

Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 19 October 2022

Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 2, 2022/23



Cllr Alan White, Leader of the Council said,

“Creating the right conditions for businesses and our economy to grow and thrive remains a priority for the county council while managing the inflationary pressures we currently face.

“We continue to do what is necessary to support those who need us most, however, increasing costs across the board along with the rising demand of social care for adults and children together with huge inflationary costs continues to put pressures on finances.

“Demand for adult social care assessments and safeguarding remains high and we continue to prioritise individuals at the highest risk. Recruitment to the service is taking place, however national recruitment and retention difficulties remains a key issue.

“Work to transform our children’s services is ongoing and we continue to face pressures including the rising cost, number and complexity of Child Protection & Children in Care. The Holiday Activity and Food programme ran through the summer supporting families by providing almost 47,000 places for children and young people. This quarter we also saw the opening of two new schools, Bramshall Meadows First School in Uttoxeter and Fradley Park Primary in Lichfield.

“The Staffordshire Warmer Homes scheme continues to provide significant benefits to some of our most vulnerable residents, especially given the rising price of energy. Up to August 2022, 613 households had benefitted from 762 home installations, while over 2,300 people had received wrap around services.

“We know that residents across the county remain worried about the rise in the cost of living. To date approximately 52,000 people (including children, families and pensioners) have benefitted from £5.5 million worth of help over the summer through the Household Support Fund. We also continue to direct people to support on things like managing debt, paying bills, food and essentials, staying warm and helping others.

“Staffordshire businesses are also under pressure from rising costs. So we continue to support our local economy through the Staffordshire Means Back to Business programme, which has already supported hundreds of local companies and the creation of 400 new apprenticeships.

“Despite the inflationary 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.”




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.

“Good progress has been made across the organisation during the quarter, however increasing costs and inflationary pressures across the organisation are having a significant impact. In addition, workforce capacity and recruitment, and demand challenges remain, particularly within Health and Care and Children and Families.

“The latest revenue forecast outturn shows a forecast overspend of £10.908m (1.9%), prior to additional funding for inflationary pressures being taken into account. Once this one-off funding is included and an allocation from the Inflation Reserve is assumed, the overspend reduces to £6.408m (1.1%). This is compared to an overspend of £3.643m reported at Quarter 1.

“Like many local authorities, we still face financial challenges, 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 tax-payers 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.



Local Members Interest
N/A

Cabinet – Wednesday 19 October 2022

Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 2, 2022/23

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.

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 2 Summary

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

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

Key highlights

- Two new schools opened in September; Bramshall Meadows First School and Fradley Park Primary with pupils now attending.
- Highways transformation on track and delivering, whilst maintaining business continuity.
- Holiday Activity Fund programme of activities completed with positive feedback received.
- Warmer Homes First Time Central Heating scheme has completed and met its target, despite challenges.
- 139 Community Champions recruited in Burton and Newcastle to date, with plans to expand, as well as 16 dedicated Ukraine Champions.
- More than 8,000 children took part in this year's Summer Reading Challenge.
- Start-Up Hubs established across all 16 Staffordshire County Council libraries during the summer.

Key challenges

- Inflationary pressures across the organisation, with work underway to mitigate risks on future planned activity.
- Substantial risk that Adult Social Care Reform is unaffordable and require significant resources to implement. Recruitment of key roles now underway.
- Demand for adult social care assessments and safeguarding remains high. Work continuing to prioritise individuals at the highest risk.
- Continued pressures across Children's services, including the rising cost, number and complexity of Child Protection & Children in Care, as well as increased demand for Education, Health and Care Plans. New programmes of work established to support post transformation activity.
- Development of a solution to waste disposal arrangements in the north of the county post 2025.
- Workforce capacity and recruitment challenges remain across the organisation.

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

1. Summary

This report provides an update on Quarter 2 activities for each service area: Health and Care; Children and Families; Economy, Infrastructure and Skills; and Corporate Services.

Significant progress has been made across the organisation during Quarter 2, however inflationary pressures across the organisation continue to have an impact on delivery. In addition, workforce capacity and recruitment, and demand challenges remain, particularly within Health and Care and Children and Families. There also continues to be areas of financial risk in Adult Social Care and Children and Families, with further details included within this report and its appendices.

