

Birmingham City Council

Report to Cabinet

16 March 2021



Subject: **BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS AGAINST DELIVERY PLAN DURING Q3 2020-21**

Report of: **THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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, state which appendix is exempt, and 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 3 of FY 2020-21 (Oct-Dec 2020) 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.

- 1.3 The report comprises of an overarching narrative for each portfolio, which describes what activities have been undertaken during the quarter. It highlights key achievements, explains where challenges have arisen or deviations from the plan have been required, and what steps are being taken to bring performance back on track where necessary.
- 1.4 Attached to the report is an appendix that details the specific KPIs for each portfolio along with further detail in commentary to set the context where relevant.
- 1.5 The Covid-19 pandemic has fundamentally changed the context in which the Council operates. In most, if not all cases, the pre-pandemic positions and benchmarks do not make for accurate or relevant comparators for evaluating performance during the third quarter. Having explored how this issue has been handled elsewhere and having taken external advice on the most suitable way to present performance information in its proper context, the decision has been taken to use Q2 2020-21 (Jul-Sep 2020) performance as the default baseline comparator for Q3. Further work will be undertaken to re-establish appropriate baselines and benchmarks for future reports.
- 1.6 Additionally, the Covid-19 pandemic has continued to significantly impact upon our performance and the Council's ability to report performance in numerous ways. Where relevant these are explained in the portfolio overviews and/or the additional detail for each KPI.

2 Background

- 2.1 On 10 November 2020 Cabinet approved the Council's two-year Delivery Plan. This plan detailed the overall policy direction of the Council, in line with the six Outcomes set out in the Council Plan, 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 will be reported quarterly to Cabinet
 - Delivery and legacy of the **Commonwealth Games, which will be 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 and on which the Council will work with our partners to address; this annual report will be presented after the end of each financial year
- 2.2 We are pursuing these ambitions against an increasingly complex public service landscape with significant social, fiscal, and political challenges. This includes increasing demand for vital services; changes to citizens' needs and expectations; diminishing resources; the ongoing climate emergency; an uncertain national

political picture, complicated by Brexit; and, the unprecedented Coronavirus pandemic.

- 2.3 The impact of the pandemic has exposed and amplified inequalities faced by too many communities across the country, revealing issues that have been hidden in plain sight for too long.
- 2.4 The Delivery Plan sets out a collective view of the city, where it can and should be and the role of the Council in helping to make that happen. The six outcomes are at the centre of the longer-term approach, and in understanding the drivers of achieving these outcomes we can introduce a framework to address and understand the root causes. At its heart, this is about tackling inequality so all of Birmingham's residents and communities have the opportunity to live a good life.
- 2.5 Whilst doing this work to envision our longer-term approach, we also need to ensure we are delivering on step change improvements and critical priorities we have already committed to, such as ensuring the city is ready for and benefits from the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games and supporting the city to recover from the Coronavirus.
- 2.6 The Delivery Plan provides a framework for developing and creating a sustainable financial strategy for the medium-term. The performance component provides ongoing transparency and accountability to Cabinet on progress against our commitments as part of a wider framework to drive improvements in service delivery and outcomes for residents and businesses in the city.

3 PORTFOLIO OVERVIEWS

- 3.1 This section sets out an overview for each Cabinet Member portfolio of what activity has taken place over the quarter, the key achievements, challenges and adaptation to the original plan, and, where relevant, what work is being undertaken to bring performance back on track.

3.2 Leader's Portfolio

- 3.3 The Covid-19 pandemic has continued to have a significant impact on Birmingham's economy and businesses during this quarter and has required an ongoing response across the Council to changing restrictions. Our Inclusive Growth Directorate has maintained co-ordinated support to businesses whilst also progressing plans for the longer-term economic recovery of the city. Consultation on the draft Economic Recovery Strategy took place during this quarter and responses are now being considered before the final strategy is reported to Cabinet in March.
- 3.4 We have continued with our efforts to drive development and stimulate economic growth across the city through projects including the Urban Centres Framework where work to establish individual projects that could accelerate the framework to support recovery has taken place. Further detailed plans are being developed on individual centres in line with established work programmes including the Perry Barr masterplan. We have also received approval for the outline business case and contract award on Birmingham Smithfield, we have concluded our formal

consultation on the East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy and started the development of the initial delivery plan, we have awarded £10m discretionary grant fund as part of the Business Growth Programme and a consultant team comprising urban design, transport planning and viability/development consultancy expertise has now been instructed to work on the Smethwick to Birmingham Corridor Development Framework.

