

**COMMISSION**  
**PERFORMANCE REPORT**  
**QUARTER 3 2023-24**



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## 1. Our Borough Strategy 2021-30 Priorities

Performance Management in St Helens Borough Council is focused around achieving the 6 strategic priorities outlined in Our Borough Strategy 2021-30.



**Priority 1 - Ensure children and young people have a positive start in life**

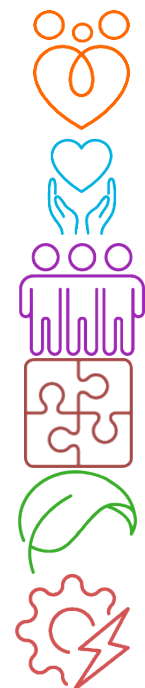
**Priority 2 - Promote good health, independence, and care across our communities**

**Priority 3 - Create safe and strong communities and neighbourhoods for all**

**Priority 4 - Support a strong, thriving, inclusive, and well-connected local economy**

**Priority 5 - Create green and vibrant places that reflect our heritage and culture**

**Priority 6 - Be a responsible council**



## 2. Borough Strategy Priorities and the UN Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a collection of 17 interlinked global goals designed to be a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all". The SDGs were set up in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly and are intended to be achieved by the year 2030. Making progress towards the global goals by 2030 depends on local action. SDGs fit with Our Borough Strategy Vision and the Council's approach to Reset and Recovery. All 17 Sustainable Development Goals have been mapped against the 'Our Borough Strategy' priorities and outcomes.

 <p>ENSURE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE A POSITIVE START IN LIFE</p>	     	 <p>SUPPORT A STRONG, THRIVING, INCLUSIVE AND WELL-CONNECTED LOCAL ECONOMY</p>	          
 <p>PROMOTE GOOD HEALTH, INDEPENDENCE AND CARE ACROSS OUR COMMUNITIES</p>	   	 <p>CREATE GREEN AND VIBRANT PLACES THAT REFLECT OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE</p>	      
 <p>CREATE SAFE AND STRONG COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS FOR ALL</p>	  	 <p>BE A RESPONSIBLE COUNCIL</p>	       

### **3. Purpose of the Report**

The purpose of the report is to inform and update Elected Members on performance against the 6 priorities of the Our Borough Strategy 2021-30 and respective outcomes as set out above. The report covers the period Quarter 3 2023-24 providing the performance position reported over the course of the period. The reporting format splits the report into 2 distinct parts:

