



ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Appendix 1

Performance Report

Quarter 2 - 2020/21

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Performance Indicator Tables Explanatory Note

There are two different types of performance tables contained within this report:

1. Summary Performance table – this provides an at glance view of performance in relation to Tier 1 indicators in each priority and;
2. Individual Priority Performance tables – this presents data for both Tier 1 and Tier 2 measures in each priority for the quarter. Further quarter's data will be added into subsequent reports over the year.

A Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rating is used on the Summary table, as well as for the performance figures on the individual priority tables. Where there is data but no colour, this indicates that a target was not previously set as the indicator was not hitherto reported to Cabinet. The RAG rating indicates whether performance has met or exceeded target (green), did not meet target but was within a 5% tolerance (amber), or did not meet target by more than 5% (red).

The Direction of Travel (DOT) symbol compares performance from the last reported period, to the most recent reported performance, in terms of percentage variance from target. This indicates whether the latest reported performance data is either an improvement on the data from when last reported (arrow pointing up), the same as the last reported data (dash symbol), or worse than the last reported data (arrow pointing down).

The colour of the DOT symbol correlates as to whether the target was met (as set out above). For example, a green arrow pointing down would show that an indicator was on target for the month/quarter, but performance was down on the last reported period.

On the individual priority tables, the '% Variance from Target' column shows the percentage variance between the latest reported data and the target for that month.

The Comparative Performance column provided in both the summary and individual priority tables provides a judgment (where available) on the performance of an indicator compared to a suitable family comparator group. On this column, the following applies: Green = First Quartile; Yellow = Second Quartile; Amber = Third Quartile; Red = Fourth Quartile. *It should be noted that the quartile performance does not relate to performance within the quarter but reflects St Helens' position for the indicator against a comparator group when the last nationally verified data was published.*

However, some caution should be applied to comparative performance data. The quartile positions given for St Helens - compared to peer authorities - is at a given moment in time, when the last nationally verified and published information was made available. In most instances within this report the latest comparative data relates to 2018/19. It is possible that since this time the relative performance of St Helens and its comparator authorities may have subsequently changed.

Equally, although 'first quartile' is the preferred outcome, in some instances the quartile comparative position does not necessarily equate to a judgement on good or bad performance. It should therefore be viewed in the context of the performance of other linked measures. For example, top quartile performance in terms of a low rate of children subject to a Child Protection Plan would need to be viewed within the context of other measures such as referral rates and Section 47 rates.

Priority Performance Summary

Although subject to future review, the Tier 1 performance measures are those reported to Cabinet in 2019/20 recast against the priorities of the Draft Council Plan. The table below provides an overview of performance for those measures where new data was available as at Quarter 2 2020/21.

Portfolio	Reference	Performance Indicator	Performance vs. Target	DOT	Comparative Performance
Ensure Children and Young People have a positive start in life	E&S-25a	NEET & Not Known			2nd Quartile
	CYP-01	Children in need (CIN)			4th Quartile
	CYP-02	Looked after children (LAC)			4th Quartile
	CYP-40	Children subject to a Child Protection Plan (CPP)			3rd Quartile
	CYP-41	Referrals to children's social care			3rd Quartile
Promote good health, independence and care across our communities	ASC-18	Permanent admissions to residential care			2nd Quartile
	ASC-20a	All delayed transfer of care	Data collection currently suspended by NHS		1st Quartile
	PH-25	Mortality rate due to suicide			4th quartile
	PH-48	Admissions for alcohol specific conditions			4th quartile
	PH-52	Emergency hospital admissions for falls			N/A
Create safe and strong communities for our residents	SC-01	Repeat MARAC			N/A
Support a strong, diverse and well-connected local economy	G&P-01	Rate of employment			1st Quartile
	G&P-06	Town Centre retail vacancies			N/A
	G&P-09	Increases in dwelling stock			N/A
	G&P-30	New build employment floor space completed (sqm)			N/A
Create a green, thriving and vibrant place to be proud of	ENV-02	Percentage of household waste sent for recycling			N/A
Be a modern, efficient and effective Council	CS-02	Sickness Absence			1st Quartile
	CS-14a	Satisfaction with Council Contact Centre			N/A
	CS-01	Council Tax collection			3rd Quartile
	CS-03	Business Rate collection			4th Quartile

KEY - Performance vs Target

On or better than target	
Off target within 5%	
Worse than target	

KEY - Comparative Target

First Quartile	
Second Quartile	
Third Quartile	
Fourth Quartile	

KEY - Direction of Travel (DOT)

Better than the last reported outturn	
Worse than the last reported outturn	
No change from last reported outturn	
First reported period	

The table below highlights those measures of performance where the latest comparative performance is either 3rd or 4th quartile, and where direction of travel, from the last reported period to the most recent reported performance in quarter 2, is not showing improvement.

Quarter 2 Performance - 2020/21

Portfolio	Reference	Performance Indicator	Performance vs. Target	DOT	Comparative Performance
Ensure Children and Young People have a positive start in life	CYP-02	Looked after children (LAC)			4th Quartile
	CYP-41	Rate of referrals to children's social care per 10,000 under 18 year olds			3rd Quartile
	CYP-28a	Percentage of former care leavers aged 19-21 in employment, education or training			3rd Quartile
	CYP-23	Average number of days between entering care and being placed for adoption			4th Quartile
	PH-04	Under 18 conception rate per 1,000 15-17 year old (3 year rolling average)			4th Quartile
Support a strong, diverse and well-connected local economy	G&P-06	Town Centre retail vacancies as a proportion of total stock			N/A
Create a green, thriving and vibrant place to be proud of	ENV-02	Percentage of household waste arisings which have been sent for recycling			N/A
Be a modern, efficient and effective Council	CS-01	Council Tax collection			3rd Quartile

Priority 1- Ensure children and young people have a positive start in life

Objectives

- Every child will attend a good school and achieve their potential
- Support children and young people to build their confidence and resilience
- Support children and families with early help
- Safeguard children and young people from risk of harm and improve the lives of children in care.

Progress against priority

Education and Schools

- The key focus of education and school support services over the summer period was on the wider opening of schools in September. Work was led by the Education Reset and Recovery Group. Guidance documents from the DfES were collated and circulated to schools with changes in recommendations noted.
- Twilight forums for governors were held to update them on changes in guidance during the summer period and to advise them on actions taken by the Reset and Recovery group to support the safe return of school staff and children and young people.
- An Attendance Strategy and Campaign was developed entitled '*All In*' which outlined the support available to parents and children and reminded them of the importance of good attendance. A website was launched providing details of guidance and support for parents with attendance a key feature of the website content.
- Support was provided to schools to complete risk assessments to support the wider opening, with recommendations to share with chairs of governors. The model risk assessment circulated to all schools was well received. A visitor protocol which can be displayed in the entrance halls to remind visitors of expectations was also provided.
- The Assets and Buildings team worked continuously despite the closedown of many contractors and were able to deliver the Children and Young People's Services capital programme of works for this Summer, whilst maintaining progress with the major projects including Ashurst and Penkford schools. The team also remained responsive to additional works, such as improvements to electrical systems and external works over the holiday period.
- The Council supported schools in the procurement of PPE resulting in a reduction in costs for schools and more timely delivery of goods ready for the new term.
- Collaborative work with Council services, Merseytravel and other transport operators ensured robust plans were put in place to ensure safe travel to and from school with information distributed to parents and pupils.
- The impact of all the above activity was very positive, resulting in high pupil attendance rates for both primary and secondary schools upon their return at the start of the new term. During the first week of the new term, attendance rates from schools that participated in returning data initially showed around 96% of pupils were in school. Due to the phased return of year groups this was not however a complete picture of attendance.
- The Education Reset and Recovery Group continued its development and delivery of a Reset and Recovery Plan over the Summer period and into the new school term. A

recovery curriculum was produced and circulated with advice and strategies provided to all schools. In addition, support was provided to schools in forming their remote learning offer with a model policy produced and support through the IT department in setting up Microsoft TEAMS for schools to use as a platform and providing the appropriate training for staff.

- However, following the alarming rise in Covid-19 infections across St Helens Borough during September, there was a return to response mode, with a need for immediate further action and strong collaboration between the Education Reset and Recovery Group, Public Health and schools to mitigate the spread. A number of additional measures were agreed and put in place to try and stop the rate of community transmission causing the significant rise in infections. Measures in relation to supporting schools resilience included instruction that parents should wear face coverings when they arrive at the school gates to pick up or drop off their children and not gather in groups of more than six at the school gates, the reinforcement of the need to comply with staggered drop off/pick up times for schools and compliance with guidance for pupils self-isolating.
- Despite the challenges, the strategic response has worked well with the majority of schools still continuing to function. As of the 30th of September, there were 14 educational establishments within St Helens not fully open due to either year groups or 'form bubbles' isolating. The daily attendance rate stood at 81% across all establishments, lower than the national average and reflective of the higher rates of infection across the Borough, the Liverpool City Region, and the north of the country generally. There was a total of 72 confirmed pupil cases, 107 suspected cases and 2,315 pupils self-isolating due to contact with either suspected or confirmed cases in St Helens. For all schools either closed or partially closed remote learning offers for pupils have been put in place. However, real concerns persist in terms of the future impact that either lost learning or remote learning will have on the learning gap for pupils in areas such as St Helens with high rates of infection. The authority continues to work with schools to ensure a strong picture of actual attendance, whilst providing support to ensure all barriers to attendance are removed. Work continues with local schools as well as with National Government to overcome lost learning, review the curriculum and help those in greatest needs, particularly our vulnerable children and young people, to catch-up and promote educational attainment at all levels.
- The Early Years Quality and Inclusion team are monitoring any vulnerable children who may be isolating at home via contact with the setting to check on the child's well-being. Early Year's sufficiency is beginning to become a pressing issue; one setting has announced permanent closure and two are at risk as a direct result of Covid-19.
- Work was completed to examine the feasibility of repurposing the former Red Bank educational facility to support the relocation of Penkford Special School, the buildings of which have exceeded their life expectancy. The findings concluded that Red Bank could provide a suitable site, and the proposal, although subject to approval by the Charity Commission, was approved in principle by Cabinet in September. The proposal is part of a range of initiatives to develop more cost-effective quality provision for pupils with Social, Emotional and/or Mental Health needs and reduce the reliance on independent non maintained special schools.
- The DfES announced the successful provider for the new jointly commissioned Special Free School, providing a high quality education to those children and young people with a primary need of social, emotional and mental health for secondary age children aged 11-16 in need of a more specialist educational setting. The provider will be the Youth Engagement Trust, who currently run two Alternative Provision schools in Cheshire and will shortly be opening another. The new school will be called the Raise Academy and is planned to open in September 2022.

- Work to reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training has been ongoing over the course of quarter 2, with the following action achieved:
 - The tracking of all 16/17-year-old apprentices in St Helens was completed identifying who was furloughed and those who had become NEET for early intervention.
 - Service delivery was remodelled to offer support with retention to all post 16 training providers.
 - Intensive support and transition planning were provided to the 88 year 11 students identified as “At Risk of NEET”.
 - 3,296 young people in the 16/17 age group were tracked and a blended model of information, advice, and guidance (virtual and some face to face) support was offered resulting in our lowest ever NEET performance in this age group.
 - In the September Guarantee Y11 cohort, 1,878 young people have offers of learning which is 98% against a target of 98%
 - In the September Guarantee Y12 cohort, 1,759 young people have offers of learning which is 93%, against a target of 93%.

Early Help and Children’s Centres

- The Pause programme works with women who have experienced or are at risk of repeated pregnancies that result in children needing to be removed from their care. Pause aims to break this cycle by giving women the chance to pause, learn and aspire to take control of their lives. In the two years to date, it is estimated that 21 pregnancies have been avoided by delivering the St. Helens Pause programme, with an estimated cost saving over 3 years of £2 million in statutory services. Cabinet approved on 23rd September 2020, the recommendation to continue the Pause programme for a period of 21 months (November 2020 to July 2022). The programme will be match funded by a grant provided by the national Pause charity and existing funding from the Troubled Families programme.
- Over the course of Quarter 2, St Helens’ Early Help Service and Children’s Centres continued to provide ongoing support to children and families during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The emergency creches previously delivered by Children’s Centres, for key working staff were wound down, as more day care providers re-opened following the easing of lock down restrictions.
- Reviews of all open EHAT assessments were completed to ensure the needs of children and families continued to be met, with priority being given to families who were likely to encounter additional pressure during “lockdown” because of domestic abuse and mental health concerns.
- Early Help Services continued to be delivered via direct work, following social distancing measures and through the use of technology. Following the easing of lockdown restrictions direct interventions have been offered, with priority given to those interventions accessed by the most vulnerable families. Programmes also continued to be delivered through virtual sessions, including speech and language and other areas of support, as well as delivering daily activities through the Children’s Centres Facebook page.
- Lessons learned during the lockdown period have been used to inform practice going forward, such as the benefits of using digital technology to provide increased accessibility of services for service users and professionals.

Resilience and Wellbeing

- Young people have helped to shape a new wellbeing support kit called #GrowYourHappy. The online kit is an easy to digest page filled with ideas for young people to embrace taking care of their mental health. With everything from playlist recommendations to links to resources to get specialised help #GrowYourHappy takes a positive look at the things young people can do to take care and look after their mental wellbeing. The online space has been created by the Youth Council of St Helens and has been tailored by young people for young people including suggestions of how to be kind and access positive messages to inspire their day.
- Liverpool City Region have recently launched a Youth Hub outlining education, training, and employment opportunities available for young people across Merseyside. The Council is now in dialogue to establish a physical Youth Hub in the Town Centre.

Children's Social Care

- Preparation was ongoing over the first part Quarter 2 for the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) 6 Month Review, which took place on the 30th July 2020 and the Ofsted Monitoring Visit that took place on the 11th and 12th August 2020. There was much to be positive about, with feedback from both the DfES and Ofsted recognising improvements made since the Ofsted ILLACS inspection in September 2019. However, areas were also identified where strategic and practical 'hands on' improvement need to be progressed at pace. In summary the Ofsted feedback acknowledged:
 - The substantial investment made in children's services that has increased social work capacity within the Directorate.
 - The revised Improvement Plan provides leaders with an effective monitoring tool to support measurement of the impact of service improvement on children's experiences and progress.
 - The focus on achieving early permanence for children and the challenge and oversight from Independent Reviewing Officers are starting to deliver positive impacts on children's experience and progress. Robust tracking and monitoring processes for achieving early permanence are in place to assist oversight and timeliness of securing the permanence of children who have recently come into care.
 - Increased oversight, scrutiny of social work practice and review of children's circumstances by managers is beginning to improve the quality of practice and outcomes for children and young people. However, the quality of practice is still too variable, greater challenge is required and the pace of improvement needs to speed up.
 - Social workers know the children they work with well. Most practice is child-focussed with social workers engaging with children in meaningful and creative direct work. The child's voice has an increasing role in informing effective care planning, but this needs to be sustained.
 - The need to continue to focus on improving children's social care records in terms of detail and completeness to ensure informed decision making.

