

Corporate Overview of Performance: Q2 (July – Sep) 2023-24

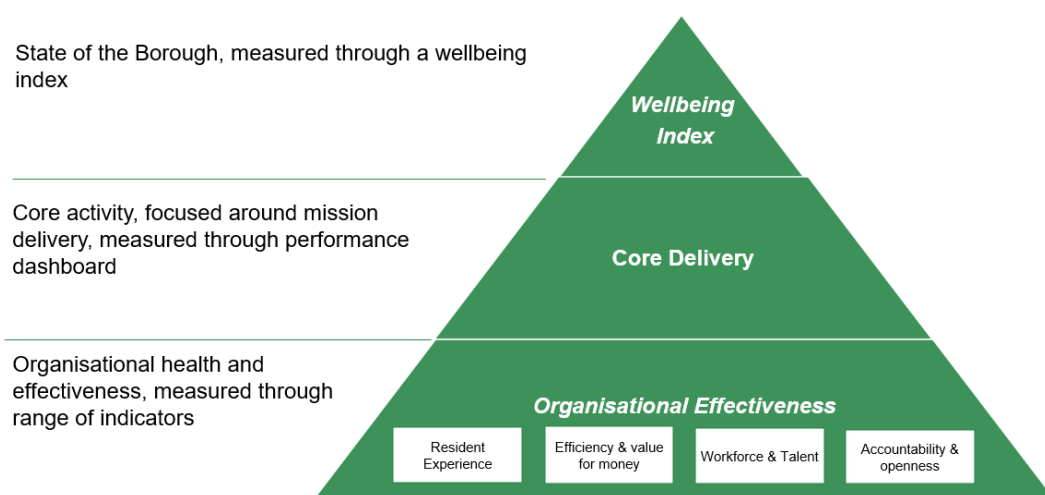
Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Corporate Overview	1
2.1. Progress on delivering our missions	1
2.2. Key themes of challenges for Q2 2023/24	5
2.3. The external view	9

1. Introduction

As outlined in Q1, we seeking to monitor progress on delivering the 2030 Plan through an ‘impact framework’. This will connect population-level outcomes (the Wellbeing Index), service activity outcomes and outputs (corporate performance) and ‘organisational health’:

Impact Framework: Quantitative Indicators



2. Corporate Overview

The corporate overview first provides a summary of the extent to which we are delivering against our missions and programmes, followed by themes of challenges and an ‘external view’ for Q2.

2.1. Progress on delivering our missions

This section summarises how on track the council is on delivering against our missions and programmes. Each programme is RAGged based on the indicators under that programme and areas of challenge and risk are highlighted for each programme.

CHILD-FRIENDLY ISLINGTON

	<p>Making Islington a child-friendly place to live and grow (Children & Young People, Environment & Climate Change, Public Health) This programme is in development and there are not yet measures for an update.</p>
	<p>Resilient children and families (Children & Young People) Of the 12 measures, 8 are green, 1 is amber, 3 are red (% of children who became subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time; engagement rates at adventure playgrounds; and % of repeat young offenders). The main concern is around children who became a repeat subject of a Child Protection Plan: there were 14 of these (5 families), 44% of the total number of new CP plans in Q2.</p>
	<p>Lifelong learning skills and enrichment (Children & Young People) Of the 14 indicators available, 1 is green, 3 are amber, 4 are red. Challenges exist around persistent absence and suspensions. The greatest concern and focus going forward is persistent absence and the stretch target to meet inner London benchmark.</p>
	<p>Progressing well to adulthood, independent and fulfilled lives (Children & Young People) One annual measure of success, which is not updated this quarter.</p>

