

Slough Borough Council

Report to:	Cabinet
Date:	20 July 2026
Subject:	Corporate Plan Annual Report and Performance Update
Lead Member:	Cllr Wal Chahal, Leader of the Council
Chief Officer:	Will Tuckley, Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Sonia Khan, Director, Strategy, Community and Resident Engagement
Ward(s):	All
Key Decision:	YES
Exempt:	NO
Decision Subject To Call In:	YES
Appendices:	A - Draft Corporate Plan Annual Report 2025/26 B - Corporate Performance Report Q4 2025/26 C – Corporate Performance Scorecard Q4 2025/26 D – Corporate Performance Dashboard Q4 2025/26

1. Summary and Recommendations

- 1.1 This report sets out an update on the progress of the council in delivering the Corporate Plan for the 2025/26 municipal year.
- 1.2 Alongside the above, this report also presents the final quarterly update for 2025/26 under the Council's corporate performance framework and demonstrates the Council's continued commitment to openness, improved outcomes and progress against its key corporate priorities.
- 1.3 Together they support Cabinet oversight of performance, enabling informed challenge, decision-making and accountability as part of the Council's wider recovery and improvement journey.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is recommended to:

- Review and approve the draft Corporate Plan Annual Report 2025/26 at Appendix A for referral to Full Council.
- Note and review the Council's current performance as presented through the corporate performance report, scorecard and dashboard at Appendices B to D including any performance issues identified and the mitigations in place.

Reason: When approving the council's Corporate Plan for 2023-27, Cabinet agreed that a report on progress against the plan should be presented to Full Council annually to demonstrate accountability and transparency in delivery.

Commissioner Review

Commissioners welcome publishing an update to the corporate plan in the spirit of transparency and accountability. It's important that the update is written clearly and in a language that is accessible to the public. Similarly performance metrics that demonstrate progress should be meaningful and measurable.

2. Report

2.1 Options considered

- Prepare Corporate Plan Annual Report for May Cabinet and Full Council **(Recommended)**
- Do not publish an Annual Report

2.2 Background

2.2.1 The council's current Corporate Plan (2023-27) was approved in September 2023, following a period of public consultation, and drawing on newly available data from the 2021 Census .The plan set out the Council's overarching purpose, priorities and approach.

2.2.2 The overarching purpose of the plan is to identify and implement interventions that help to close the gap with regards to the difference in healthy life expectancy, with a particular strategic focus on children. This is a long term ambition that is intended to focus the whole Council, and partners, on the impact it can have on the health and wellbeing of people in Slough from young age. Slough residents are much more likely to live in poor health than their neighbouring communities.

2.2.3 The Corporate Plan sets out the more immediate priorities, for 2023-2027, that support this long term goal:

1. A borough for children and young people to thrive
2. A town where residents can live healthier, safer and more independent lives
3. A cleaner, healthier and more prosperous Slough

2.2.4 Alongside the purpose and priorities the corporate plan also identifies the approaches that are required to have the impact needed:

- Resident focussed
- Providing financial sustainability
- Enabling residents and communities
- Strengthening partnerships
- Building trust

2.3 Annual Report Summary

2.3.1 When approving the council's Corporate Plan for 2023-27, Cabinet agreed that a report on progress against the plan should be presented to Full Council annually. This did not happen in previous years, but is good practice for demonstrating

accountability in delivery of the corporate plan. Slough Children First produces a separate Annual Report, as part of the council's annual review and contract-monitoring arrangements.

2.3.2 Appendix A provides such a progress report for the 2025/26 municipal year. A summary of the report is included below:

2.3.3 **Transformation and Recovery**

Since the Corporate Plan was adopted, the council has continued its extensive transformation journey, strengthening organisational leadership, governance, workforce development and decision-making. Leadership development programmes saw high participation rates, helping build a more confident management cohort, while workforce turnover declined and new performance and accountability structures were embedded.

Oversight and scrutiny arrangements were expanded and matured, with strengthened risk management, improved reporting cycles, and clearer lines of responsibility across directorates. These changes support a culture of transparency, evidence-based planning, and greater assurance for elected members and residents.

