

Local Members Interest
N/A

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Tuesday 10 May 2022

Integrated Performance Report – Quarter 4, 2021/22

Recommendation(s)

I recommend that:

- a. Committee Members note and challenge performance and advise of any further information and/or action required.

Report of Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Finance

Summary

What is the Overview and Scrutiny Committee being asked to do and why?

1. This quarterly Integrated Performance Report provides an overview of Staffordshire County Council's progress, performance, and financial position in delivering against our Strategic Plan and Delivery Plan.
2. We recommend that Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes and challenges performance and advises of any further information and/or action required.

Report

Background

3. The Integrated Performance report is considered by Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis.

Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 20 April 2022

Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 4, 2021/22



Cllr Alan White, Leader of the Council said,

“Dealing with Covid-19 and learning how to live safely with the virus remains a priority and we continue to do what is required to keep people safe. The vaccine programme has been a game changer and vaccination uptake in Staffordshire remains comparatively good with booster uptake now above the national average.

“We continue to do what is necessary to support those who need us most, including vulnerable residents, the care sector, local communities, and businesses. Growing our economy, creating better quality jobs, and supporting local businesses with their recovery through the Staffordshire Means Back to Business Programme remains a priority. Putting more money in people’s pockets and improving their financial security, especially at a time when living and energy costs are on the increase, is vital.

“The cost of adult social care continues to rise, and we face challenges in the sector although we have seen a reduction in waiting times for assessments since last quarter. We continue to address workforce issues through the Future Social Care Workforce Programme, which is in its early days, but will help us to understand current local issues and needs.

“The new model for the delivery of our Children and Families services introduced last year continues to embed well and our work through the Building Resilient Families and Communities programme continues to support vulnerable families. An Ofsted and Care Quality Commission inspection of SEND provision in January found improvements in six out of eight areas under review, with two areas requiring further development. Work continues to make improvements within the service.

“The Warmer Home schemes have provided significant benefits to Staffordshire residents, especially given the rising price of energy. To date 3,500 people have accessed the schemes and received help and advice. This includes 511 families benefitting from 566 home installations, such as gas central heating, replacement boilers or insulation measures.

“Despite the pressures facing councils like ours, we will invest to keep growing the county in a sustainable way to make a positive difference in the lives of our residents. We want Staffordshire people to enjoy a better quality of life, in thriving communities, and live longer in good health.

“In much more sobering news, we continue to be horrified by the events unfolding in Ukraine and as a county we stand with all those affected by the conflict. Staffordshire has a proud history of helping those who have had no choice but to flee war or persecution. We have set up an Incident Management Team and we are supporting the delivery of the ‘Homes for Ukraine’ scheme. We stand ready to offer Ukrainian refugees a warm welcome to our county should our help be needed.”



Cllr Ian Parry, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources said,

“All council departments continue to deliver against their priorities, whilst progressing with activities in the organisation’s Delivery Plan.

“The latest revenue forecast outturn shows a forecast saving of £4.417m (0.8%). This is compared to the previous forecast of a saving of £3.963m (0.7%) at Quarter 3.

“Like many local authorities, we still face financial challenges including in adult social care and in children’s social services, but we continue to keep our finances in as strong a position as possible. Well managed finances ensures that we provide good value for money for local taxpayers and means we can continue to invest in our future and growing our economy.”

Report Summary

This quarterly Integrated Performance Report provides an overview of Staffordshire County Council’s progress, performance, and financial position in delivering against our Strategic Plan and Delivery Plan.

Recommendation

We recommend that Cabinet:

- a. Notes and challenges performance and advises of any further information and/or action required.
- b. Approves the use of £2.702m from the Contingency budget to fund the national pay award relating to 2021/22. This is not currently included in service budgets as a pay freeze was assumed during the MTFS.

Local Members Interest
N/A

Cabinet – Wednesday 20 April 2022

Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 4, 2021/22

Recommendation of the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

We recommend that Cabinet:

- a. Notes and challenges performance and advises of any further information and/or action required.
- b. Approves the use of £2.702m from the Contingency budget to fund the national pay award relating to 2021/22. This is not currently included in service budgets as a pay freeze was assumed during the MTFS.

Report of the Director for Corporate Services

Reasons for Recommendations

This is an opportunity for Cabinet to consider and discuss Staffordshire County Council's quarterly performance and finance position.



Quarter 4 Summary

Performance ratings for the individual service areas across the council are as follows:

Service Area	Delivery	Finance
Health & Care	A	G
Families & Communities	A	A
Economy, Infrastructure & Skills	G	G
Corporate Services	G	G

Key highlights

- Shortlisted for LGC Council of the Year Award 2022.
- Shift in COVID approach to 'living safely with COVID'; good vaccination rates.
- Additional £19.25m non-recurrent funding for investment in Staffordshire has been confirmed for the NHS and Social Care for 2022/23 – 2023/24.
- Staffordshire Means Back to Business Programme continues to succeed for Staffordshire's businesses.
- Staffordshire has been confirmed as a continued Earned Autonomy area for the Supporting Families Programme in 2022/23.

Key challenges

- Implementation of Adult Social Care Reform by April 2023 – project in place which will require significant resource.
- Overall demand remains high for adult social care assessments, leading to capacity issues and waiting lists, although some improvement in Quarter 4.
- Continued pressures relating to the number and complexity of children in care.
- Capacity issues in SEND due to need for Accelerated Progress Plan by April 2022; also declining Education, Health and Care plan timeliness.
- Continuing to develop and manage Staffordshire's waste services.

Further details of the above can be found in the main report and accompanying appendices.

1. Summary

This report provides an update on Quarter 4 activities for each service area: Health and Care; Families and Communities; Economy, Infrastructure and Skills; and Corporate Services.

Significant progress has been made across the organisation during Quarter 4, however challenges remain in relation to capacity and demand, particularly within Health and Care and Families and Communities. There also continues to be areas of financial risk in Adult Social Care and Families and Communities, with further details included within this report and its appendices.

The latest revenue forecast outturn shows a forecast saving of £4.417m (0.8%). There are a number of potential carry forward requests to be made in the Final Outturn report, if all these requests are approved this will reduce the saving to £2.503m (0.4%). This is compared to the previous forecast of a saving of £3.963m (0.7%) at Quarter 3.

2. Health and Care

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
Amber	Green

3. Considerable progress has been made across Health and Care in Quarter 4, both in leading the council's move to living safely with COVID and in the recovery of key adult social care services, with an AMBER delivery overall to reflect a number of ongoing challenges, including the implementation of key adult social care reform. The GREEN finance rating reflects significant in-year underspend, despite longer term cost pressures.



4. In Staffordshire, work to implement the Government's new plan for adult social care reform, including a lifetime cap on the amount anyone in England will need to spend on their personal care, is a key area of challenge. The council has commenced a project to understand, design and implement the necessary process and system changes required for Adult Social Care Reform, including implementing the fair cost of care and the lifetime cap on care costs. Like all other local authorities, significant resource will be required to implement the necessary changes by April 2023.

5. Following the national trend, overall demand remains high for adult social care assessments, leading to capacity issues and waiting lists, although there has been some improvement in Quarter 4, with waiting lists

reducing from their peak and improvements in terms of capacity. Capacity improvements in home care are particularly due to focused work with partners in relation to retention of staff, which has mitigated the risk over winter.

6. In the longer term, workforce issues are looking to be addressed by the Future Social Care Workforce Programme, which is in its early days, but will help to understand current local social care sector issues. The programme will work with sector representatives and develop approaches across the partnership to address the identified issues.
7. Brokerage demand remains high with levels consistently above 'pre-Covid' levels (22% higher in February 2022 compared with February/March 2020). Overall timeliness of sourcing has however improved to 70% in February compared to 63% in January. Home/day care sourcing has improved from 59% to 71%, although issues continue for a number of care homes temporarily in lockdown and declining new admissions. Care homes timeliness of sourcing is marginally down from 73% in January 2022 to 69% in February 2022.
8. The council's response to COVID-19 is adapting to align with the Government's shift to 'living with COVID'. There will continue to be ongoing management of outbreaks in high risks settings and there is a need to ensure contingency plans and resources are in place in case there is a surge in cases. Positively, vaccination uptake in Staffordshire remains comparatively good. As of 16th March 2022, Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent recorded a booster uptake of 84.1%, compared to the national average of 81%. Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent have got the highest uptake for 12–15-year-olds for the first dose across the region at 64.2%. In Staffordshire alone it is 67.5%.
9. With the cost-of-living increases that are being experienced nationally, Staffordshire has measures in place to help those residents facing financial hardship. One of these measures is the delivery of the Warmer Homes Scheme, which aims to combat fuel poverty across the county and help residents to heat their homes. The scheme is for those residents in receipt of means tested or disability benefits e.g., Universal Credit, Disability Living Allowance, or on low incomes. The council has recently undertaken further work to understand where Staffordshire's most in need families live, allowing for more targeted campaigns to raise awareness of the scheme in those areas.
10. The current Warmer Home schemes are ending in Quarter 1, 2022/23 and have provided significant benefits to Staffordshire residents, especially given the rising price of energy. As of mid-March 2022, 511 households had benefitted from 566 home installations, such as gas central heating, replacement boilers or insulation measures to ensure houses are kept warm, and over 2,300 people had received wrap around

services through 'Beat the Cold', which include eligibility testing, advice, and signposting to further support. Anecdotally, these figures have already increased substantially and will be included in the next report. For those receiving first time central heating, average savings on energy bills have been £657 per year. Households across all districts in Staffordshire have benefitted from the scheme. Of those measures installed, there has been the highest take-up in Tamworth (122), Cannock (100), Stafford (94) and East Staffordshire (69). These are also the districts that have had the highest level of take-up of wrap around services. The focus during 2022/23 will primarily be on the Sustainable Warmth Competition, which helps local authorities to upgrade energy inefficient homes of low-income households and will target around 400 homes in 2022/23, plus the continued wrap-around services. This is subject to £5.9m funding which is anticipated to be approved by the end of April 2022.

