

Report Title	Q4/Annual 2024/25 Corporate Performance Report
Date of Meeting	Wednesday 30 July 2025
Report Author	Kayleigh Walker - Service Improvement
Lead Officer	Assistant Chief Executive
Lead Cabinet Member(s)	Leader, Cllr Kerrie Carmichael
Why is this a key decision?	NA
Wards Affected	NA
Identify exempt information and exemption category	NA
Is the report urgent?	No
Reasons for urgency (only where applicable)	NA
Appendices (if any)	Appendix 1 – Corporate Performance Indicators Q4/Annual 2024/25 Appendix 2 –AD Business Plan Actions Exception Report Q4 2024/25 Appendix 3 – Corporate PI Set 2025/26

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report presents the Quarter 4 and Annual Corporate Performance Report 2024/25, setting out the Council's progress in delivering the Council Plan 2024-2027.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board note progress on the further development of the Corporate Performance Management Framework and provide comment the 2024/25 Quarter 4 and Annual monitoring reports.

3. Proposals – Reasons for the recommendation

- 3.1 Following a period of government intervention that ended in March 2024, the Council's Performance Management Framework has been further refined and embedded into business processes. This is enabling us to track progress in delivering the strategic outcomes in the Council Plan, improve services through identifying poor performance and sharing good practice, celebrate our achievements and where things are going well and provide a strong evidence base for improved decision making and the efficient use of resources. Through enabling us to identify opportunities for continuous improvement, the Performance Management Framework is also a key component in our journey to becoming an outstanding organisation.
- 3.2 The Council Plan 2024-2027 was approved by Council on 23rd July 2024.

The strategic themes in the Council Plan are: -

- Growing up in Sandwell
- Living in Sandwell
- Healthy in Sandwell
- Thriving Economy in Sandwell

All underpinned by One Council One Team

- 3.3 Performance measures for 2024/25 have been aligned against the outcomes under each strategic theme, which, along with the updates to the business plan actions, will allow the Council to understand if it is delivering against the Council Plan (reported on a quarterly and annual basis through the Corporate Performance Report).

3.4 A two-tiered approach to performance measures has also been developed:

1. Council measures that are within the gift of the Council and that it can set a meaningful and ambitious target for. In total there are 175 of these measures.
2. Contextual measures that are important for the Council to monitor but are not solely influenced by the Council and that it would not set a target for. In total there are 37 of these measures.

3.5 In total there are 212 Corporate Performance indicators. Of these, 85 are annual measures and 127 are quarterly measures.

3.6 This report sets out the Council's performance against the Corporate Performance Indicators for Q4 and the annual position for 2024/25 (attached in **Appendix 1**), and a summary of Assistant Director Business Plan that contribute towards delivering the Council Plan rated 'red' (attached as **Appendix 2**).

3.7 Performance of key contracts is included in the quarterly performance reports to provide oversight of the performance of these services and assurance that contract management mechanisms continue to be in place and effective. (Please see paragraph 11)

3.8 The information collected is used to enable the authority to better understand the impact of its work on local people, and where necessary, target actions and resources to improve progress in achieving the Council's strategic objectives.

4. Quarter 4 and Annual Performance Report – key messages

Corporate Performance Indicators

4.1 In Q4, the number of Quarterly PIs, excluding contextual measures, was 116. Some quarterly PIs also have a separate annual position depending on how

they are calculated. For those that don't, the Q4 position is taken as the annual position to provide the annual summary.

4.2 Of the 116 quarterly indicators in Q4:

- o 51 PIs (43.97%) are RAG rated 'green' compared to 51 PIs (44.35%) in Q3
- o 7 PIs (6.03%) are RAG rated 'amber' compared to 9 PIs (7.83%) in Q3
- o 32 PIs (27.59%) are RAG rated 'red' compared to 27 PIs (23.48%) in Q3
- o 26 PIs (22.41%) have no RAG rating because there is no target set or there was no outturn available this quarter compared to 28 PIs (24.35%) in Q3.

4.3 The highest number of 'red' PIs are under the 'Living in Sandwell' strategic theme (10), and under the 'One Council One Team' strategic theme (13).

4.4 Of all the red quarterly PIs, 21 were also red last quarter. These have been highlighted in the paragraphs below.

Area	Total	Red	Amber	Green	RAG NA	Data not available
Growing Up	14	3	2	7	2	0
Living	27	10	1	10	6	0
Healthy	10	4	0	4	2	0
Thriving	18	2	0	9	7	0
One Council One Team	47	13	4	21	7	2
Total	116	32	7	51	24	2

4.5 There are 175 annual measures. The 2024/25 annual performance summary is below and a comparison to 2023/24 has been provided, but it must be noted that the Corporate Performance Indicator set did change at the end of last financial year.

- 78 (44.57%) are rated 'green' compared to 76 (37.62%) in 2023/24
- 15 (8.57%) are rated 'amber' compared to 18 (8.91%) in 2023/24
- 44 (25.14%) are RAG rated 'red' compared to 42 (20.79%) in 2023/24
- 38 PIs (21.71%) have no RAG rating because there is no target set or there was no outturn available compared to 66 PIs (32.67%) in 2023/24.

Area	Total	Red	Amber	Green	RAG NA	Data not available
Growing Up	31	9	5	14	2	1
Living	38	10	3	15	7	3
Healthy	21	6	2	9	3	1
Thriving	33	7	0	17	8	1
One Council One Team	52	12	5	23	7	5
Total	175	44	15	78	27	11

Council Plan

4.6 In total, 63.06% of all actions in Assistant Director Business Plans are on track, compared to 72.61% in Q3; however, 22.29% are now complete in comparison to 12.74% in Q3. 9.55% of actions are experiencing delays,

compared with 12.1% in Q3. 0.96% have not started, compared with 2.23% in Q3. These actions are now to commence in 2025/2026 period.

4.7 The table below shows an overview of performance by strategic theme.

	On track	Completed	Delayed	Not started	No update
Growing up in Sandwell	41	20	5	0	0
Living in Sandwell	33	11	2	0	3
Healthy in Sandwell	36	9	7	0	4
Thriving in Sandwell	46	11	10	0	6
One Council One Team	42	19	6	3	0

4.8 Full commentaries for all delayed actions can be found in Appendix 2.

5. Our key achievements in Q4 and for 2024/25

5.1 Oracle Fusion was launched in October 2024 and hyper care has now ended, with the closure report signed off in April. The Council is already benefiting from increased digital self-service and having data in one place, creating a single version of the truth. Work continues to fully embed the system and train officers on the new features.

5.2 The Council's statutory accounts are now up to date: the final Statement of Accounts for 2023/24 was presented to Audit and Risk Assurance Committee on 20th February and the Statement of Accounts 2023/24 (final audited) have been published. These accounts play a vital role in ensuring financial transparency and accountability. The previous failure to submit them was a

contributing factor to Grant Thornton's assessment that the Council has significant weaknesses in its governance arrangements. Statutory accounts serve as a reliable public record of the Council's financial activities, enabling residents, taxpayers, and other stakeholders to see how public funds are being used and to hold the Council to account. Keeping these accounts current also supports the Council in monitoring its financial position, making informed decisions, and maintaining long-term financial sustainability.

