



Corporate Performance Report
Executive Summary
2022/23 Quarter 4



Introduction

The 2022/23 Q4 corporate performance report provides an update on performance across the 77 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which monitor progress towards achieving our four priorities: delivering better services, protecting the environment, supporting economic growth, and caring for the vulnerable.

The Chief Executive and each Executive Director has provided a summary of performance for their areas of responsibility in the following sections.

Angie Ridgwell, Chief Executive

This final quarter performance report for 2022/23 sees a continuation in improved delivery against a challenging backdrop. As well as ensuring we continue to respond to the growing number of increasingly complex cases for our vulnerable residents, we also remain focused on good quality basic services which impact on day to day living for everyone. We are also transforming our practice model in both adults and children's social care to ensure they continually improve, as well as delivering significant change programmes including Oracle Fusion. There is a lot going on with much to celebrate and some real challenges to address too. These are highlighted by individual Executive Directors in their service overviews.

It was really pleasing to receive positive feedback from Ofsted when their report was published in January rating all aspects of children's social care as 'good'. This is a great recognition of the hard work and commitment from across the Council and we are already mapping out our pathway to 'outstanding' which is nothing less than our children and families deserve.

January also saw us secure just under £50m in Levelling up funds for safer, greener, healthier neighbourhoods, public transport and active travel improvements. In total Lancashire received over £200m, the highest support per head of population in England reflecting the strengthening partnerships across the county under the Lancashire 2050 framework. Partnerships are particularly important as resources continue to be constrained and this is good evidence of our improvements as a place leader, a convenor, and a deliverer of services.

Inflation is having a significant impact across the board. We have responded positively with support to residents and businesses including our warm and welcome spaces and fair funding for adult social care providers. We have also taken the opportunity to support our partners, particularly in health, to ensure public funding in Lancashire is maximised. However, this is also impacting our costs and supply chains, particularly in construction, and we are reviewing how this may impact the sequencing of a number of our larger projects.

Progress on the sufficiency of school places gives us confidence we can meet demand in the annual allocation. In year places are a challenge in a small number of year groups and locations, particularly where we have limited influence over admission numbers either because they are set by the school, or the school is constrained by contractual obligations. We continue to work closely with these schools to negotiate agreements but even with the best will in the world, this is complex and time consuming.



We continue to work as best we can within the constraints of the legislation to deliver an increasing number of Education, Health and Care plans. Demand for assessments increased by 70% in 2022 resulting in an additional 19% new assessments being completed. This is a national issue and our current performance is in line with the national average. Where we do differ is that we send more of our children to special schools than in other parts of the country and we have an agreed strategy to deliver more special educational need places in local schools where children can build better social networks while achieving good educational attainment.

The Council set a balanced budget for 2023/24 in February and teams have now completed their business plans for the coming year to ensure our resources are prioritised on achieving the ambitions set out in the corporate strategy. Significant work has been undertaken to strengthen the performance management framework creating the golden thread between corporate ambition, service delivery and individual performance. This will shape our reporting framework for 2023/24 utilising the performance metrics set out in appendix D.

The implementation of the Oracle system has continued to have some impact on services. Teams continue to work at pace to implement solutions and this has understandably featured as an increased risk in our risk and assurance framework. The information Commissioners Office has been kept informed and is satisfied with the approach we are taking. Our external auditors are also briefed, and this has been factored into our accounts closure processes which will necessarily take longer.

Our people strategy, designed to make us an employer of choice, has also been developed and is being socialised with stakeholders ahead of formal approval and then launch in the Summer. This is one of our key responses to address the recruitment and retention challenges which remain as one of our highest corporate risks.

Finally, Adult Social Care has been shortlisted for two national awards: the Municipal Journal awards for hospital aftercare and Local Government Chronicle awards for the mental health trailblazer. This showcases the best practice and innovative approach adopted by our staff and the council. Fingers crossed for the finals.

