

Date of despatch: Wednesday, 22 November 2023

To the Members of Slough Borough Council

Dear Councillor,

You are summoned to attend a Meeting of the Council of this Borough which will be held in the Council Chamber - Observatory House, 25 Windsor Road, SL1 2EL on **Thursday, 30th November, 2023 at 7.00 pm**, when the business in the Agenda below is proposed to be transacted.

Yours faithfully



STEPHEN BROWN
Chief Executive

PRAYERS

AGENDA

Apologies for Absence

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1. Declarations of Interest	-
<i>All Members who believe they have a Disclosable Pecuniary or other Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting must declare that interest and, having regard to the circumstances described in Section 9 and Appendix B of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter is discussed.</i>	
2. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Council held on 28th September 2023	1 - 8
3. To receive the Mayor's Communications.	
4. Petition - Urgent Appeal to Save Community Hub (Unit 26 Wexham Business Village, Wexham Rd, Slough)	9 - 14

Public Questions

5. Questions from Electors under Procedure Rule 9. -

Recommendations of Cabinet and Committees

[Notification of Amendments required by 10am on Wednesday 29 November 2023]

6. Recommendations of the Cabinet from its meeting held on 16th October 2023
- A - Quarterly Improvement and Recovery Progress Report, to be preceded by a Question and Answer session with the Lead Commissioner. 15 – 45
- B - Corporate Performance Report 46 - 80

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Motions

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Member Questions

10. To note Questions from Members under Procedure Rule 10 (as tabled). -

Press and Public

Attendance and accessibility: You are welcome to attend this meeting which is open to the press and public, as an observer. You will however be asked to leave before any items in the Part II agenda are considered. For those hard of hearing an Induction Loop System is available in the Council Chamber.

Webcasting and recording: The public part of the meeting will be filmed by the Council for live and/or subsequent broadcast on the Council's website. The footage will remain on our website for 12 months. A copy of the recording will also be retained in accordance with the Council's data retention policy. By entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings.

In addition, the law allows members of the public to take photographs, film, audio-record or tweet the proceedings at public meetings. Anyone proposing to do so is requested to advise the Democratic Services Officer before the start of the meeting. Filming or recording must be overt and persons filming should not move around the meeting room whilst filming nor should they obstruct proceedings or the public from viewing the meeting. The use of flash photography, additional lighting or any non hand held devices, including tripods, will not be allowed unless this has been discussed with the Democratic Services Officer.

Emergency procedures: The fire alarm is a continuous siren. If the alarm sounds Immediately vacate the premises by the nearest available exit at either the front or rear of the Chamber and proceed to the assembly point: The pavement of the service road outside of Westminster House, 31 Windsor Road.

MINUTES OF COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

At a Meeting of the Council for the Borough of Slough held at the Council Chamber - Observatory House, 25 Windsor Road, SL1 2EL on Thursday, 28th September, 2023 at 7.00 pm

Present:- The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor Abbasi), in the chair; Councillors E. Ahmed, I. Ahmed, Ajaib, Akram, Anderson, Carter, Chahal, Dauti, Dhillon, Escott, Gahir, Gill, Hulme, Iftakhar, Instone, Kelly, Manku, Mann, Matloob, Mohammad, Mohindra, Muvvala, Nazir, Naveed, O'Kelly, D. Parmar, Qaseem, Rana, J. Sabah (until 8.11pm), W. Sabah, Satti, Shah, Shaik, Smith, Tomar, Wright and Zarait.

Apologies for Absence:- Councillors Bedi, Dar, Khawar and Stedmond.

21. Declarations of Interest

Agenda Item 5 - Petition - Support the sale of property from the asset disposal list to the Langley Islamic Centre for Community Development: Councillor Shaik declared that he had been approached by the Lead Petitioner. Councillor Shaik stayed in the meeting and participated in the discussion on this agenda item.

22. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Council held on 27th July 2023

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 27th July 2023 be approved as a correct record subject to Minute reference 15 being amended to read “four electors were present but only three supplementary questions were asked.”

23. To receive the Mayor's Communications.

Members were informed that the Mayor had attended a number of engagements which included visits to schools, community organisations and citizenship ceremonies. The work carried out by volunteers across the town was acknowledged by the Mayor and appreciation for their services was placed on record.

The Mayor reminded Members of their responsibilities as elected representatives and the important role they played in the development of the town.

24. Petition - Support the sale of property from the asset disposal list to the Langley Islamic Centre for Community Development

The Mayor invited Mr Rana, the petition organiser to address the meeting.

Following completion of the subsequent debate,

It was moved by Councillor Smith,
Seconded by Councillor Chahal,

“That the Executive Director of Property and Housing:

- a) Initiates in conjunction with other Directors a review of the services delivered from the asset is completed and a decision made on future service delivery utilising less or alternative assets
- b) Includes representatives of the Petition Organiser in any stakeholder engagement concerning the asset.
- c) Ensures there is wide publication of any intended disposal of the Langley Pavilion such publication to specifically include the Petition Organiser.
- d) Includes representatives of the Petition Organiser in any stakeholder engagement with the voluntary and community sector to inform its wider estates strategy.”

The recommendations were put to the vote and agreed with 37 votes for and 1 abstention.

Resolved – That the Executive Director of Property and Housing:

- a) Initiates in conjunction with other Directors a review of the services delivered from the asset is completed and a decision made on future service delivery utilising less or alternative assets
- b) Includes representatives of the Petition Organiser in any stakeholder engagement concerning the asset.
- c) Ensures there is wide publication of any intended disposal of the Langley Pavilion such publication to specifically include the Petition Organiser.
- d) Includes representatives of the Petition Organiser in any stakeholder engagement with the voluntary and community sector to inform its wider estates strategy.

25. Questions from Electors under Procedure Rule 9.

Five elector questions had been received. Four electors were present and asked a supplementary question.

26. Recommendation of the Member Panel on the Constitution from its meeting held on 7th September 2023

It was moved by Councillor Smith,
Seconded by Councillor Anderson,

“That the proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference for inclusion in the constitution, as set out at Appendix B in the supplementary agenda, be approved.”

The recommendation was put to the vote and agreed with 37 votes for and 1 abstention.

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Resolved – That the proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference for inclusion in the constitution, as set out at Appendix B in the supplementary agenda, be approved.

27. Recommendation of the Cabinet from its meeting held on 18th September 2023

It was moved by Councillor Smith,
Seconded by Councillor Chahal,

“That the Corporate Plan, attached at Appendix A in the supplementary agenda, be approved.”

The recommendation was put to the vote and agreed with 35 votes for and 1 abstention.

Resolved - That the Corporate Plan, attached at Appendix A in the supplementary agenda, be approved.

28. Recommendation of the Employment Committee held on 25th September 2023

It was moved by Councillor Zarait,
Seconded by Councillor Smith,

- a) “That the contents of the report are noted.
- b) That the chief officer structure as set out in Appendix A be approved and agree the pay grades for the new Director posts which includes grades over £100,000.
- c) That the other proposed changes to the structure at Appendix A that the head of paid service intends to make be noted and approve the redundancy package(s) set out in Appendix B.
- d) Authorise the Monitoring Officer to make any consequential changes to the Constitution, including Article 12, Part 3.6 Scheme of Delegation to Officers, Part 4.7 Officer Employment Procedure Rules, and Part 7.
- e) Delegate to the chief executive in consultations with the leader decisions to depart from the multi-borough agreement to share a statutory Director of Public Health (recruitment to that post will then be conducted in the normal way).”

The recommendations were put to the vote and agreed with 36 votes for and 1 abstention.

Resolved –

- a) That the contents of the report are noted.
- b) That the chief officer structure as set out in Appendix A be approved and agree the pay grades for the new Director posts which includes grades over £100,000.

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- c) That the other proposed changes to the structure at Appendix A that the head of paid service intends to make be noted and approve the redundancy package(s) set out in Appendix B.
- d) Authorise the Monitoring Officer to make any consequential changes to the Constitution, including Article 12, Part 3.6 Scheme of Delegation to Officers, Part 4.7 Officer Employment Procedure Rules, and Part 7.
- e) Delegate to the chief executive in consultations with the leader decisions to depart from the multi-borough agreement to share a statutory Director of Public Health (recruitment to that post will then be conducted in the normal way).

29. Petition - Review and Reversion of the Bi-Weekly Bin Collection Policy

The Mayor invited Ms Anu Singh, on behalf of the petition organiser, to address the meeting.

Following completion of the subsequent debate,

It was moved by Councillor Smith,
Seconded by Councillor Chahal,

- a) "That fortnightly collections continue as currently scheduled;
- b) That the council roll out further educational programmes to better inform residents on recycling and general waste;
- c) That the Executive Director for Property and Housing Council will report to Cabinet on options for residents to improve the recycling rates.
- d) That the council works with members for reducing food waste and hence reducing disposal costs and that the Lead member for Transport, Housing, The Environment and Environmental Services be briefed and updated on the collection service."

The recommendations were put to the vote and agreed with 36 votes for and 1 abstention.

Resolved -

- a) That fortnightly collections continue as currently scheduled;
- b) That the council roll out further educational programmes to better inform residents on recycling and general waste;
- c) That the Executive Director for Property and Housing Council will report to Cabinet on options for residents to improve the recycling rates.
- d) That the council works with members for reducing food waste and hence reducing disposal costs and that the Lead member for Transport, Housing, The Environment and Environmental Services be briefed and updated on the collection service.

30. To consider Motions submitted under procedure Rule 14.

Learning from the recent past years at Slough Borough Council

In accordance with council procedure rule 16.9

Councillor Mohindra, as proposer of the motion, moved to withdraw the motion, Councillor Manku, as seconder of the motion, seconded to withdraw the motion.

The motion was withdrawn with 20 votes for, 16 against and 1 abstention.

Resolved – That the motion be withdrawn.

Proposed reorganisation of Thames Valley Police

It was moved by Councillor Qaseem,
Seconded by Councillor Mohammad,

“Council Commends;

- That excellent work is undertaken by hard-working police officers across the town to best serve the needs of the Slough community.
- That strong partnership work with the police is evident in Slough, and the town benefits from an area based policing approach.
- That a local, strong, neighbourhood based policing approach, deeply rooted within the communities that the police serve, is essential to build trust with the police and enable residents to feel safe in our town.
- That resident's value having a front of house and highly visible police station within the town.
- That despite the efforts of our local police partners, Slough continues to have a 45% higher crime rate than the average across the Thames Valley and Thames Valley as a whole continues to have high race disproportionality rates in relation to stop and search and arrests data.

The council notes the proposed reorganisation of Thames Valley Police into 5 new command areas, placing Slough within Berkshire East, alongside Bracknell and Windsor & Maidenhead. Whilst we understand the need to move to a different organisational model, it is vital that the unique needs of Slough, the higher demand within Slough and our residents continue to be best served by the police.

As such, the council resolves to;

- a) Vigorously oppose any loss of a front of house, centrally located police building within the town.
- b) Lobby the Police and crime commissioners for the restoration of Police Community Support Officers across the town back up to 27.
- c) Constructively challenge Thames Valley police force to increase recruitment from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities at all levels of Thames Valley, ensuring that the police service adequately reflects the communities it

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serves. Ensure that these efforts are included within the annual report to the council.

- d) Ensure that tackling the blight of drug use, and the associated criminality that accompanies it is at the forefront of Slough's policing plan.
- e) Work with police partners to ensure an increase in mandatory, high visible patrols in key retail centres across the town."

It was moved by Councillor Muvvala, as an amendment,
Seconded by Councillor I Ahmed,

"Council Commends;

- That excellent work is undertaken by hard-working police officers across the town to best serve the needs of the Slough community.
- That strong partnership work with the police is evident in Slough, and the town benefits from an area based policing approach.
- That a local, strong, neighbourhood based policing approach, deeply rooted within the communities that the police serve, is essential to build trust with the police and enable residents to feel safe in our town.
- That resident's value having a front of house and highly visible police station within the town.
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The council notes the proposed reorganisation of Thames Valley Police into 5 new command areas, placing Slough within Berkshire East, alongside Bracknell and Windsor & Maidenhead. Whilst we understand the need to move to a different organisational model, it is vital that the unique needs of Slough, the higher demand within Slough and our residents continue to be best served by the police.

As such, the council resolves to;

- a) Vigorously oppose any loss of a front of house, centrally located police building within the town, **while acknowledging that there are currently no plans to close Slough Police Station/front counter.**
- b) Lobby the Police and crime commissioners for the restoration of Police Community Support Officers across the town back up to 27.
- c) Constructively challenge Thames Valley police force to increase recruitment from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities at all levels of Thames Valley, ensuring that the police service adequately reflects the communities it serves. Ensure that these efforts are included within the annual report to the council.
- d) Ensure that tackling the blight of drug use, and the associated criminality that accompanies it is at the forefront of Slough's policing plan.
- e) Work with police partners to ensure an increase in mandatory, high visible patrols in key retail centres across the town."

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The amendment was put to the vote and agreed unanimously. The amended motion became the substantive motion.

The substantive motion was put to the vote and carried with 35 votes for and 1 abstention.

Resolved -

“Council Commends;

- That excellent work is undertaken by hard-working police officers across the town to best serve the needs of the Slough community.
- That strong partnership work with the police is evident in Slough, and the town benefits from an area based policing approach.
- That a local, strong, neighbourhood based policing approach, deeply rooted within the communities that the police serve, is essential to build trust with the police and enable residents to feel safe in our town.
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As such, the council resolves to;

- f) Vigorously oppose any loss of a front of house, centrally located police building within the town, while acknowledging that there are currently no plans to close Slough Police Station/front counter.
- g) Lobby the Police and crime commissioners for the restoration of Police Community Support Officers across the town back up to 27.
- h) Constructively challenge Thames Valley police force to increase recruitment from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities at all levels of Thames Valley, ensuring that the police service adequately reflects the communities it serves. Ensure that these efforts are included within the annual report to the council.
- i) Ensure that tackling the blight of drug use, and the associated criminality that accompanies it is at the forefront of Slough's policing plan.
- j) Work with police partners to ensure an increase in mandatory, high visible patrols in key retail centres across the town.

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31. To note Questions from Members under Procedure Rule 10

Details of Member questions and replies received, as set out in the supplementary agenda, were noted

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 7.00 pm and closed at 9.55 pm)

Slough Borough Council

Report To:	Council
Date:	30 November 2023
Subject:	Petition - Urgent Appeal to Save Community Hub (Unit 26 Wexham Business Village, Wexham Rd, Slough, SL2 5HF)
Chief Officer:	Pat Hayes, Executive Director, Property and Housing
Contact Officer:	Kunwar Khan, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager
Ward(s):	Upton Lea Ward
Exempt:	No
Appendices:	None

1. Summary and Recommendations

- 1.1 This report sets out the details of a Petition on Urgent Appeal to Save Community Hub (Unit 26 Wexham Business Village, Wexham Rd, Slough, SL2 5HF), which has been received under the Council's Petitions Scheme.
- 1.2 The Council is invited to review and agree its course of action in relation to the petition.

Recommendations:

Following the debate, the Council is asked to resolve what action it wishes to take with regard to the Petition, noting the service officer's recommendation provided below:

Council notes that:

- a. Cabinet agreed an Asset Disposal Strategy at its meeting on 18 September 2023.
- b. As the same Cabinet meeting, in response to a Member question, the Leader confirmed that Unit 26 Wexham Business Village would be sold via auction to ensure that best consideration was obtained and the current occupier would be free to bid for the asset as part of this process.

Commissioner Review

Commissioners have reviewed the report and made no comments.

2. Report

- 2.1 This report advises the Council of a Petition – Urgent Appeal to Save Community Hub (Unit 26 Wexham Business Village, Wexham Rd, Slough, SL2 5HF) – which has been received under the Council’s Petitions Scheme.
- 2.2 Council’s Petition Scheme, inter alia, states that if a petition has, or acquires 1,500 valid signatures the issues will be debated at a Full Council meeting (i.e. a meeting to which all elected Members are invited).
- 2.3 The Petition has surpassed the threshold of triggering a debate at full council and contains **1,564** signatories on the Council’s website.
- 2.4 The Petition text reads as follows:

Urgent Appeal Save Community Hub

We the undersigned petition the council to remove for sale Unit 26 Wexham Business Village, Wexham Rd, Slough, SL2 5HF currently on auction due on the 21st September 2023 and have a review meeting with the current tenancy holder Blackbeard Academy Ltd (Blackbeard Community Projects CIC) to discuss viable options.

Blackbeard MMA Community Hub Faces Imminent Closure, Urgently Seeks Support to Preserve Vital Community Resource

Slough, 4th September - The Blackbeard MMA Community Hub, a beacon of hope and transformation in the Slough community, is under threat of being taken away from its users without notice. In an unexpected turn of events, the Slough Borough Council has put the beloved community hub up for bidding to private investors, without providing prior notification to the Blackbeard MMA organisation or allowing them the opportunity for first refusal. With just 20 days remaining before the building goes up for bidding, the local community is rallying together to save this vital resource.

Founded in 2010, the Blackbeard MMA Community Hub has served as a cradle of champions, nurturing, and producing skilled martial artists who have achieved excellence on national and international stages. However, the impact of the hub extends far beyond the realm of sports.

The Blackbeard Community Projects CIC, a non-profit organisation closely associated with Blackbeard MMA, is dedicated to enhancing the Slough community through a wide range of activities, workshops, and support services. These initiatives are designed to empower the local youth, equipping them with life skills, leadership training, mentoring, and the tools to overcome the challenges they may encounter in their daily lives.

"We are deeply saddened by the sudden turn of events that has put the future of the Blackbeard MMA Community Hub in jeopardy," said Nomaan Khalid at Blackbeard MMA. "Our hub is more than just a building; it is the heart and soul of our community, a place where dreams are nurtured, and lives are transformed. We have consistently strived to make a positive impact on the lives of young people in Slough, and it is disheartening to see our efforts jeopardised."

Community members and supporters of Blackbeard MMA are urgently calling for the Slough Borough Council to reconsider this decision and explore alternative solutions that will allow the hub to continue its vital work.

"We implore the Slough Borough Council to reconsider their decision to auction off our community hub," continued Nomaan Khalid "There are numerous vacant buildings in Slough, and we believe that preserving the Blackbeard MMA Community Hub would be a testament to their commitment to community development. Together, we can ensure that this valuable resource remains accessible to the people it serves."

Blackbeard MMA is urging concerned citizens, supporters, and community leaders to join them in their efforts to safeguard the future of the hub. Those interested in helping can get involved by signing petitions, raising awareness on social media, and reaching out to local officials.

For further information and to stay updated on the situation, please visit Blackbeard MMA's official website <http://www.blackbeardacademy.co.uk> or follow them on social media channels @blackbeardmma.

About Blackbeard MMA Community Hub:

The Blackbeard MMA Community Hub is a cornerstone of the Slough community, fostering talent, personal development, and community engagement since its inception in 2010. Through its association with Blackbeard Community Projects CIC, it continues to provide essential services, support, and opportunities for local youth and the broader community.

Comments from the Service

Unit 26 Wexham Business Village was part of SBC's Investment Portfolio. The Council's reason for owning it was to generate a financial return. It was leased under a commercial arrangement to a limited company (Blackbeard Academy Ltd). It is not recognised as a "Community Hub".

The property was sold at auction on 21st September 2023, as part of Phase One of the Asset Disposal Programme, and the sale completed on 2nd November 2023. There was dialogue with the tenant before and during the transaction period. Arrangements have been made to introduce the tenant to the new owner of the property, to enable discussions around any ongoing lease arrangements.

Supporting Information for debate

- 2.5 The Petition Organiser will be invited to the council meeting to speak on the Petition (up to five minutes) and the Petition will then be discussed by Members of the Council for a maximum of 15 minutes. The Mayor has discretion to extend this time taking account of the degree of public interest in the issue, the level of support given to the petition and the number of elected members wishing to express their views on the subject.
- 2.6 Following this discussion, the Council will need to decide what action to take with regard to the Petition. As this matter relates to an executive function, the Council can decide whether to make recommendations to Cabinet. In this particular case,

Cabinet considered the subject matter on 18 September 2023. At that meeting, Cabinet approved an updated Asset Disposal Strategy. This Strategy confirms the following:

- a. That consideration will be given as to whether an asset is required for Council service delivery priorities or by partners in furtherance of delivery of the Council's priorities. In these cases, a business case will be required to ensure that the full economic costs of using and running the building are met.
 - b. As a general principle, all disposals will be on commercial terms and demonstrably evidence that the test in section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 is met, namely that the disposal is for best consideration reasonably obtainable. Any decision to dispose of an asset for less than best consideration, with the exception of disposals to comply with statutory obligations, should be approved by Cabinet.
 - c. Various disposal methods will be considered, including the use of auctions. Where a property is sold via auction, the successful bidder will be required to exchange on the day of the auction and there will be a set timetable to complete the disposal.
- 2.7 In response to a Member question at Cabinet on 18 September 2023, the Leader confirmed that the Council was currently in Phase 1 of its disposal programme and that this focused on disposal of investment and development portfolio and that the asset in question was not an asset of community value or an operational asset. The Leader responded in particular on Unit 26 Wexham Business Village asset, stating this is not regarded as a community asset and that the proposal is to put it to auction that week, delivering a transparent disposal at best value. The disposal would not necessarily lead to displacement of the current occupant, as this would be a matter for the new owner and the current occupier is free to bid for the site.
- 2.8 Since the cabinet meeting, the asset was sold via auction. The asset was sold to an individual for a value considerably in excess of the reserve and completion took place on 2 November 2023. The sale is subject to the lease, although it should be noted that the occupier was occupying the land under an expired lease and therefore will need to negotiate any ongoing arrangement with the new owner.
- 2.9 The Scheme indicates that the Council's response to a Petition will depend on what a petition asks for and how many people have signed it but may include one or more of the following;
- Taking the action requested in the Petition;
 - Considering the Petition at a Council Meeting;
 - Holding an Inquiry;
 - Commissioning relevant research;
 - Organising a public meeting;
 - Mounting a wider public consultation;
 - Meeting with the Petition Organiser or representatives of signatories;
 - Providing a written response outlining the Council's views on the subject;
 - Referring the issue to the Council's Overview & Scrutiny Committee **OR**
 - Referring the issue to the relevant Committee/Cabinet;
 - Consulting statutory partners and local service providers;
 - Instigating discussions with the voluntary and community sectors; and
 - Making representations to Commercial or other Interests.

The Recommendation may incorporate the following options:

- Considering the Petition at a Council Meeting;
- Mounting a wider public consultation;
- Meeting with the Petition Organiser or representatives of signatories;
- Providing a written response outlining the Council's views on the subject;
- Consulting statutory partners and local service providers; and
- Instigating discussions with the voluntary and community sectors.

2.10 In this matter, Cabinet has already considered the circumstances of the individual unit and recently reviewed and updated the Council's strategy. It is therefore recommended that Council note this; Leader's response at September's cabinet meeting; and the fact that the asset was put to auction on 21 September 2023 in order to deliver a transparent disposal at best value and now has been sold.

3. Implications of the Recommendation

3.1 There are no particular implications arising from the recommendation, given that Members are simply asked to note the rationale and process for the disposal of this asset.

3.1 Financial implications

3.1.1 There are no adverse implications from this, given that the sale was completed in accordance with the agreed Asset Disposal Strategy.

3.1.2 The asset disposal programme and sale of properties are critical to the financial recovery of Slough Borough Council.

3.2 Legal implications

3.2.1 Slough Borough Council adopted a new petition scheme in July 2010. This Petition meets the criteria listed in the [Council's Petition Scheme](#).

3.2.2 Under the Council's published Petitions Scheme, a petition that contains 1,500 signatures triggers a debate at Council.

3.2.3 Disposal of a property asset or freehold is an executive function and therefore reserved to Cabinet. Full Council does not have the power to direct Cabinet to take a particular decision on this matter. When deciding, Cabinet must take account of relevant policies, its legal duties and in particular its duties under 'Disposal of land by principal councils' ([Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972](#)) and the financial implications of any decision. Any decision to dispose of an asset at less than best consideration reasonably obtainable is reserved to Cabinet. This particular asset was discussed in response to a Member question at the Cabinet meeting on 18 September 2023 and the asset – Unit 26 Wexham Business Village, Wexham Rd, Slough, SL2 5HF – has since been sold via auction to ensure that best consideration was obtained.

3.2.4 This asset was held by the Council as an investment asset and is a commercial unit. The current occupier was permitted to bid for the freehold of the site at the auction and will be able to negotiate a new lease arrangement with the new owner.

Risk management implications

3.3.1 The Council has significant financial challenges and needs to make revenue savings and generate capital receipts to fund some of its services in the short to medium term. This requires it to dispose of a significant number of its surplus assets and when doing so, to ensure it receives the best consideration reasonably obtainable. When disposing of assets, the Council must ensure it understands any legal constraints on the site and any protected uses. Legal support is provided for every asset disposal to review the title documents and consider any usage restrictions.

