



Northumberland County Council

Cabinet

Tuesday, 7 November 2023

Corporate Performance - Quarter 1 2023/24

Report of Councillor(s) Councillor Richard Wearmouth , Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services

Responsible Officer(s): Dr Helen Paterson, Chief Executive

1. **Link to Key Priorities of the Corporate Plan**

1.1 Link to Corporate Plan

- **Achieving Value for Money** – The Council aims for continuous improvement and innovation in all its services to residents. This is underpinned by a clear understanding of the direction of travel for service performance.
- **Tackling Inequalities** – Everything the Council does across its services can make a positive impact on tackling inequalities therefore it is important to track performance and understand which key performance indicators (KPIs) relate to tackling inequalities outcomes.
- **Driving Economic Growth** – The Council's KPIs set out measures of economic growth.

2. **Purpose of report**

2.1 This report provides a summary of the progress against the Council's three Corporate Plan priorities using the Council's performance at the end of Quarter 1, 2023/24 (Q1).

3. **Recommendations**

3.1 Cabinet is recommended to:

- a) Consider progress against the three Corporate Priorities as summarised in this report.

4. **Forward plan date and reason for urgency if applicable**

Friday 13th October. No key decision required.

5. Background

- 5.1 Performance reporting to Cabinet and other committees provides a valuable opportunity for Members to consider and comment on the performance of services across the Council, with a particular focus on progress against the three Corporate Plan priorities. This strengthens accountability between key decisions, allocation of resources, service outputs and the overall achievement of the three priorities of the Council.
- 5.2 The Council adopted the Corporate Plan at its Annual General Meeting on 17th May 2023. The Plan establishes three priorities for the Council, underpinned by our approach to tackling Climate Change. The Annual Council Achievements Report (reported to Council in March 2023) sets out overall progress against the three priorities, alongside Annual Cabinet Member reports which provide an opportunity for Members to look further into the work of portfolios.
- 5.3 This report forms part of an updated approach to Corporate Plan performance reporting as follows:
- Regular directorate briefings with Cabinet Members;
 - Executive Management Team;
 - Strategic Leadership Team;
 - Cabinet (Quarterly reports);
 - Scrutiny Chairs and Overview and Scrutiny Committees; and,
 - A quarter 4, outturn report to Full Council in the summer period.

Delivering our Priorities

- 5.4 The following sections set out performance summaries for each of the three Corporate Plan priorities for Quarter 1 2023/24. These summaries highlight key points on performance, both positive and including where targets have been missed at the end of Quarter 1.
- 5.5 It is important to remember that many of our Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are influenced by a range of external factors. For example, economic measures are a function of global issues beyond the control of our Economy and Regeneration Service. Equally, Looked After Children rates are impacted by a range of complex and long-term societal factors. Recovery from Covid continues to be an issue in some areas of service performance.
- 5.6 For other targets, in-year shifts in social and economic factors can create spikes in demand for certain services which may not have been anticipated when targets were set at the start of the year. It is important that performance against targets is seen in this wider context.

Our Corporate Plan Vision:

- 5.7 *Northumberland: Land of Great Opportunities. With world-class facilities to stunning landscapes, spectacular castles, picturesque coastal and market towns, we believe there's no better place to live and work. Our economy boasts a growing, internationally-recognised offshore and renewable energy hub delivering clean and green growth. And, we have a strong manufacturing base, including in pharmaceuticals and life sciences. We are the largest and least densely populated local authority area in England. That makes for lots of communities with distinctive characteristics, heritage, functions and needs. We aim to build on all these strengths to ensure the county continues to be a land of great opportunities for current and*

future generations. To achieve this, Members and Council staff are focused on working together to deliver our three priorities:

- *Achieving Value for Money;*
- *Tackling Inequalities; and,*
- *Driving Economic Growth.*

Value for Money Priority

- 5.8 We recognise we are funded by residents and businesses and are accountable to them for our spending decisions and the quality of services we deliver. We must ensure we are delivering Best Value through efficient, effective and accessible services that respond to and meet the needs and expectations of our residents. And, as one of the largest employers in the county, we can become a leading example for residents, communities and businesses on carbon neutral approaches.

Outcome (i):

- 5.9 **Residents receive the best customer experience** - doing the best for residents drives all of our work. We want residents to know that when they are dealing with us they can expect the best customer service every time and trust we are providing them with the best service possible.

