

Council Performance & Budget Summary

2022-23 Quarter 4 (January to March)



The performance summary outlines trends in information the Council uses to monitor service delivery. It shows performance against relevant targets.

Recommendation

That the Strategy & Resources Committee notes the Council Performance and Budget Summary (Quarter 4 2022-2023).

Future Performance Reports

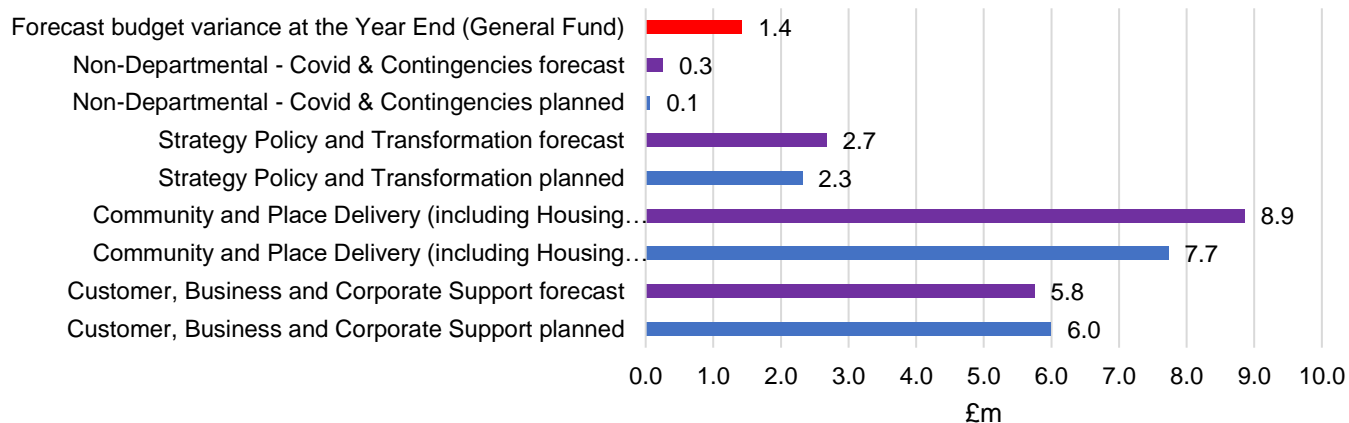
The Council is developing a new Performance Management Framework. This is part of the Council's transformation work and takes account of recommendations made following the LGA Peer Challenge conducted in February. Quarter 1 2023/24 data will be presented in a new format. The content will develop over time as the new framework is implemented.

Budget Variance Quarter 4 2022-23

	£m			
	Q1 2022-23	Q2 2022-23	Q3 2022-23	Q4* 2022-23
Budget				
Gross Expenditure Budget	39.6	39.6	39.6	39.6
Less Fees and Charges Budget and Government Grants	-23.5	-23.5	-23.5	-23.5
Total Net General Fund budget	16.1	16.1	16.1	16.1
Total General Fund forecast	16.6	17.3	17.3	17.5
Forecast budget variance at the Year End (General Fund)	0.5	1.2	1.2	1.4
Housing Revenue Account				
Housing Income (rents and charges)	-39.4	-39.4	-39.4	-39.4
Housing Expenditure	37.2	37.2	37.2	37.2
Housing Revenue Account Budget	-2.1	-2.1	-2.1	-2.1
Housing Revenue Account forecast	-2	-0.9	-1.0	-0.8
Forecast budget variance at the Year End (HRA)	0.1	1.2	1.2	1.4

Note: The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) records expenditure and income on running the Council's housing stock and closely related services or facilities, which are provided primarily for the benefit of our tenants.

Annual Outturn: Q4 2022-23



Notes:

*Data correct up to end of February 2023 – full year-end data not available prior to publication of the report. Figures show the Forecast Annual Outturn at the end of each quarter versus the budget.