3.4 Environmental implications

3.4.1 No environmental implications have been identified as a direct result of this report.

3.5 Equality implications

3.5.1 The Equality Act duties apply to the Council when disposing of assets. The Council will consider its service delivery priorities when considering the most efficient use of its assets and when deciding to dispose of an asset.

Background papers and information

- [Petition.](#)

230922V1KK

Slough Borough Council

Report To:	Council
Date:	30 November 2023
Subject:	Recommendations of the Cabinet from its meeting held on 16 th October 2023: A - Quarterly Improvement and Recovery progress report
Chief Officer:	Stephen Brown, Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Sarah Hayward, Executive Director, Strategy & Transformation
Ward(s):	All
Exempt:	NO
Appendices:	Appendix 1 – report to Improvement and Recovery Board September 2023

1. Summary and Recommendations

- 1.1 This report provides an update on progress being made by the Council against the Secretary of State Directions issued in December 2021, and the overall council recovery plan. The Cabinet considered this report at its meeting held on 16th October 2023 and agreed to refer it to full Council for discussion and debate and to invite the Lead Commissioner and Commissioner team to a question and answer session at full Council.

Recommendations:

- 1.2 Council is requested to consider the recommendations from Cabinet to:
- a) Note and comment on the progress made by the Council since the previous report in addressing the Directions of the Secretary of State;
 - b) Agree to the next steps to deliver improvement as set out in the action plans and other workstreams that have been developed to address the Directions;
 - c) Note the resolution of Cabinet to refer recovery items to full council every six months so every member has oversight and involvement in Slough's recovery;
 - d) Invite the lead commissioner and commissioner team to a question and answer session at full council.

Reason

- 1.3 The then Cabinet agreed on 21 November 2022 to receive quarterly updates from the councils Improvement and Recovery Board chaired by government commissioners.
- 1.4 Information from the most recent Improvement and Recovery Board in September is attached as Appendix A.
- 1.5 Formal meetings with Commissioners continue monthly in the form of the Improvement and Recovery Board. Quarterly updates will continue to be brought to Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet setting out the detail of the issues reported on at these progress meetings along with additional areas of focus and activity as required by Commissioners. Other Scrutiny and Cabinet reports will also reference progress and agendas and decisions will strongly link to improvement and recovery activity.
- 1.6 In the past year regular reporting on improvement and recovery has been embedded in the cabinet forward plan. The council's scrutiny programme is also focussed much more tightly on improvement and recovery. Consideration is now being given to how best involve all councillors in recovery. Regular discussion at full council is considered a transparent and democratic way to involve councillors regardless of whether or not they're in the administration or members of specific committees.
- 1.7 It is recommended to hear from commissioners in this process as part of the vital check and challenge councillors should be doing to assure themselves that Slough's recovery is on track and will ultimately ensure it is able to sustain delivery of services for Slough's residents.
- 1.8 This report and the appendix set out the progress made to date and the next steps to deliver change against the journey to recovery and improvement.

Commissioner Review of Cabinet report, 16th October 2023

"Commissioners welcome the report on improvement and recovery, giving the opportunity for Members to report progress to the public. The Council may wish to consider sharing this report to full council, so that a broad range of Members are kept up to date and have the opportunity to ask questions."

2. Report

Introduction

- 2.1 As previously reported Members are aware the Council received a formal direction from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities made under s.15(5) and (6) of the Local Government Act 1999, including a direction that prescribed functions are to be exercised by Commissioners; and the appointment of Commissioners from 1 December 2021.
- 2.2 The Council took a number of steps, including approving a new Corporate Plan in May 2022 that set out its strategy for improvement. The Corporate Plan has been refreshed and was approved by Council on 28 September 2023.
- 2.3 Commissioners have recognised that there is now a more holistic approach to reporting progress against the various action plans in place to address the Directions and this is presented in the reports attached to the Improvement and Recovery Board.

- 2.4 The Commissioners report to the Secretary of State in December 2022 set out the position after the first 12 months and the Secretary of State subsequently wrote to the council in March 2023. Commissioners' have submitted a further six month report to the Secretary of State and this was published on 14 September with a parliamentary statement and accompanying letter to the council – all documents can be found on the government website here [Intervention at Slough Borough Council - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/intervention-at-slough-borough-council). The Council welcomes the report and will issue a response once it has time to consider the detailed content.
- 2.5 Commissioners also wrote to the Chief Executive on 14 August 2023. The letter provided clarity on a series of priority areas and we will be providing regular reports on improvements against each of these in time for Commissioners to be able to consider before the submission of their next report.

3 Background

- 3.1 It was agreed by Cabinet in November 2022 that regular public reporting on the Council's ongoing response to Government intervention was essential to ensure transparency and accountability.
- 3.2 These reports are submitted to Scrutiny Committee first to provide the opportunity for comment to Cabinet.
- 3.3 It is now almost two years since Commissioners were appointed by the Secretary of State. During that time the Council has had the opportunity to discuss with Commissioners the extent of the challenges it faces.
- 3.4 The Commissioner team changed earlier this year with the appointment of Gerard Curran and Denise Murray in May 2023, replacing Max Caller and Margaret Lee. Gavin Jones remains as a commissioner and has been appointed as the Lead Commissioner. In May the Council changed administration and the new Leader of the Council attends the monthly Improvement and Recovery Boards with Commissioners, the Chief Executive and senior managers.
- 3.5 Senior level appointments have created more of a sense of stability and an ability to oversee a refreshed corporate approach to financial planning, improvement and recovery.
- 3.6 Commissioners submit regular reports to the Secretary of State, the latest of which was published on 14 September 2023.
- 3.7 Commissioners commented on the last report to Cabinet in June that:
- The Council is working hard to address the significant problems that it faces. The new administration and senior managers are enthusiastic, realistic, and properly focused on the tasks ahead.
- Whilst strenuous effort is essential it is not the same as success in resolving the issues. The council will want to resist the temptation to declare victory too soon or to see hard work, on its own, as being enough. Challenges remain and it is not possible yet to say that even in the medium term they will be fully resolved.
- These challenges include but are not limited to:
- Winning the trust and commitment of the workforce to obtain the best from them.

- Having a strong medium term financial strategy and a firm financial footing.
 - Implementing effective IT systems and processes.
 - Improving engagement with the public.
 - Fully engaging elected members in the running of the council.
 - Delivering improvement at pace.
 - Anticipating, preparing for and removing obstacles to the planned improvements.
 - Rising to the challenges faced by children in Slough.
- 3.8 The appendix to this report presents an overview of the workstreams in place to address each of the Directions and how these have been reported to Commissioners.
- 3.9 Commissioners also commented on the June Scrutiny report that the:
- Committee will wish to satisfy itself that appropriate leadership, programme and project management skills are being deployed to ensure that the ambitions presented to them are delivered on time and on budget.
- 3.10 To that end, the Council has established an internal Recovery & Transformation Board to:
1. Develop and communicate SBCs recovery and transformation strategy.
 2. Identify and prioritise Projects, approving strategic business cases as necessary, that support recovery and strategic objectives.
 3. Assess whether new demand can be supported, and whether new resources are required, or existing ones redirected.
 4. Resolve contention for organisation resources, ensuring a balanced portfolio.
 5. Ensure that Projects are, and remain, aligned to SBCs recovery and strategic objectives, including the required pace.
 6. Ensure that the best corporate wide solutions are identified / delivered, that provide the most benefits.
 7. Provide oversight and guidance to delivery teams, ensuring that they have the resources and support they need.
 8. Monitor progress against Transformational Projects, reporting on progress to the CLT, Members and Commissioners and demonstrating SBC is moving as fast as possible towards recovery with the available resources.
 9. Assist in the identification and monitoring of escalated risks / issues and support proposed mitigation strategies.
 10. Ensure that Transformation and Recovery Projects are aligned with the organisation's values and culture.

- 3.11 A separate report on the council's strategic direction in the form of a refreshed Corporate Plan was submitted to September Cabinet and approved at Council to confirm the continued focus on Improvement and Recovery and:
- Set a renewed purpose and set of strategic priorities for the council
 - Ensure greater alignment with the medium term financial strategy.

3.12 In addition, the Cabinet and other member forums continue to receive reports which relate to specific directions and improvements, including finance action plan updates, reports on specific company governance, updates on ICT, procurement and internal audit progress, asset disposal recommendations and updates and updates on senior officer staffing restructure.

3.13 The Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee (CISC), at its meeting on 26 September, agreed to formally recommend to the Improvement and Recovery Board and Cabinet through the Leader of the Council that:

- a. Where appropriate, the action/improvement plans to deliver the Directions are couched in terms of Outcomes: and
- b. Under Direction 5, Culture Change; the expression of outcome/s will prove especially helpful not least:
 - to provide the focus for IRB work;
 - to establish the building blocks of a Public Engagement and Communication Strategy and
 - restore/initiate a more positive dialogue with residents, businesses and service users.

The Leader receives a letter to this effect, from the Chair of CISC, before the 16 October Cabinet.

3.14 It was noted that, at the present time, the Committee is planning to trigger a Task and Finish Group on 28 November to investigate resident engagement and building public trust (exact scope to be developed and agreed).

3.15 In addition, the Committee members asked officers for:

- Revised information going forward that reconciles the RAG status of the Directions with Outcomes and the workstreams to deliver them with actions, outputs and milestones that will indicate progress; and
- That in future quarterly reports, the commentary includes a summary of the direction of travel and momentum for the Directions.

3.16 These request for information will be managed through the Scrutiny Committee's Action Tracker

3.17 The report is taken to scrutiny, cabinet and council to ensure members are playing a full role in the council's recovery. For each report the most up-to-date IRB papers attached. Links to the earlier reports are included in the background papers section.

4 Implications of the Recommendation

Financial implications

4.1 This progress update report is intended to complement existing financial reporting in particular against the Financial Action Plan. Any actions arising from the recommendations will be funded from within existing budgets.

Legal implications

4.2 On 1 December 2021 the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities made statutory directions requiring the Council to take prescribed actions and that certain functions be exercised from this date by appointed Commissioners, acting jointly or severally. The directions were extended on 1 September 2022. The directions were made under Part 1 of the Local Government Act 1999 due to the Council having failed to comply with its best value duty. The general duty of best value is set out in section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 and requires local authorities to “make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness”. This requires consideration of overall value, including economic, environmental and social value, when reviewing service provision. There is also a duty to consult when deciding how to fulfil the best value duty.

4.3 Annex A of the directions set out the action the Council is required to take. Annex C sets out the functions to be exercised by the Commissioners. This includes functions associated with governance and scrutiny of strategic decisions, requirements for the proper administration of financial affairs, functions associated with the oversight of collection of revenues and benefits and appointment of the three statutory governance officers and the scrutiny officer, as well as functions to define the officer structure at a senior level, determine recruitment processes and recruit relevant staff to these positions. The Explanatory Memorandum to this Direction confirms that in practice most decisions are expected to be taken by the Council, however the Directions are designed to give the Commissioners the power to tackle weaknesses identified to ensure the Council is better equipped to meet the best value requirements. Cabinet should have regard to the advice and comments of the Commissioners contained in this report.

Risk management implications

4.4 The table below sets the key risks

Risk	Summary	Mitigations
Financial	Failure to deliver financial sustainability	Financial action plan, Capitalisation Directive and immediate to long-term savings plans
Legal	Failure to address the Directions and demonstrate compliance with the Council’s best value duties or other legal duties leading to	Appointment of new interim Monitoring Officer to bolster capacity at senior management level. Recruitment of interim support for governance and scrutiny.

Risk	Summary	Mitigations
	increased legal challenges to decision-making and further statutory intervention.	A whole system approach, focusing on the basics of local government governance and decision making, including training and development and involvement of legal services at an earlier stage of policy formulation.
Reputational	Failure to meet the requirements contained in the Directions leading to further intervention from Government	A more comprehensive and corporate approach has been developed building on lessons learned over the past year to provide greater confidence in the Council's journey and direction of travel

Environmental Implications

4.5 There are no direct environmental implications as a result of the recommendations contained in this report.

Equality implications

4.6 The Council has a duty contained in section 149 of the Equality Act to have due regard to the need to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day-to-day business and to keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services.

Procurement implications

4.7 One of the Directions includes specific reference to the procurement and contract management function and this is detailed in the Appendix.

Workforce implications

4.8 Any future changes to the workforce will be subject to full statutory processes and consultation.

Property implications

4.9 The Council has developed an Asset Disposal Strategy and this has been approved by Cabinet.

5 Background Papers

5.1 See Appendix.

Improvement and Recovery Board

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Progress Report
28-Sep-23

Report Owner: Sarah Hayward, ED Strategy and Improvement
Report Author: Strategy and Improvement Team

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Section Four .

- Future Meetings ED Strategy & Improvement.

Headline Commentary

- Commissioner report published 14 September with ministerial statement and correspondence from DLUHC to Council. Confirms improvement since previous report while still a long way to go.
- Commissioners separate internal letter of 14 August highlighted priority areas for focus between now and December report – see agenda item and paper to agree approach.
- Consultation on senior management restructure has closed and responses due to be issued with Full Council to approve new structure 28 September.
- Further themed meetings have been held with Commissioners – mainly Ged including HR, Customer, Culture and ICT (separate Finance briefings with Denise ongoing).
- Series of Cabinet reports presented on 18 September directly related to improvement including Corporate Plan, Estates and various assets, Finance, SCF, Adults and Procurement.
- Continue to dovetail our activity across the DfE intervention so that there is clear alignment between our work as an authority to address the issues and reporting to the Getting to Good Board.



Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
1	Functional Capability Assessment	Sarah Hayward	Dean Tyler		01-Dec-22		=	14/10 - Service plans have been completed, which will address gaps in capability. These are continuing to be iterated to ensure coherence across services and alignment with the corporate plan. SLT will act as the governance body for the service planning. Next steps are to develop reporting arrangements for monitoring progress in delivery, and ensure lessons for next year are captured.
2	Avoid Poor Governance or Financial Mismanagement	Adele Taylor	Alistair Rush & Hitesh Jolapara	Leader / Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	Continuous		=	10/08 Action plan overview discussed with Commissioner and Lead Member. Paper will go to cabinet in September 09/06 Agreed with new Commissioner that the action plan will be considered at August Finance Board to go to Cabinet in September. This reflects change in Commissioner and wanting to involve them in the development of the combined plan.
3a Page 26	Financial Sustainability Action Plan	Adele Taylor	Alistair Rush & Hitesh Jolapara	Leader / Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	31-Mar-29		=	09/06 – Outturn for 22/23 being finalised with Cabinet paper due in July cabinet. MTFP and underlying assumptions will be refreshed with outturn data and a new MTFP model built during June / July. Will review progress at August finance board. 13/10 - The Finance action plan covers 10 years in detail from 2015/16 to 2024/25 and is supplemented by a 14 year active financial model (to 2028/29). Key elements are: Accounts, Assets sales, Capitalisation direction, Revenue budgets, Borrowings, MRP, DSG, Internal audit, Risks and mitigations Finance structure and Directions/recommendations from DLUHC, GT, CIPFA, Directions. The plan is regularly updated.





Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
3b Page 27	Democratic Governance Action Plan	Stephen Taylor	Alexander Polak	Leader	01-Dec-23	A	=	<p>11/09 - 'The detail of the next six months' delivery plan has now been completed, Commissioner Curran met with the Monitoring Officer and Statutory Scrutiny Officer to review progress and next steps including a view of both the project workbook and 'plan on a page'.</p> <p>21/08 - The Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23 has now been completed and adopted. The constitution review is ongoing and is being carried out in stages having regard to available resources. Council approved changes to Planning Committee procedures and Planning Code of Conduct at its July meeting.</p> <p>11/07 - Deep dive commentary and materials shared with the appropriate groups and feedback has been taken onboard. The annual governance statement has been produced in first draft. The launch of the Governance leadership learning has been successful with good attendance and engagement as of the 4th of July.</p> <p>16/06 – Phase 2a of the Democratic Governance Action plan can be completed with the successful delivery of the election and all the preparatory work for it including; a review of the constitution and development of an enhanced member development programme. Phase 2b continues as planned and Phase 3 can get underway – the scheduled 'deep dive' at IRB on 29th June will provide further detail at this checkpoint.</p>

Directions Progress Summary







Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
3c	Scrutiny Action Plan	Stephen Taylor	Alexander Polak	Chair, Overview & Scrutiny Committee	01-Dec-23		=	<p>11/09 – Permanent scrutiny officer position has been filled with immediate effect and they led the first meeting of the Adult Social Care Task & Finish Group on 06/09; a scope was agreed by the group. Reports for the 26/09 Scrutiny Committee meeting were submitted on time last week, and Commissioner Curran praised the revised draft work programme, having seen an advance copy.</p> <p>21/08 - A Task and Finish WG has been set up in relation to Adult Social Care, and a revised Work Programme is to be presented to Committee in September. Interviews for a permanent Scrutiny officer are scheduled for 24 August. The finance and cabinet workshop in September will be the penultimate stage of the scheduled scrutiny induction programme.</p> <p>11/07 - Work is ongoing to improve the scrutiny function as a whole and support members. Discussion around the recruitment of a permanent Scrutiny officer are underway.</p> <p>16/06 - Induction of the new Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee is well underway, following the full adoption of the revised constitution at the AGM in May 2023 including the new O&S structure and procedure rules. The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny are working alongside the Statutory Scrutiny Officer and Democratic Services Team to emphasise the criticality of this function and to upskill the Chair and</p>
3d	Internal Audit Action Plan	Adele Taylor	Tariq Monsour	Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	31-Mar-23		=	<p>08/09 - All outstanding audit actions and reports were discussed with the representative Associate Directors and Heads of Department at the Risk and Audit Board that was held on 5th September 2023. This will be a recurring theme in future meetings. The next meeting will be held on the 6th December 2023. 01/08 - The revised annual Internal Audit Plan for 2023/24 and the Internal Audit Charter were approved by the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee on 19 July 2023.</p> <p>10/07 - We have introduced a KPI of 0% for all high priority audit actions raised in 21/22 and 0% with a tolerance of 10% for all high priority actions raised in 22/23. For 23/24, audit actions to be closed after 30 days from the assigned implementation date.</p> <p>09/06 - Continued monitoring of actions through DLT. Audit and Governance committee training on 07/06 covered their oversight role and at the July committee they will consider the first report on the progress around internal audit actions.</p>

Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
3e	Procurement and Contract Management Action Plan	Adele Taylor	Clare Priest	Lead Member for Financial Oversight, Council Assets, Procurement and Revenues & Benefits	12-Jan-23		=	05/09 - Improvement plan to implement recommendations from process mapping exercise is live, which includes improvements to processes and procedures. Work to develop a contract management framework and refresh of the commercial strategy has commenced. Successfully recruited a procurement category manager, a further round of recruitment will be undertaken to recruit to the 2 remaining posts. Social value pilot underway and work with SME's has commenced, working with the economic development team on an event in October.
3g	Information Technology Action Plan	Stephen Brown	Simon SharkeyWoods	Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Procurement & Performance	11-Jan-23		▲	11/09 - Progress has been slower during August and early September due to the holiday season. Projects in the programme of modernisation and remediation work have been particularly impacted by the availability of staff in departments. Following the completion of the IT Health Check (ITHC) there is now greater clarity of what needs to be done to improve our cyber security stance. Business cases in development include changes to our Microsoft licence to improve security and control, a trial of meeting room technology to improve hybrid working, and new tools to support mental health at work. 08/08 - The delays to the implementation of the new wide area network (SD-WAN) mean that the data centre implementation is now provisionally scheduled for the end of October. There have been new starters to support ICT procurements, strengthen our networks team, and provide resource for building the next generation of devices. A site visit has taken place to begin the proof-of-concept of new hybrid meeting room technology. Deep dive with CEO and Commissioners has provided clarity around the balance of risk vs pace in progressing technology improvements.
3g	Suitable Officer Structure and Scheme of Delegation	Stephen Brown	Sarah Wilson (MO)	Leader	01-Oct-22		=	Please see direction 8.
4	Improvement Plan Monthly Reporting	Sarah Hayward	Tony Wisken	Leader	01-Sep-23		=	11/08 - In readiness for the departure of Tony Wisken (13/08) the reporting process has now been embedded in the team and appropriate snr officer ownership going forward has been established. Handover is taking place. 13/06 - Further discussion with RTB and Commisioners required to ascertain if changes to reporting styles / content / timing are needed.

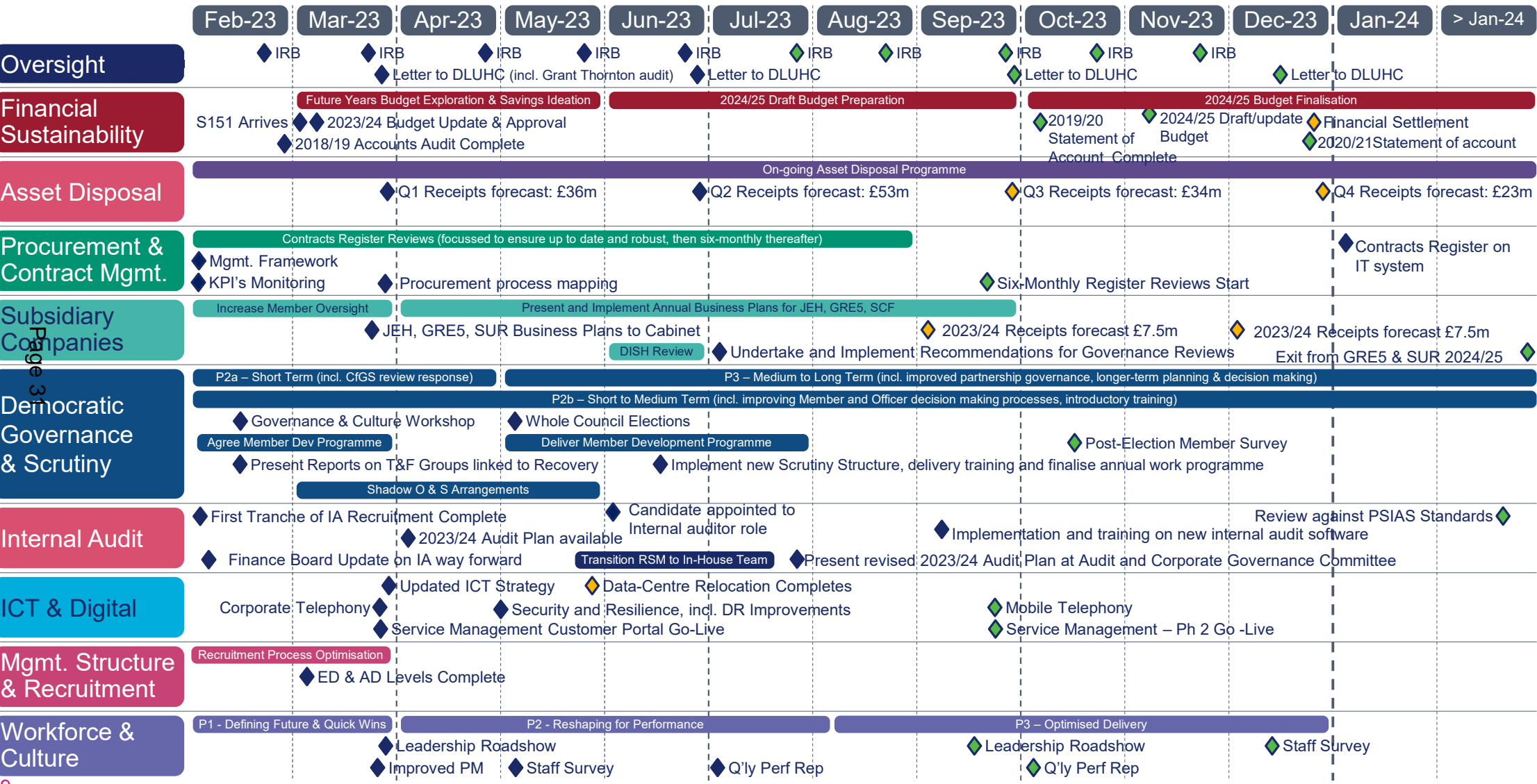
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Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
5	Culture Change	Stephen Brown	Sarah Hayward	Leader	31-Dec-23			<p>18/08 - Next CLT workshop now been targetted for September with external facilitation being lined up. Refresh of headline plans progressing well.</p> <p>13/07 - The next Culture Change CLT Workshop is being schedule for August. Workstream leads have been tasked with refreshing their headlines plans now that we have reached the mid-year point. The next deep-dive will aim to demonstrate the good work that has been achieved on Culture that perhaps is not currently being recognised, incl. with Commissioners.</p>
6	Subsidiary Company Review	Adele Taylor / Sarah Wilson	Pat Hayes	Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	02-Apr-23			<p>13/07 - Following progress made to date and the remaining actions largely with Property, ownership is now with Pat Hayes.</p> <p>04/07 SCF Business and Improvement Plan recommended for approval on an interim basis at July cabinet. Plans in process to appoint a new Chair for SCF Board as well as new SCF Director of Finance.</p> <p>19/05 - Subsidiary Company Review is tracking to plan.</p>
7	Evidence Based Decision Making	Sarah Hayward	Sarah Wilson	Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Procurement & Performance	02-Apr-23			<p>22/09 - Business case approved for interim additional data analyst capacity. Reset of Data Strategy Group and repurposing of Data Strategy to drive improvement.</p> <p>16/06 - New evidence base created to inform refresh of Corporate Plan. New Data Strategy being developed for July. Options paper and business case with proposals to enhance data and insight</p> <p>14/04 - Position statement developed for agreement with CLT including proposals for introduction for new technology to improve data collection and management.</p> <p>09/02 - First draft of Data Strategy created. Due at CLT in March.</p>
8	Senior Officer Structure and Recruitment	Commissioners	Stephen Brown		31-Mar-23			<p>13/04 - Now considered BAU, however a restructure at the AD and levels immediate below is about to get underway.</p> <p>03/02 - ED for Strategy and Improvement has been appointed. This was the last remaining vacancy in CLT.</p>
SEND	DfE Issued SEND Direction	Sue Butcher	Len Brazier	Cabinet Member for Education, Children's Services, Lifelong Skills and Governance	31-Mar-24 (FOR REVIEW)			<p>10/09 - Draft SEND action plan reorganises the actions in the 7 priorities in the Written Statement of Action into 5 workstreams to mitigate against silo working. Update report agreed by Commissioners and will be presented to Cabinet on 8th September. Another report will go in November costing the plan. Monthly Strategic SEND and Inclusion Partnership Board meetings continue overseen by SEND commissioner.</p> <p>11/08 - SEND Direction wording has now been received. DfE has acknowledged the progress that has been made.</p>

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Recovery Combined "Plan on a Page"



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Note, RAG Status against individual milestones does not represent overall service status

Finance: Statement of Accounts Update

- 2018/19 Audited Accounts – Final Opinion anticipated in September 2023 (ref. Audit & Governance Committee – 12/09/23)
- 2019/20 Draft Accounts prepared and shared with Grant Thornton.
- 2020/21 through to 2022/23 Accounts are in the process of preparation.