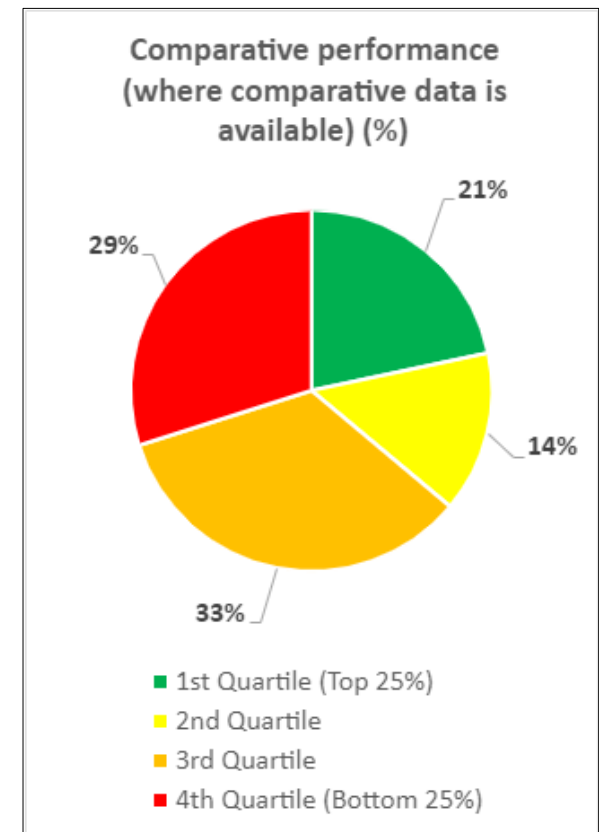
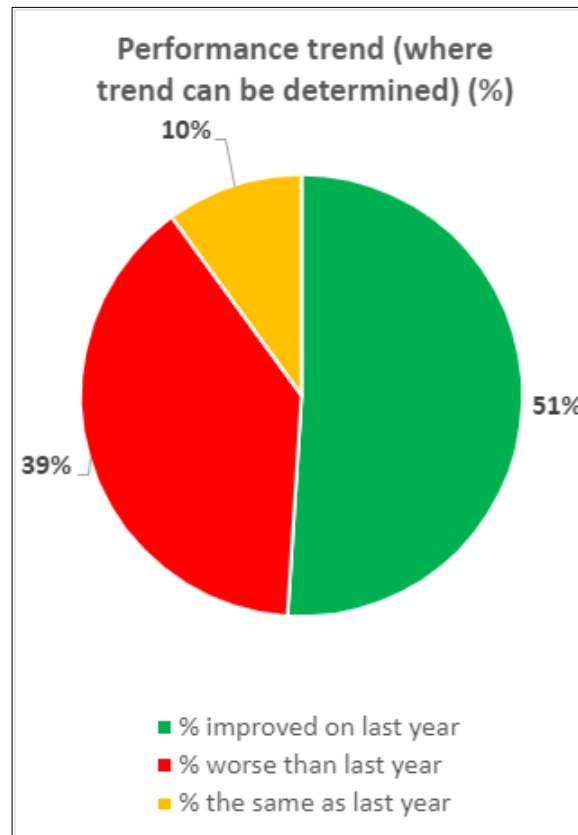
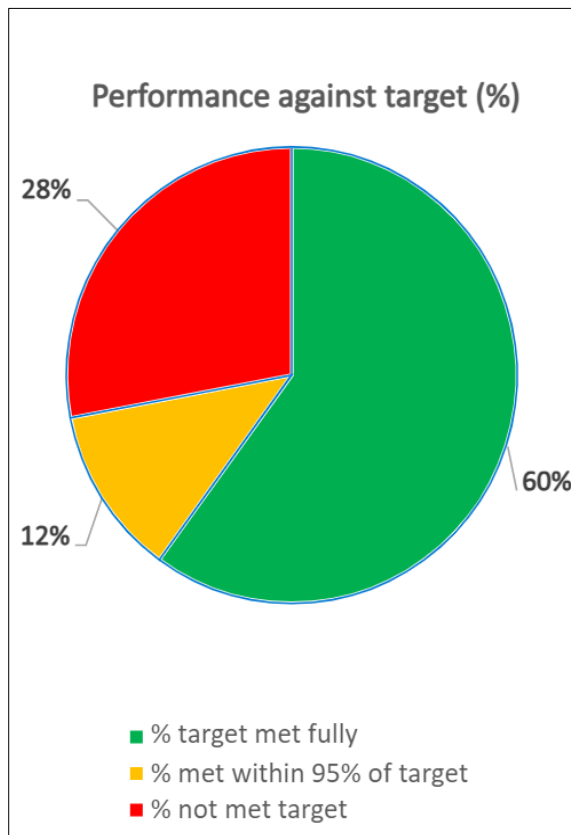
**Part 1** of the report is a statistical analysis of the performance position at Quarter 3 2023-24.

**Part 2** of the report is a commentary on performance against delivery of the 6 strategic priorities and their respective outcomes summarising current performance within the quarter and action being taken to improve performance where required.

### 3. Executive Summary

The charts below provide an overview position of all performance measures across all 6 Borough Strategy priorities as at Quarter 3 2023-24, examining:

- Performance against target.
- Trend - whether performance has improved / worsened since the position 12 months ago.
- Inter Authority performance - how St Helens' performance compares to that of a family group of authorities similar to St Helens.



