



Corporate Performance Report
Executive Summary
Quarter 4 2023/24



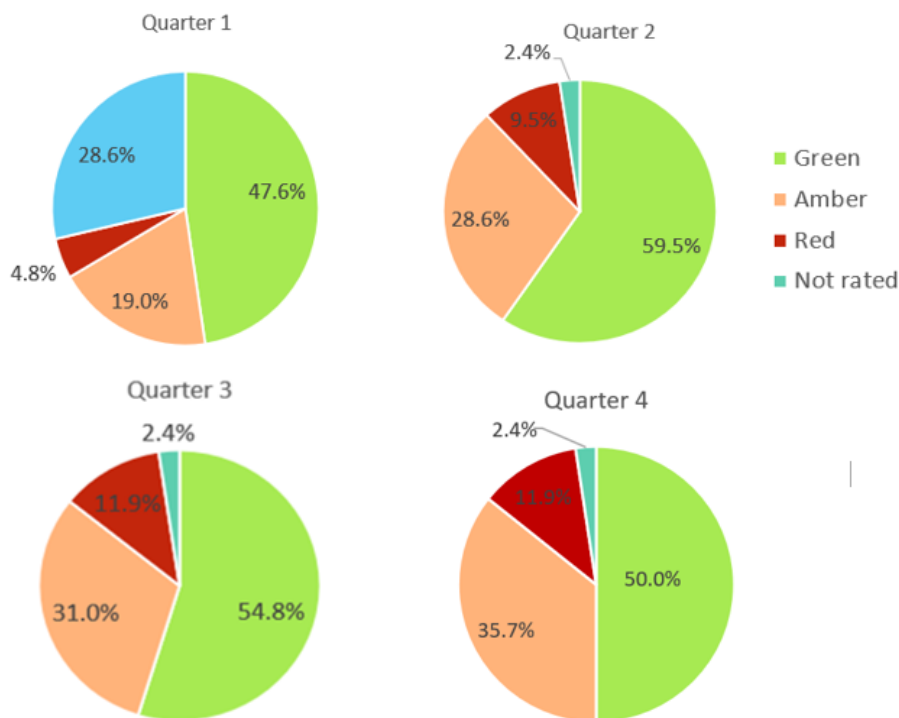
Introduction

The Council's performance indicators for 2023/24 were set out at the Cabinet meeting on 8 June 2023. The key performance indicators monitor progress towards achieving our four priorities: delivering better services, protecting our environment, supporting economic growth, and caring for the vulnerable, as well as providing an overview of our corporate health. The accompanying corporate performance dashboard includes 42 key performance indicators (KPIs) plus an overarching measure of the degree to which we are achieving or exceeding our targets. The online dashboard can be found here: [Microsoft Power BI](#).

Overview of performance

51% of rated KPIs were achieving or exceeding their target in quarter 4. There are 41 rated KPIs in Q4, with one, economic impact index, still in development and unrated. The charts below provide an overview of all KPI ratings.

Comparisons of KPIs ratings across the quarters of 2023/24



The following KPIs have improved performance since Q3:

- Waste re-used, recycled or composted.
- Revenue forecast compared to budget.

The following KPIs have a decline in performance since Q3:

- Highways condition and maintenance score.
- Number of complaints upheld by the Ombudsman.
- Average attainment 8 score at Key Stage 4 (revised national figures were published).
- Timeliness of assessments and reassessment in Adult Social Care.
- Successful completion of treatment for opiates.

The details of the issues, causes and actions for each KPI can be found in Appendix C.



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

The final performance report for this year provides a mixed picture. It is the culmination of ambitious targets, focused on those areas that were more challenging to deliver against some national headwinds that have dampened the overall outcomes. A priority for the council is the responsible management of our finances and good performance in this context enabled Cabinet to release resources to address some of our highways' issues. We have also seen improved performance in re-cycling as well as key stage four results for our young people.

Fourteen of our performance indicators have been on track all year. Of particular note is the number of children we are able to keep safe in their own homes, children securing their first choice school and the take up of free early education places. All of these are important determinants in optimising the life chances of young people. These factors are further boosted by the Lancashire skills hub as well as the growing activity and engagements with our libraries, all of which maintain that skills focus and emphasis on life-long learning.

There are a number of areas where performance has dropped in the last quarter and these largely reflect a national position where demand is rising. The wet weather has impacted the condition of our highways with more issues being reported. Assessment times in adult social care and volumes of special educational need & disability requests are impacting delivery times and in turn increasing complaints. We also host a number of stubborn indicators including children missing education, attainment of disadvantaged children and staff sickness. There are no quick fixes here, but we have improvement plans in place and continue to work with our partners to identify and implement best practice.

Overall, the Council remains in a relatively strong position. Our finances are tight but resilient and our evidence-based plans to deliver better value from our resources are well into development. Our children are safe and well looked after and our adults social care has high degrees of resident satisfaction as well as an award-winning supported living scheme. Our devolution plans are progressing well with statutory framework being finalised for the parliamentary process. Major developments are largely on track having worked through the supply and inflation implications that materialised across the year.

