

Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

5 May 2023

Quarter Three, 2022/23
Performance Management Report



Report of John Hewitt, Chief Executive Officer

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 three, 2022/23, October to December 2022.

Executive Summary

- 3 This report is structured around a performance framework which reflects our current [Council Plan](#) (2022-2026), and its format has been developed to provide greater focus on how the council is contributing to achieving the people's vision.
- 4 The performance report is structured around 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 on an exception basis with key messages against the five thematic areas within the Council Plan 2022-2026: our economy, our environment, our people, our communities, and our council. It is broken down into national, regional and local picture, things that are going well, areas which require attention and other areas to note.
- 6 The [Council Plan](#) has undergone its annual refresh and the plan for 2023-2027 was approved by Council on 22 February. The performance

framework is now being adjusted accordingly and will form the structure of this performance report from quarter one, 2023/24.

Context

- 7 The legacy of COVID-19 can still be seen in both our performance reporting and within our services. Performance data relating to the last two financial years are not representative for many areas so, wherever possible, we have compared current performance against pre-pandemic data.
- 8 However, the greatest challenge for our residents, local businesses and the council is the current cost-of-living crisis which has steadily worsened over the last 12 months. High inflation, currently at 10.5%¹, has largely been driven by the rise in the cost of fuel and energy bills, which is being impacted significantly by world events, including the war in Ukraine.
- 9 The cost-of-living crisis is having a triple impact.
 - (a) Impact on our residents. High inflation is outstripping wage and benefit increases, so income is falling in real terms. This is driving demand for services which support people facing financial hardship or who are in crisis, as well as services provided to vulnerable people such as social care for children and adults.

We are receiving more contact from households seeking financial assistance, and we are continuing to see high volume of applications for Welfare Assistance and Discretionary Housing Payments. We are continuing to support residents through the crisis with various initiatives and funds.

- (b) Increased costs for the council. Premises and transport costs have increased in line with higher energy costs and fuel prices, most noticeably across service areas such as waste and Home to School Transport. Contract prices are also being affected, and more contracts are reflecting changes in demand.

We have created a £10 million Budget Support Reserve to assist with inflationary pressures within 2022/23.

- (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. We estimate that during 2022/23 our income will be under budget by £1.47 million.

¹ UK Consumer Price Index for 12 months to December 2022. Indicative [modelled consumer price inflation estimates](#) suggest that the CPI rate would have last been higher in October 1981, where the estimate for the annual inflation rate was 11.2%.

- 10 £78.9 million of budget pressures are expected during 2023/24, mainly driven by inflationary and service demand pressures. Partly financed by the additional £56.5 million received from the final Local Government Settlement and from council tax and tax base increases. Savings of £12.4 million will be found from savings with the residual £10 million being funded from the MTFP Support Reserve.
- 11 However, our £778 million capital programme is the most ambitious the council has ever agreed and supports the council's ambition to use its resources to improve education, transport, housing and economic growth.

Recommendation

- 12 That Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the overall position and direction of travel in relation to quarter three performance, the impact of COVID-19 pandemic recovery and the external international factors driving inflation and cost-of-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

- 13 The areas identified in this section are contributory indicators linked to the priorities of the Council Plan. Performance is reported on an exception basis with key messages against the five thematic areas within the Council Plan 2022-2026.

Our Economy

Going Well

- 14 More core tourism businesses are trading in 2022 (c850) compared to 2021 (591) as more businesses reopened following COVID closures.
- 15 Three of our cultural events were evaluated during quarter three. They showed a combined economic impact of almost £850,000 and significant returns on our investment: Durham Book Festival (108%), Seaham Food Festival (598%) and BRASS festival (268%).
- 16 Quarter three ticket sales for our theatres and cinemas were up 14% compared to last year. This was mainly due to successful panto seasons at the Gala and Empire. An average of 100 tickets were sold for each screening / performance held during the quarter which is on par with pre-COVID sales of 103 (at December 2019). 92% of survey respondents rated their 'whole experience' at the theatre or cinema as 'good' or 'very good'

Areas which require attention

- 17 Almost 38,000 people attended our cultural venues during the quarter, 25% fewer (-12,495) than quarter two. However, visitor numbers fluctuate quarter on quarter due to seasonality and events held in the period.

