

To: **The Executive**
17 September 2024

Council Plan Overview Report Chief Executive

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform the Executive of the performance of the council over the first quarter of the 2024/25 financial year (April - June 2024). This is the first Council Plan Overview Report (CPOR) for the new Council Plan.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 **To note the performance of the council over the period from April to June 2024 highlighted in the Overview Report in Annex A, this includes any recommendations made by Overview and Scrutiny in Annex B.**

3 Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 To brief the Executive on the council's performance, highlighting key areas, so that appropriate action can be taken if needed.

4 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 None applicable.

5 Supporting Information

- 5.1 The council's performance management framework requires the preparation of Quarterly Service Reports (QSRs) by each department. These QSRs provide an update of progress and performance against departmental Service Plans and are published on the intranet.
- 5.2 The QSRs have been combined into the Council Plan Overview Report (CPOR), which brings together the progress and performance of the council as a whole. The CPOR enables the Corporate Management Team and Councillors to review performance, highlight any exceptions and note any remedial actions that may be necessary, either from under-performing or over-performing services, across the range of council activities.
- 5.3 The CPOR performance information will also be reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny. This process enables all Members to be involved in performance management. Any recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission will be included within the report for the Executive to consider.
- 5.4 The full suite of actions and performance indicators has been reviewed as part of the production of the annual service plans and 2023-2027 Council Plan, setting out key activity to deliver the council's strategic aims. The 2024/25 service plans were approved by Executive on 19 March 2024 and are available to view on the [council's website](#).
- 5.5 The CPOR has been refreshed to reflect the new Council Plan and service plans, with actions and indicators reported under the four strategic priorities: Engaged and health communities; Thriving and connected economy; Green and sustainable environment, and; Ambitious, resilient and sustainable organisation.

5.6 Sections for budget position and corporate health have been retained. The section on Community Health is no longer required as contextual indicators are reported in addition to performance indicators to provide relevant data under the strategic themes.

5.5 The CPOR for the first quarter (April - June 2024) is shown in Annex A.

5.6 Key achievements during the first quarter include:

- Waiting lists for Early Help Services reduced to zero and re-referrals dropped to 2%.
- Over 1,000 carers involved in creating a new all-age integrated carers strategy.
- £1.6 million refurbishment of Bracknell Leisure Centre complete including new spin studio and the 'Play World' soft play area.
- Bracknell Forest Council awarded the Ministry of Defence Employer Recognition Scheme, Silver Award.
- Wide public engagement events for developing the town centre masterplans.
- Inaugural meeting of Berkshire Prosperity Board to enhance joint working including developing a Berkshire Economic Strategy.
- The Lexicon and council's work to support pollinators was awarded a Bee's Needs Award by the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).
- Corporate Improvement programme launched, with workstreams and work plans established.
- The Police and Crime Commissioner election successfully delivered in May.

5.7 There also continue to be challenges the council is working to resolve:

- The management of potential overspend primarily due to increase in demand and cost of providing adult and children's social care services. Enhanced spending controls and additional cost savings are being identified across the council.
- Delivery of the requirements under the new Procurement Act which comes into force from October 2024. Due to the scale and impact cross-council, this work is now being managed as part of the Corporate Improvement programme.
- Delivery of affordable homes in line with forecast is at risk following challenges securing registered providers of social housing. Alternative providers are being sought.

6 Advice Received from Statutory and Other Officers

Legal Advice

6.1 There are no specific legal implications relevant to this report.

Financial Advice

6.2 There are no specific finance implications relevant to this report. Key budget information is included in section two in Annex A.

Other Consultation Responses

6.3 None specific.

Equalities Impact Assessment

6.4 This report does not require an equalities impact assessment as this is a management reporting tool.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

6.5 There are no specific strategic risk implications relevant to this report.

Climate Change and Ecological Implications

6.6 The recommendations in section two above are expected to have no impact on emissions of CO₂ or ecological considerations. The reasons the Council believes that this will have no impact are that this is a management reporting tool.

Health & Wellbeing Considerations

6.7 There are no specific health and wellbeing implications relevant to this report.

Background Papers

[All performance reports \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Contact for further information

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Annex A – Council Plan Overview Report

[Attached as a separate document]

Annex B – Overview and Scrutiny Commission review

Date of Overview and Scrutiny Commission

29 August 2024

Having reviewed the report, the Commission did not make any recommendations to the Executive but did make the following observations:

- **Page 51, 1.13 KR -Percentage of children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) (5-16 years) with school placement in borough**
It was queried if the percentage of children with a placement at 69%, rather than the target 75% was an improving trajectory? Commissioners were informed the number was unlikely to deteriorate as the majority of children had already been allocated a school place in September.
- **Page 52, 1.1.3 PI – Number of visits to the Lookout Discovery Centre**
Commissioners were concerned the number of visitors to the Centre appeared to be decreasing but were reassured it was an accounting issue as the figures did not include tickets bought by large groups. Reassurance was given the site was well used and the budget remained static in terms of income.
- **Page 52, 1.2.1.KR – Percentage of care leavers (19-21 years) Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)**
Concerns were raised that SILVA Homes were no longer providing apprenticeship places and, if this was the case, the negative impact it would have on NEET care leavers. The Chief Executive agreed to look into this matter and would have discussions with housing provider, Abri, and the Local Enterprise Partnership, to ensure alternative opportunities were sought.
- **Page 53, 1.6.1.KR – Additional affordable homes completed (affordable rented and shared ownership)**
It was noted the Registered Provider market was not taking up some of the sites the council had secured through planning. The impact of this was the council had to take commuted sums which impacted on the figures. Officers were talking to existing and new providers to request they take on new builds. One issue was that flatted developments required two staircases since the Grenfell disaster, so some registered providers were not keen to take on builds without two staircases in

place. It was considered an issue affecting a number of Councils and would need to be addressed by national government.

An additional question was raised in relation to the above item about the cost of keeping families in temporary accommodation because sufficient affordable housing was not available, and if that had been factored into the budget? Figures were not available about the impact on temporary accommodation if the Council was unable to find affordable housing for families although numbers on the waiting list were available. It was agreed officers would provide a written answer on that specific point.

- **Page 53 ECN 2.03 – Implementation of a meanwhile use on the previous Bentalls site**

Commissioners queried if there was a time period for how long the project would be halted and were informed there were no immediate plans but that the council was still talking to the developers.

- **Page 55, ENV 1.08 - Review approach to climate change, social value, funding routes and holistic policy**

It was queried why the RAG status was amber? Commissioners were informed the policy had only been introduced in April so the policy had just not been used much.

- **Page 58 ORG 2.07 – Ensure spending is within approved budget, monitored through monthly reporting to DMTs/CMTs**

Commissioners asked how concerned they should be about budget pressures and the Chief Executive stated all councils were feeling significant budget pressures currently and that pressures could not be easily mitigated. However, the council would remain solution focused. For example, CMT had strong control over recruitment and continuously reviewed risks and challenges to make in year decisions. Commissioners also queried if national Government had approached the council about reducing the Berkshire authorities down from six, but the Chief Executive confirmed no such approach had been made.