11. The Supportive Communities programme has continued to progress during Quarter 4. The programme has started developing a long-term model for voluntary sector provision of unregulated social care support, which will help with the demand and capacity issues faced in Social Care. The Community Help Point referral rate is also continuing to improve. A model and vision for strengths-based working is developing across Health and Care, with a locality focused approach being developed initially in Newcastle followed by Staffordshire Moorlands.

12. From a Finance perspective, the Health and Care forecasted outturn at Quarter 4 is a saving of £1.176m, compared to a £0.982m saving in Quarter 3. There remains a range of high-risk Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) savings within this area, with the directorate seeking alternative savings where necessary. In addition, the level of client debt is above target and work is ongoing to recover this. The forecast financial impact of COVID-19 for the directorate is £3.644m.

13. Families and Communities

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
Amber	Amber

14. Significant progress has been made across the Families and Communities service area in Quarter 4. The overall AMBER performance ratings reflect much work that has taken place during the quarter, balanced with managing some key issues in relation to demand and capacity.



15. Staffordshire has continued to experience pressures relating to the number and complexity of children in care, as well as challenges associated with the embedding of a large-scale Children's

Transformation. Work to embed the workforce structure continues; leadership and senior management roles have now been filled and wider transformation elements (policy, digital, Power BI) are now live and embedding well. Refurbishment works on the council's new in-house residential unit remain on track for completion by the end of March 2022.

16. At the 28th February 2022, there were 1,277 children in care in Staffordshire, which represents very little change compared to the position reported in Quarter 3 (1,279), however this remains slightly higher than the revised business case number. The rate is 74.6 per 10,000 which is higher than the most recent national benchmark (67 per 10,000 - March 2021) but lower than the regional benchmark (85 per 10,000 - March 2021). In Staffordshire, the council has provided crucial placements to 21 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children as part of the Government's National Transfer Scheme, which continues to place additional pressures on all local authorities with children's services.
17. The number of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) issued in time (within 20 weeks) in Staffordshire has declined during Quarter 4. In February 2022, 30% of EHCPs were issued in time, compared to the most recent national benchmark of 56% (from 2020/21). The overall 12-month position is at 69%, compared to the most recent national benchmark of 56%. Half of the plans 'out of time' were issued within 25 weeks. The issue around timeliness is linked to securing keyworkers following the changes during the transformation. To address this, and the overall increase in demand for EHCPs - which is being experienced nationally, the council has increased the SEND Keyworker FTE from 28 to 35, resulting in less reliance on agency staff. All new keyworker roles have been recruited, but they have not all started yet. Performance of this key measure is also continuing to be closely monitored by the SEND Service and District Operations Teams.
18. In January 2022, the council also had its Ofsted and Care Quality Commission inspection of SEND provision in the county, which found improvements in six out of eight areas under review, with two areas requiring further development in the next 12 months, through an Accelerated Progress Plan. These areas of development include improving both the relationships with families and the quality of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). Changes already planned include developing a recently launched Parent Carer Forum to identify problems and solutions more quickly and working on a national pilot scheme with the Council for Disabled Children to measure the impact of the changes being made.
19. Work has continued to co-produce a new Staffordshire Early Help Strategy with the involvement of children and their families. This joint strategy, developed with key partners, is due to be in place from April 2022. Work is also ongoing to finalise the Early Help & Place Based

Approach Implementation Plan which will underpin delivery of the refreshed Early Help Strategy.

20. Following a standard 10-year review of the agreement between the council and Entrust, a small number of services currently provided by Entrust to the council will be brought back in-house by April 2023. These services include skills and employability, early years support and other property projects. This reflects the changing school landscape in the county and new council priorities. Services Entrust provides directly to schools will remain largely unaffected.
21. More than nine out of ten parents have been allocated their first-choice secondary school in Staffordshire. Out of the 7,964 offers for a secondary school in Staffordshire made to parents, 93.5% were allocated their first-choice school. This is compared to 7,650 applications made for a school place in 2021. Around 98% have been allocated one of their top three preferred schools, above the national average which stands at 93% (2021).
22. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) have confirmed Staffordshire will continue to be an Earned Autonomy area for the Supporting Families Programme in 2022/23. In Quarter 4, the council achieved successful outcomes for a further 232 families, taking the total for the year to 1,238 and exceeding its annual DLUHC target of 817.
23. The council has administered over £12 million in the last 12 months to assist people facing financial hardship through the Household Support Fund and other grants made available to the council. These funds have been used primarily to support households most in need with food, energy costs and other bills. The grants have helped over 100,000 people with food vouchers, including children who are entitled to Free School Meals and Care Leavers, and 2,616 households have had support with energy bills. Within the Spring Statement it was announced that the Household Support fund would be extended from the 1st April to 30th September 2022 to continue to support those in need. Further details around the funding and distribution will be included in the next report.
24. From the 22nd March, parents of eligible children in Staffordshire can register for a space on the council's [Easter Holiday Activities and Food Programme \(HAF\)](#). All HAF programmes over the Christmas holidays were delivered despite COVID-19 risks and with more than 20,000 places available across Staffordshire, the Easter programme will offer 67 inclusive activities and healthy meals over the school holidays for children aged 5-16 years.
25. The Staffordshire Resilience Forum is working to plan and prepare Staffordshire's partnership response to the Ukraine crisis. The council has

also established an Incident Management Team, including council senior managers, to help respond to the crisis. The council are also currently supporting the Home Office and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to deliver a new scheme 'Homes for Ukraine.' The scheme sees local people ('sponsors') offer a bedroom in their home for a Ukrainian fleeing war, with checks in place to ensure the safety of the guests. The scheme is being developed across the partnership to ensure that they have access to community support, schools, work, and wider support to help them integrate in Staffordshire. Further work is also taking place to prepare for potential health needs. As of 5th April 2022, there were 144 Staffordshire sponsors who had come forward and agreed to accommodate a total of 370 Ukrainians.

26.A key priority for the council is the provision of domestic abuse services (the council contributes to a jointly commissioned service). Work remains on track to ensure new commissioning arrangements are in place from April 2023, with funding of over £1.5m to support victims and their families living in safe accommodation for 2022/23 awarded during Quarter 4.

27.The Trading Standards team continues to support businesses through safeguarding and compliance advice. Since April 2021 the team have dealt with almost 16,900 engagements and interventions with businesses; with almost £750,000 prevented from being lost to scams and fraud through the council's intervention.

28.Between October and December 2021, the council's Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Strategic Capacity Building Partner saw 226 organisations provided with one-to-one development support, c.£1.3m external funding secured by VCSE organisations and 33 individuals supported to access local volunteering opportunities. In addition, the tender for the new VCSE Capacity Building Framework went live on 31st January, with a deadline for applications of 7th March. Evaluation of bids is currently underway, with a go-live date for the new arrangements of 1st August.

29.In terms of the financial position at Quarter 4 for Families & Communities, there is a forecast overspend of £1.357m, compared to an overspend of £1.313m in Quarter 3. Whilst there are various savings which are mainly to do with vacancies the pressure on Children in our Care leads to an overall overspend. The forecast financial impact of COVID-19 for the directorate is £8.400m.

30.Economy, Infrastructure and Skills

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
Green	Green

31. Economy, Infrastructure and Skills is currently on track in terms of both Delivery and Finance in Quarter 4. The overall GREEN performance ratings reflect considerable progress made across the service against its key plans, whilst continuing to respond to some key challenges.



32. A key area of focus within the service is in relation to the Hanford Waste Disposal Facility. Discussions with Stoke-on-Trent City Council are ongoing to ensure that there is a cost effective and sustainable waste disposal solution for household residual waste in the north of Staffordshire post 2025.

33. Work is on track to bring the day-to-day management and running of Staffordshire's Household Waste Recycling Centres back in-house from April 2022. Risks have been mitigated against and staff have been supported to transition from AMEY. Residents should experience no immediate difference with this changeover, although it is hoped in the short-term improvements to facilities and encouragement of more advanced recycling methods will be noticeable.

34. The council continues to support local businesses to survive, adapt and continue to operate as part of delivering its £6m Staffordshire Means Back to Business Support Scheme, which is a unique partnership with Staffordshire's eight boroughs and districts to prioritise support for small businesses and people whose jobs and employment prospects have been impacted.

35. As part of the Back to Business scheme, the Staffordshire Apprentice 500 initiative launched in April 2021 to provide incentives to small and non-levy employers to provide apprenticeships to Staffordshire's young unemployed residents. Between the launch and February 2022, 195 applications have been approved, creating over 300 apprenticeships and over 250 apprentices have so far been recruited.

36. The Staffordshire Start-Up Loan scheme is assisting those made redundant or unemployed to start up new businesses with loans of between £3,000 and £5,000, with no interest or fees. By the end of February 2022, 21 start-up businesses were supported through the scheme at a total of £101,000 with 3 businesses having paid back to the council after 12 months. The Staffordshire Start-Up course (delivered through Staffordshire Chamber) is also progressing. At the end of February 2022, 361 people had signed up to the course and nearly 43% had started trading.

37. The Get Started scheme which launched in November 2021 gives participants extra confidence to launch or continue with their enterprise with the backing of free expert professional support. The scheme is

proving extremely popular with 123 applications received by the end of February 2022.

