

**MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL**

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| <b>Report of:</b>                 | Chief Executive  |
| <b>Relevant Executive Member:</b> | The Mayor  |
| <b>Submitted to:</b>              | Executive  |
| <b>Date:</b>                      | 11 June 2025   |
| <b>Title:</b>                     | Corporate Performance: Quarter Four 2024/2025, Year End    |
| <b>Report for:</b>                | Decision   |
| <b>Status:</b>                    | Public   |
| <b>Council priority:</b>          | <b>Plan</b><br>All   |
| <b>Key decision:</b>              | No   |
| <b>Why:</b>                       | Decision does not reach the threshold to be a key decision |
| <b>Subject to call in?</b>        | Yes  |
| <b>Why:</b>                       | Non-Urgent Decision.                                       |

**Proposed decision(s)**

That Executive:

- approves the proposed changes to the Executive actions, detailed at Appendix 1
- notes the progress and position of the corporate performance disciplines, including the Transformation Portfolio
- notes delivery status of the Council Plan 2024-27 supporting workplan at Quarter Four, detailed at Appendix 2
- notes delivery status of Council Plan 2024-27 Outcome Measures at Quarter Four, detailed at Appendix 3 and Appendix 4
- notes the activities / outcomes of completed Council Plan workplan initiatives as detailed at Appendix 5
- notes the Strategic Risk Register, at Appendix 6
- notes corporate projects benefits / outcomes delivered in 2024/25 as detailed at Appendix 7
- notes Transformation project benefits / outcomes in 2024/25 as detailed at Appendix 8

### **Executive summary**

This report advises the Executive of progress against corporate performance at Quarter Four 2024/25 Year End, providing the necessary information to enable the Executive to discharge its performance management responsibilities against the following performance disciplines:

- Actions pertaining to decisions approved via Executive reports;
- Delivery of the Council Plan 2024-27 and associated outcome measures;
- Strategic Risk Register performance;
- Programme and Project management performance;
- Transformation progress and performance; and
- Other matters of compliance.

Where appropriate, this report seeks approval of any changes or amendments, where these lie within the authority of the Executive.

## 1. Purpose of this report and its contribution to the achievement of the Council Plan ambitions

1.1 This report advises the Executive of corporate performance at the end of Quarter Four and 2024 / 2025 Year End, and where appropriate seeks approval of any changes, where these lie within the authority of the Executive. The primary purpose of the report is to set out how effectively the Council is delivering activity to deliver against each of the Council Plan priorities, aims and ambitions and underpinning workplan activities.

| Our ambitions                          | Summary of how this report will support delivery of these ambitions and the underpinning aims   |
|--|---|
| <b>A successful and ambitious town</b> | <p>13 Council Plan Workplan initiatives are supporting delivery of the Council Plan's ambitions and aims to achieve a successful and ambitious town which are reported within this report.</p> <p>Positive progress reported includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of an Economic Growth Strategy and Masterplan for the town</li> <li>- Development of a new Local Plan for Middlesbrough</li> <li>- Development of the Council's Education and Skills Strategy.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>A healthy Place</b>                 | <p>22 Council Plan Workplan initiatives are supporting delivery of the Council Plan's ambitions and aims to achieve a healthy place which are reported within this report.</p> <p>Positive progress reported includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increasing the amount of reablement provided to reduce the need for on-going care</li> <li>- Improve health literacy through delivery of a Healthy Start pilot model for prevention of ill-health in schools</li> <li>- Development of a Community Capacity Building Strategy with focus on social capital and community wealth building.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Safe and resilient communities</b>  | <p>8 Council Plan Workplan initiatives are supporting delivery of the Council Plan's ambitions and aims to achieve safe and resilient communities across Middlesbrough which are reported within this report.</p> <p>Positive progress reported includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reducing Crime and Anti-Social behaviours across Middlesbrough through the continued working with the Community Safety Partnership</li> <li>- Improving the safety and health of the public and the environments in which they live and work through review of public protection policies and interventions</li> <li>- Review and implementation of an Empty Homes strategy to support the Councils wider approach to tackling crime and ASB.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Delivering best value</b>           | <p>13 Council Plan Workplan initiatives are supporting delivery of the Council Plan's ambitions and aims to achieve safe and</p>  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <p>resilient communities across Middlesbrough which are reported within this report.</p> <p>Positive progress reported includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increasing the level of grant income to support development of new service delivery initiatives</li> <li>- Remodelling of the Council's Planning Service to reflect increasing demand and complexity, address recruitment and retention difficulties, and deliver improved customer service.</li> </ul> |
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## 2. Recommendations

### 2.1 That the Executive:

- approves the proposed changes to the Executive actions, detailed at Appendix 1
- notes the progress and position of the corporate performance disciplines, including the Transformation Portfolio
- notes delivery status of the Council Plan 2024-27 supporting workplan at Quarter Four, detailed at Appendix 2
- notes delivery status of Council Plan 2024-27 Outcome Measures at Quarter Four, detailed at Appendix 3 and Appendix 4
- notes the activities / outcomes of completed Council Plan workplan initiatives as detailed at Appendix 5
- notes the Strategic Risk Register, at Appendix 6
- notes corporate projects benefits / outcomes delivered in 2024/25 as detailed at Appendix 7
- notes Transformation project benefits / outcomes in 2024/25 as detailed at Appendix 8

## 3. Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

3.1 To enable the effective management of performance and risk in line with the Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance.

## 4. Background and relevant information

4.1 The Council's Scheme of Delegation gives the Executive collective responsibility for corporate strategic performance, together with associated action.

4.2 This report provides the necessary information to enable the Executive to discharge its performance management responsibilities, setting out progress against priority performance disciplines and other key associated items, together with actions to be taken to address any issues identified.

4.3 The projected financial outturn at Quarter Four and 2024/2025 Year End, is presented separately to this meeting of the Executive, and so not repeated here. There are plans in development to integrate performance, risk and financial reporting for future financial years.

