

**Children and Young People
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

23 September 2022

**Quarter One, 2022/23
Performance Management Report**

Ordinary Decision



Report of Paul Darby, Corporate Director of Resources

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide.

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To present an overview of progress towards achieving the key outcomes of the council's corporate performance framework and highlight key messages to inform strategic priorities and work programmes.
- 2 The report covers performance in and to the end of quarter one 2022/23, April to June 2022.

Executive Summary

- 3 A new [Council Plan](#) for 2022-2026 was approved by Council on 22 June. This sets out a new performance framework for the Council. Corporate Management Team has agreed to the development of a new quarterly performance report format which provides greater focus on these issues. This is the first report for the new reporting period to follow this format.
- 4 The performance report is structured around the two main components.
 - (a) State of the County indicators to highlight areas of strategic importance and reflected in both the [County Durham Vision 2035](#) and the [Council Plan](#).
 - (b) Performance of council services and progress against major initiatives as set out in the [Council Plan](#).
- 5 Performance is reported against the five thematic areas within the Council Plan 2022-2026: our economy, our environment, our people, our communities, and our council.
- 6 Performance is reported on an exception basis with key messages under each thematic Council Plan areas being broken down into national, regional

and local picture, things that are going well, areas which require attention and other areas to note.

- 7 We are now transitioning into a post-pandemic world, but the impacts of COVID-19 can still be seen in our performance reporting. The last two financial years are not representative for many areas of performance and will be an unfair comparison due to pandemic impacts.
- 8 We have therefore, wherever possible, tried to make the comparison of current performance against pre-pandemic data. Whilst COVID-19 continues to impact on certain performance metrics, there is evidence of some areas returning to pre-pandemic levels.
- 9 However, the largest challenge for our residents, local businesses and the council is the current cost of living crisis. Inflation is currently running at 10.1%¹ with the Bank of England forecasting it to peak at 13.3% at the end of March 2023. Ofgem are expected to increase the energy cap again in October and further again in January 2023. The inflationary increase is largely driven by the rise in the cost of fuel and energy bills, which is being impacted significantly by the war in Ukraine.
- 10 The cost of living crisis has a triple impact on the council.
 - (a) It impacts on our residents. High inflation is outstripping wage and benefit increases resulting in a fall in income in real terms. This has been further exacerbated by the tax increases implemented in April. This will result in increased demand for services to help support people facing financial hardship or who are in crisis.
 - (b) Increased costs for the council. Our premises and transport costs have increased because of the rise in energy costs and fuel prices, and, also the cost of other supplies and services where prices have increased as suppliers face similar issues themselves. It is also anticipated that employee costs will increase by more than in previous years when the settlement is negotiated to accommodate inflation.
 - (c) Reduced income for the council. Users of council services may seek to save money resulting in a fall in income from discretionary services such as leisure centres and theatres.
- 11 Other areas which require attention relate to social work caseloads which remain higher than optimum and the extreme pressure on child placements in the looked after service remains.

Recommendation

- 12 That Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the overall position and direction of travel in relation to quarter one performance, the continuing impact of COVID-19 and the increased cost of

¹ UK Consumer Price Index for 12 months to July 2022

living on the council's performance, and the actions being taken to address areas of underperformance including the significant economic and well-being challenges because of the pandemic.

Analysis of the Performance Report

Going well

Our economy

- 13 94% of three and four year olds in the county are receiving their free education entitlement.

Our people

- 14 581 families have been turned around via the Stronger Families programme, 545 by attaining significant and sustained outcomes and 36 by maintaining continuous employment.

Areas which require attention

Our people

- 15 Caseloads remain high across our social workers. Newly qualified social workers recruited will take up their posts over the summer. We remain focused on retention as well as recruitment.
- 16 More children in care have resulted in significant placement pressures, which are reflected both regionally and nationally, and are focusing on increasing capacity within our in-house children's homes, recruiting more foster carers, and working with children and their families to prevent them entering the care system. The CLA placement budgets are forecast to overspend by £5.39 million this year.
- 17 High demand for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) continues. More than 500 requests were received in the year ending June 2022 - higher than in the same period in any of the last three years.

Other areas of note

Our people

- 18 The National Child Measurement Programme 2020/21 shows a reduction in the percentage of children, across all age ranges, who are of a healthy weight in the national and regional data. This survey used a sampling methodology, and local authority level data is not available, however, this suggests that County Durham will likely see a reduction in children who are of a healthy weight.

Performance Indicators – Summary

- 19 We are now transitioning into a post-pandemic world, but the impacts of COVID-19 can still be seen in our performance reporting. The last two financial years are not representative for many areas of performance and will be an unfair comparison due to pandemic impacts.
- 20 We have therefore, wherever possible, tried to make the comparison of current performance against pre-pandemic data.