The latest revenue forecast outturn shows a forecast overspend of £10.908m (1.9%), prior to additional funding for inflationary pressures being taken into account. Once this one-off funding is included and an allocation from the Inflation Reserve is assumed, the overspend reduces to £6.408m (1.1%). This is compared to an overspend of £3.643m reported at Quarter 1.

2. Health and Care

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
AMBER	GREEN

3. Progress has been made during Quarter 2 to deliver the Health and Care elements of the Corporate Delivery Plan; however, there are ongoing challenges impacting on this, including rising adult social care demand, combined with recruitment and staff retention issues. Due to these challenges, alongside the implementation of significant national Adult Social Care Reform, the overall Delivery rating for Health and Care is Amber. The Finance rating is Green.



4. Adult Social Care (ASC) Reform, the Government's plan to implement the fair cost of care and the lifetime cap on care costs, remains a key risk for the council. Like all other local authorities, significant resource will be required to implement the necessary changes by April 2023 and there is a high risk that the cost of these national reforms will exceed funding available. Recruitment has now commenced to support the implementation, however national recruitment and retention difficulties remains a key issue.

5. Demand for adult social care assessments and safeguarding remains high, with the council continuing to prioritise individuals at the highest

risk. Additional permanent and temporary capacity has also been recruited to the safeguarding team to support with this work. In the context of this high demand, performance is below target for those service users receiving a 12-month review (78% in August 2022 against a target of 80%), with resource being diverted to deal with the level of demand. An action plan is in place to improve performance.

6. In addition, Care in the home continues to experience rising demand, combined with ongoing recruitment and retention issues faced by providers. However, to help address this a tender is out to increase market capacity in areas of high demand and recruitment has commenced for the enhanced home care service, which was approved at Cabinet in July 2022, with a further £2m agreed to be invested. This service will work flexibly, offering additional home care capacity to meet demand when necessary, and reablement for some people to increase their independence. Brokerage referrals (for helping individuals to arrange care) have also recorded a new high in Quarter 2 with 1,050 referrals in August 2022.
7. During Quarter 2, the council has been pursuing options for further use of digital and assistive technology. The Integrated Commissioning Service for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent has been successful in its Year 1 bid application for up to £600,000 of funding to implement Digital Social Care Records management and Falls Detection technology in care settings. There is also a Three-Year application which has been submitted, which the service is awaiting the outcome of. This represents an exciting opportunity to implement digital solutions and realise the associated efficiencies within the Staffordshire Care Market.
8. As part of the Warmer Homes scheme, up to August 2022, 613 households had benefitted from 762 home installations, such as first-time gas central heating, air source heat pumps, solar panels 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 including replacement boilers. Despite experiencing ongoing national supply chain issues, with high demand and material shortages impacting on the programme, Staffordshire met its target for the First Time Central Heating Installations scheme which ended in August 2022.
9. Households across all districts have benefited from the Warmer Homes scheme, with the highest take-up of installations in Stafford (143), East Staffordshire (119), Tamworth (118), and Cannock Chase (110). Cannock Chase and East Staffordshire are also the districts that have had the highest level of take-up of wrap around services, alongside South Staffordshire. The procurement process is now underway for the Sustainable Warmth Competition (SWC) which is the focus in 2022/23. This will enable the council to continue helping low-income households

to upgrade energy inefficient homes through the installation of insulation measures and replacement heating systems.

10. As part of the Supportive Communities programme, there are now 139 Community Champions in Burton and Newcastle, with plans to expand to Uttoxeter and Tamworth. In addition, there are also 16 dedicated Ukraine Champions to support families that have come to Staffordshire. A pilot project in Staffordshire Moorlands which links Supportive Communities to an approach that focuses on individuals' strengths and what they can do has also progressed well during Quarter 2. The pilot aims to increase accessibility to community resources for adult social care practitioners.

11. The Covid vaccination programme remains strong in Staffordshire with 87% of over-12s vaccinated with the first dose and 84% with the second dose, as of 26th September. Work is ongoing to identify specific areas and communities with lower uptake to encourage residents to come forward for a vaccination. Robust system-wide plans are also in place for the seasonal flu vaccination and the Covid booster rollout over the coming months.