Louise Taylor, Executive Director of Adult Services and Health and Wellbeing

Our Key Performance Indicators continue to provide good insight into performance, support the preparation for inspection and care reform, and assist in the maintenance of budgetary control. The measures have been developed with regard to the CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) nearest neighbours and national and regional performance benchmarking Indicators. This allows for more context driven comparisons of our performance and supports with setting realistic and challenging targets for the directorate. At year end, 6 of our 13 indicators are rated green and 'on target', 3 are red and require improvement and 4 are amber, meaning they are slightly below target. This is an improved position from 21/22 when we closed the year with 5 greens, 8 red and 0 amber for these KPIs, but we still have work to do to continue to improve overall.

Whilst the waiting time indicator we set originally is now green, we are now rethinking this metric, the service's response, and the monitoring because we know we have higher numbers of people waiting longer than what we would want.



Although progress has been made in 2022/23 there is still room for improvement. We are changing our practice model in 2023/24 and once embedded, we expect to see waiting times significantly improve. Our Living Better Lives in Lancashire work will continue to seek out alternative care and support options for people in their community as an alternative to traditional, formal care. Our ability to provide community alternatives to bed-based care is also dependent on our integrated work with the Integrated Care Board who, through its chief executive, has committed to increasing capacity through working with us.

The higher numbers of working age adults admitted to long term residential provision is in the main due to the lack of alternative community based provision and the report outlines some of the measures we are continuing to push forward on to address this, and our commissioning and contracts team continue to support our external market and we anticipate that the increase in fee rates that are now being paid to the sector will support stabilisation and further improvements in quality.

We continue to receive requests for support in line with our England comparator authorities, the numbers of older adults who remain at home following a stay in hospital remains in a strong and stable position and above the England average, the proportion of adults with a disability living in their own home, the number of carers receiving support and the quality of community-based services remain high and our redesigned safeguarding service has showed steady improvement throughout the year.

In relation to public health services, 2022/23 has been a year of continued recovery and improvement.

NHS Health Checks programme in particular has continued to recover well and has exceeded the annual target to achieve at least 50% of pre-COVID activity three months ahead of schedule. Development of community offer, including the running of a pilot to explore the use of Community Libraries during sessions will enable more easier access for our residents.

The end of year position for the performance of the health visiting service has also shown significant improvement albeit there is still significant work to do to achieve the national levels of ambition. Revision of key service specifications in advance of formal procurement exercises is now underway and due to continue during 2023/24.

Health Protection Service has made significant strides in preventing and controlling infections including our seasonal flu and general vaccination delivery across Lancashire. There are plans to develop further joint working with the NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board, districts and voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector during 2023/24.

Jacqui Old, Executive Director of Education and Children's Services

As at the end of March the Education and Children's Services directorate continues to perform well overall. Following an inspection in December 2022, all aspects of Children's Social Care were rated as good. The report published in January 23 endorsed the commitment to children and our focus on continuously developing our services. The report recognised the huge improvements and financial investment which have been made. That said there continues to be in-year budget pressures



driven largely by the increased costs of placements plus the complexity for some of the children in our care. We are continuing to embed robust decision making and challenge when high cost homes are sought, ensuring that the opportunities for children and young people to be placed in in-house foster care and residential homes are maximised. Additionally, we have also been progressing work on the increased cost in Section 17 spend where families require financial assistance in terms of goods or services in exceptional circumstances.

While most young people thrive and have healthy lives, some need extra support and protection. The Children and Family Wellbeing Service (Early Help) are supporting an increasing number of families earlier. This has had a positive impact and we continue to see the number of children who need statutory support decreasing. However, for those children and young people who require social worker services there are rising numbers of young people with mental health difficulties, special educational needs, disabilities and complex needs, these children and young people require specialist and often expensive support. We have seen an improvement in the timeliness of seeing our children and families. The percentage of children and young people who received targeted early help support which met their identified needs improved significantly and is above target. Our Children's Social Care Services are continuing to perform well in the context of increases in the complexity of demand and challenges in securing the right homes for children in Lancashire. Placement sufficiency continues to be a key challenge. Good practice is being shared across teams in this quarter we approved 10 new mainstream foster carers and made 83 placements with mainstream in-house foster carers, as well as approving 12 new adopters.