Impacts:

- 5.10 In this outcome, we are working to achieve the following impacts:
- Improved resident satisfaction in Council Services;
 - Residents choose to transact with us digitally;
 - Residents feel delighted and empowered when using digital services;
 - Residents receive consistent and timely responses from all our services;
 - We look for opportunities to make a difference to customers and residents' lives at every interaction;
 - Residents are able to access our services in the right way for them at the right time for their needs.

Progress

- 5.11 We know residents value being able to contact the Council quickly and conveniently to pay bills, ask questions, access services and resolve issues. Our Customer Services are continuing an overall trend of improvement. In Quarter 1, we delivered impressive performance with the '% of calls answered', achieving an average of 95.6% for the quarter. Encouragingly, for 'average time to answer calls', the Team achieved 73 seconds for the quarter. This compares to 292 for the June 2022, an improvement of 219 seconds. We continue to work with teams to enable as many enquiries as possible to be answered at first point of contact from the customer.

Focus on improvement:

- 5.12 For 'complaints answered within timescale (%)', the Council missed its target of 100% for Quarter 1 (68.4%). It should be noted that cases where an extension to the timescales has been authorised are not included. The Team continues to use complaint data to drive innovation and improvement.

Further development of measures

- 5.13 Whilst the Council continues to ensure residents can call us and interact face-to-face, we are increasingly encouraging customers to use digital channels as these are more effective and efficient. In future reporting under this outcome, we propose to develop

measures which show the shift of residents to digital channels as well as the effectiveness of digital contacts.

- 5.14 We are also reviewing the complaint measures so these better represent shifts in how we engage and learn from what we are being told. In future, we will also use new Resident Survey data to measure perceptions, including: resident satisfaction with access to Council services; and, overall satisfaction with the Council.

Residents receive the best customer experience – Quarter 1 2023/24

	Measure	Target	Q1 22/23	Q2 22/23	Q3 22/23	Q4 22/23	Q1 23/24
1	Complaints answered within timescale (%)	100	63.3	70.7	74.2	70.8	68.4
2	% calls answered	90	86.2	93.5	97.2	93.4	95.6
3	Average time to answer calls (seconds)	180	292	121	46	112	73

Outcome (ii):

- 5.15 **We make the best spending decisions** - we are responsible for providing a vast array of different services to local communities, residents and businesses. To provide best value it's essential we maximise our spending power, make good decisions that create the best impact for our residents and better align our spend to the outcomes we want to achieve.

Impacts:

- 5.16 In this outcome, we are working to achieve the following impacts:
- We use transparent, accurate, and accessible data to improve how we work together, putting the needs and aspirations of Northumberland at the heart of our decision-making;
 - Individuals, communities, and Members are involved in designing and delivering services;
 - Increased value from our spending decisions;
 - Achieve savings through economies of scale, leveraging the Council's combined purchasing power; and,
 - Performance is managed better.

Progress:

- 5.17 The Council's Q1 financial position showed a forecast overspend of £4.115m, increasing to £4.471m due to inflationary pressures. The financial monitoring process is a continuous process, and it is not unusual to project an overspend in Quarter 1 as

pressures in the system are recognised and realised. Services are now taking appropriate action to bring the budget back into balance.

- 5.18 It vital to local economic growth that the Council maximised spend on locally supplied goods and services. In Quarter 1, we are pleased the Procurement Team has continued its improvement compared to Q4 last year in: 'the number of local suppliers'; 'Local Suppliers (Number)'; and, 'Suppliers trading with Council who are local (%)' (no annual targets were set for these measures). It's also important for small and medium business that orders and payments are processed efficiently when they supply the Council and, we are pleased to report the target for 'requisitions processed within three days' was achieved and was improved on compared with Quarter 4 last year.

Focus on improvement:

- 5.19 Whilst our direction of travel on measures of working with local suppliers is broadly positive, we will work on developing targets for these and continue to grow the value of local suppliers within the relevant legal and procurement frameworks.

Further development of measures

- 5.20 In future, we will also use new Resident Survey data to measure perceptions including: whether residents agree the council provides value for money; and, residents views on whether they can influence decisions affecting their local area.

We make the best spending decisions – Quarter 1 2023/24

	Measure	Target	Q1 22/23	Q2 22/23	Q3 22/23	Q4 22/23	Q1 23/24
1	Local Suppliers (Number)	-	1,564	1,506	1,361	1,402	1,553
2	Value of Local Suppliers (£)	-	80.7m	79.7m	72.7	92.3m	122.6m
3	Suppliers trading with Council who are local (%)	-	42.1	44	40	38	39
4	Requisition Processed within 3 days (%)	80	98.5	99	97	97	98

Outcome (iii):

- 5.21 **Working better, more efficiently** - we are a large and complex organisation with over 5,000 staff working hard to achieve the best outcomes for residents. Our services currently have a significant operational footprint with over 300 properties used to deliver our services. To achieve Best Value, it's essential we have the right

structures in place to enable both our people and other assets to have the greatest impact. For our staff, this means the best operating structures and models to enable effective delivery and provide good career development opportunities. It also means establishing a workplace culture focused on learning and continuous improvement. For our property assets it means making best use of our land and buildings by maximising their impact and running them efficiently to deliver our operational objectives.