12. In terms of Public Health and Prevention, new cases of monkeypox also continue to slow nationally and numbers remain very low in Staffordshire. Systems are in place for provision of pre- and post-exposure vaccination, where needed.

13. From a Finance perspective, Health and Care is forecast to have a breakeven position at Quarter 2, compared to a breakeven position at Quarter 1. 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.

14. Children and Families

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
AMBER	RED

15. Progress has been made across the Children and Families service area in Quarter 2. The Amber Delivery rating reflects much work that has taken place during the quarter, balanced with managing challenges in relation to increasing demand, workforce capacity and recruitment issues, as well as market availability of children in care placements. The Red Finance rating also reflects significant cost pressures impacted by these issues, as well as rising demand for SEND support.



16. Staffordshire continues to experience pressures relating to the increasing cost, number and complexity of Child Protection and Children in Care, as well as challenges associated with the embedding of a large-scale Children's Transformation. In response to this, several new programmes of work have been established, which will be overseen by a Programme Board, focussing on children's workforce, ways of working, development of a communications strategy and Children in Care planning. In addition, detailed progress against its plans will be reported back to Cabinet during the next quarter.
17. At the 31st August 2022, there were 1,331 children in care in Staffordshire, which represents an increase compared to the Quarter 1 position (1,315). The rate is 78 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). There has also been a continued increase in the number of children subject of a Child Protection Plan, with 725 children subject of a plan in August 2022 (a rate of 42.3 compared with 41.4 nationally and 42.6 regionally).
18. The number of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) issued in time (within 20 weeks) in Staffordshire remains low, with some improvement reported in quarter. In August 2022, 41% of EHCPs were issued in time, compared to the most recent national benchmark of 58% (from 2021/22). The overall 12-month position is at 46%. Although there are seven new key workers in post, demand for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) support continues to rise, with a notable increase in those with reported Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs.
19. In response to these challenges, work is ongoing to improve outcomes for children & young people, through the delivery of the council's SEND Strategy and Accelerated Progress Plan (APP). Much work has been underway to progress activities within the APP, which were reviewed by OFSTED at the end of September. The council has also secured additional temporary Educational Psychologist capacity to improve the timeliness of issuing EHCPs, as well as revising its Quality Assurance processes and checks to further improve the quality of these plans. The formal virtual launch of the SEND Countywide Review of Specialist Provision Project is also scheduled to take place with early engagement of education settings, parents, carers and children and young people from October.
20. As of Quarter 1 (latest data available), Staffordshire achieved successful outcomes for 419 families through the Building Resilient Families and Communities Programme since April 2022, which accounts for 53% of the annual target. From October 2022 there are new criteria to identify eligible families with an expanded range of needs who can be included in the programme. Work is taking place to produce additional information requested by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

to demonstrate how the programme is performing locally to contribute to the decision on whether Staffordshire maintains its Earned Autonomy status. A decision is due in January 2023.

21. To date approximately 52,000 people (including children, families and pensioners) have benefitted from £5.5m worth of help this summer through the Household Support Fund allocation given to Staffordshire. This latest allocation from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) was distributed to households most in need of support to put towards the cost of food, energy, and water. The council has provided support to 27,000 children and young people entitled to free school meals, 22,000 pensioners benefitting from Local Council Tax Reduction, 650 care leavers and 260 families accessing support from Children's Services, and around 2,000 financial vulnerable households have had support with energy bills. Having recently received confirmation that the Household Support Fund has been extended to March 2023, with an allocation of £11.013m for 2022/23, plans are being developed to ensure those most in need will benefit from financial assistance.

22. The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme ran over the summer holidays and offered children free activities and a healthy meal on site to help with the cost of food over the holidays. There were almost 47,000 places available and as of the end of September the council had received returns from 34 providers, showing a 65% attendance rate (30,551 places taken from an offer of 46,783 places). This included 2,769 primary children and 905 secondary children, of which 625 were children with SEND and 215 were either from the Ukraine, in the care of the authority, a young carer or living in a hostel. The total number who benefitted from the programme will be reported in Quarter 3.

