Council Performance & Budget Summary

2022-23 Quarter 3 (October to December)

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

Recommendation

That the Policy Committee notes the Council Performance and Budget Summary (Quarter 3 2022-2023).

Future Performance Reports

The Council is developing a new Performance Management Framework. In the interim, we will begin presenting the data in this report in a more accessible format and discontinuing what is no longer needed. The Performance Report format will therefore continue to evolve.

Budget Variance by Directorate Quarter 3 (October to December) 2022-23

Directorate	Variance %	£	Comments *(on variances +/-5% of budget)*
Customer, Business and Corporate Support	0%	£0.0m	
Community and Place Delivery (including Housing General Fund)	14%	£1.0m	Reduced income compared to budget on contract renewals.
Strategy Policy and Transformation	8%	£0.3m	Lower commercial income and increased. utility costs
Non-Departmental - Covid & Contingencies	-7%	-£0.1m	Contingencies held against utility cost inflation and reduced income have not been drawn on.
Forecast budget variance at the Year End (General Fund for year in question)	7%	£1.2m.	Increased cost (including utilities) and lower income on contract renewals.

Council Performance & Budget Summary
Quarter 3 2022-2023 (October to December)

St Albans
City & District Council

A Note on the Content in the Tables Below

The information presented in the tables below reflects the Quarter 3 data (for the period October to December 2022) 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 3 2022-23 Performance Summary

Committee	Directorate		Bigger or Smaller is Better	Quarter 3 2021-22	Quarter 4 2021-22	Quarter 1 2022-23	Quarter 2 2022-23	Quarter 3 2022-23	TARGET
Policy	Community and Place Delivery	Percentage of invalid planning applications received	Smaller	1.1%	1.2%	1.0%	1.5%	0.9%	Trend
		Percentage of all major planning applications determined within 13 weeks (measured over a 2-year period)	Bigger	84.2%	86.3%	84.9%	81.7%	78.9%	70%
		Planning obligations (Section 106/CIL) monetary contributions secured		£550,029	£55,173.65	£559,021.63	£0.00	£46,942.91	
		Planning and Building Control applications received (including pre-app, trees and condition discharge)		1,308	1,290	1,268	1,156	1,007	

Council Performance & Budget Summary
Quarter 3 2022-2023 (October to December)

St Albans City & District Council

Committee	Directorate		Bigger or Smaller is Better	Quarter 3 2021-22	Quarter 4 2021-22	Quarter 1 2022-23	Quarter 2 2022-23	Quarter 3 2022-23	TARGET
Policy	Community and Place Delivery	Percentage of Council's planning decisions supported at appeal (cumulative 12 month)	Bigger	66%	66%	65%	68%	73%	66%
		Percentage of planning applications not determined (within time limits or agreed timescale)	Smaller	40.6%	32.0%	30.0%	32.0%	49.2%	25%
		Number of planning applications that have not been determined in time (at end of month)	Smaller	192	171	177	242	327	40
	Customer, Business and Corporate Support	Forecast budget variance at the year-end (General Fund for year in question)	Smaller	0.6%	0.3%	3.0%	7.0%	7.0%	0.00%
		Percentage of council tax collected of that collectable in the year	Bigger	85.06%	98.71%	29.84%	57.37%	84.86%	87%^
		Percentage of business rates collected of that collectable in the year	Bigger	80.78%	99.16%	30.58%	55.16%	83.57%	84%^
		www.stalbans.gov.uk visits	Bigger	257,078	168,217	194,865	251,941	240,241	Trend
		Total volume of calls to the Contact Centre across all queues	Smaller	21,238	23,946	26,537	24,832	20,085	Trend
		Number of Stage 1 complaints logged	Smaller	26	29	40	35	34	Trend
		Number of Stage 2 complaints logged	Smaller	16	14	14	7	11	Trend

Council Performance & Budget Summary
Quarter 3 2022-2023 (October to December)