Q4 2022-23 Commentary: Principal reasons for variance to Budget by Directorate:

Community and Place Delivery (excluding Housing Revenue Account)	Reduced income of £0.6m compared to budget on contract renewals and additional utility costs of £0.6m
Strategy Policy and Transformation	Commercial income shortfall of £0.4m due to vacant commercial premises, and increased Council utility costs of £0.15m
Non-Departmental – Contingencies and Customer, Business and Corporate Support	Contingencies held against utility cost inflation and reduced income have not been drawn on and a small underspend across a range of budgets in Customer, Business and Corporate Support -£0.3m
Housing Revenue Account	Lower income forecast and increased utilities cost

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A Note on the content in the Tables Below

The information presented in the tables below reflects the Quarter 4 data (for the period January to March 2023) and is a look back at the position at the end of that quarter.

Performance Information

The performance information colour coding relates to the measure's target or trend. For indicators with a target: Green is where a target is achieved; Amber is up to 10% worse than target; Red is worse than 10% from target.

For indicators with trend analysis: Green highlights an improved performance; Red a worse performance.

Quarter 4 2022-23 Performance Summary

Committee	Directorate		Bigger or Smaller is Better	Quarter 4 2021-22	Quarter 1 2022-23	Quarter 2 2022-23	Quarter 3 2022-23	Quarter 4 2022-23	TARGET
Strategy & Resources	Customer, Business and Corporate Support	Forecast budget variance at the year end (General Fund for year in question)	Smaller	0.3%	3.0%	7.0%	7.0%	9.0%	0.00%
		Percentage of council tax collected of that collectable in the year	Bigger	98.71%	29.84%	57.37%	84.86%	98.67%	99%^
		Percentage of business rates collected of that collectable in the year	Bigger	99.16%	30.58%	55.16%	83.57%	98.25%	99%^
		Number of Stage 1 complaints logged	Smaller	29	40	35	34	36	Trend
		Number of Stage 2 complaints logged	Smaller	14	14	7	11	7	Trend
		Establishment – actual FTE in post		334.2 (315.3 permanent/ 19.9 fixed term)	342.1 (323.4 permanent/ 18.7 fixed term)	341.9 (326 permanent/ 15.9 fixed term)	334.8 (321.9 permanent/ 12.9 fixed term)	338 (331.6 permanent/ 6.4 fixed term)	N/A
		Agency and casual workers (FTE cover for vacancies or additional workloads)		15 agency / 14.14 casual	19 agency / 15.52 casual	20 agency / 17.77 casual	20 agency / 12.78 casual	17 agency / 11.6 casual	N/A

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Committee	Directorate		Bigger or Smaller is Better	Quarter 4 2021-22	Quarter 1 2022-23	Quarter 2 2022-23	Quarter 3 2022-23	Quarter 4 2022-23	TARGET
Strategy & Resources	Customer, Business and Corporate Support	Temporary workers as a percentage of total staff (FTE)	Smaller	8.0%	9.1%	9.9%	8.9%	7.8%	N/A
		Employee Turnover (excluding retirements)	Smaller	4.35%	4.63%	4.34%	3.85%	3.84%	Trend
		Number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence per full time equivalent employee (days)	Smaller	2.21	1.39	1.48	1.61	1.21	Trend
		Average time to hire vacancies (days)	Smaller	40.90	48.00	58.00	61.00	54.60	Trend
	Strategy, Policy and Transformation	Percentage of total expected rental income that is in arrears	Smaller	7%	6%	14%	8%	10%	10%
		Reactive repairs as a percentage of all maintenance	Smaller	43%	33%	36%	48%	42%	Trend
		Planned maintenance as a percentage of all maintenance	Bigger	57%	67%	64%	52%	58%	Trend
		Number of non-residential properties which are not fully operational	Smaller	1	1	1	4	4	Fewer than 5
		Out-of-Work Benefits Claimant Count (ONS data)	Smaller	2,070	1,860	1,875	1,890	1,775	***

^Quarterly Seasonal Target	Q4 2021-22	Q1 2022-23	Q2 2022-23	Q3 2022-23	Q4 2022-23
Council Tax collection rate	99%	31%	59%	87%	99%
Business Rates collection rate	99%	31%	57%	84%	99%

* Figures for Council Tax collections and Business rates collections from Quarters 1-4 are cumulative

Note: Trend based RAG rating calculated over 9 quarters to ensure correct colours in comparison to the whole time period – only the most recent 5 quarters are shown in this report

Contact: Jenny Swatton, Policy Officer (Economic Development & Projects) (Jenny.Swatton@stalbans.gov.uk).