- 3.5 We are supporting the preparation for the Commonwealth Games and the continuing regeneration of the Perry Barr area. Further work on a number of critical infrastructure projects has been completed during this quarter including preparatory work for the National Express Bus Depot and for the A34 Highways Scheme (Perry Barr Flyover). We have also submitted and received approval from Government for the Full Business Case for the Commonwealth Games Trade, Tourism and Investment (TTI) programme, a three-year programme delivered by the West Midlands Growth Company that will promote 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.
- 3.6 We have completed the design of Our Future City Plan, the ambitious Birmingham vision to support a green, liveable and globally leading city that responds to changing economic, social and environmental conditions. The Plan was launched on 26 January which kicked off an 8-week consultation period to seek feedback from a wide spectrum of voices to ensure all of Birmingham's communities are shaping the city together. We have also launched the consultation on the Birmingham Design Guide which will support the city's transition into a zero-carbon environment through the creation of healthy, high-quality people focused places across Birmingham.
- 3.7 The total Cumulative Capital Receipts generated up to the end of Q3 totalled £14.65m. This is significantly behind our original target and is due to the slippage of our largest forecast disposal (Peddimore £23m). Completion of this disposal has been frustrated due to a small number of formal planning objections relating to the stopping up and highways issues. Officers are working closely with all parties to overcome the objections or work around them, and negotiations are ongoing. If a resolution can be found there may be a possibility to bring this case back into 20/21, otherwise it will complete in the next financial year.
- 3.8 Continuous review of the Council portfolio will help to bring forward extra land for housing development and commercial opportunities. During this quarter, 91 rental and 10 rental sales units have been handed over. The focus this quarter for the city's housing programme has been on tender acceptance reports, new contracts, feasibility and design work on future programme pipeline as well as ongoing risk management on sites in relation to Covid-19 and Brexit with the impact on imported materials and labour chains. The prognosis for 2021/22 is good based on the progress made to bring forward start on sites for major projects including Yardley Brook, Monmouth Road, Farnborough Road and the Bromford Estate.
- 3.9 Preparations are being made for a report to Cabinet in April 2021 to socialise the New Ways of Working initiative which will include recommendations for a reduction

in the number of workstations provided and therefore the number of office buildings operated. The lessons learnt from working at home since late March 2020 in response to Covid-19 are being incorporated into this programme.

- 3.10 In early 2021 operational services will be engaged to ascertain their future property requirements and this, combined with the development of the Corporate Landlord initiative, will enable a thorough review of the estate to ensure the effective utilisation of all property assets.
- 3.11 The Neighbourhoods Directorate has contributed to many of the above key priorities including Smithfield Development, Commonwealth Games preparation, the city's Housing Programme, the Trade, Tourism and Investment (TTI) 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 eight Marshals working in our Parks who have been deployed to give advice and hand out face coverings to help reduce the spread of Coronavirus.
- 3.12 Milestones and KPIs under this portfolio for Neighbourhoods are generally on track although some risks to achievement of targets have been identified. These are:
- A new street trading policy, agreed by Council, is now subject to judicial review by traders. The judicial review is being defended
 - The food inspection programme is currently suspended by the Food Standards Agency and, subject to how the programme is reintroduced by the UK Government, achievement could be at risk
 - The partnership bid to transform Erdington High Street was unsuccessful, and we remain in dialogue with MHCLG over proposals
- 3.13 Covid-19 has had a huge impact on our Communications Team who have been a central plank of the Council's response to the pandemic. Their focus this quarter has continued to be on those key messages linked to Covid-19 to keep our residents and staff informed. Demands have been such that they are unable to report on the performance measures linked to corporate campaigns and social media this quarter however progress against these performance measures will be reported on at the end of year.
- 3.14 A refreshed Medium-Term Financial Plan went to Cabinet in November 2020 which provided an update on the Council's medium-term financial position. This sought to agree budget measures to achieve a balanced budget for 2020/21 and set out financial contingencies that could be utilised should there be further budgetary pressures from Covid-19. Finance and Governance Directorate have concentrated since then on developing the draft Financial Plan 2021 – 2025, an updated position on the MTFP refresh report. This Financial Plan provides solutions for closing the identified gap, provides an update on funding as a result of the Local Government

Provisional Settlement and updates on pressures and savings non-delivery following the budget challenge sessions held with each Directorate.

3.15 Deputy Leader's Portfolio

- 3.16 Over the past quarter, the Covid-19 response has continued to be at the forefront of the work across the Digital and Customer Services. Despite increasing Covid-19 cases during this period, including amongst staff, overall absence levels have remained lower than last year. In addition, most of the KPIs for the directorate have been delivered upon with the few exceptions, detailed below.
- 3.17 Amongst the economic impact of Covid-19, there have been increases in the number of new claims and changes made to Housing Benefit over the past quarter. The Benefits Service have continued to process these within the required target although with increased volumes and additional work supporting Test and Trace isolation payments and Local Welfare Provision claims there has been some increase in the time taken to do so.
- 3.18 The stay of possession proceedings against tenants which started on 27 March 2020 has been extended until 21 Feb 2021 following the third national lockdown. The Rent Service continue to contact tenants arranging sustainable payments where appropriate and offering vital support and assistance during these challenging times. At the end of December rent collection was still exceeding target.
- 3.19 Under the current round of lockdown business grants, we have received high volumes and in mid-January there were over 16,000 applications for support of which over 9,000 had been assessed. Payments of over £15.1 million (as at 27 January 2021) have now been made, with a further £3.3 million awaiting approval in the next batch meaning over 8,000 businesses will have received support.
- 3.20 The process of making payments to business has led to a considerable improvement in the quality of information held around business across Birmingham. Stronger links and understanding have also been developed with Birmingham Chambers of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses. All of this will support recovery activity and ongoing service delivery.
- 3.21 The contact centre remains home based and operating very well; in December we managed to answer over 96.7% of calls (against a target on 90%). The contact centre has continued to play a major role in contacting citizens who have been requested to shield. Following on from the 40,000 outbound calls carried out from end of March to end of July 2020, we have contacted a further 3,000 citizens since the November lockdown and this outbound continues as more citizens are added to the shielding list. As these calls are to citizens shielding, we are checking their requirements and organising food parcels and any other assistance where appropriate. Adjustments have been made in Q3 to the measurement and capture of customer satisfaction levels.
- 3.22 The emergency response hub that was set up to deal with Covid-19 related enquiries from those citizens who required assistance is still operational. The Covid-19 whistle blowing reporting via phone and online remains in place – to date we

have received 3,585 reports of non-compliance, all of which are passed to Environmental Health to follow up and act as appropriate.

