

<b>Item No</b>	<b>Referred from:</b>	<b>OVERVIEW &amp; SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>6A</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>12 SEPTEMBER 2023</b>
	<b>Title of item:</b>	<b>Q1 2023-2024 Update on the Council Delivery Plan</b>
<b>To be considered alongside agenda item:</b>		<b>Agenda Item 15</b>

The report considered by Overview & Scrutiny Committee at the meeting held on 12 September 2023 can be viewed here: [Agenda for Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 12th September, 2023, 7.30 pm | North Herts Council \(north-herts.gov.uk\)](https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/agenda-for-overview-and-scrutiny-committee-on-tuesday-12th-september-2023-7.30-pm-north-herts-council-north-herts.gov.uk)

**RESOLVED:** That the Committee:

- (1) Noted the progress against the Council projects as set out in the Council Delivery Plan (appendix A) including changes to milestones, performance indicators and risks, and makes any recommendations or comments to Cabinet.
- (2) Considered the presentation of the report for future meetings, especially in relation to milestones and project status, and made any recommendations or comments to Cabinet.

**REASON FOR DECISIONS:** The Council Delivery Plan (CDP) monitoring reports provide Cabinet with an opportunity to monitor progress against the key Council projects, and understand any new issues, risks or opportunities.

*Audio recording – 27 minutes 29 seconds*

The Controls, Risk and Performance Manager presented the report entitled ‘Q1 2023-2024 Update on the Council Delivery Plan’ and advised that:

- This was the first quarter update on Council projects, as approved by Cabinet, and was intended to be an evolving document and could be updated following feedback from Members.
- Point 8.2 of the report detailed the changes to milestones, which were highlighted in yellow in Appendix A.
- Point 8.4 of the report clarified that the completion status was based on the current milestone, therefore if milestones were changed the original date would not be visible. It was being explored how this could be presented without referring to past reports.
- It was expected those projects with higher priority would have fewer milestone changes.
- Project prioritisation had been discussed at the previous Committee meeting and informal discussions were taking place with Executive Members on this, with a view to present this alongside the second quarter report.
- All projects, risks and milestones were available for Members to view on Pentana.
- As previously requested, an update on resourcing at the Council had been provided at point 8.7 of the report.
- The progress bar in Appendix A highlighted the progress on the current milestone, not the entire project, and this only reported on milestones within this financial year.
- The 27 projects and their status were included on page 68 of the report pack, with those as amber status included at the front of the report.

- There were five projects highlighted amber, three were green with some requests for date changes and there were four new Performance Indicators included on projects.
- The report was intended to be an overview of projects, but further details could be provided on specific projects if requested by Members.
- Questions submitted by Councillor Matt Barnes had been responded to via email prior to the meeting, and circulated to Members.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor David Levett
- Councillor Daniel Wright-Mason
- Councillor Nigel Mason

In response to questions, the Controls, Risk and Performance Manager advised that:

- A consultant had been appointed on the Churchgate project, however a longer lead in time was required before they could begin, which had led to the date slippage.
- There had been resourcing issues which had affected the digital hubs.
- They were keen to add transparency by adding detail around the changing dates to make it easier for Members. However, there was an auditable trail back through Overview and Scrutiny reports of any date slippage.
- Detailed updates could be provided on projects, including the history of that project, should Members make these requests.
- HR had been doing a lot of recruiting in different ways to address resourcing issues, including social media, making the role more attractive and promoting the benefits of working in local government.
- There were some areas that were difficult to recruit into, despite actions being taken by HR, and this was common in these areas across local authorities.
- The use of agency staff in these areas highlighted the problem and even the recruitment of agency staff in these areas was becoming increasingly difficult.
- The Council was unable to offer more pay for roles, therefore there was a need to promote other aspects of the roles.
- The Council had previously shared officer posts with other authorities and the Council currently had a joint Waste Service Manager with East Herts Council.
- The milestones highlighted under the Delivery of Housing on Council Land project were to have their dates reviewed to the end of September. There were no further milestones on this project in this financial year, unless new milestones were added.

In response to questions from Councillor Muncer, the Chair requested that specific questions be addressed to the Officer outside of the meeting to ensure a full answer could be provided. Councillor Muncer accepted the comment of the Chair, but noted that it was for the Committee to hold Executive Members to account by asking questions.

Councillor Clare Billing proposed and Councillor Daniel Wright-Mason seconded and, following a vote, it was:

**RESOLVED:** That the Committee:

- (1) Noted the progress against the Council projects as set out in the Council Delivery Plan (appendix A) including changes to milestones, performance indicators and risks, and makes any recommendations or comments to Cabinet.

(2) Considered the presentation of the report for future meetings, especially in relation to milestones and project status, and made any recommendations or comments to Cabinet.

***REASON FOR DECISIONS:*** The Council Delivery Plan (CDP) monitoring reports provide Cabinet with an opportunity to monitor progress against the key Council projects, and understand any new issues, risks or opportunities.