



Corporate and Performance Overview & Scrutiny Panel

To All Members of the Performance Overview and Scrutiny Panel on
Wednesday, 18 September 2024

Date of meeting: Thursday, 26 September 2024

Time: 18:30

Venue: The Council Chamber

The Symington Building, Adam and Eve Street, LE16 7AG

Members of the public can access a live broadcast of the meeting from the [Council website](#), and the meeting webpage. The meeting will also be open to the public.

Agenda

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Declarations of Members' Interests
- 3 Performance Overview & Scrutiny Panel Minutes - 25.07.24 3 - 8
- 4 Portfolio Holder Update
- 5 Q1 2024.25 - Finance & Corporate Performance Report, Scrutiny 9 - 42
- 6 Equality Plan 202528 43 - 64
- 7 To consider any urgent items (to be decided by the Chairman)

JOHN RICHARDSON
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HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Circulate to: Paul Dann - Member, Stuart Finan - Member, Rose Forman - Member, Peter James - Chairman, Phil King - Member, Michael Rickman - Member, Geraldine Whitmore - Member

And all other Councillors for information

Minutes of the Performance Overview & Scrutiny Panel



Location: Harborough Innovation Centre

Date: 25th July 2024 commencing at 6.30pm

Present:

Councillors: Dann, Elliott, Forman, James, King and Rickman.

Officers: C. Mason – Director of Resources (& s.151)

S. Manek – Democratic Services Officer

1. Election of Chairman 2024-25

The Clerk opened the meeting. She noted that the first item on the agenda was to Elect a Chairman of the Corporate and Performance Overview & Scrutiny Panel for the municipal year 2024/25. She invited nominations, Councillor James was nominated by Councillor Elliott. This was seconded by Councillor King and there being no other nominations, Councillor James was duly elected.

2. Election of Vice Chairman 2024-25

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Panel invited nominations for the position of Vice-Chair. Councillor Whitmore was nominated by Councillor Elliott. This was seconded by Councillor Forman and there being no other nominations, Councillor Whitmore was duly elected.

Councillor James assumed the Chair and welcomed all to the meeting. Introductions were made around the table.

3. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Finan who was substituted by Councillor Elliott. Apologies were also received from Councillor Beadle.

4. Declarations of Members' Interests

No declarations of interest were received.

5. Minutes of the Performance Overview & Scrutiny Panel 11.04.2024

The minutes were proposed by Councillor Elliott and seconded by Councillor Rickman.

It was RESOLVED that the Panel agree the minutes of the meeting on 11th April 2024 as an accurate record.

6. Portfolio Holder Update

The Report was presented by the Portfolio Holder for Finance. Points made included:

- The Plowmans Yard refurbishment of the three flats for temporary accommodation has begun. This was approved at Cabinet in April.
- The internal accounts for 2023-24 had closed on 24 June 2024. The 2022-23 accounts had been signed off.
- The Harborough Innovation Centre had an occupancy rate of 98% and the Harborough Enterprise Centre having an occupancy rate of 88%, both ahead of where expected.
- The Market Hall footfall in June was slightly above the same month in the previous year. The June events calendar was busy with the 1940s weekends.

Members raised the following points:

- It would be really very helpful if the update was submitted to the committee as a written report.

ACTION: Portfolio Holder updates need to be presented as a written report to Committees.

- Surprised that there was no information on car park income. The annual car parking accounts had not been published anywhere.

ACTION: Share information on performance of car parks including statistics and revenue.

Resolved: The Panel noted the update from the Portfolio Holder.

7. Q4 2023-24 – Finance & Corporate Performance Report

The Portfolio Holder for Finance presented the report. The report covered the financial and corporate performance quarter 4 (outturn) for 2023/24 which was reported to Cabinet on the 15 July 2024; with the report attached as Annex A and associated appendices attached as Annex B to D. In respect of the key outturns, for:

Finance, highlighted in Annex B,

- i. Revenue underspend of £1.1m; a positive variance to the approved budget of 8.5%.
- ii. Capital overspend of £200k; a negative variance to the approved budget of 7%.

Performance, a refresh of the corporate plan Key Activities was undertaken prior to 1 April 2023, resulting in 31 Key activities for the 2023/24 period.

- iii. Annex C contains a report of progress against all 31 Key activities in the Corporate Plan. At the end of Quarter 4 there was one at red status.
- iv. iv. Annex D contains a report of twenty key performance indicators (KPI's). At the end of Quarter 4, 3 KPI's had a red status.

The Quarter 4 report (Annex A) also considers the overall years performance against targets, where 1 Key Activity remained at Red and 3 KPI's did not reach target set. These are summarised in Annex A and in details in Annex C and D.

The Chair then invited questions and comments from the Panel:

- Was there an underspend of one million pounds? The Council has a lot of money in the bank and invested and that had produced additional investment return. It was concerning as the Chief Internal Auditor has stated in the Audit reports that savings need to be made, yet there is no reference to any savings in this report.

- SP01 – Number of affordable housing completions was red. In the financial year, the total number of house completions were 144, just 35 short of the 179-house targets. This was over 20% down. What was going to be done about this?
- Was there going to be any statement made about the Council's position on net zero?
- What were the required standards of the minimum performance standards? And what had been done to increase pre application advice to generate income? What were staff working on if no big applications were being submitted?

The Portfolio Holder and Section 151 Officer responded to all the points raised.

Resolved: The Panel noted the report and the recommendations to Cabinet.

8. Scrutiny Workplan Report

The Democratic Services Officer presented the report to the Panel. The draft Work-plan had been populated using a combination of items previously referred to Scrutiny from various sources, officer or member-led items, and statutory items. The suggested criteria at the Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group on 9 May 2024 (Appendix C) to assess topics being put forward for consideration by the respective Overview and Scrutiny Panel were: Public interest – not an individual's issue, Performance issues, Relevance to HDC and its objectives, Timely – able to act in time, not covered in the last year, Ability to make a difference/impact/influence, Not covered by another committee or function of the council and have the Resources to deliver – is there enough capacity in the council to deliver the outcomes/review. These would now be discussed at the respective Panels and then agreed by the respective Chairs.

The Panel made the following comments:

- Which Panel was the Car Parking Strategy being presented at? It was scheduled for the 26 September, but the report had not been circulated to Members yet.

ACTION: Circulate response to Panel

- The external contractors for big projects were scrutinised through the budget process and the procurement process was managed by procurement. Members could request for items to be placed on the workplan.

ACTION: Add Budget Principles Report to December Agenda for discussion

- After a detailed discussion, the Panel agreed that they wanted a detailed meeting concentrating solely on Platform Housing and others that provided affordable housing as soon as possible. It would be beneficial to invite providers and scrutinise them.

ACTION: Check feasibility of the additional meeting

- Additional meeting may need to be added depending on the workload.

Resolved: The Panel agreed the Draft Scrutiny Work-plan attached at Appendix A, agreed the proposed criteria, and agreed that a joint Task and Finish Group be set up for both scrutiny panels to discuss the development of the scrutiny function, to report back to Council in December 2024.

9. Any Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

The meeting ended at 20:04.

Harborough District Council



Report to the Corporate & Performance Overview & Scrutiny Panel

26 September 2024

Title:	2024/25 Performance Report – Financial (Outturn) and Corporate Performance Quarter 1 (Year ending 31 March 2025)
Status:	Public
Key Decision:	No
Report Author:	Clive Mason, Director of Resources (& S.151 Officer)
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Phil Knowles, Strategy Cllr Mark Graves, Finance
Appendices:	<p>Annex A – 2024/25 Performance Report – Financial (Outturn) and Corporate Performance Quarter 1 (Year ending 31 March 2025) reported to Cabinet 9 September 2024.</p> <p>Annex B – Appendices 1-9 Financial Performance, to the 2024/25 Performance Report (Q1) reported to Cabinet 9 September 2024.</p> <p>Annex C – Appendix 7 Key Activity Quarterly Report – Quarter 1, to the 2024/25 Performance Report (Q1), reported to Cabinet 9 September 2024.</p> <p>Annex D – Appendix 8 Strategic Performance Dashboard – Quarter 1, to the 2024/25 Performance Report (Q1), reported to Cabinet 9 September 2024.</p>

Executive Summary

This report covers the financial and corporate performance quarter 1 for 2024/25 which was reported to Cabinet on the 9 September 2024; with the report attached as Annex A and associated appendices attached as Annex B to D.

In respect of the key outturns, for:

- **Finance**, highlighted in Annex B,
 - i. Revenue underspend of £486k; a positive variance to the approved budget of 3.3%.
 - ii. Capital is forecasting to be on budget.
- **Performance**, a refresh of the corporate plan Key Activities was undertaken prior to 1 April 2024, resulting in 21 Key activities for 2024/25.
 - iii. Annex C contains a report of progress against all 21 Key activities in the Corporate Plan. At the end of Quarter 1 there are no activities at red status.
 - iv. Annex D contains a report of 19 key performance indicators (KPI's). At the end of Quarter 4, 1 KPI had a red status.

Recommendation
It is recommended that the Corporate & Performance Overview & Scrutiny Panel consider and comment on the contents of this report.
Reasons for Recommendation
The Council's Performance Management Framework requires that both Scrutiny and the Cabinet have a role in monitoring the finance and performance of the Council against its Budget and Corporate Delivery Plan.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider and comment on the contents of this report.

2. Background

- 2.1 Financial and Corporate Performance is monitored and reported to Officers and Members on a quarterly basis as part of the Council's Financial and Performance Management Framework. Finance and Performance Reports are submitted to both Scrutiny and the Cabinet via quarterly reports.

3. Details

- 3.1 This report consists of:

Annex A: Outturn Report to Cabinet

- 3.2 A copy of the report that was presented to Cabinet on the 9 September 2024. This provides a commentary on both the financial and corporate performance of the Council for quarter 1 of 2024/25.

Annex B: Summary of 2024/25 Revenue Budgets and Capital Programme

- 3.3 This annex is Appendix 1 to 6 to the Cabinet report. It includes a summary for the 2024/25 revenue and capital programme.
- 3.4 In respect of **Revenue**, for 2024/25 this is showing a revenue underspend of £486k; representing 3.3% of the approved budget. Appendix 3 shows a detailed variance analysis based on the directorate division of budgets. The most significant variations are noted below:

i. Additional Income/Underspend

- **Resources**

- a. **Investment Income:** £846k (income). This has occurred because the Council has benefited from the high-interest rate environment that the UK economy has been subject to.

ii. Reduced Income/Overspends

- **Deputy Chief Executive:** £123k; the significant items relate to unbudgeted licence costs (£70k) and delays in transformation implementation (£51k).
- **Resources**
 - a. **Market Hall:** £95k. Increased direct cost of cleaning (£35k), utility costs (£33k) and reduced income (£25k).
 - b. **Insurance:** £43k. Higher than anticipated insurance premiums.
- **Communities**
 - c. **HDC Temporary Accommodation:** £26k. Higher costs of temporary accommodation due to demand and higher accommodation costs.
- **Planning**
 - g. **Development Control:** £51k. Reduction in income due to less expected receipts of major planning applications.

3.5 It should be noted that a number of these overspends will be addressed as part of the 2025/26 budget setting process.

3.6 In respect of the £486k revenue underspend, Cabinet has agreed to allocate £400k to a new sub-reserve within the Corporate Plan & Strategy reserve. As noted in para 3.9 of Annex A, the Government has announced plans to make changes to the National Planning Policy Framework. The direct impact of these change proposals are not known, but the allocation will assist the Council in helping to deal with any consequential impacts of the proposed changes if and when they are implemented.