Financial sustainability remains challenging, but the council has made significant progress through a strengthened and more robust Medium-Term Financial Strategy, improved demand modelling and forecasting tools to better anticipate service pressures, and the delivery of a structured three-year savings programme that supports long-term budget recovery and reduces reliance on one-off measures.

SBC also advanced development of its new Target Operating Model, which shifts Slough towards becoming an “enabling council”. This includes better use of digital tools, more integrated and accessible community hubs, preventative approaches to service design, and working with residents in a more collaborative way. This Operating Model builds on, and reinforces, the approaches set out in the Corporate Plan that are outlined under 2.2.4.

2.3.4 **Resident Engagement and Partnership Working**

The 2025 residents’ survey reflected notable improvements across multiple dimensions, including overall satisfaction, trust, perceptions of fairness, and perceived value for money. While keeping residents well-informed continues to be an area requiring further improvement, the trend shows strong recovery in local confidence. The Council has areas of good practice, particularly in relation to co-production in adult social care, which was recognised in the CQC inspection and is actively improving tenant engagement and empowerment in the housing directorate following the Regulator of Social Housing’s review last year.

The council delivered a strengthened programme of engagement, including the State of the Borough Debate, a refreshed Resident Engagement Framework, new communications approaches, and expanded involvement opportunities for community groups. These activities support more accessible and transparent governance and enable residents to shape priorities and services more directly.

Integrated multi-agency working was piloted in the Britwell Hub, demonstrating the value of co-located, cross-sector services. This collaborative approach is now being

built upon in Britwell and Langley Foxborough, recently awarded up to £40 million of Pride in Place regeneration funding, as communities and partners are placed at the forefront of driving local change, overseen by Neighbourhood Boards. Regionally, Slough contributed to emerging Thames Valley devolution proposals, which aim to strengthen local influence over growth, transport, and economic development across the wider region.

Overall, however, significant improvements in resident engagement are still required - including more targeted engagement with our more vulnerable communities, aligning engagement and information sharing across directorates and partners, and improving how the council communicates back to communities the changes that have been made.

There are also significant opportunities to strengthen strategic partnership working across Slough. Improving how the council collaborates with partners has consistently been a key recommendation in commissioner and external audit reviews and in inspections including the most recent SEND inspection. The council is currently working with communities and partners to refresh its strategic partnership structures, to be launched this summer, and is conducting an independent review to strengthen the council's statutory partnership working.

2.3.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Slough suffers from areas of high deprivation (30% of neighbourhoods lie within most deprived 30% nationally, IMD 2025), including inequalities across: health (e.g. healthy life expectancy significantly below regional average; infant mortality almost double), income (e.g. almost one fifth of children live in low-income households), education (e.g. one fifth of residents have no qualifications), crime (e.g. 45% higher crime rates than sub-regional average) and housing (e.g. highest rates of homelessness and overcrowding outside of London, almost 70% of rough sleepers have no recourse to public funds).

The last year has seen a strengthened focus on addressing inequalities embedded across services in collaboration with communities and multi-agency partners.

Slough's Community Safety Partnership, for example, has led a multi-agency approach to working with affected communities to tackle pockets of crime, support community safety and build longer-term resilience across communities disproportionately affected, including through culturally sensitive engagement, empowerment and education. For example, the multi-agency initiative 'Clear, Hold, Build' in Langley, led by Thames Valley Police and Slough Borough Council, has led to a 43% reduction in reported knife crime.

South Asian residents make up the largest broad ethnic group and face a much higher prevalence of health conditions such as type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular and kidney disease compared to white populations. Slough's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2026–2036 sets out a cross-system approach to addressing these health inequalities, including delivering more culturally responsive services and taking a more targeted approach to prevention and early intervention.

Slough has one of the youngest populations in the country, with one fifth of residents aged under 15 years. The Council's commitment to enabling more participatory approaches to working with young people – such as through the Youth Parliament, Young Commissioners, and Young Inspectors, alongside the recent

Story Tent and Eco Conference events – is increasing engagement and embedding the voice of young people across council decision-making.

Further examples can be found in Appendix A.

