

## **Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 21 June 2023**

### **Integrated Performance – Performance and Finance Final Outturn Report, 2022/23**



**Cllr Alan White, Leader of the Council said,**

“Creating the right conditions for businesses and our economy to grow and thrive while supporting our most vulnerable residents remain priorities for the county council.

“We know that many people still face challenges in dealing with the increased cost of living and we continue to do what we can to support them. Programmes such as the Household Support Fund which has provided over £15 million of financial assistance and the Sustainable Warmth

Competition which has installed energy saving measures in almost 900 homes are all providing valuable support. Through the Holiday Activities and Food Programme we’ve also helped thousands of families while the ‘Here to Help’ campaign has provided advice to over 24,000 visitors to the website.

“Alongside this, our supportive communities work is helping people to live independently with support from their families and local communities. The programme has seen the recruitment of 166 Community Champions and the creation of 26 community help points to date.

“Our work to support local businesses to start up, survive, and grow remains a priority, while our ‘We are Staffordshire’ campaign goes from strength to strength in promoting business and employment opportunities in the county. We also continue to invest in highways, enterprise centres and infrastructure including broadband which benefit both residents and businesses alike. Major investment projects at Chatterley Valley in Newcastle, i54 South Staffordshire and highways work at Pets at Home’s new headquarters in Stafford are all helping attract more jobs to the county.

“Work to tackle climate change and achieve net zero by 2050 is ongoing with the council already reducing its carbon emissions by 44% since declaring a climate change emergency in 2019. We do continue to face challenges in adult social care and children’s services including levels and complexity of demand in both areas. However, additional investment is helping ease the situation.”



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

“Significant progress has been made across the organisation during quarter 4 and during the year with departments delivering on key areas of work.

“We still face pressures from inflation across all council areas which we continue to monitor carefully. Challenges around recruitment and demand within children’s services also continue which we are trying to address within our longer-term plans. The final outturn position for the county council for the year is an overspend of £11.294m (1.9%). The quarter 3 forecast was an overspend of £11.635m.

“Like most local authorities, we still face financial challenges, but we are a well-run council and continue to keep our finances in as strong a position as possible. Well managed finances means we can continue to invest in our future, grow our economy and improve people’s lives.”



## **Report Summary**

This Integrated Performance Report provides an overview of Staffordshire County Council's progress, performance, and financial position in delivering against our Strategic Plan, Delivery Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

## **Recommendation**

We recommend that Cabinet:

- a. Notes and challenges performance and advises of any further information and/or action required.
- b. Note the final financial outturn and approve the planned contributions to reserves.



|                               |
|-------------------------------|
| <b>Local Members Interest</b> |
| N/A                           |

## **Cabinet – Wednesday 21 June 2023**

### **Integrated Performance – Performance and Finance Final Outturn Report, 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.
- b. Note the final financial outturn and approve the planned contributions to reserves.

#### **Report of the Deputy Chief Executive & Director for Corporate Services and the Director of Finance**

#### **Reasons for Recommendations**

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



# Outturn Summary

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

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

## Key highlights

- **Cost of living:** Supporting residents with cost of living, through programmes such as the Sustainable Warmth Competition, Household Support Fund, Holiday Activities and Food Programme and 'Here to Help' campaign for those in need.
- **Supportive Communities:** Delivering the programme, including recruitment of 166 Community Champions and increasing to 26 Community Help Points.
- **Highways:** Successfully delivering Highways Maintenance schemes, while also carrying out a significant programme of transformation.
- **Business support:** Delivering a dynamic business support offer for Staffordshire start-ups and scale-ups.
- **Waste:** 12 months of successfully managing HWRCs since transferring back under council control.
- **Climate Change:** Successful delivery of Climate Action Fund and shortlisted for MJ award for 'Innovation in Delivering Sustainability and Social Value'.
- **Supporting Families:** Achieved successful outcomes for families facing multiple challenges and maintained Earned Autonomy status.
- **Education:** 95.1% awarded their first choice primary school and 92.5% their first choice secondary school.
- **We are Staffordshire:** Successfully promoting the Staffordshire brand, including nomination for global 'Place brand of the year' award.

