

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday 13 November 2024

A meeting of the above Committee will be held in Shire Hall, Market Place, Warwick on Wednesday 13 October, at 6.00pm.

Councillor A Milton (Chair)

Councillor D Armstrong (Vice-Chair)

Councillor A Barton

Councillor M Collins

Councillor D Harrison

Councillor M Luckhurst

Councillor J Payne

Councillor P Redford

Councillor D Russell

Councillor P Wightman

Conservative Vacancy

Emergency Procedure

At the commencement of the meeting, the emergency procedure for Shire Hall will be announced.

Agenda

1. Apologies & Substitutes

- (a) to receive apologies for absence from any Councillor who is unable to attend; and
- (b) to receive the name of any Councillor who is to act as a substitute, notice of which has been given to the Chief Executive, together with the name of the Councillor for whom they are acting.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members to declare the existence and nature of interests in items on the agenda in accordance with the adopted Code of Conduct.

Declarations should be disclosed during this item. However, the existence and nature of any interest that subsequently becomes apparent during the course of the meeting must be disclosed immediately. If the interest is not registered, Members must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days.

Members are also reminded of the need to declare predetermination on any matter.

If Members are unsure about whether or not they have an interest, or about its nature, they are strongly advised to seek advice from officers prior to the meeting.

3. Minutes

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2024. **(Pages 1 to 5)**

4. **Work Programme, Forward Plan & Comments from Cabinet**
To consider a report from Governance Services **(Pages 1 to 13)**
5. **The Royal Pump Rooms Customer Service Centre – Six Months On**
To consider a report from Customer & Digital Services **(Pages 1 to 8)**
6. **Annual Update on the Corporate Strategy**
To consider a report from the Chief Executive **(Pages 1 to 16)**
7. **Quarter 1 Performance Report**
To consider a report from Governance Services **(Pages 1 to 4)**
(Appendix A Pages 1 to 8)
8. **Climate Change and Low Cost, Low Carbon Energy Reporting**
To consider a report from the Programme Director for Climate Change **(Pages 1 to 12)**
9. **Public & Press**
To consider resolving that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.
10. **Tachbrook Country Park**
To consider the public report and appendices a, and b from Neighbourhood Services **(Pages 1 to 10)**
To consider the confidential appendices c, d, e, and f from Neighbourhood Services **(Pages 11 to 22)**
11. **Confidential minutes**
To confirm the confidential minutes of the meetings held on:
a) 24 September 2024 **(Pages 1 to 7)**
b) 15 October 2024 **(Pages 1 to 2)**

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 15 October 2024 at Shire Hall, Warwick at 6.03pm.

Present: Councillor Milton (Chair); Councillors Armstrong, Barton, D Harrison, Luckhurst, Payne, Redford, Russell and C Wightman.

Also Present: Councillor Davison – Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership and Councillor King – Portfolio Holder for Place.

47. **Apologies and Substitutes**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Collins.

48. **Declarations of Interest**

Item 9 – Local Growth initiatives Plan – West Midlands Investment Zone (WMIZ)

Councillor Milton declared an interest because West Midlands Combined Authority had previously been a client of his business.

Item 11 – Leamington Town Centre Transformation Proposals

Councillor Milton declared he had an interest on a lease on a building within the area covered by the proposals.

49. **Minutes**

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 24 September 2024 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

50. **Quarterly Budget Update**

The Chair informed the Committee that following publication of the agenda, this item would not be considered until December 2024, in line with the work programme.

51. **Work Programme, Forward Plan & Comments from Cabinet**

The Committee considered a report from the Head of Governance which informed Members of the Committee's work programme for 2024-2025, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, and sought confirmation of approach of a number of areas in respect of that work plan.

The five main roles of Overview and Scrutiny in local government were: holding to account; performance management; policy review; policy development; and external scrutiny.

Two of the five main roles of Overview and Scrutiny in local government were to undertake pre-decision scrutiny of Cabinet decisions and to feed into policy development.

The pre-decision scrutiny of Cabinet decisions fell within the role of 'holding to account'. To feed into the pre-decision scrutiny of Cabinet decisions, the Committee needed to examine the Council's Forward Plan and identify items which it would like to have impacted upon.

The Council's Forward Plan was published 28 days before each Cabinet meeting and set out the key decisions that were expected to be taken by the Cabinet in the next twelve months.

A key decision meant a decision made in the exercise of an executive function by any person (including officers) or body which met one or more of the following conditions:

- (1) The decision was likely to result in the Council incurring expenditure or the making of savings in excess of £150,000. Excluded from this were all loans to banks or other financial institutions made in accordance with the Treasury Management Strategy.

Officers' delegated powers to make the Cabinet decisions were subject to the key decision/call-in regime where it was likely that the Council would incur expenditure or make savings above the threshold of £150,000.

In relation to letting contracts, the key decision was the proposal to let a contract for a particular type of work. The subsequent decision to award the contract to a specific contractor would not have been a key decision provided the value of the contract did not vary above the estimated amount by more than 10% for contracts with a value of up to £500,000 or 5% for contracts of over £500,000.

- (2) The decision was likely to be significant in terms of its effects on communities that lived or worked in any two or more wards. In considering whether a decision was likely to be significant, a decision-maker would have needed to consider the strategic nature of the decision and whether the outcome would have had an impact, for better or worse on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the Council to a significant number of people living or working in the locality affected.

The Forward Plan was considered at each meeting and allowed the Committee to look at future items and become involved in those Cabinet decisions to be taken if members so wished.

The Forward Plan also identified non-key decisions to be taken by Cabinet in the twelve months that followed, and the Committee, if they wished, could also pre-scrutinise those decisions.

There were also policies identified on the Forward Plan, either as key or non-key decisions, which the Committee could have pre-scrutinised and had an impact upon how these are formulated.

The Committee was mindful that any work it wished to undertake would have needed to have been undertaken without the need to change the timescales as set out within the Forward Plan.

At each meeting, the Committee considered its work programme and made amendments where necessary, and commented on specific Cabinet items, where notice had been given by 9am on the morning after Group meetings. The Committee received a report detailing the response from the Cabinet, on the comments the Committee made on the Cabinet agenda in the previous cycle.

The Committee considered issues that had due significance with reference to the following criteria:

- the number of residents impacted and the significance of that impact;
- the amount of spend involved; and
- if it concerned a strategic priority of the Council or key project.

On the day of publication of the Cabinet agenda, all Councillors were sent an e-mail asking them to contact Committee Services, by 9.00am on the day of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting to advise which Cabinet items they would like the Committee to consider.

The Chair informed Members that Councillor Day had stepped down from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. He had also stepped down from the Budget Review Group as he had been appointed as a representative from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Therefore, there was a vacancy on the Budget Review Group. There were no volunteers to cover this at Budget Review Group on 16 October 2024.

Councillor Milton explained that he had met with both the Housing Scrutiny Committee and Audit and Standards Committee Chairs on 14 October 2024. Councillor Milton had requested they would review the membership of the Budget Review Group to ensure they have a member of the Housing Scrutiny Committee on the group as it also looked at the HRA.

At the same meeting, they discussed the fees and charges strategy and had requested the Head of Finance would produce an informal discussion paper for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This would be added to the work programme.

Resolved that

- (1) a briefing on the fees and charges strategy; and
- (2) a review of the ID Verde contract be added to work programme as part of the Committee's review of significant contracts.

52. Cabinet Agenda (Non-Confidential items and reports) – Thursday 17 October 2024

The Committee considered the following items which would be discussed at the meeting of the Cabinet on Thursday 17 October 2024.

Item 9 – Local Growth Initiatives Plan – West Midlands Investment Zone (WMIZ)

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee noted the report and reminded Cabinet of the indicative nature of the list of projects. Members welcomed and supported Abbey Fields being the first scheme being funded and recognised the potential benefits this could bring. The Committee also explored some of the wider risks presented by the political change and was satisfied that everything was done to mitigate those risks as much as it possibly could.

Item 11 – Leamington Town Centre Transformation Proposals

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee explored the need for a single, coherent approach to prioritisation and to the wider town centre and welcomed the appointment of a programme director in the future. The Committee recognised that the approach to transport needed to be holistic and Cabinet needed to think quite widely about the needs of different groups of people, including those travelling from rural areas and didn't have access to regular and reliable public transport. In addition, when potentially moving location of bus stops, the Committee emphasised that those most vulnerable would still be able to easily access essential facilities.

Members were concerned that there was a risk around managing the project going forward, and it was important to recognise what the priorities were, to make sure the desired outcomes were achieved. Members emphasised the importance of engaging local partners such as Warwickshire County Council early on and ensure they are on board with the project.

53. **Public and Press**

Resolved that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, as set out below:

Minute Number	Paragraph Number	Reason
53	3	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

54. **Cabinet Agenda (Confidential items and reports) – Thursday 17 October 2024.**

The Committee considered the following confidential item which would be discussed at the meeting of the Cabinet:

Item 15 – Kenilworth Wardens Sports Club Property Matter

These were detailed in the confidential minutes of the meeting.

(The meeting ended at 8.13pm)

CHAIR
13 November 2024

Overview & Scrutiny Committee
13 November 2024

Title: Work Programme, Forward Plan & Comments from Cabinet
Lead Officer: Graham Leach, Head of Governance and Monitoring Officer
Portfolio Holder: Not applicable
Public report
Wards of the District directly affected: Not applicable

Summary

This report informs Members of Overview & Scrutiny Committee of the Committee's work programme for 2024-2025 (Appendix 1) and seeks confirmation of approach of a number of areas in respect of that work plan.

Recommendations

- (1) That Members consider the work programme (Appendix 1), the themes the Committee intends to scrutinise this year and agree changes to its Work Programme appropriately.
 - (2) That the Committee:
 - identifies any Cabinet items on the [Forward Plan](#) on which it wishes to have an input before the Cabinet makes its decision; and
 - nominates a Member to investigate that future decision and report back to the Committee.
-

1 Background/Information & Reasons for the Recommendation

- 1.1 The five main roles of overview and scrutiny in local government are: holding to account; performance management; policy review; policy development; and external scrutiny.
- 1.2 Two of the five main roles of overview and scrutiny in local government are to undertake pre-decision scrutiny of Cabinet decisions and to feed into policy development.
- 1.3 The pre-decision scrutiny of Cabinet decisions falls within the role of 'holding to account'. To feed into the pre-decision scrutiny of Cabinet decisions, the Committee needs to examine the Council's Forward Plan and identify items which it would like to have an impact upon.
- 1.4 The Council's Forward Plan is published 28 days before each Cabinet meeting and sets out the key decisions that are expected to be taken by the Cabinet in the next twelve months.

- 1.5 A key decision means a decision made in the exercise of an executive function by any person (including officers) or body which meets one or more of the following conditions:

- (1) The decision is likely to result in the Council incurring expenditure or the making of savings in excess of £150,000. Excluded from this are all loans to banks or other financial institutions made in accordance with the Treasury Management Strategy.

Officers' delegated powers to make the cabinet decisions are subject to the key decision/call-in regime where it is likely that the Council would incur expenditure or make savings above the threshold of £150,000.

In relation to letting contracts the key decision is the proposal to let a contract for a particular type of work. The subsequent decision to award the contract to a specific contractor will not be a key decision provided the value of the contract does not vary above the estimated amount by more than 10% for contracts with a value of up to £500,000 or 5% for contracts of over £500,000.

- (2) The decision is likely to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in any two or more Wards.

In considering whether a decision is likely to be significant, a decision-maker will need to consider the strategic nature of the decision and whether the outcome will have an impact, for better or worse on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the Council to a significant number of people living or working in the locality affected.

- 1.6 The Forward Plan is considered at each meeting and allows the Committee to look at future items and become involved in those Cabinet decisions to be taken if members so wish.
- 1.7 The Forward Plan also identifies non-key decisions to be taken by Cabinet in the next twelve months, and the Committee, if it wishes, may also pre-scrutinise these decisions.
- 1.8 There may also be policies identified on the Forward Plan, either as key or non-key decisions, which the Committee could pre-scrutinise and have an impact upon how these are formulated.
- 1.9 The Committee should be mindful that any work it wishes to undertake would need to be undertaken without the need to change the timescales as set out within the Forward Plan.
- 1.10 At each meeting, the Committee will consider its work programme and make amendments where necessary, and also make comments on specific Cabinet items, where notice has been given by 9am on the morning after Group meetings. The Committee will also receive a report detailing the response from the Cabinet, on the comments the Committee made on the Cabinet agenda in the previous cycle.

Agenda Item 4

- 1.11 The Committee will consider issues that have due significance with reference to the following criteria:
- The number of residents impacted and the significance of that impact.
 - The amount of spend involved.
 - It concerns a strategic priority of the Council or key project.
- 1.12 On the day of publication of the Cabinet agenda all Councillors are sent an e-mail asking them to contact Committee Services, by 9.00am on the day of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting to advise which Cabinet items they would like the Committee to consider.