- 3.23 We continue to receive high call volumes in relation to the £500 isolation grant and the Covid-19 business grants. We have worked in conjunction with Public Health colleagues and set up Case Tracing outbound which was set up in a tight timeframe and involved recruitment of 14 staff. Training took place in early January and went live on 11 January.
- 3.24 In responding to the Council's business needs during lockdown, the Corporate Mail Centre has provided inbound scanning and digital distribution of post which has been rolled out across the Council with 60% of inbound mail collected, sorted, opened and digitised on day of receipt in December. Cheques are now also processed on entry point into the Council rather than being transferred on for processing. In addition, staff have a solution where outbound correspondence can be printed and sent out directly from the centre with 1,491 staff so far utilising this. The reduction in the need to collect and distribute post to offices has aided removal of two cars from the courier fleet. Press to post also improves compliance with posting requirements which can both speed delivery and utilise the lower postal charges available through our mail agreement.
- 3.25 The ICT Hub continues to support delivery of face to face IT fixes and distribution of equipment with 1,313 visits during the third quarter to its base in Lancaster Circus. An initiative is underway to collect inactive desktops and landline telephones to reduce costs. Lancaster Circus was completed in December with over 1,500 telephones and 300 desktops collected.
- 3.26 Alongside the Covid-19 response and everyday activity, progress has been made in developing new areas of work as outlined in the Council's Delivery Plan. In support of work around the Exempt Accommodation Strategy, the Benefits service are progressing with reviews of SEA Landlords; however, the other elements of the project within various other areas of the Council have been delayed due to recruitment and the pandemic.
- 3.27 Underpinning the drive to improve the Council's customer focus, the Customer Access Strategy discovery phase has been completed and, during quarter four, we will be completing analysis and developing content for a customer service strategy. Brum account phase 3 developments have been on hold with staff diverted to Covid-19 response work but the programme has now been reviewed and is scheduled to restart with a Full Business Case being developed to progress this work.
- 3.28 The Complaints Implementation project is now live and we are currently working on reviewing processes, recording and reporting and drafting the Members Protocol to improve how enquiries and concerns are dealt with. It is expected that initially there will be an increase in overall volumes of complaints being recorded as a more consistent approach is taken. Additional staff will be deployed to support complaints in quarter four based in individual directorates. The project is also looking at how performance can be benchmarked and understood with further indicators looking at

complaints per customer and details around Ombudsman complaints also being considered which will be reported in quarter four.

- 3.29 Business Improvement work has continued to look for ways of more efficient delivery working to put in place performance dashboards for service areas; reviewing the records retention policy and seeking to reduce the need for physical archiving of documents unless necessary. There has also been a focus on seeking to use more automation and wider use of robotic processing with 20 areas identified for initial consideration. The programme has also identified savings that can be made from nonessential expenditure. Project Savings to date are circa £111,201 (19/20 20/21) on Stationery, Paper, Recycling of Access to Work equipment and document storage with Iron Mountain.
- 3.30 In addition, Robotic Processing has been established in four key areas in revenues including checking direct debit errors and credits on accounts.
- 3.31 The Applications Platform Modernisation programme has progressed with the setup of new hardware (Nutanix) in our existing data centres being completed as of October 2020 and application migrations have commenced onto the Council's new hardware within our existing data centres from October 2020 with 80 applications migrated to date. The major programme milestone of the operational sign off for our new data centres, with new hardware and new networking, was signed off in January 2021. Application migration to the new data centres is now underway to line up with our contractual end dates in the three existing Capita Data Centres of June 2021, September 2021 and March 2022. This will support delivery of planned savings and service improvements arising from bringing the IT Service in-house. Work has progressed around ensuring Cyber Security arrangements for the organisation and a report was taken to Cabinet in February 2021 outlining the approach.
- 3.32 Contract arrangements have been progressed for the new contract for Enforcement agents and delivery of a new bulk printing contract for the Council. The Enforcement agent tender evaluation has been completed and the contract award is being progressed. By splitting the work across three different firms it has been possible to ensure greater business continuity and competition along with having firms with different characteristics which will help ensure an improved service.
- 3.33 Despite the planned phased return to offices being delayed, all technology is now rolled out and operational in Woodcock Street to support hybrid meetings, in line with the Council's New Ways of Working programme. Requirements for Council meetings have been understood and the project is working with Scrutiny Services to complete detailed requirements and consider suitable technologies to support this.
- 3.34 Within Partnerships, Insight and Prevention Directorate, the Business Improvement and Change service redesign to deliver a new service operating model that provides a flexible, integrated offer to the organisation for policy, partnerships, insight, change and performance, has now been completed and the new structure is now in place.