Impacts:

5.22 In this outcome, we are working to achieve the following impacts:

- Staff are empowered and supported to do the best work they can for our residents and develop and grow in their careers with us;
- Streamlined administrative functions enable us to operate effectively;
- Land and buildings are used effectively to maximise impact in improving outcomes for our residents;
- Our land and buildings are well maintained and safe for our residents, service users and staff;
- Our estate is smaller, more sustainable, effectively managed, efficiently run and used creatively to maximise impact; and,
- Our estate is fit for purpose to deliver inclusive, quality services, achieve Council priorities and improve outcomes for residents.

Progress

5.23 We are proud to be an organisation that invests in apprenticeships. In the latest data we have (Quarter 4) we significantly exceeded the % of the workforce who are apprentices. In Quarter 1, we continued our positive trajectory for levels of 'mandatory training' being completed by staff.

5.24 In Q1, our measures for property management also continue to perform well. We continue to complete all fire risk audits on target and critical statutory tests for property have been completed within the required timescales.

5.25 Our performance also shows we are also effective in collecting Council Tax which enables us to provide good services for our residents. For '% National Non-Domestic Rates collected' we were pleased to achieve our target and improved performance relative to Q4 last year.

Focus on improvement:

5.26 In 'days lost to sickness' again, we missed the target of 7.5 days per 'full time equivalent' (FTE). Services continue to focus on reducing absence.

Further development of measures

5.27 In future, we are looking to develop more measures for this outcome including: the percentage of staff saying they are proud to work for NCC (Staff Survey); staff retention rates; and measures for how effectively we manage our property estate.

Working better, more efficiently – Quarter 1 2023/34

	Measure	Target	Q1 22/23	Q2 22/23	Q3 22/23	Q4 22/23	Q1 23/24
1	% of the workforce who are apprentices(Annual)	2.3	-	-	-	4.1	-
2	Days lost to sickness (# per FTE / annum)	7.5	10.9	11.4	11.3	11.4	11.4
3	Mandatory Training completed (%)	85	83	88.2	88.2	91.5	90.3
4	Corporate Landlord Compliance (%)	98	100	100	100	100	100
5	Property statutory tests completed on time (%)	92	94.2	94.2	96.7	98.1	94.2 (May latest data)
6	Council Tax - arrears retrieved (£m)	£1.13	2	2.5	3.4	4.3	1.0
7	% of Council Tax collected	28.7	28.2	55.1	82	97.3	28.6
8	% National Non-Domestic Rates collected	28.25	28	53.8	77.3	94.9	28.8

Outcome (iv):

5.28 **Making a difference with digital** - digital technology enables us to work better and has the power to delight residents when it works effectively. Currently, we have a range of systems and platforms across our services which are not fully joined up. To provide Best Value we want to make a difference with digital by enabling quicker access to better data and many more automated processes for our workforce,

partners and residents. By strengthening skills, we can develop our own sustainable solutions and ensure our staff have tools and systems to make a difference in everything they do.

Impacts:

5.29 In this outcome, we are working to achieve the following impacts:

- Staff have reliable, secure IT hardware and software enabling them to deliver the best services to our customers;
- Residents choose to transact with us digitally (and they have digital access) because of the systems we create; and,
- With reduced system failures our services are more reliable.

Progress:

5.30 As in Q4 last year, in Q1, we have continued to meet targets on “Availability of Superfast broadband (%)”, ‘Take up of Superfast broadband (%)’ and, were within tolerance with our performance on ‘Service Desk calls resolved within Service Level Agreement (%)’.

Further development of measures

5.31 In future, we are looking to use new measures for this outcome including: the shift in customers to digital contact (as an alternative to telephone and face-to-face); and, new Resident Survey data on the percentage of residents using Council services digitally.