2.3.6 **A borough for children and young people to thrive**

This year SBC progressed a wide range of initiatives to support children, young people and families.

On health, work included the launch of a borough-wide Healthy Schools Award, encouraging whole-school wellbeing practices.

The July 2025 joint Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection of Slough's SEND Local Area Partnership identified significant weaknesses across the SEND system, including delays in processes, inconsistent quality and timeliness of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), and shortcomings in communication and multi-agency coordination. Demand for SEND support continues to rise, with around 2,800 children and young people supported through EHCPs in 2025, representing a 51% increase since 2019. While performance has improved, including a substantial reduction in overdue assessments, demand remains above forecast levels and local specialist provision is nearing capacity, resulting in continued reliance on out-of-borough placements despite ongoing investment in additional in-borough provision. Rising demand continues to place pressure on the High Needs system and the Council's Safety Valve agreement, with a forecast cumulative deficit of £33.4 million by 2026/27. In response, the Council approved a Priority Action Improvement Plan in early 2026 to drive service improvement, strengthen partnership working, improve data quality and support the transformation required to meet increasing demand and improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

Early Help services have been strengthened, with improvements in support pathways, targeted interventions and partnership arrangements. Fostering services and the Corporate Parenting Strategy have been further developed to ensure children in care receive better, more consistent support. Slough has also continued to maintain one of the smallest early-years disadvantage gaps in the country, supported by strong early-education provision, community-led learning spaces, and targeted interventions.

This year also saw the council participate in programmes that brought together schools, community groups and partners to strengthen youth participation, support creativity and confidence, and enable young people to take a more active role in influencing the future of Slough. Initiatives included the Eco Conference at Slough and Eton Secondary School, the Story Tent Slough and the EYE Lab entrepreneurship programme, each providing meaningful opportunities for children and young people to share their ideas, shape local priorities and build new skills.

In order to deliver the first priority of the corporate plan the council aligns its work closely with Slough Children First. SCF produces a separate Annual Report, as part of the council's annual review and contract-monitoring arrangements. Key improvement priorities are:

The Youth Justice Service was inspected in September 2024 and received an Inadequate judgement. An improvement plan was implemented in January 2025

and is overseen by the Youth Justice Board through regular monthly and quarterly reviews to ensure progress and strengthen service performance.

Recent audit and inspection activity in Children's Social Care has also identified inconsistencies in practice, oversight and understanding of the experiences of children and families, limiting the organisation's ability to respond quickly to areas of weakness. In response, strengthened interim leadership has been appointed and has begun implementing measures to address risks and drive improvement.

An Ofsted focused visit in November 2025 found that support for care leavers aged 18–25 was inconsistent. Ofsted issued an Area for Priority Action relating to support for care leavers over 18, alongside required improvements in management oversight, workforce capacity, planning and quality assurance. While committed practitioners and examples of strengths-based practice were recognised, the findings highlighted the need for continued improvement to ensure a consistently effective service for all young people.

2.3.7 A town where residents can live healthier, safer and more independent lives

This year, the borough became a national pilot area for the Neighbourhood Health Scheme, enabling residents to access primary and community healthcare in more convenient local settings. The council recommissioned Solutions 4 Health to deliver targeted lifestyle and wellbeing services.

Adult Social Care services received a Good CQC rating, with particularly strong performance in prevention, reablement and community support. Areas requiring further improvement were clearly identified and are being addressed through updated improvement plans. The council also launched AskSARA alongside RBWM, a digital self-help tool designed to support residents with personalised advice for safe and independent living at home.

On community safety, 2025/26 has seen expanded anti-social behaviour engagement events; the relaunch of the Safe Places scheme, a borough-wide Community Safety survey and the delivery of Slough's first Crime and Community Safety Summit. SBC has also participated in partnership activities through the Safer Slough Partnership, and the award-winning Safer Langley initiative, which achieved substantial reductions in youth violence and knife crime. Work with faith groups has culminated in development of a new Slough Faith Compact, supporting cohesion and shared community leadership.

2.3.8 A cleaner, healthier and more prosperous Slough

The council made progress in housing, environmental sustainability, transport and regeneration. Housing performance has improved from a low base, with the number of void properties reduced from 189 to 49, alongside investment in repairs, safety, and energy efficiency.

