

# Report to Cabinet

**18 October 2023**

<b>Subject:</b>	Performance Management Framework – Q1 Monitoring
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Deputy Leader, Cllr Bob Piper
<b>Director:</b>	Chief Executive – Shokat Lal
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Kate Ashley – Strategic Lead: Service Improvement Kayleigh Walker – Senior Lead: Service Improvement Jane Alexander – Senior Lead: Service Improvement Sarah Sprung – Senior Lead: Service Improvement

## 1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That Cabinet note progress on the further development of the Corporate Performance Management Framework and approve the Q1 monitoring reports.

## 2. Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 Council approved a Corporate Performance Management Framework (PMF) on 12 April 2022, to address the recommendations of the Governance Value for Money Review by Grant Thornton and as a key element of the Council's Improvement Plan.
- 2.2 Since then, the corporate PMF has been further refined and built into business processes. In June 2023, Cabinet approved a revised



Corporate Plan with a revised set of Corporate Performance Indicators. This report sets out the Council’s progress against the delivery of the Corporate Plan and performance against the Corporate Performance Indicators for Q1 of 2023/24. **Appendix 1** lists the measures and performance, including a RAG rating against target where applicable. The appendix also includes the direction of travel of performance since the last quarter of 2022/23 and compared to the same period last year.

2.4 Performance of key contracts is included in the quarterly performance reports to provide oversight of the performance of these services and assurance that contract management mechanisms continue to be in place and effective.

### 3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>The corporate PMF includes measures under all strategic objectives in the Corporate Plan to monitor progress in these key areas. The PMF also includes elements that measure the council’s use of its resources to ensure delivery of the strategic objectives.</p> <p>The Strategic Risk Register details the key strategic risks that need to be managed to ensure that they do not negatively impact on the successful delivery of the Corporate Plan objectives.</p>
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3.1 An effective performance management framework facilitates increased accountability, learning and improvement. It also provides early warning signals and facilitates decision-making.

3.2 On a quarterly basis, the council gathers and analyses a wide range of data and information to understand how effectively its plans are being implemented and whether the strategic outcomes contained in the Corporate Plan are being achieved.



3.3 The information collected is used to enable the authority to better understand the impact of its work on local people, and where necessary, target actions and resources.

#### 4. Quarter 1 Key messages

##### Corporate Plan

4.1 The table below shows that 167 Corporate Plan 'We will' statements and Directorate Business Plan Actions are rated as 'green' (on track), 37 are rated 'amber' (medium issues) and 8 are rated as 'red' (significant issues). Of those rated 'amber' or 'red', the vast majority are because of slippage of the project/programme/initiative. There are a small number where more work is needed to achieve the impact/outcome we want e.g. as part of the Early Help Strategy more work is needed to ensure partners take on a lead role. There are also a small number where the action or piece of work has stalled or need to be re-evaluated. These include:

- The redesign of the communal areas at Walker Grange (extra care housing complex) have been prepared by Urban Design, but no budget has been approved yet because of the pressures on the HRA budget. HRA forecasts need to be remodelled, but a budget for Walker Grange will be included in the discussions to identify when the work could commence. *(Rated 'red')*.
- The plan for replacement of diesel fleet with sustainable fuel vehicles is an area of risk given the number of electric charging points available and technological limitations in replacing some of the larger fleet with EV or an alternative fuelling option. Progress is being made to address the risk and develop a plan for electrification going forwards (consultancy, EVP solutions recently appointed to look at this). There are now 12 EV charging points available for fleet vehicles to use, in addition to a further 14 which are for staff/public depending on location. In addition, there are 16 public units at the aquatics centre. *(Rated 'red')*.



- A number of new build housing schemes have been impacted by construction costs (due to increased inflation) and are not able to proceed at the current time. *(Rated 'amber')*.
- The government has withdrawn the Housing Transformation Fund so the planned work to support independent living using this funding is on hold. *(Rated 'red')*.
- Commercial bus services in the West Midlands are being reduced due to viability/footfall issues and this has impacted on the level of bus service provided in Sandwell.( However, the metro extension project from Wednesbury to Dudley is on track and in budget to open to passengers by December 2024.) *(Rated 'amber')*.
- Year-end commercial income projections for Sandwell Valley Visitor Centre, Forge Mill Farm, Lightwoods House and Park (Visitor Services) for 2023/24 are lower than target at the end of Q1 due to a range of factors including operational delays and poorer than expected weather. *(Rated 'amber')*.

Plans are being worked on to address these areas and an update will be provided in the Quarter 2 report.

	Best Start	Live Well & Age Well	Strong Resilient Communities	Quality Homes	Strong Inclusive Economy	Connected & Accessible	One Council One Team	Total
No of Corporate Plan 'we wils'	12	21	20	17	11	8	18	107
No of Directorate Business Plan Actions	23	85	38	23	18	17	51	255



On Track	12	62	21	11	14	12	35	167
Medium Issues	5	10	6	5	2	3	6	37
Significant Issues	-	4	1	1	-	-	2	8
No Update available	6	9	10	6	2	2	8	43

## Quarter 1 Performance

4.2 In summary, of the 79 indicators given a RAG status this quarter, 23 are RAG rated 'red', 13 are rated 'amber' and 43 are rated 'green'. 46 do not have a RAG rating as a target is not applicable or available, and the PI is for information only. For 38 PIs no data is available, and this is because the PI is either being developed or there is no information available this quarter.