The DfES feedback acknowledged:

- Strong political and corporate commitment, with political leaders putting children at the forefront of everything the council is doing.

- The strong work undertaken by the leadership team to identify and understand the causes of failure in Children's Services, and the commitment to resolving the problems identified.
- A strong, collective, and safe council response to Covid-19 with many innovative ideas effectively implemented to adapt to the challenging situation.
- The dedication and motivation of all staff to improving services for the children and young people of St Helens, despite the challenges.
- A very strong positive culture within the service with staff reporting effective support, training, and coaching.
- The successful recruitment of social workers during the pandemic, which demonstrates the growing positive reputation of the service as a great place to work.
- The reduction in caseloads due to the increase of social workers which is having a positive impact with social workers.
- A positive cultural shift in relation to understanding the importance of data intelligence, quality assurance and audit work, which is beginning to be more embedded in practice, but the approach still needs to be further strengthened.
- The need to prioritise the implementation of a fully operational Edge of Care offer to reduce the high numbers of looked after children and strengthen placement sufficiency to reduce numbers of children in residential care.

Considering the findings, the Directorate is reviewing its plans to ensure the feedback is fully taken account of and acted upon. A detailed revised action plan will be reported monthly to the Children's Improvement Board.

- During September, Children's Social Care progressed its partnership with the NSPCC and work planning to introduce the re-unification programme. This programme will offer a framework to support assessment and planning for children who we are returning home from care, with the aim of preventing future breakdown. Support from the NSPCC will enable Children's Social Care to embed the framework and the training needed to make it a success.
- The Safeguarding Children Partnership Board has been commended by the National Panel in relation to the way in which it has commissioned a serious case review report, a date for publication is to be set.
- Following approval of a Supported Lodgings Scheme Children's Social Care are now working with its commissioned service SHAP to deliver the offer. The scheme will help young people between 16 – 21 (and occasionally up to 25) years old who may be leaving care, are homeless or at risk of homelessness, providing the opportunity to live in a family-like setting where the householder can make a difference to the young person's life, be it emotional support or help with the practical everyday skills required to build confidence for adult life.
- St Helens Adoption Team recently won the 'Team of the Year' award at the Cheshire and Merseyside Social Work Teaching Partnership Awards in the children's service category. Open to social work teams, the award recognises services that have made a difference through their outstanding work with children and families and comes just a matter of weeks since Ofsted found a number of improvements in the Council's Children's Services.

Performance Indicator Summary

Ensure Children and Young People have a positive start in life - 2020/21

Tier	Ref	Performance Indicator	Higher / Lower is better?	Past Performance			20/21 Target	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q2	Q2	Q2	% Variance from Target	DOT	Comparative Performance
				17/18 Outturn	18/19 Outturn	19/20 Outturn		April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept			
Tier 1	E&S-25a	Percentage of young people academic age 16-17 not in education, employment or training and not known combined	Lower	6.5	6.1	5.8	8.4	5.9	6.6	7	6.8	7.9	19.3	-20.63%	↑	2nd Quartile
	CYP-01	Rate of Children in Need per 10,000 0-17 population	Lower	429	492.9	478	485	444	454	439	426	435	441.8	8.91%	↓	4th Quartile
	CYP-02	Number of looked after children per 10,000 children within the Borough	Lower	121	129	134.8	125	133	134	134	133	133	133	-6.40%	↔	4th Quartile
	CYP-40	Rate of children subject to a Child Protection Plan per 10,000 under 18 year olds	Lower	34.7	59.5	56.3	55	57	59	51	61	61.2	58.2	-5.82%	↑	3rd Quartile
	CYP-41	Rate of referrals to children's social care per 10,000 under 18 year olds	Lower	506	589.7	805.4	600	-	-	152.5	201.9	256.9	317.8	-5.93%	↓	3rd Quartile
Tier 2	CYP-04	Rate of S47s per 10,000 population (cumulative)	Lower	148	288.4	255.2	195	20	36	52	72	87	102	-4.08%	↑	4th Quartile
	CYP-09	Percentage of re-referrals to Children's Social Care within 12 months of the previous referral	Lower	18	16	23.5	18	33	32	31	31	32	30	-66.67%	↑	2nd Quartile
	CYP-18	Percentage of children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time	Lower	9.9	19.3	25.9	16	-	-	17.9	-	-	26.5	-65.62%	↓	2nd Quartile
	CYP-23	Average number of days between entering care and being placed for adoption	Lower	553	480	572	440	-	-	541	-	-	563	-27.97%	↓	4th Quartile
	CYP-24	Average time (in days) between a LA receiving court authority to place a child and the LA deciding on a match to an adoptive family	Lower	303	222	272	140	-	-	282	-	-	227	-62.14%	↑	4th Quartile
	CYP-27a	Percentage of former care leavers aged 19-21 in suitable accommodation	Higher	92.9	89	90	95	-	-	97	-	-	92	-3.16%	↓	1st Quartile
	CYP-28a	Percentage of former care leavers aged 19-21 in employment, education or training	Higher	49	49	47	66	-	-	76	-	-	59	-10.61%	↓	3rd Quartile
	CYP-29	Percentage of Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans completed within a 20 week period	Higher	68.6	15.5	69	50	-	-	100	-	-	95.8	91.60%	↓	4th Quartile
	CYP-42	Percentage of S47s progressing on to an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC)	Lower	37	36.3	35	45	-	-	29	-	-	42.2	-5.50%	↓	2nd Quartile
	CYP-43	Number of foster carers recruited by St Helens Council	Higher	1	6	4	10	-	-	3	-	-	5	0.00%	↑	N/A
	PH-04	Under 18 conception rate per 1,000 15-17 year old (3 year rolling average)	Lower	33.4	29.6	32.8	28	-	-	32.6	-	-	33.6	-20.00%	↓	4th Quartile
	PH-05	Percentage of infants being breastfed at 6-8 weeks	Higher	22.4	21.8	27.4	29	Data is not yet available from North West Boroughs Healthcare			Data is not yet available from North West Boroughs Healthcare			N/A		4th Quartile
	PH-15	Smoking status at time of delivery	Lower	15.6	15	16.4	14.1	-	-	-	16.1	-	-	-14.18%	↓	3rd Quartile
	PH-22	Under 18 admissions to hospital for alcohol specific reasons per 100,000 population	Lower	99	98.8	73.4	83	-	-	73.4	-	-	67.8	18.31%	↑	4th Quartile

Overview of Priority Performance

A total of 19 indicators were due to be reported in Quarter 2. There is one data gap - breastfeeding data for Quarters 1 and 2, 2020/21 is not currently available from North West Boroughs Healthcare.

Data for the educational attainment indicators for the academic year 2019/20 is not being reported nationally.

Of the remaining indicators 4 are reported as meeting target, whilst 14 are not meeting target. Of the 14 measures not meeting target, 2 are within a 5% tolerance of target.

Of the 17 indicators where direction of travel can be determined, 7 are showing improvement on the previous reporting period in terms of variance from target, 1 is showing the same level of performance and 9 are showing a downturn in performance.

The latest available picture of comparative performance relates to verified nationally published data for the financial year 2018/19. The comparators used for the children's social care measures are the 11 local authorities within the DfES family group. The comparators for the public health measures are the 16 authorities within the CIPFA nearest neighbour's family group. The comparative performance position remains challenging with 10 indicators in the 4th quartile and 3 in the third quartile.

What is performing well

- Performance on the timeliness of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) remains strong with 96% of EHCPs finalised to time. This quarter 3 EHCPs were produced outside of 20 weeks, all of these were for pupils who transferred into St Helens mid assessment and their plans were transferred to St Helens having already missed the statutory deadline. Performance has also been positive in relation to Annual Reviews with 91% of reviews completed this quarter. Performance has remained strong despite the additional pressures on the service during the pandemic to contact families and be assured that schools and services were endeavouring to meet the needs of our 1,100 pupils as set out in their EHCPs in this period.
- A total of 5 foster carers have been recruited for the period April to September 2020, which is halfway to meeting the annual target of 10. The service anticipates in quarter 3 that an additional 8 households will be presented to panel for approval. The service is making good use of the new Facebook site which has generated over 129 out of the 179 initial enquiries in the year to date. The service is also responding to Facebook posts 24/7, which again is generating interest. The first virtual skills to foster course for mainstream carers will be run in November 2020.

What requires improvement and what is being done about it

Children's social care

- At the end of September 2020, the total number of children and young people open to and receiving support from statutory children's social care was 1,624 per 10,000 aged under 18 years, a small decrease in performance compared to the previous quarter. The performance trajectory over the last 12 months is very positive as there were a total of 1,988 Children in Need (CiN) in September 2019. Further reductions are still required as it remains the case that the numbers of CiN reported for St Helens remain well above comparable average rates in the region (389) and at national level (334) as reported in March 2019.

Action to improve - The Department is undertaking a range of improvement actions as part of its wider improvement plan for children's social care. Good progress is being made on strengthening the Early Help offer across the partnership; developing consistency to increase family resilience and reduce the need for statutory intervention

in family life. We are developing the partnership understanding of resources available and effective step up / step down arrangements. The Safeguarding Children's Partnership has highlighted issues in relation to escalation to statutory services and re-referrals. The Director of Children's Services and Assistant Director have met with Senior Merseyside Police representatives in relation to the management and screening of referrals. All contacts have been reviewed to understand patterns in relation to referrals and this has been fed back to the Safeguarding Children's Partnership Board and Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub Boards for consideration and action.

- At the end of September 2020, there were 488 children in care, when expressed as a rate per 10,000 under 18-year olds, that continues to be well above than comparable regional and national averages. The number of looked after children needs to reduce significantly, but performance is now going in the right direction. Recent months have seen fewer children coming into care and more children being discharged from care and a subsequent gradual reduction in the overall numbers from a high of 534 at the end of October 2019 to the 488 children reported at the end of September.

Action to improve - Work is ongoing to strengthen the Early Help offer across the partnership developing consistency to increase resilience and reduce the need for statutory intervention in family life. We are also embedding an effective offer to families where their children are considered to be on the Edge of Care. We are working to improve our support offer to families subject to pre-proceedings. We have also ensured that all children looked after have a plan of permanence and we continue to support children to exit care via a Special Guardianship Order, plan of adoption or to return home where safe to do so. Given the current numbers of children in care to achieve the same rate of LAC as our statistical neighbours or the England average we are working on the basis of a 3 to 5-year reduction plan. In context of Covid-19, it should be noted that many other authorities are seeing increases in the numbers of looked after children. It is therefore positive that our numbers continue to reduce.

- A total of 214 children are being supported by a child protection plan (CPP), at the end of September 2020. This equates to a rate of 58.2 per 10,000 under 18s, has not met target and performance has deteriorated compared to the previous quarter. Local performance is also now worse than the comparable national average. In the period April to September 2020 a total of 155 children have been made the subject of a CPP, whilst, over the same period, 146 CPPs have ended. The targets set for the current year have been set at a rate that the department believes represents a realistic population estimate, one that is aligned to comparable Statistical Neighbours.

Action to improve – To help reduce numbers, there is a focus being placed on a number of children who have been on a CP Plan for a lengthy period. A total of 26 children have been subject to a CPP for over 12 months, with 4 children subject to planning for 25 months. In these cases, there are consistent features, which are domestic abuse, parental mental health, and parental substance misuse issues. Due to the nature of these issues faced by the families the plans tend to be longer to address performance in this area the Safeguarding Unit will amend and further embed the 9-month plan review system to include a partnership review of these children at 8 months of CP planning. Going forward, Thresholds, Scrutiny, mid-point tracking and challenge will be better monitored within the Unit across child protection work. Assessment teams and the Child in Need Coordinator will need to audit and address work with children held at child in need to ensure effective planning. Assessments will need to be completed earlier and prior to the conclusion of the Section 47. This will provide a better understanding of risk and thus its appropriate management.

- In the period April to September 2020, a total of 155 children and young people became the subject of a Child Protection (CP) Plan with 41 of the children in the group (or 26.5% of children) having previously been on a CP Plan at some time in the past. The

percentage of children who were the subject of a CP Plan for a second or subsequent time is the same as the activity reported locally during 2019-20 financial year (26%) and is above the most recently published 2018-19 comparable regional (22%), statistical neighbour (19%) and national (21%) averages.

Action to improve - 40 % of children were subject to a second CP Plan within one year. All of these incidences related to Domestic abuse in both the first and the second CP plan. To address this, the Safeguarding Unit will improve the oversight on threshold for and at conference. In addition, the Assessment Team and Child in Need Coordinator will ensure effective child in need work and planning. The wider commissioning of services related to working with perpetrators will also support performance improvement in this area.

- In the current year, a total of 1,169 referrals to Children's Social Care have been received. This equates to a rate of 317.8 per 10,000 under 18-year olds and has not met target at the end of September 2020. However, performance is on a positive trajectory. It is projected that if the rate of referrals continues at its current rate for the remainder of the financial year, there will be a reduction of the high number of referrals received in the previous 2019/20 financial year. Comparative performance at the end of March 2019 places St. Helens below the median average for its group of statistical neighbours. Of the 1,169 referrals to St Helen's Children's Social Services received between April and September, 354 (or 30%) of those referrals were re-referrals to St Helen's Children's Social Services, occurring within 12 months of the current referral. The current re-referral rate (30%) stands well above comparable regional and national averages, but again performance is going in the right direction.

Action to improve - Close oversight and scrutiny continue to be placed on re-referral activity. As stated, good progress is being made on strengthening the Early Help offer across the partnership; developing consistency to increase family resilience and reduce the need for statutory intervention in family life. We are developing the partnership understanding of resources available and effective step up / step down arrangements. The Safeguarding Children's Partnership has highlighted issues in relation to escalation to statutory services and re-referrals. The Director of Children's Services and Assistant Director have met with Senior Merseyside Police representatives in relation to the management and screening of referrals. All contacts have been reviewed to understand patterns in relation to referrals and this has been fed back to the Safeguarding Children's Partnership Board and Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub Boards for consideration and further action.