38. The council has developed a new Economic Strategy that will help to strengthen partnerships with district and borough councils and other organisations, in addition to influencing central Government and attracting investors. Main priorities include the regeneration of town centres, supporting start-up and growing small businesses, ensuring Staffordshire has a higher skilled and higher paid workforce, supporting development of sites so they're ready for business and strengthening transport corridors such as the A50/A500 and A38. A four-week consultation is set to take place soon after its approval.
39. Highways works to create the access from the A34 to the Pets at Home development began in February 2022 and will be overseen by the council. The 670,000 square foot development is expected to create 750 jobs when it opens in late 2022 and will be the company's new national headquarters.
40. We Are Staffordshire, the place marketing delivery vehicle for the council, unveiled the new Staffordshire Investment Prospectus in March 2022 at the international MIPIM property marketplace. The prospectus highlights economic investment opportunity across the whole of Staffordshire and has been jointly prepared by the Make It Investment service and Place Branding teams in collaboration with all district and borough councils. It presents key major projects that will regenerate and transform Staffordshire over the next five years, including Stafford town centre regeneration and Chatterley Valley West – part of the Ceramic Valley Enterprise Zone.
41. The Superfast Staffordshire programme will end in 2022. Its success, combined with the commercial roll-out, has enabled 96% of county premises to have available connectivity to superfast broadband (>30Mbs), however 4% currently miss out. [Project Gigabit](#) is a new £123M Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) investment into the region to enable premises that are not commercially viable to get 1,000Mbs connectivity. The council has been working with DCMS on an Open Market Review and Public review to ensure that this investment will deliver value for money and its progress, scheduled for deployment in 2023, will be shared on a new website in May this year.
42. In terms of climate change, over 100 applications were received for the second round of the Climate Change Action Fund which are currently being assessed. Furthermore, the council in partnership with environmental company Veolia launched the Staffordshire EnviroGrant programme in Quarter 4, which made grants of up to £750 available to not-for-profit organisations. Grants could be awarded to projects that

help improve waste and recycling, improve the natural environment, or raise awareness of environmental issues.

43. Positive progress is also being made on the actions in the council's Climate Change Action Plan 2. The council has been working with The Forest of Mercia Community Interest Company on two sites in Cannock Chase district where 17,500 trees will be planted. The planting has been funded by £92,000 of the Government's Trees for Climate Fund. A trial of the use of HVO fuels in the council's heavy goods and heavy plant vehicles has also commenced, which has the potential to save over 1,000 tonnes of CO₂ if it can be rolled out over the council's Highways and Household Waste and Recycling Centre operations. The council has also been successful in securing funding under the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme and are looking at converting a new schools heating system from conventional gas fuelled boilers to a heat pump solution.
44. In March 2022, a two-week anti-idling campaign was delivered by the council and local businesses, to help raise awareness of improving air quality in Staffordshire. During the campaign, businesses encouraged employees to turn off their engines when they aren't in use.
45. Since the street lighting LED retrofit programme commenced in April 2021, 12,000 lanterns have been exchanged for energy efficient LED units up to the end of February 2022, reducing the associated energy consumption by almost 1.5m kWh per annum. This figure is ahead of planned delivery targets to convert around 47,000 lanterns by March 2025. When complete this programme will save the equivalent of 2,650 tonnes of CO₂e each year and reduce energy costs by c.£1.6M pa.
46. As part of the wider Medium Term Financial Strategy, it has been agreed that an extra £15.5m capital and minimum £1m revenue will be invested in the highway service during 2022/23. The money is in addition to £50m proposed investment in major projects, maintenance, and local improvements. The council also continues to transform its current Highways arrangements, with agreed changes to strengthen the council's control of highway management. This includes the transfer of the Asset Management, Risk and Liability team back into the council which is progressing well. Consultations have started with the staff involved and HR teams are working together to ensure a smooth transfer.
47. At the end of February, the UK faced 3 storms (Dudley, Eunice and Franklin) in the space of 7 days. All three affected Staffordshire, with Storm Franklin having the biggest impact. Staffordshire Highways Crews worked tirelessly over the week to respond to over 150 calls, including 82 fallen trees, as well as debris and localised flooding issues.

48. The financial position at Quarter 4 for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills is a forecast saving of £1.027m, compared to a saving of £1.228m in Quarter 3, with small forecast savings across the service. The forecast financial impact of COVID-19 for the directorate is £1.626m.

49. Corporate Services

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
Green	Green

50. Corporate Services is currently on track in terms of both Delivery and Finance in Quarter 4 and continues to provide vital support to the organisation in delivering on its priorities. Whilst the overall GREEN performance ratings reflect a great deal of activity that has taken place to progress its plans, like other service areas it continues to manage challenges regarding capacity impacting on progress.



51. In February both the council's new Strategic Plan, setting out the ambitions and priorities for the year ahead, and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) were approved at a meeting of Full Council. Work on developing the Corporate Delivery Plan for 2022/23 has now begun, which will include specific activities detailing how we will achieve the vision and priorities set.

52. Over a two-year period, the council aims to raise £17m through the sale of unused land and buildings to fund transformation of services and activity, in line with new Government regulation. To date the council has delivered c.£11.6m in year through the sale of 21 assets.

53. In addition, work on the council's property programme is progressing well, including the Lichfield Day Centre refurbishment which is due to be completed by the end of March. Service transition expected soon after in April 2022. Demolition work continues on Bilbrook House in South Staffordshire, with an expected completion of the end of April 2022. Furthermore, as part of the council's school's capital programme the expansion of Graham Balfour school has been completed and opened in January 2022, and both new primary schools in Uttoxeter and Fradley are on track to open in September 2022 as well as the school expansions at St Johns, Essington, and Princefields First, Penkridge.

54. In March the Judge's Chambers in County Buildings, Stafford became the new home of Stafford Registrar's Office where people will give notice of marriage, civil partnerships and to register births and deaths. This new venue will provide more spacious rooms for appointments and ceremonies. Last year the service hosted 4,000 weddings and registered

over 3,000 births and approximately 6,000 deaths across its various offices.

55. Digital inclusion remains a key priority and work is continuing to address those key barriers. More than 180 devices have now been donated as part of 'Donate IT' Digital Device Recycling Scheme and these are now being distributed to people who are at risk of digital exclusion in the county. Those that have benefitted from the scheme include South Staffordshire Jobs Club who have received three laptops to help people search and apply for jobs and Staffordshire Women's Aid who have received five devices to help victims of sexual and domestic abuse to access counselling and group sessions.

56. The 2022 Community Fund launched in April. It will focus on projects which develop health and wellbeing; support communities caring for and supporting each other and looking after the places where we live and encouraging community spirit, including supporting Jubilee celebrations. The fund will run and make payments throughout the financial year but will close to new applications on 31 October 2022.

57. Over the last quarter there has been significant progress around promoting the Staffordshire story and place brand. This has included developing its plan and priorities for 2022/23, as well as continued delivery of external promotional activity with partners. Specific activities include campaign materials to support the Inward Investment Campaign, including a new investment prospectus brochure, and the council's involvement in the Commonwealth Games. A virtual Ambassador event was held in January, focussing on a prosperous Staffordshire, attracting over 80 online attendees. Further promotional events are being planned, including a potential Staffordshire Day event to take place at the House of Commons on 26th April.

58. In February, a Local Government pensions benefit scheme, Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVC Wise) was launched to its members, with 68 applications received so far. This equates to an annual saving of £27,000, which is set to increase as more applications are received. Work also continues to deliver the council's internal People Strategy, including the development of a new careers' website which is expected to go live by late Summer. In addition, as we move towards 'living with COVID' work is taking place to support staff to work in a smart and flexible way.

59. Absence levels continue to rise and year on year we see absence levels worsen with long term absence at 8.23 days lost per employee (Feb 2022), compared to 7.30 at the same point last year. Short-term absence at 3.40 days lost per employee (Feb 2022) compared to 2.38 at the same point last year. Absences relating to diagnosed/suspected cases of COVID-19 account for 1.56 days lost per employee over this period an increase from last year at the same point at 1.1. However, it is worth

noting that pre COVID (Feb 2020) total absence levels were at 11.68 days lost per employee, therefore an underlying improvement from pre COVID. Outside of COVID related absence psychological disorders is the highest absence reason at 3.44 days lost, an increase of 19% from last year. However, 52% (2027) of employees have had no absence and 20% (777) have had less than 5 days absence.

60. In Corporate Services the financial position at Quarter 4 is a forecast saving of £0.652m, compared to a saving of £0.868m in Quarter 3. This is largely due to staffing vacancies and increased incomes. The forecast financial impact of COVID-19 for the directorate is £0.461m.

61. Legal Implications

There are no legal implications of note in relation to this report, which is for information and discussion, not for decision.

62. Resource and Value for Money Implications

Please see Finance Appendices.

63. Climate Change Implications

There are no direct climate change implications of note.

Link to Strategic Plan

64. Cross-cutting as the performance of the Corporate Delivery Plan represents the most significant activity that directly delivers against all areas of the strategic plan.

Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity

65. Detailed scrutiny of the council's activity in relation to the various areas discussed in this report takes place at the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as appropriate.

Community Impact

66. This report represents a strategic summary of the county council's performance against key indicators, finances, and delivery of priorities. The individual projects and programmes are reported separately where specific decisions are required, and community impact assessments are completed where appropriate. As such there is no community impact presented with this report.