5.3 The Procurement Act 2023 came into effect in February 2025, with the aim of simplifying and streamlining public procurement processes. The Council has made appropriate arrangements to ensure compliance with the legislation for all current and future procurement activities. A dedicated Procurement Board was established in October 2024 to oversee and support procurement activities including strategic policy review, contracts management, procurement practice and training to align with sector best practice. The establishment of the Board and actions taken to date directly responded to historical concerns over procurement practices that contributed to the Council being placed under government intervention. The comprehensive transformation work undertaken over the past year demonstrates the Council's continued significant progress which will continue under the supervision of the Board.

5.4 In 2024/25 significant improvements have been made to the Occupational Therapist (OT) assessments and processes. This has resulted in a significant increase in equipment being processed and delivered, a reduction in the waiting time for a prevention assessments from 20 weeks to 5 (with the target to reduce this further) and with the introduction of OT assessments being offered at OT clinics at the Independent Living Centre, a 6% increase in OT assessments and a reduction in the waiting list (740 down to 597 - we aim to accelerate this once the new OTs are with the team). Moving forwards, our overall ambition for the service is to reduce waiting times for OT and Therapy services to no more than 20 working days from referral to assessment.

- 5.5 Following development with members and officers throughout 2024, the Council's new Neighbourhood Working model was launched in April 2025 with a newly recruited team and will drive positive collaboration and priority driven action in our neighbourhoods. This is a significant step in enabling us to be a council that is member led, officer-driven and customer focused.
- 5.6 Persistent absence from school improved from 20.2% in 2022/23 to 16.6% in 2023/24 (1065 students) in primary schools and from 27.8% in 2022/23 to 27.3% in 2023/24 (241 students) for secondary schools. For secondary schools we are still above benchmarking figures for regional, national and statutory neighbours, but for Primary, whilst we are above regional and national figures, we are now below the statutory neighbour benchmarking figure (17.2%). Regular school attendance supports academic achievement, helps children build essential life skills, and promotes social and emotional development. It also lays the foundation for future opportunities and good habits, while ensuring access to important support and a safe environment.
- 5.7 April 2025 saw the Council launch new Customer Service Standards, which set out how the Council will provide high-quality modern customer service that is accessible to everyone who lives in or visits Sandwell. The purpose is to put the customer at the heart of everything we do and when customers get in touch with us, we will always aim to consistently provide an excellent service.
- 5.8 The performance measure for the rent collected by the Council as a proportion of the rent owed against HRA properties ('Rent Collection as a percentage of rent due') has been better than target throughout 2024/25 and for Q4 was 96.91%, also exceeding last year's performance of 95.98%. This achievement comes despite the challenges of the cost-of-living crisis, the wider rollout of managed migration of benefit claimants to Universal Credit for rent payments, and the additional 53rd week in the financial year. A revised team restructure has enhanced employee retention and fostered better communication through a more streamlined organisational structure. The team's dedication and effective case management have been key factors in delivering these outstanding results. Sandwell's performance continues to

exceed industry benchmarks, outperforming both local authorities and housing associations averages across the sector.

- 5.9 The Household Support Fund ran from October 2024 until March 2025 and provided £3.471m in support 53,000 households in need. This included supporting nearly 23,000 children for free school meals in the school holidays.
- 5.10 In Q4, the first stage of the Supporting Families Data Maturity Project was finalised. The project has automated the process to bring together lots of different data sets across the council into one platform, providing a holistic view of families and allowing us to identify those that qualify for support from SCT, based on ten criteria set by government. As a result of the project, in Q4 289 families were identified for support. The next stage of the project will look at how else this data can be used, particularly in terms of prevention and early intervention.
- 5.11 2024/25 has seen the establishment of the Performance Board. This is enabling the Council to track delivery of the Council Plan on a quarterly basis and consider progress alongside the delivery of key contracts, the People Strategy, the Strategic Risk Register and Internal Audit, Health and Safety and Member Casework. This has created a more holistic view of corporate performance, and the approach will continue to be reviewed and strengthened, further improving corporate oversight of the organisation.
- 5.12 In March it was announced that Sandwell Council has been shortlisted in the 'Most Improved Council' category at this year's Local Government Chronicle (LGC) Awards. The LGC Awards are the biggest celebration of excellence in local government, and the Most Improved Council category recognises authorities that have successfully led major organisational change or reform to deliver genuine improvement. The judging will take place in spring with the results announced on 11 June.

6. Performance Monitoring Areas for Improvement – Growing Up in Sandwell

- 6.1 There are 3 'red' quarterly PIs in Q4 for this Strategic theme out of 14 quarterly PIs in total. All 3 were also 'red' last quarter. For 2 of these PIs the annual position was also 'red'. There are also 6 'red' annual PIs this year under this strategic theme and 1 quarterly indicator that is 'green' for Q4, but 'red' for the annual position (percentage of 16s and 17s not in employment, education or training/not known (NEET/NK). In summary 9 annual PIs are 'red' out of 31 in total. The key messages are summarised below.
- 6.2 The outturn for 'Educational Attainment Sandwell All Pupils - KS4 attainment of English and maths at Grade 5 or above' (annual PI) has been confirmed in Q4 at 35%, below the target of 40% for 2023/24. This is below national figures, with the gap similar to previous years (currently -11 percentage points). Breaking it down, performance in English was at grade 5 or above was 55%, 15 percentage points above that in maths at 40%, with outcomes in English demonstrating an improving trend. Improving attainment in both subject areas remain a priority, but particularly in maths.
- 6.3 Priority Education Investment Area (PEIA) funding, one strand of which focused on maths, has now come to an end. The funding totalled £3m from 2022-2025 and much of how that money was spent was determined by the DfE and channelled directly to Academy Trusts to provide support. The Children & Education Directorate is looking at how support to schools can be widened and improved across the borough and is developing an Education and School Improvement Strategy. More resource has been put into Peer-to-Peer support for schools recently, alongside a focus on enhancing the training and support offer for schools. The Directorate are also in the process of updating webpages so that schools have clear guidance on what offer of support is available, both core (available to all) and enhanced (either grant funded, or a small financial contribution required). Services are also investigating other sources of potential funding external to the council and looking at funding options internally. With investment channelled through the

Council (rather than from government straight to schools) we could build on the current support offered to schools, capitalising on what we understand to work well (such as peer-to-peer support) to address prevalent issues in Sandwell such as education attainment at KS4. Maths Hubs (a network to develop and spread excellent practice) will continue to support all eligible schools.

- 6.4 The outturn for 'Educational Attainment Children in Care (CIC) – KS4 attainment of English and maths at Grade 5' (annual PI) is 8.2%, below the target of 15%. Performance is below the target but in line with regional performance and 0.8 ppt below national performance. This is a small cohort with each child equating to approximately 2%, so each pupil that achieves the standard has a significant impact and can cause a swing in performance figures. Of the cohort, 49% were receiving SEN Support or on an EHCP. We are continuing to support the children through their Personal Education Plan meetings and workshops to ensure that children gain their Function Skills (English and Maths) Qualifications.
- 6.5 The outturn for 'Attainment rates for those with EHCP attainment 8 (KS4)' is 12.8 against a target of 14, above regional average, but below the national average. 'Attainment rates for those with SEN Support attainment 8 (KS4)' is 28.6 against a target of 31, below regional and national averages. Both annual PIs are 'red' for 2023/24. These indicators give us the average academic performance of a secondary school. It is calculated by adding together pupils' highest scores across eight government approved school subjects. The grades are converted into points, put through a formula and finally out comes the school's Attainment 8 score.
- 6.6 Sandwell school performance for attainment 8 for young people with EHCPs is above regional and statistical neighbour average, but attainment remains below national average. Attainment rates for those with SEN Support attainment 8 (KS4) is also below regional and national averages. This is due to a variety of factors, one being the numbers of young people who have been issued with EHCPs but are not yet able to be placed in the most appropriate

setting to meet their needs. Sufficiency work (making sure we have the right number of places in the local area) is on-going to make improvements in this area and is part of the wider SEND transformation work. Another factor is the provision of the Inclusive learning service, that focuses on work with primary schools, but less on work with secondary schools.