Our environment

- 18 The aim of this priority is to protect our natural environment, including biodiversity and healthy ecosystems. In 2019, the council declared a climate emergency with a commitment to reduce carbon emissions to net zero by 2030 and contribute towards a carbon neutral county by 2045. In April 2022, the council declared an ecological emergency and committed to address ecological decline wherever possible. Our county is of significant landscape value and supports unique combinations of plant and animal species.
- 19 We collected and disposed of 16,000 fewer tonnes of municipal waste during the latest 12 months compared to the previous year (-6%). We believe this is due to people spending more time in their workplace rather than home working so less waste is entering the domestic waste stream managed by the council, and more is going into private trade waste streams through the workplace. The amount of municipal waste collected is now within 3% (7,500 tonnes) of pre-pandemic levels.

Going Well

- 20 Renewable electricity capacity across the county increased by 2.8MW in 2021, compared to 2020. It is currently just over 231MW, with wind power as the largest contributor (135.4MW, 59%). This includes renewable energy capacity generated through delivery of our own schemes as well as through countywide schemes we are involved in.
- 21 245 fewer properties benefited from an energy efficiency measure this quarter (-31%) which reflects the Local Authority Delivery Scheme Phase 2 coming to an end in September 2022. However, we expect measures funded by the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund to help almost 1,200 social housing properties increase their EPC ratings and reduce energy costs by September 2023.

Our communities

- 22 The aim of this priority is to ensure our communities are well connected and supportive of each other, with vibrant and accessible towns and villages which are well-used, clean, attractive and safe. We will support our most vulnerable residents, particularly those isolated or financially vulnerable. We will maintain a strong focus on tackling poverty throughout the cost-of-living crisis.

Going Well

- 23 24% of properties covered by our selective licensing scheme (launched 1 April 2022) are fully licenced, and a further 6% have submitted applications. Since approval of the scheme was approved, the rate of anti-social behaviour within designated areas has increased by 14% (compared to 16% countywide).

Risk Management

- 24 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 Two, 2022/23 Performance Management Report
<https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/documents/s166398/Corporate%20Performance%20Report%20Q2%202022-23%20v2.1.pdf>
- Quarter One, 2022/23 Performance Management Report
<https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/documents/s161902/Corporate%20Performance%20Report%20Q1%202022-23%20Revised.pdf>
- 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>

Author

Steve Evans

Contact: steve.evans@durham.gov.uk

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 Three, 2022/23



1.0 Our Economy: National, Regional & Local Picture

1.1 Council Activity: Going Well

Tourism businesses actively engaged with Visit County Durham

- 1 The promote of our cultural and tourism offer for both visitors and our community and raising the profile of our County as a key UK visitor destination are an important part of our economic growth plans within the Inclusive Economic Strategy.
- 2 At the end of quarter three, there were c850 core tourism businesses across the county compared to the 2021 baseline of 591. The increase being due to businesses reopening following COVID closures.
- 3 27% (230) of tourism businesses were actively engaged with Visit County Durham via our paid for partnership scheme. However, broader active engagement extends to over 90% of businesses through local business support programmes and national initiatives targeted at the visitor economy.
- 4 The impact of COVID during this time and the subsequent cost of living crisis has impacted on the profitability of businesses and therefore the willingness to participate in the paid membership scheme.

Festivals

- 5 Durham Book Festival (13-15 October) involved 30 live events at the Gala Theatre and Clayport Library. Most events were also live streamed so people could watch from home. 2,843 people attended the live events, generating an economic impact of £81,346, a 108% return on our £75,000 investment.
- 6 BRASS festival (10-17 July), a free and ticketed event, attracted 35,645 visitors. The festival generated an economic impact of £321,474, a 268% return on our £120,000 investment.
- 7 Seaham Food Festival (4-7 August) involved 119 stall holders, a programme of food demonstrations by celebrity chefs and outdoor performances and music. The festival attracted 28,120 visitors and generated a total economic impact of £434,789, a 589% return on our £73,789 investment.