3.7 In respect of the **Capital Programme (Appendix 5)**, the programme is expected to be on budget.

Annex C: Key Activity Quarterly Report

3.8 This report details the 21 key activities that support the delivery of the Corporate Plan, and their achievement (performance) is categorised as per the table below:

Status	Description
Red	Planned actions have not been achieved or have missed their target date. Issues are now impacting on delivery or expected outcomes.
Amber	Most actions completed. Some issues recognised which may impact on the delivery or expected outcomes.
Green	Planned actions completed, project on track. There are no known issues.
Complete	The project has been completed.

3.9 At this time the Council is not forecasting any “red” activities.:

Annex D: Strategic Performance Dashboard

3.10 The Strategic Performance Dashboard provides a display of the 19 key performance indicators, of these one has a red status

FS03; 90% of payments to creditors within 30 days; outturn performance of 77.9%.
The Council went live with a new finance system in November 2023. As expected there has been a process of transition as systems and processes settle back down. This is an improvement of the 2023/24 outturn position of 64.1%..

4. Implications of Decisions

Corporate Priorities

4.1 The contents of this report are evidence of how the Council has performed in meeting its Corporate Priorities.

Financial

4.2 No financial issues arise directly from this report.

Legal

4.3 No legal issues arise directly from this report.

Policy

4.4 No policy issues arise directly from this report

Environmental Implications

4.5 No environmental issues arise directly from this report.

Risk Management

4.6 Risks are managed alongside performance through the Council’s Performance Management database. Risk reports are provided to the Cabinet at regular intervals during each year.

Equalities Impact

4.7 Equality actions are identified as part of the Business Planning Process and are captured where relevant for each Key Activity.

Data Protection

4.8 No data protection issues arise directly from this report.

5. Alternative Options Considered

Not applicable.

6. Background papers

- Cabinet report 15 July 2024.

Harborough District Council



Report to the Cabinet Meeting of 9th September 2024

Title:	2024/25 Performance Report – Financial (Outturn) and Corporate Performance Quarter 1 (Year ending 31 March 2025)
Status:	Public
Key Decision:	No
Report Author:	Carolyn Bland, Head of Financial Services Rob Chew, Head of ICT & Transformation
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Mark Graves, Finance Cllr Phil Knowles, Strategy
Appendices:	1: Summary Revenue Budgets and Capital Programme for 2024/25 Budget and MTFS (2025/26 to 2028/29). 2: 2024/25 Revenue Outturn and Variance Analysis by Portfolio & Director Service Categorisation. 3: Commentary on 2024/25 Budget Variances Greater than £25,000, by Director Service Categorisation. 4: General Fund Reserves 31.03.2024 5: 2024/25 Capital Outturn and Variance Analysis 6: Application of revenue carry forwards from 2023/24 7: Key Activity Quarterly Report - Quarter 1 2024/25 8: Strategic Performance Dashboard - Quarter 1 2024/25

Executive Summary

This report combines two reports previously received separately, Financial Performance (Outturn), and Performance. This combined report sets out the financial position (outturn) for the year ending 31 March 2025 for revenue and capital as at end of Quarter 1 and covers performance monitoring of the refreshed corporate plan for Quarter 1, April to June 2024.

Financial Performance

- i. Revenue is forecasting an underspend of £486k, a variance of 3.3% to the approved budget. £400k of this to be allocated to an earmarked reserve to fund potential implications of the new NPpF arrangement.
- ii. Capital is forecasting to be on budget, a variance of 0% to the approved budget.

Performance

A refresh of the corporate plan Key activities was undertaken prior to 1 April 2024, resulting in 21 Key activities for the year 2024/25.

- i. Appendix 7 contains a report of progress against all 21 Key activities in the Corporate Plan. At the end of Quarter 1 there are no activities at red status
- ii. Appendix 8 contains a report of 19 key performance indicators (KPI's). At the end of Quarter 1, 1 KPI was at red status.

The links between the red activities/KPI's and outturn have been reviewed and are detailed in paragraph 3.16 below.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- considers and comments on the contents of this report and associated appendices.
- approves the establishment of a new sub-reserve titled “NPPF Support”.
- approves the allocation of £400k to the NPPF Support sub-reserve.

Reasons for Recommendations

The Council's Performance Management Framework requires that both Scrutiny and the Cabinet have a role in monitoring the performance of the Council against its Corporate Plan. Good financial governance requires the Cabinet to consider and comment on financial outturn. Such commentary demonstrates to customers, partners, and stakeholders that the Council is actively considering the environment within which the Council is operating.

1. Purpose of Report

To update Cabinet in respect of the Quarter 1 outturn for 2024/25 for revenue, capital, and reserves, and provide information on the Council's performance.

2. Background

2.1 This combined report [Financial Performance (Outturn) and Corporate Performance] seeks to ensure that trends reflected in the outturn are also reflected in the performance reporting and vice versa. Because many things can occur between the end of June and the end of the financial year, some trends may not yet be apparent.

2.2 The Council approved the 2024/25 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (2025/26 to 2028/29) (MTFS); which included the Capital Programme in February 2024. It should be noted that the categorisation of services by Director and Portfolio used in this report, is based on the current structure not the structure used in the budget.

2.2.1 The **Revenue budget**, the 2024/25 net service expenditure was £14.8m and after capital financing of (£560k), the net expenditure for the delivery of services was £15.3m; over the MTFS period, this increases to £17.4m. This is summarised in **Appendix 1**.

2.2.2 The **Capital Programme**, the 2024/25 programme totals £33.7m, of which £16.9m was in respect of projects brought forward from previous years and £16.8m was in respect of new initiatives for 2024/25.

2.2.3 **Reserves**, Council approved a net contribution to reserves of £2.6m.

2.3 Performance is monitored and reported to Officers and Members on a Quarterly basis as part of the Council's Performance Management Framework. Performance Reports are submitted to both Scrutiny and the Cabinet via Quarterly reports. Officers and Members can review performance via Pentana Risk in between these reports at [Corporate Plan 2024/25 \(pentanarpm.uk\)](https://pentanarpm.uk).

2.4 The key activities within the corporate plan have been refreshed in line with meetings with Heads of Service and the annual service planning process. The annual refresh of the delivery plan was agreed in June, with 21 key activities for the period 2024-25. There has been an ongoing dialogue with Cabinet and Members about priorities throughout the year and during the budget setting processes for 2024/25 some new funds have been created which form projects that are listed as new to the 2024/25 plan, including a funding pot for Community Grants and a Communities Team, building relationships with Parish councils and local businesses and an Environmental Grants pot. A summary of performance is found at **Appendix 7 & 8**.

3. Details

Revenue Headlines

3.1 The outturn for the current financial year and the impact over the MTFS is summarised below.

3.2 **2024/25**; In respect of the original net expenditure budget of £15.331m, the outturn is £14.845m, which represents an underspend of the budget by £486k. A “financial” variance analysis based on Director service categorisation is summarised in **Table 1** below. A more detailed analysis based on both Director and Portfolio service categorisation is shown in **Appendix 2** along with an accompanying Reserve analysis. A summary of variances greater than £25k shown in **Appendix 3**. It should be noted that it is proposed to set-aside £400k of the forecast underspend into a new sub-reserve, as detailed in paragraph 3.9 below.

Summary of 2024/25 Revenue Budget Variances, by Director Service Categorisation				Table 1
Service	Updated Budget £000	Outturn £000	Variance £000	Commentary
Chief Executive	317	313	(4)	
Deputy Chief Executive	3,471	3,594	123	IT software costs
Resources	1,929	1,382	(547)	£843k forecast increased investment income less overspends in insurance and market hall
Communities	6,829	6,773	(56)	HDC temporary accommodation property management fee
Planning	2,225	2,223	(2)	Reduced development control income
Net Direct Cost of Services	14,771	14,285	(486)	
Finance & Assets: Capital Financing (*)	560	560	0	
Net Expenditure	15,331	14,845	(486)	
Approved Carry Forwards from 2023/24	0	(1,062)	(1,062)	
Net Expenditure after Carry Forwards applied	15,331	13,783	(1,548)	
Proposed contribution to NPPF Reserve	0	400	400	To be agreed
Net Expenditure after Carry Forwards and proposed contribution applied	15,331	14,183	(1,148)	

NB.
* Finance & Assets are allocated to this item, but this item (Minimum Revenue Provision) is dependent on other services actioning the capital programme.

Reserves

3.3 Inevitably as the Council progresses through any year its use of reserves will flex depending on:

- the macro and micro economic climate that the Council finds itself, and
- along with its need to meet its corporate priorities and statutory obligations.

- 3.4 As required by the Reserves Strategy, Cabinet is asked to note that through the active management of reserves that the General Fund (Unallocated) Reserve is maintained at 20%, the approved minimum level of reserves.
- 3.5 Further, members will recall that when the budget was set in February, no contribution from reserves was needed. At 31 March 2024, the Council had revenue reserves totalling £21.8m; however not all of these reserves are useable, and these are shown in **Appendix 4**. Of these reserves, £8.5m are potentially useable and sufficient to meet any in-year pressures. The forecast position of reserves at 31 March 2025 (as at 30 June 2024) is £25.3m.
- 3.6 Included in reserves was an amount of £1.1m in respect of carry forwards from 2023/24, as agreed by Cabinet on 15 July 2024 <https://cmis.harborough.gov.uk/cm5/Meetings>. These have been released back into revenue to meet the relevant costs as shown in **Appendix 6**.

Capital Programme

- 3.7 The Capital Programme for **2024/25** totals £33.7m, of which £16.9m was in respect of projects brought forward from previous years and £16.8m was in respect of new initiatives for 2024/25. The outturn is current forecast to be in line with budget. A summary variance analysis is shown in **Table 2**, and a detailed analysis, with associated commentary, is shown in **Appendix 5**.

Summary of 2024/25 Capital Budget Variance Greater than £25,000					Table 2
Service	Proposed Updated Budget £000	Outturn £000	Variance		Commentary
			£000	%	
Capital Projects	33,752	33,752	0	0%	At Qtr 1 all capital projects forecast to be budget

Monitoring of Current Local Plan Development

- 3.8 Local Plan preparation is currently to programme and to budget. The total project budget is £2.876m, including both the original Local Plan budget and the additional accelerated budget. The current total forecast outturn for the project is £2.823m thus giving a forecast underspend of £53k.

Changes to National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 3.9 Members will be aware that the new government has announced that it plans to make changes to the NPPF. At this time the direct impact of any new NPPF on the council's current local plan development process are not known. Consequently, it is recommended that Cabinet agree to allocate £400k of the current forecast underspend (3.2) to a new specific sub-reserve (NPPF Support) within the Corporate Plan & Strategy reserve. This will enable the service to draw from this reserve as required (as per para 5.2.2 of the [Reserves Strategy](#)).

Corporate Performance

- 3.10 Officers are required to monitor and update the performance management software on a regular basis and provide a status of Complete, Green, Amber, or Red for each Key Activity. Definitions of these are as follows:

3.11 **Appendix 7: Key Activities in Detail**

This appendix contains a performance summary of each of the Key Activities identified in the Corporate Delivery Plan for the 2024/25 year including a status (as described in the table below), progress comment and next steps.

Status	Description
Red	Planned actions have not been achieved or have missed their target date. Issues are now impacting on delivery or expected outcomes.
Amber	Most actions completed. Some issues recognised which may impact on the delivery or expected outcomes.
Green	Planned actions completed, project on track. There are no known issues.
Complete	The project has been completed.