6.7 Work is underway to reduce the timescales related to EHCPs, which will mean more children get the support they need as soon as possible. Work is also taking place to improve inclusion in schools, and the service is working towards putting an Inclusion Strategy in place. In the meantime, SENCO training sessions are taking place to ensure all staff involved in SEND provision have the necessary skills and knowledge. In addition, school improvement advisors have a specific focus on SEND children, focusing on whether the learning they are receiving is appropriate, and if not, identifying actions the school needs to take to address this. Progress towards addressing the action points is then monitored during subsequent visits.

6.8 The annual measure 'Percentage of schools (including primary, secondary and specialist provision) that have achieved the EHWB charter mark' is 72% against a target of 80% and is 'red'. The Sandwell Whole School Approach to Well-Being is commissioned and funded by Public Health Sandwell, in partnership with the Educational Psychology Service who have taken a lead on the background research and design and delivery of the model. The programme is intended to be delivered universally through all schools, initially developed for Primary, but now extended to Secondary. Schools that opt into the programme are awarded the Sandwell Wellbeing Charter Mark if they can demonstrate that they take a whole-school approach to emotional health and wellbeing through a process of audit, action planning and review. Performance is below target at the end of the year 2 service level agreement. The programme is also being rolled out to early years settings and is included as the annual PI 'Number of early years setting that have achieved the Emotional Health and Well Being (EHWB) charter mark'. We are also below the target of 14 at 9 settings. The Public Health team is working

with Inclusion Support to increase uptake across early years settings and schools. It is also being reviewed as part of the Healthy Schools programme.

7. Performance Monitoring Areas for Improvement – Living in Sandwell

- 7.1 There are 10 'red' quarterly PIs under this strategic theme in Q4 out of 27 quarterly PIs in total. Of these, 8 were red last quarter. There are 10 'red' annual PIs out of 38 in total. The key messages are summarised below.
- 7.2 The 'percentage of responsive repairs completed in timescale' was 90.6% for emergency repairs and 75.7% for non-emergency repairs, against a target of 95% in Q4 (also 'red' last quarter). A dedicated team has been created to complete Emergency and Urgent repairs. The team began new working practices on 1st April 2025 and significant improvements have been seen. A contractor has been procured to address the backlog of repairs and is on track to be mobilised in May 2025. This contractor will complete all backlog repairs raised prior November 2024. Results for non-urgent works are expected to decrease as older jobs are completed. Whilst we will continue reporting this measure, we will also identify the performance of the new jobs with the backlog excluded to give some assurance of the service improvements being made. There is no separate annual outturn so the Q4 position is also the annual position.
- 7.3 'Housing Compliance Health Check: Asbestos safety checks' is 34.1% against a target of 100% and RAG rated 'red' (also 'red' last quarter). Following advice from an external auditor, Sandwell has employed the services of an external asbestos management company to undertake surveys to appropriate residential blocks. The decision was taken to instruct refreshed surveys to improve the quality of information held and to ensure that the reports held were in line with current HSE requirements. This has led to a significant drop in performance from 79.29% in Q3 to 34.1% in Q4. The works have been packaged into a programme which is performance measured with an anticipated completion for July 2025. The survey report records will be

uploaded to the recently procured IT system which will further improve the way we record and distribute the information. There is no separate annual outturn so the Q4 position is also the annual position.

8. Performance Monitoring Areas for Improvement – Healthy in Sandwell

- 8.1 There are 4 quarterly PIs rated as 'red' in Q4 under this strategic theme out of 10 quarterly PIs in total. Of these, 3 were 'red' last quarter. Of the 4 quarterly PIs rated 'red', 3 have no separate annual outturn so are 'red' for the annual position as well. There are 6 annual 'red' PIs out of 21 annual PIs in total. The key messages are summarised below.
- 8.2 The quarterly PI 'ASCOF 3D Proportion of people using social care who receive self-directed support, and those receiving direct payments' is 16% against a target of 22% in Q4 (also 'red' last quarter). Performance is below target, lower than this time last year and is below the England average for 2023/24.
- 8.3 As part of the ASC Transformation programme our Transformation partner ARCC have worked with teams to explore processes within ASC to look at how improvements in the Direct payments process can be embedded. From this work a steering group has been established with representation from social work teams, commissioning and finance, as Direct Payments is a system that encompasses all of these functions and to ensure a coproduced solution to DP performance. Some key areas have been identified which can be summarised as: need for training and confidence building in workers, improved communications and processes across teams and greater promotion of direct payments amongst people accessing services.
- 8.4 Solutions to these have already begun with the introduction of a new Direct Payment Practice Panel which will guide practice across all teams, quality

assure the direct payment applications and reduce the number of suspensions/clawbacks or closures of DP by ensuring we 'get it right first time'. Training for social workers and teams to build confidence is being developed and will be delivered in May and will be supported by our DP Champions who are social workers with strong experience of direct payments, able to guide colleagues in their teams. In addition, collaboration with commissioning, through the steering group and shared learning about what services people accessing support need, will lead to the development of a more robust market from which people can purchase support. The priority for the Council is that people are enabled to use their direct payments flexibly, in a way that is most appropriate for them, whilst meeting all necessary regulatory requirements. Whilst the number of DPs are an indicator of performance, the quality of DPs is the more meaningful measure. Support for people wishing to employ a Personal Assistant is now provided by our new commissioned service, Purple Zest, who we will work with to explore how the PA market can also be developed.

- 8.5 We plan to undertake more engagement with people using DPs to purchase their support services later in the summer, to follow up on earlier consultation exercises and measure our success in improving our processes and performance. We continue to audit cases to ensure that social workers are offering Direct Payments to residents wherever it's appropriate to do so. We are monitoring the numbers of people who use Direct Payments via our monthly performance oversight and scrutinise performance and practice at our Practice Governance Board. We expect to see improvements in performance in the next 6-8 months.
- 8.6 The quarterly PI 'The proportion of people who received short-term services during the year - who previously were not receiving services - where no further request was made for ongoing support' was 51% against a target of 60% (also 'red' last quarter). Performance has improved by 2 percentage point since last quarter but is below the figure for England (79.4%). We currently have a programme of work in progress with our transformation partner ARCC to improve our internal and externally commissioned

reablement services. This includes reviewing the intermediate care pathway (such as STAR, Home-Based Intermediate Care, the hospital discharge hub and how we help people coming out of hospital and into the community). This work will inform the future operating model and service design, setting out what services will be delivered and where we will signpost customers for information and support. Part of this is having more informal advice and support at the front door and have a strength-based approach in our conversations with customers (which means working with customers to understand what they can do themselves or with the support of others (e.g. family) and what they need support with) so that we provide the services and interventions they need to remain healthy and independent in their own homes. Improvements to performance should be seen in September/October. There is no separate annual outturn so the Q4 position is also the annual position.