SAFE PLACE TO CALL HOME

	<p>Building new homes (Community Wealth Building) A new programme of home building starts this year so no new builds will start on site this year. However, four new build projects will be completing in Q3 and Q4 delivering 69 new social rent homes and 11 supported housing units. The delivery context has become increasingly challenging with the rising cost of borrowing and construction costs and a slowdown in the private housing market, impacting the cost and viability of council house building schemes. A paper goes to Executive in February with the strategy for the delivery of this next phase and how the manifesto target will be met.</p>
	<p>Prevent rough sleeping (Homes & Neighbourhoods) Of the 5 measures, 3 are red (homeless decisions within target time; number of homeless preventions and rough sleepers) and 2 are not ragged. Challenges exist around the continued increase in homelessness presentations impacting homeless decisions within target time, homeless preventions and the numbers rough sleeping. The Council has secured £102m in capital funding to provide more temporary accommodation and has significantly fewer people in temporary accommodation (10.4 per 1,000) compared to London March 2023 figure (16.5 per 1,000).</p>
	<p>Ensuring trusted landlord services (Homes & Neighbourhoods) Of 14 measures, 1 is red (lettings provided to tenants transferring to alternative accommodation), 1 is amber, 1 is green and 11 are not ragged. The service continues to focus on under occupiers to release larger properties for households that need them and encouraging uptake of the mutual exchange, but challenges are posed by a focus on reducing the use of nightly paid temporary accommodation and reducing number of social housing properties available to let. The volume of damp and mould work continues</p>

	to be a key challenge and focus in Q2 and the number of inspections in Q2 this year is more than double this time last year.
	<p>Making our communities safer <i>(Homes & Neighbourhoods, Children & Young People, Adult Social Care)</i></p> <p>Of the six quarterly measures, 1 is red (proportion of section 42 safeguarding enquiries where a risk was identified and the reported outcome was that this risk was reduced or removed), 2 are amber and 3 are not ragged.</p> <p>Challenges exist around meeting safeguarding goals and improving data quality.</p>

COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING

	<p>Economic wellbeing <i>(Community Wealth Building)</i></p> <p>Of the 22 measures reported for this quarter, 7 are green, 5 are amber, 8 are red (number of London Living Wage entry level jobs delivered, number of employees achieving London Living Wage accreditation, number of apprenticeships supported and the 3 target groups; Childcare Bursary uptake and the 2 target groups), 2 are not ragged.</p> <p>Improvement actions are underway for each of the red areas, including improvements on data collection with partners; adjusting support offered to parents/carers; and, addressing cost barriers for LLW accreditation for smaller businesses. Following finalisation of the Apprenticeship Strategy, a planned recruitment in Q4 will improve performance on internal apprentices, along with increased engagement with external partners, primarily Capital City College Group. There continues to be strong performance on employment secured for Islington residents, reflecting the commitment and challenging work of the Islington Working Partnership, the Islington Anchor Institutions' Network and council contractors.</p>
	<p>Inclusive economy <i>(Community Wealth Building)</i></p> <p>Of the 7 measures, 5 are green, 1 is amber, and 1 is not ragged.</p> <p>This measure includes performance of our affordable workspaces where we derive social value from our operators. Performance is strong, particularly in relation to supporting entrepreneurs from under-represented backgrounds through mentoring programmes and business incubation.</p> <p>This measure includes performance of our affordable workspaces where we derive social value from our operators. Performance is strong, particularly in relation to supporting entrepreneurs from under-represented backgrounds through mentoring programmes and business incubation.</p>
	<p>Progressive procurement <i>(Community Wealth Building)</i></p> <p>Two annual indicators measure progress on this programme, which are not updated for this quarter.</p> <p>We are continuing to work on increasing our corporate expenditure with local businesses and have recently launched a new directory to promote local businesses in the construction industry and planning to roll this model out to other sectors. This is a useful tool as we deepen the work with Islington Anchor Institutions' Network on procurement. We are also currently procuring and implementing a new Contracts Register database which will improve our ability to collate and analyse spend data.</p>
	<p>Social and economic infrastructure <i>(Community Wealth Building)</i></p> <p>Of the five measures, 3 are green and 2 are not ragged.</p> <p>These measures relate to our planning application processes which continues to perform well. Most notably in Q2, the new Local Plan was adopted following rigorous examination by</p>

the Inspectorate. This is a strong basis upon which to deliver the council objectives and all its missions, including a healthier, greener Islington.