4.4 As part of continuous improvement in performance and risk management, the Council's Leadership Management Team (LMT) has implemented monthly reviews of corporate performance utilising a Directorate Performance dashboard, drawing data from a range of performance feeder systems.

4.5 The output from these sessions is reflected through quarterly updates to the Executive and covering in addition, progress in delivering actions agreed by the Executive, key Directorate performance issues and other performance-related matters.

### **Overall progress at Quarter Four 2024/25**

4.6 The Council's performance overall at the end of Quarter Four 2024/25 maintained achievement in two of the five corporate performance disciplines as set out in the Council's risk appetite, which is a dip to that reported at Quarter Three 2024/25.

| Performance discipline                   | Q4<br>2024/25                 | Q3<br>2024/25   | Q2<br>2024/25   | Q1<br>2024/25   | Expected<br>standard | Standard<br>achieved | Trend |
|--|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------|
| Executive actions                        | <b>64%</b><br><b>(30/47)</b>  | 51%<br>(32/63)  | 67%<br>(36/54)  | 68%<br>(30/44)  | 90%                  | No                   | ↑     |
| Council Plan 2024-27<br>outcome measures | <b>30%</b><br><b>(12/40)</b>  | 13%<br>(5/39)   | 13%<br>(5/39)   | 13%<br>(5/39)   | 90%                  | No                   | ↑     |
| Council Plan workplan                    | <b>89%</b><br><b>(46/56)</b>  | 100%<br>(55/56) | 98%<br>(55/56)  | 98%<br>(55/56)  | 90%                  | No                   | ↓     |
| Strategic Risk Register                  | <b>91%</b>                    | 90%             | 91%             | 94%             | 90%                  | Yes                  | ↑     |
| Programme and Project<br>Management      | <b>100%</b><br><b>(17/17)</b> | 100%<br>(14/14) | 100%<br>(15/15) | 100%<br>(18/18) | 90%                  | Yes                  | ↔     |

4.7 It should be noted that performance against Council Plan outcomes for Quarter Four 2024/25 is measured by tracking progress against baseline key performance indicators, as outlined in the Council Plan 2024-27 and its associated workplan. It is expected that over time, 90% of the outcome measures will be achieved.

### ***Progress in delivering Executive actions***

4.8 Actions agreed by the Executive to deliver approved decisions are tracked by LMT, each month. If following Executive approval, any action is found to be no longer feasible, appropriate, or cannot be delivered within the approved timescales, this report will be used to advise the Executive as such, and to seek approval of alternative actions or amended timescales.

4.9 At Quarter Four 2024/25, 30 of 47 live actions (64%) were reported as on target to be delivered by the agreed timescales; an improvement from the 51% reported at Quarter Three 2024/25, however continuing to remain below the 90% expected standard of achievement of actions.

4.10 There are seven proposed amendments to Executive actions presented for approval at Quarter Four as detailed in Appendix 1. It is assumed that the remainder of Executive actions will be achieved within originally approved timescales and a further update on progress against plans, will be provided at Quarter One 2025/26.

4.11 Of those seven amendments detailed in Appendix 1, the reasons for the proposed amendments are as follows:

- The report pertaining to *Developing a New Nunthorpe Community Facility* report has two actions relating to 'Conduct Construction Tender,' (to extend from 02/01/2025 to 31/05/2025) and 'Seek Executive approval to proceed to construction stage and present 25-year lease', (to extend from 02/01/2025 to 31/05/2025), seeking approval for a change to the end date, due to a delay in finalising scheme design, alongside a recent drainage issue which is under investigation.
- The *2024/25 Quarter Two Revenue and Capital Monitoring and Forecast Outturn* report has two actions relating to 'Undertaking Service Reviews' in both Crematorium and Fleet services, (to extend from 31/12/2024 to 30/09/2025), seeking approval or a change to the end date, due to service reviews being postponed until after budget setting.
- The *Breastfeeding Borough Declaration* report has two actions at risk, one relating to the implementation of the Breastfeeding Boroughs Declaration and one relating to achieving full Breastfeeding Borough status, (to extend from 31/03/2025 to 30/06/2025), due to the Breastfeeding campaign now running until the end of March 2025.
- The *Dental Health and the Impact of Covid-19* report has an action relation to the development of a local oral health strategy, which is seeking extension from 31/03/2025 to 30/06/2025, due to the strategy still being in development and which is ICB led.

### ***Progress in delivering the Council Plan 2024-27***

4.12 The Council Plan is the Council's overarching business plan for the medium-term and sets out the priorities of the Elected Mayor of Middlesbrough and the ambitions for our communities and the ways in which we seek to achieve them.

4.13 The Leadership Team collaborated with the Mayor and the Executive to develop and shape the Mayor's priorities for the town, to inform the Council Plan 2024-27.

4.14 The Council Plan articulates the four priorities of the Mayor and outlines the approach that will be taken to addressing those priorities:

| Mayor's Priority                | Description   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| A successful and ambitious town | Maximising economic growth, employment, and prosperity, in an inclusive and environmentally sustainable way.  |
| A healthy place/                | Helping our residents to live longer and healthier lives, improving life chances and opportunities to thrive. |
| Safe and resilient communities  | Creating a safer environment, where residents can live more independent lives.                                |
| Delivering best value           | Changing how we operate, to deliver the best outcomes for residents and businesses.                           |

4.15 The underpinning initiatives and workplans which enable effective delivery of the Council Plan 2024-27 ambitions and measures of success, and the proposed performance and governance arrangements, were approved at a meeting of the Executive on 10 April 2024, and together they demonstrate a robust approach to the delivery of key priority activities across Council services.

### **Council Plan 2024-27: outcomes**

4.16 Progress of delivery of the Council Plan 2024-27, is monitored via detailed milestone plans which support each initiative under the four priorities and link to success measures determining the impact upon:

- the types of businesses being established in Middlesbrough, to ensure that we attract those which will give residents access to well-paid and rewarding careers,
- healthy life expectancy of residents of Middlesbrough, who currently experience ill-health much earlier than wealthy areas across the UK,
- community safety, as part of our plans to reduce crime and make residents and communities feel safer,
- progress against the Council's governance improvement journey, to provide assurance to members of the public and our partners, that the services we are providing are value for money.

