



**NORWICH**  
City Council

**Committee Name: Cabinet**

**Committee Date: 12/07/2023**

**Report Title: Q4 2022/23 Assurance Report**

**Portfolio:** Councillor Stonard, Leader of the council

**Report from:** Executive director of community services

**Wards:** All Wards

**OPEN PUBLIC ITEM**

### **Purpose**

To report progress against the delivery of the corporate plan priorities and key performance indicators and to provide an update on corporate risks for quarter 4 of 2022/23.

### **Recommendations:**

It is recommended that cabinet review progress on the key performance indicators for this quarter and the corporate risk register.

### **Policy Framework**

The Council has five corporate aims, which are:

- People live independently and well in a diverse and safe city.
- Norwich is a sustainable and healthy city.
- Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city.
- The city has an inclusive economy in which residents have equal opportunity to flourish.
- Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city.

This report meets the Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city corporate aim.

## **Report Details**

1. The corporate plan 2022-26 established five corporate aims:
  - People live independently and well in a diverse and safe city
  - Norwich is a sustainable and healthy city
  - Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city
  - The city has an inclusive economy in which residents have equal opportunity to flourish
  - Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city.
2. The performance framework aims to measure progress against these aims through key performance indicators (KPIs) which monitor delivery of activities and services which contribute to these objectives.
3. Performance reporting for indicators in this report is based around a traffic light concept where green is on or above target, amber provides an early warning for possible intervention and red suggests intervention is necessary. White indicates that we are currently not reporting on a KPI, and the reason will be indicated in the main report.
4. This report sets out progress against the KPIs that track delivery of the corporate plan priorities. This is the fourth quarterly performance report for year one of the Corporate Plan 2022-2026. It also provides an overview of the key corporate risks.
5. The report appendices give further information across corporate performance, and risk. Relevant annexes have been provided and are referred to throughout the report.
6. The quarterly assurance reports would usually include the quarterly financial performance updates. At its meeting on 14 June 2023, Cabinet considered the revenue outturn for 2022/23. This report should be seen in the context of the revenue outturn report; however the financial performance information has not been repeated here.

## **Consultation**

7. No consultation was required in creating this report.

## **Implications**

## **Financial and Resources**

8. Any decision to reduce or increase resources or alternatively, increase income must be made within the context of the council's stated priorities, as set out in its Corporate Plan 2022-26 and Budget.

## **Legal**

9. In considering its financial and non-financial performance, the Cabinet is supporting the Council to fulfil its duties under s.151 of the Local Government Act 1972 to ensure there are arrangements in place for the proper administration of its financial affairs, and under

s.3 of the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

## Statutory Considerations

Consideration	Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:
Equality and Diversity	This report does not have direct implications for equality and diversity; it reports on progress made in delivering agreed services and programmes, the equality implications of which will have been considered as part of service planning or other decision-making processes.
Health, Social and Economic Impact	This report does not have direct health, social or economic implications; it provides an update on progress made in delivering agreed services and programmes, the implications of which will have been considered elsewhere.
Crime and Disorder	This report does not have direct implications for crime and disorder; it provides an update on progress made in delivering agreed services and programmes, the implications of which will have been considered elsewhere.
Children and Adults Safeguarding	This report does not have direct safeguarding implications; it provides an update on progress made in delivering agreed services and programmes, the implications of which will have been considered elsewhere.
Environmental Impact	This report does not have direct environmental implications; it provides an update on progress made in delivering agreed services and programmes, the implications of which will have been considered elsewhere.

## Risk Management

Risk	Consequence	Controls Required
Specific risk management activities and detailed consideration of the corporate risk register is included within the relevant section of this report.	Failure to manage risks appropriately could have financial reputational or other consequences	Risk owners are required to implement controls to mitigate risks and update these regularly.

## Other Options Considered

10. No alternative options.

## Background papers:

11. The report refers to additional documents throughout, supplying these as annexes within the relevant sections.

**Appendices:** Combined Assurance Report, Q4 2022/23

**Contact Officers:**

Helen Chamberlin, Head of Strategy, Engagement and Culture  
01603 989269  
[helenchamberlin@norwich.gov.uk](mailto:helenchamberlin@norwich.gov.uk)

Neville Murton, interim Head of Finance, Audit and Risk  
[Nevillemurton@norwich.gov.uk](mailto:Nevillemurton@norwich.gov.uk)

# Assurance Quarterly Report

Q4 2022/23

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## 1. Executive summary

### 1.1. Performance

At a corporate level, this quarter shows 13 green, four amber, seven red and one white indicator. The white indicator relates to KPI 17 *Area of underused council land brought back into productive use (m2)*. This is currently being monitored for a baseline. Two annual KPIs were not reported in this quarter.

Notable trends at the directorate level include:

**Community Services** continues to outperform in:

- *IT system availability as a percent of time available in core hours*
- *number of homeless households living in temporary accommodation*
- *the percentage of households owed a homelessness prevention duty*
- *the percentage of customers responding as satisfied with the customer contact team service.*

Areas under target include:

- The *average re-let time of council homes in calendar days (excluding major works)* remains under target. Commentary indicates that contractor's capacity is increasing which will result in a reduction to empty units throughout the year.
- The *number of private sector insulation measures completed* this quarter is 34. This figure is reflective of when the installation of insulation has been completed. Commentary indicates that more than 120 assessments have been completed and/or payments received by us prior to installation, with the actual insulation due to be fitted over the next two reporting periods. The nature of the funding landscape for this area of work produces 'peaky' quarterly KPI outcomes but we will see an overall increase annually. We only report on private sector insulations in which the Council is directly involved with.
- Improvements to KPI 11, the *% of people responding as feeling safe in a local area survey*, are being explored to improve response rates. Commentary indicates that during the last reporting period, only 93 (4%) of responses were received, resulting in statistically insignificant data. In March 2023, the Safer Norwich Strategy 2023-26 was adopted, and work is now underway to form a Safer Norwich Partnership which will seek to address the reasons why people feel unsafe in their neighbourhoods.

**Corporate and Commercial Services** continue to outperform in the *number of days taken to process new Housing Benefit applications*.

*Council tax and Business rates collection* have seen an improvement in performance, both moving from amber to green. Commentary indicates that performance in these areas has been aided by the cessation of a number of short-term grant schemes which has

freed up resources to focus on business-as-usual work along with a gradual return to recovering debts using a number of different methods of recovery.