- Since 1st April 2020, a total of 374 Section 47 enquiries were initiated, which is a rate of 102 per 10,000 under 18-year olds. Performance has not met target but has improved compared to the same period in the previous year (14% reduction in S47 enquiries). Although the number of S47 enquiries has reduced slightly data continues to demonstrate a level of child protection activity that is above comparable national rates. Of the 374 S47 enquiries initiated in the year to date, 158 have progressed to initial child protection conferences (ICPCs), which equates to 42% of enquiries. This has not met target and is a much higher S47 to ICPC conversion than reported in the previous year.

Action to improve - To drive improvement in this area, a review of our performance in relation to S47s was undertaken, which identified key areas of development. All S47s are kept under review at performance clinics and briefing and training sessions to managers in relation to the application of S47s have been delivered. An independent audit was also recently completed which confirmed that the threshold for S47s are now being applied consistently. This will be kept under review with work ongoing to drive and support practice improvement. It is anticipated that performance will continue to

improve as the year progresses. After a further 12 months of development it is expected we will no longer be an outlier in this area.

- A total of 64 former relevant care leavers have turned 19, 20 or 21 years old between April and September 2020 and the authority was in touch with 62 of the young people at the time of their latest birthday. Of the 64 care leavers, 59 or 92% were living in suitable accommodation. This has not met target but is better than the most recent national average of 85% in 2018/19. A total of 38 of the 64 care leavers were in employment, education or training, which equates to 59% of the cohort and has not met target (66%) but is better than the most recent national average of 52% published for 2018/19.

Action to improve - We continue to drive improvement in this area. Care leavers performance has improved considerably and is still the subject of scrutiny and review at performance clinics. We have commissioned an independent expert to undertake a follow up review of our care leavers service, which will report at the end of the year. Care leavers are now a routine part of our monthly audit cycle and the findings are being used to inform learning and development. The numbers of young people not in either employment, education or training are being impacted by the pandemic, however care leavers continue to be one of the priority groups we are looking to support through access to employment projects. A Scrutiny Review of support for care leavers was undertaken in February 2020 and having considered the recommendation an action plan has been developed, which will be presented to Cabinet in November.

- The three-year average number of days between a child entering care and being placed for adoption is 563 days, but in year performance care in the period April to September 2020/21 is 308 days. There have been two children adopted from care in the year to date. One of the children was adopted by their former foster carers following a direct application to the Court. Recently the DfE have introduced a new indicator, which allows us to measure timeliness between children moving in with a foster carer, who then goes on to adopt the child. We have had several children who have gone on to be adopted by their foster carers and when this new measure is applied to these children performance is 328 days.

Action to improve - For each of the adoptions within 2020/21, there has been a delay to the child's overall journey due to the suspension of adoption Court hearings at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. We have escalated these delays to the Merseyside Court Users Forum, attended by Legal Services and we do now have several confirmed dates for final adoption hearings. It is also important to note that there are a further 14 children placed for adoption, whose adopters have lodged their adoption application. When adoption orders are granted for these children it is anticipated that performance against this indicator will dip significantly given the delays in securing their final adoption hearings due to backlogs within the Court.

- The average 3-year performance for the time in days between the local authority receiving court authority to place a child and deciding on a match to an adoptive family has reduced to 227 days at the end of Quarter 2, but this remains outside the target. Just one child has been subject to a placement order resulting in them being adopted during the period April to September 2020/21, with their overall journey from placement order to match just 80 days, which represents good performance. This was achieved due to 'family finding' having taken place prior to the child's placement order having been granted with a match being secured shortly afterwards. Performance is less than the target set for this indicator because we have consistently shown a commitment to securing a plan of adoption for children who are considered 'harder to place'. For these children, the journey from placement order to match has inevitably been longer, although the outcomes they achieve in terms of securing permanence through

adoption are the right ones. If we removed the 'harder to place' children from the adoption tracker we would be able to clearly show that we consistently demonstrate timeliness when matching younger children with adopters.

Action to improve - The Directorate is continuing to work with the children and family court to secure timely adoption hearings in the context of Covid-19. We are tracking each child's journey to adoption and agreeing timescales for family finding linked to each individual child. We are actively engaged in the Regional Adoption Agency Partnership Board and subgroups where performance and quality of practice are reviewed. Adoption is considered as part of performance monitoring and is contained in the ChAT tool, a performance monitoring system. We are building the adoption workflow in Integrated Children's Systems (ICS) to improve our ability to report on adoption performance live.

Education and attainment

- At the end of quarter 2, 2020/21, 19.3% of 16-17-year olds in St Helens were not in education, employment, or training (NEET) or their status was not known. Performance has not met target but is better than the same period last year (32% NEET or not known). At the end of September 2020, there were 89 16-17 years-olds who are NEET, or 2.24%, which is better than the 3.6% who were NEET in the same period last year. Similarly, the number of young people where their education, employment or training destination is not known also improved from 28% not known last year to 17% this year (678 young people). Tracking of young people has become more problematic during the pandemic, so improvements in this are positive. The percentage of NEET and Not Known is high in August and September due to the DfE guidance that requires all young people to be reported as NEET as of 31st August each year, until a confirmed destination has been followed up during September and October leading into the destination report (Activity Survey), which is published later in the year. The percentage of NEET and Not Known will improve during the third quarter.

Action to improve - There is significant activity ongoing to reduce NEET. Through the post 16 pathways recovery group, established in the context of the pandemic, partners have worked together to create a more collaborative approach to ensuring all young people had an offer of education or training in September and are committed to delivering a more flexible offer by understanding the need to adapt programme delivery and extend transition for learners. The recovery group will be monitoring the position in the next few weeks to ascertain the impact on learners and their pathway choices in the first half term. In addition, 7 learners with SEND have embarked on a supported internship programme and will begin with their employers after half term. Placements range from retail, local authority, creative industries, and the voluntary sector. Partners in St Helens continue to work with colleagues across Liverpool City region on a range of initiatives including the youth taskforce and youth hub. Performance has clearly been impacted on by the pandemic in terms of the range and availability of employment, training, and education destinations. One of the ongoing challenges is the reengagement of young people who were not in education, employment, or training at the point of lockdown and getting them to reengage with provision.

Public Health

- The under 18-year old conception rate per 1,000 15-17-year olds has increased further at the end of quarter 2, 2020/21. NB Data is time lagged. There were 21 conceptions in quarter 2, 2018/19, which brings the three-year rolling rate at March 2019 to 33.6 per 1,000 15-17-year olds. In the same period the North West rate decreased to 21.6, whilst the England rate decreased to 17.2.

Action to improve - In December 2019, the national lead from Public Health England attended St. Helens multiagency task group to advise on priority actions. A strategy and action plan have been drafted. Initial actions include:

- We have developed a local system to be able to estimate up to date trends as the Public Health England data is 15 - 18 months behind.
- We have identified the schools with the highest number of pregnancies, and we are working with them and local services to increase interventions
- We are working with four 'early adopter' schools and the faith sector on implementing the new national guidance on Relationship and Sex Education in preparation for mandatory roll out to all schools from September 2020.
- The Family Nurse Partnership have completed insight work with teenage parents about access to contraception and attitudes towards teenage pregnancy to help inform the strategy.

With the increase in the number of Covid-19 cases across the Borough, many of the Public Health staff, including those tasked with progressing the actions above, have been diverted into other duties, such as Test, Track and Trace.

- Smoking status at time of delivery stands at 16.1% in St. Helens. Data is for the period Quarter 1, 2020/21 and is provided by NHS Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit. Performance has not met target (14.1%) but is a small improvement on the 2019/20 outturn of 16.4%. Whilst smoking prevalence overall for the borough is improving, decreasing from 15.8% in 2018 to 13% in 2019, smoking in maternity remains too high.

Action to improve - A multi-agency action group including Midwifery, Public Health, Ultrasonography and Stop Smoking Services continues to meet, and priority actions have been reviewed and agreed.

- The rate of under-18s admissions to hospital for alcohol specific reasons decreased from 75.2 per 100,000 (Quarter 4, 2019/20) to 67.8 per 100,000 (Quarter 1, 2020/21). Data is time lagged by one quarter. The reduction equates to eight fewer admissions to hospital. Performance is improving but remains considerably higher than the North West (45.9) and England (31.6) averages.

Action to improve - It is likely the reduction seen is partly due to the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly during the beginning part of the quarter. During the previous quarter, the Young People's Drug and Alcohol Team were delivering targeted work in certain wards of the Borough where it was identified that there were higher rates than others.

To continue this, we will need to be able to receive up to date data on admissions by ward to ensure that we are targeting those young people more at risk of admissions. The team has worked tirelessly during this quarter to ensure that young people are remaining safe and well, in particular in relation to their mental wellbeing. We have reviewed and refreshed our pathways with Whiston hospital to ensure that young people continue to receive the right intervention and support as required. Positively, there are very few re-admissions for under 18's.

Priority 2- Promote good health, independence, and care across our communities

Objectives

- Provide people with a positive experience of health and care services
- Support people to lead healthy lives and improve their wellbeing
- Promote good mental health to improve people's lives
- Support people with health and care services to remain independent in their community

Progress against priority

- A local plan for Reset and Recovery for services within the priority theme of 'Promote Good Health Independence and Care' was developed collaboratively during quarter 2 with input from council services and a broad range of partners. Work is ongoing to deliver the plan, which focuses on the following 4 sub-themes, each containing a series of objectives, outcomes, and actions:
 - People First - delivering responsive services to support individuals' wellbeing with a focus on mental health, suicide prevention support for people in poverty and an expanded role for Contact Cares to manage demand for services'
 - Staying Safe - ensuring people remain safe and are supported to meet the ongoing challenge of the pandemic, with a focus on health improvement, outbreak management, winter flu planning, safety in care settings, and activity around timely hospital discharge, reablement and home care support.
 - Importance of Local - delivering services, advice, information, and guidance to residents to maintain their health and wellbeing and enable self-care in their local area, including integrated care planning and multi-disciplinary working.
 - Support for Care – supporting unpaid and paid carers to effectively continue their roles and working together with partners to tackle the challenges of increasing cost and demand on the health and care system.

Provide people with a positive experience of health and care services

- The second quarter of 2020/21 continued to be dominated by the Covid-19 pandemic and the Council response. The Council has an obligation to ensure that contracted adult social care services remain financially sustainable within the requirements of the Care Act (2014). Service user preferences may change as the effects of Covid-19 across the sector are felt. This could result in a rebalancing of the service profile across the market, for example a greater use of care at home such as domiciliary care, direct payments, or other care models rather than care in residential settings. In progressing against this priority, it is imperative:
 - To ensure there is a sustainable care market in St Helens.
 - To ensure there is enough market capacity to meet demand.
 - To ensure good quality care is provided.
- These objectives must be seen in the context of achieving financial effectiveness for the Council. During the Covid-19 pandemic the department has strove to ensure this priority continues to be met and has undertaken the following in Quarter 2 via the Contact Cares function:
 - Made 31,850 calls to individuals.

- Delivered 89 emergency parcels delivered to residents.
- Delivered 484 emergency parcels delivered to residents.
- 164 residents supported with Hospital and Brookfield discharges, outpatient appointments and Care Home transfers.
- The department has continued to provide services to enable service users to maintain their independence and has:
 - Made 950 welfare calls to everyone registered and follow up calls to those in greatest need.
 - Ensured telephone assessments continued throughout and equipment delivered.
 - Undertook daily calls and support to all providers.
 - Undertook weekly conference calls with providers.
 - Seen 647 people currently supported by St Helens in Care Homes.
 - Seen 1,775 people currently supported by Domiciliary Care Services.
 - Undertaken daily monitoring of Care Homes with outbreaks.
 - Secured access to the national emergency PPE supplies and develop a system to fairly allocate.
- As well as dealing with the pandemic and linked to the Reset and Recovery Plan for the priority, the department is also developing strategies to increase independence and improve services for individuals in the following areas, including the provision of funding of all costs associated with Covid-19 thus far:
- *Care Homes* - Enhanced 'Care Home Support' developed during the pandemic will be retained so that residents can be supported safely and out of borough placements reduced. The department responded to an extensive government request to complete a care home support plan to assure the care sector response to Covid-19 and enable access to the first tranche of the Infection Control Fund (ICF).
- *Homes for Life* - Our strategy is to maximise Extra Care Housing and continue to reduce demand for traditional Care Home beds, whilst developing alternative housing options that are future proof.
- *Day Services* - The focus continues to be to reduce dependence on buildings. Outreach support developed for people who require care and volunteers and community solutions will support people who are isolated, lonely and require support to take part in activities or provide a break for a carer. Alongside community activities peer support and 'virtual' day services will be provided through "digital days" which could be an alternative to building based services and an opportunity to stay in touch, socialise and even exercise.
- *Market Strategy* - The department has undertaken a consultation exercise with providers to understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the market and by consequence service users. This was via a face to face review of care homes utilising a risk methodology to understand the individual viability of care homes. Initial indications suggest that whilst the Care Home sector in St Helens has been adversely impacted by the pandemic, it currently remains largely stable with no imminent risk of provider failure.
- *Budget Strategy* - The department continues to take a robust approach to dealing with the financial position and providing scrutiny with a view to finding solutions. This is in conjunction with the wider savings strategy. An adult services finance group has been established to consider the financial position and the savings strategy. This group

continues to meet, and the department has taken a full and active role in the budget planning process for 2021/22, undertaking several planning and progress meetings with senior managers aiming to identify robust savings proposals for future years.

- As part of an ongoing process to support care homes, the department took forward an approved decision to support the market in a limited way for the coming months thereby achieving the twin objectives of market sustainability and financial effectiveness.
- The department is formulating its response to the recently announced NHS Winter Plan including the extension of the ICF from 1st October 2020.
- The department, in conjunction with health colleagues, has restarted the assessment process for Continuing Health Care cases.
- The department continues to play an active role in regional and sub regional forums to assure best practise and compliance in the care sector.
- The department has assured the supply of PPE and will continue to play a role considering the recent establishment of the PPE portal.
- The department has now received the Adult Social Care Winter Plan and are in the process of formulating a response for Government.