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Commentary

The table below provides commentary to explain the indicators in the Performance Summary table above and includes any action the Council is taking to improve performance where appropriate.

	Measure	Comments
A	Forecast budget variance at the year-end (General Fund for year in question)	Various economic factors are adversely affecting the Council's financial position, particularly increased costs (including utilities) and lower income on contract renewals and commercial rents.
A	Percentage of council tax collected of that collectable in the year	Although collection rate of 98.67% is slightly under target of 99%, it is comparable to collection rates for 2021/22 (98.72%) and 2020/21 (98.76%). We will adjust the collection rate target for the financial year 2023/24 to 98.5% to reflect the collection trend over the past 3 years and potential impact of increases in cost of living on the Council Tax collection rates.
A	Percentage of business rates collected of that collectable in the year	Changes and reductions to the amount of rate relief available to businesses in the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure sectors have had an impact on collection rates with these business types receiving substantially less financial assistance with their business rates than they did during the 2020/21 and 2021/22 financial years.
A	Number of Stage 1 complaints logged	<p>There were 36 Stage 1 complaints in Q4, an increase of 2 on Q3. The complaints were related to: Housing - 18 Planning - 11 Public Realm - 5 Council Tax / Business Rates – 2</p> <p>There has been a reduction in Stage 1 Housing Management complaints from 6 in quarter 3 to 1 in this quarter which could be attributable to the current full complement of housing officer staff.</p> <p>There has been an increase in Housing Options related Stage 1 complaints from 1 in quarter 3, to 4 in this quarter. This is due to queries regarding the housing register, homeless applications and the voids process. It should be noted that Voids work has moved from the Repairs team to the Housing Options team so the change in profile of the two workstreams may impact on these figures.</p> <p>The increase in Stage 1 Planning complaints is likely to reflect increased queries related to planning applications. This is discussed further in the Planning Policy and Climate Committee Performance Report (link below).</p>

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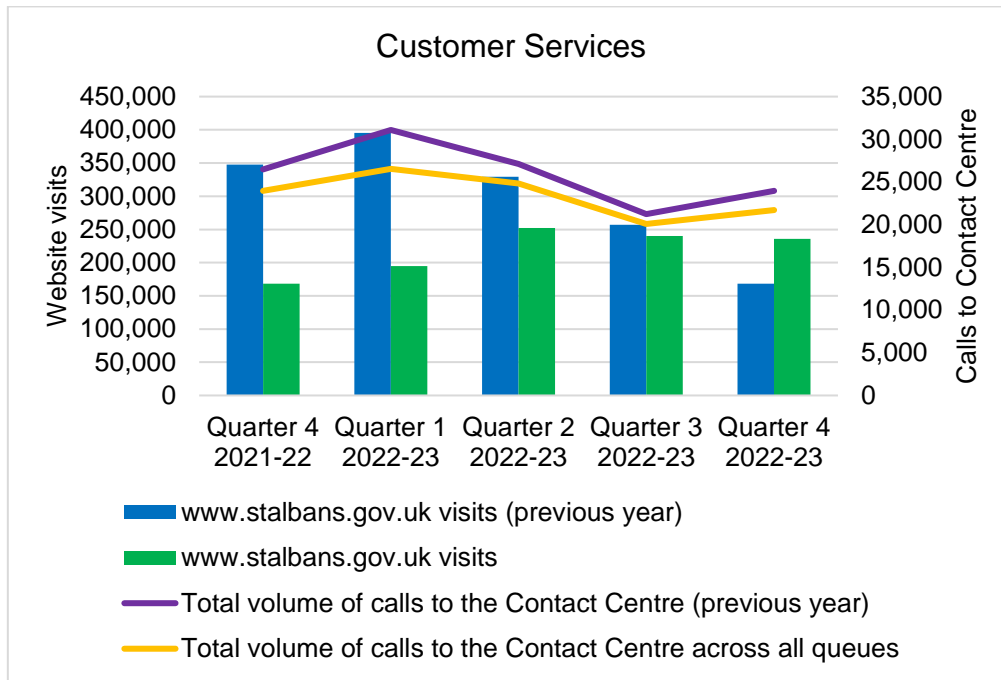
Quarter 4 2022-2023 (January to March)

