

# Birmingham City Council

## Report to Cabinet

29<sup>th</sup> June 2021



**Subject:** **BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS AGAINST DELIVERY PLAN DURING Q4 2020-21**

**Report of:** Assistant Chief Executive, Jonathan Tew

**Relevant Cabinet Member:** Councillor Brigid Jones, Deputy Leader

**Relevant O & S Chair(s):** Councillor Carl Rice – Co-ordinating O & S Committee

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Are specific wards affected?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No – All wards affected
If yes, name(s) of ward(s):		
Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, add Forward Plan Reference:		
Is the decision eligible for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, provide exempt information paragraph number or reason if confidential :		

### 1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report appraises Cabinet of the performance of the Council during Quarter 4 of 2020-21 (Jan-Mar 2021) against the commitments and outcomes set out in the Council's Delivery Plan, which was presented to and approved by Cabinet on 10 November 2020.
- 1.2 Performance is reported to Cabinet against the 'Vital Signs' indicator set, which presents performance in relation to service effectiveness and efficiency, and provides an updated position in relation to performance reporting against our Commonwealth Games indicator set. (See Appendices 1 & 2).

- 1.3 With this being a report to the end of year, performance is also included on the State of the City indicator set that are reported on annually. These indicators measure over-arching city outcomes, and results will be used to inform the reform elements of the Delivery Plan and to guide our work with the City Board on development of a shared, multi-agency goal framework for Birmingham. (See Appendix 3).

## 2 Recommendation

That Cabinet notes the performance of the Council during Quarter 4 of 2020-21 (Jan-Mar 2021) against the commitments and outcomes set out in the Council's Delivery Plan.

## 3 Background

- 3.1 Cabinet approved the Council's two-year Delivery Plan in November last year. This plan set out the overall policy direction of the Council and included a detailed set of milestones and timescales for specific commitments that would be delivered over the life of the plan, and a comprehensive performance framework comprising of three sections:

- **Vital Signs** of service effectiveness and efficiency, which is reported quarterly to Cabinet
- Delivery and legacy of the **Commonwealth Games**, which is reported quarterly to Cabinet
- An annual report to Cabinet setting out the Council's view of the '**state of the city**' in relation to key issues that stretch beyond the Council's own performance, on which the Council will work with our partners to address.

- 3.2 A report on Quarter 3 performance, the first against this new performance framework, was presented to Cabinet in March this year. This Quarter 4 report shows performance for the remainder of the year, building our knowledge on direction of travel.

- 3.3 Conditions have continued to be challenging during this quarter, with tight restrictions in place due to the Covid-19 pandemic, setting businesses, communities and many individuals further back. Despite these challenges Directorates have continued to make progress on key Delivery Plan projects, although the impact of the pandemic has been reflected in some areas. Details are set out in the overview below and in the narrative included in the appendices.

## 4 Portfolio overviews

- 4.1 This section sets out an overview for each Cabinet Member portfolio of the activity that has taken place over the quarter, in the context of the year overall. It outlines key achievements, challenges and adaptations to the original plan, and, where relevant, what work is being undertaken to bring performance back on track.

## **4.2 Leader Portfolio**

- 4.2.1 A significant amount of work has occurred this year to set the Medium-Term Financial Plan for Birmingham City Council for 2021/22 and beyond and the 2021/22 budget supporting the delivery plan was approved in February with a statutory consultation taking place. The sufficiency of budget was considered for high risk areas and will be regularly monitored through the “rolling budget” process that will continuously update the Medium-Term Financial Plan. Capital programme and investment reserves for priority activities were included in the budget. The capital programme for 2021/22 has been approved and work is underway to explore the scope of the 25-year capital programme as well as a 10-year Medium Term Financial Plan, and to agree a plan for development during 2021/22.
- 4.2.2 This has been a challenging year for Birmingham businesses, one which has necessitated a shift in our focus in order to respond to both immediate and changing future needs. We have continued delivering the Business Growth fund during this quarter as well as other grants to businesses. Over the course of the year we have successfully delivered £10.8m Discretionary Grant Scheme supporting 1,700 businesses, £26.3m Additional Restrictions Grant Scheme supporting 7,739 businesses and £100m Small Business Grant's Scheme. We have also supported businesses in their preparation for the planned easing of restrictions by taking steps to provide greater space for outdoor hospitality activity from April 12<sup>th</sup>. We have closed roads to traffic in the city centre and allowed Victoria Square to be used for informal outdoor seating and have increased the footway widening and parklets installed in 2020 to support the latest reopening. These temporary changes will maximise economic activity and support local business while Covid-19 restrictions remain in place but will have an impact on delivery of the City Centre Public Realm works, with some projects having to be delayed as a result.
- 4.2.3 But we must also focus on the future, and how we build back our economy. The consultation on the Economic Recovery Strategy concluded during this quarter and the final strategy was approved by Cabinet in March. The Strategy contains a range of schemes that will be delivered across the next couple of years which have the potential to add value to the economy and create new jobs for our residents.
- 4.2.4 Our Urban Centres have been increasingly important throughout the pandemic and are a key part of the city's recovery. The Levelling Up Fund and other recently launched government investment funding will further allow projects within our centres to be progressed and we intend to maximise opportunities arising from these. Our development and regeneration projects, which will stimulate growth across the city, have also progressed this quarter. These include Birmingham Smithfield where the demolition contract has been awarded and enabling and infrastructure works begun, Paradise where work has continued on Phase 2 of the development and the City Centre Enterprise Zone where funding approval for

public realm improvements has been obtained. In addition, critical progress has been made on our East Birmingham Inclusive Growth project with the Delivery Board now established, the strategy adopted, and the project Delivery Plan developed and agreed in May.

- 4.2.5 To further support the city's recovery, we need to maximise the economic value of the upcoming Commonwealth Games. A major milestone was achieved this quarter with our partners, the West Midlands Growth Company, successfully submitting to Government the Full Business Case for the £23.6m Commonwealth Games Business and Tourism Programme (formerly the Trade Tourism and Investment programme). We will ensure that this programme will promote Birmingham, the West Midlands and the wider UK as a world-class destination for trade, investment, education and tourism, drive long-term economic benefit and boost the UK and region's global reputation.
- 4.2.6 The development of a regeneration framework for Perry Barr – which will make best use of the opportunities presented by the Games and existing investment as a catalyst for future inclusive growth – also continues apace, with a particular focus on a spatial masterplan and delivery plan. Thematic Advisory Groups have been established and local engagement meetings are underway. Emerging themes include delivering new housing and infrastructure to support growth, creating a healthy place, maximising access to green spaces, knitting new development into existing communities, and creating a strong and future-proof Urban Centre.
- 4.2.7 The existing programme of regeneration in Perry Barr has seen during this quarter the topping out of all the residential plots under construction on the former Birmingham City University site, and the removal of the flyover. Demolition to facilitate further highways works has been completed, and the early works for the station redevelopment are underway. Consultations on both Our Future City Plan and the Birmingham Design Guide, which will shape development in the City Centre and across Birmingham, have also concluded during this quarter. Comments will now need to be assessed and revisions made.
- 4.2.8 Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust (BMHT) housing development across the city this quarter has resulted in 17 rental and 11 sales units being handed over, giving a year-end total of 108 rental and 43 sales units. Some delays continue as a result of Brexit, leading to increased shortages and longer supply times on key elements including bricks, timber and steel. Prospects for additional development are being pursued, with BMHT having signed contracts on 3 projects for a total of 107 units during this quarter and are near to concluding an additional 2 contracts for another 421 units. BMHT are also looking very carefully at future house types and design with a view to changes in building regulations and the council's commitment to reducing carbon emissions. BMHT is reviewing their house building specifications to improve the environmental performance of future new builds and will apply lessons learned from a Passivhaus (the leading

international low energy design standard) trial currently underway at Dawberry Fields.