A regulatory inspection resulted in a C3 rating, highlighting both improvements and remaining challenges. highlighting serious shortcomings in the transparency, influence and accountability standard, as well as the tenancy standard. It also identified weaknesses in the safety and quality, and neighbourhood and community standards. It did, however, also recognised that the council has a clear understanding of the issues and is implementing a rigorous improvement programme to deliver better outcomes for tenants.

Housing services have sought to enhance resident engagement opportunities, providing a wider range of accessible, in-person engagement events such as the well-attended housing options open day for residents in temporary accommodation, where council teams and partners provided personalised advice on pathways into stable housing and essential support. However, there is more to do to respond to the serious failings identified by the Regulator for Social Housing in relation to transparency, influence and accountability.

The Council has good data on its housing stock, with a stock condition survey covering 90% of its homes completed in 2021 and this is used, with other data, to inform asset management decisions. 4.9% of its homes do not meet the DHS. Significant improvements have been made in relation to repairs and maintenance, with the regulatory noting that the Council was delivering an effective, efficient, and timely repairs service for homes and communal areas

Key areas of progress across transport and climate change activity included the continued rollout of the A4 Cycleway, urban realm improvements through Destination Farnham Road, expansion of the EV charging network through a £2.2m investment, and increased food waste recycling participation. The council continued delivering Project Sponge, a partnership initiative applying nature-based solutions to improve climate resilience, surface water management and green spaces.

Regeneration progressed through Berkeley Homes' acquisition of the Queensmere and Observatory sites, enabling plans for around 1,600 new homes and major public realm improvements. Community infrastructure benefited, including the refurbishment of Langley Pavilion delivered with Dulux and community volunteers.

3. Quarterly Performance Update

3.1 Background and refresh of indicators

This quarterly corporate performance report is a core component of the Council's performance management framework. It enables the Council to identify, monitor and respond to areas of underperformance that have the greatest impact on residents, ensuring that resources and interventions are targeted effectively. Strengthening this approach remains a key priority, informed by feedback from external auditors, the Annual Governance Statement and ongoing oversight from the Secretary of State and Commissioners.

External scrutiny including Ofsted's focused visits to Children's Social Care (April–May 2024 and November 2025) and the Area SEND inspection (July 2025) has reinforced the need for sustained improvement, transparency and robust performance accountability.

This report provides the final quarterly update to Cabinet on performance against the key strategic indicators within the 2025/26 corporate performance scorecard. These indicators align with the Corporate Plan 2023-2027 and support the Council's focus on recovery, service improvement and delivering better outcomes for residents. They incorporate priorities from the Improvement and Recovery Programme agreed by Cabinet in March 2026.

The report draws on a broad evidence base including insight from residents, Members, tenants, staff and complaints data and forms part of the Council's wider assurance arrangements alongside reporting on risk, finance and audit. Benchmarking remains integral to the performance framework providing context for Slough's performance. Comparative analysis is included where available using national, regional, CIPFA nearest neighbour and statistical neighbour data to support evidence-based assessment and decision-making.

During Q4, the performance framework and targets have been reviewed and refreshed for 2026/27. This ensures alignment with emerging national expectations including the Local Outcomes Framework (LOF) and supports the delivery of the Council's Best Value improvement priorities, Target Operating Model (TOM) and wider recovery programme.

The Government's LOF digital tool is expected to be released later this year and will provide trend data and benchmarking of LOF aligned outcome measures. These metrics are drawn from a range of existing national data sources and are updated at different frequencies with many published annually. They will inform the Council's Annual Performance Report and support in-year performance monitoring and benchmarking while also informing strategic planning and improvement activity including targeted director-led performance deep dives at Corporate Leadership Team level.

A refreshed set of 40 corporate performance metrics and targets for 2026/27 are presented below including 11 new measures replacing 7 existing metrics. These reflect service-led proposals to strengthen strategic oversight by balancing LOF aligned outcome measures with selected indicators that provide visibility of demand and core service performance. Together, they provide a focussed and coherent framework offering a holistic view of performance and progress against priorities. This aligns with and complements the Government's forthcoming LOF digital tool.

