

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
7 JANUARY 2024**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF REPORT: COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2024-25 (QUARTER 2 UPDATE)

REPORT OF: REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR - RESOURCES

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: FINANCE AND IT

COUNCIL PRIORITY: THRIVING COMMUNITIES / ACCESSIBLE SERVICES / RESPONSIBLE GROWTH / SUSTAINABILITY

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents progress on delivering the Council Delivery Plan for 2024-25. This is a Quarter 2 update, but generally reflects progress up to the point that this report was prepared (early December). The report includes:

- For the projects identified by Cabinet in March 2024, it details milestones and progress against them.
- The risks in relation to the delivery of those projects, as well as the corporate risks that could impact the delivery of all our projects and services.
- Latest data for the performance indicators identified by Cabinet in June 2024.

There are 19 delayed milestones across 8 projects. Whilst there is not a specific theme, resourcing will be a significant component in the delays.

There is one red performance indicator relating to calls answered within 45 seconds. The actions to correct this are set out in paragraph 8.4.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Overview and Scrutiny Committee comment on the Council Delivery Plan Quarter 2 monitoring report, including the recommendations made to Cabinet i.e.:
- That Cabinet notes the progress against Council projects as set out in the Council Delivery Plan, and approves the changes to the milestones (Appendix A)
 - That Cabinet notes the performance against the performance indicators and confirms the actions detailed in paragraph 8.4.
- 2.2 That Overview and Scrutiny Committee determine any project that they want to receive more detail on as part of the next monitoring report.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Council Delivery Plan (CDP) monitoring reports provide Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and Cabinet, with an opportunity to monitor progress against the key Council projects, and understand any new issues, risks, or opportunities.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 In developing the CDP, it was agreed that Cabinet would receive quarterly updates. The updates are also provided to Overview and Scrutiny Committee so that they can provide additional oversight and support to Cabinet.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- 5.1 Service Directors and Service Managers have provided updates on progress and will have made Executive Members aware of progress made.
- 5.2 A draft of the Quarter 2 update was provided to Risk and Performance Management Group (RPMG) in November. The Group has a standing invite to the Executive Member for Finance and IT (has responsibility for performance monitoring), the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) and the Chair of Finance, Audit and Risk Committee (FAR). Other members of O&S and FAR are also encouraged to attend when they can. RPMG were asked to comment on the Q2 update. There were no specific issues raised by the group.
- 5.3 The CDP is reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and they are asked to provide comments and recommendations to Cabinet.

6. FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 This report contains a recommendation on a key Executive decision first notified on the Forward Plan on the 18 October 2024.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 The CDP brings together projects, risks, and performance indicators together in one document. The projects to be included in the 2024/25 Council Delivery Plan were agreed by Cabinet in March 2024, following a project prioritisation exercise. The performance indicators that are included were determined by Cabinet in June 2024.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 Appendix A provides an update on the progress made in delivering the Council Delivery Plan 2024-25. Whilst it is labelled as a Quarter 2 update, it generally reflects the latest position at the time that the report was written (early December). Milestones are set as far ahead as possible, but are not included where there is too much uncertainty over the scope or timing of the milestone.

8.2 In previous years the report included a percentage completed. This has now been removed as it over-simplified the position. As there are now fewer projects on the Council Delivery Plan, the focus is on providing a description of the progress made. Projects are still rated on overall progress, i.e. shown as completed, on track, some delays, significant delays. Where there are delays, Cabinet will be asked to consider revisions to milestones. For this report:




- Eight projects have proposed delays to milestones which relate to 19 individual milestones.
- Four projects have new milestones which relate to 7 new individual milestones.
- Five projects have an amber status, and the other 6 are rated green.

There are various reasons for the delays in milestones being achieved. In many cases there is a link to available resourcing for the project.

8.3 Our performance indicators now reflect the overall performance of the Council. Performance levels are rated as either green (achieving or exceeding the target), amber (not achieving the target level and need to look at actions to get back on track) and red (urgent action needed to get back to the target performance). For this report:

- 11 indicators are rated green.
- 2 indicators are rated amber.
- 8 indicators do not have a target.
- 1 indicator is rated red.