Criteria for Items on the work plan	Scheduled Meeting dates
1. High Risk 2. High Value 3. Major Project 4. Decreasing Performance 5. Statutory/Constitution requirement	15/10/2024 13/11/24 (NC) 3/12/2024 21/1/2025 (NC) 4/2/2025 18/2/2025 (NC) 18/3/2025 *NC = No Cabinet meeting

Agenda Item 4
Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Title	Lead Officer / Councillor	Meeting Date	Where did item originate from	Notes	Criteria
Six-month post opening update on the "Relocation of Office Accommodation and the Provision of Public Facing Access to Council Services, including, financial cost of each aspect, savings, communication and residents feedback	Darren Knight David Elkington Tracy Dolphin Councillor J Harrison	13/11/2024 (NC)			3
Corporate Strategy - the Corporate Strategy should be reviewed on a yearly basis, in the same way that the annual governance statement comes through scrutiny to make sure the Council is properly governed. More specifically, the Committee would like to see an annual strategy progress update, looking at the big picture and how the Council is working towards its goals and values <i>"In response to the request from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to provide clarity on the review process on the "who, what, when and how", this would be set out in the first annual report to Overview & Scrutiny Committee in November 2024".</i>	Chris Elliott Councillor Davison	13/11/2024 (NC)	O&S 3 October 2023		3
Quarter 1 Performance Report – to help shape the data in a positive and constructive way	Graham Leach Councillor Davison	13/11/2024		Subject to review with Chair & Vice	

Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Title	Lead Officer / Councillor	Meeting Date	Where did item originate from	Notes	Criteria
				Chair of Committee, in early July, of SAP performance and new Policy, Performance & Complaints Manager in post.	3 & 4
Milverton Homes (MH) – the Committee has requested a specific meeting be set up around the time that the Milverton Homes’s AGM is held. There was a suggestion that non-executive directors from MH could be invited to attend. Also see the Summary of Comments from O&S meeting 9 April 2024 (confidential version).	Graham Leach	13/11/2024	O&S 9 April 2024	A non-Cabinet meeting to coincide around the time of the Milverton Homes AGM specifically to discuss MH.	
Tachbrook Country Park	Ruth Hytch / Cllr Roberts	13/11/2024	O&S 30 July and 4 September 2024	Areas covered by the report to be: purpose of the project; timeline for delivery; skills being in place to deliver; budget (how the project	

Agenda Item 4
Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Title	Lead Officer / Councillor	Meeting Date	Where did item originate from	Notes	Criteria
				was delivered against its original budget and against anticipated running costs); governance of the project; project risks/ issues; and communications.	
Climate Change and Low Cost, Low Carbon Energy Reporting - part of the Climate Change and Biodiversity reporting	Dave Barber / Councillor Williams	13/11/2024, deferred from 24/09/2024	O&S 30 July 2024	To include a risk assessment.	
Future High Streets Fund update – if everything is on track, the Committee will accept a short report to this effect following liaison with the O&S Chair.	Martin O'Neill Councillor Billiald	03/12/2024 - Short update to be provided via email before the meeting	O&S February 2023	Every 3 months until further notice	1, 2, and 3
Quarter 2 Budget Update	Steven Leathley Councillor Chilvers	03/12/2024 (Cab report)			1 & 2
Park Exercise Permit Report on how the scheme has performed along with some data, including date on how much of officers' time is being spent	Ann Hill / Councillor Sinnott	03/12/2024	Cabinet 10 April 2024 and O&S 9 April 2024		

Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Title	Lead Officer / Councillor	Meeting Date	Where did item originate from	Notes	Criteria
with the implementation and governance of the scheme					
Peer review – a report to update the Committee on which recommendations are being adopted by the Council and which are not, as well as an update on the progress of those recommendations which are being implemented	Darren Knight / Councillor Davison	By December	30 July and 3 September O&S meetings		
Climate change and biodiversity engagement and communication activity - part of the Climate Change and Biodiversity reporting	Dave Barber; Councillor Williams	21/01/2025	30 July 2024 O&S	"residents engagement and communication" theme. To include a risk assessment.	
Commercial Strategy scoping paper – outlining what is to be covered in the commercial strategy and the process for developing it	Andrew Rollins	21/01/2025 or TBC	O&S 15/10/2025		
Quarter 3 Budget Update	Steven Leathley Councillor Chilvers	4/2/2025 (Cab Report)			1 & 2
Service Area Plans and Performance Management Framework	Graham Leach	4/2/2025 (Cab Report)			3
MRF Update – Richard Dobbs from Sherbourne Recycling	Darren Knight	18/02/2025	O&S Meeting 03/09/2024	Richard Dobbs to provide briefing paper to discuss	2&3

Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Title	Lead Officer / Councillor	Meeting Date	Where did item originate from	Notes	Criteria
				performance to date, risks, issues, challenges, and opportunities.	
I.D Verde Maintenance Contract Review – Grounds Maintenance Services and Street Cleansing Services	Zoe Court	18/03/2025	O&S 06/02/2024		
O&S End of Term report.	Committee Services Officer.	18/3/2025	Standing Annual Item, Constitution requirement	Annual report - last scheduled O&S meeting in the municipal year.	5
Summary of the role, responsibilities and performance of the SWCSP. Invite Councillor Falp (non-Exec rep) and the PH Safer Communities to O&S (This report was originally scheduled 2023/24 so the reps for that year were Councillors Sinnott and Falp) See minute 76, 6 February 2024 for details requested in the report.	Liz Young / Marianne Rolfe.	18/03/2025	This is a Statutory requirement	Annual report next due March 2026	5
Change Programme – Case for Change	Darren Knight; Councillor Davison	18/03/25	O&S 5 March 24 and 3 Sept 2024	A six-monthly update to ensure that the	

Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Title	Lead Officer / Councillor	Meeting Date	Where did item originate from	Notes	Criteria
				savings are coming through and the Committee can see their impact in the budget.	
Future High Streets Fund update – if everything is on track, the Committee will accept a short report to this effect following liaison with the O&S Chair.	Martin O'Neill Councillor Billiald	18/03/2024 - Short update to be provided via email before the meeting	O&S February 2023	Every 3 months until further notice	1, 2, and 3
Biodiversity Action Programme - part of the Climate Change and Biodiversity reporting	Dave Barber; Councillor Williams	April 2025	30 July 2024 meeting	To include a risk assessment.	
Report on Adaptation – part of the Climate Change and Biodiversity reporting	Dave Barber; Councillor Williams	April 2025	30 July 2024 meeting	To include a risk assessment.	
Elect a Chair and Vice Chair		May 2025	Standing Annual Item	On-going at the first meeting of each Municipal Year	5
To appoint members to the Budget Review Group (add the Group's remit which is saved to the annex in the Constitution)		May 2025	Standing Annual Item.		5
Appoint Children's and Adults' Safeguarding Champion		May 2025	Standing Annual		5

Scheduled Briefing Notes to All Councillors requested by the Committee

Title	Lead Officer	Update Due by (end of Month)
Children's and Adults' Safeguarding Champions: End of Term Report.	Marianne Rolfe/Jane Rostron	April every year
Members' Annual Feedback on Outside Appointments / Annual review of membership/participation of Outside Bodies (Includes a short synopsis on Champions)	Graham Leach (report collated by the Scrutiny Officer)	April every year
Review on the Identification and Remediation of Damp and Mould in Council Homes to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What was happening with the policy; Was it being put into action; and The impact it has made 	Lisa Barker, Interim Assets Manager and Darren Knight Councillor Adkins	February 2025
Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards Enforcement Process – Private Sector Housing - Briefing for all Councillors of how this process is working.	Paul Hughes Councillor Adkins	November 2024
Update - plans to improve accessibility to, and the condition / cleanliness of, toilets for people living with disabilities. - Update to all Councillors from Officers on the work that has taken place following the meeting at Committee.	Zoë Court Councillor Roberts	January 2025
Update - plans to improve accessibility to, and the play areas for people living with disabilities. - Update to all Councillors from Officers on the work that has taken place following the meeting at Committee	Dave Anderson Councillor Roberts	January 2025
Review additional Licensing Scheme to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How effective it had been. 	Paul Hughes Councillor Adkins	January 2025

Title	Lead Officer	Update Due by (end of Month)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many licenses had been issued. • Was there enough resources in place 		
<p>Resident Engagement Strategy (report to Cabinet August 2023). The Committee is keen to understand a) how is it going? And b) what are we learning? (include some examples of changes that have been made as a result of the consultation.) - Change to Councillor Briefing session in first instance covering these areas. Also raised by Asset Compliance Committee as an area that needs to be understood</p> <p>The question that sits behind this is as-to whether this is a good use of the Council's resources. There are benefits to us as a Council from getting resident feedback and what we'd like to get is visibility of those. This is 'value for money' in its broadest sense (No need to come with figures and a ROI.)</p> <p>Housing is one of the biggest ways that we impact residents' lives and getting a bit more visibility amongst members of some of the good things we do but also some of the challenges residents face will be valuable"</p>	Sally Kelsall/ Councillor Adkins	February 2025
MRF – What is it, what's it doing, is it meeting our performance expectations, financials, what's our liability,	Zoe Court	
Revised Arrangements for Destination Management Organisations including LVEP	Martin O'Neil	December 2024
Commercial Strategy scoping paper – outlining what is to be covered in the commercial strategy and the process for developing it	Andrew Rollins	

DRAFT

**Response from the meeting of Joint Cabinet on the O&S Committee's
Comments – 17 October 2024**

Item 9 – Local Growth initiatives Plan – West Midlands Investment Zone (WMIZ)

Scrutiny Comment:

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee noted the report and reminded Cabinet of the indicative nature of the list of projects. Members welcomed and supported Abbey Fields being the first scheme being funded and recognised the potential benefits this could bring. The Committee also explored some of the wider risks presented by the political change and was satisfied that everything was done to mitigate those risks as much as it possibly could.

Cabinet Response: Cabinet noted the comments from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Item 11 - Leamington Town Centre Transformation Proposals

Scrutiny Comment:

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee explored the need for a single, coherent approach to prioritisation and to the wider town centre and welcomed the appointment of a programme director in the future. The Committee recognised that the approach to transport needed to be holistic and Cabinet needed to think quite widely about the needs of different groups of people, including those travelling from rural areas and didn't have access to regular and reliable public transport. In addition, when potentially moving location of bus stops, the Committee emphasised that those most vulnerable would still be able to easily access essential facilities.

Members were concerned that there was a risk around managing the project going forward, and it was important to recognise what the priorities were, to make sure the desired outcomes were achieved. Members emphasised the importance of engaging local partners such as Warwickshire County Council early on and ensure they are on board with the project.

Cabinet Response: Cabinet noted the comments from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Agenda Item No 5
Overview and Scrutiny Committee
13 November 2024

Title: The Royal Pump Rooms Customer Service Centre – Six Months On
Lead Officer: David Elkington, Head of Customer & Digital Services
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Jessica Melrose
Wards of the District directly affected: None

Approvals required	Date	Name
Portfolio Holder	04/11/24	Councillor Jessica Melrose
Finance	04/11/24	Andrew Rollins
Legal Services		
Chief Executive	04/11/24	Chris Elliott
Director of Climate Change	04/11/24	Dave Barber
Head of Service(s)		
Section 151 Officer	04/11/24	Andrew Rollins
Monitoring Officer	04/11/24	Graham Leach
Leadership Co-ordination Group		
Final decision by this Committee or rec to another Cttee / Council?	No	
Contrary to Policy / Budget framework?	No	
Does this report contain exempt info/Confidential? If so, which paragraph(s)?	No	
Does this report relate to a key decision (referred to in the Cabinet Forward Plan)?	No	
Accessibility Checked?	Yes	

Summary

This report summarises progress which has been made at the Pump Rooms Customer Service centre, following its opening in April 2024.

Recommendation(s)

- (1)** That the committee receives the report and provides commentary if required.
-

1 Reasons for the Recommendation

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 In February 2023 Warwick District Council's (WDC) Cabinet considered a report which discussed the relocation of services away from the (then) Council's headquarters, Riverside House. The report put forward several recommendations including migrating back-office functions to Saltisford One in Warwick and relocating front facing Customer Service operations to the Royal Pump Rooms. Cabinet agreed to these proposals and work towards the relocation commenced.
- 1.1.2 The Customer and Digital Services team, supported by the Assets team engaged with an architectural contractor, Atkins, to design a new customer service centre, to be located at the site occupied by the Pump Rooms shop. Atkins architects worked through several design iterations to ensure that any development would protect the character of the Pump Rooms whilst providing a modern and efficient customer service space. Officers from Customer Services, the Assets team and the Pump Rooms informed these discussions at every stage.
- 1.1.3 Following several months of planning a final design was produced which was significantly more expensive than what was originally anticipated. February's Cabinet report stated that the costs of relocating Customer Services to the Pump Rooms was provisionally expected to be around £200,000. However, due to massive inflationary costs for building materials and other complications discovered during the design phase, the estimated costs had grown to between £380,000 and £410,000.
- 1.1.4 In light of the significant cost increases, a report was taken to Cabinet again July 2023 requesting a final decision on the route to be taken. The report revisited previous relocation options, including renting a shop or relocating to the Town Hall, but ultimately continued to recommend the Pump Rooms as the best choice. These recommendations were accepted by Cabinet and budget was assigned.
- 1.1.5 The significant increase in costs created apprehension amongst Councillors, as did a negative reception to the project from members of the public. This was expressed most significantly in an online petition entitled "Hands Off Our Pump Rooms" which was concerned about the closure of the shop and the perceived impact introducing Customer Services would have on the Pump Rooms environment. The Cabinet decision was called into Overview and Scrutiny for further consideration and after discussing the matter, the Committee resolved to refer their concerns to Council for wider dialogue.
- 1.1.6 The Chairman of the Council agreed to take the Overview and Scrutiny

Committees referral as an urgent item at the 26th July 2023 meeting, where the Cabinet report and supporting information regarding customer numbers and alternative options were considered. After debate, a decision was reached to take no further action and therefore, the project could commence.

1.1.7 Some of the modifications to the Pump Rooms required listed building consent and these were considered by the Planning Committee in November 2023. No work started towards building the Customer Service Centre until the consent had been gained and following this approval, the Pump Rooms shop closed on Sunday, 19th November 2023. Work on converting the space started a week later and took approximately four months to complete. During this time, most of the Council's other services relocated to Saltisford One and Customer Services were the last team to move out of Riverside House.

1.1.8 The new Customer Service Centre officially opened to the public on Tuesday, 9th April 2024.

1.2 Costs and Delivery Timeline

1.2.1 The proposal to Cabinet in July 2023 outlined costs of between £380,000 and £410,000. This was composed of £315,000 for building and contractor works, £65,000 for professional fees and £30,000 contingency budget.

1.2.2 When the Customer Service Centre opened, the delivery cost of the project stood at £306,851. This consisted of:

- £66,767 Professional Fees.
- £240,084 Building, Contract and Equipment
 - Carpentry – £79,428
 - Electrical - £30,298
 - Mechanical - £46,477
 - Furniture - £79,994
 - ICT Equipment – 3,126
 - Decommissioning of shop - £760

1.2.3 During the project, several value engineering decisions were taken to reduce costs without significant detrimental impact on the project's overall outcome. For example, approximately £10,000 was saved by reusing desks and seats from Riverside House. Around £5,000 was saved by changing the specification of the light fittings proposed for use in the main Customer Service area and a further £6,000 was saved by increasing the gap between the oak slats used on the dividing wall to more closely match those of the Café. The Council also used its own contractors to facilitate building works and procured the required furniture directly. These actions secured significant savings on the original quoted costs.

1.2.4 Cabinet agreed that a contingency budget of £30,000 could be carried into the 2024/25 financial year in case further expenditure was incurred following the opening of the Customer Service Centre. To date, £3,323.75 has been spent, predominantly to replace a manual door opening mechanism with a powered alternative.

1.2.5 A further potential expense may be incurred to improve CCTV in the Customer Service Centre, following an internal audit of the wider Pump Rooms system earlier in the year. Customer and Digital Services are currently in discussion with the Council's CCTV team on this matter, but it is not anticipated that costs

would require any further budget to be allocated. Improvements to signage at the Pump Rooms are also required and this is currently being investigated.

- 1.2.6 It was reported to Council in July 2023, that the Pump Rooms Customer Service Centre was anticipated to be fully operational by 8th January 2024. There were two key assumptions made in the associated report which facilitated the January opening: 1) listed building consent would be granted at the October Planning Committee; and 2) that works which did not require planning permission would be allowed to start straight away – including closing the shop. Approximately four months were allocated for building work between October and January.
- 1.2.7 Unfortunately, this deadline was not met, but for good reason. Due to the level of public interest in the Pump Rooms development, the project board did not want to create any impression that work was commencing without the appropriate planning permission. The Listed Building Consent application was scheduled for consideration at the October Planning Committee, but due to timing constraints was deferred until the November meeting. The shop remained open at this point and the site was not effectively handed over to Customer and Digital Services until the end of November.
- 1.2.8 Once the site was handed over and all required permissions were gained, building work took approximately four months, as expected. Whilst the original January deadline was not met, the decision to work transparently, not undertake any action until Listed Building Consent was gained and to keep the shop open was in the best interests of the Council and its communities. The delay did not materially impact the move from Riverside House.

