

TITLE OF REPORT: Performance Management and Improvement Framework Year-End Performance Report 2023/24

REPORT OF: Dale Owens, Chief Executive

SUMMARY

To report to the Committee the Council's Performance Management and Improvement Framework year-end report for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. The report also provides an overview of performance relevant to the role and remit of this committee.

Purpose of the Performance Management and Improvement Framework

1. The Performance Management and Improvement Framework (PMIF) enables the Council to know how it is delivering against the Thrive agenda. It has a clear focus on priorities, delivery, measurement, and analysis of impact. It is based on Thrive and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and incorporates an organisational 'health check' balanced scorecard.

Background

2. The Council's performance framework was agreed by Council on 27 May 2021. The draft measures were considered and agreed by Cabinet in October 2021, with further updates to several measures agreed by Cabinet in subsequent reporting cycles. The reporting of 2022/23 performance was considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committees in June and agreed by Cabinet in July 2023.

3. The PMIF aims to:

- Enable the Council to know whether it is achieving its priorities (Thrive).
- Ensure that the Council's resources are being deployed effectively.
- Make both short- and long-term effective decisions, and the Council's approach to resource allocation and budget setting.
- A whole system approach – embedded in our partnership working to deliver the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Year-end reports

4. The analysis of performance for 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024, against each of the six policy objectives of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the balanced scorecard, is set out at Appendix 1. Areas of relevance to this Committee are highlighted in this report, however, the entire PMIF is provided to enable members of the committee to see the full picture of performance across all priority areas at Appendix 1. Please note that the current version attached at Appendix 1 is a draft, as the performance data and analysis is regularly being updated due to the iterative nature of the framework.

5. The performance reports outline the challenges, achievements, actions, and resources for each policy objective. It also contains performance data including strategic and operational measures and is informed by qualitative and quantitative assessment to inform policy and resource decisions.
6. Some data is not available at this stage. Indicators are released throughout the year, some annually which do not coincide with this reporting cycle. Where provisional data is available this has been provided. The report sets out the current performance for the strategic and operational measures, where data is available, at the year-end stage.
7. Cross-cutting key areas already being highlighted are:
 - Budget pressures continue to provide a significant challenge across the Council.
 - Continuing demand pressures being faced by services with increased complexity and conflicting priorities in many areas.
 - There are ongoing issues with recruitment and retention across all areas.
 - Many services across the Council are working closely with key partners and local communities to deliver support to residents in need.
 - The cost-of-living and high interest rates are continuing to impact the financial challenges already facing some residents.
 - The economic climate continues to make things difficult for many businesses in the borough, as well as the global economic and political uncertainty impacting level of business investment.
 - Many services are actively engaging with customers to improve their offer and/or customer experience.
8. An overview will be provided at the Committee meeting, however, below are some of the key areas to highlight:

Challenges include:

- There have been further academisations during 2023/24 which reduced the scope of Service Level Agreement purchases, impacting the value of services provided by the Council to schools.
- Of the 82 Chief Executive Reviews that were completed following stage 3 corporate complaints, 49 were upheld.
- The number of complaints received by the Local Government Ombudsmen has increased from last year, to 29. However, only 3 of those were upheld.
- The number of employee resignations as % of headcount has increased from 5.11% in 2022/23, up to 8.8% in 2023/24, demonstrating the ongoing issues facing the council regarding employee retention.

Areas of excellence / improvement include:

- There were fewer total work-related incidents reported by council services during 2023/24 compared with the previous year. We are now seeing more near misses reported than accidents across council services.

- There has been no enforcement action taken against the council by the Health and Safety during 2023/24.
- The percentage of overall Council spend with organisations based in Gateshead has continued to increase and is currently sitting at 2.15% more than the baseline.
- Of the 18 data breaches reported to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), no complaints were upheld, which demonstrates that none of the breaches required further intervention by the ICO.
- There has been a small increase in the use of online services. Individually, the online services typically range from 70-90% uptake. We have also seen a 13% increase in online payments compared to the previous year.

Actions include:

- As we look to develop a positive 'health and safety' culture, we would expect to see the percentage of near misses continue to increase next year.
- Outcome for the Local Area Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Inspection – the local area partnership's arrangements lead to inconsistent experiences and outcomes for children and young people with SEND. The local area partnership must work jointly to make improvements.
- Collate and share the staff survey undertaken in the spring of 2024.

Review of framework

9. Over the coming twelve-month period the current PM IF will undergo a review to ensure that the information provided by the framework continues to add value to decision making process and reflects advancements in technology and the introduction of the Office for Local Government.

Recommendations

10. Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:
 - Comment on the year-end report at Appendix 1 and identify any areas for further scrutiny.
 - Recommend the performance report to Cabinet for consideration in July 2024.

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