23. As part of the 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme, the council and its partners continue to work hard to ensure everything is in place to support refugees from Ukraine when they are here. As of 13th September, there were 405 Staffordshire sponsors who had agreed to accommodate a total of 986 Ukrainian refugees. Of this number, 672 have now arrived in Staffordshire. Some guests are now approaching six months since their arrival, and the council is working with district and borough councils on next steps for these guests – either to remain with sponsors or transition to a more independent life in the local community. The council and its partners are also pressing the Government for further information about how it will operate for the rest of the year, to inform a longer-term approach to the programme.

24. Two new schools were opened in Staffordshire in September 2022, with pupils now attending. The schools are Bramshall Meadows First School in Uttoxeter and Fradley Park Primary School in Lichfield. Work has also begun onsite for the construction of a new primary school at Deanslade in Lichfield for opening in September 2023.

25. In terms of the financial position at Quarter 2 for Children & Families, taking into account a one-off funding allocation, there is a forecast overspend of £5.8m, compared to an overspend of £3.643m at Quarter 1. This is largely due to higher than forecast placements of children in the authority's care and the service is taking mitigating actions to address these pressures as far as possible.

26. Economy, Infrastructure and Skills

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
AMBER	GREEN

27. Economy, Infrastructure and Skills is currently on track in terms of Finance in Quarter 2, however like other service areas the Amber Delivery rating reflects challenges faced across several service areas, particularly in relation to inflationary pressures impacting on current progress and representing a potential risk to future planned projects.



28. Inflationary pressures are particularly being experienced in terms of Highways and Transport. The council is continuing to work with suppliers to ensure visibility of information to understand and mitigate inflationary risk on planned projects and operations.

29. The future delivery model for Highways across Staffordshire from 2024 was agreed in principle at Cabinet on 20th July. It is hoped the new operating model (Hybrid Mixed Economy) will support the council's vision to deliver an excellent customer experience and improve the quality of Staffordshire's roads.

30. Work to deliver the council's extra in year £15m investment programme in the highway service is on track, including a range of pilots and 8 new targeted structural maintenance schemes with the first one (Station Road in Rolleston-on-Dove) starting on site in September. The schemes are all part of the council's investment in gateways to major towns in the county and are due to take place throughout the next year. The Highways Transformation Programme is also on track and delivering, whilst maintaining business continuity.

31. 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. As part of this 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 August 2022, 409 apprentices have been approved. Almost 90

apprentices from across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent were also recognised at the seventh Staffordshire Apprenticeship Graduation Ceremony, attended by just under 400 people, at the Staffordshire County Showground at the end of June.

32.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 to be extremely popular with 256 expressions of interest received by the end of August 2022, of which 66 applications have been approved. A new 'Step Up' programme is due to start in October for young businesses of 2 to 5 years, to support them with consultancy services worth up to £1,000.

33.The council's Ignite Programme was launched in 2021; it is a programme of free advice, workshops, mentoring and support for post-16 further education students looking to set up their own business in Staffordshire. By the end of June 2022, targets for the 2021/22 academic year had been exceeded with around 5,500 students receiving lesson plans; 480 registered on the online learning platform; and 282 registered for the face-to-face intensive 5-day course.

34.The Shire Hall Business Centre in Stafford's Market Square opened in July and became operational from October. A total of £1.6m was allocated to the project from the national Getting Building Fund, in addition both the council and Stafford Borough Council have also invested in the centre. Bringing part of the Shire Hall back into productive use will help revitalise Stafford town centre by bringing in new businesses and will form part of the wider long-term regeneration of the Shire Hall.

35.In terms of key Transport updates, the council has recently been awarded funds to help with the production of a new Local Transport Plan. This will set out the council's proposals for transport provision in the county, including walking, cycling, public transport, car-based travel, and freight, together with the management and maintenance of local roads and footways. There was also a huge effort to ensure home to school transport arrangements were delivered ahead of the start of the school term in September.

36.A national programme to boost adult numeracy skills leading to better job prospects and improved day-to-day living will launch in Staffordshire this autumn. The council has been allocated £4.2m by the Government as part of the £570m Multiply scheme. It is a three-year fully funded programme, giving people the opportunity to learn when and where they want. It will be accessed through a new digital numeracy platform and local courses.

