

Agenda

Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Tuesday, 25 July 2023, 2.00 pm
County Hall, Worcester

All County Councillors are invited to attend and participate

This document can be provided in alternative formats such as Large Print, an audio recording or Braille; it can also be emailed as a Microsoft Word attachment. Please contact Scrutiny on telephone number 01905 844965 or by emailing scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk

DISCLOSING INTERESTS

There are now 2 types of interests:
'Disclosable pecuniary interests' and **'other disclosable interests'**

WHAT IS A 'DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST' (DPI)?

- Any **employment**, office, trade or vocation carried on for profit or gain
- **Sponsorship** by a 3rd party of your member or election expenses
- Any **contract** for goods, services or works between the Council and you, a firm where you are a partner/director, or company in which you hold shares
- Interests in **land** in Worcestershire (including licence to occupy for a month or longer)
- **Shares** etc (with either a total nominal value above £25,000 or 1% of the total issued share capital) in companies with a place of business or land in Worcestershire.

NB Your DPIs include the interests of your spouse/partner as well as you

WHAT MUST I DO WITH A DPI?

- **Register** it within 28 days and
- **Declare** it where you have a DPI in a matter at a particular meeting
 - you must **not participate** and you **must withdraw**.

NB It is a criminal offence to participate in matters in which you have a DPI

WHAT ABOUT 'OTHER DISCLOSABLE INTERESTS'?

- No need to register them but
- You must **declare** them at a particular meeting where:
 - You/your family/person or body with whom you are associated have a **pecuniary interest** in or **close connection** with the matter under discussion.

WHAT ABOUT MEMBERSHIP OF ANOTHER AUTHORITY OR PUBLIC BODY?

You will not normally even need to declare this as an interest. The only exception is where the conflict of interest is so significant it is seen as likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.

DO I HAVE TO WITHDRAW IF I HAVE A DISCLOSABLE INTEREST WHICH ISN'T A DPI?

Not normally. You must withdraw only if it:

- affects your **pecuniary interests** **OR** relates to a **planning or regulatory** matter
- **AND** it is seen as likely to **prejudice your judgement** of the public interest.

DON'T FORGET

- If you have a disclosable interest at a meeting you must **disclose both its existence and nature** – 'as noted/recorded' is insufficient
- **Declarations must relate to specific business** on the agenda
 - General scattergun declarations are not needed and achieve little
- Breaches of most of the **DPI provisions** are now **criminal offences** which may be referred to the police which can on conviction by a court lead to fines up to £5,000 and disqualification up to 5 years
- Formal **dispensation** in respect of interests can be sought in appropriate cases.

Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel Tuesday, 25 July 2023, 2.00 pm, County Hall, Worcester

Membership

Councillors:

Cllr Emma Stokes (Chairman), Cllr Emma Marshall (Vice Chairman), Cllr Laura Gretton, Cllr Peter Griffiths, Cllr Natalie McVey, Cllr James Stanley, Cllr Richard Udall, Cllr Craig Warhurst and Vacancy

Agenda

Item No	Subject	Page No
1	Apologies and Welcome	
2	Declarations of Interest and of any Party Whip	
3	Public Participation Members of the public wishing to take part should notify the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance in writing or by e-mail indicating both the nature and content of their proposed participation no later than 9am on the working day before the meeting (in this case 24 July 2023). Further details are available on the Council's website. Enquiries can also be made through the telephone number/e-mail address listed in this agenda and on the website.	
4	Confirmation of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting Previously circulated	
5	Performance and 2022/23 Year End Budget Monitoring Indicative Timing 2:05 – 2:40pm	1 - 26
6	Update on Developments Relating to the Power BI Project Indicative Timing 2:40 – 3:20pm	27 - 32
7	Web Redevelopment Project Indicative Timing 3:20 – 3:50pm	33 - 42
8	Update Report: Registration of Deaths Within Five Days (and Out of Hours Registration) Indicative Timing 3:50 – 4:10pm	43 - 46
9	Work Programme Indicative Timing 4:10 – 4:15pm	47 - 52

Agenda produced and published by the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance, County Hall, Spetchley Road, Worcester WR5 2NP. To obtain further information or hard copies of this agenda, please contact Emma James / Jo Weston 01905 844964 / 01905 844965 email: scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk

All the above reports and supporting information can be accessed via the [Council's Website](#)

Date of Issue: Monday, 17 July 2023

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NOTES

Webcasting

Members of the Panel are reminded that meetings of the Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel are Webcast on the Internet and will be stored electronically and accessible through the Council's Website. Members of the public are informed that if they attend this meeting their images and speech may be captured by the recording equipment used for the Webcast and may also be stored electronically and accessible through the Council's Website

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 25 JULY 2023

PERFORMANCE AND 2022/23 YEAR END BUDGET MONITORING

Summary

1. The Panel will be updated on performance and financial information for services relating to Commercial and Change, and Community Services.
2. The Cabinet Members with Responsibility for Communities and for Corporate Services and Communication, the Strategic Director of Commercial and Change, the Strategic Director for People, the Assistant Director for Communities and the Deputy Chief Finance Officer have been invited to attend the meeting in order to respond to any queries from Panel Members.

Performance Information

3. Attached at Appendix 1 is a performance report for Quarter 4 (January to March 2023). It covers the performance indicators from the Directorate and corporate level and other management information (as appropriate) which relate to services relevant to this Scrutiny Panel's remit.
4. A summary of the performance information is also provided by a Power BI report. The link to the Power BI Summary report can be found here [Our performance | Worcestershire County Council](#)
5. The Scrutiny Panels consider this information on a quarterly basis and then report by exception to the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board (OSPB) any suggestions for further scrutiny or areas of concern.

Financial Information

6. The Panel also receives in-year budget information. The information provided is for Outturn Period 12 and is attached in the form of presentation slides at Appendix 2.

Purpose of the Meeting

7. Following discussion of the information provided, the Scrutiny Panel is asked to determine:
 - any comments to highlight to the Cabinet Members at the meeting and/or to Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board at its meeting on 26 July 2023.
 - whether any further information or scrutiny on a particular topic is required.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Performance Report for Quarter 4 (January to March 2023)

Appendix 2 – Budget Monitoring Information for Outturn Period 12 2022/23.

Contact Points

Emma James / Jo Weston, Overview and Scrutiny Officers, Tel: 01905 844964/ 844965

Email: scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk

Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- Agendas and minutes of the Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 28 March 2023, 13 July and 17 March 2022, 8 November, 24 September and 20 July 2021
- Agendas and minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board on 28 April, 29 March and 30 January 2023, 7 December, 29 September, 20 July and 23 March 2022

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.](#)

Scrutiny Report Corporate & Communities 2022/2023 Quarter 4

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Registration and Coroner's

Birth registration appointments within 5 working days

RAG: Green

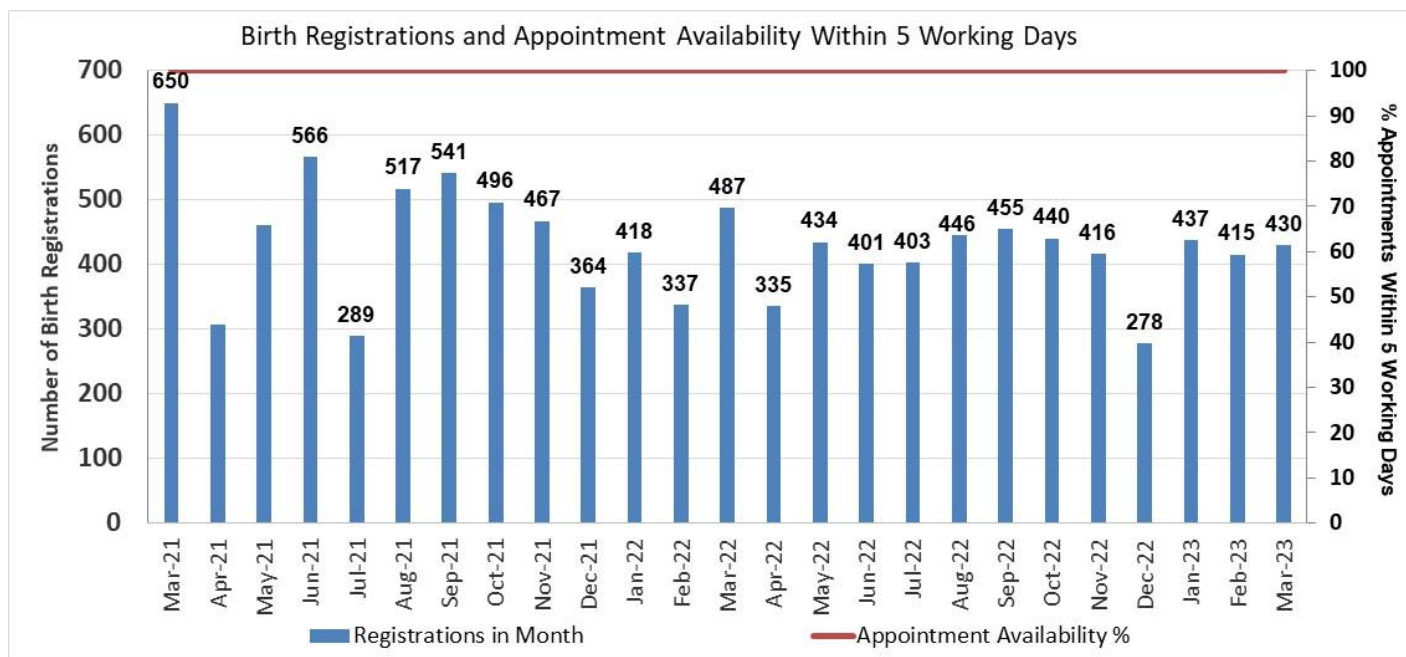
Direction of Travel: No Noticeable Change

Performance Details: Anyone contacting the service from January to March 2023 to register a birth was offered a convenient appointment within 5 working days. Birth registrations in the last quarter of the financial year totalled 1,282, up 40 (3.2%) compared with the 1,242 registered in the same quarter of 2022.

Current Activity: Although there is currently a need to prioritise death registration appointments, birth-registration appointments are available at all offices, with evening opening on one night a week increasing diary capacity. Such measures should help ensure that anyone contacting the service to register a birth can be offered a convenient appointment within 5 working days.

Future Activity: The service will follow all national guidelines in respect of the registration of births. Residents will be kept informed of any changes to those and any alterations to opening times at any of the county's offices via the website, social media, and local media.

Graph: Number of Birth Registrations and Percentage Appointment Availability Within 5 Working Days



Death registration appointments within 2 working days

RAG: Green

Direction of Travel: No noticeable change

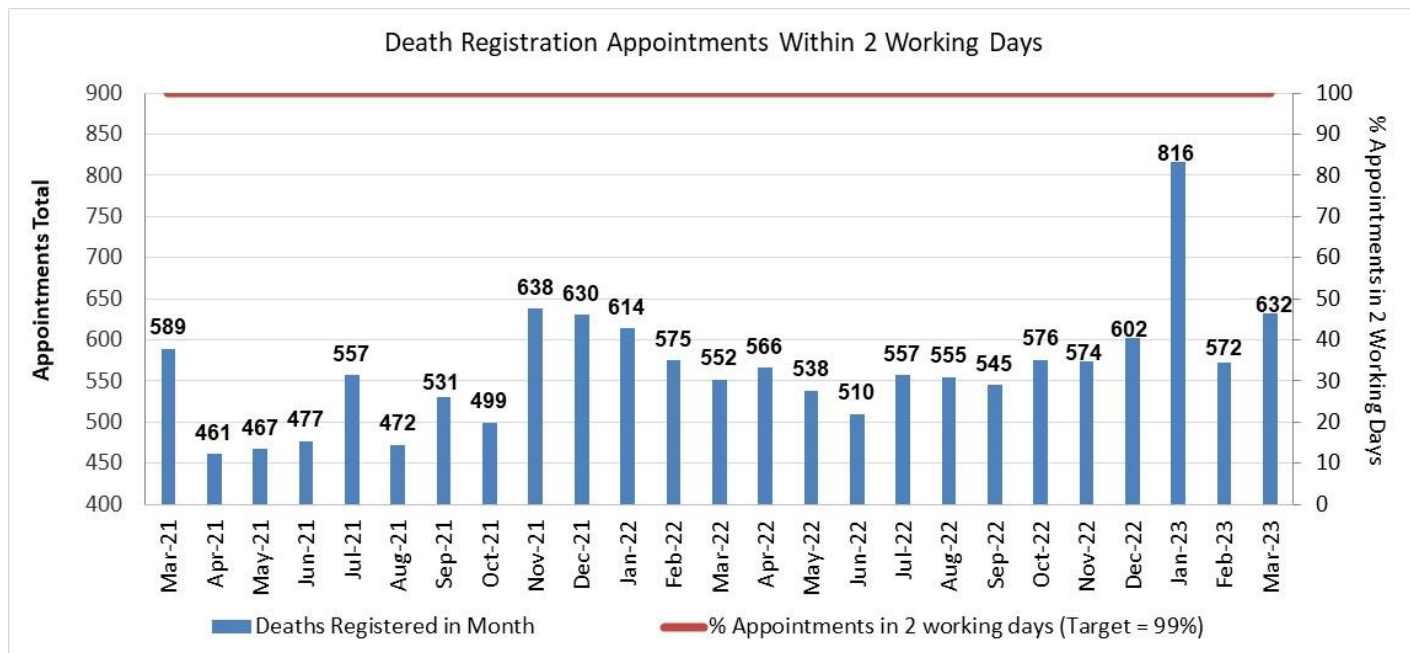
Performance Details: During February and March, additional staff were used and calendars were once again managed to meet the demand for death registration appointments. This is in good part a result of delays receiving Medical Cause of Death Certificates (MCCDs) from the Medical Examiner or surgeries. Demand for appointments is not focussed on one office. Despite the additional demands, full availability of appointments was maintained throughout the last quarter of the financial year and, indeed, during 2022/2023 a whole.