- National work addressing the generic backlog of SoAs is anticipated to result in the following;
 - Revised Code of Practice
 - Revised timetable for the completion & audit of prior year accounts
 - Clearance of the backlog by December 2024
- Corporate Finance are developing a work and resourcing plan to meet the anticipated revised timescales.
- Regular monthly meetings with Grant Thornton to coordinate work and progress are being scheduled.
- The team establishment now holds sufficient capacity and skills to deliver successful completion of the tasks.

- MRP calculation model has been reviewed and refreshed, including with reference to critical friend quality assurance.
- Asset Register is being reviewed and updated, alongside active collaboration with Property to support both the Asset Disposals Strategy and the implementation of the Estate Strategy

The priorities for the Asset Disposal Programme over the next month include:

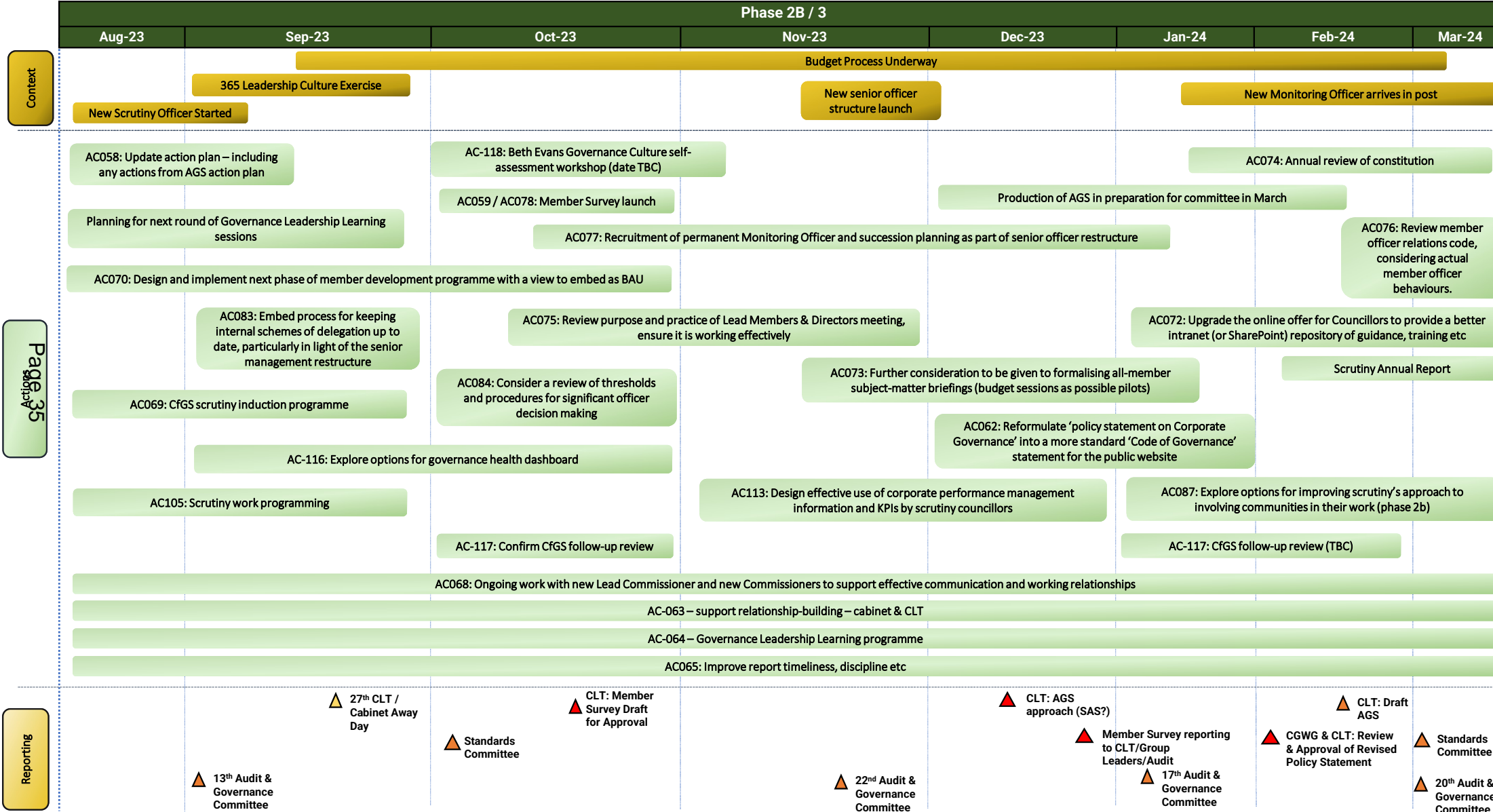
- Secure the approvals necessary to move forward with transactions
- Complete summer auction sales and continue to identify further sites for auction.
- Continue the Estate Strategy work to identify further disposal opportunities and to help clarify the size of the retained portfolio, moving forward. The initial Stakeholder Engagement exercise is complete and an emerging conceptual hypothesis is being tested.
- Further develop the Observatory House business case, subject to Cabinet approval in September.
- Review reporting on the Asset Disposal Programme.
- Clarify the status of HRA assets and the ability to appropriate to the General Fund.

Further to IRB's agreement of the next steps for Democratic Governance and ongoing discussions with commissioner Ged Curran, including most recently in a meeting with the Monitoring Officer and Head of Governance and Scrutiny on 07/09, the detailed weekly breakdown of actions over the next six months has now been completed and provided to Commissioners along with a 'plan on a page' (see overleaf).

Next Steps Summary:

1. Focus on the timeliness and quality of cabinet reports including early engagement by EDs with stakeholders, clearance and sign-off.
2. Deliver further Slough-specific training on working in a political environment, as part of refreshed L&D offer for new senior leaders and managers.
3. Review of management and senior officer development programme is underway led by HR – ensure governance learning elements are included and continue with Governance 'Lunchtime Learning' sessions.
4. Reformulate 'policy statement on Corporate Governance' into a more standard 'Code of Governance' statement for the public website.
5. Recruitment of permanent Monitoring Officer and succession planning as part of senior officer restructure (phase 3).
6. Next Member Survey due October 2023 to provide a baseline with the new council and compare with the February 2023 survey.
7. Development and implementation of a longer-term strategic planning and delivery cycle linked to the four-year municipal cycle is well underway.
8. Various other actions as per project plan.

Democratic Governance Improvement Action Plan – Phases 2b & 3



The new committee's third meeting will take place on 26 September. A revised work programme focused on the Council's improvement and recovery is on their agenda, following an initial draft being seen at their July meeting. The revised draft has been praised by Commissioner Curran on an early viewing, and the papers had all been submitted promptly for commissioners' review at the time of writing.

The Adult Social Care task and finish group, which is reviewing readiness for the new CQC inspection regime and seeking to identify potential areas for improvement of that service area, met for the first time on 06/09 and agreed its scope.

The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny, with the Head of Governance and Scrutiny, delivered a scrutiny training session to cabinet members on 06/09. Four of the seven cabinet members attended including the Leader and the session was videoed for the benefit of the others.

A 'scrutiny of finance' training session will be delivered by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny, and Finance colleagues, on 19/09. This is in support and preparation of the committee's finance items on 26/09. That session marks the beginning of the whole-year overview and scrutiny of the budget-setting process.

It also marks the end of the CfGS-supported scrutiny induction process. From this point Dem Services will continue supporting scrutiny, under the heading of 'business as usual' Member Development.

The hard-to-fill position of 'Scrutiny and Governance Officer' has been successfully filled, with the candidate starting on 05/09.

Next Steps Summary:

1. The second iteration of the new committee's first work programme will be considered by the committee on 26 September.
2. The scrutiny officer position has been filled with immediate effect following a head-hunting exercise.
3. Scrutiny chair now has an LGA mentor assigned. Additional support and training for the Chair and whole committee continues to be a priority, following the completion of the CfGS' scrutiny induction programme (funded by the LGA).
4. System of pre-meetings with facilitated identification of key lines of inquiry for significant items continues – each month additional elements are introduced for the Chair and committee. This month the first 'pre-agenda' meeting was held with report authors.
5. Adult Social Care Improvements Task & Finish Group has agreed scope – now moves into evidence-gathering phase.
6. Various other actions in the medium and long term as per project plan.

21/22 internal audits:

- Actions completed as at end of August number 226 or 69% of the total due. A concerted effort is being made by CLT to close the remaining 101 actions or 31% that are overdue.

22/23 internal audits:

- 28 reports have been finalised. 225 actions have been raised for 2022/23 from these reports. As of end of August 2023, 44 actions or 20% are overdue and 87 or 39% complete. 94 actions or 42% are not due.

23/24 internal audits:

- Progress against the 2023/24 audit plan is on target. 2 reports have been finalised and a further 5 reports are in draft and being responded to by management. 52 actions have been raised for Q1 2023/24 from these reports. A further 3 audits are currently in fieldwork.

Implementation of 'AuditBoard'

- Implementation and training on the new Internal Audit software is due to start week commencing 25th September 2023. It is expected that full implementation will be completed by the end of November 2023.

1. All internal audit actions have been allocated to and reviewed by actions owners and Executive Directors, including actions that are deemed not relevant due to changes in circumstances. Actions from previous year's audits are also reviewed to ensure they are relevant to the service area to which they have been assigned.
2. High rated actions are being given priority and are reviewed monthly by the Council's Finance Board, DLTs' and will be reviewed monthly by the Executive Directors, and quarterly at Risk and Audit Board.
3. Progress is being made on closing actions on the tracker. Evidence of actions completed is obtained and quality assured by the Internal Audit Manager, and, retained for use in follow up audits.
4. Responses from management on audit actions/audit reports will be monitored, in line with the Terms of Reference. Any delay will be escalated to the Executive Director – Finance and Commercial.
5. The Risk and Audit Board meeting was held on 5th September 2023. All outstanding audit actions and reports were discussed with the Associate Directors and Heads of Departments. This will be a recurring theme in future meetings. The next meeting will be held on 6th December 2023.

1. Contracts register is being used as a business-as-usual tool in forward planning procurement activity, this includes consideration of longer-term procurement activity required for high value, high risk contracts. Meetings held with Executive Directors and their management teams to review throughout July which has informed the forward plan update report for September cabinet
2. Utilising existing IT systems for the contract register – options for the implementation on Agresso commenced in July 2023 and currently looking at either pursuing the Agresso option or using Microsoft Office tools, with support from SBC's IT team
3. The training programme on the council's contract procedure rules continues and reflects the revised rules approved by Council in November, 120 staff have been trained to date. Further date scheduled in September.
4. Continue to build a permanent in-house team. Further round of recruitment successfully appointed one procurement category manager, working with HR colleagues to find creative ways to attract candidates which has had a wide reach for further recruitment rounds.

Further key development activities

1. Implement the contracts register on IT system – by July 2023 (option appraisal in progress)
2. Develop a framework to ensure there is a co-ordinated and consistent approach to contract management.– from January 2023.
3. Tiering and risk assessment of contracts and contract management plans for high risk contracts – by March 2024
4. Process mapping procurement – implement improvements to processes and procedures including making best use of automated tools– By March 2024
5. Establishment of Contract Management Assurance Board to drive best practice in contract management – December 2023
6. Ensure KPI's are meaningful and monitored effectively – from January 2023.
7. Programme of continuous contracts register reviews to ensure the council is getting the best value for money – from September 2023 and six monthly thereafter, this will include improvements to reporting.
8. Develop a commercial strategy to replace the procurement and contract management strategy and implement actions throughout the 2023/24 financial year.
9. Pilot a social value policy and engage with SME's- from August 2023
10. Direction deep dive on procurement and contract management will go to the October Corporate Improvement Scrutiny committee

The ICT & Digital Team Strategy and Plan

The ICT & Digital strategy adopted by the Council in March is our reference point for improvement work. The table below covers the three key themes and the recent against each:

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Theme	Recent activities
<p>Improving the reliability of technology services and transforming the way support is provided for them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on the consistent delivery of end-user-devices is moving forward and a milestone plan for the delivery of a more robust experience for staff has been created. There is now a target of providing a significantly improved experience by the end of the year. • The continuing lack of a clear decision on the future of Observatory House is a blocker to improving the hybrid working technology in the building. To move forward ICT&D will be submitting a business case for piloting technology that should support a better hybrid experience. • The planning of the new wide area network that connects Slough offices is progressing and there are promising signs that we can simplify the way other technologies can work with the new connectivity.
<p>Resetting the council’s approach to the way residents access services and increasing the volume of interactions through lower cost digital channels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited resource in the Digital team, along with the holiday period, has resulted in delays to an upgrade to the main digital platform, Jadu. Planning will recommence in the first half of September and milestone created to track the work. This is a pre-requisite for the change we require around the translation function of the website which is an important feature for Slough. • Jemma Reid, our new Digital Customer Engagement Manager starts on the 19th September. • Initial meetings have taken place around replacing the legacy intranet at Slough through exploiting the investment we have already made in the Microsoft 365 platform.
<p>Supporting the exploitation of data more effectively so that the council can prioritise precious resources to have the most impact for residents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the holiday period, the planning of the pilot of a data integration and presentation layer to help with improved reporting and analysis, is underway. The trial will focus on the Housing area. • One of the legacy storage devices at Slough, a large storage area network, has now been fully decommissioned as part of the modernisation and remediation work. This is another step that will help prevent the risk of data loss.

1. Next series of Leadership Workshops (CLT) being planned. The next workshop to focus on the Action Plan to address issues raised within the staff survey, hybrid working, definition of what the new SBC values and behaviours will be across the organisation, and the development of clear and measurable objective setting to smarter working practices. These actions are to be incorporated into Cultural Change Programme of work. LGA are supporting the Senior leadership 360 which will take place on 11th October

2. Members and cabinet development programme being rolled out.

3. We are progressing on the HR Improvements to support the end-to-end recruitment, induction, workforce development, and talent management structures to be put into place.

4. Workstream leads are in the process of a mid-year refresh of their workstream plans, developing the roadmap of milestones to be achieved through to the end of the year and planning for 2024.

Calendar

Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23
M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F
2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3	1 2 3	3 4 5 6 7	1 2 3 4 5	1 2
9 10 11 12 13	6 7 8 9 10	6 7 8 9 10	10 11 12 13 14	8 9 10 11 12	5 6 7 8 9
16 17 18 19 20	13 14 15 16 17	13 14 15 16 17	17 18 19 20 21	15 16 17 18 19	12 13 14 15 16
23 24 25 26 27	20 21 22 23 24	20 21 22 23 24	24 25 26 27 28	22 23 24 25 26	19 20 21 22 23
30 31	27 28	27 28 29 30 31		29 30 31	26 27 28 29 30

Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23
M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F	M T W T F
3 4 5 6 7	1 2 3 4	4 5 6 7 8	2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3	1
10 11 12 13 14	7 8 9 10 11	11 12 13 14 15	9 10 11 12 13	6 7 8 9 10	4 5 6 7 8
17 18 19 20 21	14 15 16 17 18	18 19 20 21 22	16 17 18 19 20	13 14 15 16 17	11 12 13 14 15
24 25 26 27 28	21 22 23 24 25	25 26 27 28 29	23 24 25 26 27	20 21 22 23 24	18 19 20 21 22
31	28 29 30 31		30 31	27 28 29 30	25 26 27 28 29

IRB & RTB Updates / Papers due	12:00pm to Strategy & Transformation
Publish final papers for RTB	Transformation Team to distribute
Publish final papers for IRB	9:00am to IRB Administration
IRB Papers due for CLT	9:00am to CLT Administration
Dispatch Papers for Finance Board	TBC
Recovery and Transformation Board	Monthly, usually the 3rd Tuesday
Improvement & Recovery Board	Monthly, usually the 4th Thursday
CLT to pre-approve IRB papers	Wed before IRB (RTB approves after May)
Finance Board	Monthly

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Slough Borough Council

Report To:	Council
Date:	30 November 2023
Subject:	Recommendations of the Cabinet from its meeting held on 16 th October 2023: B - Corporate Performance Report - August 2023
Chief Officer:	Sarah Hayward Executive Director, Strategy & Improvement
Contact Officer:	Dean Tyler Associate Director, Strategy Dave Hounsell Group Manager, Data, Insight & Strategy
Ward(s):	All
Exempt:	No
Appendices:	A - Corporate Performance Report – August 2023

1. Summary and Recommendations

- 1.1. The Council was set a Direction to improve evidence-based decision-making. One mechanism to achieve evidence-based decision-making is to implement a robust, transparent, and regular corporate performance reporting cycle. This corporate performance reporting cycle is a key component of the council's Performance Management Approach and is underpinned by an emerging corporate Data Strategy.

Recommendations:

Council is requested to consider the recommendation from Cabinet to:

- (a) Note and comment on the Council's current performance and mitigating actions as measured by the key performance indicators within the corporate management information report and scorecard.
- (b) Note that the Cabinet resolved that the Corporate Performance Report be referred to full Council on a six-monthly basis and to scrutiny on a quarterly basis.

Commissioner Review of report to Cabinet, 16th October 2023

“Commissioners are pleased to see the Council publicly reporting progress against its priorities and its focus on mitigation actions when performance is below target. This should be seen as an important component of a culture where the organisation takes seriously its performance and accountabilities. It will be important that this report stimulates positive discussions in terms of sustained performance improvement.”

2. Report

- 2.1. This is the first reporting on the 59 key performance indicators from the 2023/24 corporate management information scorecard aligned to the strategic priorities in the new Corporate Plan.

Options considered by Cabinet:

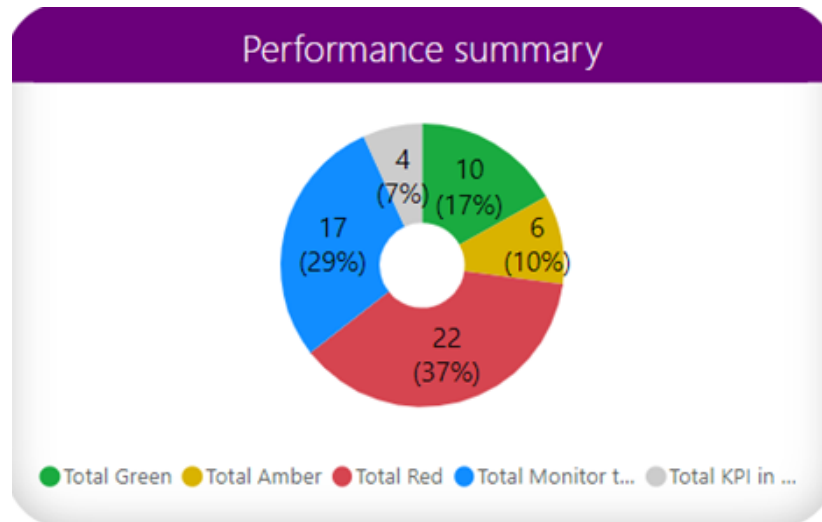
Option 1: to have regular quarterly performance reports to Cabinet – **this is recommended**. The draft best value guidance characterises a well-functioning authority as one that has an organisational-wide approach to continuous improvement, with frequent monitoring, performance reporting and updating of the corporate and improvement plans. There is also a need for effective political leadership, which includes the Council’s corporate plan being evidence-based, current, realistic, and enabling the organisation’s performance to be measured and held to account. Systems for monitoring performance should be owned by members. Service delivery should involve mechanism for scrutinising performance across all service areas and ensuring performance is regularly reported to the public to ensure citizens are informed of the quality of services being delivered.

Option 2: to continue to report performance in informal and internal boards without any formal, public reports – **this is not recommended**.

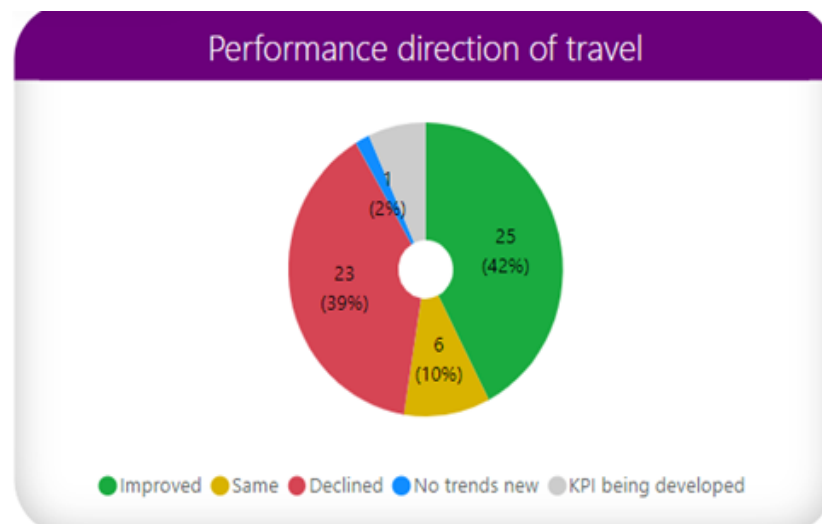
Background

- 2.2. In April 2023, the Corporate Leadership Team adopted a refreshed monthly report, which aligned key performance indicators to the purpose and strategic outcomes included in the draft new Corporate Plan. As the Corporate Plan was in draft when this realignment took place, it was acknowledged that the performance report would adapt in line with feedback from the public consultation and against the final, approved Corporate Plan.
- 2.3. This report sets out performance information as at the end of July 2023. The data point reviewed is the last available data point at the time of reporting, with metrics being reported against on a monthly, quarterly, termly, or annual basis depending on the nature of the source information.
- 2.4. Performance levels are measured through the key performance indicators in the corporate management information scorecard during 2023/24 financial year, and the council’s current position is set out in this cover report and the accompanying Appendix A.
- 2.5. Cabinet will receive a quarterly update on corporate performance. Corporate performance reporting remains a work-in-progress in the council, and through continuous learning and improvement there will be adaptations to the scope, structure, and content as the 2023/24 financial year progresses.

2.6. Overall, for Q1 the strategic performance picture remains variable. 17% (10) of the 59 key performance indicators (KPIs) are performing either at or better than target. 10% (6) indicators are performing marginally worse than target, and 37% (22) indicators are performing below the red KPI threshold. A further 29% (17) indicators are monitored for trends and 7% (4) where the indicator is in development.



2.7. Compared to the previous month, performance has improved for 42% (25) of the 59 KPIs, remained the same for 10% (6) and declined for 39% (23). 2% (1) was reported for the first time therefore no previous trends are available and the remaining 7% (4) metrics are in development.