Risk Management

- 21 Effective risk management is a vital component of the council's agenda. The council's risk management process sits alongside our change programme and is incorporated into all significant change and improvement projects. The latest report can be found [here](#).

Background papers

- County Durham Vision (County Council, 23 October 2019)
<https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/documents/s115064/Draft%20Durham%20Vision%20v10.0.pdf>

Other useful documents

- Council Plan 2022 to 2026 (current plan)
<https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=56529>
- Quarter Four, 2021/22 Performance Management Report
<https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/documents/s157533/Year%20End%20performance%20report%202021-22.pdf>
- Quarter Three, 2021/22 Performance Management Report
<https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/documents/s152742/Performance%20Report%202021-22%20003.pdf>
- Quarter Two, 2021/22 Performance Management Report
<https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/documents/s149087/Q2%20Performance%20Report%202021-22%20-%20Cabinet.pdf>
- Quarter One, 2021/22 Performance Management Report
<https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/documents/s144872/Q1%20Performance%20Report%202021-22.pdf>

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

Not applicable.

Finance

Latest performance information is being used to inform corporate, service and financial planning.

Consultation

Not applicable.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Equality measures are monitored as part of the performance monitoring process.

Climate Change

We have declared a climate change emergency and consider the implications of climate change in our reports and decision-making.

Human Rights

Not applicable.

Crime and Disorder

A number of performance indicators and key actions relating to crime and disorder are continually monitored in partnership with Durham Constabulary.

Staffing

Performance against a number of relevant corporate health indicators has been included to monitor staffing issues.

Accommodation

Not applicable.

Risk

Reporting of significant risks and their interaction with performance is integrated into the quarterly performance management report.

Procurement

Not applicable.



Durham County Council Performance Management Report Quarter One, 2022/23



1.0 Our Economy: National, Regional & Local Picture

Education

- 1 Our exclusion rate has reduced by around 0.05% since the 18/19 academic year. Although 50 pupils were permanently excluded in 2020/21, the pandemic and sustained period of school closures will have played some part. Suspensions remain around 5%, higher than nationally but lower than the North East (7%).

2.0 Our People: National, Regional & Local Picture

Children in Care

- 2 Although more children are in care, the rate per 10,000 children aged 0-17 remains the third lowest in the North East.

Pupils attending good or outstanding schools

- 3 A lower proportion of pupils in County Durham attend good or better schools in comparison to national and regional averages.

Special Educational Needs and Disability

- 4 An additional 200 children and young people were given an Educational Health Care Plan during the last 12 months. This figure continues to rise year on year.

2.1 Council Activity: Going Well

Stronger Families Programme

- 5 The programme has turned around 581 families. 545 attained significant and sustained outcomes and 36 families achieved continuous employment.

2.2 Council Activity: Areas which require attention

Children's Social Care

- 6 Both children looked after and children in need² continue to show an increasing trend, and this, combined with more complex cases, has led to caseload pressures

² includes our children in care as well as children in need, children on a child protection plan and care leavers

for our social workers. Whilst we have recruited newly qualified social workers, who will take up their posts over the summer, we are also focusing on staff retention.

- 7 More children in care have led to increased placement pressures, which are reflected both regionally and nationally. We are focusing on increasing the capacity in our own in-house children's homes, recruiting more foster carers, and working with children and their families to prevent them entering care.

Education, Health and Care (EHCP) Plans

- 8 High demand for EHCP plans continues. More than 500 requests were received over the latest 12 months, higher than the same period over the last three years.
- 9 We are struggling to recruit education psychologists as there is a national shortage, and this is impacting our ability to complete assessments within statutory timescales.

2.3 Council Activity: Other Areas to Note

Healthy weight in children

- 10 Regional and National data from the National Child Measurement Programme suggest that we are likely to see a reduction in the percentage of children, across all age ranges, who are of a healthy weight.

3.0 Data Tables

Key to Symbols

Performance against target		Performance against comparable groups		Direction of Travel	
★	meeting or exceeding target	★	same or better than comparable group	↑	higher than comparable period
●	within 2% of target	●	worse than comparable group (within 2%)	→	static against comparable period
▲	more than 2% behind target	▲	worse than comparable group (greater than 2%)	↓	lower than comparable period

NB: oldest data in left column

Types of indicators

There are two types of performance indicators throughout the report:

1. Key target indicators – targets are set as improvements can be measured regularly and can be actively influenced by the council and its partners; and
2. Key tracker indicators – performance is tracked but no targets are set as they are long-term and / or can only be partially influenced by the council and its partners.

National Benchmarking

We compare our performance to all English authorities. The number of authorities varies according to the performance indicator and functions of councils, e.g., educational attainment is compared to county and unitary councils, however waste disposal is compared to district and unitary councils.