List of Appendices:

- Appendix 1 - Performance Dashboard
- Appendix 2 - Finance Quarter 4 Summary
- Appendix 3 - Finance Quarter 4 Detailed Report
- Appendix 4 - Corporate Checklist
- Appendix 5 - Revenue Forecast Outturn 2021/22
- Appendix 6 - Capital Forecast Outturn 2021/22
- Appendix 7 - Financial Health Indicators 2021/22

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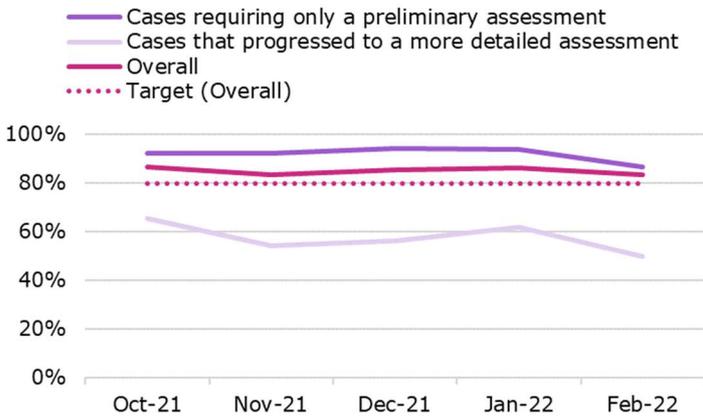
Report Author: Rachel Spain
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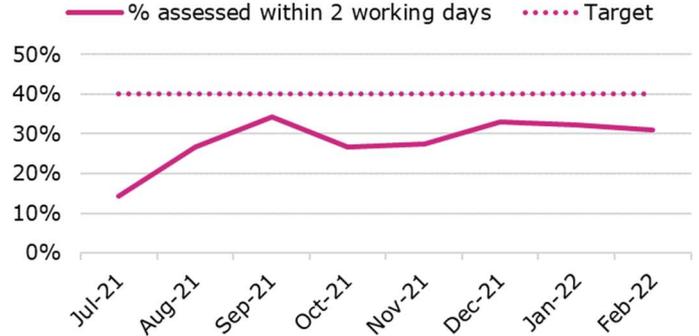
Health & Care Dashboard

Adult Social Care and Safeguarding

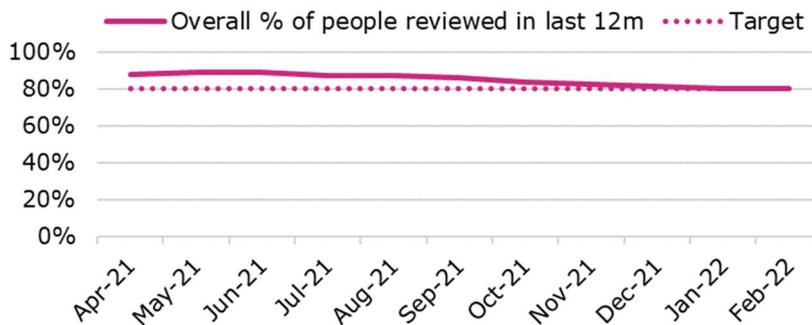
% of Care Act assessments of new clients completed in 28 days



% of safeguarding referrals assessed within 2 working days



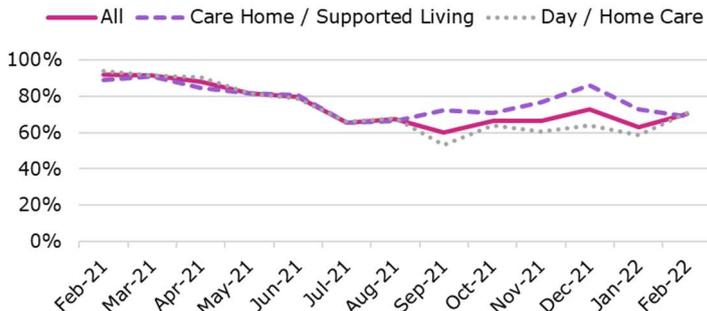
Overall % of people who have been receiving services for 12 months or over, who have had a review in the previous 12 months



Source: SCC

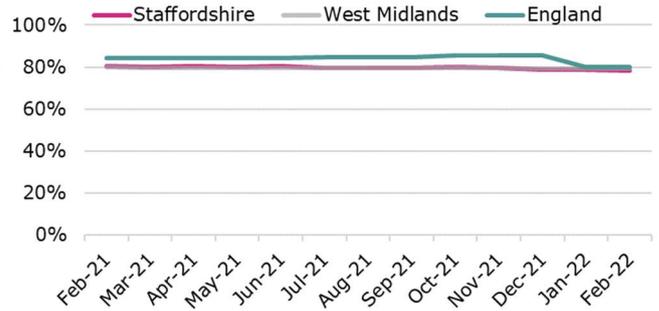
Care Commissioning

% of brokerage sourced within agreed timescale (by service type)



Source: SCC

% of care providers with CQC ratings of Good or Outstanding

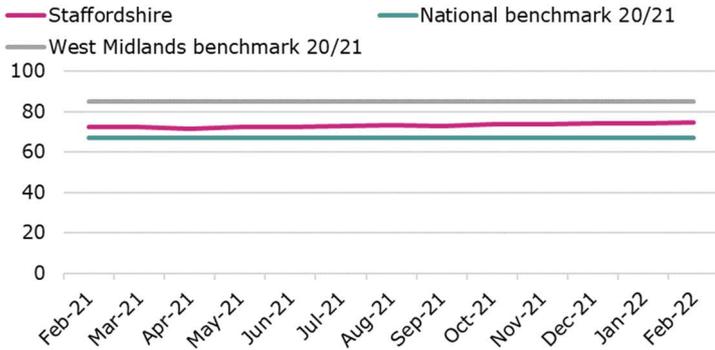


Source: SCC and Care Quality Commission

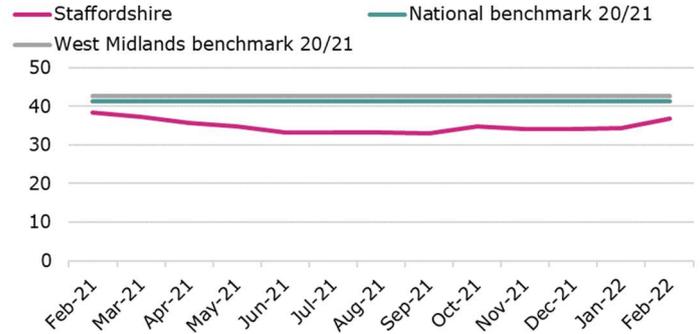
Families & Communities Dashboard

Safeguarding

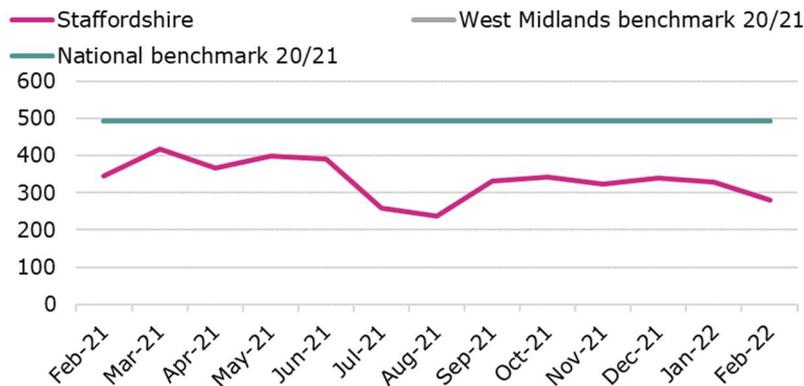
Rate of children in care (per 10,000 population)



Rate of children subject of a Child Protection Plan (per 10,000 population)



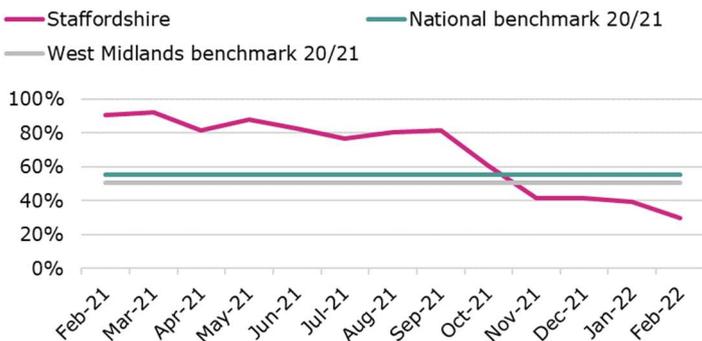
Rate of children referred, rolling 12 month average (per 10,000 population)



Source: SCC and Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT)

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

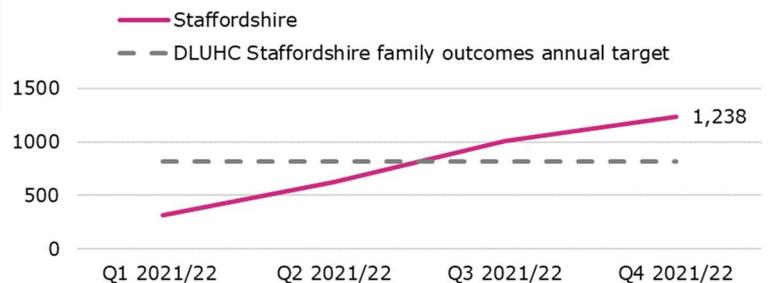
% of Education, Health and Care Plans issued in time, each month



Source: SCC and Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT)

Supporting Families Programme

Supporting Families Programme - Reported successful family outcomes in 2021/22

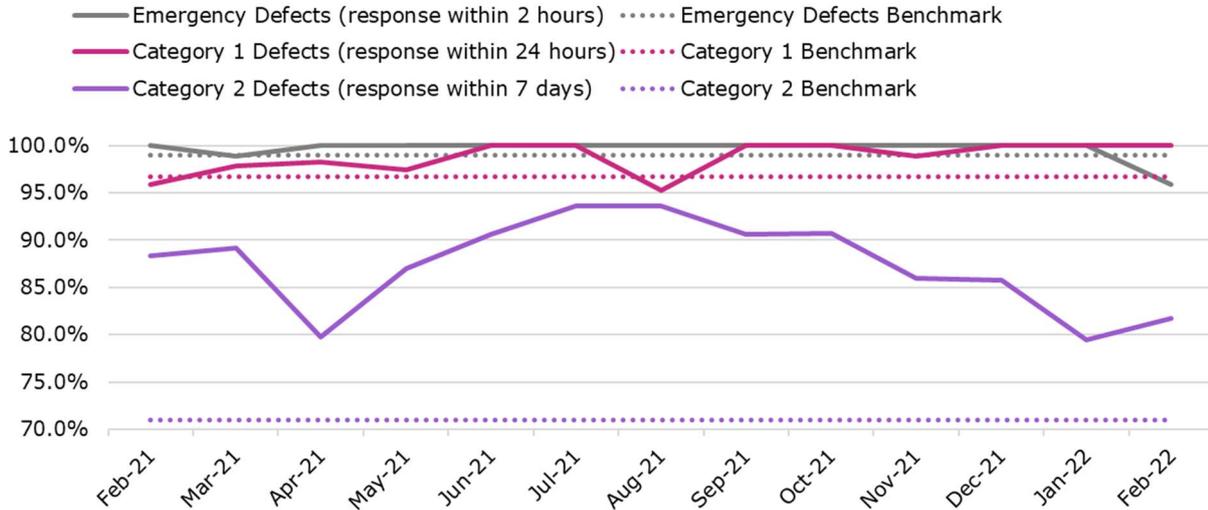


Source: SCC and Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities

Economy, Infrastructure & Skills Dashboard

Highways

% of Emergency, Category 1 and Category 2 defects repaired in time



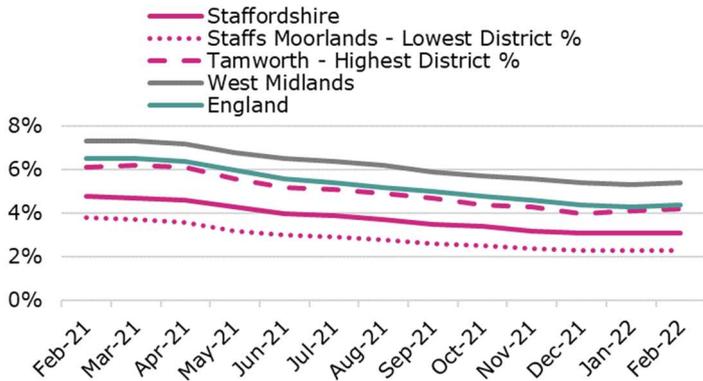
Total number of Category 3 (low-risk) safety defects identified



