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Notice of Meeting

Cabinet

Councillors Simon Werner (Chair), Lynne Jones (Vice-Chair), Richard Coe, Geoff Hill, Joshua Reynolds, Catherine Del Campo, Adam Bermange, Karen Davies and Amy Tisi

Wednesday 24 January 2024 7.00 pm

Grey Room - York House - Windsor & on [RBWM YouTube](#)

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Agenda

Part I

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1	Apologies for Absence To receive any apologies for absence.	-
2	Declarations of Interest To receive any declarations of interest from Cabinet Members.	3 - 4
3	Minutes To consider the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 13 December 2023.	5 - 14
4	Appointments	-
5	Forward Plan To consider the Forward Plan for the period February 2024 to May 2024.	15 - 22
6	2023/24 Month 8 Budget Monitoring Report <i>Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance</i> To note the report and: i) note the forecast revenue outturn for the year is an overspend on services of £8.009m which reduces to an overspend of £4.347m when including unallocated contingency budgets and changes to funding budgets (para 5); ii) note the forecast capital outturn is expenditure of £43.960m against a budget of £88.267m (para 11).	23 - 44
7	Quarterly Assurance Report Q2 2023-24 or where latest information is available until October 2023 <i>Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Community Partnerships, Public Protection and Maidenhead</i> To note the report and review the Quarterly Assurance Report setting out progress against the performance indicators and risk register.	45 - 90

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By attending this meeting, participants are consenting to the audio & visual recording being permitted and acknowledge that this shall remain accessible in the public domain permanently.

Please contact Oran Norris-Browne, Oran.Norris-Browne@rbwm.gov.uk, with any special requests that you may have when attending this meeting.

Published: Tuesday 16 January 2024



MEMBERS' GUIDE TO DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

Disclosure at Meetings

If a Member has not disclosed an interest in their Register of Interests, they **must make** the declaration of interest at the beginning of the meeting, or as soon as they are aware that they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) or Other Registerable Interest. If a Member has already disclosed the interest in their Register of Interests they are still required to disclose this in the meeting if it relates to the matter being discussed.

Any Member with concerns about the nature of their interest should consult the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

Non-participation in case of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI)

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your DPis (summary below, further details set out in Table 1 of the Members' Code of Conduct) you must disclose the interest, **not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room** unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest' (as agreed in advance by the Monitoring Officer), you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest. Dispensation may be granted by the Monitoring Officer in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a DPI.

Where you have a DPI on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet Member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.

DPis (relating to the Member or their partner) include:

- *Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.*
- *Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses*
- *Any contract under which goods and services are to be provided/works to be executed which has not been fully discharged.*
- *Any beneficial interest in land within the area of the council.*
- *Any licence to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer.*
- *Any tenancy where the landlord is the council, and the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest in the securities of.*
- *Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where:*
 - a) *that body has a place of business or land in the area of the council, and*
 - b) *either (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body or (ii) the total nominal value of the shares of any one class belonging to the relevant person exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.*

Any Member who is unsure if their interest falls within any of the above legal definitions should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to one of your Other Registerable Interests (summary below and as set out in Table 2 of the Members Code of Conduct), you must disclose the interest. **You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.** If it is a 'sensitive interest' (as agreed in advance by the Monitoring Officer), you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Other Registerable Interests:

- a) any unpaid directorships
 - b) any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority
 - c) any body
 - (i) exercising functions of a public nature
 - (ii) directed to charitable purposes or
 - (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)
- of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management

Disclosure of Non- Registerable Interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a DPI) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, or a body included under Other Registerable Interests in Table 2 you must disclose the interest. **You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting** but otherwise **must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation**. If it is a 'sensitive interest' (agreed in advance by the Monitoring Officer) you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **affects** –

- a. your own financial interest or well-being;
- b. a financial interest or well-being of a friend, relative, close associate; or
- c. a financial interest or well-being of a body included under Other Registerable Interests as set out in Table 2 (as set out above and in the Members' code of Conduct)

you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied.

Where a matter (referred to in the paragraph above) **affects** the financial interest or well-being:

- a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
- b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise **must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation**. If it is a 'sensitive interest' (agreed in advance by the Monitoring Officer, you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Other declarations

Members may wish to declare at the beginning of the meeting any other information they feel should be in the public domain in relation to an item on the agenda; such Member statements will be included in the minutes for transparency.

Agenda Item 3

CABINET

WEDNESDAY 13 DECEMBER 2023

PRESENT: Councillors Simon Werner (Chair), Lynne Jones (Vice-Chair), Geoff Hill, Joshua Reynolds, Catherine Del Campo, Adam Bermange, Karen Davies and Amy Tisi

Also in attendance: Councillors Neil Knowles and Helen Taylor

Also in attendance virtually: Councillors Maureen Hunt, Helen Price, Mandy Brar, Clive Baskerville, Suzanne Cross and Mark Wilson

Officers: Oran Norris-Browne, Stephen Evans, Lin Ferguson, Elizabeth Griffiths, Andrew Durrant, Elaine Browne, Kevin McDaniel, David Wiles and Julian McGowan

Officers in attendance virtually: Andrew Vallance and Becky Hatch

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Coe.

Declarations of Interest

Councillors Bermange and Hill both declared an interest in the item titled 'Review of the Cabinet Decision to not dispose of the Open Space Land at Braywick Park, Maidenhead' as both had spoken on the matter in the past and were therefore pre-determined. They left the room during the course of the debate and did not take part in any way.

Councillor Jones declared a non-pecuniary interest in the item titled 'School Condition Allocation 2024/25' that she was the lead member for finance at Kings Courts governing body.

Minutes

Councillor Price asked for two inclusions to be made to the minutes. The first was in reference to the 'In-Year Monthly budget Monitoring Update' item, where she had reference external auditors, the Section 151 officer and the interim Chief Executive.

The second omission was in relation to the 'Early adoption of fees and charges' item where she had referenced the charges of fines for persons who broke the law. This also included the officer response to her question.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 29 November 2023 were approved, subject to the above inclusions.

Appointments

None

Forward Plan

Cabinet noted the Forward Plan for the next four months including the following new added items:

- Quarterly Assurance Report – January 2024 Cabinet

- Draft Affordable Housing Delivery Supplementary Planning Document – February 2024 Cabinet
- SEND and Alternative Provision Capital Strategy update – February 2024 Cabinet
- Determination of school admissions arrangements for September 2025 – February 2024 Cabinet

Review of the Cabinet Decision to not dispose of the Open Space Land at Braywick Park, Maidenhead

Councillor Werner, the Chair and Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Community Partnerships, Public Protection and Maidenhead, provided some background history as to why the Cabinet had chosen to review the decision that they had previously heard at a Cabinet meeting in July 2023. The decision that the Cabinet made was to not dispose of the land at Braywick Park, Maidenhead. He said that 2 different petitions had been launched since then by residents. One by Shay Bottomley, which sought for Cabinet to reconsider the July decision and one by Doug Watts, which sought to uphold the original decision respectively. Both lead petitioners had been invited to attend the meeting to address the Cabinet for five minutes each. Four additional speakers were also attending, with one of these being an extra public speaker slot above the usual three speakers, which was made at the Chair's discretion. This was due to the significant public interest in the agenda item.

The Chair then invited Shay Bottomley (Lead Petitioner for 'Move us or Lose us') to address the Cabinet. He was followed by Doug Watts (Lead Petitioner for 'Protect Open Space and Maidenhead United'), Jon Adams (Maidenhead United), John Scaife (Maidenhead Athletics Club), Steve Bough (Maidenhead Rugby Club) and Andrew Hill (Open Spaces campaigner), in that order. The Lead Petitioners were each given 5 minutes to address Cabinet, with the remaining speakers being given 3 minutes each.

The Chair thanked the registered speakers for each of their contributions and said that it was very valuable to gather the thoughts from a variety of persons from both sides, which were reflected in each petition. He then invited Elaine Browne, the Council's Monitoring Officer and Deputy Director of Law and Governance to provide some historic information in terms of previous Cabinet and Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel discussions, stretching back as far as 2019.

Elaine Browne stated that on 19 December 2019, Cabinet approved in principle, the request for relocation of MUFC, subject to a valuation report required pursuant to s.123 of the Local Government Act 1972 ("the 2019 Decision"). The 2019 Decision was called in and was considered by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 15 January 2020. The Panel agreed to take no further action but requested that the next Cabinet Report in relation to MUFC's request for relocation be brought to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel for further scrutiny. On 24 November 2020 the proposed further Cabinet Report relating to the request for relocation of MUFC was considered by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel. The Panel noted that the comments from the meeting would be passed to Cabinet for consideration. Then on 26 November 2020, Cabinet further considered the request for relocation of MUFC following the commission of the s.123 Report confirming the valuation of the land at Braywick Park. The decision of Cabinet ("the 2020 Decision") was to approve the release of the land at Braywick Park, subject to planning for £460,000 and delegated authority to the Executive Director of Place to undertake the Statutory procedure required under Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972 as required and negotiated a draft agreement for lease for 999 years at a peppercorn rent.

Elaine Browne then continued and said that on 28 April and 5 May 2022 an Open Space Notice was published in the Maidenhead Advertiser. Following the publication of the Open Space Notices, the Council received 22 objections to the disposal of the open space. On 4 April 2023 the Executive Director of Place, Andrew Durrant, made the delegated decision in

relation to the Disposal of the Land following the Open Space Notice Procedure (“the Delegated Decision”). The Officer Decision Notice dated 4 April 2023 stated as follows:

“That the Executive Director of Place Services having due regard to the objections received in relation to the Public Open Space Disposal Notice and, subject to the granting of planning permission for a new stadium, agrees to proceed with the lease of the site.” On 20 April 2023 following the receipt of a call-in, the Place Overview and Scrutiny Panel considered the Delegated Decision and in accordance with their powers set out in the Council’s Constitution, the Panel referred the Delegated Decision back to the decision maker, Andrew Durrant, Executive Director of Place to re-make the decision, taking into account the concerns of the Panel. Part 5A of the Council’s Constitution (Scheme of Delegation to Officers) states at Paragraph 2.8: “Where any function is delegated to an officer, that officer may choose not to exercise that function and may, instead, refer a matter to the Council, the Cabinet, Committee, the relevant Director or relevant Portfolio Holder for decision as appropriate with the agreement of the appropriate Director.”

On 25 May 2023 the Executive Director of Place, Andrew Durrant made a decision not to exercise the delegation originally made by Cabinet on 26 November 2020, and referred back to him by Place Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 20 April 2023 (pursuant to Paragraph 2.8 of Part 5A of the Council’s Constitution). The Officer Decision Notice published on 25 May 2023 stated as follows: “The Executive Director of Place has decided that this decision shall be brought back to Cabinet to review the approach and process conducted regarding the Open Spaces Notice and Disposal of Land following previous Cabinet approval.” This then led to this being brought to Cabinet on 27 July 2023, following the Open Space Notice Procedure, and decided as follows: “That Cabinet considered the objections received in relation to the proposed disposal (by the grant of a lease) of land at Braywick Park, Maidenhead (“the Open Space”) following the statutory notification of the Council’s intention to dispose of the Open Space and having regard to the objections, confirmed that they did not agree to the disposal of the Open Space”

The Chair thanked Elaine Browne for providing a full history of the decision that the Cabinet had in front of them. The Chair then invited the Cabinet Member whose portfolio this fell under to comment.

Councillor Reynolds, Cabinet Member for Communities & Leisure, said that if the Cabinet were to change their decision it was important that all parties realised that there was a still a long way to go, with things such as planning permission still needing to be obtained later down the line. Over the past week, Cabinet Members had received more than around 70 emails from both sides. Some asking for the decision to be reversed and some asking for it to be upheld. This even included residents who at first glance you would have thought they would have been for the move such as football fans wanting the decision upheld or even passionate open space campaigners, who were actually in favour of the move. He also appreciated that the athletics club, certainly needed additional investment following numerous meetings with them. It was a fine balance between weighing up the amount of open space there was available and the impact on the environment compared to the sporting benefits that it would have.

The Chair then outlined some of the positives that would come if the Cabinet were to reverse their decision. These were:

- A new stadium would be built.
- The athletics club shall be provided with an upgrade.
- New AstroTurf’s provided.
- A new sports hall, along with various new facilities for the football club.

In terms of the negatives of the Cabinet reversing their decision, these included the following:

- Walkers and runners would no longer have access to a large portion of the park.
- Harm to the physical and mental wellbeing of some residents who use the open space.

- The potential loss of a free-to-use running track.
- No more access to a children's playground.
- The Borough Local Plan (BLP) identified the area as an important area of open space.
- Restricted views due to the proposed height of the football club's grounds.

Councillor Jones, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance, said that when making her decision in July 2023, she took into account a range of factors. This included many positives, but also various negative implications too including the impact on biodiversity. She said that she could not see any new information before her at the meeting that would allow her to change her mind from the decision she came to in July 2023. Councillor Jones then proposed a motion to reaffirm the original Cabinet decision, which was recommendation ii).

Councillor K Davies, Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Biodiversity and Windsor Town Council said that she tended to agree with the comments that had been made by Councillor Jones. This included the harm to biodiversity that could come from the decision to overturn the original Cabinet decision that was made in July 2023. She then seconded the motion that had been put forward by Councillor Jones to reaffirm the original Cabinet decision.

AGREED: That Cabinet noted the report and reaffirmed their original decision to not dispose of the Open Space Land at Braywick Park, Maidenhead.

Draft 2024/25 Budget

Councillors Hill & Bermange re-entered the room and rejoined the meeting.

Councillor Jones introduced the report to Cabinet and stated that it contained the details of the draft budget for 2024/25 and asked for approval of the document to go to public consultation ahead of the final budget setting in February 2024. According to the local Government association almost one in five Council Leaders and Chief Executives in England, that completed a recent survey, believed that it was very or fairly likely that their Chief Finance Officer would need to issue a Section 114 notice in the current year or next due to a lack of funding to keep key services running. This had proved to be even more challenging due to not having a realistic baseline as the inherited budget set for 23/24 had proven to be non-realistic and undeliverable almost immediately. The draft budget before Cabinet, not only had to balance for the financial year 24/25, but also close a budget gap of £6 million, which was caused by the deficiencies of the budget approved in February 2023, that had left the Council with an unbudgeted overspend of over £7 million.

Councillor Jones said that due to historic financial decisions, the Council had a much lower level of funding than comparable Councils. Currently, the amount RBWM received in Council tax for a Band D property was on average between £413 and £698 lower than other neighbouring Councils. The report and accompanying appendices set out the Councils proposed Revenue budget, Capital budget, medium term Financial Plan & Growth and Efficiencies tables. It was clear from the revenue budget, that forecast costs relating to adult services had increased by £5 million, Children's services by £2.6 million and the borrowing and MRP costs of servicing the circa £200 million debt had increased by £4 million to £13 million. A vitally important way to address the shortfall was to propose an increase in fees and charges, which was a tough decision to make and one that officers, and the Cabinet did not take lightly.

Councillor Jones then provided Cabinet with a breakdown of each inclusion within the appendices and outlined above. She then outlined the Council's aims to achieve financial stability and was required to do this. These were:

- Using technology across services including road repairs.
- Bringing statutory services back in-house to the Council.
- Investing more in early Intervention and prevention.

- Investment in procurement and contract management to ensure best value for money and better outcomes.
- Exploring new commercial opportunities for income from events, advertising, and sponsorship.
- Investigating opportunities to develop Council owned accommodation and facilities to reduce reliance on high-cost providers.
- Make better use of Council assets.
- Securing investment and growth in our economy.

She concluded by putting on record her thanks to Elizabeth Griffiths, Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer, and her team for their hard work over the last three months. The budget would go through public consultation, the 3 Overview & Scrutiny Panels and come back to Cabinet, before going to Council in February 2024 for approval.

Councillor Del Campo, Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Housing Services, said in terms of her portfolio, homelessness and rough sleeping was unfortunately on the rise currently and that private landlords were being seen to exit the market. This was having additional pressures on the budget. She acknowledged the tough rental market and said that she and officers were looking at new ways to support residents when it came to private accommodation.

Councillor Del Campo said that the Council was indebted to voluntary organisations and individuals whose support was fantastic. They provided vital support to residents, and she wished to work closely with them moving forward. She then placed on record her thanks to officers of the Council for their hard work with this.

Stephen Evans, Chief Executive, said that the report before Cabinet represented a huge step forward. He said that remarks made by Michael Gove, Secretary of State, last week about some Council's being seen as a 'crying wolf' when it came to finances did not apply to RBWM and that the threat of issuing a Section 114 notice was very real. Despite the good work from officers, the borough were not yet out of the woods and the Council's financial resilience remained extremely low. Increased pressures on the adult social care market and also external macroeconomic factors, continued to put pressures on the borough financially.

Stephen Evans said in terms of due diligence, responses to the public consultation would be considered along with various process being put in place. This included new boards and greater dives to scrutinise the budget at various boards and panels.