3.12 **Appendix 8: Strategic Performance Dashboard**

The Strategic Performance Dashboard consists of the Council's key performance indicators for each corporate priority. It is designed to provide an overview of how the Council is performing against those identified priorities. The Council's Performance Management database contains information on a wider range of performance indicators including further indicators from the Corporate Delivery Plan and operational indicators. The status of these items is categorised as either 'Green' (on or better than the set target), 'Amber' (within a tolerance of 5% below the target) or 'Red' (5% or more below target).

The Direction of Travel column indicates whether the indicator has changed status since the previous month. Direction of Travel is stated as either 'Better,' 'Same' or 'Worse'.

Performance Summary

- 3.13 Quarter 1 reported performance indicates 0 red key activities shown in **Appendix 7** and 1 red activity within the strategic performance (KPI) dashboard shown in **Appendix 8**.

Status of Key Activities

- 3.14 There are 21 Key Activities, and progress against them all is shown in **Appendix 7**. There were no red or amber key activities in the quarter 1 report.

Status of Strategic Performance Dashboard

- 3.15 There are currently 19 KPI's on the Strategic Performance dashboard. Performance against these indicators at the end of Quarter 1, is available in **Appendix 8**. with 1 at red status:
- 3.15.1 FS 03 (Red) 90% of payments to creditors within 30 days – HDC went live with a new finance system on 6th November, to ensure the data migration was done correctly the previous system was shut down for 2 weeks which affected volumes and payments within 30 days. Also training of HDC finance and wider staff has taken time away from processing and as such has affected the performance, this will improve as the new finance system is bedded in. 77.9% of all invoices were paid within 90 days during this Q1 period. This is showing an improvement on the 2023/24 period.

4. Implications of Decisions

4.1. Corporate Priorities

The contents of this report are evidence of how the Council monitors issues that may affect the delivery of its Corporate Priorities.

4.2. Financial

This report gives the forecast outturn position for the Council's 2024/25 revenue and capital budgets. Including an additional contribution to an earmarked reserve, as permitted by the [Reserves Strategy](#) (para 5.2) (approved by Council in February 2024).

4.3. Legal

The Council is legally required to set and manage a balanced budget.

4.4. Policy

No policy issues arise directly from this report.

4.5. Environmental Implications including contributions to achieving a net zero carbon Council by 2030

Currently, only some of the capital initiatives relating to achieving net zero are being implemented. The capital programme is currently being reviewed and will be reported to a future Cabinet meeting as part of 2024/25 budget setting.

4.6. Risk Management

It is important to monitor the position against budget to ensure any issues can be addressed appropriately and in a timely manner. Risks are managed alongside performance through the Council's Performance Management database, Pentana Risk. A Corporate Risk register can be found at [Corporate Risk portal \(pentanarpm.uk\)](https://pentanarpm.uk).

4.7. Equalities Impact

Equality actions are identified as part of the Business Planning Process and are captured where relevant for each Key Activity.

4.8. Data Protection

No data protection issues arise directly from this report.

5. Summary of Consultation and Outcome

Consultation has been undertaken with the Portfolio Holder.

6. Alternative Options Considered

Not applicable.

7. **Background papers**
 - Corporate Plan
 - Performance Management Framework

Appendix 1

Summary Revenue Budgets and Capital Programme for 2024/25 Budget and MTFs (2025/26 to 2028/29)

REVENUE					
Approved 2024/25 Budget & Medium-Term Financial Strategy (2025/26 to 2028/29)					
	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	2028/29 £000
Net Direct Cost of Services	14,771	15,021	15,513	16,064	16,431
Capital Financing	560	779	882	920	972
Net Expenditure	15,331	15,800	16,395	16,984	17,403
Contributions to/(from) Reserves					
- General Reserves	4,043	958	(1,667)	(2,079)	(2,130)
- Earmarked Reserves	(1,460)	(345)	(301)	(280)	(226)
	2,583	613	(1,968)	(2,359)	(2,356)
Budget Requirement	17,914	16,413	14,427	14,625	15,047
Total Grants	(10,987)	(9,197)	(6,911)	(6,789)	(6,883)
Council Tax Requirement	6,927	7,216	7,516	7,836	8,164

Summary of Capital Programme 2024/25 to 2028/29							Table 6	
Service Area	Asset Category	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total	
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Assets	Infrastructure	8,010	2,500	0	0	0	10,510	12,584
	Cemeteries & Burials	1,056	15	40	0	0	1,111	
	Civic Buildings	783	0	0	180	0	963	
Customers	Housing	1,043	0	0	0	0	1,043	8,232
	Service Transformation	20	20	20	20	20	100	
	Leisure Centres	6,098	41	41	41	41	6,262	
	CCTV	37	10	10	10	10	77	
	s.106 Schemes	250	250	250	0	0	750	
Economic Development: Business Centre	Business & Enterprise	92	60	0	140	0	292	292
Economic Development: Market Hall & Events	Market Hall	252	144	0	0	0	396	396
Environmental Services	Waste Collection	920	0	0	0	0	920	920
Parks & Open Spaces	Parks etc	320	160	100	20	20	620	620
Projects	Environmental Projects	40	0	0	0	0	40	683
	Corporate	381	172	38	52	0	643	
Regulatory	Environmental Projects	2,468	197	163	0	0	2,828	5,156
	Grants	420	420	420	420	420	2,100	
	Car Parking	228	0	0	0	0	228	
Total Capital Programme		22,418	3,989	1,082	883	511	28,883	
5% Contingency		800	199	54	44	26	1,123	
Total Capital Programme		23,218	4,188	1,136	927	537	30,006	

2024/25 Revenue Outturn and Variance Analysis by Portfolio & Director Service Categorisation	Appendix 2
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2023/24 Outturn	Service Analysis - BY PORTFOLIO	Original Budget	Approved Budget Increases	Virements & Reserve Movements	Updated Budget	Forecast Outturn	Variance	
£000		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
1,459	Strategy	429	0	0	429	436	7	2%
(494)	Finance	1,305	0	0	1,305	683	(622)	-47.7%
4,531	Environment & Climate Change	4,968	0	0	4,968	4,997	29	1%
499	Culture Leisure Economy & Tourism	491	0	0	491	486	(5)	-1.0%
3,358	Corporate	3,385	0	(277)	3,108	3,303	195	6.3%
846	Planning	1,892	0	0	1,892	1,887	(5)	-0.3%
817	Wellbeing	1,030	0	146	1,176	1,131	(45)	-3.8%
0	Non-Service Specific	1,271	0	131	1,402	1,362	(40)	-2.9%
11,016	Net Direct Cost of Services	14,771	0	0	14,771	14,285	(486)	-3.3%
399	Capital Financing	560	0	0	560	560	0	0.0%
11,415	Net Expenditure	15,331	0	0	15,331	14,845	(486)	-3.2%
	Approved Carry Forwards from 2023/24					(1,062)	(1,062)	
	Revised Net Expenditure					13,783	(1,548)	-10.1%

2023/24 Outturn	Service Analysis - BY DIRECTOR	Original Budget	Approved Budget Increases	Virements & Reserve Movements	Updated Budget	Forecast Outturn	Variance	
£000		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
0	Chief Executive	194	0	123	317	313	(4)	-1%
425	Deputy Chief Executive	3,748	0	(277)	3,471	3,594	123	3.5%
2,577	Resources	1,922	0	7	1,929	1,382	(547)	-28.4%
6,662	Communities	6,682	0	147	6,829	6,773	(56)	-0.8%
1,352	Planning	2,225	0	0	2,225	2,223	(2)	-0.1%
11,016	Net Direct Cost of Services	14,771	0	0	14,771	14,285	(486)	-3.3%
399	Capital Financing	560	0	0	560	560	0	0.0%
11,415	Net Expenditure	15,331	0	0	15,331	14,845	(486)	-3.2%
	Approved Carry Forwards from 2023/24					(1,062)	(1,062)	
	Revised Net Expenditure					13,783	(1,548)	-10.1%

2023/24 Outturn	Reconciliation to Council Tax Requirement	Original Budget	Approved Budget Increases	Virements & Reserve Movements	Updated Budget	Forecast Outturn	Variance	
£000		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
11,415	Net Expenditure	15,331	0	0	15,331	14,845	(486)	-3.2%
	Contributions to/(from) Reserves							
7,367	- General Reserves	4,043	0	0	4,043	5,591	1,548	0.0%
655	- Earmarked Reserves	(1,460)	0	0	(1,460)	(2,522)	(1,062)	72.7%
8,022		2,583	0	0	2,583	3,069	486	18.8%
19,437	Budget Requirement	17,914	0	0	17,914	17,914	0	0.0%
(12,629)	Corporate Funding & Grants	(10,987)	0	0	(10,987)	(10,987)	0	0.0%
6,808	Council Tax Requirement	6,927	0	0	6,927	6,927	0	0.0%

	2024/25 Reserve Movements			Appendix 2 (continued)		
Original Budget		Updated Actuals 31.03.24		Updated Budget		Forecast Outturn
£000		£000		£000		£000
	> General Fund (Unallocated) Reserve					
2,509 4,043 (3,486) 3,066	b/f Cont from/(to) Services Cont from/(to) Budget Surplus Audit adjustment c/f	2,283		2,283 4,043 (4,043) 2,283		2,283 5,591 (4,905) 2,969
15,331 3,066 Yes	Min Level Reserves Net Expenditure Gen Fund Minimum @ 20% Are Reserves maintained at 20% of Net Expenditure	11,415		11,415 2,283 Yes		14,845 2,969 Yes
	> Earmarked Reserves					
0 3,486 (3,486) 0	Budget Surplus Reserve b/f Cont from/(to) General Fund Cont from/(to) Earmarked Reserves c/f	0		0 3,486 (3,486) 0		0 4,905 (4,905) 0
3,267 (953) (481) 40 1,873	Projects, Risk & Smoothing Reserve b/f Cont from/(to) Services Cont from/(to) Financial Sustainability Cont from/(to) CEI c/f	3,977		3,977 (953) (481) 40 2,583		3,977 (953) (481) 40 2,583
2,653 (500) (50) 2,103	Capital & Contract Reserve b/f Cont from/(to) Financial Sustainability Cont from/(to) Services c/f	3,043		3,043 (500) (50) 2,493	(1,062)	3,043 (500) (1,112) 1,431
1,000 (100) 900	Transformation Reserve b/f Cont from/(to) Services c/f	2,186		2,186 (100) 2,086		2,186 (100) 2,086
2,909 1,739 481 574 5,703	Financial Sustainability Reserve b/f Cont from/(to) Budget Surplus Cont from/(to) PRS Cont from/(to) Capital & Contracts c/f	3,999		3,999 1,739 481 574 6,793	1,419	3,999 3,158 481 574 8,212
1,000 0 1,000	Collection Fund Reserve b/f Cont from/(to) Earmarked Reserves c/f	1,000		1,000 0 1,000		1,000 0 1,000
723 1,747 2,470	Corporate Plan & Strategy Reserve b/f Cont from/(to) Budget Surplus c/f	1,909		1,909 1,747 3,656		1,909 1,747 3,656
1,000 0 (40) 0 960	Community, Economic & Infrastructure Reserve b/f Cont from/(to) Earmarked Reserves Cont from/(to) PRS Cont from/(to) Budget Surplus c/f	2,186		2,186 0 (40) 0 2,146		2,186 0 (40) 0 2,146
1,229 0 1,229	Investment Reserve b/f Cont from/(to) Earmarked Reserves c/f	1,229		1,229 0 1,229		1,229 0 1,229