Priority 1: A borough for children and young people to thrive

Corporate performance measure	Reporting	CLT Lead	2026/27 target
Percentage of new EHC plans issued within 20 weeks including exceptions	Monthly	Executive Director of Children's Services	>=national average
**School readiness: Percentage of children achieving a good level of development at age 5	Annual	Executive Director of Children's Services	2025/26 70.8%
Child development: percentage of children achieving a good level of development in all five domains at 2 to 2.5 years old	Quarterly	Executive Director of Public Health, Public Protection, Engagement & Communities	>= national average
Proportion of children obese including severely obese at Year 6	Annual	Executive Director of Public Health, Public Protection, Engagement & Communities	<= national average
Percentage of 16–17-year-olds not in education, employment and training (NEET) or whose activity is not known	Monthly	Executive Director of Children's Services	<=national average
Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training	Monthly	Executive Director of Children's Services	>=52%
Rate per 10,000 of Children Looked After (CLA)	Monthly	Executive Director of Children's Services	Metric monitored for trends
**Number of contacts received by children's social services	Monthly	Executive Director of Children's Services	Metric monitored for trends
**Rates per 10,000 of referrals received by children's social services	Monthly	Executive Director of Children's Services	Metric monitored for trends
**Children in low-income families	Annual	Executive Director of Children's Services	Metric monitored for trends

Priority 2: A town where residents can live healthier, safer and more independent lives

Corporate performance measure	Reporting	CLT Lead	2026/27 target
**Percentage of people aged 18-64 who receive long-term support who live in their home or with family [ASCOF 2E2]	Annual	Executive Director of Adults Services	>=national average
Percentage of clients accessing long term support in the community at the end of the year [LTS001B)	Annual	Executive Director of Adults Services	>=national average
Percentage of eligible adults managing their care via a direct payment [ASCOF 3D2a]	Quarterly	Executive Director of Adults Services	>=national average
Percentage of safeguarding referrals that meet section 42	Quarterly	Executive Director of Adults Services	>=national average
Percentage of total eligible population aged 40-74 received an NHS Health Check in the quarter	Quarterly	Executive Director of Public Health, Public Protection, Engagement & Communities	>=national average
**Physical activity: percentage of adults aged 19 and over who are physically inactive	Annual	Executive Director of Public Health, Public Protection, Engagement & Communities	<=national average
Smoking prevalence in adults (18+) - self reported smokers in the Annual Population Survey (APS)	Annual	Executive Director of Public Health, Public Protection, Engagement & Communities	<=national average

Priority 3: A cleaner, healthier and more prosperous Slough

Corporate performance measure	Reporting	CLT Lead	2026/27 target
Average re-let time in days for HRA standard voids [BVPI 212]	Monthly	Chief Executive	<=35 days
Percentage of SBC emergency housing repairs completed within agreed timescale	Monthly	Chief Executive	100%
Tenant satisfaction survey: Percentage of tenants who responded satisfied with the overall service provided by Slough Borough Council Housing [TPO1]	Annual	Chief Executive	>=55%
**Rate of households with children in temporary accommodation per 1,000 households	Quarterly	Chief Executive	Metric monitored for trends
**Percentage of duties owed where homelessness was prevented or relieved	Quarterly	Chief Executive	Metric monitored for trends
**Employment rate for 16- to 64-year-olds	Quarterly	Executive Director of Regeneration, Environment & Planning	Metric monitored for trends
Percentage of decisions made on major planning applications within 13 weeks or timescale agreed with applicant	Quarterly	Executive Director of Regeneration, Environment & Planning	>=65%
Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling, anaerobic digestion or composting	Monthly	Executive Director of Regeneration, Environment & Planning	>=40%