Councillor Reynolds said that it was important to realise that although Council tax may be a lot lower in RBWM, this did not mean that services were a lot cheaper to deliver than other local authorities. He then wished to pull out one certain line out of the budget to note, which was increased money for an improved health suite at Windsor Leisure Centre. This was funded by developers through CIL, which would attract more persons and assist the borough in generating more revenue. This showed an example of the new administration identifying key areas to invest in to see increased revenues, which would assist in fixing the mess that has been inherited. He said that it was the Council's priority to best use resources to bridge that gap and fix the mess that had been inherited.

Councillor Hill thanked Councillor Jones and Werner especially, for their hard work in producing the draft budget along with the officers who were also involved. He said that the issues in the past with having a draft budget that was not open and transparent was that money was having to be taken from one area such as 'Place' and fed into another. In the past, this had seen a halt on several highways' projects for example, which was not good. This included several bridges. Policy would come second, and infrastructure repairs would come first, to avoid an awful mess.

Councillor Hill then said that the inspection team would now be brought back in-house. This was important as the inspectors would now be working for the Council directly and that they

would be ensuring that contracts were delivered expertly for residents. The borough would now be 'marking their homework' rather than them 'marking their own homework'. He added that there was also a new thermal device that would allow for highways repairs, which was a lot more efficient.

Councillor Tisi, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Windsor, said that for around every £100 that was spent in the budget, £28 was spent on Children's Services, with many of these services being statutory services. She added that early support and prevention of issues before they were to escalate, was a crucial priority for the new administration. She commended officers for their work on transformation when it came to the budget.

Councillor Davies said that having inherited such a difficult financial situation, the tackling of climate change was challenging. However, she wished to thank the Place directorate for the work they had done in terms of identifying areas of service transformation. If persons came together, thought smartly and were innovative, then ways to both save money and cut carbon by doing something different, were possible. Mixed recycling had been an area looked at, along with energy management. Both would cut costs and carbon emissions.

Councillor Bermange thanked Councillor Jones and officers for their hard work in producing a balanced draft budget for 2024/25, considering the looming threat of issuing a Section 114 notice. He commended the work to tackle the issue head on and not to bury things for another day. He said that in terms of a governance viewpoint, everything had been gone through in extreme detail to ensure that the savings were actually deliverable. He finished by encouraging residents to engage in the public consultation process and the Overview & Scrutiny process over the coming weeks.

The Chair thanked all for their words and then outlined what changes had now been made by the Cabinet, compared to what had been inherited from the previous administration.

- No unachievable savings targets included within the draft budget.
- Transformations were true ones and not cuts in disguise.
- Making better use of insourcing in street care and adult services.
- Ensuring the risks are kept in the public domain, to ensure they are known by the residents.
- Making better use of commercialisation.

The Chair then made it clear that the mess was not fixed, and that work was still ongoing, however the draft budget was a huge step forward. He was also keen to hear from residents on their concerns and ideas on the budget too.

Councillor Price then praised officers and the Cabinet for being able to produce a balanced draft budget, as she did not think it would be possible. The situation took a huge amount of maturity to deal with, which she said the Cabinet proved that they had. She then thanked Councillor Del Campo for putting on record her thanks to the voluntary sector who had worked very hard in recent times. She then noted as she had in previous Cabinet meetings, that communication with residents was essential, with the utilisation of language that they could relate too.

AGREED: That Cabinet noted the report, reviewed the council's approach to balancing the budget and:

- i) noted the draft revenue budget for 2024/25 included in the report, which showed a preliminary balanced position.**
- ii) noted the proposed capital budget for 2024/25 and revised Medium Term Financial Plan to 2028/29 set out respectively in Appendices A and B.**
- iii) considered the proposed budget pressures and savings / transformation / income proposals set out in Appendices C and D;**
- iv) noted the Equality Impacts Assessments shared at Appendix E; and**
- v) agreed to commence public consultation on the draft 2024-25 budget, including proposals to increase Council Tax by the maximum allowed by**

Government. The consultation was expected to run from 14th December 2023 to 22nd January 2024.

Mill Lane Conservation Area Appraisal

AGREED: That the order of the agenda be altered so that agenda item 11 be heard next.

Councillor Bermange introduced the report to Cabinet. He wished to thank officers and residents alike for their work and contribution towards this, including that of Susie Shearer who was in the public gallery. The area covered the ward of Clewer East, where both Ward Councillors were present at the meeting, as members of the Cabinet. The document when adopted would assist in the approval of developments in the future, when it came to looking at applications in the conservation area. He was recommending that it went out to public consultation, with an in-person event being held.

Councillor Davies said that Clewer village was a special place in Windsor, which also housed the oldest building in Windsor. She thanked numerous persons for their work and also their undertaking of reading the draft report that had been presented. This was in addition also to Councillor Bermange and the planning team for facilitating it. She wished to second the proposal.

Councillor Jones said that conservation areas had been put aside for many years and upon asking for them, it had been cast aside. She then wished to mention the conservation area in Old Windsor, which had been waiting 12 years for a report like this too.

AGREED: That Cabinet noted the report and:

- i) Agreed the draft appraisal document.**
- ii) Delegated authority to the Assistant Director of Planning in Consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning, Legal and Asset Management to a) approve and publish any minor changes to the Mill Lane Conservation Area Appraisal document, prior to its publication for consultation, and b) commence a period of public consultation on the document, including a drop-in session at a local venue.**
- iii) Agreed that the appraisal document would come back to Cabinet after consultation, following a review of the responses received, for a decision on whether it can be adopted as a material planning consideration.**

Procurement of Stop Smoking Services

Councillor Del Campo said that the report before Cabinet was close to her heart, as a former smoker, she acknowledged how difficult it was and therefore knows how important it was for assistance with it. The borough already provided smoking cessation services to residents who were aged 12 years and over, with this money being ring-fenced. The current contract was due to expire on 31 March 2024. Cabinet approval was being sought for a 2-year contract with option for a further three 1-year extensions, totalling 5 years altogether. This would take it past the £500,000 threshold; therefore, it required Cabinet approval.

Councillor Price asked if the report classed vaping in the category of smoking and also was the service to purely stop persons who did smoke, or would it also act as a preventative too for those who did not currently smoke.

Councillor Del Campo said that it did not class vaping as smoking but said that vaping was a better alternative for persons wishing to stop smoking, however vaping was not to be encouraged. There was growing concern about young person's taking up vaping too. In relation to the second question, the service was aimed at persons who were addicted to smoking.

AGREED: That Cabinet noted the report and delegated authority to Kevin McDaniel (Executive Director of Adult Services and Health (DASS)) in consultation with Councillor Del Campo (Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing Services) to approve the outcome of the current Stop Smoking Procurement exercise.

School Condition Allocation 2024/25

Councillor Tisi outlined the report that was before Cabinet. A grant was received from central government to fund capital schemes in maintained schools for projects such as replacing boilers or roofs for example. There was an expected receipt of £1.17 million, however this would be made final in March 2024. Proposed works included the replacing/repairing of roofs and also changes in boilers too from oil based to a new air sourced one. She then said that routine survey work was very important to identify issues and fix them, prior to them becoming very expensive to address. This had not been carried by the previous administration, due to no revenue funding having been allocated.

Councillor Hill wished to reinforce Councillor Tisi's request for revenue funding on regularly surveying schools. Routine repairs and maintenance would ensure that a large bill was not incurred later down the line.

Cabinet considered the part II appendix in part I and therefore did not move into part II.

AGREED: To note the report and:

- i) Approved the school condition capital schemes for 2023/24 set out in Appendix C, and their budgets as set out in Appendix D (Part II).**
- ii) Recommended the school condition capital schemes for 2024/25 as set out in Appendix C, and their budgets as set out in Appendix D (Part II), for inclusion 2024/25 capital programme, to Council.**
- iii) Delegated approval of further projects for inclusion in the 2023/24 and 2024/25 SCA capital programme to the Director of Children's Services and Education in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Windsor.**
- iv) Noted the indicative programme of capital schemes for 2025/26 and 2026/27.**
- v) Delegated authority to the Director of Children's Services and the Procurement Manager to undertake procurement and enter into contracts for the delivery of the schemes set out at Appendix C, including where varied under recommendation (ii).**
- vi) Requested that consideration be given to establishing a corporate revenue fund for survey and feasibility works relating to the maintenance and development of the council's assets.**

Building Heights and Tall Buildings Supplementary Planning Document - Adoption

Councillor Bermange introduced the report to the Cabinet and made it clear that the BLP had been inherited from the previous administration and that the Cabinet did not agree with many aspects of it, however they acknowledged that they needed to work with what they had before them. He praised the Planning Policy team for their work in making some significant changes and improvements from the first draft of the proposed Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This included a reduction in the heights of tall buildings that had originally been drafted. This also ensured that the plans for Cookham station were altered.

The Chair asked three questions to Councillor Bermange that had been asked to him by many residents during the election.

1. Would the three tower blocks in Maidenhead be allowed now under the new guidance of the SPD? Councillor Bermange replied by saying that it would be a lot more difficult for that now and unlikely.

2. What would now happen with the 25 storey Nicholsons building that was approved under the previous administration? Councillor Bermange replied with saying that a more appropriate 16-storey would be recommended, subject to planning consent.
3. Was the proposal made by the previous administration to build roughly a 15-storey tower by Maidenhead station now off the agenda? Councillor Bermange replied by saying that the site showed that it was not appropriate to have more than 8 or 10-stories here.

AGREED: That Cabinet noted the report and:

- i) **Approved the adoption of the Building Height and Tall Buildings Supplementary Planning Document, as set out in Appendix B.**
- ii) **Delegated authority to the Assistant Director of Planning in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning, Legal and Asset Management for minor changes to the Supplementary Planning Document to be made prior to publication.**

Article 4 Direction—removal of permitted development rights to change of use from Class E (commercial class) to C3 (residential)

Councillor Bermange briefly outlined the report that was before Cabinet. The BLP did not only discuss housing requirements but also that places of work for example were also mentioned and how to safeguard them. A permitted development right did exist which allowed for an office site to be converted into a block of flats, which had happened. The main aspect of the report would be to disapply this, with developers having to obtain regular planning permission moving forward.

Councillor Hill supported the recommendations and said that when a commercial building went to residential, the income to the borough in terms of business rates would be lost, which in turn could put a dent in the Council’s business rate income stream quite significantly.

AGREED: That Cabinet noted the report and:

- i) **Agreed a non-immediate Article 4 direction be made to remove the permitted development rights (within Schedule 2 of the General Permitted Development Order 2015 (as amended)) to change use from Class E (commercial, business or service) to C3 (residential) on protected employment sites as shown in Appendix B and to prepare and undertake a public consultation.**
- ii) **Delegated authority to the Assistant Director of Planning in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning, Legal and Asset Management, to approve and publish any minor changes to the Article 4 direction and supporting documents, prior to its publication.**
- iii) **Agreed that the Article 4 direction would be taken back to Cabinet after consultation following a review of the responses received, for a decision on whether it can be confirmed.**

The meeting, which began at 7.00 pm, finished at 9.08 pm

CHAIR.....

DATE.....

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Changes made to the Cabinet Forward Plan since the Cabinet meeting on 13.12.23:

Item	Scheduled date	New date	Reason for change
School Transport Policy	24.04.24	-	New Item
Budget 2024/25	07.02.24	-	New Item

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FORWARD PLAN OF CABINET DECISIONS

All enquiries, including representations, about any of the items listed below should be made in the first instance to Democratic Services, Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead. Email: democratic.services@rbwm.gov.uk

Residents can access the Cabinet Forward Plan via the following link - [Browse Forward Plans - Cabinet \(moderngov.co.uk\)](https://www.moderngov.co.uk/Browse-Forward-Plans-Cabinet). The Forward Plan is published at least 14 days prior to the beginning of that month's business. All Key Decisions that are planned to be taken by the Cabinet, shall be listed here, covering the next four month period.

FORWARD PLAN

ITEM	Private Meeting - contains exempt/confidential information ? See categories below.	Short Description	Key Decision , Council or other?	REPORTING MEMBER (to whom representations should be made)	REPORTING OFFICER / DIRECTOR (to whom representations should be made)	Consultation (please specify consultees, dates (to and from) and form of consultation), including other meetings	Date and name of meeting	Date of Council decision (if required)
17 Budget 2024/25	Open -	To recommend revenue and capital budget proposals for 2024/25, including council tax levels, to the Full Council	Yes	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance (Councillor Lynne Jones)	Elizabeth Griffiths, Andrew Vallance	External	Cabinet 20 Feb 2024	
February In-Year Monthly Budget Update	Open -	A monthly report to provide an update on the Council's finances.	No	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance (Councillor Lynne Jones)	Elizabeth Griffiths	Internal	Cabinet 28 Feb 2024	
Draft Affordable Housing Delivery Supplementary Planning Document	Open -	The report seeks approval for the draft Affordable Housing Delivery Supplementary Planning	Yes	Cabinet Member for Adults, Health & Housing Services (Councillor Catherine del Campo), Cabinet	Andrew Durrant, Adrien Waite	Internal consultation and early stakeholder engagement already undertaken. Report	Cabinet 28 Feb 2024	

N.B. All documents to be used by the decision maker to be listed in the report to Cabinet

ITEM	Private Meeting - contains exempt/confidential information? See categories below	Short Description	Key Decision, Council or other?	REPORTING MEMBER (to whom representations should be made)	REPORTING OFFICER / DIRECTOR (to whom representations should be made)	Consultation (please specify consultees, dates (to and from) and form of consultation), including other meetings.	Date and name of meeting	Date of Council decision (if required)
		Document to be published for consultation		Member for Planning, Legal & Asset Management (Councillor Adam Bermange)		seeks approval for full external consultation.		
18 SEND and Alternative Provision Capital Strategy update	Open -	This report seeks approval to consult on new projects addressing special education and alternative provision needs, to be funded using the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation.	No	Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education & Windsor (Councillor Amy Tisi)	Lin Ferguson, Ben Wright	Internal	Cabinet 28 Feb 2024	
Determination of school admissions arrangements for September 2025	Open -	This report seeks approval of the school admissions arrangements for entry into community and voluntary controlled schools in September 2025.	Yes	Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education & Windsor (Councillor Amy Tisi)	Lin Ferguson, Ben Wright	Statutory consultation	Cabinet 28 Feb 2024	
March In-Year Monthly Budget Update	Open -	A monthly report to provide an update on the Council's finances.	No	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance (Councillor Lynne Jones)	Elizabeth Griffiths	Internal	Cabinet 27 Mar 2024	

N.B. All documents to be used by the decision maker to be listed in the report to Cabinet

ITEM	Private Meeting - contains exempt/confidential information? See categories below	Short Description	Key Decision, Council or other?	REPORTING MEMBER (to whom representations should be made)	REPORTING OFFICER / DIRECTOR (to whom representations should be made)	Consultation (please specify consultees, dates (to and from) and form of consultation), including other meetings.	Date and name of meeting	Date of Council decision (if required)
April In-Year Monthly Budget Update	Open -	A monthly report to provide an update on the Council's finances.	No	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance (Councillor Lynne Jones)	Elizabeth Griffiths	Internal	Cabinet 24 Apr 2024	
19 Empty Property Strategy	Open -	Cabinet to agree RBWM's Empty Property Strategy. The Empty Property Strategy aims to work with empty homeowners to increase the supply of housing. The strategy will set out the approach RBWM will take to provide a clear direction for addressing empty homes which blight communities and adversely affect neighbourhoods.	Yes	Cabinet Member for Adults, Health & Housing Services (Councillor Catherine del Campo)	Andrew Durrant, Amanda Gregory	Consultation may be required with residents, landlords.	Cabinet 24 Apr 2024	
School Transport Policy 2024-25	Open -	This report proposes changes to the School Transport Policy, effective from May 2024, based on a review of the	Yes	Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education & Windsor (Councillor Amy Tisi)	Lin Ferguson, Lynne Penn	External consultation using RBWM process	Cabinet 24 Apr 2024	

N.B. All documents to be used by the decision maker to be listed in the report to Cabinet

ITEM	Private Meeting - contains exempt/confidential information? See categories below	Short Description	Key Decision, Council or other?	REPORTING MEMBER (to whom representations should be made)	REPORTING OFFICER / DIRECTOR (to whom representations should be made)	Consultation (please specify consultees, dates (to and from) and form of consultation), including other meetings.	Date and name of meeting	Date of Council decision (if required)
		school transport policy undertaken with the support of Hampshire County Council.						
May In-Year Monthly Budget Update	Open -	A monthly report to provide an update on the Council's finances.	No	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance (Councillor Lynne Jones)	Elizabeth Griffiths	Internal	Cabinet 22 May 2024	

ITEM	Private Meeting - contains exempt/confidential information? See categories below	Short Description	Key Decision, Council or other?	REPORTING MEMBER (to whom representations should be made)	REPORTING OFFICER / DIRECTOR (to whom representations should be made)	Consultation (please specify consultees, dates (to and from) and form of consultation), including other meetings.	Date and name of meeting	Date of Council decision (if required)
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DESCRIPTIONS OF EXEMPT INFORMATION: ENGLAND

- 1 Information relating to any individual.
- 2 Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
- 3 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
- 4 Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
- 5 Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
- 6 Information which reveals that the authority proposes:
 - (a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
 - (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
- 7 Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

N.B. All documents to be used by the decision maker to be listed in the report to Cabinet

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Report Title:	2023/24 Month 8 Budget Monitoring Report
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part I
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Jones, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet – 24 th January 2024
Responsible Officer(s):	Elizabeth Griffiths, Executive Director of Resources Andrew Vallance, Deputy Director of Finance
Wards affected:	All



REPORT SUMMARY

This report details the forecast outturn against budget for the 2023/24 financial year. It includes the revenue and capital budgets along with the financial reserve position at year end.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Cabinet:

- i) notes the forecast revenue outturn for the year is an overspend on services of £8.009m which reduces to an overspend of £4.347m when including unallocated contingency budgets and changes to funding budgets (para 5);
- ii) notes the forecast capital outturn is expenditure of £43.960m against a budget of £88.267m (para 11).

