

# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

24 MAY 2022

## ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2021/22

### Relevant wards: All wards

### Portfolio holder: Cllr Peter Whatley

### Head of Service: Deputy Chief Executive – Andy Baldwin

### Contact officer: Head of Finance, Strategy and Performance – Becky Floyd

**If you have any questions about this report, please contact the portfolio holder or the contact officer.**

## Purpose and summary

To inform the committee of the latest council performance at the end of year 2021/22.

To advise the committee of the strategic issues and risks facing the council which reflect the existing and future financial and organisational pressures on the council.

## Recommendations

**i) The achievements and improvements in performance be noted;**

* + 1. **The strategic issues raised in section 4 be addressed;**
    2. **Executive Committee thank staff for the outcomes of their efforts.**

## Background

The Performance Management Framework provides for the quarterly review of corporate performance at a strategic level. It is informed by data from a variety of independent public sources, the council’s own performance management system and progress reports Heads of Service. Appendix 1a of this report provides the council’s performance measures for 2021/22, as well as an update on workload/volumes (appendix 1b).

The Five Year Plan (Appendix 2) has been updated wherever possible to provide performance up to the end of Q4 for the full financial year. The 2022/23 update of the Five Year Plan was approved in Q4.

The continued strong performance in the proportion of missed bins, numbers of green waste customers, numbers of affordable new homes delivered, Council Tax collection rates, and the Covid-19 support provided to residents and businesses are welcomed. Where under-performance has been identified, it has been, or is being, addressed as a matter of urgency.

## Strategic Issues and Risks

### South Worcestershire Development Plan Review (SWDPR)

* + 1. During the course of 2021/22 it has been necessary to further amend the timetable for the SWDP. A revised Local Development Scheme (LDS) earlier in the year allowed time to progress the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and viability evidence required to support the Plan and also to move the consideration of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling ShowPeople (GT&TSP) Development Plan Document (DPD).
    2. Most of the work to support the SWDPR is complete and a full draft of the SWDP has been circulated to all Councillors in Q4. There are outstanding reports which link to viability and infrastructure which are being finalised with support from external consultants.
    3. There are some remaining issues on the SWDPR risk register relating to the strategic allocations which efforts are being made to resolve. The Regulation 19 document, along with the GT&TSP DPD, was due to be considered by each of the three Councils in June 2022, with the formal publication stage in July and August. However, this timescale, for both documents, has recently had to be reconsidered. This is due to a lack of agreement for a site to accommodate Worcester City’s need for the GT&TSP DPD. The SWDPR has been delayed due to continued delays with viability and infrastructure work, and a revised timetable has yet to be drawn up.

### Business Plan Achievement

* + 1. The council’s business plan has identified target savings of £500,000 over the period 2021-2026. These savings will be delivered through efficiencies, investment and growth and income generation.
    2. Whilst the council has a robust track record for the achievement of savings, Covid-19 continues to impact on the Council’s financial performance, particularly in leisure and car parking income. However, at this stage the Council has over-achieved its budgetary targets for this financial year.

### Strategic Context

* + 1. There has been a further decrease in unemployment levels across the country, region and district at the end of 2021/22, following the peak at the end of 2020/21. The proportion of claimants is now approaching 2019/20 levels, with around 1,300 making claims at the end of 2021/22 (2.9% of residents aged 16-64). This compares to 2,085 at the end of 2020/21.

### Covid-19

* + 1. The council has continued to be involved in delivering the response to Covid-19 to support both residents and businesses in the district. The Council’s Covid Recovery Plan, which was approved by Council in Q2 focussing on the council priorities of ‘Our Communities’ and ‘Our Economy’, is now being delivered.
    2. Official government statistics confirm that 12.6mn claims (3.8mn individuals) were made across all rounds of the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS), up to 28 October 2021 (still the latest data). This includes Rounds 1-5 of the scheme. A total of £34.8m in funding has now been paid out in the district, with £2,800 the average value of all claims made for all grants.
    3. At the end of the government’s Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme to support individuals during the pandemic, around 12,400 Malvern Hills residents had been furloughed, with the most common sector in 2021 being Wholesale and Retail.
    4. The council provided a range of Covid specific support for residents and business advice, as well as continuing to deliver usual services, throughout the pandemic.
    5. The council continued to make self-isolation support payments to residents. Since the scheme started 1,064 grants totalling £532,000 have been paid.
    6. All of the hardship payments have now been awarded to eligible households. This is a total of £409k.
    7. The council has supported businesses through the processing of grants from the first lockdown until the present. A total of £37,537,599 has been awarded across all of the schemes were administered, which includes payments in Q4 totalling £934,743 to 304 businesses under the Omicron Business Rates Grant Scheme and £241,844 to 90 businesses under the Additional Restrictions Grant Scheme.