8.4 For the indicators that are rated red or amber, the following actions are being taken:

-  Percentage of Customer Service Centre calls answered within 45 seconds (68% against a target of 80%, and a decline in performance from 74% at Quarter 1). During this period the CSC saw an increase in calls due to annual billing and the elections that took place. Additionally, the team faced staff shortages due to annual leave, sickness and leavers. However, the CSC have been running on an on-going recruitment process to fill vacancies. While these new team members are still completing their training and a couple of vacancies still to fill, we are confident that the attainment of this KPI will improve steadily. Importantly, the percentage of calls answered overall was a 94%.
-  Working days lost due to short-term absence per FTE (4.22 days against a target 4, and an improvement compared to 4.51 days at Q1). We will continue to develop ways to support employee health and wellbeing as part of our response to the staff survey. We have offered flu vaccines to help reduce winter absences. It should also be noted that there is a national trend for increasing levels of employee absence.
-  Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting (59.92% against a target of 60%). This is a profiled target and the annual target is lower than the Q2 target. The profiling reflects varying volumes of

garden waste over the year. This continues to be a very small shortfall so we will continue to keep it under review, especially as this is a provisional total and it might improve. Actions and initiatives to encourage more recycling by residents will continue.

- 8.5 The Council Delivery Plan is intended to be a live document. Councillors and Officers can access IdeaGen for the latest position. New projects can be added to the Plan, if they are a strategic priority and there are resources available to deliver them. Projects will be removed when they are completed, or if they are no longer a priority. As the new Council Plan has now been approved, Cabinet should consider whether this means that there should be any projects added to or removed from the Council Delivery Plan. Cabinet (following review by Overview and Scrutiny) will be asked to approve any changes to milestones.
- 8.6 Overview and Scrutiny can ask for more detail on any of the Council Delivery Plan projects. That can either be provided as a written update or can be included as part of the next quarterly update, to support discussion in the meeting.

Access to Ideagen (previously known as Pentana)

- 8.7 All the detail behind the projects, risks and performance indicators is available to view in Ideagen, the Councils performance and risk software. A guest login is provided on the intranet for any member to use, along with a procedure note and short video on how to view the data.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The constitution determines the role of Cabinet as including: “To take decisions on resources and priorities, together with other stakeholders and partners in the local community, to deliver and implement the budget and policies decided by the Full Council. To monitor performance and risk in respect of the delivery of those policies and priorities” (Section 5, paragraph 5.7.3).
- 9.2 The constitution determines the role of Overview and Scrutiny as including: “To review performance against the Council’s agreed objectives/ priorities and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/ or service area. To consider risks to the achievement of those objectives/ priorities. To make recommendations to Cabinet” (Section 6, paragraph 6.2.7 (s)).
- 9.3 There are no specific legal implications arising from the CDP. However, there may be individual legal implications for some of the projects outlined. Any commissioning of work on new and existing projects will follow the standard legal requirements and those required by the Council’s internal standing orders, contained within the Constitution.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Where projects are linked to efficiencies or investments then these are included in the budget proposals and monitored through the quarterly finance reports.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Good Risk Management supports and enhances the decision-making process, increasing the likelihood of the Council meeting its objectives and enabling it to respond quickly and effectively to change. When taking decisions, risks and opportunities must be considered.
- 11.2 The Council Delivery Plan aims to support the risk management process by directly linking the risks to projects being undertaken. The aim of these proposals is to strengthen the link between performance and risk and make risks more current. This should provide an improved perspective of the risks that the Council faces.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report. Equalities analysis will have been completed for relevant projects referred to in this report.
- 12.3 As the Customer Service Centre are not meeting the target standard for call answering, there is a concern that this could have a negative impact on those who share a protected characteristic. The report sets out measures to address the current performance.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The Social Value Act and “go local” requirements do not apply to this report.

14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 There will continue to be a need to align Council and Service objectives with available people resources to be able to achieve them. The Council Delivery Plan will help to make that link clearer.

15. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 There are no known Environmental impacts or requirements that apply to this report. However, a number of the projects to be monitored throughout the year are related to key environmental issues.

16. APPENDICES

16.1 Appendix A – Council Delivery Plan 24-25 Q2 Monitoring Report

17. CONTACT OFFICERS

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18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

18.1 Council Delivery Plan projects for 2024-25 agreed by Cabinet (March 2024):
<https://democracy.north-herts.gov.uk/documents/s24602/Council%20Delivery%20Plan%20Q3%20update%20and%20projects%20for%202425.pdf>

18.2 Performance Indicators for 2024-25 agreed by Cabinet (June 2024):
<https://democracy.north-herts.gov.uk/documents/s25289/KEY%20PERFORMANCE%20INDICATORS%20202425.pdf>

18.3 Council Plan 2024-28 <https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/council-plan>