A significant number of posts remain unfilled and action will be taken to recruit to these posts during the next quarter.

- 3.35 The team has continued its work on the development and implementation of the new Delivery Plan for the Council, including a new performance management framework, and this was approved by Cabinet in November 2020. Action is now underway to ensure appropriate governance and performance management structures are in place to support and monitor delivery.

3.36 Children's Wellbeing Portfolio

- 3.37 The Children's Trust continues to strive to deliver all of its services to the city's most vulnerable children and families, including maintaining high levels of face-to-face contact with vulnerable children and families. The Trust continues its system leader role, supporting and galvanising the wider children's partnership to ensure a strong multi-agency response is in place in the community, and that partners maintain home visits to our most vulnerable.
- 3.38 Performance against the fifteen contractual KPIs has remained strong throughout the year. In both November and December, ten of the fifteen KPIs were at or better than target, four within tolerance, and one outside. In quarter 3 the KPI outside tolerance related to adoptions and was driven by activity in the family courts rather than something in the control of the Trust. In December the KPI relating to % of re-referrals made to Children's Social Care within 12 months was 25% against a tolerance of between 22-24%. We are analysing all these referrals so we better understand, for those children being re-referred for the same reason, why past help and support may not have worked and/or whether there was more that others could have done. In our system leadership role, we are seeking to ensure that partner agencies continue to support families during the pandemic and to understand what other resources are available to support children/young people and their families. Due to the impact of the pandemic we may continue to see a rise in re-referrals as support services contract or begin to have long waiting lists.
- 3.39 Placement stability for children in our care is better than it has ever been; only 2% of our children in care experienced three or more placements in a year, compared with the national and statistical neighbour average of 10%. This is testament to the work of our social workers and the commitment of our foster carers.
- 3.40 The Trust is retaining its approach to supporting staff to carry out their work face-to-face, safely. We have experienced some difficult outbreaks in our short breaks care homes, but these have been managed well. We have had to suspend much face-to-face contact/family time for children in care, due to outbreaks in our contact centres. We are working on recovery plans to resume.
- 3.41 The locality-based Early Help offer has been maintained and will need once again to step up in this latest lockdown. Social work support to schools has increased, with Trust managers linked to schools for advice and support across the city.
- 3.42 A cohort of new Early Help workers is starting work, further bolstering the offer to families in need, and the SEMH Pathfinder (a schools-based family support service

developed in and funded by the Trust in partnership with some schools) has extended its reach with some early success in Northfield. The initial allocation has targeted key localities where data suggests need is greatest.

- 3.43 We have maintained a continued focus on children who are being both criminally and sexually exploited and those missing from home and care via the work of the contextual safeguarding hub, EMPOWER U. A performance framework is now in place in order to monitor demand and impact. As predicted within the delivery plan, through increased awareness raising and reporting, we are seeing an increase in referrals for children criminally exploited; we will be increasing our focus on awareness raising of sexual exploitation in 2021. Additional resources from West Midlands Police have been agreed for 2021 which will result in improved intelligence and investigation outcomes for perpetrators.
- 3.44 The work on corporate parenting continues and, over the Christmas period, the team organised the donation and delivery of gifts for over 10,000 children.
- 3.45 Throughout the pandemic we have maintained oversight of the quality of practice through practice evaluation, audit, practice forums, learning webinars and surveys of staff and with families. We have introduced additional data collection to ensure that we understand school attendance, visiting quality and service demand.
- 3.46 The Trust is experiencing greater pressure now than at any point in the pandemic: demand at the front door, staff vacancies and rising sickness all pose a significant risk and, at the time of writing, leaders are developing additional contingency plans for the potential redeployment of staff to front-line practice. We are also concerned about staff morale and wellbeing, not least in the context of this much more virulent variant of the Coronavirus. It is very important therefore that the vaccination programme for front-line staff in the Trust is underway and we are working hard to get everyone vaccinated who is in a 'critical worker' role. Trust staff and managers have worked tirelessly over the last 10 months to keep as many children and families as possible safeguarded and supported during the pandemic.

Please note: Owing to a technical reporting issue, indicators ESC05-08 are listed in Appendix 1 under the Education, Skills and Culture portfolio. They will be moved to their correct place within the Children's Wellbeing portfolio in future.

3.47 Education, Skills and Culture Portfolio

- 3.48 With each of the Education and Skills indicators we have sought to provide some context of that area of work. It is pleasing that in all bar two Vital Signs measures we are within tolerance but we recognise there is much more work to do provide the overall story. We will confirm improved summary information at the next return date and agree an improved system for collection within the new line management arrangements.
- 3.49 The two milestones relating to the Birmingham Museum Store Options Appraisal and cultural compact established have progressed. Further feasibility work for the former is required.