## **4. Part 1 - Statistical analysis**

To measure performance at Quarter 3 2023-24, the Council is reporting against a total of 86 performance indicators, where targets were set. The indicators reported are split between Tier 1 and Tier 2:

**Tier 1** – A set of high-level strategic indicators and targets that constitute the Outcomes Framework of the Borough Strategy 2021-2030.

**Tier 2** – A further set of performance indicators and targets to address key priority areas of performance within Directorates / Departments.

In the supporting scorecards for each priority area, this distinction is maintained and both tiers are shown as they are all relevant to an understanding of overall performance.

The Quarter 3 report statistical analysis looks at performance under 3 areas:

1. Performance against targets
2. Trend over 12-months
3. Inter-authority comparison

## 4.1 Performance Against Target

This measure sets out:

- The percentage of indicators by priority where targets have been fully met or exceeded.
- The percentage of indicators by priority that have not fully met target but are within 95% of target.
- The percentage of indicators by priority that have failed to meet the target by more than 5%.

In the supporting scorecards for each priority area, green, amber, and red colours are used to depict indicators in each of the above three bullet point situations.

Priority	Number of Indicators with data	% target fully met	% target met within 95%	% target not met
1. Ensure children and young people have a positive start	21	52% (11)	24% (5)	24% (5)
2. Health, independence, and care	21	57% (12)	14% (3)	29% (6)
3. Safe and strong communities and neighbourhoods	14	64% (9)	0% (0)	36% (5)
4. Strong, thriving, inclusive and well-connected economy	8	63% (5)	0% (0)	37% (3)
5. Green and vibrant places reflecting our heritage and culture	9	67% (6)	0% (0)	33% (3)
6. Responsible Council	13	70% (9)	15% (2)	15% (2)
<b>Total</b>	<b>86**</b>	<b>60% (52)</b>	<b>12% (10)</b>	<b>28% (24)</b>

\*\* Some new indicators do not have targets set for the year as baseline data is being collected in 2023-24. See individual priorities for details.

A listing of indicators, which have met or exceeded target, have met within 95% of target, or have failed to meet target by more than 5% are shown within each of the 6 priority scorecards.

## 4.2 The Performance Trend

This measure compares performance at Quarter 3 2023-24 with performance at Quarter 3 2022-23 by setting out:

- The percentage of indicators where performance compared to last year has improved.
- The percentage of indicators where performance compared to last year has declined.
- The percentage of indicators where performance compared to last year is the same.



In the supporting scorecards for each priority a black arrow pointing up, downwards or sideways is used to depict indicators in each of the above 3 scenarios.

NB. There are a small number of indicators for 2023-24, where performance data in 2022-23 is not available and therefore it is not possible to show a performance trend. Where this is the case N/A appears.

Priority	Number of Indicators with data	% improved on last year	% worse than last year	% the same as last year
1. Ensure children and young people have a positive start	22	45% (10)	41% (9)	14% (3)
2. Health, independence, and care	19	42% (8)	42% (8)	16% (3)
3. Safe and strong communities and neighbourhoods	11	45% (5)	55% (6)	0% (0)
4. Strong, thriving, inclusive and well-connected economy	5	60% (3)	40% (2)	0% (0)
5. Green and vibrant places reflecting our heritage and culture	8	63% (5)	37% (3)	0% (0)
6. Responsible Council	13	70% (9)	15% (2)	15% (2)
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>51% (40)</b>	<b>39% (30)</b>	<b>10% (8)</b>

### 4.3 Inter Authority Comparison

This measure shows how performance in St Helens compares to the performance of a family group of authorities similar to St Helens. It does this by ranking each authority's performance by quartile. The top performing 25 % are in the first quartile and the bottom 25% in the fourth quartile. Authorities in between are placed in either the 2nd or 3rd quartiles. Comparative national data is only available to be used for **43** indicators.