Commentary on 2024/25 Budget Variances Greater than £25,000, by Director Service Categorisation			Appendix 3	
Service	Directorate Variance £000	Total £000	Detailed Service Variance	
			Commentary	
Chief Executive	(4)			
Cumulative variances less than £25k		(4)		
Deputy Chief Executive	123			
IT Services		121	Unbudgeted licence cost for Idox hosting £70k, will be addressed in 24.25 budget setting, and other software (mainly citrix costs) £51k due to delayed transformation implementation.	
Cumulative variances less than £25k		2		
Resources	(547)			
Insurance		43	Higher insurance premiums.	
Interest & Investment Income		(843)	Interest rates higher than budgeted.	
Market Hall		95	£35k increased cost share of cleaning contract, £33k forecast overspend on gas and electric, £2k routine maintenance and income forecast to be £25k below budget due to reduced footfall during the week.	
Corporate Savings		45	£45k of vacancy savings for quarter 1 achieved and matched by savings in individual cost centres, spread over several cost centres so under the £25k threshold. Net nil impact overall but an overspend in Corporate Savings.	
Cumulative variances less than £25k		113		
Communities	(56)			
HDC Temporary Accommodation		26	Increased temporary accommodation costs	
Cumulative variances less than £25k		(82)		
Planning	(2)			
Development Control		51	Income forecast to be under as reduced majors so far this year mitigated by salary saving due to vacancy.	
Cumulative variances less than £25k		(53)		
Finance & Assets: Capital Financing	0			
Net Expenditure	(486)	(486)		
Approved Carry Forwards from 2023/24	(1,062)	(1,062)		
Net Expenditure after Carry Forwards applied	(1,548)	(1,548)		
Proposed contribution to NPPF Reserve	400	400	To be agreed	
Revised Net Expenditure	(1,148)	(1,148)		


General Fund Reserves, 31 st March 2024				Appendix 4	
Reserve	Balance (£m)		Purpose	Useable / Unusable	
General Fund (Unallocated Reserve)	2.3		Emergency funding (20% of net expenditure)	Unusable	
Earmarked Reserves	19.5				
Projects, Risks & Smoothing	4.0		To meet known future pressures, primarily the Local Plan.	Unusable, as this is funding set-aside to meet known future costs.	
Capital & Contracts	3.0		To meet known capital and revenue contract costs.	Unusable, as this is funding set-aside to meet known future costs.	
Transformation	2.2		To meet costs relating to the current transformation programme.	Usable, but this would be available to meet costs of transformation.	
Financial Sustainability	4.0		To ensure medium-term sustainability can be achieved to ensure the Council will be able to deliver services into the future.	Unusable, as this is funding set-aside to meet future costs.	
Collection Fund	1.0		To manage potential Collection Fund risk.	Usable, but this would only be available to meet the impact of future Collection Fund movements.	
Corporate Plan & Strategy	1.9		To support delivery of priorities within the Corporate Plan.	Usable, but this would be available to meet costs of the corporate plan.	
Community, Economic & Infrastructure	2.2		To meet potential costs relating to community etc development.	Usable, but this would be available to meet the costs of community development.	
Commercial Investment	1.2		To meet potential costs where investments will generate a return.	Usable, but this would be available to support the costs of commercial investment.	
Total	21.8				


2024/25 Capital Forecast Outturn and Variance Analysis				Appendix 5				
Service Area	Asset Category	Capital Project	24/25 Budget	'23/24 Actual Slippage	Updated Budget	24/25 Qtr 1 Actuals	Forecast Outturn	Variance
			£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Assets	Infrastructure	Northampton Road	50	868	918	3	918	0
	Infrastructure	Balancing Area Works	0	15	15		15	0
	Infrastructure	Lutterworth Town Centre, Heritage Action Zone	457	528	985		985	0
	Infrastructure	Depot	5,000	2,481	7,481		7,481	0
	Infrastructure	Public Realm Furniture Replacement / Enhancement	20	75	95		95	0
	Cemeteries & Burials	Cemetery; Market Harborough Northampton Road Extension	0	87	87		87	0
	Cemeteries & Burials	Cemetery; Market Harborough, New Cemetery	950		950	21	950	0
	Cemeteries & Burials	Cemetery; Boundary Walls & Paths	0		0	1	0	0
	Civic Buildings	The Symington Building, External Works	0	386	386	1	386	0
	Civic Buildings	The Symington Building, Ventilation Works	0	148	148		148	0
	Civic Buildings	The Symington Building, Concierge	0	60	60		60	0
	Civic Buildings	The Symington Building, Generator	0	85	85		85	0
	Civic Buildings	The Symington Building, M&E Works	0	15	15		15	0
	Civic Buildings	The Symington Building, Secondary Glazing	150	44	194		194	0
	Civic Buildings	Audit Visual, Civic Suite	0	60	60		60	0
Customers	Housing	Temporary Accommodation; New Housing Provision	0	910	910		910	0
	Housing	Temporary Accommodation; Enhancement of Current Provision (Plowmans Yard)	200	99	299	6	299	0
	Service Transformation	Customer Services Development	20	35	55		55	0
	Grants	Jubilee Grants	0		0		0	0
	Leisure Centres	Leisure Centres, Market Harborough	3,908	5,396	9,304	3	9,304	0
	Leisure Centres	Leisure Centres, Lutterworth	999	568	1,567	(36)	1,567	0
	Leisure Centres	Leisure Centre, Equipment	426		426		426	0
	Leisure Centres	Leisure Centres, Remedial works outside of contract	765		765		765	0
	CCTV	CCTV, Welland Park	0	12	12		12	0
	CCTV	CCTV, Lutterworth	0	12	12		12	0
	CCTV	CCTV	10	27	37		37	0
	S.106 Schemes	S.106 Schemes	250	193	443	215	443	0
Economic Development; Business Centres	Business & Enterprise	Harborough Innovation Centre, M&E Works	15	35	50		50	0
	Business & Enterprise	Harborough Innovation Centre, Solar	0	77	77	18	77	0
	Business & Enterprise	Harborough Innovation Centre, Kitchens	0		0		0	0
Economic Development; Market Hall & Events	Market Hall, Market Harborough	Market Hall, Heating	65	(3)	62	31	62	0
	Market Hall, Market Harborough	Market Harborough, Market Hall, Hot Water Tanks	41		41		41	0
	Market Hall, Market Harborough	Market Harborough, Market Hall, Roof & Windows	94		94		94	0
	Market Hall, Market Harborough	Market Harborough, Market Hall, Lift Replacement	52		52		52	0
Environmental Services	Waste Collection	Food Waste; purchase of collection recepticals and vehicles	920		920		920	0
Parks & Open Spaces	Parks & Opens Spaces	Play Areas	20	(423)	(403)	6	(403)	0
	Parks & Opens Spaces	Parks & Open Spaces, Welland Park	0	267	267	7	267	0
	Parks & Opens Spaces	Parks & Open Spaces, General	100	50	150	1	150	0
Projects	Environmental Projects	Solar Farm	40		40		40	0
	Corporate	Special Project Funding	381		381		381	0
Regulatory	Environmental Projects	EV Charging	0	206	206		206	0
	Environmental Projects	Environmental Grants	164	257	421	116	421	0
	Environmental Projects	Flex D (LEVI)	250	1,991	2,241	12	2,241	0
	Grants	Disabled Facilities Grants (Lightbulb)	420	(17)	403	53	403	0
	Car Parking	Car Parking (System Upgrades)	107		107		107	0
	Car Parking	Car Parking (Lighting Upgrades)	121		121		121	0
		ICT & Transformation		679		93	679	0
		Housing & Homelessness Schemes		1,736	1,736		1,736	0
Total Capital Programme before contingency			15,995	16,957	32,952	550	32,952	0
Indicative 5% Contingency (to remain unfunded, funding to be found from in-year unused capital allocations/slippage)								
			800		800		800	0
Total Capital Programme			16,795	16,957	33,752	550	33,752	0

Proposed Budget Carry Forwards from 2024/25				Appendix 6
Reason	£'000		Requested by	Future years impact
S106 - data transfer	25	Expertise to support S106 information to digital	R Felts	2024/25 only No future years impact
Harborough Innovation Centre	25	Batteries to complement the recently installed solar panels which will further improve service efficiency	C Averill	
Harborough Enterprise Centre	15	Hotdesking booths to enable short-term flexible client services	C Averill	
Waste Contract procurement	280		R Smith	
Special Expenses Project	60	Fundamental review	C Mason	
Discretionary Income review	60	Fundamental review	C Mason	
Election storage	5	New storage capacity	L Elliot	
Open Spaces Resourcing	40	To support development of open spaces policy	Cabinet	
Total One-Off	510			
Election Apprentice	38	Capacity building and succession planning	L Elliot	Funding for 2024/25 Future years impact will be determined through 2025/6 budget setting
Finance resource	150	Capacity building for transactional and business partnering	C Mason	
Democratic Services Apprentice	38	Capacity building and succession planning	L Elliot	
Neighbourhood Services Officer	56	Capacity building for new waste responsibilities	R Smith	
Asset Officer (Development)	56	Capacity building to support asset development	C Averill	
Systems Officer (Uniform)	56	Capacity building to support uniform digitalisation	D Atkinson	
Housing Officer (Empty Properties)	56	Capacity building to support the reduction of empty properties	E Bird	
Community Development Officers	51	Capacity building to support community safety	Cabinet	
Community Safety Officer (CCTV)	51	Capacity building	Cabinet	
Total Likely Future Years Impact	552			
Total Carry Forwards	1,062			


Appendix 7: Key Activity Quarterly Report, Quarter 1 (2024-2025)


Community Leadership to create a sense of pride and wellbeing


Activities	Status	Progress	Next Steps	CMT Lead / Team	Portfolio
KA.01.01 Continue to develop the Customer Services centre and the digital offer to improve the customer experience		In Quarter 1 - work has been ongoing to look at both new Ai in the customer services recording of calls and online forms for the licensing function.	Complete final stages of implementation of the new contact centre. Undertake staff training.	Customer Services and Engagement	Corporate

Activities	Status	Progress	Next Steps	CMT Lead / Team	Portfolio
KA.01.03 To ensure effective Strategic Communications across the District to keep residents informed of Council services and Key Activities		<p>This ongoing Key Activity is completed to date except for delivery of the engagement toolkit for staff. Key news and updates are shared with stakeholders via the council's communication channels in a timely, accurate and engaging way and links with partners and local media continue to help us to widen our reach to residents across the Harborough district.</p> <p>Followers on the council's social media profiles is growing steadily and ongoing monitoring of these shows good reach and levels of engagement of Harborough residents.</p>	<p>-Continue to deliver high-quality communication activities for key projects and initiatives, and in support of service areas and corporate plan priorities, across the Council's communication channels to stakeholders.</p> <p>- Engagement Strategy draft completed and internal consultation is taking place.</p>	Communications	Strategy

Activities	Status	Progress	Next Steps	CMT Lead / Team	Portfolio
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KA.01.07 Implementation and monitoring of the adopted Harborough Local Plan (2011-2031)		Continued support for implementation and ongoing monitoring of the Local Plan	- Publication of the 2021-2 Authority Monitoring Report	Strategic Planning	Planning
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Activities	Status	Progress	Next Steps	CMT Lead / Team	Portfolio
KA.01.09 Continue the preparation of the next Local Plan, ensuring that design codes are developed to shape the District in line with our place-shaping ambitions		Local Plan preparation remains on track and within budget. The transitional arrangements of the proposed new draft NPPF are being factored into local plan preparation, especially the likely need for the Council to move as efficiently as possible to a draft local plan regulation 19 public consultation, potentially, early in 2025. Plan preparation is well programme and project managed and it is challenging but possible to deliver this. The local plans team are working to this goal'.	Prepare strategic development options	Strategic Planning	Planning