1.3 **Facilities**

- 1.3.1 The new Customer Service Centre's facilities are extensive and significantly better than those previously available to customers at Riverside House.
- 1.3.2 Customers primarily meet with Customer Service agents in two private meeting pods. These pods can comfortably accommodate up to six people, including the Customer Service Agent. They are fully wheelchair accessible, having an extra wide opening door, a completely flat floor and significant turnaround space, making them easily navigable for both manual and powered chair users. The desk within each pod is height adjustable and all equipment can be easily turned around and shared with the customer. Lighting and ventilation levels can fully adjust to account for customers with complex sensory needs, and a portable hearing loop is also available. Privacy screening on the entrance to the pods ensures that whilst the main door panels are glass (to let in natural light), customers cannot be easily seen whilst interacting with our teams. The meeting pods are very private and extensive sound insulation ensures that audio travel into the main customer service area is minimal.
- 1.3.3 A further private meeting pod is also available with video conferencing facilities, should a customer need to speak to an officer located elsewhere, or if they have a planned online meeting and do not have facilities of their own. The pod is enclosed and a PC with camera is fixed to a motorised height adjustable desk. Again, lighting and ventilation can be completely controlled by the occupant and the door is powered to ensure wheelchair accessibility.
- 1.3.4 Open meeting tables are also available at the far end of the Customer Service Centre, with some customers preferring to meet with our team in the open space. This area benefits from particularly good views of the Pump Room

Gardens. These tables do not provide the level of privacy extended by the meeting pods but are only used if the customer expresses a preference for them. Staff on reception can also deal with simple customer queries such as returning a form or requesting non-personal information.

- 1.3.5 The main customer service space also benefits from high efficiency cooling and heating. Ceiling mounted units fully control the temperature and ventilation in the area, ensuring the site will remain warm during the winter and cool during the summer. The office behind the Customer Service Centre, which has no openable windows itself, also benefits from this climate control system.
- 1.3.6 The back-office area accommodates up to four Customer Service Agents. Facilities available to staff in this office are comparable to those at Saltisford One and it's also fully accessible, with a similarly wide, powered entrance door and large turning circle to accommodate any type of user. A height adjustable desk is also available.
- 1.3.7 As a wider improvement for the Pump Rooms, public and staff internet connectivity were both significantly improved as part of the Customer Service Centre project. The old public Wi-Fi system was completely replaced by a modern, secure, scalable solution that is significantly faster and attracts lower costs. This new system is also universal and accessible from other sites, such as the Town Hall, Spa Centre and Tennis Pavilions. Staff access was also improved with the installation of a faster separate connection, as well as improved Wi-Fi infrastructure and general networking equipment. Later in the year, ICT will expand the service further into other areas of the Pump Rooms which are not currently served.

1.4 Customer Numbers and Satisfaction

- 1.4.1 As of 1st November 2024, since opening in April some 5277 customers have used the Pump Room facilities. Council Tax, Benefits and Housing related enquiries continue to be the most popular services, as was the case at Riverside House. It was reported to Council in July 2023 that on average, 266 customers per week accessed the facilities at Riverside House, which has decreased slightly to 202 customers per week, on average, at the Pump Rooms. This decrease was not unexpected.
- 1.4.2 Customer and Digital Services anticipated that around 30 enquiries per week, which related to services located at Riverside House would no-longer be received and that around 26 people per week would require video-conference facilities. Changed working practices have helped reduce this number significantly as at Riverside House customers would often be asked to reattend for a video conference appointment at a later time or date. Such issues are now typically dealt with immediately reducing the overall customer count.
- 1.4.3 Customer Satisfaction with the facility is also high and since opening, no complaints have been received. Customer Services operate a feedback system where, most customers have rated the quality of the facilities as being good, or very good. During conversations with staff, the quality of the site and it's calming location have also been complimented, with the clear views of the Pump Room Gardens being a particular high point.
- 1.4.4 The impact that Customer Services may have had on the Pump Room's other facilities and privacy issues were also cited as significant concerns when the proposals were being considered. Since opening, there have been no negative incidents in relation to customers visiting the Customer Service Centre, their

interactions with the wider Pump Rooms environment, or issues relating to loud or disruptive behaviour. The privacy of customers has been maintained throughout, with all customer interactions being contained to the customer service area.

1.5 The Shop

- 1.5.1 As part of the July Cabinet report, it was agreed that options for a future shop location would be investigated. Unfortunately, this work did not yield a successful outcome, with the most significant issue being the staffing of any new facility. The Pump Rooms original shop benefitted from “passive” staffing whereby personnel within the Pump Rooms were always available but were not “in the shop” itself, nor was it their primary role. This would not have been possible at another site, which would have needed a permanent, dedicated staff presence.
- 1.5.2 Following the closure of the main shop the Pump Rooms Team relocated some of the display stands into the main Pump Rooms foyer to continue selling some items. Further modifications to the reception desk in the main foyer have increased the available space and recently a pop-up shop was created, working with some of the artists who used to sell their works in the original shop, as part of the Pump Rooms 25 anniversary celebrations.
- 1.5.3 At present, no plans are being actively worked on to specifically create a new, dedicated shop space within the Pump Rooms, although there are ongoing refinements being made to the foyer reception area which is facilitating more retail activity. Other projects currently being undertaken, such as the Stoneleigh Arms and Town Hall refurbishments may provide opportunities in the future to reconsider a dedicated shop facility.

1.6 Addressing the “Temporary” Nature

- 1.6.1 During the project, concern was raised that the Pump Rooms Customer Service Centre was temporary, and that significant investment was being made in a facility that would not continue to be used in the long term. To offer clarity on this situation, temporary was not intended to describe the overall facility, but some of the construction techniques used to create the centre overall.
- 1.6.2 Almost all the furnishings and equipment installed at the Pump Rooms are freestanding and can be easily removed if Customer Services were to be relocated elsewhere in the future. The only change that could not be easily reversed without undertaking corrective building work would be the removal of the oak dividing wall – and this itself was installed in such a way that it could be removed, with minimal damage to the surrounding building.
- 1.6.3 Customer Services can remain at the Pump Rooms for as long as the Council requires them to. The independence of the site creates several significant benefits for WDC when considering its wider future office location, as a town centre presence for Customer Services can continue to be maintained regardless of where any back-office functions go. The site also means that any future moves for back-office staff will not disrupt customer access in any way, unlike the move from Riverside House.

1.7 Added Value

- 1.7.1 The centre has also opened opportunities for customers to access other partner services too and in early October, as part of the Council’s drive to increase the take up of Pension Credits, the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) began offering

sessions at the Pump Rooms every Thursday afternoon. To date, take up of the sessions for Pension Credit assistance has been very limited, but there have been other more positive, sustainable outcomes.

- 1.7.2 The slots have allowed the CAB to undertake additional sessions with their own customers in a better environment. This is particularly important for customers with accessibility needs, as their current offices were not entirely suitable. The partnership has also created a mechanism whereby the Customer Services team can easily book appointments and refer our own customers to the CAB's if required. This is reciprocated if a CAB customer requires help from the Council.
- 1.7.3 Whilst this development may seem quite minor, it adds significant value to a customer's journey by simplifying the interaction between two important public services. For example, if a customer were to visit the CAB to request financial advice, the CAB may recommend that they speak to the Council's benefits team, which historically would have required another visit. Now, they can simply ask a member of the customer service team to pick up the case and immediately undertake the required assessments. Ultimately this doesn't change the outcome for the customer, but the journey to achieving it is significantly easier.

1.8 **Overall**

Overall, the opening of the Pump Rooms Customer Service Centre has been hugely successful. The project was delivered within its budget and whilst slightly later than planned, within the original anticipated build time. The site is favourable to our customers, has excellent facilities, extends future flexibility for Council's back-office operations and is providing services that were not available at Riverside House.

2 **Alternative Options**

- 2.1 There are no alternative options considered by this report as its purpose is to provide an update to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

3 **Legal Implications**

- 3.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

4 **Financial Services**

- 4.1 There are no further financial implications arising from this report.

5 **Corporate Strategy**

- 5.1 The corporate strategy in its current form was not adopted when the Pump Rooms project was approved. However, the projects outcomes are relevant to strategic priority 1, delivering valued, sustainable services.
- 5.2 Outcome 1.3.2 of strategic priority 1 seeks to ensure that the customer services team can help more customers at the first point of contact through different communications channels. The successful opening of the Pump Rooms Customer Service Centre has ensured that face-to-face options for contacting WDC remain available to any customer who needs it, at an accessible location, in a calm, private, high-quality environment.

6 **Environmental/Climate Change Implications**

- 6.1 There are no additional negative Environmental/Climate Change implications arising from this report.

- 6.2 The original report to Cabinet in July 2023 acknowledged that the introduction of the Pump Rooms Customer Service Centre would not increase WDC's overall Carbon Footprint. It did not however mention the potential for ancillary carbon savings associated with transport.
- 6.3 Whilst there is no easy way for the Council to capture information relating to transport currently, the Customer Service Centre is now located near to multiple bus and rail options. This facilitates far greater flexibility and accessibility than Riverside House, which could be considered as slightly out of town. Whilst the tracking of 3rd party Carbon emissions associated with transport is not part of the Council's strategic priorities for reducing carbon emissions, this is none-the-less, a positive contribution to wider carbon neutrality goals.
- 7 Analysis of the effects on Equality**
- 7.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report. A fully equality assessment was undertaken as part of the Pump Rooms report to Cabinet in July 2023.
- 8 Data Protection**
- 8.1 There are no Data Protection implications arising from this report.
- 9 Health and Wellbeing**
- 9.1 There are no Health and Wellbeing implications arising from this report.
- 10 Risk Assessment**
- 10.1 A risk assessment has not been completed as part of this report.
- 11 Consultation**
- 11.1 Consultation has not been completed as part of this report.

Supporting papers:

[Cabinet – February 2023.](#)

[Cabinet – July 2023.](#)

[Overview and Scrutiny Committee – July 2023.](#)

[Council – July 2023.](#)

[Planning Committee – November 2023.](#)

[WDC Press Release: Planning Permission and Pump Rooms Shop – November 2023.](#)

[WDC Press Release: Pump Rooms Customer Service Centre Opening – April 2024](#)

Agenda Item 6
Overview and Scrutiny Committee
13th November 2024

Title: Annual Update on the Corporate Strategy

Lead Officer: Chris Elliott

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Davison

Wards of the District directly affected: All

Approvals required	Date	Name
Portfolio Holder	05.11.24	Cllr Ian Davison
Finance	05.11.24	Andrew Rollins
Legal Services	-	-
Chief Executive	05.11.24	Chris Elliott
Director of Climate Change	05.11.24	Dave Barber
Head of Service(s)	05.11.24	Marianne Rolfe, Tracy Dolphin, Lisa Barker, Philip Clarke, David Elkington, Andrew Rollins, Graham Leach & Darren Knight
Section 151 Officer	05.11.24	Andrew Rollins
Monitoring Officer	05.11.24	Graham Leach
Leadership Co-ordination Group	-	-
Final decision by this Committee or rec to another Cttee / Council?	No – Report to Overview & Scrutiny Committee in November	
Contrary to Policy / Budget framework?	No	
Does this report contain exempt info/Confidential? If so, which paragraph(s)?	No	
Does this report relate to a key decision (referred to in the Cabinet Forward Plan)?	No	
Accessibility Checked?	Yes	

1. Summary Why Overview & Scrutiny Committee asked for the report

- 1.1 The report sets out the progress after a year of the agreed Corporate Strategy for Warwick District Council and offers an opportunity to reflect on the experience of its first year and make any adjustments accordingly. This report should be read in conjunction with the report on the Low Cost, Low Carbon Strategic Priority area and the report on Quarter 1 Performance of Service Area Plans and especially on that element relating to the Performance Management Framework being developed for the Council and Service Area Planning Process for the 2025/2026 Service Area Plans.

2. What is being delivered

- 2.1 The Corporate Strategy was adopted by Full Council in December 2023, so it has been formal Council Policy for almost a year. The Strategy sets out the administration's vision for the future of Warwick district; the values which are a key part of the Council's culture and guide the actions and behaviours expected of its representatives; and the three strategic priorities the Council seeks to achieve by 2030.
- 2.2 The strategic priorities should be translated into the provisions within the Service Area Plans, the Council's Budget and therefore its projects and allocations of resources whether that be people, money or asset. The performance report is a key tool to help the Council demonstrate the services it is providing are performing well (or not) and that it is delivering its strategic objectives. It is though not proposed to replicate the contents of the other report on this same agenda which covers Service Area Plan performance. Instead, the approach deployed is to look at the key elements of the strategy and assess progress.
- 2.3 Vision

The Vision adopted for the Warwick 2030 strategy is to:

"Make Warwick District a great place to live work and visit by improving lives and the environment."

Whilst the aspirational content is largely unchanged from the original 2009 iteration, the revised vision importantly also sets direction - to improve the environment and to improve lives. This is an important addition as it provides a broad framework for the Council's objectives to align to when seeking to achieve Warwick District's future state. The vision also continues to align with WDC's values and clearly articulates where the Council seeks to go.

The challenge has always been to find an effective way to measure achievement of this vision especially as it is outcome focused, rather than being focused on transactional service efficiency or effectiveness and whether it relates to the whole experience for citizens and businesses or just those things that this Council has direct control over.

2.4 Values

The organisational values were updated and revised. An organisation's values guide the actions and behaviours expected of its representatives when pursuing its strategic objectives and vision. They communicate the underlying and enduring core principles that guide strategy and define the way an organisation

should operate for the long term. Values are the bedrock of an organisation that can always be relied on and are a key part of organisational culture.

Culture eats strategy for breakfast, so translating these values into actions and behaviours is a complex task. To introduce the new values, in February 2024, our Human Resources team facilitated a series of Conversation Café sessions, inviting staff from across the entire Council to engage with the new values and make them real. However, it is critical to recognise that the values are also for Councillors, as well as for staff. The task we now face is to ensure that all leaders at all levels of the Council, Cllrs and staff to demonstrate the behaviours aspired to in our values and for everyone to challenge behaviour which does not accord with them.

Since the Conversation Cafés were completed, a staff pulse survey has already been undertaken. There will be a further series of these surveys in the future, to help test the experience of the adopted values in real life.

