

**TITLE OF REPORT:** Performance Management and Improvement Framework –  
Year End Performance Report 2022/23

**REPORT OF:** Darren Collins, Strategic Director, Resources and Digital

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## **SUMMARY**

This report provides the Committee with the Council's Performance Management and Improvement Framework, reporting performance on the delivery of Council priorities for the period April 2022 to March 2023. It also provides an overview of performance relevant to the role and remit of this committee.

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### **Purpose of the Performance Management and Improvement Framework (PMIF)**

1. The Performance Management and Improvement Framework (PMIF) enables the Council to know how it is delivering on its Thrive policy. 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 internal organisational 'health check' Balanced Scorecard.

### **Background**

2. The Council's performance framework was reviewed, and a new approach was agreed by Council on 27 May 2021. The draft measures were considered and agreed by Cabinet in October 2021. The reporting of 6-month performance which was considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committees during December 2022 and agreed by Cabinet in January 2023.
3. The PMIF aims to:
  - Enable the Council to know whether it is achieving its priorities. (Thrive Policy).
  - Ensure that the Council's resources are being deployed effectively.
  - Make both short and long-term effective decisions.
  - A whole systems approach – embedded in our partnership working to deliver the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

### **Year End Performance Reporting**

4. The analysis of performance for 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 against each of the 6 policy objectives of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Balanced Scorecard is set out at Appendix 1. Areas of particular relevance to this Committee are highlighted in this report, however, the full Performance Management & Improvement Framework is provided to enable members to see the full picture of performance across all priority areas at Appendix 1.

5. The report outlines 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 year end. This is due to a variety of reasons including areas where data has not been published since the pandemic, or where there is a lag between year-end and the data being confirmed. Where provisional data is available, this has been provided and referenced as such.
7. Cross-cutting key areas already being highlighted are:
  - MTFS estimates a £55m financial gap over the medium term due to significant pressures manifesting over the last twelve months in inflation, pay, utilities and costs of living.
  - The continuing impacts of rising costs facing local people, families, and businesses, as well as in the delivery of services.
  - The demand pressures being faced by services such as in children's and adult social care continue to increase, as well as expanding demand for debt advice.
  - Staffing pressures are still impacting performance across the Council including recruitment, retention, and sickness.
  - Progress in key areas such as workforce strategy, climate change strategy and customer experience.
  - Inequalities continue to widen. Thrive data shows a shift (over 2 percentage points) compared with the previous year-end, towards more people being vulnerable, moving from the just coping and managing categories. There is minimal change in the proportion of people 'thriving'.
  - Additional support is still being sought and provided to local people and businesses through various grants, although this is affected additionally by burdens relating to central Government's initiatives. Household support grant is to continue for a further 12 months.
8. An overview will be provided at the Committee meeting, however, areas of particular relevance to this Committee are:

### *Challenges*

- There continues to be increasing demand for children's social care support. The number of looked after children increased from 435 at year end 2021/22 to 529 by year-end 2022/23. This demand includes increases in:
  - Children becoming looked after for the first time.
  - Children being referred to social care.
  - Children who are the subject of a Child Protection Plan.
- Child poverty remains highest in and around the urban centre of Gateshead, with smaller pockets identified further afield.
- Employee recruitment and retention issues being seen across the Council are also an issue within social care services.

### *Areas of excellence include*

- Free school meal uptake continues to steadily increase, rising from 74% last year to 76.9% for 2022/23
- The England average for the percentage of people smoking at the time of delivery was 9.1% for 2021/22, this compares to 11.8% for Gateshead; a minor increase of 0.2% from the previous year. The recent trend demonstrates figures are decreasing and improving (both locally and nationally) albeit slowly; there has been a decrease every year for Gateshead since 2018/19 (13.4%).
- There has been an impact on the average time between a child entering care and being made subject of a Special Guardianship Order with a reduction in the time for this process.
- Early Help Services continue to perform well, and it is hoped that these improvements will support a longer-term reduction in demand, although this will take some time to show impact.
- Despite increases in demand we continue to meet council statutory duties.

### *Actions include*

- A reunification strategy, edge of care strategy and associated practice guidance is being developed to support staff in maintaining children at home and to return children to families at the earliest opportunity, and where it is safe to do so.
- Family Hubs are being launched across the council which will increase opportunities for early identification of needs and reduce the number of families escalating into statutory services for support.
- Placement provision and placement sufficiency is currently under review. A commissioning strategy will be developed and implemented to ensure that demand does not outstrip capacity.
- Short break care has been reviewed and capacity increased to meet the rise in demand.
- Work is ongoing to increase free school meal take up within primary schools:
  - social Media promotions for themed days;
  - working with unit managers to develop the new menu for September 2023, including the introduction of a 'Cooks Choice' meal;
  - including heads and business managers in menu development & trialling new dishes in some sites;
  - school meals area supervisors will be attending open evenings for the new reception children alongside the unit managers to encourage children to stay for a school meal; and a
  - themed day calendar is being created for the new academic year which will offer alternative themed menus.

## **Further development**

9. A review of measures is being undertaken to understand where changes may be needed to ensure the PMIF remains robust, particularly where data is still not available for reporting.

10. Following a request in June 2022 for additional support in relation to the Performance Management and Improvement Framework, the Commercialisation and Improvement team are working with the Workforce Development team on a focussed training session for councillors. A training brief has been drafted and is being shared at the next meeting of the Councillor Support and Development Group (date TBA) for their contribution. It is intended that this training opportunity will be delivered in late-September.
11. Work is ongoing to improve the presentation of performance information and analysis, particularly as we gather a catalogue of data over time through the performance reporting phases.
12. It is important the PMIF is flexible and able to evolve to ensure it remains relevant.

### **Recommendations**

13. Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:
  - Comment on the Year End performance report at Appendix 1 and identify any areas for further scrutiny.
  - Recommend the performance report to Cabinet for consideration on 18 July 2023.

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