4.17 Performance management and monitoring of the Council Plan adheres to the corporate programme and project management framework where applicable and is reported to all senior managers and Members as part of this quarterly corporate performance results report, presented to Executive for noting and decision, where applicable.

4.18 Performance overall against the Council Plan 2024-27 outcome measures at Quarter Four 2024/25 Year End, is reported as 12 of 40 (30%) either of an improving or static trend, against the 90% performance standard, detailed in Appendix 3.

| Outcome Status      | Q4 2024/25         | Previous reported position | Expected standard | Standard achieved | Trend |
|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------|
| Number (%age) GREEN | <b>10/40 (25%)</b> | 4 / 39 (10%)               | 90%               | No                | ↑     |
| Number (%age) AMBER | <b>2/40 (5%)</b>   | 1 / 39 (3%)                | N/A               | N/A               | ↑     |
| Number (%age) RED   | <b>28/40 (70%)</b> | 34 / 39 (87%)              | N/A               | N/A               | ↓     |

4.19 Of those outcome measures reporting as Green and of an improving trend, the following narrative is provided below with further detail provided at Appendix 3:

- *New Homes Completed:* With a target is 410 and reported performance at 445, the outcome has overachieved by 35 units at Quarter Four 2024/25 Year End.
- *Cancer Screening coverage (Breast Cancer):* Reported performance against this outcome is 67.9% against a target of 67.10%, demonstrates an improvement and upward trend for Breast Cancer Screening uptake in 2023/24, compared to 63.7% in 2022/23, which had significantly dropped during and post COVID-19 period.

- *Percentage of children achieving at least the expected level of development in communication, language and literacy skills at the end of reception:* Reported performance of 70.3% (2023/24) against the target of 67.70% is a significant increase compared to 61.7% reported in 2022/23.
- *Obesity prevalence in children (aged 10 to 11):* Reported performance of 25.6% (2023/24) against the target of 25.80%, demonstrates a positive upward trend compared to 28.5% in 2022/23. Active Healthy Eating campaigns in schools and educating parents continue.
- *Number of adults aged 65 and over whose long-term support needs are met by admission to residential and nursing care homes (per 100k population):* Reported performance of 374.4 against a target of 738.6, demonstrates a significant decrease in the number of adults aged 65 and over whose long-term support needs are met by admission to residential and nursing care homes. This is as a result of the support provided to enable adults to be independent for longer.
- *Bus Patronage:* Reported performance of 3,218,815 against the target of 6,170,735, demonstrates an upward trajectory to meet target when Quarter Four 2024/25 Year End figures are made available.
- *Rail Patronage:* Reported performance of 1,519,254 against the target of 1,441,801, demonstrates a positive increase in the number of people choosing to use rail services.
- *Number of publicly accessible electric vehicle charging points:* Reported performance of 55 against the target of 54, demonstrates that the target has been fully met, and with an additional 21 publicly accessible electric vehicle charging points installed in Middlesbrough Council car parks, and a further 34 on-street charging points.
- *Total Middlesbrough Council website page views:* Whilst no specific target was set, the current reported position of 3,181,585 visits against the previous reported position of 2,103,027, shows a growing increase in the number of website page views. The council website was reviewed, and content improved during 2024/25.
- *Total MyMiddlesbrough user accounts:* Whilst no specific target was set, the current reported position of 114,727 accounts against the previous reported position of 111,305, shows a steady increase in the number of MyMiddlesbrough user accounts being created.

4.20 Of those outcomes reporting as Red and of a worsening trend, the following narrative is provided below with further detail provided at Appendix 4:

- *Number of pupils in local authority funded alternative provision:* The target is 0.42%, with current reported performance at 0.65%. Exclusions figures within Middlesbrough are remaining stable with suspension figures forecasted to reduce by the end of the academic year. The rise reported is reflective of the number of children in 'alternative provision' through either a permanent exclusion, suspension or an intervention to avoid a permanent exclusion.



- *Estimated un-ringfenced reserves as a % net revenue expenditure:* The target is 37.54%, with reported performance at 12.98%, however the final 2024/25 Year End outturn cannot be finalised until after the time of writing this report, though it is expected to be closer to the target figure.
- *Crime rate per 1,000 population:* The target for 2024/25 is 149.2, with reported performance at 159.26. The key contributing factor was a significant increase in young people given a conditional discharge, following the civil disorder that occurred in August 2024.
- *Anti-Social Behaviour Rate per 1,000 population:* The target for 2024/25 is 29.7, with reported performance at 39.02. Seasonal variations, civil disorder and an increase in pro-active partnership campaigns have led to an increase in recorded ASB incidents, which has led to the increased outturn figure.
- *First time entrants into the Criminal Justice System:* The target is 163, reported performance is at 392.74. The key contributing factor was a significant increase in young people who were given a conditional discharge as a result of being involved in the civil disorder that occurred in August 2024.
- *Number of completed affordable homes delivered (gross):* The target is 155, with reported performance at 133. It should be noted that although the Council have control over land release and planning permission, they do not have direct control over private development timescales.
- *New homes started:* The target is 410, and reported performance is 378, however it should be noted that although the Council have control over land release and planning permission, they do not have direct control over private development timescales.
- *Rate of births of new enterprises per 10,000 resident population aged 16 and above:* The target is 67, with reported performance at 51. Contributing factors include economic downturn and uncertainty, legislation changes and a general shift in consumer behaviour. Locally in Middlesbrough, there are several incentives in delivery which support start up business opportunities.
- *Household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting:* The target for 2024/25 is 33%, with reported performance at 20.8% (at Quarter Three, awaiting Year End outturn), due to contamination rates being higher than expected. Efforts continue on a range of interventions to improve the recycling rates, including educating our residents by roadshows and visits to hubs and schools, refuse crews stickering bins to identify contaminated bins, letters sent to residents advising how to correct any contaminated bins and regular social media posts.
- *Residual household waste per household:* The target for 2024/25 is 578.45kg, with reported performance at 729.14kg (at Quarter Three, awaiting Year End outturn), largely due to adjustments for residents moving to a fortnightly collection not reducing waste in some areas. Targeted education is being rolled out to specific areas to assist further with reducing waste.
- *Households owed a duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act per 1000 population:* The target is 4.1, reported performance is 7.26. Key reasons include

social factors such as poverty, deprivation, substance use, offending, poor mental and physical health and unemployment which all contribute to a person's ability to secure and sustain accommodation. The council continues to strengthen links with wider services and organisations to promote an early intervention approach to prevent homelessness where possible and conduct more 'upstream' work. There has been a concentrated effort over recent months to improve the quality of casework and decisions made by the team