## Key challenges

- **Children in Care:** Continued pressures across Children's services, including the rising cost, number and complexity of Child Protection & Children in Care, and ongoing placement pressures. Recruitment underway following investment.
- **SEND:** Increased demand for Education, Health and Care Plans. Capacity continues to be a challenge, however recruitment of additional Key Workers and Educational Psychologists is underway.
- **Adult Social Care Assessment Demand:** High level of Adult Social Care assessment demand, however recruitment to vacant posts and using additional temporary capacity continues.
- **Inflationary Pressures:** Continue to be monitored closely across the organisation, with the need for one-off resources to fund them.

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, as well as an overview of performance for the year.

Significant progress has been made across the organisation during 2022/23, with inflation and cost of living pressures continuing to be responded to, whilst also delivering key programmes of work. Levels of demand have presented challenges, particularly in Children and Families and Adult Social Care, including responding to adult social care market pressures. There also continues to be areas of financial risk in Children and Families, with further details included within this report and its appendices.

The final outturn position is an overspend of £11.294m. The Quarter 3 forecast was an overspend of £11.635m.

## 2. Health and Care

| Delivery<br>Performance Assessment | Finance<br>Performance Assessment |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>GREEN</b>                       | <b>GREEN</b>                      |

3. Good progress has been made during 2022/23, despite challenges in relation to demand, capacity, and the adult social care market. Some of these pressures have eased with the announcement of the delayed implementation of Adult Social Care Reform to 2025.



4. In March 2023 there were 1,473 Care Act Assessments initiated; 5% lower than March 2022 but 17% higher than pre-Covid levels. Demand for Care Act Assessments increased in January 2023, which is not unusual due to winter pressures, and then reduced again during Quarter 4. Work continues to address this demand with recruitment continuing to take place and the use of additional temporary capacity, in addition to reviewing processes going forward. Despite the levels of demand, the council has continued to exceed its target throughout the year for completed Care Act Assessments within 28 days (see Appendix 1).

5. In March 2023 there were 1,368 Safeguarding contacts, which is the highest number since August 2022 (1,457). The increase in demand and a temporary reduction in staffing capacity led to a small increase in the number of people waiting, but this is being actively managed and remains below the agreed threshold.

6. The number of reviews of people receiving services for 12 months or more has increased each month since December 2022, and in March 2023, 86% of service users had received a review in the previous 12 months



representing the best performance in this area in recent years (see Appendix 1). There has been a particular improvement within Adult Learning Disability reviews, with 87.2% reviewed in March 2023 compared to 61.1% in March 2022.

7. Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLs) applications (where it is necessary to deprive a person of their liberty in a hospital or care home if they lack capacity to consent to their treatment and care) is a further area of demand impacting on resources. The council has 1,409 DoLs applications waiting to be completed at the end of March 2023, however the majority of these are low priority. Staffordshire is a large county and has a lot of care homes, meaning a high number of DoLS applications are received compared to other local authorities and demand is increasing. Just over half of referrals in the last 12 months are for people requiring a review – either to have it extended for a further period or where they have moved to a new provider.
8. Timeliness of sourcing for brokerage (helping individuals to arrange care) has continued to improve in recent months, with February (90%) and March 2023 (89%) recording the best performance over the last two years (see Appendix 1). March 2023 also recorded the highest ever number of referrals (1,236; a 53% increase compared to March 2022). The continued good performance in sourcing brokerage within timescales, against a backdrop of increased demand, has been due to an increase in resource, a review of the supported living process and improving market conditions during 2022/23.
9. Work has taken place during the year to increase capacity in the home care market. Capacity has increased for a number of reasons, including contracted providers increasing their workforce, and 'Trusted Assessor' schemes which enable providers to flag to the council when they can safely reduce a package which, if approved, means they have capacity to pick up additional care packages. The council's new brokerage portal has also been in place since December 2022 and enables improved visibility for providers to see what is available and make offers on packages.
10. The council continue to make as many contracted block booked beds live and in use as possible. Block booked beds contract for a fixed number of beds with guaranteed business once these beds are activated. They ensure timely access when required, as well as better value for money. As of 21<sup>st</sup> April 2023, 325 beds were contracted, of which 228 were live (in payment), and 97% were filled. Whilst the number live has increased, this remains lower than anticipated impacting on savings, which have needed to be met elsewhere.
11. Over the past 12 months, the Supportive Communities programme has made significant progress in helping people to live independently with

support from their families and local communities. The programme is helping residents get the information and guidance they need by expanding Community Help Points to 26 countywide, as well as further developing online information resources for residents. The council's network of Community Champions has also grown, with 166 champions now promoting local health initiatives through trusted voices across Newcastle-under-Lyme, Tamworth, and Burton-on-Trent. Supportive Communities is also helping the council to better understand the needs and priorities of its vulnerable adults and communities. An innovative 'citizens inquiry' programme has taken place in five local areas, talking with local communities about their priorities for staying healthy and how the council and communities can work together to overcome barriers to good health and wellbeing.