Theatres: Gala, Bishop Auckland Town Hall and Empire²

8 Ticket sales are up 14% on last year, with an average of 100 tickets sold for each screening/performance held during the quarter, compared to 88 in quarter two. Ticket sales are on par with the same period pre covid (103, December 2019). Ticket sales were boosted due to a successful Panto Season at both the Gala and Empire, with the Empire seeing record breaking attendance figures. Cinema sales have increased slightly with an average of 29 tickets sold compared to 24 last quarter. We are looking at options to address cinema attendance by taking a different approach to programming and are scheduled to roll out an Events Cinema pilot during the coming months that will offer customers not only new releases but film genres, for example romantic films to coincide with Valentines.

9 Across the three venues, respondents rated the following as 'good' or 'very good':

	Overall	Gala	Bishop Auckland	Empire
Ticket booking experience	96%	95%	95%	97%
Staff welcome	93%	91%	96%	95%
Food and drink facilities	72%	69%	77%	76%
Quality of event	90%	85%	84%	98%
Value for money	92%	88%	91%	98%
Whole Experience	92%	89%	90%	98%

10 Specific customer feedback was received through the satisfaction survey. Recurring issues were poor toilet facilities, long queues for food and drink, and the auditorium temperature (too cold).

11 Also, some customers felt we were under-selling the shows and suggested that events could be better advertised with more information about the event provided.

1.2 Council Activity: Areas which require attention

Visits to council owned cultural venues during quarter three

12 There were 37,834 visits during the quarter, 25% (12,495) less than quarter two. However, visitor numbers fluctuate quarter on quarter due to seasonality and events held in the period

- Killhope: 1,280 visitors (October only) – the 2022 season (April-October) was its best performance for many years with attendance figures reaching 12,995, compared to 10,640 in 2021. An increase in visitors of 2,355 (22%).

² October - December 2022

- DLI Collection at Sevenhills: 7,640 visitors – a decrease of 31% (3,423) on quarter two which had higher education figures. Also, Palace Green library exhibition was quieter during quarter three due to Christmas closures and no temporary exhibitions taking place.
- Durham Town Hall: 6,348 visitors – although 4% (241), less than the previous quarter, quarter two figures included visitors to the Durham Fringe Festival and graduation parties from the University.
- Bishop Auckland Town Hall: 22,566 visitors – 12% (3,218) lower than quarter two due to the opening of the Spanish Gallery restaurant and new café which is close to the Town Hall and Auckland Castle Café stopping ticketing entry. Poor weather and heating issues in the Town Hall also impacted visitor numbers.

2.0 Our Environment: National, Regional & Local Picture

13 Renewable electricity capacity increased across the County in 2021 to just over 231 MW, with wind power as the largest contributor (135.4MW, 58.6%). Since 2014 when this data was first released, capacity in the County has increased by 18% (35.2MW). This includes renewable energy capacity generated through delivery of our own schemes as well as through countywide schemes we are involved in.

2.1 Council Activity: Going Well

Carbon Reduction

14 The Business Energy Efficiency Programme, which provides advice and grants to local businesses, has reduced carbon emissions by more than 1,000 tonnes since 2019. Demand for the service remains high due to the current energy crisis.

Carbon Emissions

15 The solar farm with battery storage at Morrison Busty Depot is due to be completed in February 2023.

16 Bids to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) Phase 3b have been submitted and we are awaiting the announcement of the outcome. A previous scheme delivered under the PSDS at Woodland primary school where air source heat pumps and a solar PV system were installed in December 2021 has reduced energy costs to the school by 30% (£3,500) and carbon emissions by almost 17 tonnes.

Energy efficiency advice and support

- 17 129 households were helped to save an average of £179 during quarter three (through Managing Money Better). More people contacted the scheme about fuel debt issues, and almost £5,600 of savings linked to fuel debt write-offs and vouchers were claimed within the quarter.
- 18 546 properties benefited from an energy efficiency measure this quarter, 31% (245) less than quarter two due to the Local Authority Delivery Scheme Phase 2 (LAD2) coming to an end in September 2022. Measures are currently funded via the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund that is expected to help 1,164 social housing properties increase EPC ratings to reduce energy costs by September 2023.

Accreditations and Awards

- 19 The council was awarded Overall Outstanding Achiever (Large Organisation) at the 2022 Investors in the Environment award ceremony – in recognition of a wide array of environmental projects and initiatives to improve the council's sustainability and protect and enhance County Durham's environment.