Activities	Status	Progress	Next Steps	CMT Lead / Team	Portfolio
KA.01.11 -Preserve the heritage and conservation of the district whilst developing local communities.			Adoption of the Bitteswell Conservation Area Review and second Tranche of the Local List. Begin preparatory work on the Great Easton Conservation Area Appraisal	Strategic Planning	Planning


Activities	Status	Progress	Next Steps	CMT Lead / Team	Portfolio
KA.01.13 Review of existing council		Work on the review is ongoing with		Creating a	

property portfolio and develop plans for the use of operational assets in line with community and council needs.		reports going to cabinet in September and October 25. this Key activity will be updated in quarter 3.		sustainable environment to protect future generations; Property Team	
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Activities	Status	Progress	Next Steps	CMT Lead / Team	Portfolio
KA.01.18 implement an internal transformation strategy to maximise resources and deliver efficiencies in service provision.		Productivity plan agreed and returned to Central Government. Review of HDC values is started.		Deputy Chief Executive ; ICT Services	


Activities	Status	Progress	Next Steps	CMT Lead / Team	Portfolio
KA.01.19 Develop a new Community Engagement team		Recruitment has taken place during quarter 1 for 4 posts which have been filled successfully. this includes the Community Development officer, grant administrator x 2 , Youth engagement officer		Community Services	


Promoting health and wellbeing and encouraging healthy life choices

Activities	Status	Progress	Next Steps	CMT Lead / Team	Portfolio
KA.02.01 Provide support for the most vulnerable in our communities, providing suitable accommodation to safeguard them from harm and provide high-quality help and advice on housing options		The housing team ongoingly provide advice and support to families in need for accommodation - work continues on the Business Case to homeless accommodation is near completion and this will be presented to CMT in September.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to Provide extensive training to the Housing Options Officer. - working with internal services and external housing providers to support residents with the costs of living crisis. - Recruitment of an officer to focus on the resettlement of refugees. 	Community Services	Wellbeing

Activities	Status	Progress	Next Steps	CMT Lead / Team	Portfolio
KA.02.02 -Deliver the Housing Strategy		Approved by Cabinet in March and the		Regulatory Services	

action plan.		action plan is now being implemented.			
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Activities	Status	Progress	Next Steps	CMT Lead / Team	Portfolio
KA.02.03 Develop leisure facilities through the investment in Leisure centres & other facilities		the work on both leisure centres still remains on track with Lutterworth leisure centre will be opening at the end of September with a launch being planned. Market Harborough remains on track to be opened on December as planned.		Community Services	


Activities	Status	Progress	Next Steps	CMT Lead / Team	Portfolio
KA.02.05 To identify and address key issues of crime and disorder through the community safety partnership and the use of statutory tools and powers		<p>CSP Action Plan agreed.</p> <p>Stakeholders event held for parishes and agencies.</p> <p>Livestock worrying campaign April, Respect and Tolerate/Lighter Nights May, Op Sceptre (police) Summer campaign including Euros and DA June-August.</p> <p>CSP vehicle used by police and CS Team.</p> <p>Motorcycle/off road vehicle warning signs deployed to Wellington Place and Scraftoft</p> <p>Re-deployable cameras moved to two hotspot areas.</p>	<p>Campaigns</p> <p>Lighter Nights</p> <p>National Stalking Week</p> <p>Knife Crime Awareness – Op Sceptre</p> <p>Safer Summer (from June)</p> <p>Stakeholders event in June</p> <p>Scrutiny June.</p>	Environmental Services and Community Safety	Wellbeing


Activities	Status	Progress	Next Steps	CMT Lead / Team	Portfolio
KA.02.07 Provision of a sustainable		Quarter 1 work continues to review the	- Continue marketing of	Lifeline	Wellbeing

control room delivering services across Harborough District		service.	service.		
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Creating a sustainable environment to protect future generations

Activities	Status	Progress	Next Steps	CMT Lead / Team	Portfolio
KA.03.01 Reduce environmental crime through promoting a cleaner, greener environment using education and enforcement		Continue to deliver education and patrols through our enforcement officer working with the community and parishes.] Fly tipping is slightly lower than this time last year. Littering campaign is being organised between Harborough and other councils to tackle the A5 firstly, then will be expanded further on main roads.	- Continue the work on our successful campaigns. - Work with other districts on campaigns - Work with parishes and other organisations	Environmental Services and Community Safety	Environment and Climate Change


Activities	Status	Progress	Next Steps	CMT Lead / Team	Portfolio
KA.03.02 Prepare for the procurement of Refuse, Recycling, Garden Waste, Street & Grounds maintenance, ensuing that the services, meets new requirements from Government Such as Weekly Food Waste implementation from April 2026.		Consultant now on board for several phases of work. The procurement of the wider contract as per this indicator will start in 2025, this will give us 18 months to 24 months to go through procurement for a start date of April 1st 2027.	1. Legal Enquiries	Environmental Services and Community Safety	Environment and Climate Change


Activities	Status	Progress	Next Steps	CMT Lead / Team	Portfolio
KA.03.05 Continue to deliver Council activities & initiatives to be net zero by		Inventory of Emissions draft completed	Draft reports to be completed with comments and published	Corporate Services	Environment and Climate Change

2030		<p>HIC Solar is complete</p> <p>Leisure capital investment is underway - environmental improvements to be included.</p> <p>Individual projects for Scope 1 and 2 - Action plan is updated.</p> <p>Internal Audit has been completed and new led on the officer group</p>	<p>on website by end 2023.</p> <p>Detailed approach to decarbonising HDC Scope 1 and 2 emissions being prepared</p>		
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Activities	Status	Progress	Next Steps	CMT Lead / Team	Portfolio
KA.03.07 Harborough District council will be a community leader for change towards a greener and more sustainable Harborough District		<p>We were successful in achieving a gold for both East Midlands in Bloom and Britain in Bloom.</p> <p>90 trees to be planted by this winter to replace and add to our stock.</p>	<p>1. Additional tree planting</p> <p>2. New locations for wildflowers</p> <p>3. Options to revamp the old greens at Welland Park (Community Orchard)</p> <p>4. Planting at other parks to be re-evaluated</p>	Environmental Services and Community Safety	


Supporting businesses and residents to deliver a prosperous local economy

Activities	Status	Progress	Next Steps	CMT Lead / Team	Portfolio
KA.04.01 Ensure that Harborough District's towns, villages and rural areas remain attractive and vibrant places to live, work invest and visit		<p>We continue to promote the district via our visit and invest in harborough marketing platforms, including social media, electronic signage, websites and newsletters.</p> <p>We are using UKSPF funds to improve both town centres and the 4 villages.</p>	<p>- Start rolling out a programme of investment through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, including Active Travel and town centre improvements.</p> <p>- Submit plans for the Government's Rural England Prosperity Funding to support Harborough District's rural areas.</p>	Economic Development	Finance

Activities	Status	Progress	Next Steps	CMT Lead / Team	Portfolio
KA.04.02 Ensure that we support new and existing businesses with Harborough District to be as successful as they can be		UKSPF final year of delivery of this project, and continued work to support businesses with newsletters advice and guidance and work is underway on the comedy festival for the autumn period 2024.	<p>- Develop plans for the Rural England Prosperity Fund to support rural businesses and communities within Harborough District.</p> <p>- Developing new business grants scheme and comprehensive business support offer, as part of our UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme.</p>	Economic Development	Finance

Activities	Status	Progress	Next Steps	CMT Lead / Team	Portfolio
KA.04.03 Ensure that Harborough		Job Clubs - MH - 21 May, Lutt - 7 June,	- Develop detailed plans for	Economic	Finance

District residents (particularly young people), can gain access to the education, training, and skills they require to obtain high-quality employment and careers to help them meet their potential and live a fulfilling life		MH - 27 June and Lutt - 2 August	the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to support District residents gaining skills and employment, (ideally for implementation in 2023/24 and 2024/25).. - Continue to support and develop Job Fairs in both towns and the Lutterworth Job Club, in conjunction with partners. - Continue to support school careers events and share good practice between schools.	Development	
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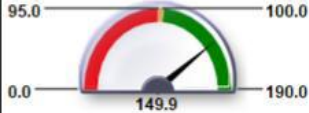



Activities	Status	Progress	Next Steps	CMT Lead / Team	Portfolio
KA.04.04 Review and revise the Economic Development Strategy to ensure it is fit for purpose in the current climate		Final draft to the ED strategy is now starting consultation with Parish council and the community with the aim to take it to Cabinet in October for sign off	- Detailed work to review and develop a new Economic Development Strategy for the District is planned for late 2022/ early 2023.	Economic Development	Finance










Appendix 8: Strategic Performance Dashboard

Summary of performance



			
Quarter 1	15	0	1

Priority 1: Community Leadership to create a sense of pride and wellbeing



















KPI	Status	Value	Target	Gauge	Direction of Travel	Comments
HS HL 07 Number of Repeat Homelessness Acceptances		0	0	<p>Q4 2023/24 result</p> 		
SP 01 Number of new affordable housing completions during the year	Annual Target		179.0	<p>Q4 2023/24 result</p> 		Annual Target
SP 02 Supply of ready to develop housing sites in forthcoming five year period compared to requirement (achievement of five-year land supply)	Annual target		100.0	<p>March 2021 result</p> 		Annual Target. Expected in Q 2
COR 01 Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints responded to within 20 working days (%)		92.2%	90.0%	<p>Cumulative result for Q1 2024/25 as of June 2024</p> 		There were a total of 51 complaints in Quarter 1 of which 47 where responded to in the 20 working days

						deadline. This is an improvement on Q 4 performance.
DM 01 60% of major applications determined within 13 weeks or other agreed time		90.0%	60%	Cumulative result for Q1 2024/25 as of June 2024 		In total 10 applications were received and 9 determined on time. Performance slightly below Q4 but overall, an improving picture.
DM 02 Percentage of minor and other applications determined within 8 weeks or other agreed time		83.7%	70%	Cumulative result for Q1 2024/25 as of June 2024 		In total 207 applications were received and 174 determined on time. Whilst the short-term trend is down on last quarter overall performance is an improving picture. New resources were added to planning in 2023/24.
DM 07 Less than 10% of major decisions allowed at appeal		0.0%	10.0%	Cumulative result for Q1 2024/25 as of June 2024 		No major applications went to appeal in Quarter1. This is a continuing picture since Q3 2021.