2.8. Please refer to Appendix A corporate performance report which summarises progress against the Council's priorities as presented in August 2023. The report includes:

- Summary progress against the strategic outcomes in the Corporate Plan.
- KPIs for action, and the mitigating actions and owners assigned - trends that indicate the council is not on track for delivering its strategic objectives.

- KPIs for recognition, where the council can learn from promising practice - trends that indicate the council is on track for delivering its objectives.

2.9. In Appendix A, pages 2 to 7 outline the performance trends against the 59 strategic KPIs, and the mitigating actions and action owners. Each action has an assigned Executive Director owner, who is accountable for the performance level, and who will assign responsibility for delivery to officers.

2.10. The performance indicators will be kept under review and amended as appropriate to meet the corporate priorities of the Council. They will also be reviewed to take account of the role of the Office of Local Government (Oflog). Oflog has been established to provide an authoritative and accessible source of information about the performance and health of the local government sector. Its objective is to increase transparency of performance in the sector. At present there is a limited number of published performance metrics and some of these are historic. However, it is expected that over time this dataset will increase. In the meantime, the Council will make use of other performance datasets, including LG Inform and CIPFA benchmarking to ensure it has comparable performance data.

3. Implications of the Recommendation

3.1. Financial implications

- The key performance indicators from the corporate management information scorecard are aligned to the priorities in the Corporate Plan. The Corporate Plan articulates a commitment to delivering financial prudence and demonstrating Best Value for residents.

3.2. Legal implications

- Whilst there is no statutory duty to report regularly to Cabinet on the Council's performance, as a best value authority under the Local Government Act 1999, the Council has a statutory duty to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness. Regular reporting of performance can assist the Council to demonstrate best value.
- The Council's Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23 was approved by Audit and Corporate Governance Committee in July 2023. This included a number of actions, including an action to improve the systems in place for managing performance. This stated that the Council must ensure basic systems and controls are in place to ensure that performance is managed, and risk appropriately identified, reported and monitored. Performance data should measure the quality of services for users, use of resources and value for money. Performance indicators should be set drawing on sector wide data sets from various organisations including the Local Government Association and CIPFA.

3.3. Risk management implications

- Mitigating actions are in place for strategic performance indicators where key performance trends require action. These actions are proposed by the responsible manager, and updates are monitored at the monthly CLT Assurance forum.

- The monthly CLT Assurance forum considers finance, risk, and performance to ensure that the leadership team receive a rounded picture on the health of the organisation, to inform improvement actions.

3.4. *Environmental implications*

- Strategic performance indicators aligned to priority 3 of the corporate plan retains and expands upon environmental commitments under the following strategic objective '*reducing Slough's carbon footprint, promoting active travel and sustainable forms of transport, and taking action to prevent or minimise the impact of climate change*'.

3.5. *Equality implications*

- The Equality Act 2010 sets out duties for local authorities in relation to equalities, including the public sector equality duty, which requires the Council to have due regard to equality issues when reviewing and changing services. Councils should also collect and review data on service provision to identify gaps in service and whether these impact on certain protected groups to a greater extent than others.
- Cabinet received an update on the Council's progress against its Public Sector Equalities Duty in November Cabinet, including a commitment to service-level equalities objectives and an analysis of the current position.

4. Background Papers

None

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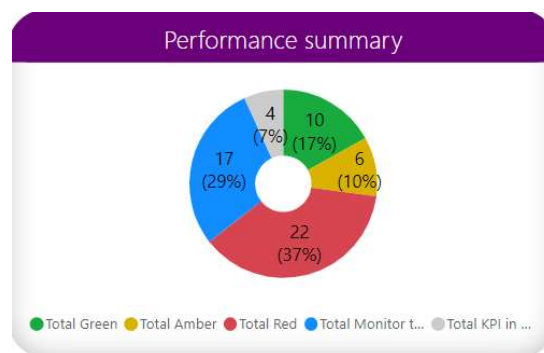
Corporate Performance Report: as at end of Jul-2023

Data and Insight Team

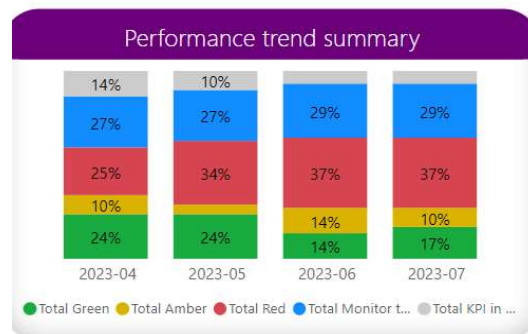
Strategic performance position

The latest position of the Council’s key performance indicators at the end of July 2023 shows a mixed picture: however, there are key movements within indicator trends. Of the 59 indicators reported:

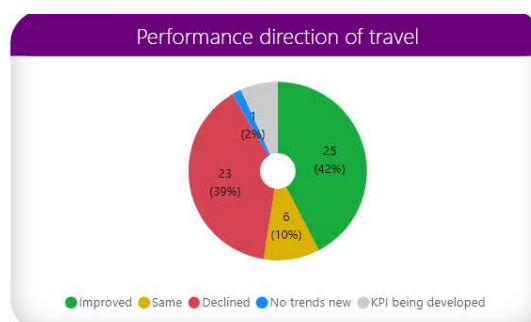
- 17% (10 indicators) were rated overall as **Green**,
- 10% (6 indicators) rated as **Amber**,
- 37% (22 indicators) rated overall as **Red**,
- 29% (17 indicators) where the metric is monitored for trends (**blue**) and
- 7% (4 indicators) where the metric is in development (**grey**)



Mixed overall performance compared to the previous month with changes to RAG status for key performance metrics across all 3 priority areas as well as corporate health.



Compared to last month or similar period from previous year, performance has improved (↑) for 42% (25) of the 59 KPIs, remained the same (→↔) for 10% (6), declined (↓) for 39% (23), 2% (1) are reported for the first time therefore no previous trends available and the remaining 7% (4 metrics are in development).



Corporate Management Information Scorecard 2023/24

Outcome	Performance Measure	Good to be	Frequency	Previous update	Previous Performance	Performance direction of travel	Latest update	Latest Performance	Target	Mitigating actions	ED Lead	Comparison
Priority 1 A borough for children and young people to thrive	Number of new EHC plans issued	High	Monthly	Jun-23	R 6	↑	Jul-23	G 27	>=15	Third party provider contracted to work alongside SEN Team to reduce backlog of late running EHC needs assessments.	Sue Butcher	Mar-22 173 Mar-23 145
	Percentage of new EHC plans issued within 20 weeks including exceptions	High	Monthly	Jun-23	R 0.0% (nil)	↑	Jul-23	R 22.2% (6)	>=national average	Third party provider contracted to work alongside SEN Team to reduce backlog of late running EHC needs assessments.	Sue Butcher	2022 Slough 11.6% National 50.7% South East 45.8% CIPFA NN 67.4%
	Percentage of eligible 2 year olds receiving 15 hours of free early years education or childcare	High	Termly	Spring 2022	R 57.0%	↓	Spring 2023	R 55.9%	>=65%	Early Years Team are targeting parents through all available communication methods and offering guidance and support to encourage take up of these places however, the rate remains below the national average. An Early Years Strategy in development that will contain a number of actions to increase the take up of places.	Sue Butcher	Spring 2023 Slough 56% National 72% Ranking National 150/152 South East 19/19 SN Group 11/11
	Pupil exclusions in Slough schools as a percentage of school population	Low	Termly	Autumn 2022	Mon 0.04% (12)	↓	Spring 2023	Mon 0.07% (23)	Metric in place to monitor trends	The rate has been rising in Slough in line with national data following the Covid lockdown. A new Preventing Exclusions Strategy in development to identify pupils at risk and provide early interventions.	Sue Butcher	2020/21 Slough 0.02 (8) National 0.05 South East 0.02 SN average 0.04
	Children Missing from Education (CME) as a percentage of school population	Low	Termly	Autumn 2022	Mon 0.20% (66)	↓	Spring 2023	Mon 0.26% (90)	Metric in place to monitor trends	Following the lockdown, attendance rates nationally have fallen and levels of persistent absence are running at 22%. The team is focusing on Emotional School Based Avoidance and will provide advice and other support, including a toolkit, to help encourage pupils to return to school.	Sue Butcher	Spring 2023 Slough 0.26% South East 0.13% Ranking South East 17/18
	Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training	High	Monthly	May-23	A 50.0% (41)	↔	Jun-23	A 50.0% (41)	>=52%	Virtual school meet with all young people who are NEET as well as personal advisors. A number of NEET are new to the country (12) and have a September destination for employment which are not yet counted.	Sue Butcher	2021/22 Slough 52.0% National 55.0% South East 57.0% SN average 55.9%
	Rate per 10,000 of children receiving targeted early help	Low	Monthly	May-23	Mon 139.1 (607)	↓	Jun-23	Mon 145.0 (633)	Metric in place to monitor trends	Children open to the service have been reviewed and those that no longer require services have been closed. We expect this to increase as a result of children from the Assessment and Intervention and Safeguarding and Support services to step down which will be identified through the Child in Need Forum.	Sue Butcher	external benchmarking not available (project starting this year which will hopefully make benchmarking available)
	Percentage of children looked after in external foster care placements	Low	Monthly	May-23	A 36.1% (91)	↔	Jun-23	A 36.3% (90)	<=34%	Fostering Recruitment Group has been launched. Partnering with Hampshire as improvement partners. Reviewing recruitment and retention policies and offers. Currently there are 8 carers going through the recruitment process – most of these are likely to become registered carers however this will be realised over several months due to time taken to complete the recruitment process.	Sue Butcher	external benchmarking not available

Corporate Management Information Scorecard 2023/24

Outcome	Performance Measure	Good to be	Frequency	Previous update	Previous Performance		Performance direction of travel	Latest update	Latest Performance		Target	Mitigating actions	ED Lead	Comparison
	Percentage of children and young people in external residential placements	Low	Monthly	May-23	R	11.1% (28)	↓	Jun-23	R	12.1% (30)	<=9.1%	External Placement Panel review all children in external placements, targeting those specifically in residential care, identifying those that specifically can be placed in fostering placements. This process takes time as sourcing a suitable home for children will need to be completed and appropriately matched based on their needs.	Sue Butcher	external benchmarking not available
	Rate per 10,000 of Children Looked After (CLA)	Low	Monthly	May-23	Mon	57.7 (252)	↑	Jun-23	Mon	56.8 (248)	Metric in place to monitor trends	Currently in line with statistical neighbours. CLT is cited when rate increases especially as a result of the National Transfer Scheme or an increase in Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children.	Sue Butcher	2021/22 Slough 53.0% National 70.0% South East 56.0% SN average 58.7%
	Percentage of referrals to children's social care within 12 months of earlier referral	Low	Monthly	May-23	A	23.4% (92)	↑	Jun-23	G	17.7% (51)	<=22.0%	Re-referrals are continually tracked and are in line with the national picture.	Sue Butcher	2021/22 Slough 17.3% National 22.7% South East 27.7% SN average 20.6%
	Percentage of children aged 2.5 years who received a 2-2.5 year child development review	High	Quarterly	Q1 2022-23	G	85.5% (467)	↓	Q2 2022-23	G	80.7% (447)	>= national average	100% of children eligible for a review by the end of the current quarter, received a 2-2 ½ year review by the age of 2 ½ years	Sue Butcher & Health	2021/22 Slough 85.8% National 74.0% South East 76.9% CIPFA NN 71.6%
	Proportion of children obese at Year 6	Low	Annual	2018/19	R	26.2% (625)	↑	2019/20	R	24.9% (595)	>= national average	1. Health and Wellbeing Board refreshing Wellbeing Strategy. 2. New joint commissioning arrangements in development.	Sue Butcher & Health	2019/20 Slough 24.9% National 21.0% South East 17.8%

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Priority 2 A town where residents can live healthier, safer and more independent lives	Percentage of new clients who received short-term services, where no further request was made for ongoing support	High	Annual	2020	A	77.1%	↑	2021	G	79.6%	>=national average	2022/23 performance level will be available from July 2023. Final quality assurance stage in process.	Marc Gadsby	2021 Slough 79.6% National 74.9% South East 74.1%	
	Number of safeguarding concerns recorded	Low	Quarterly	Q4 2022-23	Mon	353	↑	Q1 2023-24	Mon	319	Metric in place to monitor trends	Safeguarding data reviewed by Safer Slough Partnership.	Marc Gadsby		
	Percentage of safeguarding referrals that meet section 42	High	Quarterly	Q4 2022-23	Mon	11.0% (39)	↓	Q1 2023-24	Mon	9.7% (31)	Metric in place to monitor trends	Safeguarding data is reviewed by Safer Slough Partnership.	Marc Gadsby		
	Percentage of care homes in the borough with a Care Quality Commission (CQC) rating of either good or outstanding	High	Quarterly	Q4 2022-23	Mon	64.3% (9)	↔	Q1 2023-24	Mon	64.3% (9)	Metric in place to monitor trends	Quality Assurance team working with safeguarding, health and where appropriate other local authorities to support providers in overseeing quality improvement action plans.	Marc Gadsby		
	Perception of safety in the community	High	Annual		Dev					Dev			The Safer Slough Partnership crime survey is currently being completed for the first time and will close at the end of August 2023. The data will then be analysed to be included in the strategic assessment this autumn.	Richard West	
	Number of anti-social behaviour and environmental related service requests open for more than 90 days	Low	Monthly	Jun-23	A	37	↓	Jul-23	R	41	<=36	All cases are reviewed each month and appropriate action taken. Working with Comms and DSO to target hotspots for household fly-tipping. Complex cases require investigation and officers to take formal legal action, cases are closed at the completion of formal action. This is not necessarily a negative as it's about reaching the right outcome.	Richard West	Mar-22 271 Mar-23 36	
	Percentage of NHS health checks offered to the total eligible population in the quarter	High	Quarterly	Q3 2022-23	G	5.3% (2,140)	↓	Q4 2022-23	R	2.7% (1,100)	>= South East region average	1:1 visits of GP practices delivering NHS health checks in Slough to understand barriers and opportunities to improve delivery.	Marc Gadsby & Health	2022/23 Q4 National 5.3% South East 5.0% CIPFA NN 4.4%	

Corporate Management Information Scorecard 2023/24

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Outcome	Performance Measure	Good to be	Frequency	Previous update	Previous Performance		Performance direction of travel	Latest update	Latest Performance		Target	Mitigating actions	ED Lead	Comparison
	Proportion of population receiving dental checks: Access to NHS dental services - successfully obtained a dental appointment	High	Annual	2019/20	A	91.5% (720)	↓	2020/21	A	76.9% (693)	>= national average	1. Health and Wellbeing Board refreshing Wellbeing Strategy. 2. New joint commissioning arrangements in development.	Marc Gadsby & Health	2020/21 Slough 76.9% National 77.0% South East 77.3%

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	Number of Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) approaches	Low	Monthly	Jun-23	R	219	↓	Jul-23	R	225	<=179	Project plan in place to check that all TA is occupied. Non-occupancy will result in the closure of TA bookings and closure of homeless applications.	Pat Hayes	Slough 2022/23 2,086
	Number of homeless cases prevented or relieved	High	Monthly	Jun-23	R	5	↔←	Jul-23	R	5	>=22	This will create more time to collaborate with the Social Lettings Team to prevent homelessness prior to TA occupancy. Teams will assist TA occupants to access alternative accommodation in the privately rented sector.	Pat Hayes	2021/22 212 2022/23 122
	Total number of homeless households placed in temporary accommodation	Low	Monthly	Jun-23	R	707	↑	Jul-23	R	683	Q1 <=648 Q2 <=675 Q3 <=639 Q4 <=612	TA Team and Housing Demand Team will issue notices to all occupants who do not qualify for TA (non-priority, not eligible, intentionally homeless).	Pat Hayes	Slough Mar-20 359 Mar-21 414 Mar-22 462 Mar-23 676
	Standard voids at month end	Low	Monthly	Jun-23	R	115	↓	Jul-23	R	127	<=42	The housing register and allocations module within Housing NEC system fully operational at the end of Jul-23. Tenancy services staff will be deployed to carryout viewings and sign-ups as quickly as possible. Performance regularly reviewed at housing management meetings to address issues and risks.	Pat Hayes	Slough Mar-22 46 Mar-23 90
	Average re-let time in days for standard voids	Initially high before performance improves	Monthly	Jun-23	R	310 days (4)	↑	Jul-23	R	217 days (2)	<=35 days		Pat Hayes	Slough 2021/22 89 days 2022/23 80 days
	Percentage of SBC housing repairs completed within timescale by Osbourne	High	Monthly	Jun-23	R	76.8% (1,498)	↓	Jul-23	R	71.5% (1,393)	>=95%	Regular management meetings scheduled with Osborne's senior management to discuss critical issues including complaints. Proposals in discussion to introduce a new approach to working smarter to reduce response times.	Pat Hayes	Mar-22 63.1% Mar-23 70.0%
	Percentage of SBC housing repairs completed within one visit by Osbourne	High	Monthly	Jun-23	G	84.4% (1,366)	↓	Jul-23	G	84.3% (1,263)	>=75%		Pat Hayes	Mar-22 86.2% Mar-23 90.2%
	Percentage of decisions made on major planning application within 13 weeks or timescale agreed with applicant	High	Quarterly	Q3 2022-23	G	100% (6)	↔←	Q4 2022-23	G	100% (1)	>=65%		Pat Hayes	
	Percentage of decisions made on non-major planning application within 8 weeks or timescale agreed with applicant	High	Quarterly	Q3 2022-23	A	69.4% (143)	↑	Q4 2022-23	G	79.9% (119)	>=75%		Pat Hayes	
	Number of public transport local bus journeys undertaken	High	Quarterly		Dev				Dev			Metric in development - service team are working with local bus transport operators to establish this metric. It is estimated KPI will be reported against from Dec-23.	Richard West	

Corporate Management Information Scorecard 2023/24

Outcome	Performance Measure	Good to be	Frequency	Previous update	Previous Performance		Performance direction of travel	Latest update	Latest Performance		Target	Mitigating actions	ED Lead	Comparison
Priority 3 A cleaner, healthier and more prosperous Slough	Air quality in Slough: NO ₂ (Nitrogen Dioxide) concentration levels for Air Quality Management Area (AQMA 1) - Spackmans Way	Low	Monthly	Rolling year to Jun-23	Mon	22.52	↑	Rolling year to Jul-23	Mon	22.42	Metric in place to monitor trends	Slough Borough Council continues to work hard to improve air pollution and comply with national air quality objectives (AQOs) and EU limit values. Good air quality is not only important to improve health outcomes of our residents, but also for enhancing the natural and built environment and for attracting residents, visitors and businesses to Slough. The wellbeing of those living in Slough is the highest priority and continued implementation of strategies such as the Low Emission Strategy 2018-2025 (LES) and its programmes, and emerging strategies such as the new Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP), over the next few years will improve air quality and therefore health for all of those living and working in the borough.	Richard West	12 month average as at: Mar-22 26.38 Mar-23 22.56
	Air quality in Slough: NO ₂ (Nitrogen Dioxide) concentration levels for Air Quality Management Area (AQMA 2) Brands Hill	Low	Monthly	Rolling year to Jun-23	Mon	29.61	↑	Rolling year to Jul-23	Mon	28.82	Metric in place to monitor trends	NO ₂ concentrations tend to peak in the mornings and evenings, which not only occurs due to temperature changes, but also corresponds with peak traffic rush hour periods during commutes and school runs. NO ₂ concentrations are at the highest in the winter months and lowest in the summer months due to both meteorological and anthropogenic influences. People tend to travel by private car more frequently than active travel modes in winter compared to summer, and use of fossil fuel burning for heating increases, which contributes to increased NO ₂ concentrations in winter.	Richard West	12 month average as at: Mar-20 35.10 Mar-21 28.02 Mar-22 34.53 Mar-23 30.08
	Air quality in Slough: NO ₂ (Nitrogen Dioxide) concentration levels for Air Quality Management Area (AQMA 3) Windmill	Low	Monthly	Rolling year to Jun-23	Mon	27.92	↑	Rolling year to Jul-23	Mon	27.23	Metric in place to monitor trends	The pandemic and budget restrictions following S114 have impacted the progress of LES programmes. Recruitment underway for officers to deliver:	Richard West	12 month average as at: Mar-20 35.30 Mar-21 27.15 Mar-22 29.55 Mar-23 28.08
	Air quality in Slough: NO ₂ (Nitrogen Dioxide) concentration levels for Air Quality Management Area (AQMA 4) Wellington Street	Low	Monthly	Rolling year to Jun-23	Mon	26.73	↑	Rolling year to Jul-23	Mon	26.03	Metric in place to monitor trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slough Electric Car Club Programme Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure Programme (rapid and public chargers for public and taxis) Taxi EV Rapid Charger Infrastructure Programme Bus Fleet Programme (retrofit and electric bus routes) Cycle Infrastructure and Hire Programme Clean Air Zone (CAZ) Feasibility Programme 	Richard West	12 month average as at: Mar-20 31.43 Mar-21 24.94 Mar-22 28.52 Mar-23 26.96
	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling, or composting	High	Monthly	Jun-22	R	27.8%	↓	Jun-23	R	26.5%	>=40% by Mar-23	Campaign running to promote the importance of recycling waste and materials. Messages include the need to optimise recycling to conserve space in residents general waste bins.	Richard West	2021/22 Slough 26.7% National: 42.5% South East: 46.4% CIPFA NN: 38.8%
	Missed refuse bin collection per 100,000	Low	Monthly	Jun-23	R	41	↑	Jul-23	R	35	<=30	Updated guidance on the council's website on how to prevent a rejected bin collection due to overloading or contamination.	Richard West	
	Missed recycling bin collection per 100,000	Low	Monthly	Jun-23	R	38	↑	Jul-23	A	31	<=30	Online form to report a missed bin collection.	Richard West	
	Number of incidents of fly-tipping reported	Low	Monthly	Jun-23	R	59	↑	Jul-23	R	44	<=30	Hotspots identified through use of Flare recording system. Team will target hotspots.	Richard West	2021/22 381 2022/23 442 (avg 37)
	Unemployment rate: Number of 16-64 year olds claiming unemployment related benefits as a percentage of working age population	Low	Monthly	May-23	R	4.7%	↓	Jun-23	R	4.9%	<=national average	A draft Skills Improvement Plan will be prepared by Aug-23, with consultation to follow. Skills and Employment Hub opening at the Curve from Sept-23.	Pat Hayes	Jun-23 Great Britain 3.7% South East 2.8%

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	Number of businesses (enterprises) registered	High	Annual	2021	Mon	6,660	↓	2022	Mon	6,570	Metric used to monitor trends	The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) support programmes delivery is well underway. Activities include workshops and masterclasses for start-ups and high growth companies. A Small to Medium sized Enterprise (SME) Engagement framework is being developed.	Pat Hayes	2022 for Slough Micro 90% (5,915) Small 7.1% (465) Medium 2.1% (135) Large 0.8% (50)

Page 56	Business rates collection rate	High	Monthly	YTD to Jul-22	R	36.67%	↑	YTD to Jul-23	G	39.43%	Jul-23 36.80% End of year 98.85%		Adele Taylor	2022/23 Slough 98.7% National 96.8 Unitary Authorities 97.1%
	Council tax collection rate	High	Monthly	YTD to Jul-22	G	37.64%	↑	YTD to Jul-23	A	37.83%	Jul-23 38.20% End of year 96.65%	Expanded Council Tax Support scheme to provide additional support to more than 9,000 households currently in receipt and for those making a new application from Apr-23.	Adele Taylor	2022/23 Slough 95.7% National 96.0% Unitary Authorities 96.2%
	Average time taken to process new housing benefit claims	Low	Monthly	Jun-23	R	54.74 days	↑	Jul-23	R	51.63 days	<=20 days	Detailed improvement plan in place to remedy issues and improve processing times by Sept-23.	Adele Taylor	2022/23 Slough 35 days National 20 days
	Percentage of high priority audit actions overdue from 2021/22	Low	Quarterly	Mar-23	R	22.2% (12)	↑	Jun-23	R	21.8% (12)	0% by Mar-24	The overdue actions have been shared with each department for Department Leadership Teams (DLTs) to consider current position and respond. This will improve over time with the interventions in place.	Adele Taylor	
	Percentage of high priority audit actions overdue from 2022/23	Low	Quarterly	Mar-23	R	54.5% (12)	↑	Jun-23	R	35.3% (18)	0% by Mar-24	Progress is being made on closing actions on the tracker. Evidence of actions completed is obtained and quality assured by the Head of Commercial and the Interim Financial Adviser and retained for use in follow up audits.	Adele Taylor	
	Variance between revenue budget and full year forecast	Low	Monthly	Jun-23	A	6.9% (£9.9m)	↑	Jul-23	A	3.8% (£5.5m)	0%	Risks are actively monitored and reported to Finance Board.	Adele Taylor	
	Percentage of total savings for 2023/24 on track to be delivered by Mar-24	High	Monthly	Jun-23	R	87.7% (£19.7m)	↑	Jul-23	R	87.9% (£19.7m)	100%	At this stage only one saving is considered undeliverable. Risks are actively monitored and reported to Finance Board.	Adele Taylor	
	Percentage of contract exemptions RAG rated as Red	Low	Monthly	Jun-23	G	0% (nil)	↔	Jul-23	G	0% (nil)	0%	Meetings with all Executive Directors and their management teams to review the contract register and procurement pipelines, to ensure there is forward planning to continue to prevent Red and Amber exemptions.	Adele Taylor	
	Corporate Health	Percentage of customer service calls answered	High	Monthly	Jul-22	G	68.2% (10.4k)	↓	Jul-23	R	60.1% (10.0k)	>=75%	The Improvement Project team working on the following service improvements: - Telephone Interactive Voice Response (IVR) Review & Scripts. - Video development for our website and digital channels. - Improve performance and productivity within the Customer Service Centre. - Review templates for email responses. - Service liaison meetings in place to discuss performance / training / service issues with a focus on demand management.	Sarah Hayward