GREENER, HEALTHIER ISLINGTON

	<p>Delivering net zero carbon (Environment & Climate Change)</p> <p>Of the four measures, 1 is green, 2 are amber, 1 is red (net new council-owned trees) and 1 is not ragged.</p> <p>Challenges could emerge around the carbon emissions from the council's fleet vehicles as they are similar to the same period last year and so falling behind target. This is due to the increase in vehicle numbers, mainly in housing repair leased vehicles, offsetting improvements from the electrification of the fleet.</p>
	<p>Cleaner Islington (Environment & Climate Change)</p> <p>Of 8 measures, 4 are green, 3 are amber, and 1 is not ragged.</p> <p>The previous challenge around recycling improved for Q1 on Q4 (reported a quarter in arrears). However, there is currently a 9% shortfall in the corresponding waste reduction indicator (residual waste per household) figure, although this is likely to still be top London quartile.</p>
	<p>Safer and easier travel (Environment & Climate Change)</p> <p>Of 2 measures reported, 1 is green, 1 is amber.</p> <p>There is a risk of being unable to deliver the last 100 secure cycle parking facilities on streets by end of the FY due to staff vacancies (have delivered 500 so far this year).</p>
	<p>Healthier Islington (Environment & Climate Change, Public Health, Adult Social Care)</p> <p>Of the 25 measures, 21 are green, 2 are amber and 2 are not ragged.</p> <p>Leisure visits are 9% down on target, as impact of the August 22 Sobell flood continues. The reablement service still faces challenges, one of which is creating consistent demand to maximise efficiency of delivery.</p>

FAIRER TOGETHER

	<p>Empowering strong and supportive communities (Community Engagement & Wellbeing)</p> <p>Of the five measures, 5 are green.</p>
	<p>Delivering high quality joined-up early intervention and prevention services (Community Engagement and Wellbeing)</p> <p>Of two measures, 2 are green.</p>

ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH

	<p>Manage our budget effectively and efficiently (Resources)</p> <p>Of the seven measures, 2 are green, 2 are amber, 1 is red (management of the general fund budget) and 2 are not ragged.</p> <p>Significant and increasing gross overspend of £17.7m before applying (on a one-off basis) c£12m of contingencies, to bring the net overspend down to £5.8m. Likely that a significant</p>
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	portion of the gross overspend is ongoing in nature and will need to be considered for inclusion in the 2024/25 MTFS/budget position.
	<p>Harness digital technology for the benefit of the resident (Resources)</p> <p>Of two measures, 1 is green and 1 is red (number of incidents which affect more than 100 staff or residents or significantly impairs applications or access).</p> <p>As with last quarter most outage incidents were caused by hosted platforms and infrastructure. We continue to work with our suppliers to review and understand their SLA's for dealing with outages. 4 P1s in Q2 related to a repeating problem with printing.</p>
	<p>Make sure our workforce is diverse, skilled and highly motivated (Resources)</p> <p>Of six measures, 3 are green, 1 is red (% of workforce who are agency staff) and 2 are not ragged.</p> <p>Sickness absence reduced in Q2, for the first time in an extended period, to be better than the new target of London Councils' average. Agency usage dropped in Q2 after a prolonged period of continual increase. While it continues to be lower than the London Average, it remains above target.</p>
	<p>Be open and accountable (Resources)</p> <p>Of five measures, 1 is amber, 1 is red (percentage of SARs completed within target) and 3 are not ragged.</p> <p>The % of SARs completed within target is still significantly below target but has improved on previous quarter and is higher than last year's average figure.</p>
	<p>Improving the resident experience (Community Engagement and Wellbeing)</p> <p>One measure, which is green. That said, there are a number of growing and considerable challenges around complaints, which are set to continue. We continue to work on improving processes and learn lessons from complaints to ensure joined up responses, where needed</p>

2.2.Key themes of challenges for Q2 2023/24

As presented in previous quarters, this section attempts to draw out common themes of challenge shared by services in Q2 in a broadly decreasing order of complexity. Please refer to the more detailed narratives in Section 3 for more information for each service. The point of this section is to enable consideration of similar types of challenges collectively as a council in order to more efficiently identify approaches to more impactful improvement.