- 8.7 Referring to annual measures, the 'Number of VCS settings that have achieved the EHWB charter mark' is 2 against a target of 7 and is rated 'red'. The EHWB Charter mark programme was intended to be delivered universally through all schools but is now being rolled out to early years settings and the voluntary sector as well. However, this element of the service level agreement is under-performing as should be 14 at this point across all settings. This offer and approach are being reviewed as part of the programme evaluation. The PI is proposed to be removed from the Corporate set for 2025/26, as it is difficult to calculate and provide accurate figures because the number of VCS organisations changes throughout the year.
- 8.8 The 'Number of adults completing a tier 2 weight management programme' is 215 (11.8% of the 1,816 people referred to the programme) against a target of 900 referrals and 540 completions. A further 215 participants are currently on the 12-week programme and have not yet completed. The contact for this programme is under performing. The Public Health Team have been meeting weekly to address the issues and targeted performance measures have been put in place. The provider has staffing issues, with current waiting time at 8 weeks which is unacceptable for participants. We are currently 4 months into

year 2 delivery and will not be extending for the optional year 3 in favour of a new delivery model that is being developed. We will continue to work with the provider to improve performance and use the following 8 months to set up the new Adult Weight Management provision.

9. Performance Monitoring Areas for Improvement – Thriving Economy in Sandwell

- 9.1 There are 2 quarterly PIs rated as 'red' in Q4 under this strategic theme, out of 18 quarterly PIs in total. One these 'red' PIs was also 'red' in Q3 - 'Ratio of diesel to lower emission vehicles in fleet (Serco & Corporate)'. This PI also has no separate annual outturn so the Q4 position is also the annual position. In total there are 7 'red' annual PIs out of 33 annual PIs in total. The key messages are summarised below.
- 9.2 The annual PI 'Reductions in killed and seriously injured by 50% by 2030' was above target at an increase of 11% against a target of a reduction of 5%. This increase matched national trends which had seen a gradual increase year on year post covid as casualty rates 'normalised' with traffic finally returning to pre-covid numbers. However, this is the 2023 figure as 2024 figures are not finally verified and published by the Department for Transport (DfT) until September 2025. Sandwell's new Road Safety Strategy and action plan was launched in 2024 which will focus on road safety interventions moving forward to help bring the casualty figures down.
- 9.3 The Council is responsible for maintaining a road network of 876.4km, 654.3km of which are unclassified roads. The annual PI 'The percentage of our unclassified carriageways in Red Risk condition' was 22%, above the target of 19%. Increases are more likely to be seen year on year on these carriageways due to several factors such as: the age of the roads; traffic volume; maintenance history; lower expected annual data coverage and less frequent surveys due to the size of the unclassified road network. Weather conditions such as wet winters can also contribute to the acceleration of road deterioration. For 2025/26 additional funding has been secured from both Department for Transport (DfT) and from Council prudential borrowing. This

additional funding will be targeted at arresting the deterioration in the condition of the unclassified road network and at footways in red risk condition and in need to resurfacing.

9.4 The annual PI 'Number of new council homes built Per annum (Council house new build programme and the high-rise programme)' is below the target of 58 at 14. The remaining units that were to be delivered as part of the council house new build and high-rise programmes have been delayed for handover to the Council. It is anticipated that the outstanding units to meet this target will be handed over in Q1 2025/26.

9.5 The annual PI 'The number of on-street residential EV charging points installed' is below the target of 114 at 14. The year-end target has not been achieved due to some contractor delays resulting in remaining installations taking longer than anticipated. Likely completion of Phase 1 (74 installations) is due in Q2 2025/26.

10. Performance Monitoring Areas for Improvement - One Council One Team

10.1 There are 13 quarterly PIs rated as 'red' in Q4 under this strategic theme out of 47 quarterly PIs in total, 6 of which were 'red' last quarter. In total there are 12 annual PIs rated as 'red' out of 52 in total. The key messages are summarised below.

10.2 The Revenue and Benefits Contact Centre Average Wait Measure is above target for Q4 at 4 minutes 54 seconds and for 2024/25 at 4 minutes 38 seconds against a target of 3 minutes 30 seconds. The Revenues and Benefits Contact Centre Abandonment Rate is above target at 10% for Q4 against a target of 8%, (RAG rated 'red') although it is below target for 2024/25 ('green'). This is largely due to the additional recovery of outstanding council tax, and annual billing in March as well as changes to Council tax reduction (CTR) scheme for 2025-26 which has reduced the level of CTR support, affecting 12,000 residents and leading to increase in calls - the Contact Centre received 15,000 more calls in March 2025 than in March 2024

(35,000 compared to 20,000). The service tried to recruit 4 additional customer service advisors but only managed to find 2 suitable candidates and after their 6 weeks' training they started to take calls in Q4. If the service has been successful in recruiting 4 staff performance would have been better. The service is looking to get 2 temporary staff in during Q1 of 2025/26, whilst we recruit for permanent staff again who will need training. We have also used back-office support in customer services to help deal with the demand and this continued throughout March and April 2025.

10.3 The 'Adult Contact Centre Average Wait measure' was 1 minute 35 seconds for both Q4 and for 2024/25, above the target of 30 seconds but an improvement on 2 minutes 56 seconds in Q3. The abandonment rate was 7.7% in Q4 and 6.79% for 2024/25, again an improvement on Q3 at 13.23% (both PIs RAG rated 'red' in Q3). This was due to recruitment of agency staff during these months allowing us to take a bigger volume of calls and in a timelier manner. As part of the ASC transformation programme, ASC is currently reviewing and piloting alternative approaches to how the service manages calls –

- A Trusted Assessors approach – where 3 staff are focusing on spending more time with the customer to ensure we adopt a 'contact resolution approach' rather than passing the call to the back office and enabling a further wait for a more detailed response. This is proving to be successful, and we envisage this approach continuing, but it will continued to be reviewed over the next 6-12 months.
- Looking at the Blue Badge process to see how AI/Digital models can be used to improve our efficiency in this area as we have up to 1,400 calls around this activity per week. An options appraisal for a Digital Provider took place at the end of May and is being considered by the Transformation Board on the 28th May 2025.
- Other self-serve options around digitalisation are being explored as part of the wider transformation programme

10.4 'Subject Access Requests (SARs) compliance with timescales' was 68% against a target of 95% (RAG rated 'red', also 'red' in Q3). 78 SARs were

received this quarter, more than in Q3 at 66 when the outturn was 75%. There has been a downward trajectory for this PI throughout 2024/25. In terms of annual performance for SARs, performance was 74% and RAG rated 'red' with 295 SARs received in total. We have done better than last year when Performance was 70% despite having fewer SARs in total (218).