Making a difference with digital – Quarter 1 – 2023/24

	Measure	Target	Q1 22/23	Q2 22/23	Q3 22/23	Q4 22/23	Q1 23/24
1	Availability of Superfast broadband (%)	95	95.1	95.4	95.4	95.63	95.7
2	Take up of Superfast broadband (%)	65	80.1	79.8	79.1	79.1	78.6
3	Service Desk calls resolved within SLA (%)	96.5	94.1	95.4	95.7	96.6	93.4

Tacking Inequalities

5.32 We want to ensure people have fair access to the building blocks of a good life such as a decent income, a good-quality job, safe, affordable and warm housing as well as good quality education and training opportunities. By tackling inequalities, we want to reduce the gap in experiences our residents have across health, education, employment and social outcomes.

Outcome (i):

5.33 **Empowered and resilient communities** - our residents are our greatest asset. They are more than customers or service users. Our communities are full of potential. Everybody has their gifts, skills and passions that can make their communities stronger. Whilst good quality services and institutions are important, they cannot alone bring about the change in our neighbourhoods, villages, high streets and towns that our residents deserve. Community development, based on the assets that are in neighbourhoods, will help us to value, discover, connect and mobilise communities. We call this Asset Based Community Development. This is about encouraging and supporting people to get actively involved in their communities, shaping and even leading local initiatives and looking after each other.

Impacts:

5.34 In this outcome, we are working to achieve the following impacts:

- Communities are more resilient, connected and act together to improve their area;
- Residents will know what assets there are in their area and where to go if they need support; and,
- Shift in culture within the Council - we will have a workforce who are skilled and competent in applying an 'asset-based community development' approach in their day-to-day practice and fully appreciate the four domains of inequalities in all they do (protected characteristics, geographical, socio economic and inclusion groups).

Progress:

5.35 The positive number of referrals made to Communities Together, which outperformed the target by more than 400 as well as grants to vulnerable families (just under £422k in Q1) underlines the Council's ongoing commitment to community resilience. Beyond direct support to households, the Council is also helping voluntary and community organisations to lead positive change in communities – in Q1, the Council's Communities Together Team awarded just over £100k to VCSE groups.

Focus on improvement:

5.36 Building on the impressive performance from our Communities Together Team, the Council is committed, through its Inequalities Plan, to continuing to build community resilience.

Further development of measures

5.37 We propose to use new data from our Residents Survey to measure progress on this outcome, including: whether residents believe they can influence decisions affecting their local area; and, levels of resident satisfaction with their local area.

Empowered and resilient communities – Quarter 1 2023/24

	Measure	Target	Q1 22/23	Q2 22/23	Q3 22/23	Q4 22/23	Q1 23/24
1	Number of referrals in to NCT (#)	1,950 (150 per week)	2,258	3,349	3,044	3,182	2,363
2	Grant funding distributed to vulnerable households (£)	tbc	£1,800,521	£659,453	£1,100,479	£1,238,257	£421,962
3	Total awards to vulnerable households (#)	tbc	15,693	20,293	21,609	35,254	12,624
4	Number of Grants Awarded to Voluntary and Community organisations (#)	tbc	16	21	5	15	6
5	Total amount of funding provided to VCSE organisations (£)	tbc	£140,828	£202,500	£65,600	£200,000	£100,100

Outcome (ii)

5.38 **Children and young people have the best start in life and grow up well -** inequalities in the early years can have lifelong impacts on the development of physical and emotional health, language and social skills. They affect readiness for school, education, training, skills, employment and healthy relationships. Not everyone has the same access to things which children and young people need to be healthy, thrive and feel safe. We will work with partners and families – including children, young people and their families - to develop the services used by everyone as well services for those that need more intensive support.

5.39 In this outcome, we are working to achieve the following impacts:

- More of our children, young people and families will reach their potential regardless of their circumstances;
- Northumberland will be a place where our young people feel a sense of belonging and are safe and connected;
- Children and young people will have equity in access to affordable, healthy food to maximise the opportunity of having a healthy weight;
- Children and young people with additional needs receive the right support at the right time;
- Children and young people will have equity in access to an environment that encourages physical activity and active travel; and,

- More of our children will have good mental health and wellbeing.

Progress:

- 5.40 We are delighted to see more children and young people attending good or outstanding primary schools. This continues the improving trend over the last 2 years. The figure of 94% is 4% better than the national average.
- 5.41 For 'pupils in good / outstanding secondary schools' - we have seen very impressive performance in Q1, 83.7%. Inspection outcomes are approximately 2% above the national average.
- 5.42 We are also pleased to see a positive trend on measures of children's development, including: breast feeding prevalence; height and weight recorded Year-6 (%); reception age and year-6 obesity rates.