12. Staffordshire Warmer Homes programme enables the council to continue helping low-income households to upgrade energy inefficient homes. In Quarter 4, 325 measures were installed across 250 properties across the county through the Sustainable Warmth Competition. In total the overall programme has delivered 1,086 measures across 886 properties, with 90% increasing their Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings by 1 or more band. All districts and boroughs are benefiting from the programme, with the highest number of properties receiving measures in Stafford (187), Tamworth (163) Cannock Chase (157) and East Staffordshire (144).

13. The Covid vaccination programme has remained strong in 2022/23, with 69% of those eligible having received their Autumn Booster when the programme finished on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2023. Just over 86% of the total eligible Staffordshire population have received their full primary doses, and Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent continue to be one of only two systems in the region to be above the national average for all cohorts.

14. From a finance perspective, within Health and Care, the final outturn position is a small saving of £0.026m.

### 15. Children and Families

| Delivery<br>Performance Assessment | Finance<br>Performance Assessment |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>AMBER</b>                       | <b>RED</b>                        |

16. The Children and Families service continues to build on progress made during the year. The service has faced ongoing challenges in relation to increasing demand and complexity of need, alongside workforce capacity and recruitment issues. There is also an overspend which is a result of use of agency staff and cost pressures within the Children's Social Care market.





17. The Placement team have developed a Placement Sufficiency Strategy and are working with the sector and the regional Strategic Commissioning Hub to seek to affect ways of working across the region to mitigate the rising costs within the external market. This is a priority area nationally as part of the care review 'Stable Homes Built on Love' and for the regional directors for children's services.
18. Children in Care demand has continued to rise with an increasing number of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children coming into the authority's care (106), however the number of children returning home after coming into care is higher than anticipated for Staffordshire. Following the extra financial investment (£5.7m) approved in December 2022 for additional staffing to support increasing numbers of children in care, recruitment for additional capacity is now underway.
19. At the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, there were 1,385 children in the authority's care in Staffordshire, representing a slight increase compared to the previous quarter (1,372). This is a rate of 82 per 10,000; higher than the most recent national benchmark (70 per 10,000 - March 2022) but lower than the regional benchmark (88 per 10,000 - March 2022). The number of children subject of a Child Protection Plan at the end of the year is similar to levels seen earlier in the year with 717 subject of a plan (a rate of 42 per 10,000 in Staffordshire compared to the most recent benchmarks from March 2022 of 42 nationally and 43 regionally).
20. The number of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) issued in time (within 20 weeks) in Staffordshire remains low. The rolling 12-month figure in Staffordshire to March 2023 is 34% compared to the most recent national benchmark of 58% (from 2021/22). Increasing demand and complexity continues to impact on timeliness, with recruitment of additional SEND Key Workers and Educational Psychologists now underway.
21. Progress has been made in taking forward the four key change programmes of work within Children & Families. The four programmes of work will focus on Children in Care, Children's Workforce, SEND Improvement and Embedding the C&F System with the aims of improving recruitment and retention, working with families to build resilience and offer support at the earliest possible opportunity, streamlining processes so they are more efficient and improving experience across the system.
22. At the end of the year, Staffordshire had achieved successful outcomes for 1,010 families through the Building Resilient Families and Communities programme since April 2022; exceeding the target (797) set by the Department of Levelling up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). Recently the council became one of only two local authorities to successfully bid to lead on a peer support project. This involves coaching and supporting other councils to improve key aspects of their

children's system as part of their Supporting Families Programme delivery.