- 10.5 'Freedom of Information requests compliance with timescales' was 74% against a target of 95% (RAG rated 'red'). 326 FOIs were received this quarter – this was a higher number than received in Q3 at 252 when the compliance rate was 81%. In terms of annual performance for FOIs, performance was 80% and RAG rated 'amber' with 1,087 FOIs received in total. This is lower than the previous year when performance was 85% despite having more FOIs (1,143).
- 10.6 To help achieve the target for SARs and FOIs, the Governance Team continue to support Directorates, including regular (often weekly) meetings with teams, providing advice and guidance and undertaking the internal reviews when responses are challenged.
- 10.7 'The Average working days for Stage 1 complaints (excluding ASC) to be responded to' is above target for Q4 and 2024/25 at 12.88 days and 13.55 days respectively (against a target of 10 days). This is worse than Q3 when performance was 11.64 days (RAG rated 'red').
- 10.8 The 'Average working days to respond to MP enquiries' is above the target of 10 days for both Q4 and 2024/25 at 11.81 days and 11.87 days respectively (RAG rated 'red'). This is worse than Q3 11.28 days (RAG rated 'red'). The Customer Feedback Team have had initial face to face meetings with all MP office teams and have also hosted their first training session on Homelessness and Choice based lettings which took place in February, with a further session being arranged with Education and Children Services. All MP officers have confirmed that they are happy with the standard of responses as

well as timescales especially when comparing the same with neighbouring local authorities they correspond with.

- 10.9 In the Place Directorate, Housing have changed the approach to complaints in response to the Housing Ombudsman Code of Guidance which means complaint volumes are increasing. Capacity issues have been identified in responding to this additional demand and the service has recently had approval through the vacancy panel to on-board additional capacity. This includes converting fixed-term post to permanent and additional temporary capacity to clear down the current backlog. We need to recruit so a significant improvement is not expected until later in Q2.
- 10.10 For Children and Education, FOIs, SARs, complaints and enquiries can be complex, and responses required from different teams across the service. Often the different approvals needed can also cause a lag. Whilst the directorate acknowledge they are still above corporate targets there has been significant improvement over the course of the last quarter for complaints, enquiries and SARs. A new officer is now in post, and this should ensure further improvements moving forwards as some historical enquiries have taken a while to resolve and will be affecting the Q4 figures. Longer term, the transformation programme should relieve some pressure. For Adult Social Care, there is a similar picture with complex enquiries requiring a response from multiple teams and often redactions aligning to hundreds of pages need to be applied. Performance is monitored every week with updates going out every Monday to each Assistant Director, with a summary of what is outstanding in their areas so that they can keep on top of timescales and responses required.
- 10.11 The annual PI 'Children in Care Work experience placements (Council)' is below the target of 15 at 11, and RAG rated 'red'. These placements are part of the 'ringfenced' Care Experienced Young People (CEYP) vacancy recruitment process, which aim to establish suitability for an apprenticeship. Age ranges for these are from 16-22. The service showcases the offer at Metsec drop in's and it is advertised as part of the CEYP offer. The work

experience offer is also utilised to encourage the young people to apply for apprenticeship opportunities and currently we can offer paid work placements for CEYP who are 18-21.

- 10.12 The numbers of CEYP completing work experience have increased since last year (3) and is 11 for 2024/25. All CEYP who want to complete work experience are able to as opportunities are created around the young person. Some young people are completing multiple work experience placements. Performance will improve as more CEYP want work experience opportunities.

11 Contract Governance

- 11.1 Reports on contract governance have been provided for Sandwell Children's Trust (SCT), Serco, Places Leisure and Sandwell Leisure Trust (SLT) and assurance of governance arrangements has been provided through these reports. A summary for each one is detailed below.

Sandwell Children's Trust (SCT)

- 11.2 Since April 2018, children's services have been delivered by Sandwell Children's Trust on behalf of the Council. The Trust delivers the following range of services:
- Children's Social Care
 - Fostering
 - Targeted Early Help
- 11.3 The contract with Sandwell Children's Trust has a comprehensive programme of governance arrangements. The contract requires that the Director of Children and Education, together with council senior officers from finance and legal services, and the Chief Executive of the Trust meet on at least a monthly basis to consider performance and operational matters. In addition, each quarter, the Lead Member for Children's Services and the Chief Executive of

the council meet with the Chair of the SCT Board and the Chief Executive of SCT, at a Strategic Partnership Board.

- 11.4 The contract requires SCT to provide regular performance updates for consideration by the Operational Partnership Board, the Strategic Partnership Board and then by the Cabinet. Progress against the performance indicators, together with information about financial, workforce, and other performance areas is reported.
- 11.5 In terms of governance, the process to agree a settlement that takes us through to March 2028, that will include this year's contract sum is progressing and we will likely have a indicative figures by the end of June/beginning of July. SMBC, with input from SLT, commissioned Newton Europe to work on the medium-term financial strategy (MTFS) for SCT.
- 11.6 In January 2025, SCT was subject to a LGA Peer Review, focusing on children we care for and care experienced young people. The purpose of the review was to provide an external view on the effectiveness of the strategic response and quality of practice, jointly identify strengths and areas for consideration and provide feedback from engagement with the partners.
- 11.7 The peer review highlighted the Trust's determined focus to enhancing the lives of the children in its care, as well as those with care experience. Significant progress has been made in improving the quality of practice for these children, demonstrating innovative and resourceful approaches. Corporate parenting is well supported, with active engagement from partners leading to improved outcomes. Opportunities for further improvement were identified, particularly in the areas of transitions and strengthening work with adult services were highlighted as a key area requiring additional focus to ensure seamless support for children as they move into adulthood.
- 11.8 In addition, the DfE six monthly review took place at the end of March. They acknowledged the significant progress made by SCT, particularly in workforce stability, reputation, and embedding a strong practice model (ST*R). It was highlighted Sandwell Deal continues to positively impact social worker

retention, and Ofsted has noted improvements in key service areas. However, it was acknowledged that financial constraints remain a critical challenge. Workforce pressures continue, especially within child protection and courts teams, while rising placement and transport costs have exacerbated financial difficulties.

- 11.9 With regards to Performance, at the last Operational Partnership Board in May 2025, SCT reported data from March 2025; 9 KPIs were within tolerance (amber) and 6 KPIs were green.
- 11.10 Since September 2024, one key performance indicator (KPI) measuring the percentage of children in care for 2.5 years or more who have remained in the same home for at least two years, had been in the performance failure zone ('red') for over three months. The PI methodology was reviewed, and the PI was benchmarked against statistical neighbours with a view to reviewing the tolerance levels. As a result of this work, it was agreed that the PI should be amended to focus on children under 16, and that the tolerance and target should be amended. Taking these changes into account the PI is now RAG rated 'amber'.
- 11.11 From January 2025 to March 2025, the number of children we care for decreased from 833 to 822. This is due to children leaving care as they turn 18 and returning home to live with family
- 11.12 The number of children on child protection plans increased by 29 from end of Q3 (324) to end of Q4 (353), primarily due to groups of siblings being placed on plans. Despite the increase during this quarter, the overall trend has continued downwards, reflecting SCT's regular assessment and review of the impact related to ST*R practise model and its approach to risks.
- 11.13 In relation to Finance, SCT continues to project a deficit outturn position of £5.77m for 2024/25 as of 31st December, they are currently undergoing financial closedown. Placements remain the primary cost driver—particularly the increasing expenses of residential and external foster placements, as well as the growing number of children in these arrangements. In February 2025,

Cabinet approved the proposal to progress plans for Sandwell to open its own internal residential provision. This phase involves 2 homes (minimum 2 beds in each) and is part of a wider systems approach to help reduce demand for external provision. The submission for the Department for Education (DfE) Capital Funding for Complex Needs Provision was completed on 28 February 2025, with successful applicants expected to be advised in late summer 2025 if they have been successful. Work is ongoing to appoint the project manager and progress the capital appraisal.