2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Options

Table 1: Options arising from this report

Option	Comments
To note the Council's outturn.	This is the recommended option.
To not note the Council's outturn.	This is not the recommended option.

3. SUMMARY

- 3.1 RBWM faces significant financial challenges. In the Cabinet meeting of 27th of September, the Chief Executive and S151 Officer gave an update to Cabinet, stating that the Council's reserves would be so significantly depleted by the current forecast in year overspend and projected gap in next year's budget that the Council would no longer be able to finance its budget and was therefore at risk of issuing a S114 notice.

- 3.2 Since then, a huge amount of work has been done, and continues to be done to produce a balanced budget for 2024/25 and indeed, coupled with an ambitious but achievable transformation programme for the systems and services next year, the Council was able to issue a balanced draft budget in December 2023.
- 3.3 The overall financial position however remains extremely vulnerable, with a clear inter-play between the current year overspend and the council's financial resilience as we move into the 2024/5 financial year in April. While plans are being implemented to ensure that the required transformations happen, these are future deliverables and therefore inevitably carry an element of risk. The current year position continues to worsen which not only highlights the unexpected pressures that can be put on our finances at any time by our provision of statutory services but also reduces our current level of reserves to significantly below the minimum level set at February 23, leaving us increasingly vulnerable to unexpected costs and decreasing our already fragile financial resilience.

Although a draft balanced budget was presented to Cabinet in December, the level of reserves the council will have going into 2024/25 is likely to be minimal, removing the already low level of resilience we started the year with and meaning that the risk of issuing a S114 notice remains very real.

- 3.4 In spite of the ongoing work on financial controls, the position at month 8 has deteriorated by a further £0.659m. This is because the majority of the increases are either beyond our control or relate to past events. If we compare the positions between month 2, which was reported in July and marked the first reporting of a significant overspend, and our current outturn at month 8, it's easy to see the impact that rising costs in our statutory services have had.

- Adult Social Care overspend has increased from £2.85m to £6.36m
- Children's Services overspend has increased from £0.05m to £0.585m
- Place overspend has reduced from £2.5m to £1.7m
- Resources underspend has increased from (£0.53m) to (£0.65m)

It must be noted that within these movements the increased governance and work by individual directorates has reaped benefits. Place has suffered negative budget impacts but has found compensating savings to create an overall reduction. Resources have also absorbed impacts from unexpectedly high audit fees to reach an improved position. Children's services, while rising overall, have found ways to mitigate hundreds of thousands of pounds of cost. Adult's Services have managed to maintain the number of people requiring long-term residential care, in spite of the fact that the number of people discharged from hospital over the last year has doubled.

The increasing overspend we are noting each month is due to the cost of statutory services we are obligated to deliver. The team have done everything they can, where safe and appropriate, to increase prevention and check the rise in the number of clients, but the complexity of need drives the cost ever upwards. This is also difficult to predict and project and must be acknowledged as an issue not only for this year but, in spite of significant funding being added to these services for the 2024/25 budget, a risk for next year too.

- 3.5 As a further inclusion in the report, to allow for greater transparency and understanding of the underlying issues, the Council has included a table of known financial risks. These are acknowledged, under discussion and where possible, have been quantified but are not included in the forecast position reported. These are both positive and negative. Mitigations are either in place or are being developed by the services.
- 3.6 The initial process of setting the draft budget has been successfully concluded with a balanced draft budget published in December 2023. Further work is being done to review the potential of funding the transformative work that has been planned by a different route, which would allow the Council to boost its reserves a little in the short term.
- 3.7 The Spending Control Panel continues to run successfully and provide challenge to avoidable spend. All non-essential spend over £500 is referred to the panel.
- 3.8 The key variances in each directorate are outlined below. The main pressures remain unchanged and are mainly an increase in both costs and usage in demand led services. These increases are being offset where possible by the use of external grants and earmarked reserves.
- 3.9 Forecasts are expected to have a certain level of volatility during the year, especially on demand led budgets which, to some extent, are beyond our control. Directorates have been asked to establish clear action plans to address the current in year situation. Where feasible, any measures identified to improve next year's budget will be implemented as early as possible, allowing for benefits to be realised in this current financial year. This is particularly applicable to the increases in fees and charges which are being finalised and will be included in the forecast when agreed.
- 3.10 The cost of servicing debt remains a key concern and the forecast increase in interest costs is a large contributor to next year's budget gap.
- 3.11 This report also covers capital expenditure and debt recovery which are two high focus areas with significant impact on our current financial position. All current capital expenditure has been reviewed and additional resource has been put in place to recover debt.
- 3.12 Monthly reviews of the financial position are given to the Executive Leadership Team and Cabinet. Improvements to the Governance of our Property Company and all outsourced partners are underway and new boards have either been set up, or are in the process of being set up, to monitor and drive performance, transformation and cross departmental projects.

3.13 The organisation as a whole is responding to the challenge with regular communications, staff Q&A sessions and member involvement. Both Cabinet and Council have voiced and agreed their support to resolving the situation. The challenge is significant but both officers and members are working hard to alleviate the risk as far as possible.

4. KEY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Council faces considerable financial risks that could have a significant and immediate impact on its finances. The expectation is that reserves will fall below the minimum level set out in the February 2023 budget papers. Whether the remaining level of reserves can be deemed adequate will depend on whether the authority can transform its ongoing financial position sufficiently to continue to reduce its expenditure and significantly reduce the current debt liability.

Table 2: Key Implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
General Fund Reserves	<£7.9m	£7.9m to £12m	£12m to £15m	> £15m	Ongoing

5. 2023/24 MONTH 8 REVENUE FORECAST OUTTURN

5.1 The month 8 forecast is an overspend on service budgets of £8.009m. Assuming the contingency budget is applied and the budgeted contribution to general reserves not made, this reduces to an overspend of £4.347m. The movement between months 7 and 8 is detailed in the table below.

Table 3: 2023/24 Month 8 Revenue Budget Forecast

	Current Budget	Forecast Outturn Mth 7	Forecast Outturn Mth 8	Over / (under) spend Mth 8	Change since Month 7
	£000	£000		£000	£000
Adult Social Care and Health	40,456	46,170	46,816	6,360	645
Children's Services	27,758	28,024	28,343	585	319
Place	11,672	13,869	13,382	1,710	(487)
Resources	12,326	11,542	11,680	(646)	136
Chief Executive Department	1,013	1,013	1,013	0	0
TOTAL SERVICE EXPENDITURE	93,225	100,618	101,234	8,009	613
Contingency and Corporate Budgets	2,983	739	788	(2,195)	49
Other funding and non-service expenditure	(96,208)	(97,669)	(97,675)	(1,467)	(3)
DECREASE IN GENERAL FUND RESERVE	0	3,688	4,347	4,347	659

GENERAL FUND	
Opening balance	(10,213)
Transfer out	0
CLOSING BALANCE	(10,213)

5.2 This shows a worsening at month 8 and would leave to a significant reduction in the level of already low general reserves.

5.3 Although the overall position is very similar in month 8 compared to month 7, there have been significant changes:

- The forecast outturn for Adults has increased by nearly £0.650m as a result of further line by line reviews of all service budgets, along with an increased number of residents needing support on leaving hospital
- The Resources directorate have reduced their expected saving because of circa £130k of additional scale audit fees for the 2023/24 audit
- The Place directorate have reduced their forecast deficit by nearly £500k by finding in-year savings, despite continued pressure on planning fee income and the effect of inflation on contract prices

6. ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH

6.1 The Adult Social Care & Health directorate forecast outturn at M8 is an overspend of £6.360m.

Table 4: Adult Social Care and Health

	Budget	Forecast Outturn Mth 7	Forecast Outturn Mth 8	Over / (under) spend Mth 8	Change Since Mth 7
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Exec Director & Commissioning	1,563	2,010	1,888	325	19
Adult Social Care	38,648	43,915	44,683	6,035	626
Transformation and Community	170	170	170	0	0
Public Health Spend	5,392	5,392	5,392	0	0
Public Health Grant	(5,317)	(5,317)	(5,317)	0	0
Total	40,456	46,170	46,816	6,360	645

6.2 The overspend is primarily due to the residential care costs of older people and increased demand for services, driven by worsening health of a growing population. There also continue to be workforce challenges, meaning all savings in respect of staff costs are unlikely to be met. There are currently £1.27m (31%) of targeted revenue budget savings which remain RAG rated red, meaning that there is a significant risk that they won't be achieved and this is reflected in the forecast.

6.3 The worsening forecast between months 7 and 8 is also due to:

- Backdated Direct Payments for a number of older people have now been recognised in the forecast (£0.072m)
- Increased projection for rehabilitation costs in light of sustained levels of discharge from acute hospitals over the year (£0.078m)
- Likely bad debt costs (£0.142m) – failure to make the entire £350k saving despite the ongoing recovery project work
- Apprentice fee and additional staff costs for developing our own social workers (£0.053m)
- Additional agency staff costs for qualified Mental Health workers to maintain minimum staffing levels (£0.070m)

- 6.4 Ongoing actions to address the overspend include establishing a rigorous panel process for new care placements, the Homefirst project that seeks to support people as they leave hospital to reduce the risk of care home placements, and a targeted review of care packages between August and November. There are early indications that the panel review and Homefirst are having positive impacts, but with demand led services we must wait to see longer term trends before drawing firm conclusions.
- 6.5 There is significant inflationary pressure from all providers, especially those with no contractually agreed terms. This is particularly noticeable in residential and nursing home places where we are seeing requests for 8-16% uplifts on existing placements, having budgeted 5%.
- 6.6 The additional Urgent and Emergency Care Fund govt grant of £0.233m which was recently awarded has been incorporated into this forecast.
- 6.7 While vacancies in this section of the Finance team have been filled after a significant length of time, we are still working with a team who, bar one FTE, are entirely new this year. The complex set up where transactions are split over two ledgers also makes forecasting extremely difficult. These issues are expected to be resolved in part by the move from the current adult social care system to the new system currently being implemented.
- 6.8 Other risks include:
- Predicting the client income figure in the forecast outturn
 - Further bad debt write offs
 - Further inflationary pressures on fees

7. CHILDREN'S SERVICES

- 7.1 The Children's directorate forecast outturn at M8 is an overspend of £0.585m.

Table 5: Children's Services

	Budget	Forecast Outturn Mth 7	Forecast Outturn Mth 8	Over / (under) spend Mth 8	Change Since Mth 7
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Management & Business Services	3,158	3,242	3,195	37	(47)
Education	1,279	1,041	1,081	(198)	40
SEN & Disabilities	3,676	4,205	4,291	615	86
Social Care and Early Help	21,043	21,225	21,465	422	240
Public Health	(11)	(16)	(16)	(5)	0
RBWM Retained Grant Budgets	(1,387)	(1,673)	(1,673)	(286)	0
Total	27,758	28,024	28,343	585	319

- 7.2 Since month 3 there has been a high cost placement costing £14k per week. Cost outliers such as this cause disproportionate pressures on the budget and can quickly consume additional budget allowance for growth in demand, meaning that this expected growth then becomes an overspend.
- 7.3 Since month 7 there have been further additional costs:
- Increase in residential placements of £108k. This is for the placement of 2 young people costing £4.5k per week
 - Placement of 3 young people into Independent Foster Placement costing £124k for 2023/24
 - 8 new support packages for families, totalling £45k for 2023/24
 - Placement of 2 young people into an in-house foster placement, costing £40k for 2023/24
- 7.4 There are currently £0.550m (18%) of targeted revenue budget savings which remain RAG rated RED, meaning there is a significant risk they will not be achieved.
- 7.5 Ongoing actions to address the areas of budget pressure include a new process around SEN cases to ensure only eligible young people are offered transport.

8. PLACE

8.1 The Place directorate forecast outturn at M8 is an overspend of £1.710m. This is a reduction of nearly £500k since period 7.

Table 6: Place

	Budget	Forecast Outturn Mth 7	Forecast Outturn Mth 8	Over / (under) spend Mth 8	Change Since Mth 7
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Executive Director of Place	20	20	20	0	0
Neighbourhood Services	9,277	10,970	10,844	1,567	(126)
Planning Service	1,331	1,725	1,498	167	(227)
Communities including Leisure	(1,250)	(1,032)	(1,054)	196	(22)
Housing	2,018	1,889	1,889	(129)	0
Property	(2,908)	(2,908)	(2,908)	0	0
Infrastructure, Sustainability & Transport	3,184	3,205	3,093	(91)	(112)
Total	11,672	13,869	13,382	1,710	(487)

8.2 The overspend includes the following significant factors:

- Contract costs, including £0.600m on the SERCO contract and £0.360m on the Volker highways contract, have risen sharply due to inflation staying higher than expected for longer than expected.
- Daily parking income has improved significantly with performance at 91% of income targets but there remains an underachievement of parking income targets partly due to the continued lower levels of season ticket sales at 71% of budgeted income (1.020m). Development of the Maidenhead parking strategy is progressing and a comms campaign has launched to increase parking use in key locations.
- Reprocessing rates are still higher than anticipated (£0.285m), mainly due to stockpiling of material in overseas markets and paper mills in Europe being shut due to the energy crisis. An additional saving of £0.180m has been achieved by signing a new Dry Mixed Recycling contract for 50% of materials, and negotiating lower rates with the existing supplier for the rest.

- A reduction in major planning applications, reflecting the current economic situation, leading to a shortfall in planning fees income (£0.690m). This is £0.3m worse than month 7

8.3 The predicted overspend has decreased between months 7 and 8 partly due to

- A one-off CIL allocation of £0.573m for essential work to green infrastructure has been applied and various ear marked reserves and grants have been applied where appropriate to mitigate other costs.

8.4 Further risks in Place include:

- Pressures on Temporary Accommodation budgets from increasing levels of homelessness
- Legal costs following the refusal of a planning permission. Early forecasts of these are around £0.2m but have not yet been included in the forecast.

9.5 There are currently, £0.220m (9%) of targeted revenue budget savings which remain RAG rated red, meaning that there is a significant risk they will not be achieved.

9. RESOURCES

9.1 The Resources directorate forecast at M8 is an underspend of £646k.

Table 7: Resources

	Budget	Forecast Outturn Mth 7	Forecast Outturn Mth 8	Over / (under) spend Mth 8	Change Since Mth 7
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Executive Director of Resources	155	83	83	(72)	0
Revs & Bens, Library & Res Services	4,390	3,522	3,523	(867)	0
Housing Benefit	(377)	(346)	(346)	31	0
HR, Corporate Projects & IT	3,346	3,301	3,286	(60)	(15)
Corporate Management	(196)	304	556	752	252
Finance	1,615	1,549	1,448	(167)	(101)
Governance	2,368	2,280	2,280	(88)	0
Legal Services	1,025	849	850	(175)	0
Total Resources	12,324	11,542	11,680	(646)	136

- 9.2 The underspends in the table above are mainly related to £0.43m staff vacancies and £0.8m of New Burdens Funding from ear marked reserves.
- 9.3 Planned savings on corporate debt of £0.2m were previously rated amber but due to arrangements for enhanced debt monitoring still being developed and current capacity issues, progress has not been as quick as anticipated. There is an expectation that £0.165m of these will not be achieved and this has been included in the forecast. Please see below for an update on the work that is being undertaken.
- 9.4 This under collection of debt, along with expected overspends on audit fees for 20/21 and confirmed rises in fees for 2023/24 are the cause of the overspend in Corporate Management.