Current Activity: Additional staff are used as required and appointment diaries continue to be monitored and managed to maximise the number of appointments. It is still proving a challenge to deal with the backlog, however. There continue to be instances of paperwork being received from GPs on or after the fourth day following a death.

Current actions to address this are engagement with Practice Managers to try to speed up the processing of paperwork and a reminder to staff to contact informants about deaths of which the service is aware.

Future Activity: Current arrangements will be reviewed and altered if required. Changes to the ME service are likely to create future pressure points. It is intended that all GP surgeries will be on-line with the scheme by the end of January 2023 preparatory to it becoming statutory sometime after the start of April this year. The number of deaths to be registered is likely to drop during the spring and summer.

Graph: Number of Death Registration Appointments and Percentage of Availability of Appointments



Registration of deaths within 5 days

RAG: Red

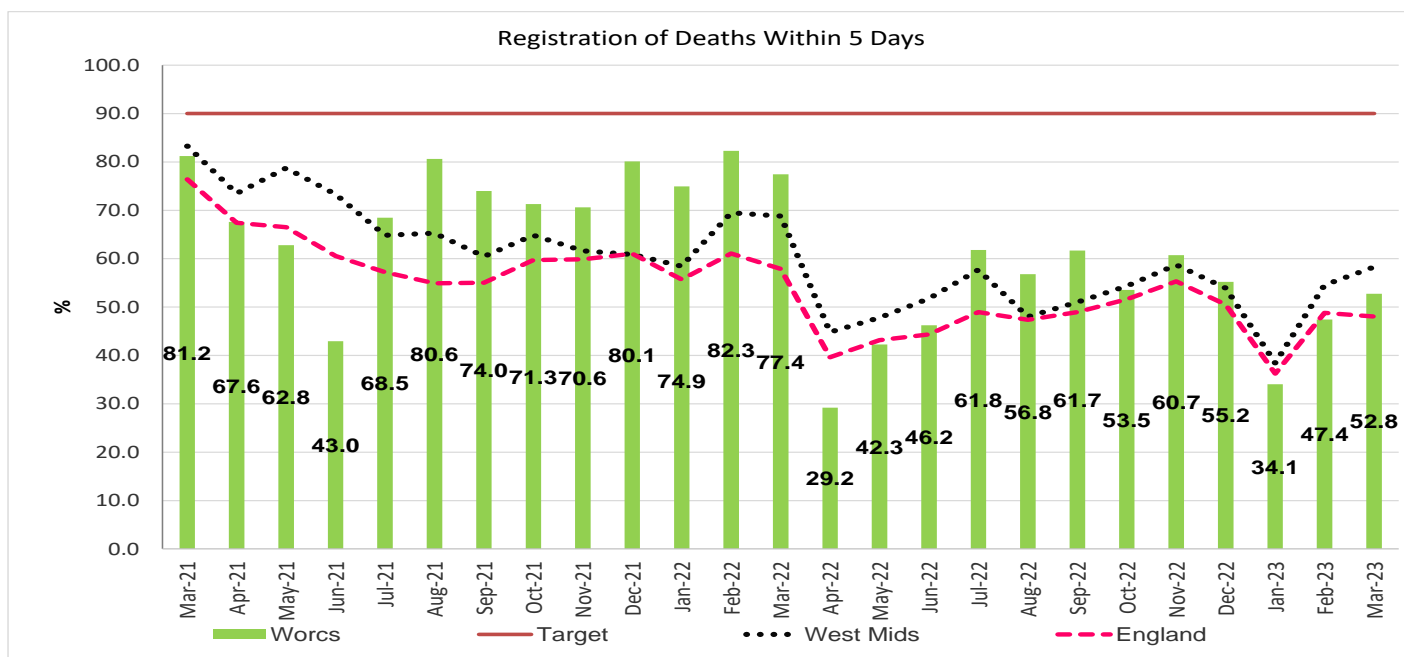
Direction of Travel: Improving

Performance Details: GP surgeries' work with the office of the local Medical Examiner continues to lengthen the process of signing off paperwork to enable deaths to be registered. In March, 201 (52.8%) of the 381 deaths registered in Worcestershire were within 5 days, the percentage being the highest for a calendar-month since December's 55.2%. The equivalent March percentages for West Midlands and England were, respectively, 58.3% and 48%. Over the course of the 2022/2023 financial year, Worcestershire's unadjusted performance was 49.5%, below the West Midlands out-turn (51.3%), but above the overall figure for England, which was 46.7%.

Current Activity: Appointments are being offered as quickly as possible, but even with increased availability of appointments, it is still a challenge to deal with the backlog. Improvement may come if, as is customary, the number of deaths to be registered drops as winter turns to spring. There continue to be instances of paperwork being received from GPs on or after the fourth day following a death. There is ongoing engagement with GPs in Worcestershire about this.

Future Activity: The role of Medical Examiner becomes statutory later this year. It is anticipated that future months' local, regional, and national percentages will remain at levels lower than those seen in previous years. Monitoring of local, regional and national percentages will help to gauge the impact of this major procedural change.

Graph: Percentage of Deaths Registered in 5 Working Days



Communications and Consumer Relations

Increasing staff engagement

RAG: Green

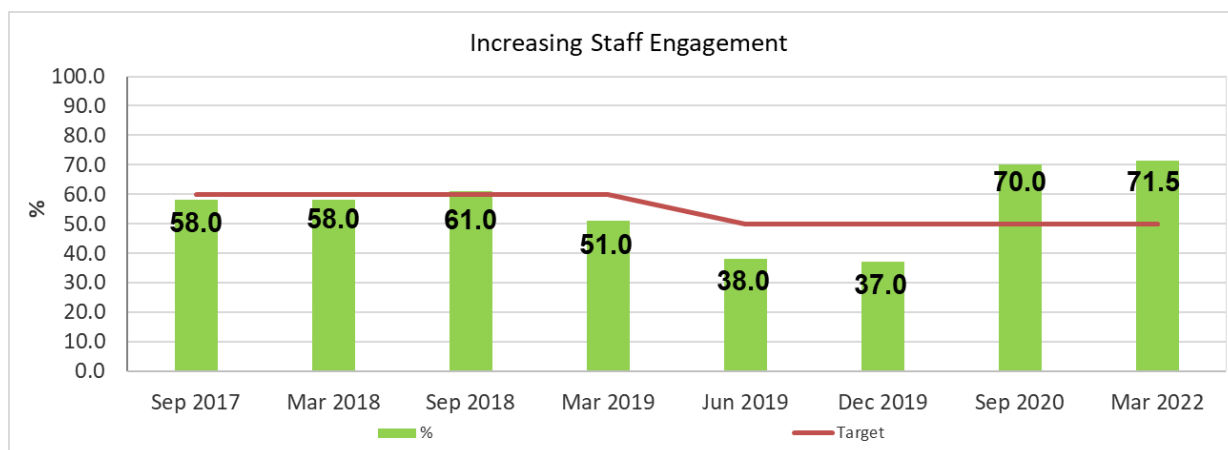
Direction of Travel: Improving

Performance Details: There was an extended gap following the September 2020 survey due to the County Council's COVID-19 response. The 2022 staff survey, which ran from 7th February to 7th March inclusive, had a 71.5% response rate, the best to date. The previous-highest response rate was 70% for September 2020's survey. Staff have been thanked for participating. A shorter survey (Winter Pulse) was then carried out over the course of a week in early-December 2022. Its focus was on wellbeing, equality, and inclusion. The completion rate (52%) is the highest ever for a WCC Pulse Survey.

Current Activity: Workforce updates to continue to be provided via Staff Briefings and regular emails. These will provide progress reports about the actions put in place in response to the themes raised in the 2022 survey, aligned to the Workforce Strategy. Promotion of Your Voice 2023 is taking place during January and February.

Future Activity: Following completion of the 2023 Survey and confirmation of the results, an action plan will be devised.

Graph: Percentage of Staff That Completed the Staff Survey



HR, ICT and Corporate Information Governance Team

Employees - Actual Full-Time Equivalents

RAG: N/A

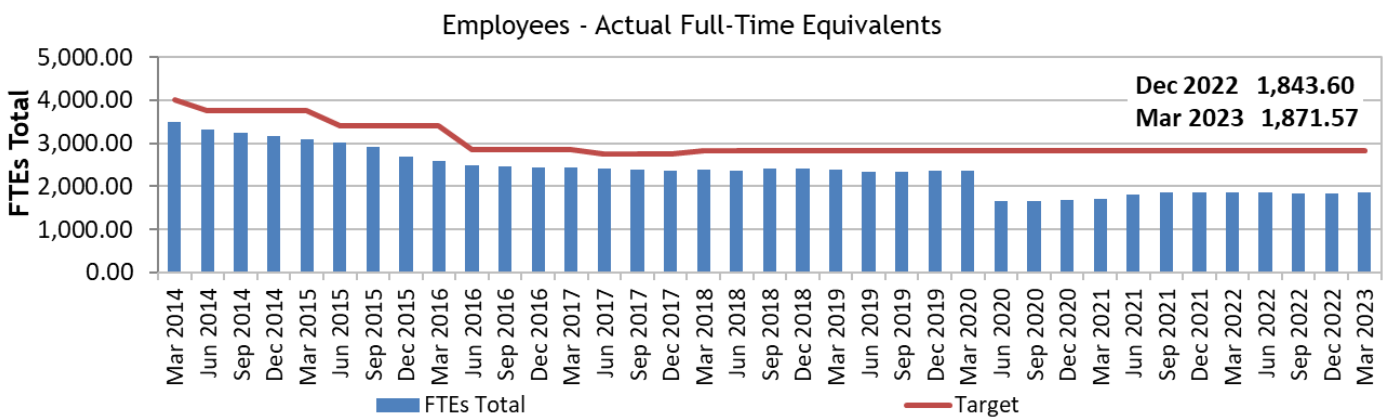
Direction of Travel: N/A

Performance Details: FTEs at the end of the fourth quarter of 2022/2023 equated to 1,871.57 up 1.5% from 1,843.60 at the end of December and 1.2% higher than at the end of March 2022 (1,848.84). Changes in headcount from quarter to quarter reflect some of the initiatives active at any one time (e.g., TUPE in/out, recruitment drives).

Current Activity: Confirmed data for each quarter is normally available towards the end of the first month of the following quarter.