2.2 Council Activity: Other Areas to Note

Waste

- 20 6% (16,000 tonnes) less municipal waste tonnage was collected and disposed of during the latest 12 months compared to the previous year and is within 3% (7,500 tonnes) of pre-pandemic levels. This decrease is believed to be due to people now spending more time in the workplace rather than home working - less waste entering the domestic waste stream managed by the council, and more going into private trade waste streams through the workplace.
- 21 Capacity issues continue at the energy from waste plant, impacting the proportion of waste diverted from landfill. This is a regional issue due to a higher level of local authority waste, as County Durham has the highest population in the area it also has the highest input into the plant. When tonnages collected across the region reduce and capacity improves it is hoped that the diversion rate will also improve.
- 22 Although the contamination rate is below the same period last year, it has increased slightly on last quarter (by one percentage point) and continues to be above the pre-covid rate of 29.95%. Bin stickers showing which items should be placed in each bin have been distributed to all households as part of the countywide contamination campaign. Phase two is now underway, this involves rejecting and removing contaminated bins, supported by recycling assistants' door knocking and advising residents.

Air Quality

- 23 The deterioration in air quality, from 96% in 2020 to 65% in 2021, within the Durham City air quality management area was mainly due to the city returning to normal routines and working patterns post-covid, and changes to traffic flows whilst works to Elvet Bridge were being completed. Air quality results show an improvement on the pre-covid (2019) position of 54%.

Street cleansing surveys (July-October)

- 24 The latest survey showed an increase in dog fouling, and we have responded with targeted patrols in the known problem areas. We are consulting on expanding [The Public Space Protection Order for dog ownership](#) until 13 March.

National recycling award

- 25 Our Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) recycling project won 'Campaign of the Year' at the National Recycling Awards (it was also shortlisted for a 2022 LARAC3 Award). 130 collection points are available across the county.

3.0 Our Communities: National, Regional & Local Picture

3.1 Council Activity: Going Well

Selective Licensing (in effect from 1 April 2022)

- 26 6,712 properties are now fully licenced, equating to an estimated 24% of all properties covered by the scheme. A further 1,600 applications are in the system, which equates to a further 6% of properties.
- 27 Since the scheme was approved in December 2021, the rate of anti-social behaviour incidents within selective licensing designated areas⁴ has increased by 14%. This compares to a 16% increase across the county.

³ Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee

⁴ This is a specific sub-set of ASB. It differs in that it does not contain stray dogs, stray horses, abandoned shopping trolleys, graffiti, criminal damage or pollution. It is also limited to council, fire and police data whereas the overall reports of ASB contains some housing association data.

4.0 Data Tables

Key to Symbols

Performance against target and previous performance		Performance against comparable groups		Direction of Travel	
✓	meeting or exceeding	✓	Performance is better than national or north east	↑	higher than comparable period
○	within 2%	×	Performance is worse than national or north east	→	static against comparable period
×	more than 2% behind			↓	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 (N)

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 (NE)

The North East comparator 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

Performance Indicator	Latest data (period covered)	Performance compared to:					Direction of Travel - last four reporting periods				updated
		Period target	12 months earlier	Pre-COVID	N	NE					
Attract 11.96 million visitors to the county in 2021 (5% increase on 2020)	15.77m	11.96m	11.39m	11.39m	-	-	↓	↓	↓	↑	No
	(2021)	✓	✓	✓							
Amount (£ million) generated by the visitor economy	£826.6m	£608.4m	£506.7m	£506.7m	-	-	↓	↓	↓	↑	No
	(2021)	✓	✓	✓							
No. jobs supported by the visitor economy	10,063	8,153	6,794	6,794	-	-	↓	↓	↓	↑	No
	(2021)	✓	✓	✓							
No of tourism businesses actively engaged with Visit County Durham	230	Tracker	236	new PI	-	-	new PI	new PI	new PI	new PI	Yes
	(2022)	-	x								
No. of people attending cultural events / programme events	185,312 (2021)	Tracker -	new PI	new PI	-	-	new PI	new PI	new PI	new PI	No
No. of people attending council owned cultural venues (Killhope, DLI & town halls)	37,834 (Oct-Dec 22)	Tracker -	-	-	-	-	new PI	new PI	↓	↓	Yes
Average number of tickets sold per cinema and theatre screening/performance during the quarter	100 (Oct-Dec 22)	TBC	88 ✓	74 ✓	-	-	↑	↑	↑	↑	Yes