2.5 Strategic Priorities

The Corporate Strategy focuses on 3 Strategic Priorities each with a few objectives. The attached Appendix 1 illustrates high level progress against each objective and gives a RAG rating. Overall, this demonstrates good progress is being made on almost all fronts in a short period of time,

Two Member/Officer Programme Boards oversee the first two Strategic Priorities while a Member/Officer informal meeting oversees progress on the 3rd Priority.

Another report on this agenda sets out proposed performance measures for the low cost low carbon Strategic Priority. There is not yet a full set of measures across 3 Priority Areas and this remains a matter to be addressed but needs to be considered in conjunction with the targets or measures for the Service Area Plans. These need not to duplicate efforts.

3. The key risks to the service and how they are being managed

- 3.1 The primary risks for the Strategy should be reflected in the Strategic Risk Register which is reported upon separately.

4. Further development and Review

- 4.1 A reflection of a year on indicates a drafting oversight as there are two objectives with near similar wording (these being x and y).
- 4.2 There is the challenge of ensuring that the strategic priorities and each of their objectives are translated effectively into the Service Area Plans and into decisions around projects and about the allocation of resources. Last year was the first year for this Corporate Strategy and given the issues in Housing and Assets it was not as effective across the board as it might have been.
- 4.3 This next year offers an opportunity to correct that position and to ensure that measures or targets in the Service Area Plans reflect the priorities set by the Corporate Strategy as well as their being an appropriate set of performance measures for each Strategic Priority. As set out in the Performance Report to help to record progress a Performance Management Framework is also being developed to come to Cabinet in February 2025.

Background papers: None

Supporting documents: [Corporate Strategy 2023 to 2030](#)



Warwick District Council Corporate Strategy Progress Summary

Key:

Completed	
In progress	
Not started	

1. Delivering valued, sustainable services

In order that the Council can continue to focus its efforts and activities on the needs of its residents, communities and businesses, this priority will be underpinned by continued demonstration of financial sustainability through the medium term. This is the foundation for ensuring there are resources to continue to enable residents to receive excellent high-quality services that are responsive and accessible to local needs.

1.1. Ensure sustainability is at the heart of our decision-making		
Ways we will deliver this	Progress	Status
1.1.1. We will develop a climate and sustainability impact tool to help inform, shape and improve our decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate impact tool currently under construction and will soon be ready for testing 	In progress
1.2. Continue to ensure the Council's finances remain on a firm and sustainable footing		
Ways we will deliver this	Progress	Status
1.2.1. Our medium-term financial strategy will set out the steps we will take to ensure we continue to be financially sustainable and can continue to invest across the district. This will include making better use of existing resources and consider how we can increase income generating opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed and reported quarterly as part of Budget Monitoring reports to Cabinet. Next update to be delivered as part of Budget Setting. Agreement to be part of WMIZ – first LGI approved by Cabinet for WMCA approval in Dec. F&C 25 approved, revised strategy to be included updated MTFS assumptions. 	In progress
		In progress

Appendix 1 – Corporate Strategy Progress Summary

1.2.2. Our change programme will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of how the Council delivers services to ensure they remain responsive and accessible to customer needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change Programme – Case for Change created and approved. • Change Programme launched • Efficiency tracker established. • Programme board established. • Independent fees and charges review complete. Next stage – Commercial training, launching with SLT 28 November. • CRM procured. • Digital transformation commenced starting with waste & recycling. • Efficiency savings commenced • Pipeline of initiatives underway 	
1.3. Achieve and demonstrate delivery of high quality services		
Ways we will deliver this	Progress	Status
1.3.1. By reviewing how Council services are delivered and measuring performance will help ensure high quality services are being delivered across the Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Risk Management Policy and significant risk register • Housing & Asset Management compliance and regulatory programme underway • Introduced updated complaints policy and revised procedures being implemented • Review of corporate performance and service area plans commenced • Business process reengineering underway for waste and recycling services 	In progress
1.3.2. The Digital and Customer Strategy and Change Management Programme will make it easier for customers to contact the Council 24/7, 365 days a year, and enable our customer service team to help more customers at the first point of contact through different communication channels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital strategy created and approved as part of the Change Programme – Case for Change • CRM procured • Business process mapping tool procured • Service Designer appointed • Process review underway for waste & recycling • Opening of the Pump Rooms Customer Service Centre in April 2024, providing improved access to in-person services for those who need it. 	In progress

Appendix 1 – Corporate Strategy Progress Summary

1.3.3. We will measure our performance and develop how we use data, benchmarking and customer insight to ensure we continuously learn and improve how we deliver services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is underway to develop a performance management framework and associated processes for inclusion in SAPs. • Customer insight is being used with Customer and Digital Services to improve service access – recent exercise to target Pension Credit take up is an example of this. 	In Progress
1.3.4. We will further develop our approach to commissioning and contract management across the Council to continue to ensure residents receive the best service possible and value for the taxpayer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparations underway for the new Procurement Act (launch delayed to Feb 25) • Procurement champions group established – meet quarterly • Procurement SLT sub-group established – meet fortnightly 	In progress
1.3.5. Ensure Council homes are safe and meet the Decent Homes standard for all our tenants, including improving the energy efficiency of their homes and meeting all new social housing regulatory requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stock condition surveys commissioned – currently 75% complete • Pennington's and Housing Quality Network commissioned to assess and report on • Decarbonisation and Energy Efficiency Delivery Plan has been drafted for consideration by Cabinet (see 2.2.1) 	In Progress
1.4 We want to attract and retain the best talent to deliver our ambitions		
Ways we will deliver this	Progress	Status
1.4.1. Our People Strategy will help to attract the right people with the right skills the Council needs; this will help the Council become recognised locally, regionally and nationally as an employer of choice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued work on key themes including the 'Recruitment Retention and Remuneration' project and EDI agenda together with support for the Digital Strategy as per reports to SLT and Employment Committee. External communication support all other actions for the Strategy to ensure that our residents are fully informed. 	In Progress
1.5. Ensure the best use of the Council's assets and resources to deliver the Council's wider corporate aims and support the circular economy		
Ways we will deliver this	Progress	Status

Agenda Item 6

Appendix 1 – Corporate Strategy Progress Summary

1.5.1. A new Asset Strategy and Management Plan will set out how we will best use our assets to drive sustainability, enable regeneration, and commercial value to contribute to our long-term financial position and place-shaping ambitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will commence in November 2024 	Not commenced
1.5.2. We will continue to develop our approach for maximising social value through our place-shaping initiatives to recycle money within the District.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will be considered following the implementation of the new Procurement Act 	Not commenced

Priority 2: Low cost, low carbon energy across the district

The Council will look to find ways to reduce energy consumption and bills in Council civic buildings, Council housing, and help others to do the same, such as privately owned homes, businesses and other public and voluntary sector organisations. Support programmes and initiatives will be developed that meet national standards of accreditation to ensure performance in use is optimised. A performance measurement approach will be developed to assess the long-term benefits of the improvements made.

2.1. Reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions from the council's public buildings		
Ways we will deliver this	Progress	Status
2.1.1. Significantly improve the energy efficiency of Council buildings and introduce renewable energy generation capacity where possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business cases for LED lighting programme, rooftop solar and targeted heating replacement systems have been agreed. Procurement underway and implementation due to commence early 2025. Solar PV on leisure centres project is moving forward. 	In progress
2.1.2. Assess the creation of an investment fund for energy conservation and energy generation projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renewable Energy Generation Reserve in place for 2024/25. Savings from initiatives will be captured so that decisions can be made on an annual basis regarding the extent to which that reserve can be added to 	In progress
2.2. Reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions from existing Council housing		
Ways we will deliver this	Progress	Status
2.2.1. Develop a Decarbonisation and Energy Efficiency Strategy, for existing Council homes to reach a minimum of EPC C by 2030. Aim to go further to reduce carbon emissions and energy bills for Council tenants by exploring how we can maximise the impact and prioritisation of our maintenance programme and any external funding opportunities. This will	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report scheduled for Cabinet in December 2024 to reach EPC C. LCLC Energy Programme Board has discussed the strategy to go further and has provided a steer to enable officers to prepare a strategy for consideration in 2025. 	In progress

include developing the toolkit to measure and assess impact.		
2.3. Provide homes which are safe and meet the Decent Homes standard for all our tenants, including improving the energy efficiency of their homes		
Ways we will deliver this	Progress	Status
2.3.1. Working with tenants and using sector best practice to ensure that our homes are safe, energy efficient, free from damp and mould and, as a minimum, meet Decent Home standard.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The links with the action plan that has been prepared in response to the HQN report and the housing regulator 	In progress
2.4. Ensure new housing developments led by the Council are exemplars of planning and construction to meet the climate emergency and other challenges.		
Ways we will deliver this	Progress	Status
2.4.1. New Council homes are net-zero carbon in operation. To support this, we will set out our aspirations relating to carbon performance of WDC-led developments, whilst recognising that there may be times when these aspirations cannot be fully achieved in light of viability constraints.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A specification for consultants to work with the Council to prepare a housing development strategy has been agreed. Building on informal discussions with Cabinet members, work on the strategy to commence imminently. 	In progress
2.5. Explore multiple, innovative approaches to make it easier for others in the district to reduce their energy needs.		
Ways we will deliver this	Progress	Status
2.5.1. By working in partnership locally, regionally and nationally, we will identify, evaluate and undertake initiatives to help local people reduce their energy needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline proposals for a retrofit grant and lending scheme have been agreed by the LCLC Programme Board. Soft Market testing with potential lending organisations are getting underway. This is included within the draft proposals for the Local Growth Initiatives funding 	In progress

Priority 3: Creating vibrant, safe and healthy communities of the future

We will work with communities, businesses and public sector partners to enable and support improvements where people's community, economic and housing needs can be met. This will facilitate a better and more sustainable balance with the natural world that will allow our communities and businesses to thrive in a sustainable and safe way.

3.1. Support all our communities, urban and rural, to be economically ready for the future, with the right infrastructure and protect community identity with a focus on people and environment		
Ways we will deliver this	Progress	Status
3.1.1. Enhance our town centres by working with businesses in place making initiatives, events and active travel to support the daytime and nighttime economy. This will include taking forward the future high street fund and the progression of the creative quarter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nighttime economy interventions (Ask Angela, Street Marshalls, NTE Community Wardens, etc) First Creative Quarter project (refurbishment of buildings at Spencer Yard into offices for digital creative industries) is completed. Work has begun on second project (Stoneleigh Arms & Old School House) with planning permission issued and demolition of Stoneleigh Arms PH. Have jointly commissioned work with WCC to refresh the Leamington Town Centre vision and on the future of the Parade. Feasibility Study on Covent Garden completed. Work on relocation of the Sorting Office is underway. Work is progressing on SPD for Old Town to provide a wider planning framework for current and future projects. 	In progress
3.1.2. Opportunities for an investment zone will focus on the transition to a green economy, protect against unsuitable development and deliver for biodiversity, sustainable transport, and job creation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in WMIZ approved First LGI scheme approved by Cabinet Oct 24, to be approved by WMCA Dec 24 LGI timeline agreed to bring forward further schemes 	In progress
3.1.3. Promote the district as a location for advanced manufacturing, "green" industries,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The South Warwickshire Economic Development Strategy has been developed 	

Appendix 1 – Corporate Strategy Progress Summary

<p>creative games and hi- tech based companies, building on our national reputation. Work with educational establishments to inspire people to learn new skills, help local people access jobs and opportunities.</p>	<p>and launched in partnership with Stratford District Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WDC works in collaboration with partners across the district and region to achieve shared targets and vision for the area. • Partnership work with C& W Inward Investment Team, Warwickshire Skills Hub, Warwickshire Towns Network , Economic Development colleagues across the area and the Growth Hub and other partners are well established. • Collaborative partnership work continues to progress the transition of the Destination Management Organisation (DMO) into the formation of the Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) with partners across Coventry & Warwickshire. • Working with partners at Warwickshire County Council and the industry which includes global studios based in the District. • Conference and Exhibition Interactive Futures 2024 was held in The Spa Centre, Leamington Spa. 	
<p>3.1.4 Increase the volume of high quality, low carbon, affordable and social housing, including increasing the Council's and Milverton Homes' home building activity. This will help meet demand for housing and help tackle rough sleeping and homelessness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposals to bring forward developments at Leyes Lane and Rouncil Lane are progressing, including exploring the potential for Passivhaus housing on the sites. 	<p>In progress</p>
<p>3.2. Promote vibrant communities, a welcoming atmosphere and good mental and physical health and wellbeing within all our towns and villages.</p>		
<p>Ways we will deliver this</p>	<p>Progress</p>	<p>Status</p>
<p>3.2.1. Support our creative community, including local artists,</p>		<p>In progress</p>

Appendix 1 – Corporate Strategy Progress Summary

dancers, actors, musicians, and history and heritage organisations through a revised Creative Framework and a programme of support through UKSPF projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SPF programme of projects is underway as part of a multi year funding package 	
3.2.2. Build on our reputation as a home for national and international sporting events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing improvements to our facilities. Building new facilities. Working with Bowls England to deliver nationals and support in their world bowls 2027. Reviewing possibility of becoming a training ground for the Commonwealth Games 2026. 	In Progress
3.2.3. Encourage everyone to have a more active lifestyle by using our leisure centres, parks and open spaces, other sports facilities, and the provision of outreach activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reintroduced park permits, Outdoor gyms and park improvements programmes. Development of new parks – i.e Queen Elizabeth 2; Bishops' Tachbrook Country Park; Gateway Country Park; Baginton Country Park; Myton Park phase 2; active communities programmes. New Swimming pool at Kenilworth construction underway; New Community Stadium, footpath and cycleway and relocated athletics track progress 	In progress
3.2.4. Review, update and continue to take forward initiatives in the Climate Emergency Action Programme and evaluate their impact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Climate Change Action programme was reviewed in December 2023, with the LCLC Energy Programme and the Biodiversity Action Programme providing a clearer focus for the priorities relating to climate change. Improved data dashboards are being worked on in relation to low carbon energy (see separate report on the O&S agenda). A range of initiatives within the CCAP continue to be progressed 	Review Complete (work on initiatives is ongoing)
		In progress

Appendix 1 – Corporate Strategy Progress Summary

<p>3.2.5. Using our joint Local Plan with Stratford DC to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prioritise housing development on brownfield sites. • minimize use of greenfield sites where possible. • promote new developments using 20-minute neighbourhood/ settlement designs. • ensure convenient access to services and shops. • protect existing community identities. • ensure the provision of appropriate infrastructure is available to support new and existing developments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All this is being progressed through the work on the SWLP. All the principles below are to be embedded in the SWLP. This is being informed by the evidence base that is being gathered. 	
<p>3.2.6. In partnership with Warwickshire County Council, promote and implement active travel choices as a priority – public transport, walking and cycling.</p>	<p>Work progressing in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EV charging on WDC land • Abby Fields cycle route • Working with WCC on car clubs • Improved cycle infrastructure at Newbold Coym (including cycle parking at the pavilion and the Radford Rd bridge 	<p>In progress</p>
<p>3.2.7. Adopt a Net-Zero Carbon Development Plan Document (DPD) and provide supplementary guidance, training, and support to ensure that new homes and other buildings in the district are net-zero carbon.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NZC DOD was adopted in May 2024. It is now given weight in all relevant planning decision. • The Council has recruited an officer to provide expertise on interpreting and advising on energy statement to ensure decision can be made with a full understanding of the building's energy performance 	<p>Complete</p>
<p>3.3. Enhance the biodiversity of the district</p>		
<p>Ways we will deliver this</p>	<p>Progress</p>	<p>Status</p>
		<p>In progress</p>