North East Benchmarking

The North East figure is the average performance from the authorities within the North East region - County Durham, Darlington, Gateshead, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Newcastle upon Tyne, North Tyneside, Northumberland, Redcar and Cleveland, Stockton-on-Tees, South Tyneside, Sunderland.

More detail is available from the Strategy Team at performance@durham.gov.uk

Our Economy

Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	12 months earlier	Performance compared to:				Direction of Travel - last four reporting periods				updated this quarter
					Pre-COVID	National	North East	Nearest neighbour					
Increase the proportion of young people in education, employment and training to be consistently higher than regional and national levels	94.2%	Jun 2022	higher than regional/national ●	93.6% ★	94.3% ●	95.2% ●	93.9% ●	-	▲	▼	▲	n/a	Yes
% uptake of free early education entitlement for 3-4-year-olds	93.7%	2022	Tracker	92.8% ★	96.1% ★	90% ★	96% ▲	94.1% ●	→	▲	▼	▲	Yes
Improve the proportion of children achieving expected standards in maths and reading at key stage 2 in line with 2030 ambitions* (reported by academic year)	65%	2018/19	Tracker [90% by 2030]	67% ▲	65% ●	65% ★	67% ▲	61% ▲	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	No
Improve the average grade of achievement of all our pupils within GCSE English and Maths to a Grade 5 (in line with 2030 ambitions)	data not yet published	new PI	5 by 2030	new PI	new PI	-	-	-	new PI	new PI	new PI	new PI	No
Improve the educational attainment of our most disadvantaged cohorts to meet basic threshold measures in English and Maths	new PI	new PI	new PI	new PI	new PI	-	-	-	new PI	new PI	new PI	new PI	No

*Not reported for 2019/20 or 2020/21 academic years as no Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) or Key Stage 2 (KS2) assessments took place

Our People

Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	12 months earlier	Performance compared to:				Direction of Travel - last four reporting periods				updated this quarter
					Pre-COVID	National	North East	Nearest neighbour					
Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage achieving a good level of development (reported as academic year)	71.8%	2018/19	Tracker	72.8% 	-	71.8% 	71.8% 	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	No
% of County Durham pupils attending an Ofsted judged 'good or better' school	83.1%	as at 30 Jun 22	Tracker	n/a	-	86.3% 	83.9% 	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Yes
No. of Children Looked After per 10,000 population	99 [1,005]	as at 30 Jun 22	Tracker	93 [2020/21]	-	67	108	103					Yes
No. of Children in Need per 10,000 Population	369 [3,979]	as at 30 Jun 22	Tracker	361 [2020/21]	-	321	461	421					Yes
% of Children Looked After placed within 20 miles of their home address	85%	as at 31 Mar 22	Tracker	87% [2020/21] 	89% 	74% 	87% 	89% 					Yes
No. of families on our Stronger Families Programme attaining significant and sustained outcomes	581	Apr-Jun 2022	760 [2022/23] 	372 	311 	-	-	-					Yes
Increase the % of children aged 4-5 who are of a healthy weight ***	74.6%	2019/20	90% 	75.6% 	-	76.1% 	74.5% 	74.4% 					No
Increase the % of children aged 10-11 who are of a healthy weight ***	61.5%	2019/20	79% 	61.1% 	-	63.4% 	61.3% 	61.3% 					No
No. of children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan	4,038	Jun 2022	Tracker	3,855 	3,496 	-	-	-					Yes

*Not reported for 2019/20 or 2020/21 academic years as no Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) or Key Stage 2 (KS2) assessments took place

***National Child Measurement Programme ceased March 2020 when schools closed due to the pandemic, so north east and nearest neighbour comparators should be treated with caution due to missing data from some LAs. Whilst the data for the academic year 2020/21 has been published, local authority data is not available as only a 10% sample of data was recorded.

Other relevant indicators

Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	12 months earlier	Performance compared to:				Direction of Travel - last four reporting periods				updated this quarter
					Pre-COVID	National	North East	Nearest neighbour					
Increase the % of 16-17-year-olds in an apprenticeship	8.5%	as at Jun 2022	Tracker	5.5% ★	6.8% ★	4.7% ★	7.6% ●	-	↑	↓	↓	n/a	Yes
% of mothers smoking at time of delivery	14.8%	Jan-Mar 2022	0% ▲	15% ★	18.1% ★	9.4% ▲	12.8% ▲	12.1% ▲	↑	↓	↑	↑	Yes
Reduce the % point gap in breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks between County Durham and the national average	17.4pp	2020/21	Tracker	20.2pp ★	20.2pp ★	-	12.2pp ▲	13.3pp ▲	↓	↑	↑	↓	Yes