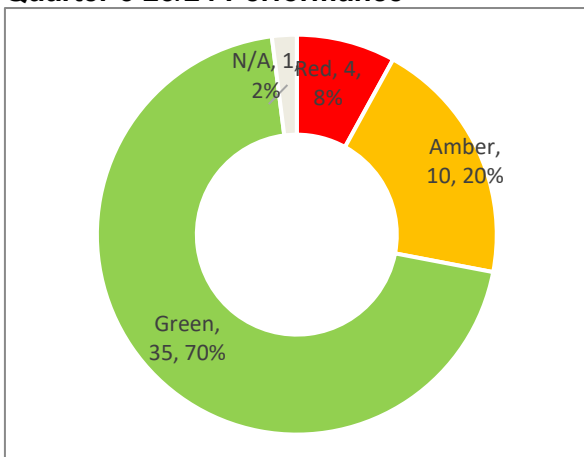
Quarter 3 KPIs show sustained performance despite significant continued challenges to delivery. High inflation driving up the cost-of-service delivery coupled with financial uncertainty at a global level has made this a challenge to deliver. The number of red KPIs is 4 with improvements in crime figures and recycling rates moving PG8 and PG9 to amber. There are 10 amber KPIs and 35 green.

Red KPIs in Quarter 2 2023/24
The following information below gives details of the KPIs reported as Red in Q2 23/24 with background and context of performance and the corrective action being taken.

CEX8 – Proportion of Wokingham resident pupils eligible for FSM in Wokingham borough schools
This KPI measures the number of children who have applied for and are eligible for means-tested free school meals as a proportion of all pupils on the roll. It has increased from 8.8% to 8.9% from Q1 to Q3.

This is measured as part of a continued push through the Tackling Poverty Strategy to increase access to support for residents on low incomes. The target was initially 9% and was increased to 10% during 23/24 to become a stretch target. There is no government data which would allow the Council to clearly quantify the number of children in the borough who would be eligible. As a result the council has set this stretching target to push performance and maximise take up.

Actions to increase take up of FSM since Q1 are to target schools, particularly those where take up is lower than expected, to promote and support parents to claim. We will be working with schools admissions to identify opportunities to promote FSM during the admissions process.

CS5 – Proportion of all EHC plans issues in 20 weeks (including exceptions)
Whilst EHCP timeliness in Wokingham remained, on average, above national and statistical neighbours, it is recognised that there was a drop in the latter part of the autumn term. Timeliness was impacted by the spike in EHC assessments requests in the spring term (Q2), which were the highest recorded in Wokingham to date. This compounded pressure on the EP service as well as therapy assessments through CYPIT.
To reverse this trend, the SEND Service held a meeting with the Performance Team and Principle Education Psychologist, with the following developments:
- A new 'timeliness' dashboard has been developed (currently in beta form), that provides live data and can be used as a supportive tool by SEND Managers to monitor and step in if any EHC Plans appear to be at risk of being overdue.
- An EHC assessment request dashboard has also been produced- which will help with short-, medium- and long-term planning, to support staff to prioritise, and request additional capacity to assist with peaks in demand.
- Through Commissioning, we will continue to monitor (and raise concerns if required) the timeliness of statutory advice through CYPIT, which currently impact overall EHCP timescales".

The statistical neighbour and England averages in 2022 calendar year for all EHC plans issued in 20 weeks (including exceptions) are 38.5% and 49.1% respectively.

AS1- Social work assessments allocated to commence within 28 days of the requests (counted at point of allocation)
This is not monitored as a national performance measure, however, numbers of people waiting for assessments, packages of care or reviews is collected regularly for all Local Authorities in the South East. Currently 26% of people are waiting longer than 6 months across the region. 28 days is a local target to ensure best practice.

There is a process of triaging and risk assessing all contacts received to ensure those requiring immediate attention are prioritised. Changes were made to the Adult Social Care pathway in Q2, and it was anticipated that this could have an impact on performance data during Q3. Expectation that figures will improve in Q4.

RA10 – Revenue monitoring forecast position
The revenue monitoring position has improved from 2% at the end of Q2 to 1.98% at the end of Q3 and work continues to balance the position for the year end. Full details can be found in the December 2023 executive paper.

KPIs without Targets

There is currently 1 KPI without a target, reported as N/A. PG2 – Number of households in emergency nightly-let/B&B accommodation is reported to give visibility of the level of demand experienced by the housing service and its associated risks. Targeting of this KPI may drive the wrong behaviour and has limited value.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION
The Council faces unprecedented financial pressures as a result of; the longer term impact of the COVID-19 crisis, Brexit, the war in Ukraine and the general economic climate of rising prices and the increasing cost of debt. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are optimised and are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	Nil	Nil	Nil
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	Nil	Nil	Nil
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	Nil	Nil	Nil

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision
None

Cross-Council Implications (how does this decision impact on other Council services, including properties and priorities?)
This report covers the whole of the Council's operations.

Public Sector Equality Duty

This report covers a full range of services across the council. It is for noting and discussion and does not contain recommendations for approval that would involve a policy or service alteration that would have implications upon people with protected characteristics under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Climate Emergency – *This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030*

This report covers a full range of services across the council. It is for noting and discussion and does not contain recommendations for approval that would involve a policy or service alteration that would have implications for the climate emergency.

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2

N/A

List of Background Papers

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