1. Ongoing growth in pressures on council resources

There are a number of areas for the council – namely **finance, housing, information governance and complaints** and this quarter **adult social care** and **flyposting** – where performance is compromised by a continual growth in demand. Interdependencies exist between these areas that drive knock on effects or further sustain impact, as seen with for example housing, finance and complaints pressures. A clear foreseeable end to the factors driving the increasing pressures does not exist and mechanisms are not in place to limit or counterbalance the demand. This is not altogether an Islington-specific challenge, with national trends also involved. Improvements are likely to require fundamental system change.

Our finance measures show us to be in a stable position for the time of year considering the current financial context, however **financial pressures continue** and pose particular risks for our levels of

reserves. The net **overspend** reduced in Q2 to £5.8m, down from £7.2m in Q1. It is likely that a significant portion of the gross overspend is ongoing in nature and will need to be considered for inclusion in the 2024/25 MTFS/budget position.

Building new homes has become increasingly challenging, with a range of changes negatively impacting the cost and viability of council house building schemes to a significant degree: Interest rates have more than doubled, significantly impacting the cost of borrowing; high levels of inflation, particularly in relation to construction costs (although the cost of construction materials is stabilising, albeit at very high levels for certain materials) have coupled with a slowdown in the private housing market; and the introduction of more stringent and costly fire safety regulations.

There continues to be an **increase in homelessness presentations** and temporary accommodation nationally. In Islington, we believe this is due to a combination of domestic abuse, an increase in Section 21 notices, the cost-of-living crisis and properties being in disrepair (damp/ mould/ condensation). The focus on reducing the use of costly nightly paid temporary accommodation and increasing lettings to statutory homeless households, coupled with the overall **yearly reduction in the number of social housing properties available to let** means that **lettings to transferring tenants** is challenged. The **quality of homes including volume of damp and mould work continues to be a challenge**, which is an area directly within our responsibility.

Pressure in adult social care in Q2 included **limited bed capacity** for people requiring a residential setting (Adult Social Care). For **hospitals**, the data highlights that demand is increasing and more work is needed to understand the factors that are influencing the **delays** of Islington residents in hospital. One of the key challenges for **reablement** is creating consistent demand to maximise efficiency of delivery.

Complaints: A continued **growth in stage 1 complaints** received in the year so far (an increase of 21% on the first half of last year), the percentage upheld remains fairly stable at 55%. Housing continues to represent most (78%) of these. A significant **increase in the rate of stage 1 complaints escalated** to stage 2 (24% for the first half of the year compared to 9% for the same period last year). A significant **increase in Ombudsman cases received and decisions** received. Four times more cases were initiated in the first half of 2023/24 (97) than 22/23 (23). A significant **increase in the number of maladministration decisions** (44 this year compared to 2 in the same period last year), 70% of which were from the Housing Ombudsman, indicating a lower rate of maladministration decisions relative to the number of investigations for housing complaints. The growth in Ombudsman investigations is largely due to the Housing Ombudsman tackling its own backlog, as well as our complainants escalating their complaints to the Ombudsman during our stage 2 backlog period. **Ombudsman** decisions relate to **issues** known during this time: **delays in complaint responses, non-compliance to the Housing Ombudsman Code Dec 2020, increase in cases of damp and mould and ASB**. Recurring **themes** include: **poor communication, record keeping, complaint handling, following council procedure in respect to ASB and repairs**. Improvements have followed the allocation additional resources to complaints handling. The increase in ombudsman activity and upheld decisions are expected throughout 2023/24 and into Q1 of 2024/25. we continue to work on improving processes and learn lessons from complaints to ensure joined up responses, where needed.

Levels of **flyposting** are up significantly on last year due to a significant summer spate of posters advertising protests and music/dance events, placing extra demand street sweepers and enforcement by the compliance team.

