

## **SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL – 12 DECEMBER 2023**

### **INTEGRATED PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT (IPM) REPORT – 2023/24 QUARTER 2**

**REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL – COUNCILLOR ROGER LEES**

#### **PART A – SUMMARY REPORT**

##### **1.0 SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

1.1 This report provides an update as of 30th September 2023 for Quarter 2 of 2023/24 on performance, finance, and risk. This includes results against performance targets set to monitor delivery of the Council Plan 2020 – 2024.

1.2 This is the final year of the current Council Plan.

##### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 It is recommended that Members note the Quarter 2 IPM Report.

##### **3.0 SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

POLICY/COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Council Plan objectives?	
	Yes	It reports progress against Council Plan targets.
	Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) been completed?	
	No	This report does not impact on equality issues
SCRUTINY POWERS APPLICABLE	The IPM report is presented to O&S at Quarter 2 and 4.	
KEY DECISION	No	
TARGET DATE	Performance reports are prepared quarterly.	
FINANCIAL IMPACT	Yes	The report details the financial position as at the end of Quarter 2 2023/2024.
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes	Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires the Council to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs.
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	Yes	This report includes all Council strategic risks and a summary position statement on operational risk.
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	No	All Wards

## 4.0 INTEGRATED PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### 4.1 Finance



#### REVENUE

Net Revenue Budget 2023/24 £m	Forecast expenditure at Q2 2023/24 £m
£19.061	£18.801
Provisional Variance 2023/24 £m	Percentage Variance from Budget 2023/24
£0.260	1.36%



#### CAPITAL

Capital Budget 2023/24 £m	Capital Spend to Date Q2 2023/24
£18.642	£1.083

### 4.2 Performance

Current Position	G	A	R	N/A
<b>21 Council Plan Targets at Q2</b>	17	4	0	0
Revenue Budget - Service (Net) Expenditure				
Revenue Budget - Other Expenditure				
Revenue Budget - External Funding				
<b>Overall Revenue Budget - Appropriations to Reserves</b>				
<b>Capital Programme</b>				

### 4.3 Strategic and Operational risks

<b>Strategic Risks</b>	6
<b>Operational Risks</b>	64

## **5.0 IPM Narrative Report**

### **5.1 Review of the Quarter**

- 5.1.1 There has been strong performance across the Council in Quarter 2 with 17 of the 21 Council Plan targets being on target with no measures receiving a RAG rating of Red. Of the 17 green, performance was particularly strong in planning as 0% of planning applications were overturned through the appeals process against a target of no more than 10% ; 100% of fly tipping reports investigated with agreed actions were resolved within two days. Financial performance continued to be strong in Quarter 2. In quarter 1 no targets received a RAG rating of Red and 5 targets received a RAG rating of Amber
- 5.1.2 The purpose of this report is to analyse measures that are below target, the impact service delivery performance has on our financial position and report on potential risks and any mitigating actions being taken to manage risks and improve performance.

### **5.2 Long term successes/measures which were underperforming but are now on target**

- 5.2.1 Quarter 2 saw 72 businesses supported with 127 business supported cumulatively across quarters 1 and 2. This is 84.6% of the yearly target already achieved. The success of this measure is in large down to the Council now directly delivering a number of business support programmes funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund which has increased the amount of engagement the Enterprise Team is undertaking.
- 5.2.2 Maintaining over 85% income as a percentage of operating costs for our four leisure centres has achieved green RAG status for the first time in this Council Plan time period as Q2 performance stands at 89.64%. This measure has been heavily impacted by COVID-19 and the ongoing refurbishment programme. The recent growth in membership and re-opening of refurbished leisure centres along with implementation of the new membership structure has seen an improvement in leisure performance.

### **5.3 Measures below target**

#### **5.3.1 Welfare**

- 5.3.2 At the end of Quarter 2, new benefit claims were processed in an average of 17 days against a target of 15 days. The above target number was due to an increased number of staff absences. Annual Billing took place during Quarter 1, members of the team have leave restrictions during this time. Because of this more members of staff are on leave during Quarter 2. Furthermore, there were two vacancies in the team which added additional pressure. It is expected performance will increase in Quarter 3 as staffing levels will return to normal and current vacancies will be filled. The risk of cost-of-living impacting residents whose benefit claims take longer to process is a major concern and could increase as volumes of claims grow. Investment has been made in additional staffing in the Welfare team to deal with additional demand. There is an emerging pressure within Benefits Services relating to a reduction in the number of overpayments that are received back to the council through the Housing Benefit Subsidy. This is resulting in a projected budget pressure

which will need to be covered by General Fund reserves. This is being addressed as part of budget setting for 2024/25 onwards.

- 5.3.3 When compared to all of our CIPFA “nearest neighbours” (similar authorities) Quarter 2 performance of 17 days is the mean for South Staffordshire CIPFA nearest neighbours. Investment in the team should see an increase in performance. The below charts and tables highlight South Staffordshire as an efficient council.