The percentage of care leavers in employment, education or training (EET) continues to be a challenge and whilst the numbers in supported accommodation had improved those in EET remains below target. This variation can be attributed to a reduction in seasonal work, the cost-of-living crisis and the current industrial action. We continue to work with young people and partners in addressing the increased challenges young people face in accessing affordable housing and the Employee Support Team and Virtual School continue to seek out opportunities for our young people.

In education, the quarter 3 report noted the challenges relating to sufficiency of school places in some parts of the county and ongoing work to secure access to appropriate places. This work has progressed at pace, and we have secured expressions of interest to expand from Archbishop Temple, Broughton High School, Preston Muslim Girls School and Christ the King Catholic High School in Preston. 96.7% of parents were offered one of their preferred choices of secondary school from September 2023 and 99% were offered one of their preferred choices of primary schools (based on latest provisional data).

The number of permanent exclusions and suspensions has continued to increase in Spring 2023 (31 in Primary and 283 in secondary). This means some of our Pupil Referral Units or Short Stay Schools where children are placed when permanently excluded, are still full. Therefore, this remains a key priority for the service. Our strategies of challenge and support are starting to have an impact with overall exclusions reducing from 167 in Autumn Term 22 to 113 in Spring Term 23 in the secondary sector. This is still higher than last year but suggests we are moving in the right direction.



Key indicators for the library service continue to demonstrate good recovery with footfall continuing to grow, alongside increases in e-downloads. The Warm Welcome initiative is very much appreciated in both library venues and Children, Family and Wellbeing venues and consideration is being given as to how residents can be supported going forward during the next six months

The challenges regarding workforce and recruitment are improving but we still find it a challenge to recruit to most professional roles across the service. We are now starting to see some improvement in recruitment and retention and are reducing dependency on agency social work staffing.

Phil Green, Executive Director of Growth, Environment, Transport and Community Services

In addition to the corporate KPIs, the directorate's 'speed dial' dashboard indicates that Growth, Environment and Transport is performing at least 'good' across the majority of indicators as well as highlighting some key areas performing at average or below for Q4 including Estates, Business Growth, Skills and Employment and Strategic Development.

Ongoing global factors and macro-economic conditions including the highest annual UK inflation in over 30 years are challenging for all businesses and particularly bad for the construction industry with knock on implications for some key performance areas, particularly economic development. Officers are increasing risk management, stress testing and due diligence including supply chain and contractual matters as well as applying mitigation to address budget and programme risks.

Whilst key milestones continue to be achieved, Strategic Development has dropped from 67% in Q3 to a 45% overall performance rate in Q4 which is 'amber' reflecting a change in risk ratings for some key projects.

The start of Q4 saw Cabinet approve the Highways and Transport Strategy coinciding with Lancashire being awarded further Levelling Up monies bringing the total to almost £250m including LCC's successful £50m 'safer, greener, healthier' active travel projects in east Lancashire. Strategic transport, planning and environment indicators are performing good to excellent aligned to early work on action planning for the three new GET strategies including preparatory work on the levelling up projects as well as sustainable travel, electric vehicle infrastructure, biodiversity net gain and local nature recovery.

A challenging economy together with end of period (European Regional Development Fund) contract performance are combining to have a localised impact on aspects of the business community affecting start-ups, recruitment, and the scale of investment appetite. Whilst Rosebud loans have continued to see improvement with 5 investments forecast to generate 107 new jobs, sub-contracted business formation and job creation continue to under-perform against targets. Provider contracts have been terminated and temporary mitigation is in place until the intended UK Shared Prosperity Fund provision is in place.

The Careers Hub performed above target and at a Gatsby Benchmark score of 6.13 exceeded the national average of 5.16. (The 'Gatsby Benchmark' is an indicator of good careers guidance, using 8 benchmarks). Whilst the spend profile is below target, the new Multiply programme to improve adult numeracy skills has achieved 97% target starts in year 1. A further 129 companies registered pledges to support skills



development in the workforce 17% above target for Q4 and exceeding the target overall for 2022/23. Thirteen businesses have taken advantage of 24 Young Apprenticeship Grants. Whilst over 70 have expressed interest, the time taken to recruit apprenticeships is creating a lag against the target of 100. Skills Bootcamp performance strengthened in Q4 from 146 starts to 373 exceeding the original target and attracting further funding from Department for Education.