3.50 Finance and Resources Portfolio

- 3.51 Covid-19 has continued to impact on the work of HR during this quarter where progress on key initiatives has had to be balanced against the need to respond to the challenges and the demands it presents. There has been ongoing delivery of Manager Bulletins and Covid-19 intranet content for managers and employees. This is aimed at supporting the workforce to continue to provide key services, whilst ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of Council employees, and support to strategic cells. Despite this there are still significant achievements to report.
- 3.52 The existing Workforce Strategy has been reviewed in the context of the new Delivery Plan. Workforce planning is embedded in the Directorate Business Planning process and discussions within directorate management teams and between HR and directorates are now more regular. To assist planning activity, particularly on equality and diversity related matters, there has been a significant focus on reducing the data gap during this quarter with communications to encourage the provision of information being sent to circa 5000 employees. Work has started on a HR Target Operating Model (TOM) and a stock-take will be undertaken to ensure that this is aligned with the Workforce Strategy and supports the delivery of the new organisational operating model.
- 3.53 We are already seeing more genuine assessment of need coming out of the workforce planning activity, with greater levels of coordination and consistency. Good examples of working with business areas to understand this need has aided the design of a training programme which includes the mandatory e-learning modules and the new Future Leader Development programme, for which dates are now available. We will continue to drive workforce planning discussions with our key customers and will seek to deepen the conversations on succession planning and talent management linked to our annual appraisal process.
- 3.54 Other activity during this quarter includes progress on our health and safety monitoring where responses to our audit template distributed in November, will be used to direct a number of Safety Adviser led verification audits. We are beginning to see more interest in apprenticeship opportunities, and we have successfully commenced a range of new programmes linking back to the apprenticeship framework, which have landed well in the business. We have also co-created, in partnership with Trade Unions, the Job Evaluation Principles document which was agreed at CLT on 18 January.
- 3.55 We have continued to develop our relationship with Trade Unions, working closely with them on several projects, and are seeing this have a positive impact on preventing disputes and on case resolution.
- 3.56 There has been slippage in the development of the Industrial Relations (IR) Framework. In the case of the IR Framework, we are working on a much broader Employee Relations Framework which will give the strategic context to the IR Framework. HR TOM work should secure additional resource to ensure delivery to timescale. On the 1B HR element of the system the project team have worked hard

to address the areas of concern which prevented exit from the design phase. The HR processes have now been signed off, allowing progress to the next phase.

- 3.57 Finance and Governance have continued to drive forward their Delivery Plan priorities during this quarter. On the priority to improve financial management we have introduced the Finance Target Operating Model (TOM) Programme which amalgamates all the Finance transformational change plans: Finance Improvement Programme, Delivery Plan, Target Operating Model and ERP business change. This reduces the amount of duplication, streamlines activities and enables greater focus on areas that matter. We are bringing in a delivery partner for capacity and capability and there is new governance in place with CIPFA as a key stakeholder. We will be introducing quarterly self-assessments from Q1 of 2021-22 running up to spring 2022 when we are planning for a further CIPFA financial management assessment with an improved rating.
- 3.58 The Accounts were signed off on 08 January by our external auditors and we have just had the revised Audit Findings Report. The Audit Opinion is unqualified for the Statement of Accounts. We are also responding to the external audit Value for Money (VFM) assessment and have developed an approach to address the two identified weaknesses to ensure the development of more robust business cases to support improved information for Members.
- 3.59 To strengthen financial management and accountability, accountability letters were introduced in 2020/21 and have been distributed to Directors and Assistant Directors, meeting the milestone set.
- 3.60 We have also built on the social value work by developing a programme of work designed to bring about the enhancements required to maximise the outcomes of social value by:
- Improving the capability of Council Officers and external partners
 - Creatively enhancing the outcomes and targeting of activities to those most in need
 - Ensuring consistent high-quality and high-volume delivery by improving our systems
 - Transparently publishing the results of the performance of the Council and its contractors to manage and improve performance.
- 3.61 This has been approved by CLT and will be rolled out over the next 12 months. Directorate leads have been nominated and their first meeting took place in January. 147 staff have already been trained and sessions are being arranged for a further 44 staff.
- 3.62 We are targeting Social Value through specifying outcomes; applying evaluation criteria that reflect the volumes committed in the action plan; weighting wards according to deprivation; and, working with successful tenderers to put them in contact with community organisations to help them deliver on their commitments to achieve Council priorities. 496 businesses have now been accredited to the

Birmingham Business Charter for Social Responsibility, the mechanism through which the Council implements its Social Value policy.

3.63 KPIs have been incorporated into the Corporate Procurement Service Business Plan to monitor achievements for financial years 20/21 and 21/22. Achievements from contracts/developments are significant – those from the period from the start of the contracts to April 2020 are given below:

- Number of weeks of local (30 miles) apprenticeship created relating to this project / contract: 6,965 weeks
- Number of weeks of local (30 miles) work placements created relating to this project / contract: 3,429 weeks
- Amount of local (30 miles) spend: £261,548,630
- Amount of Social Enterprise spend: £5,458,289
- Hours of paid voluntary time given to local school and charities: 38,417
- Amount of money raised and/or donated to local charities: £337,745

3.64 During this quarter our Communications Team have continued to support senior members and officers engage with staff through multiple media channels including Yammer sessions. Since lockdown began the team have organised 52 Yam Jams, including 34 with the Director of Public Health, and there has been a significant increase in Yammer users. Membership of the Yam Jam 'Ask me anything' Yammer group has risen from 459 at the start of lockdown to 1,126, whilst Yammer users council-wide have risen from 5,600 to 7,600. 34 people on average post messages around each Yam Jam, whilst 300-500 people usually view a typical post.