Future Activity:

Graph: Number of Employees- Actual Full-Time Equivalents by Quarter



Sickness Rates (Cumulative)

RAG: Red

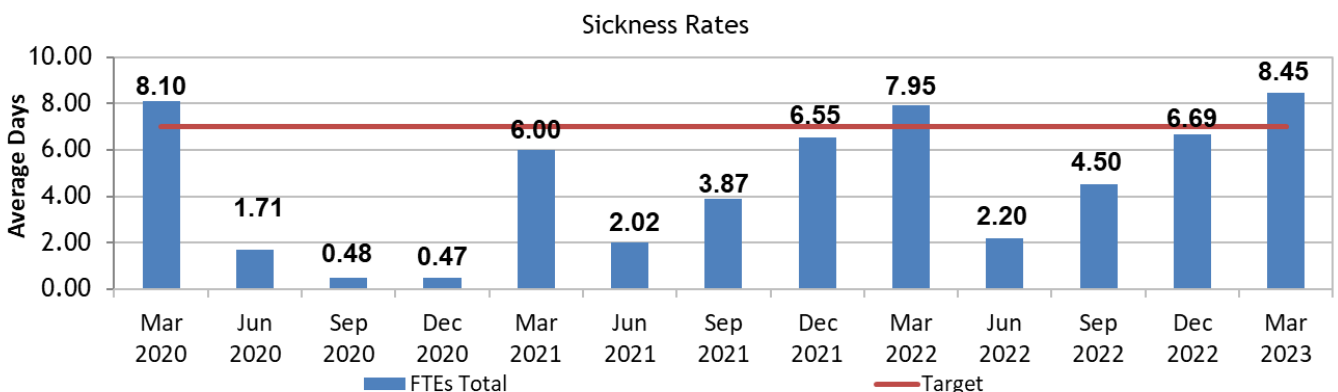
Direction of Travel: Deteriorating

Performance Details: At the end of quarter 4 of 2022/2023, the average days sick per person (FTE) was 8.45, up from 7.95 at the end of year 2021/2022. The equivalent figure at the end of 2020/2021 was 6.00; at the end of 2019/2020 it was 8.10. This is the highest end of year sickness figure since 2018 which was 8.71 days.

Current Activity: Monitoring and management of sickness absence continues. Confirmed data for each quarter is normally available towards the end of the first month of the following quarter.

Future Activity:

Graph: Average Days Sick per FTE (Full Time Equivalents) Cumulative



Days lost through long-term sickness

RAG: N/A

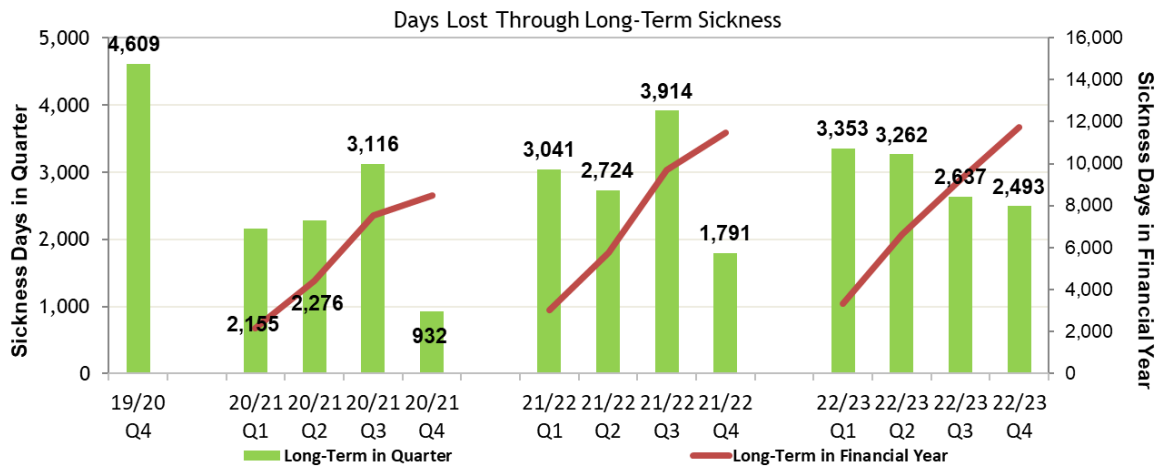
Direction of Travel: N/A

Performance Details: Long-term absences are episodes of 21 or more calendar days. At the end of 2022/2023 long-term absences totalled 11,745 days, this is an increase when compared to total days absent in 2021/2022 which totalled 11,469 days. During Q4 (standalone) this equated to 2,493 days up 28.2% compared with the figure for the same period in 2021/2022 (1,791).

Current Activity: Monitoring and management of sickness absence continues. Confirmed data for each quarter is normally available towards the end of the first month of the following quarter.

Future Activity:

Graph: Total Days Lost Through Long-Term Sickness



Days lost through short-term sickness

RAG: N/A

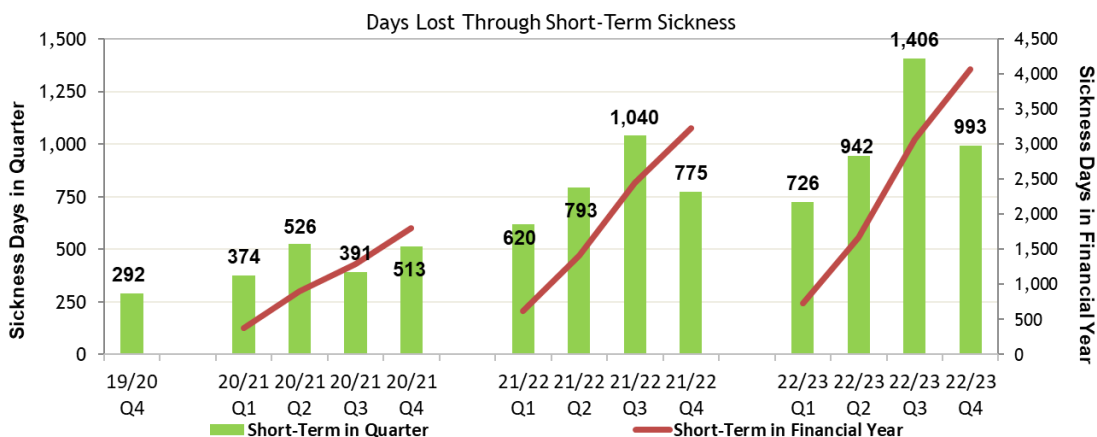
Direction of Travel: N/A

Performance Details: Short-term absences at the end of 22/23 totalled 4,067. This is an increase when compared to total days absent in 2021/2022 which totalled 3,226 days (an increase of 21%). During Q4 (standalone) this equated to 993 days lost to sickness up 22% compared with the figure for the same period in 2021/2022 (774.50 days).

Current Activity: Monitoring and management of sickness absence continues. Confirmed data for each quarter is normally available towards the end of the first month of the following quarter.

Future Activity:

Graph: Total Days Lost Through Short-Term Sickness



Staff turnover rate

RAG: N/A

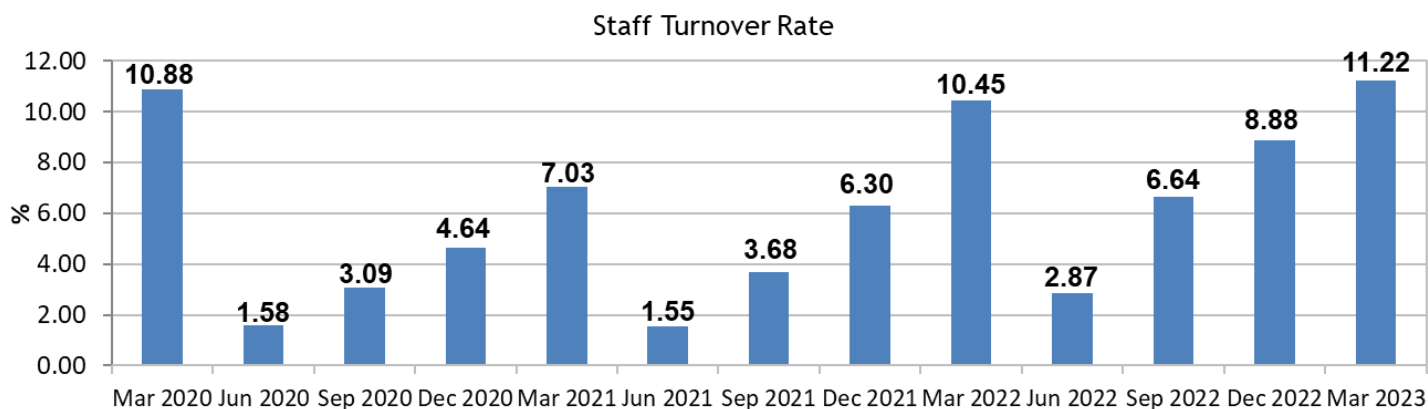
Direction of Travel: N/A

Performance Details: Leavers in the financial year as a percentage of the workforce. Turnover rate for 22/23 was 11.22%, this is the highest it has been since 2015/2016.

Current Activity:

Future Activity:

Graph: Turnover Rate



Cost of agency staff as a percentage of the total pay-bill

RAG: N/A

Direction of Travel: No Noticeable change

Performance Details: This relates to agency spend at each quarter-end as a percentage of the total pay bill. Since 1st October 2019, the figure has excluded WCF. 2022/2023's percentage on 31st March was 6%, down from 7% on 31st December. On 31st March last year, the figure was 7%

Current Activity:

Future Activity:

Graph: Agency Staff as a Percentage of Total Pay-Bill



Communities

Library Visits and Issues

RAG: No Status

Direction of Travel: Underlying trend for both visits and issues - Improving

Performance Details: The 2022/2023 visits total of 1,581,086 equated to 60.6% of the 2019/2020 total of 2,607,445. Visits in the last three months of 2022/2023 totalled 423,928, equivalent to 74.2% of the total for January to March 2020 (571,443). The latest-Libraries Connected national comparator data (January's) indicated physical book-borrowing was at 81% of the 2019/2020 level. Worcestershire's 2022/2023 issues total of 1,544,994 equated to 78.6% of the total for 2019/2020, which was 1,966,257.

Current Activity: Libraries continue to provide the full range of on-site services. These include meetings of social-connecting groups, children's activities, adult learning courses, digital support, and employability sessions. Libraries are home to Worcestershire Business & Intellectual Property Centre, giving free advice, information, and resources to businesses. Monitoring of the Libraries Unlocked scheme at Droitwich and Stourport continues. This visits, issues, and use of the buildings by community groups. Proposals for Phase 2 of the scheme are being developed.

Future Activity: Actions to increase library usage will include the Libraries Unlocked schemes. Local events and activities will be promoted. These will include a series of free-to-attend Cost of Living Fairs to be held in late-January and early-February. These will provide residents with information and advice from partner organisations to help with the rising cost of living and enable them to find out more about the services offered by Worcestershire's libraries, which also form part of the Warm Welcome initiative. The service's opt-in e-mail service will keep members better informed about new library services and future plans, as well as providing a feedback facility. Customer Voice Survey responses will also help inform planning and promotional activities.

Graph: Number of Visits and Issues per Month



Library Visits: Library-by-library totals

Library	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
Alvechurch	57,788	5,781	40,703	48,694
Bewdley	52,404	4,730	39,798	49,727
Broadway	18,229	1,446	4,277	7,714
Bromsgrove	165,219	15,014	73,555	112,595
Catshill	10,403	389	1,901	3,907
County Mobile	7,121	704	3,464	4,025
Droitwich	124,184	16,757	60,859	71,971

Evesham	275,958	12,760	60,991	101,163
Hagley	31,304	3,836	19,795	27,075
Hive	655,789	66,680	251,197	410,125
Kidderminster	259,564	39,099	119,234	135,555
Malvern	173,601	23,267	97,052	133,290
Martley	787	0	77	94
Pershore	88,743	10,187	42,437	55,723
Redditch	269,777	39,008	143,502	144,857
Rubery	36,500	2,893	19,297	25,814
St John's	63,565	9,503	26,951	40,364
Stourport	101,761	8,977	53,226	78,682
Tenbury	73,058	7,965	40,708	51,082
Upton	18,092	1,184	6,075	9,748
Warndon	33,118	2,448	20,682	21,760
Welland	729	0	38	130
Woodrow	11,036	1,834	13,938	18,238
Wythall	78,715	4,137	35,494	28,753
Totals	2,607,445	278,599	1,175,251	1,581,086

Library Issues: Library-by-library totals

Library	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
Alvechurch	47,407	11,510	39,006	43,670
Bewdley	44,509	11,359	36,726	41,339
Broadway	19,913	4,446	12,511	14,486
Bromsgrove	123,395	34,081	97,823	113,287
Catshill	9,789	1,678	6,189	7,985
County Mobile	22,858	4,431	16,322	17,063
Droitwich	114,182	33,474	89,599	94,409
E-Audiobooks	36,334	67,296	77,706	98,854
E-Books	32,139	72,830	62,950	67,936
E-Magazines	31,452	49,783	42,422	44,206
E-Newspapers	0	0	83,089	150,960
Evesham	121,662	29,086	86,096	97,657
Hagley	41,293	9,752	33,272	34,837
Hive	581,646	127,786	370,020	394,161
Kidderminster	126,283	29,435	88,568	100,777
Malvern	224,195	57,559	163,369	185,914
Martley	1,321	110	699	996
Pershore	80,568	22,809	63,075	68,633
Redditch	126,592	33,861	90,553	103,383
Rubery	30,723	6,407	23,773	25,584
St John's	59,183	16,657	44,886	47,534
Stourport	73,624	21,081	50,991	55,818
Tenbury	36,918	10,796	28,767	32,011
Upton	16,322	3,408	10,189	12,020
Warndon	27,305	5,714	18,678	18,740
Welland	1,849	249	698	1,189
Woodrow	12,979	2,023	9,746	11,001
Worcester Hub	5,780	890	1,477	2,503
Wythall	38,482	9,301	29,025	30,725
Totals	2,088,703	677,812	1,678,225	1,917,678