- *Adult Obesity (18 years plus)*: The target is 32.4%, and reported performance is 34.7% however, this figure was derived from a national annual survey which was last undertaken in 2022/23, so is now outdated.
- *Obesity prevalence in children at reception age (four to five years)*: The target is 11.3% and last reported performance was 13.8% for the 2023/24 school academic year. Key contributing factors include a higher prevalence in areas of deprivation, the cost of living crisis and the affordability and convenience of choosing fast / unhealthy food.
- *Children Looked After (CLA) placed out of area*: The target is 10%, reported performance is at 14.40% due to the complexities involved in children's care, national searches are undertaken where we do not have availability to place children more locally.

4.21 The expectation is that over time and the duration of the Council Plan, 90% of the outcome measures will be achieved, as these are outcome measures predicted over the period of the Council Plan, 2024-27.

4.22 Current and previous outcome measures have generally focused on existing published data sets which whilst they provide consistency and regional and national comparators, meaningful localised data and insights would be more impactful.

4.23 A level of strategic cohesion and planning is required to ensure delivery of all Council activity, contributes towards effective and successful delivery of the Council Plan priorities through articulation of what it is we want to achieve / impact / change (the outcomes) and how we then deliver that change (through an enabling strategy) for each Priority. Those outcomes then drive our direction and intention as a Council.

4.24 Outcome measures for the next iteration of the Council Plan will therefore be derived through collaboration with services, to understand the impactful work that we as an authority have influence over in shaping and affecting.

### ***Council Plan 2024-27: workplan***

4.25 At Quarter Four 2024/25, performance against the Council Plan workplan is detailed in Appendix 2 and summarised below as below the corporate standard of 90%, with 89% of all initiatives on target to be achieved in full, within approved timescales.

| Status    | Q4 2024/25 position | Q3 2024/25 position | Q2 2024/25 position | Q1 2024/25 position | Expected standard | Standard achieved | Trend |
|-----------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------|
| COMPLETED | 23%<br>(13 / 56)    | 14%<br>(8 / 56)     | 5%<br>(3 / 56)      | 2%<br>(1 / 56)      | 90%               | Yes               | ↓     |

|       |                                |                  |                  |                  |     |     |   |
|-------|--------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-----|-----|---|
| GREEN | <b>66%</b><br><b>(37 / 56)</b> | 86%<br>(49 / 56) | 93%<br>(52 / 56) | 98%<br>(55 / 56) |     |     |   |
| AMBER | <b>0%</b><br><b>(0 / 56)</b>   | 0%<br>(0 / 56)   | 0%<br>(0 / 56)   | 0%<br>(0 / 56)   | n/a | n/a | ↔ |
| RED   | <b>11%</b><br><b>(6 / 56)</b>  | 0%<br>(0 / 56)   | 2%<br>(1 / 56)   | 0%<br>(0 / 56)   | n/a | n/a | ↓ |

4.26 There are six Council Plan initiatives reporting as off-track at Quarter Four as detailed below:

- *Prevent and / or delay the need for formal service provision through improved access to reliable and timely advice and information, to support independent and healthy living*, is delayed from 31/03/2025 to 31/06/2025 due to a dependency on the redesign of the ASC approach through 'Three Conversations'.
- *Increase pathways offer for homeless households that embody choice; safety and dignity and provide routes into sustainable, long-term accommodation*, is delayed from 31/03/2025 to 30/08/2025 due to an external review of homelessness to inform our future strategy.
- *Increase the effectiveness of prevention through the development of more signposting and a consistent strengths-based approach to the promotion of independence at the "front door" of ASC*, is delayed from 31/03/2025 to 31/08/2025 due to a dependency on the implementation of the Customer model and Three Conversations approach.
- *Work with partners to ensure safe and effective systems and processes are in place for the protection of victims of domestic abuse and their children*, is delayed from 31/03/2025 to 30/06/2025 due to a delay in a change of approach requiring a needs assessment to inform a new strategy.
- *Review of Children's and Young People placements, including processes and procedures to ensure robust decision-making and allocation*, delayed from 31/03/2025 to 30/04/2025 awaiting approval of 2024/25 Year End report.
- *Implement new delivery model for Procurement*, delayed from 31/03/2025 to 31/12/2025, due to awaiting the outcome of piloting a new contract management model.

4.27 There are no proposed amendments to Council Plan workplan actions presented for approval at Quarter Four. It is assumed that the remainder of Council Plan workplan actions will be achieved within originally approved timescales and a further update on progress against plans, will be provided at Quarter One 2025/26.

4.28 At Quarter Four 2024/25 Year End, 13 Council Plan initiatives were fully completed. A summary of the key activities and outcomes achieved that have contributed towards the achievement of the Council Plan priorities, are detailed in Appendix 5 and include:

*A Successful and Ambitious Town:*

- *Establish a strategic leadership role for the provision of housing to ensure that the provision aligns with needs*: Identification and recruitment of a permanent Head of Housing to identify current routes and costs used for providing temporary accommodation and the developing a demand led model for the financially efficient supply of housing which meets service user needs.