Corporate Management Information Scorecard 2023/24

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Outcome	Performance Measure	Good to be	Frequency	Previous update	Previous Performance		Performance direction of travel	Latest update	Latest Performance		Target	Mitigating actions	ED Lead	Comparison
	Average time taken to answer customer services calls	Low	Monthly	Jul-22	G	09min 05sec	↓	Jul-23	R	12min 58sec	<=8 mins	The Improvement Project team working on the following service improvements: - Telephone Interactive Voice Response (IVR) Review & Scripts. - Video development for our website and digital channels. - Improve performance and productivity within the Customer Service Centre. - Review templates for email responses. - Service liaison meetings in place to discuss performance / training / service issues with a focus on demand management.	Sarah Hayward	Average 20/21 09min33sec 21/22 12min51sec 22/23 08min32 sec
	Percentage of stage 1 complaints partially or fully upheld	Low	Monthly	May-23	G	60.4% (32)	↓	Jun-23	G	62.1% (36)	<=67%	Quarterly service quality check meetings continue to take place focussing on identifying service improvements to improve service. As a result, there have been a significant learning in complaints upheld.	Sarah Hayward	2021/22 71.5% 2022/23 73.7%
	Percentage of IT service desk tickets resolved at first point of contact	High	Monthly	Jun-23	Mon	67.1%	↓	Jul-23	Mon	63.8%	Metric in place to monitor trends	New service desk processes continue to be reviewed and improved each month.	Sarah Hayward	
	Percentage of IT service desk tickets resolved within SLA	High	Monthly	Jun-23	Mon	90.0%	↓	Jul-23	Mon	89.6%	Metric in place to monitor trends	New service desk processes continue to be reviewed and improved each month.	Sarah Hayward	
	Proportion of permanent posts filled with interim staff	Low	Quarterly		Dev				Dev		Metric in place to monitor trends	Reporting to commence from end-Q2 onwards. Reporting released one month in arrears	Sarah Hayward	
	Interim staffing costs (£)	Low	Quarterly		Dev				Dev		Metric in place to monitor trends	Reporting to commence from end-Q2 onwards. Reporting released one month in arrears	Sarah Hayward	
	Percentage of staff equalities data recorded on Agresso	High	Quarterly		Dev			Jun-23	Mon	67.4%	Metric in place to monitor trends	HR carrying out critical workstream reviews through the culture change programme.	Sarah Hayward	
	Staff turnover rate	Low	Quarterly	Rolling year to Mar-23	Mon	18.5%	↓	Rolling year to Jun-23	Mon	18.9%	Metric in place to monitor trends	1. Refresh of internal communications and engagement e.g., Staff Roadshows. 2. Recruitment redesign workshop held as part of the council's recovery programme.	Sarah Hayward	Civil Service 2020 10.3% 2021 8.4% 2022 13.6%
	Number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE employee	Initially high to address under reporting	Quarterly	Rolling year to Mar-23	Mon	2.2	↑	Rolling year to Jun-23	Mon	3.8	Metric in place to monitor trends	This is likely to be under-reported. HR/OD encouraging timely and accurate reporting by working with management teams and through staff communications.	Sarah Hayward	Civil Service 2019 7.0 2020 7.4 2021 6.1 2022 7.9

For action - trends that indicate the council is not on track for delivering its strategic objectives

- **Although improving, the average time taken to process new housing benefit claims is 52 days, which is well above the national average for 2022/23 of 20 days:**
 - Regular meetings with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) on the performance of the benefits service have continued and the team have accepted their offer of support to improve performance. These are scheduled for 26th to 29th Sept-23.
 - Outstanding work continues to reduce each month. At the end of June, 4,219 items of work outstanding which reduced to 1,288 during July, a reduction of 69.5% (2,931 items).
 - Number of days work outstanding also improved from 30 days to 19 days during the month, a reduction of 11 days.
 - The Council has made a significant investment in automation, and a detailed improvement plan is in place to implement this which will remedy existing issues and help to improve processing times to an acceptable and sustainable level by Sept-23.

- **Increase in the number of void and a reduction in the average number of days to re-let standard voids:**
 - Void numbers and average re-let times have increased significantly since Oct-22. This coincided with the switch off, of the Capita Housing Management system, which was key to the voids, allocation, short listing, viewing and sign up-process. The NEC housing system was not ready when use of the Capita system stopped.
 - In addition, there were shortfalls in staff resource, including the subsequent loss of a key manager. There were 700 plus applications awaiting to be added to the waiting list without the ability to allocate and shortlist in accordance with the council's allocation policy and no work around available.
 - NEC housing system is being developed with the implementation of the allocations module although short listing process remains outstanding. All outstanding applications are now on the system however there remains some configuration work required to enable the process from start to finish to work.
 - Once the process is fully working, tenancy services staff will be deployed to carryout viewings and sign-ups as quickly as possible.
 - The full configuration of the NEC Housing Register system is due for completion at the end of Aug-23.

- **A reduction in the number of homeless households have been placed into Temporary Accommodation (TA) over the last two months however the numbers remain critically high:**
 - The Accommodation team are verifying all occupants in TA, which is likely to result in additional housing benefit income as it is likely that not all occupants have a live HB claim.
 - Historically/currently only daily rate TA occupants have rent accounts. Housing benefit for TA nightly rates are transferred directly to the SBC general fund. All TA occupants will have a rent account on Slough Housing NEC system which will enable us to monitor all rent accounts.
 - Project plan is in place to carry out the following:
 - Check that all TA is occupied, non-occupancy will result in the closure of TA bookings and closure of homeless applications.

- 200 plus visits have been completed with the aim to complete the remaining within the next 6 weeks.
 - The Housing Demand Team to be fully staffed to clear the backlog and create more time to work with the Social Lettings Team on preventing homelessness prior to TA occupancy.
 - Recruitment is underway.
 - TA Team to work with the Housing Demand Team regarding issuing notices to all occupants who do not qualify for TA (non-priority, not eligible, intentionally homeless).
 - As visits are completed and unlawful occupation is identified, work to remove occupants will commence.
 - A fortnightly Prevention Working Group has been created. This involves a meeting attended by the Housing Demand, Temporary Accommodation and Social Lettings Teams to discuss cases referred for prevention of homelessness into the privately rented sector.
 - At least 60% of nomination rights to permanent voids to go to long-term/priority accepted homeless households.
 - When this commences using the new NEC system, this will be in pace to ensure continued rotation of TA units.
 - It is highly likely that a combination of these points will result in the reduction of TA occupancy.
 - As a result of the above we have started to see a reduction in TA occupancy.
- **The proportion of housing repairs completed on time remains far below the target of 95%. There remains a large backlog of housing repairs due, however repairs completed within timescale remain above target:**
 - There remains a backlog of outstanding repairs with 2,430 at the end of Jul-23. The demand for repairs is around 15% higher than normal following damp & mould letters sent to residents which has generated not only repairs work to resolve damp and mould issues but has generated other additional repairs being reported.
 - A reduction in the number of Osborne related outstanding complaints to resolve from over 100 last month to 76 at the end of Jul-23, many of these are complex cases that take longer to review and resolve. A review of the cases has shown many of these are in fact resolved but Osborne have been slow to provide responses, which they are now addressing.
 - Regular management meetings scheduled with Osborne's senior management to discuss critical issues including complaints. Proposals in discussion to introduce a new approach to working smarter to reduce response times.
 - Repairs successfully completed in one visit at 84% (1,263 repairs) remains consistently above target of 75%.
- **Improvements in the number of Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plans issued within the month, the highest numbers finalised over the last 16 months however, there remains a high backlog of late running EHC needs assessments:**
 - Improvement in the number of EHC plans completed, with 27 EHC plans issued during Jul-23 of which 6 (22%) were completed within the statutory 20 weeks' timeframe, this is the highest number issued within the month over the last 16 months.
 - The 6 plans issued within timescales were issued prior to week 18, new assessments within the timespan of new managers being in post and case management being in place.

- 32 draft plans were issued in Jul-23 and 21 amendment notices, the highest in the past 6 months.
 - Over the last 12 months, 129 plans were issued of which 15% (20 plans) were completed within 20-week timescale. This compares to a 2022/23 national benchmark of just over 50% complete within 20 weeks.
 - The backlog for completing Education, Health, and Care Assessments for children with special education needs or a disability remains high, with over 270 children waiting for assessment of which 45% (122) are over the 20 weeks threshold. The team have been working on reducing late running EHC needs assessments over the 40-week threshold.
 - There is a focus on early years and those transitioning settings to have face to face assessments and virtual assessments within the next 12 weeks as a priority.
 - There is still a shortage of education psychologists however an external agency will be providing addition capacity moving forward.
 - The Head of SEND has reviewed all current cases and has set targets for future months which are shared with the team manager. This will allow us to predict the number of plans moving forwards over a 20-week period to the SEND Inclusion Partnership Board.
 - New supervision approach in place for SEN Officers, and new Quality Assurance process in place, to improve quality of Plans for children. Children and parents involved in QA and feedback.
 - Capita Improvement Working Group underway to improve record keeping and reporting – will enable tracking of the journey of a child and family.
- **Customer Services: a reduction in the percentage of calls answered and customer service calls received, call waiting times increased to 12 minutes 58 seconds and remains above target:**
 - 60.1% (10,025) customer service calls answered during Jul-23 resulting in performance falling below the current target of 75%. There was a decrease in calls received compared to the previous month although more than similar period last year.
 - The biggest increase during the month was for Direct Service Organisation (DSO) services with the introduction of fortnightly collections of waste and recycles during Jun-23.
 - The average call wait time increased to 12mins 58 secs, remains above target of under 8mins.
 - The Improvement Project team working on the following service improvements:
 - Telephone Interactive Voice Response (IVR) Review & Scripts
 - Video development for our website and digital channels
 - Improve performance and productivity within the Customer Service Centre.
 - Review templates for email responses
 - Service liaison meetings in place to discuss performance / training / service issues with a focus on demand management.
- **Although improving, spend is higher than budget. 3.8% (£5.5m) variance between revenue budget and full year forecast compared to 6.9% (£9.9m) last month:**
 - The predominant theme emerging is one of unrealisable income targets being reported, some of which date back to previous years as well.
 - There are also service pressures leading to overspends where expenditure is greater than budgeted for, notably in People (Adults), Slough Children First, homelessness, highways maintenance, and contract inflation not budgeted for. There is also a large shortfall on client contributions in Adult Social Care.

- Where there are underspends, these tend to be around staffing, partly where vacancies are being held, but also notably where vacancies cannot be filled. In Finance, for example, this situation is leading to a significant overspend with the bulk of posts being held by interims.
 - Improvements in Housing, Property & Planning of £1.5m and Corporate Budgets (Capital Financing and Minimum Revenue Provision) of £3.1m have reduced the overall forecast this month significantly.
- **10.9% (£2.4m) of £22.4m savings required in 2023/24 delivered with a further 60.3% (£13.7m) on track to be delivered during the year, with a forecast that 87.9% (£19.7m) will eventually be delivered:**
 - Savings are classified as being Blue (already delivered), Green (on track), Amber (some risk), Red (major risks) or Mitigating savings.
 - There are some risks in People (Adults) and in Place & Community of non-delivery, but at this stage only one saving is considered undeliverable, which is the vacancy factor within Finance and Commercial Services. With finance being reliant on interims currently, there is in fact an overspend against budget and this saving cannot be achieved this year.
 - The service is exploring potential mitigations and alternative in-year savings proposals and will report on those through future budget monitoring reports. A significant recruitment campaign is underway to try and improve the position.
 - Some savings items within Place and Communities and Housing, Property & Planning are considered partly undeliverable this year, for example the full saving from charging for green waste is not considered achievable with fewer customers signing up than forecast.
- **Council tax in-year collection rate 0.37% below in-year target for July, an improvement from the previous month of 0.47% below target and 0.19% ahead of this time last year:**
 - The council tax in-year collection rate of 37.83% for Jul-23 is 0.19% above collection rate achieved this time last year however 0.37% below Jul-23 target of 38.20%, an improvement of 0.10% on the previous month's gap of 0.47%.
 - Collection rates potentially have been impacted with the 9.99% increase for 2023/24 and the continuing cost of living crisis, although this is early in the financial year so the trend will be monitored over the coming months to understand if this is a timing issue.
 - Another factor in the gap between target and actual is the cancelling of almost £0.7m of Single Person Discounts following a thorough review of eligibility. This has increased the net Collectable Debit and reduced the collection rate by 0.8%. This will be collected over the remainder of the financial year.
 - To improve collection rates, the team are implementing additional technology that will automate high volume, low value tasks, which will free up resources to focus on collection. The first of these automations went live in May-23 and the programme is due to run until the end of this year. The next automation to go live later this month is email indexing which officers currently complete manually.
 - In addition, the service has invested in technology that will automate outbound text messages, emails and phone calls targeted at accounts already in arrears and those that may move to this stage soon.
 - To support residents the council has expanded its Council Tax Support scheme to provide additional support for more than 9,000 households currently in receipt and for those making a new application from Apr-23.

- **Higher proportion of 16–64-year-olds claiming unemployment related benefits as a percentage of working age population:**
 - Slough's claimant rate for June-23 of 4.9% comprises of 5,055 people of which 665 aged 16-24 (13.2%) and 1,285 aged 50+ (25.4%). The rate remains above the national (3.7%) and South-East region average (2.8%).
 - Since Mar-2020, the claimant count rate has increased by 2.2%. During covid, Slough's rate was the 2nd highest out of the 63 largest cities and towns.
 - A new Economic Development Strategy is being drafted.
 - A draft Skills Improvement Plan will be prepared by Aug-23, with consultation to follow.
 - The Skills and Employment Hub is opening at the Curve from Sept-23.
 - Two jobs fair in partnership with DWP-Jobcentre Plus was held in the Venue at the Curve in February and June 23. Approx. 600+ residents attended both events.
 - As part of the multiply programme, Enterprise Exchange are running free online self-employment workshops. This project is funded through Levelling Up Multiply Funding.
 - Rebel Business School will be delivering a face-to-face programme in the Venue at the Curve aimed at residents who want to start a business or those in the existing business community who want to access a business growth and development programme in Oct-23. This project is funded through Levelling Up Multiply Funding.
 - The Community Development Team plans to organise a jobs fair in collaboration with Everyone Active and DWP at The Centre.
 - Promoting Berkshire Skills for Life, Skills Bootcamps locally.
 - The Individual Placement and Support in Primary Care (IPSPC) programme is being launched to begin in Sept-23. People with health conditions will be helped to start and stay in work. This programme has replaced the Building Better Opportunities initiative.

- **Number of anti-social behaviour and environmental related service requests open for more than 90 days on the increase:**
 - The team are working on complex cases, such as Chalvey ASB, High Street and Environmental air pollution issues at Simpsons. These issues are not simple or easy to close due to being complex.
 - We may need to consider how we record such cases, to ensure that they do not conflict with on-going service requests. For example, a simple case where there is a complaint against a neighbour can take more than 90 days to resolve, as officers are dealing with people, who are in their very nature, complex. Officers will first engage, work with both parties to resolve the issue, collect evidence throughout and will only use legal powers once there is a strong legal case and all other options have been explored.

- **Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting increased to 26.5% however remains well below the 40% target:**
 - Recycling rates cyclically decline during the winter months due to a reduction in green waste, however the rate in Slough remains low in all seasons.
 - Green waste collection tends to improve during the summer months where the weather improves, and green waste season begins however rate lower than this time last year due to recent wetter weather we've been having.
 - With the introduction of fortnightly collection of waste and recyclables from Jun-23 a campaign ran through to the launch date promoting the importance of recycling waste and materials. Messages include the need to optimise recycling to conserve space in residents general waste bins.

- The 'wanted' waste campaign launched specifically to promote alternative week collection, targeting recycling and steps resident can take to improve recycling rates.
- **Reduction in missed refuse and recycling bin collection per 100,000 however remains above target:**
 - Refuse bin collection rates improved month-on-month from 41 missed per 100,000 to 35 during Jul-23 however remains above target of 30. Recycling bin collection rate also improved from 59 missed per 100,000 to 31, marginally above target of 30.
 - The waste collection team is being more robust in rejecting bins that are overloaded or are contaminated. Residents have been recording these as missed but should be referred to as rejected as they do not meet criteria for collection.
- **Reduction in incidents of fly-tipping recorded however remains well above target:**
 - Reduction in the number of fly-tipping incidents reported from 59 last month to 44 during Jul-23 of which 89% (39) on public land and 11% (5) on private land however rate remains consistently above target.
 - This has been impacted by the introduction of fortnightly collections of waste and recycling during Jun-23.
 - Hotspots identified through use of Flare recording system. Team targeting hotspots.

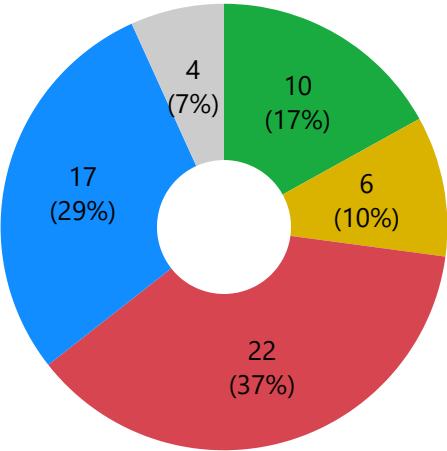
For recognition - trends that indicate the council is on track for delivering its strategic objectives

- **Compared to similar period last year, an increase in the number of stage 1 complaints received from residents, however, there has been a reduction in time taken to resolve stage 1 complaints and in the percentage of complaints partially or fully upheld:**
 - During June 23, 79 complaints received of which 62% (36) of complaints answered were either partially or fully upheld, a further 27% (21) remain to be resolved. Complex complaints take longer to review and close. These are predominantly Osbourne Housing Repairs and Housing/Neighbourhoods related. The complaints team continue to hold conversations with the relevant managers to address the outstanding complaints.
 - The largest proportion of complaints upheld during June-23 were for Revenue & Benefits (22%; 8), SEND & Inclusion (22%; 8), Osbourne's (19%; 7), Transport (8%; 3) and Environmental (8%; 3).
 - The average number of days taken to resolve complaints has improved over the past year. Q1 shows 14.7 working days compared to 26.6 from the same quarter last year.
 - A significant increase in informal complaints / service requests relating to the new fortnightly bin collection which commence in June. 120 queries received between 26/06/23 to 07/08/23 compared to 21 for the previous month.
 - Bespoke weekly complaints reports detailing outstanding casework per service issued to AD's requesting action to close outstanding casework. Services use these reports effectively with a reduction in outstanding complaints for some services. In addition, separate weekly reports are sent to Environmental, Planning and to SEND.
 - Service quality check meetings continue to take place quarterly - with the last suite of meetings completed in April. The meetings focus on identifying service improvements used to improve service. As a result, there have been a significant learning in upheld complaints.
 - The new 2 stage corporate complaint process and improved complaints webpage drafts are receiving final sign off and nearing completion.
- **Improvement in the percentage of referrals to children's social care within 12 months of earlier referral:**
 - Improvement in the percentage of referrals to children's social care within 12 months of earlier referral, with 18% at the end of Jun-23 compared to 23% during May-23.
 - Re-referrals are continually tracked and are in line with the latest published national picture of 17.3% for 2021/22.
- **A high in-year collection rate for business rates compared to one year ago:**
 - The business rate in-year collection rate of 39.43% for Jul-23 is 2.76% higher than this time last year and 2.63% above July target of 36.80%.
 - The council continues to take appropriate recovery action on those businesses that do not keep their payments up to date.
- **Percentage of contract exemptions RAG rated as Red:**
 - Exemptions to the council's contract procedure rules shows where good and sufficient reason has been demonstrated.

- Red: Whilst the exemption is not in breach of the council's contract procedure rules, better forward planning could have resulted in a competitive process being undertaken. A competitive process must be undertaken before the contract term ends.
 - Amber: Whilst the rationale for the exemption given is good and sufficient, forward planning could have resulted in a competitive process being undertaken, and should be undertaken before the contract term ends
 - Green: The rationale for the exemption given is good and sufficient and an exemption is fully justified.
- During July-23, no exemptions were submitted to procurement review board.
 - Meetings with all Executive Directors and their management teams were completed in Jul-23 to review the contract register and procurement pipelines, to ensure there is forward planning to continue to prevent Red and Amber exemptions.

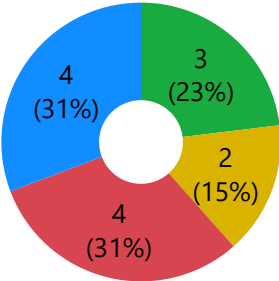
Summary

Performance summary



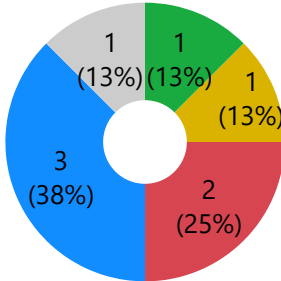
● Total Green ● Total Amber ● Total Red ● Total Monitor t... ● Total KPI in ...

Priority 1



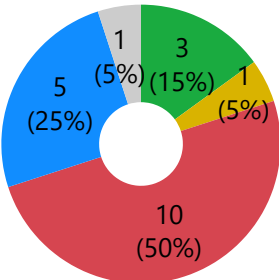
● P1 Green ● P1 Amber ● P1 Red ● P1 Monitor trends ● P1 KPI in develop...

Priority 2



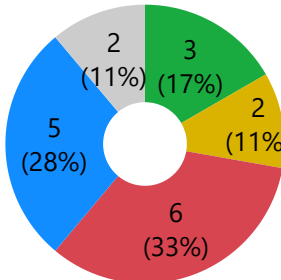
● P2 Green ● P2 Amber ● P2 Red ● P2 Monitor trends ● P2 KPI in develop...

Priority 3



● P3 Green ● P3 Amber ● P3 Red ● P3 Monitor trends ● P3 KPI in develop...

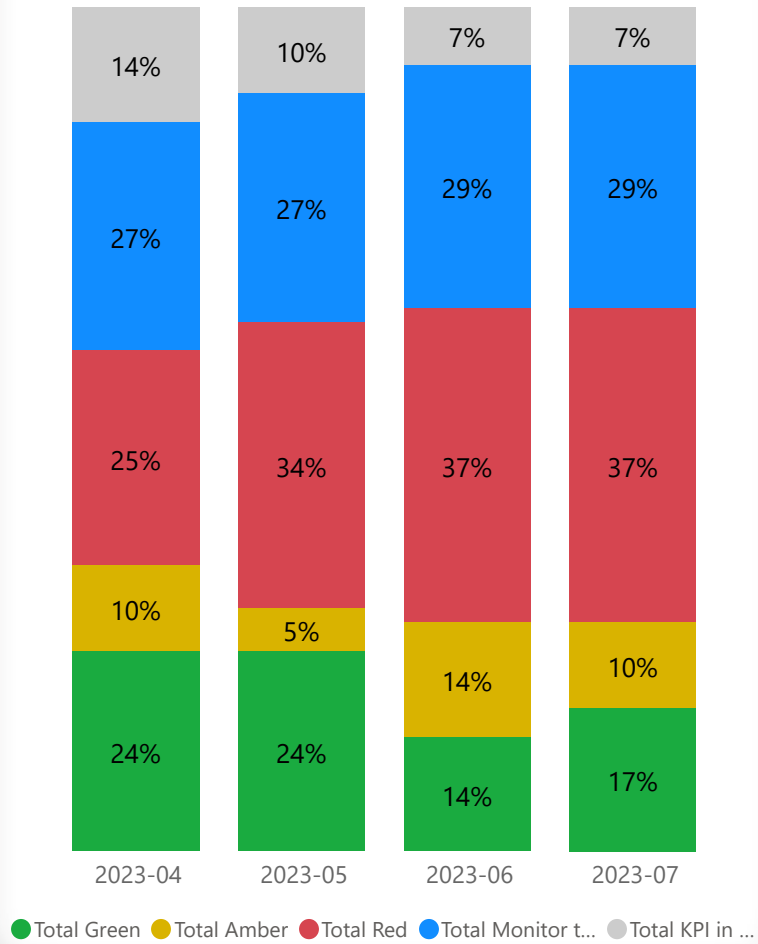
Corporate Health



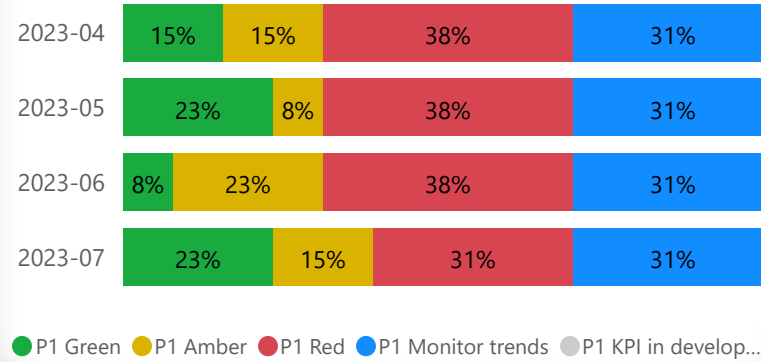
● CH Green ● CH Amber ● CH Red ● CH Monitor trends ● CH KPI in devel...