Focus on improvement:

- 5.43 'For Key Stage 4 Attainment' - we were pleased external examinations returned in 2022 for the first time since 2019. Teacher and centre assessed grades were used during the pandemic. Nationally, it was determined that grades would, overall, fall roughly halfway between 2019 and 2021. Given the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on different students and schools, this data should be treated with caution. Pre-pandemic Attainment 8 scores in Northumberland were improving more quickly than nationally.
- 5.44 For '16-17 year-old NEETs or not known' - Northumberland's end of June figure is poorer than the June national average of 5.0%, but slightly better than the regional average of 6.1%. Staffing capacity is now in place to contact more young people. July saw the figure improve slightly from 6.0% to 5.8%. Weekly progress review meetings with careers assistants have been implemented that monitor the level of contact with NEET young people and provide better tracking of outcomes.

Further development of measures

- 5.45 We will continue to develop new and better ways to measure how we are progressing on tackling inequalities, including through new questions in our Residents Survey.

Children and young people have the best start in life and grow up well – Quarter 1 2023/24

	Measure	Target	Q1 22/23	Q2 22/23	Q3 22/23	Q4 22/23	Q1 23/24
1	Pupils with good level of development at age 5 (%) Annual *	72	-	67.5	-	-	-
2	KS4 – average Attainment 8 score (%) Annual *	44.7	-	46.6	-	-	-

	Measure	Target	Q1 22/23	Q2 22/23	Q3 22/23	Q4 22/23	Q1 23/24
3	KS4 - average Progress 8 score (%) Annual *	-0.15	-	-0.23	-	-	-
4	Pupils in good/ outstanding Primary schools (%)	89	87.4	87.9	88.3	94.2	94.0
5	Pupils in good/ outstanding Secondary schools (%)	75	73.0	68.9	79.2	84.0	83.7
6	16-17 yr-olds NEET or Not Known (%)	5.3	4.9	5.0	5.5	4.9	6.0
7	Women not smoking at time of delivery (%)	88	88.2	88.6	91.8 <small>(Q3 latest data)</small>	-	-
8	Breast feeding prevalence (%)	38	38.1	36.3	41.4	42.5 <small>(Q4 latest data)</small>	-
9	Height and weight recorded Year 6 (%) Annual	95	-	-	97.6	-	-
10	Reception age obesity (%) Annual	10	-	-	9.2	-	-
11	Year 6 obesity (%) Annual	21	-	-	21.8	-	-

Outcome (iii)

- 5.46 **All adults living well, regardless of age, background, illness or disability** - everyone should have the opportunity to have a good life and play a part in creating strong communities. Residents in the county's most deprived communities have an average life expectancy of 75 years compared to 87 years in the least deprived.

Around 25% of our residents are aged over 65 years and projections show there is also likely to be a significant acceleration in the ageing of Northumberland's population profile. We must support people to live healthier lives and provide good quality, equitable services for those who need extra support to maintain health, wellbeing and independence.

5.47 The Council has a responsibility to ensure Northumberland is a good place to live for people who have a disability or long-term illness, including conditions associated with older age, and both physical and mental issues. Across our services, we look for ways to help people to remain independent and live in the way they want to, whatever their disability or condition. Nobody should have to depend on care and support services if better-designed community facilities would have made that unnecessary. When people do need care and support, it should be easy to access and arranged in a way which keeps them in control of their own lives.

5.48 In this outcome, we are working to achieve the following impacts:

- The healthier choice will be the easiest choice;
- More of our workforce will be maximising contacts with residents to improve wellbeing;
- Residents stay healthier for longer;
- Residents are well connected in the community;
- Residents live independently for longer;
- Our residents will be more active; and,
- Residents have choice and control over the way their services are received.

Progress:

5.49 We are very pleased with the continued strong performance in the measures for this outcome which are the result of hard work across teams in Adults Services and Public Health, working closely with external providers and partners. These positive trends demonstrate our commitment to supporting healthier and more independent lives for our adults.

Focus on improvement:

5.50 There were 141 permanent care home admissions (65+) in Q1 which pushed this KPI into 'Amber'. This is expected due to the current domiciliary care market. There is difficulty commissioning and providing domiciliary care countywide due to lack of provision, therefore leading to a slightly higher number than normal of admissions to care homes.

5.51 For 'Successful treatments - alcohol (%)' – whilst the target was missed, performance improved in Q1. The service works with some of our most disadvantaged residents and continues to experience very high demand for alcohol treatment. Public Health continues to work closely with the service to identify ways of improving performance while ensuring patient safety and addressing inequality.

Further development of measures

5.52 We will continue to develop new and better ways to measure how we are progressing on tackling inequalities, including through new questions in our Residents Survey.