- 11.14 Sandwell has received £3.5 million through the Social Care and Prevention Grant to enhance prevention support for children and families. This funding will enable the implementation of Family Help and Child Protection reforms, ensuring the integration of new and existing prevention services. Additionally, it will support evidence-based service design aligned with practice guides and existing guidance and offer Family Group Decision Making to all families at pre-proceedings. A strategic partnership approach has been adopted to define and coordinate the delivery of the grant.
- 11.15 Following the success of the Emotional Wellbeing Pilot Programme for children in our care and care-experienced young people, the Council has committed £250k in mainstream funding to sustain this initiative. This investment will continue to provide essential emotional wellbeing support, addressing the needs of our children.
- 11.16 On 15 January, Cabinet member for Children and Families, Councillor Uddin and the Forum for Independent Young Adults (FIYA) Chair presented a report to Cabinet seeking approval to make care experience a protected characteristic, this was passed with many Cabinet members commenting positively on the presentation of the report. To implement this, a steering group with representatives from key Directorates has been formed. Key actions include updating HR processes to monitor applications and success rates of care-experienced individuals, revising equality impact assessments, and delivering corporate parenting training that integrates protected characteristics.

- 11.17 As part of the Council's wider commitment to expanding work experience placements and apprenticeships, the number of ring-fenced apprenticeships for care-experienced young people has increased from three to five.

Serco

- 11.16 The council's contract with Serco was awarded in 2010 and runs until 2035. It has a contract value in the region of £34m per annum. The contract covers services including waste and recycling collection, household recycling centre management, street cleansing and service fleet management and renewal.
- 11.17 The contract has a set of regular meetings in place with standard agendas relating to the contractual requirements from key outcome targets (KOTs) to operational issues. These meetings are supported by regular cross channel communications between the SMB and Serco teams. Leadership Team also receive regular contract reports that provide oversight and issues are raised as appropriate.
- 11.18 The contract contains the requirement for the provision of regular data from the contractor to be provided, there is also an associated requirement for SMBC to provide information to Serco, relating to Council priorities annually and fleet maintenance through a set of KPIs. In addition, there is an integration with the Council's My Sandwell reporting tool.
- 11.19 Overall service performance in Q4 has been good, with fewer penalty points awarded than most quarters last year. Penalty points over a certain threshold result in a deduction from the contract payment. In Q4 this was £16,023, although March is yet to be fully audited.
- 11.20 The weed spraying programme commenced on time this year and the service has been brought in house by Serco. The Waste Team will continue to monitor progress to ensure that the works are carried out in accordance with the agreed programme.

- 11.21 Serco experienced technical issues with their back-office waste management system which impacted the start of the garden waste service this year. This created some small-scale confusion regarding which week a small number of residents' collections started; however, these issues have now been resolved.

Places Leisure

- 11.22 The Council has a 25-year contract with Places Leisure to operate West Bromwich Leisure centre. The contract is a Design, Build, Operate and Maintain contract which ensured value for money by reducing design and build costs as well as ongoing maintenance liabilities.
- 11.23 Monthly operational reports are provided to update on performance, – operational and technical. Quarterly contract management meetings are held to ensure the ongoing monitoring of the contract and performance. These cover Operational Performance, Health and Wellbeing outputs, Customer Feedback and Community Outreach.
- 11.24 In terms of participation, Memberships have decreased by 7.9% in FY25, and overall visits have also declined by 2.5% compared to FY24. Places Leisure is addressing this by implementing a 'back to basics' approach to outreach work and improving cleanliness standards to retain existing customers and attract new ones. Those that do cancel memberships are being contacted to discuss the reasons and explore whether there's any way they can help, such as offering a different membership option. Places Leisure are also doing some detailed work to look into other potential reasons for the decline in participation and will report back on this in Q1. The decrease in numbers (albeit modest) may in part be due to increased competition from the improved performance of the SLT sites.
- 11.25 Swim School has experienced an overall decrease of nearly 3%, although this reflects an improvement from Q3. The decline is attributed to a change in lesson structure introduced at the start of the year, which required parents to enter the water with their child. This led to several parents—particularly those

lacking water confidence—withdrawing from the program. The structure has since been revised to use 'Aquatic Helpers' and volunteers instead. Free swimming visits have decreased, likely due to an issue with the turnstiles that prevented some members from checking in at reception. This issue has now been resolved.

Current Year to Date Participation vs FY24 and FY20			
	<i>FY25</i>	<i>FY24</i>	<i>FY20</i>
April	36,477	34,239	39,911
May	38,667	36,923	38,520
June	37,504	37,815	37,968
July	39,749	39,078	40,288
August	35,678	37,606	38,285
September	35,261	31,373	39,988
October	37,036	37,736	38,719
November	33,710	33,948	35,358
December	27,617	30,060	26,778
January	30,812	37,513	39,718
February	30,811	31,034	41,445
March	29,894	36,580	28,822
Total	413,216	423,905	445,800

Memberships at Q4 FY25 v FY24		
<i>Membership Type</i>	<i>FY25</i>	<i>FY24</i>
Fitness Club Live	2,476	2,689
Swim Only	58	83
Learn to Swim	1,182	1,218
Basketball Club Live	33	36

- 11.26 Based upon projected operational, and therefore financial performance a business plan was agreed for the duration of the contract. The business plan results in an annual management fee payment to the Council of circa £28k.
- 11.27 There is also a utility benchmarking arrangement included in the contract, whereby PL own the risk on consumption and the Council are liable for the risk on tariff. Pre-pandemic operations resulted in a net gain for the Council – Management Fee minus Utility Benchmarking Payment. This is calculated and paid at the end of each financial year. In 2023/24 the utility benchmark resulted in a payment from the Council to PL of £131,785k. Modelling for 2024/25 indicates that the utility benchmarking will require a payment from the Council to PL of circa. £64k.

Sandwell Leisure Trust (SLT)

- 11.28 Sandwell Leisure Trust (SLT) manages the following leisure centres in Sandwell:
- Haden Hill Leisure Centre
 - Hadley Stadium
 - Harry Mitchell Leisure Centre
 - Portway Lifestyle Centre
 - Sandwell Aquatics Centre
 - Tipton Leisure Centre
 - Tipton Sports Academy
 - Wednesbury Leisure Centre
- 11.29 In terms of participation, the headline figures are below.
- 638,534 attendances January to March 2025. **7.5%** up on Q4 FY24 (594,061)
 - From March 2024 to March 2025, total memberships increased by **21.8%**
 - 5,962 enrolled on Learn to Swim – **8.3%** up from Q4 FY24 (5,506)

- Free swimming for under 18s shows a decrease of **24.4%** from FY24. This is due to many swimmers at Sandwell Aquatics Centre being registered via the free swim button at the till instead of swiping their cards. This was done to reduce waiting times at reception, so no information was captured for these swimmers.