- 4.2.9 We see the Development Management Service performance going from strength to strength which assists the economic recovery plan. In the past year, we have dealt with over 10,000 applications with nearly 8,500 decisions being issued, significantly more than any other core city. There has been an increase month by month over the past year regarding performance, which is now better than it has been since at least 2013. In spite of Government budget, new protocols have been adopted to improve the quality of the service and the speed of decision making has increased from about 75%-85% of applications dealt with in time at the beginning of the year to now around 90%. Planning Committee has approved a number of major applications which play an important role in terms of economic recovery and creating confidence for further inward investment.
- 4.2.10 Cumulative Capital Receipts, generated through the disposal of council assets, totalled £38,634,244 by the end of Q4. This is significantly above our original target of £30m. Generating capital receipts from disposal of surplus assets provides a cost-efficient method of funding the Council's capital investment programme. The Asset Valuation programme was completed by the end of March and additional valuations required for the accounts are currently underway.
- 4.2.11 Our Neighbourhoods Directorate has contributed to key priorities such as the Smithfield Development, Commonwealth Games, City's Housing Programme, the Trade, Tourism and Investment Programme and regenerating High Streets. This work has continued alongside the Directorate's efforts as part of the Council's ongoing response to the pandemic. For example, our enforcement activities have been enhanced with 24 Covid-19 Marshals with a further 8 Marshals working in our Parks who have been deployed to give advice and hand out face coverings to help reduce the spread of Coronavirus.
- 4.2.12 Alternative delivery models, compliant with Covid-19 requirements, have been strong across all front-line services during this and previous quarters. Officer time and resource has been dedicated to the Council's ongoing response to the pandemic and this has included specific activities to work in support of businesses, high streets, communities, cultural sector and leisure. This has enabled a strong response with Business Improvement Districts to the hospitality re-opening on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021.
- 4.2.13 As a result of our work regarding major events, Birmingham has been shortlisted for hosting world events in Triathlon and Athletics.
- 4.2.14 Both the Regional Intelligence Team (Scam Busters) and the Illegal Money Lending Team (IMLT) have successfully achieved their set programmes of work and both contracts have been retained, with an increase in budget for the IMLT.

4.2.15 Milestones and KPIs are generally on track although risks to achievement of targets under this portfolio exist as follows:

- The food inspection programme is currently suspended by the Food Standards Agency until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021 and, subject to how the programme is reintroduced by the UK Government, could risk its achievement. The Regulation and Enforcement service is represented on a national review and will be able to influence how any food safety programme is implemented post June 2021.
- The partnership bid to transform Erdington High Street was unsuccessful, as announced by Government in December 2020. Following dialogue with MHCLG and an unresolved dispute, it is now anticipated that the project will be submitted to the Levelling Up Fund. A final decision on which projects will be submitted to the Levelling Up Fund will be made by Cabinet on 8<sup>th</sup> June.

4.2.16 Our Resilience and Emergency Planning functions have continued to be heavily involved in the Covid-19 response. Additional waves at the end of Quarter 3 and in Quarter 4 have disrupted normal activity of the services, however we have managed a number of concurrent incidents during the pandemic and maintained critical activities. Emergency Planning is now increasingly returning to normal work, with enhanced and urgent focus now on the Commonwealth Games readiness programme.

4.2.17 The 24/7 Operations Centre/Control room, providing vital services for residents, has maintained operation, with no interruption throughout the pandemic. The service provision and support offered has changed to reflect the Covid-19 restrictions and required new ways of working to be implemented, such as reduced staffing and heavily restricted access and interaction to keep the centre operational and staff safe.

4.2.18 The Safety programme continues to ensure that events under our remit are Covid-safe. As we have moved forward during Quarter 4 and the government roadmap develops, there has been increasing focus on supporting venues and organisers to prepare for spectators to return. Again focus is increasingly on readiness for the Commonwealth Games, with Games wide resilience and BCC internal resilience being a priority for the team. There has been some slippage in the expected programme this year, which will be made up as we return to a more normal programme.

### **4.3 Deputy Leader Portfolio**

4.3.1 Against the challenges presented by Covid-19, the Revenues and Benefits Service has continued to deliver against its planned performance targets.

- 4.3.2 The Benefits service has seen both an increase in claims and additional activity in processing Test and Trace Social Isolation payments (SIP). As of 25 April 2021, 14,484 SIP claims had been made. Of the 13,122 currently completed there were:
- 3,045 “Standard” payments (SIP) with a total value of £1,522,500 paid.
  - 1,541 Discretionary payments (DSIP) with a total value of £770,500 paid.
  - 8,536 have been refused due to not meeting mandatory criteria (e.g. no positive test, not isolating, no financial loss, out of area, duplicate application, etc.)
- 4.3.3 We have still managed to process new Housing Benefit Claims within the target of 15 working days, achieving a yearly average of 11.43 days, and changes to claims have been processed within 3.52 days again coming in under the target of 5 working days.
- 4.3.4 The overpayment collection target has been exceeded this year, achieving £20,053,231 against a target of £16,250,000. Whilst the target has been exceeded this was not without challenges; Covid-19 has meant that the Service has been unable to use some existing recovery methods over the course of the year and resources have been called upon for other higher priority areas of the service. It has, however, managed to optimise recovery from landlords and citizens in receipt of Housing Benefit, with appropriate hardship measures in place where needed.
- 4.3.5 Work has also been progressed within the Rent Service on the Exempt Accommodation strategy. Covid-19 restrictions prevented other departments carrying out some required activities so activity will continue into next year with annual reviews with providers taking place.
- 4.3.6 Housing Rents collected have hit 97.78% for the year against a target of 94.6%. In spite of the difficulties presented by Covid-19 to the Rent Service, it exceeded the collection target by almost 3.2%. The Service will shortly be resuming recovery action but in a more tailored fashion following a restructure. Additional plans to develop new software solutions to improve rent collection have been delayed due to the introduction of the new service redesign and these will move forward in 2021/22.
- 4.3.7 Due to the pandemic the Revenues service reprofiled its Council tax collection rate target based on the indicative data available in April 2020. It is now reporting an anticipated collection rate of 92.17% against a target of 90.23. Business rates collection was also re-profiled in April 2020 to a target of 91.8%. The business sector has been hit hard and our collection assumptions did not anticipate the impact of a second and third lockdown. Despite this, the ‘in-year’ collection was 91.17%.

- 4.3.8 In the last two quarters the Council has paid out 44,391 Local Restrictions grants to businesses across Birmingham totalling just over £99.6m. This is in addition to the £217 million paid to businesses in the first period of lockdown grants.
- 4.3.9 In terms of Customer Services and Business Support, at the start of the year the whole Contact Centre operation moved to home working with over 300 staff now working from home. The Covid-19 response line was set up in April 2020 and we have taken over 50,000 calls assisting citizens with urgent support needs, self-isolation payments, grants and various other Covid-19 related enquiries. Overall for the year 94% of calls were answered compared to 88% last year. We have also supported various outbound calling initiatives to those who are shielding making sure our citizens have access to food and other support. We contacted just under 30k across the year.
- 4.3.10 The monthly position for March was 94.58% of calls answered against the target of 90%. This month was also Council Tax annual billing which sees a significant increase in volume and, despite receiving 46,000 calls, we achieved 95% calls answered. This has been the busiest Council Tax annual billing since at least 2014 which in part can be attributed to the rise in Council Tax this year but also the ongoing impact of the pandemic.
- 4.3.11 During March, Customer Services continued to support the Covid-19 response, answering 6,505 (91.97%) calls in total. These broke down into 1392 discretionary business grant calls, 2,898 Test and Trace Isolation grant calls, 571 Contact Tracing Calls, 6 public health calls, 92 Business Breach calls and 1,546 calls into the Covid-19 response hub number (303 1116). As restrictions continued through March 2021, Customer Services continued to contact clinically extremely vulnerable citizens (CEV's) to ensure they had the right support in place to stay at home.
- 4.3.12 The Customer Service Programme is underway, with a Full Business Case being developed and appropriate resourcing being sourced to allow this to move forward. This will bring together current activity in the Delivery Plan around the Citizen Access Strategy, further consolidation of services into the Contact Centre, and the Brum Account Phase 3.
- 4.3.13 The Complaints Management review is also included in this programme. Work on this has progressed during Q4 with a new revised complaints policy and set of procedures agreed. Additional staff are being recruited to support the go live from 26 April with a revised model for Member enquiries to follow in May.
- 4.3.14 Business Support improvement activity has continued in line with the Delivery Plan to reduce nonessential expenditure, streamline activity and make better use of technology. Projected savings for 20/21 is £142k. Business Support has worked closely with the Corporate Mail Centre to achieve this. The Mail Centre Press to Post solution was used by 1761 staff by the end of the year ensuring more cost efficient and timely mail (where printing could not be avoided).