37.Over the last quarter Project Gigabit has continued, which is the £123m

Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) investment to enable premises that are not commercially viable to get 1,000Mbs connectivity. National procurement delays have impacted on delivery in Staffordshire during Quarter 2, however other solutions are being explored with opportunities being taken forward for new voucher schemes to be deployed with alternative networks (alt nets) following the success of the current voucher scheme, which is looking to connect over 1,000 premises in local communities. Work is also taking place locally to provide additional mapping analysis and local knowledge to help with the identification of other premises and areas, that are not currently covered by providers' current plans, to potentially be connected.

38. The 'Zero by nature' consultancy report is expected in October to inform the council's future climate change activity. Work is also ongoing to refresh the annual Climate Change Action Plan which identifies the priorities and actions for the year ahead. This will help the council to play its part in the global effort to reduce the impact of climate change and meet its net carbon zero target by 2050. This and the Climate Change Annual Report are due to go to Cabinet in November 2022.
39. The Climate Action Fund opened for the third time in July after supporting 217 projects to combat climate change to date. The deadline for Climate Action Fund Phase 1 was the 30th September 2022, with 36 applications received totalling c.£35,000 worth of potential funding to Community groups within Staffordshire.
40. The Trading Standards team continues to support businesses through safeguarding and compliance advice. During June and August 2022, the team fitted their 100th call blocker ensuring that scam calls do not reach vulnerable people, with over 600 calls blocked in August.
41. The 'Libraries and Arts' service have successfully delivered the Summer Reading Challenge with more than 8,000 children from across Staffordshire having taken part by the end of August, exceeding targets. Start Up hubs have also been established in all 16 Staffordshire County Council libraries in the summer, with take-up to be reported next quarter.
42. Inflationary pressures have impacted on the financial aspect of the Staffordshire History Centre development, in terms of the rising costs of construction materials. However, this is being addressed and positive progress has also been made during Quarter 2 with successful recruitment for the centre, including volunteers.
43. A communications campaign is underway to signpost residents, staff and businesses to the range of support available in Staffordshire to help tackle the current cost of living pressures. The 'Here to Help' campaign launched in early October to make sure people are aware of the support

and advice available, focussed on areas such as money and bills, food and essentials, staying warm and helping others.

44. The financial position at Quarter 2 for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills is a forecast saving of £61,000, compared to a breakeven position at Quarter 1. This is following an allocation of one-off funding for inflationary pressures materialising in highways and transport.

45. Corporate Services

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
GREEN	GREEN

46. Corporate Services is currently on track in terms of both Delivery and Finance in Quarter 2 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 ongoing challenges regarding workforce capacity and recruitment, as well as being subject to similar inflationary pressures impacting on areas of business, such as ICT and parts of the property programme.



47. During 2022/23, the council aims to raise £8m through the sale of unused land and buildings to fund transformation of services and activity, in line with new Government regulation. By the end of August 2022, the council was progressing sales with six surplus sites and remains on target to deliver this.

48. In addition, work on the council's property programme is progressing well. This has included the repurposing of the Chesterton Vision Centre, including staff moving from Brackenberry, with the service operational from the end of August. Bilbrook House in South Staffordshire site sale has been agreed and Shire Hall Stafford was handed over to the Enterprise Team in July and became operational from early October. The c.£8m schools maintenance programme which comprises of over 100 projects remains on track to be delivered during this financial year.

49. The council continues to review and develop its digital approach across all areas of the organisation. Work has continued to refresh the council's priorities for 2022/23, ensuring they align with the new Corporate Delivery Plan. Good progress has been made across multiple existing priorities, such as establishing a Robotic Process Automation (RPA) pilot to automate a range of different processes to free up capacity for added-value activities. Work also continues with district and borough councils to progress the "Single Customer Front Door" project across

Staffordshire, with a Target Operating Model currently in development. The Digital Champions network was also re-launched in September following an organisation-wide 'recruitment' drive.