Our Environment

Performance Indicator	Latest data (period covered)	Performance compared to:					Direction of Travel - last four reporting periods				updated
		Period target	12 months earlier	Pre-COVID	N	NE					
County Durham to become net zero by 2045	57 (2020)	Tracker -	54 ✓	54 ✓	-	-	↑	↑	↓	↑	No
Reduce the council's carbon emissions to net zero by 2030 (reduction from 1990 baseline)	57% (2021/22)	Tracker -	58% ○	51% ✓	-	-	↑	↑	↑	↓	No
Work towards Durham City Air Quality Management Area NO2 levels being below the govt threshold of 40µg/m3	65% (2021)	100% x	96% x	54% (2019) ✓	-	-	↓	↓	↑	↓	Yes
Plant a minimum of 140,000 trees by 2024	40,414 (2021/22)	Tracker -	new PI	new PI	-	-	new PI	new PI	new PI	new PI	No
% of household waste that is re-used, recycled or composted	37.7% (Oct 21-Sep 22)	Tracker -	38.2% ○	41.1% x			↓	↑	→	↓	Yes
Increase the proportion of waste diverted from landfill to at least 95%	93.2% (Oct 21-Sep 22)	95% x	90% ✓	97.8% x			→	→	↑	↑	Yes
Contamination rate (%)	34.5% (Oct 21-Sep 22)	Tracker -	34.69% ✓	29.95% x	-	-	↑	↑	↓	↑	Yes
Raise cycling and walking levels in County Durham in line with national levels by 2035	67.7%	Tracker	68%	68%			↑	↓	↑	↓	No
	(2020/21)	-	○	○							
% overall satisfaction with cycle routes & facilities (confidence intervals +/-4pp)	52%	Tracker	54%	-			-	-	-	→	Yes
	(2022)	-	○								

Our Communities

Performance Indicator	Latest data (period covered)	Performance compared to:					Direction of Travel - last four reporting periods				updated
		Period target	12 months earlier	Pre-COVID	N	NE					
Achieve 100% licensing of private rented sector properties covered by the Selective Licensing Scheme by 2027	24% (Sep 22)	Tracker -	new PI	new PI	-	-	new PI	new PI	new PI	n/a	Yes
No. of fully licensed private rented sector properties in the selective licensed areas	6,712 (Sep 22)	Tracker -	new PI	new PI	-	-	new PI	new PI	new PI	n/a	Yes
Reduce ASB rates (per 10,000 population) within the Selective Licensing Scheme areas by 10% (against the 2021 baseline)	283.9 (Jul-Sep 22)	224.27 x	229.06 x	new PI	-	-	new PI	new PI	new PI	↓	Yes
Return the number of fly-tipping incidents to at least pre-COVID levels by 2035	5,184 (Jan-Dec 22)	6,548 ✓	6,895 ✓	6,548 ✓	-	-	↓	↓	↓	↓	Yes
% of land which falls below unacceptable levels of cleanliness - detritus	7.8% (Jul-Oct 22)	12% ✓	9% ✓	13.4% ✓	-	-	↑	↓	↓	↓	Yes
% of land which falls below unacceptable levels of cleanliness - litter	4.4% (Jul-Oct 22)	6% ✓	5.2% ✓	6.6% ✓	-	-	↓	↓	↓	↑	Yes
% of land which falls below unacceptable levels of cleanliness - dog fouling	1.4% (Jul-Oct 22)	1% ✓	0.5% x	1.6% ✓	-	-	↑	↓	↓	↑	Yes

Other relevant indicators

Performance Indicator	Latest data (period covered)	Performance compared to:					Direction of Travel - last four reporting periods				updated
		Period target	12 months earlier	Pre-COVID	N	NE					
% of A roads where maintenance is recommended	3.1% (2020)	Tracker -	3.0% ○	3.0% ○			↓	→	↑	↑	No
% of B roads where maintenance is recommended	3.0% (2020)	Tracker -	3.3% ✓	3.3% ✓			↓	→	↓	↓	No
% of C roads where maintenance is recommended	2.6% (2020)	Tracker -	2.3% x	2.3% x			↓	→	↓	↑	No
% of unclassified roads where maintenance is recommended	22.5% (2020)	Tracker -	21.3% x	21.3% x			→	↑	↑	↑	No