Area	Total	Red	Amber	Green	RAG NA	Data not available	Annual
Best Start	38	3	7	9	13	6	0
Live well Age Well	37	3	4	9	4	14	3
Strong Resilient Communities	24	0	1	6	3	4	10
Quality Homes	21	5	1	6	1	1	7
Strong Inclusive Economy	15	0	0	1	4	4	6
Connected and Accessible	11	0	0	1	0	0	10
One Team One Council	57	12	0	11	21	9	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>40</b>



- 4.3 For some Directorates including Adult Social Care, Children’s Services and Public Health, Q1 data was not available because of the time lag in reporting, so the most recent data has been provided. Some of these are annual, and data will not be provided again until year end, but has been provided here for context, given it is the first time it has been reported in this format.
- 4.4 For some indicators, a target is not applicable, or a target was not in place for the time period the data relates too (this is the case for many indicators in Children and Education; however, for most of these a target has now been set for this year).
- 4.5 The following sections provide on oversight of Corporate Plan monitoring and performance across the strategic outcomes.

## **5 The Best Start in life for Children and Young People**

### **Corporate Plan Monitoring**

- 5.1 Good progress has been made under the theme of First 1,000 days in respect of new birthing visits. Sandwell achieves 97.9 of their new birth visiting, against a national average of 97.6.
- 5.2 Libraries continue to provide good outreach with 110 Deliver Play, Talk, Read sessions in all libraries and 1175 under 5s active library users through the Sandy Bear project.
- 5.3 The Council is continuously improving with the lessons learnt captured from SEND 2 incorporated into the project plan for SEND 3 developed with Local Partnerships. ITT documentation and specification is to be refreshed to drive continuous improvements and better outcomes for children and young people and their families.
- 5.4 There has been some slippage on projects such as the Early Help Strategy where further work is required to ensure more partners are



taking on a Lead Professional role. Also, a review of existing school admission appeals service arrangements is due to commence in August/September 2023.

## Performance Reporting

- 5.5 We are below target for 'Financial performance against budget (SCT)' - At the end of Q1 SCT were projecting a year end deficit of £224k against the Contract Sum, in real terms this is an overspend of £966k as there is an expectation for SCT to achieve a surplus of £742k by the end of the year. At the end of July 2023 SCT had provided an update to this and are projecting a year end deficit of £797k against the Contract Sum, in real terms this is an overspend of £1,537k as there is an expectation for SCT to achieve a surplus of £740k by the end of the year. These projections are based on 4 months of activity and subject to change.
- 5.6 Whilst we are above target for 'Early Help - Referrals to Social Care with no evidence of Multi-Agency Early Help in the prior 12 months' and slightly above target tolerance, performance is on par with last quarter and 1% lower than this time last year.
- 5.7 We are above target for 'Care Leavers that are NEET', although within the tolerance (53%). The 19–21 year-olds Statistical Neighbour Average NEET is 45%, England is 41% and 43% for the West Midlands.
- 5.8 Whilst the '% of 16s and 17s not in employment, education or training (NEET)' is slightly higher than target, last quarter and this point last year, performance is still below the figure for statistical neighbours (3.5%), West Midlands (3.1%) and England (3.2%).
- 5.9 The '% children becoming subject of a CP Plan for the second or subsequent time (within two years)' is below target ('Green') and better than last quarter and last year. This is a local measure the latest regional performance is at 10.4%.
- 5.10 The 'Permanent vacancy rate of social workers' is 22.7% ('Green'). The current England and Statistical Neighbour Averages are 14.7% and



16.7%. This measure includes vacancies covered by agency workers. Performance has improved since last quarter (24%)

- 5.11 The Children in Care with 3+ moves (placement moves) is 7.5% ('Green') and better than last quarter (8%) and this point last year (8.1%)
- 5.12 The Number of Children/Young People receiving intervention (Early Help) was 1138 this quarter ('Green'). Those allocated to Strengthening Families remained the same, however huge increase in Multi-Agency Early Help (+121) to the highest figure recorded.

## 6 People Live Well and Age Well

### Corporate Plan Monitoring

- 6.1 Progress has been made in tackling health inequalities, data sharing with GPs, smoking cessation and improving air quality.
- 6.2 Work continues to be underway with partners to reduce social isolation and there is further investment into community based mental health programmes.
- 6.3 There has been slippage in some areas including implementing the new day opportunities model across the market; Joint Equipment Stores site development and relocation of Community Alarms and the upgrade of the Walker Grange Accommodation (as set out in paragraph 4.1).

