

**Committee and Date**Transformation & Improvement Scrutiny
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Item

Public



Performance Monitoring Report Quarter 4 2024/25

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1. Synopsis

The Shropshire Plan clarifies our vision and priorities, aligning our resources to deliver positive outcomes for our people, businesses and communities. Delivery of our outcomes is measured through the developing Performance Management Framework, demonstrating progress to date.

2. Executive Summary

2.1 The Shropshire Plan (TSP) was created to clarify Shropshire Council's vision, priorities and strategic objectives. These objectives reflect the outcomes we aim to achieve within our available financial envelope. We measure the achievement of TSP by monitoring our performance, using Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure, drive and understand delivery of our strategic objectives and managing our overall financial position.

2.2 [The Shropshire Plan Performance Report \(Dashboard\)](#) has been developed, through engagement across all Directorates, to monitor our KPIs for each Healthy priority and the agreed strategic objectives. Detailed information is available for each KPI, including performance status (red, amber, green), trends and benchmarking

information, where available. This report should be viewed in conjunction with the dashboard. A how to guide on navigating the dashboard is attached in the Appendices

2.3 The dashboard is updated on a quarterly basis and published via [Performance | Shropshire Council](#) webpage. This is the main source of performance information enabling greater insight, transparency and scrutiny of the Council's performance and delivery of its outcomes as set out in TSP. This ensures a focus on using data to inform decisions and actions, particularly where performance may not be meeting targets.

2.4 Performance status (red, amber, green) is currently reported purely based on variation from the target. In Q1 25/26, we will be incorporating trends in the measurement of performance in this report.

2.5 In Quarter 4 of 2024/25, a total of 54 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been updated in [The Shropshire Plan Performance Report \(Dashboard\)](#). 24% (13) of these are grey, meaning that they do not have a target set for various reasons, such as:

- They include new data where a baseline is being established, and a target will be set for 25/26
- They are information only indicators
- A target is not appropriate or KPI definition has changed

2.6 Of the 41 newly reported KPIs with targets:

- 53.7% (22 KPIs) are above their target (green). Highlights are reported in the [Improvements](#) section below.
- 14.6% (6 KPIs) of indicators were similar to their target (amber).
- 31.7% (13 KPIs) are below their target and are showing as exceptions (red). The reasons for this are reported in the [Exceptions](#) section below.

2.7 Given the financial constraints, this is a reasonable performance position for this quarter, with 68.3% of newly updated indicators above or similar to their target.

2.8 This report complements the Financial Outturn 2024/25 Report but provides a different perspective. We may therefore find that the position on KPIs is favourable, but that the finance position is adverse because the activity levels (the cost drivers) are higher than anticipated. As Shropshire Council continues to manage an unprecedented financial position, significant management action is required over the remainder of the financial year to ensure the Council's financial survival. This may involve scaling down initiatives, changing the scope, delaying implementation, or extending delivery timescales therefore potentially impacting on performance in some areas.

3. Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Note progress to date in achieving the outcomes of The Shropshire Plan (TSP).
2. Confirm that the KPIs currently agreed remain the same for 2025/2026 until aligned to the refresh of TSP in 2025/26.

4. Improvements

There are 22 KPIs showing an improvement (and above their target, green) out of the newly updated 41 KPIs. Of which, the following are the most notable:

4.1 HP32 The proportion of long-term adult social care users in receipt of community-based services has improved throughout the year to 72%, an improvement of 5% compared to the same time last year. We know that the number of individuals accessing long term support is increasing in Shropshire, however we continue to perform well in supporting people at home.

4.2 HEc13 Young people (16 - 17) Not in Employment Education or Training (NEET)

There has been an improvement in the NEET figure for Shropshire, with the latest figure now at 2.8% (2024/25 average), and below the national average of 3.6%. We have also achieved a reduction in our 'not known' students, reducing to 0.2%. This is a fantastic achievement to see our "not known" cohort reduce whilst still seeing our NEET figures decline, indicating more 16-17s in employment, education or training. Looking at the combined figure (NEET and not known), there has been a significant improvement, reducing from 7.9% in 2022/23 to 3.0% in 2024/25, below the national average of 5.2%.

4.3 HEn9a Increasing the generation of renewable energy by Shropshire Council (Solar). During quarter 4, a total of 137,118kWh of energy was generated. The Q4 result is an increase on last year's performance for the quarter, due to the amount of direct sunshine we had for the month.

4.4 HO1 The number of compliments received. 125 compliments were received within Q4. This an improvement on previous quarters and above target.

Report

Exceptions

There are 13 exceptions (red) out of the newly reported 41 KPIs this quarter:

4.5 HP18 Percentage of assessment timeliness, within 45 working days (%)

The timely assessment of a child's needs is key in determining the necessary steps to ensure their safety and wellbeing, it is important that assessments occur in a timely manner.