Appendix 1 – Corporate Strategy Progress Summary

3.3.1. Increase the level of biodiversity on Council owned land and create a network of accessible, linked biodiversity rich spaces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity Action Programme has been adopted and year 1 actions progressed. This includes a number of practical measures, as well as work to explore the potential for Biodiversity Net Gain on WDC land holdings. This will be subject to a separate report to O&S in April 2025 	
3.3.2. Encourage residents, communities, and businesses to enhance the biodiversity of the district using the planning system, the Biodiversity Net Gain legislation and other opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity Action Programme has been adopted and year 1 actions progressed. This includes: on site infrastructures such a swales and bat boxes; developing clear biodiversity evidence to support SWLP preferred options; promotion of biodiversity to Town and Parish Council through partnership with WALC; and implementation of BNG 	In progress
3.4. Champion new and innovative ways of working together to improve health, safety, wellbeing and tackle inequalities – focusing on prevention and building resilience in communities.		
Ways we will deliver this	Progress	Status
3.4.1. Reduce health inequalities within the district and develop a series of health and community wellbeing hubs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening of Lillington Health hub and associated work on tackling respiratory disease in that neighbourhood. South Warwickshire Place Plan priorities agreed. Feasibility studies on new health hubs in Kenilworth and North Leamington and work with Brunswick Hub on evolving future. 	In progress
3.4.2. Develop and implement an asset based community development strategy where the Council and partners will work with communities to build capacity to help address their own health,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to start during December 2024 	Not yet started

safety and wellbeing needs, especially those with more deprived socio-economic or isolated backgrounds.		
3.4.3. Working with partners to deliver community safety interventions to address ASB and fear of crime.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Warwickshire community safety partnership (statutory body), action plans described in annual O&S report. • Community safety team delivering against CSP plans and local threats. • Various interventions delivered through Hotspot response, safe streets, serious violence funding. • Various surveys to understand fear of crime and inform future plans. 	In progress

Agenda Item 7
Overview & Scrutiny Committee
13 November 2024

Title: 2024/25 Quarter 1 Performance Report

Lead Officer: Graham Leach

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Davison

Wards of the District directly affected:

Approvals required	Date	Name
Portfolio Holder	04/11/2024	Ian Davison
Finance	31/10/2024	Alex Elston
Legal Services		
Chief Executive	31/10/2024	Chris Elliott
Director of Climate Change	31/10/2024	Dave Barber
Head of Service(s)		Graham Leach
Section 151 Officer	31/10/2024	Andrew Rollins
Monitoring Officer		Graham Leach
Leadership Co-ordination Group		
Final decision by this Committee or rec to another Cttee / Council?	Yes	
Contrary to Policy / Budget framework?	No	
Does this report contain exempt info/Confidential? If so, which paragraph(s)?	No	
Does this report relate to a key decision (referred to in the Cabinet Forward Plan)?	No	
Accessibility Checked?	Yes	

1. Summary Why Overview & Scrutiny Committee asked for the report

- 1.1 The report sets out the 2024/2025 Quarter 1 Performance Report for Warwick District Council against the measures/targets included within the adopted Service area plans. It also sets out the timetable for reporting on performance for the remainder of the Financial Year.
- 1.2 The report also provides an update on the Performance Management Framework being developed for the Council and Service Area Planning Process for the 2025/2026 Service Area Plans.

2. What is being delivered

- 2.1 The Performance report is a key tool in helping the Council demonstrate the services it is providing are performing. At present the performance report focuses on the measures within the Service Plans and if they are achieving the expected level of performance. The commentary provided by officers against those measures which are below the expected level enables an understanding of the reasons for this and if there is a need for further investigation.
- 2.2 The Quarter 1 report is set out at Appendix A to the report. Quarter 1 for 2024/2025 ran from 1 April 2024 to 30 June 2024. This data has not been reported before now as time was taken to reflect on the best approach and format for this.
- 2.3 The current performance report provides an overview of the measures within the approved service area plans for 2024/25 with a focus on those that were either in red or amber status. The status is defined within the specific measure on expected performance. The report also provides details of measures where the "Measure/Target trending down for at least two consecutive quarters".
- 2.4 Not all measures are reported on within the report, but all can be found, along with full service area plans on the WDC [Business Intelligence Portal](#), the link to which has been circulated separately to all Councillors.
- 2.5 Table 1, below sets out the reporting timeline for the performance report for the remainder of the 2024/25 Service Area Plans.

Table 1

Stage	Q2 report	Q3 report	Q4 report
Deadline for Service Areas to provide the data	4 November 2024	3 February 2025	5 May 2025
Date for the draft SAP to SLT	11 November 2024	10 February 2025	12 May 2025
Date SLT to provide commentary	18 November 2024	17 February 2025	19 May 2025
Date to be considered at SLT	28 November 2024	20 February 2025	29 May 2025
Date to be considered at Cabinet Catch Up	2 December 2024	24 February 2025	2 June 2025
Date SAP will be shared with all Councillors	4 December 2024	26 February 2025	4 June 2025
Date to be considered by O&S Cttee	21 January 2025	18 March 2025	TBC

- 2.6 Also available, via the Business Intelligence Portal, are the [corporate projects list](#), the [significant risk register](#) and in the near future procurement activity setting out current and upcoming procurement activity. The link to which have been circulated separately to all Councillors.
- 2.7 The Service Area Plans for 2025/26 are being developed by Service Areas in partnership with their relevant Portfolio Holder(s). This is with a view to them being approved by Cabinet in February 2025, alongside the budget. The timetable for their approval is running alongside the budget setting process allowing for cross checking that funds are aligned to the relevant areas where appropriate. This also allows for consideration of overall capacity and risks at an early stage of planning.
- 2.8 To compliment this planning process, Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Cabinet discussed broad themes for the Service Area plans on 28 October 2024. The next phase will see the SLT review all Service Area Plans, with a focus on checking and challenging performance measures/targets as part of an awayday on 28 November 2024. This will be followed by a further review with SLT and Cabinet on 9 December 2024 before final sign off of the drafts on 13 January 2025 and the agenda being published on 27 January 2025.

3. The key risks to the service and how they are being managed

- 3.1 The primary risks around performance monitoring reports are ensuring that the data provided in the service area plans report is accurate and provides commentary on the rationale for the level of performance. This helps the Council to identify at an early stage where performance is below the expected standard and investigate/challenge as appropriate.

4. Further Development and Review

- 4.1 Performance reporting allows the Council to see a broad view of performance and highlights areas of underperformance. However, it does not allow for recognising success where Services are performing at or above the expected level.
- 4.2 At present further development is required to improve highlighting the performance of the Council in respect of its regulatory/statutory requirements and drawing these out as a performance indicator. This is important so officers/Councillors and the public can see that the legal duty is being met as required. This is being developed for the 2025/2026 Service Area Plans to clearly show this information, by providing the definition of target (those where there is a duty to meet a specific performance rate (for example ensuring gas safety certificates are in place and up to date) and a measure (for example footfall in the Town Hall) which will look more at the trend over time. As yet, this data is not differentiated within the Service Area Plans but will be for next year, with a view to back dating it over the current Service Area Plans.
- 4.3 There is also development underway of a Performance Management Framework for the Council. This is being developed alongside the Service Area Plans for 2025/26 and is due to be considered by Cabinet in February 2025.
- 4.4 To support the Framework some minor changes to the Service Area Plan format are being designed for 2025/26. As an example, there will be a definition of a target and measure and when they are expected to be used, as set out above. This will also see reflection on the current status of nearly all measures currently being Key Performance Indicators where some are simply Performance Indicators.

- 4.5 There will also be further work on the alignment to the Corporate Strategy of Service Area Plans and the project list. The current service area plans were approved at nearly the same time as the new Corporate Strategy. This time officers are using time to plan to show clearer links between the plans and performance and the Strategy. The key area to develop more detailed modelling is on Corporate Priority 3 where The Head of Governance, Head of Digital and Customer Services, Head of Safer Communities, Leisure and Environment and the Policy, Performance and Complaints Manager are looking at the most appropriate model for this.

Background papers: Nil

Supporting documents:

Service Area Plans for 2024/25

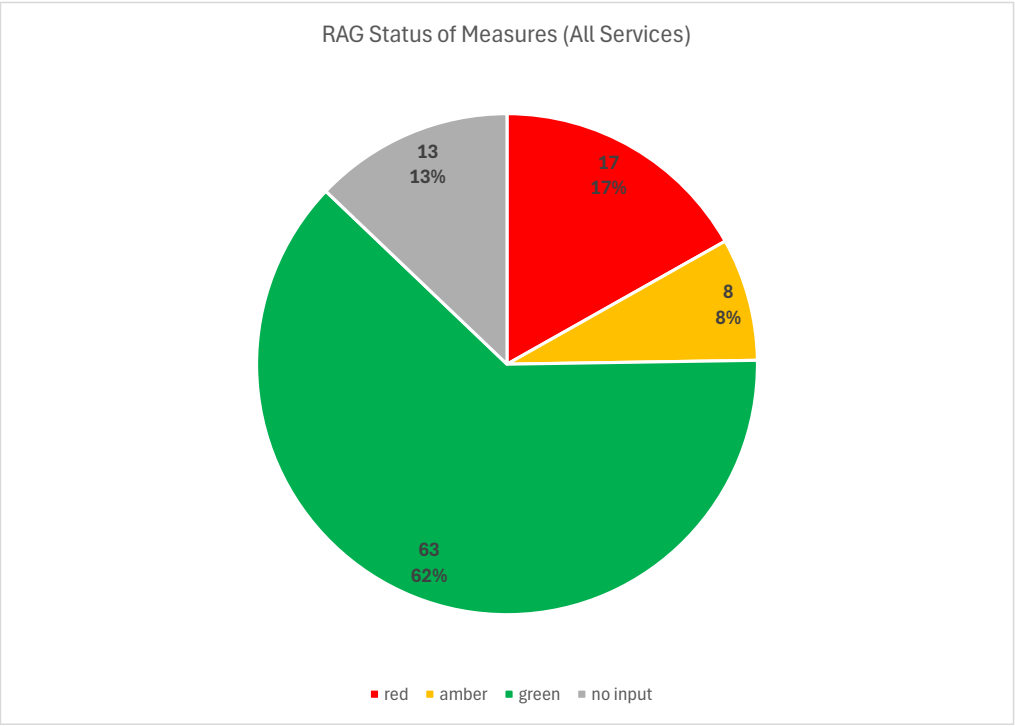
2024/25 Quarter 1 Performance Overview

RAG Status of Measures

Service Area	Measures on SAP	Red Status	Amber Status	Green Status	No data input	No target	% red~
CD&S	12	1	0	11	0	0	8%
Climate Change	13	0	0	0	2	1	N/A
Finance	17	2	0	5	7	1	28%
Governance	4	1	0	3	0	0	25%
Housing	29	2	1	5	0	0	25%
Neighbourhood and Assets	31	6	3	13	4	0	27%
P&C	6	0	0	6	0	0	0%
Place, Arts, Economy	14	3	1	6	0	4	30%
SCLE	21	2	3	14	0	0	11%
Total	147	17	8	63	13	6	19%

There are 21 Housing, 10 Climate Change, 3 Neighbourhood & Assets, 2 Finance and 2 SCLE measures that cannot be measured measured until year end. These are excluded from the table above and the pie chart below.

~Of those with targets and not annual

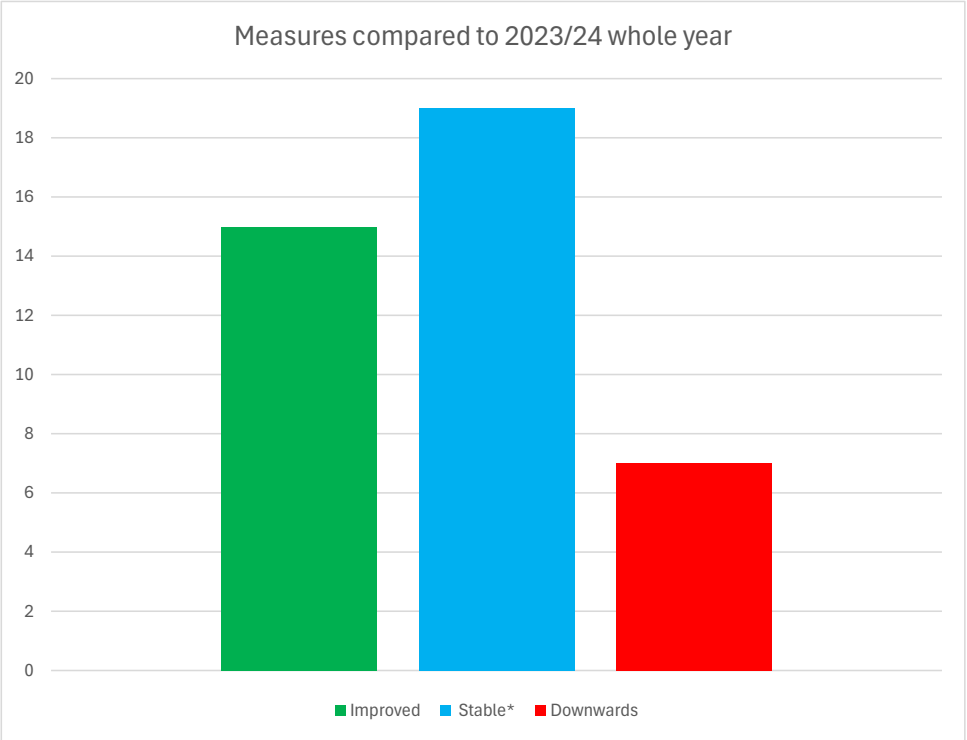


Measure comparison to last period

Service Area	Improved	Stable*	Downwards
CD&S**	N/A	N/A	N/A
Climate Change**	N/A	N/A	N/A
Finance**	N/A	N/A	N/A
Governance	2	1	1
Housing	4	3	1
Neighbourhood and Assets**	N/A	N/A	N/A
P&C	2	0	0
Place, Arts, Economy	4	5	3
SCLE	3	10	2
Total	15	19	7