Visits by Site				
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q4 Total
Haden Hill Leisure Centre	Closed with effect from 28 March 2024			
Hadley Stadium	27,579	24,841	32,542	84,962
Harry Mitchell Leisure Centre	2,022	1,344	1,383	4,749
Portway Lifestyle Centre	33,344	34,900	43,819	112,063
Sandwell Aquatics Centre	68,510	72,532	79,655	220,697
Tipton Leisure Centre	22,263	22,941	26,832	72,036
Tipton Sports Academy	13,687	14,789	15,740	44,216
Wednesbury Leisure Centre	31,790	31,315	36,706	99,811
Total Visits	199,195	202,662	236,677	638,534

Current Year to Date Participation vs FY24		
	<i>FY25</i>	<i>FY24</i>
Q1	628,857	527,457
Q2	624,840	574,886
Q3	544,185	525,820
Q4	638,534	594,061
Total	2,436,416	2,222,224

- 11.30 Sport & Leisure, Public Health and SLT worked together at the start of this year to develop improved reporting for the free-swimming element as funded by Public Health. Previously, other than free swimming visits, there was no agreed reporting mechanism. SLT have provided Public Health with figures for an agreed set of 11 KPIs. A reporting structure has also been agreed with regards to other Public Health re-directs which help to fund concessionary memberships and outreach work, particularly at Portway Lifestyle Centre.
- 11.31 Following the reconciliation of Q3, SLT's accounts are projecting a surplus of circa £318K for 2024/25.
- 11.32 Council Officers are working with SLT's Leadership Team to further develop the Strategic Leisure Review. This work looks at the future options for 3 of the SLT run leisure facilities:
- Harry Mitchell Leisure Centre
 - Hadley Stadium
 - Tipton Sports Academy
- 11.33 This work also explores options for the settlement of leisure management after the expiry of the current agreement with SLT on 31st March 2027. Reports have been presented to both Leadership Team and at Leaders Meeting in February and March 2025, prior to any potential Cabinet decision. Next steps include the establishment of an officer working group to commence in Q1 2025/26.

12. The Assurance Plan

- 12.1 Following the end of government intervention in March 2024, the Improvement Plan programme ended as a separate governance process. Sustained improvement activity has been embedded into existing arrangements. Where actions on the Improvement Plan remained 'open' at the close of the programme, these were mapped to existing plans and governance arrangements (e.g. local, business, and corporate plans) and

recorded in an Assurance Plan. This Assurance Plan was built into the quarterly corporate performance management reporting arrangements for 2024/25 to ensure continued oversight of key workstreams whilst ensuring that the council continues its journey to becoming an outstanding organisation.

- 12.2 To provide assurance that the council continued to address the recommendations made by Grant Thornton, a progress report was presented to Audit & Risk Assurance Committee in December 2024. There were no concerns raised by the committee when this report was presented. Grant Thornton continues to monitor the Council as part of their annual audit.
- 12.3 At the end of Q4 a review of items in the Assurance Plan has been undertaken. Where progress is shown as delayed, these items have been reported to the Assistant Chief Executive and actions are in place to address them. Therefore, there are no items to report this quarter.
- 12.4 During Q4 a review of the current process was also undertaken. Throughout the reporting cycle for 2024/25, no items have had to be raised at Performance Board for review and discussion. For anything that was a concern, action was already being undertaken, either through business planning or other governance mechanisms. Therefore, continuation of the current process and Assurance Plan from this point would be duplication and considering this it is therefore at the end of 2024/25 this process and report will cease. All documentation will be retained for audit purposes and as evidence of the Council absorbing recommendations following intervention, into 'business as usual'.

13. Strategic Risk Register

- 13.1 Effective risk management is a key element of good corporate governance, as noted in the council's [Code of Corporate Governance](#), and is essential to the overall performance of the council in meeting its council plan objectives. Good

risk management will ensure that resources are used efficiently and effectively, and that assets and resources are protected against risk in the most efficient way.

- 13.2 The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) receive the Council's Strategic Risk Register (SRR) on a regular basis for review and comment. The role of the ARAC is to provide assurance to the Council that it has a system of governance, risk management and internal control in place and that the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements continue to inform decision making.
- 13.3 The SRR does not include all of the risks faced by the Council. Other risks are captured within directorate, programme and project risk registers in line with the Council's risk management framework.
- 13.4 The SRR is currently in the process of being updated and as at 10 June included the following risks:

Risk	Current risk score
Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation	Red
SEND Placements and Transport: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing trajectory of demand Both demand and cost 	Amber Red
Climate Change (reduced from red)	Amber
Housing Transformation (reduced from red)	Amber
Cyber Security (reduced from red)	Amber
Adults - Strategic Workforce Development (reduced from red)	Amber
Compliance with DPA/GDPR	Amber
Children's Social Care	Amber
Business Continuity Management	Amber
Equalities	Amber
Borough Archives	Amber
Elections Act	Amber

Workforce Recruitment (reduced from amber)	Green
Customer Experience (reduced from amber)	Green
Organisational Culture (reduced from amber)	Green
Continuous Improvement (reduced from amber)	Green
Budget Monitoring and Management	Green
MTFS	Green
Regeneration Fund Programme	Green
Sandwell Local Plan	Green

- 13.5 An updated copy of the register is currently in the process of being finalised and will go before the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee on 26 June.

14. Corporate Performance Indicator set

- 14.1 As part of the development of the Council Plan, a significant amount of work was put into developing the Corporate Performance Indicators that would help us monitor in the delivery of the plan for 2024/25.
- 14.2 For 2025/26, we have worked with managers across the Council to review the Corporate Performance Indicators set to ensure they are still fit for purpose to enable the Council to track performance and impact of the Council Plan. There have been a small number of changes, which are set out below. In summary, 17 have been proposed for removal, 8 have been proposed to be added and 4 have been proposed to be amended or replaced with another PI. Appendix 3 sets out the full set for 2025/26. The below table highlights the changes.

PI	Directorate	Justification
Growing Up in Sandwell		
Under 16 issue figures (physical & electronic to include books, audiobooks, magazines & comics)	Place (Environment)	To be reworded to 'Children's books issue figures (physical and electronic)' and the measure definition to change

Vacancy Rate (% of case holding social worker posts not filled by a permanent employee) (SCT)	Children and Education	To be removed. Performance has improved and it is no longer a required area of focus. This will still be included under contract monitoring.
'% pupil attendance Primary'	Children and Education	To be added. To provide additional context to the persistent absence PI (G7)
'% pupil attendance Secondary'	Children and Education	To be added. To provide additional context to the persistent absence PI (G8)
Rate of Secondary permanent exclusion	Children and Education	To be added. A key PI for the Directorate to monitor.
Rate of Secondary Pupils with 1 or more suspension	Children and Education	To be added. A key PI for the Directorate to monitor.
Average number of weeks taken for statutory assessment (quarterly)	Children and Education	To be added. A key performance indicator for SEN.
Phase transfers completed in time Yr6 and Yr 11. (annual)	Children and Education	To be added. A key performance indicator for SEN.
% early years children starting school with an EHCP plan (annual)	Children and Education	To be added. A key performance indicator for SEN.
Living in Sandwell		
The number of Friends Groups in parks working in Partnership with The Council	Place (Environment)	To be removed - more of an operational measure
Net promoter score for Libraries	Place (Environment)	To be removed - more of an operational measure
The total monetary value of benefits awarded by the Welfare Rights Service	Place (Housing)	To be added - provides more information and context to L29 'The total number of people assisted by the Welfare Rights Service to claim additional benefits'
Over 16 issue figures (physical & electronic to include books, audiobooks, magazines & comics)	Place (Environment)	To be reworded to 'Adults book issue figures (physical and electronic)' and the measure definition to change
% of residents who have are aware of the availability of Social Tariffs (Resident Survey)	Assistant Chief Executive	To be removed - this is a sub question of L31 (% of residents feel confident to complete basic tasks in the online world) and based on low numbers. PI to sit in Digital Strategy.
Number of Databanks in Sandwell	Assistant Chief Executive	To be removed - PI to sit in the Digital Strategy as a contextual