Progress

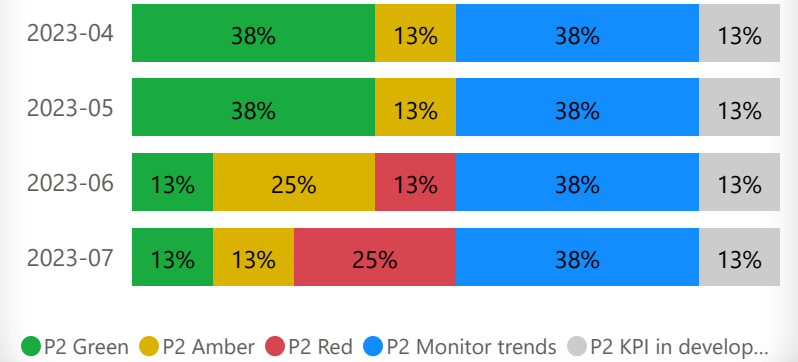
Performance trend summary



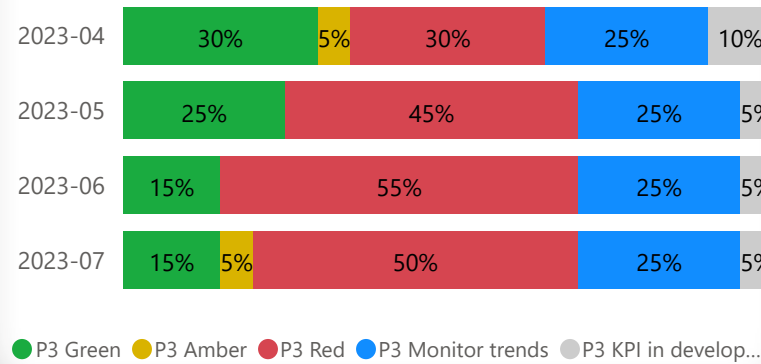
Priority 1



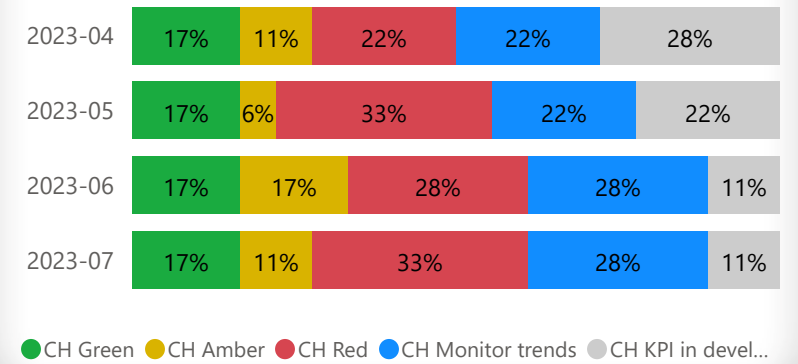
Priority 2



Priority 3

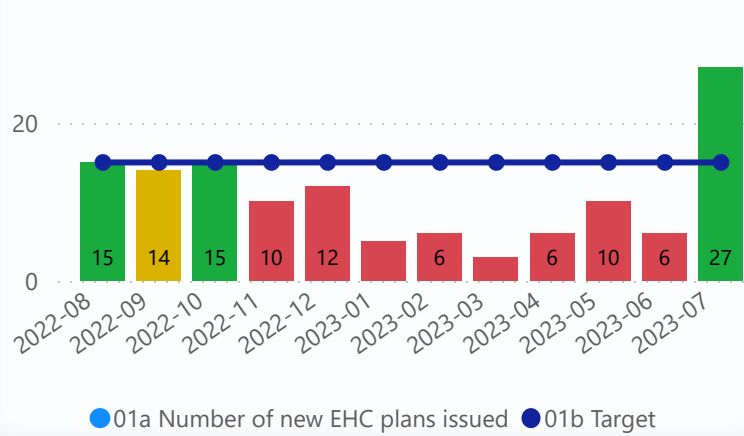


Corporate Health

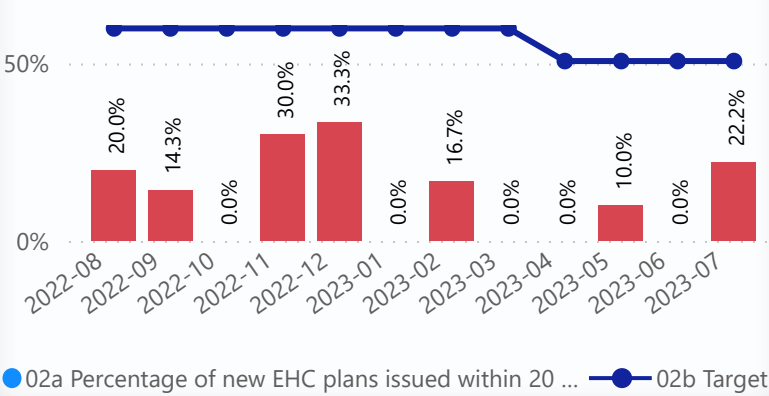


Priority 1: A borough for children and young people to thrive

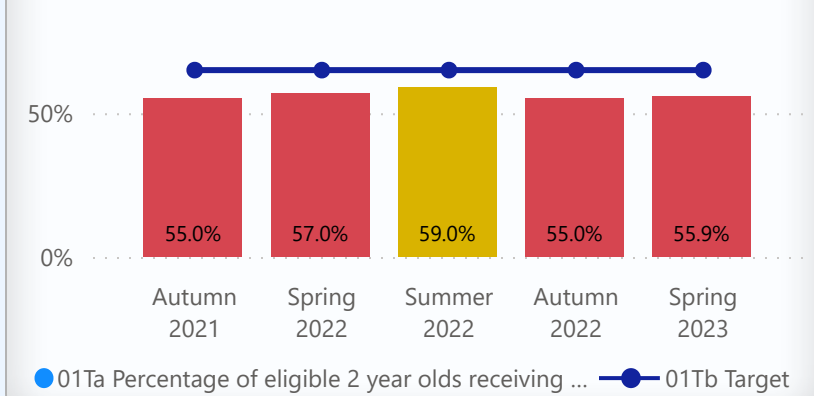
Number of EHC plans issued



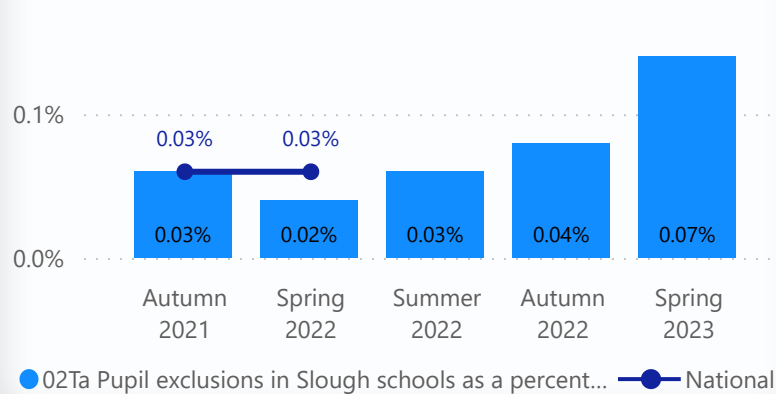
Percentage of new EHC plans issued within 20 weeks including exceptions



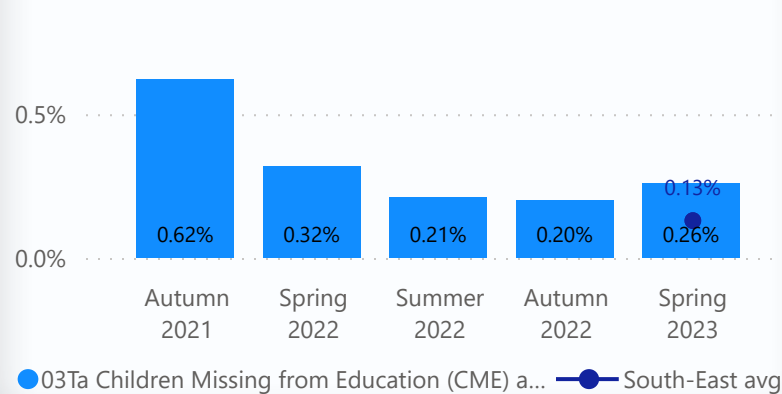
Percentage of eligible 2 year olds receiving 15 hours of free early years education or childcare



Pupil exclusions in Slough schools as a percentage of school population

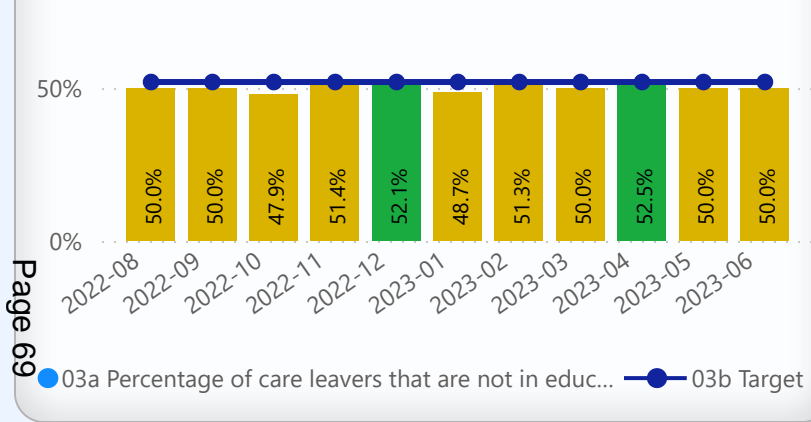


Children Missing from Education (CME) as a percentage of school population

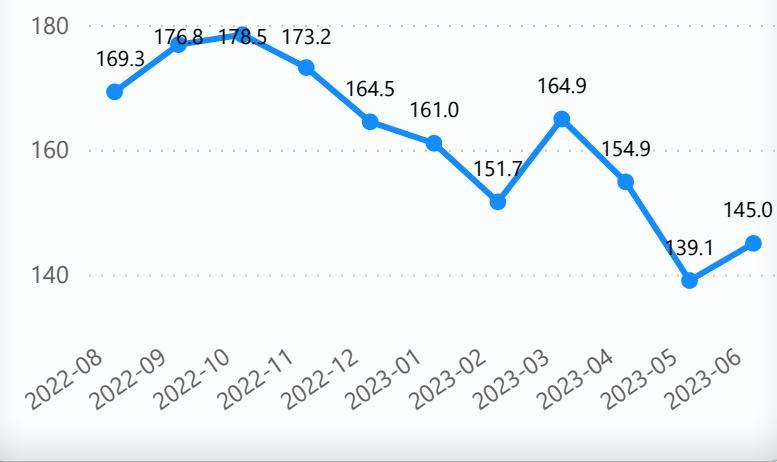


Priority 1: A borough for children and young people to thrive

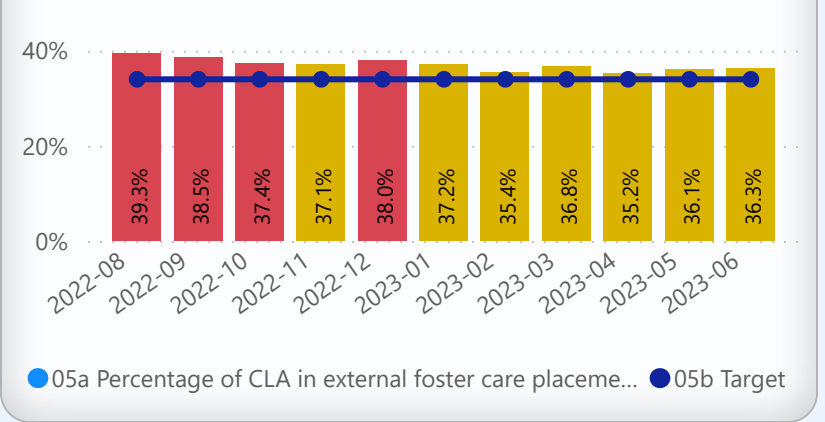
Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training



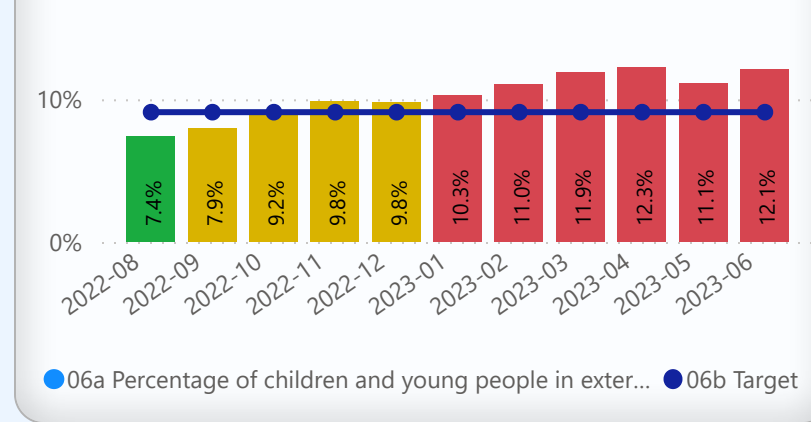
Rate per 10,000 of children receiving targeted early help



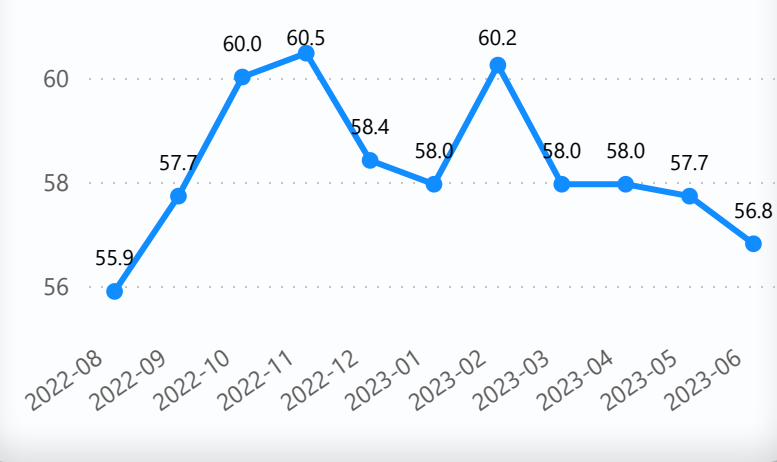
Percentage of children looked after in external foster care placements



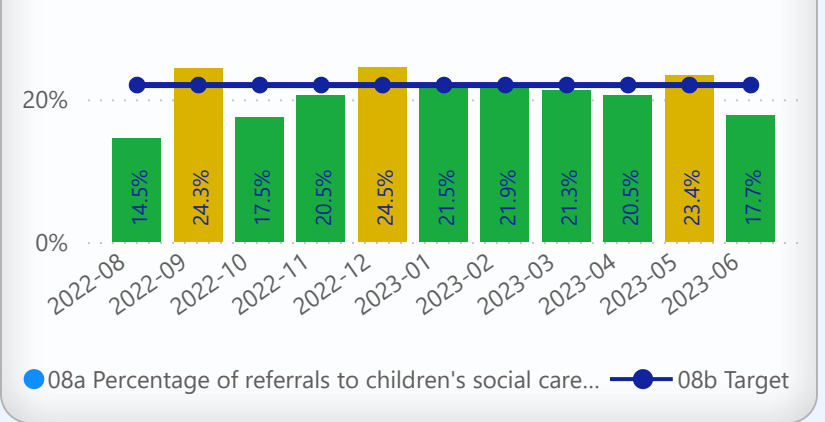
Percentage of children and young people in external residential placements



Rate per 10,000 of Children Looked After (CLA)



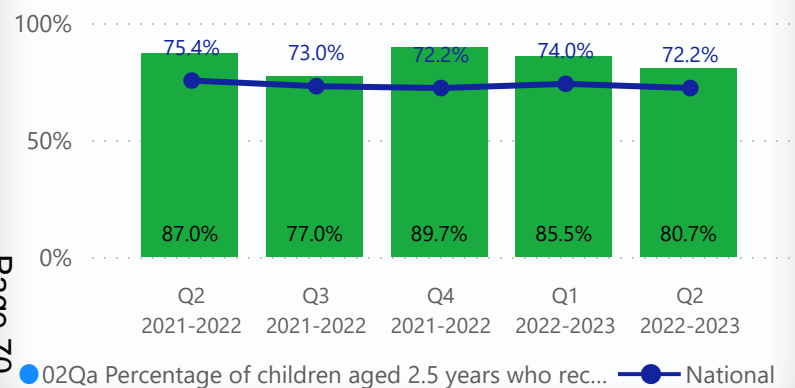
Percentage of referrals to children's social care within 12 months of earlier referral



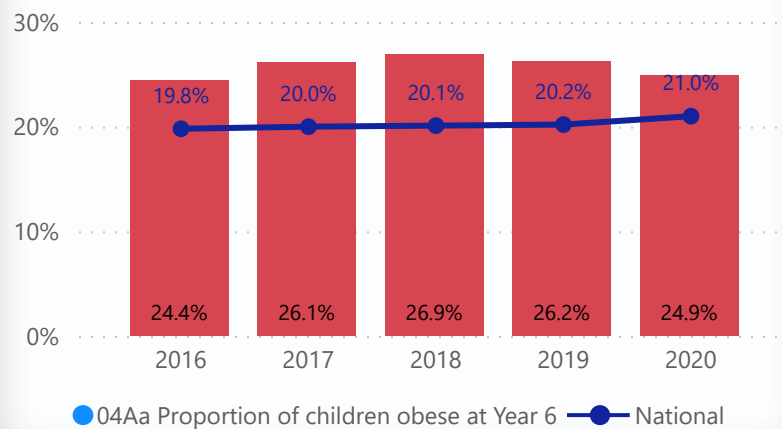
Priority 1: A borough for children and young people to thrive

Page 70

Percentage of children aged 2.5 years who received a 2 to 2.5 year child development review

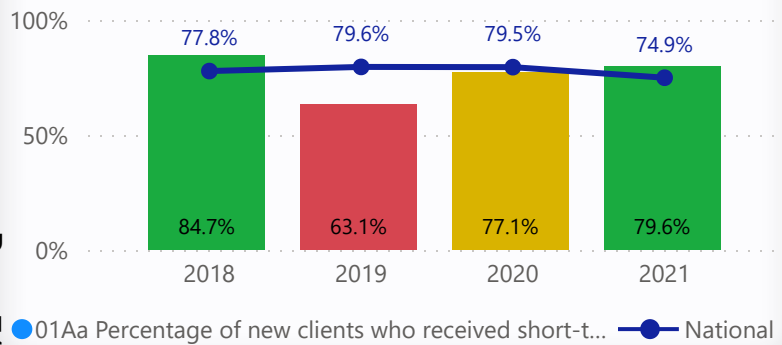


Proportion of children obese or severely obese in Year 6

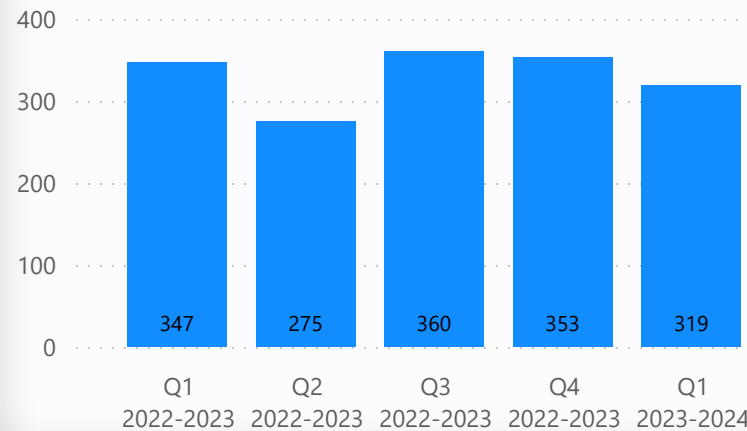


Priority 2: A town where residents can live healthier, safer and more independent lives

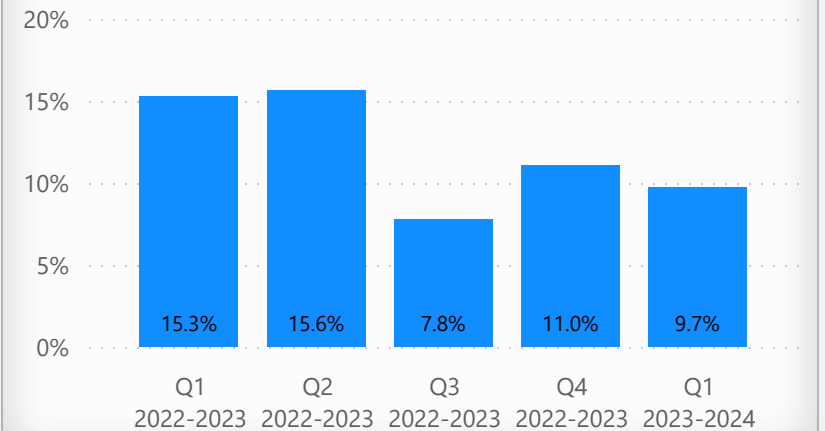
Percentage of new clients who received short-term services, where no further request was made for ongoing support



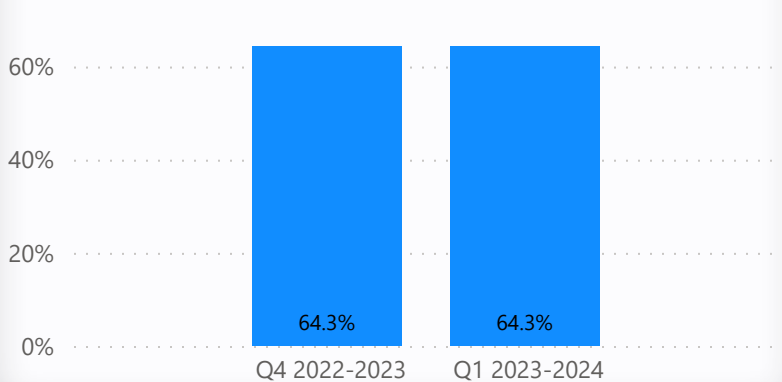
Number of safeguarding concerns recorded



Percentage of safeguarding referrals that meet section 42



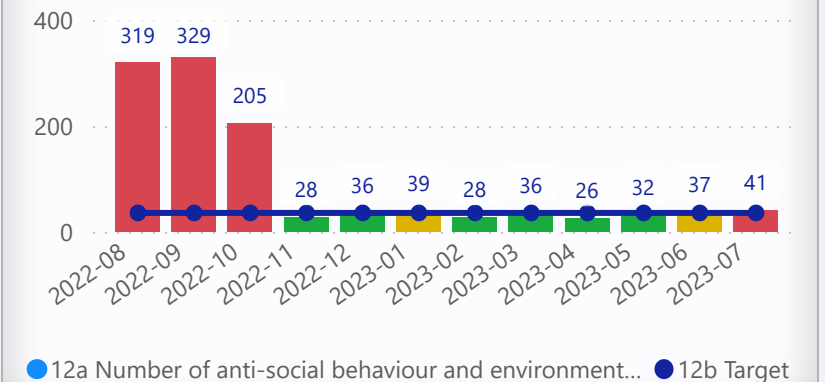
Percentage of care homes in the borough with a Care Quality Commission (CQC) rating of good or outstanding