### Flood Recovery

* + 1. In addition to delivering council services and essential work undertaken on Covid recovery actions, the council has continued to work closely with communities, elected members and businesses to reduce the impact of the flooding events. The flood resilience scheme launched in 2020/21 is continuing and during Q4 four grants totalling £18,601 were paid. This brings the total number of residents and business supported through the scheme to 65, and the total grants paid to £317,434.

## Service Performance

Service delivery has continued on track throughout the quarter to the end of the year. A breakdown of performance by service area can be seen in Appendix 1a, with workload/volumes detailed in Appendix 1b.

The year end red/amber/green (RAG) status for the council’s performance measures, which are shown in Appendix 1a are summarised in the table below:

| **Status** | **Total** |
| --- | --- |
| Green - On track | 16 |
| Amber - Behind schedule / slightly below target | 1 |
| Red - Not on track | 3 |
| No current data available | 1 |
| **Total** | **21** |

### Performance Highlights

* + 1. More than three quarters of the council’s performance measures (76%) are on track. These include the lowest numbers of missed bins on record, good performance on waste collection and Council Tax in year collection for the year, a particular achievement considering the circumstances over the year.

### Performance Concerns

* + 1. Disappointingly the days taken to validate planning applications, which had improved in to Q3, decreased slightly in Q4. Unfortunately, there have been issues with the Planning Portal through which applications are received which have delayed processing of applications by up to two weeks. As a response to address these issues, the validation process has been changed to make things more manageable, and the team is optimistic this will have an impact in 2022/23.
    2. Longer validation times continue to negatively impact the speed with which planning applications are being determined. ‘Major’ applications continue to do well, but the speed of determining ‘Minor’ and ‘Other’ applications have fallen in Q4. Determination of Householder applications, which has a challenging target of six weeks, has fallen yet again to 17% in Q4 and remains rated ‘red’. These types of smaller applications have very short timescales for determination and are where holdups in the validation process will have most impact.

## Five Year Plan Performance

Appendix 2 provides a detailed update of progress made over the year against every Five Year Plan action, as well as the work undertaken to deliver the council’s Covid-19 Recovery Plans.

The year end RAG status for the progress made to deliver the council’s Five Year Plan actions, as shown in Appendix 2, are as follows:

| Status | Total |
| --- | --- |
| Green - On track | 35 |
| Amber - Behind schedule / slightly below target | 4 |
| Red - Not on track | 2 |
| No current data available | 0 |
| Total | 41 |

### Performance Highlights

* + 1. Despite the Covid-19 pandemic and associated recovery actions there has continued to be a significant amount of good progress made to deliver the Five Year Plan actions with 83% of them rated as ‘on track’.

### Performance Concerns

* + 1. Two Five Year Plan action are now rated as ‘red’ for the year end. One of these has been flagged as an issue all year due to the further delay, approved by Councils, to the timetable for the SWDPR (see also 4.1). Work continues to progress the review and a draft has been circulated, but original plan timescales will not be met.
    2. The other relates to the target number of visits to our leisure centres which had already been revised for 2021/22 due to the impact of Covid-19 restrictions in 2020/21. As hoped, the number of visits recorded in Quarters 2, 3 and 4 increased significantly from Q1 (to more than 83k in Q4), however this has not been enough to reach the annual goal of nearly 390k needed to contribute to the long term target (total for the year = 276k). This continues to be closely monitored.
    3. A very small number of areas of activity have been rated as ‘amber’, and this is generally due to the impact of the Coronavirus slowing progress on delivery.
    4. The delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) through the Home Improvement Agency (HIA) has returned to Amber for the end year position. At the end of the year 42 DFGs had been completed. Whilst this is below the local target a further 15 DFGs have been already been approved, including some larger, higher value works, and there are a further 44 DFGs currently being processed. As previously highlighted, this performance is largely due to the impact of the pandemic and the capacity of Occupational Therapists to carry out the assessment process, shortage of contractors and delays with accessing materials. Housing services continue to work with the HIA to improve this, including proposals to increase Occupational Therapist capacity to overcome the backlog of referrals and to increase the productivity of the HIA in line with contract expectations.

## Implications and impact

### What are the financial/resource implications?

None

### What are the risks?

Failure to recognise oraddress strategic issues within a reasonable time scale could result in loss of credibility and performance. This management of underperformance will be addressed through senior level review processes as per the Performance Management Framework

## Outcomes of the impact assessment

### Privacy

None.

### Council priorities

None.

### Equalities

None.

## Appendices

* Appendix 1a Performance data
* Appendix 1b Workload/Volume Data
* Appendix 2 Five Year Plan Summary

## Background papers

None