10. SUNDRY DEBT

- 10.1 The current level of overdue sundry debt is £9.247m. On subsidiary systems there is also debt of £2.917m and £0.129m in relation to Housing Overpayments and Housing Rents respectively. This remains an area of high focus.
- 10.2 Some of the efficiency savings in this year's budget relate to reductions in debt. As such, work is currently ongoing to establish a more holistic, corporate led approach to debt. This includes:
- clearer and more frequent reporting of debt to encourage directorates to engage in the debt recovery process;
 - data cleansing, including write off of historic uncollectable debts, to allow efforts to be focused on collectable debts. Debts are only ever approved to be written off where they are truly uncollectable. This process is being balanced against collection of debt to avoid timing issues on the bad debt provision.
 - ensuring processes are in place for debt on subsidiary systems that are not covered by regular corporate processes (e.g. Housing Rents)
 - adopting a tailored approach where relevant, such as Adult Social Care where Optalis has recently recruited a dedicated income collection officer.
 - Review of billing processes and collection of current debtors. While increased effort has been put into the reduction of aged debt, it's important to improve early collection so the problem does not reoccur.
 - Investigation of where system capabilities can improve the process, for example to collect the history on a case as it moves between the stages of the process.

Table 8: Aged Debt and bad debt provision

	> 1 month	> 2 month	> 6 month	> 1 year	Total	Cost of Bad Debt Prov
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Adults & Health						
Adult Social Care	339	749	683	2,677	4,447	461
Deferred Payments	21	100	114	528	763	0
Children's Services	16	24	0	6	46	3
Place						
Housing	3	8	13	1,316	1,341	66
Commercial property	53	610	148	110	921	185
Other Place	152	398	164	92	805	134
Resources	837	4	5	77	924	56
Total Agresso Debt	1,421	1,893	1,127	4,805	9,247	905

Debt on other systems:

HB Overpayments	2,917	0
Housing Rents	129	60
Total overdue debt	12,293	965

Note: this excludes CTAX and Business Rates debt due to the collection fund

11. CAPITAL

- 11.1 The 2023/24 budget of £88.267m includes the original capital programme budget of £34.766m approved by Council in February 2023 and an expenditure slippage of £52.929m carried-forward from 2022/23.
- 11.2 The capital budget for the current financial year is summarised in Table 9 below.
- 11.3 All capital expenditure from 2023/24 has been reviewed in order to minimise borrowing requirements and reduce spend where possible.

Table 9: Capital programme outturn

	Budget £000	Variance on Budget £000	Reprofiled to future years £000	Forecast 23/24 Outturn £000	YTD spend £000
ASC and Health	1,738	(213)	(899)	626	239
Children's Services	15,044	0	(4,049)	10,995	6,127
Place	67,712	(1,716)	(36,159)	29,838	12,946
Resources	3,774	(1,151)	(122)	2,501	808
Total	88,267	(3,079)	(41,228)	43,960	20,120

11.4 Table 10 below summarises how the capital programme for 2023/24 is financed:

Table 10: Financing of the capital programme

	Over / (under) spend £000
	£000
Government Grants	15,577
Other Grants	901
Community Infrastructure Levy	15,469
S106	1,959
Capital Receipts & contributions	200
Borrowing	9,854
Total	43,960

12. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

12.1 In producing and reviewing this report the Council is meeting its legal obligations to monitor its financial position.

13. RISK MANAGEMENT

13.1 Projected variances require mitigation to reduce them during the financial year.

14. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

14.1 Equalities. There are no direct impacts.

14.2 Climate change/sustainability. There are no direct impacts.

14.3 Data Protection/GDPR. There are no direct impacts.

15. CONSULTATION

15.1 None.

16. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation date if not called in: 'Immediately'.

17. APPENDICES

17.1 This report is supported by one appendix:

Appendix A Revenue monitoring statement
Appendix B Risks and assumptions

18. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

18.1 This report is supported by one background document, the budget report to [Council February 2023](#).

19. CONSULTATION

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
<i>Mandatory: Statutory Officers (or deputies)</i>			
Elizabeth Griffiths	Executive Director of Resources		08/01/24
Elaine Browne	Monitoring Officer		08/01/24
<i>Deputies</i>			
Andrew Vallance	Deputy Director of Finance	Report Author	
<i>Directors</i>			
Stephen Evans	Chief Executive		08/01/24
Andrew Durrant	Executive Director of Place		08/01/24
Lin Ferguson	Executive Director of Children's Services		08/01/24

Kevin McDaniel	Executive Director of Adult Services and Health		08/01/24
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Confirmation relevant Cabinet Member(s) consulted	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance	Yes
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REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To follow item?
Non-key decision	No	No

Report Author: Andrew Vallance, Deputy Director of Finance
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Service	Current budget	Forecast outturn	Forecast variance	Previously reported variance	Change from previously reported variance
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Chief Executive Department					
Chief Executive	244	244	0	0	0
Strategy & Performance	769	769	0	0	0
TOTAL CHIEF EXECUTIVE	1,013	1,013	0	0	0
Children's Services					
Director of Children's Services	(79)	(79)	0	0	0
Achieving for Children Contract	44,686	45,271	585	266	319
Children's Services - Retained	58,870	58,870	0	0	0
Dedicated Schools Grant - Income	(75,719)	(75,719)	0	0	0
TOTAL CHILDREN'S SERVICES	27,758	28,343	585	266	319
Adult Social Care and Health					
Executive Director and Commissioning	1,563	1,888	325	306	19
Adult Social Care	38,648	44,683	6,035	5,409	626
Better Care Fund - Spend	14,579	14,579	0	0	0
Better Care Fund - Income	(14,579)	(14,579)	0	0	0
Transformation and Community	170	170	0	0	0
Public Health Spend	5,392	5,392	0	0	0
Public Health Grant	(5,317)	(5,317)	0	0	0
TOTAL ADULT SOCIAL CARE and HEALTH	40,456	46,816	6,360	5,715	645
Resources					
Executive Director of Resources	155	83	(72)	(72)	0
Revenues, Benefits, Library & Resident Services	4,390	3,523	(867)	(867)	0
Housing Benefit	(377)	(346)	31	31	0
Human Resources, Corporate Projects & IT	3,346	3,286	(60)	(45)	(15)
Corporate Management	(196)	556	752	500	252
Finance	1,615	1,448	(167)	(66)	(101)
Governance	2,368	2,280	(88)	(88)	0
Legal services	1,025	850	(175)	(175)	0
TOTAL RESOURCES	12,326	11,680	(646)	(782)	136
Place					
Executive Director of Place	20	20	0	0	0
Neighbourhood Services	9,277	10,844	1,567	1,693	(126)
Planning Service	1,331	1,498	167	394	(227)
Communities including Leisure	(1,250)	(1,054)	196	218	(22)
Housing	2,018	1,889	(129)	(129)	0
Property	(2,908)	(2,908)	0	0	0
Infrastructure, Sustainability & Transport	3,184	3,093	(91)	21	(112)
TOTAL PLACE	11,672	13,382	1,710	2,197	(487)
TOTAL SERVICE EXPENDITURE	93,225	101,234	8,009	7,396	613
Sources of funding and non-service expenditure					
Contingency and Corporate Budgets	2,983	788	(2,195)	(2,244)	49
Precepts and Levies	2,066	2,066	0	0	0
Financing and investment (income) and expenditure	5,180	4,653	(527)	(527)	0
Taxation and non-specific grant income	(110,629)	(110,629)	0	0	0
Minimum Revenue Provision	3,139	3,268	129	129	0
Transfer to / (from) earmarked reserves	(364)	(1,364)	(1,000)	(997)	(3)
Contribution to Pension Fund deficit	4,400	4,331	(69)	(69)	0
TOTAL FUNDING AND NON-SERVICE EXPENDITURE	(93,225)	(96,887)	(3,662)	(3,708)	46
(INCREASE) DECREASE IN GENERAL FUND	0	4,347	4,347	3,688	659

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Directorate	Risk and/or Opportunity Description	Estimated impact (Surplus) / Pressure £m
All	FEES AND CHARGES UPLIFT FROM 1 JANUARY (excluding Parking) Following approval at November 2023 Cabinet, some fees will increase from January 2024. This is not yet reflected in individual forecasts though an estimated impact figure was provided in the November report.	(0.160)
Place	HOUSING ROUGH SLEEPER DISPERSAL GRANT The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has been scrutinising how this grant has been used. The allocation was £1.492m for the period 2022-2025. Initial meetings with the department have been positive however, but we have yet to receive assurance grant will not be withheld.	0.250
Place	TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION This is a volatile area and there are a number of pressures, both locally and nationally, which make this worth noting as a risk as we head into year end. This risk includes the asylum hotels (for which specific grant of £298,500 has been received from government) and potential additional demand should Ukrainian families currently being hosted present as homeless. There also remains a significant amount of Housing legacy debt on Agresso, though this is taken into account in the forecast via the bad debt provision (see below).	Unknown
Place	PLANNING APPEAL Costs in relation to a planning decision compensation / costs are expected. Initial indication is that this is £0.180m (not in the forecast), but this is an estimate and may increase.	0.180
Place	TREE MAINTENANCE Increase in re-active maintenance as a result of ongoing inspections by end of March 2024 have been included in the forecast. However, the higher end of this forecast indicated potential additional costs of £0.085m which are not in the forecast.	0.085
Place	PARKING FEES AND CHARGES Additional income will be generated by raising parking fees from February 2024, subject to consultation. This is not reflected in the forecast.	(0.150)
Resources	EXTERNAL AUDIT FEES Deloitte have requested to the local government audit regulator (Public Sector Audit Appointments) that they be allowed to charge additional fees of £0.400m in respect of the 2020/21 audit, which includes additional work responding to objections. This has been included in the forecast we are challenging the scale of these additional fees so there could be a benefit if that was accepted.	(0.050)
Resources	BAD DEBT PROVISION (excluding Adults & Health) A saving of £0.190m was included in the 2023/24 budget in respect of reducing the bad debt provision (though the saving relates to Place as well, it has been recorded in Resources for simplicity). However, it is looking unlikely that this target will be achieved and there will be a cost from a requirement to increase the bad debt provision. Bad debt provisions are volatile depending on the timing of large invoices, but there is a risk that the requirement for an increase in the provision will be significant. There are however some unreconciled credits on Agresso of approximately £0.360m which may mitigate the pressure.	0.090 - 0.450
Children's	HEALTH FUNDING The budget assumes health funding for two placement of young people, totalling £0.258m. However, there is a risk that health will not fund part or all of these costs.	0.258

Directorate	Risk and/or Opportunity Description	Estimated impact (Surplus) / Pressure £m
Adults & Health	<p>DATA QUALITY OF INFORMATION TO BASE ADULT SOCIAL CARE FORECASTS ON</p> <p>The lack of a care system that integrates with the ledger and automates processes results in significant concerns over the quality of data used to inform forecasting in Adult Social Care. Finance are reliant on the service to update manual spreadsheets of care packages, but there are significant differences between what is currently on the spreadsheets and the commitments recorded on the care system. This could be that the care system is not up to date, but each case needs to be followed up individually. As an example, in Mental Health there are £1.288m of care costs recorded on finance spreadsheets that are not recorded on the care system.</p> <p>There are also delays in notifying finance of new care package changes, some of which have been backdated to pre-1 April. So far prior year costs not accrued have been identified that total £0.250m. As an example, we have been made aware of services in October 2023 that backdate to December 2022.</p>	Unknown
Adults & Health	<p>INCOME FORECASTING</p> <p>Client income is proving difficult to forecast and there remains a risk of significant variations in forecast in the final months leading up to year-end. This is due to the invoicing of clients being a manual process and therefore requiring complex manual spreadsheets to monitor, exacerbated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - frequent backdating of financial assessments, for example due to delays at Court of Protection granting deputyship; - data quality issues (see data quality above) meaning finance may not be aware of the care package and the associated assessed client contribution; - learning disability clients who finance have recorded as having to make a contribution (including CHC) but have not been invoiced; - s117 clients where it may be that the ICB should be meeting costs. 	Unknown
Adults & Health	<p>PROVISION FOR SOCIAL CARE COSTS</p> <p>At the end of 2022/23 we provided for a Continuing Health Care case for which health have offered to pay 35% (£0.103m). We are still disputing this but if the 35% was accepted would allow is to release part of the provision.</p>	(0.103)
Adults & Health	<p>FUNDED NURSING CARE (FNC)</p> <p>FNC is a contribution from health to nursing residential placements. The Council pays care providers the FNC as part of its nursing block fees and then reclaims it from the Integrated Care Board (ICB). It can take a long time for the ICB to agree FNC with claims outstanding from 2021. The Council is projected to pay £0.244m more FNC than it receives (£0.162m in 22/23). There may be potential to increase the FNC agreed and increase the income in the current forecast.</p> <p>It should also be noted that by paying FNC as part of the block contract that Council takes the risk of applying for and obtaining this funding, whereas with other providers it is usual to pay net of FNC and the provider takes that risk. This means that in the case of the block spaces where the fee includes FNC that there is no financial imperative for the block provider to secure FNC.</p>	(0.244)
Adults & Health	<p>INCORRECT PAYMENT OF FUNDED NURSING CARE (FNC) BY HEALTH</p> <p>The Integrated Care Board (ICB) has paid FNC to block providers instead of paying this to the Council. Block providers have not disclosed that they are receiving duplicate FNC both the ICB and the Council (see issue raised above). There are six clients for which we are currently trying to recover funding.</p>	(0.097)
Adults & Health	<p>ADULT SOCIAL CARE FEES</p> <p>The ICB limited the uplift it will fund in 2023/24 to 1.8% so they are not paying the published fees and charges for Council / Optalis provided care services. The Director of Adults & Health is challenging this decision.</p>	(0.060)
Adults & Health	<p>BAD DEBT PROVISION (ADULTS AND HEALTH)</p> <p>Although there is a project underway concerning the large amount of old debt in Adult Social Care, it is looking increasingly unlikely that any improvement will be realised in the year. The budget contains a bad debt saving of £350k which may not materialise in 2023/24. In addition the current bad debt provision is projected to increase by £0.433m. This makes a total overspend of £0.783m. £261m is in the forecast, the remainder is being released to the forecast over the coming months depending on how the debt profile changes. It should be noted that the current project chasing debt over 1 year old has shown some early success.</p>	0.522

Directorate	Risk and/or Opportunity Description	Estimated impact (Surplus) / Pressure £m
Adults & Health	<p>PUBLIC HEALTH REPLACEMENT SPEND</p> <p>The budget assumes Public Health funding of £0.190m will be received for preventative services (day care and supported employment). However, the Public Health team have previously indicated that such funding is predicated and a more substantive case being made. The forecast assumes Public Health will continue to provide this funding.</p>	0.190
Adults & Health	<p>SUPREME COURT JUDGEMENT ON S117 AFTERCARE</p> <p>In 2023 the Supreme Court ruled on determining responsibility for aftercare when people are placed out of area and then detained again under the Mental Health Act 1983. This impacts on which local authority has responsibility for aftercare , (including funding) for a person detained in hospital under the Mental Health Act. The ruling represents a change in the law resulting in £1m risk to RBWM arising from specific circumstances.</p>	1.000

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Report Title:	Quarterly Assurance Report Q2 2023-24 or where latest information is available until October 2023
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part I
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Werner, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Community Partnerships, Public Protection and Maidenhead
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet – 24 January 2024
Responsible Officer(s):	Stephen Evans, Chief Executive Elizabeth Griffiths, Executive Director
Wards affected:	All

REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide the Quarterly Assurance Report (Appendix A) focused on the latest available position in relation to performance indicators and the corporate risk register. Audit and Workforce insights are also included. The Quarterly Assurance Report is a mechanism to support good governance and reflects performance (Q2 23/24 or where latest information is available until October 2023) and risk for RBWM.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Cabinet notes the report and:

- i) Reviews the Quarterly Assurance Report setting out progress against the performance indicators and risk register.**

2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The Quarterly Assurance Report (QAR) at Appendix A was introduced in October 2023 to bring together the latest available performance insights and risk information. Audit and Workforce insights are also included. As a mechanism to support good governance, there are no options associated with this report.

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The council is developing a new Council Plan which will set out a vision for the borough over the coming years and describe the most important aims and priorities that the council will focus on delivering. The new Council Plan provides a framework for decision-making and resource allocation.
- 3.2 The aims and priorities of the new Council Plan will be presented at both Cabinet and Full Council in February 2024, alongside the 2024/25 Budget. The

full Council Plan, inclusive of deliverables and a refreshed suite of performance indicators, will be considered by the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel and Cabinet in March, and presented to Full Council in April 2024.

- 3.3 As part of its consideration of the first QAR in November 2023, the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel shared constructive feedback in relation to the QAR's future evolution, including feedback on additional performance indicators to be considered for inclusion. The Panel's feedback is being factored into the development of the new performance management framework that will support the new Council Plan, and which will be monitored through the Quarterly Assurance Report going forwards.
- 3.4 In the interests of good governance, an interim performance management framework (PMF) has been developed to share performance with Cabinet and the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel in 2023/24. This is set out in the QAR (see Appendix A). Performance reporting for indicators is based on a traffic-light concept where green is on/above target, amber provides an early warning for possible intervention, and red suggests intervention may be necessary.