**Development and City Services** continue to outperform in:

- *the number of planning decisions upheld after appeal*
- *the number of food premises rated 0, 1 or 2 moving to a compliant rating of 3, 4 or 5*
- *Council income from investment property portfolio.*

*The percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting remains amber. This is consistent with the previous reporting period.*

Performance overall for **Freedom of Information requests responded to on time** for Q4 has decreased to 91.40%, compared with 92.36% for Q3.

Community Services, and Development and City Services have seen slight improvements:

- Community Services 97.5% (Compared with 95% for Q3)
- Corporate and Commercial Services 92.6% (compared with 96% for Q3)
- Development and City Services 89.1% (compared with 88.4% for Q3)

Performance overall for **complaints requests responded to on time** for Q4 has improved overall to 66%, compared with 58% in Q3

- Community Services: 90% (compared with 82% for Q3)
- Corporate and Commercial Services: 90% (compared with 88% for Q3)
- Development and City Services: 61% (compared with 54% for Q3)

In line with the Corporate Plan for 2022-26, the current KPIs are now reported across five corporate aims. A table of all KPIs can be found appended to this report, and how they relate to each corporate aim can be found in the Technical Appendix of the Corporate Plan. Figures 1 and 1.1 below show the mix of KPIs and their current performance status by directorate and by corporate aim, respectively.

Figure 1: Q4 KPI performance by directorate

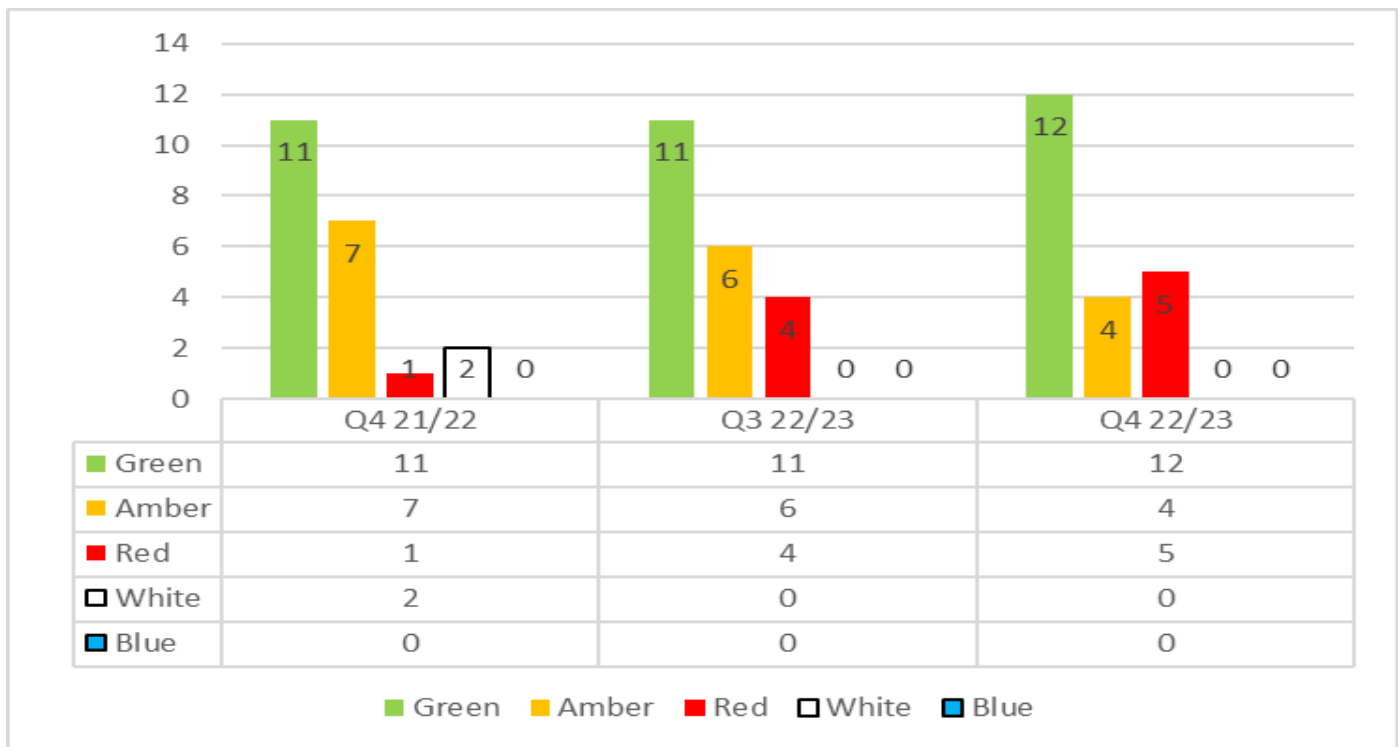
Directorate	Red	Amber	Green	Monitoring data	Not completed	No data this quarter	Total
Cross Cutting	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
Community Services	4	2	4	0	0	0	10
Corporate and Commercial Services	0	0	4	0	0	0	4
Development & City Services	2	2	4	1	0	0	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25</b>

Figure 1.1: Q4 KPI performance by corporate priority

Corporate aim	Red	Amber	Green	Monitoring data	Not completed	No data this quarter	Total
An inclusive economy in which residents have equal opportunity to flourish	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city	2	0	7	0	0	0	9
Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city	3	3	1	0	0	0	7
Norwich is a sustainable and healthy city	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
People live independently and well in a diverse, and safe city	1	0	4	0	0	0	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25</b>



Performance overall has decreased compared with Q4 2021/22. There has been some positive movement on the previous quarter for 2022/23 with an additional indicator moving into green, as shown in the table below:



*\*For comparison purposes, only quarterly indicators are included. White indicators are those where we were monitoring data before setting a target. Blue indicators are those where no data was recorded for the quarter.*

## 2.1 Risk

Heads of Service and other risk owners were asked to update their directorate and corporate registers in a timely manner. The current Corporate Risk Register summary is shown in the table below.

There are a number of risks which have been RAG rated as red indicating that specific consideration is needed to reduce the impact of the identified risk. These risks will continue to form part of directorate risk reviews.