50. The new VCSE Capacity Building Framework went live on 1st August and will focus on supporting the local voluntary sector, working alongside communities to promote health and wellbeing, and working with young people and the community groups that support them. Twelve-month delivery plans have been agreed and in place between all partners and the first round of contract review groups will take place in October. The final quarter of the previous arrangements (between April – July 2022) saw 191 organisations provided with one-to-one development support, VCSE groups supported to access c.£1.5m of external funding, 61 VCSE representatives accessing free training places, and 51 individuals supported to access local volunteering opportunities.

51. The council's new Community Fund opened on the 19th April and to date 54 projects have been supported, including 23 jubilee projects. The total value for projects so far (including the requests from members) is £426,000 – this total represents a current matched value of £2.80 raised by communities for every £1 requested from the fund. The total budget for the fund is £156,000 and will continue taking new applications until 31 October 2022.

52. Throughout the quarter there has been significant work around promoting the Staffordshire story and place brand as part of 'We are Staffordshire'. This has included celebrating Staffordshire's involvement with the Commonwealth Games, supporting a tourism campaign/competition to 'play in Staffordshire' over summer, with over 250 entries received, and developing a 2022-26 strategy for approval at the October Place Board. There are now over 150 Ambassadors registered and a successful Ambassador event held at the 'World of Wedgwood' in July attracted over 60 Staffordshire businesses.

53. Earlier this year the Local Government Boundary Commission initiated an Electoral Review of Staffordshire, due to the council's changing population and the length of time since the last review. As part of the review the council is required to submit a Council Size proposal to the Boundary Commission in November. The council is set to propose that it should retain its current number of 62 councillors, as well as requesting that the review seeks to achieve single member electoral divisions. The proposal will be considered by Full Council in October. An in-principal decision on councillor numbers is expected to be announced by the Boundary Commission in January 2023. At which point, a 12-week consultation on future division arrangements will begin. The review is expected to be completed in late 2023, with new divisions in place for the 2025 elections.

54. Work is ongoing to deliver the council's current internal people strategy, including the launch of a new green lease car scheme in July, with the environmental advantage of being focused on electric and hybrid cars. The council has also partnered with CIPD, the professional body for HR and people development, to use its People Impact Tool during September to help shape the council's new People Strategy.

55. There is continued focus on staff absence levels across the council to help teams improve their days lost to sickness. The People Services team have taken a deeper dive into absence to establish short, medium, and longer-term approaches that will be proposed to Senior and Wider Leadership Teams. The People Operations team are working directly with the refreshed list of top 30% locations with the highest days lost to understand the root causes for absence and proactively support them with short- and medium-term actions. Additionally, weekly absence reports are now being emailed to all line managers to facilitate best practice absence management.

56. As at August 2022, total absence has increased to 13.05 days lost per employee, compared to 9.94 at the same point last year. Currently long-term absence is at 8.93 days lost per employee, compared to 7.37 at the same point last year. Short-term absence is at 4.12 days lost per employee, compared to 2.57 last year. Absences relating to diagnosed/suspected COVID-19 account for 1.25 days lost per employee, similar to last year at 1.24. With COVID-19 related absences excluded, total absence levels are now higher at 11.8 days lost per employee, compared with a pre-COVID position of 11.68 in Feb 2020. Employees who have had no absence is at 46.9% of the workforce and 22.2% have had less than 5 days absence.

57. Corporate Services is forecast to have a saving of £0.181m at Quarter 2, compared to a breakeven position at Quarter 1. There is potential for some additional income from Registrars due to the higher number of weddings that are being booked following the lifting of all COVID restrictions.

58. Legal Implications

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

59. Resource and Value for Money Implications

Please see Finance Appendices.

60. Climate Change Implications

There are no direct climate change implications of note.

List of Appendices:

- Appendix 1 - Performance Dashboard
- Appendix 2 - Finance Quarter 2 Summary
- Appendix 3 - Finance Quarter 2 Detailed Report
- Appendix 4 - Corporate Checklist
- Appendix 5 - Revenue Forecast Outturn 2022/23
- Appendix 6 - Capital Forecast Outturn 2022/23
- Appendix 7 - Financial Health Indicators 2022/23
- Appendix 8 - Prudential Indicators

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