**All adults living well, regardless of age, background, illness or disability –
 Quarter 1 2023/24**

	Measure	Target	Q1 22/23	Q2 22/23	Q3 22/23	Q4 22/23	Q1 23/24
1	Social Care related quality of life (score out of 24)	19.1	-	-	19.7	-	
2	Care plans reviewed annually (%)	98.5	96.1	94.8	94.2	94.6	96.5
3	Effectiveness of Reablement/Rehabilitation (%)	88	88.7	91.0	92.1	90.8	90.6
4	Providers rated by CQC as outstanding or good (%)	84.3	84.9	83.6	84.8	88.2	86.7
5	Indicative personal budget (%)	95	91.8	92.1	92.1	94.1	91.6
6	Adults with learning disabilities living at home/with family (%)	83	84.8	84.7	84.9	86.1	86.3
7	Admissions to residential/nursing 18-64 (per 100k population)	12.5	11.4	10.3	8.7	14.2	10.9
8	Admissions to residential/nursing 65+ (per 100k population)	654.9	577.6	538.8	625.6	677.2	685.8
9	Adults with learning disabilities in employment (%)	5	4.2	4.3	4.5	4.7	4.7
10	Successful treatments – alcohol (%)	32	26.3	24.4	26.6	28.7	29.98

	Measure	Target	Q1 22/23	Q2 22/23	Q3 22/23	Q4 22/23	Q1 23/24
11	Successful treatments - non-opiates (%)	21	27.8	28.6	27.3	29.1	26.8
12	Successful treatments – opiates (%)	3	2.9	2.7	3.5	3.5	3.1

Outcome (iv):

5.53 **Residents have the building blocks of a good life** - almost every aspect of our lives impacts on how well and how long we live. This includes our income, jobs, homes, access to education and public transport and whether we experience poverty or discrimination. To create a county where everyone can thrive, we need all of these building blocks in place.

5.54 In this outcome, we are working to achieve the following impacts:

- The resident's voice (insights) will be heard;
- Residents are more financially secure; and,
- There are good employment opportunities.

Progress:

5.55 The measures of support to households set out in ‘Outcome 1’ are equally relevant to this outcome. The impressive number of referrals made to Communities Together, which outperformed the target by more than 400 as well as grants to vulnerable families (just under £422k in Q1)) underlines the Council's firm commitment to supporting households in challenging times.

Further development of measures

5.56 We will continue to develop new and better ways to measure how we are progressing on tackling inequalities, including through new questions in our Residents Survey.

Residents have the building blocks of a good life – Quarter 1 2023/24

	Measure	Target	Q1 22/23	Q2 22/23	Q3 22/23	Q4 22/23	Q1 23/24
1	Number of referrals in to NCT (#)	1,950 (150 per week)	2,258	3,349	3,044	3,182	2,363

2	Grant funding distributed to vulnerable households (£)	tbc	£1,800,521	£659,453	£1,100,479	£1,238,257	£421,962
3	Total awards to vulnerable households (#)	tbc	15,693	20,293	21,609	35,254	12,624

Driving Economic Growth

5.57 We want to see everyone can benefit from a strong and sustainable economy. There are significant opportunities for growth right across our diverse and rich county and harnessing these opportunities will support our communities to thrive. We want Northumberland to be a great place to live with opportunities for all of our residents, whether they live in our countryside or within one of our busy towns.

Outcome (i):

5.58 **Thriving places and culture** - Northumberland has vibrant and distinctive communities, villages and towns that are built upon a rich cultural heritage and an outstanding natural environment. Continuing to support the vibrancy of our county through investment will bring new cultural, leisure, environment and economic benefits to communities. We know that housing affordability is a challenge in many parts of our county and by continuing to invest in decent, affordable homes we will ensure there is a good mix of housing options to meet the broad needs of our residents. Our residents tell us how important their neighbourhoods are, and we want them to enjoy where they live, with clean, well maintained and safe neighbourhoods.

Impacts:

5.59 In this outcome, we are working to achieve the following impacts:

- There are more affordable housing options across the county;
- Neighbourhoods are safe, clean and well maintained;
- Regenerated town centres in Blyth and Ashington;
- Plans for Town Investment Plans across the county through the Borderlands Town Programme;
- Improved walking and cycle ways;
- Low carbon heating solutions are available for residents and businesses; and,
- Increased business investment and growth.

Progress:

5.60 As in Q4 last year, performance across key measures show neighbourhoods are clean and tidy, where fly tipping issues are dealt with swiftly and more people have access to high-quality parks.