Support people to lead healthy lives and improve their wellbeing

- Test and Trace – Outbreak management programme.
 - The outbreak management plan has been developed along with a suite of documents available on the website <https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/omp>
 - To support the local response and bolster resilience, St Helens is part of a Cheshire and Merseyside Test and Trace Hub. A team is in place within both Merseyside and Cheshire enabling greater local insight, but also maximising shared functions. Mutual aid will ensure no one local authority becomes overwhelmed should multiple outbreaks occur. The shared service will undertake test and trace for all people that are referred from the national Test and Trace Service, with daily data provided. The service will escalate to local area outbreaks where further consequence management is required. The service is funded by contributions from all local authorities across Cheshire and Merseyside and a case management system has been purchased to ensure the effective functioning and monitoring of the system.
 - Financial allocations have been received and St Helens received £1.3M, which will be needed to operate the system over the next 2 years.
 - In St Helens there is a single point of contact for outbreaks from Public Health England with Contact Cares.
 - A team consisting of environmental health officer's, sexual health, public health, infection control and admin support staff are working on a seven-day rota to deal with local outbreaks, contact tracing, complex cases and test and trace queries. Additional capacity has been recruited within the Infection Control Team and we are looking to recruit further to the core team. The team have been working hard to prevent outbreaks in various settings including schools, care homes, pubs, and food preparation sites. There has also been targeted work in areas where clusters of cases have been identified to try and prevent wider community spread.
 - Work has been ongoing with the CCG to secure swabbing for vulnerable cohorts to support outbreak management.

- Trained staff are working in care homes on swabbing and PPE and we are in the process of training staff who may pick up outbreaks as part of emergency duty, school health and the quality and monitoring team.
- The 0-19 service is continuing to deliver main health checks for the under 5's - both virtual and face-to-face where necessary. The 'Attend Anywhere' virtual platform has been launched and is effectively supporting parents and young people with virtual drop-in sessions and appointments. Targeted face-to-face baby clinics have commenced, especially for those families who are concerned about their baby's development. All Public Health Nurses contacted their schools in advance of the start of the school year. School nurses have been trained in infection control and swabbing to support schools.
- Planning for the 2020/21 local flu vaccination programme is well underway. There will be a mixed model of delivery, including a vaccination programme at Saints consisting of inside and drive through clinics and individual practice delivery. Flu vaccinations will also be delivered in local pharmacies as in previous years. GP practices will work with local pharmacies to formulate a plan maximise uptake of residents and staff in nursing homes. The Schools programme has been extended to include children in year 7 in addition to all primary school children. The programme will be delivered in schools from October to December by the Immunisation Team from North West Boroughs NHS Trust. Eligible council staff will be offered a voucher to receive a free flu vaccination at a local pharmacy. Emails have been sent out to gauge demand and vouchers will be distributed.
- To support the health of highly vulnerable residents, the Council's Affordable Warmth and Welfare Outreach service have continued to undertake action to support the health of highly vulnerable residents. From April 2020 to September 2020 the service has:
 - assisted with the Council's response to Covid-19 by contacting over 1100 residents who were shielding supporting them to access essential supplies and services.
 - installed 29 major central heating replacements / improvements
 - carried out Emergency Fund works at 57 households at high risk of ill health / hospitalisation
 - From April to date the welfare staff have taken 263 enquiries for benefits and welfare advice assistance and between April and the end of September had secured £746,679 of benefit gains for vulnerable residents.

Promote good mental health to improve people's lives

- Mental Health services in Adult Social Care have continued to be provided. 1,900 calls have been made to a 24/7 mental health crisis line and the Mental Health Floating Support Team has continued to visit all service users.
- Cabinet approved a decision on 15th July 2020 for the development of a Supported Tenancy Scheme for people who need support with mental health issues. The Scheme will be developed by Torus, housing provider. A one-off financial commitment of £30,000 by St. Helens Council was approved to assist with the refurbishment of the proposed site, with a similar commitment made by St. Helens CCG.
- The OKtoAsk website continues to be developed with materials to support positive wellbeing. The Men's health OFFLOAD programme and Arts on Prescription service are both offering weekly virtual support.
- A Bereavement pack has been developed to support people experiencing bereavement or loss during the Covid-19 crisis.

- A Mental health resource toolkit has been prepared in conjunction with Liverpool City Region for care home/social care staff.

Performance Indicator Summary

Promote good health, independence and care across our communities - 2020/21

Tier	Ref	Performance Indicator	Higher / Lower is better?	Past Performance			20/21 Target	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q2	Q2	Q2	% Variance from Target	DOT	Comparative Performance	
				17/18 Outturn	18/19 Outturn	19/20 Outturn		April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept				
Tier 1	ASC-18	Number of older people aged 65 or over admitted on a permanent basis in the year to residential or nursing care per 100,00 population aged 65 or over	Lower	630.9	570	669	660	25.97	35.33	62.52	98.8	166.21	203.9	38.21%	↓	2nd Quartile	
	ASC-20a	All delayed transfer of care (number of delayed days per 100,000 population aged 18 and over)	Lower	250.6	172.3	219	220	Data collection currently suspended by NHS			Data collection currently suspended by NHS			N/A		1st Quartile	
	PH-25	Mortality rate due to suicide and injury of undetermined intent per 100,000 population	Lower	17.9	15.9	14.4	13	-	-	12.9	-	-	12.9	0.77%	↔	4th quartile	
	PH-48	Admission episodes for alcohol specific conditions, all ages, per 100,000 population	Lower	1,110	1,125	1,108	1,034	CCG currently unable to provide data			-	-	214	18.01%	█	4th quartile	
	PH-52	Emergency hospital admissions for falls for aged 65+ per 100,000 population	Lower	2,692	2,484	2,438	2,484	CCG currently unable to provide data			-	-	2451	1.33%	█	N/A	
Tier 2	ASC-11	Percentage of adults aged 18-69 with learning disabilities known to ASCH in settled accommodation at the time of their most recent assessment, formal review or other MDT planning meeting	Higher	96.5	97	96.6	96	97.6	97.6	97.4	97.5	97.5	97.4	1.46%	↓	1st Quartile	
	ASC-12	Percentage of adults aged 18-64 with learning disabilities in employment	Higher	6.6	7.7	7.4	8	7.8	7.6	7.2	7	7.16	6.9	-13.75%	↓	1st Quartile	
	ASC-13	Number of adults, receiving self-directed support in the year to 31st March, as a percentage of clients accessing long-term community support	Higher	87.9	77.8	84.8	88	90	89.4	88.8	88.5	88.6	88.3	0.34%	↓	3rd Quartile	
	ASC-17	Percentage of older people discharged from hospital to their own home or to a residential or nursing home or extra care housing bed for rehabilitation who are still at their place of residence 91 days after discharge	Higher	87	93.3	90.6	93	87	88.5	90.1	89.5	89.6	90.1	-3.12%	↑	1st Quartile	
	ASC-19	Number of adults aged 18-64 admitted on a permanent basis in the year to residential or nursing care per 100,000 population	Lower	12.2	11.3	16	12	0	0	0	1.9	1.9	2.8	53.33%	↓	2nd Quartile	
	ASC-22	Percentage of initial strategy discussions undertaken within 1 working day of an adult safeguarding alert being made to the contact centre.	Higher	97.8	98	84	99	100	96	96	96	96	96	96	-3.03%	↔	N/A
	ASC-23	Percentage of visits to an adult safeguarding victim undertaken within 2 working days of the initial strategy discussion unless requested otherwise by service user or family.	Higher	100	100	100	98	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	2.04%	↔	N/A
	ASC-26	The outcome of short-term services	Higher	76.7	78.1	89.6	85	-	-	87.5	-	-	86	1.18%	↓	2nd Quartile	

Overview of Priority Performance

A total of 13 indicators are due to be reported in Quarter 2. Data cannot currently be provided for 1 of the measures. The reporting of delayed transfers of care has been suspended by the NHS.

Of the remaining 12 indicators, 9 are reported as meeting target, whilst 3 are not meeting target. Of the 3 measures not meeting target, 2 are within a 5% tolerance of target. Of the 12 indicators where data is available, 2 are showing improvement on the previous reporting period in terms of variance from target, 3 are showing the same performance and 7 are showing a downturn in performance.

The latest available picture of comparative performance relates to verified nationally published data for the financial year 2018/19. The comparators used for the social care measures are the 23 local authorities within the ADASS North West family group. The comparators for the public health measures are the 16 authorities within the CIPFA nearest neighbour's family group. The comparative performance of the adult social care measures is generally strong, with all but one either first or second quartile. The comparative performance of the public health measures for suicide and alcohol specific admissions to hospital are both 4th quartile, however recent local performance trends are showing some improvement.

What is performing well

- As at the end of quarter 2, 2020/21, there have been 75 admissions to permanent nursing or residential care for people aged 65 years and over and 3 admissions for people aged 18-64 years. Performance is considerably less than target for both indicators and may reflect service users / families' reluctance to consider nursing and residential care during the COVID-19 pandemic. The position will continue to be closely monitored. Most recent comparator performance (2018/19) places performance above the median average.
- At the end of quarter 2, 2020/21, a total of 418 out of 464 people were still at home or in nursing or residential care, 91 days after discharge from hospital. This equates to 90%. Although performance is marginally below target, performance still remains strong. The most recent comparative data (2018/19) placed St Helens top quartile for this indicator.
- Over 97% of adults with learning disabilities were living in settled accommodation at the end of quarter 2, 2020/21, which is better than target and is similar to the same period last year. The most recent comparative performance in 2018/19 was top quartile.
- Service users receiving self-directed support in the year to date stands at 88.3%, which is slightly better than target and better than the same period last year (84%). The most recent comparative performance placed St Helens below the median average for its statistical neighbour group, however performance has seen improvement since 2018/19.
- All adults subject to a safeguarding investigation have received a social worker visit within two working days of the initial strategy meeting. This demonstrates that enquiries leading to investigation are being commenced in a timely manner.
- In the year to date, 125 out of 146 people who received short term care services have not gone onto receive long term care services. This equates to 86% and is better than target. The positive performance demonstrates the success of the short-term care services available.

What requires improvement and what is being done about it

- At the end of September 2020, a total of 42 people with a learning disability (out of 608) were in paid employment, which has not met target. Performance has deteriorated slightly compared to the same period last year, 49 out of 591 people in employment.

Action to improve - This reduction is due to the impact of Covid-19 and the closing of several workplaces. This trend may continue due to the 2nd wave of Covid-19 and performance will be closely monitored during quarter 3. However, comparatively performance remains amongst the best in our comparator group. The Supported Employment team continues to enable adults with disabilities to enter pathways into employment and training.

- In the period to the end of September, there were a total of 606 safeguarding enquiries received. Of the enquiries received, 580 initial strategy discussions were undertaken within one working day of receipt, which equates to 96% and has not met target (99%). There was an increase in the number of enquires June and July averaging 100 per month then a reduction in August to 60. But in September the department experienced an increase of 181 enquires. Having discussed this with the Safeguarding Team, there does not appear to be a theme apart from the increase was in community enquiries not residential care.

Action to improve - Performance will be closely monitored during quarter 3, via management to check for reasons behind further spikes in enquires. The locations of abuse can be compared month on month and increases checked against the number of people now either working from home or furloughed and spending more time with vulnerable relatives during this stressful time.

- Provisional data from the Primary Care Mortality Database indicates the suicide rate in St Helens has reduced to 12.9 per 100,000 population, which is better than target (13). The data is a rolling three-year rate up until the end of March 2020. The latest published data is for the period 2017-19 and St Helens position was 13.9 per 100,000, compared to 10.6 in the North West and 10.1 nationally. The published data indicates an improvement from the 2nd highest rate in the country to the 8th highest rate. However, the rate remains high and further work is required to reduce it, particularly in tackling men's mental health issues, men accounted for the majority of suicides in the 2017-19 period in St Helens.

Action to improve – A number of work programmes are seeking to tackle mental health issues and improve wellbeing.

- 20 - minute Suicide prevention training.
- Programmes aimed at supporting mental health conversations such as Ok2Ask.
- A focus on men's mental health including delivery of the OFFLOAD programme
- Ongoing Council and CCG mental health advice and support.
- The latest falls data from the CCG (quarter 1 period 2020/21 - reporting is time-lagged) shows the rate of 2,451 falls per 100,000 of the 65 plus population is slightly better (lower) than target, but still higher than the latest published NHS national rate of 2,116. St Helens rate is also higher than the Cheshire and Merseyside CCG rate of 2,327 for the same period. All indicators for falls related injuries are improving except for the cost of treatment once in hospital.

Action to improve - Work continues on a range of projects to prevent falls in St Helens, including delivery of the Hospital Avoidance Car and the falls toolkit implementation in Care Homes. The Falls Prevention Team has now been transferred into Contact Cares and are under new supervision and there will be more focus on therapy rather than

nursing going forward. Safer Steps digital support for Care Homes is being considered for implementation by the CCG. A brief falls review was undertaken in June 2020 to identify areas of concern. The need to re-commence the Falls Forum and create a new action plan was identified to continue the ongoing good work. Staffing issues and Covid-19 are risk factors with this action.

- The rate of alcohol specific admissions to hospital per 100,000 population at the end of September 2020 is 214 (data period is April to June 2020), which is better than target. However, the latest published data (2018/19) places St Helens as the 6th highest rate out of the 23 North West authorities, with a rate of 1,141 admissions per 100,000, compared with 883 for the North West and 626 nationally.

Action to improve - Due to the Covid-19 pandemic pressures the number of patients attending hospital has been affected. Notwithstanding the excellent work of the community treatment provider and the Whiston Alcohol Care Team, it is reasonable to infer that alcohol specific hospital admissions may have reduced in this period due to the pressure and impact of Covid. The Whiston Alcohol Care Team has continued to operate throughout the pandemic continuing to treat and support those who are vulnerable, alongside the community drugs and alcohol service. Research/evidence suggests that for every 3 people seen pre-admission that one future admission should be avoided. e.g. during April - August 2020 the service saw a total of 795 alcohol 'pre-admissions', which could mean that 265 future admissions could have been avoided.

The NHS Long Term Plan makes a commitment to support those hospitals with the highest rates of alcohol dependence-related admissions. Whiston hospital is one of those receiving investment. Priority actions in 2020 include:

- NHSEI funding is to be invested into St Helens and Knowsley NHS Trust in Autumn 2020.
- St Helens and Knowsley NHS Trust is to work with commissioners to begin to develop an optimised an Alcohol Care Team, as outlined in the NHS Long-Term Plan.
- A steering group is to be established to oversee optimisation of the service and the development of pathways to and from the community. This will include a programme of admissions prevention.