- 4.3.15 The ICT Hub based at Lancaster Circus continues to support delivery of face to face IT fixes and distribution of equipment with almost 2500 visits during the fourth quarter.
- 4.3.16 Approximately 11,000 incidents and service requests are raised each month via the ICT Service Desk and 96.4% of all incidents are resolved within agreed service levels. There has been an average of 11 major incidents per month (35% reduction in comparison to the previous year's average of 18). Recent customer satisfaction surveys of staff returned a 97% satisfaction level with the service.
- 4.3.17 Over the year the Information, Technology and Digital services have been central in enabling staff to work and collaborate. They have also been involved in work to support the Covid-19 response, enabling business as usual Council services to be delivered safely while also supporting additional Covid-19 related activity. They have successfully produced online solutions as part of the Council's response to central government announcements on Business Rates grants, Emergency Vulnerable support and Personal Protection Equipment.
- 4.3.18 Responding to these needs has meant that developments on some of the Delivery Plan activity, including the BRUM Account stage 3, have been impacted with resources diverted. BRUM Account stage 3 is now being progressed as part of the Customer Programme. Data and Insight capability has largely been directed towards the Covid-19 response, which has delayed progression of the Data into Insight activity second phase as planned. A new business case to reprofile and resource this activity is being developed.
- 4.3.19 Progress has been made on the Application Platform Modernisation which is delivering new data centre and cloud hosting capabilities to reduce Council operating costs. Over the last year we have procured two new data centres and begun the migration of over 80 applications so far. The programme is on schedule to exit previous data centres by March 2022 as planned.
- 4.3.20 The revised Cyber Strategy and funding agreement have been completed and approved at Cabinet on 9<sup>th</sup> Feb 2021. Regular cyber security risk meetings are conducted every two weeks. This includes a security watch list that has been developed and used to monitor issues on a regular basis in collaboration with service management, so proactive risks can be raised when necessary. There were no significant cyber security incidents in the last quarter.
- 4.3.21 The New Ways of Working Programme reported to Cabinet in April which agreed the future of Lancaster Circus and work being done to implement more agile working. This will include the Delivery Plan work on Field Working and Hybrid Council Meetings (in line with ongoing guidance).
- 4.3.22 The implementation of our shared care record working across the Health and Social Care system has been progressed. There is slight variation to the milestones due to STP information and governance issues out of our direct control. Adult Social Care went live with sharing data from our Care First system on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021, completing Phase 1 of the project. Work has now

commenced on Phase 2 and this is scheduled for completion in late May and a roll out to Adult Social Care staff in early June.

- 4.3.23 The Hostile Vehicle Mitigation sub-group has continued to meet, with wider Protect work paused due to Covid-19. The team has led on supporting the counter terrorism (CT) requirements within the Covid-19 reopening, working closely with CT policing and partners to ensure reopening of retail and hospitality can occur with appropriate security considerations in place. However, the majority of planned Protect work, including exercising, has remained paused due to Covid-19 and is due to commence in 2021.
- 4.3.24 An independent Peer Review of the Council's Prevent programme has been initiated and will look at examining the Council's processes and plans to support individuals vulnerable to extremism. The findings and recommendations of the review are due to be reported back in June 2021.
- 4.3.25 The service redesign within Business Improvement and Change has been completed and recruitment is now underway for key vacancies within the team. Under the new model the service is working collaboratively with other functions and with partners to drive forward key strategic initiatives for the council, including Localism, Covid-19 Recovery, City Board, Adult Social care.
- 4.3.26 The Delivery Plan and performance framework have now been fully embedded within the council and act as anchor documents that guide our work. They are linked to the MTFP and a detailed set of Directorate Business Plans has now been developed that flow from these documents, strengthening the golden thread and drawing together more closely financial and strategic planning.

#### **4.4 Children's Wellbeing Portfolio**

- 4.4.1 There has been some pleasing performance against targets during this quarter and over the year as a whole although some areas for improvement remain. Final Education Health Care Plans(EHCP) issued during April 2021 increased by 6% to 136 from 128 in the previous month - the highest number of plans issued since reporting commenced from April 2019. 74 of final plans were completed within the 20 weeks.
- 4.4.2 128 requests for assessments were made in April, a 6% increase than this time last year, although the total number of requests received this year (515) has dropped compared to last year. 7 Mediation requests were received in March in relation to EHCPs with 1 Mediation undertaken. 4 were resolved with no mediation.
- 4.4.3 The Parent Link Service had 160 new enquiries in January and closed 157 (98%) of them which is a great improvement from the previous month (89% closed cases).
- 4.4.4 The number of Special School Placements has risen from 4,413 to 4,523 since 2019 providing 110 additional placements within the special school sector. There are currently 82 commissioned places unfilled and ongoing work is taking place

both short term and long term to review and ensure placements are commissioned appropriately to match needs.

- 4.4.5 The number of Children Awaiting Special School Placement has dropped by 10% from March and is currently at 69. The team managed to place 8 which is 5 less than last month. Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder continue to generate the highest demand for places but numbers are currently continuing their downward trend.

#### **4.5 Education, Skills and Culture Portfolio**

- 4.5.1 Covid-19 has again impacted on the delivery and performance against milestones and targets under this portfolio. In Early Years provision for example there was a long period when Ofsted inspections of providers were suspended meaning that updated ratings were not available. Ofsted have now resumed on-site inspections of early years providers so results against appropriate targets will be reported on during Quarter 1 of 2021/22.
- 4.5.2 The pandemic has led to an increase in the numbers of enquiries and referrals received from Birmingham schools and other local authorities regarding children missing education (CME). To address this our Education and Skills Directorate have been working closely with colleagues in school attendance as well as Birmingham Children's Trust and partner agencies. Staff were repurposed from other teams to support the CME work and this focus will continue.
- 4.5.3 There has however been a significant reduction in permanent exclusions (99 as at 24 May 2021 compared to 208 at the same time in the 2019/20 academic year). The reduction in primary exclusions (18 compared to 51 last year) is particularly pleasing.
- 4.5.4 The lockdowns imposed as a result of covid-19 have had a significant impact on young people and consequent demand for support. As a result of a review of performance, actions were taken to secure additional resource and adopt innovative ways of working internally and with external stakeholders as part of a change of leadership and leadership approach. The Jobs/Skills Taskforce, as part of the wider Council Recovery Plan, will have a specific focus on young people and be complemented by an internal audit of the quality and impact of post-16 'readiness' and also suitability of curriculum/careers offer across the 14-19 transition points along that age spectrum.
- 4.5.5 We are stepping up our support to those Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET), the referrals of which have increased during the pandemic by approx. 200 compared to previous years at this time. All newly identified NEET young people will be allocated an individual careers adviser to provide careers guidance and placing support. Face to face delivery of support has recommenced in community, youth centre venues with further enhanced delivery from Library of Birmingham planned from late June onwards.