	Measure	Comments
G	Number of Stage 2 complaints logged	<p>There has been a 36% reduction in Stage 2 complaints with 7 in Q4 compared to 11 in Q3. The complaints were related to:</p> <p>Housing - 4 Planning - 2 Public Realm - 1</p>
G	Number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence per full time equivalent employee (days)	<p>The rate is 0.71 when long term sickness is excluded.</p> <p>Most absences are related to:</p> <p>1) Covid19 (Confirmed) – 58 days 2) Tumour/Cancer – 55 days 3) Stress & Anxiety (Personal) – 50 days</p> <p>Of 8 long term absences recorded during the period, 6 continue.</p>
A	Average time to hire vacancies (days)	<p>The average time to hire across 10 roles with accepted offers during the period January – March 2023 was:</p> <p>Principal Officer roles – 4 Non-Principal Officer roles – 6</p>
R	<p>Reactive repairs as a percentage of all maintenance</p> <p>Planned maintenance as a percentage of all maintenance</p>	<p>The poor weather continued to be a factor in the number of repairs required across the estate. The situation has improved and is comparable to the same period in 2021/22.</p>

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Website Visits and Calls to the Contact Centre*



*As reported in previous Performance Reports, the Google Analytics data in 2021 was reported by many organisations to be problematic. This was thought at the time to be connected to changes to its algorithm. There may also have been a heavier demand on web content at that point because of the pandemic situation.

Google Analytics data for Quarter 4 2022-23 (January 2023-March 2023) is incomplete. The Council changed over to Google Analytics 4 in January and during this transition there was a period where little or no analytics data was captured.

The ten most visited pages in Quarter 4 2022-23 were:

1. Homepage 18.07%
2. Planning (view and track applications) 9.04%
3. Car parks/pay and display 2.78%
4. Do it online 2.71%
5. Planning and building control 2.68%
6. Council Tax 2.67%
7. Search 2.61%
8. Parking permits, suspensions and season tickets 2.23%
9. Waste/rubbish collections 2.19%
10. Recycling and rubbish 1.61%

Council-owned Commercial Property

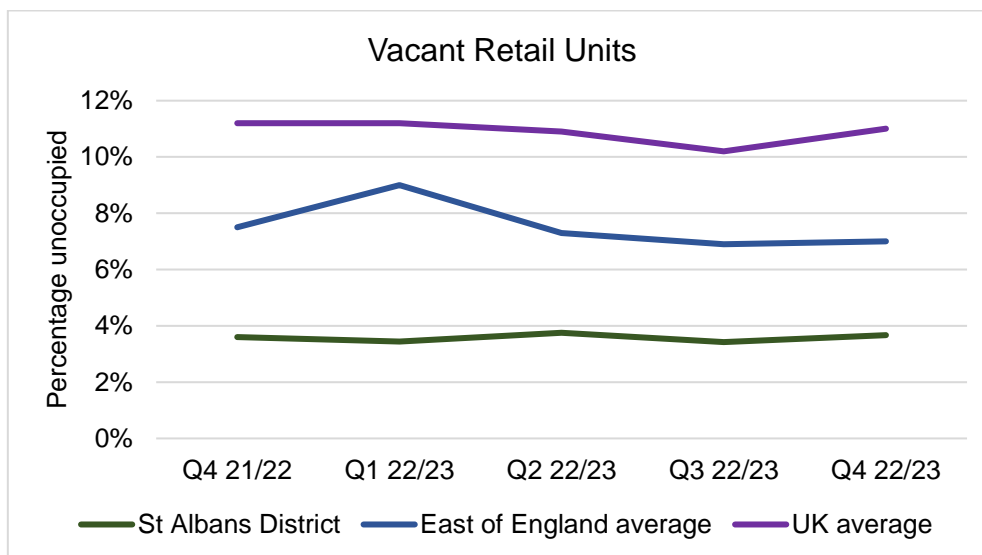
The Council has two commercial units that have been empty for some time. The plan was to re-develop 35 Market Place thus taking it out of the commercial portfolio. However, as a decision has been taken not to proceed with this, it will be marketed for a new commercial tenant. The negotiations on the lease for Batchwood Hall have concluded and the agreement is expected to be completed in June/July 2023. Following this the new tenant will commence planning for their refurbishment and fitout.