*Within 5% of last year

**Last years figures not on SAP



Red & Amber Measures

Red Measures									Appendix A
Service Area	Reference Number	Measure/Target Description	Measure/Target	This Performance Period	Time Missing Target/Measure	Distance From Target/Measure	Previous Performance Period	Trend Direction	Commentary
Customer & Digital Services	CD&S1	Incident Management - First Fix Resolution Rate	75%	71%	Quarterly	4%	N/A	N/A	First fix rates for ICT queries vary significantly depending on the nature of the issues raised by our users. In Q1 ICT replaced most of the Council's telephony, migrating users from Cisco Jaber to Microsoft Teams. This generated a lot of traffic that was new to both the helpdesk and users. A temporary dip in first fix performance was expected and is nothing to be concerned about at this point.
Finance	Finance4	Efficient and timely council tax processing (Age of oldest item) - Days	30	49	3	19 days	N/A	N/A	Influx of work following new year billing, plus work taken back into the team previously dealt with by Customer Services and 1 FTE down on long term sickness
Finance	Finance16	Number of outstanding appeals (Business Rates)	25	142	Quarterly	117	N/A	N/A	WDC have no control over this number, this the VOA's responsibility. Customers can appeal their rateable value with the VOA, under the VOA's process, WDC have no interaction with this process or outcome, so this should really not be a reportable measure. Will be reviewed for 25/26 SAP

Governance	Governance1	Percentage of Freedom of Information Requests Responded to on time	90%	85%	2	5%	90%	↓	Appendix A This was due to the absnece of officers within the IG team as it was beign established and work being covered through CSteam who did not have sufficient resourec to meet overall demand. This should now see a change through Q2 with IG team established.
Housing	Housing4	Percentage of ended preventions and relieved duties that were successful.	75%	64.3%	Quarterly	10.7%	63.9%	↔	Challenges with staffing resources (turnover and recruitment) have resulted in some cases either running over the 56 day period to resolve or in prevention cases becoming homeless
Housing	Housing6	Number of rough sleepers on the street at period end	0	2	Quarterly	2	6	↓	Long term goal to end rough sleeping. Expected that it is likely to identify rough sleepers on any given night in 24/25. Officers suggest delivering a zero return in the current climate is unlikely and we would seek members views on whether the target should remain at zero.
Neighbourhood & Assets	N&A4	Percentage of corporate properties with up to date gas safety certification	100%	68.4%	3	31.6%	N/A	N/A	Lag on Corp (GF) data reaching ActiveH. Historically resolved to 100% on investigation. Work required to emulate process in place for HRA
Neighbourhood & Assets	N&A5	Percentage of HRA homes with a stock condition survey completed in the last 5 years	100%	70.0%	3	30%	N/A	N/A	Contract in place to undertake surveys. monitoring progress closely.
Neighbourhood & Assets	N&A6	Percentage of corporate properties with an in-date electrical test certificate	100%	83.8%	3	16.2%	N/A	N/A	Lag on Corp (GF) data reaching ActiveH. Historically resolved to 100% on investigation. Work required to emulate process in place for HRA

Neighbourhood & Assets	N&A9	Percentage corporate properties with an in-date DEC on display	100%	75.0%	3	25%	N/A	N/A	Completed - Awaiting Certificates from supplier.
Neighbourhood & Assets	N&A15	Percentage HRA Asbestos safety checks in date as per management survey	100%	94%	Quarterly	6%	N/A	N/A	All are currently being renewed though via a planned programme of works
Neighbourhood & Assets	N&A24	% of street cleansing operations completed to acceptable standard (monthly)	80%	51%	3	29%	N/A	N/A	Mechanical Sweepers off the road is affecting the capability and performance of the contractor
Place, Arts & Economy	PAE4	Number of planning applications determined within the statutory timeframe (%)	90%	83%	Quarterly	7%	93%	↓	The 90% target is a very high performance standard that we set ourself which exceeds that which the majority of LPA s achieve. 83% remains an excellent performance outcome and performance trends are monitored on an ongoing basis.
Place, Arts & Economy	PAE7	% of planning applications refused permission	20%	8%	Quarterly	12%	12%	↓	This is a measure of the quality of planning applications that are being submitted. The Q1 performance figure indicates that for this period, the number of submissions that were acceptable in planning terms significantly exceeded that target.
Place, Arts & Economy	PAE13	Leamington Town Hall Footfall	Major building works have been affecting this and will continue until fourth quarter						
Safer Communities, Leisure & Environment	SCLE4	Percentage of ASB perpetrators deterred at first intervention	80%	75%	Quarterly	5%	100%	↓	Greater percentage of reoffending seen in this period. Multi agency response to this issue.

Safer Communities, Leisure & Environment	SCLE9	Percentage Completion of IPPC inspection programme (36 premises)	25%	6%	3	19%	0%	↑	This is an inspection programme which was put on hold during covid, then the team lost their expert in this field. We have invested in training the team and have recommenced the inspection programme. this has resulted in finding issues with premises inspected and subsequent work required for rectification. Inspection number's continue to increase monthly.
Amber Measures									
Housing	H3	Percentage of Lifeline calls answered within 60 seconds	98.00%	97.70%	Quarterly	0.3%	N/A	N/A	In tolerance threshold with minimal material impact - to be continually monitored in 24/25
Neighbourhood & Assets	N&A1	Percentage of HR repairs completed within target time	90%	89%	2	1%	N/A	N/A	In discussions with contractors to improve performance
Neighbourhood & Assets	N&A18	Percentage of HRA properties with in date EICR certificates	100%	98%	Quarterly	2%	N/A	N/A	Programme in place to clear backlog of outstanding EICR's as per compliance audit. Procedure now in place to raise programmes in advance of due dates
Neighbourhood & Assets	N&A21	Percentage of Household Waste recycled	63.38%	62.88%	2	0.5%	N/A	N/A	Waste, recycling & food are comparable to last year. Green Waste amount collected is down, most likely due to weather conditions this summer as permit numbers are higher
Neighbourhood & Assets	N&A23	Bulky waste collections (tonnes)	25.65	25.55	1	0.1	N/A	N/A	Monthly target is higher due to one off exceptional month in equivalent previous year. Sep 24 amount is acceptable
Neighbourhood & Assets	N&A25	Quality score for standard of Grounds Maintenance	4	3.94	2	0.06	N/A	N/A	idverde assessment to the minimum standard of the contract

Place, Arts & Economy	PAE10	Proportion of searches issued within 10 days	100%	98%	Quarterly	2%	99%	↓	An outcome of 98% relative to a performance target of 100% remains an excellent outcome.
Safer Communities, Leisure & Environment	SCLE15	Number of Events Days on Bowling Greens	40	39	Quarterly	1	0	N/A	Greens closed last quarter. One less event day seen this year on the greens.

Measure/Target trending down for at least two consecutive quarters

Service Area	Reference number	Measure/ target description	Measure/Target	Latest performance period	Previous Performance Period	Change in Performance	Distance from measure/target	Commentary
Governance	DX1	% of FOI requests responded to ontime	90%	92%	98%	-6%	+2%	This was due to the absnece of officers within the IG team as it was beign established and work being covered through CSTeam who did not have sufficient resourec to meet overall demand. This should now see a change through Q2 with IG team established.
Housing	H8	End to end time in days for HEART cases	390	284	197	87	102	HEART services have advised that changes to IT systems and associated procedures have impacted on end to end times for DFG closure
PA&E	PA&E4	Number of planning applications determined within the statutory timeframe (%)	90%	83%	95%	-12%	-7%	The 90% target is a very high performance standard that we set ourself which exceeds that which the majority of Council's achieve. 83% remains an excellent performance outcome and performance trends are monitored on an ongoing basis.
PA&E	PA&E5	Time taken to determine planning applications (no. of days average)	N/A	98	78	20	N/A	The average number of days taken to determine planning applications will fluctuate and can be effected by a range of factors. Performance in this regard continues to be monitored.
PA&E	PA&E13	Leamington Town Hall Footfall	22100	19517	24638	-5121	2583	Major building works will be affecting this until at least start of Q4

SCLE	SCLE4	Percentage of ASB perpetrators deterred at first intervention	80%	75%	93%	-18%	-5%	Q2 has not yet been reported. Q1 - Greater percentage of reoffending seen in this period. Multi agency response to this issue.
SCLE	SCLE5	Percentage of CCTV incidents self sourced	55%	67%	75%	-8%	+12%	Target is above 65% of incidents observed and dealt with are self sourced. The team maintain that % split between highlighted to them and self sourced. this is a self imposed target to ensure that operators are effective in spotting offences rather than them being called in to the team.

Agenda Item 8
Overview & Scrutiny Committee
13 November 2024

Title: Climate Change and Low Cost, Low Carbon Energy Reporting

Lead Officer: Dave Barber

Portfolio Holder: Ian Davison, Will Roberts, Lowell Williams

Wards of the District directly affected: All

Approvals required	Date	Name
Portfolio Holder	1/11/24	Lowell Williams
Finance	N/A	
Legal Services	N/A	
Chief Executive	1/11/24	Chris Elliott
Director of Climate Change		Author
Head of Service(s)	N/A	N/A
Section 151 Officer	N/A	Andrew Rollins
Monitoring Officer	1/11/24	Graham Leach
Leadership Co-ordination Group	N/A	N/A
Final decision by this Committee or rec to another Cttee / Council?	No – Scrutiny Report only	
Contrary to Policy / Budget framework?	No	
Does this report contain exempt info/Confidential? If so, which paragraph(s)?	No	
Does this report relate to a key decision (referred to in the Cabinet Forward Plan)?	No	
Accessibility Checked?	Yes	

1. Summary: Why Overview & Scrutiny Committee asked for the report

- 1.1 At its meeting in July 2024, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed, as part of its work programme, to receive a report on Climate Change data tracking (including carbon emissions) and how this can be provided and managed in the most efficient way. Further, there is another report on the agenda for this meeting relating to the annual reporting against the Corporate Strategy. In that context, this report, focuses on the data to support the Low Cost, Low Carbon Energy priority (Strategic Priority 2) along with updates on carbon emissions data .
- 1.2 To reflect the Corporate Strategy and the subsequent Cabinet decisions relating to the Low Cost, Carbon Energy Strategy, this report has two parts to it.
- 1.2.1 Part 1 provides an update on the Low Cost, Low Carbon (LCLC) Energy data agreed by Cabinet in July 2024 as part of the Low Cost, Low Carbon Energy Strategy. Part 1 of this report (paragraphs 2.1 to 2.13) provides an update on the latest position with regard to those measures, setting out:
- what data will be reported to align with Corporate Strategic Priority 2 and how frequently.
 - The role of the Low Cost, Low Carbon Programme Board and the plans for a LCLC Energy Dashboard
 - How members can review the latest data on an ongoing basis
- 1.2.2 Part 2 (paragraphs 3.1 to 3.8) provides an update relating to the three ambitions agreed as part of the Climate Change Action Programme, noting the biodiversity data will be report separately to Overview and Scrutiny in April 2025.

2 Part 1: Low Cost, Low Carbon Energy

- 2.1 Updates on the actions associated with Low Cost, Low Carbon (LCLC) Energy are included with the report on the Corporate Strategy, also on this agenda. This report focuses on plans for how data can support the progress on the Low Cost, Low Carbon Energy priority.
- 2.2 The Low Cost, Low Carbon Energy Strategy includes a series of 8 primary indicators to be used to track progress. The Strategy also includes a further set of 5 supporting secondary indicators.
- 2.3 The 8 primary indicators that were proposed are:

	'Low Cost'	'Low Carbon'
Public Buildings	Actual cost of energy used in the Council's public buildings	Actual total CO2 emissions from the Council's public buildings

Existing Council Housing	Predicted savings on energy bills for residents who have been supported by WDC through retrofit advice/implementation.	Predicted CO2 reductions from Council Housing as a result of WDC retrofit interventions
New housing developments led by the Council	Indicator to be developed potentially drawing on data from the newly adopted NZC DPD	Indicator to be developed potentially drawing on data from the newly adopted NZC DPD
Helping Others with Retrofit	Predicted savings on energy bills for residents who have been supported by WDC through retrofit advice/implementation.	Predicted total CO2 emission savings for residents who have been supported by WDC through retrofit advice/implementation.

2.4 The secondary indicators are:

- Percentage of electricity used in the Council's public buildings generated from renewable electricity produced onsite.
- Percentage of Council homes reaching EPC C or above
- For new WDC homes, the average percentage reduction in pre-offset CO2 emissions compared with other houses built in the district (as measured through the calculations of residual carbon emissions required to comply with the Net Zero Carbon DPD)
- Number of retrofit measures implemented by WDC residents or businesses as a result of the Council's retrofit support scheme
- Estimated overall District-wide carbon emissions from buildings as assessed through "Scatter" or similar data.

2.5 As the indicators are fully defined and the data becomes available, it will be collated and presented through a Dashboard which will enable managers, the Portfolioholder, the Programme Board and all WDC members to see the latest data. A draft dashboard was presented to and discussed at the Low Cost, Low Carbon Energy Programme Board on 23rd October 2024. Further work is now taking place to refine and populate the Dashboard. In time, this will be made available to all WDC members and will form the basis of ongoing reporting to Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to Strategic Priority 2.