Source: Amey, Confirm. * Please note the above charts include all asset defects

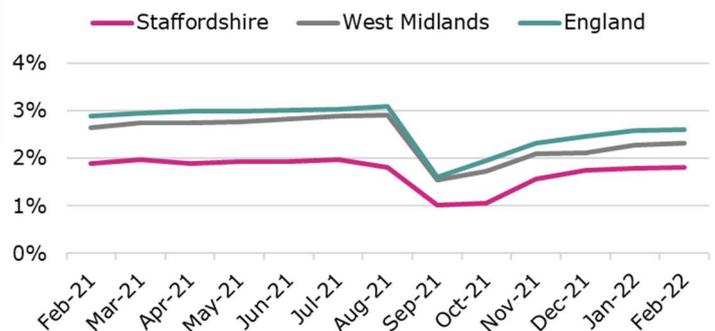
Employment and Skills

Claimant Count



Source: Office for National Statistics

% 16-17 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET)

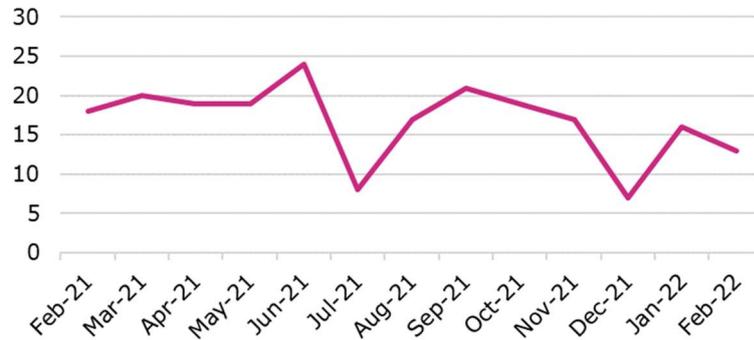


Source: National Client Caseload Information System

Economy, Infrastructure & Skills Dashboard

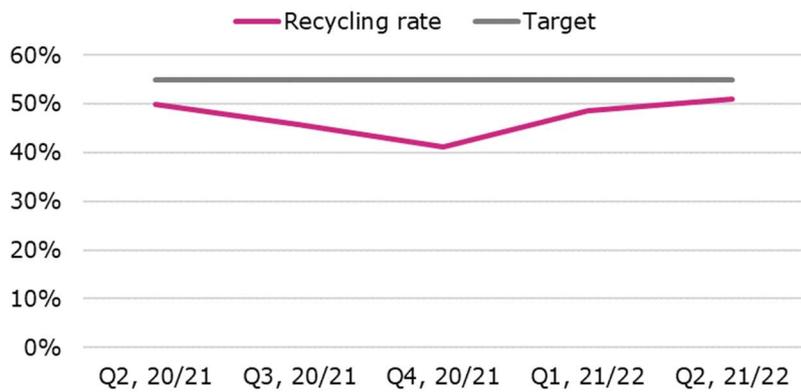
Business

Number of business start-ups assisted by the council



Climate Change and Waste

Percentage of waste recycled each Quarter



Source: SCC

Corporate Services Dashboard

Finance

Revenue outturn forecast variance compared to the overall budget (target no more than +/- 2%)

Quarter 1, 21/22	Quarter 2, 21/22	Quarter 3, 21/22	Quarter 4, 21/22
-1.5%	-0.4%	-0.7%	-0.8%

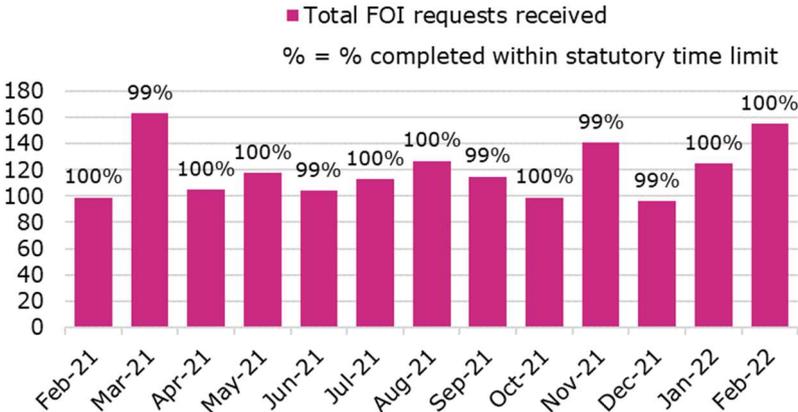
Staff Sickness Absence

Average payroll days lost per employee



Freedom of Information

Number of FOI requests and % completed within statutory time limit



Source: SCC

Latest Financial Summary

The following graphs summarise the financial performance of the council. Full details are contained in this report.

The graphs and charts are compiled using quarter 4 forecast information.

The latest revenue forecast outturn shows a saving of £4.4m (0.8%), which reduces to a saving of £2.5m (0.4%) if all potential carry forward requests are approved. Due to Covid 19 Central Government have issued additional grant payments to support the additional pressures of continuing to provide vital services while protecting the workforce and local residents.

There has been request for the use of £3.618m of the Exit and Transition Fund which was established in 2018/19.

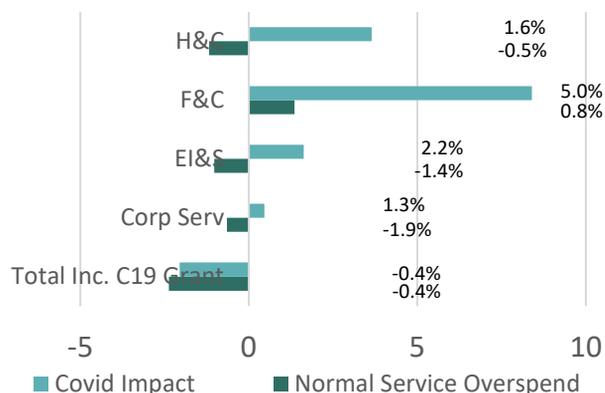
There is a forecast non-Covid saving of £10.5m on Care Commissioning Older People Placements budgets. The reduced number of placements has lead to this forecast – it does also mean that it is possible the forecast income may not be achieved and this will be monitored throughout the financial year.

Savings are categorised into confidence of delivery. There are £4.331m savings that are delivered as at quarter 4. There are £1.351m savings now undelivered, those savings are £1.204m of Adult Social Care Client Income savings and £0.147m for Accommodation Based Care savings.

The latest capital outturn projection is £112.7m, compared to the quarter 3 position of £122.0m, a decrease of 7.8%. This projection is a fully funded position. This decrease is mainly due to Basic Needs, SEND funding and other projects being rephased into 2022/23, offset by new S278 developer schemes being included into the programme. More details can be found in the report.

Within the national context, the retail price index is currently 7.8%, and the latest consumer price index is 4.9%. GDP is estimated to have increased by 0.8% in January 2022. Current unemployment figures show Staffordshire benefit claimant rate remains below that of the West Midlands and Great Britain.

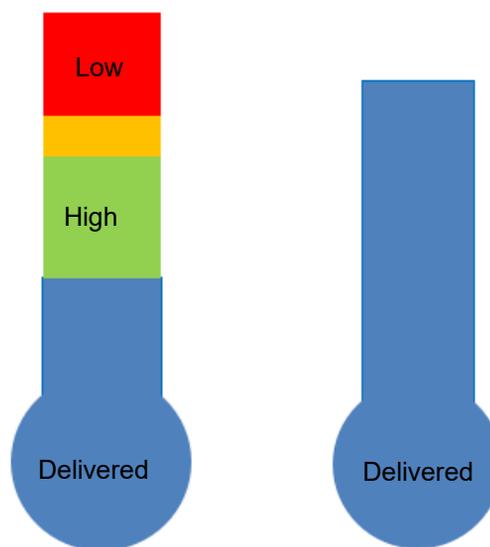
Revenue Budget Variance



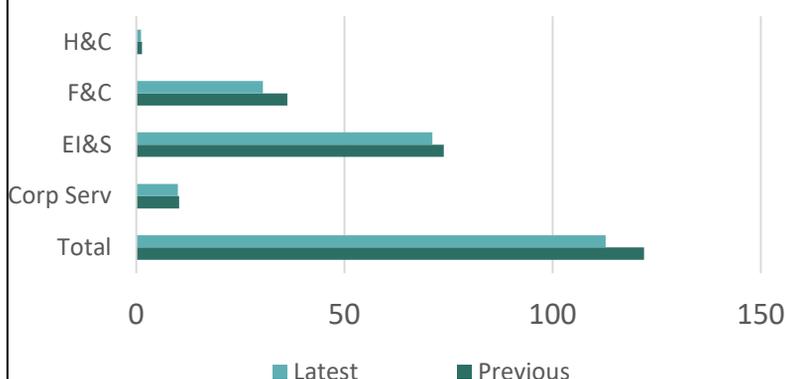
Savings Tracker – Target £5.682m

Quarter 3 - £5.682m

Quarter 4 - £4.331m



Capital Programme



Appendix 3 – Quarter 4 Finance Report

Introduction

Revenue Forecast

1. The latest revenue forecast outturn (as provided in appendix 5) shows a forecast saving of £4.417m (0.8%). There are a number of potential carry forward requests to be made in the Final Outturn report, if all these requests are approved this will reduce the saving to £2.503m (0.4%). This is compared to the previous forecast of a saving of £3.963m (0.7%) at quarter 3.
2. Since 2020/21, Covid 19 has been a global pandemic requiring a combined response from public sector services, which is also having a severe impact on the economy. In 2021/22 Central Government has issued general grant to local authorities, totalling £16.2m, in order to support the additional pressures of continuing to provide vital services during the pandemic while protecting both workforce and local residents.
3. The table below sets out the current forecast of additional costs relating to the pandemic, plus lost income and delayed savings caused by the crisis.