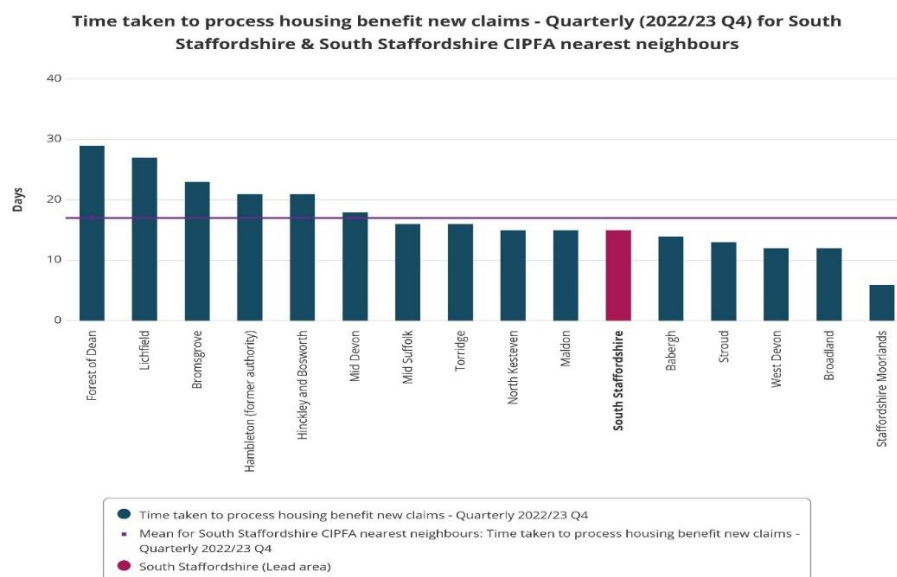
#### Time taken to process housing benefit new claims - Quarterly (2022/23 Q3 and 2022/23 Q4) for South Staffordshire

Period	Time taken to process housing benefit new claims - Quarterly			
	Mean			
	South Staffordshire	Minimum for South Staffordshire CIPFA nearest neighbours	Mean for South Staffordshire CIPFA nearest neighbours	Maximum for South Staffordshire CIPFA nearest neighbours
2022/23 Q3	18	6	17	32
2022/23 Q4	15	6	17	29

#### Source:

Department for Work and Pensions

Powered by LG Inform



#### Source:

Department for Work and Pensions

Powered by LG Inform

## 5.4 Council tax/Business Rates

- 5.4.1 At the end of Quarter 2 Council Tax collection rate was 57.1% which is 0.3% down on last year and Business Rates collection rate is 58.2% which is down 1.5% on last year. The collection rates for both Council Tax and Business Rates have both fallen in September. Some of the reduction is attributable with the end of the month figure coinciding with a weekend where payments received are carried forward into the new month. However, Business Rates remains challenging as two large businesses continue to struggle to maintain payments despite a payment plan being agreed. The Council continues to engage and recover the full amount outstanding.
- 5.4.2 Quarter 3 Council Tax performance is expected to increase with the additional payment being carried over from Quarter 2 to Quarter 3. Business Rates performance should increase with the Council's payment plan in place for the two large businesses who are struggling to maintain payments. A continual decrease in Council tax and Business Rates collection would impact upon adherence to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. Currently the risk to sustain this with adequate reserves to meet unforeseen circumstances is moderate. To ensure this risk remains moderate there is robust horizon scanning to monitor changes in Government policy. CLT actively participate in Government consultations, MP discussions and are kept aware of changes ensuring where appropriate the learning from this is incorporated into strategic plans. CLT and Members engaged in the development of the MTFS to ensure robust appraisal of any plans put forward.
- 5.4.3 All Council tax service revenue budgets are on target and without any significant variances to report.
- 5.4.4 When comparing to all CIPFA nearest neighbours South Staffordshire Council Tax collection is slightly above the mean. Differences between CIPFA nearest neighbours is generally minimal.