In the supporting scorecards for each priority, where this measure is used, green indicates that St Helens is in the top best performing quartile, red that it is in the bottom quartile or yellow/amber that St Helens is in either the 2nd or 3rd quartile). The England average figure (Eng, Av) is also now presented, as is the statistical neighbour group average (LA Av.) to provide additional context to comparative performance.

Priority	Number of Indicators with data	% in 1st quartile	% in 2nd quartile	% in 3rd quartile	% in 4th quartile
1. Ensure children and young people have a positive start	22	23% (5)	14% (3)	23% (5)	40% (9)

Priority	Number of Indicators with data	% in 1st quartile	% in 2nd quartile	% in 3rd quartile	% in 4th quartile
2. Health, independence, and care	11	18% (2)	9% (1)	46% (5)	27% (3)
3. Safe and strong communities and neighbourhoods	0	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
4. Strong, thriving, inclusive and well-connected economy	6	33% (2)	17% (1)	50% (3)	0% (0)
5. Green and vibrant places reflecting our heritage and culture	2	0% (0)	50% (1)	0% (0)	50% (1)
6. Responsible Council	2	0% (0)	0% (0)	50% (1)	50% (1)
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>21%* (9)</b>	<b>14% (6)</b>	<b>33%* (14)</b>	<b>33%* (14)</b>

NB – Percentages rounded to nearest whole number

The latest available picture of inter authority performance largely relates to the 2021-22 financial year. Therefore, St Helens position vis-a-vis its quartile position is based on St Helens performance in that particular year relative to its statistical neighbours. Future reports will be updated to reflect the 2022-23 comparative performance position as and when verified data is published.

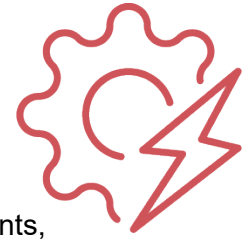
#### 4.4 Summary and conclusion of statistical analysis

- **72%** of indicator targets have been either exceeded, met fully, or met within 95% of target. This compares to 73% of indicators in Quarter 3 2022-23.
- **28%** of indicator targets were not met, compared to 27% in Quarter 3 2022-23.
- The trend measure indicates over the course of the last 12 months **51%** of indicators showed improvement, **10%** of indicators maintained the same performance and **39%** of indicators showed a downward trajectory. The position in Quarter 3 2022-23 was that **52%** of indicators showed improvement, **7%** of indicators maintained the same performance and **41%** of indicators showed a downward trajectory.
- **21%** of all indicators where comparison is possible are in the top quartile, compared to 24% at Quarter 3 2021-22, whilst **33%** are in the bottom quartile, compared to 27% at Quarter 3 2022-23. 14% and 33% of indicators are in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quartile respectively, compared to 20% and 29% in Quarter 3 2022-23 (NB percentages rounded to nearest whole number).
- Annual targets were set where possible within the context of national, Northwest, and local authority comparator group data. Equally targets aspire to be challenging but achievable within the context of the available resources. The targets also take account of performance during the last 3 years which has been an unprecedented period due to the onset and impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, a cost-of-living crisis, increasing demand for services and severe financial constraints.
- Performance should therefore be viewed within the context of what has continued to be a challenging operational period for the Council. The legacy impact of the pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis, rising demand for services and the requirement to deliver significant budget savings has impacted the Council's ability to meet targets and demonstrate improvements in performance trends. Equally in many areas the impact of the pandemic on performance is yet to be fully realised and understood. However, given the effect of the pandemic on St Helens to date there is the strong likelihood that

existing inequalities may be widened. This presents risks for future performance, but particularly in areas such as public health, education and schools and children's services where comparative performance is already challenging.

