

Slough Borough Council

Report To:	Council
Date:	30 November 2023
Subject:	Recommendations of the Cabinet from its meeting held on 16 th October 2023: B - Corporate Performance Report - August 2023
Chief Officer:	Sarah Hayward Executive Director, Strategy & Improvement
Contact Officer:	Dean Tyler Associate Director, Strategy Dave Hounsell Group Manager, Data, Insight & Strategy
Ward(s):	All
Exempt:	No
Appendices:	A - Corporate Performance Report – August 2023

1. Summary and Recommendations

- 1.1. The Council was set a Direction to improve evidence-based decision-making. One mechanism to achieve evidence-based decision-making is to implement a robust, transparent, and regular corporate performance reporting cycle. This corporate performance reporting cycle is a key component of the council's Performance Management Approach and is underpinned by an emerging corporate Data Strategy.

Recommendations:

Council is requested to consider the recommendation from Cabinet to:

- (a) Note and comment on the Council's current performance and mitigating actions as measured by the key performance indicators within the corporate management information report and scorecard.
- (b) Note that the Cabinet resolved that the Corporate Performance Report be referred to full Council on a six-monthly basis and to scrutiny on a quarterly basis.

Commissioner Review of report to Cabinet, 16th October 2023

“Commissioners are pleased to see the Council publicly reporting progress against its priorities and its focus on mitigation actions when performance is below target. This should be seen as an important component of a culture where the organisation takes seriously its performance and accountabilities. It will be important that this report stimulates positive discussions in terms of sustained performance improvement.”

2. Report

- 2.1. This is the first reporting on the 59 key performance indicators from the 2023/24 corporate management information scorecard aligned to the strategic priorities in the new Corporate Plan.

Options considered by Cabinet:

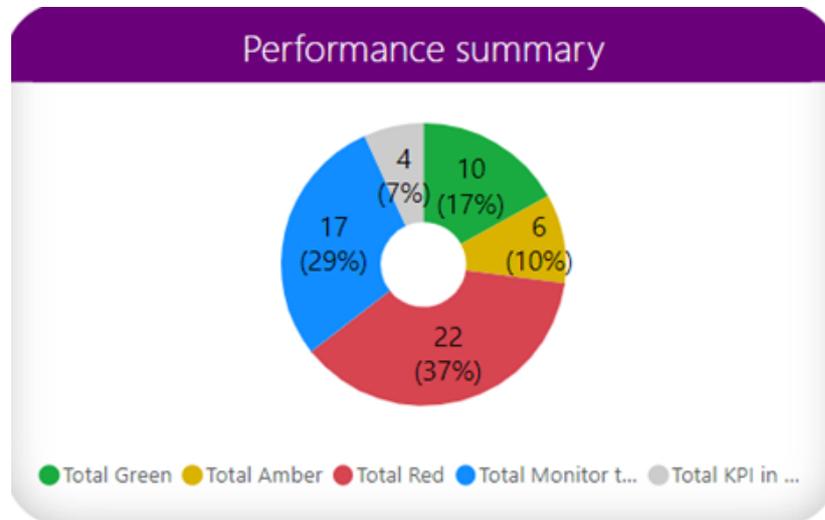
Option 1: to have regular quarterly performance reports to Cabinet – **this is recommended**. The draft best value guidance characterises a well-functioning authority as one that has an organisational-wide approach to continuous improvement, with frequent monitoring, performance reporting and updating of the corporate and improvement plans. There is also a need for effective political leadership, which includes the Council’s corporate plan being evidence-based, current, realistic, and enabling the organisation’s performance to be measured and held to account. Systems for monitoring performance should be owned by members. Service delivery should involve mechanism for scrutinising performance across all service areas and ensuring performance is regularly reported to the public to ensure citizens are informed of the quality of services being delivered.

Option 2: to continue to report performance in informal and internal boards without any formal, public reports – **this is not recommended**.