	£m
Additional Costs	2.988
Lost income	2.121
Delayed savings	9.046
Grant funding	(16.204)
Remaining Grant / (Shortfall)	(2.049)

All grants received by Staffordshire County Council in 2021/22 for Covid 19 related activities are listed below. The General Covid Grant can fund activity in all service areas, the remaining grants are specific and go directly to services. All grants allocated for Covid-related activities will be utilised in full, over the medium term, in order to fund the additional expenditure caused by the pandemic.

	£m
General Covid Grant Funding	16.204
Adult Social Care Lateral Flow Testing	7.896
Adult Social Care Infection Control	9.163
Clinically Extremely Vulnerable	1.477
Local Support Grant	2.613

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Practical Support Framework	1.298
Covid Winter Grant	2.039
Community Testing Grant	0.455
Workforce Recruitment & Retention	6.825
Vaccine Funding	0.359
ASC Omicron Support Fund	0.885
Contain Outbreak Management	4.182
Total	53.397

4. The following paragraphs consider the key financial issues in each of the council's portfolios.
5. **Health and Care** **Covid impact - £3.644m**
Normal service forecast – £1.176m saving
6. *Adults Social Care & Safeguarding* *Covid impact - £0.141m*
Normal service forecast – £0.746m saving
7. Overall, the service is forecast to save £0.846m. Covid related costs are forecast to be £0.141m.
8. There has been a significant number of vacancies in the Adults Learning Disability Team (ALDT) this year which have proven difficult to fill. This has led to a forecast saving of £0.679m. However, a review of the ratio of qualified to unqualified staff is being carried out which is expected to lead to higher costs in future. A Section 75 agreement covering both Mental Health North and South is in place and there is a small forecast overspend of £16,000 due to the inflationary increases being slightly higher than budgeted. The £0.154m MTFS saving for Mental Health North has been delivered in full.
9. Cabinet is requested to approve a carry forward of £31,000 for recruitment of Occupational Therapy resource to tackle the backlog of referrals for Occupational Therapy on the waiting list. Delays in recruitment mean that the team have been unable to recruit the level of resource required in 2021/22.
10. There is a forecast saving of £0.676m in the Learning Disability In-house Residential services due to staff vacancies in advance of a planned restructure.

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There is also a forecast saving of £0.210m for the Specialised Day Opportunity service due to some transport savings and some additional cross boundary income. A review of these services is taking place which may lead to changes to the way they operate and will have a financial impact in the future.

11. There is an overspend of £1.074m for care systems due to repaying all future years prudential borrowing. Other variances amount to a forecast saving of £0.405m.

12. *Care Commissioning* *Covid impact - £3.503m*
Normal service forecast – £0.330m saving

13. Overall the service is forecast to save £0.330m, and covid related costs are forecast to be £3.503m.
14. The Mental Health budget was increased this year in recognition of the growth in placements costs in 2020/21. It is now forecast to overspend by £0.417m which is an increase from the £84,000 forecast at quarter 3. The placement budget is now forecast to overspend by £0.468m, an increase from the £0.135m forecast at quarter 3 due to an increase in the number of nursing care placements. There is a forecast saving of £51,000 for the Mental Health contracts which is unchanged from the quarter 3 position.

15. The Learning Disability placement budget is now forecast to save £6.769m, an increase from the £5.667m reported at quarter 3. This movement is due to a reduction in the forecast for supported living of £0.663m since we have not experienced the growth in placements expected in the second half of the year and a reduction in the replacement residential care (respite care) forecast of £0.177m due to lower take up due to the pandemic. In addition, the council has saved £1.530m due to the NHS agreeing to meet the full cost of people with learning disabilities or autism discharged from specialist hospitals to community-based settings under the Transforming Care Partnership (TCP) during 2020/21. Partially offsetting these savings has been an increase in the forecast cost of residential care of £0.929m and a further increase in the cost of direct payments of £0.148m compared to quarter 3. Although there has been a slight reduction in the amount of health income, we are still seeing benefits of increases in income negotiated in recent years and will collect significantly more income than assumed in the budget.

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16. MTFs savings expected from the Community Offer Programme have taken longer than originally planned due to the impact of the pandemic. This means that some of the planned redundancy costs are likely to slip into the 2022/23 financial year which creates a forecast saving of £1.250m against the Health and Care redundancy budget in year. Cabinet have agreed to allocate £2m of the placement savings towards the costs of planned investment in the In-House services to minimise future borrowing costs for the council.
17. As part of the Transforming Care Partnership (TCP), the latest forecast is that the county council could incur costs this year of just of £2.6m. The council is close to agreeing a new cost allocation model with its health partners, resulting in a 50/50 cost share for people in this cohort.
18. The new Carers service went live in April 2021 following a delay caused by the pandemic. It is forecast that there will be a small saving of £17,000 this year. There is also a saving forecast on the Advocacy contract of £77,000 and the £0.150m contract MTFs saving has been delivered in full.
19. Following the resolution of a contract dispute on the Section 75 agreement with the Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (MPFT), there is now a small saving on the Reablement contract of £52,000. There is a small forecast overspend of £34,000 on the other contract elements of the Section 75 due to the inflationary increases being higher than budgeted.
20. There is a forecast saving of £98,000 for the Learning Disability and Mental Health Commissioning Team due to staff vacancies held during the year. Cabinet approval is sought to carry forward this saving into 2022/23 to fund some additional temporary commissioning capacity required to support the transformation programme across All Age Disabilities and Mental Health in 2022/23.
21. Prisoners related care activities are forecast to save £0.303m due to staffing savings and lower care costs.
22. The Older People's placements budget is now forecast to save £10.463m compared to the £9.493m saving that was reported at quarter 3.
23. Despite numbers increasing throughout the financial year there are still significantly fewer placements than budgeted. Additional placements have

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been assumed resulting in a revised forecast saving of £6.375m compared to the position of £6.761m reported at quarter 3. The additional £7m of additional funding provided to mitigate risks in year is not required given the reduced levels of activity resulting from the pandemic.

24. The reduced number of placements has resulted in income forecasts being lower than budgeted and the forecast increase in numbers over recent months hasn't materialised. This has increased the shortfall for independent residential and nursing placements overspend to £3.372m compared to a forecast of £2.897m at quarter 3.
25. The forecast saving on Older People's home care has increased to £1.521m compared to the position of £0.267m reported at quarter 3. This has arisen as the anticipated increase in commissioned hours in the later part of the financial year hasn't yet materialised.
26. The forecast saving on the Older People's Direct Payments budget has increased to £0.311m from the £0.232m forecast at quarter 3, reflecting the ongoing reduction of people in receipt of direct payments.
27. Covid 19 has meant that fewer people are using services than had been budgeted. This has resulted in a forecast saving of £0.537m on the Older Peoples Day Care budget.
28. The Older People's in-house residential placements budget is forecast to save £0.429m compared to £0.335m forecast at quarter 3, due to the number of service users being impacted by Covid 19.
29. The forecast saving for Older People's short stay respite has reduced to £46,000 compared to £0.246m reported at quarter 3.
30. Approval was sought from Cabinet in quarter 2 to increase the care risk reserve by £7m from the placement savings to mitigate against the risks facing the care provider market including increasing costs as a result of the pandemic and recruitment and retention issues. Additionally in quarter 2, approval was also sought from Cabinet to add £7m to the IT reserve to progress the directorates digital transformation journey.