### Performance Reporting

- 6.4 'The targeting of the health checks at those most in need' is below target, (200 against a target of 1,500). This is because the new service started in February and due to data sharing, the service was delayed in starting the health checks. However, they are now catching up and performance will improve next quarter.
- 6.5 'Vaccine take-up, childhood vaccines, flu season and COVID boosters' is below target but the data relates to MMR. The flu season vaccination doesn't start until October and the data will not be available until later in the year.



- 6.6 Childhood Obesity is 34% (2021/22; this is the most recent data available. Data for the year prior to this is not available (pandemic year)). The source is the National Child Measurement Programme for Year 6. Sandwell is significantly above the regional (26.2%) and national figure (23%).
- 6.7 'Smoking at time of delivery' is 9.3% of women who deliver, this is below the regional value of 9.8% but slightly above the national value of 9.1%. Further work is being carried forward to increase uptake of smoking cessation offer for those who are smoking in pregnancy.
- 6.8 In 2022-23, 51.9% of service users (ASC) said they have as much social contact as they want with people they like, an increase from 47% in 2021-22. This is below target but within the target tolerance. The latest benchmarking information for the service user survey relates to 2021/22. The Sandwell score is higher than regional (41.6%) and national (40.6%) average.
- 6.9 During 2022-23, 63.7% of people were at home 91 days after being discharged from hospital into a reablement service. This compares to 66% during 2021-22. The Sandwell score is below the regional (81.2%) and national average (81.8%). Benchmarking also shows that Sandwell offers significantly more episodes of reablement than other LAs. Work is being done on the pathways that facilitate hospital discharges and the criteria of the reablement offer. Please note, every local authority has their own way of calculating their measure, so numbers that make up this calculation can vary wildly across authorities, so not always useful to compare results or processes.
- 6.10 Deaths from drug misuse, Hospital admissions due to substance misuse (15-24 years), Admission episodes for alcohol-related conditions and Smoking cessation uptake are all better than target (which is the national average). Performance against these indicators is significant given the demographics of the area. In particular, Sandwell still has one of the lowest rates of drug related deaths in the region and within the lowest in the country and alcohol related admissions are the third lowest in the region for 2021/22. This is below Solihull and Malverns.
- 6.11 The 'Overall satisfaction of people who use services with their care and support' is significantly above target and better than last year. The latest



benchmarking information relates to 2021/22. The Sandwell Score is significantly higher than the regional (62.2%) and national average (63.9%).

## 7. Strong Resilient Communities

### Corporate Plan Monitoring

- 7.1 Delivery of the Legacy Build phase for the Sandwell Aquatics Centre and facility available for public use from Summer 2023 - SAC opened July 2023, membership above target of 3,000 members and delivered on time and in budget.
- 7.2 Green Flag accreditation achieved at SVC and Tipton Cemetery. In addition, Fallings Heath cemetery has been awarded Green Flag status for the first time.
- 7.3 Corporate Climate Change Action Plan agreed to ensure we can meet our 2030 and 2041 targets for carbon neutrality.
- 7.4 There were 2,772 attended fly-tipping incidents in Quarter 1. The total cost of removal of these fly-tips was £172,607.

### Performance Reporting

- 7.5 There is no target for 'Domestic Abuse incidents in Sandwell reported to police', but this has increased significantly since Q1 22/23 and will continue to be monitored (2,855 in Q1 23/24 compared to 2,037 in Q1 22/23).
- 7.6 Data for 'the number of cases referred to the MARAC' is not yet available. However, when looking at year end figures, MARAC cases saw a 28.4% increase in 2022/23, in comparison to the previous year. This includes a repeat rate of 49%, which is above the Safelives recommendation of 28-40%. 2021/22 held a repeat rate of 43%, which demonstrates a 6% increase, which may account for some of the increased referral figures. 2022/23 saw the commissioning of a new 5-year contract with Black Country Women's Aid to provide refuge safe accommodation across the Borough. 2023/24 is also seeing more investment into making community living safer for victims, which is a key priority within safe accommodation.



7.7 'The number of library visits in person', 'the % of Meaningful gifting of Booktrust packs', 'the number of community activities & events held in libraries or online', 'the number of PC sessions held in libraries' and 'percentage of Library users satisfied with the service overall (per quarter)' are 'green', illustrating good use and high satisfaction with library services.

## 8. Quality homes in Thriving Neighbourhoods

### Corporate Plan Monitoring

8.1 The majority of actions under this theme are on track. Those under medium /risk of slippage include construction costs increasing for council home new builds (as set out in paragraph 4.1)..

8.2 SHDF Wave 1 – delivery of properties reduced due to delivery difficulties with project expected to be concluded by October.

8.3 There has been some slippage in bringing empty homes back into use in terms of recruiting an Empty Property Officer, but this post is now filled.

8.4 Government has withdrawn Housing Transformation Fund so work is on hold and therefore a red risk (as set out in paragraph 4.1).