- 4.5.6 We have progressed during this quarter our dialogue with the Department for Education to obtain for Birmingham a potential 2 years of funding for 16- & 17-year olds to support wider re-engagement activities in response to the impact of Covid-19. We are also working in collaboration with the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESfA) to develop a gap in provision submission and hopefully develop below level 2 courses for an additional 800 young people citywide, in 10 sector areas aligned to areas NEET young people are requesting.
- 4.5.7 Other work during this quarter includes support to the Task and Finish group working on a citywide Mental Health Toolkit and action plan to roll out over a 5-year period and working in collaboration on safeguarding – supporting various internal meetings and information sharing across professionals to reduce NEET & Not Known numbers.
- 4.5.8 The Council Delivery Plan (2020-2022) and the stated milestones are embedded in the Neighbourhood Directorate's core business of strategic planning to improve performance in service delivery and outcomes for the community.
- 4.5.9 The two milestones relating to the Birmingham Museum Store Options Appraisal and Birmingham Cultural Compact establishment have progressed. Further feasibility work for the former is required. With regards to the latter, expert advice and guidance on innovative additional funding streams for the cultural sector has been commissioned.
- 4.5.10 Performance against targets is generally on track but Covid-19 has impacted performance in some areas. The number of filming enquiries handled by Film Birmingham has reduced significantly, however, there are strong signs for regrowth in 2021-22. It has also led to a delay in the delivery of project-funded Cultural Commissioning activity, which has been agreed to be extended into 2021-22.

## **4.6 Finance and Resources Portfolio**

- 4.6.1 Progress has been made over the course of the year to strengthen financial management and accountability within the Council. Accountability letters were issued for 20/21 to Directors and Assistant Directors and revised versions for 2021/22 are being prepared for the next quarter. Exception based reporting is in place and will continue to be developed over the next year. The broader accountability framework will be documented as part of the Finance Target Operating Model (TOM) Programme, to identify gaps and implement any required improvement.
- 4.6.2 As part of the ongoing improvement in the Council's financial management, CIPFA are supporting the delivery of the first quarterly self-assessment against the CIPFA 5-star Financial Management Model.

- 4.6.3 The Finance TOM programme activities are progressing well. This includes proposals to improve the business partnering role, drafting a finance competency framework, improving learning and development (including training in key areas such as inductions for new starters), ensuring the production across the Council of more robust business cases through improved guidance.
- 4.6.4 To support the effectiveness of commissioning and to increase the impact of social value, a new Procurement TOM is underway and is currently at design stage with priority activities progressing in parallel. The vision focuses on ensuring strategic thinking, creating talent of staff, operational excellence, embracing technology and being results driven. Work to date has focused on future team structure and governance (reporting, processes, procedures). A high-level summary of the consolidated programme plan has been produced and a detailed plan is in development. Further work will continue to finalise the planning of all activities.
- 4.6.5 Following the approval of the revised business case for the new Oracle HR, Finance and Procurement system a detailed delivery plan has been developed. This provides for the completion of the remaining development items by late summer 2021 and the commencement of user acceptance testing from September 2021. HR resources have been confirmed and adoption activity has been restarted. Briefing sessions have taken place with a number of directors and senior executives to re-engage them on the programme and to set the scene for the approach to user engagement and self-service learning. The management of scope remains key to the successful delivery of the programme for April 2022.
- 4.6.6 The HR directorate has made good progress on key policy development this quarter and year, working closely with Trade Unions. Following agreement and delivery of a new approach to incremental pay progression we have modernised capability policy moving to a 'Supporting Performance Improvement Policy'. We also expect to agree an updated disciplinary and single grievance policy early in Quarter 1 of 2021/22.
- 4.6.7 This work has been facilitated by the Industrial Relations Unit (IRU), who have also refined process for TUPE transfers and ensured that protections are applied to all staff transfers. In addition, the IRU has completed an initial review of Trade Unions facilities that will be consulted on in Spring 2021 as part of a new Employee Relations strategy.
- 4.6.8 HR have led a casual to contract project, ensuring that over 200 staff have been offered a contract with the security of regular working hours, whilst supporting the launch of consultation on service redesign in a number of areas with business plans to invest in services and improve outcomes for citizens. Good progress has also been made on the review of HR cases to agree outcomes and avoid formal hearings where possible, with 20% of HR cases now resolved via this 'triage' process.

- 4.6.9 There has been further progress with the health and safety audit cycle where responses to the November directorate self-assessment survey are being advanced. This will lead to a cycle of verification audits which will start next quarter. They have also worked closely with Inclusive Growth to develop compliance indicators associated with the property and asset portfolio. Accidents and incidents continue to reduce, particularly in line with the reduction in delivered services. HSE reportable diseases increased in line with the change in reporting criteria to include confirmed Covid-19 cases.
- 4.6.10 Work on the HR TOM has been productive with an outline model agreed following staff consultation which will inform a business case to redesign the service to become best in class, launching in Quarter 1 2021/22.

## **4.7 Health and Social Care Portfolio**

- 4.7.1 We have made great strides in progressing our adult social care priorities this quarter and in the year overall. We have moved forward our commitment to work with NHS partners to better support the care market through improved partnership working, a city-wide system of joined-up commissioning and progressive quality monitoring and engagement. We have provided extensive support to registered care providers during the last quarter and throughout the pandemic. Officers have published regular information and guidance, developed a dedicated Infection Control Service, coordinated emergency personal protection equipment supplies, supported provider Covid-19 testing, taken an active role in vaccination roll out and distributed over £23m in national grants and £3m Council funding to support them during the crisis.
- 4.7.2 The BICP Care Homes Programme has now been refreshed as the Covid-19 response comes to an end. Six workstreams have been established: emergency response; digital; primary and clinical support; joint commissioning; quality; and workforce. Programme level outcomes and priorities have been set and individual workstreams are now completing their detailed scoping work and establishment of workstreams/deliverables.
- 4.7.3 We achieved a major milestone with the implementation of Phase 2 of the Customer Journey model in September 2020. Updated findings from staff engagement events were considered during quarter 4. No significant issues were identified, and work is underway to implement recommendations which support the continued improvement of the new ways of working.
- 4.7.4 The Customer Journey model has bolstered our strengths and community assets approach through continued development of the 3 Conversations Framework, Neighbourhood Network Schemes, Family Group Conferencing, Community Network Support Officers and the Early Intervention Community Team (EICT). Roll out of 3 Conversations in hospital front door teams was postponed to Spring

21 due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. We have however met our milestone to extend existing Neighbourhood Network contracts for 12 months starting from April 21. During this extension period we will be piloting extending the work to benefit younger disabled adults. We have also made good progress on the work necessary to enable the recommissioning of Neighbourhood Network from April 2022. We have just completed a co-design process speaking to over 400 stakeholders; including providers, citizens, Birmingham Children's Partnership and the CCG.