Library Issues: e-books, e-audio books, e-magazines, and e-newspapers

RAG: No Status

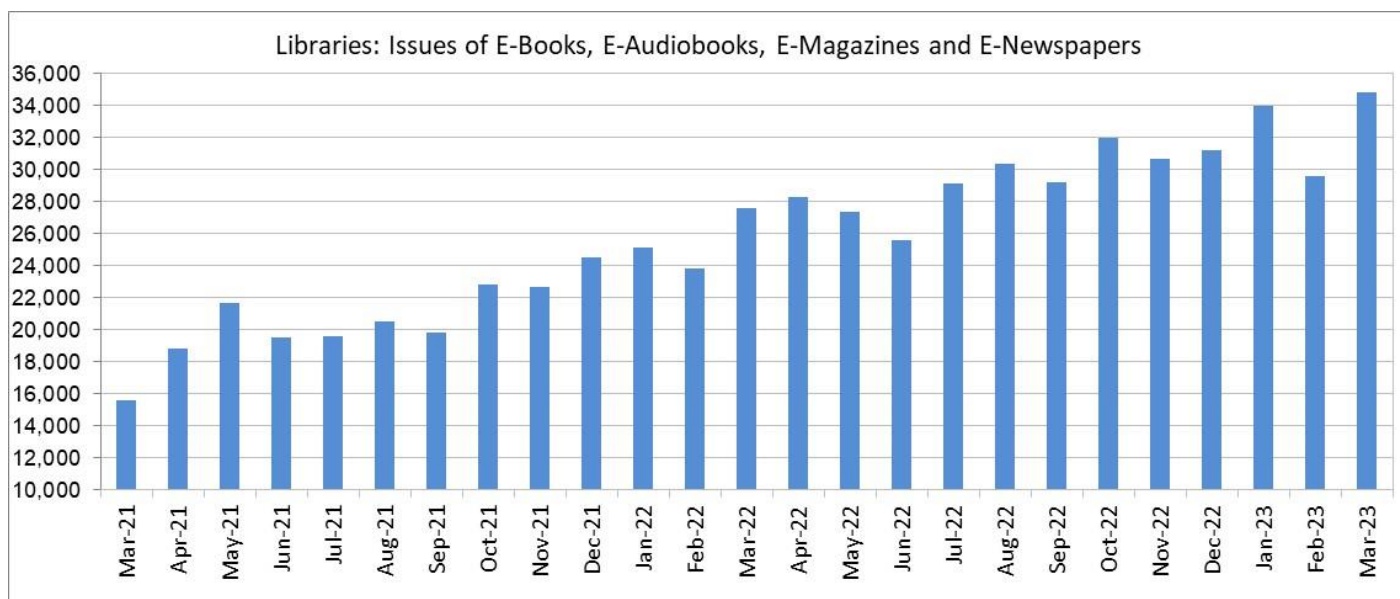
Direction of Travel: Improving

Performance Details: March's e-issues total of 34,807 is the highest ever calendar-month total, the previous-highest such figure having been January's 33,934. The total for the 2022/2023 financial year was 361,956, up 36% compared with the total for 2021/2022 (266,167), which was itself 40.2% higher than 2020/2021's 189,909. Of 2022/2023's total, 150,960 (41.7%) were of e-newspapers, 98,854 (27.3%) were of e-audiobooks, 67,936 (18.8%) were of e-books, and 44,206 (12.2%) were e-magazines issues.

Current Activity: Efforts continue to promote the e-library. These include setting up Borrowbox displays in libraries and highlighting on the Library Service website the Digital Library Hub, which provides a one-stop shop for e-services. Work is ongoing with the e-book and e-audiobook supplier to expand the range of titles and the number of available copies of already-held titles. Nationally, Libraries Connected is in discussions with publishers about libraries being given access to e-versions of the most-recent published titles.

Future Activity: Monitoring of e-issues and the number of active users (including new users) will continue as a means of tracking the appeal to residents of the e-collections and the effectiveness of promotional campaigns, as well as providing evidence to support any review discussions with the service providers (BorrowBox for e-books, Overdrive for e-magazines, Press Reader for e-papers).

Graph: Number of Issues of E-Books, E-Audiobooks and E-Magazines per month



Museum Visits

RAG: No Status

Direction of Travel: Improving

Performance Details: As is customary, County Museum was closed to the public in January. The museum's visits total for March was 1,291, its highest March total since 2019's 1,604 and 49 (3.9%) higher than March 2022's tally. Visits to County Museum in the 2022/2023 financial year totalled 21,927, up 18.5% compared with the total for 2021/2022 (18,506) and 12.4% greater than the 19,501 visits made in 2019/2020.

Current Activity: The museum's information leaflet is available in a variety of formats, including on-line. It details the partnership with Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust, providing details of all the buildings on the site, the grounds themselves, and the activities and live events the County Museum and the Trust are staging between them. Events in the first three months of this financial year include family crafts and trails activities spanning the school Easter holiday period, May bank-holiday event (including a 'Coronation Celebration' on the Monday of the long Coronation

bank-holiday weekend) and Superhero events on the Spring bank holiday Monday. Outreach visits to schools inside and outside the county's borders have been booked.

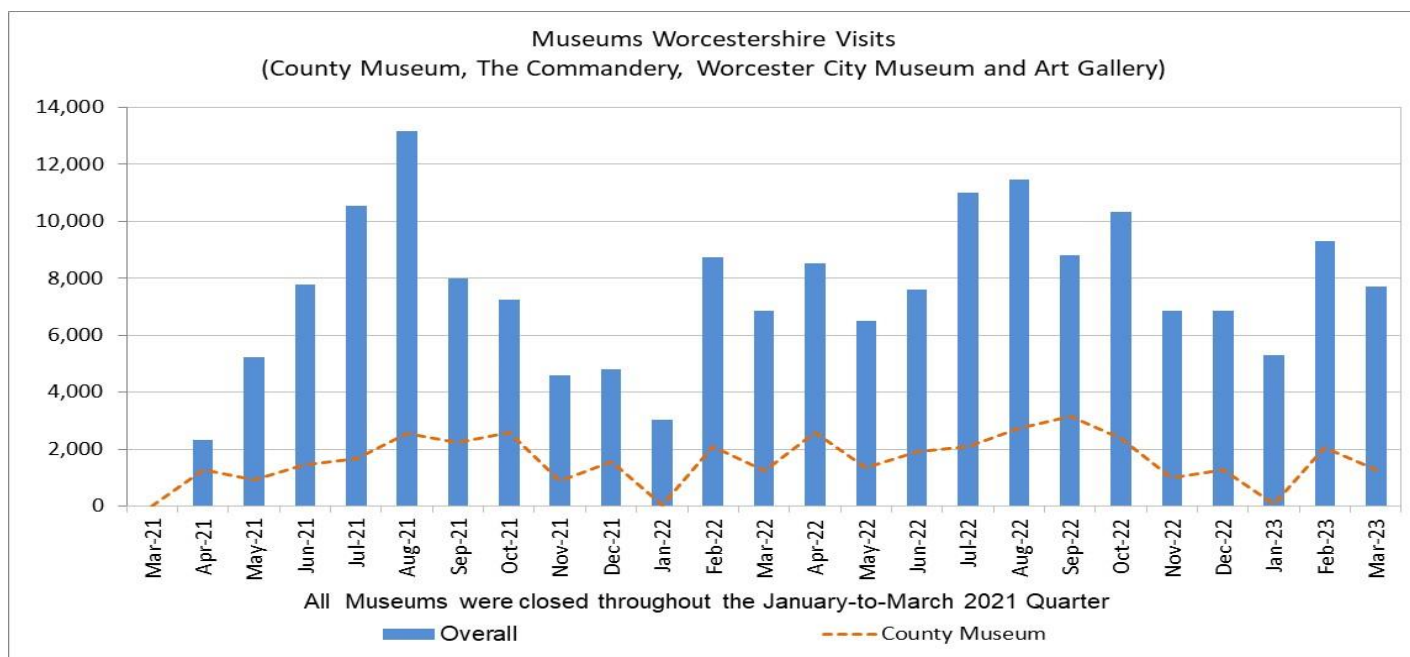
Future Activity: Work will continue with the Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust to further promote the whole site, accredited by the Visit England Visitor Attraction Quality Scheme for the high standard of the museum and visitor experience. Property Services is currently working with Museums Worcestershire to develop options for County Museum and the Collections Centre Store following the end of their leases at Hartlebury in 2026. Options are due to be presented to Joint Museums Committee in June and to County Council Cabinet in November.

County Museum Visits: Monthly totals

Month	Visits	Children's Visits
Jan 2018	406	363
Feb 2018	1,362	599
Mar 2018	757	388
Apr 2018	1,855	448
May 2018	2,215	446
Jun 2018	1,320	256
Jul 2018	1,910	364
Aug 2018	2,961	602
Sep 2018	2,247	220
Oct 2018	1,837	397
Nov 2018	1,377	574
Dec 2018	1,348	367
Jan 2019	112	80
Feb 2019	1,630	426
Mar 2019	1,604	236
Apr 2019	2,026	281
May 2019	2,575	416
Jun 2019	1,575	287
Jul 2019	1,589	317
Aug 2019	2,817	451
Sep 2019	2,551	100
Oct 2019	1,581	478
Nov 2019	987	313
Dec 2019	1,484	457
Jan 2020	60	52
Feb 2020	1,778	470
Mar 2020	478	115
Apr 2020	0	0
May 2020	0	0
Jun 2020	1,226	0
Jul 2020	756	106
Aug 2020	1,378	187
Sep 2020	937	22
Oct 2020	930	119
Nov 2020	44	4
Dec 2020	519	119
Jan 2021	0	0
Feb 2021	0	0
Mar 2021	0	0
Apr 2021	1,291	0
May 2021	930	71
Jun 2021	1,466	203
Jul 2021	1,677	241

Aug 2021	2,551	400
Sep 2021	2,247	118
Oct 2021	2,575	522
Nov 2021	869	303
Dec 2021	1,555	295
Jan 2022	26	22
Feb 2022	2,077	435
Mar 2022	1,242	126
Apr 2022	2,595	560
May 2022	1,342	171
Jun 2022	1,913	414
Jul 2022	2,091	355
Aug 2022	2,740	468
Sep 2022	3,151	139
Oct 2022	2,380	548
Nov 2022	996	361
Dec 2022	1,284	348
Jan 2023	83	73
Feb 2023	2,061	529
Mar 2023	1,291	236

Graph: Combined monthly totals for County Museum, The Commandery, and Worcester City Museum and Art Gallery by month