The continued focus on assessment timeliness has seen this figure increase quarter on quarter, with the figure for the period of Q4 25/25 (Jan-Mar 2025) at 80%, however this is still slightly below the target of 90%.

Note: the figure reported in the performance dashboard is the year-to-date percentage, reflecting the period April 24- March 2025.

4.6 **HP19 Stability of placements of looked after children, length of placement.**

Placement stability is a key outcome for any child that is looked after, to ensure children who are required to be looked after, enjoy a stable and settled homelife to support them to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Our rate of children in long-term/stable placements has increased since last quarter and is now the highest since March 2022. We continue to track higher than the national average and statistical neighbours in this area. A focus on permanency planning has contributed to this figure, and a large proportion of those who are not deemed to be in stable placements have moved to a 'placed with parents' placement as their most recent change.

4.7 **HP31 Percentage of Educational Health Care Plans (EHCP) issued within 20 weeks (exc exceptions)**

The Percentage of Educational Health Care Plans (EHCP) issued within 20 weeks (excluding exceptions) has fallen to 14.3% at Q4 this is below the 50.0% target.

Timeliness of EHCPs – the decline in the timeliness of EHCPs over the quarter is disappointing but expected given the radical restructure to the team, leaving a c. 40% deficit in staff and inexperience of remaining staff. In Shropshire, we have 3,210 active plans and of those 2,977 are maintained by Shropshire (Home LA and funding LA both Shropshire).

The anticipated number of cases a case officer was expected to hold was 187 (3000/16). This took account of 12 Case Officers and 4 Seniors holding a case load. Senior EHCP Case Officers are supporting case work whilst we experience vacant posts within the team. It is anticipated that Seniors will be undertaking Tribunal work and supporting the most complex of cases. Current plan numbers are 3210.

This figure doesn't account for the new and on-going EHCNA work.

This level of case work impacts timeliness.

EHCNA - ECHNA requests are high.

In the quarter from January to April we have seen an increase as follows:

2021	70
2022	126
2023	299
2024	217

2025 229

At the start of the year, it was anticipated that the role of the EHCNA Coordinator, which became redundant under the new structure, would be absorbed into the EHCP Case Officer role, supported by suitable business support. There have been some delays in establishing the business support function to support the work of the team, however we have focussed on resolving this – see below.

Timeliness of EHCPs – planning for recovery: We have implemented weekly scrutiny of the available reports for the issuing of draft and final EHCPs. Seniors having responsibility for their key stage areas, doing a line-by-line management of each case to understand the hinderances and consider with case officer how best to move on cases. They then secure a pledge from Officers about what is realistic and achievable. Officers report to be motivated by the target setting. This has been in place since 01.04.2025. In order for us to recover timeliness it is estimated that we would need to issue 40 plans per month from July to December to recover to 50%. In addition, there are plans that we increase the number of CYP who's plans are ceased through effective provision and review. managing demand and would provide suitable challenge back to our schools and settings around meeting need. This could include some CYP stepping down from an EHCP to GSP for example.

EHCNA - Adopting admin support back into the team, currently confirmed until the end of December 25, has supported this function with the retrieval of timeliness back in place and being consistently 100% since the admin team support arrived in the team from 21.02.2025.

4.8 HEc15 Maintaining 5-year housing land supply

Authorities are currently required to identify a suitable supply of development land to meet planned housing requirements.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and 'standard methodology' for assessing Local Housing Need have recently been amended (on the 12th of December 2024). The amendments to the NPPF and the new 'standard methodology', which results in an increased Local Housing Need for Shropshire of 1,994 dwellings (previously 1,070 dwellings), both have implications for housing land supply in Shropshire.

Due to the changes to the NPPF and the associated update to the 'standard methodology', Shropshire Council considers that on balance of considerations it is currently unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply.

Specifically, the most recent assessment of the Five-Year Housing Land Supply Statement is that with a base date of 31st March 2024 and was published in February 2024. The assessment concludes that whilst a very significant supply of deliverable housing land exists in Shropshire of 9,902 dwellings, this falls around 567 dwellings short of a five-year housing land supply, based on the new Local Housing Need, constituting a 4.73 years' supply of deliverable housing land.

The assessments are always a year behind due to the need to undertake the necessary monitoring to identify housing completions to inform this assessment.

The housing completions monitoring for the 2025 base date assessment is currently ongoing, however the associated return to Government is not due until October 2025.

