

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Corporate Leadership Team's
Report to Cabinet**

10 September 2024

Report Title: Annual Report 2023-2024

Submitted by: Cabinet

Portfolios: One Council, People & Partnerships

Ward(s) affected: All

<u>Purpose of the Report</u>	Key Decision NO
<p>To provide Cabinet with the opportunity to consider the Council's Annual Report for 2023-2024, which provides a high-level summary of the progress made during the second year of the Council's 2022-2026 Council Plan. The Annual Report also provides contextual information on the financial challenges and operating environment, which have informed the Council's priorities.</p>	
<u>Recommendation</u>	
<p>That Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Receive and consider the Council's Annual Report for 2023-2024 2. Refer the 2023-2024 Annual Report to Full Council's 25th September 2024 meeting. 	
<u>Reasons</u>	
<p>The publication of an Annual Report is accepted good practice and a key element in the Council's governance and assurance framework providing transparency to stakeholders on progress made, the handling of key risks, the financial outlook of the authority and evidence-based strategy development.</p>	
1.	<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>1.1 As part of the Council's focus on performance management this Annual Report provides an opportunity to review the progress and achievements made against the Council's stated objectives and to use this intelligence to understand what still needs to be done and what new challenges lie ahead. The Annual Report does this by including the following sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Understanding our Communities - presenting a place profile for the Borough to inform decision-making ➤ Listening to our Communities – detailing the consultation and engagement programme for the previous year and how this feedback has been used to inform service improvements ➤ The Financial Context - outlining the financial challenges facing the authority over the course of its Medium Term Financial Strategy and how we manage risks ➤ Our Vision for the Borough – as set out in the 2022-2026 Council Plan ➤ Our Achievements - looking at performance against our own targets and trend data ➤ Value for Money Services - analysing our performance and costs against national and regional comparisons

	<p>➤ External Assessments - providing objectivity and assurance through the reporting of external assessments of the Council's work and any awards received in recognition of our achievements on behalf of our communities</p> <p>1.2 In summary, the Annual Report provides assurance as to the progress made during the second year of the 2022-2026 Council Plan with 72% of all targets met in 2023-2024 and sound progress on our priority projects. The Report acknowledges the funding gap outlined within the 5-year Medium Term Financial Strategy and the plans to address this and the hugely positive findings of the Corporate Peer Challenge progress visit from the LGA (Local Government Association) in January 2024, which recognised the 'energy' and 'ambition' of the Council and the progress being made.</p> <p>1.3 The Annual Report will be published on the Council's website as an important stakeholder document written for councillors, partners and employees and will remain a central element in the Council's annual performance management framework.</p>
2.	<p><u>Proposal</u></p>
	<p>That Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive and consider the Council's new Annual report for 2023-2024 • Refer the 2023-2024 Annual Report to Full Council's September 2024 meeting
3.	<p><u>Legal and Statutory Implications</u></p>
	<p>3.1 None from this report.</p>
4.	<p><u>Equality Impact Assessment</u></p>
	<p>4.1 Local authorities have a responsibility to meet the Public Sector Duty of the Equality Act 2010. The Act gives people the right not to be treated less favourably due to protected characteristics. There are no differential equality issues arising directly from this report.</p>
5.	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p>
	<p>5.1 None from this report.</p>
6.	<p><u>Major Risks</u></p>
	<p>6.1 No new major risks have been identified through the process of developing the Annual Report.</p>
7.	<p><u>UN Sustainable Development Goals and Climate Change Implications</u></p> 

8.	<u>Key Decision Information</u>
	8.1 This is not a key decision.
9.	<u>Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions</u>
	9.1 None
10.	<u>List of Appendices</u>
	10.1 Annual Report 2023-2024 https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/downloads/download/858/annual-report-2023---2024
11.	<u>Background Papers</u>
	11.1 Working papers held by the Strategic Hub Team.