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

- 4.1 This report combines the council's performance and risk. Robust information on performance and risk helps to inform future resource allocation decisions, including the current budgeting process. A separate Budget Monitoring report is provided to Cabinet monthly with full detail of the council's latest financial position.
- 4.2 The current predicted overspend, coupled with a potential budget gap in 2024/25 are significant risks. An update was provided to Cabinet on 27 September 2023, summarising further, urgent action to address the financial risk.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 In considering its financial and non-financial performance, the Cabinet is supporting the Council to fulfil its duties under s.151 of the Local Government Act 1972 to ensure that there are arrangements in place for the proper administration of its financial affairs. Further, under s.3 of the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 Specific risk management activities and consideration of the corporate risk register is included within the relevant sections of Appendix A. Failure to manage risks appropriately could have financial, reputational or other

consequences. Risk owners are required to implement controls to mitigate risks and update these regularly.

7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

7.1 **Equalities.** This report does not have direct implications for equality and diversity.

7.2 **Climate change/sustainability.** This report does not have direct environmental impacts.

7.3 **Data Protection/GDPR.** There are no data protection impacts as a result of this report.

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 No consultation was required in creating this report.

9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

9.1 The Quarterly Assurance Report set out at Appendix A provides an update on latest position in relation to performance and risk. There are no implementation items associated with this report.

10. APPENDICES

This report is supported by 1 appendix.

- Appendix A: Quarterly Assurance Report

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

11.1 There are no background documents.

12. CONSULTATION

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
<i>Mandatory: Statutory Officer (or deputy)</i>			
Elizabeth Griffiths	Executive Director of Resources / S151 Officer	08.01.24	16.01.24
Andrew Vallance	Deputy Director of Finance		
Elaine Browne	Deputy Director of Law & Governance & Monitoring Officer	08.01.24	16.01.24
<i>Mandatory: Equalities Officer – to advise on EQiA, or agree an EQiA is not required</i>			

Ellen McManus-Fry	Equalities & Engagement Officer	N/A	N/A
<i>Other consultees:</i>			
<i>Directors</i>			
Stephen Evans	Chief Executive	02.01.24	16.01.24
Andrew Durrant	Executive Director of Place	08.01.24	
Kevin McDaniel	Executive Director of Adult Social Care & Health	08.01.24	16.01.24
Lin Ferguson	Executive Director of Children's Services & Education	08.01.24	10.01.24

Confirmation relevant Cabinet Member(s) consulted	Councillor Werner, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Community Partnerships, Public Protection and Maidenhead	Yes
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REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To follow item?
For information	No	No

Report Author: Rachel Kinniburgh, Service Lead – Strategic Policy, Performance and Insights

APPENDIX A

Quarterly Assurance Report

Performance Data as at Q2 (Jul-Sep) 2023/24 or where latest monthly data is available until October-23.

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Report Author(s)	
Radhika Thirunarayana-Govindarajan	Lead Performance Analyst
Rachel Kinniburgh	Service Lead – Strategy, Policy & Performance
Steve Mappley	Insurance & Risk Manager

1. Executive Summary

Performance

- 1.1 An interim suite of performance indicators (“the Interim PMF”) has been developed for reporting in 2023/24 as part of Quarterly Assurance reporting arrangements. A new Council Plan and related performance management framework is currently in development and will be in place by April 2024. The Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel will have a role in reviewing the new performance management framework, and comments shared by the Panel to date – including the need to include outcome/impact focused indicators – are being factored into the new framework’s development. The structure and format of this report will continue to be refined in line with feedback from both Cabinet and the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel to ensure that it delivers the insights required for assurance and decision-making.
- 1.2 The Interim PMF has a total of 65 indicators, with further indicators being identified for inclusion as appropriate over time. It is noted that the indicators reported in 2023/24 follow different frequencies (e.g. monthly, quarterly), and this report sets out the latest data available at the time of this report’s preparation – either Q2 (Jul-Sep) or Oct-23. This report’s preparation has preceded availability of Q3 data for indicators reported on a quarterly frequency.
- 1.3 Table 1 summarises the volume of indicators reported in this QAR for each Directorate with a breakdown by RAG status and an indication of the change since the last QAR was reported to Cabinet in Oct-23 shown in brackets. Of the 37 target-based indicators, 84% are either green or amber (31/37), 14% are red (5/37) and 3% (1/37) have no latest data available. Details of performance for each Directorate are set out in relevant sections of this report and a high-level summary of key messages across all Directorates is provided at 1.4.

Table 1: Latest available period performance with Directorate breakdown (previous QAR position identified in brackets to show change)

Directorate	Red	Amber	Green	Monitoring only	No data available	Total
RBWM corporate cross-cutting	1 (→ 1)	0 (↓ 1)	3 (↑ 2)	9		13
Adult Social Care & Health	2 (↓ 4)	0 (→ 0)	4 (↑ 3)	7		13
Children’s Services & Education	1 (→ 1)	1 (→ 1)	9 (↑ 8)	4		15
Place	1 (↑ 0)	1 (↓ 2)	7 (↓ 8)	8	1	18
Resources	0 (↓ 1)	4 (↑ 2)	2 (↓ 3)	0		6
Total	5 (↓ 7)	6 (→ 6)	25 (↑ 24)	28	1	65

Key messages:

- 1.4 **Finance:** The council's serious financial position remains the most acute challenge. A separate Budget Monitoring report is provided to Cabinet monthly with full detail of the council's latest financial position. The risk to the council's financial stability is driven in large part by key strategic risks within services – in particular rising costs, demand pressures and recruitment challenges within adult social care, children's social care and housing. The council's financial position is impacted by its ability to mitigate risks in these areas. While the draft budget for next year has been balanced, it is dependent on the delivery of a large transformation programme and on a range of external factors. The in-year position continues to fluctuate and has been worsening over recent months due to these pressures.
- 1.5 **Adult social care:** the service continues to see acute staffing challenges. A reliance on agency staff to deliver a statutory duty has significant financial implications for the council and risks the quality of care provided. The percentage of posts filled by permanent staff has been declining and is at 70% (Oct-23), meaning that almost a third of posts are vacant or filled by temporary or agency staff.
- 1.6 Despite the challenges, data released in December 2023 as part of the annual Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) shows a trend of growing satisfaction year-on-year in some key areas of service quality. The borough is ranked top nationally for social care-related quality of life, 2nd nationally for the proportion of adults with learning disabilities in paid employment, 3rd nationally for residents feeling safe, and 4th nationally for people's overall satisfaction with their care and support. These figures provide reassurance on the quality of services provided, as requested by Corporate Overview & Scrutiny.
- 1.7 **Children's social care:** The service continues to see acute staffing challenges to deliver its statutory duties, which means an over-reliance on agency staff and related financial implications for the council due to higher costs.
- 1.8 **Housing:** The cost of living crisis continues to impact the housing service. This, combined with a growing number of asylum seekers, a limited housing stock, and increasing prices for rental properties continues to place considerable strain on the provision of temporary accommodation within the borough and remains a key challenge for the council. The % of households in temporary accommodation within the borough was 39.3% in Oct-23 (red), down from 43% (amber, Aug-23) reported in the last QAR. As at Dec-23 there were 264 households in temporary accommodation, 163 of which (62%) were placed out of borough. Of those placed out of borough, 83% (136/163) were placed in Slough.

Risk

- 1.9 Risks potentially carrying the most damaging impacts on our measurement scale are classified as key risks. The inclusion of risks within any level of risk register does not mean there is an immediate problem but signifies officers are aware of potential risks and have devised strategies for the implementation of relevant mitigation measures towards the accepted appetite position. Table 2 sets out the current risk assessment status by Directorate.
- 1.10 Cabinet Members are notified of the key risks where they are named as the risk owner, typically as part of a Member briefing. Officers are tasked with ensuring that any comments by Members are reflected in the assessment.
- 1.11 If any risks are of such low inherent impact that there is no good reason to continue referencing them as key risks then they are removed from the key risk registers. They are usually re-categorised as service area risks unless to do so would simply create extraneous “noise” and be of no management benefit. In which case they would be removed completely.

Table 2: Current risk assessment status by Directorate

	High	Medium/ high	Medium	Low
RBWM strategic risks	3	4	5	3
Adults, Social Care and Health	0	0	3	0
Chief Executive	0	0	1	0
Children’s Services and Education	1	0	0	2
Place	0	2	0	2
Resources	0	0	3	0

2. RBWM corporate cross-cutting

Performance

2.1 Scorecard 1 sets out cross-cutting corporate indicators and reflects the latest data available at the time of this report's preparation.

Scorecard 1: Corporate cross-cutting performance [please note a separate Budget Monitoring report is provided to Cabinet monthly with full detail of the council's latest financial position]

Corporate cross-cutting									
Information governance									
Measure	Date	Period Actual	Period trends	Last period	Period Improving / Worsening	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YE Target	Frequency
[RBWM:IG1] % of information requests processed within 20 working days or within agreed timelines	Oct 23	91.3%		84.4%	↑	90.1%	90.0%	90.0%	Monthly
Budget									
Measure	Date	Period Actual	Period trends	Last period	Period Improving / Worsening	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YE Target	Frequency
[RBWM:M1] % forecast variance to service revenue budget	Oct 23	7.9%		6.8%	↓	7.9%	0.0%	0.0%	Monthly
[RBWM:M1a] Forecast variance to service revenue budget (£000s)	Oct 23	£7,396		£6,288	?	£7,396			Monthly
[RBWM:M2] % savings made or on track	Oct 23	45.0%		45.0%	?	45.0%		100.0%	Monthly
[RBWM:M2a] Savings made or on track (£000s)	Oct 23	£4,871		£4,871	?	£4,871			Monthly
[RBWM:M3] Overdue debts (excluding Housing Benefits over-payments) (£000s)	Oct 23	£7,380		£7,457	?	£7,380			Monthly
Complaints & Compliments									
Measure	Date	Period Actual	Period trends	Last period	Period Improving / Worsening	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YE Target	Frequency
[RBWM:C10] # of compliments received (RBWM Formal Corporate)	Sep 23	97		120	?	217			Quarterly
[RBWM:C6b] # of contacts progressed as complaints (RBWM Formal Corporate)	Sep 23	43		53	?	96			Quarterly
Workforce									
Measure	Date	Period Actual	Period trends	Last period	Period Improving / Worsening	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YE Target	Frequency
[RBWM:P01] Headcount	Oct 23	575		566	?	575			Monthly
[RBWM:P02] FTE	Oct 23	523.21		514.69	?	523.21			Monthly
[RBWM:P05] # of working days lost to sickness per headcount (YTD)	Oct 23	1.95		1.57	↓	1.95	3.38	5.80	Monthly
[RBWM:P06] % voluntary turnover (Month)	Oct 23	1.24%		0.54%	?	1.24%			Monthly
[RBWM:P07] % voluntary turnover (YTD)	Oct 23	8.33%		7.14%	↑	8.33%	7.53%	12.90%	Monthly

Key messages

2.2 **Finance:** The council's serious financial position remains the most acute challenge. In Oct-23 the % forecast variance to service revenue budget was 7.9% (red), worsening from 6.8% in Sep-23. In monetary terms this is a £7,396,000 variance in Oct-23 compared to £6,288,000 in Sep-23. The council has taken swift and decisive action to address the serious financial challenges it faces. This includes introducing a spending control panel which reviews all avoidable spend over £500 and working with each directorate to create robust and deliverable plans to increase income, reduce costs and deliver transformation. A separate Budget Monitoring report is provided to Cabinet monthly with full detail of the council's latest financial position. The council shared its draft Budget in December 2023, which sets out proposals for a balanced budget for 2024/25, however significant delivery risks remain.

2.3 **Workforce:** The council monitors a range of workforce-related indicators, including the number of working days lost to sickness and voluntary turnover, that are drawn from the council's internal HR system. The Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel has acknowledged that it would be beneficial to incorporate additional indicators into this report to provide additional insight into agency staff, vacancy rate and the related financial impact. Discussions are in train with officers from relevant services to define the required indicators and the data points required to report against these as part of future reporting. More broadly, maintaining workforce stability is a key risk for the council and included on the corporate risk register (HR26), shown in Table 3, with key mitigations. It is acknowledged that there are capacity gaps across the council which will take time to be addressed, but which are being actively looked at as part of the budget-setting process for 2024/25.

2.3.1 **Working days lost to sickness:** The end of year target is to have fewer than 5.8 working days lost to sickness in total, with a set monthly target trajectory up to 5.8. In 2023/24 sickness has been consistently below the set target trajectory and therefore flagging as green with no concerns. The latest position at the time of this report's preparation is 1.95 (Oct-23), lower than last year (2.15 Oct-22). It is acknowledged that hybrid working has seen a reduction in sickness absence as staff who feel that they are well enough to work from home may choose to do so. Trends will be monitored closely during the winter seasons as Covid Boosters and Winter flu vaccinations are rolled out by the NHS. Sickness is reported at a Directorate and service-level under "Workforce" in relevant sections of this report.

2.3.2 **Voluntary turnover:** It is acknowledged that some staff-churn is healthy for any organisation and so the year-end target for RBWM is for % voluntary turnover to be within an acceptable range of 12.9% at the end of the financial year. Monthly targets are profiled as a trajectory line up to that 12.9% year-end target. The latest position at the time of this report's preparation is 8.33%, which falls within the acceptable range of the Oct-23 target (7.53%) and therefore flagging green. Voluntary turnover is reported at Directorate and service-level under "Workforce" in relevant sections of this report.

- 2.4 **Information governance:** The council monitors the timeliness of processing Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, including Environmental Information Requests (EIRs) that relate to various environmental aspects. Monthly performance shows volatility as responsiveness can be impacted by the complexity of incoming FOIs and, on occasion, the need to retrieve records or information stored in offsite storage facilities. The council is currently meeting its target of 90% with 571/634 (90.1%) of FOIs responded to within timescales in total between 1 April and 31 October. This indicator will continue to be monitored.
- 2.5 **Complaints and compliments:** It is acknowledged that all complaints and compliments data is drawn from a live system and data may retrospectively change as complaints progress through the various stages of the process. The council publishes an Annual Compliments and Complaints Report, providing detailed focus on volumes of compliments and complaints including reasons for complaints, outcomes and lessons learnt. A Q2 snapshot of the system shows that there have been lower volumes of both complaints (Q2: 97) and compliments (Q2: 43) received in Q2 compared to Q1.
- 2.6 “Universal services” such as waste & recycling, council tax, parking tend to see higher complaints volumes generally, however there can be volatility in volumes of complaints for these areas across quarterly reporting periods due to a range of factors including seasonality (e.g. annual billing for council tax, bin collection during holidays due to collection date changes). A higher proportion of complaints received in Q2 related to housing options (23.3%, 10/43) and this follows a quarter on quarter rise in housing options complaints since Q3 22/23, a trend that could be attributable to a combination of factors including increased demand, team vacancies and possible counting of banding appeals as complaints. The service is reviewing the data, key themes and learnings to identify how to reduce complaints in this area. There has been a reduction in the volume of complaints in relation to both waste & recycling (14%, 6/43) and planning applications & enquiries (14%, 6/43) from Q1. There were no complaints in Q2 about debt recovery, enforcement and parking compared to a sum of 13 complaints in Q1, contributing to an overall reduction in complaint volumes in Q2 23/24.

- 2.7 Senior management undertook a comprehensive re-evaluation and revision of the entire strategic risk register during December 2022 and January 2023 which informs much of the content of our current key strategic risk registers as per Table 3. Throughout the year the key operational and strategic risks are reviewed typically as part of a directorate management meeting to encourage discussion and challenge. A review and refresh of the strategic risk register will take place in 2024 once the new Council Plan is in place.
- 2.8 Since the Q2 report one new risk has been added to the resources directorate's risk portfolio:
- There is a risk that the current CRM¹ needs to be shut down because it goes end of life, fails the necessary mitigations and this happens before the new becomes operational.
- 2.9 No risks have been removed from any our key risk registers in the last quarter.
- 2.10 Mitigation timescales will be introduced into the risk commentaries at future risk review sessions to provide further granularity around the progress of outstanding control measures.

¹ Customer Relationship Management software.