## 5. Part 2 - Commentary on performance against priority and outcome

### Priority 6 - Be a responsible council



#### Outcomes

- Communicate, listen, engage, and work in partnership well with our residents, communities, local organisations, and partners recognising the strengths and skills in our community
- Invest in developing the strengths and skills of our workforce and elected members
- Embrace innovative ways of working to improve service delivery and the operations of the council
- Meet our community's needs by delivering accessible and responsive services
- Provide value for money and ensure we are financially resilient and sustainable

#### Overview of priority performance

The tables below show provide an overview of performance at Quarter 3 2023-24 for the indicators reported.

#### Performance Against Target

Number of Indicators with data	% target fully met	% target met within 95%	% target not met
13	70% (9)	15% (2)	15% (2)

#### The Performance Trend

Number of Indicators with data	% improved on last year	% worse than last year	% the same as last year
13	70% (9)	15% (2)	15% (2)

#### Inter Authority Comparison

Number of Indicators with data	% in 1st quartile	% in 2nd quartile	% in 3rd quartile	% in 4th quartile
2	0% (0)	0% (0)	50% (1)	50% (1)

## Priority 6 – Be a responsible council

### Tier 1

Outcome	Ref	Performance Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Higher / Lower is better?	22/23 Outturn	23/24 Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	% Variance from Target (DEC)	Trend	Comparative Performance
							June	Sept	Dec			
Communicate, listen, engage, and work in partnership well with our residents, communities, local organisations, and partners recognising the strength and skills in our community	CS-001	Number of complaints received	Quarterly	Lower	745	654	290	543	826	-67.89%	↓	N/A
	CS-002	Percentage of Stage 1 complaints responded to within policy timescales.	Quarterly	Higher	38%	60%	24	63	73	21.67%	↑	N/A
We invest in developing the strengths and skills of our workforce and elected members	CS-003	The percentage of staff completing mandatory core E-learning training	Quarterly	Higher	65%	70%	54	54	58	28.89%	↑	N/A
	CS-004A	The percentage delivery of the Member Development Programme over 12 months	Quarterly	Higher	100%	100%	100	100	100	0%	↔	N/A

Outcome	Ref	Performance Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Higher / Lower is better?	22/23 Outturn	23/24 Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	% Variance from Target (DEC)	Trend	Comparative Performance
							June	Sept	Dec			
	CS-005	The percentage of training outcomes perceived to be above 'Satisfactory'	Quarterly	Higher	87%	85%	83.8	94	96	12.94%	↑	N/A
	CS-006	The number of apprenticeships commenced in financial year as a percentage of the total workforce.	Quarterly	Higher	1.9%	1.7%	0.46	0.99	1.28	0.39%	↑	N/A
<b>Embrace innovative ways of working to improve service delivery and the operations of the Council</b>	CS-007	Percentage of transformation programmes with delivery confidence as 'on track'	Quarterly	Higher	N/A	TBC	87	87	Awaiting data	-%	N/A	N/A
	CS-008	Customer Satisfaction Score - Customer rating on satisfaction with contact with the Council	Quarterly	Higher	2.8	3.5	4.1	3.9	4.1	17.14%	↑	N/A
	CS-009	Customer Effort Score - Customer rating on how easy the Council made it to resolve their issue	Quarterly	Higher	2.8	3.5	4.1	3.7	3.9	11.43%	↑	N/A

Outcome	Ref	Performance Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Higher / Lower is better?	22/23 Outturn	23/24 Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	% Variance from Target (DEC)	Trend	Comparative Performance
							June	Sept	Dec			
	CS-010	Percentage of Customers that have had their call answered within the promised timeframe	Quarterly	Higher	36%	60%	85	61.5	57.7	-3.83%	↑	N/A
Provide value for money and ensure we are financially resilient and sustainable	CS-011	Percentage of council tax collected	Quarterly	Higher	94.51%	95%	27.3	53.1	79.15	-0.44%	↓	3rd Quartile Eng Av. 96 LA Av. 95.2 (2022/23)
	CS-012	Percentage of non-domestic rates due for the financial year which were received by the authority	Quarterly	Higher	95.29%	95.6%	30.4	55.3	82.42	1.75%	↑	4th Quartile Eng Av. 96.8 LA Av. 97.1 (2022/23)