St Albans
City & District Council

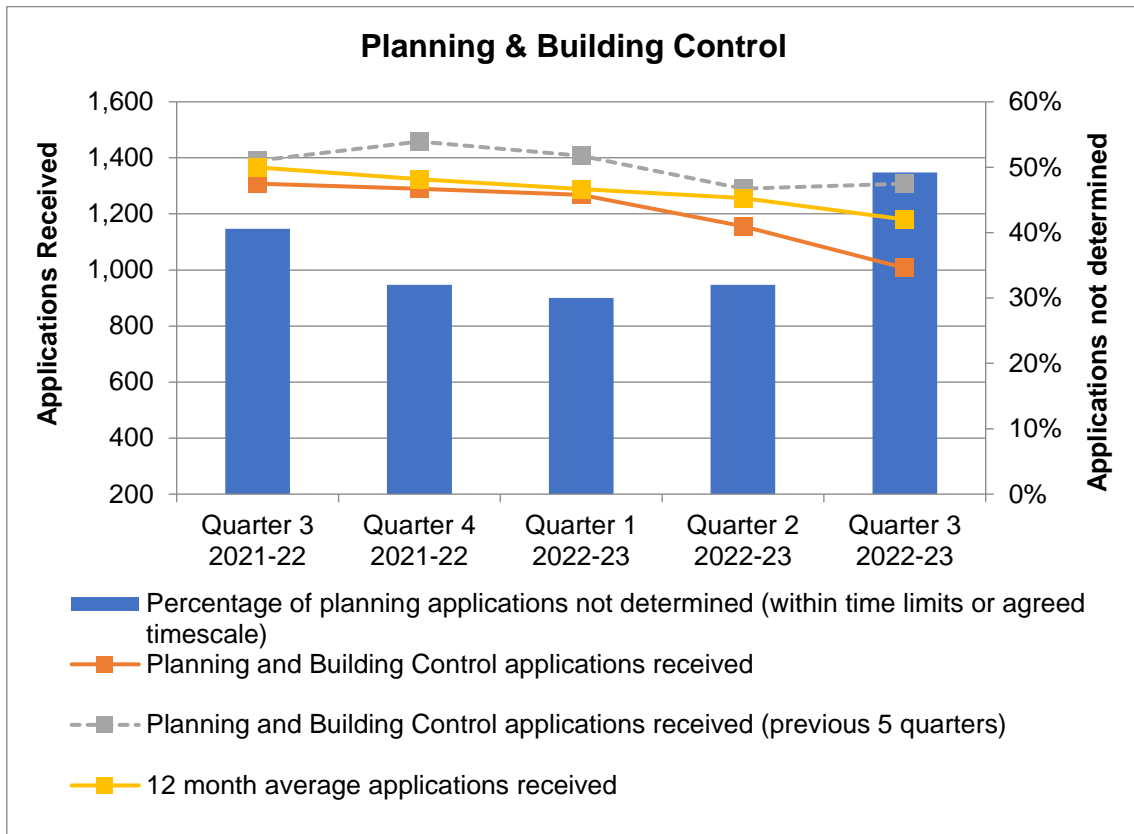| Committee	Directorate		Bigger or Smaller is Better	Quarter 3 2021-22	Quarter 4 2021-22	Quarter 1 2022-23	Quarter 2 2022-23	Quarter 3 2022-23	TARGET
Policy	Customer, Business and Corporate Support	Establishment - actual FTE in post		346.9 (323.4 perm/23 fixed term)	334.2 (315.3 permanent/19.9 fixed 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)	
		Agency and casual workers (FTE cover for vacancies or additional workloads)		18.3 agency / 11.9 casual	15 agency / 14.14 casual	19 agency / 15.52 casual	20 agency / 17.77 casual	20 agency / 12.78 casual	
		Temporary workers as a percentage of total staff (FTE)	Smaller	8.0%	8.0%	9.1%	9.9%	8.9%	
		Employee Turnover (excluding retirements)	Smaller	5.76%	4.35%	4.63%	4.34%	3.85%	Trend
		Number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence per full time equivalent employee (days)	Smaller	2.11	2.21	1.39	1.48	1.61	Trend
		Average time to hire vacancies (days)	Smaller	49.64	40.90	48.00	58.00	61.00	Trend

^ Seasonal Target

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

Note: Trend based RAG rating calculated over 11 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).

Council Performance & Budget Summary
Quarter 3 2022-2023 (October to December)

Planning & Building Control

Legend:
- Percentage of planning applications not determined (within time limits or agreed timescale)
- Planning and Building Control applications received
- Planning and Building Control applications received (previous 5 quarters)
- 12 month average applications received

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
R	Percentage of planning applications not determined (within time limits or agreed timescale)	Recruitment into planning roles is very difficult across the country at the moment for reasons outlined in past Performance Reports. Our additional contractors are working well and are prioritising older case work. Average timescales for progressing applications are currently as follows: • Householder Applications – 14 weeks • Minor Applications – 18 weeks The statutory timescale for these types of applications is 8 weeks. The Development Management Team is requesting extended time periods for considering applications, though applicants are not required to agree these extended timescales.