4.9 **HEc18 Reduction of households in B&B accommodation**

Temporary emergency accommodation should be a short-term solution for households with children. Reducing the number of children in temporary accommodation will improve health and educational outcomes

A new temporary accommodation unit opened in January 2025 which helped to reduce numbers significantly. However, demand into the service is still high meaning numbers in B&B are still higher than forecast. However, we have 3 additional projects due to go live in June / July 2025 which again will enable us to reduce the numbers in B&B.

4.10 **HEn6 Percentage of household waste sent for re-use, recycling and composting**

This measure is reported a quarter in arrears, due to DEFRA's requirements for reporting.

The percentage of household waste sent for re-use, recycling and composting Q3 figure of 46.47% has missed the target of 52.60%, this is also a reduction on the Q2 figure of 58.61%.

The percentage has dropped from previous quarters. This quarter coincided with two significant changes. On October 1st, residents had to subscribe to continue to have their garden waste collected, it was anticipated as part of the modelling undertaken that up to 33% of the garden waste previously collected would be placed into the residual bin and these results show the effect of that change, food waste collections were also suspended and this tonnage removed from the garden waste collections. Additionally, we introduced the Household Recycling Centre booking system on the same date, this has resulted in a significant drop in the amount of waste disposed of through the HRC over the three months it was in place the tonnage reduced by 20%.

4.11 **HEn11 Percentage of streetlights converted to LED**

The percentage of streetlights converted to LED at Q4 is 95% against a target of 100%. As previously reported the programme of work is ongoing but has faced delays due to various circumstances such as parked cars, birds nesting, requirement of complex traffic management and programmed works - joint working with major projects sharing Traffic Management to reduce disruption and costs.

The LED lantern replacement initiative will commence May this financial year over a 9-month programme to convert the remainder of the halogen lights.

4.12 **HEn15 Number of Environmental Permit inspections completed against statutory target (100%)**

The number of environmental permit inspections completed by quarter 4 was 87% which missed the target of 100%. Due to complying with some businesses' wishes in terms of suitability of dates and times that their staff were available; 4 further

inspections were completed in the 1st week of April. However, if included that would be 57/61 which is 93%. The few remaining will be completed by end of April 25.

4.13 HO5 Resident satisfaction with Highways and Transport services

Shropshire Council has taken part in the National Highways and Transport Survey. Each year a random sample of residents are sent a questionnaire to provide feedback on highways and transport services in their area.

Nationally, highway authorities are managing deteriorating assets, with the cost of the national backlog now estimated to be £16.81 billion. The diminishing levels of real-term financing for highways over many years have seen an increase in potholes and increased the demands on all highway services and continue to stretch the limited resources available for maintenance.

4.14 HO6 Budget vs Outturn

The Council revenue position has been finalised for 2024/25. The Council has:

- A revenue outturn position of £34.230m over the available budget (13.1% of net budget).
- Delivered £47.194m savings (52.5% of the target, and by value the highest ever achieved by the Council)
- Utilised £7.726m of reserves and provisions to support the position, whilst leaving a general fund balance of £4.823m with plans to increase this during 25/26.
- Capital expenditure of £107.820m in the financial year, representing 95.7% of the revised capital budget.

4.15 HO11 Staff turnover rates

The staff turnover rate for Q4 is 8.58% against a target of 7%, the Q3 figure was 6.74%.

Turnover for this quarter is significantly higher for this quarter compared to last which aligns with normal predictions where the new year is one of the most popular times people search for a new career. When looking at leavers, not including Shires Services, over one third of the voluntary leavers gave a reason due to career, with the majority of those being due to career advance. Across the whole year, 56% of non-Shires leavers had less than 2 years service, with 77% having less than 5 years service. Organisational change will have had an impact on the stability of the workforce, particularly for those with less service.

4.16 HO13 Average number of days lost to sickness absence per year

The average number of days lost to sickness absence per year Q4 figure of 10.9 has missed the target of 7.5.

A further significant increase in sickness absence for corporate figures where Shires are not included while the figures including Shire have remained the same. Absences due to stress has grown once again while musculoskeletal absences have changed very little. One of the greatest areas for focus is around absences

attributable to benign and malignant tumours, cancer which has increased by over a quarter from 2023/24.

4.17 HO17 Responding to Freedom of information Requests within statutory timescales (20 working days)

FOI response rates are monitored by Executive Directors through the Power BI dashboard. There has been some slippage in response rates since the enforcement notice was lifted in November 2023. However, for the first 2 months in 2025 the compliance rate is 76%. This shows a sustained improvement since the enforcement notice was issued in April 2023.

5. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 5.1 The management of the Council's Performance Management Framework is a key process in ensuring strategic risks are mitigated and the Council can carry out business as intended and planned for within TSP.
- 5.2 The management of key performance indicators is a key process to monitoring progress in the delivery of outcomes as set out in TSP. This provides insight into whether corrective action is required to bring performance back on track.
- 5.3 The performance reports and dashboard provide a high-level lens into the performance of Shropshire Council allowing for further targeted detail analysis to support the mitigation of any risks identified.
- 5.4 Regular financial reporting is part of the governance and risk management approach within the Council ensuring that it delivers sustainable and value for money services as required under statute. Risk management continues to be an active part of this process, and Officers review potential risk and opportunity scenarios each month. The Council holds two finance related strategic risks regarding managing the current financial situation and so this remains under constant review to consider appropriate management action of the situation.
- 5.5 The dashboard includes instructions for use and a feedback form is available for questions or feedback. Members have previously been shown how to use the dashboard, and the Business Intelligence and Insight team are available for training for new Members.
- 5.6 Monitoring will be in place using the dashboard so any issues can be resolved in a timely manner.
- 5.7 Ultimately, the Council must risk assess the delivery of strategic objectives within TSP and adjust, accordingly, to ensure an acceptable balance of outcomes are achieved at a strategic level. This may mean the prioritisation of some objectives over others to react to the evidence presented within the PMF. It may not be possible to achieve optimal performance across all indicators and it may be necessary to oversee expected reductions in performance in some areas to remain within the overall financial envelope and ensure full focus is given to prioritised areas of activity by officers including significant management action required over the remainder of the financial year to ensure the Council's financial survival.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The performance report provides progress on key activity targets which will have correlation to financial performance.
- 6.2 It should be noted that positive improvement on activity may not necessarily correspond to financial improvement, and this should be drawn out in the narrative of the financial and performance reports.

7. Climate Change Appraisal

- 7.1 The performance report includes KPIs for Healthy Environment with measures for monitoring Shropshire Council's direction of progress on climate change.
- 7.2 Recommendations within the Climate Strategy and Action Plan Monitoring Report 2023 were agreed by the Council on the 18th of July 2024, including two recommendations specific to key performance indicators which will be incorporated into the Shropshire Plan Performance Report for future reporting:
 - Specific carbon emission reductions by activity
 - Energy efficiency
- 7.3 Climate Change also has significant implications for Healthy People, a Healthy Economy and a Healthy Organisation and further work to develop additional KPIs, in partnership with the Climate Team will reflect this. There has been a reduction in size of the Climate Change team and as a result, future work programmes are being reviewed. Further indicators will be made available as new data becomes available to ensure that as high a percentage as possible of primary data collected is based on measured carbon emissions via a clear and transparent process such as carbon accounting, rather than estimating scope 3 emissions based on spend.
- 7.4 Measuring emissions also provides a baseline for setting climate targets and deciding where to start reducing emissions. Repeating the measurement process annually allows Shropshire Council to track and report progress in a clear, transparent way to ensure that key stakeholders - members, regulators, employees, members of the public, other local authorities and system partners are informed about our collective climate action and impact.

8. Background

- 8.1 Work continues on the development of our KPIs including setting targets, tolerances and including benchmarking where possible.
- 8.2 The Q4 report provides a useful overview of performance, however, ongoing iterative improvements will continue to incorporate additional agreed KPIs. It should also be noted that some of the performance indicators are baseline figures, from which targets will be established.
- 8.3 The approach being taken by Shropshire Council is progressive and in advance of many other authorities and this places us in a strong position to continually improve

our approach to managing performance and ultimately providing evidence of our ability to deliver the outcomes set out in TSP.

- 8.4 This is the fourth report for 2024/25 and sets out the key issues to manage this year; delivering acceptable performance while remaining within our available financial envelope.
- 8.5 The focus of the Council in 2024/25 and the immediate future is necessarily directed at the delivery of a balanced budget, and is currently, therefore, the highest priority strategic objective within TSP balanced alongside protecting our most vulnerable children. Our Performance Management Framework (PMF) has been reviewed and strengthened to align with all our strategic objectives to enable us to become an evidence-led and performance-managed council.
- 8.6 The dashboard is designed to be a dynamic tool, continuously evolving and improving based on user feedback and emerging requirements. Feedback on the design and usability of the dashboard and performance webpage is welcomed. A feedback form is available for questions and queries, which are reviewed regularly with responses provided and published where appropriate alongside the dashboard.

9. Conclusions

- 9.1 The development of the interactive dashboard sees a substantive step change in the reporting of performance with more emphasis on target delivery and comparator information.
- 9.2 The key performance pressure remains the delivery of a balanced budget which are detailed in the financial report.
- 9.3 Considering the financial constraints, overall Q4 24/25 shows reasonable performance in achieving The Shropshire Plan and its objectives, with 68.3% of newly updated indicators meeting or exceeding their target.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Local Member: All

Appendices How to Navigate the dashboard [Performance Report Walkthrough Video 1.mp4](#)