An ongoing challenge exists of managing significant and unpredictable volumes of **FOIs** (Freedom of Information requests) and **SARs** (Subject Access requests), and an increase in FOIs was received in Q2 compared to Q1. That said, performance for managing these improved in Q2 on Q1.

2. Challenge of growing complexity in need

Some council services are experiencing performance trends which suggest challenges for particular groups of residents which in turn challenge responses by services, including those of partners.

These challenges can lack clarity over what is causing the problem exactly or what action is needed and can appear 'stuck' with little shift seen over time. While they are presented as singular issues, they are likely to be inter-related with other issues. Improvement in these areas is likely to require a deep understanding of the influencing factors and while these factors are likely to be complex, improvements may not require fundamental system change.

While children looked after has successfully reduced, **children who became subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time** percentage continues to be high. Of 32 children (from 21 families) newly supported by a child protection plan, 14 (44%) (from 5 families) were repeat child protection plans in Q2. Most plans so far this year have been repeated after a gap of 3 to 4 years.

Persistent absence: Absences are rising and while illness is the main reason given in Islington, factors driving this remain speculative but are likely to include increased anxiety, lack of mental health support, school budget pressures, unmet SEND, 'can't we just do it on-line?', changes in parental working schedules (leading to Friday 'awaydays'). Others suggest more fundamental factors evident pre-pandemic: a breakdown in trust between parents and schools, increasing unhappiness with the narrow academic curricula schools are measured by; increased academic pressure to catch up, plus the feeling that enjoyable activities such as sport or music were being squeezed out of the curriculum, fostering disengagement.

Key Stage 4 Attainment 8: 7 of 10 schools had disadvantaged students making less progress than expected. Of these, 3 of those schools saw disadvantaged students achieving more than half a grade lower than predicted across their GCSE outcomes. 6 of 10 schools had middle band students on entry making less progress than expected. All figures are provisional, to be finalised for Q3.

3. Challenge in delivering at scale and engagement

A number of areas are challenged to deliver to the extent planned, as performance is reliant on others, or limitations exist in our staffing capacity. The **waste reduction** measure (residual waste per household) is currently projected to be 9% over the target and is dependent on the engagement of residents to improve. The **Sobell flood** continues to affect **leisure visits**, which are 9% down. The number of **London Living Wage entry level jobs** delivered through the Islington Working Partnership is below target, with 242 LLW job outcomes in the first six months of 2022/2023, with some way to go to the annual target of 900. And ongoing challenges exist with delivering the **cultural programme 11 by 11** as schools' stretched capacity is leading to many last-minute cancellations which causes issues for our cultural partners.

4. Challenge of conflicting priorities and policies

A few areas of performance are affected by conflicting priorities either of policies across the council, between council and national policy or between our policy and resident positions. The amount allocated through our **Childcare Bursary scheme** continues to be well below target largely due to recent changes to payment of childcare support through Universal Credit. **Carbon emissions from the council's fleet vehicles** in the year to date are projected to fall behind target by 28% due to the increase in vehicle numbers, mainly in housing repair leased vehicles, which are effectively offsetting the improvements from the electrification of the fleet. An area of ambition for the council that can conflict with motorists' interests: further analysis of the 2022 Islington **Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) road casualty data** (111 for 2022/23) shows a return to the 2019 level after reductions during the covid years. In absolute terms, cyclists are at greatest risk of death and injury, followed by pedestrians, and borough roads are more dangerous than TLRN. Numbers KSI were 96 in 2021, 84 in 2020 (both lockdown years), 111 in 2019 and 141 in 2018. The 111 breaks down 34 pedestrians, 46 cyclists, 21 motorbike/moped rider or pillion passengers, 6 car occupants and 4 other. Fifty were on the TLRN (TfL road network) with one fatality, and the remaining 61 were on borough roads, also with one fatality. Comparing our data with that from Hackney and Camden, Islington had the lowest number of total killed or seriously injured casualties in all of the last four years, despite being the most densely populated of the three. There has also been challenging with communication and managing the decision around the **Sobell ice rink**, as this has not aligned with many residents' views.