Risk (inc reference)	Directorate	Q4 2022/23			Current direction	Date of Last Review
		Is risk exempt from publication?	Residual risk score	Target risk score		
CORP01 Council Funding Medium - Long Term	Exec Dir - Corporate & Commercial Services	N	12	8	Static	12/05/2023
CORP03 Health & safety in the workplace	Exec Dir - Development & City Services	N	12	8	Improving	01/06/2023
CORP06 Failure to respond to a critical, business continuity or emergency planning event	Chief Executive	N	12	6	Static	01/06/2023
CORP07 Cyber security	Exec Dir - Community Services	N	15	15	Static	17/04/2023
CORP08 Data Protection compliance	Exec Dir - Community Services	N	12	8	Static	17/04/2023
CORP09 Failure to fulfil statutory or legislative responsibilities - safeguarding	Exec Dir - Community Services	N	15	12	Static	31/05/2023
CORP12 Contract management - governance	HoS - Legal & Procurement	N	9	6	Static	06/04/2023



<b>CORP13 The Council's approach to waste and recycling becomes financially, environmentally and contractually unsustainable</b>	<b>Exec Dir - Development &amp; City Services</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Static</b>	<b>28/04/2023</b>
<b>CORP14 Health and safety and compliance in council homes and buildings</b>	<b>Exec Dir - Community Services</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Static</b>	<b>30/05/2023</b>
<b>CORP15 Failure to be able to draw down £15m of Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) money previously secured from Homes England (HE) and under contract to assist with the delivery of Anglia Square leading to failure for successful redevelopment of this key city centre site</b>	<b>Exec Dir - Development &amp; City Services</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Worsening</b>	<b>01/06/2023</b>
<b>CORP16 Implementation of the Election Act</b>	<b>Chief Executive</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Improving</b>	<b>06/04/2023</b>
<b>CORP17 Failure to deliver acceptable levels of performance in regulatory services</b>	<b>Exec Dir - Development &amp; City Services</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Improving</b>	<b>01/06/2023</b>
<b>CORP18 Failure to address Natural England advice on Nutrient Neutrality (NN)</b>	<b>Exec Dir - Development &amp; City Services</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>Improving</b>	<b>01/06/2023</b>
<b>CORP19 Housing regulation</b>	<b>Exec Dir - Community Services</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Improving</b>	<b>31/05/2023</b>



<b>CORP20 Cost of living (COL) crisis has a negative impact on the city and the council</b>	<b>Exec Dir - Community Services</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Static</b>	<b>18/05/2023</b>
<b>CORP21 Equality impacts due to climate change</b>	<b>Exec Dir - Community Services</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Static</b>	<b>18/05/2023</b>
<b>CORP23 Impact of economic downturn on key council suppliers</b>	<b>Exec Dir - Corporate &amp; Commercial Services</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Static</b>	<b>06/04/2023</b>

## Appendix A. Cross cutting KPIs

At a corporate level, there are two KPIs where performance is affected across all three directorates. These are:

- % of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests responded to within statutory timescales (reporting as green)
- % of corporate complaints responded to within stated timescales (reporting as red)

The below gives a view of Cross Cutting KPI performance across the past year:

Indicator	Q4 2021	Q1 2022	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022
▼ % of FOI requests responded to within statutory timescales	91.19	79.52	80.12	92.36	91.40
% of corporate complaints responded to within stated timescales	56.30	54.95	62.06	58.00	66.00

This quarter saw 163 FOI requests. This is comparable to the previous quarter (157) and the same quarter last year (159).

Our on-time FOI response performance is 91.4% which is above our KPI target.

The time to respond to complaints target was reduced from 15 to 10 days, effective from 1 October 2022. This has impacted on performance which remains below target however there is a positive direction of travel indicated as the new response time embeds. Weekly reports are being supplied and any delays are being actively investigated and actioned.

## Appendix B. Community Services

### B.1. Performance

#### B.1.1. Summary of performance

**Community Services** has 11 KPIs, 10 of which report quarterly and one annually in quarter two. For this quarter, the directorate reports four red, two amber and four green indicators.

The red indicators this quarter are:

- *‘Total number of private sector insulation measures completed’*. There have been 34 confirmed insulation measures completed via the Sustainable Warmth Competition funding (33) and the Solar Together Scheme (1). As part of the Sustainable Warmth Competition funding, there has also been over 50 assessments which should translate into installations within the next two reporting periods. There have also been 70 people pay for solar panels via the Solar Together scheme that have yet to receive installation; these will also fall within the next two reporting periods. With these combined, it’s likely that the April-June 2023 period will be significantly above the target figure. The nature of the funding landscape for this KPI produces ‘peaky’ quarterly KPI outcomes but with increasing annual outcomes. It’s also worth noting that this figure does not account for private sector insulations that the Council is not involved in. Similarly, this KPI and target was established to monitor the success of ECO3 funding, which has since ceased, and so is due to be reviewed and amended.
- *‘Average re-let time of council homes in calendar days (excluding major works)’*. As previously reported, the legacy of 147 void properties inherited from 2021/22 has resulted in significant void relet times. The capacity across the council to complete more units is increasing and this will result in further reductions in empty units with the aim to achieve a pre-pandemic level of around 0.5% of stock void as standard work in progress during the year.
- *‘% of customer contact that takes place through digital channels’*. At the beginning of 2022/23 the target and intervention rates were increased. A telephone automation pilot was launched in March 2023. The pilot automates some calls around council tax and benefits and we will assess its effectiveness over the reporting period, if successful this should help increase our percentage of contact through digital channels.
- *‘The % of people responding as feeling safe in a local area survey’*. The response rate to the survey for this quarter was 4% and therefore is not statistically significant. Improvements to this measure are being explored to improve response rates. In March 2023, the Safer Norwich Strategy 2023-26 was adopted, and work is now underway to form a Safer Norwich Partnership which will seek to address the reasons why people feel unsafe in their neighbourhoods.

The below gives a view of Community Services performance against its KPIs across the past year:

Indicator	Q4 2021	Q1 2022	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022
Total number of private sector insulation measures completed	70.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	34.00
Number of homeless households living in temporary accommodation	41.00	47.00	52.00	48.00	46.00
IT System availability expressed as a percent of time available during core hours	99.86	99.94	99.85	99.94	99.95
Average re-let time of council homes in calendar days (excluding major works)	55.00	35.00	49.00	95.00	101.00
% of people responding as feeling safe in local area survey	59.00	65.00	55.00	63.00	52.00
% of households owed a homelessness prevention duty (in accordance with the Homelessness Reduction Act) where the duty was ended due to suitable accommodation being secured for them	80.00	74.00	68.00	87.00	88.00
% of customer's responding as satisfied with customer contact team service	78.35	70.43	68.04	83.71	84.75
% of customer contact that takes place through digital channels	42.75	54.29	45.71	42.05	42.98
% of council housing rent collected (excluding arrears brought forward)	99.35	95.87	96.20	98.25	98.77
% of council homes with a valid gas safety certificate	99.82	99.87	99.82	99.92	99.99

The directorate's performance on FOI requests was 97.5% (up 2.6 percentage points since last quarter and up 7.8 percentage points on same quarter of previous year).