### Performance Reporting

8.5 The 'Percentage of homelessness cases successfully prevented (under Homelessness Reduction Act duty)' is below target and below last quarter and Q1 last year. This is due to the impact of the historical backlogs with homelessness prevention, a number of cases have escalated beyond prevention and into relief. This has been progressing through the system and we expect prevention levels to return to target levels by September 2023

8.6 The 'Number of long-term empty homes brought into use' is 0 against a target of 2. The Empty Property Officer has now been appointed and is



anticipated to start in September. Precatory work has been underway for a number of months and the service has a number of cases in train which will be progressed and, in some instances, concluded by the new post holder. The target is profiled throughout the year with a Q4 target of 20.

- 8.7 'The percentage of properties with a Domestic Electrical Installation Condition report (DEICR) under 5-years old (or in legal resolution)' is below target at 89.40% against a target of 100%. The service self-referred last year to the housing regulator, with the intention to increase work streams for the testing programme and implement a new legal process along with the new tenancy agreement. We continue to work with our contractors to provide more resource to meet demand. Access is an issue in some instances and in some cases we require 2 visits, the first to test the installation and the second where significant remedial work is required. Minor work is completed during the initial visit. Current estimates are 100% compliance by April 2024.
- 8.8 'The % of current tenancies with a live valid Home Check in place (in the last 3 years)' is below target at 12.7% against a target of 16%. A total of 1130 Home Checks have been carried out during Q1. This has had less impact on the % of tenancies than we anticipated due to a higher than anticipated number of tenancies ending in the period. Recruitment to new Housing Service Office posts created by the restructure of the service were completed by June, this will increase capacity to deliver more home checks from Q2.
- 8.9 'The total number of people assisted by Welfare Rights Service to claim additional benefits' is below target at 2,475 against a target of 2,750 due to the increase in complex cases, resulting in officers having to spend more time on each case. Overtime has been introduced as well as recruiting to a number of temporary posts to increase the number of officers dealing with enquiries. This did not hinder performance on the monetary gains for the quarter as the service was successful in gaining £388,669 over target.



- 8.10 The proportion of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out is slightly below target (Amber 99.19%) because of a shortage of labour in the market. However, there has been recent improvement and so performance for the PI should improve moving forwards.
- 8.11 Significantly fewer Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) are being approved due to the reduction in referrals received from Adult Social Care from April 2023 as all Council owned property referrals are being delivered directly by the Councils Asset Management Team and not by the Home Improvement Agency. However, we are still above target, and above target for the DFGs certified as complete.
- 8.12 Fire Safety Checks, Water Safety Checks and Lift Safety Checks are new measures included in the Corporate Set for 2023/24 and are all 100% in Q1.

## 9. A Strong Inclusive Economy

### Corporate Plan Monitoring

- 9.1 Most of this area is on track with only two actions rated as amber.
- 9.2 We continue to work with partners in relation to retaining local spend in the borough. Cabinet have given approval for the procurement of a strategic delivery partner for regeneration projects in which local spend, local employment and low carbon are essential requirements.
- 9.3 The Council continues to work with key contractors to ensure that local businesses and supply chain benefits from capital projects spend. For example, 58% of the construction spend with Wates Ltd occurred within a 10 mile radius of the Aquatic Centre.
- 9.4 The Levelling Up Programme with interventions has been agreed with DLUC and Cabinet. Spending profiles are very challenging, we will continue to work with Government to maximise benefit of this partnership.



## Performance Reporting

- 9.5 The number of businesses supported quarterly target has been achieved. These businesses have come through either by direct referrals or via other partners referring through to the Business Growth Team. The majority of businesses have required support with access to finance and business support and guidance.
- 9.6 When looking at the Employment rate in Sandwell, of the 68% of people economically active, 63.9% are employed. For the West Midlands, 77.5% are economically active with 73.8% in employment and for Great Britain, 78.5% are economically active, with 75.6% in employment. The employment rate has been on a downward trajectory since March 2021 when it peaked at 74%.
- 9.7 The Economic Intelligence Unit provided some insight on this, stating that 'the data suggests that this is likely to be a continuation of the participation/worklessness issues identified nationally since the pandemic - with people (either in work or looking for work) leaving the labour market and not returning. There are now 21,800 more people inactive in Sandwell, mainly driven by those long-term sick which has increased by 7,700 and those looking after the family or home - up c.6,000. This participation issue can also be linked to higher worklessness due to poor health (particularly mental health) which suggests a need to improve access and the way in which health services and employment services work together.'

## 10. A Connected and Accessible Sandwell

### Corporate Plan Monitoring

- 10.1 Progress on delivering the capital programme of maintenance in relation to highways infrastructure is on track. The expenditure profile delivers more costly work in the final two quarters.



- 10.2 The Transportation Pipeline projects and the £30M Birchley Island Major Junction Improvement are all long-term programmes with no departures to report.
- 10.3 Sandwell's Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan projects are generally on track to deliver, whether funded from the active travel fund, the towns fund programme or CRSTS.
- 10.4 Commercial bus services in the WM are being reduced due to viability/footfall issues and this has impacted on the level of bus service provided in Sandwell (as set out in paragraph 4.1)..