Countryside Standards Achieved

RAG: Quarter 3 – Green; 2022/2023 overall - Amber

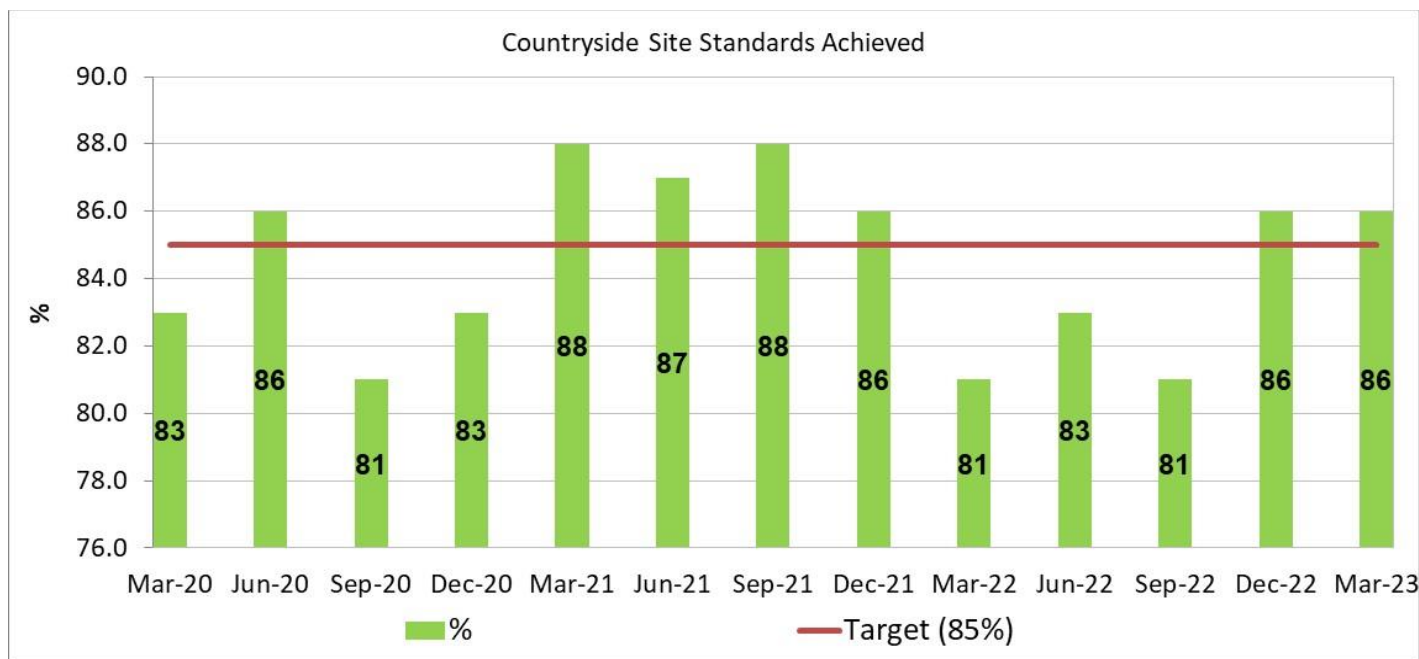
Direction of Travel: Improving

Performance Details: The average percentage rating for the Countryside Sites Standards indicator over the whole of the last financial year was an amber-rated 84%. The average rose from 83% at the end of December courtesy of an above-target quarter four out-turn of 86% (the target is 85%). The improvement over the last two quarters has been because the Greenspace Team has been restored to full capacity, facilitating the carrying out of extensive programmes of work to replace worn-out picnic benches and address other maintenance issues.

Current Activity: A lot of site furniture such as permanent picnic benches and signage is coming to the end of its life, the impact on furniture of weathering and normal levels of usage having been accelerated by increased usage during the COVID-19 pandemic. The regular programme of inspections, groundworks, and repairs should ensure signs and notices, buildings, site furniture, and trails are repaired and well-maintained.

Future Activity: The service will continue to promote each site's natural attractions and facilities and any events, activities or group meetings being staged. The schedule of regular inspections will identify any issues arising from increased usage, but any issues or concerns raised by visitors will be monitored and addressed as necessary. Site usage will increase as the days lengthen and the weather improves.

Graph: Countryside Site Standards Achieved



Bikeability – Children Trained in Level 2

RAG: No status.

Direction of Travel: Improving

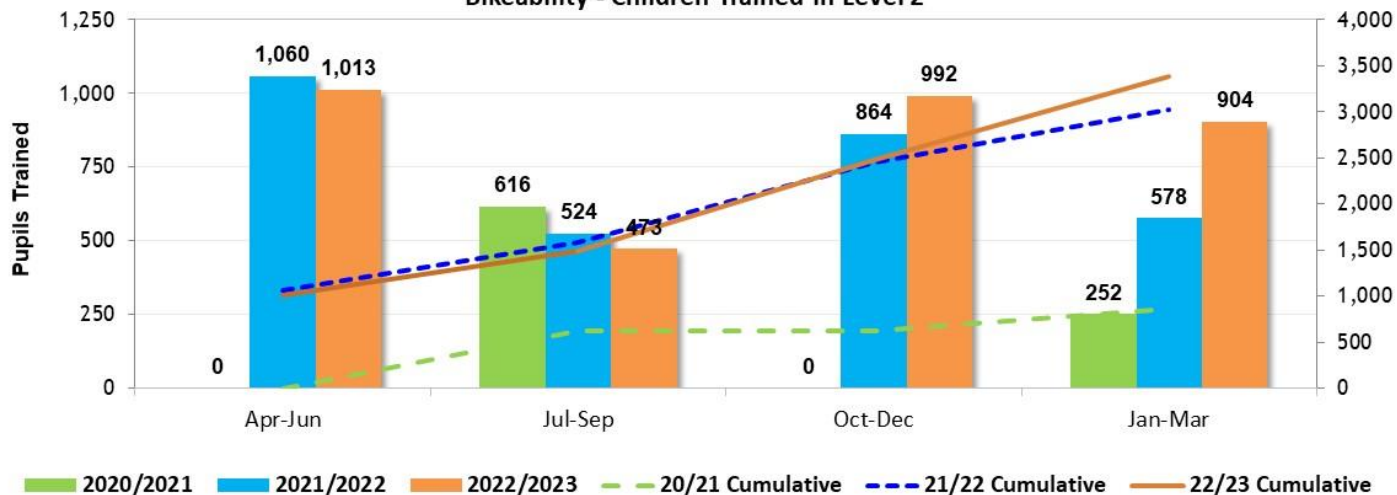
Performance Details: Level 2 training teaches how to cycle planned routes on minor roads, thereby offering a proper cycling experience. 904 pupils received Bikeability Level 2 training during the last quarter, an increase of 56.4% compared with the figure of 578 trained in the same January-to-March quarter in 2022. The final total for the 2022/2023 financial year was 3,382 an 11.8% increase on the total for the whole of the 2021/2022 financial year, which was 3,026.

Current Activity: Lockdown-related school closures impacted heavily on Bikeability training throughout the 2020/2021 year. Previously-vacant positions are now filled and new staff members have received required training.

Future Activity: The summer term is traditionally a period of high demand for training.

Graph: Children Trained in Bikeability Level 2

Bikeability - Children Trained in Level 2



Bikeability – Children Trained in Other Levels

RAG: No status.

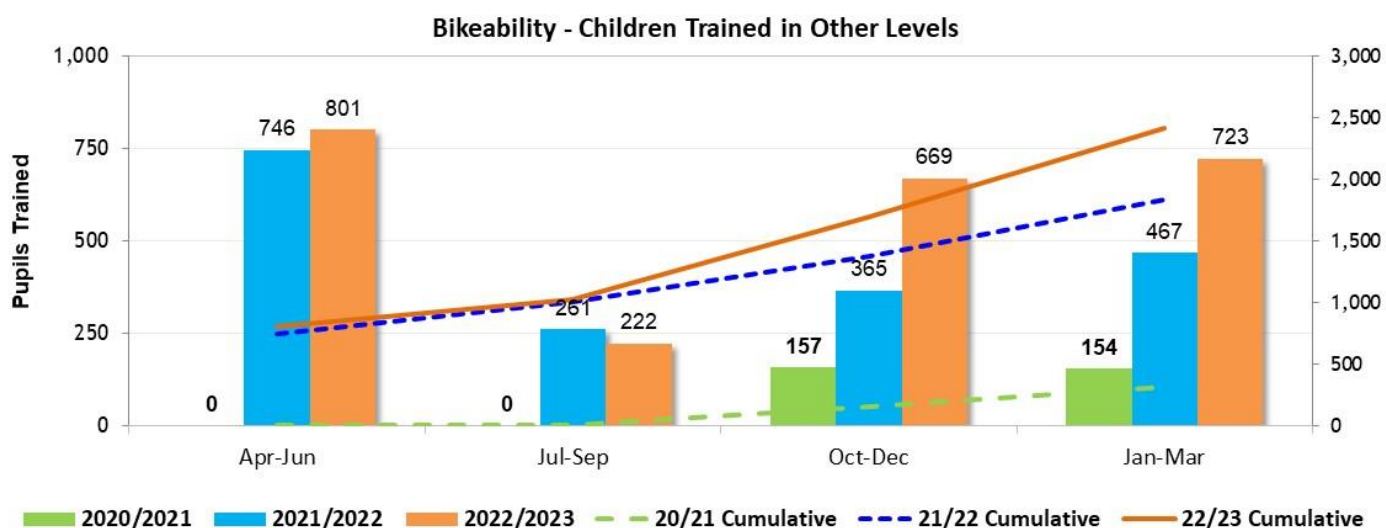
Direction of Travel: Improving

Performance Details: Level 1 acts as a gateway to cycling. Most children take part in Level 1 at school during Year 3 or 4. The more advanced course at Level 3 is usually most suited for children aged 11+. If the 2,415 pupils trained in Levels 1 and 3 are added to 2022/2023's Level 2 total, the financial year's pupils-trained figure was 5,797, an improvement of 932 (19.2%) compared with 2021/2022's 4,865.

Current Activity: During the last quarter of 2022/2023, there was a continuation of the improvement seen in previous quarters relative to 2020/2021 when the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown periods caused in-person training to be paused. Previously-vacant positions are now filled and new staff members have received required training.

Future Activity: It is likely that, as in previous years, the summer term will prove to be the peak period for training.

Graph: Children Trained in Bikeability Levels Other than Level 2



Finance - Revenue Budget Year-End Actuals and Previous Quarter-End Forecasts 2022/2023

COMMERCIAL AND CHANGE (COaCH)	2022/2023 Gross Budget Q4	2022/2023 Net Budget Q4	2022/2023 Year-end Actuals Q4	2022/2023 Actual Variance Q4	2022/2023 Forecast Variance Q3	2022/2023 Forecast Variance Q2	2022/2023 Forecast Variance Q1
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
COACH - Management	577	220	211	-9	-17	-56	0
Legal and Democratic Services	8,267	5,250	5,134	-116	57	38	55
Commercial Management	2,320	147	60	-87	-116	-37	0
Property Services	9,189	429	538	109	-334	-44	-55
Digital, IT and Customer Services	9,838	952	673	-279	-208	-58	0
Transformation & Change Team	2,570	688	545	-143	0	0	0
TOTAL COMMERCIAL & CHANGE	32,761	7,686	7,161	-525	-618	-157	0

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S UNIT	2022/2023 Gross Budget Q4	2022/2023 Net Budget Q4	2022/2023 Year-end Actuals Q4	2022/2023 Actual Variance Q4	2022/2023 Forecast Variance Q3	2022/2023 Forecast Variance Q2	2022/2023 Forecast Variance Q1
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Engagement & Communications	1,199	365	312	-53	-46	-4	0
Health & Safety	366	24	24	0	7	19	0
HR-Core	4,952	658	582	-76	-57	-39	0
Financial Services	5,575	1,948	1,167	-781	-238	-102	0
Chief Executive	387	387	385	-2	36	-3	-3
TOTAL CHIEF EXECUTIVE UNIT	12,479	3,382	2,470	-912	-298	-129	-3

COMMUNITIES	2022/2023 Gross Budget Q4	2022/2023 Net Budget Q4	2022/2023 Year-end Actuals Q4	2022/2023 Actual Variance Q4	2022/2023 Forecast Variance Q3	2022/2023 Forecast Variance Q2	2022/2023 Forecast Variance Q1
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Strategic Libraries	11,425	4,057	4,067	10	42	121	120
Museum Services	776	658	657	-1	19	0	-5
Archives & Archaeology	3,659	1,573	1,620	47	0	0	0
Greenspace & Gypsy Services	2,159	196	212	16	-37	2	1
Community Services Leadership Team	351	326	-11	-337	-370	-215	-116
Registration & Coroner	2,260	710	494	-216	100	-5	0
Public Analyst	69	2	2	0	0	0	0
Trading Standards	879	122	122	0	0	0	0
Communities and Partnerships	14,016	542	675	133	-101	-4	0
Adult Front Door	631	319	320	1	0	0	0
TOTAL COMMUNITIES	36,226	8,505	8,158	-347	-347	-101	0

Finance - Revenue Budget Year-End Actuals and Previous Quarter-End Forecasts 2021/2022

COMMERCIAL AND CHANGE (COaCH)	2021/22 Gross Budget Q4	2021/22 Net Budget Q3	2021/22 Year-end Actuals Q4	2021/22 Actual Variance Q4	2021/22 Forecast Variance Q3	2021/22 Forecast Variance Q2	2021/22 Forecast Variance Q1
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
COACH - Management	580	222	204	-18	10	-2	-6
Legal and Democratic Services	8,154	5,168	5,399	231	136	20	-55
Commercial Management	3,441	979	774	-205	-205	1	3
Property Services	8,744	359	-434	-793	-4	43	44
Digital, IT and Customer Services	9,429	737	729	-8	52	-4	7
Transformation & Change Team	311	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	30,659	7,465	6,672	-793	-11	58	-7