Council Performance & Budget Summary
Quarter 3 2022-2023 (October to December)

	Measure	Comments
R	Number of planning applications that have not been determined in time (at end of month)	The number and percentage of out of time applications remains high. Planning Officers continue to have high caseloads and a high number of expired cases. At the end of December there were 695 live applications in the system. The three new contractors are contributing to the more complex minor applications, which are the older ones. Of the applications not determined in time, 25 were due a decision in October 2022, 54 in November 2022, and 111 in December 2022; the remaining 137 are older and include some applications which are awaiting S106 agreements, under negotiation, or cannot be decided due to the Chiltern and Beechwoods Conservation Area which is subject to a holding objection from Natural England. The oldest applications in the backlog list are being reviewed and divided evenly amongst the team with a view to reducing the backlog to cases which are no older than six months by the end of this quarter.
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. Officers are actively seeking ways to mitigate these.
A	Percentage of council tax collected of that collectable in the year	More residents are electing to pay Council Tax over 12 months affecting the percentage collected in Quarters 1, 2 and 3. Collection rates do not yet seem to have been significantly impacted by the cost-of-living crisis and are very similar to the figures at the same point last year. Officers will continue to monitor this. A recent Single Person Discount review will have a small impact on the amount of Council Tax still to collect.
A	Percentage of business rates collected of that collectable in the year	More businesses are electing to pay Business Rates over 12 months affecting the percentage collected in Quarters 1, 2 and 3. Figures are almost 2% better than the collection figures at the same point last year although the different rate relief schemes operating each financial year make year on year comparisons less useful.
A	www.stalbans.gov.uk visits	The ten most visited pages in Quarter 3 were: 1. Homepage 15.14% 2. Planning (view and track applications) 10.08% 3. Waste/rubbish collections 5.75% 4. Car parks/pay and display 3.75%

	Measure	Comments
		5. Parking permits, suspensions and season tickets 3.21% 6. Recycling and rubbish 2.94% 7. Council Tax 2.77% 8. Planning and building control 2.63% 9. Do it online 1.89% 10. Pay online 1.76%
G	Total volume of calls to the Contact Centre across all queues	This figure is significantly lower than Q2. The difference relates to a spike in Garden Waste calls throughout the summer months and December's data being affected by the Council's Christmas closure.
A	Number of Stage 1 complaints logged	Stage 1 Complaints: 8 Housing Repairs 6 Planning/Development Management 6 Housing Management 2 Environmental Services 1 Leasehold 1 Council Tax 1 Housing Options 4 Parking 2 Planning Enforcement 1 Trees & Woodlands 1 Capital Projects 1 Business Rates Housing repairs complaints were mainly related to responsive repairs. The housing management complaints were neighbour, noise or anti-social behaviour related. Planning (Development Management) complaints include queries over planning applications and delays partly due to shortage in planning officers.
A	Number of Stage 2 complaints logged	Current Stage 2 complaints are split evenly between various service areas. 1 Housing Repairs 1 Leasehold 1 Parks & Green Spaces 1 Housing Options 2 Planning/Development Management 2 Housing Management 1 Parking 2 Planning Enforcement

Council Performance & Budget Summary
Quarter 3 2022-2023 (October to December)

	Measure	Comments
A	Employee Turnover (excluding retirements / TUPE)	This quarter's employee turnover comprises 3.59% unplanned and 0.26% planned leavers. The ongoing challenge around turnover reflects the local and national picture of a lively employment market, strong pay growth in other sectors and individual choices post pandemic about location and/or type of work. 8 staff transferred to other councils under shared services arrangements in this period. These are not included in the data presented in the Performance Summary table above.
A	Number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence per full time equivalent employee (days)	1.03 days were lost for short term, and 0.58 days were lost for long term sickness per full time equivalent employee. Top absence reasons are flu-like symptoms, Covid 19 and work-related stress/anxiety. Of 9 long term absences during this quarter; 6 staff members have now returned to work, 1 employee has left the Council, and 2 cases are being managed in line with our attendance management policy.