Priority 3- Create safe and strong communities for our residents

Objectives

- Work with partners and communities to create strong and safe neighbourhoods
- Reduce the impact of domestic abuse in our communities
- Work as a partnership to prevent and reduce harm to our most vulnerable residents

Progress against priority

Work with partners and communities to create strong and safe neighbourhoods

- In July, the St Helens People's Board approved a revised Governance structure, which included the creation of the Safer St Helens Executive, including a revised Terms of Reference. As part of the review, the People's Board also approved the establishment of a number of sub-groups to support the delivery against key community safety areas including domestic abuse, youth justice and anti-social behaviour. The Executive includes responsible authority partners and wider partners such as Torus and Halton & St Helen VCA.
- A local plan for Reset and Recovery for Council services within the theme of Safer Communities has been developed and will ensure that opportunities for joint working across service areas is maintained as services move into the recovery period in Autumn 2020.
- The Environmental Health team are currently piloting a new application 'the Noiseapp' as a triage and efficiency improvement tool for use in the investigation of noise nuisance complaints. Using a smart phone, complainants can submit secure audio recordings of episodes of noise disturbance and record key details such as duration, frequency and impacts on their lives through the software.
- In September, St Helens Youth Justice Service launched its new website. The website provides support and guidance for children, their families, or carers, as well as support for victims. The website can be accessed through the following link. [St Helens Youth Justice Service](#).
- During August and September, Halton & St Helens VCA has supported the Safer St Helens Executive in delivering a small grants programme to engage local community organisations following £40,000 of support from the Merseyside Violence Reduction Programme. The small grants programme will support the delivery of interventions, youth mentoring and diversionary programmes to be delivered in Autumn 2020.
- The service has commissioned a Condition Survey of the 1500 + alley gates installed by the Council across our neighbourhoods. The findings of the Survey will inform future investment priorities and ensure that this important crime prevention measure is maintained across local areas.
- A joint campaign was launched during Summer 2020 in partnership with the Young People's Drug and Alcohol Team (YPDAAT) to raise awareness of the risks of Nitrous Oxide use. The N2Othing to Laugh About campaign was targeted at parents and carers of young people as well as highlighting the wider damage that Nitrous Oxide canisters can cause to our local environments.

Work as a partnership to prevent and reduce harm to our most vulnerable residents

- To progress efforts to increase community capacity and volunteering, a Volunteer Management system had been part-funded by St Helens Borough Council and

procured by Halton and St Helens Voluntary and Community Action (VCA) prior to the pandemic, and user testing was accelerated in March to quickly mobilise the system. The portal enables volunteer opportunities to be advertised and allows individual volunteers to register. A Rapid Response App, "I can help" was also deployed to allow volunteers to pick up multiple tasks near to them, using google maps functionality. The system allows the volunteers to confirm when they have completed a job and offer feedback. The Volunteer portal was supported by a rapid implementation (24 hour) of the provider portal between the health and social care system and the voluntary sector. This allowed Contact Cares to direct support requests to the voluntary sector, whilst allowing volunteers to escalate any concerns they have to health and social care staff. There are currently 842 registered volunteers. A review of the Council Volunteering Policy and engaging with volunteers are key actions within the Reset and Recovery Plan for Safer Communities.

- In response to the significant growth in referrals for support from victims of domestic abuse following the cessation of lockdown, additional financial support was secured from the Community Safety service for the provider of Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy (IDVA) capacity from the Safe2Speak service.
- During the summer months, the service delivered an Open Water Safety campaign, highlighted the Day of Remembrance for Forced Marriage and Honour Based Abuse, and supported the Srebrenica Memorial Week.
- The Community Safety Team has supported the response to Covid-19 during the Summer period, with co-ordinated activity with Police and partner agencies in ensuring the safe re-opening of the Night Time Economy in July 2020 and in working alongside MFRS in delivering letters to residents of Eccleston Park and Newton Le Willows / Earlestown following increases in cases during August and September 2020.

Performance Indicator Summary

Create safe and strong communities for our residents - 2020/21

Tier	Ref	Performance Indicator	Higher / Lower is better?	Past Performance			20/21 Target	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q2	Q2	Q2	% Variance from Target	DOT	Comparative Performance
				17/18 Outturn	18/19 Outturn	19/20 Outturn		April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept			
Tier 1	SC-01	Percentage rate in repeat victimisation for those domestic violence cases being managed by a MARAC	Lower	27.5	29.2	38.5	41	48	36.29	34.21	35	35	34.6	15.61%	↑	N/A
Tier 2	SC-07	Number of hate crime incidents report to agencies	Higher	211	245	314	290	-	-	74	-	-	177	21.23%	↑	N/A
	SC-08	Number of incidents of anti-social behaviour	Lower	6065	4470	4,196	5,400	-	-	2014	-	-	3249	-1.53%	↑	N/A
	SC-12	The percentage of children re-offending	Lower	57	50.8	40.7	45.3	Data collection currently suspended by Ministry of Justice			Data collection currently suspended by Ministry of Justice					3rd Quartile
	SC-17	The number of LAC receiving a substantive outcome as a percentage of all youth justice substantive outcomes	Lower	17	26	29	18	-	-	-	17	-	-	-13.33%	↓	N/A

Overview of Priority Performance

A total of 6 indicators were due to be reported in Quarter 2. The Youth Justice measure, which relies on national data has been temporarily suspended by the Ministry of Justice. Data in relation to the serious violence measure which is a local new indicator for 2020/21 is still awaited from the Police. Targets will be set once this is received. Of the 4 indicators where data is available, 2 of the measures are currently meeting target, whilst 2 are not, one of which is within a 5% tolerance. Direction of travel can be determined for 3 measure in Quarter 2 with all showing improvement on the previous reporting period in terms of variance from target.

Comparative performance can be determined for 1 indicator, as the remainder are all local measures of performance. The Youth Justice measure is shown as 3rd quartile, however performance improved significantly in 2019/20 and this position is anticipated to change for the better when national data for 2019/20 is published.

What is performing well

- Performance in relation to the number of repeat cases managed by the MARAC has continued to record an improvement since April 2020. In the year to date a total of 364 cases have been discussed at MARAC, with 126 being repeat cases, giving a cumulative repeat rate of 34.6%. This is a much lower rate of repeat cases than in the same period during the first 2 quarters of 2019/20, when the repeat rate stood at 48% even though the total number of cases going before MARAC has remained pretty consistent over both periods. The MARAC continued to operate virtually during this quarter and despite higher levels of demand to commissioned services, there were 174 cases considered at MARAC during Q2 (41 less cases than the same quarter during the previous year). The MARAC continues to work well, with good attendance from partner agencies online. The MARAC Steering Group has continued to oversee the performance of the MARAC in St Helens, including receiving updates from the MARAC Chair, and reviewing the levels of referrals and repeat cases.
- Quarter 2 saw a further rise in recorded reports of hate crime to agencies. There were 103 reported hate crimes compared to 74 in quarter 1. This brings the figure for the year to date to 177, an increase of 21 on the same period in the previous year. The target within the framework seeks to see an increase in reporting of hate crime incidents as this is an area that has traditionally remained under-reported. The majority of reported incidents continue to be racial in nature, followed by homophobic / transgender incidents. The partnership continues to closely monitor all reported incidents and to promote action to encourage reporting and tackle hate crime.

What requires improvement and what is being done about it

- In the period April to September 2020, there have been a total of 3,249 anti-social behaviour (ASB) cases reported to the Police. This has not met the target of 3,200 cases. The number of reported cases in Quarter 2 stood at 1,235, 43 higher than in Quarter 2, 2019/20. The cumulative number of reported incidents in the year to date is nearly 1,000 more than during the same period in 2019/20. This can be attributed to the impact of lockdown during the first 3 months of 2020/21 and the numbers of calls which related to non-adherence to Covid-19 regulations. The easing of restrictions during the second quarter saw a decline in the number of reported incidents of ASB.

Action to improve - Work continues across the partnership to address ASB. A new post of Anti-Social Behaviour Officer commenced during August 2020 and a sub-group of the Safer St Helens Executive was set up further coordinate efforts to tackle ASB. The levels and nature of reporting of ASB will continue to be monitored closely over the remainder of the year and the service will continue to undertake targeted action and campaigns to address ASB, whilst responding to any emerging challenges.

- There were six children and young people resident in St Helens who received a substantive outcome from the Youth Justice System, i.e. a caution or above, in Quarter 1 (data reporting is time-lagged). Of the 6 children and young people, one was a Looked After Child, 17% of the cohort. This sentence was for numerous offences committed both in the community and in the care home.

Action to improve - There is a significant focus in St Helens to reduce offending in Looked After Children (LAC), given that LAC make up around 30% of the Youth Justice Service (YJS) cohort. A Reducing Offending in Children Looked After Steering Group was established over the summer period with representatives from the YJS, Children's Social Care, Education, the Care Leavers Association, other agencies and 2 Care Leavers acting as champions. Work was undertaken to capture the lived experience of children looked after and links to offending. A strategy and action plan setting out a clear response to reduce offending is now being finalised. Alongside this, the strong focus on early intervention and prevention continues, with specific preventative programmes of work delivered to children and young people on topics such as criminal exploitation, knife crime and online safety. A wide-ranging training plan to educate and work with the partnership to reduce the involvement of LAC in the criminal justice system continues to be delivered, involving social workers, care home staff and others.

Priority 4- Support a strong, diverse, and well-connected local economy

Objectives

- Invest to grow, attract, and create more businesses and jobs
- Improve skills and access to employment
- Redevelop our town and district centres
- Provide the right homes, in the right place, at the right cost

Progress against priority

Business and the Economy

- Following the release of the Liverpool City Region Economic Recovery Plan 'Building Back Better' work began over the course of the quarter on St Helens Local Economic Recovery Plan. A framework has been developed with 3 key themes:
 - People Focussed Recovery - including responsive employment support, entrepreneurial development, graduate into employment programmes, apprenticeships, skills development, and retraining programmes'
 - Business Recovery - including inward investment support, business grant funding, business start-up support, a package of support for the night-time and leisure economy,
 - Investment Projects and Regeneration – including the progression of major pipeline regeneration schemes, town and district centre regeneration and investment in transport and digital infrastructure.

The draft plan will be presented to Cabinet in November.

- The progression of the Glass Futures project continues to go from strength to strength with the announcement of the allocation of £9m through the "Build Back Better" funding via the Liverpool City Region and a further £15 million being awarded via UKRI to support the project. Development of the design, layout and internal fit of the facility is also progressing, and work will shortly commence on the planning process in advance of a planning application. The proposed structure and financing of this project will be presented to Cabinet ahead of the final funding business case submission to the Combined Authority.

Skills and access to employment

- The pandemic period presented some significant challenges for the continued delivery of the Ways to Work (W2W) Programme. The Team adapted to remote working during Quarter 1 whilst still maintaining support to the programmes' participants, and this has continued throughout Quarter 2. Since 16th March 2020, the W2W Programme has received more than 400 requests for support from local residents and working closely with JCP and local employers almost 100 people have been assisted to find employment. The W2W Programme is offering support to businesses who have recruitment needs, assisting those who are self-employed, providing advice around wider services available locally and on the various grants that have been made available due to the pandemic.
- The W2W programme is providing further support to those companies that have announced redundancies or where redundancies are anticipated by giving employers

details on the W2W offer and the wider offer of the Borough's partners. This is helping to ensure individuals affected by redundancy have immediate access to employment support.

- St Helens Borough Council has been successful in securing additional ESF resources that will enable the extension of W2W programme through to June 2021. The funding will enable the implementation of a new ESF Programme (Positive Inclusion) to work intensively with some of the Borough's residents who are significantly distanced from the labour market.
- Collaborative work with the Liverpool City Region (LCR) Combined Authority, LCR local authorities, local partners, providers and Job Centre Plus (JCP) is ensuring we are well positioned to react to changes in the local economy and to support increasing numbers of people experiencing employment issues.
- There has been close working with JCP to develop and deliver Youth Hubs. St Helens first Youth Hub will be in the Beacon building, offering young people direct access to a host of local providers who can offer them support linked to employment education and training. Work is also underway to develop a virtual hub. This online hub will be a searchable resource, signposting young people to the services available across the LCR.

Town and District Centre Redevelopment

- Following endorsement of the partnership with English Cities Fund (ECF) by Cabinet in March, work has continued to progress the Overarching Development Agreement that will provide the objectives, structure, and process for our future regeneration programmes. It is envisaged that the Overarching Development Agreement will be exchanged in Early September which will set a further milestone in establishing ECF as our long-term development partner with the experience to deliver transformational regeneration.
- The Town Deal Board are now very focused on the delivery of a Town Investment Plan which will be submitted to Government at the end of January 2021. This Investment Plan will set out the vision, objectives and the key projects that would be brought forward through the potential £25 million funding available. The Board has already commissioned a number of programmes to support this objective and we will continue to support the Board in developing the submission.
- The Council received confirmation from the Government that it is to receive a £1million Accelerated Town Deal fund grant. This is in advance of the Town Deal Fund bid to access £25 million funding. On 23rd September 2020, Cabinet approved the recommendation to accept the £1million Town Deal Accelerated Fund from Central Government to accelerate a key component of the Town Deal, for the demolition of Chalon Way Car Park to unlock a key future development site in St Helens Town Centre.
- At the same meeting, Cabinet approved the acceptance of a £1m Liverpool City Region (LCR) Town Centre Fund to support the recovery of Earlestown and St Helens Town Centres. The action plan was developed in consultation with business owners and retailers and will form a key part of the St Helens Economic Recovery Plan, which is in development. The fund was originally designed to enable local authorities to reimagine and reshape town centres. However, the impact of Covid-19 has provided a huge challenge to the viability of centres, and many existing businesses now need help and support. The re-purposing of the Town Centre Fund is designed to offer such assistance.

Local Plan and Development

- On 23rd September 2020, the Cabinet approved the recommendation for the submission of the St. Helens Borough Local Plan 2020-2035 'Submission Draft' to the Secretary of State and to bring the Local Development Scheme (LDS) July 2020 into immediate effect. Submission of the Local Plan had been delayed in order to consider the land use implications of entering into a strategic partnership with English Cities Fund (ECF). Whilst ECF has ambitious plans for St Helens Borough plans are still being developed and there is not enough evidence at this point that submission of the Local Plan should be delayed. The LDS is required to set out the development plan documents that the Council intends to produce and a timescale for their preparation.

