



Corporate Performance Report
Executive Summary
2023/24 Quarter 1

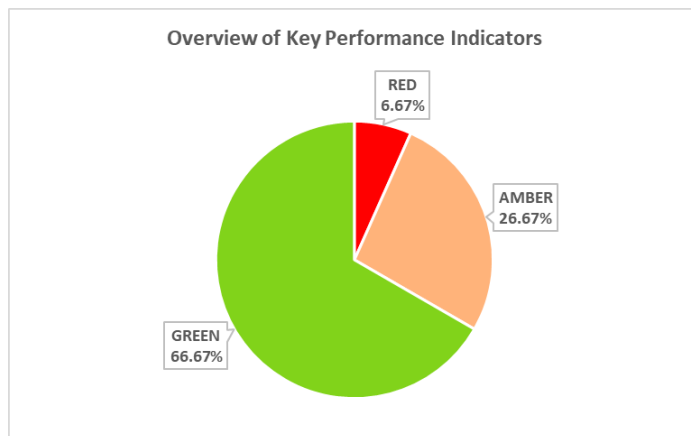


Introduction

There was a comprehensive review of the key performance indicators (KPIs) used to monitor performance during 2022/23, and a new suite of indicators was agreed by Cabinet in June 2023. For 2023/24 there are 43 KPIs being reported to monitor progress towards achieving our four priorities: delivering better services, protecting our environment, supporting economic growth, and caring for the vulnerable, and to give an overview of our corporate health.

Overview of performance

Of the 43 KPIs included in this report, one is 'The percentage of KPIs that are achieving or exceeding their target', which is currently reported as 66.67%. Considering the other 42 KPIs, 12 (28.57%) are not rated. Of the rated KPIs, 20 are green, 8 are amber and 2 are red, as shown in the chart below.



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 is the first performance report against our agreed corporate performance metrics for 2023/24. No dashboard can include every metric we measure and these metrics, which were agreed at Cabinet on 8 June 2023, are considered to best represent our priorities for the year, including some areas which are particularly challenging for us. Consequently, while individual Executive Director summaries will reflect on key points arising from the dashboard, they also highlight by exception other areas which are important.

The quarter 1 (Q1) dashboard indicates that we are currently exceeding or meeting 66% of our rated targets. This is an improvement on last year's performance, albeit on a slightly different, and more challenging set of metrics. However there remain a number of unrated indicators and we are developing a mechanism to standardise the indicator rating process to enable more of these indicators to be assessed throughout the year. We are also committed to driving the percentage of positive delivery up across the year despite introducing more challenging metrics. Underpinning the corporate dashboard directorates have a range of detailed metrics that support the operational management of our services.

At a corporate level, Q1 has seen us focused on a number of strategic priorities. Together with our unitary partners, we have formally commenced negotiations with Government in respect of a level 2 devolution deal for Lancashire. Maintaining engagement with district councils and other key stakeholders is an important part of this work and creates some challenges given the pace and fluidity of those conversations. We have a narrow window of opportunity to

secure the necessary primary and secondary legislation before Parliament is prorogued. Feedback from officials continues to be positive.

Our place based partnership with the ICB continues to evolve under the leadership of Louise Taylor. The ICB have now formally agreed the delegation of resources to the partnership in a structured way as it evolves. A series of workshops have commenced with our District colleagues to design the delivery of these community health and well being services and the aim is to align our adult social care resources alongside the health delegations to secure the biggest impact for our residents.

Adult social care continues its preparations for the new CQC inspection regime. We do not know when we will be subject to inspection, but we are learning from the pilots and have a comprehensive plan to make sure we are ready. In an organisation the size of Lancashire this is a significant undertaking and, as with Ofsted, maintaining consistency of practice through a necessary dispersed leadership model remains one of our biggest challenges. The next tranche of CQC inspections has been delayed slightly from their expected October start date. While we do not know if we will be part of the next tranche, we will use every extra day we have before inspection to continue our improvements.

The implementation phase of Oracle Fusion is drawing to a close. As previously reported it has not been without problems and it will be a positive step to transfer the system into business as usual. The next challenge is to optimise the system and deliver efficiency gains from the technology. This will require us to change a range of processes and procedures and ultimately deliver a better service. The upgrade of Oracle has meant that financial information for managers has been limited in Q1 and managers are working with finance colleagues to reconcile the budget monitoring reports as they come through. Once this has been completed, we will be able to formally report our financial position for Q1 which would normally sit alongside this report.

At a more operational level, the performance report shows continued good progress across children's social care as our families reap the benefits of the family safeguarding model. Our care leavers are benefiting from better accommodation, and we continue to strive to create more opportunities to gain employment, education and training for them. We again improved the number of children securing their school preferences although challenges remain in a handful of hotspots.

Our aim to improve our customer focus, is positively reflected in the indicators and we need to challenge ourselves to make this more consistently felt. In particular the quality of our responses and the learning from complaints is a focus for officers this year.

We are on track to deliver our People Strategy, and we see some green shoots in recruitment and retention as well as continued improvement in attendance. These remain significant issues for management and will require a sustained effort to achieve our ultimate targets.