Corporate Health			
Corporate performance measure	Reporting	CLT Lead	2026/27 target
**Business rates in-year collection	Monthly	Chief Operating Officer	End of year 97.0%
**Council tax in-year collection	Monthly	Chief Operating Officer	End of year 93.5%
Members survey: I have confidence in Slough Borough Council senior officers	Annual	Chief Operating Officer	Metric monitored for trends
Members survey: There is a healthy culture and good ways of working overall between Members and officers	Annual	Chief Operating Officer	Metric monitored for trends
Interim staffing costs (£)	Quarterly	Chief Operating Officer	Metric monitored for trends
Percentage of staff equalities data recorded on Agresso	Quarterly	Chief Operating Officer	Metric monitored for trends
Staff turnover rate	Quarterly	Chief Operating Officer	Metric monitored for trends
Number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE employee	Quarterly	Chief Operating Officer	Metric monitored for trends
Staff survey: I would recommend Slough Borough Council as a great place to work	Annual	Chief Operating Officer	>=65%
Staff survey: I am proud to work for Slough Borough Council	Annual	Chief Operating Officer	>=75%
Percentage of customer service calls answered	Monthly	Executive Director of Public Health, Public Protection, Engagement & Communities	>=75%
Percentage of customer facing enquiry box emails responded to within 5 working days	Monthly	Executive Director of Public Health, Public Protection, Engagement & Communities	100%
Percentage of complaints escalated from stage 1 to stage 2	Monthly	Executive Director of Public Health, Public Protection, Engagement & Communities	Metric monitored for trends
Resident survey: Percentage of Slough respondents said they were very or fairly satisfied with 'the way Slough Borough Council runs things'	Annual	Executive Director of Public Health, Public Protection, Engagement & Communities	>= national average
Resident survey: Percentage of Slough respondents said that they trust Slough Council a great deal or a fair amount.	Annual	Executive Director of Public Health, Public Protection, Engagement & Communities	>= national average

** New metric introduced for 2026/27

3.2 Summary of performance 2025/26

Overall, performance shows a mixed but gradually improving picture. A greater proportion of measures are now meeting or approaching target compared to the previous year, with fewer indicators performing below expectations. This reflects year-on-year improvement, with more services demonstrating progress and fewer areas of significant underperformance, although performance has been more variable in recent months.

There has been particularly strong progress in a number of areas. Outcomes for children's early development remain above national averages, supporting a strong start in life, while public health performance continues to outperform key benchmarks, including on NHS Health Checks. Adult social care is delivering positive outcomes, with more residents able to manage their own care, and homelessness prevention has improved significantly, reflecting a stronger focus on early intervention. Planning performance remains consistently strong, and improvements in financial management have led to reductions in council tax and business rate arrears, alongside better supplier payment performance. These areas demonstrate where a clear focus on outcomes, prevention and performance management is delivering tangible results.

However, challenges persist in other areas including the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), recycling rates, adult safeguarding performance remaining below national benchmarks, reflecting variation in referral thresholds and case mix. Challenges also remain within housing services – particularly repairs, re-let times and tenant satisfaction. Customer service responsiveness is also under pressure due to rising demand and capacity constraints. These issues reflect ongoing system pressures and highlight the need for greater consistency in delivery across all priorities.

Looking ahead, the Council enters 2026/27 with stronger performance foundations, clearer accountability and evidence of progress in key areas. The focus for the year ahead will be on driving greater consistency across services, closing gaps with national and regional benchmarks, and maintaining a clear focus on improving outcomes for residents.

Further detail on performance is provided in appendices B, C and D: the quarterly performance report, scorecard and dashboard.

4. Implications of the Recommendation

4.1 *Financial implications*

4.1.2 The Council reports its financial position to Cabinet every quarter through a separate Budget Monitoring Report. This provides a detailed update on how the Council is managing its finances and supports the performance information in this report. The Council reported its year-end position to Cabinet in June, showing an overspend of £13.152m against a previous forecast of £15.493m on its main day-to-day General Fund Revenue budget. This represented a £2.3m favourable movement. Maintaining tight financial control is essential to ensure long-term stability.

4.1.3 This performance report (Appendix B) highlights areas where performance may have financial impacts both directly (e.g. cost of services) and indirectly (e.g. demand for services). This reinforces the need to closely manage performance alongside the Council's finances as part of its recovery and improvement plans.