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31. The Physical Disabilities Placements budgets forecast saving is £0.673m, compared to £1.120m at quarter 3. This is mainly due to an increase in the number of residential and nursing placements. The forecast saving on the home care budget has increased marginally from £0.415m at quarter 3 to £0.426m and there have also been slight increase on the forecast savings for direct payments from £42,000 to £72,000 and Supported Housing where the forecast saving is now £77,000, an increase from £53,000 at quarter 3. These savings are offset by forecast overspends totalling £0.239m which have reduced from £0.332m at quarter 3. Income forecast remain broadly in line with the budget.
32. Staffing savings of £0.435m are forecast across a number of areas including Care Commissioning, Quality Assurance, Brokerage and the Care Market Team as a result of vacancies or difficulties in recruitment as seen in many sectors.
33. Additional temporary capacity is required in 2022/23 to support initiatives including
 - Undertaking the national cost of care exercise,
 - co-commissioning and co-production across the health and social system
 - development of several strategies such as housing, disabilities and market shaping
34. Some of this work has been delayed because of the pandemic and other requirements as a result of upcoming adults' social care reform. Therefore, Cabinet approval is sought to carry forward £0.520m to meet these staffing requirements in addition to £0.235m to provide a workforce training fund to improve recruitment and retention in the provider market.
35. Other variances amount to a forecast saving of £1.506m.
36. The additional covid related costs of £3.644m consists of
 - £2.646m unachievable savings that have been reprofiled to future years
 - £0.549m additional staffing costs that have been incurred to support the ongoing response to Covid 19 and ensure continuity of services

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- Additional expenditure of £0.140m incurred to support the provider market such as providing a care home loan scheme
 - £0.310m other exceptional costs
37. The council has received confirmation that any unspent monies from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) can be carried forward into the 2022/23 financial year. However, there are still further conversations ongoing around the future of COMF and updates will be shared as soon as they are available.
38. The latest forecast commitments against the COMF grant for future years have been reported at £6.2m, meaning that £12m in uncommitted in 2022/23. The ambiguity of the email from the UK Health Security Agency regarding future discussions means that there is a risk that they may look to claw back funding at some point.
39. In addition to the funding agreed and submitted in the 2021/22 Staffordshire Better Care Fund Plan, an additional £19.250m of non-recurrent funding has been identified that could be used to improve and sustain health and care services. An amendment has been made to the Staffordshire BCF Plan to include this additional funding and associated expenditure, as summarised in the table below:

Expenditure by service	£
Support to Care Homes	£0.259m
Home First	£6.006m
Section 117 placements	£1.400m
Home Care	£4.500m
Discharge to Assess Beds	£0.710m
Learning Disability - Step up	£1.875m
Children's Services	£1.500m
Healthcare Tasks	£0.750m
Integrated community equipment	£0.750m
Crisis response and intervention - South East	£0.800m
Crisis response and intervention - South West	£0.700m
Total	£19.250m

40. This amendment had been:
- Agreed by the County Council and Clinical Commissioning Groups.

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- Approved by the Health and Well-being Board Chairs in line with the authority delegated from the Board to approve the 2021/22 Staffordshire BCF Plan.
 - Agreed by the West Midlands Better Care Fund manager.
41. The Council and Clinical Commissioning Groups are developing detailed plans for expenditure on each service, including the associated outcomes and governance arrangements. The BCF Section 75 Agreement will be updated to reflect this additional funding, and then approved and signed by the Council and Clinical Commissioning Groups.
42. The total amount of Health and Care client debt at the end of January is £27.068m which has increased slightly from the £26.853m reported at quarter 3. The amount of collectable debt is £14.629m.
43. **Families & Communities** **Covid impact - £8.400m**
Normal service forecast - £1.357m overspend
44. *Children's Services* *Covid impact - £7.590m*
Normal service forecast - £4.352m overspend
45. The forecast position is an overspend of £4.352m which is an £0.5m increase from the position reported at quarter 3 and reflects increased spending on agency social workers, continuing high level of placements in both residential and fostering settings and well as an allowance for a forecast increase in the bad debt provision of £0.2m.
46. Based on latest forecast, the placements spend this year is over budget by £2m. The currently level of demand remains a significant concern and could put at risk the delivery of planned MTFs savings. This pressure is mitigated in part by additional grant funding for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and staffing vacancies totalling £1m.
47. The Families and Communities transformation programme has now been finalised and the new design implemented from the end of October as planned. The redesign, which is informed by best practice, seeks to change both the practice and culture across the children's system and it has impacted upon just over 2,000 staff. It will enable a whole system approach, bringing together children's social care, SEND and Inclusion, the Place Based Approach and

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commissioning. It is essential for the delivery of revised practices and cultures that underpin the necessary MTFS savings and stabilisation of SEND.

48. The forecast additional redundancy cost is for £3.3m and will be funded from the Corporate Exit and Transition Fund.
49. *Education Services* *Covid impact - £0.571m*
Normal service forecast - £0.729m overspend
50. The forecast overspend is £0.729m a reduction of £0.3m from the quarter 3 position. This overspend is largely a result of additional SEND transport costs of £1.3m as previously reported, however this is offset partially by other budget savings in historical pension costs, and one off revenues by the settlement of an on-going insurance claim relating to one of our schools.
51. The existing underlying pressure on SEND transport has been addressed in the MTFS for next year, however there is a risk that recent rises in fuel costs, exasperated by the current Ukraine conflict, will lead to further additional pressures in 2022/23.
52. *SEND High Needs Block*
53. The High Needs Block is currently anticipated to overspend by £8.2m and reflects continuing growing demand for SEND support. This overspend will be charged against the DSG reserve which at the end of 2020/21 was already £2m in deficit. Staffordshire County Council is not alone in this difficult financial position, it is shared by the majority of Councils across the sector.
54. In 2022/23 the Government has provided for significant additional funding that will see Staffordshire's High Needs Block funding increase to £115m, from £101m in 2021/22. This is insufficient to close the gap and based on existing rises in demand and costs a further overspend is forecast next year.
55. It is anticipated that the SEND transformation programme will provide a more inclusive system that enables the necessary early support and intervention to manage demand within overall resources. However this will take time and will not generate the immediate savings required to address the current shortfall and further action must be taken to mitigate the existing overspend in this area.

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56. *Culture & Communities* *Covid impact - £0.128m*
Normal service forecast - £0.193m saving
57. This forecast saving is due to reduced transport costs and reduced costs associated with the purchase of new books within the Libraries service.
58. *Rural County* *Covid impact - £0.111m*
Normal service forecast - £0.111m saving
59. The forecast saving largely due to on off staffing vacancies of £0.3m offset by increased costs of £0.2m associated with Rights of Way and carpark repairs due to increased usage.
60. *Community Safety* *Covid impact – nil*
Normal service forecast - £0.120m saving
61. The forecast saving is due to additional income and service contract savings which have resulted from the impact of the pandemic and are likely to return to normal levels.
62. **Economy, Infrastructure & Skills** **Covid impact - £1.626m**
Normal service forecast - £1.027m saving
63. *Business & Enterprise* *Covid impact - nil*
Normal service forecast – £0.177m saving
64. The service is forecast to save £0.177m in year, this is a slightly reduced from the quarter 3 position. The main reason for this forecast saving is additional income in Planning Policy and Development Control. The service is now assuming a carry forward of £0.6m into 2022/23, which is a reduction from quarter 3 as more money has been spent on Staffordshire Means Back to Business schemes in year. This carry forward was approved by Cabinet in January and is due to Staffordshire’s successful Community Renewal Fund bid that allows the programme to be funded from grant rather than service budgets.
65. In 2020/21 an Emergency Business Grant fund of £0.5m was established to support Small and Medium sized Enterprises during the initial Covid restrictions. Approximately £0.390m of this has been spend to date on grants, PPE for businesses, Federation for Small Business payments and the start-up

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business loan scheme. There is £0.110m remaining of this initial allocation in reserves and it is proposed to spend this in March 2022 and 2022/23 on the following – the Get Started scheme after the Community Renewal Fund grant money has been spent, additional funding for the start-up business loan scheme, Business Enterprise Support start-up coaching and the Start up Strategy phase 3.

66. *Infrastructure & Highways* *Covid impact - £0.316m*
Normal service forecast – £0.215m overspend
67. The forecast has increased from a break-even position to a forecast overspend of £0.215m. There are various areas of forecast overspends including with Sustainable Development and Highways Maintenance, however these are being mitigated by savings within Community Infrastructure and the Network Management areas. The increase from quarter 3 includes an increase of £0.125m towards the bad debt provision along with £90,000 towards forecast costs for HS2 protestors in 2022/23. This forecast position includes transferring £0.590m of additional permit income to reserves as the forecast over-recovery for the year.
68. The forecast impact of Covid 19 is £0.316m which is largely a continued loss of income from on-street parking and bus enforcement in the Regulation and Governance area, and a small number of increased costs for Safe Operating Procedures such as PPE.
69. *Transport, Connectivity & Waste* *Covid impact - £1.276m*
Normal service forecast - £1.123m saving
70. The Transport and Connectivity area is forecast to save £0.224m, which includes savings in the operational Transport budgets and vacancies in the Transport Planning team. These are offset by making a provision of £0.2m towards a further years Local Transport Assessment Works. It should be noted that there are currently significant planned reductions in the commercial Staffordshire bus network and further service reductions may occur in Autumn 2022 if patronage levels do not return to pre-pandemic levels.
71. Additional Covid 19 costs to date include providing additional cleaning on home to school transport until the end of July 2021 and additional transport capacity to avoid full and standing buses at peak times.

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72. Within Sustainability and Waste, there is a forecast saving of £0.9m, which includes a saving of £0.920m on Climate Change which will be monitored over the next few weeks and look to make a formal carry forward request as part of the Financial Outturn Report. Although much of the Climate Change budget is committed, it is unlikely to be fully spent in year and this carry forward could be utilised on items in the Climate Action Plan in 2022/23.
73. This forecast position also includes a £0.6m provision for likely additional costs (shared 50/50 with Stoke-on-Trent City Council) for consultants working on the Hanford Incinerator project. It should be noted that waste budget are demand led and will need continuous close monitoring until the end of the year and into the new financial year to track tonnages and costs as social restrictions lift and any new normal are established.
74. The impact of Covid on the service is £1.276m, a reduction from quarter 3 which reflects the drop in the level of tonnages in more recent months going to the Energy from Waste sites, allowing some of the additional capacity tonnage to be sold again to third parties and generate income. There is still uncertainty around the impact of Covid 19 moving forwards in this service and as such a £0.5m provision has been made for potential Covid related costs in 2022/23.
75. *Skills* *Covid impact – £12,000*
Normal service forecast - £50,000 saving
76. The service is forecast to save £50,000 which is a small reduction from quarter 3. The forecast saving is due to savings on the Entrust contract and a lack of activity in Community Learning groups. Some of these forecast savings are being used to fund the first-year software costs of a new Brokerage team.
77. *EI&S Business Support* *Covid impact - £22,000*
Normal service forecast - £0.108m overspend
78. The forecast overspend of £0.108m includes the balance of the Health and Safety Executive fine received by Staffordshire County Council for its role in the Isabel Trail incident. We will review the EI&S outturn in accordance with normal monitoring arrangements and make any adjustments, if necessary, as part of the final outturn.