Rising interest rates and inflation continue to put pressure on our budgets. Our robust out turn position from 2022/23 allowed us to support our NHS partners and can give us continued confidence in our track record of good financial stewardship. As a management team we remain committed to delivering within our financial envelope. We are monitoring closely significant projects which will be impacted by these variations and are scenario planning to ensure we have options for consideration. We are prepared to make difficult choices where necessary as demonstrated by the Cabinet decision in respect of the South Lancaster to M6 road scheme.



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

Adult Social Care and Public Health continue to have areas that perform well. For Adult Social care this includes the quality of CQC regulated care provision and how quickly we respond when concerns are registered that a person may be unsafe. For Public Health this includes improvements in NHS Health Checks and steady improvements in the Health Visiting Service.

Adult social care continues to monitor a range of performance indicators but is focusing in the corporate performance report on readiness for the new CQC inspection regime of which there are 7 where 2 are green, 3 are amber and 2 rated red. Senior managers have undertaken a self-assessment of the service to understand areas of strength and improvement. In this process, the forensic analysis has revealed some shortcomings in practice, recording and data quality. An experienced CQC improvement delivery partner has now been identified and started on 3rd July 2023 to work with the service to deliver improvement at pace.

Leadership is one of the four areas the CQC inspection will look at and a number of the Corporate Performance Indicators have been changed to ensure that all leaders including members have greater oversight on performance. These include the support offered to carers, how long people wait for assessment and how effectively adult services meets its statutory duty to offer an annual review to those in receipt of care. Performance in these areas is significantly below where we want it to be.

There continues to be a strong emphasis on performance recognising that performance improvement is not only about oversight of qualitative and quantitative information but also about workforce and culture; implementing a strength-based social care practice model (Living Better Lives in Lancashire); effective budget management; and transforming the way support is delivered in line with national best practice. Workforce and specifically recruitment and retention is fundamental because we know that a consistent and well-trained workforce also correlates to good performance, quality in practice and effective use of resources. Adult social care has already produced a Workforce Strategy and now our action turns to operational plans which includes attendance at recruitment fairs, a more localised advertisement campaign; staff sharing their stories about working in Lancashire on media platforms, career progression pathways and robust induction programmes.

In relation to Public Health the NHS Health Checks programme has achieved an annual coverage with just over 45% of eligible residents receiving an NHS Health Check which is well above expectations for the past 12 month period. Likewise, the Health Visiting Service continues to make steady improvements and performance regarding the six to eight-week review has risen further to 89%. We will continue to work on moving closer to the challenging national level of ambition of 95%. Finally, for our substance misuse services, we are continuing to increase the number of eligible residents in treatment and are hopeful that the recent investment in additional staff will over time translate to improvements in outcomes.

The Public health team has been restructured into functional units to address recruitment challenges and workforce development as well as to enable collaborative working with districts and the Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Integrated Care Board. A commissioning hub has been launched to support the recommissioning of public health service contracts. A self-assessment of strengths and risks is being carried out as part of continuous improvement programme to enhance the public health functions of the county council.

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

As at the end of June the Education and Children's Services directorate continues to go from strength to strength in several areas. Children's Social Care continues to manage demand well. This is approximately 10 children less per month being received into care and is in line with other good and outstanding authorities with a similar demography. The team have worked hard to explore alternatives to care and this is having a significant impact.



Overall, the number of children in care has reduced from 1,901 in March 2023 to 1,875 in June 2023. Children's social care has continued to build on successes and performance continues to be good. More children are living in our own children's homes and occupancy levels have been above 90%. One home was upgraded to good meaning all of Lancashire's children's homes are good or outstanding.

Progress has been made in relation to recruitment and retention. Turnover has stabilised in two out of three services resulting in a turnover rate of 13% which is below the national average. This is already reducing agency costs. Moving forward we will focus on ensuring the largely newly qualified staff from South Africa are sufficiently trained and supported to work effectively.

96% of care leavers are in suitable accommodation but we remain focused on improving the proportion not in education, employment, or training. A care leavers job fair was held at County Hall with stands from Higher Education, Further Education, the Skills Hub, North Lancs Training Group, Lancashire Volunteering, training providers, our own apprenticeship team and 14 Employers.

For 16/17yr olds with an Education or Health Care Plan, there are 23 more young people not in education, employment or training this year than last year. 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.

As of 31 July 2023, 91% of schools were rated good or above by Ofsted. 4,034 young people attended targeted youth support and participation groups in the quarter. And at the end of quarter 4, there were 30,397 families attached to the Supporting Families programme in Lancashire.

In education, challenges remain relating to sufficiency of school places in some parts of the county and there is ongoing work to secure access to appropriate places. This work has progressed at pace. 96.5% 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.

The number of permanent exclusions and suspensions has continued to increase. 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. 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 performance. However, visitor numbers have been impacted by the regeneration of the Harris Library in Preston and the temporary closure of Kirkham Library for repairs.