- *Improve outcomes through delivery of the Priority Education Area action plan at Key Stages 1, 2 and 4:* This work has seen an improvement in reading attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 from 63% to 68%, through support to schools to develop writing skills across the curriculum, to improve outcomes at Key Stage 2 and 4 and support to schools to secure outcomes in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 4, from 34% to 45%

#### *A Healthy Place:*

- *Develop and implement a pilot approach to housing and support, for inclusion health groups and ensure this is reflected in the Supported Housing Strategy:* This work has seen a significant increase in support and additional housing solutions within South Tees, for 48 residents.
- *Strengthen our approach to supporting dementia friendly communities programme through increasing voluntary and community sector capacity:* This work has seen funding secured for community grassroots organisations to support the wellbeing of residents who live with dementia and their carers. Additionally, increased opportunities for care home residents with a dementia diagnosis to access dementia friendly activities, an increase in volunteers to support programmes aimed at supporting people living with dementia, aimed at reducing chronic loneliness and delivering Age Friendly and Dementia Friendly Training to voluntary and community organisations making their service and activities more inclusive.
- *Relaunch Welfare Strategy to support Middlesbrough's vulnerable residents who need financial assistance, advice and support:* This activity has resulted in a significant increase in accessing unclaimed benefits, which can be attributed to the volume of referrals coming into the service from residents and staff referrals, alongside a joint pilot with Public Health on the auto enrolment of free school meals for those that meet specific government criteria which identified and enabled 546 more children to have a free school meal and an additional £765k in Pupil Premium funding for Middlesbrough schools. Support was also provided to 194 pensioners that were no longer entitled to the winter fuel payments but were eligible to claim pension credits and 860 individuals were also supported through Discretionary Housing Payments.
- *Reduce health inequalities caused by excess weight, through implementation of the core Healthy Weight Declaration commitments:* Although the impact of this will take time to realise, key activities include, Eat Well Schools, embedding school food standards into holiday activities, a cooking programme for vulnerable people and a weight stigma e-learning module.
- *Improve environmental standards of the town, through increased levels of environmental enforcement:* This activity has resulted in a range of positive impacts on environmental enforcement across the town such as the recovery of stray dogs, legal micro-chipping notices served, a significant number of vehicles seized for being untaxed or abandoned. Fixed penalty fines for fly-tipping and case files prepared and submitted for legal review for fly-tipping offences.

#### *Safe and Resilient Communities:*

- *Implement a multidisciplinary approach (SHIFT) to increase prevention opportunities through early intervention:* Since its launch in September 2024, the SHIFT programme has seen 17 of 27 children with no arrests, 22 children had not committed

any proven offences, and 21 children had not been missing. Children's Social Care involvement reduced for 4 children with 4 children moved back to Middlesbrough, 2 of whom were previously in custody and 2 were living in placements out of area and Guide's ratings of mental health had improved for 6 children from the identified cohort.

*Delivering Best Value:*

- *Develop and implement approach to achieve organisational change through implementation of transformation portfolio of programme and projects and associated governance structure:* The implementation of a transformation programme with robust governance structures in place has enabled cross-Directorate strategic discussion and decision making, with improvements made to programme and project management processes and documentation and the successful delivery of 21 transformation initiatives / projects which realised significant savings during 2024/25.
- *Refresh the Information Strategy to ensure legal compliance in regard to information governance:* This work has resulted in the completion of an assessment of the quality of data held by the organisation to inform priorities, and the approval of a refreshed Information Strategy to enable data to be open and transparent and reuse data in predictive analytics to support services to better forecast demand and target resources.
- *Implementation and review effectiveness of demand and cost modelling forecast, for high-spend areas to feed into MTFP assumptions:* This work has resulted in focused activity to review and implement a demand and cost modelling forecast, for high-spend areas, leading to an improved production of the current Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and supporting the achievement of a balanced budget for the next two financial years.
- *Implementation of a People Strategy to underpin the Council's cultural transformation ambitions and financial stability:* The People Strategy is live and will see the implementation of a wide range of activities across six key themes and delivery of a successful staff awards event.
- *Maximise grant opportunities to support service delivery:* This activity has seen the recruitment of a Grants Review Officer to support the achievement of existing and future savings, a review of Section 17 funds to maximise the use of funding from other sources, recruitment of a temporary bid writer to horizon scan grant portals and identify bid opportunities across directorates, and the introduction of parenting assessments expertise in-house to train up and to avoid future external costs and support demand management.

**Strategic Risk Register (SRR)**

4.29 The Strategic Risk Register (SRR) sets out the key risks, which if they occurred, could stop the Council achieving its objectives, as set out in the Council Plan.

4.30 The Register also sets out control measures in place to reduce the impact and / or likelihood of a risk occurring, as well as further planned actions to manage the risk.

Risks in the SRR are identified and managed by the Council's Leadership Management Team in line with the Risk and Opportunity Management Policy, agreed by Executive in 2023. Progress in managing these risks is reported to the Leadership Management Team on a monthly basis, with a full review of the SRR conducted on a quarterly basis.

4.31 The more volatile the risk, the more closely it must be monitored and managed. Managers are responsible for identifying and recording the countermeasures / actions required to address risks and opportunities and maintaining those details within the Council's risk management solution. Countermeasures to risk will include actions to terminate, transfer, treat or tolerate the risk. Actions in relation to opportunity will include exploitation (fully or partially) or avoidance.

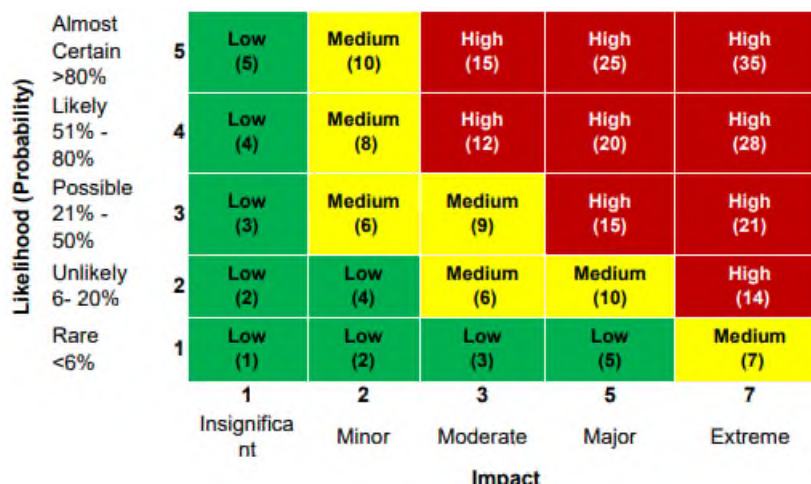
4.32 The Strategic Risk Register contained 14 risks at the end of Quarter Four 2024/25. The quarterly review of the SRR identified inclusion of the following new risk:

*SR-16: Removal of the statutory override preventing the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficit from being met from general fund resources. If the statutory override issued by central government expires as planned on 31 March 2026, without providing a national solution to the current shortfall in funding compared to demand and cost of high needs provision, this will mean that the High Needs Funding Deficit will be required to be met from the Council's general fund resources. Based upon the current projection of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) high needs deficit compared to the level of revenue reserves, this will result in the Council's reserves being exhausted and the Council's s151 Officer potentially being required to issue a s114 Notice. This is likely to be the case for the majority of local authorities nationally.*

4.33 The following additional actions were identified to manage this risk:

- Lobbying Government to resolve the High Needs Fund (HNF) budget
- Work with schools and settings to reduce the number of children and young people who are excluded.
- Promote greater inclusion within mainstream settings.
- Reduce the number of children and young people on out of area provision.

4.34 Risks within the SRR are scored three times, using the following table: the first score assesses the likelihood and impact of the risk occurring without any control measures in place; the second assesses the impact of the control measures currently in place; and the third sets a target for the management of the risk.



### Directorate Risk Registers

4.35 The Strategic Risk Register has a supporting suite of Directorate Risk Registers. The Council's Leadership team agrees escalations and de-escalations of risk. In addition, directorate management teams review their risks, monthly. This and other measures ensure the Council has a grip on its risk management approach. Below is a summary position of actions taken during Quarter Four to manage held at the directorate level:

| Directorate Risk Register | Regeneration | Adults | Public Health | Children's Services | Environment | Finance | Legal and Governance Services |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------|---------------|---------------------|-------------|---------|-------------------------------|
| New Risks                 | 1            | 0      | 0             | 0                   | 1           | 0       | 0                             |
| New Actions               | 8            | 0      | 0             | 6                   | 6           | 0       | 5                             |
| New Assessments           | 0            | 2      | 0             | 0                   | 1           | 10      | 0                             |
| Deactivated Risks         | 0            | 0      | 2             | 0                   | 1           | 7       | 0                             |

### Progress in delivering Programmes and Projects

4.36 The Council maintains a portfolio of programmes and projects in support of achievement of the Council's strategic priorities. At Quarter Four 2024/25, 100% (17 of 17) of the programmes / projects within the portfolio, remained on-track to deliver against project time, cost, scope, and benefits, remaining above the expected combined standard of 90%.

| Status | Q4 2024/25 position | Q3 2024/25 position | Q2 2024/25 position | Q1 2024/25 position | Expected standard | Standard achieved | Trend |
|--------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------|
| GREEN  | 100% (17 / 17)      | 93% (13 / 14)       | 100% (15 / 15)      | 100% (18 / 18)      | 90%               | Yes               | ↑     |
| AMBER  | 0% (0 / 17)         | 7% (1 / 14)         | 0% (0 / 15)         | 0% (0 / 18)         |                   |                   |       |
| RED    | 0% (0 / 17)         | 0% (0 / 15)         | 0% (0 / 15)         | 0% (0 / 18)         | N/A               | N/A               | ↔     |

4.37 During 2024/25, three large corporate projects were successfully delivered as summarised below with further information on the benefits achieved detailed in Appendix 7:

- *Inspecting Local Authority Children's Services (ILAC)* Improvement to address six key areas identified by OFSTED
- A range of *Town Fund Initiatives* to improve the physical environment and provision of outdoor recreational facilities
- A *Review of the Middlesbrough Council Website* to improve and enhance the Council's web presence, improve the intranet and online interaction with our customers

### ***Transformation progress and performance***

4.38 The Council has an established Transformation Programme; *Recover, Reset, Deliver*, which is designed to align with the vision and ambitions of the Council Plan, and aims to deliver tangible outcomes that benefit the people of Middlesbrough whilst delivering value for money and a financially sustainable organisation.

4.39 The 'Approach to Transformation of Middlesbrough Council' report to full Council on 27 March 2024 outlined the contents of the Transformation Portfolio, which is structured around six themed programmes. These programmes encompass a range of activities, key business changes, and complex projects aimed at addressing the emerging challenges and opportunities.

4.40 The scope of the Transformation Programme and its associated investment provides assurance on and aims to secure the delivery of all the savings of £21.028m approved by Council at its budget meeting on 8 March 2024. Investment in the resource required to physically deliver, such as programme management, finance expertise and subject matter experts, will support the Council in delivering all approved savings.

4.41 A report on 'Resetting the Council's approach to Transformation and Delivery of the Council Plan' was approved at Executive on 30th April 2025, which will see a reduction in strategic programmes from six to four.

4.42 To ensure the success of the now established governance framework and board structure, key roles and responsibilities have been designated at each layer, with the Executive being the ultimate accountable body for successful delivery of the transformation portfolio, in its entirety.

4.43 This Executive-approved governance structure ensures that projects and programmes are scrutinised in a uniform way, with exceptions escalated to senior responsible officers to ensure action is taken to bring the portfolio, programmes and projects back on-track, where required and / or necessary.

4.44 The position of savings within the transformation portfolio were reported to the Leadership Team and through the Transformation Portfolio governance and performance management reporting cycle arrangements throughout 2024/25, and detail and summary for Quarter Four 2024/25 of financial savings achieved, is provided



in the 2024/25 Revenue and Capital Outturn report presented at the same meeting of the Executive, and so are not repeated here.