Community Services' performance in responding to corporate complaints within timescales reports at 90%.

### B.1.2. Successes and challenges

#### Successes

**Automation of phone enquires:** A pilot has been successfully implemented to automate some of our phone calls for council tax and benefits. The new service is being managed and monitored over a six-month pilot period to assess the effectiveness of the service delivery and impact on the contact team. If the service proves to be effective, then a business case will request the service be made permanent with the potential to expand automation of phone calls to other service areas.

**Homelessness Prevention:** The homelessness prevention team continues to deliver a highly effective service, despite the ongoing challenge of limited affordable housing options and the cost of living crisis. They prevented 88% of clients who presented to us as facing homelessness within 56 days, from becoming homeless, which is a huge achievement. Recent service improvements include the introduction of new processes to ensure more efficient case management, the introduction of a rent guarantee scheme and the use of specialist officers to assist ex-offenders and private sector tenants, helping us to provide positive outcomes for our customers.

**Action Plan for Culture:** Developed with input from key stakeholders as part of the Norwich Creative City Compact in early 2023 and launched in June 2023. The action plan commits the city council to a series of deliverables and actions that will support

the development of a Cultural Strategy for Norwich in 2025 and is aligned to the Norwich 2040 Vision. The document has both short-term and long-term aims and articulates the key areas of focus which other stakeholders can mobilise to contribute to the ecosystem of arts, culture and creativity in Norwich in 2023 and 2024. The Action Plan is intended as a platform for wider engagement and also to support the strengthening of relationships between Norwich and key national funders and investors.

**Budget consultation:** In recent months we have developed our online engagement platform 'Get Talking Norwich'. This platform was used to consult with Norwich residents on our Budget proposals for 2023/24. The consultation ran from 15 December 2022 to 20 January 2023. Analysis shows that use of 'Get Talking Norwich' has helped us to reach more people from a broader demographic, with a response rate double that of the previous year (2,654 for this year versus 1,307 responses last year). We have heard also from communities with a range of backgrounds, identities and cultural affiliations through some specific conversations - holding these themed based community conversations has been well received and helps to ensure the voices of community members in Norwich are better reflected.

We are prioritising plans to strengthen community and tenant engagement further to deliver on our commitment to put residents at the 'heart of everything we do' and the success of and lessons learned from these changes to the budget consultation gives us a good basis to continue improvement.

## Challenges

**Recruitment challenges to technical IT positions:** Following the IT service restructure, a number of new positions have been advertised with some technical positions still vacant after three recruitment campaigns. Temporary resources are being used to backfill the vacancies whilst we continue to recruit.

**Capital Projects:** Over the past year the Environmental Strategy Team has been delivering two central government funded capital projects to retrofit social and privately-owned homes via the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) and the Sustainable Warmth Competition (SWC). Both of these projects are well underway with numerous dwellings receiving a mix of retrofit measures, ultimately reducing residents' carbon emissions and their energy bills. However, these projects have not been without their challenges. Firstly, due to the funds' relatively specific eligibility criteria, finding residents who qualified initially proved to be difficult. An increased focus on publicity and outreach ultimately meant though that the quota was reached, with the schemes soon becoming oversubscribed. However, when attempting to contact residents for this outreach, GDPR restrictions also created challenges; because residents' names could not be used on posted letters, many thought these were scam and discarded of them. Likewise, Eon – who are managing the two projects – have met several challenges linked to the material and labour shortages facing the construction industry as a whole. While these have not threatened the projects' viability, it has meant that labour has had to be sourced from outside of



Norfolk for some installations, and the difficulty in sourcing material has added a longer wait time. Nonetheless, both projects are 'ahead' of others nationally, and have not suffered from material shortages to the same extent that other projects elsewhere currently are.

**Void turnaround:** Average turnaround times continue to be impacted by long term voids which were let during Q4. It is expected that these will also impact on performance of Q1 2023/24. Whilst this area of work is an ongoing challenge, the total number of units has fallen to 1.26% since the highest point on 3 October 2022 which was 1.8%. This represents a £135k improvement due to HRA rent loss. Performance and activity monitoring via the Voids Dashboard and NEC have also facilitated better voids forecast, and improved programming across operational services. Norwich City Services Ltd are adapting their resources during Q1 to meet demand in this sector, with Gasway commissioned for larger major voids work during this year.

### B.1.3 Case Study

**UK Shared Prosperity Fund set up:** The council was informed by Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) at the start of 2022/23 that it had been allocated approximately £1.6m from 2022/23 to 2024/25 from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

To be granted the money we had to produce an investment plan for DLUHC to approve which following internal consultation and stakeholder engagement was submitted in August 2022. Year one of the allocation was 2022/23 and DLUHC had indicated that local authorities should start spending at risk. Given the sums involved and uncertainty it was felt unwise to spend at risk. The investment plan was designed so that grant funding for community conversation officers could be used to underwrite the year one costs with agreement from those funders that this could be carried forward to be spent as match funding in year two if we were to be successful with UKSPF.

A decision from DLUHC did not arrive until December 2022, over two months later than had been indicated and we needed to quickly mobilise in order to deliver against our year one targets. We prioritised recruitment of a programme manager, supported by a quick response from HR, and had someone in post on secondment by mid-January. Finance pulled together to set up cost centres for both the capital and revenue streams as well as made the necessary transfers to these new cost centres.

Once in post, our programme manager, quickly brought internal project partners together from economic development and citywide services to begin year one delivery and plan for year two. The programme manager also established the reporting mechanisms which would feed into the DLUHC report and ably supported by the transformation team put in place the internal project management structures to ensure good governance.

The mobilisation couldn't have been done at this pace without a positive, flexible and constructive approach across the organisation.

