

**Committee and Date**Cabinet
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Item

Public



Performance Monitoring Quarter 2 2024/25

Responsible Officer:	James Walton/Rachel Robinson		
email:	james.walton@shropshire.gov.uk	Tel:	01743 258915
	rachel.robinson@shropshire.gov.uk		01743 258918
Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder):	Cllr Robert Macey		

1. Synopsis

The Shropshire Plan clarifies our vision and priorities, aligning our resources to deliver positive outcomes for our people, businesses and communities. Delivery of our outcomes is measured through the developing Performance Management Framework, demonstrating progress to date.

2. Executive Summary

Overview

- 2.1. The Shropshire Plan (TSP) was created to clarify Shropshire Council's vision, priorities and Strategic Objectives. These objectives reflect the outcomes we aim to achieve within our available financial envelope. We measure the achievement of TSP by monitoring our performance, using Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to help measure, drive and understand delivery of our Strategic Objectives) and managing our overall financial position (ultimately delivering our outcomes while remaining within our agreed financial envelope).
- 2.2. This is the second report for 2024/25 and sets out the key issues to manage this year; delivering acceptable performance while remaining within our available financial envelope. Over the year we need to monitor and review our finances, aligned to TSP, to support delivery of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). We are seeking to rebase our budgets over several years, in line with the outcomes

defined in TSP, to secure a modern, efficient, and sustainable base for the Council finances across the 5-year period of the MTFS. This approach is aligned to the recommendations of the LGA peer review and is comparable with the best approaches seen in local government. We must adjust each year to ensure financial survival, with the aim to move towards financial stability and sustainability over the medium term. Against this backdrop we are seeking to manage our performance and therefore expectations, within our available financial envelope. Our plans will focus on economy, efficiency and effectiveness, redefining the way we deliver interventions to optimise delivery of our vision wherever and however possible.

Summary

- 2.3. The focus of the Council in 2024/25 and the immediate future is necessarily directed at the delivery of a balanced budget, and is currently, therefore, the highest priority Strategic Objective within TSP balanced alongside protecting our most vulnerable children. Our new Performance Management Framework (PMF) has been reviewed and strengthened to align with all our strategic objectives to enable us to become an evidence-led performance managed council.
- 2.4. Development of our KPIs will continue with Portfolio Holders, Executive Directors and Assistant Directors identified for each indicator. Targets, tolerances and benchmarks will be clarified over the coming months, where possible, with regularly updated monitoring information published via the performance webpage at - [Performance | Shropshire Council](#) . Online performance reporting will be the main source of performance information enabling greater insight, transparency and scrutiny of the Council's performance and delivery of its outcomes as set out in TSP.
- 2.5. Through engagement across all Directorates the PMF has been launched with the focus on using data to inform decisions and actions particularly where performance may not be meeting targets and expectations. As part of the necessary arrangements for delivering TSP, the Council has reviewed and updated its approaches to both performance and financial monitoring. Both areas are now more pro-actively informed by timely activity data and are available to a range of officers to help guide decision making. Interactive dashboards using 'PowerBI' are being developed which will show a summary of KPIs for each Healthy priority through to agreed strategic objectives. It will then be possible to drill down into more detailed information for each KPI including status which is RAG (red, amber, green) rated, trend information and benchmarking where available comparing Shropshire's figure to the national average and nearest statistical neighbours.
- 2.6. The Q2 Finance report (elsewhere on this agenda) sets out the financial envelope of the Council and how spending plans and patterns are being managed to deliver a balanced budget.
- 2.7. This Q2 Performance report complements the Finance report but provides a different perspective. We may therefore find that the position on KPIs is favourable, but that the finance position is adverse because the activity levels (the cost drivers) are higher than anticipated. Likewise, as Shropshire Council continues to manage an unprecedented financial position significant management action is required over the remainder of the financial year to ensure the Council's financial survival, this

may involve scaling down initiatives, changing the scope, delaying implementation, or extending delivery timescales and impacting performance in some areas.

- 2.8. As part of our new approach feedback on the design and usability of the new report and performance webpage is welcomed. A feedback form will be available for questions and queries, and this will be reviewed with responses provided and published where appropriate alongside the dashboard.