Table 3: Strategic Risks

Risk	Directorate	Q2 rating	Q3 rating	Target	Direction	Last review
<p>HOF6 - The council's financial strategy needs to be effective in dealing with pressures. Addressing the ongoing impact of historical Council Tax cuts and the cost of servicing debt remain key concerns.</p> <p>As at the end of November, the forecast revenue outturn for the year is an overspend of £7.396m reducing to £3.688m including unallocated contingency budgets and changes to funding budgets.</p> <p>The risk is that although we have drafted a balanced budget for the coming year, our reserves will be so depleted that our already low level of financial resilience has reduced even further which increases our risk of having to issue a S114 notice.</p> <p>The drafting of a balanced budget was a significant achievement but in order for it to be realised, a large scale transformation programme is under way and there is still huge uncertainty about the longer term position.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly budget updates at ELT/Cabinet briefing. • Strategic business plan at Cabinet briefing 06/23. • Since October, all non-essential spend over £500 has required approval via a Spending Control Panel. • Capital expenditure has been reviewed to minimise borrowing requirements. • Budget challenge sessions successfully concluded and a balanced draft budget published in December. 	Executive Director Resources	16	16	8	Static	24/10/23

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Risk	Directorate	Q2 rating	Q3 rating	Target	Direction	Last review
<p>CLIM12 - Climate change – extreme weather conditions, carbon emissions.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate strategy approved Dec 2020. <p>Key mitigations in progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Climate Change Adaption plan. 	Executive Director Place	12	12	9	Static	21/11/23
<p>SDCHIL29 - Impact of winter flu and possible future pathogen variants.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RBWM Outbreak Control Plan. Hospitals have critical incident plans e.g., postpone non-urgent operations. Priority that beds are available for seriously ill patients. 	Executive Director of Adult Social Care & Health	12	12	8	Static	21/09/23
<p>HR26 – Maintaining workforce stability. Problems in recruitment and retention of staff.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place: likely</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision for salary increases in MTFP. Salary gateways where appropriate. Ongoing consideration of revisions to posts to attract suitably qualified candidates. HR manager - recruitment and retention to work with senior managers to develop strategies to reduce agency spend. <p>Key mitigations in progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continual review of terms and conditions and further national benchmarking. 	Chief Executive	9	9	3	Static	31/10/23

Risk	Directorate	Q2 rating	Q3 rating	Target	Direction	Last review
<p>SDCHIL27 – a potential increase in residents suffering complex mental health disorders could impact on RBWM to support the consequences.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with ICB and ICP to ensure that health services prioritise mental health services. Develop "Mental Health in School" teams across the borough <p>Key mitigations in progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public health strategy alignment. Progress in Frimley ICB. 	Executive Director of Adult Social Care & Health	9	9	3	Static	20/09/23
<p>HOUS03 - Increasing migration and movement of people placed in local hotels could result in an increased demand on RBWM's critical front-line services.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Berkshire and national meetings to ensure RBWM is notified of when asylum seekers are appearing. Work with the Home Office, Clearsprings etc to try and find a solution to growing numbers of asylum seekers in hotels. <p>Key mitigations in progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve early notification process by having access to the asylum placement information portal. Recognise budget pressures and reflect in MTFP. 	Executive Director of Adult Social Care & Health/ Executive Director Children's Services and Education Executive Director of Place	9	9	3	Static	31/10/23
<p>SDCHIL28 – Financial implications arising from the state of the social care market and demand pressures.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p>	Executive Director of Adult Social Care &	9	9	6	Static	05/10/23

Risk	Directorate	Q2 rating	Q3 rating	Target	Direction	Last review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of robust management controls in Optalis to manage funding packages and spend. <p>Key mitigations in progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transitions strategy. Commissioning plan for supported housing Pan ICS commissioning task group for low volume of residents with highly complex needs. 	Health/ Executive Director Children's Services and Education					
<p>HR25 - IT infrastructure failure, cyber-crime, technological change.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure remote working. Networks protected by multiple security layers using firewall and other control technologies. Multiple data centres provide increased resilience. <p>Key mitigations in progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go through cyber policy following external review. 	Executive Director Resources	8	8	3	Static	31/10/23
<p>POLPER20 - Failure to secure best value for contracted services.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change control mechanisms. Exit clauses/strategies negotiated. Robust governance arrangements at Member and officer levels. <p>Key mitigations in progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve commercial management skills and capacity to assist services. 	Executive Director Resources	8	8	4	Static	24/10/23

Risk	Directorate	Q2 rating	Q3 rating	Target	Direction	Last review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve governance on decentralised contract management. 						
<p>SDCHIL25 - Major safeguarding issue leads to significant and preventable harm/death to vulnerable people.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MASH strengthens response to children and young people at risk of significant harm incl. CSE. Adult Safeguarding hub setup within the general front door service. Revised adult and children's safeguarding partnership arrangements implemented with external scrutineers engaged throughout. 	Executive Director of Adult Social Care & Health/ Executive Director Children's Services and Education	6	6	6	Target achieved	20/09/23
<p>CORP7 - Uncertainty around major schemes and commercial projects.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prop Co's risk register details regeneration risks with joint venture partners with quarterly board review. Appraisal of all our projects so there's complete understanding of each individual scheme. Introduction of improved governance for Prop Co including creation of new Shareholder Panel to hold company to account. <p>Key mitigations in progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure minimum EPC^[1] of E for our commercial and residential stock as per MEES^[2]. 	Executive Director Place	6	6	6	Target achieved	21/11/23

Risk	Directorate	Q2 rating	Q3 rating	Target	Direction	Last review
<p>SDCHIL26 - Cost of living crisis - increased levels of debt, community tension, anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSF pilot well established. • Active communication about ways of getting support (Here to Help). • Engagement with voluntary sector to support with Household Support scheme. 	Executive Director of Adult Social Care & Health	6	6	6	Target achieved	20/09/23
<p>HOF15 - Fraud and corruption leads to loss of council resources.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong protocols in place including anti-money laundering, prevention of bribery and anti-corruption policies. <p>Key mitigations in progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess counter-fraud resource options best suited to the council (following up SWAP risk assessment exercise summer 23) by 31 March 2024. 	Executive Director Resources	4	4	4	Target achieved	24/10/23
<p>ELEC02 - Failures in running an election leads to loss of confidence by electorate in RBWM.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory training for staff involved. • Guidance provided by the Electoral Commission incl. polling station, verification and count centre risks. • Election project group chaired by the RO, comprising senior officers. Group maintains an elections project risk register. 	Deputy Director of Law and Governance	3	3	3	Static	24/10/23

Risk	Directorate	Q2 rating	Q3 rating	Target	Direction	Last review
<p>POLPER21 - Legislation not responded to effectively leads to external intervention.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistant directors/managers keep up to date with service developments Legal advice on decisions is a mandatory part of our report writing mechanism. 	Executive Director Resources	4	4	4	Target achieved	24/10/23

^[1] Energy Performance Certificate

^[2] Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards

Audit

2.11 The purpose of inclusion in this report is to monitor the implementation of the highest priority actions agreed (priority 1). The audits selected for monitoring are those where high corporate risks have been reported. These are listed in Table 4. Oversight of Internal Audit delivery is the responsibility of the Audit and Governance Committee.

Table 4: Audits Priority 1

Name of Audit	Priority 1 Action	Ref.	Responsible Officer	Agreed date for implementation	Progress Update
Business Continuity Planning	All services to complete a Business Impact Analysis (BIA)	917	ED Place	30/09/2023 31/01/2024	Work has been started, but an ICT DR plan will not be ready before January 2024. All services should have completed their BCP and BIA by the end of November.
	All services to complete a Business Continuity Plan (BCP)	943	ED Place	30/09/2023 30/11/2023	The intention is to have 90% of the plans updated and signed off by the end of November, the last 10% will be completed once independencies have been identified.
	A corporate BIA to exercise to be completed and incorporated in the corporate BCP	887	Service Manager – Joint Emergency Planning Unit	31/10/2023 31/01/2024	Once all services have completed their service BCPs and Business Impact Analysis, JEPU will update the corporate BCP and present this to CMT for approval. CMT meeting has been moved to January 2024.
	A process of review of BCPs to be put in place for all high value contracts.	896	ED Place	31/12/2023 31/12/2024	a) The process will initially look at the critical service providers during the BC process. b) A meeting with the procurement to review the process has been requested.

Name of Audit	Priority 1 Action	Ref.	Responsible Officer	Agreed date for implementation	Progress Update
Contract Management	Implement a contract management framework and associated guidance	494	Procurement Manager	31/12/2023	No update received
	Review the published contract register to ensure completeness and compliance with the Local Transparency Code 2015	495	Procurement Manager	31/03/2023	Self-assessed as complete in August 2023 as compliant with the Code.
	Complete analysis to identify spend where a contract is needed and agree how compliance can be achieved	496	Procurement Manager	31/03/2023	Self-assessed as complete in August 2023. Analysis completed and Agresso updated following spend reports and client updates.
	Deliver contract management training to all contract managers	497		31/03/2023 Overdue	– Cannot be delivered by HR. Asked Procurement to take forward if new posts are approved – TBC
	Analysis undertaken to identify and take action in relation to all agency off-contract spend	504	Head of HR	31/12/2023 31/03/2024	Appointment to new HR post has now been made, starting in Dec 2023. Priority will be to work with services on use of agencies and to scope a new contract.
	Procedure to authorise alternatives to the agency corporate contract to be agreed.	505	Head of HR	31/12/2023 31/03/2024	Appointment to new HR post has now been made, starting in Dec 2023. Priority will be to work with services on use of agencies and to scope a new contract.

Name of Audit	Priority 1 Action	Ref.	Responsible Officer	Agreed date for implementation	Progress Update
S106 Agreements	Agree a process which sets out roles and responsibilities and the arrangements for recording, monitoring and collecting financial contributions	1211	Service Lead Infrastructure	30/09/2023	Self-assessed by service as complete. A follow-up audit has just commenced, and early indications are that the new process designed and implemented has made clear the roles and responsibilities for the end-to-end process.
	Agree a proactive approach to alerting a designated officer for each agreement when a contribution milestone is reached and payment is due.	1212	Service Lead Infrastructure	30/09/2023	Self-assessed by service as complete. A follow-up audit has just commenced, and early indications are that the new process designed and implemented has provided a full audit trail of payment milestones agreed and due.
	To maintain a full audit trail. To consider using Exacom or similar as a management system for S106 agreements and payments.	1213	Service Lead Infrastructure	30/09/2023	Self-assessed by service as complete. A follow-up audit has just commenced, and early indications are that the new process designed and implemented has provided a full audit trail for agreements and payments.
Premises Health & Safety	Conduct a comprehensive review of all premises not solely occupied by RBWM staff. Where roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined, introduce Service Level Agreements	2039	Executive Director of Place Services	31/03/2024	Executive Director and Prop Co will be liaising with the Asset Management Team and Legal to review the leases in place to clarify roles and responsibilities. There is also a working group for Tinkers Lane with Contract Managers to bottom out what the obligations in the contracts are. Property Services have

Name of Audit	Priority 1 Action	Ref.	Responsible Officer	Agreed date for implementation	Progress Update
	(SLAs) to explicitly outline each party's roles and responsibilities related to health and safety.				collated a list of assets as a start for the Asset Team to either add to or remove. Self-assessed as on track for completion by 31/03/24.
	Ensure that all fire risk assessments for properties with lease or partnership arrangements are brought up to date. Ensure all fire extinguisher inspection certificates are stored for centralised monitoring.	2118	Head of Compliance and Operations, RBWM Property Company	31/12/2023	Self-assessed as complete.

3. Adult Social Care & Health Directorate

Performance

3.1 Scorecard 2 sets out KPIs reported for the Adult Social Care & Health Directorate and reflects the latest data available at the time of this report's preparation.

Scorecard 2: Adult Social Care & Health Directorate

Adult Social Care & Health Directorate									
Health improvement									
Measure	Date	Period Actual	Period trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YE Target	Frequency
[DA2:19] % of clients engaged in treatment that are 'showing substantial progress' (Drug & Alcohol)	Sep 23	44.4%		44.0%	↑	44.4%	55.4%	55.4%	Quarterly
% of service users (tier 3) who have successfully quit smoking at 4 weeks	Sep 23	63.8%		67.0%	↓	63.8%	60.0%	60.0%	Quarterly
% of service-users who lost any amount of weight at the end of active intervention	Sep 23	85.0%		68.4%	↑	76.9%	75.0%	75.0%	Quarterly
Complaints & Compliments									
Measure	Date	Period Actual	Period trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YE Target	Frequency
[Opt:C1b] # of contacts progressed as complaints (Adults)	Sep 23	6		13	?	19			Quarterly
[Opt:C5] # of compliments received (Adults)	Sep 23	6		8	?	14			Quarterly
Adult social care									
Measure	Date	Period Actual	Period trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YE Target	Frequency
# of permanent admissions to care for those aged 65yrs+ per 100,000	Oct 23	28		34	↓	278	388	668	Monthly
% of older people (aged 65 and over) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital	Mar 23	90.7%		90.8%	?	90.7%			Annual
% of permanent admissions to a care home for those aged 65yrs+ (previously self-funded)	Oct 23	21.4%		29.4%	?	21.4%			Monthly
% of safeguarding concerns progressing to enquiry	Oct 23	36.2%		42.0%	↓	36.2%	34.0%	34.0%	Monthly
% of statutory service establishment posts filled with permanent staff	Oct 23	70.0%		72.0%	↓	70.0%	90.0%	90.0%	Monthly
[ASCOF] % of clients with Learning Disabilities in settled accommodation	Mar 23	75.1%		79.3%	?	75.1%			Annual
[ASCOF] % of Mental Health clients securing appropriate employment	Mar 22	11.0%		11.0%	?	11.0%			Annual
[ASCOF] % satisfied/very satisfied with the care & support services they receive (exc LD customers)	Mar 23	73.5%		65.1%	↑	73.5%			Annual

Key messages:

- 3.2 Adult Social Care is a highly regulated environment, and it is acknowledged that the indicators reported in Scorecard 2 are a sub-set of a larger and more detailed data-set that the service monitors routinely to provide assurance of delivery against its remit.
- 3.3 **Adult social care:** The service continues to see acute staffing challenges with the % of statutory service establishment posts filled with permanent staff following a sustained downward/worsening trend from Apr-23 (74%) to 70% in Oct-23, below the 90% target. Wider factors contributing to unfulfilled vacancies, especially for Adult Social Workers, include salary disparities with local authorities, an increased demand and a shortage of experienced staff, creating it a job seeker's market. A reliance on agency staff has significant financial implications for the council and the corporate risk register includes "maintaining workforce stability" as a key risk (HR26) with mitigations including development of strategies to increase permanent recruitment / retention to reduce agency spend (see Table 3).
- 3.4 Data released in December 2023 as part of the annual Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) ranks the 150 local authorities which provide social care in England on how well they deliver to achieve the outcomes that matter most to people. The rankings include feedback from independent survey undertaken annually in the borough. The data shows a trend of growing satisfaction year-on-year in some key areas, and the borough is ranked top nationally for social care-related quality of life, 2nd nationally for the proportion of adults with learning disabilities in paid employment, 3rd nationally for residents feeling safe, and 4th nationally for people's overall satisfaction with their care and support. A random selection of adults who had contact in the last 12 months with Optalis, or a contracted social care provider, were invited to participate and over 275 borough residents responded to the survey, including residents with learning disabilities, those living in care homes and residents in the community.
- 3.5 **Health improvement:** the indicators reported are drawn from a more detailed suite of indicators used to monitor key contracted services for drug and alcohol treatment, weight management and smoking cessation. It is acknowledged that the council's Public Health commissioned weight management service is relatively new, and while the proportion of service-users who lost any amount of weight at the end of intervention is performing above target (75%) at 85% in Q2 it should be noted this is 17 of 20 people who completed the programme from the 155 who were referred in the quarter.
- 3.6 The proportion of clients engaged in drug and alcohol treatment showing "substantial progress" is 44.4%, below target (55.4%) and the national figure of 47% but showing a sustained quarterly improvement from Q3 22/23 (39%). The cohort includes service-users who are new to treatment as well as service-users who have relapsed and been readmitted.

- 3.7 It is highlighted that while the Q2 position in relation to the proportion of service-users who have successfully quit smoking at 4 weeks has worsened in Q2 (63.8%) from Q1 (67%) there are no concerns as Q2 saw higher volumes of people accessing the service in Q2 (116) compared to Q1 (97). Service-provider information has shown that the majority of quitters in Q2 are from identified priority groups that the council is trying to reach, and those with a mental health condition and/or a long-term condition continue to have strong outcomes.
- 3.8 Overall, there are no concerns currently with performance against health improvement indicators as all are either meeting target or showing sustained incremental improvement:

Workforce

- 3.9 Scorecard 3 outlines workforce information for the Adult Social Care & Health Directorate across each of its service-delivery units. Please note that the workforce data does not include figures for Optalis. Working days lost to sickness for the Directorate and each of its service-delivery units has been consistently below the set target trajectory and therefore flagging as green with no concerns. There are no concerns at present in relation to voluntary turnover in relation to the Directorate and the service-delivery units identified in Scorecard 3.
- 3.10 Optalis carry out a range of services for residents of the borough, including the delivery of statutory social work assessments for those who may need our care. The workforce in this service has an establishment of 130 posts, of which 74% (96/130) are covered by permanent staff, 11% (14/130) by agency staff and the remainder 15% (20/130) are vacant.
- 3.11 Within this cohort, 71% (10/14) of the agency staff are qualified social workers with only 58% (23/40) of the social worker establishment covered by permanent staff. The current level of social worker capacity - 33 people - is the lowest level of safe operation, and any further permanent turnover will have to be covered with agency staff.