Priority 2: Promoting health and wellbeing and encouraging healthy life choices




KPI	Status	Value	Target	Gauge	Direction of Travel	Comments
RS 16 Average number of weeks taken to complete Disabled Facilities adaptations			20	Q2 2023/24 result 		Awaiting data for quarter1

Priority 3: Creating a sustainable environment to protect future generations

KPI	Status	Value	Target	Gauge	Direction of Travel	Comments
FS 02 Establishment and Agency costs are kept within agreed revised budget		£2,465,037.00	£2,491,701.00	Cumulative result for Q1 2024/25 as of June 2024 		
FS 03 90% of payments to creditors within 30 days		77.9%	90.0%	Cumulative result for Q1 2024/25 as of July 2024 		1089 payments were made within 30 days out of 1,398. Whilst this PI is still not within target there is an improving performance.
HR 02 Percentage staff turnover (%)		0.5	4.0	Latest result for Q1 2024/25 as of June 2024 		Establishment has increased to 199, there was one Resignation during Q1.
HR 03.1 Working days lost due to Sickness Absence (short-term only)		0.2	0.8	Average result for Q1 2024/25 as of June 2024 		27.956 days of sickness were experienced during quarter 1. This has reduced from q 4
CON 10 Levels of Litter and Detritus (% of sites are Grade B or better)		88.8%	88%	Q4 2023/24 result 		11 sites out of 125 sites reached the required standard. This is an improvement on performance from q4.
CON 14 Average number of working days to respond to reports of fly-tipping (days)		4.00	5.00	Q4 2023/24 result 		

Priority 4: Supporting businesses and residents to deliver a prosperous local economy

KPI	Status	Value	Target	Gauge	Direction of Travel	Comments
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KPI	Status	Value	Target	Gauge	Direction of Travel	Comments
RS 14 Number of interventions carried out to encourage owners of empty properties to bring them back into use/ number of properties brought back into use	Annual Target					Annual target - updated at end of Q2
RB 01 In-Year Council Tax Collection Rate of 98.4%	✓	29.2%	29%	<p>Q1 2024/25 result</p> 	↑	
ED 23 Footfall data Market Harborough	✓	515,103	480,000	<p>Latest result for Q1 2024/25 as of June 2024</p> 	▬	New footfall counters were introduced in Q4 of 2023/24. 2024/25 will be the baseline year for the new trend data.
ED 24 Footfall data Lutterworth	✓	291, 690	240,000	<p>Q1 2024/25 result</p> 	▬	New footfall counters were introduced in Q4 of 2023/24. 2024/25 will be the baseline year for the new trend data.

Harborough District Council



Report to Corporate and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Panel Meeting of 26th September 2024

Title:	Equality Plan (Strategy) 2025/28
Status:	Public
Key Decision:	No
Report Author:	Julie Clarke, Equality and Diversity Officer
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Paul Beadle
Appendices:	A. Equality Plan (Strategy) 2025/28 B. Equality Impact Assessment – Equality Plan (Strategy) 2025/28

Summary

- i. The Council's current Equality Plan 2021/24 requires a review as it is due to expire at the end of 2024.
- ii. The Harborough District Council Equality Plan (Strategy) 2025/28 contains our updated Equality objectives and there is a legal requirement for us to identify and publish these at least every 4 years (Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011).

Recommendations

1. That Scrutiny Panel Members have an opportunity to view and consider the proposed Harborough District Council Equality Plan (Strategy) 2025/28.

Reasons for Recommendations

- iii. The Council's current Equality Plan required a review as it is dated 2021/24 and is due to expire at the end of the year (2024).

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To provide an overview of the Council's reviewed Equality Plan which outlines the Council's commitment to equality and diversity and how we intend to continue to meet our statutory responsibilities over the next 3 years.

2. Background

- 2.1. The Equality Act 2010 came into force on 1st October 2010. The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which came into force on 5th April 2011, is a duty imposed on all UK public bodies by section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, to take equalities considerations into account when exercising any of their functions and taking decisions.
- 2.2. There is a legal requirement for a local authority to publish employee equality monitoring data annually and prepare and publish its equality objectives and commitments at least every four years. This plan helps to ensure that we can fulfil our responsibility and respond to changes in legislation.
- 2.3. The public sector equality duty is a general duty imposed by section 149 (1) which requires the Council to have 'due regard' to the need to:
 - 2.3.1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
 - 2.3.2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
 - 2.3.3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 2.4. The nine protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. This plan helps to ensure that we can fulfil our responsibility with regards to our public sector equality duties.

3. Details

- 3.1. It is important that the Council can identify and set out its equality objectives and to demonstrate how it plans to meet and discharge its responsibilities as required under the public sector equality duties.
- 3.2. The draft plan underwent external consultation with local community groups and with groups sub-regionally as well as undergoing internal consultation.
- 3.3. The final plan will be presented to Council on 09.12.24 for adoption. A draft is attached at appendix A for committee members to review and comment upon.

4. Implications of Decisions

Corporate Priorities

- 4.1. Place and Community - Priority 1: Community leadership to create a sense of pride and belonging.

Consultation

- 4.2. Consultation with staff and external partners and community groups was undertaken between May 2024 and August 2024. The plan was reviewed by the Corporate Management Team on 27.08.24. Further information regarding consultation can be found within the associated Equality Impact Assessment – Appendix B.

Financial

- 4.3. All new employees to the organisation receive a one-hour 'introduction to equality' initial briefing. This outlines the Council's responsibility with regards to equality and diversity and forms part of the

plan to embed equality and diversity throughout the organisation, by developing staff knowledge and raising awareness.

- 4.4. Staff awareness is refreshed at least every 3 years by mandatory completion of an online learning module.

Legal

- 4.5. There is a legal requirement on the Council to identify and publish its equality objectives every four years to demonstrate compliance with the equality duty, to publish employee equality and diversity data annually and to pay 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Failure to comply with the public sector equality duties could result in the council facing a legal challenge and its reputation being damaged.

Environmental Implications

- 4.6. None identified.

Risk Management

- 4.7. There is a potential risk to the council if there is a failure to recognise the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and adhere to the specific duty implementation deadlines. A failure to comply can amount to an unlawful action, and it is one that is commonly raised as grounds for a judicial review claim.

Equalities Impact

- 4.8. The main purpose of the plan is to ensure that all people are treated with fairness and respect regardless of their personal characteristics. The plan has been written in clear English, is available for translation, and is written in a way that simplifies the commitment Harborough District Council has towards Equality, meaning that people can easily understand our responsibilities and our dedication to working towards cultivating an inclusive community.
- 4.9. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed as part of the plan's development as attached at Appendix B.

Data Protection

- 4.10. None identified. All information contained within the plan is in the public domain.

5. Alternative Options Considered

- 5.1. Not reviewing the plan. However, the Council has a duty to identify and publish its equality objectives and the Council's existing equality plan is in need of review, to meet legislative requirements.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1. The approval of the Harborough District Council Equality Plan (Strategy) 2025/28 by full Council.

7. Background papers

- 7.1. [Harborough District Council Equality Plan 2021/24](#)



Harborough District Council Equality Plan (Strategy) 2025/28

If you need this document in an alternative format, please visit our [website](#) for information on how to request this or contact our Customer Services Team by telephone on 01858 828282 or text 07860 041908.

Version 1	13.08.24	J Clarke
Version 2	20.08.24	J Clarke
Version 3		
Reviewed by the Corporate Management Team	27.08.24	
Reviewed by the Council's Communities Scrutiny Panel		
Approved by Cabinet		
Review Due	2028	

Introduction

The aim of this Equality Plan is to explain how we, at Harborough District Council, intend to continue progressing our work regarding equality, diversity and challenging discrimination over the next three years. As a Local Authority, we have both a legal (statutory) and a moral duty to show fairness and promote equity for all our residents, customers, and employees. It is important that we provide services, facilities and policies which meet community and employee needs by designing and delivering them in a way that is appropriate and accessible for all. We want to ensure that our actions do not discriminate against or disadvantage anyone, and responsibility for this lies with everyone here at Harborough District Council.

Key to our work in this area is knowing our community and understanding how it is changing over time. Census 2021 statistics showed that over the previous 10 years our population grew by 14.3% and that our population is ageing, with 22% of our residents being 65 years of age or older. It showed that residents live on their own in 26% of our households and that 23% have a disability or long-term health condition. Sadly, 2022 statistics from the Acorn Wellbeing Survey also show that 2.7% of our district population (approximately 2636 residents) are worried about being attacked because of their skin colour, ethnic origin or religion. It is important for us to acknowledge this data, along with statistical information covering all characteristics across the district, and try to understand the context, so that we can develop our services with consideration towards future needs as well as those currently required.

Ensuring that equality and diversity informs key decision-making at every level within the Council, is a continuous responsibility and one that allows us to adapt and be responsive to change. By encouraging collaboration, community cohesion and giving everyone an opportunity to participate, we will achieve more than any single organisation, or person could achieve working alone. As a council, we continually seek to understand our communities' varying needs and ensure that we provide easy access to services that address those needs. We recognise that identifying the nature of inequalities can be complex, impacts can be cumulative and linked to factors such as socio-economic background and family influence as well as individual characteristics. This means that, as a Local Authority, we need to ensure that we are doing all that we can to understand, recognise and reduce any inequalities we encounter or identify in all areas of our work. We also need to delve further, and so it is vital that we positively engage with, and listen to, all our communities and employees to make sure that services and policies are accessible, appropriate, fair, and that they help to advance equality of opportunity for those who may be at risk of, have been or are currently being disadvantaged.

By continuing to promote equity both internally, within our organisation, and externally, within the community, we aim to develop social and economic benefits which will ultimately positively impact all communities and cohesion within our district.

What do the terms Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusive Community mean?

Equality means making sure that everyone can access the same opportunities to reach their potential. **Equity** means recognising people may need to be treated differently, depending on their needs, to achieve **equality**. An equitable approach looks at how a person's individual circumstances impact what they can do and acknowledges that specific contexts can make it more difficult for people to achieve the same as someone not experiencing those circumstances. Whilst everyone should be able to access the same services and be protected by the same policies, the focus of equity is ensuring that everyone has what is needed to achieve this. It is not just about trying to level the playing field but actively taking steps to support people with less privilege achieve the same.

Diversity is recognising and valuing that individuals are unique with their own values, beliefs, attitudes, cultures, ethnic backgrounds, sexuality, skills, and life experiences. A successful

organisation respects and values these differences and understands how they can be developed for the good of the individual, an organisation and society as a whole. When considering diversity, we think about representation from people of different backgrounds, identities, and abilities. This includes visible and non-visible characteristics.

An **Inclusive Community** is one where everyone feels welcome, of value and can contribute. Successful and lasting inclusion and cohesion involves a shared vision, values, and a sense of belonging for all communities, where the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated, respected, and positively valued.

The Law

The [Equality Act 2010](#) and associated Public Sector Equality Duty are the main parts of equalities legislation which focus on the right of people not to be discriminated against because of who or what makes them different from other people.

There are nine 'protected characteristics' covered by the Equality Act 2010. It is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of any one of these 'characteristics', of which we all have one or more, so the Act protects all of us against unfair treatment. The law applies whether the discrimination is actual or perceived and if it occurs directly or by association. The nine 'protected characteristics' are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

As a Local Authority, Harborough District Council has additional legal responsibilities relating to the Equality Act 2010 and this is known as The Public Sector Equality Duty. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires us to have 'due regard' to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- To foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

We aim to meet our Public Sector Equality Duty by:

- Paying 'due regard' and considering equality impacts before we make decisions which directly affect residents, service users or employees. We may do this by completing an Equality Impact Assessment to demonstrate 'due regard' or through other activities or assessments
- Monitoring whether our decisions and actions do in fact reduce inequality by analysing and understanding information and feedback about our services
- Not tolerating discrimination or harassment of any staff member by ensuring fair and respectful treatment in the workplace, in training, development and career progression
- Not tolerating discrimination or harassment of any customers by ensuring they receive fair and respectful treatment from our staff and policies

- Working with communities, partners, and agencies across the district to promote good relations and community cohesion, and where there is discrimination to challenge it

Whilst not specifically mentioned as 'protected characteristics' within the Equality Act 2010, our commitment to equality also encompasses people who are socially or economically disadvantaged and communities known to experience poorer outcomes due to inequalities and discrimination such as asylum seekers, people who have care experience, carers, current and ex-armed forces personnel (Veterans) and refugees.

The Vision and Values of Harborough District Council

Here at Harborough District Council, we are determined to provide equality of opportunity by ensuring everyone we support is treated with respect and dignity and that all residents can access our services by appropriate means. We will consider digital inclusion and ensure that suitable methods of contact are available to all whether that be online, by phone or face to face if required. Our aim is to ensure that living, working, or visiting the district is the best possible experience.