The pace of dealing with highway and lighting faults continues to achieve strong performance overall. As expected, Q4 has been affected by weather conditions with increased winter maintenance impacting on emergency (4 hour) and non-urgent (5 day) defect repair performance, both dipping below the 90% target.

Estates' performance continues to measure as good overall with the annual disposal budget target achieved in full balancing a dip in the performance on asset valuations linked to a requirement to revisit of previous valuations.

Q4 includes the busiest time for Customer Access. Calls answered dropped to 87.1% (below 88.75% target) however significant improvements in automation continue to benefit performance and customer satisfaction which increased above target from 91.1% to 92.3%.

In waste, year on year performance is improving but waste recycling remains stubbornly below targets set in 2018. Overall waste volumes are reducing, and financial performance continues to be good. Operational performance of Lancashire Renewables remains excellent and performance at Household Waste Recycling Centres continues to improve at a steady pace. Targeted intervention reported in Q3 has resolved a number of longer-term absences to the overall benefit of sickness performance.

Mark Wynn, Executive Director of Resources

The final quarter of the year is always a busy one within the directorate as we support the Council to finish its plans for the year and also, in tandem, finalise the developments for the forthcoming new financial year.

This quarter has seen the preparations for the first closure of Accounts within the new Oracle Fusion System. This has not been without its challenges and has had an impact on the business in terms of continuing to provide business as usual, which in itself is not unusual for system and business change on this scale. A programme of activity is in place to normalise this position as we are mindful of the need to ensure provision of services to suppliers and staff. We are also working with staff to ensure they are supported through this transitional period. It would be remiss of me to not thank staff from across all of the organisation for their support and understanding to date.

During the quarter we have also developed service plans for each area of the Council and for the 2023/24 Financial Year we will have a clear set of prioritised plans and a supporting change programme clearly aligning activity to the Council's priorities and ensuring the provision of excellent services to our residents and customers.

We have developed a 'People Strategy' and a proactive engagement exercise is underway with Directorate Leadership Teams, Change Influencers, Staff Networks and other key stakeholders in advance of our launching it in Summer 2023. Additionally extensive work is underway to create a team that will deliver a refreshed People Service offering designed to ensure we deliver our People Strategy



outcomes aligned to our Corporate Priorities. Our focus is fundamentally to develop a brand for the Lancashire workforce, ensure we become an employer of choice that will build, support and sustain a workforce for the future. A soft launch of the service is planned for early Summer 2023 and will include a Team Lancashire week in late summer to further set out the work we are doing to deliver these objectives.

This is reaping rewards already with a reduction in absence levels (compared to 2021/2022, 2022/2023 levels have reduced by 1.07 absence days per FTE employee which an 8% reduction overall). This has been achieved through a concerted focus in this area – we note a particular benefit in a reduction in long term absence days – with a 90% reduction in long term absence days). The service is also undertaking significant work in the management of its expenditure on Agency placements which it is anticipated will generate benefits (financial and productivity related) going forward. We will also be rolling out a new Employee Benefits platform which will offer a considerable range of employee benefits that will also deliver savings to LCC.

On the financial front the Council set its annual budget in February against possibly one of the most challenging financial scenarios for many years given inflation pressures and the level of demand for Council services. At this moment in time the out-turn position for 2022/23 is still being finalised and will be reported to Members at the next meeting.

In terms of the reporting of performance within the Council this report sets out the quarter 4 position against the current corporate indicators and we have also undertaken work to refine and review this suite of indicators for use in future reports. Previous indicators are still in use across the Council, are available at a service level and being monitored as appropriate.

In this last quarter the developments that have been made in preparation for next year are positioning the Council well to improve its overall performance management for the coming year.