## Tier 2

Outcome	Ref	Performance Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Higher / Lower is better?	22/23 Outturn	23/24 Target	Q1 June	Q2 Sept	Q3 Dec	% Variance from Target	Trend	Comparative Performance
Communicate, listen, engage, and work in partnership well with our residents, communities, local organisations, and partners recognising the strength and skills in our community	CS-013	Percentage of FOIs responded to within policy timescales.	Quarterly	Higher	76%	80%	71	66	65	-16.67%	↔	N/A
	CS-014	The number of users engaging with the Council's social media posts	Quarterly	Higher	81,908	96,996	32974	51797	81374	11.86%	↑	N/A

### Summary of Performance against outcome and action for improvement

#### Outcome - Communicate, listen, engage, and work in partnership well with our residents, communities, local organisations, and partners recognising the strengths and skills in our community

##### Current Performance

- CS-001** - A total of 826 complaints were received by the Council over the course of the first 3 quarters, compared to 485 in the same period in 2022-23. The volume of complaints is above the cumulative Quarter 3 target of 492. Of the 826 complaints received, 64 complaints were logged under the children’s statutory complaints policy, 63 were logged under the adult's social care statutory complaints policy and 699 were logged under the council’s complaints policy.



- **CS-002** - Of the 289 Stage 1 complaints received in Quarter 3, 73% were responded to within agreed policy timescales, which is better than the quarterly target of 60%. Of the 23 adult social care statutory complaints, 96% were responded to on time. Of the 22 children's statutory complaints, 100% were responded to on time. Of the 244 complaints under the council's complaints policy, 69% were responded to on time.
- **CS-013** – For the period 1<sup>st</sup> October to 31<sup>st</sup> of December 180 FOIs were received, 18 of which are still open. Of the FOIs closed within Quarter 3, 106 were closed within timescale giving a compliance rate of 65%. Over the course of the first 3 quarters, the provisional position, excluding those FOIs that are still open shows that a total of 547 FOIs were received with 364 or 67% closed on time, which is below the Quarter 3 target of 78% and but equal to the performance position at Quarter 3 2022-23.
- **CS-014** - A total of 81,374 engagements with the Council's social media posts were recorded to end of Quarter 3 2023/24, which is 12% above target and an increase on engagement within the same period last year. further positive quarter for this indicator. Engagement was down in December (as expected at this time of year) but a number of high-performing posts earlier in the quarter boosted figures above the target. October saw the highest engagement for the year to date. Posts with the highest engagement included vaccination posts, a video poem about the borough for National Poetry Day, a competition to name our three new gritters and events such as the World Tipped and the Christmas lights switch on events. Posts about CYCLOPS during Road Safety Week also received high levels of engagement, as did recycling posts.

#### Action for Improvement

- **CS-001** - The projected go-live date for the triage of corporate complaints is planned for February. The Senior Complaints Officer is designing a toolkit for the Contact Centre and creating Frequently Asked Questions to support triage of complaints. The triage of complaints will assist in determining which complaints are actual complaints and which are requests for service. It should be noted that a high number of complaints is not necessarily a sign of poor performance, and the performance indicator requires review for 2024-2025 financial year.
- **CS-002** - The direction of travel for compliance is positive in the year to date. Children and adults' complaints compliance has improved significantly. There has been improvement in the number of complaints under the council's complaints policy which have been responded to on time.
- **CS-013** - The council continues to actively respond to improving the organisational monitoring of FOIs and compliance with the timeliness of FOI responses, although performance is still currently a challenge. The Information Governance team continues to offer support and help across the organisation, by encouraging FOI case managers to attend weekly meetings to identify issues. Automated chase ups from the system are functioning and the team is also seeking to enhance the approach to tracking and chasing of FOI requests to encourage the timeliness of response. The Team is meeting with Suffolk Council as part of a shared learning opportunity to identify opportunities for further improvement.