2.6 The latest position in relation to the 13 indicators in Strategy is set out below:

Ref	Indicator Description	Data Sources	Is data Available Now? If not, date expected.	Is historical data available?	Frequency of reporting
1a	Public Buildings: Actual cost of energy used in the Council's public buildings	WDC energy consumption and energy bills	Yes for 2023/24	Yes, since 2018/19	Annual

1b	Public Buildings: Actual total CO2 emissions from the Council's public buildings		Yes for 2023/24	Yes, since 2018/19	Annual
2a	Existing Council Housing: Predicted savings on energy bills for residents who have been supported by WDC through retrofit advice/implementation.	Proposed Energy intervention reports from WDC contractors involved with delivering retrofit grant schemes and/or WDC funded retrofit	No. From April 2025	No	Quarterly
2b	Existing Council Housing: Predicted CO2 reductions from Council Housing as a result of WDC retrofit interventions		No. From April 2025	No	Quarterly
3a	New WDC Housing Developments: Cost indicator to be developed potentially drawing on data from the newly adopted NZC DPD	NB: There have been no planning permissions granted for WDC developments since July 2024, so the current indicator result is zero. Data definition and sources are still be developed. It is intended the data will be drawn from energy statements required to support planning applications, along with post construction building evaluation. This data will be compared with the estimated minimum energy/cost required to comply with the Net Zero Carbon DPD. For carbon data it is suggested this should look at comparative operational carbon per year over at least 10 years. For cost data, this should look at estimated comparative annual fuel costs for residents	No. From April 2025	No	Annual
3b	New WDC Housing Developments: Carbon indicator to be developed potentially drawing on data from the newly adopted NZC DPD		No. From April 2025	No	Annual
4a	Helping Others with Retrofit: Predicted savings on energy bills for residents who have been supported by WDC through retrofit advice/implementation.	Advice on how to measure this will be sought from the soft market testing being undertaken in November and December with potential lenders. Until that scheme has been designed, it is not known what data will be available. Subject to that advice, it is intended that data will be drawn from energy intervention reports involved with delivering retrofit grant schemes or future loan schemes.	Yes for green homes grants (collated by Jan 2025), but no for retrofit loan scheme as this is not yet established	Yes for green homes grants (collated by Jan 2025), but no for retrofit loan scheme as this is not yet established	Annual

4b	Helping Others with Retrofit: Predicted total CO2 emission savings for residents who have been supported by WDC through retrofit advice/implementation.		No. From start of retrofit loan scheme	No	Annual
5	Percentage of electricity used in the Council's public buildings generated from renewable electricity produced onsite.	Energy meters in locations where solar is provided.	Yes	Yes (albeit no renewable energy prior to opening of Castle Farm)	Annual
6	Percentage of Council homes reaching EPC C or above	Parity Portfolio Software	Yes (albeit accuracy of data needs to be refined through updated EPCs)	No	Annual
7	For new WDC homes, the average percentage reduction in pre-offset CO2 emissions compared with other houses built in the district (as measured through the calculations of residual carbon emissions required to comply with the Net Zero Carbon DPD)	Post construction building evaluation reports as measured against performance of other houses built in the District within the previous 12 months	No	No	Annual
8	Number of retrofit measures implemented by WDC residents or businesses as a result of the Council's retrofit support scheme	Data relating to residential properties collated through scheme designs to support retrofit grants. In the future may require surveys of those taking part of the retrofit scheme. Currently no business-related scheme is operating. This will need to be defined separately should a scheme be developed.	Whilst the data is available for residential, it requires detailed analysis and collation. Commence Jan 2025	Whilst historical data is available for residential, it requires detailed analysis and collation. Commence Jan 2025	Annual
9	Estimated overall District-wide carbon emissions from buildings as assessed	Annual Scatter data collated nationally	Yes	Yes	Annual

	through “Scatter” or similar data.				
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2.7 The table below shows the most recent Low Cost, Low Carbon Energy data that is currently available.

Ref	Description	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
1a	Public Buildings (including leisure centres and contractor buildings): Actual cost of energy used in the Council’s public buildings	£1,171,415	£1,240,725	£1,060,792	£1,097,544	£1,544,069	£2,523,921
1b	Public Buildings (including leisure centres and contractor buildings): Actual total CO2 emissions from the Council’s public buildings	3736 tonnes CO2e	3737 tonnes CO2e	3045 tonnes CO2e	3021 tonnes CO2e	2814 tonnes CO2e	2889 tonnes CO2e
5	Percentage of electricity used in the Council’s public buildings generated from renewable electricity produced onsite.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	N/A*
6	Percentage of Council homes reaching EPC C or above (Parity Portfolio data)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	36.5% (2033 out of 5547)
9	Estimated overall District-wide carbon emissions from buildings as assessed through “Scatter” or similar data.	517,791 tonnes CO2e	447,388 tonnes CO2e	421,726 tonnes CO2e	Data is retrospective and not yet available for these years		

* Castle Farm opened Dec 2023 with rooftop solar. However, faulty data recording technology meant the data for 23/24 was not recorded

2.8 The large increase in energy costs in 2022/23 and 2023/24 is as a result of a significant price increases which saw the electricity prices more than double and gas prices increase by over 70%, in addition to increased standing charges.

2.9 A significant part of the reductions in CO2 emissions from buildings is as a result of cleaner fuel within the national grid. For instance 100kwh of electricity in 2018/19 would have been responsible for 28 kilograms of CO2 emissions. In 2023/24 would be responsible for less than 21 kilograms of CO2 emissions.

- 2.10 The buildings energy data collated until now does not easily allow the impact of WDC's interventions to be seen. However, the new Low Cost, Low Carbon Energy Dashboard will allow the estimated impact of interventions to be seen and it is expected that it will be possible to follow this through in to energy usage and CO2 emissions data.
- 2.11 A Dashboard is being developed to present the Low Cost Low Carbon Energy Data in a way that enables progress or issues to be quickly identified and explored. Whilst this dashboard is under development, the Programme Board has provided guidance on how the Dashboard should look to enable the data to be managed at the Board meetings. For example, if the aim of reporting the cost of energy from WDC buildings is to aspire to a trend of cost reductions then the graph below would show that the trend for 2022/23 and 2023/24 is an adverse one. This would be flagged as an indicator of concern which in turn would enable the Board to drill down into the reasons for this. In this case, the reason is to do with national energy costs rather than WDC energy consumption, which has continued to decline



- 2.12 Once developed, the LCLC Energy Dashboard will be made available to all Councillors through Sharepoint (or similar).
- 2.13 It should be noted that collating data and reporting through a dashboard requires staff resource and skills. Capacity to do this will be put in place within existing budgets.

3 Part 2: Climate Change Ambitions

- 3.1 **Ambition 1:** WDC is net zero carbon by 2025/26 and that services provided

through contractors include carbon reduction targets to deliver net zero by 2030.

3.2 Organisational Carbon Emissions

Scope / Activity	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	(base year)					
	Tonnes CO2e	Tonnes CO2e	Tonnes CO2e	Tonnes CO2e	Tonnes CO2e	Tonnes CO2e
Scope 1 (emissions occurring in the District as a result of using fossil fuels “on site” e.g. gas, LPG)						
Total (Scope 1)	1,309	1,297	1,249	1,186	1,101	1,228*
Scope 2 (emissions occurring elsewhere as a result of WDC energy use – e.g electricity consumption)						
Total (Scope 2)	1,261	1,280	874	910	874	862
Scope 3 (emissions occurring as a result of contractor activities in providing WDC services)						
Total (Scope 3)	2,724	3,616	2,410	2,627,	2,315	2,354**
Total Gross Emissions (t)	5,294	6,193	4,533	4,275	4,291	4,444

* the significant increase in scope 1 emission is predominantly due to an error in the calculations relating to LPG usage and carbon emissions in previous years. If LPG is excluded from scope 1 emissions, the data shows consumption of gas has fallen by 8% between 2022/23 and 2023/24, with the resulting scope 1 carbon emissions also falling by 8%.

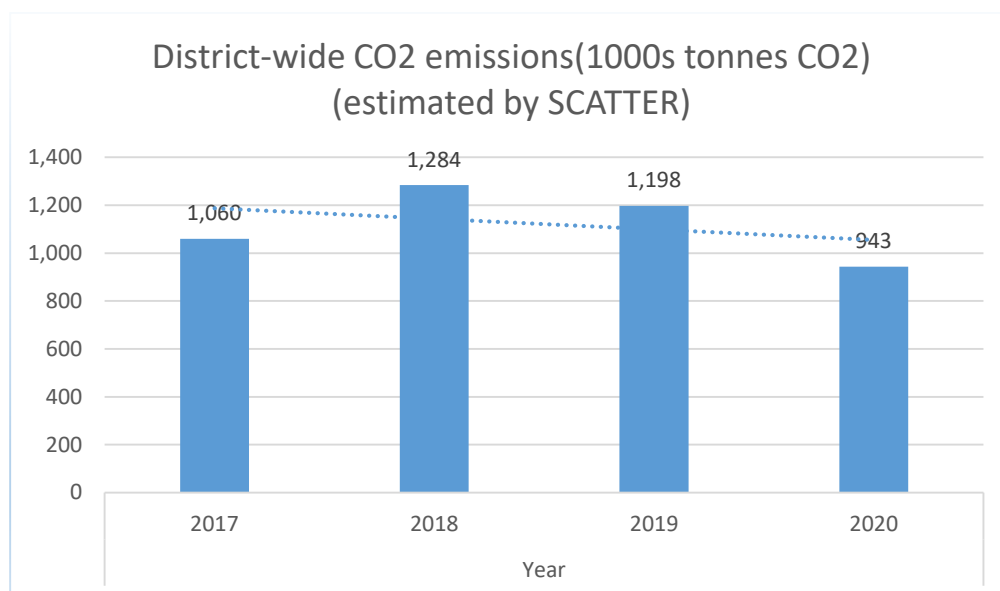
**Transmission and Distribution losses (beyond WDC’s control) are responsible for the increase. If these are excluded, scope 3 emissions have fallen by around 1%.

3.3 Key points to note:

- Emissions from WDC overall have decreased by 16% since the 2018/19 baseline.
- 2023/24 has seen a small increase in emissions since 2022/23. This is as a result of errors in previous LPG calculations and changes to estimates in transmission and distribution losses (see footnotes above)
- Unless there is a dramatic acceleration in the annual level of carbon reduction achieved over the next 2 years, the ambition to be net zero will be missed without carbon offsetting.
- An approach to carbon offsetting is being developed and will be adopted in 2025.
- Scope 3 emissions (contractors) account for more than half of all emissions and the emissions from Scope 3 transport (predominantly refuse collection vehicles) accounts for approximately a third of total emissions. Leisure centre emissions (645 tonnes per year) are also significant in scope 3 emissions

3.4 **Ambition 2:** reduce net carbon emissions from across the District by a minimum of 55% by 2030 (baseline 2018) and alongside this, plan how to further reduce carbon emissions to net zero by 2050

3.5 District-wide carbon emissions as estimated through Scatter data:



3.6 Whilst the data above shows significant progress (26.5% reduction against the 2018 baseline) towards the ambition of a 55% reduction, it should be noted that

- a) 2020 was impacted by Covid and is therefore unlikely to be consistent with previous or subsequent years. It is likely that the same will be true of 2021 once that data is published
- b) The 2020-based data is not likely to be significantly impacted by the declaration of WDC's climate emergency. The Council's actions cannot therefore be correlated in any way to the 2020 reduction
- c) When the 55% reduction ambition was established, this took account of changing national trends around factors such as cleaner electricity production.

3.7 **Ambition 3:** To enable our environment and communities to have adapted to the potential of at least 3 degrees rise in global temperatures by 2100.

3.8 No data is being collated specifically in relation to this ambition. This ambition is being managed through a risk-based approach. However, much of the data being collated for the Biodiversity Action Programme is also relevant to adaptation. This will be reported to Overview and Scrutiny in April 2025.

4 The key risks and how they are being managed

4.1 Risks are managed through the Low Cost, Low Carbon Risk Register which is currently under review by the Programme Board. The highest scoring risks within the Draft Low Cost, Low Carbon Energy Risk Register are:

RISK TITLE	RISK DESCRIPTION	RISK EXPOSURE	RAW RISK RATING	RISK CONTROL MEASURES	EFFECTIVENESS OF CONTROL MEASURES	RISK CONTROL ACTIONEE(S)	CURRENT RISK RATING
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			LIKELIHOOD	IMPACT	OVERALL RISK RATING				LIKELIHOOD	IMPACT	OVERALL RISK RATING
Costs exceeding available funds.	Cost of delivering low cost, low carbon energy and the potential that insufficient funding available to deliver the priorities	Financial , business disruption	4	4	16	The funding strategy will be utilised to establish applicable funding opportunities. The funding strategy needs to be developed. For the time being, the PB and officers understand broadly which pots of funding are being used on which projects.	Fully Effective	The Programme Board and officers supporting the Programme Board	3	4	12
Changing national priorities	Changing national priorities and funding	Unrealised opportunity	4	3	12	Include horizon scanning on Programme Board agendas to ensure we are aware as early as possible of any changes or opportunities.	Partially Effective	Officers supporting the Programme Board.	2	3	6
Grant requirements	Constraints associated with grant funds	Missed opportunity	3	4	12	Apply for grants that align with our aims; establish a pipeline of projects where regular grant schemes are in place	Full Effective	Officers supporting the Programme Board.	1	4	4

Technology advances	Changing technology and lack of examples and benchmarks from elsewhere to learn from	Missed opportunity/ineffective use of resources	4	3	12	As far as possible, learn from examples elsewhere and be prepared to experiment and learn from our own experiences.	Partially Effective	Programme Board and officers supporting the Programme Board	2	4	8
Expertise	Access to technical expertise in a fast-changing world	Financial , missed opportunity	4	4	16	Seek to recruit and retain internal expertise where we can, work with partners and use consultancies where other options are not available.	Partially Effective	Programme Board and officers supporting the Programme Board	2	4	8

4.2 Specifically in relation to collating and reporting data, the main risks concern:

a) The accuracy of some of the data for example:

- a. EPC data which is reliant on some out-of-date EPCs and will therefore need to be improved over time.
- b. Changing national formulas such as Transmission and Distribution data.
- c. Data complexities which make it difficult to ensure consistencies between different years.
- d. Staff leaving, again making it difficult to achieve consistency between years.
- e. Reliance on data from contractors.

b) Impacts that are beyond WDC's control such as the rate of decarbonisation of the electricity grid and energy prices.

c) Difficulties in defining indicators which enable meaningful and timely data to be made available:

- a. most of the data is annual, and in the case of Scatter data there is a 3 to 4 year time lag.
- b. Alternatives such as predicted savings from WDC interventions are complex to collate and are based on estimates rather than hard data.
- c. The Net Zero Carbon DPD is still relatively new. Although it has

potential to be a valuable mine of data, work is still being carried out to understand its full potential and therefore some indicators remain less well defined.

5 What is working well and what is not working so well

5.1 Working well in our data collection

- Strong focus on the Corporate Strategy priorities in relation to Low Cost, Carbon Energy, supported by a Programme Board, clear portfolio holder responsibilities and dedicated officer team.
- Significant investment in decarbonisation of public buildings has been agreed and plans to roll this out are advanced.
- There is good data, including historical trends to support this.
- The climate change officer team now has good technical skills to back up the political and managerial commitment to decarbonisation of buildings.
- The Net Zero Carbon DPD is in place and provides further potential for improving our data in relation to building performance

5.2 What is not (yet) working so well in our data collection

- There needs to be more focus on the post construction impacts on energy in relation to new buildings and retrofit measures.
- As set out in the risks above, data collation and reporting requires much more development to enable progress to be tracked in a timely manner.
- For some data, the time lag is an issue which requires proxy measures to be put in place.

6 One Change to improve performance

6.1 Improvements in defining Low Cost, Low Carbon Energy indicators and putting in place sound, consistent and effective data collection methods for all measures to support the programme

6.2 Linked to 6.1, the development of a Low Cost, Low Carbon Dashboard to enable effective tracking of progress.



Governance Services
Graham Leach Head of Governance & Monitoring Officer

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To: All Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

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7 November 2024

Dear Councillor,

Tachbrook Country Park – Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 13 November 2024

Please find attached the report and appendices for item 10 -Tachbrook Country Park for the above meeting.

Please note that the report, appendices A & B are public documents and that Appendices C-F are confidential.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Leach'.