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

This quarter we report against new indicators designed to better reflect the Directorate's performance delivering priorities, strategies and business plans. This includes the use of a grouped scoring technique or 'index' that enables us to report performance against a number of KPIs such as around the economy, highway condition and sustainable travel. The analysis in the report continues to highlight specific issues, causes and actions being taken based on individual KPI data as appropriate. Some new indicators require further data gathering before meaningful analysis and trends can be reported in future quarters.

In addition to the corporate KPIs, the directorate's 'speed dial' dashboard continues to indicate at least 'good' performance across the majority of indicators. Some key areas performing at



average or below for Q1 remain highlighted including Business Growth, Skills and Employment, Strategic Development and Waste.

Ongoing global factors and macro-economic conditions continue to impact economic performance, major developments and construction with knock on implications for some key performance areas, particularly business growth and economic development. Whilst the (inflation) rate at which prices are rising, fell in the UK to 7.9% in the year to June, down from 8.7% in April/May and the 11% high seen at the end of 2022, to help slow prices, the Bank of England has increased the UK interest rate to 5.25% over the same period, the highest rate since February 2008. Rising UK interest rates impact on real estate and investment decisions. Rising interest rates have implications for business and the number of commercial developments that provide the required return for investors. Despite weakening yields, industrial sectors (and private-rented residential in some major cities) continue to attract investment and major developments such as Lancashire Central remain attractive to investors.

Officers continue to utilise increased risk management, stress testing, due diligence and mitigation measures to address budget and programme risks to a number of key projects. Progress overall has seen the Strategic Development score improve from 45% in Q4 to 56.3% in Q1. This remains 'amber' reflecting the balance of risk across the programme.

Q1 has seen work progress on implementation of both the Economic Strategy and Highways and Transport Strategy. Work with key stakeholders is underway developing the detail of our £50m 'safer, greener, healthier' Levelling Up projects in east Lancashire. Strategic transport, planning and environment indicators are performing good to excellent aligned to continuing work on sustainable travel, electric vehicle infrastructure, biodiversity net gain and local nature recovery.

New environmental indicators are reported and illustrate some good performance aligned to the Environment and Climate Strategy and new responsibilities. We are on track to achieve our annual target for biological heritage sites and report a baseline performance of 84% air quality management areas that are within compliance limits.

The Lancashire Careers Hub (Skills) continues to perform above target achieving a Gatsby Benchmark score of 6.1, exceeding the national average of 5.5, including a current focus on supporting children in care to transition to post-16 education and employment. The Multiply programme to improve adult numeracy continues to gain momentum with increased learner starts (125% overperformance) and improve financial spending profiles. The Department for Education have included Lancashire in scope for the Year 1 evaluation and an initial visit took place in June.

Whilst Q1 is above target for the percentage of waste recycled at household waste centres, the challenges of recycling electrical items, primarily batteries and e-cigarettes is highlighted.

Finally, following the busiest time for Customer Access, Q1 performance returned above target for calls answered rising by over 2.5 percentage points to 89.73% (88.75% target). Performance and customer satisfaction continues to be supported by improved automated interactions.

Mark Wynn, Executive Director of Resources

Good progress continues as the new directorate establishes ways of working and an identify, ensuring we work as one team and offer support to the whole council.

Work on council-wide Business and Service Plans continues, ensuring issues are identified and addressed. We are improving the process for next year, building on our strong foundation.



The plans have helped develop and support a change programme, linked to our Council's priorities.

Our emerging People Strategy identifies priorities and areas for workforce development. We are working with stakeholders on it to help us become an employer of choice, building a workforce for the future. Activity includes supporting staff retention and attracting new colleagues, especially in difficult to recruit areas.

We continue to focus on reducing time lost due to sickness; providing information, support and challenge for managers. The position improved last year and continues to move in the right direction, but we need to achieve our target to further reduce absence by 12% this year.

Governance arrangements are being reviewed, including reflecting on lessons learnt from other Councils and collating feedback from members and officers. This will inform a review of our constitution, schemes of delegation, officer decision making and our strategic boards to ensure arrangements are fit for the future. The team has also been supporting on governance advice in relation to devolution.

The Council replaced its core business systems with Oracle Fusion this year and post go live, as with all major ICT implementations a programme of stabilisation and 'fixes' to known issues was needed. Progress has been made and all known issues have a scheduled remedial plan. System users are kept informed of progress as we resolve the remaining issues.

The implementation of Oracle Fusion led to a delayed closure of accounts with a report to the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee in July explaining the reasons and revised estimated timeframes, which were supported by our External Auditors. The draft statement of accounts for 2022/23 will soon be published as required and the audit of those accounts also scheduled. A large number of councils across the country have experienced delays in getting this year's accounts audited.

We remain committed to the effective use of data and information to guide resource allocation and support improvement. Our Business Intelligence Team has worked with all services to refine and develop the approach, including this report, reviewing indicators to give a clear picture of organisational performance. This allows us to recognise areas of excellent performance, to monitor trends, identify problems and explain what we are doing to remedy them. This has been a team effort involving all directorates and I would like to recognise and thank everyone for their commitment to transparency and service improvement.