		measure, as it is not within the gift of the Council (National Data Bank responsibility)
Percentage of Full Fibre Broadband across Sandwell (provided quarterly by WM5G)	Assistant Chief Executive	To be removed - PI to sit in the Digital Strategy as a contextual measure
Percentage of Gigabit Broadband across Sandwell (provided quarterly by WM5G)	Assistant Chief Executive	To be removed - PI to sit in the Digital Strategy as a contextual measure
Healthy in Sandwell		
Number of VCS settings that have achieved the EHWP charter mark	People (Public Health)	To be removed - difficult to calculate and provide accurate figures as the number of VCS organisations changes throughout the year
Number of care home sites meeting good standards of infection prevention control compliance.	People (Public Health)	To be removed - more of a operational indicator.
The dementia diagnosis rate	People (ASC)	To be removed – data no longer available at local level
Self-reported wellbeing - people with a low satisfaction score Self-reported wellbeing - people with a low worthwhile score Self-reported wellbeing - people with a low happiness score Self-reported wellbeing - people with a high anxiety score	People (Public Health)	To be removed – no new data available currently. ONS are reviewing the Annual Population Survey where this data is collected and have not currently confirmed when the next data release date will be.
Thriving in Sandwell		
Value of grants administered through the start-up grant programme	Place (Regeneration)	To be removed – PI too specific to be a corporate measure of performance
Visits to Forge Mill Farm	Place (Environment)	To be removed – More of an operational measure
Event attendance at Sandwell Valley open space (internal and external events) (estimated)	Place (Environment)	To be removed – More of an operational measure and overlap with other PIs

One Council One Team		
Debt servicing as percentage of core spending power	Finance and Transformation	To be changed to 'Debt servicing costs as a % of net revenue budget'
Total debt as a percentage of core spending power	Finance and Transformation	To be removed – not required if above PI included in Corporate set.
The proportion of Sandwell Children we Care for with live Housing applications at the end of the previous quarter housed in this quarter	Place (Housing)	To be removed – This PI relates to fairly low numbers of young people and is considered more of operational measure.
Average applications per vacancy	Assistant Chief Executive	To be removed – More of an operational measure
Response rate for citizenspace consultations	Assistant Chief Executive	To be replaced with the PI 'To what extent do you think Sandwell Council acts on the concerns of local residents (residents survey)', as the latter measure is considered more strategic and therefore more appropriate for the Council Plan

- 14.3 For some PIs a target has already been confirmed for 2025/26. These have been shaded in grey in Appendix 3. For some PIs, a target has yet to be confirmed for 2025/26. A full set of targets for all PIs will be included with the Q1 2025/26 Corporate Performance Report.

15. Performance webpage

- 15.1 The Council Plan is currently available on the Council's website, where it outlines the Plan's purpose and intended audience, along with a link to the full document. Performance against the Council Plan is regularly shared through the quarterly Corporate Performance Reports, which are accessible via modern.gov and committee papers. However, these can be difficult to locate for those who do not access them regularly.
- 15.2 To improve the transparency and openness around performance, a dedicated webpage on the Council's website that clearly presents performance information in easily readable formats will be published in October 2025. This will ensure easy access for residents to key information about performance, and align with the Council's core values of accountability (delivering on our

promises) and ambition (striving for excellence and continuous improvement, while ensuring everyone can take pride in our borough). Increased transparency will allow residents to see how their money is being spent, building trust between the Council and the community, and fostering a culture of openness. By being open about our successes, our challenges and the actions taken to improve where needed, we can strengthen public confidence in the Council's leadership. The page will also encourage engagement, offering residents the opportunity to provide feedback, raise concerns, and suggest improvements.

15.3 The webpage will include:

- The Council's approach to performance management
- How the delivery of the Council Plan is monitored (with a link to the Council Plan monitoring document)
- The Business Plan 'Plans on a Page' for each Directorate
- Key messages and achievements under each strategic theme, updated quarterly in line with reporting to Cabinet
- Links to the quarterly Corporate Performance Reports for the current financial year

15.4 The webpage will go live following the Quarter 1 Corporate Performance Report to Cabinet on 15 October 2025. This timing aligns with the refinement of the Corporate Performance Indicators for 2025/26.

16. Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications for this report.

17. Legal and Governance Implications

17.1 A corporate performance management framework was identified as a key gap in the council's governance arrangements by Grant Thornton in 2021. The establishment of the corporate performance management framework was a key action in the council's Improvement Plan agreed by Council in January 2022 and updated in June 2022. The PMF enables officer and political leadership to improve oversight and corporate grip of the council's performance.

18. Risks

- 18.1 Should the council not implement a robust performance management framework, then it will not have the corporate oversight and intelligence to inform decision making and effectively manage risks, which is key to service delivery and the achieving strategic objectives identified in the Council Plan. The risk is noted under the Continuous Improvement Risk in the SRR.

19. Equality and Diversity Implications (including the public sector equality duty)

- 19.1 Equality measures are included in the PMF, under the One Council One Team Strategic Theme.

20. Other Relevant Implications

20.1 Workforce and Human Resources (HR):

There are a number of measures in the PMF that track key HR measures, these are aligned to the delivery of the Council's People Strategy.

20.2 Health and Wellbeing:

The measures to track progress of the Council Plan include a series of health and wellbeing indicators. This enables the council's leadership to see at a high level the direction of travel of the borough's health and wellbeing and seek to continue good practice or identify mitigating actions to address issues.

20.3 Social Value:

There are some social value measures are included in the PMF that provide oversight of the Councils Performance in this area.

20.4 Climate Change:

There are measures related to Climate Change in the PMF, including Air Quality (Number of sites that are non-compliant with the National NO2 air

quality objective) and a number of measures under the outcome 'Sandwell will be a net zero council by 2030 and a net zero borough by 2041'.

20.5 **Corporate Parenting:**

There is an outcome in the Council Plan under 'One Council One Team' for Corporate Parenting: 'An outstanding corporate parent, with all of the young people in our care reaching their full potential' and there are a number of Performance Indicators to measure this. There are also performance measures under 'Growing Up in Sandwell' that cover educational attainment of Children in care.

20.6 **Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

There are three contextual measures in the PMF that relate to crime and a further 2 measures around how safe people feel. These provide oversight on the impact of the Council's crime reduction work.

21. **Background Documents**

- 21.1 Performance Management Framework – Q3 Monitoring - The report is available here:

<https://sandwell.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s26346/Performance%20Management%20Framework%20Q3%20202425.pdf>

The appendices to this report are available here:

<https://sandwell.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=143&MId=7025&Ver=4>

- 21.2 Report to Council 21 April 2022 on the Performance Framework:

[Performance Management Framework for the Council](#)