## **Performance Reporting**

- 10.5 We have completed 1 more Road Safety scheme this quarter than target. The Road Safety Schemes completed include Tollhouse Way, Smethwick - Cycle Infrastructure Scheme Phase 3, Wednesbury Town Centre Heritage Action Zone and Active Travel Improvements, Zebra Crossing – Hobs Road, Wednesbury.

## **11. One Team One Council**

### **Corporate Plan Monitoring**

- 11.1 There has been slippage on customer engagement and development of Customer Access Strategy. Revised date for draft strategy is now March 2024.
- 11.2 Embedding and delivery of Corporate Plan and Service Planning Framework through corporate approach in place and corporate plan refresh completed.
- 11.3 New approach to internal comms established that includes: CE blog, all staff live events and in person briefings, Directorate live events, Team Talk manager briefing, weekly news bulletin, dedicated wellbeing bulletin.



## Performance Reporting

- 11.4 Performance in the Revenues and Benefits Contact Centre, whilst not meeting target, is significantly better than the same point last year and performance is projected to improve further in the future.
- 11.5 There are resource issues in the Adult Contact Centre and Corporate Contact Centre which are impacting performance. Both centres are struggling to fill vacant posts, the Corporate Contact Centre is being affected by staff sickness and the Adult Contact Centre sadly lost a member of the team after a short illness, which impacted staff morale for a period in Q1.
- 11.6 SARs compliance with timescales and FOI compliance within timescales are both below target. There has been an increase of SARs within Housing due to solicitors utilising the SAR process as a mechanism for obtaining records to pursue Housing Disrepair Claims. This is being managed by the Governance Team, Housing and Legal Services. There have also been resource issues within Adults Social Care which is negatively impacting SARS statistics.
- 11.7 We have seen a reduction in our compliance with FOI timescales from the previous quarter, however there is a significant improvement on performance for the same time last year. During Q1 there was a high volume of FOI requests in Housing. There are also resource issues in ASC and Finance which has had a negative impact on performance of this measure.
- 11.8 The number of stage 1 complaints has increased in Q1 compared to last quarter and Q1 last year, driving up the number of complaints received overall. However, there are fewer complaints (at both Stage 1 and 2) upheld this quarter compared to last quarter and Q1 last year. Work is underway to analyse complaints, but no themes have been identified yet. The number of compliments received remains consistent.
- 11.9 The percentage of complaints responded to in 10 working days is below target and worse than Q1 last year. To address this, the Customer



Feedback Team (CFT) are working with all directorates to provide prompt, high quality responses. The CFT are also taking a lead in co-ordinating a response where a complaint requires further investigation or involves multiple directorates, maintaining clear communication, trying to prevent delays and helping to minimise customer frustration. The Team is encouraging other directorates to adopt a similar approach, to improve performance.

- 11.10 The number of MP enquiries has increased in Q1 compared to last quarter and Q1 last year. The satisfaction with Member Enquiries is monitored and the average rating is 4.84/5. However, this only based on 19 responses.
- 11.11 The number of customer contacts is increasing overall, but this is because there is more contact via MySandwell. Of the contacts via MySandwell, the increase is where no service response is needed; contacts where a service response is required has remained consistent over recent years (around 11-12%). This is alleviating pressure on other channels. The use of MySandwell is also increasing because of other reasons e.g. the need to book a slot to visit the tip, bin collection day reminders and the increase in people making payments. The number of telephone contacts last financial year was its lowest it has ever been (628.9k), other than 2020/21 (617.7k). 2020/21 was the Pandemic year when many services were closed or restricted. This again illustrates MySandwell is evidently minimising contact to other channels.
- 11.12 Of the 7 Finance PIs with a RAG status, 2 are 'Red'. These include 'Business Rates Collection' and 'Variance from budget – General Fund'.
- 11.13 Business rates collection is down on last year (also the Q1 target figure); however due to revaluation there is more debt to collect. Collection for 22/23 was also higher due to the effect of the team awarding £6m in Covid Additional Relief fund onto accounts which increased collection rates, so the two years are not directly comparable.



- 11.14 There is over £6m of overspend of the General Fund this quarter. Work is being undertaken to reduce the projected overspend and potential underspends may reduce overall position.
- 11.15 Sundry debt collection is significantly above target and Q1 last year; however, from the 1/4/2023 invoices issued in the first 14 days are not included in this (the service are allowing residents 14 days to pay rather than the invoice being considered due for payment immediately). Therefore, performance figures are not comparable to last year but have been included for information.
- 11.16 The 'Average working days lost per employee due to sickness absence (FTE)' is 2.87 days above a target of 2.24 days. Sickness levels have increased for the last two consecutive years since the coronavirus pandemic began in 2020-21. Housing and Regeneration and Growth have achieved a reduction in sickness compared to last year. All other directorates have seen a marginal increase apart from Borough Economy who encountered the highest increase. The most significant increase is for stress related sickness and a decrease in infections. This is due to the end of the pandemic which resulted in a decrease in coronavirus cases.
- 11.17 Stress related sickness increased by 1,107 working days (+55.4%) compared to the previous year and the main causes of this increase were:
- work related stress (+525)
  - personal reasons (+559)
  - mental health (-12)

The number of occurrences of stress, depression, mental health for this year was 141. This is an increase of 39 upon last year. The average per occurrence was 22 days this year compared to 19 days last year. Cost of sickness in Quarter 1 (2023-24) was £1.196m compared to £1.092m in 2022-23, this is an increase of almost £104k.