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S UNIT	2021/22 Gross Budget Q4	2021/22 Net Budget Q3	2021/22 Year-end Actuals Q4	2021/22 Actual Variance Q4	2021/22 Forecast Variance Q3	2021/22 Forecast Variance Q2	2021/22 Forecast Variance Q1
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Engagement & Communications	1,006	366	255	-111	-78	-42	-46
Health & Safety	357	24	25	1	-14	-19	-43
HR-Core	4,375	332	206	-126	42	5	-81
Financial Services	5,605	1,418	1,417	-1	0	0	0
Chief Executive	439	434	422	-12	-6	-8	-8
TOTAL	11,782	2,574	2,325	-249	-56	-64	-178

COMMUNITIES	2021/22 Gross Budget Q4	2021/22 Net Budget Q3	2021/22 Year-end Actuals Q4	2021/22 Actual Variance Q4	2021/22 Forecast Variance Q3	2021/22 Forecast Variance Q2	2021/22 Forecast Variance Q1
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Strategic Libraries	12,453	4,268	4,187	-81	139	139	0
Museum Services	776	657	657	0	-2	-1	2
Archives & Archaeology	3,649	1,514	1,511	-3	83	96	95
Greenspace & Gypsy Services	1,841	196	288	92	43	0	0
Community Services Leadership Team	207	207	217	10	7	-2	-2
Registration & Coroner	2,212	881	644	-237	0	0	0
Public Analyst	69	2	16	14	0	0	0
Trading Standards	871	122	122	0	-14	-5	-12
Communities and Partnerships	14,628	2,768	2,224	-544	-265	-265	-265
TOTAL	36,706	10,615	9,866	-749	-9	-38	-182

Appendix – Link to Power BI Performance Summary

The information contained in this performance summary is available as a PowerBI report. It is available [here on the Worcestershire County Council website](#)

Corporate and Communities Scrutiny Panel

25 July 2023

Year End Outturn 2022/23

Overview of Council Outturn 2022/23 - 1

- Cabinet was presented with the provisional financial results for the Council on 29 June 2023.

[\(Public Pack\) Agenda Document for Cabinet, 29/06/2023 10:00](#)
[\(moderngov.co.uk\)](http://moderngov.co.uk)

- Position was a net overspend of £7.3m on a £373.2m net budget.
- Overspends were in all our demand led areas, Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care and Home to School Transport which were partially mitigated by underspends in other service areas and in central budgets.
- For context the wider economy CPI inflation in the UK has created some of these pressures since the budget was set in February 2022.
- The £7.3m overspend will be funded by a planned transfer from specific reserves, our general fund balances are unaffected and stand at £14.3m.

Overview of Council Outturn 2022/23 – 2

Service Area at March 2023	Net Budget £m	Forecast £m	Variance £m	%
People – Adults	138.909	145.350	6.441	4.6%
People – Communities	20.601	20.138	-0.463	-2.2%
Children's Services/WCF *	109.108	115.652	6.544	6.0%
Economy & Infrastructure	59.225	58.508	-0.717	-1.2%
Commercial & Change	7.686	7.161	-0.525	-6.8%
Chief Executive	3.382	2.470	-0.912	-27.0%
Public Health	0.124	0.124	0.000	0.0%
Total: Service excl DSG	339.035	349.403	10.368	3.1%
Finance/Corporate Items	34.662	31.110	-3.552	-10.2%
Non-assigned items	-0.500	0.000	0.500	-100.0%
TOTAL	373.197	380.513	7.316	2.0%

Children's / WCF Budget figure of £109.1m is the net budget to pay the net contract price to WCF

Year End Financial Position – COACH & CEU

COACH & CEU	2022-23 Gross Budget Q4 £'000	2022-23 Net Budget Q4 £'000	2022-23 Year-end Actuals Q4 £'000	2022-23 Actual Variance Q4 £'000	2022-23 Forecast Variance Q3 £'000	2022-23 Forecast Variance Q2 £'000	2022-23 Forecast Variance Q1 £'000
COACH - Management	577	220	211	-9	-17	-56	0
Legal and Democratic Services	8,267	5,250	5,134	-116	57	38	55
Commercial Management	2,320	147	60	-87	-116	-37	0
Property Services	9,189	429	538	109	-334	-44	-55
Digital, IT and Customer Services	9,838	952	673	-279	-208	-58	0
Transformation & Change Team	2,570	688	545	-143	0	0	0
TOTAL COMMERCIAL & CHANGE	32,761	7,686	7,161	-525	-618	-157	0
Engagement & Communications	1,199	365	312	-53	-46	-4	0
Health & Safety	366	24	24	0	7	19	0
HR-Core	4,952	658	582	-76	-57	-39	0
Financial Services	5,575	1,948	1,167	-781	-238	-102	0
Chief Executive	387	387	385	-2	36	-3	-3
TOTAL CHIEF EXECUTIVE UNIT	12,479	3,382	2,470	-912	-298	-129	-3

Key Headlines COACH

The year end position was an underspend of £0.5m, with the most significant variances from budget being :

- An overspend in Legal and Democratic Services due to a significant increase in child-care cases which require pre-proceedings and court support. The overspend was offset in year by the use of the COVID grant reserve and staff vacancies
- A net overspend in Property Services due to legal costs associated with a claim relating to capital costs partially mitigated by additional income generation
- £0.3m underspend in ICT due to savings made on contracts and vacant posts
- £0.1m underspend due to vacant posts within executive support

COACH have contributed £0.4m towards the £5.1m target for corporate savings

Key Headlines CEU

CEU delivered an improved position comprising

- £0.4m staffing saving within Finance
- £0.1m saving within HR based on delay in the Talent Management Programme
- the non-utilisation of the £0.4m corporate contingency

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c£150k of savings were delivered recurrently within HR and c£185k recurrently within Finance to contribute to the corporate savings target.

Year End Financial Position – Communities

Communities Revenue Forecast	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23
	Gross	Net	Year-end	Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
	Budget	Budget	Actuals	Variance	Variance	Variance	Variance	Variance
	Q4	Q4	Q4	Q4	Q3	Q2	Q1	Q1
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Strategic Libraries	11,425	4,057	4,067	10	42	121	120	
Museum Services	776	658	657	-1	19	0	-5	
Archives & Archaeology	3,659	1,573	1,620	47	0	0	0	
Greenspace & Gypsy Services	2,159	196	212	16	-37	2	1	
Community Services Leadership Team	351	326	-11	-337	-370	-215	-116	
Registration & Coroner	2,260	710	494	-216	100	-5	0	
Public Analyst	69	2	2	0	0	0	0	
Trading Standards	879	122	122	0	0	0	0	
Communities and Partnerships	14,016	542	675	133	-101	-4	0	
Adult Front Door	631	319	320	1	0	0	0	
TOTAL COMMUNITIES	36,226	8,505	8,158	-347	-347	-101	0	

Key Headlines Communities

The £0.3m underspend is due to additional income generation within Registration Services, reduction in required spend on building maintenance and additional grant funding which has been able to be used to offset base budget expenditure

Page 26 There continues to be a reduction in income due to the vacant space within county libraires, as well as increases in utility costs, however these have been mitigated by additional income generation elsewhere within the directorate

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 25 JULY 2023

UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENTS RELATING TO THE POWER BI PROJECT

Summary

1. The Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel has requested an update on recent developments in the Power BI project and the associated benefits for data management.
2. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Corporate Services and Communication, the Strategic Director and Senior Officers from the Commercial and Change Directorate have been invited to the meeting to update the Panel and respond to any queries Panel members may have.

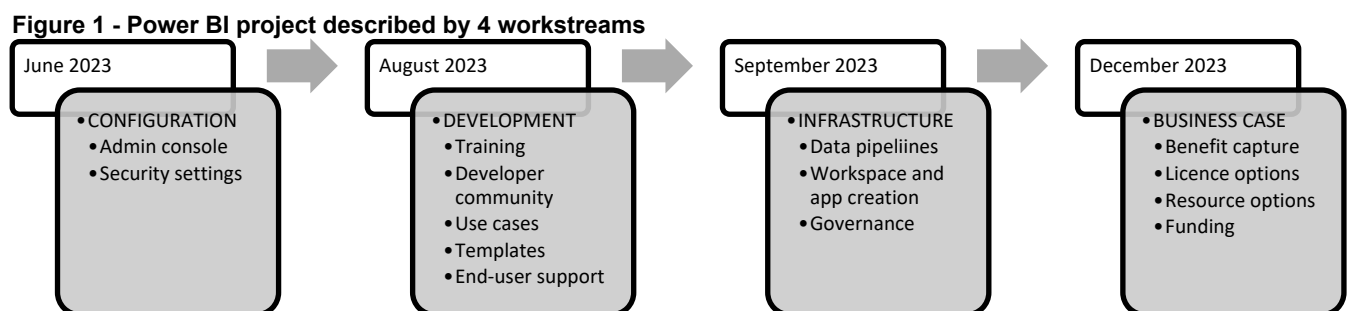
Background

3. The Panel has previously been updated on the roll out and development of Power BI, the most recent of which was on 19 January 2023, which is available here: [Weblink to Agenda and Minutes](#)
4. The Council purchased a Power BI Premium licence in late 2022 (having previously used approximately 200 individual “pro” licences for developing and sharing reports to specific groups). The rationale for investing in a Council wide licence is to allow for wider sharing of developed reports and dashboards (theoretically with every member of staff) and to facilitate the increase of more interrogatable and dynamic reporting of management information across the Council.
5. The Power BI project aims to manage the roll out of usage of Power BI across the Council, providing guidance and support for developers whilst identifying and controlling risks around the misuse of the application (including inappropriate publication of data).

Plan for Use of Power BI / Power BI Premium Instance

6. The aims of the Power BI project are to assist in the creation of monitoring frameworks and dynamic reporting and visualisations across the Council governance and decision-making forums, such as Scrutiny Panels, Cabinet, Senior Leadership Team (SLT), Chief Officers Group (COG), and Transformation Board, as well as providing an opportunity to standardise how Council data is presented to management teams and in the public domain.

7. Power BI has the potential to enable the Council to design leaner reporting processes and connect data from various sources in a less labour-intensive way than for traditional “static” reports, and free up resources to conduct more in-depth analysis.
8. During the first 12 months of the Premium licence, the objective is to establish a core set of reports that either replace existing static reports or provide new insight in a more efficient and interactive way.
9. The Power BI project can be described by four workstreams, shown in Figure 1 below.
10. An associated benefit of the project is the opportunity to divert more of the Council’s locally managed data through more of a central process, where data quality and permissions can be more effectively controlled, and in some cases reducing the need for third-party data processing, which reduces costs.
11. Before the end of the initial licence period, a business case for ongoing investment in licence(s) and capacity will be developed.



Building Capacity and Skills

12. As part of the project, an internal community of Power BI developers has been established, with a dedicated Microsoft Teams site for developers to share examples and pose questions. There are approximately 50 developers across the Council and Worcestershire Children First (WCF).
13. At the start of the financial year, the Council procured a training partner / consultant (4C / Meesh Consulting) to deliver beginner and intermediate training to developers and support development of three use cases (performance and productivity, budget monitoring, home to school transport) in advanced workshops. Three training courses have been successfully delivered, and the advanced workshops are under way. The contract will run until the end of July 2023.

14. Meesh Consulting are also providing support for establishing corporate approaches to the use of Power BI, including standardisation of reports and templates, providing advice and best practice for sharing reports (internal and external) the use of workspaces, and the development of data pipelines to allow for more dynamic reporting (where data is updated on a frequent basis and reporting needs to reflect this).

Examples of Current Developments and Live Reports

15. An increasing number of management information reports across the Council are now being delivered or developed using Power BI. As of 12 July, there were 270 published reports, and some examples are shown below. In particular, there are a number of reports now in the public domain to improve transparency of Council data to the public:

- a) Performance and productivity, risk, budget monitoring and workforce analytics. (Collated into a single standard “management report” for every level of the Council)
- b) Member Portal (updating daily with new queries)
- c) Home to school transport forecasting and benchmarking
- d) Staff survey and resident viewpoint reports
- e) Roll out of scrutiny panel performance reports
- f) Operational intelligence for Adult Social Care
- g) GP Practice Population Dashboard
- h) Commercial intelligence
- i) County Economic Summary
- j) Corporate Plan monitoring report.