23. As part of the council's continuing commitment to support vulnerable residents, since its launch in 2021, the Household Support Fund (HSF) has provided over £15m of financial assistance directly to residents, with many stating the scheme has made a difference to their ability to cope with the rising cost of living. Round 3 of the programme, running during Quarter 3 and 4, provided almost 108,000 supermarket vouchers to children and young people and also provided vouchers to 8,556 households. Additionally, 3,189 households benefited from the Winter Warmth Scheme, with each household having received either top up credit on prepaid meters or credit paid directly to their energy supplier. The fund also purchased 18,109 slow cookers for households and 11,200 accompanying seasoning packs.
24. Further support has also been made available to Staffordshire's most vulnerable families through the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme, which continues to offer children and young people free activities and a healthy meal, over school holidays. Across the year the programme has offered over 80,000 places with a take-up rate of 60%, with over 2,000 individual children benefitting in each school term. The council's approach in delivering this programme to children with Special Education Needs was also recognised by the Department for Education (DfE) as good practice.
25. Since March 2022, over 950 Ukrainians have arrived in Staffordshire as part of the government's Homes for Ukraine Scheme, with over 540 of these still being hosted by a local sponsor. Following Cabinet's endorsement of the creation of a Resettlement Team in December 2022, two new senior roles have started and eight front-line practitioners are due to start imminently – allowing for a more person-centred and targeted approach to supporting refugees across Staffordshire.
26. Positively, 95.1% in Staffordshire were allocated their first choice of primary school (92.2% nationally last year) and 99.2% one of their top three (98.4% nationally last year). 92.5% were allocated their first choice of secondary school (83.5% nationally last year) and 97.8% one of their top three (93.8% nationally last year). Note that national comparators for 2023 are yet to be published.
27. In terms of the final outturn financial position for Children & Families, there is a forecast overspend of £11.948m.

## 28. Economy, Infrastructure and Skills

| Delivery<br>Performance Assessment | Finance<br>Performance Assessment |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
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29. Considerable progress has been made across the service, including the area of Communities, despite inflationary pressures which have been experienced during 2022/23.



30. A key highlight for the year is 14 Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) being managed back in-house over the last twelve months, with recycling operatives receiving a record number of compliments from visitors. Now the service is in the council's direct control it can be ensured that the only waste that ends in landfill has no alternative disposal option. Taking over the management and day-to-day running of the sites means the council can maintain the best service for residents, be sustainable and provide good value for money.

31. Progress has been made during 2022/23, with an aligned way forward with Stoke-on-Trent City Council in the development of a solution to waste disposal arrangements in the north of the county post 2025. A Cabinet Member Delegated Decision has been made to carry out procurement for a new management and operating contractor for 2025-2030.

32. The council has agreed a 5-year extension to their contract with its highways partner Amey from October 2024. This is to maintain and improve Staffordshire's major highways network for the benefit of residents, businesses and to support the growth of the county's economy.

33. The Highways Transformation Programme has also made significant progress during 2022/23. In Quarter 4, wider highways staff have been engaged and engagement sessions with Amey have also been taking place. The transformation has also continued to take place alongside maintaining a safe and secure highways network, with the successful completion of structural maintenance schemes at Rolleston (£1m), Essington (£0.95m), Burntwood (£0.326m) and Saredon (£0.38m) in Quarter 4. The council also carried out additional early season grass cuts in urban areas.

34. Throughout 2022/23 the council continued to support local businesses to start up and grow through its dynamic range of business support schemes. Between June 2020 and March 2023, the council has supported 549 individuals through the Staffordshire Start Up Programme. Of these, almost half (254) have started their own business. Get Started and Grow has supported 160 business owners who have been trading up to 5 years

with professional services support in marketing, finance or digital marketing, with the 'step-up' element launching in Quarter 3.

35. Additionally, 72 individuals have been approved for the 'My Own Boss' programme, which due to its success, has been extended into 2023/24. The Staffordshire Start-up Forum has also now launched, where partners from across the county meet monthly to discuss the start-up offer across Staffordshire, including what support is currently on offer, any gaps in provision and new projects that are launching.
36. Several key economic growth projects have continued to develop during 2022/23, including the Chatterley Valley Project in Newcastle-under-Lyme starting on site. The site could create up to 1,700 jobs and, when fully built out, release total business rates of more than £2.5m a year that will be wholly retained within the area. Work has also progressed well at i54, with the development of a Manufacturing and Headquarters Facility for the first end user of the i54 Western Extension commencing in March 2023. Other recent successes include the delivery of highway access works to unlock Pets at Home's new Headquarters which is expected to employ around 750 people.
37. The council's Community Learning Service has recently been rated 'Good' by Ofsted, with inspectors reporting that the curriculum was well-planned and provided meaningful content to learners. Working with 16 learning providers, the Community Learning Service provides a range of courses from family learning to employability, with thousands of people benefiting from the service every year. As of end of March 2023, take-up for adult learning was on track for the academic year, with 2,011 enrolments.
38. Following the approval of the annual Climate Change Action Plan and Annual Report last quarter, Staffordshire has continued to play its part in the global effort to reduce the impact of climate change and work to meet its net carbon zero target by 2050. The council has been shortlisted as a finalist in the national MJ Awards in the category of 'Innovation in Delivering Sustainability and Social Value', which recognises the council's commitment to reducing its carbon footprint and creating a sustainable environment. The winner will be announced in June 2023.
39. Latest performance information shows that the council's carbon emissions in 2021/22 were 28,152 tCO<sub>2</sub>e; a slight reduction on the previous year (29,068 tCO<sub>2</sub>e). Work is taking place to think more innovatively about how the council continues to reduce this. The council recently ran a composting campaign which resulted in 833 composting bins being sold in total, exceeding the target of 500, and potentially diverting 121,600kg of organic waste from landfill.