Housing Services

- Building on the successful efforts to tackle and reduce rough sleeping during the pandemic, a bid was submitted to the Government's Next Steps Accommodation Programme (NSAP). For 2020/21 funding of £266million has been made available to create an additional 3,300 units of accommodation to meet the needs of rough sleepers. Working with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, the Council has developed a proposal with Torus and the Salvation Army to remodel two blocks of disused flats to create 28 units of supported accommodation by 31 March 2021. These units will have 24/7 on-site support and overnight security, including CCTV. An announcement on the bid will be made by the end of September.
- At the start of lockdown, the Resettlement Service delivered Covid-19 guidance and regulations to all resettled refugees in the Borough. Since then, a refugee WhatsApp group has been established to ensure that resettled refugees stay in contact and are able to support each other. This group also provides a platform for the Resettlement Service to provide help and support where this is needed. The service has provided support and advice to third sector organisations, the police and social care services for any issues relating to asylum seekers and refugees and have been supporting St Helens CCG in ensuring asylum seekers have access to medical care where this is needed.
- In July, proposals were approved by the Liverpool City Region Housing and Spatial Planning Board for the allocation of funds from the £45 m Brownfield Land Fund to bring forward housing developments across the city region. The funding will start this year and is expected to deliver land that will provide between 3,000 and 4,000 homes. Of the £45m available, £10 m will be allocated to St Helens to support housing delivery at Cowley Hill, Phase 1, and Moss Nook. It is anticipated that these sites, when completed, will provide up to 740 new homes.
- Following the Government announcement in July 2020 of its £2 billion investment to improve home energy efficiency in England, local plans have been drawn up and approved to promote and administer the scheme. The aim of the scheme is to reduce fuel poverty by targeting grants to low income households living in the least energy efficient homes, to support the phasing out of the use of high carbon fossil fuel heating systems and contribute to the UK's commitment to net zero carbon emissions by 2050. Of the £2 billion investment, £1.5 bn will be available through a voucher scheme and a further £500m will go directly to local authorities over the next two years specifically to help fuel poor households, through a competitive application process. To maximise local take up of the voucher scheme the Council will undertake comprehensive promotional action, including the provision of assistance to vulnerable residents to access the online application process. A funding application will be submitted to access the local authority delivery element of the scheme, which if successful will see

implementation of an area-based approach targeting low income households with poor energy efficiency ratings in the Parr area.

Highways and Transport Infrastructure

- Cabinet on 23rd September 2020 approved the Engineering Capital and Revenue Programme 2020/21 and accepted the level of grant funding from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority. The grant funding will support recovery from Covid-19 restrictions and facilitate maintenance and improvement to the highway infrastructure including the delivery of walking and cycling measures in the financial year 2020/21.

Performance Indicator Summary

Support a strong, diverse and well-connected local economy - 2020/21

Tier	Ref	Performance Indicator	Higher / Lower is better?	Past Performance			20/21 Target	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q2	Q2	Q2	% Variance from Target	DOT	Comparative Performance
				17/18 Outturn	18/19 Outturn	19/20 Outturn		April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept			
Tier 1	G&P-01	Rate of employment (working age)	Higher	70.1	72.7	74.5	74	-	-	74	-	-	75.4	1.89%	↑	1st Quartile
	G&P-06	Town Centre retail vacancies as a proportion of total stock	Lower	11.8	13.4	20.9	14	-	-	20.9	-	-	28.96	-106.86%	↓	N/A
	G&P-09	Number of net increases in dwelling stock	Higher	408	775	758	434	-	-	98	-	-	269	23.96%	↑	N/A
	G&P-30	New build employment floor space completed (sqm)	Higher	766	10,838	144,512	25,000	-	-	-	-	-	894	-96.42%	■	N/A
Tier 2	G&P-12	Percentage of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks or within an agreed extension in time	Higher	100	100	100	100	-	-	100	-	-	100	0.00%	↔	1st Quartile
	G&P-12a	Percentage of minor and other applications determined within 8 weeks	Higher	N/A	N/A	96.8	94	-	-	96.5	-	-	96.21	2.35%	↓	N/A
	HS-03	Number of private sector vacant dwellings that are returned into occupation or demolished as a direct result of action by the local authority	Higher	161	93	102	50	1	6	9	12	16	19	5.56%	↓	N/A
	HS-06	Number of households that are families with children living in temporary accommodation.	Lower	44	61	63	64	-	-	21	-	-	34	-6.25%	↑	N/A
	HS-08a	Average number of weeks spent in B&B accommodation for all households who are in priority need and owed the main housing duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017	Lower	1	10.4	0	12	-	-	0	-	-	10	16.67%	↓	N/A
	HS-08b	Total number of weeks spent in temporary accommodation provided by the LA (not B&B/refuge) for all households who have been assessed as being owed the relief duty under the Housing Act 1996, where these duties ended during the quarter and the Council discharged their duty to the household	Lower	N/A	N/A	12.7	16	-	-	14	-	-	14	12.50%	↔	N/A
	HS-09	Number of households assisted to reduce fuel poverty	Higher	496	506	861	450	-	-	135	-	-	298	49.00%	↑	N/A

Overview of Priority Performance

A total of 11 indicators are reported in Quarter 2. Of these 11 indicators, 8 are reported as meeting target, whilst 3 are not meeting target. Of the 10 indicators where direction of travel can be shown, 4 are showing improvement or the same performance on the previous reporting period in terms of variance from target, 2 are showing the same performance and 4 are showing a downturn in performance.

The latest available picture of comparative performance available for 2 indicators relates to verified nationally published data for the financial year 2018/19. The comparators used are the 16 authorities within the CIPFA nearest neighbour's family group. The latest employment rate continues to be top quartile within the family group. Planning performance remains strong comparatively and locally, performing at its maximum level.

What is performing well

- St. Helens employment rate is 75.4% of the working age population (data period is July 2019 -June 2020, NOMIS). Performance is better than target and the regional (75.2%) average, although slightly below the national average (76.5%). As the data period covers a number of months pre-COVID-19, the full impact of the pandemic and its subsequent effect on the local economy is not yet shown. However, data in the same period for 16-24-year olds shows that they are more susceptible to unemployment, possibly due to less experience in a role or due to being more likely to work in the shutdown sectors. The unemployment rate for 16-24-year olds (as a proportion of all economically active 16-24-year olds) in St Helens has stands at almost 19%, higher than regional (11%) and national (12%) rates. Projects such as the Youth Hub, as described above, will be key to supporting young people into finding secure employment.
- All planning applications continue to be determined within timescale, demonstrating strong performance in this area.
- A total of 269 net dwellings have been completed in the year to date, which met target. In July to September 2020, 171 net dwellings were completed, of which 96 (56%) were affordable housing. There are a further 478 units under construction across the Borough.
- A total of 19 private sector dwellings have been returned to occupation or demolished as a result of direct action by the local authority. Performance has met target (18) but is worse than the same period last year (49 properties).
- Two households assessed as in priority need and owed the main housing duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 were accommodated in B&B accommodation for a total of 10 weeks, which was better than the target set (12 weeks). A further 24 households were accommodated in other temporary accommodation (not B&B or refuge) for a total of 14 weeks, which was better than target (16 weeks). The Covid-19 pandemic delayed the lettings and allocations process preventing households moving on into permanent accommodation. Action also continued to house those people where notice to vacate temporary accommodation expired during the lockdown period but where people were unable to move to alternative accommodation at that time. The data does not include those households who have been accommodated under discretionary powers during the pandemic and where the relief duty has ended.
- In the year to date, a total of 298 households have been supported to reduce fuel poverty, which is better than the target (200) set. The team continued to support residents to access emergency heating repairs/boiler replacements via Housing financial assistance (accessing Energy Company Funding where possible) and Housing emergency fund; with welfare benefit advice to maximise income; providing

price comparisons for gas and electricity to reduce fuel bills and providing general energy efficiency / warmth advice over the phone.

What requires improvement and what is being done about it

- At the end of September 2020, almost 30% of retail units in the town centre were vacant, as a proportion of the total stock. Performance has deteriorated since quarter 1 (20% vacancy rate). Performance reflects the difficult economic situation locally, exacerbated by the continuing pandemic. New vacancies are a culmination of ongoing issues, linked to reduced footfall / spend within the town centre and any working strategy / plan for the town centre. Covid-19 has further exposed this and lots of the businesses that were struggling to cope are now unable to open given the rise of operating costs and the reduction of sales. Dependent on further restrictions and financial assistance to those affected, the town centre could see a further wave of closures.

Action to improve - On a positive note, there is continued progress of mixed-use developments (residential / commercial) in the town centre and businesses being relocated to more central retail areas (e.g. Church Street) as part of the re-development plan of St Mary's Arcade.

- A total of 894m² of new employment floorspace was completed between April and September 2020, which has not met target (25,000m²). Completed developments include 2 developments at Roundwood Drive. A B2 development at Bahama Road, Haydock Industrial Estate is under construction and will deliver 1,000m² of new employment floorspace.

Action to improve - It is unlikely that the target will be met this year. We are currently monitoring implementation of around 22 planning permissions that will deliver in the region of 12,500 square metres of floor space. Of these, only 3,328 square metres is under construction. Covid-19 may have played a part, as a result of a lack of construction activity in the spring, but it is far from clear. The measure significantly over-achieved last year primarily due to the completion of the units at Florida Farm North (around 100,000 square metres). The delay in the adoption of the Local Plan is not stopping employment sites coming forward per se. A number of sites identified in the local plan have either had planning permission granted and have been developed (Haydock Green, Penny Lane and Florida Farm North) or have an application pending (Parkside Phase One, Haydock Point). If Parkside and Haydock Point are approved, construction would effectively mean that existing future annual targets will be substantially exceeded. The current annual target is historic and targets going forward will be reviewed on an annual basis to reflect the planning applications dealt with in the previous year in anticipation of those developments that are likely to be implemented.

- In the year to date, 34 households with children are living in temporary accommodation. Over half of the households have offers of permanent accommodation via the RSLs. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been delays with lettings due to void works being on hold. Works have now recommenced, and it is anticipated that households will begin to move into their new accommodation as soon as the works are completed.

Action to improve - It has been agreed with Torus that priority for the completion of void works to empty properties will be given to those properties which are needed to rehouse homeless families in temporary accommodation.

Priority 5- Create a green, thriving, and vibrant place to be proud of

Objectives

- Reduce our carbon footprint and impact on the local environment
- Provide green and attractive open spaces for people to visit and enjoy
- Create a thriving, diverse cultural offer, and pride in our Borough

Progress against priority

Reduce our carbon footprint and impact on the local environment

- As more people continue to work from home, an increase in recycling being presented for collection at the kerbside has been evident with, on average of an extra 30 tonnes of material being collected each week.
- The renewal of the Garden Waste subscription for 2020 went live on 27 July. The permit starts on 31 August and will run until 4 December at a cost of £12. As of the end of September, 27,397 permits had been issued to subscribers, well up on previous years subscriptions. Residents are continuing to subscribe.

Provide green and attractive open spaces for people to visit and enjoy

- Just over 10% of the borough is green space maintained by the authority. There are 19 main parks in the borough, together with a number of smaller parks and an amount of open space and woodland to maintain. Services have provided to ensure the maintenance and up-keep of all these green spaces over the course of the first 2 quarters despite the challenges of the pandemic.
- St Helens Cemetery has been recognised in the national Cemetery of the Year competition where it was one of three finalists and won the Silver award. At the beginning of May, the Bereavement Service introduced webcasting of services and since then 238 families have benefitted from this service allowing families and friends the opportunity to pay their respects to loved ones where they have not been allowed to attend services in person due to Covid-19 regulations.

A Thriving, Diverse Cultural Offer

- A phased re-opening of the library buildings started on 27 July with the opening of libraries at Chester Lane, Eccleston and Parr. This was followed with the re-opening of Newton-le-Willows on 6 August. The feedback from residents to staff and via social media has been overwhelmingly positive. In the first three weeks since re-opening, more than 4,900 residents visited the libraries and just over 4,000 books were issued. The operation of the four sites will be monitored over the coming weeks to assess the impact of the re-opening before consideration is given to the opening of other branch libraries.
- The Archives also re-opened on 27 July. Access is available by appointment and this is being supplemented by Facebook Live Tours of the Archives with over 9,000 views on the three Facebook tours that have taken place since the end of July.
- The new Town Centre library based at the World of Glass opened on 14 September. This new facility is offering a lending library for children and adults with the option of using a self-serve kiosk - the first library in the Borough to offer this. The library also offers a computer suite and study area. Books can also be collected from

the library as part of the Library Service's new Click and Collect service which allows library members to reserve up to 6 books and then to collect them from any of the libraries that have re-opened to date.








- The Home Delivery Library Service was opened to anyone shielding or vulnerable and tripled its users during lockdown. Recognising the compounded isolation for people that don't engage or communicate online, the Arts and Libraries teams decided to develop 'Our Correspondence', which involved sending hand-written letters in stamped addressed envelopes to residents registered with the Libraries' Home Delivery Library Service. Letters were sent out to approximately 180 people. Recipients were invited to respond by reflecting on their own experiences, how their lives have changed, and hopes for the future. One 86-year-old correspondent replied:

"Thank you for giving me the chance to write a letter to someone. I used to love writing and receiving responses, especially from family. I love reading, I have been so pleased to have my books delivered to my door. I want to take this opportunity to thank those people involved in this service, I love books, I love covers, I love the feel of a book in my hands."

- Coinciding with the gradual re-opening of library buildings, a phased return to leisure centres also started on 27 July. To ensure the safety of residents and staff, the first phase saw the re-opening of the gym facilities at Newton Health and Fitness, Queens Park and Parr. This was followed with the start-up of exercise classes at Newton and Queens Park, the introduction of swimming at Queens Park, the opening of a new Exercise Studio at Newton and most recently the return of the facilities at Sutton and Ruskin Drive. All access is pre-booked online and arrangements for social distancing and resident safety are in place at all the centres. Although this has meant some reduction in the numbers who can visit and use the facilities at any one time, the feedback from customers has been very positive.