## Outcome - Invest in developing the strengths and skills of our workforce and elected members

### Current Performance

- **CS-003** - The percentage of staff completing mandatory core-E Learning training is on track to meet the annual target at the end of Quarter 3 2023-24. The overall completion figure increased this quarter to 58%. The breakdown for the current course completion is Data Protection 56%, Equality Diversity and Inclusion 64%, Unconscious Bias 69%, and Code of Conduct 55%. Completion data is accessible to all managers following the implementation of the Learning Management System dashboard and 'how to' articles have run in the weekly staff newsletter as well as regular reminders to all employee to complete their mandatory training.
- **CS-004A** - The Member Development Programme was delivered to plan over the first 3 quarters, with 100% of scheduled training delivered. Two sessions were delivered to plan within the quarter, Hate Crime Ambassador Training and People's Update. Members have access to the Members Resource Area on My Learning and The Learning Hub enabling completion of e-learning courses, wider reading, and personal development.
- **CS-005** - 96% of all training delivered to staff during Quarter 3 2023-24 was deemed to be above 'Satisfactory' by attendees, on par with Quarter 2 2022-23. Work is ongoing to encourage delegates to see the value in completing the evaluation hosted on the My Learning Platform. A richer data picture will be used to drive future improvements.

### Action for Improvement

## Outcome - Embrace innovative ways of working to improve service delivery and the operations of the council

### Current Performance

- **CS-008, CS-009, CS-010** – The Customer Effort and Customer Satisfaction score indicators are both exceeding target in Quarter 3, 2023-24. The average Customer Effort Score, which is a customer rating on how easy the Council made it to resolve the customers issue was 3.9 for the quarter, above the target of 3.5. The Customer Satisfaction Score, which is the customer rating on satisfaction with contact with the Council was 4.1 for the Quarter again above the target of 3.5. The percentage of Customers that had their call answered within the promised timeframe was 57.7%, against a target of 60%. This quarter has seen a large increase in call volume, with the Contact Centre handling an additional 14,442 calls compared to the previous quarter. This increase in calls is related to the roll out of the new Recycling and Waste scheme, seeing every household in the borough having new recycling containers delivered, followed by a change to refuse collection routes and dates.

- **CS-007** – The Corporate Transformation Board is scheduled for 29<sup>th</sup> January when the data will become available.

#### Action for Improvement

- **CS-008, CS-009, CS-010** - Since the end of Quarter 4 2022-23, within the Council's contact centre, absence rates have decreased, and vacancies have reduced. Additional measures to enhance the overall experience of contacting the Contact Centre have been introduced. The first 2 quarters of the year saw call volumes decrease to normal levels. However, Quarter 3 saw a significant increase with the roll out of the new Recycling and Waste scheme. To address the problem of residents facing extended wait times for their calls to be answered, a Virtual Queuing feature for customers experiencing financial difficulties has been introduced. This feature efficiently places callers in an automated phone queue if their waiting time exceeds 10 minutes, the callers' phone numbers are securely stored, and they are automatically contacted when it is their turn to engage with a representative. We will continue to monitor the impact of this new feature.