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Vacant Retail Units (City and District)

There has been a slight increase in vacant units locally this quarter and St Albans District continues to have a much lower vacancy rate than both the national and regional average, showing the relative resilience of the retail sector locally, when compared with other areas.



Source: East of England and UK data supplied by Springboard Research Ltd

The table below shows the proportion of vacant retail properties as of 31 March 2023 by parish and the non-parished area (City). The properties are retail only. The information is extracted from the Council's business rates database and includes both Council-owned and privately owned units.

Parish	Total no. of retail units	No. of units Unoccupied	% Unoccupied				
			Q4 21/22	Q1 22/23	Q2 22/23	Q3 22/23	Q4 22/23
Unparished City	747 (up 18*)	29 (up 2)	4.68%	3.86%	3.99%	3.70%	3.88%
Colney Heath	14 (down 18*)	0	0.00%	3.13%	3.13%	0.00%	0.00%
Harpenden Rural*	4	0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%*	0.00%	0.00%
London Colney	52	3 (down 1)	1.92%	3.85%	3.85%	7.69%	5.77%
Redbourn	34	0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
St Michael	3	0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
St Stephen	55	2 (up 2)	1.82%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	3.64%
Sandridge	59	2 (up 1)	5.17%	5.17%	1.72%	1.69%	3.39%
Wheathampstead	41	0 (down 1)	2.50%	2.50%	2.44%	0.00%	0.00%
Harpenden	245 (down 1)	10 (down 1)	2.05%	3.27%	5.31%*	4.47%	4.08%
Overall percentage	1,254	46	3.60%	3.44%	3.75%	3.42%	3.67%

*Parish Council boundaries changed in April 2023 including changing the boundary of Colney Heath Parish Council to match that of the Colney Heath District Council ward. This resulted in 18 retail units previously in Colney Heath moving to Unparished City.

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Priority Project Tracker Updates

The updates below relate to the priority projects in the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-2027:

<https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/St%20Albans%20City%20And%20District%20Council%20Corporate%20Plan%202022-2027%20web.pdf>

Committee	Q3 milestones (2022/2023) (Oct-Dec)	Priority Project	Q4 milestones (2022/2023) (Jan-Mar)	Progress	Q1 milestones (2023/2024) (Apr-Jun)
Strategy & Resources	G	Implement a new operating model for the Council which supports the delivery of a more sustainable organisation, using digital technologies to support a more flexible and mobile workforce; reduced and better use of Council office space; and the continuing development of online services for residents (includes implementation of the Council's 'Digital and ICT Strategy' and 'Customer Engagement Strategy')	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phone system integration with Salesforce is being tested. Once fully operational it will allow the Customer Services team to see whether a caller has a MyStAlbans District Account before the call is answered. This will be rolled out fully in Quarter 2 of 2023-24. Officers are working on a new call flow process to handle Council Tax queries in the MyStAlbans platform (rather than through email) to be launched in Q2. This will allow the Customer Services team to pass cases rather than calls to the back office and help to improve efficiency and customer experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on new call flow in MyStAlbans for Council Tax for launch in Q2. Preparation for Customer Service team use of the phone system/Salesforce integration in Q2. Preparation for Customer Service team use of Council Tax call flow in Q2.
Strategy & Resources	G	Develop a new economic development and regeneration strategy.	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategy drafted. Input from partners and consultation to be undertaken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Input from key partners. Service Committee consideration anticipated in the Autumn.
Strategy & Resources	A	Complete development at the St Albans City Centre Opportunity Site (CCOS) South: 33 apartments for social rent; 60 apartments for sale; 6,064 square metres of office space; 100 car parking spaces	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An issue with the height of the Juliette balcony railings is being rectified via a minor material amendment application being submitted by the Contractor, which is working through the planning process. Anticipated completion is now mid-July 2023. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works progressing to complete project in Q2 2023-24.