Council Performance & Budget Summary
Quarter 3 2022-2023 (October to December)

Priority Project Tracker Updates

The updates below relate to relevant 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	Q2 milestones (2022/2023) (Jul-Sep)	Priority Project	Q3 milestones (2022/2023) (Oct-Dec)	Progress	Q4 milestones (2022/2023) (Jan-Mar)
Policy	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	• Redesign of Management Tier 3 / 4 roles (reporting to Strategic Directors) completed to ensure right capacity and skills in place for delivery. • New Customer Delivery team from 5 December with 6-month development plan in place looking at underlying work practices. • Digital investment projects underway to improve resident access to online services and information and support new customer delivery model. • Three Shared Services implemented from 1 November (Internal Audit, Planning Enforcement and Building Control). • New desk booking system implemented to support hybrid working arrangements.	• Shared Legal Services implementation (01 Feb) to improve resilience and increase capacity to deliver. • Joining Herts Home Improvement Agency (01 Apr) to improve resilience and ability to deliver.
Policy	G	Progress the new Local Plan	G	• Local Plan Advisory Group (LPAG) meeting 13 September agreed new Local Plan timetable - Regulation 18 formal public consultation will take place during July-September 2023. • A new Government consultation on a proposed draft updated National Planning Policy Framework may impact timescale and/or content of Local Plan – but it is currently too early to know what the impacts may be.	• LPAG to consider draft Local Plan policies on Green Infrastructure at its meeting on 24/1/2023. • LPAG to consider draft Local / Development Management policies at its meeting on 14/03/2023.

Committee	Q2 milestones (2022/2023) (Jul-Sep)	Priority Project	Q3 milestones (2022/2023) (Oct-Dec)	Progress	Q4 milestones (2022/2023) (Jan-Mar)
Policy	A	Publication of a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)	A	• Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) is the lead authority (SADC is supporting the LCWIP work). • An initial draft is currently expected to be finalised in early 2023. It will then be published online for circa 6-weeks of public consultation in the first few months of 2023. • HCC is following a model for the consultation as required by the Department for Transport (DfT). The DfT methodology prioritises urban areas where there is the highest volume/density of trips and this is most likely to be in central St Albans and central Harpenden. • The likely exclusion of rural routes from the prioritised list will be mitigated through their inclusion within an appendix identifying routes currently being considered within other projects and will therefore have material consideration. • Feedback provided so far will be captured and considered as part of these rural route projects. • Rural transport initiatives have separate funding pots such as the DfT Rural Mobility Fund and local S106 funding, so should not be impacted by the LCWIP funding streams. • Councillors will have the opportunity to input directly during the public consultation and any changes needed will be made. The results of that public consultation will be reported to Councillors with the proposed final LCWIP for Councillor consideration in spring 2023	• LCWIP 6-week public consultation either to be completed before pre-election period (if ready in time) or in Quarter 1 of 2023/2024.

Council Performance & Budget Summary
Quarter 3 2022-2023 (October to December)

Committee	Q2 milestones (2022/2023) (Jul-Sep)	Priority Project	Q3 milestones (2022/2023) (Oct-Dec)	Progress	Q4 milestones (2022/2023) (Jan-Mar)
Policy	G	Take forward the Sustainability and Climate Crisis Strategy and Action Plan. Themes: governance and leadership; energy use; transport and air quality; waste; nature and food; water and climate change adaptation	Green to indicate that the Strategy and Action Plan are being taken forward. For status of specific work streams see website.	• Officers are reporting their progress against specific work streams on the Sustainability Tracker each month. • Updates are published on the Council website at: https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/060122%20Sustsinabiliy%20Tracker.pdf.	• Progress for each of the c.100 actions can be found in the Sustainability Action Tracker at the link opposite.

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

Council Performance & Budget Summary
Quarter 3 2022-2023 (October to December)

Appendix 1: Performance Reports to the other Service Committees

Regeneration and Business Committee Performance Summary 2022-23 Quarter 3 (October to December)

This report was considered by the Regeneration and Business Committee at its meeting on Monday 23rd January 2023.

Link to the report: https://stalbans.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s50063347/Final%20-%20Regeneration%20and%20Business%20Q3%202022-23%20Performance%20Report.pdf

Housing and Inclusion Committee Performance Summary 2022-23 Quarter 3 (October to December)

This report was considered by the Housing and Inclusion Committee at its meeting on Wednesday 25th January 2023.

Link to the report: https://stalbans.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s50063373/Housing%20and%20Inclusion%20Q3%202022-23%20-%20Performance%20Report.pdf

Public Realm Committee Performance Summary 2022-23 Quarter 3 (October to December)

This report was considered by the Public Realm Committee at its meeting on Tuesday 31st January 2023.

Link to the report: https://stalbans.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s50063442/Report%20-%20Public%20Realm%20Q3%202022-23%20Performance.pdf

Appendix 2: Section 106 Report

Section 106 FAQ information sheet https://stalbans.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s50062687/Appendix%201.2%20-%20Section%20106%20FAQ%20infomation%20sheet.pdf