Standardisation of Approach (Templates and Data)

16. Following an initial period of ad hoc development, the Council is now seeking to establish common standards for report design, incorporating the corporate colour scheme and logos wherever appropriate. This ensures that all developers are working towards the same presentation standards.
17. Common standards (including date ranges and filtering options) are to be adopted, along with standard language and terminology so that the end-user receives a consistent experience. Style guides (similar to those agreed as part of the internet and intranet reviews) are in the process of development to ensure that all reports have a similar look and feel (and this may result in some changes to presentation of existing reports). A page containing metadata (descriptions of the data used in the report, sources, and the latest data refresh) is to be included as standard in every report.
18. For reports that are published in the public domain, accessibility requirements will be considered. Currently, Power BI reports are used as a supplement to other reports to ensure that accessibility legislation is complied with.

19. The use of endorsed datasets, created and managed by the Data Architecture team (ICT and Digital) and shared with developers on a permissions basis, is being encouraged wherever possible. This ensures that developers are using the single version of truth and allows for the managed update of dynamic datasets for reports that change frequently (for example those that refresh overnight). There are currently 15 corporate datasets in use.
20. Following a period of proof-of-concept development, a new end-to-end process for requesting Power BI reports is to be established, including appropriate processes for creating sustainable data pipelines that will drive improved data quality and ensure that reports can be appropriately refreshed.

Culture and Transparency

21. The shift of reporting from traditional static reports (in MS Word, MS PowerPoint etc) to interrogatable reports in Power BI will only be successful if end-users are appropriately supported to use the new application confidently, without the need to resort to static copies.
22. A new training course is due to be rolled out later this month to provide guidance for end users in opening and navigating Power BI reports. It is recommended that all managers view the brief course to familiarise themselves with Power BI. The Council is also supporting elected members around full Council meetings, and a stand at the Council's management conference is being arranged.
23. A key difference in Power BI reporting will be in how reports are shared. For example, reports can be created using a common link that anyone in the Council can access, or via more controlled defined audience groups (such as Chief Officers Group or the Business Intelligence team). It will not be possible to attach Power BI reports to emails. The use of Power BI apps (which can be embedded in Teams sites) is the desired approach for sharing reports internally.
24. A key benefit of Power BI (over and above the use of static reports) will be to increase transparency of the Council's data. Engagement with chief officers has included recommendations to endorse and promote an improved culture of data transparency, by ensuring that business critical datasets are supported and managed by Data Architecture staff (to enable more certified datasets for use in Power BI).

Certified Datasets

25. The use of certified datasets by Power BI developers has the associated benefit of driving improved data management. Less datasets will be managed locally by teams and shared via network folders. Central management of data sets allows for consistent approaches to managing data quality and refreshing schedules. This is particularly important for Power BI reports that need to update on a frequent basis.

26. Officers have established a request process for defined certified datasets that are centrally managed and made available to Power BI developers on a permissions basis (i.e. access to certified datasets can be restricted to specific users or made available to anyone depending on the nature of the data). 15 corporate datasets are in production.

27. Examples of certified datasets include an e5 (finance) extract to allow development of finance reports and budget monitoring, and member portal data to allow the development of reports to monitor member queries and responses.

Funding Requirements

28. By the end of the current financial year, there will be a need for ongoing funding for both the Power BI licence and dedicated capacity for development (including development of reports and creation and management of data pipelines). There is currently no budget assigned for Power BI and the only resources are existing staff from the Business Intelligence Unit, ICT and Digital, Transformation and Change Team, Finance, and some staff in frontline services.

Purpose of the Meeting

29. The Panel is asked to consider and comment on the report and

- Determine whether any further information or scrutiny on this topic is required
- Agree any comments to highlight to the Cabinet Member

Contact Points

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance), the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- Agenda and Minutes of Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 19 January 2023 and 17 January 2022

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.](#)

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CORPORATE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 25 JULY 2023

WEB REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Summary

1. The Panel has requested an update on Worcestershire County Council's new website, which was relaunched in February 2023.
2. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Corporate Services and Communication (CMR) and the Strategic Director of Commercial and Change have been invited to the meeting to update the Panel on the Web Redevelopment Project.

Background

3. Residents want and expect transactional services and information to be available through their own devices, 24/7 – mirroring their experiences with on-line retail and banking. This means that digital engagement with the Council needs to evolve and expand from self-service to self-management so that customers are in charge; and can actively manage their own information and requests. Over 50% of transactions with Council customers are now undertaken online with high levels of satisfaction, making services more accessible and often improving the speed and efficiency of service delivery.
4. The Council's priority for digital customers is as follows:
 - A fully digitally enabled Council that provides personalised content based on customer interactions
 - An exemplar of delivering an excellent digital customer experience with the majority of customer contact via self-service channels, at the same time ensuring inclusivity for people with disabilities or other legally protected characteristics and people who don't have access to the internet or lack the skills or confidence to use it
 - Fully embedded Government Digital Service design principles in the delivery of all customer-facing digital services
 - Digitally inclusive by making sure the Council's customers have the right access, skills, motivation and trust to confidently go online to increase their digital literacy
 - An organisation that delivers a seamless experience for the customer
 - Engaging with the community and listening to what they want from digital services
 - Designing services from a customer perspective
 - Promoting independence and wellbeing through the use of digital services and technology.

5. To successfully achieve this digital vision, the Council has invested in a new website to provide the additional functionality required to deliver a modern, best-in-class, mobile first and personalised experience. The solution formed a key part of the Council's vision to deliver a streamlined digital experience, with the following key objectives:
 - Engage a partner to assist with the site redesign and content migration, also providing capacity for future development work if needed
 - Dynamic navigation will be included throughout the site
 - Design for mobile first delivering an excellent mobile experience
 - Greater design freedom to develop templates that cater for the varying needs of customers
 - Marketing and promotion opportunities
 - Flexibility to develop features, integrations and new templates in-house
 - Compliance with national standards
 - Content will be reviewed, refreshed and restructured to ensure customer focus.
6. The project was overseen by the Web Governance Board and is made up of the Assistant Director for IT and Digital, Officers from the Web Team and the Communications Team. The Board meets monthly.

Internal Stakeholder Engagement

7. Internal workshops took place with internal stakeholders throughout April 2022. The workshop covered:
 - Frustrations and experience with the current site
 - Who uses the Council's website
 - The ideal user experience
 - What functionality is required from the website
 - What will the measure of success be for the new website
 - What would your dream outcome for this project be?
 - What will stop that success happening?
 - Benchmarking sector specific digital properties.
8. A full summary of the workshop outputs can be viewed in Appendix 1: Summary of findings from internal stakeholder workshops held.
9. Feedback gained during these sessions was included in the functionality and design of the new website.

External Stakeholder Engagement

10. Meetings took place with the Chair and Secretary of Worcester Camera Club. The camera club provided some of the images for the website and have agreed to continue to share images for use on the website and in other marketing material.
11. Feedback from existing website users came through the "rate my page facility", on high traffic areas of the site.

12. Engagement took place with Speakeasy N.O.W.¹ to gather their requirements for the new site and feedback on the wireframes, this has been taken on board and will be reflected in the final wireframes.
13. Attendance at the Council Roadshows in August to gain more feedback on the new website wireframes and user journey testing with residents was also carried out.
14. Content review workshops took place with internal stakeholders from Adult Social Care and the Library Service during May.
15. Healthwatch Worcestershire carried out a mystery shop on the Beta site in February. An action plan has been created based on the feedback gained.
16. Volunteers from the Viewpoint Panel carried out user journey testing. The feedback gained during testing was used to develop the new website information architecture.

Test Website

17. The test version of the new website went live at the beginning of December. The test website enabled the gathering of internal and external customer feedback and provided customers with the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the new site.
18. Face to face feedback was received on the test website from some Members before the full Council meeting in January. Following this, an online questionnaire was sent to all Members.
19. The questionnaire was shared with residents via the website, social media channels and through the Viewpoint Panel.
20. Feedback Summary:
 - 258 responses were received. 87% feedback received came from people aged 50+
 - 78% people were able to find the information they were looking for without difficulty and found the information easy to understand
 - 87% people found the information they needed, the majority either used the website navigation or search
 - 90% people found the website visually appealing.

Accessibility

21. The Council has a statutory requirement to comply with the legislation [of The Public Sector Bodies \(Websites and Mobile Applications\) \(No. 2\) Accessibility Regulations 2018 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
22. The Council uses Silktide to monitor the corporate website, it is a comprehensive

¹ SpeakEasy N.O.W. is a self-advocacy charity run by people with learning disabilities who have lived experience.

web accessibility testing platform that deciphers all the jargon, and helps to find and fix accessibility, content, search engine optimisation, and quality issues.

23. Website Content Editors have been trained on Plain English principles. The website content will continue to be rewritten in Plain English to ensure that the Council's information, advice and guidance is easy to read and understand.
24. The Council uses Google Translate, a multilingual neural machine translation service developed by Google to translate the website and content from one language into another.
25. A live accessibility audit was carried out on the Council website which involved an accessibility expert spending two half-days remotely with the Council's Web Development Team identifying issues with the website. The majority the issues identified have been resolved.
26. The Council's Web Development Team are continuing to build their skills in accessibility and inclusive design.
27. Please see Appendix 2: Silktide Website Accessibility score

Benefits Achieved

28. The new website offers far more templates and content design elements that can be used on pages to display content in a variety of ways with or without images making it far more flexible.
29. The website has been designed for use on a mobile first and is fully responsive on all devices.
30. The website has been made more visually appealing using images and video content. Most of these images have been supplied by Worcestershire Camera Club.
31. The Council has developed additional navigation and improved the website Search, enabling visitors to easily find the information or service they were looking for.
32. The new templates provide the opportunity for the Council to promote more services, campaigns and news on the website.
33. The Council website has been developed to meet customer needs based on feedback given from existing internal and external customers.

Next Steps

34. The Council's digital team will resolve the remaining website accessibility issues identified during the live accessibility audit and will continue to consult and engage with Healthwatch Worcestershire and SpeakEasy N.O.W.
35. To be fully accessible, many deaf people need the Council's website content to be translated into British Sign Language. The Council will be reviewing British

Sign Language translation service options to ensure there is a provision in place for the deaf community.

36. The Council's digital team will continue to review website content to ensure it meets the style guide and will ensure that the information, advice and guidance is written using Plain English.

Conclusion

37. The new website was designed for use on a mobile first as most visitors come to the website via a mobile or tablet.
38. The new content management system is open source enabling changes to be made as and when required in the future.
39. Customer feedback has been taken on board throughout the development of the website resulting in a truly customer focused website. New feedback will be reviewed and used to continue to develop and improve the website.
40. A recent load test to measure how well the new website performs under pressure far exceeded the load test carried out on the previous website, proving that the new website is far more reliable.
41. Further workshops will be scheduled with internal stakeholders to complete remaining content reviews.

Purpose of the Meeting

42. The Panel is asked to consider the information provided and:
 - determine any comments to make to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Corporate Services and Communication
 - determine whether any further information or scrutiny on a particular topic is required.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1: Summary of findings from internal stakeholder workshops held
Appendix 2: Silktide Website Accessibility Score.