We strive to deliver excellent services through a strong focus on customer access and support and by making sure that people and communities within our district are at the heart of our daily work. Our vision is to work with our communities, to build a future for the people of Harborough district that gives them the best life chances and opportunities through:

- Community leadership to create a sense of pride in our place
- Promoting health and wellbeing and encouraging healthy life choices
- Creating a sustainable environment to protect future generations
- Supporting businesses and residents to deliver a prosperous local economy

We want to deliver important and lasting improvements for local people, through good equality and diversity practice and by showing high levels of corporate and social responsibility. This is supported by our internal employee values which are embedded in our appraisal system:

- We value and are valued
- We are open, honest and accountable
- We challenge and innovate
- We are the best we can be

The Council's commitment to equality

- A service provider, by providing services and facilities which meet the diverse needs of our residents and people who work in and visit our district
- An employer, by being fair in our recruitment, selection, promotion, training and in the development of our staff. By aiming to have a representative workforce that reflects the communities we support and by providing a work environment that is safe, accessible and free from harassment and discrimination
- A community leader, through our democratically elected Members working with communities and partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors to improve the quality of life for the people within our district

We will make sure that the way we meet individual and community needs is fair, equitable and helps ensure that limited resources are targeted at those most in need and least able to have their needs met in other ways. Whether this is in the provision of services, employing people, developing policies, communicating, consulting or involving people in our activities.

Open, honest and accountable

If someone feels that we, our services, or our policies cause disadvantage or are discriminatory in any way we would like them to let us know. We will thoroughly investigate any complaint and be open and honest about our findings. If challenges are made, it is important that we seek to address them, so that we understand why people feel as they do. If lessons need to be learnt, we will embrace this so that we can ensure that we continuously improve. Anyone can register a comment, compliment or complaint [online](#), by telephone 01858 828282 or text 07860 041908.

Working with Partners

Harborough District Council works closely with many partners and agencies in the delivery of our functions and services. We are a member of the LeicesterShire Equalities Forum (LSEF), which is a group consisting of equality leads from statutory organisations across Leicestershire. The Forum meets regularly and focuses on tackling issues shared by all members. We are also a statutory member of the Harborough District Community Safety Partnership (HDCSP). The HDSCP contribute towards preventing hate incidents and improving community cohesion within our district. In Harborough, hate incidents based on the characteristic of race made up the majority of reported offences over the 12-month period up to 31st March 2024, with almost 59% of reports in this category, followed by reports of incidents and crimes related to sexual orientation 18%, disability 14%, religion 6% and transgender status 1%.

In addition to these partnerships, Harborough District Council also helps to bring together and co-ordinate the work and contribution of other local organisations and local community groups, to improve quality of life in the district. These partnerships also have a responsibility for promoting equality and diversity.

The workforce of Harborough District Council

As a modern organisation, providing high quality services, we at Harborough District Council recognise the diversity of our customers and workforce. We seek to promote equity in our policies, the services we provide and in employment. More than that we seek to identify and eliminate barriers that create disadvantage. Our aim is to encourage good practice on equality throughout our organisation and to emphasise its importance as an essential element of all aspects of the business we conduct internally as well as externally within the wider community.

We operate a pay and reward system which is robust and transparent, based on objective criteria and free from bias. We continue to review all new posts, and any existing posts regraded as part of reviews, to ensure equal pay. Through these actions we aim to avoid unfair discrimination in our pay and reward system.

Each year we produce information in relation to the characteristics of our workforce which, whilst being a legal requirement, is also useful for workforce planning. We publish this information annually on the [Equality and Diversity](#) page of our website and set ourselves objectives to ensure that we continue to ensure that we are an inclusive employer with staff who reflect and understand the communities that we support.

What have we done since our last plan - Equality in Action

As well as looking at equality impacts of our policies and procedures, we have been seeking to foster good relations between communities within the district, through education and awareness raising, to assist in improving understanding of the challenges that some of our communities' face. Examples of our recent work in this area include:



Communications – a staff diary of significant dates and events has been developed and added to the staff intranet to encourage promotion and awareness of important dates for communities across our district. The calendar is used as a prompt to help celebrate and increase awareness and appreciation of dates such as Holocaust Memorial Day, Windrush Day and Pride Month.



Active Together – our Active Together team have been working across the district to increase levels of exercise for underrepresented groups to help reduce health inequalities and improve wellbeing. This includes Menopause Matters webinars, Falls Prevention Workshops, Active Mums Club walks and teaming up with the Canal and River Trust to develop a 'Waterways and Wellbeing' programme.



EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME

SILVER AWARD 2021

Proudly serving those who serve.

Defence Employer Recognition Scheme – to further develop our work in this area, we have permanently employed an Armed Forces Officer and are currently working towards achieving the Gold Award standard by March 2026.



Disability Confident Employer – new internal staff guidance has been developed including information for managers on 'recruiting and managing employees who are neurodivergent'. Staff have also been encouraged to attend courses such as Mental Health Skills for managers and Mental Health First Aider courses for employees to develop their understanding, knowledge and skills.



Environmental Services – our team have been redeveloping and creating new green areas and play spaces with wider pathways and inclusive play equipment to ensure that people with all characteristics can enjoy the outdoors and spending time with others in an accessible way. The work included the addition of a 'Changing Places' facility in Welland Park, Market Harborough.

Supporting events – Staff at Harborough District Council continue to support events and initiatives in recognition of significant dates such as Mental Health Awareness Week and Gypsy Traveller and Black History months. They continue to recognise and support people who are struggling financially by collecting donations of food for the district's foodbanks and toiletries for the hygiene bank. Individual officers have also taken part in fundraising activities to raise funds for charities such as Bliss for babies born premature or sick, Marie Curie, RNID – National Hearing Loss Charity, Cancer Research and the British Heart Foundation amongst others.

The future

For continued development and to further embed good equality and diversity practice, we have set the following equality objectives as part of our Equality Plan 2025/28:

General Equality Objectives

Objective 1. Monitor performance of the Council within the Equality Framework for Local Government

Led by: J Clarke, Equality and Diversity Officer

By when: April 2026

Measure of Success: 'Achieving' category is reached for each theme as a minimum

Support Required: Equality and Diversity Officer will need support from managers across the organisation to complete work and provide evidence relevant to their service areas

Next Steps: Framework document to be shared

Objective 2. Improve quality of equality impact assessments to ensure data is current and relevant to the local area

Led by: Heads of Service

By when: April 2026

Measure of Success: Equality Impact Assessments are completed for changes to services and include data regarding known community impacts and any gaps in knowledge

Support Required: Heads of Service will need support from Equality and Diversity Officer with regards to data and statistics to assist in writing analyses

Next Steps: Heads of Service to receive refresher input with regards to completing effective analyses as part of their decision making

2024/25 Employment Equality Objectives (these are updated on an annual basis)

Objective 1: Assess effectiveness of the data we hold and consider if it would be beneficial to strengthen reporting by reintroducing an anonymous staff equality monitoring survey

Led by: R Jenner, Head of Human Resources

By when: March 2025

Measure of success: Percentage of staff who have completed 5 or more of the sensitive information questions on their personnel record increased from 48% to 55%

Support required: Assistance from equality and diversity officer and service managers to encourage staff to complete personal information and to identify any potential concerns

Objective 2: Use data from this report to inform and develop our Workforce Strategy

Led by: R Jenner, Head of Human Resources

By when: April 2025

Measure of success: Workforce Strategy is responsive to annual report and objectives aligned

Support required: Assistance from Equality and Diversity Officer with regards to community statistics and ITrent link officer for report generation

Harborough District Council Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment is an on-going proactive process which requires us to consider the effect our decisions are likely to have on local communities, service users and employees, particularly those most vulnerable and at risk of disadvantage.

This document has been designed to assist in the collation of information and evidence required to support the 'Due Regard' process when introducing new policies/procedures/functions and services or reviewing existing ones.

Name of policy/procedure/function/service being assessed: Equality Plan 2025/28 (our Equality Strategy Document)

Department and section: Human Resources

Name of lead officer: Julie Clarke, Equality and Diversity Officer

Other people involved (assisting or reviewing – including any service users or stakeholder groups etc.): Harborough District Council Corporate Equality and Safeguarding Group, LeicesterShire Equalities Forum

Date assessment commenced: 18th June 2024

Date assessment submitted for sign off:

Step 1: Defining the policy/procedure/function/service

Is this a new, amended, or reviewed policy? What are the aims, objectives and purpose and how will they be achieved? What are the main activities and which communities are likely to be affected by these activities? What are the expected outcomes?

This is a review of our previous 3-year plan (strategy). The aim is to ensure that we are making continuous improvement regarding designing and delivering services that are appropriate and accessible to all sectors of our community and that people from different groups are not discriminated against nor disadvantaged by our actions. The Plan is also aimed at ensuring our employees are treated fairly.

Step 2: Data collection & evidence

What relevant evidence, research, data, and other information do you have and is there any further research, data, or evidence you need to fill any gaps in your understanding of the potential or known effects of the policy on different communities? Include quantitative data as well as qualitative intelligence such as community input and advice.

General Harborough District Census Data 2021 (Data from initial releases so may be unrounded)

Total Population: 97,631 **Total number of households:** 40,400

Household Composition

One person household aged 65 and over	5,335 (13.2%)
One person household other	5,179 (12.8%)
Lone parent household with dependent children	2,066 (5.1%)

Age

Census Question: What is your date of birth?

	Number of residents	% of Harborough District population
All usual residents:	97,631	100.0%
Aged 0-4 years	4,719	4.8%
Aged 5-9 years	5,371	5.5%
Aged 10-15 years	7,106	7.3%
Aged 16-19 years	4,200	4.3%
Aged 20-24 years	4,344	4.4%
Aged 25-34 years	10,487	10.7%
Aged 35-49 years	18,336	18.8%
Aged 50-64 years	21,570	22.1%
Aged 65-74 years	11,429	11.7%
Aged 75-84 years	7,336	7.5%
Aged 85 years and over	2,733	2.8%

Ethnic Group

Census Question: What is your ethnic group?

	Number of residents	% of Harborough District population
All usual residents:	97,623	100.0%
Asian/Asian British:	5,298	5.4%
Black/Black British/Caribbean/African:	699	0.7%
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups:	2,003	2.1%
White:	88,851	91.0%
Other ethnic group	205	0.24%

Population by residents born in the UK: Harborough 92.8%

Household Language

All adults in household have English as a main language	39,029 (96.6%)
At least 1 but not all adults in household have English as main language	721 (1.8%)
No adults but at least 1 person aged 3 to 15 has English as main language	143 (0.4%)
No people in household have English as a main language	520 (1.3%)

Main Language: Top 10

English	92,200 residents
Gujarati	363 residents

Punjabi	335 residents
Polish	307 residents
Romanian	222 residents
Portuguese	99 residents
Spanish	92 residents
Hungarian	72 residents
Greek	56 residents

Sign Language, 23 residents (British Sign Language, 16 residents)

Sex

Census Question: What is your sex?	Number of residents	% of Harborough District population
All usual residents:	97,625	100.0%
Female	49,276	50.5%
Male	48,349	49.5%

Gender Identity

Census Question: Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?	Number of residents	% of Harborough District population
All usual residents aged 16 and over	80,430	100.0%
Gender identity the same as registered at birth	76,560	95.2%
Gender identity different from sex registered at birth but no specific identity given	69	0.1%
Trans woman	44	0.1%
Trans man	40	0.0%
Non-binary	24	0.0%
All other gender identities	15	0.0%
Not answered	3,678	4.6%

Health

Census Question: Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?	Number of residents	% of Harborough District population
Day to day activities limited a lot	5296	5.4%
Day to day activities limited a little	9413	9.6%
Day to day activities not limited	82917	84.9%

Legal Partnership Status

Census Question: What is your legal marital or same-sex civil partnership status?