## Appendix C: Corporate and Commercial Services

### C.1 Performance

#### C.1.1 Summary of performance

Corporate and Commercial Services has four KPIs, all of which report quarterly. For Q4, the directorate reported four green indicators. The table below gives a view of Corporate and Commercial Services performance against its KPIs across the past year:

Indicator	Q4 2021	Q1 2022	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022
Council Tax Collection – the amount of in year council tax plus arrears from old years collected (target set according to budget requirement)	99.60	98.67	100.64	99.67	100.26
Council on track to remain within General Fund budget (£)	-2,364,000.00	-626,000.00	-1,397,000.00	-1,764,000.00	-1,796,000.00
Business Rates Collection – the amount of in year business rates plus arrears from old years collected (target set according to budget requirement)	101.48	105.42	100.06	99.53	101.83
Average number of days taken to process new Housing Benefit claims from point of receipt to notification of entitlement	14.00	16.00	19.00	18.00	18.00

The directorate's performance on FOI requests was 92.6% (down 3.6 percentage points since last quarter, down 1 percentage point on same quarter of previous year).

Corporate and Commercial Services' performance in responding to corporate complaints within timescales reports at 90%.

#### C.1.2. Successes and challenges

##### Successes

**Council Tax Support Fund (CTSF):** At very short notice and at the busiest time of year the council was asked to deliver a number of support schemes to help residents, one being the CTSF. The Government has provided a grant of £347,698 towards this fund. The Revenues and Benefits team pulled together to devise a scheme that allows us to support residents up to £125 in receipt of partial Council Tax Reduction, thus helping around 3,000 residents to pay their council tax bill.

**Housing Benefit Award Accuracy- Full case reviews:** With all the additional pressure of work placed on the team, we were struggling to ensure we completed the required number of Full Case reviews on Housing benefit claimants. At of 31 December 2022, we had achieved less than 50% of the required number of reviews. However, the team rallied together and achieved a 101.4% review rate by 31 March 2023.

**Treasury Management Performance:** Due to proactive management of the Council's cashflow and not fixing into long term deals, the Treasury Management team were able to optimise investment return in a rising interest environment, generating £3.8M in investment income in 2022/23. At the same time, the Council was in a position to let two large loans mature without refinancing them, causing its debt to reduce by £51m from £262.7m to £211.7m, saving £1.4m in interest payments. All of this hard

work and prudent fiscal management of resources, led to the ambitious net interest savings target of £4m in 2023/24.

## Challenges

**Early Closure of Accounts:** During COVID the government delayed, for financial years up to and including 2021/22, the publication date for the annual Statement of Account by two months. For 2022/23 and thereafter the government reverted to a publication date of 31 May 2023 following the relevant financial year, despite there being significant concerns over the supposed benefits of an earlier publication. Most statement of accounts, including those for Norwich and its grouped entities, have become more complex, audit standards have risen, and staff turnover in key roles has been significant; despite these issues the finance service delivered the draft accounts to the statutory deadlines and to its usual high standards - this represented a significant challenge to achieve. Post year-end, Finance will review lessons learned to identify how it can smooth the resource peak at year end by shifting workflows and to understand which processes could be automated and streamlined.

**Elections Act and Communications:** The Elections Act made significant changes to the operation of elections in the UK, most notably the introduction of Voter ID. However, the accompanying regulations setting out what forms of ID were only agreed at the end of December, with the Electoral Commission's national awareness campaign and the Government Voter Authority Scheme launched in January 2023. Until these launches, it was challenging for the Council to be able to plan its own awareness campaign. Nonetheless, significant steps were taken including raising awareness via social media channels, issuing information in the Citizen magazine and council tax bills and holding sessions for election agents and candidates and community groups. Information collated during the local election in May demonstrated that our efforts minimised the amount of voters attending polling stations without ID.

**Enterprise Resource and Planning system:** The council agreed to implement a new Enterprise Resource and Planning system (ERP) in April 2022. An ERP brings together many of the council's corporate systems such as its finance system, payments and income collection systems and its HR system; the project will move the council from the separate E5 financials and iTrent HR systems to the Unit 4 ERP product. The cabinet report set out that this process could take between 18 and 24 months to fully implement and an ambitious implementation plan was agreed with our partner. Some elements of the system have been successfully implemented – the council now recruits its staff using the Hireserve portal which has brought about improvements to those processes. However, despite adopting and sticking to the implementation partners model system approach, there have been some challenges with finalising the agreed build and moving into the testing and training stages; this means that we are running behind the original programme plan. Regular meetings are taking place with our implementation partner to mitigate the issues and we are looking forward to bringing the system live later this year.

### C.1.3 Case Study

**Budget Process:** In 2022/23, Norwich City Council decided to redesign its budget setting process, which while it had been effectively managed by Finance, was considered to have had limited organisational involvement with regards to wider organisational improvements.

The Council wanted a process that was more strategic, inclusive and better aligned to the Corporate Plan. The process would also link into the Future Shape Norwich (FSN) programme with assurance provided by the newly formed Design Authority, thereby strengthening the links with the Council's wider aspirations. The Design Authority, which includes representation from across all of the strategic and support services, would provide a rigorous challenge to business cases, while greater oversight of project delivery would be supported through the FSN performance management framework.

In July 2022 the Council estimated it had a challenging £6.2m saving target. This was assessed by rolling forward the budget, adjusting for known savings, growth and pressures. It was at that point, that changes took place to the budget making process.

The new process began with a forensic base budget review across the council to ensure there was a sound evidential basis for decision-making and that simple savings could be easily identified. An experienced senior business partner was seconded to the transformation team. Their role was to ensure that the change programme had robust financial challenge and that the new financial planning process would be based on evidence-based business models.

Business cases were required for long term, high value projects and programmes of work. Projects were prioritised based on the potential impact on the budget over the course of the Medium Term Financial Strategy period. The main areas of focus were identified as environmental and regulatory service transformation, improved asset usage and regeneration projects. Over the summer, initial proposals for budget savings and income generation were collated. Where assurance was required around delivery of these savings, business cases were developed. All business cases were reviewed by the Design Authority including those associated with capital investment.

The Design Authority took a holistic approach with a clear focus on technical feasibility and operational viability. Heads of service led individual business case developments with support from the Transformation team, including expertise from Finance, Procurement, Legal, IT and HR. The Design Authority aimed to represent all internal service areas affected by the change plans to ensure effective decision-making. Additionally, all services which had a role in the delivery of savings were consulted so that resources could be planned and they were aware of the requirements. However, the Design Authority did recommend which budget proposals would be included, based on viability, deliverability and benefits realised.

Detailed validation exercises were undertaken on all budget proposals for 2023/24 to ensure a robust budget. The budget process ultimately was set to deliver £5.5m of savings and additional income which was then incorporated into the 2023/34 budget,

with a further £6.7m identified savings to address the medium-term financial position over the subsequent 3 years. This process was endorsed by the recent Peer Review exercise as being more ambitious and focused than previous years, enabling the council to set the budget without the use of reserves.