There remains work to do and certainly many areas of focus, but we have a strong track record in delivery, robust plans to continue our positive trajectory and most importantly we are resilient and adaptable. We go into 2024/25 in a better position than many councils and while the challenges are not underestimated, we are satisfied that we can continue to deliver the best possible services for the people of Lancashire.

Louise Taylor, Executive Director of Adult Services

This quarter the Adult Services directorate received feedback from the Local Government Association (LGA) peer review which took place during February 2024. The peer review is part of the directorate's ongoing preparedness for a statutory inspection by the Care Quality Commission expected at some point during 2024/25.

The overall feedback from the peer review is positive. The report highlighted several areas of good practice and celebrated the hard work and dedication shown by staff across the Directorate. Highlights include Lancashire's Advocacy offer, our offer for carers, the Mental



Health trailblazer, the Enablement Service and the partnership commitment to the Lancashire Safeguarding Adults Board.

Areas for further work and improvement include addressing our waiting times for assessments, reassessments and reviews, adopting a consistent strength-based approach to our practice, enhancing our story telling to demonstrate the impact we have on improving people's lives and improving how our team managers and staff access and utilise performance information. We are addressing these issues as a matter of priority and work is already underway. Furthermore, we are refreshing our self-assessment and evidence library and continuing to undertake case audits in readiness for the inspection visit.

In relation to our backlogs, there are some early positive signs from the completion of reviews for those people who have waited the longest – we are not seeing any significant increases in cost arising from the reviews thus far undertaken which suggests that needs were being appropriately met. The modest improvements in the numbers waiting assessment have slipped back this last quarter coinciding with the release of some agency staff but is expected to gather momentum with the launch of the new practice model in July when earlier targeted support will be available.

We are making good progress in reimplementing our core case management system with training now in place to be delivered by system experts to relevant staff before go-live at the beginning of July 2024. We are also making good progress in relation to the implementation of our new practice model, which is on track to have the Wellbeing and Early Support function in place also by July. Refresher staff training in strengths-based practice is in place to be delivered in Quarter 1 of 2024/25. This training will be delivered by the market leader in strengths-based practice, the Social Care Institute of Excellence.

The directorate has made some progress throughout 2023/24 in achieving the agreed targets in relation to our key performance indicators. We have completed the year with 3 green indicators, 2 amber and 2 red. We know, in particular, that we have more to do in relation to our waiting lists and backlogs and this remains a key focus for our operational teams – we anticipate improvements in this area by autumn/winter 2024/25. We have not fully achieved our target for the proportion of services delivered in the community and our strengths-practice model will support further improvements in this area.

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

Children's Services continues to see strong performance in reducing demand with fewer children coming in to care during the year than expected. Over the past 12 months, a range of preventative approaches have been developed including re-focused edge of care services, strengthened partnership working in our complex safeguarding service and the launch of a further 17 Family Hubs in March 2024. We expect that performance will remain strong in this area.

The percentage of parents receiving one of their three preferred school places has reached 99.1% at primary and 97.0% at secondary. This is testament to the hard work, professionalism and knowledge of the staff in our teams and in schools, despite the pressures on school places that exist in parts of the county. As Early Years education is so important, it is heartening to see that the take-up of the two-year-old offer has increased markedly, now at 95.4%, alongside



a 3 and 4 year old offer that has also outperformed the target. This will enable more children to get the excellent start to their education journey that they require and promises well for the future.

Rates of children missing education are higher than we would want, and we have a greater understanding of the cohort of children and improved data and strategies. Most confirmed children missing from education are within the admissions system with parents engaging with the school registration process. However, the demand for school places is a key part of this picture and our work to create additional places in parts of the county where there are the highest pressures is beginning to have an impact.

Another critical part of our life-long journey is being literate, and fittingly library use has increased again, with computer use and downloads of E-books also surpassing expectations, with over 2.5 million visits to our libraries and 293,000 downloads. Our libraries are great places to visit, and staff have been inspiring in their innovative use of new technologies to promote both paper and digital access to books and magazines.

The percentage of 16 and 17 year olds in education employment and training has fallen slightly to 94.4% and is below the target of 95.5%. Whilst performance is below target, there are almost 500 more young people in education, employment and training than in March 2023. An action plan has been developed to secure improvement and strengthened senior leadership oversight is in place. Similarly, we have seen a small decrease in the percentage of care leavers aged 18-20 in employment, education or training which, at 49.6%, remains below the 52% target. We are working closely with the employment support team and partner agencies, to help improve performance.

Moving forward, we will continue to provide support and challenge to schools to support improvements in educational attainment, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, and in realising the benefits of investment in staffing within the SEND service, which have already supported a significant improvement in the timeliness of Education, Health and Care Plan Annual Reviews.

Phil Green, Executive Director of Growth, Environment, Transport and Health

Performance dashboards for the directorate continue to indicate strong performance overall in Q4 with the majority of indicators at good or excellent.