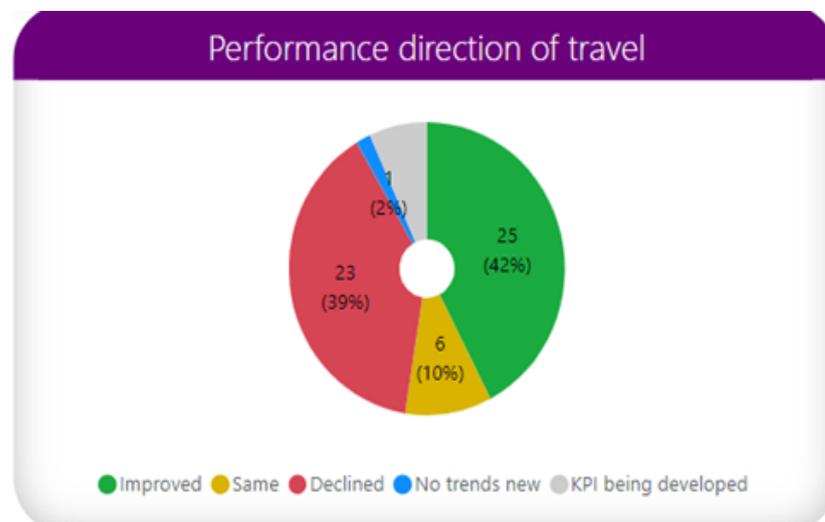
Background

- 2.2. In April 2023, the Corporate Leadership Team adopted a refreshed monthly report, which aligned key performance indicators to the purpose and strategic outcomes included in the draft new Corporate Plan. As the Corporate Plan was in draft when this realignment took place, it was acknowledged that the performance report would adapt in line with feedback from the public consultation and against the final, approved Corporate Plan.
- 2.3. This report sets out performance information as at the end of July 2023. The data point reviewed is the last available data point at the time of reporting, with metrics being reported against on a monthly, quarterly, termly, or annual basis depending on the nature of the source information.
- 2.4. Performance levels are measured through the key performance indicators in the corporate management information scorecard during 2023/24 financial year, and the council’s current position is set out in this cover report and the accompanying Appendix A.
- 2.5. Cabinet will receive a quarterly update on corporate performance. Corporate performance reporting remains a work-in-progress in the council, and through continuous learning and improvement there will be adaptations to the scope, structure, and content as the 2023/24 financial year progresses.

2.6. Overall, for Q1 the strategic performance picture remains variable. 17% (10) of the 59 key performance indicators (KPIs) are performing either at or better than target. 10% (6) indicators are performing marginally worse than target, and 37% (22) indicators are performing below the red KPI threshold. A further 29% (17) indicators are monitored for trends and 7% (4) where the indicator is in development.



2.7. Compared to the previous month, performance has improved for 42% (25) of the 59 KPIs, remained the same for 10% (6) and declined for 39% (23). 2% (1) was reported for the first time therefore no previous trends are available and the remaining 7% (4) metrics are in development.



2.8. Please refer to Appendix A corporate performance report which summarises progress against the Council's priorities as presented in August 2023. The report includes:

- Summary progress against the strategic outcomes in the Corporate Plan.
- KPIs for action, and the mitigating actions and owners assigned - trends that indicate the council is not on track for delivering its strategic objectives.

- KPIs for recognition, where the council can learn from promising practice - trends that indicate the council is on track for delivering its objectives.
- 2.9. In Appendix A, pages 2 to 7 outline the performance trends against the 59 strategic KPIs, and the mitigating actions and action owners. Each action has an assigned Executive Director owner, who is accountable for the performance level, and who will assign responsibility for delivery to officers.
- 2.10. The performance indicators will be kept under review and amended as appropriate to meet the corporate priorities of the Council. They will also be reviewed to take account of the role of the Office of Local Government (Oflog). Oflog has been established to provide an authoritative and accessible source of information about the performance and health of the local government sector. Its objective is to increase transparency of performance in the sector. At present there is a limited number of published performance metrics and some of these are historic. However, it is expected that over time this dataset will increase. In the meantime, the Council will make use of other performance datasets, including LG Inform and CIPFA benchmarking to ensure it has comparable performance data.

3. Implications of the Recommendation

3.1. Financial implications

- The key performance indicators from the corporate management information scorecard are aligned to the priorities in the Corporate Plan. The Corporate Plan articulates a commitment to delivering financial prudence and demonstrating Best Value for residents.

3.2. Legal implications

- Whilst there is no statutory duty to report regularly to Cabinet on the Council's performance, as a best value authority under the Local Government Act 1999, the Council has a statutory duty to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness. Regular reporting of performance can assist the Council to demonstrate best value.
- The Council's Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23 was approved by Audit and Corporate Governance Committee in July 2023. This included a number of actions, including an action to improve the systems in place for managing performance. This stated that the Council must ensure basic systems and controls are in place to ensure that performance is managed, and risk appropriately identified, reported and monitored. Performance data should measure the quality of services for users, use of resources and value for money. Performance indicators should be set drawing on sector wide data sets from various organisations including the Local Government Association and CIPFA.

3.3. Risk management implications

- Mitigating actions are in place for strategic performance indicators where key performance trends require action. These actions are proposed by the responsible manager, and updates are monitored at the monthly CLT Assurance forum.

- The monthly CLT Assurance forum considers finance, risk, and performance to ensure that the leadership team receive a rounded picture on the health of the organisation, to inform improvement actions.

3.4. *Environmental implications*

- Strategic performance indicators aligned to priority 3 of the corporate plan retains and expands upon environmental commitments under the following strategic objective '*reducing Slough's carbon footprint, promoting active travel and sustainable forms of transport, and taking action to prevent or minimise the impact of climate change*'.

3.5. *Equality implications*

- The Equality Act 2010 sets out duties for local authorities in relation to equalities, including the public sector equality duty, which requires the Council to have due regard to equality issues when reviewing and changing services. Councils should also collect and review data on service provision to identify gaps in service and whether these impact on certain protected groups to a greater extent than others.
- Cabinet received an update on the Council's progress against its Public Sector Equalities Duty in November Cabinet, including a commitment to service-level equalities objectives and an analysis of the current position.

4. Background Papers

None