4.45 The position was presented at Quarter Four 2024/25, by the number of projects within the portfolio and broken down by RAG rating, is as follows:

| RAG  | Adults |     | Children's |     | Property |     | Customer |    | Place-Based |     | Target Operating Model and Core Services |     | Total (No.) | Total (%) |
|--|--------|-----|------------|-----|----------|-----|----------|----|-------------|-----|--|-----|-------------|-----------|
| Benefits and / or savings(s) realised. Evidence provided.                        | 9      | 44% | 3          | 20% | 0        | 0%  | 0        | 0% | 5           | 25% | 4  | 20% | 21          | 28%       |
| Benefits and / or savings(s) on track. Assured plans in place.                   | 3      | 38% | 8          | 40% | 3        | 60% | 0        | 0% | 12          | 60% | 14                                       | 70% | 40          | 53%       |
| Medium risk to benefits and / or savings(s). Mitigation in play / in development | 1      | 6%  | 1          | 13% | 1        | 20% | 0        | 0% | 0           | 0%  | 1  | 5%  | 4           | 5%        |
| High-risk to benefits and / or savings(s). Limited scope for mitigation.         | 3      | 13% | 3          | 27% | 1        | 20% | 0        | 0% | 1           | 5%  | 0  | 0%  | 8           | 11%       |
| Benefits and / or saving(s) are undeliverable.                                   | 0      | 0%  | 0          | 0%  | 0        | 0%  | 0        | 0% | 2           | 10% | 1  | 5%  | 3           | 4%        |
| TOTAL  | 16     | 21% | 15         | 20% | 5        | 7%  | 0        | 0% | 20          | 26% | 20                                       | 26% | 76          | 100%      |

4.46 At the end of Quarter Four 2024/25, 61 out of 76 projects and saving initiatives have delivered in full, equating to 81% (Blue and Green RAG totals combined).

4.47 Two projects; ECS04: Review of Community Facilities and ECS10: Replacement Wheeled Bins Charge were removed from the portfolio as agreed by Council as part of the '2025/26 Revenue Budget, Medium Term Financial Plan and Council Tax setting report'. The remaining 13 projects / savings initiatives have been carried forward to be achieved in 2025/26 and full delivery continues to be assumed, based on latest assurance position.

4.48 Successful delivery of the first year of the transformation programme has contributed to achieving a balanced budget for the next two financial years, 2025/26 and 2026/27.

4.49 Delegated decision-making powers relating to any required approvals for proposed changes to time, scope, cost and benefit of individual projects programmes, enabling them to be brought back within agreed tolerances are as set out in the Programme and Project Management Framework (PPMF). This is with the exception where such changes are a key or urgent decisions and would require Executive approval through an additional report.

4.50 During Quarter Four 2024/25 a number of project gateways were approved. Gateway approvals are required project lifecycle stages, which ensure appropriate and robust assurance and challenge has been applied to the scoping, planning and development of the necessary project documentation and delivery plans, which are then monitored through the transformation governance arrangements.

4.51 The gateway approvals for Quarter Four 2024/25, are summarised below:

| Thematic Programme     | Project  | Gateway approval type               | Approved |
|------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|----------|
| Place-Based            | Junk Job collection chargeable   | Change control                      | Jan      |
| Property               | Property Rationalisation   | Change control                      |          |
| Property               | Property Management  | Change control                      |          |
| Children's             | Introduce Reunification team   | Project Brief                       |          |
| Children's             | Preventing Care Starts and Placement Sufficiency Programme                         | Programme Definition Document (PDD) |          |
| Children's             | Introduce supplier incentive Scheme across Children's purchasing                   | Change control                      |          |
| Children's             | Placements   | Change control                      |          |
| Children's             | Maximising grants  | Change control                      |          |
| Children's             | Introduce Reunification team   | Project Brief                       | Feb      |
| Adult Social Care      | Expansion of Autism Day Services   | Change control                      |          |
| Adult Social Care      | Reprovision of Levick Court  | Change control                      |          |
| Adult Social Care      | Review of Direct Payments  | Change control                      |          |
| Place-Based            | Chargeable Junk Job collection   | Change control                      |          |
| Children's             | Reduction in agency costs  | Change control                      | Mar      |
| Place-Based            | Replacement wheeled bin charge   | Project Closure Report              |          |
| Place-Based            | Review of Community Facilities   | Project Closure Report              |          |
| Place-Based            | Fleet Services review  | Project Brief                       |          |
| Target Operating Model | Review of MBC Customer Relationship Manager (CRM) and Content Manager System (CMS) | Project Brief                       |          |
| Target Operating Model | Artificial Intelligence (AI) Discovery Assessment                                  | Project Brief                       |          |

4.52 Due to the Council's financial challenges at the time the transformation programme was initiated, the first year of the programme was heavily focused on continuous improvement activities and savings / increased income initiatives to contribute towards a balanced budget rather than true transformation and business change. During 2024/25, a number of key projects were successfully delivered, with the detail provided in Appendix 8.

4.53 As we move into 2025/26 the Chief Executive has set a new direction for the programme as detailed in 'Resetting the Council's approach to Transformation and Delivery of the Council Plan' report for Executive on 30 April 2025, prior the time of writing this report. This next phase of transformation will see a shift in focus to non-financial benefits and improved outcomes, which will demonstrate the impact of the transformation activity, in addition to any financial savings.

4.54 To assist with the new direction and to ensure the transformation portfolio is focused on delivering true transformational change, through new approaches to service delivery design, driving improved efficiencies and the implementation of effective demand management, the portfolio has been reviewed to separate out those saving initiatives from actual change projects, with a proposal to refine the governance arrangements in a pragmatic and proportionate manner.