## Outcome - Provide value for money and ensure we are financially resilient and sustainable

#### Current Performance

- **CS-011 & CS-012** – In-year Council Tax collection is 0.35% below target at the end of Quarter 3, 2023-24. This is in part due to the delay in the billing and recovery cycle as a result of the cyber incident and the ongoing cost-of-living pressures on households. Work is continuing to bring billing and recovery work up to date. The Non-Domestic Rate collection rate at end of Quarter 3 2023-24 met target at 82.4%.
- The Council's external auditors, Grant Thornton, presented their draft Audit Findings Report in relation to the audit of the Council's financial statements for 2022-2023 at the meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee on 11 December 2023. The report confirmed that, in their opinion, the statements give a true and fair view of the financial position as at 31 March 2023 and had been properly prepared in accordance with relevant practices and legislative requirements. Official confirmation of the opinion was subsequently received on 15 December 2023.
- The report also advised that the auditors' work on the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources was undertaken separately and that the outcome of that work would be reported to a future meeting of the Committee.
- Analysis of the Council's position regarding the most recent CIPFA Financial Resilience Index Annual Assessment was reported to the Audit and Governance Committee on 27 September 2023. The results supported the actions and decisions that had informed or determined the Council's approach within its Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2023-2026.
- The report on the Council's Quarter 2 position against 2023-24 budget and delivery of savings was considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 22 November 2023, with the Quarter 3 position to be considered at the meeting of 28 February 2024. The inflationary pressures detailed in the report, along with service demand pressures (particularly within children's and adult social care) and delays/failure in the delivery of some budget savings demonstrate the extraordinary financial challenges facing the Council, with a £6.2m net budget overspend forecast for the current year at Quarter 2.

- A Medium Term Financial Strategy update report was agreed by Cabinet at its meeting on 27 September 2023 that modelled a £17.9m budget gap for the period through to 2026-27 - a level of budget shortfall, driven by factors extensively outside the control of the Council, that is significantly in excess of any ability to address solely through efficiencies. Faced with such a gap, the Council has been required to identify and develop significant budget savings options, informed by service and business planning reviews, to ensure sustainability of the Council's position in the short to medium term.
- That report also provided detail of a significant level of savings that are required in 2023-24 that remain off-track. Whilst some in year mitigations have been identified, failure to make the agreed savings within the budget create real pressure on the Council's financial position. If they are not made in the year, this will severely impact on the level of reserves and will also result in increased savings being required in 2024-25. Continued failure to deliver agreed savings on a permanent basis means that the Council is in danger of not being able to demonstrate delivery of a balanced budget and could ultimately lead to the requirement to issue a statutory notice.
- Individual directorates continue to implement in-year measures to reduce expenditure and mitigate ongoing budget pressures, and Council wide instruction has been issued in relation to the cessation of all non-essential expenditure, a review of agency workers and a recruitment freeze.
- The Council ran a comprehensive public budget consultation exercise from 10 November to 11 December 2023, providing information on the Council's revenue budget, capital programme, the financial challenge that the Council faces and seeking the views of residents and businesses on the Council's priorities and how to balance the budget over the three-year period 2024 to 2027. Cabinet received a report on 24 January 2024 that provided feedback on the consultation, whilst the detailed outcomes of the public consultation have been posted on the Council's website.
- The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement was published on 18 December 2023 and reported to Cabinet at its meeting on 24 January 2024. The feedback from the budget consultation and detail of the Final Settlement will be incorporated into further budget considerations and inform final budget proposals for 2024-25.

### Action for Improvement

- As reported in the Financial Monitoring Report and Medium-Term Financial Strategy update reports to Cabinet, there is an ongoing requirement for plans and permanent mitigating actions to be implemented by management to minimise the financial risk to the Council this year, and in future years, from increasing demand, non-delivery of savings and other prevailing budget pressures – including those arising from pay and price inflation.
- A Budget Savings Delivery Board has been established to monitor the delivery of agreed savings during 2023-24 and beyond, to ensure that a robust challenge is in place and that Directorates are accountable for the delivery of approved savings. Individual Departmental savings will be reviewed at the Board Meetings on a 3-monthly rota basis, to ensure that due regard is given to each area and Directors have the opportunity to provide a full update on progress against targets – including progress against delivery milestones, identification of any alternative or mitigating actions that may be necessary, and matters arising for decision making.

- The Council will critically need to identify, develop, and agree significant budget savings options, informed by service and business planning reviews and consultation feedback, to ensure sustainability of the Council's position in the short to medium term.
- In-year collection rates will continue to be monitored monthly, in light of the continuing squeeze on household income due to inflationary pressures.

For more information about individual performance indicators that support the achievement of these outcomes please see the scorecard.