



**REPORT TITLE: CORPORATE PERFORMANCE, RISK AND FINANCIAL MONITORING - QUARTER 3
2023/24**

Scrutiny meeting	Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Chair	Cllr Alan Preest
Presenting Officer	Paul Blacker, Finance Director Rob Ayliffe, Director: Policy, Performance & Governance
Item Type	Overview / Scrutiny / Information
Purpose of Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide an update on the year-end forecast for the 2023/24 County Council's Revenue and Capital Budgets • To report on the Council's performance and risk during Quarter 3 of 2023/24
Recommendations/ Action sought	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider the Council's year-end forecast for the 2023/24 County Council's Revenue and Capital Budgets • To ensure that Councillors and the public are made aware of the Council's current performance and risk position.
Forthcoming Decisions	N/A (Financial Monitoring Report 2023/24 to Cabinet 20th September 2023)
Background Documents	MTFS Report to 15 th February 2023 County Council
Appendices	N/A
Contact Information	<p>Paul Blacker, Finance Director (01452) 328999 paul.blacker@gloucestershire.gov.uk</p> <p>Rob Ayliffe, Director of Policy, Performance and Governance (01452) 328506 rob.ayliffe@gloucestershire.gov.uk</p>

Revenue Expenditure 2023/24

A. Revenue Forecast Outturn Position 2023/24

1. The current forecast of the year end revenue position is an overspend of £757k against the revenue budget of £567.133 million, based on forecasts for Quarter 3. This is a favourable movement of £600k compared to the £1.357 million overspend position reported to Cabinet in November (Quarter 2).
2. The largest variances are the £8.586 million forecast overspend in Children and Families – offset by the £6.214 million underspend in Economy, Environment & Infrastructure, and £2.693 million underspend in Technical & Countywide budgets.
3. At its meeting on 22nd November 2023, Cabinet approved a drawdown estimate of £3.289 million from the Pay & Prices reserve, in respect of the 2023/24 pay award. Detailed calculations have subsequently been undertaken and the figure has been revised down to £2.892 million – a reduced requirement of £397k.
4. On 21st June 2023 Cabinet approved the carry forward of £1.748 million of COVID emergency grant to fund on-going commitments associated with the recovery from the pandemic. The current forecast shows that the full amount is committed in 2023/24.
5. An analysis of the current forecast outturn position is provided in the table and narrative below.

Directorate Breakdown for Cabinet Report - Position Quarter 3 2023

Service Area	Revised 2023/24 Budget	Current Forecast Outturn Position	Forecast Outturn Variance	Variance %	Forecast Variance Previously reported November Cabinet	Change in variance	Cross reference Paragraph
	£000	£000	£000	%	£000	£000	
Adults	182,910	182,910	0	0.00%	0	0	6
Public Health and Communities	36,665	36,636	-29	-0.08%	-32	3	9
Children & Families	157,775	166,361	8,586	5.44%	7,822	764	10
Economy, Environment & Infrastructure	84,501	78,287	-6,214	-7.35%	-5,104	-1,110	15
Community Safety	22,766	22,819	53	0.23%	136	-83	18
Corporate Resources	46,429	47,483	1,054	2.27%	1,228	-174	20
Total for Services	531,046	534,496	3,450	0.65%	4,050	-600	
Technical & Countywide	36,087	33,394	-2,693	-7.46%	-2,693	0	21
Total	567,133	567,890	757	0.13%	1,357	-600	

Adult Social Care

6. Adult Social Care (ASC) are forecasting a balanced outturn, with an underlying overspend of £3.758 million. The forecast includes unachieved MTFS savings targets totalling £4.212 million brought forward from 2022/23, with a further £5.072 million of MTFS savings for 2023/24, of which £1.791 million is forecast as achievable in 2023/24. Although no formal request is being made to Cabinet to use ASC reserves at this point, the current forecast underlying overspend could be covered within the Vulnerable Adults Reserve if required at the end of the financial year.

Partnership Working

7. The Council manages £274.333 million on a partnership basis with NHS Gloucestershire Integrated Commissioning Board ('the ICB') through Joint Funding Agreements and aligned budgets. These agreements are funded from a combination of partner organisations' base budgets and grants, including the Better Care Fund.
8. The forecast outturn position reported to the Joint Commissioning Partnership Executive (JCPE) in November 2023 was an overspend of £6.857 million, of which £2.837 million relates to overspends within GCC-funded services. These GCC variances are included in the outturn position in this report, not in addition to it.

Public Health and Communities

9. Services within this area include Public Health, Supporting People and a number of smaller budgets covering the prevention hub team and grants. In total, Public Health and Communities are £29k under-spent, net of reserve transfers. This is a £3k adverse movement relative to the position reported to Cabinet in November.