11.18 Targets are being developed for a number of HR PIs – this is the first time many are being reported quarterly. However, when comparing Q1 to Q4 in 22/23, there are no significant changes in the data.

11.19 The average satisfaction rating from members using the Councillor portal is 4.08/5, below the target of 4.5. Training for the portal was given to new Councillors on 25/07 and 03/08. From 04/05 (election day) to 03/08, not all Councillors may have been accessing the portal, which will have impacted performance figures. In addition, not all Councillors leave a rating.

11.20 A new PI 'Members to undertake a minimum of 10 hours of development annually' is above target at 34.72%. This equates to 25 out of the 72 members. The year-end target is 90%

## 12. Contract Governance

12.1 Reports on contract governance have been provided for Sandwell Childrens Trust (SCT), Serco, Places Leisure and Sandwell Leisure Trust (SLT) and assurance of governance arrangements has been provided through these reports. A summary for each one is detailed below.

### Sandwell Children's Trust

12.2 Since April 2018, children's services have been delivered by Sandwell Children's Trust on behalf of the Council. The Trust delivers the following range of services:

- Children's Social Care
- Fostering
- Targeted Early Help

12.3 Performance against the contract KPIs continues to be monitored. At the end of Q1, 9 out of the 15 KPIs were green, with three in the amber tolerance zone. At the end of the previous quarter 11 out of the 15 KPIs were green. There continues to be significant issues in recruiting and retaining social workers, with the Vacancy Rate indicator remaining red however performance has improved since the end of Q4.



- 12.4 SCT attended the Children and Education Scrutiny Board in September 2023 to present the half yearly performance report. This is in line with the contractual obligations. Discussion in respect of new KPIs are ongoing between the Trust and Council. The new KPI's have been broadly agreed, with further work required to finalise them. This work has been delayed due to the Area SEND inspection being announced on 19<sup>th</sup> June and concluding 7 July 2023.
- 12.5 The composition of the Board of Sandwell Children's Trust is laid out in the Articles of Association. It includes a requirement to have two Council appointed non-executive directors (NEDs). A vacancy arose in respect of the Member NED. As per the process previously agreed by Cabinet, Cllr Randhawa has taken over as the Council appointed Member NED, approved by Cabinet in July.
- 12.6 With regard to finance, SCT Achieved a £39k surplus in 2022/23, which was significantly less than was expected due to the increasing pressures across the workforce and the significant and increased placement cost pressures. SCT secured third party income from the Integrated Care Board in excess of the sum budgeted for.
- 12.7 Cabinet approved the contract sum, £74.475m for 2023/24 on the 15<sup>th</sup> February, representing an increase of £2.5m or approx. 3.5%. In addition to the base contract sum, £138,002 additional grant was agreed by Public Health towards the cost of the DECCA Service, which is delivered by SCT as part of their targeted youth offer.
- 12.8 The 2023/24 target is that the contract sum will generate an in-year surplus of £0.74m which will contribute to the expectation of reducing the cumulative deficit position of £7m as at 1st April 2022. The Trust's latest MTFP shows that the deficit is to be fully repaid by 2027/28. However, at



the end of Q1 the forecast is that the target will not be met (please see paragraph 5.5).

## Serco

- 12.9 The council's contract with Serco was awarded in 2010 and runs until 2035. It has a contract value in the region of £34m per annum. The contract covers services including waste and recycling collection, household recycling centre management, street cleansing and fleet management and renewal.
- 12.10 The contract has a set of regular meetings in place with standard agendas relating to the contractual requirements from key outcome targets (KOTs) to operational issues. These meetings are supported by regular cross channel communications between the SMB and Serco teams. Leadership Team also receive regular contract reports that provide oversight and issues are raised as appropriate.
- 12.11 The contract contains the requirement for the provision of regular data from the contractor to be provided, there is also an associated requirement for SMBC to provide information to Serco, relating to Council priorities annually and fleet maintenance through a set of KPIs.
- 12.12 Q1 performance is inevitably dominated by the industrial action that affected the service from 5 June. In addition, other pieces of work have been impacted. For example, it was necessary to stand down the work commissioned to sample resident participation and bin presentation to inform KOT1.
- 12.13 Whilst industrial action was an extremely challenging period for the service, employees and residents, it provided further evidence of the improvements to contract management and partnership working. The



actions taken are considered to have significantly mitigated the impact of the industrial action and expedited the backlog catch-up.