Scorecard 3: Workforce (Adult Social Care & Health Directorate)

Adult Social Care & Health Directorate Workforce								
Headcount								
Org Structure	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
^Adult Social Care & Health Directorate	Oct 23	27		26	?			Monthly
Public Health	Oct 23	8		8	?			Monthly
Safeguarding Information & Advice	Oct 23	6		6	?			Monthly
Transformation & Community Partnerships	Oct 23	11		10	?			Monthly
FTE								
Org Structure	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
^Adult Social Care & Health Directorate	Oct 23	23.43		22.43	?			Monthly
Public Health	Oct 23	7.60		7.60	?			Monthly
Safeguarding Information & Advice	Oct 23	3.68		3.68	?			Monthly
Transformation & Community Partnerships	Oct 23	10.65		9.65	?			Monthly
Working days lost to sickness per headcount YTD								
Org Structure	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
^Adult Social Care & Health Directorate	Oct 23	0.56		0.29	↘	3.38	5.80	Monthly
Public Health	Oct 23	1.09		0.36	↘	3.38	5.80	Monthly
Safeguarding Information & Advice	Oct 23	0.29		0.14	↘	3.38	5.80	Monthly
Transformation & Community Partnerships	Oct 23	0.31		0.33	↗	3.38	5.80	Monthly
Voluntary turnover (Month)								
Org Structure	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
^Adult Social Care & Health Directorate	Oct 23	0.00%		0.00%	?			Monthly
Public Health	Oct 23	0.00%		0.00%	?			Monthly
Safeguarding Information & Advice	Oct 23	0.00%		0.00%	?			Monthly
Transformation & Community Partnerships	Oct 23	0.00%		0.00%	?			Monthly
Voluntary turnover (YTD)								
Org Structure	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
^Adult Social Care & Health Directorate	Oct 23	7.27%		7.41%	↗	7.53%	12.90%	Monthly
Public Health	Oct 23	23.53%		23.53%	↗	7.53%	12.90%	Monthly
Safeguarding Information & Advice	Oct 23	0.00%		0.00%	↔	7.53%	12.90%	Monthly
Transformation & Community Partnerships	Oct 23	0.00%		0.00%	↔	7.53%	12.90%	Monthly

Risk

3.12 Table 5 sets out the current key risks for the directorate.

Table 5: Adult Social Care & Health Directorate key risks

Risk	Q2 rating	Q3 rating	Target	Direction	Last review date
<p>HSG0006 - Inadequate strategic planning between children's services, adults and health.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust management controls to manage funding packages and spend. • Procedures to plan and manage transitions between children's and adult services. 	8	8	6	Static	20/09/23
<p>HSG0009 - Failure to meet aspiration of suitably integrated health and social care.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the NHS to develop the ICS as part of the NHS long term plan. • Strong governance - integrated health & social care commissioning board takes risk-based decisions on BCF progress/performance. 	6	6	6	Static	20/09/23
<p>HSG0007 - Increased demand resulting from adult social care demographics.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market management by strategic commissioning. • Collaborative commissioning with NHS and other East Berkshire authorities on a range of provision, including intermediate care. 	6	6	6	Static	20/09/23

4. Chief Executive Directorate

Performance

4.1 There are no performance indicators reported by this Directorate.

Workforce

4.2 Scorecard 4 outlines workforce information for the Chief Executive's Directorate. There are no concerns in relation to sickness, with number of days lost to sickness well below the target for Oct-23 for both the Directorate and the service-delivery unit. There are no concerns in relation to % voluntary turnover (YTD) as reported amber values (12.90% for Chief Executive Directorate and 12.50% for Strategy, Performance & Communications Service) are the result of staff leaving a small team earlier in the year, which significantly inflates reported percentages.

Scorecard 4: Workforce: Chief Executive's Directorate

Chief Executive Directorate: Workforce								
Headcount								
Org Structure	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
^Chief Executive Directorate	Oct 23	16		16	?			Monthly
Strategy, Performance & Communications	Oct 23	15		15	?			Monthly
FTE								
Org Structure	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
^Chief Executive Directorate	Oct 23	15.41		15.41	?			Monthly
Strategy, Performance & Communications	Oct 23	14.41		14.41	?			Monthly
Working days lost to sickness per headcount YTD								
Org Structure	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
^Chief Executive Directorate	Oct 23	0.09		0.09	↕	3.38	5.80	Monthly
Strategy, Performance & Communications	Oct 23	0.10		2.00	↕	3.38	5.80	Monthly
Voluntary turnover (Month)								
Org Structure	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
^Chief Executive Directorate	Oct 23	0.00%		0.00%	?			Monthly
Strategy, Performance & Communications	Oct 23	0.00%		0.00%	?			Monthly
Voluntary turnover (YTD)								
Org Structure	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
^Chief Executive Directorate	Oct 23	12.90%		12.50%	↕	7.53%	12.90%	Monthly
Strategy, Performance & Communications	Oct 23	12.50%		12.90%	↕	7.53%	12.90%	Monthly

Risk

4.3 Table 6 sets out the current key risks for the directorate.

Table 6: Chief Executive Directorate key risks

Risk	Q2 rating	Q3 rating	Target	Direction	Last review date
<p>CMT40 - Insufficient emergency response or business continuity planning (BCP) failure.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inter authority agreement with JEPU in place (RBWM, WBDC and BFBC) to provide resilience with experts in the field. <p>Key mitigations in progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90% of service BCP's agreed by end of November. Those outstanding will be completed once interdependencies are identified. • Work has been started, but an ICT disaster recovery plan will not be ready before January 2024. • JEPU to run a BCP test in the form of a whole-council exercise during 2023-2024. 	8	8	8	Static	26/09/23

5. Children's Services & Education Directorate

Performance

5.1 Scorecard 5 sets out KPIs reported for the Children's Services & Education Directorate and reflects the latest data available at the time of this report's preparation.

Scorecard 5: Children's Services & Education Directorate

Children's Services & Education Directorate									
Domestic abuse									
Measure	Date	Period Actual	Period trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YE Target	Frequency
# of children in households of MARAC referrals (including repeats)	Sep 23	41		33	?	74			Quarterly
# of reports to police in RBWM (crimes + non-crimes)	Sep 23	840		712	?	1,552			Quarterly
Complaints & Compliments									
Measure	Date	Period Actual	Period trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YE Target	Frequency
[AfC:C1b] # of contacts progressed as complaints (Children's)	Sep 23	29		21	?	50			Quarterly
[AfC:C5] # of compliments received (Children's)	Sep 23	16		27	?	43			Quarterly
Children & young people									
Measure	Date	Period Actual	Period trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YE Target	Frequency
[AfC:15] # of first-time entrants into youth justice system	Sep 23	3		6	➔	9	11	22	Quarterly
[AfC:16] # of children referred per 10,000 population (cumulative)	Sep 23	265.00		134.00	➔	265.00	265.00	530.00	Quarterly
[AfC:2] % of borough schools rated by Ofsted as good/outstanding	Sep 23	93.8%		92.3%	➔	93.8%	95.0%	95.0%	Quarterly
[AfC:21] % of children subject to a CPP for 2+ wks visited within last 10 working days	Sep 23	86.4%		96.5%	➔	86.4%	95.0%	95.0%	Quarterly
[AfC:3] % of EHCP assessments completed within 20wks (inc exceptions)	Sep 23	92.1%		97.8%	➔	95.2%	90.0%	90.0%	Quarterly
[AfC:33] % of children placed with in-house foster placements	Sep 23	68.9%		67.9%	➔	68.9%	60.0%	60.0%	Quarterly
[AfC:34] % of care-leavers living in suitable accommodation (19-21yr olds)	Sep 23	96.7%		94.8%	➔	96.7%	95.0%	95.0%	Quarterly
[AfC:35] % of care-leavers in education, training and employment (19-21yr olds)	Sep 23	63.9%		65.5%	➔	63.9%	60.0%	60.0%	Quarterly
[AfC:38] % of referrals closed in the period with a positive outcome	Sep 23	96.6%		94.2%	➔	95.3%	90.0%	90.0%	Quarterly
[AfC:6] % of eligible children receiving a 6-8wk review within 8wks	Sep 23	89.1%		86.2%	➔	87.7%	87.0%	87.0%	Quarterly
[AfC:7] % of children with a review at 2-2.5 years of age	Sep 23	94.6%		72.0%	➔	83.2%	77.2%	77.2%	Quarterly

Key messages:

- 5.2 Children's Services is a highly regulated environment, and the Children & Young People indicators reported in Scorecard 5 are a sub-set of a larger and more detailed data-set that the service monitors routinely to provide assurance of delivery against its remit.
- 5.3 It is acknowledged that the service has conducted a best practice annual review in Nov/Dec-23 of targets and related tolerance thresholds for all Children & Young People indicators reported here. While this review of targets and tolerances falls outside of standard financial year-end reviews, such a review at this time allows the service to take account of the most up to date regional and national benchmarking data for both children's social care and educational outcomes that is usually published in November/December. The methodology for this target review has been to ensure that, at a local level and as a minimum, the service strives to align with national published performance with the exception of KPIs where performance has been ahead of its comparators – in such instances the service has adjusted targets and tolerance thresholds to continue to be stretching and aligned with Achieving for Children aspirations.
- 5.4 **Children and young people:** Out of the 11 children and young people measures, 8 have improved since the last quarter and 3 have declined. Of the 3 that have declined, 2 (EHCP timeliness and Care Leavers in Education, Employment and Training) remain above target, whilst 1 (child protection visiting) is below target. The below target measure bucks the long-term positive trajectory and work is being carried out to understand why this has happened. However, the AfC target of child protection visiting every 10 days is a good practice target which is above the national expectation.
- 5.5 **Children and young people:** Further outcome-focused indicators are being identified for inclusion in future reporting to bring a stronger focus to quality assurance and outcomes for children beyond the operational delivery focus currently reported. However, of the current measures reported, there are a number that are already outcome-focused. For example, it is a good outcome to have Care Leavers living in suitable accommodation and being engaged in education, training or employment and for both of these measures, we are above our target. Another measure is referrals closed with a positive outcome for the child or young person. The target for this measure is 90% and the current quarter is reporting 96.6%, which is an improvement on the previous quarter, as well as above target performance.
- 5.6 **Domestic Abuse:** the number of children in households of MARAC referrals (including repeats) is 41 in Q2, following a consistent quarterly increase from 13 in Q4 22/23. The number of reports to police in RBWM (crimes + non-crimes) is 840, 18% higher than Q1 23/24 (712) and the highest in the last 3 years since Jun-21. The RBWM Domestic Abuse Executive Group has led on a number of initiatives to raise awareness of domestic abuse in the borough, particularly coercive control and individuals are now reporting incidents that they might not

historically have reported, or even seen as domestic abuse. This means that more families can be supported by the professional network, rather than the domestic abuse remaining hidden. Our Think Families Transformation Project is currently in the research/discovery phase and domestic abuse is coming out as a priority area for action. This research will inform next steps so that we can continue to improve our work in this area, by taking a whole family approach.

Workforce

5.7 Scorecard 6 outlines workforce information for the Children’s Services & Education Directorate and there are no concerns in relation to either working days lost to sickness or the % voluntary turnover YTD for the Directorate. The vacancy rate in front line social worker posts is 39% in Q2, down from 43.9% in Q1. The agency rate in front line social worked posts remains at 41.5% in Q2.

Scorecard 6: Workforce (Children’s Services & Education Directorate)

Children's Services & Education Directorate: Workforce								
Headcount								
Org Structure	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
^Children's Services & Education Directorate	Oct 23	2		2	?			Monthly
FTE								
Org Structure	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
^Children's Services & Education Directorate	Oct 23	2.00		2.00	?			Monthly
Working days lost to sickness per headcount YTD								
Org Structure	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
^Children's Services & Education Directorate	Oct 23	2.00		1.00	↘	3.38	5.80	Monthly
Voluntary turnover (Month)								
Org Structure	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
^Children's Services & Education Directorate	Oct 23	0.00%		0.00%	?			Monthly
Voluntary turnover (YTD)								
Org Structure	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
^Children's Services & Education Directorate	Oct 23	0.00%		0.00%	➔	7.53%	12.90%	Monthly
Achieving for Children: Workforce								
Measure	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
Vacancy rate in front line social worker posts	Sep 23	39.0%		43.9%	?			Quarterly
Agency rate in front line social worker posts	Sep 23	41.5%		41.5%	?			Quarterly

Risk

5.8 Table 7 sets out the current key risks to the directorate.

Table 7: Children's Services & Education Directorate key risks

Risk	Q2 rating	Q3 rating	Target	Direction	Last review date
<p>SSS019 - Maintain a satisfactory level of health or development for children with complex and multiple needs.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capital funding to increase the number of special units attached to mainstream schools Intensive Support team work to avoid children coming into the care of the council/reunify with their family when safe to do so. <p>Key mitigations in progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RBWM to have one of 33 new special free schools being created nationally. 	12	12	6	Static	21/10/23
<p>SSS017 - Failure to improve standards in our schools.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Termly meetings with all Heads and Chairs of Governors, engaging regional Ofsted lead as appropriate, to drive education agenda. Maintain the education and early years link approach with risk assessed identification of challenging schools. 	4	4	4	Static	05/09/23
<p>SSS018 - Exposure to health and safety risks in schools.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing programme of fire safety works. Asbestos management surveys in place. Electrical testing up to date. 	4	4	4	Static	05/09/23











6. Place Directorate

Performance

6.1 Scorecard 7 sets out KPIs for the Place Directorate and reflects the latest data available at the time of this report's preparation. Staff shortages have impacted the Directorate across a number of service-delivery areas, including Neighbourhood Services. At the time of this report's preparation resourcing levels are being looked at as part of the budget-setting process for 2024/25. It is acknowledged that the Directorate has been carrying significant pressure in terms of inflationary costs on major contracts and the continued impact of the way in which people use services since the pandemic (e.g. parking).

6.2 Overall performance across the indicators reported here is broadly favourable, albeit with key challenges in relation to Housing particularly. Following feedback from the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel on 6 Nov-23, Officers are identifying suitable indicators relating to grounds maintenance for inclusion in future reports.

Scorecard 7: Place Directorate

Place Directorate									
Planning applications									
Measure	Date	Period Actual	Period trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YE Target	Frequency
[P:1] % of major planning applications processed in time	Sep 23	100.0%		80.0%	➔	91.7%	65.0%	65.0%	Quarterly
[P:2] % of minor planning applications processed in time	Sep 23	77.1%		80.6%	➔	78.8%	70.0%	70.0%	Quarterly
[P:3] % of other planning applications processed in time	Sep 23	83.6%		84.0%	➔	83.8%	85.0%	85.0%	Quarterly
Community safety									
Measure	Date	Period Actual	Period trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YE Target	Frequency
# of ASB interventions	Sep 23	0		0	?	0			Quarterly
# of group dispersals across the borough	Sep 23	46		91	?	137			Quarterly
Number of ASB incidents & complaints	Sep 23	155		142	?	297			Quarterly
Environmental health & Trading standards									
Measure	Date	Period Actual	Period trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YE Target	Frequency
[HEHTS:01] % food businesses that are broadly compliant with food law	Oct 23	87.4%		87.1%	➔	87.4%	80.0%	80.0%	Monthly
[HEHTS:02] # of properties/dwellings improved formally and informally	Sep 23	8		10	?	8			Quarterly
[HEHTS:03] % of complaints (noise) that result in abatement notices	Oct 23	0.0%		0.0%	?	0.0%			Monthly
[HEHTS: 04] # of test purchase operations (TPOs) for age restricted products	Sep 23	1		4	?	5			Quarterly

Leisure centres									
Measure	Date	Period Actual	Period trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YE Target	Frequency
# of attendances at leisure centres	Oct 23	345,991		322,594	➡	1,953,905	1,149,069	2,010,286	Monthly

Highways									
Measure	Date	Period Actual	Period trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YE Target	Frequency
(Vol:4) % of 24hr orders responded to on time	Oct 23	100.0%		100.0%	➡	99.0%	98.0%	98.0%	Monthly
(Vol:5) % of emergency 2hr orders responded to on time	Oct 23	100.0%		100.0%	➡	99.6%	98.0%	98.0%	Monthly

Waste management & recycling									
Measure	Date	Period Actual	Period trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YE Target	Frequency
(4.2.1) % of household waste sent for reuse, recycling	Mar 23	52.1%		51.2%	➡	51.7%	50.0%	50.0%	Quarterly
(Ser:1) Average no. missed collections per 100,000 collections	Oct 23	16.00		18.42	➡	18.29	60.00	60.00	Monthly

Housing									
Measure	Date	Period Actual	Period trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YE Target	Frequency
# of households in temporary accommodation	Oct 23	244		237	?	244			Monthly
% of households in temporary accommodation that is located within the borough	Oct 23	39.3%		40.5%	➡	39.3%	50.0%	50.0%	Monthly
% successful homelessness prevention activity for households subject to the Prevention/Relief duty	Oct 23	1.9%		4.5%	?	8.6%			Monthly

Key messages:

6.3 **Housing:** The number of households in temporary accommodation (TA) is 244 in Oct-23, rising from 223 in Apr-23 and at its highest point in the last 3 years. The % of households in temporary accommodation within the borough is 39.3% in Oct-23, below the target of 50% and following a month-on-month downward trend since May-23 (46.2%). This remains a key challenge for the council with contributing factors including: limited housing stock, the continuing cost of living crisis, increases in property prices and rents, and evictions from private rented sector. Additional pressures faced by the Housing Service include providing housing for asylum seekers exiting hotels following confirmation of refugee status. Changes in government policy mean that individuals receiving refugee status may only be given 7 days' notice to leave Home Office accommodation. Other factors include the Government's decision to freeze Local Housing allowance rates for 2023/24. It is acknowledged that increases in rent for private rental properties, coupled with other factors like loss of jobs or cost of living crisis, also sees an increase in rough sleepers who are not placed in temporary accommodation. As at Dec-23 there were 264 households in temporary

accommodation, 163 of which (62%) were placed out of borough. Of those placed out of borough, 83% (136/163) were placed in Slough.