Performance Indicator Summary

Create a green, thriving and vibrant place to be proud of - 2020/21

Tier	Ref	Performance Indicator	Higher / Lower is better?	Past Performance			20/21 Target	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q2	Q2	Q2	% Variance from Target	DOT	Comparative Performance
				17/18 Outturn	18/19 Outturn	19/20 Outturn		April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept			
Tier 1	ENV-02	Percentage of household waste arisings which have been sent for recycling	Higher	36.35	36.53	37.40	37	-	-	32.41	Quarter 2 data currently unavailable			-7.40%		N/A
Tier 2	ENV-03	Kilograms of residual household waste collected per household	Lower	498.8	494.3	482.27	490	-	-	527.16	Quarter 2 data currently unavailable			-7.58%		2nd Quartile
	ENV-06	Percentage of relevant land and highways that is assessed as having deposits of litter at an acceptable level	Higher	91.8	95	95	95	91.84	90.9	94	95.5	96.3	94.9	-0.11%		N/A
	ENV-07	Number of flytipping incidents	Lower	2,005	1,959	1,817	1,900	219	401	593	757	928	1057	-8.74%		3rd Quartile
	CC-01	Number of library visits per 1,000 population	Higher	3238	3,289	3,058	1,000	-	-	115	-	-	295	-41.00%		3rd Quartile
	CC-02	Number of active library members per 1,000 population	Higher	194	135	141	50	-	-	135	-	-	126	152.00%		1st Quartile
	CC-16	Number of visits to sports centres	Higher	1,088,131	1,297,825	1,200,295	1,350,000	Sports Centres closed due to Covid-19 restrictions			-	-	66659	0.00%		N/A

Overview of Priority Performance

A total of 7 indicators were reported in Quarter 2. A total of 2 measures are reported as meeting target, whilst 5 are not meeting target, one of which is within a 5% tolerance of target. Of the 6 indicators where direction of travel can be shown, 2 are showing improvement on the previous reporting period in terms of variance from target, whilst 4 are showing a downturn in performance. It should be noted that the indicators measuring recycling rates and household waste collected were not reported in Quarter 1, as data is time lagged, but the first quarter's data is now available to report in Quarter 2.

The latest available picture of comparative performance relates to verified nationally published data for the financial year 2018/19. The comparators used are the 16 authorities within the CIPFA nearest neighbour's family group. The latest comparative picture of performance for the 4 indicators, where this can be determined, is mixed, with 1 indicator in the first quartile, 1 in the second and 2 in the third. It is difficult to determine how current direction of travel will impact the future quartile performance of these measures, which is to a large degree dependent on the performance of other authorities within the family group when the 2019/20 nationally published data is made available later in the year.

What is performing well

- The number of active library members has decreased in the second quarter by 9 per 1,000 population, although performance continues to exceed the revised target by some margin. Although there was a phased reopening of some libraries during the second quarter, the reduction in active membership was anticipated due to the continued closure of some local libraries. On-line membership saw increases during the period of lockdown. There have been 444 new members joining online since April, with 171 joining this quarter.

What requires improvement and what is being done about it

- The latest available data for the percentage of household waste sent for recycling is for quarter 1, 2020/21, as verified data for this indicator is time lagged by one quarter. A total of 32.41% of household waste was recycled, which was below the revised target of 35%. The recycling rate has been adversely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, as the recycling and garden waste service was temporarily suspended during April and May. It should be noted that verified data has been received for the 2019/20 outturn with the verified rate standing at 37.4%, a reduction on the 38.39% provisional figure.

Action to improve - Waste collection and recycling services, together with garden waste collections, resumed in June 2020. Initially recycling collections were reintroduced as a fortnightly service and then back to weekly during June. This was completed successfully, and current recycling services are performing as normal. 1,527 tonnes of recycling waste were collected to the end of June. This was an increase of 170 tonnes compared to the same period the previous year, demonstrating that residents are keen to engage with the service and to continue to recycle their household waste. The number of permits for garden waste collections to-date is 27,397, for a 3-month subscription to the service, which is quite exceptional. We are looking at pricing alternations for next years' service, starting in March, to make the service even more appealing. We know from market evidence that some private companies are looking for £15 per collection of garden waste bins, way above our charges. We also hope to be in a position to offer direct debit payments, making it easier for households to subscribe to the service.

- The latest available data for the percentage of residual household waste collected is for quarter 1, 2020/21, as verified data for this indicator is time lagged by 3 months. As a consequence of suspending the household waste recycling services, the amount of

waste collected for landfill increased during the first quarter as brown bins were emptied weekly instead of fortnightly between Monday 30th March and Friday 22nd May. A total of 527Kg of waste per household were collected between April and June 2020, compared to 484Kg per household in the same period the previous year. The revised target of 490Kg has not been met. It should be noted that verified data has been received for the 2019/20 outturn with the verified waste collected per household standing at 482.27Kg, an increase on the provisional figure of 468.05Kg originally reported. The verified data means that the target was not met for 2019/20.

Action to improve - Fortnightly residual collections resumed on Monday 25th May and work is continuing to ensure all waste is stored in the bin with no side waste being collected in line with the recycling and waste policy. The disruption to this service, together with the continued effect of the reduced availability of Recycling and Waste Recycling Centres operated by the Waste Disposal Authority, has affected tonnages collected. With many households working from home or being furloughed, tonnages have risen. Many other councils have also seen an upsurge in household waste collected over the past few months. We are actively seeking a re-opening of the household waste centre in Rainhill, which we hope this take some pressure from the collection service – this is operated by the waste disposal authority. As people return to work, we hope to see a reduction in tonnages collected.

- In the year to date there have been 1,057 fly-tipping incidents, 96 more than during the same period in 2019/20. The increase is attributable to the impact of lockdown, the resultant closure of all recycling centres across the borough from the end of March until 4 May and the suspension of the bulky rubbish collection service. However, the number of incidents in quarter 2 has reduced, with a significant reduction seen in September.

Action to improve - We are seeing a trend across many local councils where increasing amounts of fly-tipping are being reported. This may be because we have had more people working from home and reporting issues in their neighbourhood. As a service we are working more closely with colleagues in Enforcement to act on reports and issue penalties where possible. A total of 34 Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued in the year to date and warning letters continue to be posted by the Enforcement team where incidents have been found. The reinstatement of the bulky waste collection service will assist in reducing the number of incidents, together with the re-opening of the household waste centre in Rainhill. We are working with the waste disposal authority who operate the site to achieve this.

- The number of visits to libraries did not meet the revised target in quarter 2, with 115 visits per 1,000 population against a target of 250. From Monday 27th July, Chester Lane, Eccleston and Parr Libraries reopened, with Newton Le Willows Library reopening on Thursday 6th August following the easing of lockdown restrictions. St Helens Library in The World of Glass opened on Monday 14th September and has been warmly received.

Action to improve - Visits to libraries are slowly increasing as residents gain confidence in accessing local services again. Visitor performance in the new library is rapidly increasing. Visits have not returned to pre-Covid performance highs, particularly as so many libraries remain closed. Four libraries are taking returns of stock, however these visits are not being counted, as customers are not coming into the library.

- A total of 66,659 visits to sports centres took place between 27th July and the end of September. A staggered approach to the re-opening of indoor sports facilities from July was implemented to ensure that social distancing and safety measures could be maintained in line with the approved risk assessments and service recovery plan. All activities are only available via pre-booking and activities such as school swimming,

public swimming lessons and Willowbees adventure play remain closed. Sites have operated at approximately 80% capacity and still managed to attract 66,659 visitors. The annual target for the year was reset at the start of the year and reduced from the 2019/20 outturn of 1.2M to 600,000. Given the uncertainty as to when sports centres were to reopen, this was the best estimate that could be provided at the time. However, with sports centres closed for the initial 4 months of the year and then having to partially close again in October for an as yet unspecified period, it is evident that the target will not be met. For the time being, the target for the quarter has been set the same as the quarterly number of actual visits.

Action to improve - The service continues to do all it can to maximise safe access to sports and leisure facilities.

Priority 6 - Be a modern, efficient, and effective Council

Objectives

- **One Resident** - We will deliver an improved customer experience for residents, businesses, and partners, ensuring that the culture of the whole council places the customer at the centre of all we do.
- **One Digital** - We will invest to create a modern, digital workplace and infrastructure capable of changing the way we work and the services we deliver to better serve our customers, residents, and communities.
- **One People** - We will ensure our workforce is fully valued, empowered and supported; being equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to support the delivery of our strategic priorities.
- **One Message** - We will work together as one council to communicate effectively to build and support meaningful, positive relations within the council, with our customers and across communities.
- **One Space** - We will work collaboratively with partners to ensure that the buildings, land, and spaces that we have are used effectively and efficiently to promote positive change within the council and across our communities.
- **One Budget** - We will look to deliver a sustainable budget strategy focussed on the delivery of our strategic priorities and the outcomes and services that matter most to our residents and communities.
- **One Practice** - We will ensure modern, transparent, and clear governance arrangements that support strong political leadership, decision making and new collaborative ways of working.
- **One Outcome** - We will promote a culture that prioritises performance management and in which everyone takes responsibility for performance improvement at individual, service, and organisational level.

Progress against priority

One Resident

- Work on the Council's new digital platform, that will significantly improve customer service and transactions between the customer and the Council, continued over the course of quarter 2. Training will be completed by the end of October 2020 and local implementation will then commence. The new website design is going through leadership teams prior to seeking Policy Cabinet approval. Once approved the new site will be put in place by the suppliers Goss. The current website content has been reviewed in readiness to refine for the build to the new platform and work has been undertaken to ensure compliance with new legal requirements on website accessibility. Development of a new Registrars module is also now underway. Sessions with all council services to demonstrate the new product and explain requirements from services going forward are currently being planned.
- Work on the Council's new Customer Service Strategy and accompanying Customer Service Standards is all but complete, with the first draft to go out to senior management for approval at the start of quarter 3.

One Digital

- The One Digital stream of the One Council programme continued to demonstrate strong progress over the course of quarter 2, with the completion of a number of deliverables to assist the Council to modernise and operate in new ways.
- *IT Strategy* - The Council's draft ICT Strategy and Technology Roadmap 2020/24 was completed and circulated to Senior officers for review, with adoption anticipated for December.
- *Network* – The new network to support external connectivity as now been implemented giving us resilience and reliable back-up systems in the event of failure, as well as increasing capacity for applications to run.
- *Microsoft 365* - Microsoft 365 (M365) is the suite of applications that the Council is deploying to enhance agile working. The integration testing of Zoom to Microsoft Office 365 has been completed and will now be deployed to staff. A number of other "Add-ins" have been tested for deployment including Slack, a workplace instant messaging application and Trello a workflow management system that will allow users to organise tasks in Kanban boards.
- *Agile Working* - A Booking App - has been created for use across Council meeting rooms and the proposed agile hub. It includes Covid related questions and diary booking. IT are also working to ensure the CCG are also able to deploy the App. IT issues on the 3rd and 4th floors of Wesley House have now been resolved to facilitate space for staff roles unsuitable for home/agile working.
- *Wi-Fi* - Prior to the pandemic, assessments were carried out to determine the cost of deploying Wi-Fi to our corporate buildings. Costs for Wi-Fi enablement of the Town Hall and Atlas House for Council staff, Members and the public have now been obtained with a new and improved registration system.
- *System Developments* – A new development platform KinoDB has been implemented with developer training underway. The first system to be developed under the new platform will be the new "Care Leavers Programme system". A revised Delegated Executive Decisions system for the New Municipal Year has been completed and released.
- *IT Security* – Preparation has been ongoing for a dry run of the forthcoming LGA IT security penetration testing. St Helens is one of a small number of local authorities across the country to first undertake this new process to test the adequacy of security arrangements. A review of the Council's current anti-virus software and costs has begun with consideration being given to Microsoft alternatives.
- *Schools ICT* - Changes to the Schools ICT service desk have now been implemented and the school's IT network is being reviewed to ensure its capacity in the light of schools using Microsoft Teams to support blended learning.

One People / One Space

- As part of the Recovery and Reset activity, and in line with the Council's modernisation programme, a 'New Ways of Working' group has been established, setting out what the working environment for staff who were previously office-based might look like post Covid-19. Separate sub-groups have been set up focussing on HR policies and procedures; accommodation; cultural transformation and staff engagement and IT/Digital. Developments within each group are progressing at pace:
 - During the latter part of the quarter, a total of 24 participative staff engagement sessions took place with over 300 participants from services across the

organisation. At the sessions staff were asked to share their positive insights, whilst highlighting any challenges and possible solutions in relation to revised and future working practices. Feedback is currently being collated to be fed into the Reset and Recovery Group.

- An initial draft of a New Ways of Working Policy was completed and presented to the Working Group and Unions at the end of September. Feedback is being incorporated into the policy before being fed back to the Reset and Recovery Group.
 - A suite of documents covering information management policy and procedures has been completed for presentation to senior management. Work on revised policy and procedures in relation to health and safety and display screen equipment is ongoing.
 - A New Ways of Working animation was produced and circulated at the start of September indicating a 'trust model' as the way forward to replace time recording arrangements. New policy development around this is in progress.
 - The Chief Executive produced a video message for all staff, following the announcement of further Government restrictions following the rapid growth in Covid-19 infection rate, to reiterate key messages around staying safe, office based staff continuing to work from home, front-line staff continuing to work to support vital service delivery and ensuring individual wellbeing. A virtual briefing was also held for all managers to underline the importance of actively managing and keeping in regular touch with staff to ensure their productivity and wellbeing.
 - A Hints and Tips guide for Managers to manage remotely has been provided on the Intranet and training and development to develop the process further is being produced.
 - To develop and embed the future cultural transformation required around new ways of working, a group of volunteer champions will be recruited to help shape, define, and implement plans for cultural change. Recruitment will begin at the start of October and following recruitment a monthly meeting will be scheduled to collaboratively drive the process.
 - Work continued on the development of an Accommodation Strategy. The Strategy will determine, the Council's workplace building needs in the short, medium, and long term. This will cover spaces to accommodate staff that require essential office space to fulfil their role, spaces for staff to collaborate effectively over short periods and spaces to accommodate front line service delivery and customer / resident contact. The Strategy will link closely with the One Public Estate Programme and Asset Management Strategy. Recent progress has seen a number of socially distanced accommodation options prepared including Forsters House, Town Hall meeting rooms, the 2nd floor Wesley House, and Executive Meeting rooms in Atlas House. Development of an App to book these spaces is now complete, but release is currently on hold due to the recent increase in Covid-19 cases and the announcement of additional local restrictions. Plans continue to be progressed to turn Atlas House into a collaborative work hub and the mapping of individual service requirements to ensure needs are met is ongoing.
- The Workplace Health and Wellbeing Group has now been reconvened and meetings held during the quarter with managers from across the Council. Learning and feedback from this group is also being fed into the New Ways of Working group. New initiatives have been implemented to promote the health and wellbeing of staff, including support

for staff managing remotely, a weekly online fitness class, and virtual staff socialisation sessions, including the weekly 'Lets Brew'.