- 4.7.5 Our milestones to implement the EICT have been achieved and work is progressing on agreeing the strategic direction of early intervention services. Draft business cases have been completed and will inform how these services are commissioned going forward. Operationally the teams have been working on embedding the multidisciplinary approach, applying the home first principles, reducing length of stay and improving outcomes for citizens.
- 4.7.6 Our achievement against these milestones has contributed to success in supporting people to receive adult social care in their home. Latest figures available, for October to December, show we placed 153 people into care homes, compared to 223 over the same period in 2019, demonstrating the impact of our early intervention workstream.
- 4.7.7 We are currently developing a phased reopening plan for internal and external day services in line with government guidance. Due to the impact of Covid-19 restrictions and the complexity of citizen's needs, we will continue to liaise with citizens and their carers, to ensure services offer the required support. The phased model will include a range of options, in consultation with individuals, social workers and service providers.
- 4.7.8 Work is progressing to achieve our milestone of bringing together social care, community nursing, therapy services, GP practices and mental health services into multi-disciplinary teams by April 2022. Whilst the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted some progress, planning has commenced with partners to consider options for co-location, integration and multi-agency working. Task and finish groups are being developed with service leads from health and social care considering the post Covid-19 opportunities to enhance partnership working.
- 4.7.9 The milestone for launching the Integrated Transitions Team in September 20 has been achieved. The service focusses on assisting young people, aged 14-30, to achieve outcomes around employment, housing, health, relationships and community. Our approach is one of co-production with our citizens, specifically the young people we aim to support. The Youth Empowerment Squad, known as the YES! Group continues to go from strength to strength and have supported us to produce marketing materials as well as being a sounding board for new initiatives such as the online programme of activities known as Jump Start. Since our launch, we have received 250 connection requests, which have led to us

working with 151 young people to date, across the Integrated Transitions team and the Vulnerable Adults team. 55.6% of young people have achieved their outcomes; this is a new indicator for a service in its infancy and as such we are building up a baseline for future reporting.

- 4.7.10 There are areas where we have not met our targets. The proportion of people we provide direct payments to has risen this month, but we have not met the end of year target. This year, we saw a period where the uptake of direct payments slowed due to the Covid-19 pandemic and emergency measures, and the resulting lack of community opportunities. However, based on the positions in the 2019-20 Adult Social Care Outcome Framework measures, we are in the top quartile of all councils for this measure.
- 4.7.11 The number of people receiving a Shared Lives service has not met the end-of-year target, however we have 7 new carers currently going through our assessment process who we recruited through a project run by Shared Lives Plus. We are currently developing a pathway into Shared Lives placements for people being discharged from hospital and focusing on our communication strategy, carer recruitment, including an improved website and use of the media, and addressing areas where we have recruited few carers.
- 4.7.12 Our performance on proportion of clients reviewed, assessed or reassessed within 12 months has not met the end of year target. We have redirected our social worker capacity to support our response to the Covid-19 outbreak, which reduced the number of staff available to complete reviews. However, we improved upon last year's end-of-year result of 72.3% by achieving 74.8%. Starting in April, each locality team has started following a bespoke action plan for meeting their review targets. The Assistant Director will be holding monthly meetings with the Head of Service, Team Manager and Senior Practitioners for each team to ensure that they are meeting the requirements of their action plan.
- 4.7.13 As throughout the year, Public Health have continued in their critical response to Covid-19 during this quarter and this has impacted once again on the progress of some projects. The Childhood Obesity Trailblazer has been affected although all three workstreams are progressing. Full public consultation has commenced on the Healthy City Planning Toolkit and Invitations to Tender are at final draft to progress both the Birmingham Basket and Spiral Curriculum workstreams. A dedicated 12-month Graduate role was recruited in March 2021 as mitigation for the delay.
- 4.7.14 Covid-19 has also impacted on the delivery of health checks and other commissioned health services. Work has already begun to evaluate and restart/upscale service provision. The sexual health needs assessment (SNA) has now been commissioned to inform the future service requirements and support the development of a new service specification.



- 4.7.15 Progress by Public Health on other key Delivery Plan areas includes the identification of chapters for the Director of Public Health report, which is now due to be published in July 2021 rather than May. The 'Creating a Healthy Food Strategy' for Birmingham was discussed at a meeting held in March 2021, the intention now is for a public consultation on a revised document in quarter three of 2021/22. In the interim, we are continually developing and implementing an Emergency Food Plan with partners.
- 4.7.16 Following publication of the Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) report and recommendations on Infant Mortality, work is now in progress to develop a multi-agency Task Force and recruit an independent chair. The Infant Mortality Strategy and action plan, currently in development, is set to be informed by the HOSC recommendations and overseen by the Task Force.
- 4.7.17 Due to a change in Directors, the multi-agency commissioning group set up to discuss the Healthy Child Programme (HCP) and agree a future model, has stalled. Whilst progress on this over 2020/21 has been slow, it is expected that this will now become a priority. Current HCP providers have recently been working with a consultant to improve their performance and outcomes especially around integrated working on the mandated reviews. Initial feedback and data look promising.
- 4.7.18 The Neighbourhood Directorate continues to support the Council's ongoing response to the pandemic including the hosting of food banks, welfare services and Local Testing Stations at Wellbeing and Community Centres.
- 4.7.19 The pandemic and associated pressures have impacted however on the delivery of their operational priorities and targets. In response the wellbeing strategic review is now being undertaken on a site by site basis. Progress has been made to deliver a high-quality Basketball offer in Nechells and to re-open Small Heath Swimming Pool. The number of miles travelled on free bicycles provided by the council has also been impacted. It is expected this position will improve over the coming months due to more one to one cycling sessions taking place and the service adapting so that it can still engage with the city's most vulnerable citizens.

#### **4.8 Homes and Neighbourhoods Portfolio**

- 4.8.1 The Council Delivery Plan (2020-2022) and the stated milestones are embedded in the Neighbourhood Directorate's core business of strategic planning to improve performance in service delivery and outcomes for the community.
- 4.8.2 Of particular note is households where homelessness is prevented. There has been a real success in driving forward the prevention agenda. A significant percentage of cases have been closed with a positive outcome as a result of the homelessness prevention funding being used to either secure deposits or reduce

arrears and/or redirecting single vulnerable people to suitable housing providers or negotiations with families to prevent exclusion.

- 4.8.3 With regards to households where homelessness is relieved, there were 34 homeless cases relieved in March 2021, of which 20 secured accommodation or maintained existing accommodation. The service is also working with private sector landlords to help families into good quality affordable accommodation.
- 4.8.4 Equally successful has been the significant reduction in the number of rough sleepers. The 2020/21 annual snapshot result is 17 which has surpassed the target of 40. The year has been extraordinary due to Covid-19 which saw the government call for 'everyone-in' followed by a number of programmes targeting the protection and progression of people sleeping rough. The lockdown environment and the additional resources have positively impacted the level of people sleeping rough across the whole year. Birmingham City Council's count is the highest percentage reduction of any of the Core Cities so far.
- 4.8.5 The Directorate's community focus continues to remain strong and the localisation action plan is being progressed as well as supporting the community recovery framework.
- 4.8.6 Options to run ward forum meetings have further been enhanced. The success of virtual meetings has enabled the annual target to be surpassed and in addition there has been higher attendance compared to when they were held face-to-face, prior to the pandemic. The development of the YouTube channel showing recorded meetings has been very positive, demonstrating innovative practice and citizens' continued interest in local governance. This also indicates that there is value in keeping virtual meetings as an option going forward.
- 4.8.7 Alternative delivery models, compliant with Covid-19 requirements, have been strong across all front-line services during this and previous quarters. However, whilst services have in the main continued, the pandemic has impacted on our ability to perform at required levels in some areas, e.g. voids turnaround. Delivery of Neighbourhood services and programmes are continually being reviewed and adjusted in line with government guidance relating to the impact of Covid-19 across all the different sectors.
- 4.8.8 Progress against milestones and KPIs is generally on track but risks to achievement under this portfolio exist as follows:
- Tenant engagement review has been delayed due to Covid-19 but will progress as far as is practicable. Overview and Scrutiny Committee are supporting the review in the new financial year.
  - We are incentivising the production of wards plans to boost numbers e.g. £2m Celebrating Communities fund and some additional support via community anchor organisations.