Perception of safety in the community

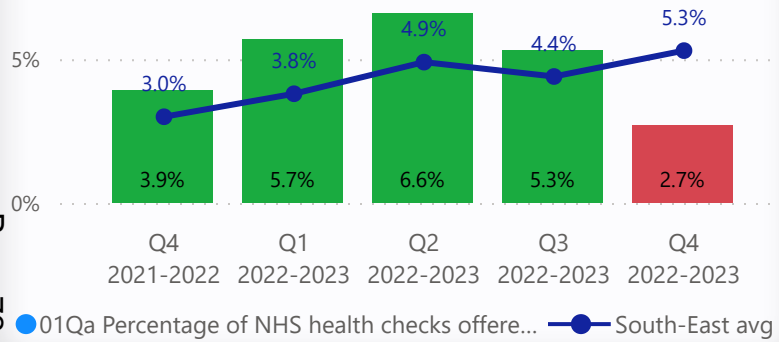
Metric in development

Number of anti-social behaviour and environmental related service requests open for more than 90 days

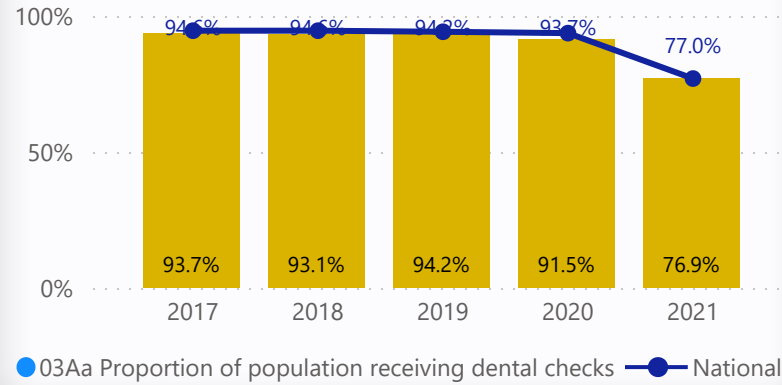


Priority 2: A town where residents can live healthier, safer and more independent lives

Percentage of NHS health checks offered to the total eligible population

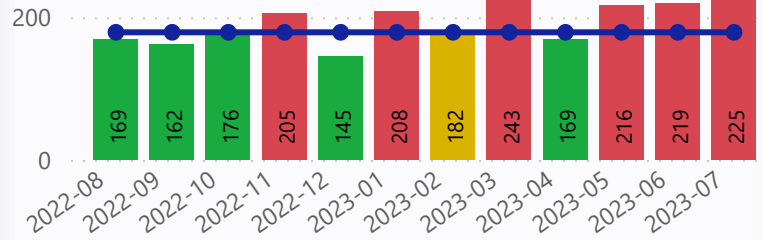


Proportion of population successfully obtaining a dental appointment



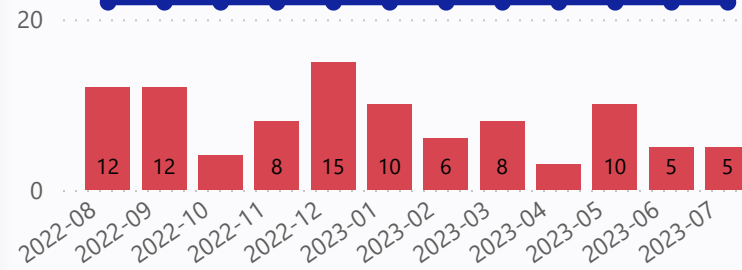
Priority 3: A cleaner, healthier and more prosperous Slough

Number of Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) approaches



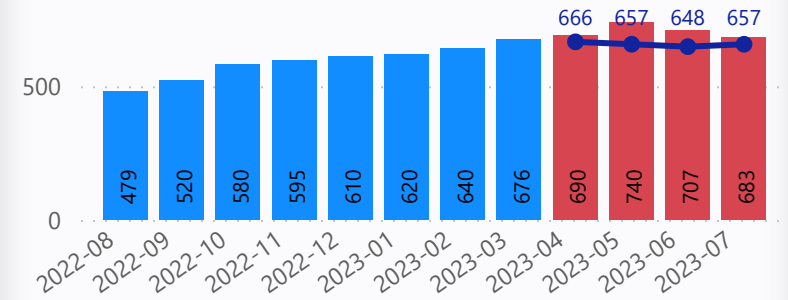
13a Number of Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) approaches 13b Target

Number of homeless cases prevented or relieved



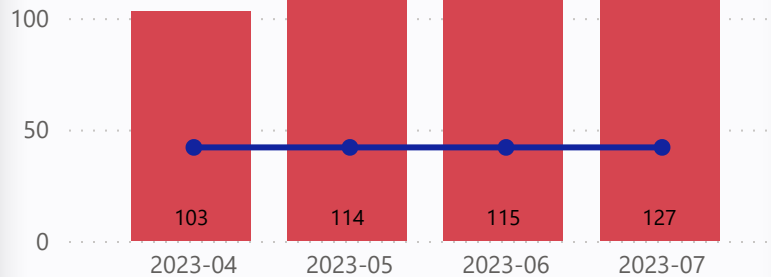
14a Number of homeless cases prevented or relieved 14b Target

Total number of homeless households placed in temporary accommodation



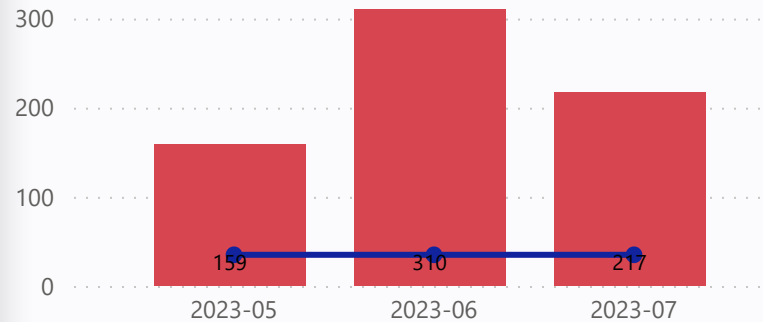
15a Total number of homeless households placed in temporary accommodation 15b Target

Standard voids at month end



39a Standard voids at month end 39b Target

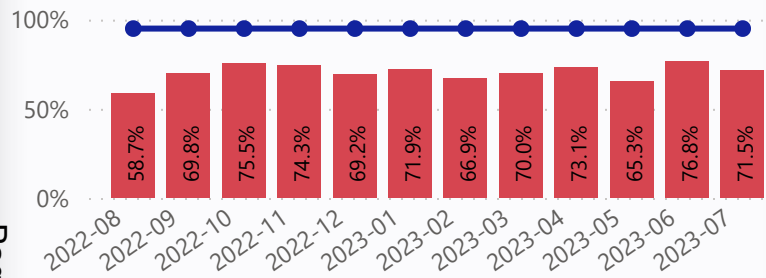
Average re-let time in days for standard voids



40a Average re-let time in days for standard voids 40b Target

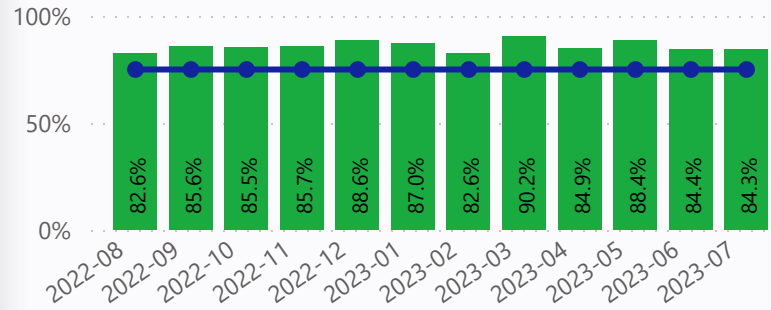
Priority 3: A cleaner, healthier and more prosperous Slough

Percentage of SBC housing repairs completed within timescale by Osbourne



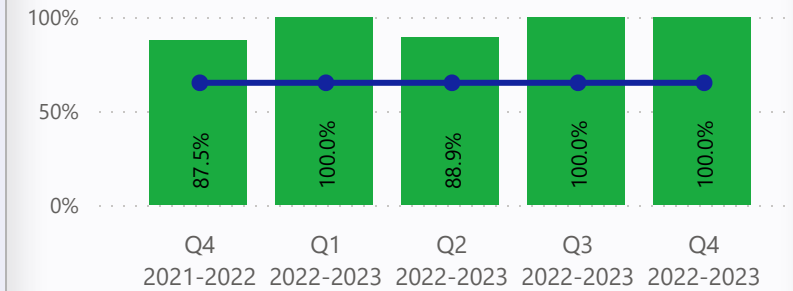
Page 74 ● 16a Percentage of SBC housing repairs completed ... ● 16b Target

Percentage of SBC housing repairs completed within one visit by Osbourne



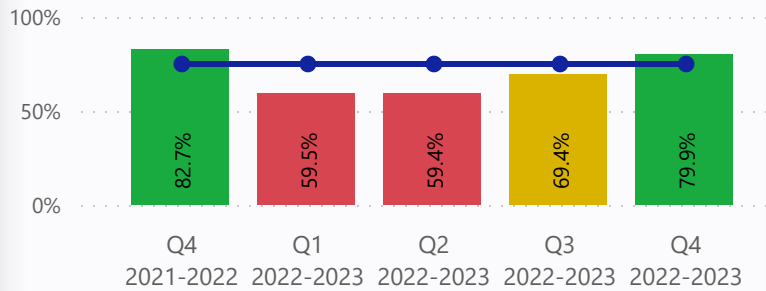
● 17a Percentage of SBC housing repairs completed ... ● 17b Target

Percentage of decisions made on major planning applications within 13 weeks or timescale agreed with applicant



● 08Qa Percentage of decisions made on major pl... ● 08Qb Target

Percentage of decisions made on non major-planning applications within 8 weeks or timescale agreed with applicant



● 09Qa Percentage of decisions made on non-maj... ● 09Qb Target

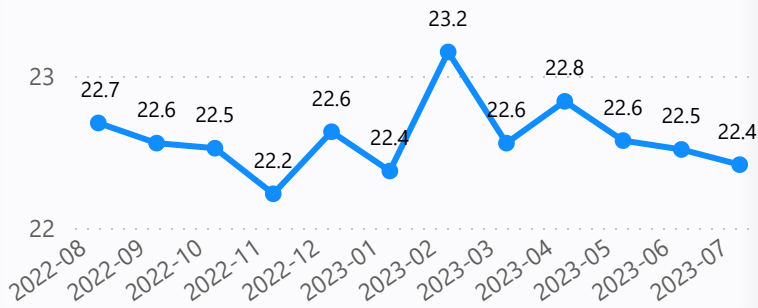
Number of public transport local bus journeys undertaken

Metric in development

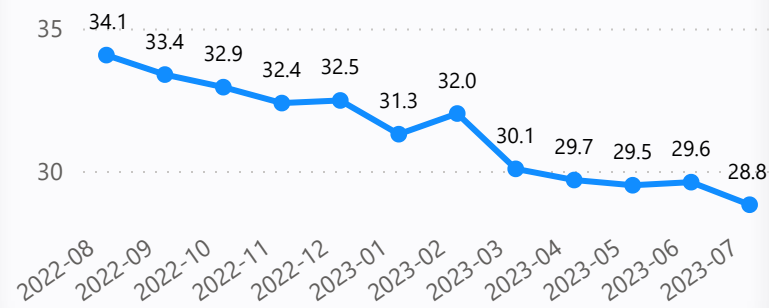
Priority 3: A cleaner, healthier and more prosperous Slough

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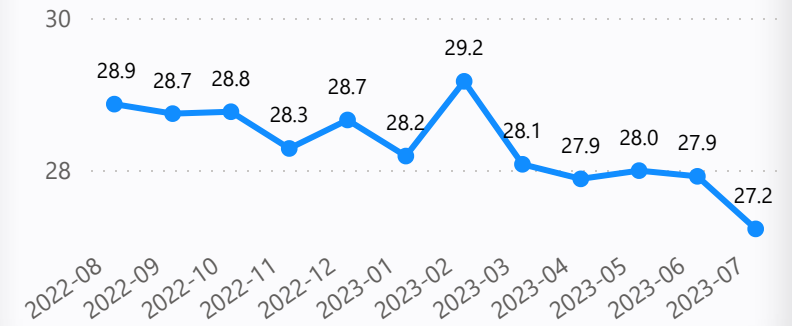
Air quality in Slough: NO2 (Nitrogen Dioxide) concentration for Air Quality Management Area (AQMA 1) Spackmans Way



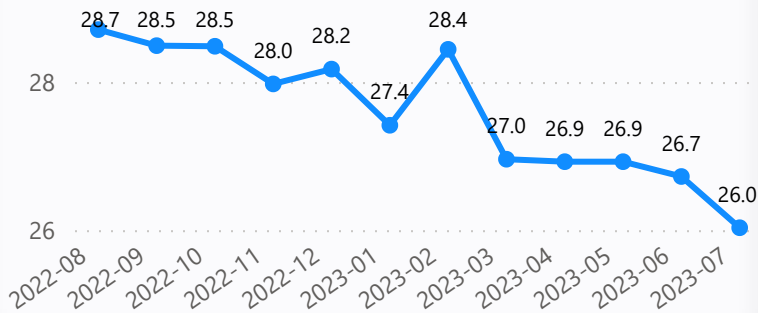
Air quality in Slough: NO2 (Nitrogen Dioxide) concentration for Air Quality Management Area (AQMA 2) Brands Hill



Air quality in Slough: NO2 (Nitrogen Dioxide) concentration for Air Quality Management Area (AQMA 3) Windmill



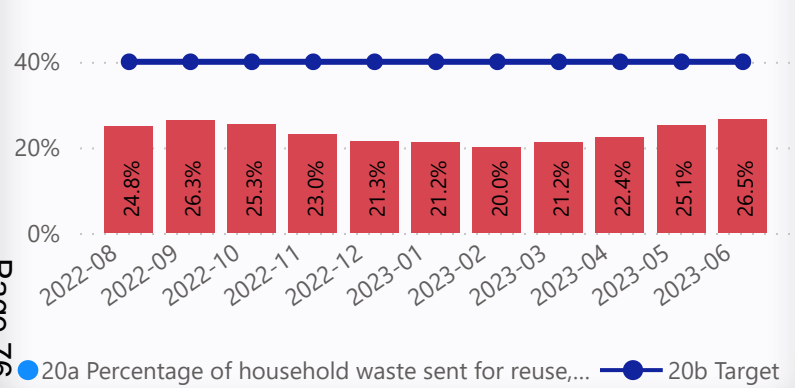
Air quality in Slough: NO2 (Nitrogen Dioxide) concentration for Air Quality Management Area (AQMA 4) Wellington Street



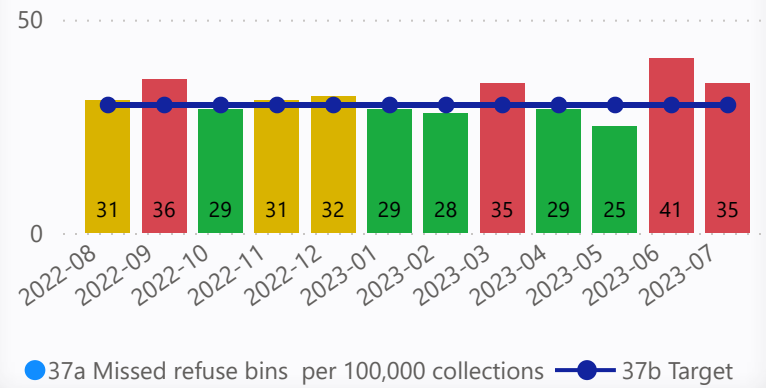
Priority 3: A cleaner, healthier and more prosperous Slough

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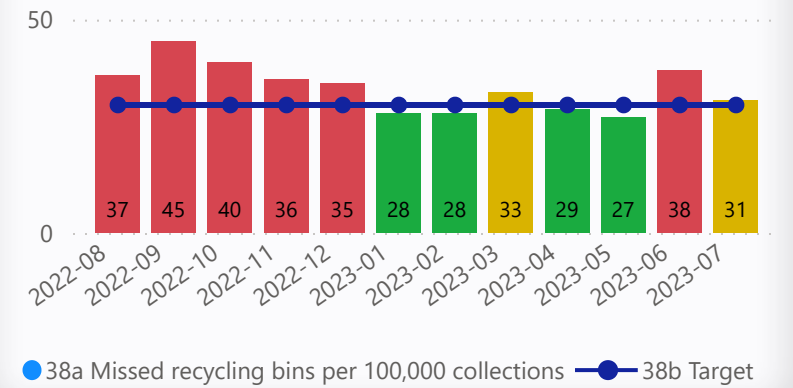
Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting



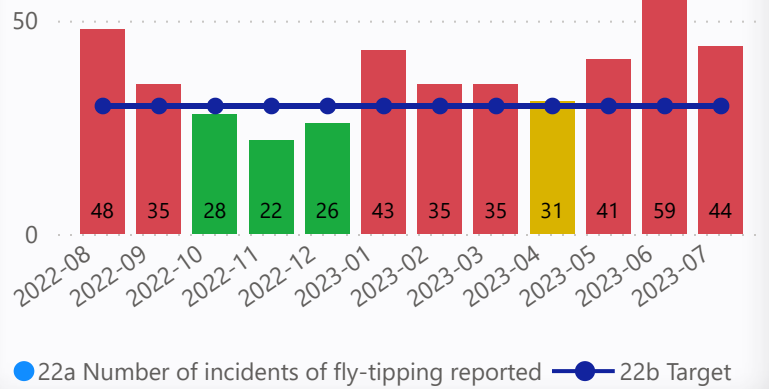
Missed refuse bin collection per 100,000



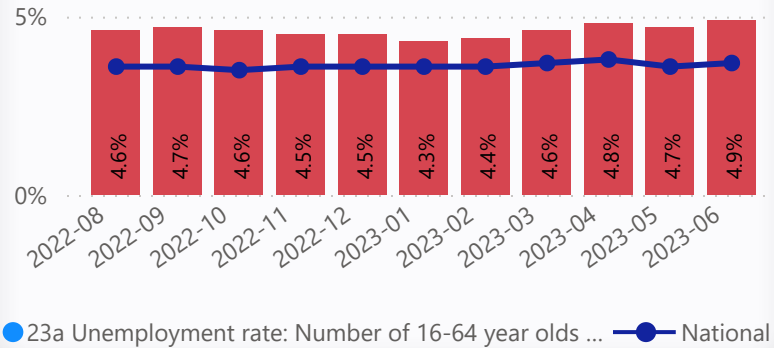
Missed recycling bin collection per 100,000



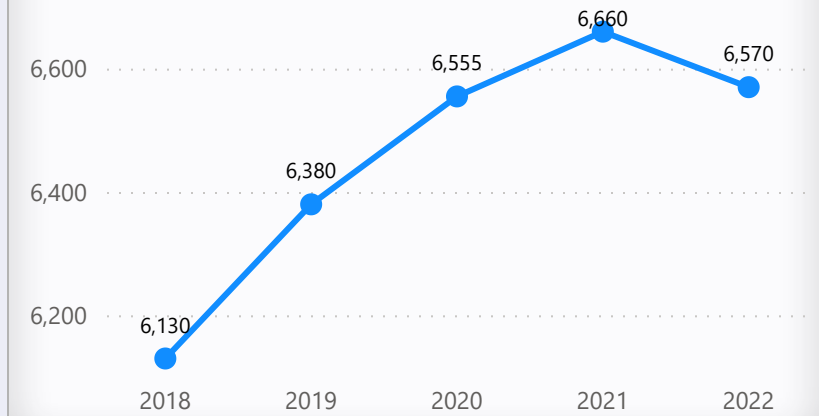
Number of incidents of fly-tipping reported



16-64 year olds claiming unemployment related benefits as a percentage of working age population



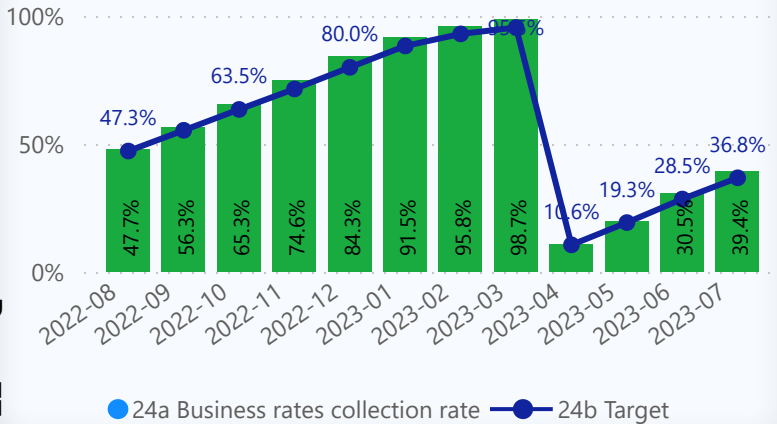
Number of businesses registered



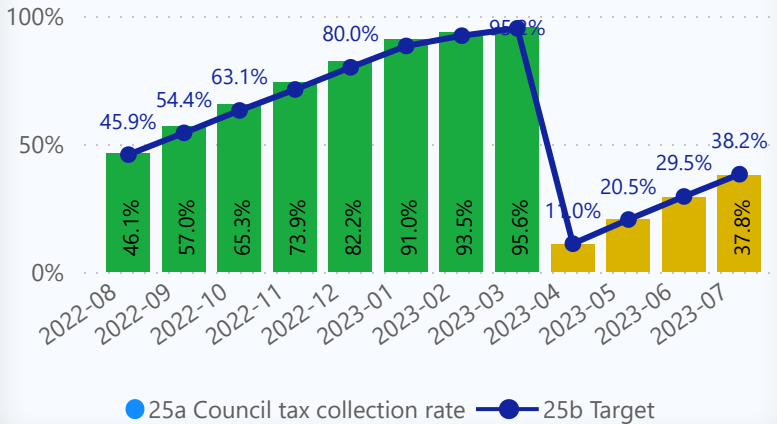
Corporate Health

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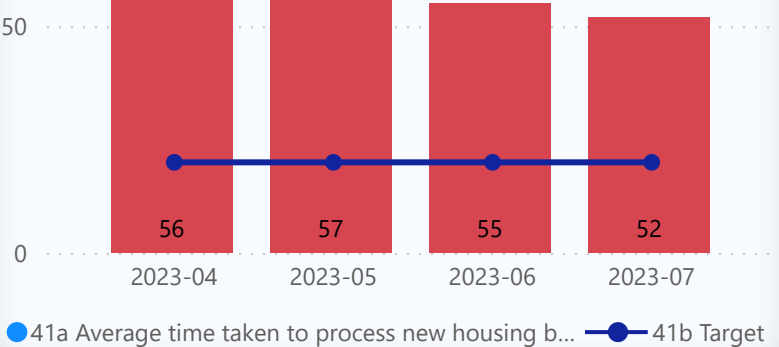
Business rates in year collection rate



Council tax in year collection rate



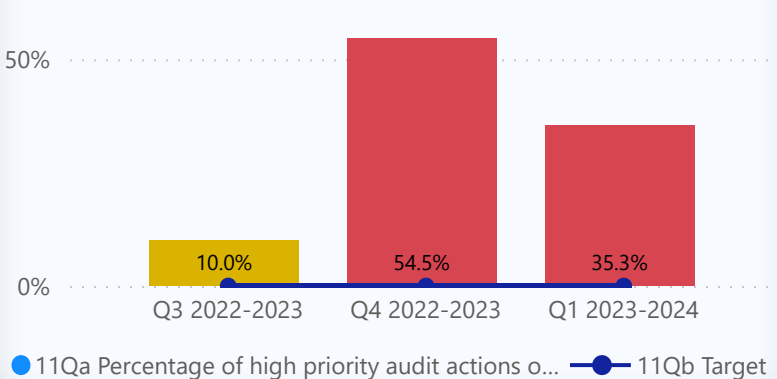
Average time (days) taken to process new housing benefit claims



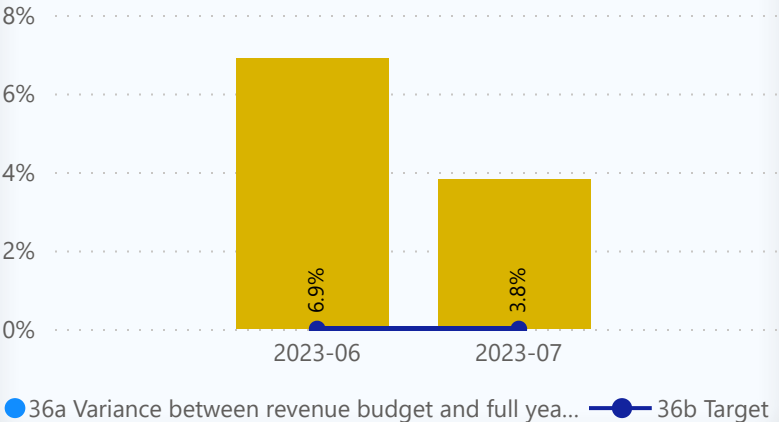
Percentage of high priority audit actions overdue from 2021/22