- Work has been undertaken on the restructuring of the wider senior management team across all directorates with Phase 1 focussing on Director and Assistant Director roles. A 3-week period of consultation on a revised senior management structure took place in late August to early September. The restructure was approved by Cabinet in early October and implementation is now underway. Phase 2 of the restructure looking at Heads of Service will begin in November with completion anticipated for the start of 2021. Implementation of the full restructure proposes an organisational shape that delivers greater equity and consistency in senior management roles across 4 tiers of management and leadership to support the effective delivery of Council and Borough wider priorities.
- During the course of the second quarter, the new Director of Finance Asad Mushtaq commenced working for the authority on the 1st of September. Jan Bakewell was welcomed back as Director of Legal and HR on the 3rd of August, whilst Billy Webster, the Assistant Director of Commercialism also joined the authority on the 10th of August.
- Approval has been granted for a replacement HR system. The procurement process is under way and it is hoped that the implementation of a new system will commence in April 2021. Once a preferred supplier has been identified, a report will be brought before Cabinet seeking approval to award the contract. In line with the One Council programme, this will significantly improve working practices.
- Approval by Cabinet on 15th July 2020 was given for the introduction of a Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme (MARS). The MARS has been developed to offer an additional tool that can be used to help the Council meet savings identified as part of its budgetary strategy. It enables individual employees, in agreement with the Council, to choose to leave their employment voluntarily in return for a discretionary "severance" payment. This creates job vacancies that may be filled in a different way or by the redeployment of employees from other jobs or for those seeking career development.

One Message

- Work continued over the quarter on the development of St Helens Together Community Engagement Strategy 2020-2025. The Strategy aims to support strong, active, and inclusive communities capable of influencing and shaping the borough, whilst creating a more transparent and accountable council. The starting point has been the initial consultation around the Council's priorities and the community's experience during lockdown. The consultation, which ran until the end of August took a number of forms. There was a digital survey for both residents and staff, a paper based survey for residents, on-line focus groups with staff, the business community, community groups and care leavers, along with a public consultation undertaken by PLACED taking the form of street engagement and further on-line engagement sessions. Analysis of the findings has now been completed for presentation to senior management and Members before feedback is provided to participants and the wider community. The findings will help inform the long-term view about what the borough should like and how the Council should refocus resources and deliver future services.
- Over the course of quarter 2, the Communications team continued to communicate messages and guidance in relation to Covid-19 effectively and regularly with residents and communities across the borough. A design and consistent message style have been developed to help convey complex regulations and guidance. Communications have taken the form of social media messages, information packs and posters for businesses and schools, 2 full page advertisements in the local paper, letter drops in targeted areas, a toolkit for councillors to help in conveying messages to residents, a

daily tracker of cases to councillors and residents via social media and a regular refresh of the Covid website pages and FAQs. There has also been constant monitoring of comments on social media to determine key issues and concerns impacting residents to that they can be addressed in what is a quickly changing landscape.

- Communication with staff and Members remain timely and regular with a weekly Covid-19 Policy briefing continuing to be produced for senior officers and Cabinet members and a monthly bulletin produced for all Members. Weekly general staff email briefings continue, and the Chief Executive has continued to undertake regular staff engagement sessions to facilitate open conversations with employees across all service areas.
- Significant work was undertaken to communicate the revised Local Plan. An Executive Summary Brochure and a video was produced, highlighting the Plan priorities and the benefits for residents across the borough.
- Work on the Council's new corporate branding based on its priorities has been completed. The branding contains a new colour palette, graphics, images, and icons. Following consultation with Policy Cabinet, the new branding will be rolled out on all media and communications platforms.

One Budget

- Written representation on the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) 2020 was submitted to HM Treasury prior to the 24th September deadline. The submission highlights the authority's precarious financial position following a decade of austerity, the increasing demand for services, the financial impact of Covid-19 and the requirement for the CSR to ensure the financial resilience and sustainability of local government. The Council had input into and is fully supportive of the Liverpool City Region CSR Representation submission which offers a detailed plan of how the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority can work with Government at a strategic level to address shared challenges and realise shared ambitions in terms of levelling up economic opportunity within the country and improving outcomes in public services.
- Over the course of the quarter there was significant work ongoing to determine the extent of the Council's budget gap and its implications. During the period Finance completed further DELTA returns to Government which record actual and projected Covid-19 financial impacts, as well as a new return for the Income Compensation scheme on sales fees and charges losses. A budget Strategy report was prepared for Cabinet on the 7th of October, setting out the estimated budget gap for 2020/21 and the projected shortfall in the current financial year. The position is materially uncertain due to the ongoing impact of Covid-19 and lack of clarity around the plans for future funding of local government. However, the estimated gap for 2020/21 is £20.4M, whilst the shortfall in the current financial year is projected to be £3.2M. The shortfalls are significant, and the authority faces tough choices as it seeks to balance its financial position. Action to address the shortfall in the current year is ongoing, whilst a process of discussion around budget savings proposals for 2020/21 is being quickly progressed. The Council will continue to lobby Government to provide a fair settlement and a Comprehensive Spending Review in the autumn that will reflect the extra financial burden which local authorities have been placed under.
- Given the unprecedented financial challenges facing the authority and the need for financial sustainability, initial work commenced on the development of potential thinking around an approach to commercialism within the Council. A report was developed for the Corporate Leadership Team to define commercialism and provide an understanding of some of the potential opportunities around increasing income, reducing costs and strategic investment. It is proposed that further engagement take

place on a planned approach to becoming a more commercial authority in order to gauge political and leadership appetite prior to the development of a formal Commercial Strategy.

One Practice / One Outcome

- The Reset and Recovery Strategic Group continued to meet over the course of quarter 2. Following the completion of impact assessments, Recovery plans have now been completed against the Council's 6 priority areas and delivery of action to support recovery is ongoing. Over the course of September, the Council prepared to undertake an LGA Peer Review around Reset and Recovery. Evidence of the Council's learning to date and plans for reset and recovery were provided to the LGA and a peer authority prior to conducting detailed conversations around the approach taken, with both Members and senior officers present. Initial feedback from the review was positive highlighting the good steps taken since the last Corporate Peer Review, evidence of the Council's quick response, the use of innovation and the success of St Helens Together as a foundation for creating a new relationship with the community. The review also identified some areas for further action and development. Formal feedback once received will be communicated to staff and Members and recommendations for further action addressed.
- To further develop the strategic approach to reset and recovery across the borough, St Helens Council Leader chaired a roundtable with a wide range of partner organisations to examine key themes and opportunities for greater collaboration. Feedback from the session was very positive with the identification of many opportunities for more joined up working to inform the ongoing approach to reset and recovery planning.
- In conjunction with the Council's priority plans for reset and recovery, work was also undertaken to develop a robust approach to Directorate and service level plans. Draft Directorate Plans have been produced. The objectives of the plans have now been aligned to the 6 Council priorities, and along with learning from the community and partner consultation exercise and the content of reset and recovery plans, will be encapsulated within the new Borough Strategy - the vision for St Helens' future.
- An update on the LGA Peer Challenge / Culture Review Action Plan and the One Council Modernisation Programme was provided to Cabinet in September. The report also set out the new approach to programme management and revised governance arrangements that have been developed to drive forward improvement in line with reset and recovery ambitions.
- At Council on 22 July, a number of important changes were approved to strengthen a suite of key governance related documents along with the adoption of some new protocols. These included:
 - Code of Conduct for Elected & Co-Opted Member
 - Member/Officer Relations Protocol
 - Protocol for Councillors and Officers dealing with Planning matters (Planning Protocol)
 - Ward Member Protocol
 - St Helens – A Member led Council - Developing effective Member and Officer relations
- At the same Council meeting, it was resolved that the current Scrutiny committee structure would be replaced with a new structure and a reduction in the number of panels from five to three. The remits for each committee would be aligned with the

remits of the Cabinet Portfolios and the new structure would also have a focus on the Council's Corporate Priorities divided between each of the new Scrutiny Committees.

- At an extra-ordinary meeting on 22nd July 2020, Council resolved that St Helens Borough Council move from elections by thirds to whole Council elections with effect from the ordinary day of elections in May 2022; and Parish Council elections be moved to match those of the Council.

Performance Indicator Summary

Be a modern, efficient and effective Council - 2020/21

Tier	Ref	Performance Indicator	Higher / Lower is better?	Past Performance			20/21 Target	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q2	Q2	Q2	% Variance from Target	DOT	Comparative Performance
				17/18 Outturn	18/19 Outturn	19/20 Outturn		April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept			
Tier 1	CS-01	Percentage of council tax collected	Higher	95.5	95.2	94.8	95.7	9.5	18	26.8	35.2	43.7	52.5	-2.78%	↓	3rd Quartile
	CS-02	Number of working days/shifts lost to sickness absence per employee	Lower	8.61	8.96	9.25	7.6	0.72	1.31	2.46	2.33	2.68	3.18	34.50%	↑	1st Quartile
	CS-03	Percentage of non-domestic rates due for the financial year which were received by the authority	Higher	96.7	96.2	95	97	6.9	22.2	30.9	35.2	43.9	51.1	-8.91%	↑	4th Quartile
	CS-14a	The percentage of customers satisfied with their first point contact with the Council through it's Contact Centre	Higher	N/A	79	78.7	85	-	-	76.4	-	-	76.6	-9.88%	↑	N/A

Overview of Priority Performance

A total of 4 indicators are reported in Quarter 1. 3 of the 4 indicators are reported as not meeting target. 1 of the 3 measures not meeting target is within a 5% tolerance of target. Of these 4 indicators, 3 are showing improvement on the previous reporting period in terms of variance from target, whilst 1 is showing a downturn in performance.

The latest available picture of comparative performance for the Council Tax and Business Rates collection relates to verified nationally published data for the financial year 2019/20, with St. Helens' performance in the 4th quartile for both indicators. The comparators used are the 16 authorities within the CIPFA nearest neighbour's family group. The latest published comparative data for sickness absence relates to 2017/18.

What is performing well

- The number of working days lost to sickness absence per employee is provisionally estimated to be 3.18 days at the end of the second quarter. This is better than the 4.07 days over the same period in the previous year. The target for 2020/21 was revised at the start of the year as it was anticipated that performance over the year would be adversely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The new target for the year has been set at 9.1 days, which still represents an improvement on 2019/20 outturn performance. However, half-way through the year levels of absence are less than in the same period in the previous year. The reasons for this are unclear and merit further investigation. Given the current circumstances, however, it is still very difficult to accurately predict what will happen over the remaining course of the year. Significant effort to monitor absence data continues to ensure that absences are effectively managed in accordance with the agreed procedures. Resources continue to focus on Covid-19 related absences. Support and reinforcement of the effective application of the Attendance Management policy, including appropriate escalation will continue to assist in the effective control of regular attendance.

What requires improvement and what is being done about it

- At the end of September 2020, 52.5% of council tax had been collected, which did not meet target (54%). Performance has been impacted by the pandemic and collection rates have deteriorated compared to the same period last year. The latest comparative performance (2019/20) places St Helens below the median average for its statistical neighbour group.

Action to improve - The service commenced re-contact with council taxpayers in August by way of a "soft" reminder and followed this up in September with statutory reminders. As usual these were staggered to ensure the contact centre is not overwhelmed. Cash received in September saw a rise of over £1.8m to that received in August as the recovery action starts to take effect. An increase in contact and arrangements being made was seen, which should result in increased collection in quarter 3. At present, no new cases have been sent to the Enforcement Agent, but this will commence in October for the appropriate cases. Despite the present economic circumstances we have not seen a substantial uptake in new Council Tax Reduction (CTR) claims reported by other authorities, and we may have a less generous CTR scheme than some of our comparative group authorities that will affect comparative in-year collection rates. Equally, the decision to take a softer approach to recovery may be different to other authorities within the comparator group, resulting in differing collection statistics going forward. In addition, the Magistrates Courts have yet to open for liability order hearings which will further delay recovery timetable this year. In view of above, it is unlikely that this indicator target will be achieved this year. Work will however continue to maximise revenue collection over the life of the debt, including

targeting recovery action to those who can pay whilst supporting low income households.

- In the year to date, 51.1% of non-domestic rates have been received, which has not met target (56.1%). Performance has deteriorated compared to the same period last year. The latest comparative performance (2019/20) places St Helens in the bottom quartile for its statistical neighbour group.

Action to improve - The service commenced re-contact with Businesses in August with statutory reminders, and again in September, and will look to send cases, where appropriate, to the Enforcement Agent in October. Cash received in September saw a rise of over £1.3m to that received in August as the recovery starts to take effect. The collection figure in quarter 2 is also being affected by a new hereditament (Kellogg's at Moore Park) coming onto the rating list with a Rateable Value of £2.29m, but the first payment is not due against the charge until October. This has an effect of reducing the indicator by 1.6%. The effect is even greater due to the reduced debit highlighted last quarter. It remains a challenging time for small manufacturing businesses that did not qualify for any relief and are facing great uncertainty, and it is these small businesses that make up a substantial portion of the remaining collectable debit. Work is continuing to target debt recovery and maximise revenue collection within year and over the life of the debt.

- At the end of September, 76.6% of residents were satisfied with the first point of contact with the Council through its contact centre. This did not meet the ambitious target of 85% but was a slight improvement on the previous reporting period. The three main reasons for customer dissatisfaction are the problem is not resolved; no response to an enquiry; service has not been delivered. Approximately 14% of callers had used digital methods to contact the Council but not received a response and therefore had telephoned to follow up. Call volume in September increased and is thought in part to be due to the return of children to school and school related enquiries, and concerns about the increasing Covid-19 rate and advice needed.

Action to improve - There is an ongoing challenge to improve customer satisfaction through the One Resident strand of the One Council modernisation programme. The delivery of the new digital platform and Customer Relationship Management system will assist in the provision of better intelligence to improve customer service and relations. When this is implemented in the next financial year it is anticipated that there will be a corresponding increase in levels of customer satisfaction.