4.2 *Legal implications*

4.2.1 There is no legal requirement to present an Annual Report to Cabinet or Full Council. However, as noted above, on approval of the corporate plan, Cabinet agreed to present such a report on the, in order to allow Members to evaluate the progress made in delivery.

4.2.2 The Council has a best value duty to secure continuous improvement in the way it delivers its services and functions. Government guidance provides further information on how this duty can be delivered. This includes having a corporate plan that is evidence-based, current, realistic and enables the whole organisation's performance to be measured and held to account. The Council's financial strategy and delivery arrangements should align to the priorities in the corporate plan and respond to local need, including the plans of partners and stakeholders.

4.2.3 The Council's corporate plan is reserved to Full Council for approval, however Cabinet should formulate the plan and review its effectiveness throughout its term. The corporate plan sets out a clearly articulated and prioritised vision for officers to follow, ensuring local residents are at its heart.

4.2.4 Regular performance reporting supports the Council in demonstrating Best Value. The national Best Value statutory guidance is used by the Council to guide further improvement actions.

4.2.5 The Government's Best Value guidance encourages local authorities to be open to challenge and support. It promotes the use of performance indicators, benchmarking and transparency. Key themes include:

- Service Delivery: using data to assess service efficiency and benchmarking against comparable authorities.
- Continuous Improvement: regular monitoring, performance reporting and updating of improvement plans.
- Governance: ensuring performance data measures outcomes effectively and is used to address underperformance.

4.3 *Risk management implications*

4.3.1 Not preparing an annual report for publication would present a reputational risk to the council and fail to demonstrate the council's commitment to accountability. Publication of the report allows the council to demonstrate its ability to deliver against its strategic priorities.

4.3.2 In regard to performance, mitigating actions are in place for strategic performance indicators where trends show early signs of concern. These actions are proposed by the responsible service lead and monitored through quarterly performance reviews at Assurance CLT forum led by the relevant Executive Director (or their delegate).

- 4.3.3 Targeted deep dive sessions are also held with service leads at CLT and Corporate & Service Improvement Board. This approach ensures that emerging issues are identified early enabling timely intervention and maintaining oversight of key risks.
- 4.3.4 The Assurance CLT forum provides a comprehensive view of the organisation's health by reviewing finance, risk and performance together supporting informed decision-making and improvement planning.

4.4 *Environmental implications*

- 4.4.1 There are no environmental implications to the recommendations of this report. The report does highlight progress made in the council's ambitions to improve air quality, promote active travel and sustainable forms of transport, and take action to prevent or minimise the impact of climate change. Including:
- Major sustainable-transport upgrades under way on the A4 and Farnham Road corridors.
 - £2.2m secured to expand EV charging; delivering 1,600+ on-street chargers by 2040.
 - Station-concourse improvements enhancing arrival experience at Slough station.
 - Food-waste recycling growing, now reaching 15,300 households.
- 4.4.2 Under Priority three, the scorecard includes an indicator on the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling, or composting, which increased notably, rising from 22.5% in January to 26.5% in March, though comparisons with earlier periods are limited due to a revised methodology that now includes food waste. While part of the improvement reflects this expanded measure, there is also evidence of genuine performance gains compared with Q3 and the previous year.
- 4.4.3 The upward trend has been driven by the borough-wide rollout of food waste collections, reduced contamination, and seasonal boosts in green waste, with food waste now making up a significant share of recycling. Although performance remains below the 40% target, the trend suggests early stabilisation, with further gains expected as participation grows following full service rollout.

4.5 *Equality implications*

- 4.5.1 The report highlights progress made in addressing Slough's key inequality challenges, including those facing disadvantaged children and young people, tackling crime in our more deprived areas, and addressing local health and housing inequalities. These measures will have positive impacts, reflecting Slough's demography. The report (see Appendix A) also sets out progress in delivering the Council's Equality Plan, including recent improvements to deepen data and insights, strengthen governance, enhance workforce representation and engagement, and improve community participation and partnership working.
- 4.5.2 In regard to performance, having a robust evidence base and proactively monitoring performance data is key to ensuring the council meets its statutory equality objectives and tackles inequality.

5. Background Papers

None