- The commencement of the tendering of the digital autopsy service has been delayed due to Covid-19. As a result, the current contract has been extended to June 2022.
- Move-on rate from temporary accommodation is impacted by Covid-19. Availability of alternative accommodation has reduced significantly (40% in Birmingham and nationally), although rough sleepers continue to be accommodated.
- Homelessness presentations are increasing with a predicted rise once the courts begin to issue possession orders from May 2021, unless the ban upon evictions is extended further. This is coupled with an Increase in domestic abuse, relationship breakdowns and anti-social behaviour.

#### 4.8.9 Key Neighbourhood policy drivers include:

- In the context of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2018 and on-going evaluation of service delivery we are reviewing the Housing Options Service and how we support our citizens who are threatened with or are already homeless. A new proposed model will focus on early intervention and prevention of those households at risk of homelessness.
- We continue to work with Private Rented Sector Providers to help meet levels of housing need across the city, as well as develop the Sector to support tenants and landlords to ensure good standards and a viable housing option for citizens.
- We are continuing to improve the supply of Housing to our citizens including building new homes through Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust and bringing more empty properties back into use. We are also considering more innovative means of providing and managing homes through our work on a community led housing policy.
- We are continuing with the Housing First pilot to house rough sleepers directly off the streets and pursuing our prevention activity, leading to a positive impact in minimising the number of rough sleepers and households living in temporary accommodation.
- To ensure that rough sleepers are moved through to independent accommodation as a part of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's Next Steps Accommodation Initiative – we are working up a bid with Registered Providers and other providers for funding that has been made available to all local authorities.
- We continue to take forward policy commitments outlined in The Working Together in Birmingham's Neighbourhoods Policy Statement, in relation to

localisation and improving neighbourhood working, as well as building a cross-council approach and framework for a locality-based model.

#### **4.9 Social Inclusion, Community Safety and Equalities Portfolio**

- 4.9.1 This has been an important year for the Council as we made commitments that embed equality as a key theme running throughout our Delivery Plan. We have recruited a Head of Service for the new Equality and Diversity service and are in the process of finalising recruitment for the wider team. The team will focus on taking forward the Council's equality commitments and progressing the priorities in the Delivery Plan. Our approach will be further shaped by the findings of the consultation on the Everyone's Battle, Everyone's Business statement of intent, which took place during the previous quarter. Over 4,000 people engaged in the consultation via a range of meetings, workshops and through social media campaigns and surveys.
- 4.9.2 The Equalities Star Chamber meets regularly and holds officers and Cabinet Members to account for the delivery of our Equality Objectives, the Workforce Race Equity plan, the improving and strengthening of our corporate approach to Equality Impact Assessments and the discharging of our duties under the Equality Act.
- 4.9.3 We are on track with the majority of the recommendations from the Workforce Race Equity report and have reduced our overall ethnicity data gap to around 18% from close to 30%, giving us a much clearer picture of our workforce demographics. We have increased representation from Asian, Black, Mixed or Multiple Ethnicities, or other marginalised ethnic groups from 27.6% to 33.4% which, whilst not comparable with the population estimates, shows a very positive direction of travel over the last 12 months. We are now gathering the data again for the reviewed Workforce Equity Report 2020/21 and will be publishing the findings by the end of Summer 2021. This year the report will widen its reach, looking at other protected characteristics to ensure that we continue our journey to full representation.
- 4.9.4 The pandemic has caused severe financial challenges to the lives of many individuals and families resulting in significant demand for welfare benefit and debt advice services. Despite advisors from both the Council's own Neighbourhood Advice & Information Service and our Third Sector advice provider partners all working from home, we have met our income maximisation targets and ensured that Birmingham citizens have benefitted from an additional £13 million of income.
- 4.9.5 A multi-agency partnership led by the Council has established to drive the campaign to make Birmingham a Living Wage City. We are in the process of finalising the submission for accreditation, to be completed by the end of 2021.

As part of this work we have successfully engaged flagship retailers and anchor organisations within the city. With the full impact of the pandemic across Birmingham not fully known, we will also ensure there is a greater focus on supporting local businesses across the city as a whole.

- 4.9.6 We are continuing to progress work to understand the impact of poverty as experienced by citizens of Birmingham. We know that poverty is a key driver of inequalities in our City and it is important to gather the lived experience of our citizens to inform policy. To that end, we have commissioned Thrive Together Birmingham and commenced the contract to deliver the Poverty Truth Commission in Birmingham. Public Health Inequalities team are working with the provider to initiate Phase 1 of the project focussing on the exploration of lived experiences in relation to housing. We are also developing a strategic approach to enable the Poverty Truth Commission to become a rolling model of engagement between policy makers and citizens.
- 4.9.7 We have made progress on community safety issues through our work with West Midlands Police to introduce a new partnership meeting that ensures an integrated partnership response is in place to deal with incidents of serious violence. The Birmingham Community Safety Partnership has also begun its review of the serious violence strategy.
- 4.9.8 A Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership Board is also now in place and operating with partners fully engaged. This means we are well placed to meet our new obligations when the Domestic Abuse Bill becomes law. There has been a prioritisation of focus in relation to the crisis support elements of the Domestic Abuse Strategy in response to the increase in demand for support during the pandemic, with up to 40% increases in calls to local and national helplines. The Council has internal, cross-directorate meetings in place to ensure a corporate approach to tackling domestic abuse and providing support services. Work has also started around the criminal justice element of domestic abuse which will ensure that actions against perpetrators are also aligned with the wider strategy.
- 4.9.9 The community safety team are working with internal and external partners to develop a new Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) policy that responds to all household related ASB issues regardless of tenure. A partnership group is also in place to address issues around exempt accommodation. This includes working with partners to reduce crime and ASB, whilst improving the standard of accommodation and provision of services within the sector.
- 4.9.10 The community safety team have secured extra resources and support for our ongoing relationship with the West Midlands Anti-Slavery Network. This means that the Modern Slavery Champions recruited this past year will continue to receive bespoke support and training from the community safety team. We are also in the process of signing up to the Modern Slavery co-op Charter and renewing the Birmingham City Council Modern Slavery Statement.

- 4.9.11 An independent Peer Review of the Council's Prevent programme has been initiated and will examine the Council's processes and plans to support individuals vulnerable to extremism. The review is due to report in June 2021.
- 4.9.12 The Council has secured additional investment into Community Safety and a planned redesign of the Community Safety Team is underway to ensure delivery of these critical projects and services. A new performance framework for community safety has also been agreed and will be ready to report from next quarter.

#### **4.10 Street Scene and Parks Portfolio**

- 4.10.1 The Council Delivery Plan (2020-2022) and the stated milestones are embedded in the Neighbourhood Directorate's core business of strategic planning to improve performance in service delivery and outcomes for the community.
- 4.10.2 The community and volunteer offer were relaunched on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2021. There has already been an increased level of interest in volunteers wanting to get involved in improving their environment. To help support these new locality environmental groups, equipment and officers have been dedicated to this area of work and arrangements have been made for Birmingham's Open Spaces Forum to act as a group mentor.
- 4.10.3 The Future Parks Accelerator (FPA) Programme has been extended until May 2022 by the National Trust and Heritage Lottery. The FPA has challenged the way Parks are managed and through the next 12 months the programme will explore how the environment can add support to other City Council initiatives. The Birmingham Open Spaces Forum (BOSF) have been proactive working with groups to bid for improvement grants for local Parks, resulting in £10k seed funding invested with them generating £52k worth of grants (with another £47k still to be determined).
- 4.10.4 The percentage of waste presented to landfill is projected to be below the 10% target at year end, notwithstanding an extended shutdown of the Tyseley Energy Recovery Facility which resulted in more waste having to be diverted to other disposal facilities, including landfill. The national average for local authority use of landfill is 10%.
- 4.10.5 Alternative delivery models, compliant with Covid-19 requirements, have been strong across all front-line services during this and previous quarters. However, whilst services have in the main continued, the pandemic did stop all non-essential works, and this impacted on our Grounds Maintenance programme. Work between end of March and May 2021 was restricted to safety works and checks. The use of parks for people's daily exercise changed the maintenance work to essential and Birmingham was the first authority to use grass cutting to promote the 2m distance rule. Delivery of Streetscene services and programmes are continually being reviewed and adjusted in line with government guidance relating to the impact of Covid-19 across all the different sectors.