	Number of residents	% of Harborough District population
All usual residents aged 16 and over:	80,428	100.0%
Never Married or registered a Civil Partnership	23,779	29.6%
Married or in a registered Civil Partnership	42,622	53.0%
Separated/Divorced or formerly in a Civil Partnership	8,889	11.0%
Widowed or surviving Civil Partnership partner	5,138	6.4%

Religious Belief

Census Question: What is your religion?

	Number of residents	% of Harborough District population
All usual residents:	97,624	100.0%
Buddhist	256	0.3%
Christian	49,046	50.2%
Hindu	2,477	2.5%
Jewish	118	0.1%
Muslim	1,120	1.1%
Sikh	1,467	1.5%
Other religion	379	0.4%
No religion	37,480	38.4%
Religion not stated	5,281	5.4%

Sexual Orientation

Census Question: Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

	Number of residents	% of Harborough District population
All usual residents aged 16 and over	80,427	100.0%
Heterosexual or Straight	73,899	91.9%
Gay or Lesbian	923	1.1%
Bisexual	620	0.8%
Pansexual	90	0.1%
Asexual	36	0.0%
Queer	8	0.0%
All other sexual orientations	6	0.0%
Not answered	4,845	6.0%

Households not deprived in any dimension: Harborough 57.9%

Population who have previously served in any UK armed services: 3,145 residents (3.9%)

Needs Assessment for Harborough, Health and Wellbeing Plan, November 2023

Age and health - 22% of the population of Harborough are 65 and over; this is higher than the average for England (18.4%) and the Leicestershire population (20.5%). Alongside most areas in England, population estimates show an ageing population in the area with increases of 51% in the size of the over 65 population by 2040. As a result, we can expect to see an increase in many of the health conditions associated with ageing, at a faster rate than in other Districts. According to the 2021 Census, Harborough is one of the places that has seen the largest increase in the population aged 65 years and over since 2011, at 38.5%.

Childhood Poverty – There are 2140 children living in relative low-income families in the district in Financial Year End 2022 (note these are provisional figures) this is 12.4% of the child population and an increase of 625 (3.7%) from the previous financial year. There are 1810 living in absolute low income families in the same year, 10.5% of the child population. This is an increase of 579 (3.4%) from the previous financial year.

Income Deprivation Affecting Older People – Market Harborough Central has significantly higher numbers of older people living in poverty when compared with Leicestershire and England. The Leicestershire Health Inequalities Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Highlights Market Harborough Central as having 44.8% people living alone, which is significantly higher than the England average.

Leicestershire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Health Inequalities, 2023

Evidence exists that show the population groups below are losing years of life as a result of health inequalities:

- People who have a learning disability (20.7 years lost)
- Looked after children or care experienced people (360% higher risk of premature death)
- People who are homeless (around 30 years lower)
- People living in poverty or deprivation (9.7 years for men and 7.9 years for women in England)
- Gypsy or Irish Travellers (life expectancy of 10 years lower)
- People who are in prison (mortality rate for prisoners is 50% higher)
- People with a Severe Mental Illness (15-20 years lower life expectancy than the general population)

Workforce Equality Statistics 2024 (from self-declaration on human resources system)

Age – 6% of our employees are aged under 24 years, 11% are aged 25-34 years, 41% are aged 35-49 years, 41% aged 50-64 years and 2% of employees are aged 65 years or over.

Ethnic group - Of the 49% of staff declaring their ethnic group, 97% said that they are white and 2% described themselves as Asian, Black, Mixed or 'Other' ethnic group.

Gender Reassignment – Of the 39% of employees who self-reported, 100% indicated their gender is the same as that assigned at birth.

Health condition or disability – Only 4% of employees completed this question and 100% declared that they do not have a health condition or disability which limits their day-to-day activities and has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months. We are trying to establish why the response rate was so low and believe that employees may have missed this question due to software design rather than choosing not to answer. We know that we have employees who have long term health conditions and disabilities and make reasonable adjustments where possible.

Religion or Belief – Of the 43% of our employees who answered, 51% declared themselves to be Christian, 38% employees stated that they have no religion and 6% stated that they are Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh or 'other'. 2% of staff selected that they did not wish to declare their religion and 57% left this question blank.

Sex – 70% of our staff are female and 30% male. This is comparable to other Local Authorities and public sector organisations. The figure is impacted by the number of part time positions at the council. Office of National Statistics UK Labour Force data for January to March 2024 showed that, nationally, 37% of women in employment worked part time compared to 14% of men. 34% of positions at this council are part time roles and 92% of these are held by female employees. The position is more even when looking at full time roles, with 59% of positions being held by female employees and 41% by male. There is a similar split when looking at management positions (Grade 10 and above) where there are 58% female and 42% male employees. 5% of Grade 10 and above positions are part time roles.

Sexual orientation – Of the 41% of employees who completed this section, 89% of respondents described themselves as heterosexual/straight and 11% as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or 'other'.

Recruitment Equality Statistics 2023/24

During the period 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024, 573 people applied for jobs with Harborough District Council, 62 people were interviewed and 61 offered posts. From information completed at the time of recruitment:

Age – 11% of new starters were aged under 24 years, 11% were 25-29 years, 41% aged 30-44 years, 34% aged 45-59 years and 2% aged 60 or over.

Ethnic origin – 79% were White, 21% Asian, Black, Mixed or 'Other' ethnic group.

Gender Reassignment - 97% of new starters stated that the gender they identify with is the same as that assigned at birth.

Health condition or disability – 92% of new starters declared that they did not have a health condition or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months, 7% said that they do have and 2% preferred not to say.

Religion or Belief – 34% of new starters were Christian, 39% had no religion, 15% were Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh or 'other' and 12% did not wish to declare.

Sex – 69% were female, 28% male and 3% of new starters described their sex in another way.

Sexual Orientation – 84% of new starters declared that they were heterosexual/straight, 7% described their sexuality as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or 'other' and 10% of new starters preferred not to say.

Harborough District Hate Incident and Offences Statistics

Within Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland reported hate incidents and hate crimes are recorded against five categories (Disability, Gender identity, Race, Religion or Belief and Sexual Orientation) as well as a category for 'any other perceived difference' to align with

Leicestershire Police recording of hate. Latest statistics from dashboards created by the Hate Incident Monitoring Project provide the following statistics for Hate reports within the Harborough District for the rolling 12-month period up to March 2024:

Number of hate reports recorded in Harborough district – 147 (which is an increase of 36.1% on the previous year's figure of 108 reports)
Breakdown of reports by category: Race 58.9%, Sexual Orientation 18.2%, Disability 14.0%, Religious 6.2% and Gender Identity 1.4%

Further information regarding Hate Incidents in Harborough can be located on the [Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Hate Incident Monitoring Project Dashboard](#) or by viewing information on the Community Safety page of our website [Hate | Hate, Prevent and Exploitation | Harborough District Council](#)

Step 3: Consultation and involvement

Have you consulted and if so, outline what you did and who you consulted with and why.

As part of the formulation of the Plan, the following groups have been/will be asked for feedback:

External - Harborough Action Team, Freedom Support Solutions, LeicesterShire Equalities Forum, Leicester LGBT Centre, Harborough District Disability Action Group, Harborough Churches Together, HCYC – Harborough District Children and Young People's Charity, MATU – Multi-Agency Traveller Unit, VASL – Voluntary Action South Leicestershire, Homestart South Leicestershire

Internal – Corporate Management Team, Heads of Service, Corporate Equality and Safeguarding Group, Cabinet Lead, Equality Member Champion, Scrutiny Panel - Communities

Step 4: Potential impact

Considering the evidence from the data collection and feedback from consultation, which communities will be affected and what barriers may these individuals or groups face in relation to Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Other groups e.g. rural isolation, deprivation, health inequality, carers, asylum seeker and refugee communities, people who are care experienced, current and ex-armed forces personnel (Veterans), deprived or disadvantaged communities and also the potential impact on Community Cohesion. Remember people have multiple characteristics so the impact of a policy on a particular community may impact people within the community differently. Where possible include numbers likely to be affected.

Work is ongoing at the Council with regards to ensuring that the make-up of our workforce is representative of the community we support. By trying to match the community we aim to employ people with diverse skills, abilities and understanding of various groups and communities to help identify barriers or potential areas of discrimination at the earliest possible opportunity. This combined with the objectives contained within our Equality Plan 2025/28 should help us to ensure that the only impacts on individuals or groups with protected characteristics are positive ones.

It is important that we recognise that just because some communities are not as substantial in terms of numbers as others within the district, it is just as significant that their voices are heard and that we are able to make certain that their needs are considered and any barriers to access assessed. By completing good quality equality impact assessments, at an early stage, when considering new policies

and procedures as well as when reviewing current ones, our staff should be able to identify potential gaps and engage with relevant communities to make certain that we do not make assumptions about impacts but make decisions based on fact.

If we become aware of any negative impact resulting as a consequence of one of our policies or procedures, we will endeavour to find opportunities to mitigate this as soon as practicable.

Step 5: Mitigating and assessing the impact

If you consider there to be actual or potential adverse impact or discrimination, please outline this below. State whether it is justifiable or legitimate and give reasons. If you have identified adverse impact or discrimination that is illegal, you are required to take action to remedy this immediately. If you have identified adverse impact or discrimination that is justifiable or legitimate, you will need to consider what actions can be taken to mitigate its effect on those groups of people. Consider what barriers you can remove, whether reasonable adjustments may be necessary and how any unmet needs have identified can be addressed.

I do not believe there to be any actual or potential adverse impact or discrimination because of this plan. The plan has been written with the intention of ensuring that our policies, procedures and services are accessible for all. It identifies the importance of ensuring that we consider the additional needs people may have to achieve the same level of access as others and the importance of eliminating barriers preventing people from engaging with us. If we do this then the only impacts should be positive for our residents and employees with protected characteristics.

Step 6: Making a decision

Summarise your findings and give an overview of whether the policy will meet Harborough District Council's responsibilities in relation to equality, diversity, and human rights. Does it contribute to the achievement of the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty – eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations?

The Equality Plan 2025/28 is centred on how we are going to meet our responsibilities and what we will do if we become aware of any situation where we are deemed to be lacking in an area. Therefore, I believe that it will contribute to us achieving all three aims of our Public Sector Equality Duty.

Step 7: Monitoring, evaluation & review of your policy/procedure/service change

What monitoring systems will you put in place to promote equality of opportunity, monitor impact and effectiveness, and make positive improvements? How frequently will monitoring take place and who will be responsible?

A yearly review will take place. This will monitor progress with regards to equality objectives within the plan. It will also help to identify any gaps and where improvement needs to be made. The review and monitoring will be the responsibility of the Equality and Diversity Officer with support from the Corporate Equality and Safeguarding Group.

Equality Improvement Plan

Equality Objective :

Action: Equality Objectives are listed as part of the Equality Plan 2025/28 document itself.

Officer Responsible: J.Clarke**By when:** December 2024**Equality Objective :****Action:****Officer Responsible:****By when:****Equality Objective :****Action:****Officer Responsible:****By when:****Signed off by:** **This document should be signed off by a service manager****Date:**

Once signed off, please forward a copy for publication to Julie Clarke, Equality and Diversity Officer e-mail: j.clarke@harborough.gov.uk