5.61 Our excellent Fire and Rescue Service continues to make our neighbourhoods safe places and their key measures reflect a service which is making our neighbourhoods safe from harm, alongside our Public Protection teams.

Focus on improvement:

5.62 Whilst it was positive that we exceeded our target on net additional homes, we missed our target for 'net affordable homes' and this continues to be a key area of focus for improvement in the coming year.

Further development of measures

5.63 We propose to use new data from our Residents Survey to measure progress on this outcome, including how satisfied residents are with their local area.

Thriving places and culture – summary of outturn 2022/23

	Measure	Target	Q1 22/23	Q2 22/23	Q3 22/23	Q4 22/23	Q1 23/24
1	Street cleanliness - Detritus (% of areas surveyed)	8	8.9	7.67	6.6	-	6.5
2	Street cleanliness - Dog Fouling (% of areas surveyed)	1	0	0.4	0	-	0
3	Street Cleanliness - Litter (% of areas surveyed)	5	3.3	1.2	1.7	-	2.4
4	Green Flag status parks (#)	11	-	-	-	-	12
5	Fly tips removed in 3d (%)	95	98.4	98	98	98	98.6
6	Net additional homes (#) Annual	614	-	-	-	1592	-
7	Net affordable homes provided (# pa) Annual	374	-	-	-	122	-
8	Outcome of fire safety inspections expressed by action taken as a result of the inspection (%)	96	95.3	99.3	97.7	97.7	99.2

	Measure	Target	Q1 22/23	Q2 22/23	Q3 22/23	Q4 22/23	Q1 23/24
9	Time taken to answer the 999 call by Fire Control (%)	95	96.7	96	99	96.3	96.7
10	Accidental Dwelling Fires (#)	57	36	22	34	33	29
11	Deliberate Primary Fire (#)	66	33	49	24	22	38
12	Rogue Trader complaints and interventions (%)	95	100	100	100	100	100

Outcome (ii):

5.64 **A diverse and resilient economy** - we will create the right conditions for sustainable, inclusive economic growth. This will involve working hard to support existing businesses to invest and grow, whilst also seeking to attract major investment to create jobs and opportunities for our residents and communities. We are home to over 100,000 employees and over 11,000 active businesses and we want to harness the assets of that employment and business 'base'. We know we have strengths in key sectors, with growth in the professional, scientific and, technical sectors and strong employment in manufacturing, retail, agriculture, tourism and health. We will build on these strengths and assets to drive growth and maximise the opportunities for our businesses and residents and support a more diverse and resilient economy across the county.

Impacts:

5.65 In this outcome, we are working to achieve the following impacts:

- A vibrant and diverse economy;
- A range of job opportunities available to residents;
- A strong Combined Authority with a clear and ambitious plan for inclusive economic growth;
- A thriving and sustainable visitor economy; and,
- A strong and sustainable rural economy.

Progress:

5.66 Our key economic measures, whilst showing some encouraging trends, continue to be shaped largely by challenging national and global economic trends over the past few years.

Focus on improvement:

- 5.67 We are continuing to invest in the regeneration across the county whilst building new infrastructure which will support economic growth.

Further development of measures

- 5.68 We are developing new economic measures which will give a better picture of the work of the Council in economic development and regeneration.

A diverse and vibrant economy – Quarter 1 2023/24

	Measure	Target	Q1 22/23	Q2 22/23	Q3 22/23	Q4 22/23	Q1 23/24
1	Employment Rate (%)	75.7	70.9	69.9	68.8	70.5	70.1
2	Weekly Pay – Residents *(£ Annual)	621.00	-	-	-	601.80	-
3	Weekly Pay – Workers *(£ Annual)	609.50	-	-	-	573.30	-

Outcome (iii):

- 5.69 **Skilled and aspirational people** - the people of Northumberland are our number one asset. Our entrepreneurial, hard-working and friendly communities make the county what it is. We know higher level and new skills are required to drive the growth of key sectors. We also know that post-Covid, we have seen changes to the way people want to work, with higher numbers of people leaving the labour market, meaning workforce pressures for some businesses. Ensuring we have programmes in place to support people and businesses is key in maintaining business stability and growth and helping our residents realise their potential.

Impacts:

- 5.70 In this outcome, we are working to achieve the following impacts:
- People have the skills to earn decent incomes;
 - Young people are clear on the opportunities available to them; and,
 - Businesses have the skilled and aspirational people they need to thrive and grow.