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Committee	Q3 milestones (2022/2023) (Oct-Dec)	Priority Project	Q4 milestones (2022/2023) (Jan-Mar)	Progress	Q1 milestones (2023/2024) (Apr-Jun)
Strategy & Resources	A	Continue to progress the redevelopment of Ridgeview in London Colney to provide a phase 2 development of 24 market rent apartments	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 2 development on hold - UKPN works to relocate electric cables to allow drainage works to be completed due in Q2 2023-24. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drainage works to be completed i.e., the connection to the Thames Water surface water drainage system. Both blocks to be occupied.
Strategy & Resources	G	Progress the development of Harpenden Public Halls	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officers working to produce a planning brief to inform valuation of Harpenden Public Halls site prior to disposal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out valuation and options report on current site. Appoint commercial agent to progress disposal of the site.
Strategy & Resources	A	Progress development at the St Albans City Centre Opportunity Site (CCOS) North (subject to planning approval)	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per recommendations approved by the Regeneration & Business Committee in January 2023, CCOS North is now paused. Work to progress a Cultural Strategy continues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A
Strategy & Resources	R	Progress the redevelopment of Fleetville Community Centre for anticipated delivery in November 2023	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project paused pending a review of funding options. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project to be reviewed to determine opportunities to use a modular build solution rather than traditional build. Further enabling funding opportunities to be identified.

Key (table above)

R(ed)	Progress is affected to the extent that the milestone completion date is significantly affected
A(mber)	Progress toward the milestone is slightly off track i.e., a minor hold-up with the project
G(reen)	Progress toward the milestone is on track
B(lue)	The milestone has been completed or ended
Paused	The project has been paused

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Appendix 1: Performance Reports to the other Service & Scrutiny Committees

Housing and Inclusion Committee Performance Summary 2022-23 Quarter 4 (January to March 2023)

This report was considered by the Housing and Inclusion Committee at its meeting on Monday 19th June 2023.

Performance Report: <https://stalbans.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s50064515/Housing%20and%20Inclusion%20Q4%202022-23%20Performance%20Report.pdf>

Appendix 1 – Morgan Sindall Property Services KPI Suite 2022-23:

<https://stalbans.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s50064516/APPENDIX%201%20-%20MSPS%20KPI%20SUITE%202022-23.pdf>

Appendix 2 – Analysis of Q3 2022-23 crime statistics: <https://stalbans.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s50064517/Appendix%202%20-%20Criminal%20Damage%20theft%20analysis%20-%20April%202023.pdf>

Public Realm Committee Performance Summary 2022-23 Quarter 4 (January to March 2023)

This report was considered by the Public Realm Committee at its meeting on Wednesday 21st June 2023. Link to the report:

<https://stalbans.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s50064438/Public%20Realm%20Q4%202022-23%20Performance%20Report.pdf>

Planning Policy & Climate Committee Performance Summary 2022-23 Quarter 4 (January to March 2023)

This report was considered by the Planning Policy & Climate Committee at its meeting on Monday 26th June 2023.

Link to the Performance Report:

<https://stalbans.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s50064581/Planning%20Policy%20Climate%20Change%20Committee%20Q4%202023-23%20Performance%20Report.pdf>

Appendix 1 – Section 106 Report: <https://stalbans.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s50064582/Appendix%201%20-%20Section%20106%20JUNE%202023.pdf>