- 6.4 The factors affecting temporary accommodation demand also have an impact on the number of rough sleepers in the borough. In Dec-23 there were 25 known rough sleepers which is a significant rise since Dec-22 where 10 were recorded. The housing service continues to provide a 3-stage pathway for rough sleepers to obtain support and access to healthcare, addiction services, education and housing.
- 6.5 The council largely relies on private rented sector to secure temporary accommodation and is looking to recruit an officer to bridge and nurture relationships with private rented sector, however has had two failed recruitment drives. The cost of temporary accommodation increasing beyond the council's capacity to fund is a key risk on the Directorate's risk register (HOUS02), shown in Table 8, with key mitigations in progress including seeking out new providers, negotiating lower costs and ceasing high-cost placements. The service is also liaising with partners and charities to secure accommodation and work for rough sleepers.
- 6.6 **Waste management & recycling:** The latest available data for the average number of missed collections per 100,000 collections for Oct-23 show a year-to-date average of 18.29 missed collections per 100,000, well below the target of 60, and with no concerns in Q2. However, we are aware of some localised issues with some residents and are working with Councillors and residents to resolve this. The recycling rate data is awaiting national verification from Defra and is shown up to March 2023 indicating an increase in recycling taking place across the borough. Latest waste management data has not been provided for this report due to the team being acutely short-staffed and with a wide range of services in its remit in addition to waste and recycling. Resource has now been identified to update the figures following necessary training and the latest information should be available for the next report. There is potential to run a promotion campaign to encourage residents to recycle more, however with staff shortages this campaign is yet to be confirmed. The service is proactively using resources as effectively as it can to support the waste agenda, including looking at opportunities with contractors and partners for financial contributions to support campaigns in relation to food waste and food minimisation.
- 6.7 **Planning applications:** Performance is broadly stable, with processing of both major and minor planning applications well above set targets for the year (Major 91.7% YTD vs 65% target; Minor 78.8% YTD vs 70% target). Processing of other planning applications shows some volatility quarter on quarter as the volume of applications fluctuates, and while year to date performance is short of target (85%) at 83.8% (amber), there are no current concerns.
- 6.8 **Environment Health & Trading Standards:** Performance in relation to the % of food businesses broadly compliant with food law is tracked monthly and remains

consistently above the 80% target at 87.4% (1,340/1,534) in Oct-23. There are currently no concerns in relation to this service.

6.9 Leisure centre attendances: Monthly attendance figures have followed a continuous upward trend since Apr-23, with a total of 1,953,905 attendances in 2023/24 up to end Oct-23, only 56,381 away from the year-end target of 2,010,286. Attendance figures are impacted by seasonality and usually show a decline in the months following peak summer. The service has, however, introduced events including swimming galas, building events, and a young people’s themed event “Random and Rocks” which has drawn in more customers.

6.10 Highways: There are no concerns in relation to Highways performance with the % of both 24hr orders and emergency 2hr orders responded to on time consistently maintained at 100% and above set targets of 98%.

Workforce

6.11 Scorecard 8 outlines workforce information for the Place Directorate across each of its service-delivery units. The number of working days lost to sickness has been consistently below the set target trajectory for 2023/24 and flagging green with no concerns. There has been some staff turnover in the Housing & Environmental Health, Neighbourhood, and Planning Services in Oct-23 however the year-to-date position for each of these service-delivery units shows an improving monthly trend in terms of moving closer to the target trajectory line.

Scorecard 8: Workforce (Place Directorate)

Place Workforce								
Headcount								
Org Structure ↑	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
^Place Directorate	Oct 23	222		218	?			Monthly
Housing and Environmental Health	Oct 23	61		59	?			Monthly
Infrastructure, Sustainability and Economic Growth	Oct 23	54		52	?			Monthly
Neighbourhood Services	Oct 23	51		52	?			Monthly
Planning	Oct 23	55		54	?			Monthly

FTE								
Org Structure ↑	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
^Place Directorate	Oct 23	207.17		203.09	?			Monthly
Housing and Environmental Health	Oct 23	59.27		57.27	?			Monthly
Infrastructure, Sustainability and Economic Growth	Oct 23	46.80		44.80	?			Monthly
Neighbourhood Services	Oct 23	47.94		48.86	?			Monthly
Planning	Oct 23	52.17		51.17	?			Monthly

Working days lost to sickness per headcount YTD								
Org Structure ↑	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
^Place Directorate	Oct 23	1.85		1.34	↘	3.38	5.80	Monthly
Housing and Environmental Health	Oct 23	2.63		2.25	↘	3.38	5.80	Monthly
Infrastructure, Sustainability and Economic Growth	Oct 23	0.36		0.23	↘	3.38	5.80	Monthly
Neighbourhood Services	Oct 23	2.91		1.94	↘	3.38	5.80	Monthly
Planning	Oct 23	1.40		0.80	↘	3.38	5.80	Monthly

Voluntary turnover (Month)								
Org Structure ↑	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
^Place Directorate	Oct 23	1.40%		0.94%	?			Monthly
Housing and Environmental Health	Oct 23	1.74%		1.77%	?			Monthly
Infrastructure, Sustainability and Economic Growth	Oct 23	0.00%		0.00%	?			Monthly
Neighbourhood Services	Oct 23	1.96%		0.00%	?			Monthly
Planning	Oct 23	1.75%		1.77%	?			Monthly

Voluntary turnover (YTD)								
Org Structure ↑	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
^Place Directorate	Oct 23	9.30%		8.45%	↗	7.53%	12.90%	Monthly
Housing and Environmental Health	Oct 23	12.17%		10.62%	↗	7.53%	12.90%	Monthly
Infrastructure, Sustainability and Economic Growth	Oct 23	4.12%		4.21%	↘	7.53%		Monthly
Neighbourhood Services	Oct 23	3.92%		1.94%	↗	7.53%	12.90%	Monthly
Planning	Oct 23	17.54%		15.93%	↗	7.53%	12.90%	Monthly

Risk

6.12 Table 8 sets out the key risks to the directorate.

Table 8: Place Directorate key risks

Risk	Q2 rating	Q3 rating	Target	Direction	Last review date
<p>HOUS02 - Costs of temporary accommodation increasing beyond capacity to fund.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise and manage placements to ensure full occupancy. • Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 18-23. <p>Key mitigations in progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek out new providers, negotiating lower cost and ceasing high-cost placements. • Look at alternative options such as social housing stock levels and private landlords. 	9	9	6	Static	21/06/23
<p>HPLAND019 – Failure to undertake inspections of council trees and delivering works.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety works are raised through the Arboriculture Services Framework. • Inspections targeted at trees in urban areas, as this is where impacts on tree health are the most frequent and significant. <p>Key mitigations in progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracted inspections ceased end of 21/22 financial year. Budget proposals for inspection 23/24 put forward. 	9	9	8	Static	21/11/23
<p>IST02 - Flood risk is not sufficiently dealt with by preventative and responsive measures.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RBWM emergency plan and flooding risk management strategy 	4	4	4	Static	03/11/23

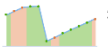
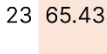
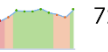
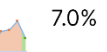


Risk	Q2 rating	Q3 rating	Target	Direction	Last review date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi agency response plan co-ordinated by flood risk manager. Key mitigations in progress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow up strategic and EOC outcomes from October 23 flooding exercise. Date: tba. 					
PPS013 - Failure to assess resources and demands resulting from cold weather. Key mitigations in place: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A comprehensive annual winter maintenance plan is in place detailing the roles and responsibilities of contractors. Risk assessments behind road treatment strategy. Contractors also have their own risk assessments for carrying out the works. 	2	2	2	Static	21/11/23

7. Resources Directorate

Performance

7.1 Scorecard 9 sets out KPIs for the Resources Directorate and reflects the latest data available at the time of this report's preparation. Overall there are no concerns in relation to the indicators reported. Staff shortages have impacted the Revenue, Benefits, Library & Residents Service across a number of service-delivery areas, including a long-standing vacancy in the Collections team since 2022 and three vacancies in the Benefits team. The service has now filled these vacancies, and new staff continue to receive training.

Scorecard 9: Resources Directorate

Resources Directorate									
Revenues									
Measure	Date	Period Actual	Period trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YE Target	Frequency
(RB:1) Percentage of Council Tax collected	Oct 23	67.49%		58.35%	🔴	67.49%	67.50%	98.50%	Monthly
(RB:2) Percentage of Non Domestic Rates (Business Rates) collected	Oct 23	65.43%		57.20%	🔴	65.43%	66.70%	98.30%	Monthly
Customer service									
Measure	Date	Period Actual	Period trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YE Target	Frequency
(LRS:4) % of calls answered within 2 mins (monthly)	Oct 23	90.2%		72.1%	🟢	84.2%	80.0%	80.0%	Monthly
(LRS:5) % of calls abandoned after 5 secs (monthly)	Oct 23	2.9%		7.0%	🟢	4.1%	4.0%	4.0%	Monthly
Benefits Claims									
Measure	Date	Period Actual	Period trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YE Target	Frequency
(RB:5) Average # of days to process new claims (Housing Benefits)	Oct 23	14.17		14.09	🔴	13.86	12.00	12.00	Monthly
(RB:6) Average # of days to process changes in circumstances (Housing Benefits)	Oct 23	6.97		5.25	🔴	5.85	5.00	5.00	Monthly

Key messages

7.2 **Revenues:** At Oct-23, the % of council tax collected is 67.49%, slightly below the target of 67.50% (amber). In cash terms, this equates to £75,443,210 collected from April – 31 Oct-23, up £4.3m in comparison to Oct-22 (£71,141,194). At Oct-23 the % of Non Domestic Rates (Business Rates) collected is 65.43%, slightly below the target of 66.70% (amber).

7.3 **Benefits claims:** performance in relation to the average number of days to process both new claims and changes in circumstances for Housing Benefits is monitored monthly through internal systems and reported into the Department for Work and Pensions (the DWP) who will then adjust figures to enable

benchmarking with regional and national comparators. Performance against both indicators has shown volatility month on month, largely impacted by the service's staffing capacity challenges. Year-to-date performance for **processing new claims** is 13.86 days in Oct-23, above target (12.00) but within acceptable tolerance thresholds and so flagging amber. It is acknowledged that the service has always set an aspirational target of 12 days whilst the national average is 20 days to process new benefits claims. Latest available benchmarking data (Jun-23) shows RBWM to be outperforming both regional and national performance: RBWM 12 days / South East 21 days / England 21 days. The year-to-date performance for **processing changes in circumstances** is 5.85 days, above target (5.00) but again within acceptable tolerance thresholds and so flagging amber. Latest available benchmarking data (Jun-23) shows RBWM to be outperforming regional and national performance: RBWM 5 days / South East 10 days / England 10 days.

7.4 **Customer service:** the contact centre continues to perform well in relation to calls answered within 2 minutes (84.2% YTD, 58,762 / 69,826) and calls abandoned after 5 seconds (4.1% YTD, 2,867 / 69,826).

Workforce

7.5 Scorecard 10 outlines workforce information for the Resources Directorate. Working days lost to sickness per headcount for Oct-23 is below target at directorate and all service levels (with the exception of Revenues, Benefits, Library and Resident Services) nonetheless, shows a decline in performance from Sep-23, in line with RBWM and other directorate performance. This could be attributed to the onset of winter.

Scorecard 10: Workforce (Resources Directorate)

Resources Directorate Workforce								
Headcount								
Org Structure ↑	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
^Resources Directorate	Oct 23	308		304	?			Monthly
Finance	Oct 23	54		55	?			Monthly
HR, Corporate Projects and IT	Oct 23	63		63	?			Monthly
Law & Governance	Oct 23	42		42	?			Monthly
Revenue, Benefits, Library and Resident Services	Oct 23	148		143	?			Monthly

FTE								
Org Structure ↑	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
^Resources Directorate	Oct 23	275.20		271.76	?			Monthly
Finance	Oct 23	52.06		53.06	?			Monthly
HR, Corporate Projects and IT	Oct 23	61.47		61.47	?			Monthly
Law & Governance	Oct 23	37.64		37.64	?			Monthly
Revenue, Benefits, Library and Resident Services	Oct 23	123.03		118.59	?			Monthly

Working days lost to sickness per headcount YTD								
Org Structure ↑	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
^Resources Directorate	Oct 23	2.26		1.93	↘	3.38	5.80	Monthly
Finance	Oct 23	0.64		0.29	↘	3.38	5.80	Monthly
HR, Corporate Projects and IT	Oct 23	1.07		0.71	↘	3.38	5.80	Monthly
Law & Governance	Oct 23	0.75		0.60	↘	3.38	5.80	Monthly
Revenue, Benefits, Library and Resident Services	Oct 23	3.75		3.44	↗	3.38	5.80	Monthly

Voluntary turnover (Month)								
Org Structure ↑	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
^Resources Directorate	Oct 23	1.32%		0.33%	?			Monthly
Finance	Oct 23	1.85%		0.00%	?			Monthly
HR, Corporate Projects and IT	Oct 23	4.65%		0.00%	?			Monthly
Law & Governance	Oct 23	0.00%		0.00%	?			Monthly
Revenue, Benefits, Library and Resident Services	Oct 23	0.00%		0.70%	?			Monthly

Voluntary turnover (YTD)								
Org Structure ↑	Date	Latest Actual	Trends	Last Period	Period Improving / Worsening	Latest Target	YE Target	Frequency
^Resources Directorate	Oct 23	7.57%		5.96%	↗	7.53%	12.90%	Monthly
Finance	Oct 23	11.11%		9.17%	↘	7.53%	12.90%	Monthly
HR, Corporate Projects and IT	Oct 23	10.85%		6.20%	↘	7.53%	12.90%	Monthly
Law & Governance	Oct 23	7.41%		7.41%	↗	7.53%	12.90%	Monthly
Revenue, Benefits, Library and Resident Services	Oct 23	4.15%		4.23%	↘	7.53%	12.90%	Monthly

Risk

7.6 Table 9 sets out the current key risks to the directorate.

Table 9: Resources Directorate key risks

Risk	Q2 rating	Q3 rating	Target	Direction	Last review date
<p>POLPER19 - Failure to comply with council constitution and code of conduct.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scheme of delegation and report writing sign off. There is no opportunity for an individual member to make a significant decision in isolation. <p>Key mitigations in progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constitution working group undertaking a review of the constitution. 	8	8	4	Static	24/10/23
<p>PEN01 - Not bringing the fund back to a fully funded position by the agreed date of 31 March 2040.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Triannual valuation signed off on 19 March 2023 including consideration of climate risk. <p>Key mitigations in progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrange independent test of systems and recommend any further cyber security measures to implement. 	8	8	8	Static	24/10/23
<p>HR27 - There is a risk that the council must shut down the current CRM because it goes end of life, fails the necessary mitigations and this happens before the new CRM becomes operational.</p> <p>Key mitigations in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> System not currently end of life and platform managed by external supplier Agreed testing schedule and alterations made on testing outcomes. <p>Key mitigations in progress:</p>	n/a	8	4	New risk from Q3	02/11/23

Risk	Q2 rating	Q3 rating	Target	Direction	Last review date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed testing schedule, alterations made on testing outcomes, new CRM system installed, fully supported and operational Nov 24. • Additional capacity in the digital development team (exact posts will depend on type of solution chosen). 					