## Places Leisure

12.14 A 25-year contract is in place with Places Leisure to operate West Bromwich Leisure Centre and an annual management fee of approximately £20K is paid to the Council.

12.15 Monthly operational reports are provided to update on performance – operational and technical. Quarterly contract management meetings are held to ensure the ongoing monitoring of the contract and performance.

12.16 In terms of Q1 participation, there has been an increase visits, Fitness Live memberships and swimming compared to 2022.

## Sandwell Leisure Trust

12.17 In Q1, Sandwell Leisure Trust (SLT) managed the following leisure centres in Sandwell:

- Haden Hill Leisure Centre
- Hadley Stadium
- Harry Mitchell Leisure Centre
- Langley Swimming Centre
- Portway Lifestyle Centre
- Smethwick Swimming Centre
- Tipton Leisure Centre
- Tipton Sports Academy
- Wednesbury Leisure Centre

(in July 2023, Langley Swimming Centre and Smethwick Swimming Centre closed and the Sandwell Aquatics Centre opened)

12.18 As part of the council's resolution of the issues identified, Cabinet at their meeting 9 February 2022 terminated the Management Funding Agreement (MFA) with SLT with SLT will formally ceasing to deliver services on 30 April 2023.

12.19 Cabinet at their meeting 22 June 2022 decided that SLT will be replaced by a Local Authority Trading Company (LATC). However, following approval from Leadership Team and Cabinet, officers have extended the



termination period with SLT to March 2027, due to the cost benefit in relation to utility costs, improved partnership working and revised governance arrangements.

12.20 In terms of performance, attendance is down in Q1 compared to 2022 – reflective of the winding down of Langley and Smethwick and also the closure of the swimming pool at Haden Hill, however, memberships have increased by 5.65%. There has also been a 3% growth in those enrolled on the Learn to Swim programme.

12.21 The current improvement focus during Q1 was across 2 key work streams; trading – identifying how SLT’s post-Covid trading is rebounding in comparison to national and statistical comparators and supporting preparation for the public opening of Sandwell Aquatics Centre (SAC).

### 13 Strategic Risk Register

13.1 Effective risk management is a key element of good corporate governance, as noted in the council’s [Code of Corporate Governance](#), and is essential to the overall performance of the council in meeting its corporate plan objectives. Good risk management will ensure that resources are used efficiently and effectively and that assets and resources are protected against risk in the most efficient way.

13.2 The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) receive the Council’s Strategic Risk Register (SRR) on a regular basis for review and comment. The role of the ARAC is to provide assurance to the Council that it has a system of governance, risk management and internal control in place and that the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements continue to inform decision making.

13.3 The SRR does not include all of the risks faced by the Council. Other risks are captured within directorate, programme and project risk registers in line with the Council’s risk management framework. The SRR was presented to ARAC on 21 September 2023.

13.4 The risk register is a live document and reflects the Council risk profile position at the time of preparing this report in September 2023. The



assessment of each strategic risk and the mitigations has been reviewed with the risk owners and the Leadership Team prior to reporting to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. A summary of the strategic risk register is included at **Appendix 3**.

13.5 The following associated risks are being subject to a wider review, while it is not envisaged that there will be any significant change in the risk scores an update will be presented to the November meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee:

- Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Allocation
- Future Government Policies and Funding Sources
- Budget Monitoring and Management
- Oracle e-Business Suite
- Partner Organisations/Contractors Service Delivery
- Inflation

#### 14. Changes to the Corporate PI list (for Cabinet approval)

Cabinet approved the Corporate Performance Indicators in June alongside the refreshed Corporate Plan. For some areas, there was a placeholder for PIs that have now been developed. Others have been reviewed and improved and for a small number, the case made for them to be taken out of the Corporate set. Cabinet are asked to review and approve this list.

#### Corporate PIs - amendments or removal

PI	Strategic Outcome and Directorate	Justification
The number of care leavers accommodated by housing under their own tenancy	Best Start in Life Children and Education	This indicator relates to a small number of individuals. It will still be monitored at Directorate level.
A 5-7% point reduction on the reported numbers of CYP experiencing emotional health and well-being challenges	Best Start in Life Children and Education	This indicator relates to a small number of individuals and is survey based. It will still be monitored at Directorate level.
% of practice reviews and practice observations rated as good or outstanding	People Live well and age well Children and Education	This indicator relates to a small number of individuals. It will still be monitored at Directorate level.
Smoking Prevalence in adults (18+) - current smokers (APS)	People Live well and age well Public Health	There has been a change to the methodology in calculating this PI and the sample it is based on is very small, therefore the data is



		less meaningful. Smoking cessation uptake is included in the corporate set, as well as smoking at the time of delivery.
Events Attendance / Participation (Forge Mill Farm)	Strong Resilient Communities Borough Economy	Amended to 'Visitor spend per head (including secondary spend)'; this will present the narrative on a more commercial footing.
Number of affordable homes delivered p.a. through the HRA	Quality Homes Regeneration	Changed to 'Number of new council homes built p.a. (Council house new build programme and the high-rise programme)'
Number of affordable homes delivered p.a. via private developers	Quality Homes Regeneration	Changed to 'Number of affordable homes delivered in total per annum (including council homes)'