5. Staffing challenges

A key staffing challenge remains the percentage of the FTE workforce who are **agency staff**, although this reduced slightly in Q2 (by just over 1%) from Q1 and remains lower than the London Councils' average. However, while FTE headcount reduced, number of agency hours submitted increased by just over 4% in Q2 from Q1 and spend increased on Q1 by just over 5%. Several service areas raised specific staffing challenges, including **Adult Social Care** mentioning that **holidays and industrial actions** within the health service influenced performance in hospitals during Q2. A key challenge in the **substance misuse service** Better Lives, in Q1 was recruiting to new roles within the service, and the staffing requirements needed to create service capacity and a specific offer for the non-opiate cohort. Environment & Climate Change also raised staff challenges, with **resident SHINE referrals** at the end of Q2 lagging the profiled target by 24% mainly due to a temporary 30% reduction in team capacity caused by sickness, staff leaving and the training of new starters. And the delivery of a further 100 **secure cycle parking facilities on streets** by end of March 24 is considered a risk due to the impact of staff vacancies. **Libraries** and **Access Islington** were challenged in Q2 in providing training while maintaining services.

6. Data quality challenges

Several service areas raised challenges for Q2 around the ability to collect quality data around performance, including statutory areas of data collection. The council is required to monitor and submit the rate of **ASB** as a Tenant satisfaction measure in March 2024. However, **data quality and data entry challenges** mean that the council does not have an accurate figure, although an improvement plan is in place.

Data for **safeguarding performance** comes from both Adult Social Care and the Mental Health Trust, which was subject to the **national cyber hack** last year. Reporting has improved, but there are ongoing challenges with **validations and data quality** in Q2. A new **statutory return** in adult social care, The Client Level Dataset, has new data capture requirements and data quality monitoring and

some areas will be challenging to capture such as accommodation and employment status for all people being supported. A data quality strategy and action plan are in development to support teams to improve recording and drive improvements and a data quality officer will be recruited to ensure Islington is compliant with statutory requirements.

The number of **LLW entry level jobs** delivered through the Islington Working Partnership is below target, although this is partly a **data collection** issue with **partners**, some of whom are not recording this information. The number of **apprenticeship** starts – both internal and external – is also below target (57 starts in the first six months of the year, with an annual target of 200), partly due to **no data received** this quarter from City & Islington College who have consistently performed strongly around apprenticeships. Discussions are ongoing in relation to improving the quality of data from external partners.

The Q2 **missed refuse and recycling collections** data is considered **unreliable** and issues in the reporting process have been identified. This corporate indicator will be reported as soon as the issues have been resolved and we have confidence in the monthly outturns.

2.3. The external view

Significant **media coverage** and issues in Q2 included:

- **New council homes and housing** – front page article in the [Independent](#) on the low rate of building new homes by councils in Britain, however, Islington was featured for completing the second highest number of council homes in 2022, and the highest for social rent. Strong local media coverage ([Islington Gazette](#), Islington Tribune, Local Democracy Reporting Service) and social media interest in the council’s plan to buy back 100 ex-council homes.
- **Community safety** – extensive national coverage in July of the [killings of 15-year-old Leonardo Reid and 23-year-old Shekaj Klevi](#) in Elthorne Road; and [the killing of Yahye Ahmed, 23](#), in Axminster Road in August.
- **Reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC)** – extensive media interest in August and September about RAAC in schools and other public buildings; 13 inquiries to LBI including BBC, ITV and local media. [Statement issued to local media](#) following discovery of RAAC in one school (St Aloysius).

Resident View: Complaints

Housing continues to represent most (78%) stage 1 complaints with the top three complaints areas: responsive repairs, ASB and targeted tenancy services.

Ombudsman decisions related to the following issues: delays in complaint responses, non-compliance to the Housing Ombudsman Code Dec 2020, increase in cases of damp and mould and ASB. Recurring themes include poor communication, record keeping, complaint handling, and following council procedure in respect to ASB and repairs.