

# **NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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

**26 June 2025**

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

**Submitted by:** Corporate Leadership Team

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

**Ward(s) affected:** All

<b><u>Purpose of the Report</u></b>	<b><u>Key Decision</u></b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
To provide the Committee with the Financial and Performance Review Report for 2024-25 (Quarter Four).			
<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>			
<b>That (the Committee):</b> 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.			
<b><u>Reasons</u></b>			
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 four 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 Q4 report (April 2024 to March 2025) 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 the reasons behind the performance and what steps are being taken to ensure improvement in the future.
- 2.4 For this report a total of 46 indicators were monitored, 20 of these indicators were contextual and had no set target. Of these contextual measures that had historic trend data available, 54% showed an improvement or maintenance when compared to the previous year's performance. Of the remaining 26 indicators, the proportion which have met their target during this period stands at 65%, with the remaining 35% falling short of target. 33% 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 53%.
- 2.5 Four project/actions have been classified as completed by their respective owners this quarter

### 3. Issues

- 3.1 There are eleven 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 Four; both are associated with priority two.
- 3.3 The first action flagged as amber is the Walleys Quarry odour issue. Comments by the action owner are listed below;

"The project is progressing but not as expected in that the landfill operator, Walleys Quarry Limited, entered into voluntary liquidation in February 2025. The liquidators subsequently disclaimed the environmental permits and the land. There is therefore no environmental permit and the Closure Notice is no longer enforceable.

The Environment Agency used their discretionary power to arrange steps to be taken to remove the risk of serious pollution. A reputable contractor has been appointed to undertake work onsite which includes the completion of the required temporary capping and stabilisation of waste. In addition the gas contractor CLP Envirogas Limited remain onsite and continue to operate the onsite landfill gas management system.

The site remains closed to any incoming waste. Odour complaints have significantly reduced from the peak at the start of the quarter 1620 odour complaints in January 2025 to 41 complaints at the end of March 2025. The air quality data shows a reduction in the percentage exceedance of the WHO annoyance guideline and the peak levels of hydrogen sulphide emissions is reducing."

- 3.4 The second action flagged as amber and not progressing as expected is the Delivery the £16m Kidsgrove Town Deal, where some issues have continued regarding the delivery of the railway station project. Following a meeting with MHCLG and DFT, Kidsgrove Town Deal Board are reviewing the Railway Station project with a view to

revising and reducing the works undertaken. Options will be drafted and considered at a Board meeting in May. This may include consideration of reallocating an element of funding from the railway station to other Kidsgrove Town Deal projects.

#### **4. Recommendation**

- 4.1 That the 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 ☒

*We will make investment to diversify our income and think entrepreneurially.*

One Digital Council ☒

*We will develop and implement a digital approach which makes it easy for all residents and businesses to engage with the Council, with our customers at the heart of every interaction.*

One Green Council ☒

*We will deliver on our commitments to a net zero future and make all decisions with sustainability as a driving principle.*

## 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.