Key Indicators and Context

- 2.9. The Q2 performance report is written as an exception report with all key performance indicators being provided in the dashboard **which should be viewed in conjunction with this report:** [Performance | Shropshire Council](#).
- 2.10. The Q2 report is not fully complete with all the agreed performance indicators due to the time taken to implement the new approach, obtain data and the focus on getting it right. Those outstanding are noted in the report. It should also be noted that some of the performance indicators are baseline figures from which targets will be established and then performance monitored against this.
- 2.11. It should be noted that the approach being taken by Shropshire Council is progressive and in advance of many other authorities and places us in a strong position to continually improve our approach to managing performance, identifying areas of under and over performance, and ultimately providing evidence of our ability to deliver the outcomes set out in TSP.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:
- Review and consider performance dashboard information alongside this exception report.
 - Note progress to date in achieving the outcomes of The Shropshire Plan (TSP) and comment as appropriate.
 - Confirm that the KPIs currently agreed remain the same for 2024/2025 and agree to individual Portfolio Holders reviewing the targets for the agreed KPIs with the relevant Executive Director.

Report

4 Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 4.1 The management of the Council's Performance Management Framework is a key process in ensuring strategic risks are mitigated and the Council can carry out business as intended and planned for within TSP.
- 4.2 The management of key performance indicators is a key process to monitoring progress in the delivery of outcomes as set out in TSP. This provides insight into whether corrective action is required to bring performance back on track.

- 4.3 The performance reports and dashboards provide a high-level lens into the performance of Shropshire Council allowing for further targeted detail analysis to support the mitigation of any risks identified.
- 4.4 Regular financial reporting is part of the governance and risk management approach within the Council ensuring that it delivers sustainable and value for money services as required under statute. Risk management continues to be an active part of this process, and Officers review potential risk and opportunity scenarios each month. The Council holds two finance related strategic risks regarding managing the current financial situation and so this remains under constant review to consider appropriate management action of the situation.
- 4.5 The dashboards include instructions for use and a feedback form is available for completion should there be questions or feedback. Members will be shown how to use the dashboards.
- 4.6 Monitoring will be in place using the dashboards so any issues can be resolved in a timely manner.
- 4.7 Ultimately, the Council must risk assess the delivery of Strategic Objectives within TSP and adjust, accordingly, to ensure an acceptable balance of outcomes are achieved at a strategic level. This may mean the prioritisation of some objectives over others to react to the evidence presented within the PMF. It may not be possible to achieve optimal performance across all indicators and it may be necessary to oversee expected reductions in performance in some areas to remain within the overall financial envelope and ensure full focus is given to prioritised areas of activity by officers including significant management action required over the remainder of the financial year to ensure the Council's financial survival.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 Shropshire Council is currently managing an unprecedented financial position as budgeted for within the Medium Term Financial Strategy approved by Council on 29 February 2024 and detailed in our monitoring position presented to Cabinet on a monthly basis. This demonstrates that significant management action is required over the remainder of the financial year to ensure the Council's financial survival. While all Cabinet Reports provide the financial implications of decisions being taken, this may change as officers review the overall financial situation and make decisions aligned to financial survivability. Where non-essential spend is identified within the Council, this will be reduced. This may involve:
- scaling down initiatives,
 - changing the scope,
 - delaying implementation, or
 - extending delivery timescales.
- 5.2 The considerations set out in para 5.1 (above) may mean that some areas of performance decline in the coming months while new operating arrangements are put into place which will ensure the longer term financial sustainability of the Council.

- 5.3 The performance report provides progress on key activity targets which will have correlation to financial performance.
- 5.4 It should be noted that positive improvement on activity may not necessarily correspond to financial improvement, and this should be drawn out in the narrative of the financial and performance reports.

6 Climate Change Appraisal

- 6.1 The performance report includes KPIs for Healthy Environment with measures for monitoring Shropshire Council's direction of progress on climate change.
- 6.2 Recommendations within the Climate Strategy and Action Plan Monitoring Report 2023 were agreed by the Council on the 18th July 2024, including two recommendations specific to key performance indicators which will be incorporated into the Shropshire Plan Performance Report for future reporting:
- Specific carbon emission reductions by activity
 - Energy efficiency to support point 3.5 in the Progress Report
- 6.3 Climate Change also has significant implications for Healthy People, a Healthy Economy and a Healthy Organisation and further work to develop additional KPIs, in partnership with the Climate Team will reflect this. There has been a reduction in size of the Climate Change team and as a result, future work programmes are being reviewed. Further indicators will be made available as new data becomes available to ensure that as high a percentage as possible of primary data collected is based on measured carbon emissions via a clear and transparent process such as carbon accounting, rather than estimating scope 3 emissions based on spend.
- 6.4 Measuring emissions also provides a baseline for setting climate targets and deciding where to start reducing emissions. Repeating the measurement process annually allows Shropshire Council to track and report progress in a clear, transparent way to ensure that key stakeholders - members, regulators, employees, members of the public, other local authorities and system partners are informed about our collective climate action and impact.