## Corporate PIs - additions

PI	Strategic Outcome and Directorate	Justification
Educational Attainment CIC - attainment at KS2	Best Start in Life Children and Education	To measure the following statement in the Corporate Plan 'We will be a good Corporate Parent for the children in our care, ensuring that those children are fully a part of our 'family', and promoting fostering and adoption.'
Educational Attainment CIC - attainment at KS4		
Educational Attainment KS2 (overall)		
Educational Attainment KS4 (overall)		
Children in Care - Same Placement for 2+ years		
Children in Care with 3+ moves (placement moves)		
Children in Care - Health assessments		
Children missing from placement and return interviews in time		
Deliver the statutory duty to provide travel assistance: Children moving onto personal travel budgets		To measure 'We will ensure that children and young people with SEND can access high quality local services when they need them, by working with partners to ensure there is a comprehensive local offer available to children and families' and also because of the spend in this area.
The total number of people assisted by the Welfare Rights Service to claim additional benefits	Quality Homes Housing	This measure shows the impact of the cost of living and the outcomes being achieved in supporting people experiencing financial pressures.
Members to undertake a minimum of 10 hours of development annually	One Council One Team Law and Governance	To measure the Member development programme and delivery of training



Member PDPs completed (no PDPs completed in Q1. For 2023/24 these will take place October- December and will be included in the Q3 report.	One Council One Team Law and Governance	To measure the Member development programme and delivery of training
The percentage of top 5% of earners that are women	One Council One Team HR	HR Measures to underpin the One Team Framework
The percentage of top 5% of earners from black and minority ethnic Communities		
The percentage of top 5% of earners who have a disability		
The percentage Disabled employees		
The percentage Ethnic Minority employees		
The percentage leavers from Sandwell Council		
The percentage new starters to Sandwell Council (include apprentices)		
Number of apprentices		
The number of graduates on the Sandwell Management Graduate Programme		
Gender Pay Gap Median		
Gender Pay Gap Mean		
Number of formal disciplinary investigations		
Number of formal grievance cases		
I am proud to work for the council		
I would recommend this council as a good place to work		
I feel a strong sense of belonging to this council		
Considering everything, I am satisfied to be working for this council		
This council motivates me to do more than is normally required in my work		
No. of Regeneration Pipeline projects in Concept Stage, Business Case Stage, Delivery Stage, projects on site, projects complete.	A Strong and Inclusive Economy Regeneration	Regeneration Pipeline PIs – a breakdown has now been provided. These will be reported on at year end.
No. of Regeneration Transport Pipeline projects in Concept Stage, Business Case Stage, Delivery Stage, projects on site, projects complete.	A Connected and Accessible Sandwell Regeneration	Regeneration Transport Pipeline PIs - a breakdown has now been provided. These will be reported on at year end.



## 15. Implications

<b>Resources:</b>	There are no direct financial implications to this report.
<b>Legal and Governance:</b>	A corporate performance management framework was identified as a key gap in the council's governance arrangements by Grant Thornton in 2021. The establishment of the corporate performance management framework was a key action in the council's Improvement Plan agreed by Council in January 2022 and updated in June 2022. The PMF will enable officer and political leadership to improve oversight and corporate grip of the council's performance.
<b>Risk:</b>	Should the council not implement a robust performance management framework, then it will not have the corporate oversight and intelligence to inform decision making and effectively manage risks to achieving service delivery and the strategic objectives identified in the Corporate Plan. These risks and the associated mitigations are noted in the SRR. The corporate performance management framework is a key mechanism to report progress and performance to the Government appointed Commissioners.
<b>Equality:</b>	Equality measures are included in the PMF, including the Organisational Health workforce indicators and the progress of the Corporate Plan.
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	The measures to track progress of the Corporate Plan include a series of health and wellbeing indicators. This enables the council's leadership to see at a high level the direction of travel of the borough's health and wellbeing and seek to continue good practice or identify mitigating actions to address issues.
<b>Social Value</b>	Measures in the PMF include looking at percentage of spend in the local area.
<b>Climate Change</b>	There are measures in the PMF that look at air quality and passenger journeys on public transport and 'we



	will' statements in the Corporate Plan on renewable energy measures in the build of new homes.
<b>Corporate Parenting</b>	There are measures in the PMF that look at children in care related to education, placements moves, health assessments and NEET figures.

## 16. Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Corporate Performance Report 2023/24 Q1
- Appendix 2 – Corporate Performance Report 2023/24 Q1 Annual Pls
- Appendix 3 – Strategic Risk Register September 2023

## 17. Background papers

- [Performance Management Framework – Q4 Monitoring](#)
- The appendices to this report are available here:  
<https://sandwell.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=143&MId=6561&Ver=4>

Report to Council 21 April 2022:

- [Performance Management Framework for the Council](#)