Public consultation on Lancashire's devolution deal concluded in Q4 and we received a letter from Minister Jacob Young confirming that the statutory tests to implement the proposal had been met. Local Enterprise Partnerships came to an end in Q4 with functions transferring to upper tier and combined authorities. These strategic changes will continue to inform an evolving landscape of economic performance indicators at both the sub-regional and upper tier administrative levels.

In Q4, UK inflation has continued a downward trend to 3.8% whilst the UK interest rate has remained at 5.25%. Ongoing global factors continue to impact on economic headwinds, real estate investment and financial performance with knock on impacts for local government such as reduced income levels for recycled materials. Nevertheless, whilst we see the continued impact of high inflation on construction, wider economic confidence continues to improve.

This is matched by estate performance with business parks (rental income) and disposals (capital receipts) exceeding financial targets, together with continued improvements across our major development and infrastructure programme. Strategic Development remains on

track to achieve the high bar 80% target for the first time in Q1 2024/25 as blockages are overcome and delivery of major projects continues.

The unprecedented wet weather has continued to have a major impact on highway performance. We are seeing a significant volume and backlog of inspections and defect repairs resulting in a longer than expected recovery period. Increased resources and specialised repair techniques are being deployed and risk managed accordingly.

In Public Health, the focus remains on NHS Health Checks, Health Visiting and substance misuse. Q4 has seen significant risk mitigation with regard to the new provider for 0-19 rate services which will continue into Q1. Treatment of substance and alcohol misuse, where demand is increasing, continues to underperform. Whilst immediate actions including recruitment in a competitive market and work to address caseloads have not yet had the desired impact; a new 3-year health improvement plan has been agreed.

Q4 has seen excellent performance exceeding outcome targets from the use of funding for skills, employment and engagement with businesses. 130 young apprenticeship grants (target 118) were allocated; 222 learners (forecast 212) achieved a successful outcome such as a job or self-employment from skills bootcamps; 147 businesses signed skills pledges (target 120) which is evolving to integrate the care covenant; and enrolment targets were exceeded for adult numeracy skills in the Multiply programme (135% vs 100% target).

Elsewhere in the directorate, major programmes such as Lancashire's £50m Levelling Up Fund and Bus Service Improvement Plan remain on track against very challenging national targets. Natural England confirmed we received the highest national response rate to our public engagement survey, the result of which will inform the evidence base for the new Local Nature Recovery Strategy being developed throughout 2024/25.

The employment market remains competitive resulting in patchy performance. Vacant posts in electric vehicle infrastructure and the Forest of Bowland National Landscape have been filled; however, pressure remains in waste recycling and engineering design capacity.

Looking ahead, a greater understanding of customer satisfaction will be possible going forward following the deployment of an improved customer experience survey that will give us a vastly increased level of data to work with.

Mark Wynn, Executive Director of Resources

This is the final quarter's performance report and inevitably it highlights some successes and some challenges for the directorate and the Council going forward.

Financial management remains a key priority for the organisation and whilst the final out turn figures are not scheduled to be reported until the Cabinet meeting in July latest indications are that the position will be an improvement on previous reports with a likely overspend of £5.2m, which reflects the priority placed on this within the organisation. This position is within the expected range previously reported and also allowed the release of an additional £5m for highway maintenance as approved by Cabinet at its meeting in May. This is a very positive position to report given the prevailing economic and financial conditions this Council along with others have faced within the financial year.

From a forward-looking perspective as set out in the budget report the work to review the Council's cost base and outcomes against a wider peer group of Councils is underway and



will be a key component of the Council's aspiration of developing a medium-term sustainable budget position.

There are a number of workforce challenges facing the Council at the moment and whilst the performance levels on sickness, vacancy levels and turnover remain a challenge to move in a positive direction in the current climate, there are some extremely positive developments happening in these areas to move the Council forward:

- We have analysed two years of sickness trend data to ensure targeted and tailored interventions in areas with the highest absence rates.
- We are proposing a new benchmark/target to allow the Council to compare more easily with other large employers.
- A focussed piece of work is being undertaken on vacancy and turnover levels again with targeted support to those areas most affected.

We continue to receive high levels of correspondence and complaints; this is particularly prevalent in the area of Special Educational Needs (which is a national challenge). It is encouraging to note that a 'programme of activity/improvement' has been developed and is being implemented which looks at the current and future challenges in this area.

This quarter we had 12 ombudsman cases across the whole council upheld. This is an area where reporting to the Compliance and Assurance Board will help identify trends and allow the Council to implement learning where appropriate and improve services to residents.

As a directorate we continue to develop our 'offer' to the organisation which will define the way we interact with managers, staff and residents to ensure we offer value added services in the most efficient manner possible. This offer will be rolled out over the course of the coming year and some areas of the directorate have already started this process ('people services' have launched from 1st April).

I believe this has been a really productive first year for the directorate and a number of developments that are in trail will improve performance further in the coming year.