4.10.6 Progress against milestones and KPIs is generally on track, but risks to achievement under this portfolio exist as follows:

- Reported missed collections are higher than the target, and this is usually due to access problems or vehicle breakdown. The first phase of the refuse collection vehicle replacement programme is continuing as planned and is on target to be completed by July 2021. 59 brand new vehicles have been brought into the fleet to date. The service expects missed collections will start to be eased now that new vehicles have started arriving into the fleet – these will be fitted with technology to further assist in reducing missed collections and will improve direct communication with the crews. There has been significant improvement in the reliability of the service and generally missed collections are made within 48 hours.
- Stopping of non-essential grounds maintenance has meant the cumulative performance target has never been able to catch up, however, from quarter 2 onwards performance in each quarter has been above the target set.
- Recycling has been a significant challenge this year with the initial closure of the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) and reduced throughput. The service is around 24,000 tonnes short, as at the same time last year. Although the service has collected more kerbside recycling, the loss of capacity at the HWRCs and increased residual waste has meant the recycling figure has remained static.

4.10.7 In terms of broader policy, Neighbourhoods continues to work with and support communities in a variety of ways to improve the street scene locality and environment.

#### **4.11 Transport and Environment Portfolio**

4.11.1 We have continued to progress our key projects during this quarter including the completion and publication of the review of Emergency Birmingham Transport Plan schemes. Many of the temporary trial schemes will now be made more permanent, subject to consultation, using Active Travel Fund funding. We will however continue to remain alert and responsive to opportunities to support Birmingham's safe transition to more usual models of delivery as progress is made against the Government's roadmap out of lockdown.

4.11.2 With the completion and review of Emergency Birmingham Transport Plan activities, focus can return to the main Birmingham Transport Plan. Work has been ongoing during this quarter to complete the consultation report and update the draft plan, with a view to adopting a final plan in September 2021. Alongside this, work has started on a robust delivery plan, aligned to Route to Zero targets and objectives. We are currently designing scope and work packages to move this forward.

- 4.11.3 Work has progressed on a number of capital schemes, in spite of Covid-19 restrictions. In some cases, the reduction in travel demand caused by Covid-19 has been used to maximise delivery of works which may otherwise have caused greater disruption to the network. In this quarter work in Perry Barr saw the critical milestone of demolition of the flyover. This is key to delivering significant transport improvements in the area, supporting the wider regeneration project. Quarter 4 also saw the launch of West Midlands Cycle Hire in Sutton Coldfield, with wider roll out in the city centre due later in 2021.
- 4.11.4 There have been several new Government funding streams announced during this quarter providing investment in transport infrastructure, links and means. Officers are working to submit appropriate bids and to maximise potential investment including that linked to the National Bus Strategy 'Bus Back Better' and the Local Authority Capability Fund which provides revenue funding to support cycling and walking.
- 4.11.5 The council has presented an updated business case to Department for Transport (DfT) in respect of its Highway Maintenance and Management PFI contract. This proposed a way forward for the project subject to reaching an acceptable commercial agreement between all project stakeholders. DfT is expected to respond by the end of May 2021. The parameters for the commercial agreement were approved by Cabinet in March and discussions are progressing. As an initial step, the interim contract for operational services with Kier Highways Ltd has been extended to 30 December 2021, with a longer extension to be progressed as soon as possible.
- 4.11.6 Systems testing for the Clean Air Zone has progressed well and will continue through to launch on 1 June 2021. As part of the latest phase of campaigns and engagement ahead of the launch all residents in the zone have received a postcard, which highlighted the launch date and encouraged them to check whether or not their vehicle would be subject to the daily fee. Information about the launch of the Clean Air Zone has also been sent to all Birmingham Council Tax payers.
- 4.11.7 The Clean Air Zone team have also made positive progress in processing applications to various support packages and have confirmed the appointment of Motorpoint as a partner to the vehicle scrappage and travel credit scheme.
- 4.11.8 We have continued to make progress on those initiatives included in our Route to Zero action plan during this quarter, which aims to deliver on the Council's commitment to be net carbon zero by 2030 as well as further developing our governance arrangements. We are making arrangements to transition the existing task force to a Route to Zero Assembly which will bring in a wider range of stakeholders and interested parties and provide a more open forum for shaping the City's transition to net zero carbon. We are putting in place monitoring



arrangements so we can better measure progress and the impact of our actions. We have started to explore possible opportunities and initiatives to expand our action plan in order to increase our impact on carbon emissions and will continue with this exploration next quarter. We have also gained approval to appoint an Assistant Director to provide dedicated leadership and oversight of this critical priority.

- 4.11.9 Overall this has been a successful year with significant progress made on our priority projects and initiatives balanced with an effective response to Covid-19 challenges. In addition to those projects highlighted above, this year has seen the development and delivery of 11 active travel schemes and numerous local and city centre schemes to support social distancing and economic activity during Covid-19; the commencement of various Perry Barr transport works, including highway improvements and A34 Sprint; substantial completion of the Selly Oak new road work to reconfigure the Selly Oak triangle; track laying for the westside Metro extension to Hagley Road and ongoing utility works for HS2 and Curzon Street station, with details of station design released.

#### **4.12 Commonwealth Games**

- 4.12.1 Preparations within Birmingham City Council for the B2022 Commonwealth Games continue at pace and on track. The work is delivered across the entire council with a 'One Team' approach, the majority of work is being delivered within Directorates with the support of a small Programme Management function.
- 4.12.2 Work on the Capital Build for the Alexander Stadium remains on schedule and within budget. While the Perry Barr Residential Scheme was descoped as the Athletes Village due to the ongoing effects of Covid-19, it is still recognised as a Legacy development of the Games and work on both schemes has progressed this quarter.
- 4.12.3 As part of the Council's preparations for the 2022 Commonwealth Games, a sum of £6m has been set aside to create a Commonwealth Games Community Fund. The Community fund is designed to ensure that BCC maximises the benefits of hosting the Commonwealth Games for its residents, through enabling all communities of the city to play their part in celebrating the Games and realising the legacy opportunities that are available. The £6m fund has been broken down into these programmes which we expect to be able to report on during the next year:
- Creative City (previously referred to as Creative Communities): being delivered by the Olympic Committee this grants programme will launch to communities on 27 May with submissions for round 1 of the funding due in by 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021.
  - Celebrating Communities: The scheme went live in March with submissions for round 1 of the funding due in by 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021.

- Stronger Communities, Physical Activity & Learning Programme: these programme areas are all in the final stages of development and due to come online by July 2021.

4.12.4 The B2022 Organising Committee have agreed to a collaborative approach to volunteering during games time which meets the needs of both the Organising Committee and City Council. The application process for volunteering roles is not open until June 2021 and will likely be open to the end of the calendar year, with roles being offered through to end of March 2022.

## 5 State of the City Framework

5.1 The 'State of the City' framework includes performance indicators that are outside the council's direct control but influence (and are influenced by) our work and the work of our partners. The indicator set is found in Appendix 3. A summary narrative for each Council Plan outcome is set out below.

### 5.2 Outcome 1: Birmingham is an entrepreneurial city to learn, work and invest in

5.2.1 The past year has been extremely challenging economically for the city, with the pandemic severely impacting upon the city's economy. We have reported the detail of the impact to Cabinet regularly, and our work on recovering is now stepping up significantly. A framework for recovery has been developed with partners and linking through to the work of the City Board. Our work includes the creation of an economic recovery plan, accompanied by an employment taskforce with sub-groups focusing on young people and adults.