Further positive improvements have also been implemented, all large change projects go through agreed project reporting and closure processes. The use of SharePoint supports collaborative and transparent inter-departmental working. Standardised business case templates developed iteratively have streamlined and strengthened decision-making processes and there is recognition that governance structures and processes need to be updated elsewhere in the same way; specifically for capital investment proposals.

Subsequently, the new assurance process has moved onto future years, as it looks to assure the detailed budget savings for all future years of the MTFS. Norwich intends to move away from an annual budget process towards a more sustainable multi-year approach supporting long-term decision making and moving away from the previous short term (annual) reactive approach.

Moreover, the potential for a true zero-based budgeting process, radical service redesigns based on resident needs are now a possibility as the Council looks to embed and 'normalise' these processes throughout the Council.

## Appendix D: Development and City Services

### D.1. Performance

#### D.1.1. Summary of performance

Development and City Services is responsible for 10 KPIs, five of which report quarterly and five of which are annual indicators. For Q4, the five quarterly indicators continued to show good performance, with three being above target and the remaining two near to their target. Four annual indicators report this quarter; two red, one green and one white which is being monitored for a baseline.

The red indicators reported in this quarter were both annual indicators:

- *'Number of private rented sector homes made safe'*. The Private Sector Housing team have continued to address backlogs in House of Multiple Occupation inspections and work on significant enforcement work, particularly against two properties of multiple units. The enforcement work has necessarily diverted officer time but is of paramount importance to ensuring significant housing in the city is safe for residents. This has resulted in the overall number of properties being made safe being recorded as 26 against a target of 50. It had been expected that the target would be comfortably exceeded in 2023/24 and the reason this was not the case was largely due to delays in remedial measures at St Peter's House. These were the responsibility of the private sector landlord rather than the Council. These works are now expected to be complete in Q1 of 2023/24 so it is anticipated that the target will be exceeded in the next year. Future performance should also be assisted by a recent restructure of the team following which the Council is currently recruiting to remaining vacancies which should be filled by the autumn 2023. The team continues to work proactively and to the best of their ability whilst managing competing demands and a complex case load.
- *'Number of affordable homes, built, purchased or enabled by the council'*: 26 new affordable homes with a further 13 Gypsy and Traveller Pitches have been completed. In total 39 new affordable homes have been delivered against a target of 50. The properties delivered consisted of five properties built by the council, 13 enabled through gifting council land (of which four also received grant funding from Right to Buy receipts) and a further eight with just a grant of Right to Buy receipts. The council also provided the land for the Gypsy and Traveller site. This indicator fluctuates significantly and is heavily dependent on the Council's own housebuilding activity. Through the development underway at Three Score, it is expected that the target will be exceeded in 2023/24.

The table below gives a view of Development and City performance against its KPIs across the past year:

Indicator	Q4 2021	Q1 2022	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022
Value of external funding leveraged to support council development and place-shaping priorities (£)	16,999,750.00				6,550,985.00
Number of private rented sector homes made safe	5.00				26.00
Number of new homes (both council and private) completed			316.00		
Number of affordable homes built, purchased or enabled by the council	23.00				39.00
Number (of total) (%) of food premises rated 0,1 or 2 (non-broadly compliant), moving to a compliant rating of 3, 4 or 5 against the Food Hygiene Rating System following intervention by food safety officers	95.00	91.00	94.00	94.50	93.00
Council income from investment property portfolio expressed as % of target income	95.00	87.00	92.00	95.00	97.00
Area of underused council land brought into productive use (m2)	0.00				0.00
% of planning decisions upheld after appeal (where council has won)	80.00	100.00	91.00	88.00	88.00
% of planning applications determined within statutory time limits	88.00	86.00	87.00	87.00	87.00
% household waste sent for reuse, recycling, composting (reporting on previous quarter)	39.10	39.10	38.80	38.10	37.00

Planning applications determined within timescales and household waste indicators continue to report as amber, however both are above their intervention targets.

The directorate's performance on FOI requests was 89.1% (up 0.7 percentage points since last quarter, up 2.6 percentage points on same quarter of previous year).

Development and City Services' performance in responding to corporate complaints within timescales reports at 61%.

### D.1.2. Successes and challenges

#### Successes

**Nutrient Enrichment:** On the 16 March 2022 Natural England issued new guidance to several local planning authorities concerning nutrient enrichment and the role local authorities must play in preventing further adverse impacts to protected wetland habitats. Between March 2022 and now officers have been working with all other affected Norfolk authorities and Royal Haskoning were commissioned to assist with developing a mitigation strategy for Norfolk. In addition to this, the City Council also looked to work up a scheme for the installation/retrofitting of more water-efficient fittings in bathrooms and kitchens in Council owned residential properties.

The Council's retrofitting scheme to partially mitigate nutrient neutrality was agreed by Cabinet on 14 December 2022 at which time a list of priority sites to receive such mitigation were identified. Following Cabinet's approval of the scheme, officers prepared the required Appropriate Assessment required by the Habitats regulations and submitted this to Natural England for approval. Natural England signed off the Appropriate Assessment on 23 March 2023.

This is a significant success as it allows for development on identified priority sites in the Cabinet Report to be progressed. However, nutrient requirements remain a significant challenge to delivering the levels of housing required to meet Norwich's needs. A total of 56 planning applications are still held up awaiting determination, equating to 1790 homes (excluding purpose-built student accommodation, HMOs, care homes and hotels). These applications are not reflected in the performance data that relates to KPI 15 '*% of planning applications determined within statutory time limits*'. The longer Nutrient Neutrality is not addressed fully, the more the development industry is suffering. Work on a joint venture was endorsed in principle by Cabinet in March and progress on this is continuing.



**Development Strategy Team:** In Q4 of 2022/23 the development strategy team were successful in securing £2.4m of external funding, including £2m from the Norfolk County devolution deal to part fund the acquisition of 24 new homes from NRL, £0.3m from the DLUHC local authority housing fund to provide accommodation for 15 Ukrainian and Afghan families and £0.1m in Homes England capacity funding to provide technical studies and design work for the Mile Cross and Three Score developments.