Contact Points

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance) there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.](#)

Appendix 1: Summary of findings from internal stakeholder workshops held

Frustrations and experience with the old site:

- Navigation (or lack of)
- Duplication of content
- Consistency
- Content too long
- Complex content
- No feedback gathering
- Outdated style
- Search no working correctly
- Consistency issues
- Clunky
- Static
- Daunting

The ideal user experience, ideal scenario:

- Users being able to self help
- Common design patterns
- Crisis buttons
- Reduction in documents
- Accessibility to AA standards
- Breadcrumbs
- More flexible layout
- More imagery, infographics & video
- Easy information discovery
- Landing page, interactive elements, signposted to the right areas, service set out well

What are the most important Journeys on the site:

- Here to help and adult social care
- Self-help actions
- Referral process
- SEND / SENDIAS
- Business customers
- School admission process
- Parents
- Foster carers
- Journalists
- New residents
- Bin collections
- To be the first port of call

Functionality:

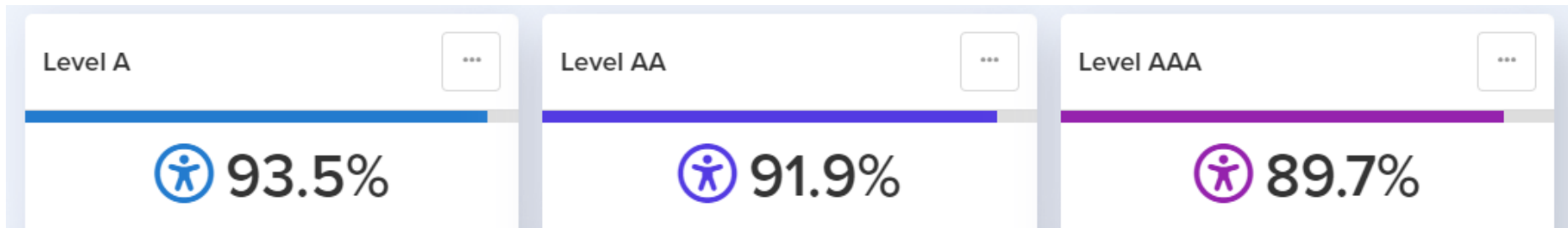
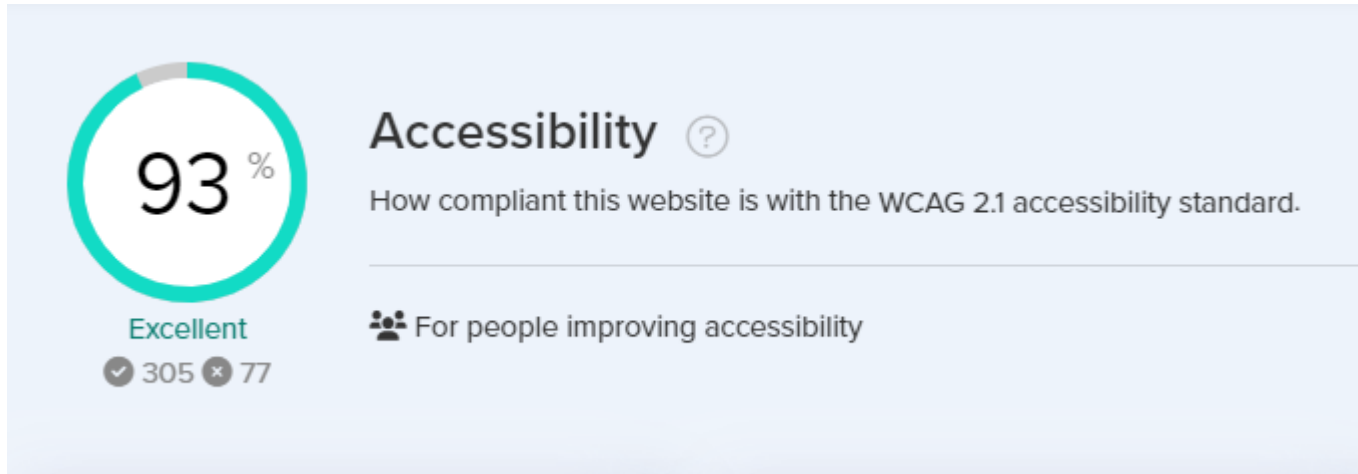
- Feedback
- Step by step
- Chatbot
- Breadcrumbs

- 'Your visited pages'
- Personal identification
- Map of services
- Co branding, colour theming
- URL Renaming
- News section
- Search based on topic/sector
- Accessibility
- Related content
- Searchable FAQs
- Searchable documents
- Microsites
- Step by step infographics
- Report it, pay it sections

What will the measure of the success be for the new site:

- Reduction in enquiries
- Successful transfer of existing content
- To be the first port of call
- Customer feedback

Appendix 2: Silktide Website Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Score



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CORPORATE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 25 JULY 2023

UPDATE REPORT: REGISTRATION OF DEATHS WITHIN FIVE DAYS (AND OUT OF HOURS REGISTRATION)

Summary

1. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Communities, the Assistant Director of Communities and the Head of Service for Registration, Coroners and Resettlement have been invited to the meeting to update the Panel on the position with the registration of deaths within the statutory deadline and the process for registering deaths out of hours

Background

2. It is a statutory requirement that all deaths, excluding those referred to the coroner, are registered within five days of the date of death. Performance in this area has been in decline for several years but significantly so in the last year or so, and processes have changed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In November 2021 the Panel requested further information (additional to the regular reports received on performance and in-year budget monitoring) to understand the reason for declining performance and what mitigating action was being taken. In addition, the Panel also asked for information in relation to the process of registering deaths outside of normal working hours.

Registration of Deaths – Process and Performance Overview

3. The statutory requirement to register deaths within five days is contained in the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953.
4. For the Registration Service (Registrar) to register a death they must receive the necessary documentation (medical certificate cause of death) before the appointment with the informant. Prior to 2020, the medical certificate cause of death (MCCD) was completed by the doctor who saw the deceased during their last illness and within the previous 14 days. Provided those two elements were met and the cause of death was acceptable for registration purposes, the GP would then advise the family to collect the MCCD from the surgery (or bereavement office at the hospital). The informant (usually the family) would have made an appointment to register the death and arrive with the MCCD and any other required documentation to complete the registration process.

5. In late 2019, a pilot scheme began introducing Medical Examiners on the back of the inquiry into Dr Harold Shipman. Medical Examiners are senior medical doctors who are contracted for several sessions per week, outside of their usual clinical duties, to provide independent scrutiny of causes of death. They are also trained in the legal and clinical elements of death certification processes. The purpose of their role is to:
 - Provide greater safeguards for the public by ensuring independent scrutiny of all non-coronial deaths
 - ensure the appropriate referral of deaths to the Coroner
 - provide a better service for the bereaved and an opportunity for them to raise concerns to a doctor not involved with the care of the deceased
 - improve the quality of death certification
 - improve the quality of mortality data
6. During the COVID-19 pandemic the care of patients in the hospitals was prioritised. During this time, new laws were introduced as part of the Coronavirus Act and this enabled registration of deaths to be completed by telephone. Additional relaxation of rules included the ability for doctors to email the MCCD to Registration Services, therefore not requiring families to attend hospitals or GP surgeries during times of restricted movement. Registration Services were able to demonstrate an improved performance during this time, whilst still dependent on the timely submission of the form from the doctor.
7. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, services began to return to business as usual although some of the elements in the Coronavirus Act remained, such as the electronic transmission of the MCCD to the Registration Service. Medical Examiners returned to scrutinising hospital deaths and during 2022 began rolling out the pilot to include deaths in the community as well. Post pandemic there has also been increased pressure on health services and availability of doctors, and this has provided a significant challenge to the death registration process.
8. In summary, the following factors have all contributed to the delays the Registration Service is now experiencing in completing death registrations within the statutory timeframe:
 - the rolling out of the Medical Examiner Service across the county
 - less availability of doctors
 - the settling in of a new process.

Action Taken to Manage Impact on Performance

9. The Registration Service continues to take action to try to improve performance and minimise the impact to the public. These actions include:
 - Extra appointment availability, especially during periods of high demand (e.g. winter)
 - Chasing paperwork to meet the appointments booked
 - Issuing communications to the surgeries reminding them of processes and the expectation on doctors
 - Meeting with the Coroner Service and medical examiners to share information, data and improve process

- Feeding back through the General Register Office and the National Panel for Registration that the impact of the medical examiner service means that the statutory requirement to register deaths in five days is unachievable.

10. As outlined in paragraph 8, the main factors contributing to the delays are beyond the control of the Registration Service. Whilst the Service takes action to influence change, the impact on performance will be limited and it is expected that the Service will continue to struggle to meet the statutory timescale expectations.

Registration of Deaths – Out of Hours

11. This Service receives a small number of requests to register a death out of normal working hours for those communities that require the service to enable them to meet their faith needs. On average, 8 are received per year which are requested out of hours which equates to 0.12% of the total number of deaths the service registered for year 2022/23.

12. On Monday to Friday, the Service is available using the normal number between 9am and 5pm. Outside these hours, an answerphone message will provide the emergency number that can be called which is monitored between 8am and 9am and 5pm until 10pm each weekday. Overnight, a message can be left which is responded to from 8am the following day.

13. During weekends and bank holidays, the Service is available to be contacted between 8am and 10pm on the emergency number. Outside of these hours, the call will transfer to the answerphone which is responded to when phone is switched back on the following day.

14. When a call is received, the Registrar on duty will check that all the paperwork has been submitted from the doctor ready to be used for the registration. The Registrar will then contact the family and arrange a time and location for the registration and the meet the family to complete the death registration process and issue the paperwork to enable the burial to take place. This information has been provided to the hospitals, GPs and faith groups.

Purpose of the Meeting

15. The Panel is asked to consider and comment on the detail in report, and:
- Agree any comments to highlight to the Cabinet Member
 - determine whether any further information or scrutiny on this performance indicator is required
 - Consider whether to continue to monitor this area through the Panels quarterly performance and in-year budget monitoring reports.

Contact Points

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance) the following are background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- Agenda and Minutes of the Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 28 March 2023, 1 November, 21 September, 13 July and 17 March 2022, and 8 November 2021

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.](#)

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 25 JULY 2023

WORK PROGRAMME

Summary

1. From time to time the Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel will review its work programme and consider which issues should be investigated as a priority.

Background

2. Worcestershire County Council has a rolling annual Work Programme for Overview and Scrutiny. The 2023/24 Work Programme has been developed by taking into account issues still to be completed from 2023/23, the views of Overview and Scrutiny Members and other stakeholders and the findings of the budget scrutiny process.
3. Suggested issues have been prioritised using scrutiny feasibility criteria in order to ensure that topics are selected subjectively and the 'added value' of a review is considered right from the beginning.
4. The Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel is responsible for scrutiny of:
 - Commissioning, contracts and commerce and ensuring the corporate commissioning cycle works well
 - Transformation
 - Finance
 - Localism and Communities
 - Organisation and employees
5. The scrutiny work programme was discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board (OSPB) on 28 April and was agreed by Council on 18 May 2023.

Dates of Future Meetings

- 3 October 2023
- 23 November 2023

Purpose of the Meeting

6. The Panel is asked to consider the 2023/24 Work Programme and agree whether it would like to make any amendments. The Panel will wish to retain the flexibility to take into account any urgent issues which may arise.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel Work Programme 2023/24

Contact Points

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

[Agenda and Minutes for Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board on 28 April 2023](#)

[Agenda for Council on 18 May 2023](#)

All Agendas and Minutes are available on the Council's website [weblink to Agendas and Minutes](#)

SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24

Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date of Meeting	Issue for Scrutiny	Date of Last Report	Notes/Follow-up Action
25 July 2023	New website update		
	Performance and In-Year Budget Monitoring (Q4 January-March 2023)	28 March 2023	
	Power BI update	1 January 2023	
	Update on Registration of Deaths within 5 days (including out of hours registration)		Agreed by Panel 8 November 2021
3 October 2023	Performance and In-Year Budget Monitoring (Q1 April to June)	25 July 2023	
	Performance Monitoring of Comments, Compliments and Complaints	21 September 2022	
	Member Portal – Case Management System	24 September 2021	Suggested at 28 March 2023 meeting
	Income Generation including results of scoping exercise undertaken for the provision of weddings on countryside sites		Suggested at 28 March Meeting
	The Council's Customer Contact Centre (including accessibility options)		
	Performance Monitoring of Comments, Compliments and Complaints		
23 November 2023	Performance and In-Year Budget Monitoring (Q2 July to September)	25 July 2023	
	Review of Museums, Arts and Culture Strategy 2023/24	1 November 2022	

January 2024	Scrutiny of 2024/25 Budget		
March 2024	Performance (Q3 October to December) and In-Year Budget Monitoring		
TBC	Update on review of Libraries Unlocked	8 June 2023	Requested at 8 June 2023 meeting. To be considered by Panel in early 2024.

Possible Future Items			
TBC	Farming and Rural Estates		Suggested at 8 June 2023 meeting
TBC	TV and Film Policy Briefing		Raised at 18 May 2023 agenda planning meeting
TBC	Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Chat GTi systems		Suggested at 28 March 2023 meeting
TBC	Update on role of Here2Help (including the Executive Summary of the Business Plan).	19 January 2023, 24 September 2021	Suggested at 19 January 2023 meeting
TBC	Worcestershire One Public Estate		Suggested at 14 February 2022 meeting
TBC	Electric Vehicle charging points on the County Council Estate		Suggested at 14 February 2022 meeting
TBC	Council Communication	8 November 2021	Suggested at 8 November 2021 meeting
TBC	West Mercia Energy Joint Committee Business Plan	17 January 2022	
Standing Items			
November/January	Budget Scrutiny		Annually
	Annual update on the Council's energy purchasing arrangement via the West Mercia Energy Joint Committee including the Business Plan	17 January 2022	Agreed at October 2021 Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board

TBC	Councillors Divisional Funding Scheme	20 July 2021	A regular report to Scrutiny on the operation of the WCDF is required under the Scheme
TBC	Worcestershire County Council Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 Policy (RIPA)		
TBC	Performance monitoring of comments, compliments and complaints	28 March 2023 1 November 2022 21 September 2022 13 July 2022	Quarterly

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