3.65 Health and Social Care Portfolio

3.66 Adult Social Care delivery during this quarter has focused on supporting vulnerable citizens through the Covid-19 pandemic. The social work team have been working with our most vulnerable citizens, ensuring risks are managed and regular contact is maintained. We have undertaken welfare calls to all citizens known to Adult Social Care to provide reassurance and identify if any further signposting or assistance is required. We have continued to work with partners to deliver enhanced support to care homes including clinical support, training, infection control support, financial support, and support in accessing PPE and testing. The effect of the pandemic has resulted in a slight increase in the number of long-term admissions to care homes (reported a quarter in arrears).

3.67 We are also working with BVSC and our Neighbourhood Networks to help develop the community response to the pandemic. This includes volunteering support and support from partner leads on key issues such as carer, care homes, homelessness, domestic abuse, mental health, food assistance and faith group support activity.

3.68 We know that longer stays in hospital can lead to worse health outcomes and can increase long-term care needs for older people. This is the driver for our Discharge to Assess model which we have continued to embed with system partners during

this quarter. This multidisciplinary approach supports discharges from hospital as soon as citizens are medically fit. In order to maintain the flow in the system we have also been working with partners to reduce length of stay in short term beds and increase the number of referrals into the Early Intervention Community Team.

- 3.69 Our Integrated Transitions Team have mostly been engaging with the young people we support virtually during this time but, when it has been possible, we have also met them outside for a walk in the park or at a café. Since our launch in September, we have received around 115 connection requests, which have led to us working with 76 young people so far. We are co-producing our service with the young people we aim to support and we will be monitoring performance through the introduction of new measures this quarter that focus on the Integrated Transition Team proof-of-concept that works with young people who will have ongoing care needs as adults.
- 3.70 Our performance over this quarter has been mixed and continues to be affected by the demands of the coronavirus pandemic. We have continued to increase the proportion of people who receive their care through a direct payment, albeit at a slower rate due to the emergency measures and the resulting lack of community opportunities. We have started to improve our performance on the client reviews measure, despite having to redirect our social work staff towards our response to the outbreak, through additional duties such as welfare calls. Elsewhere, the proportion of clients receiving services from providers rated as silver or gold, and the proportion of individuals asked about their desired outcomes during safeguarding enquiries have remained above target. The number of people in Shared Lives placements has remained stable at 101, but the team is working to increase referrals.
- 3.71 Public Health have been another critical respondent to the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic and this has impacted on the progress of some of their projects this quarter. The Childhood Obesity Trailblazer is progressing slower than expected although all three workstreams are active and relevant partners engaged where appropriate. A dedicated 12-month Graduate role is being recruited as mitigation for the delay caused by the Covid-19 emergency response.
- 3.72 The milestones for the Health City Active Travel/Modal Shift Programme have had to be adjusted to reflect the need for the Public Health division to redeploy to respond to Covid-19. All social marketing insight has however been completed and a Marketing and Communications consultancy has been appointed to develop the campaigns. The campaigns are expected to go live for implementation in late February/early March to finish by 31 May. Work is now underway to procure an external evaluation partner to design and deliver the evaluation; we expect this partner to be appointed during February.
- 3.73 Covid-19 has also impacted on the delivery of health checks and other commissioned health services. Future work will be needed to evaluate and restart service provision. Work is however currently underway to tender for a sexual health needs assessment to inform the re-commissioning of services and understand local service needs.

- 3.74 Progress by Public Health on other key Delivery Plan areas includes the identification of chapters for the Director of Public Health report, due to be published in May, based on key areas of Covid-19 impact and informed by the results of the commissioned ethnographic research and case studies which have provided a rich in-depth understanding of the lived experience of Covid-19. The 'Creating a Healthy Food Strategy' for Birmingham was discussed at the Creating a Healthy Food City Forum and partners have volunteered to support the drafting process to ensure a robust document reflecting the shared vision of the food partners. A reducing infant mortality, multi-agency working group has been created who are currently developing an action plan which will incorporate any actions from the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Infant Mortality Inquiry once they are agreed. All work will feed into a strategy. A multi-agency commissioning group, to support the Healthy Child Programme, has also been developed to identify the best commissioning model and ensure that it will meet the needs of children and young people. Meetings are taking place regularly and the service specification is in development.
- 3.75 Neighbourhoods continues to support the Council's ongoing response to the pandemic, for example Wellbeing and Community Centres have continued to host food banks, welfare services and Local Testing Stations throughout.
- 3.76 The Directorate's wellbeing strategic review has been delayed due to the impact of Covid-19 and associated pressures on operational priorities; however, progress has been made to deliver a high-quality Basketball offer in Nechells.

3.77 Homes and Neighbourhoods Portfolio

- 3.78 The Council's Delivery Plan 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.
- 3.79 Alternative delivery models, compliant with Covid-19 requirements, has 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, for example 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.
- 3.80 The Directorate's community focus remains strong and a localisation action plan has been introduced as well as supporting the community recovery framework.
- 3.81 Overall, delivery against milestones and KPIs for Homes and Neighbourhoods is on track despite the many challenges as a result of the ongoing pandemic. Some 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
- The number of wards plans produced are being incentivised, for example Celebrating Communities fund
- Formal review of the digital autopsy service is delayed until spring 2021 due to Covid-19
- Move-on rate from temporary accommodation is impacted by Covid-19. Availability of alternative accommodation has reduced significantly, although rough sleepers continue to be accommodated
- Homelessness cases are increasing with a predicted rise once evictions recommence in 2021, and increases in domestic abuse, relationship breakdowns and Anti-Social Behaviour issues are expected

3.82 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.