In addition, the team has worked in partnership with local registered Providers of affordable housing to see the delivery of 21 new affordable homes across four sites. This includes seven new homes delivered by Broadland Housing to support rough sleepers on the former Ketts Tavern pub car park. The council supported these schemes with land and / or grants of retained RTB receipts. Finally, working in partnership with Broadland HA, Q4 has seen the completion of 13 new Gypsy and Traveller pitches at Swanton Road and successful planning approvals for a further three pitches and the remodeling of the existing site from 21 pitches to 15 in order to meet modern standards.

Ketts Hill:





## Swanton Road Gypsy & Traveller Site:



**Mile Cross Depot:** Quarter 4 of 2022/23 saw work start in earnest on the redevelopment of site of the former depot site in Mile Cross. The site was appropriated from the General Fund to the HRA to enable an affordable housing led development following a cabinet decision in June 2020. Work on the project has been led by the Council's Housing Delivery Team with support from additional expert advice in order to progress what is a technically difficult site.

This led to the award of a £2.8m contract for land remediation to Anglia Demolition Ltd following the Cabinet decision in December 2022. The site circumstances of the former depot are extremely complex due to contamination, material previously dumped, underground services, soil conditions and even invasive species.

Work on the site is now well underway and is progressing gradually from the Mile Cross Road end of the site towards Sloughbottom Park. Material is being extracted, crushed, graded and re-laid in readiness for future development. The team, working with technical advisers and the contractors have been able to reuse the vast majority of the material on the site. Much of this appears to be from local homes hurriedly cleared historically, most likely bomb-damaged properties cleared during or shortly after World War two. The fascinating social history of the area is being recorded as they progress.

The land remediation work is due to continue over the summer alongside the working up of the detailed plans for the homes that will be delivered on the site. This aspect of the work has been delayed by the issues with nutrient neutrality but planning applications for phase one of the development are expected to be submitted in Q1 2023/24.

The standard of land remediation should deliver significant savings when it comes to construction of the homes as it will substantially de-risk the build process thus enabling the Council to get better value and more certainty of costs through the next of the project.



## Challenges

**Delays to Hay Hill:** The £2.8m towns fund project to revitalise Hay Hill has been delayed. Previously it had been proposed to relocate the sculptures “Homage to Thomas Browne” by Anne and Patrick Poirier (the brain and eye etc) to a site near Elm Hill but concerns raised through consultation led the Council to reconsider its approach. Instead of determining the location in advance of commencing work on Hay Hill the statues have been removed for cleaning and storage and further consultation will follow later in the year to determine the best location for them.

This led to a delay in the start of works to Hay Hill from February to mid April. The works are now well underway and are expected to be completed by February 2024. The project remains on track to be completed within Towns Fund budget.



**Private rented housing sector – damp and mould:** The Private Sector Housing team continues to face multiple challenges. Government requests for detail on damp and mould cases has diverted officers and delayed business as usual work. Two significant enforcement cases are being undertaken, The second is seeing cross organisation working between the Council, CNC Building Control, NPLaw and Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service.



## Annex 1: Performance and KPIs

### Community services KPIs

Indicator	Q4 2021	Q1 2022	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022
Total number of private sector insulation measures completed	70.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	34.00
Number of homeless households living in temporary accommodation	41.00	47.00	52.00	48.00	46.00
IT System availability expressed as a percent of time available during core hours	99.86	99.94	99.85	99.94	99.95
Average re-let time of council homes in calendar days (excluding major works)	55.00	35.00	49.00	95.00	101.00
% of people responding as feeling safe in local area survey	59.00	65.00	55.00	63.00	52.00
% of households owed a homelessness prevention duty (in accordance with the Homelessness Reduction Act) where the duty was ended due to suitable accommodation being secured for them	80.00	74.00	68.00	87.00	88.00
% of customer's responding as satisfied with customer contact team service	78.35	70.43	68.04	83.71	84.75
% of customer contact that takes place through digital channels	42.75	54.29	45.71	42.05	42.98
% of council housing rent collected (excluding arrears brought forward)	99.35	95.87	96.20	98.25	98.77
% of council homes with a valid gas safety certificate	99.82	99.87	99.82	99.92	99.99

**'The % of customer contact that takes place through digital channels'.** The target and intervention were increased from 45% and 40% to 53% and 45% at the start of 2022/23.

**'The % of people responding as feeling safe in a local area survey'.** The response rate to the survey for this quarter was 4% and therefore is not statistically significant. Improvements to this measure are being explored to improve response rates.





## Corporate and commercial services KPIs

Indicator	Q4 2021	Q1 2022	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022
Council Tax Collection – the amount of in year council tax plus arrears from old years collected (target set according to budget requirement)	99.60	98.67	100.64	99.67	100.26
Council on track to remain within General Fund budget (£)	-2,364,000.00	-626,000.00	-1,397,000.00	-1,764,000.00	-1,796,000.00
Business Rates Collection – the amount of in year business rates plus arrears from old years collected (target set according to budget requirement)	101.48	105.42	100.06	99.53	101.83
Average number of days taken to process new Housing Benefit claims from point of receipt to notification of entitlement	14.00	16.00	19.00	18.00	18.00

## Development and city services KPIs

Indicator	Q4 2021	Q1 2022	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022
Value of external funding leveraged to support council development and place-shaping priorities (£)	16,999,750.00				6,550,985.00
Number of private rented sector homes made safe	5.00				26.00
Number of new homes (both council and private) completed			316.00		
Number of affordable homes built, purchased or enabled by the council	23.00				39.00
Number (of total) (%) of food premises rated 0,1 or 2 (non-broadly compliant), moving to a compliant rating of 3, 4 or 5 against the Food Hygiene Rating System following intervention by food safety officers	95.00	91.00	94.00	94.50	93.00
Council income from investment property portfolio expressed as % of target income	95.00	87.00	92.00	95.00	97.00
Area of underused council land brought into productive use (m2)	0.00				0.00
% of planning decisions upheld after appeal (where council has won)	80.00	100.00	91.00	88.00	88.00
% of planning applications determined within statutory time limits	88.00	86.00	87.00	87.00	87.00
% household waste sent for reuse, recycling, composting (reporting on previous quarter)	39.10	39.10	38.80	38.10	37.00