Progress:

- 5.71 In future quarterly reports, we plan to include numbers of residents entering employability and skills training. It is important to emphasise the organisation is well-

sighted on and able to respond to data and intelligence on skills, including through our Annual Economic Performance Roundup. The last 'Roundup' (Autumn 2022) stated:

- “In 2021, 7.6% of the population in Northumberland (aged 16-64) had no qualifications. This is better than the North of Tyne CA (8.6%), North East LEP (8.7%) and the region (8.2%).”
- “The ‘UK Commission for Employment and Skills Employer Skills Survey’ provides comprehensive analysis of the skills businesses need and identifies areas of skill deficiency. The last survey reported that 12% of Northumberland’s establishments had staff not fully proficient and 4% had a skills shortage vacancy. This was marginally better than the North of Tyne CA average (13% and 6%) and North East Local Enterprise Partnership (14% and 4%). The national average was 13% of establishments without fully proficient staff and 6% had a skills shortage vacancy.”

Further development of measures

5.72 In future reports, we will introduce, where possible, more up-to-date skills data, including numbers of residents entering employability and skills training.

Outcome (iv):

5.73 **A connected county** - the connectivity of Northumberland is key to driving future job growth, reducing carbon emissions and tackling inequalities. This means having well-maintained roads, good transport routes and public transport, broadband and mobile coverage. Responding to growth and the needs of the population, changing patterns of work, as well as ensuring connectivity for businesses, requires upgrades to transport and digital infrastructure.

Impacts:

5.74 In this outcome, we are working to achieve the following impacts:

- Northumberland's transport network is well maintained and connects people and business;
- Effective public transport is a viable and green option for residents;
- More residents and visitors use electric vehicles; and,
- Digital connectivity supports wellbeing and growth.

Progress:

5.75 In Quarter 1, we have met our targets on “Availability of Superfast broadband (%)” and ‘Take up of Superfast broadband (%)’ which shows a positive direction of travel in terms of ensuring our county is digitally connected.

A connected county – Quarter 1 2023/24

	Measure	Target	Q1 22/23	Q2 22/23	Q3 22/23	Q4 22/23	Q1 23/24
1	Availability of Superfast broadband (%)	95	95.1	95.4	95.4	95.63	95.7

	Measure	Target	Q1 22/23	Q2 22/23	Q3 22/23	Q4 22/23	Q1 23/24
2	Take up of Superfast broadband (%)	65	80.1	79.8	79.1	79.1	78.6

Further development of measures

- 5.76 In future reports, we will aim to introduce more measures of connectivity, particularly on public transport access and usage, which will give a better picture of the work of the Council on this outcome.

Climate Change

- 5.77 In achieving the three Corporate Priorities, we will ensure we pass a healthy, clean and sustainable environment to future generations. Each of our three Priorities has a part to play in responding to Climate Change. Climate Change threatens to disproportionately affect our poorest areas, and climate policies which are too burdensome for the poorest in society could have an unwelcome effect on inequality. Net Zero is the growth opportunity of the 21st Century. Northumberland can get a huge boost from the low carbon economy, and we are already creating the foundations as we work to become carbon neutral.

- 5.78 Updated data for 2023-24 on the following measures will be reported in later quarters:

- Free Tree Planting Scheme (Number of Trees);
- Kerbside Glass Collection Scheme (tonnes of glass) Annual;
- NCC Carbon Dioxide Emission (tCO2) Biannual;
- NCC EV Fleet Replacement (# eligible vehicles) Annual.

6. Options open to Cabinet and reasons for the recommendations

- 6.1 As Cabinet is recommended to consider progress against the three Corporate Priorities as summarised in this report, there are no other options to consider.

7. Implications

Policy	This report supports delivery of all three priorities of the Corporate Plan.
Finance and value for money	Value for money is a priority for the Council. This Report contains no direct financial implications. The ongoing delivery of the Corporate Plan involves individual actions that may have financial implications which would form separate reports as these arise.

Legal	Whilst this report contains no immediate legal implications, the delivery of the individual actions within the Corporate Plan may have legal implications, which would form separate reports as these arise.
Procurement	N/A
Human resources	N/A
Property	N/A
The Equalities Act: is a full impact assessment required and attached?	No - not required at this point N/A
Risk assessment	None at this stage.
Crime and disorder	N/A
Customer considerations	N/A
Carbon reduction	Each of our three Priorities have an important a part to play in responding to Climate Change.
Health and wellbeing	N/A
Wards	(All Wards);

8. Background papers

Not applicable.

9. Links to other key reports already published

Corporate Plan 2023-26
 Corporate Plan Achievements Report March 2023
 Quarter 4 2023/24 Outturn Report

10. Author and Contact Details

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