40. The final figures for the latest round of the Climate Action Fund have also been announced, with 72 applications resulting in funds issued to the community totalling £72,685, with over £200k awarded over the last three years. Successful applications will help reduce the carbon impact, improve air quality, reduce waste or improve the natural environment.
41. Working with Staffordshire's communities is a key part of the council's Strategic Plan 2022-26. Progress has been made throughout 2022/23 in developing this area of work and in February 2023, Cabinet approved the development of a new Communities Strategy and countywide engagement to support it. Work is now underway to plan the engagement and strategy process.
42. The council's 'Here to Help' campaign was launched in early October to help with the cost-of-living crisis and make sure people were aware of the support and advice available, focussing on areas such as money and debt, energy bills, food and essentials, help paying for childcare, staying well, staying warm and helping others. Up to the end of March 2023, over 24,000 people visited the web area, with over 40,000 page views.
43. Delivering a sustainable and vibrant library offer has continued to be a priority for the council in 2022/23, with the successful Summer Reading Challenge taking place and the introduction of the start-up information offer for those wishing to work for themselves in Staffordshire County Council Libraries. Work has also taken place to re-contract with the partners delivering Great Wyrley, Knutton, Loggerheads, Wilnecote and Brereton Community Managed libraries.
44. Construction has continued to progress in building the brand new £5.4m Staffordshire History Centre, which will extend the existing Staffordshire Record Office in Stafford, incorporating the William Salt Library. The project also has funding to deliver a four-year programme of activities enabling people to discover more about their family or local history. A new website will be developed, and key collections will be digitised to widen access. Throughout 2022/23, volunteers have given 3,942 hours in time, which equates to £78,850 in match funding towards the project.
45. The Trading Standards team continues to support businesses through safeguarding and compliance advice. The team's intervention throughout 2022/23 has prevented detriment to customers valued at over £15m.
46. From a finance perspective, within Economy, Infrastructure and Skills, the final outturn position is a forecast saving of £0.252m.



## 47. Corporate Services

| Delivery<br>Performance Assessment | Finance<br>Performance Assessment |
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48. Corporate Services has continued to provide vital support to the organisation in delivering on its priorities during 2022/23.

49. Significant progress has been made promoting the Staffordshire story and 'We are Staffordshire' place brand. During Quarter 4 the campaign 'A Place to Thrive' was launched to help market Staffordshire's quality of life offer, with four new videos and a prospectus. Throughout the year, four successful Ambassador Network events have also been held, and there are now over 175 Ambassadors in the Staffordshire Network. Recognising this excellent work, 'We are Staffordshire' was also shortlisted for two awards by the global place marketing organisation City Nation Place - including overall 'Place Brand of the Year'. A successful Staffordshire Day was also held at the House of Commons where a delegation of Staffordshire businesses and local leaders showcased the county as a great place to do business, work, learn and visit.

50. During 2022/23, the council aimed to raise £8 million 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 March 2023, the council had completed sales of four surplus sites, delivering £2.475 million, with two of the anticipated sales delayed due to complexities and that will now form part of the 2023/24 delivery programme.