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79. **Corporate Services** **Covid impact - £0.461m**
Normal service forecast - £0.652m saving
80. The service is forecast to save £0.803m, this is a minimal change from the forecast saving reported at quarter 3. This includes a forecast saving of £0.214m within Assets primarily due to staff vacancies. There are also staff vacancies within the Business Support and Strategy areas and forecast one off additional income in Registrars of £0.350m due to the higher number of weddings being booked as restrictions are being lifted.
81. This forecast includes the service making a £0.250m provision towards the potential future costs of the Electronic Document and Records Management project and a further provision of £0.1m towards the net to gross project and new recruitment and lone worker systems. There is also a £0.150m provision for potential Cybersecurity costs that may be incurred in 2022/23.
82. The Covid impact of £0.461m includes the costs of the temporary mortuary facilities and the closure of the first annual leave purchase scheme window.
83. **Centrally Controlled**
84. There is a forecast saving of £1m within Pooled Buildings which relates to loss of buildings, reduced usage of energy and electricity in unoccupied buildings and one-off income received in year. This is offset by a forecast overspend of £0.130m on Insurances services as the premium has increased.
85. **Capital Forecast**
86. Appendix 6 compares the latest capital forecast outturn of £112.7m, a decrease from the quarter 3 position of £122.0m. The key reasons for this decrease of £9.3m are set out in the following paragraphs.
87. **Health and Care** **Forecast spend £1.139m**
88. There has been a decrease of £0.301m due to the finalisation of the Care Director V6 upgrade, and costs did not reach levels previously forecast.

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89. **Families and Communities** **Forecast spend £30.461m**
90. *Maintained Schools* *Forecast Spend £29.289m*
91. There has been a reduction of £5.824m in forecast spend since the quarter 3 report. This is due to £3.7m of Basic Needs funding being rephased into 2022/23, £0.256m of other refinements across smaller projects as well as £2m of SEND funding being rephased into next year.
92. **Economy, Infrastructure and Skills** **Forecast spend £71.110m**
93. *Economic Planning & Future Prosperity* *Forecast spend £7.562m*
94. There has been a reduction of £1.541m in forecast spend since the quarter 3 report. This is due to rephasing of contingency for the A50 project to 2022/23 of £0.706m, slippage on i54 Western Extension of £0.321m and revision of the expected developer payments for Pye Green of £0.3m, along with other smaller rephasing and refinement of budgets.
95. *Highways Schemes* *Forecast spend £62.596m*
96. There has been a decrease of £1.091m in forecast spend since the quarter 3 report. There has been rephasing of £1.295m into 2022/23 for the Stafford Western Access Route project as it nears completion, as well as rephasing of Integrated Transport Budgets of £0.414m and Bridge Maintenance of £82,000. There has been an increase of £0.536m on developer schemes being introduced into the programme, as well as other budget refinements.
97. **Property, Finance and Resources & ICT** **Forecast spend £10.014m**
98. There has been a reduction of £0.342m since the quarter 3 report, which is predominantly as a result of the Wireless Refresh project and delays in obtaining equipment rephasing the budget by £0.150m and delays in Core Switch Replacement project of £0.245m, also rephased to 2022/23.
99. **Financial Health**
100. Appendix 7 provides a forecast outturn performance against the key Financial Health Indicators approved as part of the 2021/22 budget setting process.

Appendix 3 – Quarter 4 Finance Report

101. There have been 98.0% of invoices paid within 30 days of receiving them at the end of February, exceeding the financial health indicator target. This position also reflects early payments to suppliers to help them with cashflow during the pandemic.
102. The estimated level of outstanding sundry debt over 6 months old is £19.994m, this is over the target of £14.7m by £5.294m. This is a decrease of £2.077m since the quarter 3 report. The debt recovery process involves chasing by a range of methods with the eventual escalation to the external collection agent or to Legal for the possibility of a court decision to recover the debt.
103. The level of CCG health debt over 6 months old is £1.797m below the target figure. This is a decrease of £2.776m since the quarter 3 report.
104. Client debt now stands at £10.254m and could potentially increase as a consequence of the pandemic. A working group has been established to look at why clients are not paying debts and to implement ways to avoid clients getting into debt in the first instance, this includes an initiative to encourage and assist clients with setting up direct debit instructions.

Debtor Type	2021/22 Target	31/12/2021	31/03/2022 Est	Increase / (Decrease)
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Health Bodies & CCGs	3.900	4.879	2.103	(2.776)
Other Govt. and Public Bodies	2.000	3.217	2.840	(0.377)
Other General Debtors (Individuals & Commercial)	4.700	4.388	4.797	0.409
Health & Care Client Debt	4.100	9.587	10.254	0.667
TOTAL	14.700	22.071	19.994	2.077

Appendix 4 – Corporate Checklist

Equalities implications:

Through the delivery of county council business plans, service delivery is increasingly reflecting the diverse needs of our various communities.

Legal implications:

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Resource and Value for money implications:

The resource and Value for money implications are set out in the report.

Risk implications:

The risk implications concern the robustness of the forecast outturn which may change owing to pressures on services with a consequent effect on county council functions being able to keep within budgets and a potential call on balances.

Climate Change implications:

Staffordshire's communities are places where people and organisations proactively tackle climate change, gaining financial benefit and reducing carbon emissions' is one of the county council's priority outcomes. Through the monitoring and management of this outcome; climate change and carbon emissions are being addressed in an active manner.

Health Impact Assessment and Community Impact Assessment screening:

Not required for this report.

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Revenue Forecast Outturn 2021/22

	Revised Budget Qtr 4 £m	Forecast Outturn £m	Covid Impact	Normal Service Overspend / (Savings)	Total Variation £m
Health and Care					
Public Health & Prevention	0.263	0.263	0.000	0.000	0.000
Adult Social Care & Safeguarding	41.095	40.249	0.141	(0.846)	(0.705)
Care Commissioning	185.096	184.766	3.503	(0.330)	3.173
Specific Grant Allocation (Public Health)	(0.263)	(0.263)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Exit and Transition Fund	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Health and Care Total	226.191	225.015	3.644	(1.176)	2.468
Families and Communities					
Children's Services	119.697	124.049	7.590	4.352	11.942
Children's Public Health	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Education Services	30.584	31.313	0.571	0.729	1.300
Culture and Communities	5.438	5.245	0.128	(0.193)	(0.065)
Rural	2.356	2.245	0.111	(0.111)	0.000
Community Safety	9.257	9.137	0.000	(0.120)	(0.120)
Specific Grant Allocation (Public Health)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Exit and Transition Fund	0.000	(3.300)	0.000	(3.300)	(3.300)
Families and Communities Total	167.332	168.689	8.400	1.357	9.757
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills					
Business & Enterprise	2.194	2.017	0.000	(0.177)	(0.177)
Infrastructure & Highways	29.675	29.890	0.316	0.215	0.531
Transport, Connectivity & Waste	39.880	38.757	1.276	(1.123)	0.153
Skills	2.435	2.385	0.012	(0.050)	(0.038)
EI&S Business Support	1.097	1.205	0.022	0.108	0.130
Specific Grant Allocation (Public Health)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Covid related capital project costs	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Exit and Transition Fund	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Total	75.281	74.254	1.626	(1.027)	0.599
Corporate Services					
Corporate Services	34.457	34.123	0.461	(0.334)	0.127
Specific Grant Allocation (Public Health)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Exit and Transition Fund	0.000	(0.318)	0.000	(0.318)	(0.318)
Corporate Services Total	34.457	33.805	0.461	(0.652)	(0.191)
Traded Services	(0.761)	(0.761)	0.000	0.000	0.000
TOTAL PORTFOLIO BUDGETS	502.500	501.002	14.131	(1.498)	12.633
Centrally Controlled Items					
Interest on Balances & Debt Charges	34.669	34.669	0.000	0.000	0.000
Pooled Buildings and Insurances	27.083	26.213	0.024	(0.870)	(0.846)
Investment Fund	0.798	0.798	0.000	0.000	0.000
Covid 19 Grant	0.000	0.000	(16.204)	0.000	(16.204)
TOTAL FORECAST (SAVING)/OVERSPEND	565.050	562.682	(2.049)	(2.368)	(4.417)

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2021/22

	3rd Quarter Budget	Enhancements to Programme	4th Quarter Budget
	£m	£m	£m
Health and Care			
Care and Independence	1.440	(0.301)	1.139
Health and Care Total	1.440	(0.301)	1.139
Families and Communities			
Maintained Schools	35.113	(5.824)	29.289
Rural County (Countryside)	0.616	(0.033)	0.583
Vulnerable Children's Projects	0.222	0.009	0.231
Tourism and Culture	0.358	0.000	0.358
Families and Communities Total	36.309	(5.848)	30.461
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills			
Economic Planning & Future Prosperity	9.103	(1.541)	7.562
Highways Schemes	63.687	(1.091)	62.596
Connectivity	0.680	0.000	0.680
Waste & Sustainability Projects	0.379	(0.107)	0.272
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Total	73.849	(2.739)	71.110
Trading Services - County Fleet Care	0.457	0.053	0.510
Finance, Resources & ICT	0.727	(0.395)	0.332
Property	9.172	0.000	9.172
Total	121.954	(9.230)	112.724

Financial Health Indicators 2021/22

Appendix 7

Indicator		Current Performance
<p><u>Debtors</u> Level of outstanding general debtors more than 6 months old does not exceed £14.7m (Current Performance – £20.0m)</p>		
<p><u>Payments to suppliers</u> At least 90% of invoices have been paid within 30 days of us receiving them during the last quarter (Current Performance – 98.0%) This reflects early payments to suppliers to help them with cashflow during the pandemic.</p>		
<p><u>Monitoring</u> Quarterly financial monitoring reports have been issued to Cabinet during the last 12 months</p> <p>The council's most recent revenue outturn forecast did not vary by more than +/-2% when compared to the overall revenue budget</p> <p>Quarterly monitoring reports of progress against MTFS savings have been produced for the Senior Leadership Team during the last 12 months</p>		  
 Indicator not met	 Indicator not met by small margin	 Indicator met