**Council tax collected as a percentage of council tax due (2022/23) for South Staffordshire**

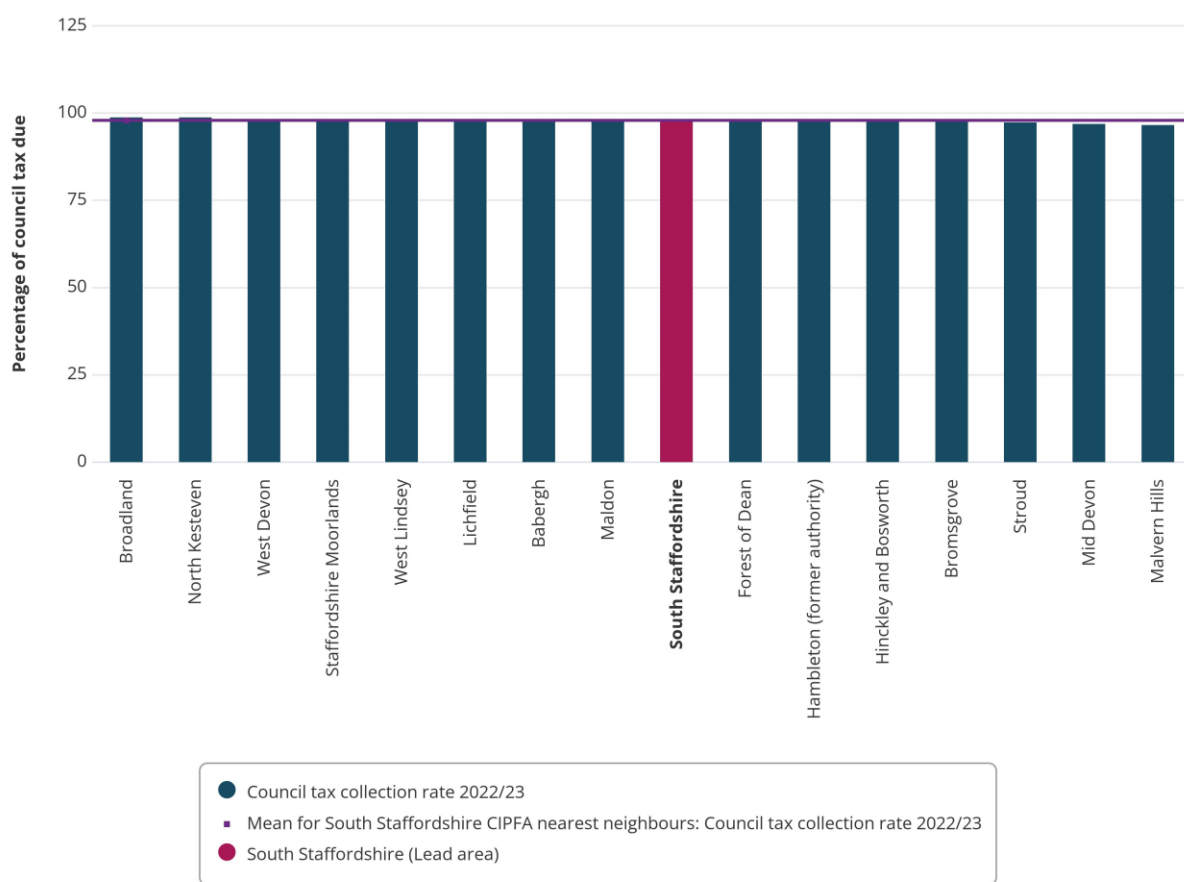
Period	Council tax collection rate			
	%			
	South Staffordshire	Minimum for South Staffordshire CIPFA nearest neighbours	Mean for South Staffordshire CIPFA nearest neighbours	Maximum for South Staffordshire CIPFA nearest neighbours
2022/23	97.96	96.70	97.94	98.87

**Source:**

Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

Powered by LG Inform

## Council tax collected as a percentage of council tax due (2022/23) for South Staffordshire & South Staffordshire CIPFA nearest neighbours



### Source:

Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

Powered by LG Inform

## 5.5 Planning

### 5.5.1 Planning enforcement

5.5.2 For Quarter 2, 74.6% of planning enforcement complaints were investigated within 12 weeks. This is below the 80% target. It is the second straight quarter that performance has dropped below 80%. Quarter 2 performance reflects the number of high profile and complex cases being investigated; this slows the ability to deal with day-to-day investigations. Due to this, progress has slowed in reducing the number of open active cases. August and September have seen an increase in open cases.

5.5.3 Quarter 2 performance had no impact on the revenue budget of planning enforcement, and financial performance for planning services remains on target and its strong performance helps mitigate potential risk and also contributes towards covering budget pressures in other areas of the council.

5.5.4 The risk of this having a larger impact is currently moderate. To help mitigate potential issues and ensure performance remains on track we have invested in the Planning Team to ensure that we have a fully staffed Development Management team to effectively manage planning applications in a timely manner. Good relations

continue to be maintained with service and infrastructure providers to respond swiftly to ad hoc applications. With these actions being taken it should reduce pressure on planning services such as investigating planning enforcement complaints.

## **5.6 Temporary accommodation costs increasing**

- 5.6.1 Over the past Quarter there has been an increase pressure upon temporary accommodation, and this has led to an increase in temporary accommodation costing.
- 5.6.2 An increase in homelessness in the district, the impact of asylum seeker decisions and the Government decision to no longer use two contingency hotels in the district will put additional strain upon the district council. To help mitigate the increased risk and financial impact caused from this pressure an additional risk plan is being created for Quarter 3 and ear marked reserve provision.

## **6.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Not applicable

## **7.0 PREVIOUS MINUTES**

Not applicable

## **8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Appendix 1 – Quarter 2 Performance Scorecard
- Appendix 2 – Quarter 2 Finance Scorecard
- Appendix 3 – Quarter 2 Strategic Risk Register
- Appendix 4 – Quarter 2 Storyboard

Report prepared by

Jackie Smith, Corporate Director, Chief Operating Officer