### ***Progress in other corporate performance matters***

| Status                          | Q4<br>2024/25<br>position | Q3<br>2024/25<br>position | Q2<br>2024/25<br>position | Expected<br>standard | Standard<br>achieved | Trend |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------|
| P 1 / 2 audit actions in time   | <b>87.4%</b>              | 88%                       | 100%                      | 90%                  | Yes                  | ↓     |
| FOI / EIR responded to <20 days | <b>66%</b>                | 69%                       | 61%                       | 90%                  | No                   | ↑     |
| % live SARs overdue             | <b>19%</b>                | 38%                       | 6%                        | 90%                  | No                   | ↑     |
| Information security incidents  | <b>32</b>                 | 30                        | 34                        | N/A                  | N/A                  | ↓     |
| Incidents reported to the ICO   | <b>2</b>                  | 0                         | 1                         | N/A                  | N/A                  | ↑     |
| % complaints closed in time     | <b>82%</b>                | 86%                       | 82%                       | 90%                  | No                   | ↑     |

*\* Measure reflects actions agreed to be delivered in 2024/25*

4.55 In addition to the above performance and risk issues, the Leadership and Management Team review a range of other performance measures on a monthly basis, including compliance with agreed actions from internal audits, responsiveness to statutory information requests, information security incidents and complaints.

4.56 At the end of Quarter Four 2024/25, the key points of note in matters of compliance, are:

- There has been a slight reduction in the level of compliance with statutory timescales for FOI and EIRs, however performance continues to remain below acceptable levels. Capacity in services to respond to these statutory requests continues to be an issue. It is also impacted by the volume of requests they are also dealing with through the Members Enquiries system in some areas. The central team have increased their activity in relation raising awareness of legal obligations. The Council has also commissioned a new ICT system to improve request processing, which will go live during 2025/26.
- Compliance with the legal timescales in relation to Subject Access Requests (SARs) relates to a very small number of complex SARs (3). Requesters are receiving information from their requests as it has been prepared and the Council is in ongoing communication with them. The Council has had to source additional external capacity during Quarter Four to support staff to manage ongoing high demand for SARs, which has improved compliance, though it remains below target.
- The audit actions which were not completed in line with timescales relate to 2 Priority One actions from the Direct Payments internal audit, for which information has been sent to Veritau and 3 Priority Two actions. All other actions were completed within 14 days of going overdue.

## 5. Ward Member Engagement if relevant and appropriate

5.1 Not applicable.

## 6. Other potential alternative(s) and why these have not been recommended

6.1 The council is required to operate a performance management framework in order to ensure delivery of its best value duty; to not do so would place the council at risk of failing in its statutory responsibility in this regard.

## 7. Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)

| Topic   | Impact  |
|---|---|
| Financial (including procurement and Social Value)                    | There are no direct financial implications rising from the recommendations set out in this report.  |
| Legal   | There are no legal impacts of the proposed decisions or recommendations, and they are consistent with and will promote the achievement of the Council's legal duty to achieve Best Value.   |
| Risk  | The proposed recommendations are key to and consistent with supporting delivery of the Council's strategic priorities and risks, as set out in the Council Plan.  |
| Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion      | The ambitions of the Council Plan set out how the Council will improve outcomes for all its residents and highlight where additional activity is required to address inequalities in outcomes that exist across groups and individuals. This approach was impact assessed as part of the development of the 2024-2027 Council Plan, which found that the plan would have a positive impact by addressing inequalities.  |
| Reducing Poverty  | The ambitions of the Council Plan set out how the Council will work with partners to support our residents out of poverty and improve community resilience to prevent people falling into poverty. Meeting this challenge is central to all of the ambitions within the Council Plan.   |
| Climate Change / Environmental  | The ambitions of the Council Plan set out how the Council will protect and improve our environment, as part of the "A healthy place" priority which focuses on improving levels of recycling, protecting and improving parks and open spaces, and improving environment standards of the town. There are no direct impacts on this theme as a result of this and performance to date is reflected in Appendix 2: Council Plan workplan; progress at Quarter Four 2024/25. Where impact on climate change and environment is considered as part of wider programmes, projects or Executive reports, these will be referenced within the detail of the report                       |
| Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers | The ambitions of the Council Plan set out how the Council will respond and react to Children and Young People cared for by the authority and care leavers, across the "A successful and ambitious town", "A healthy place," and "Safe and Resilient Communities" priorities. There are no direct impacts on this theme as a result of this and performance to date is reflected in Appendix 2: Council Plan workplan; progress at Quarter Four 2024/25. Where impact on Children and Young People cared for by the authority and care leavers is considered as part of wider programmes, projects or Executive reports, these will be referenced within the detail of the report. |
| Data Protection   | Whenever the council delivers activities and uses data to assess impact, it takes the necessary steps to ensure it complies with the requirements of GDPR In any use of personal data that is undertaken within that work.  |

**Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)**

| Action  | Responsible Officer | Deadline     |
|---|---------------------|--------------|
| Performance management feeder systems to be updated according to approval from Executive.   | J Chapman           | 30 Jun 2025  |
| For those outcome measures reporting as Red and of a worsening trend, services are to develop action plans to address and mitigate where possible for Quarter One 2025/26 report. | J Chapman           | 30 Sept 2025 |

**Appendices**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | Executive actions proposed amendments at Quarter Four 2024/25                                    |
| 2 | Council Plan workplan progress at Quarter Four 2024/25   |
| 3 | Council Plan outcome measures reporting as Green with an improving trend at Quarter Four 2024/25 |
| 4 | Council Plan outcome measures reporting as Red with a worsening trend at Quarter Four 2024/25    |
| 5 | Council Plan initiatives fully completed during 2024/25 and associated benefits and outcomes     |
| 6 | Strategic Risk Register  |
| 7 | Corporate portfolio projects benefits / outcomes delivered in 2024/25                            |
| 8 | Transformation portfolio project benefits / outcomes delivered in 2024/25                        |

**Background papers**

| Body      | Report title  | Date       |
|-----------|---|------------|
| Council   | The Council Plan 2024-27                            | 08/03/2024 |
| Council   | Approach to Transformation of Middlesbrough Council | 27/03/2024 |
| Council   | Transformation of Middlesbrough Council             | 24/04/2024 |
| Executive | Quarter One 2024/25 Corporate Performance Report    | 04/09/2024 |
| Executive | Quarter Two 2024/25 Corporate Performance Report    | 04/12/2024 |
| Executive | Quarter Three 2024/25 Corporate Performance Report  | 05/12/2025 |

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