

CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S
REPORT TO FINANCE, ASSETS AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

05 December 2024

Report Title: Financial and Performance Review Report – Second Quarter 2024/25

Submitted by: Corporate Leadership Team

Portfolios: One Council, People & Partnerships
Finance, Town Centres & Growth

Ward(s) affected: All

<u>Purpose of the Report</u>	<u>Key Decision</u>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
To provide the Committee with the Financial and Performance Review Report for 2024-25 (Quarter Two).			
<u>Recommendation</u>			
That (Committee): note the contents of the attached report and appendices and continue to monitor and challenge the Council's service and financial performance for this period.			
<u>Reasons</u>			
The Financial and Performance Management monitoring reports provide information on a quarterly basis regarding the performance of individual council services and progress with delivery against our priorities, alongside related financial information on the organisation.			

1. Background

- 1.1 This quarterly report provides Members with a detailed update on how the Council has performed during the quarter by presenting performance data and progress summaries set within a financial context. The report provides broad financial information (Appendix A) and also details service performance (Appendix B) for the period to the end of quarter two in 2024/25.
- 1.2 The Council approved a General Fund Revenue Budget of £17,046,150 on 14 February 2024. Further financial information is provided in Appendix A.

2. Performance

- 2.1 The Q2 report (April 2024 to September 2024) has been produced using business intelligence tools in order to automate and improve the monitoring, analysis and reporting of Council performance. The indicators included are those agreed as part of the new Council Plan and reflect the priorities for the Borough. In addition to reporting on key performance indicators, the report also includes progress summaries for each priority action, detailing the progress with the delivery of planned activities.
- 2.2 Contextual performance information is provided (indicators without a target), not only to ensure the monitoring of the corporate activities of the Council, but also to inform

Members, businesses and residents of performance in their local area that the Council cannot directly control.

- 2.3** Any indicators failing to meet the set targets include a comment explaining why the indicator has not performed well, and what steps are being taken to ensure improvement in the future.
- 2.4** For this report a total of 49 indicators were monitored, 20 of these indicators were contextual and had no set target. Of these contextual measures that had historic trend data available, 38% showed an improvement or maintenance when compared to the previous year's performance. Of the remaining 29 indicators, the proportion which have met their target during this period stands at 83%, with the remaining 17% falling short of target. 20% of off target measures this quarter show a positive trend when comparing to the same time period of the previous financial year. It must also be noted that a small number of these 'off target' measures have more stretching targets this year, in line with benchmarking findings and council ambition. In terms of trend data overall, with measures where there is comparable data, the proportion of indicators showing an improvement or maintenance of the previous year's performance stands at 44%.
- 2.5** Three project/actions have been classified as completed by their respective owners this quarter

3. Issues

- 3.1** There are five indicators 'off target' this quarter and officers do not feel that these give rise to serious cause for concern at present (see commentaries in Appendix B). The management of each of the service areas concerned continue to monitor and take steps to address performance improvement where feasible and appropriate.
- 3.2** Progress on delivery of planned activities is summarised for each priority with two activities/actions being amber rated in Quarter Two; both are associated with priority two.
- 3.3** The first action flagged as amber is the Walleys Quarry odour problem. Comments by the action owner is listed below;

LEGAL ACTION

On 29 July 2024 the Secretary of State Environment, Food and Rural Affairs responded to the Leader's request for permission to prosecute Walleys Quarry Ltd under statutory nuisance legislation. The Secretary of State granted consent for a prosecution to proceed. On 30 September the Chief Executive provided an update stating; ""there are very few precedents for taking legal action against an operator regulated by a Government agency, so there is a great deal of legal advice and preparation involved, however I believe we will be ready to take the next step by the end of October"". Odour complaints reported in Q2 (July-September) are higher than reported over the same Quarter in 2023.

COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY

A member-led committee of inquiry was set up to look at the impact on local communities from the Walleys Quarry Landfill operation. The lines of inquiry were:
What is the impact of the ongoing odour issue?

What needs to be done next, and by whom, to bring about resolution?

What, if any opportunities have been missed to resolve the issue sooner?

The inquiry heard more than 11 hours of submissions over 2 days from the EA, UK Health Security Agency, community groups and others, and considered additional written statements. On 25 September the final report was presented to full Council recommending that the EA serve a closure notice to commence the process of the site being closed with an additional 10 other recommendations detailed in the report 'Walleys Quarry Committee of Inquiry July/August 2024'."

3.4 The second action flagged as amber and not progressing as expected is the Delivery of the £16m Kidsgrove Town Deal. Where some issues have continued in regard to the delivery of the Railway station project whilst technical issues are resolved on the ground conditions around the railway station. Work continues with the Town Deal Board and project partners to resolve these.

4. Recommendation

4.1 That Committee note the contents of the attached report and Appendices A and B and continue to monitor and challenge the Council's performance alongside its financial performance for the same period.

5. Reasons

5.1 To enable financial and performance information to be presented for continued scrutiny and encourage improvement within council delivery.

6. Options Considered

6.1 At this time, it is felt there is no other option necessary for consideration, however the presentation of information is continually reviewed.

7. Legal and Statutory Implications

7.1 The Council has a Best Value duty to provide value for money services.

8. Equality Impact Assessment

8.1 There are no differential equality issues arising directly from this report

9. Financial and Resource Implications

9.1 Any positive variance for the full year on the General Fund Revenue Account will enable that amount to be transferred to the Budget Support Fund and will be available in future years for use, as the Council considers appropriate. Conversely, if there is an adverse variance, the amount required to cover this will have to be met from the Budget Support Fund.

10. Major Risks & Mitigation

10.1 The ongoing changing market conditions represents the greatest risk to the revenue budget, particularly with regard to the impact it may have upon income receivable in relation to services where customers may choose whether or not to use Council facilities or in the case of the waste/recycling service where the volume of recycled materials is liable to fluctuate.

10.2 The capital programme will require regular monitoring to identify any projects which are falling behind their planned completion dates. This will be carried out by the Capital Programme Review Group, which meets on a bi-monthly basis together with quarterly reports to Cabinet.

11. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)



12. One Council

Please confirm that consideration has been given to the following programmes of work:

- One Commercial Council
- One Digital Council
- One Green Council

13. Key Decision Information

13.1 This is not a key decision.

14. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

14.1 Not relevant

15. List of Appendices

15.1 Financial information (Appendix A) and Performance Outturn (Appendix B)

16. Background Papers

16.1 Working papers held by officers responsible for calculating indicators.