## All KPI details

KPI No.	Indicator	Methodology	Target	Intervention	Frequency
KP1 01	Average number of days taken to process new Housing Benefit Claims from point of receipt to notification of entitlement	Data generated from Northgate system	21 days	23.10 days	Quarterly
KPI 02	Council Tax collection – the amount of in year council tax plus arrears from previous years collected (target set according to budget requirement).	The annual target is the Council Tax requirement set in the budget. The annual target is profiled across the year based on what we would expect to have collected by the end of each month. Each quarter, variance to the quarterly target is reported. Data is generated from the Northgate System	100%	99%	Quarterly
KPI 03	Business Rates collection – the amount of in year business rates plus arrears from previous years collected (target set according to budget requirement)	The annual target is the National Non Domestic Rate forecast rating income. The annual target is profiled across the year based on what we would expect to have collected by the end of each month. Each quarter, variance to the quarterly target is reported. Data is generated from the Northgate System	100%	99%	Quarterly
KPI 04	Council on track to remain within General Fund budget (£)	Forecasts from all budget managers input into Collaborative Planning tool	£0.00	£500,000.00	Quarterly



KPI 05	% of council housing rent collected (excluding arrears brought forward)	(A / B)*100 . Where A = the actual rent and service charges collected year-to-date on current & former General Needs (GN) & Housing for Older People (HfOP) (excluding garages) and where B = the actual rent and service charges due year-to-date for all tenanted GN & HfOP properties (excluding garages). Worked example - By the end of September £470,000 of rent and service charges had been received by the organisation from current & former tenants. The year-to-date actual rent and service charges due is £500,000. Rent collected as a percentage of rent owed = (£470,000 / £500,000)*100 = 94.0%	99.80%	98.80%	Quarterly
KPI 06	Average re-let time of council homes in calendar days (excluding major works)	Calculated by dividing the total number of days standard re-let properties were vacant in the period, by the number of standard re-lets in the period	21 days	25 days	Quarterly
KPI 07	% of council homes with a valid gas safety certificate	The denominator is the number of rented dwellings in ownership that have a connected gas supply. Calculation = Number of council homes with a valid gas safety certificate / Number of council homes requiring a gas safety certificate * 100	100%	99.80%	Quarterly



KPI 08	Number of homeless households living in temporary accommodation	This measure of temporary accommodation is a snapshot at the end of the period. It is not a cumulative total of all households living in temporary accommodation across the period. Any households living in temporary accommodation in another local authority district are included where this has been provided by Norwich City Council	62	68	Quarterly
KPI 09	% of households owed a homelessness prevention duty (in accordance with the Homelessness Reduction Act) where the duty was ended due to suitable accommodation being secured for them	<p>This KPI measures the proportion of households owed a prevention duty whose duty ended due to suitable accommodation being secured for at least six months. This can involve assisting them to stay in their current accommodation, or helping them to find a new place to live.</p> <p>Calculation = <math>(N / D) * 100</math></p> <p>N = Number of households secured accommodation for at least six months (where a prevention duty ended in the period)</p> <p>D = Number of households whose prevention duty ended in the period</p>	66	60	Quarterly
KPI 10	% of household waste sent for reuse, recycling, composting (reporting on previous quarter)	Using DEFRA methodology from <u>WasteDataFlow</u>	40%	36%	Quarterly





KPI 11	% of people responding as feeling safe in a local area survey	% of people responding as feeling safe to a local area survey issued by text	60%	54%	Quarterly
KPI 12	Number (of total) (%) of food premises rated 0,1 or 2 (not broadly compliant), moving to a compliant rating of 3, 4 or 5 against the Food Rating Hygiene System following intervention by food safety officers	Calculation run in Environmental Health systems	80	72	Quarterly
KPI 13	Number of private rented sector homes made safe	Report run in Uniform	100	90	Annual (Q4)
KPI 14	% of planning decisions upheld after appeal (where the council has won)	Trailing Twelve Month Data calculated after the end of each quarter based on planning appeal decisions	66%	59.4%	Quarterly
KPI 15	% of planning applications determined within statutory time limits	% of planning applications of development types Q1-Q21 (these being central government definitions) determined within statutory time periods or within an agreed extension of time	90%	51%	Quarterly
KPI 16	Council income from investment property portfolio expressed as a % of target income	Rental income collected (including agreed deferrals) as a % of budgeted income	95%	85.5%	Quarterly
KPI 17	Area of underused council land brought into productive use (m2)	Measure the m2 of any sites allocated in the Site Allocations plan that are within council ownership and are brought into the use specified in the allocation policy within that	0%	0%	Annual (Q4)



		monitoring year (excludes designated open space)			
KPI 18	Number of affordable homes built, purchased or enabled by the council	Collection of information from Registered Providers and in-house development	50	45	Annual (Q4)
KPI 19	Number of new homes (both council & private) completed	Sum of dwellings completed in financial year. the number of dwellings counted for this indicator refers only to standard dwellings that are counted against the Joint core strategy (JCS) target. Student and communal institutional accommodation are not counted against the JCS but are reported in the monitoring report for the Development Management Policies Local Plan	477	429	Annual (Q2)
KPI 20	Value of external funding leveraged to support council development and place shaping priorities (£).	Sum of £ leveraged	£250,000.00	£225,000.00	Annual (Q4)



KPI 21	% reduction of CO2 emissions from Local Authority operations	The Council's carbon reduction metric relates to the % of carbon dioxide emitted, in tonnes, compared to the previous year. Carbon emissions included in the scope of measurement and reporting include Scope 1, 2 and a subset of Scope 3 emissions (as defined by the International Greenhouse Gas protocol and according to the National Indicator 185). These include heating and fleet fuel for operational buildings* and vehicles, electricity for operational buildings and vehicles, business travel and contractor's emissions for significant contracts including waste and other city services. * Operational buildings include City Hall, Riverside Leisure Centre, The Halls, car parks and sheltered housing schemes.	3%	2.7%	Annual (Q2)
KPI 22	Total number of private sector insulation measures completes	Sum of measures	50	45	Quarterly
KPI 23	% of customers responding as satisfied with customer contact team service	% responding as satisfied with service via a text survey	76%	70%	Quarterly
KPI 24	% of customer contact that takes place through digital channels	Sum of webforms divided into total telephone and face to face contacts	53% from 2022/23 (previously 45%)	45% from 2022/23 (previously 40%)	Quarterly



KPI 25	% of FOI requests responded to within statutory timescales	% of FOI requests answered within 20 working days	90%	81%	Quarterly
KPI 26	% of corporate complaints responded to within stated timescales	% of complaints answered within 10 days	70%	62%	Quarterly
KPI 27	IT system availability expressed as a percent of time available during core hours	System availability data captured from various applications	99%	90%	Quarterly