

Resources  
222 Upper Street, N1 1XR

Report of: Dave Hodgkinson, Corporate Director of Resources

Meeting of: Corporate Resources and Economy Scrutiny Committee

Date: 5 November 2024

Ward(s): N/A

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## Corporate Performance update: Q1 2023/24 (April – June 2024)

### 1. Synopsis

- 1.1. This report presents the performance update for Q1 2024/25 for note and discussion. It comprises:
  - 1) Corporate Performance update for Corporate Resources in section (4) of this report with key performance messages around successes and challenges.
  - 2) Appendix 1: Q1 scorecard of corporate performance metrics for Corporate Resources
  - 3) Appendix 2: Q1 update on progress and performance against the Delivery Plan (all missions), for information.
- 1.2. The Committee is invited to review the Q1 2024/25 update in this note, drawing on the scorecard in Appendix 1 for more detail, for question and challenge at the committee meeting.

### 2. Background

- 2.1. Islington Council adopted the Islington Together Delivery Plan 2024-26 as a corporate plan, setting out the Council's corporate priorities for the next two years. As the role of corporate performance is to evaluate and monitor progress towards achieving corporate goals and priorities, performance reporting has shifted to report against the Delivery Plan.

- 2.2. Following a couple of meetings of a small working group of Committee members (Cllrs Khondoker, Hyde, Jegorovas-Armstrong and Wayne) and officers, it was agreed that the Q1 update to CR&E scrutiny committee focus on the performance of Corporate Resources (budget management, workforce, Digital Services, Information Governance).
- 2.3. The council has in place a suite of corporate performance indicators to track the difference that the Council's five missions are making and its Organisational Health. Indicators and targets are regularly reviewed to ensure they remain relevant. Corporate performance is one of several tools that enables the Council to ensure that it is making progress in delivering Council priorities while maintaining good quality services.
- 2.4. Performance is monitored internally and externally, through Departmental Management Teams, Corporate Management Board, Joint Board, Executive and the Scrutiny Committees. According to its remit, Corporate Resources & Economy Scrutiny Committee monitors Organisational Health (Corporate Resources), Community Wealth Building (management of council assets, New Build programme, local economy, and community financial resilience) and the work of the Communities, Strategy and Change directorate (resident engagement, complaints performance, resident satisfaction, communications and equalities). Performance for other service areas is reported separately to the relevant scrutiny committees:
- Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
  - Environment, Climate and Transport Scrutiny Committee
  - Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee
  - Homes and Communities Scrutiny committee.

### 3. Recommendations

- 3.1. To review and challenge Corporate Resources performance for Q1 2024/25.

## 4. Corporate Resources Key Performance Messages

### **A balanced and sustainable budget**

- 4.1. We are managing the approved **General Fund budget** well for the start of the year. **Gross directorate overspend** stands at **+£9.8m at Q1** and this is offset by a £5m underspend on corporate budgets relating to interest payable and investment income, use of the £3.6m Inflation, Energy and Demand contingency budget and application of £0.6m corporate provision for the revenue impact of capital projects. This gives an **overall net overspend of +£0.6m at Q1**.
- 4.2. On **savings** (a new metric for 2024/25), **71% (£7.643m)** of the target savings for the year is **forecast to be delivered** in full in 2024/25. 2% (£0.253m) is forecast to

be undelivered but will be offset by other management actions and favourable budget variances. **27% (£2.874m) is forecast to be undelivered** in 2024/25. The impact of these on the future year budget will be assessed to distinguish between savings that are delayed and those that are undeliverable and to identify offsetting management actions.

### **A high performing workforce**

- 4.3. **Sickness absence** continues to improve with 8 days absence in Q1 per employee. This compares to an average of 8.1 days in 2023/24, an average of 8.6 days in 2022/23 and an average of 9.27 days for London Councils in 2022/23. This is due to a reduction in both short and longer term (+20 days) sickness absence.
- 4.4. Percentage of the workforce who are **agency staff** (by FTE) remains high at the beginning of 2024/25 and an area of focus for improvement. The percentage of the workforce who are agency (by FTE) for Q1 is 16.96%, slightly lower than the Q4 figure for 2023/24 at 17% due to the decrease in replacements in the first quarter. London Councils benchmark for 2022/23 is 15%. Campaigns are planned for Q2 in high agency usage areas such as Adult and Children's Social Care and Housing and Neighbourhoods to fill current recruitment gaps and convert existing agency workers to reduce the FTE during the year.

### **Digital Services**

- 4.5. The number of **significant outages** (P1s) is stable and there were fewer in Q1 (12) than the average in 2023/24 (14).
- 4.6. 97% of active **projects** are on track (green or amber).

### **Open and Accountable (Information Governance)**

- 4.7. **Freedom of Information** (FOI) performance is the best to date, with 97% completed within target time in Q1, despite a relatively high number received. Performance is now above the required ICO standard of 90%. This is down to the actions put in place by the council's Information Governance team to improve performance, principally the centralisation of the team.
- 4.8. Although the **SARs** completion rate target (90%) was not reached, it achieved higher in Q1 (73%) than Q1 last year. The team continues to struggle with both the volume and complexity of requests and are working through high caseloads at pace. Although the number of requests for historic social care files is slightly lower than the same period last year, all other areas have seen an increase. Specialist redaction software was purchased in July and the team is currently testing this with the hope that it's fully in use by September. This software automates much of the process with built in data dictionaries meaning the process of finding and removing information is easier.

## 5. Implications

### 5.1. Financial Implications

- The cost of providing resources to monitor performance is met within each service's core budget.

### 5.2. Legal Implications

- There are no legal duties upon local authorities to set targets or monitor performance. However, these enable us to strive for continuous improvement.

### 5.3. Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030

- There are no environmental impacts arising from monitoring performance. Corporate performance helps the Council to monitor its progress in delivering its environmental objectives.

### 5.4. Equalities Impact Assessment

- The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.
- An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required in relation to this report. Corporate Performance aims to support these duties by monitoring inequalities to enable the Council to improve performance.

## 6. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

- 6.1. The Q1 2024/25 Corporate Performance update for Corporate Resources sets out progress against the council's strategic priorities as measured by a suite of corporate objectives and indicators. The Committee is asked to review the update and note and challenge specific performance of the Resources directorate.

### Appendices:

- Appendix 1: Q1 scorecard of corporate performance metrics for Corporate Resources (Organisational Health)
- Appendix 2: Q1 update on progress and performance against all the Delivery Plan (all missions), for information.

**Final report clearance:**

Signed by:

**Dave Hodgkinson, Corporate Director of Resources**

Date: 22 October 2024

Report Author: Joanna Dawes, Corporate Performance Manager

Email: [Joanna.Dawes@Islington.gov.uk](mailto:Joanna.Dawes@Islington.gov.uk)