Graham Leach
Head of Governance &
Monitoring Officer

Agenda Item 10
Overview & Scrutiny Committee
13 November 2024

Title: Tachbrook Country Park

Lead Officer: Ruth Hÿtch / Chris Elliott

Portfolio Holder: Cllr W Roberts

Wards of the District directly affected: Myton and Heathcote and Bishop's Tachbrook

Approvals required	Date	Name
Portfolio Holder	7.11.24	Cllr W Roberts
Finance	7.11.24	A Rollins/D Dabasia
Legal Services		
Chief Executive	7.11.24	C Elliott
Director of Climate Change	7.11.24	D Barber
Head of Service(s)		See above
Section 151 Officer		See above
Monitoring Officer	7.11.24	G Leach
Leadership Co-ordination Group		
Final decision by this Committee or rec to another Cttee / Council?	Yes N/A Information report	
Contrary to Policy / Budget framework?	No/Yes	
Does this report contain exempt info/Confidential? If so, which paragraph(s)?	No/Yes Paragraph 3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)	
Does this report relate to a key decision (referred to in the Cabinet Forward Plan)?	N/A/	
Accessibility Checked?	Yes/No	

1. Summary Why Overview & Scrutiny Committee asked for the report

1.1 This report for Overview and Scrutiny Committee is part of its ongoing programme of scrutinising the Council's key projects. This report informs the Committee about Tachbrook Country Park in respect of:

- Purpose of the project
- Timeline for delivery
- Governance of project
- Budget
- Skills being in place to deliver
- Project risks
- One Change to Improve Performance

2. What the project is being delivered

2.1 Purpose of the Project

2.1.1 The origin of the Tachbrook Country Park was set out in the adopted Local Plan for Warwick District covering the period 2011 to 2019. As a designated green space, it supports a large expansion of the urban area of Whitnash/Warwick and Leamington where several thousands of homes have been planned and many are now built.

2.1.2 The Country Park concept was for an area of almost 50 hectares (over 100 acres) to:

- Provide a permanent green edge to the expanded urban area.
- Offer a significant amenity area for the many new residents.
- Address an identified green space deficit in the southern area of Leamington and Whitnash.
- Create the potential for enhancement of the biodiversity of the district.
- As now to be modified it will also enable an off-road pedestrian/cycling route to a new secondary school form much of the new development.

2.1.3 The proposal will offer a range of features and habitats including wetland features and habitats, allotments, a refreshment centre and car parking as well as extensive footpaths and some cycling provision. The park has planning permission with outline permission for the refreshment centre.

2.1.4 In September 2020 the Project Board agreed that there will be two distinct phases to the project. The current approved plan is attached as Appendix A. The vision and objectives were updated to incorporate some land additions and future potential. (See Appendix B).

Phase 1 - land delineated within the Local Plan for use as a country park and land already secured by WDC for the same usage. This will form the basis of the planning for a country park. Also included – Oakley Grove School development due to it containing agreed shared community facilities, linked to the country park.

Phase 2 - proposals for new physical links and facilities for the country park, including potential land additions to the site, community facilities associated with it, commercial opportunities to support future site maintenance and transport links.

2.2 Key project components

- 2.2.1 The delivery of the scheme is based upon securing land free via Section 106 agreements connected with the development of adjoining sites for housing and financial contributions from those developments toward the cost of construction and maintenance also via Section 106 agreements. This has made it relatively easy to secure agreement to the land and money being transferred but harder as to when that transfer would happen.
- 2.2.2 The land necessary for the country park falls into 4 ownerships (see attached plan and summary at Appendix C).
- 2.2.3 Planning permission for the scheme was granted in November 2022. This followed a public consultation exercise on the draft masterplan which received over 1000 online comments. The proposal enables a stronger local community element in that the freehold will be owned by the parish council and there will be a long leasehold back to the District Council. This transition was re-confirmed in by the Council Executive on 11th February 2021 having been approved in principle in November 2018. A Memorandum of Understanding was later agreed with the Parish Council in June 2023.
- 2.2.4 The practical steps necessary for the delivery of the country park are:
- Assemble multiple land ownerships committed for the ownership of Warwick District Council to create a cohesive site through land transfers. (Relates to the stated Local Plan area, 2ha of woodland and shared facilities at Oakley School).
 - Obtain full planning permission to ensure the use of the site is established as a country park.
 - Ensure a cohesive set of community facilities is created, in parallel with the development of the proposed Oakley Grove School that will be adjacent to the country park.
 - Create site infrastructure in accordance with the agreed masterplan.
 - Ensure that the delivery provides opportunities for later enhancement of the site remain open throughout this delivery stage.
 - Open the site as a facility for the residents.
- 2.2.5 Progress to date is:
- One transfer completed on 19.03.24.
 - One transfer is agreed and awaiting full legal completion.
 - One transfer is agreed subject to some final confirmation from the owner. Weekly chasing is taking place to move to full legal completion.
 - One element of the site is planned for a date after construction has commenced. Negotiation of the terms of transfer is substantially complete. Final arrangements will include the agreement of a s106 agreement.
 - Further agreements relating to easements, site infrastructure, access to the site and details relating to agreed use of the community facilities (Community Use Agreement) are ongoing (currently 3 in total).

- Planning permission granted 25 November 2022. Detailed planning permission for the refreshment centre will be submitted once final design and cost evaluations have been completed and budget approved.
- Provision of the facilities agreed via s106 agreement. More detailed points of the Community Use Agreement are being agreed and awaiting legal completion.
- Contract for final design and discharge of pre-commencement planning conditions in final stages of agreement and will allow for a detailed specification leading to the appointment of a main works contractor.
- Future site enhancement has been accommodated via its incorporation in the design of the site masterplan.
- The country park will open in two geographical parts once the main construction has completed. The final (central) geographical part is due to be completed later in conjunction with a third-party stakeholder.

2.2.6 The scheme has also been materially affected by some external interventions.

Two of note are:

- i) the change made to the boundary of the scheme in conjunction with the proposal to accommodate the new Secondary School at Oakley Wood Road and some additional housing. This enabled a change to the extent and geography of the scheme meaning its southern tip is now very close to the northern tip of the village of Bishop's Tachbrook. It will also allow for the country park to act as an off-road route to school for many of the new homes in the area and to the village. The school scheme will also offer some car parking for the country park and another access point off Quercus Way.
- ii) Severn Trent Water are proposing a new sewer within the country park area to the immediate west of the Secondary School meaning that WDC works cannot start until that is complete. These works are provisionally scheduled to start in January 2025 and complete in May 2025.

This has required more time than originally anticipated and of course resource time from officers and the Project Board.

2.2.7 Subject to the land transfers being completed this year the timeline for the scheme going forward is now as set out in the project plan attached as Appendix D to the report.

2.3 **Governance of Project**

2.3.1 The current Project Board is chaired by a representative of Bishop's Tachbrook Parish Council, reflecting the local community involvement approach for this scheme given the Parish Council is the intended freeholder of the country park. It meets monthly and reviews and directs risk, performance and key project decisions. It is constituted as follows:

Parish Council Representative, Bishops' Tachbrook (Chair) – voting role
 Neighbourhood Portfolio Holder, WDC Cllr – voting role
 Planning and Place Portfolio Holder, WDC Cllr – voting role
 Bishop's Tachbrook Ward Cllr, WDC – voting role
 Chief Executive, WDC (Project Sponsor) – voting role
 Programme Manager, WDC

Project Manager, WDC

Principal Accountant (Projects), WDC (Finance)

Marketing and Communications Officer, WDC (Communications and Media)

Strategic Procurement and Creditors Manager (Procurement)

Green Space Manager (Green Spaces)

2.4 Budget

- 2.4.1 Obtaining land for the scheme has not incurred any cost other than officer time and legal resource as the land transfers have been secured free via Section 106 agreements.
- 2.4.2 Project financial resources have been provided via the various Section 106 agreements, with most of the income already received. There are at least two other s106 agreements anticipated, with some income still also awaited from agreed items. The funds obtained in total to date are £3.97m.
- 2.4.3 The current budgetary forecast is shown in Appendix E. The table currently shows a projected shortfall of £502k. The original forecasts were pre-Covid-19 and have been affected adversely by both time and the escalation of construction costs generally in the post-Covid period. When compared to original build estimates, as the land assembly has progressed, costs not directly related to the country park construction have risen e.g. unanticipated professional fees to negotiate a quid pro quo arrangement requested by one of the developers; redesign due to boundary changes from the original anticipated land take; additional surveys in relation to drainage. It is also to be noted that the current projected shortfall excludes additional anticipated costs detailed in paragraph 2.4.5.
- 2.4.4 This position has been under active consideration and mitigation to this is proposed by:
- Seeking grant funding from STW's Community Fund
 - Seeking restoration of interest lost on received s.106 agreements
 - Seeking use of some CIL from Bishops Tachbrook Parish Council
 - Seeking other grant aid and appropriate use of other WDC funds
- 2.4.5 In addition whilst costings relate to the final country park design, there are two main areas that are yet to be fully costed. These are the final refreshment centre build for which full planning consent is yet to be obtained and the main access to the country park from the now Quercus Way.
- 2.4.6 Once all these points are costed, this will be reported back to Cabinet for consideration and setting out funding options, including any specific grants or external funding that have been obtained.

2.5 Skills being in place to deliver

- 2.5.1 The project team have key skills relevant for this project. The scheme is not simply the planting of an area of land; it involves land assembly, engineering design, commercial understanding, financial forecasting and budgeting, negotiations with various bodies and an understanding of planning process and powers. That is quite a range of skills and experience to deploy. Additional

skills and expertise have been bought in as necessary. However, the project team skills or more importantly capacity had to be brought in for the project inception. Challenges that have arisen along the way have related to availability of time from support services e.g. legal; and from the contracted consultants.

2.6 Project Risks

2.6.1 The risk register attached at Appendix F is updated each month and reviewed by the Board. Key elements relate to the project design, construction phase, impact of other landowners, handover and maintenance and the introduction of the refreshment centre. Some key challenges are set out in the risk register.

2.6.2 What's working well

Partner arrangements - Although the project remains within the aegis of the Council's decision-making procedures, it has been a positive impact on the project to include the Parish Council as the site's ultimate owners as a key part of the Project Board throughout its work.

Planning consent - Full planning permission has enabled the wider project considerations to be addressed and formally approved within the wider design.

2.6.4 Could Work Better

Land assembly - Despite legal agreements being in place, ground conditions have impeded their completion e.g. Council not able to accept land until specific liabilities have been resolved by the developers; developers have sold their portfolios before completion made. Whilst negotiations are well advanced, land assembly specifically in relation to the geographically central part of the park will continue beyond the commencement of its construction. These are also linked to identifying the final income elements of the project's financial structure. This issue also relates to the planning conditions imposed and the respective timings. For example, developers were able to walk away from the site with homes completed before they had to complete the SuDS. This is a learning point and has been reflected in the most recent planning decision illustrating the opportunity to learn and adapt.

Design completion/procurement - Some elements of the design remain outstanding because of ongoing changes made by adjacent landowners. Multiple redesigns of parts of the concept have had to take place throughout because of decisions made outside of the Council's control. A learning point from this is that in future concept designs would be worked up more efficiently following full land assembly and not in parallel though this may not always be possible.

Physical site access challenges - The site has always been challenging in terms of appropriate physical access for both construction and operational usage, particularly in terms of what the Council can control directly. This has meant considerable additional expert attention has been needed to address these points. This aspect of the site will continue to be challenging throughout its lifetime. It is a key learning point that the assessment of key site needs, such as access, need to undergo due diligence at the beginning of the concept design process.

STW sewerage works - The Council has achieved some cooperation in relation to the impact of the route for a new rising main sewer on the approved country park planning permission but the impact of the build will need to be reviewed.

Potentially the design and planning consent will need to be further altered once STW has completed its works. Statutory financial compensation in respect of the works will be limited. Discussions are ongoing around additional arrangements to address losses to the project construction e.g. grant allocation from STW.

2.7 One Change to Improve Performance

- 2.7.1 Ideally, land assembly should be secured before attempting to commence design & construction. There are 3 parts to this:
- Practical due diligence of land e.g. adequate access, ransom strips, other links, contamination etc.
 - Plan against a settled cohesive site i.e. finish project #1 which is about land assembly. Include site management pre-construction in total anticipated costs. Project #1 requires a different set of professional skills to achieve.
 - Practical delivery i.e. project #2 create a final full design in the knowledge that construction will be possible immediately after. This is the time to promise via comms rather than against a less tangible vision.
- 2.7.2 However, this approach is the ideal. If put in practice on this project WDC would still be doing land assembly as the STW land will not yet come forward. In addition, there must be the potential to seize opportunities. If that had not happened in this case, then the land alongside the new secondary school would not have been available and indeed the land for the secondary school would not have been available. The challenging lesson is to be able to discuss and assess the realities that are thrown up during a project's lifetime and amend course as needed.

Appendices

Appendix A – Tachbrook Country Park Masterplan

Appendix B – Visions and objectives 2020

Appendix C – Land Ownership Summary and Plan

Appendix D – Project Plan November 24

Appendix E – Budgetary Forecast

Appendix F – Risk Register November 24

Tachbrook Country Park



Tach Brook Country Park Vision and Objectives

Vision

To create a country park at Bishop's Tachbrook providing green space for informal recreation, opportunities for habitat creation, walking and cycling links between parts of the local community and flood alleviation.

Initially, it is important to secure the area and establish it as a recognised green space, providing access and recreation, as well as space for nature to thrive within the wider green corridor around the brook.

Ultimately, the park will provide wider facilities including a community hub/visitor centre and greater links to the community. This will expand its quality as a recognisable country park and offer the opportunity to use a green space to people within the wider area. This enhancement will include opportunities to increase the initial area, through additional green space and wider commercial links, as well as infrastructure to enable access to the nearby school and other areas via foot or cycle and away from public roads.

Objectives

1 Establish the country park (Phase 1)

- a) Obtain full planning permission to ensure the use of the site is established as a country park.
- b) This phase of the work relates to establishing the local green space as expressed in the Local Plan (2011-2029). In addition, it will include an area of 2ha woodland and the shared facilities at the proposed Oakley Grove School.
- c) To ensure a cohesive set of community facilities is created, this stage of the work will be undertaken in parallel with the development of the proposed Oakley Grove School that will be adjacent to the country park.
- d) Create site infrastructure in accordance with the agreed masterplan.
- e) Ensure that the delivery provides opportunities for later enhancement of the site remain open throughout this delivery stage.
- f) Open the site as a facility for the local residents.

2 Enhance the country park area (Phase 2)

- a) To advance the vision for the Bishop's Tachbrook area by developing further infrastructure that offers access links via the green areas and away from public roads.
- b) To develop the country park further by embracing the opportunity to include more green space linked to the original country park.
- c) To develop the country park further by enhancing its quality to include additional facilities such as a community hub/visitor centre.
- d) To enhance the benefits of the country park further by continuing to work with the local community to create linked commercial and recreational facilities that are appropriate to the existence of a country park.