7 Background

- 7.1 Quarter 2 – a total of 47 Key Performance Indicators have been updated in the Shropshire Plan report. Additional information will be added in the period between writing of this report and its presentation to members.
- 7.2 Information on each of these indicators can be found via the performance webpage at – [The Shropshire Plan Performance Dashboard](#).
- 7.3 The online performance report is now the main source of performance information. This report highlights any exceptions or downturns and explains the causal issues and any corrective actions the service is taking.
- 7.4 In quarter 2, there are 14 exceptions that have been raised and these are reported in the additional information section below.

8 Additional Information

8.1 During quarter 2, a total of 20 out of the newly updated 47 performance indicators showed an improvement and are above their target. Of which the following are the most notable:

- **HP31 % of Educational Health Care Plans (EHCP) issued within 20 weeks (exc exceptions)** performance has improved significantly during the year. The quarter 2 figure of 72.97% is well above the target of 50%; and a notable improvement on the quarter 1 figure of 43.33%.
- **HEc 23/24/25 Planning applications (major, minor and other).** The number of planning applications determined within the timescales in all three categories is well above the statutory target.
- **HEn 6 % of household waste sent for re-use, recycling and composting.** The newly reported quarter 1 figure of 59.76% is above the target of 52.6%, and an improvement on the quarter 4 figure of 57.7%
- **HO1 Number of compliments received.** There were 117 compliments received during quarter 2. This is an increase compared to the previous two quarters and above target.

There are 14 exceptions out of the newly reported 47 performance indicators this quarter:

8.2 **HP 14 Rate of deaths by suicide (per 100,000 population)**

The rate of deaths by suicide in Shropshire for 2021/23 is 12.8 per 100,000 population, although this is higher than the England average of 10.7 per 100,000 it is not statistically different to the England average despite being a higher value.¹

Further targeted work to reduce suicides continues to be prioritised by the multi-agency suicide prevention action group to achieve the target and support our zero suicide ambition. This is being progressed as part of the new Suicide Prevention Strategy, updated action plan and new workstream groups. These new groups invite stakeholders who work with cohorts with a higher suicide risk compared to the general population to review and champion suicide mitigation opportunities as well as how to embed suicide prevention risk approaches throughout the system. An audit of suicide deaths has now been completed and is being reviewed by the suicide prevention Action Group to support with system recommendations to mitigate suicide risk. Access continues for the subsidised suicide prevention awareness and intervention training offers for certain workforce groups (including VCSE and frontline workers) and existing resources continue to be promoted to support concerns about suicide risk with new resources to be launched soon (including a GP suicide prevention toolkit).

¹ This is because a small change in the number of suicide deaths has a large impact on rate and therefore wide confidence intervals are recorded. The local rate is roughly in the middle range when compared to other LA areas with a similar socio-demographic and geographic profile as Shropshire (range from 6.8 per 100,000 to 19.0 per 100,000).

The Health and Wellbeing Board receives regular updates on progress against this target which requires a systemwide response. In addition, deaths by suicide is also being discussed in depth at the joint People and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee session on the 25th November. This will include information sharing for other areas of the community who may also be in need of support

8.3 **HP18 % Assessment timeliness: within 45 working days**

Front door SWA timeliness for quarter 1-2 is 58% - Caseloads have been consistently high in the front door and has directly impacted assessment timeliness. Service Manager is aware and is working through a plan to address. Other teams also impact on this and the performance is being monitored weekly. High caseloads in Case Management and Children Looked After is impacting.

8.4 **HP19 Stability of placements of looked after children: length of placement**

The quarter 2 figure (70%) remains consistent with the previous quarter (72%) following several sibling groups having to move placements. Of those children looked after for more than 2.5 years and whose placements are not 'long term', due to the duration of the measure (2.5 years) it takes time to demonstrate progress. Long term stability and permanence is monitored by the Permanence Co-ordinator.

8.5 **HP33a Top quartile performer for the rate of admissions per 100,000 people to residential and nursing care (18-64)**

This is a key measure within the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (“ASCOF”) and aligns with the priority to support people in the community.

There have been changes to the reporting methodology for KPI’s HP33a and HP33b for 24/25, meaning the data for quarter 1 and 2 are not comparable to data previously reported, hence noting these KPI’s as exceptions.

The Adult Social Care Short and Long Term Return (SALT) has been replaced with a new Client Level Data (CLD) return. NHS Digital has published a new methodology for deriving the new admissions indicators. This methodology will also apply to the ASCOF indicators set centrally from Local Authorities CLD submissions.

Work is ongoing between local authorities and NHS Digital to realign this data. The quarter 2 data has improved since quarter 1 and work to realign the data continues into Q3.

We support a high number of people in the community. We do continue to monitor admissions, but overall performance is good in this area.