5.2.2 Our Business Growth and Property Investment programmes have continued throughout, particularly to support SMEs who have lost income. The number of active SMEs in the city increased by 4.0% (1,745) in 2020 compared to the previous year and we have a healthy pipeline of applications for the programmes.

### 5.3 Outcome 2: Birmingham is an aspirational city to grow up in

5.3.1 Covid-19 has had an impact this year on our ability to collect data and report on it. Nonetheless there are a number of areas where the City has performed well and where we have demonstrated continuous improvement.

5.3.2 Birmingham continues to perform well on educational attainment measures compared to its neighbours and nationally. This year's results however should not be compared with previous years as, due to the pandemic, the summer exam series was cancelled, and pupils were awarded either a centre assessment grade or a calculated grade using a model developed by Ofqual.

5.3.3 Our GSCE attainment 8 score was in line with the national average and just 1% lower than the regional average. Fewer of our young people took the subjects that make up the EBAC (combining English, Maths, Science, Languages and , Humanities subjects) and as such our scores were lower than regional and national averages.

- 5.3.4 The data shows that children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) in Birmingham are less likely than those nationally to achieve the Attainment 8 measure at KS4. From 2017 to 2019 the gap between Birmingham and England as a whole narrowed slightly for children with SEN support, but grew for children with Education & Healthcare Plans/statements. Birmingham remains in the third quartile for both groups. However, children with SEN in Birmingham are more likely to achieve Attainment 8 than in statistical neighbouring authorities.
- 5.3.5 There has been a considerable increase in completed Personal Education Plans (PEP) this year with Virtual Schools and Birmingham Children's Trust working closely to continue the improvement.
- 5.3.6 Birmingham City Council admission teams and its Virtual School are co-producing guidance to strengthen advice, guidance and practice around school admissions for children in care. The Virtual School has developed guidance and flow charts for a range of stakeholders around actions for children in care with SEN who are moving care placement to ensure they are not disadvantaged by this change in their education. Next term we start our new school visits to discuss best practice, will be running designated teacher network meetings and publishing a designated teacher practice handbook.
- 5.3.7 All pupils complete their views as part of their termly review of their education plan. The Virtual School is developing the use of Squiddle to greater strengthen pupil voice in real time. It is also an area for service development over the next three years to strengthen pupil advocacy and consultation.
- 5.3.8 Birmingham City Council currently deliver and offer a three-year training programme for all educational settings to become 'Trauma Informed Attachment Aware' Education Settings. We have an accreditation scheme for schools and an annual awards event.

#### 5.4 Outcome 3: Birmingham is a fulfilling place to age well in

- 5.4.1 Please note that all indicators that fall within this category are either incorporated into the 'Vital Signs' indicator set or are measured through other Outcomes in this 'State of the City' indicator set.

#### 5.5 Outcome 4: Birmingham is a great place to live in

- 5.5.1 This year has been very difficult for the city's residents in numerous ways. Our focus and that of our partners has been to support our residents, particularly those who are most vulnerable, throughout. A strong success has been the reduction in the number of rough sleepers across the city, which now stands at 17. The lockdown environment and the additional resources have positively impacted the level of people sleeping rough across the whole year. Birmingham City Council's count is the highest percentage reduction of any of the Core Cities so far. Maintaining the reduction and further reducing the rough sleeping figure will be challenging and subject to a wider economic and social factor.

- 5.5.2 However, the pandemic has exposed the nature and severity of structural inequalities nationally and that situation is reflected in Birmingham as well. We can see that the unemployment gap between the areas with highest and lowest employment in the city stands at 12.8%, with unemployment in the worst affected wards at 17.7%. The wage gap between those who live in the city and those who work in the city has also risen by £917 (28%) to £4,149. The council has placed tackling structural inequalities at the core of our mission and Cabinet has set out numerous commitments on this agenda in the Everybody's Battle, Everybody's business paper that was approved in late 2020.
- 5.5.3 The delivery of homes, and particularly affordable homes, is becoming increasingly critical to Birmingham as our population continues to grow. Latest information shows that over the ten years up to the end of March 2020, 22,524 new homes have been completed, exceeding the target of 19,800. We are behind where we want to be on affordable homes, due to factors such as viability and the physical limitations of the sites available. Where this has occurred on private developments, the developer has made financial contributions for off-site affordable housing to be delivered by registered providers of social housing. The availability of sites is an issue and one which the Council will work closely through Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust (BMHT) and other registered providers to identify suitable sites for development.
- 5.5.4 Despite a challenging year for housebuilders the Council has delivered 151 new homes through BMHT with a number of large developments due to start on site in 21/22 providing much needed social rented family homes.
- 5.6 Outcome 5: Commonwealth Games
- 5.6.1 *Please see Commonwealth Games section*
- 5.7 Outcome 6: Birmingham is a city that takes a leading role in tackling climate change
- 5.7.1 To reduce carbon emissions and address the detrimental impact of climate change on our environment is a priority for the city, with many public, private and community organisations contributing to this agenda. The Council's Route to Zero Action Plan - Call to Action, was agreed in January; this focuses on the priority actions that will enable us to scale up existing successful projects and to deliver the largest impact in reducing carbon emissions. The priority areas identified are: new build housing, housing retrofit, transport, EV charging, waste, energy and the natural environment.
- 5.7.2 Latest information available, for 2018, shows that there was a 36.5kt reduction in annual CO2 emissions when compared to 2017 giving a total reduction from 2005 levels of 39.2%. This compares favourably to the UK average of 35% and the West Midlands average of 30%. We expect information for 2019 to be available in September 2021 and look forward to reporting continued progress.
- 5.7.3 We are also prioritising the reduction of levels of nitrogen dioxide within the city, which we know can have a detrimental impact on our health, with the objective to

bring levels within legal limits within the shortest possible time. The Clean Air Zone (CAZ) will have a major impact on city centre levels and activity on this has been reported earlier. We have already made significant progress, with a reduction in locations above the legal limit within the CAZ boundary reduced from 30 in 2016 to 19 in 2019. Clearly the pandemic, and the lockdown restrictions introduced as a result, will have had an effect on air quality this year which makes an accurate assessment of the impact of our activity difficult to measure. There is valuable learning to be had from this experience as we go forward and we remain firmly committed to our objective.

## **6 Next Steps**

- 6.1 This report serves as the basis for discussions of performance with Overview and Scrutiny.
- 6.2 The next quarterly performance report will be presented to Cabinet in September 2021.

## **7 Consultation**

- 7.1 None required.

## **8 Risk Management**

- 8.1 The Council has an established approach to risk management which is set out in the Strategic Risk Register. Strategic and operational risks will be reviewed in light of this report.

## **9 Compliance Issues:**

### **9.1 How are the recommended decisions consistent with the City Council's priorities, plans and strategies?**

- 9.1.1 There are no specific recommended decisions included within this report. However, the methodology used for reporting performance are consistent with the City Council's priorities, plans and strategies, supporting the Council's stated commitment to improvement.

### **9.2 Legal Implications**

- 9.2.1 None

### **9.3 Financial Implications**

- 9.3.1 Implications set out in Medium Term Financial Plan

### **9.4 Procurement Implications (if required)**

- 9.4.1 None

### **9.5 Human Resources Implications (if required)**

- 9.5.1 None

## **9.6 Public Sector Equality Duty**

- 9.6.1 There are no additional Equality Duty or Equality Analysis issues as a result of this report.

## **10 Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Detailed report of KPIs against ‘Vital Signs’ Key Performance Indicator Set.

Appendix 2 – Detailed report of KPIs against ‘Commonwealth Games’ Key Performance Indicator Set.

Appendix 3 – Detailed report of State of the City indicator set.