3.83 We continue to work with the Private Rented Sector Providers to help meet the housing need as well as developing the sector to support tenants and landlords to ensure good standards and a viable housing option for citizens.

3.84 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.

3.85 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.

3.86 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 in the process of working up a bid with Registered Providers and other providers for funding that has been made available to all local authorities.

3.87 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.

3.88 Social Inclusion, Community Safety and Equalities Portfolio

- 3.89 The Council's commitment to embed equality in everything we do is a key theme running through the Delivery Plan. We must ensure we have an Equality and Cohesion service that can properly support and progress this commitment. Although there have been some delays in the redesign of the service, posts have now been advertised and we hope to have the new team in place by the end of March. The team will be focused on taking forward the Council's equality commitments and to progress priorities in the Delivery Plan. This includes the priority to involve and enable our communities to play an active role in civic society and put citizens' voice at the heart of decision making and build community cohesion, plans for which are currently being worked up. The future approach will be shaped by the results of the consultation on Everyone's Battle, Everyone's Business initiative which took place during this quarter.
- 3.90 We are on track with many of the recommendations from the Workforce Race Equity report: we have had successful discussions with trade unions over our approach to appraisals and secondments and have recently piloted our approach to rebuilding trust. By the end of Q4 we will have planned our approach to re-running the Workforce Race Equity Review which will give us an indication of whether our actions are starting to make a difference.
- 3.91 We are advancing our work to understand and overcome the impact of poverty in Birmingham. We have commenced the contract with the Poverty Truth Commission this quarter and the Public Health Inequalities team are working with the provider Thrive Together Birmingham to initiate phase 1 of the project - recruitment of testifying commissioners. The initial theme of exploration is lived experiences in relation to housing. The project is projected to run until the end 2022.
- 3.92 Due to COVID-19 in Quarter 1 and 2, our ability to assist citizens to maximise income from benefits/charitable sources has been affected under Covid-19, as face to face advice and information services have not been able to be delivered.
- 3.93 We have also progressed many of our community safety related activities during this quarter. We have introduced a Community Reference Group as part of developing our strategic approach to effective engagement with communities and partners, which will meet every 6 weeks. We have identified two areas of the city without representation and work has started to identify community leaders. A seasonal plan through the Local Partnership Delivery Groups is also being developed to introduce a partnership engagement response at a local level throughout 2021.
- 3.94 Our partnership approach also extends to our work on addressing hate crime and modern slavery. We now have a Hate Crime Partnership and Delivery Plan in place and have started work to improve reporting and raise awareness. We have introduced 42 Modern Slavery Champions and strengthened links within the WM Anti-Slavery networks to improve outcomes.

- 3.95 Our Public Space Protection Order Review is moving forward. Consultation with partners has concluded, legal input obtained and a final draft produced, pending approval from partners.
- 3.96 There is a planned redesign of Community Safety to enhance the delivery of these critical projects and services. Budget approval and confirmation is currently being sought.
- 3.97 Indicators were approved by Community Safety in December 2020. This enabled the service to consult with all other members of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP). It also provides a platform to align the future CSP performance framework with this, and thus ensure a focused city-wide approach towards community safety. Targets have been agreed, and benchmarking information is now being compiled to enable the first detailed reporting at Q4.

3.98 Street Scene and Parks portfolio

- 3.99 The Council's Delivery Plan 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.
- 3.100 Alternative delivery models, compliant with Covid-19 requirements, has 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. commencement of the Grounds Maintenance programme. 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.
- 3.101 Overall, delivery against milestones and KPIs for Street Scene and Parks are on track despite the many challenges being faced by front-line services as a result of the ongoing pandemic. Some risks to achievement exist, as outlined below:
- Work with communities and volunteers to improve the locality environment is on hold due to Covid-19, with community project funding being temporarily redirected; however, this work is expected to resume after the lifting of lockdown restrictions
 - The grounds maintenance target was impacted by Covid-19 but performance has recovered to 94% in Quarter 2 and 97% in Quarter 3. Reported missed collections are higher than the target, and this is usually due to access problems or vehicle breakdown. Missed collections are generally rectified within two days of being reported or take place before the end of the working week. 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
- 3.103 In terms of broader policy, Neighbourhoods continues to work with and support communities to improve the street scene environment.