51. Work on the council's schools and corporate projects is ongoing. The 2023/24 Schools Capital Programme was approved by Cabinet and new primary school's at Deanslade in Lichfield and the relocation/expansion of St Leonard's Primary School to the former Kingston Centre in Stafford are on track for a September 2023 opening. This follows the successful delivery of the c.£8m schools maintenance programme during 2022/23 and the opening of new primary schools in Uttoxeter and Fradley in September 2022. Several corporate projects were delivered in 2022/23 including the relocation of Stafford Registrars and Coroners service, the completion of the Lichfield Day Centre refurbishment, the repurposing of the Chesterton Vision and the opening of the Shire Hall in October.

52. Digital continues to be fundamental to the way the council works as an organisation, as well as how it will interact with partners, citizens, and communities. Over the year significant progress has been made across multiple priorities, such as the purchasing of automation software for trialling in areas across Health & Care and Finance to free up capacity for



added-value activities. Work with district and borough councils began to explore what a new and innovative “Single Front Door” may look like across Staffordshire, with the aim of improving access and ease of use. The council has progressed several pilots in collaboration with Lichfield District Council, initially focussing on Customer Experience and Single Phone Number, with further pilots planned for 23/24. Furthermore, over the past year significant work has been undertaken to refresh the Digital Delivery Plan for 2023/24, which was approved in December 2022.

53.The council’s Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Capacity Building Framework continues to promote social action in local communities and build capacity in the voluntary and community sector. Between October and December 2022, 133 organisations were provided with development support such as help with planning, developing policies and safeguarding. An additional 47 children and young people’s VCSE organisations received specific development support for their area. Groups were also supported to access over £1.5m of additional funding, including the Armed Forces Reaching and Supporting Communities Fund and the council’s Community Champions grants scheme.

54.The council’s 2022 Community Fund’s applications had a total value of nearly £1m. Projects varied from small community activities to supporting community investment worth hundreds of thousands of pounds. Applications have been processed, and an end of year report will be brought to Full Council in July, highlighting performance information and next steps. The 2023 Community Fund recently opened in May.

55.In 2022, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) initiated an Electoral Review of Staffordshire, due to the council’s changing electorate and the length of time since the last review. The first and second stages of the review have now been completed. The Council Size Submission to retain the current number of 62 councillors was agreed in principle by the LGCBE in December 2022, and the boundary changes proposed by the council approved at Full Council and submitted to the LGBCE on 20th March 2023. The LGBCE is expected to release their draft recommendations on 27th June.

56.Work to deliver the council’s internal People Strategy has progressed during 2022/23. This has included implementing a new Applicant Tracking System in October, which has received positive feedback and improved Time to Hire, by 14 days to an average of 32 days. The council also partnered with CIPD, the professional body for HR and people development, to help shape a refreshed People Strategy for 2023-2027, which went live on 3rd April 2023. The strategy supports the council’s aim to be an excellent employer with a welcoming culture, that embraces the council’s vision and values.

57. There has been a continued focus on absence across the council to help teams improve their days lost. This includes working directly with those teams experiencing the highest days lost to understand the root causes for absence and proactively support them. Additionally, absence related surgeries have been provided to management teams to help them manage absence through their directorate absence improvement plans.

58. As such, long term absence has continued to reduce and as of March 2023 stood at 8.55 days lost per employee; this remains higher than the same point last year (8.31 days) but has improved from the previous quarter where performance was 8.65 days. Short-term absence has also reduced to 3.61 days lost per employee, showing improvement from both the same point last year (3.68 days) and the previous quarter (4.04). Almost half of the workforce has had no sickness absences over the last year (47.3%, 1,999 people), with a further 25.0% (1,057 employees) having been absent for 5 days or fewer.

59. In terms of the final outturn financial position for Corporate Services, there is a forecast saving of £0.1m.

#### **60. Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications of note in relation to this report, which is for information and discussion.

#### **61. Resource and Value for Money Implications**

Please see Finance Appendices.

#### **62. Climate Change Implications**

There are no direct climate change implications of note.

#### **63. Link to Strategic Plan**

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.

#### **64. Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity**

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.

## 65. **Community Impact**

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 - Integrated Performance – Performance and Finance Final Outturn Report, 2022/23
- Appendix 2 - Performance Dashboard
- Appendix 3 - Finance Outturn Summary
- Appendix 4 - Finance Outturn Detailed Report
- Appendix 5 - Corporate Checklist
- Appendix 6 - Revenue Final Outturn 2022/23
- Appendix 7 - Capital Final Outturn 2022/23
- Appendix 8 - Financial Health Indicators 2022/23
- Appendix 9 - Prudential Indicators

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