8.6 **HP33b Top quartile performer for the rate of admissions per 100,000 people to residential and nursing care (65+)**

See HP33a regarding methodology changes. We continue to maintain excellent performance and keep this figure lower than the national rate in line with our

strategy to support people to live at home with self-directed support in the community.

8.7 **HEc11 Paid employment for people with Learning Disabilities**

The rate of people with Learning Disabilities who are in paid employment needs to be collected with a replacement classification for 2024/25, therefore the Q2 figure of 5.29% is not comparable to previous data.

As the replacement classifications are added, the numbers will get back to a comparable level during the year; there has already been a significant improvement between quarter 1 (1.16%) and quarter 2 (5.29%).

The service continues to work with its clients to find opportunities to develop skills and positive experiences through training, volunteering and where suitable to find paid employment.

8.8 **HEc18 Reduction of households in B&B accommodation**

The number of households in B&Bs are subject to fluctuation due to changes in demand. There were 107 households in B&B's as at 30 August 2024, compared to 99 as at 11th October 2024. The Council has several new temporary accommodation units planned over the next 12 months and can confirm that the overall number of households in B&Bs will decrease over the coming months as more council owned temporary accommodation units come into use.

8.9 **HEn9a Increasing the generation of renewable energy by Shropshire Council (Solar)**

Shropshire Council currently has 42 solar arrays (27 sites) where energy is generated.

During quarter 2, a total of a total of 237,904kWh of energy was generated; when comparing this to the same period last year there has been a slight reduction from 292,139 kWh in quarter 2 2023.

The slight drop can be explained by using two indicators, average temperature and precipitation, both of which give a good indication of the amount of uninterrupted sunlight available; quarter 2 2023 was better weather with less rain.

8.10 **HEn11 % of streetlights converted to LED**

Work continues with the conversion of the remaining streetlights to have LED lanterns fitted.

The remaining conversions are slow due to problems with sites that are not readily accessible for the following reasons, and include: -
Parked cars - these are slowly being resolved with the notices being issued.
Birds nesting - these sites are now being revisited following nesting season finishing earlier in the summer.

Requirement of complex traffic management for example lane closures - the details of this are currently being established as this involves work with contractors Kier.

Programmed works – Joint working with major projects sharing Traffic Management to reduce disruption and costs.

Slow progress has also been exacerbated by reduced levels of staffing, by Kier, which reflects the corresponding reductions in spend necessary to respond to budget pressures.

Overall, 95% of the streetlight stock has been converted.

8.11 HO6 Budget vs Outturn

Forecast spending to year end as at 30 September	£m
'adverse' projection	£74.6m over budget
Central projection ('most likely')	£35.1m over budget
'favourable' projection	£19.7m over budget

8.12 HO8 Average number of new days to process a new housing benefit claim

Q1 2024-25 (released October 2024): average new claims 23 days (national average 21 days) average change in circs 9 days (national average 8 days)

8.13 HO11 Staff turnover rates

Staff turnover at quarter 2 was 7.69%, this is slightly higher than the profiled target of 7% this is largely attributable to Shire Services which is more likely to see leavers at the end of the school term which falls within Q2. Over a 3rd of our voluntary leavers were due to a reason around the employees career whether that be due to a career change or career advance

8.14 HO13 Average number of days lost to sickness absence per year

The average number of days lost to sickness absence is 9.22 at quarter 2 against the target of 7.5. This is a very slight increase on sickness absence figures from last quarter (8.96) however, we would have expected a decrease for quarter 2 and there is quite an increase when compared to the same quarter last year. Overall, the percentage of sickness absence attributable to stress has reduced when compared to last quarter, however the percentage attributable to musculoskeletal injury has increased. In addition, the percentage of absence due to benign and malignant tumours and cancer has taken quite a jump to over 7% and is the 3rd highest reason for sickness absence this quarter.

8.15 **HO 17 Responding to Freedom of information Requests within statutory timescales (20 working days)**

At quarter 2, 74% of freedom of information requests were responded to within the statutory 20 days. Although this represents a significant improvement on recent years, the compliance rate is below the required target. This has been raised with Information Governance representatives at the Information Governance Leadership and Organisational Oversight (IGLOO) meetings in June and September 2024. A further report will be presented to the November 2024 meeting. A new corporate FOI system is currently being implemented with an indicative implementation date of January 2025.

9 Conclusions

- 9.1 The development of the new reporting sees a substantive step change in the reporting of performance with more emphasis on target delivery and comparator information.
- 9.2 The key performance pressure remains the delivery of a balanced budget which are detailed in the financial report.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Local Member: All

Appendices

None