3.104 Transport and Environment Portfolio

- 3.105 Managing business as usual activity within our Inclusive Growth Directorate has been extremely challenging during this quarter, however, the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has surprisingly also presented some opportunities to accelerate work in some areas. Reduced traffic levels during lockdown, for example, has enabled us to accelerate some programmes and activity including the processing of traffic management approvals across the network.
- 3.106 It has also presented challenges and has continued to impede progress on the Birmingham Transport Plan (BTP) where we have been unable to conclude the outstanding elements of the consultation which would allow the document to be finalised and taken forward to adoption. We have instead operated under the Emergency Birmingham Transport Plan and during this quarter the focus of activity has been on concluding the delivery of committed schemes in government funded programmes, commencing a review of schemes already in delivery and some early mobilisation following a successful bid to Tranche Two of the Active Travel Fund for approx. £4.5 million for delivery in 2021/22.
- 3.107 As we progress into recovery, there will be a need to transition into business as usual via the BTP and we have started work during this quarter on scoping the way forward ensuring that the Plan aligns with and supports other key programmes, specifically Route to Zero (R20) Action Plan, East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy and Our Future City Plan.
- 3.108 Work has continued on the Highway Maintenance and Management Services Private Finance Initiative project with options for procurement being developed and affordability scoped. Cabinet is being briefed on the commercial approach proposed and the parameters for a way forward.
- 3.109 The A38(M) Aston Expressway Tame Valley Viaduct project, one of the most critical highway assets on the Birmingham's road network, has also progressed during this quarter with the main strengthening works contract put out to tender in September and the procurement of the advance testing works completed in November 2020.
- 3.110 The recently developed Delivery Plan makes clear that whilst striving to increase the pace and scale of growth for those that need it the most, we must remain focused on delivering our climate change objectives. We have continued with the development of 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, and have identified seven key priority areas for action:
- New Build Housing
 - Housing Retrofit
 - Transport
 - Electric Vehicle Charging

- Waste
- Energy
- The Natural Environment

3.111 Under each priority we have identified projects which will deliver the largest reductions in carbon emissions over the next few years. The Action Plan was approved by Full Council on 12 January 2021. A number of projects are already underway, for example work is commencing on a Passivhaus trial to increase the standard of BMHT's new build housing, a number of funding bids have been submitted for retrofit projects, the implementation of the Birmingham Emergency Transport Plan has supported walking and cycling throughout the pandemic, work is underway on a waste strategy, we have entered the second phase of the BEIS decarbonisation of heat programme and the Future Parks Accelerator – Naturally Birmingham - has reached its midway point. We will continue working with partners and key stakeholders through the Route to Zero Task Force to deliver the Action Plan.

3.112 The new launch date of Birmingham's Clean Air Zone has now been agreed as 01 June 2021. This was confirmed on 08 October 2020, the same day on which the Council confirmed that it would open for applications the £35 million package of financial incentives that will be used to help businesses, Birmingham-licensed taxi drivers and low income workers in the Clean Air Zone prepare for the launch. The financial incentives are in addition to a package of exemptions that were made available earlier in the year. Two other significant milestones during this quarter were the installation of all 67 of the automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras that will be used to support the enforcement of the Clean Air Zone, and receipt of the core of the enforcement IT solution. Completion of these two milestones have enabled the Council to start systems testing from January 2021 through to April 2021.

3.113 The Clean Air Zone delivery programme incorporates a number of additional measures that support the ambition of improving air quality in the city and the Council's Route to Zero programme. During this quarter the delivery team completed contracts for the manufacture and operation of 20 hydrogen buses, which are scheduled for delivery around the middle of 2021.

3.114 Commonwealth Games

3.115 Good overall progress has been made in structuring the Commonwealth Games Programme to support delivery of BCC obligations as host city. The Programme is continuing its effort to establishing a firm basis of planning and integration of BCC activities for Games delivery in collaboration with relevant Directorates and externally with the partnership. Progress made on critical infrastructure projects (Alexander Stadium) and the constructive actions taken by BCC to improve its capability is recognised in the report by Infrastructure and Projects Authority following its Project Assessment Review of the Commonwealth Games during w/c 9th November.

3.116 The development of a BCC Legacy Plan & Evaluation Framework is progressing aligned with BCC's future investment and strategies. This work includes the drafting of a host city narrative and is themed around the mission pillars and workstreams – Community Fund, Institutional Legacy and Capital Legacy. These deliverables will aid the coordination of legacy activities in BCC's control and support wider Council priorities and ambitions for Birmingham, all supported by defined outcomes and KPIs/metrics. In conjunction with BCC Legacy activities, the Programme is also collaborating with partners on the region wide/cross partner Legacy Plan & Evaluation Framework.

3.117 A system of performance reporting against the Council's Commonwealth Games indicator set is expected to be in place from Q4. Reporting of metrics/KPIs will be by the relevant Directorates as and when respective projects and initiatives are implemented and the data sets become available. At this stage of the Programme lifecycle, performance reporting will be focused on capital build metrics /KPIs until such times as the other Games Legacy initiatives are activated in FY 21/22.

4 Next Steps

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

5 Consultation

- 5.1 None required

6 Risk Management

- 6.1 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.

7 Compliance Issues

- 7.1 How are the recommended decisions consistent with the City Council's priorities, plans and strategies?
 - 7.1.1 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.
- 7.2 Legal Implications
 - 7.2.1 None
- 7.3 Financial Implications
 - 7.3.1 Implications set out in Medium Term Financial Plan

7.4 Procurement Implications (if required)

7.4.1 None

7.5 Human Resources Implications (if required)

7.5.1 None

7.6 Public Sector Equality Duty

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

8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1 – Detailed report of KPIs against 'Vital Signs' Key Performance Indicator Set.

8.2 Appendix 2 – Detailed report of KPIs against 'Commonwealth Games' Key Performance Indicator Set.