Percentage of high priority audit actions overdue from 2022/23



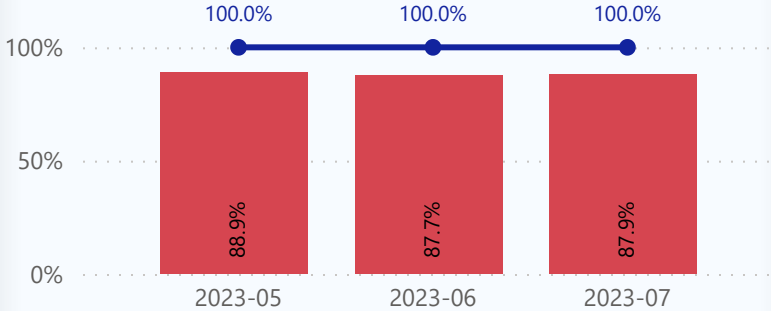
Variance between revenue budget and full year forecast



Corporate Health

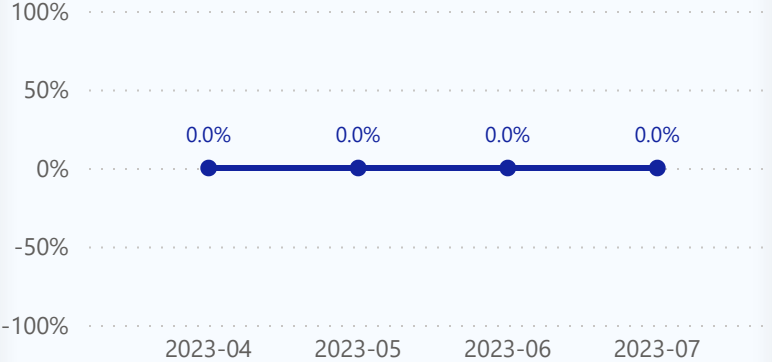
Page 78

Percentage of total savings for 2023-24 on track to be delivered



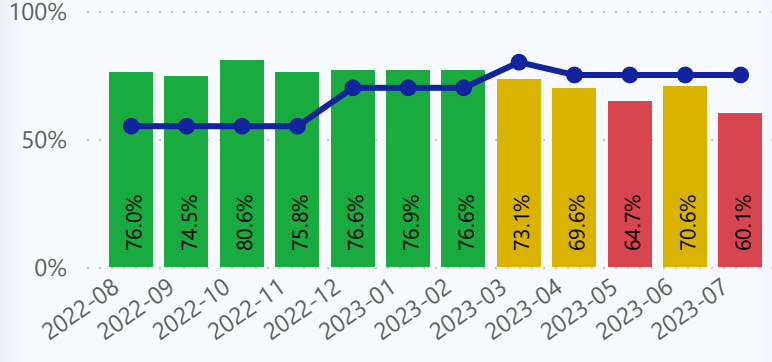
● 29a Percentage of total savings on track to be deli... ● 29b Target

Percentage of contract exemptions RAG rated as red



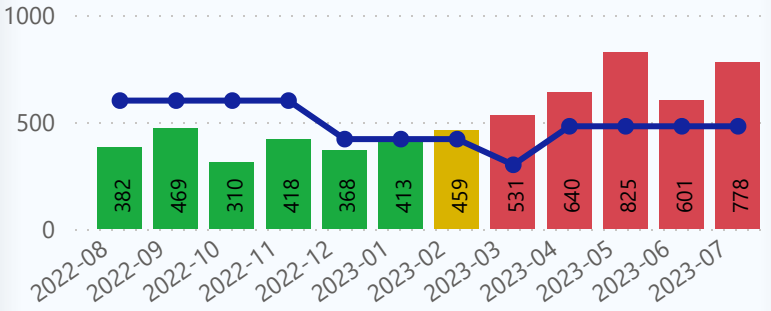
● 27a Percentage of contract exemptions RAG rated ... ● 27b Target

Percentage of customer service calls answered



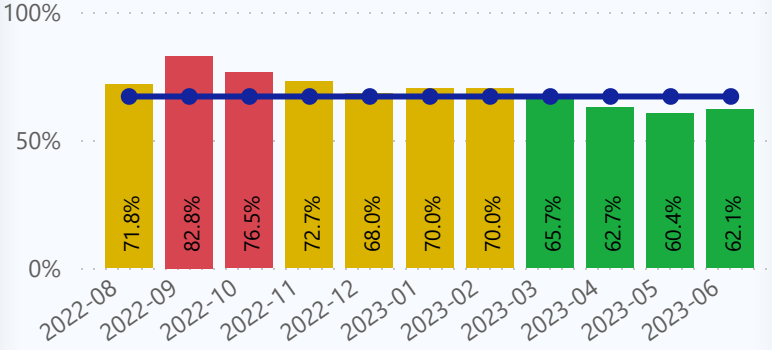
● 30a Percentage of customer service calls answered ● 30b Target

Average number of seconds taken to answer customer service calls



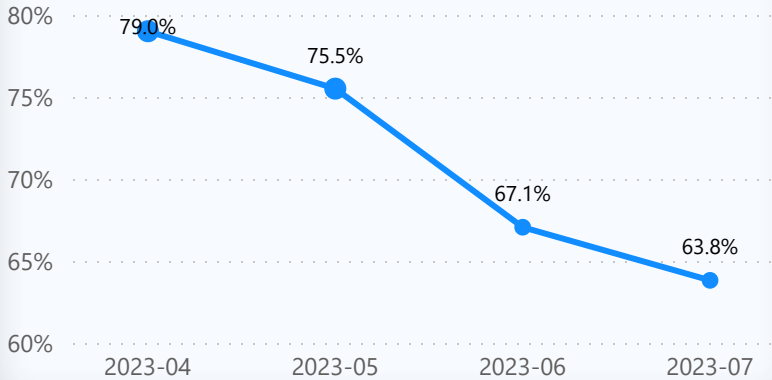
● 31b Average time taken to answer customer servic... ● 31c Target

Percentage of complaints partially or fully upheld



● 32a Percentage of stage 1 complaints partially or f... ● 32b Target

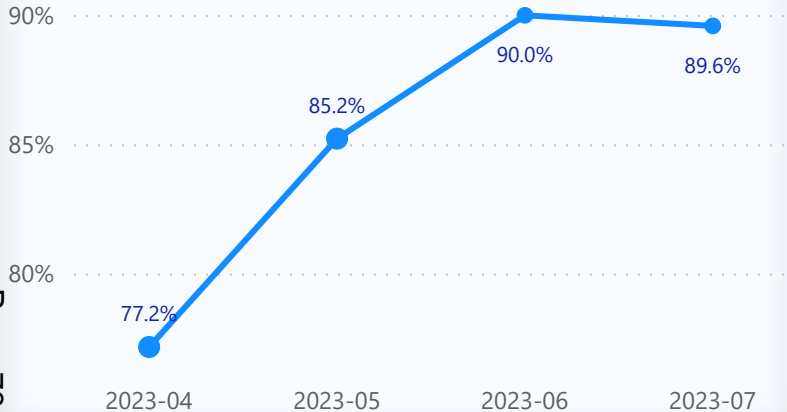
Percentage of IT service desk tickets resolved at first point of contact



Corporate Health

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Percentage of IT service desk tickets resolved within SLA



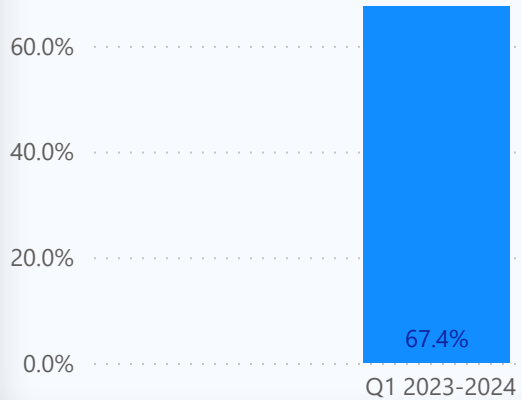
Proportion of permanent posts filled with interim staff

Metric in development

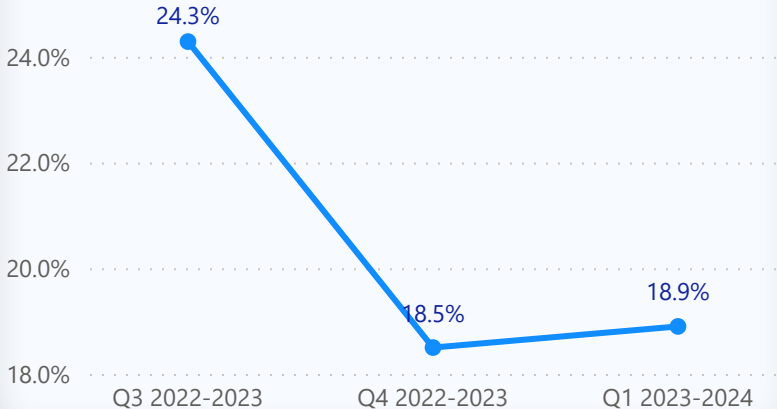
Interim staffing costs (£)

Metric in development

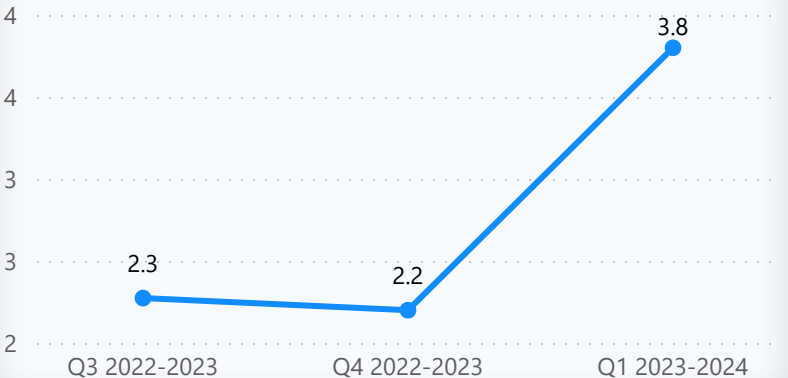
Staff turnover rate (rolling 12 months)



Staff turnover rate (rolling 12 months)



Number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE employee (rolling 12 months)



Performance Indicator Key

Metric updates this month:

For indicators where the updates are released in the later in the month, these will be reported in the following months report i.e., October figures reported in the November report.

Performance against target:

Where possible the latest monthly performance is compared with an assigned target or a benchmark. Indicators are colour-coded as follows:

RAG status	Description
Green	Performance is in line with or above in-year target or benchmark
Amber	Performance has not been met but is within 10% (unless otherwise stated) of in-year target or benchmark
Red	Performance has not been met and is more than 10% (unless otherwise stated) off in-year target or benchmark
Blue	Metric in place to monitor trends
Grey	Metric is being developed

Performance indicators are RAG rated as amber if performance is within 10% and red if more than 10% off in-year target or benchmark except for:

- Financial indicators: these are RAG rated as amber if performance is within 5% and red if more than 5% off in-year target.
- Collection rates for council tax and business rates: these are RAG rated as amber if performance is within 0.5% and red if more than 0.5% off in-year target.
- Children's social care indicators: these are as per agreed with Slough Children's First.

Performance direction of travel:

The *direction* of the arrows shows if performance has improved, declined, or been maintained relative to the previous month, quarter, or year.

- ↑ performance improved
- ↔ performance remained the same
- ↓ performance declined

For example, for overall NEET rate indicator where good performance is low:

- A decline in the NEET rate would have an upwards arrow ↑ as performance has improved in the right direction.
- An increase in the NEET rate would have a downwards arrow ↓ as performance has declined.

Slough Borough Council

Report To:	Council
Date:	30 th November 2023
Subject:	Quarterly Update on Urgent Key Decisions
Chief Officer:	Stephen Taylor, Monitoring Officer
Contact Officer:	Nick Pontone, Principal Democratic Services Officer
Ward(s):	All
Exempt:	No
Appendices:	Appendix 1 – Log of decisions taken under special urgency procedures where call-in waivers granted

1. Summary and Recommendations

- 1.1 This report informs Members of the number of Executive key decisions taken during the last quarter for which urgency provisions were utilised. There are various constitutional reporting requirements for such urgent decisions, including where proper constitutional procedures have not been adhered to and where special urgency procedures are relied upon.

Recommendations:

Council is recommended to note the use of special urgency provisions used for key decisions as set out in Appendix 1.

Reason:

This quarterly update ensures compliance with the various constitutional provisions for the key decision processes. This report contains details key decision made under special urgency procedures, where the agreement of the Chair of the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee has been sought to waive call-in. Whilst the constitutional and statutory requirements were followed for making these decisions, paragraph 17.3 of the Access to Information Rules state that a quarterly report should be taken to Council where decisions are taken in accordance with Rule 16. This report has not been produced in the past and the appendix sets out all decisions made since this rule was introduced.

Commissioner Review

Commissioners have reviewed the report and made no comment.

2. Report

Introductory paragraph

- 2.1 This report details the use of special urgency procedures to waive call-in for key decision made in accordance with the Special Urgency rules as set out in Paragraph 16 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules. This report contains information of decisions made for 2022 and 2023.

Background

- 2.2 Slough Borough Council operates the leader and cabinet model of governance. The Executive (Cabinet) is subject to various legal and constitutional provisions for decision-making. The main legal requirements are contained in the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, which have been incorporated into the Council's Constitution, primarily the Executive Procedure Rules and Access to Information Rules.
- 2.3 There are specific constitutional rules that apply to the taking of 'key decisions', the definition of which is:

"A key decision is an Executive decision which:

(a) is likely to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates;

or

(b) is likely to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area of two or more wards of the Borough.

A decision is significant for these purposes if it involves expenditure or the making of savings/receipt of income of an amount in excess of £1 million for capital expenditure or £500,000 for revenue expenditure or, where expenditure or savings are less than the amounts specified above, they constitute more than 50% of the budget attributable to the service in question. Revenue expenditure or savings should be calculated by reference to an annual figure, unless the expenditure will bind the Council for multiple years. Capital expenditure and capital receipts should be calculated based on total figures for the duration of the project or contractual term.

A decision taker may only make a key decision in accordance with the requirements of the Executive and Access to Information Procedure Rules set out in this Constitution."

- 2.4 The procedure rules require the Council to give 28-days public notice of the intention to take a key decision. To comply with this requirement the Council publishes a Notification of Key Decisions each month which summarises the key decisions the Cabinet expects to take in the next three months.

- 2.5 Where it has not been possible to comply with this notification process, a key decision may still be taken under General Exception and Special Urgency provisions set out in sections 15 to 17 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules.
- 2.6 The Overview & Scrutiny function is important in enabling non-executive Members to review and scrutinise decisions made by the Cabinet. This includes the power to 'call in' a decision of the Cabinet which has not yet been implemented. Every Cabinet decision which is subject to call-in cannot be implemented until the call-in period expires, which is 5 working days after the publication of the decision. If a decision needs to be implemented urgently the Chair of the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee can agree to waive call-in to enable the decision to be implemented without waiting for the 5 working days to elapse. The Cabinet report and/or minutes will specify if a call-in waiver was granted.
- 2.7 Under Section 17 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee has the power to require the Cabinet to report to Council if it believes a key decision has not been taken in accordance with the relevant procedures. It is confirmed that the Committee has not reported any such non-compliance this quarter or in 2022 or 2023.

Summary of use of special urgency provisions requiring call-in waivers

- 2.8 During the current quarter (October to December 2023, as at 22nd November 2023), there was one decision that utilised urgency provisions:
- Procurement of Replacement Fleet Vehicles
- Decision taken under the Cabinet Urgency Procedure – Leader's Action on 30th October 2023. The reason for urgency was the current contract for most DSO vehicles ends on 30th November 2023 and the award of a new contract by the end of October 2023 was required to ensure continuity of service. A report will be provided to Cabinet in December 2023. Call-in was waived with the agreement of the Chair of the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.9 During the previous quarter (July to September 2023) there were no urgent key decisions or call-in waivers granted during the quarter.
- 2.10 A full list of the use of the use of special urgency procedures requiring call-in waivers in 2022 and 2023 is detailed in Appendix 1. To provide Members with further context, the table below sets out the use of wider urgency procedures, including those where it was not necessary to waive call-in.

	Urgent Key Decisions (all decisions not included on 28 day notice of key decisions)	Leader's Urgent Action	Chief Executive's Urgent Action	Call-in waivers granted
Q1 2022	0	0	0	0
Q2 2022	0	0	0	0
Q3 2022	2	1	0	1
Q4 2022	2	0	0	2
Q1 2023	2	2	0	1
Q2 2023	2	0	1	2
Q3 2023	0	0	0	0
Q4 2023	1	1	0	1
Total 2022	4	1	0	3
Total 2023	5	3	1	4

NB: some decisions were subject to more than one of the above provisions.

- 2.11 In future, quarterly reports informing Members of these provisions will be provided to Council in January, April, July and November each year.

3. Implications of the Recommendation

3.1 Financial implications

- 3.1.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

3.2 Legal implications

- 3.2.1 The key legal provisions are summarised in the report. The primary legal requirements are contained in The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, which have been incorporated into the Council's Constitution.
- 3.2.2 The Centre for Governance & Scrutiny has produced guidance on the use of call in to assist local authorities in drafting their constitutional rules. In relation to exceptions which should apply to call-in procedures, it recommends that these should be used where for reasons that it would be prejudicial to the interests of the Council, for safety reasons or because it is in the wider public interest. The Council has followed this guidance by incorporating rules for general and special urgency and emergency arrangements for decisions of different degrees of immediacy with different processes affecting call-in and member oversight. The guidance states that this may appear potentially complicated, but does mean that the right to call a decision in is wholly absent only in the most extreme of circumstances. The guidance refers to decisions to remove call-in and the reasons for this being reported to Full Council either on a decision by decision basis or via an annual report.
- 3.2.3 The draft best value guidance refers to an indicator of potential failure being scrutiny functions being undermined and a lack of pre-decision scrutiny, plus a culture of secrecy and overuse of urgency arrangements, confidential or delegated action reports and a failure for such reports to be reported in a form which allows scrutiny.

3.3 *Risk management implications*

3.3.1 There are no risks directly associated with this report.

3.4 *Environmental implications*

3.4.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

3.5 *Equality implications*

3.5.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report. Decisions taken by the Cabinet are subject to equality impact assessments where appropriate.

4. Background Papers

None.

Appendix 1: Log of decisions taken under special urgency procedures where call-in waivers granted in accordance with Rule 16 of the Access to Information Rules

	Decision taker	Report Title	'Urgent' key decision	Call-in waived	Reason for urgency and other comments
			<i>Decision taken under General Exception (para 15 of Access to Information Rules) i.e. less than 28 days notice of key decision given.</i>	<i>Call-in waiver request granted by the chair of scrutiny.</i>	
Quarter 1 2022 Jan to Mar 2022	<i>No urgent key decisions or call-in waivers granted during the quarter</i>				
Quarter 2 2022 Apr to Jun 2022	<i>No urgent key decisions or call-in waivers granted during the quarter</i>				
Quarter 3 2022 Jul to Sep 2022	Leader's Action 27 th July 2022	Corporate Energy Purchase Contracts (August 2022 to March 2025)	Yes	Yes	In view of the extraordinary state of the wholesale energy market, urgent approval was sought to change to the Council's energy purchasing strategy to manage the risk of price volatility. Delay would expose the Council to significant further risks from rising energy prices.
Quarter 4 2022 Oct to Dec 2022	Cabinet 2 nd November 2022	Montem Site Appropriation	Yes	Yes	A decision on appropriation was required by 4 th November 2022 to enable exchange of contracts for the disposal of the site. A report was provided to Council on 22/11/22.
	Cabinet 2 nd November 2022	Disposal of Council Asset – Former Akzo Nobel site	Yes	Yes	The grounds for urgency in agreeing the disposal was to avoid any delay to the completion date and ensure the capital receipt from the asset sale was achieved to support the Council's financial recovery.

Quarter 1 2023 Jan to Mar 2023	Leader's Action 16 th February 2023	Disposal of Council Asset at Montem Lane	Yes	Yes	To agree a revised purchase price offer for the Montem Lane asset from the sum approved by Cabinet on 17 th October 2022. The contract for sale was due to exchange on 17 th February 2023 and an urgent decision was required. Any delay risked losing the sale and subjecting the Council to additional costs.
Quarter 2 2023 Apr to Jun 2023	Cabinet 17 th April 2023	Disposal of 380 Bath Road	Yes	Yes	To ensure the disposal was completed with the purchaser by the end of April 2023 it was necessary to implement the decision urgently to minimise the risk of the purchaser withdrawing or seeking to amend the terms of the deal.
	Chief Executive – Urgency Procedures 12 th May 2023	Disposal of 233-249 High Street	Yes	Yes	The approval being sought to dispose of the asset was time critical and so, to protect the Council's commercial interests, the 'urgency' procedures were applied.
Quarter 3 2023 Jul to Sep 2023	<i>No urgent key decisions or call-in waivers granted during the quarter</i>				
Quarter 4 2024 Oct to Dec 2023 (as at 13 th November 2023)	Leader's Action 30 th October 2023	Procurement of Replacement Fleet Vehicles	Yes	Yes	The decision is urgent and to wait for call in would be prejudicial to the Council's interests as contract needs to be awarded by end of October 2023 to ensure vehicles are available from 1 December 2023. A report would be provided to Cabinet in December 2023.

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SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Council **DATE:** 30th November, 2023

CONTACT OFFICER: Shabana Kauser
(For all enquiries) Principal Democratic Services Officer
07821 811 259

WARD(S): All

PART I
FOR DECISION

MOTIONS SUBMITTED TO COUNCIL UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 14

The following motions have been received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14:-

Housing

(Moved by Councillor Ajaib, seconded by Councillor Escott)

“The Council recognises:

1. Housing is a pressing issue for local residents in Slough, across all sectors, tenures and housing types.
2. There is a chronic shortage of housing in Slough and nationwide.
3. Housing is a multifaceted issue, with many teams within the council involved in the delivery of housing services, from planners to housing regulation, temporary accommodation to the allocations team.
4. All of these teams hold data – however, this data is not readily available to councillors in an easily accessible, singular document.

The Council therefore resolves;

1. To request Cabinet to agree to produce an annual ‘State of Housing’ report in Slough to be published at the start of each financial year.

The report should include up-to-date information on, but not limited to, council house waiting lists, right to buys receipts, council lets, rough sleepers, temporary accommodation, housing supply, housing tenures, housing providers, conditions of housing stock, repairs and maintenance performance, voids, mould, complaints, local housing allowance rates, homelessness, overcrowding, landlord licensing, inspections, affordable housing and any other matters that are pertinent”.

Conflict in the Middle East

(Moved by Councillor Smith, seconded by Councillor Naveed)

“Slough Borough Council extends and notes:

- Our deepest condolences to those who have lost their loved ones due to recent events in Israel and Palestine; and acknowledges that Slough residents have been horrified to see the horrific escalation of violence since 7th October in which thousands of innocent men, women and children have been killed, including over 4,000 Palestinian children.
- Our unequivocal condemnation of Hamas’s terror attack on 7th October; of the fact that whole Palestinian communities have been driven from their homes and that the Gaza Strip has been cut off from crucial water, food, fuel and medical supplies.
- Our belief that Israel must not be given a blank cheque to continue operating in the manner it has done, and that every effort should be made by the UK Government to ensure the stability of the region.

Slough Borough Council resolves:

That the Leader of the Council write to the Foreign Secretary outlining the following:

- The multicultural nature of Slough and the pride which Slough places in our vibrant community relations;
- Our agreement that Israel must stop extremist settler violence in the West Bank; and that we recognise the calls from charities such as Christian Aid, Oxfam and Save the Children who have called a ceasefire ‘our only option to avert further loss of civilian life and humanitarian catastrophe’.
- That we call for Israel to protect Hospitals and allow food, water, electricity, medicine and fuel into Gaza; and to stop the aerial bombardment of any targets with likely civilian presence with immediate effect;
- That International law makes it clear that the intentional killing of civilians, collective punishment and hostage-taking may be deemed as war crimes; and that all members urge the Government and the Member of Parliament for Slough to work to uphold the international rules which underpins our collective human rights;
- That the United Kingdom should reaffirm its longstanding commitment to a diplomatic and political process to deliver an immediate ceasefire, and a pathway to the lasting peace of a two-state solution.”