Children & Families

10. The forecast revenue position as at Quarter 3 for non-DSG funded services is an overspend of £8.586 million (5.44% above budget), an adverse movement of £764k relative to the position reported to Cabinet in November. The forecast includes the use of the children's reserve set up in the budget of £6.2 million and assumes the achievement of planned mitigations totalling £4.7 million. External placements continue to be the most significant and enduring variance. Other forecast overspends include disability services, commissioning activities and safeguarding staff costs.
11. The main reasons for the adverse movement of £764k from the previous report are due to external placements, with 6 new/extended residential placements more than offsetting the reduced costs of other placements, and also an increase in disabled children's packages. The in-year recovery plan includes projections around individuals stepping down from residential to more appropriate placements, but the additional demand for residential care continues to be higher than anticipated.

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) position

12. The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) carry forward deficit from 2022/23 was £28.58 million and included the high needs block deficit of £30.85 million, offset by early years and school balances. The total projected deficit as at 31st March 2024 is £45.52 million. This is an increase of £16.94 million, of which the high needs block accounts for £15.69 million.

This is £2.87 million higher than the £12.82 million projected at budget setting. Increasing demand for Education Health and Care Plans, and specifically independent special school provision, continues to be the primary driver for the pressures. The remaining increase of £1.25 million is the forecast use of early years and school balances held at the beginning of the year.

13. Gloucestershire, in partnership with Swindon Borough Council, has been awarded a grant of £5.8 million to be shared across both LAs until August 2025 to support a change programme to test and refine significant system-level Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) reforms. The programme aims to demonstrate whether proposed system reforms will collectively drive the much-needed improvements in outcomes and experiences for children and young people with SEND or in AP and their families, whilst delivering a financially stable SEND and AP system, avoiding unintended consequences.
14. Gloucestershire's High Needs block, like most local authorities nationally, is in deficit. A technical instrument – a Statutory Override – exists, which allows Local Authorities to hold a ring-fenced deficit (i.e. overdrawn) reserve balance for DSG. The Statutory Override was recently extended by Government, to March 2026. This creates a risk that General Fund balances will be required to meet the cumulative deficit, as at 1st April 2026.

Economy, Environment & Infrastructure

15. Economy, Environment and Infrastructure are currently forecasting an underspend of £6.124m (7.35% of the £84.501 million budget) assuming £733k of Covid-19 general expenditure related to the Employment & Skills Hub and the Recovery Strategy will be funded from the carried forward COVID grant.
16. The forecast underspend predominantly relates to the energy from waste facility. The forecast of electricity income is £2.6 million over achievement due to higher volumes than budgeted. In addition to this, the current forecast includes £3.3 million favourable variance on net payments to the contractor due to a combination of lower volumes of GCC waste being processed in year and higher third-party fee income.
17. The underspend is a favourable movement of £1.1 million relative to the position reported to Cabinet in November. The main reason for this improved underspend is due to the energy for waste facility as mentioned above offset by some smaller overspends across the directorate. Strategic Waste Reserve balances are frequently reviewed with a view to ensuring that they provide enough mitigation against future fluctuations in income receivable.

Community Safety Directorate

18. The Community Safety Directorate has a forecast year end position which shows an overspend of £53k (0.2%), a favourable movement of £83k relative to the position previously reported.
19. Within Fire there is a forecast overspend of £36k mainly due to increased costs for the national mobilising service, Airwave and inflationary pressures on operational equipment prices.

Corporate Resources

20. Corporate Resources are forecasting an overspend of £1.054 million (2.27% of the budget). The forecast is a favourable movement of £174k relative to the position reported previously. The overspend predominantly relates to specialist costs associated with Legal support and tribunals, as well as non-recurring tenant vacancy pressures within Asset Management, as reported previously.

Technical and Countywide

21. The forecast outturn position for Technical and Countywide budgets is a £2.693 million underspend, unchanged from the Q2 position. The underspend relates to better than expected returns on investments and cash balances.

B. Delivery of Savings Programme

22. At the end of Quarter 3, £14.419 million savings have been achieved, and a further £1.909 million savings are forecast to be delivered by the end of the financial year against a target of £21.101 million. (77.38% forecast achievable in-year).
23. A total of £4.773 million savings is forecast to be at risk of being delivered by the end of 2023/24, which would represent 22.62% of the annual target. The most significant elements at risk being £3.895 million Adult Social Care Savings, £100k income targets across Economy, Environment & Infrastructure and £698k income targets across Corporate Resources and Technical & Countywide budgets.

C. Capital Expenditure

Current Spend 2023/24

24. The current capital budget for 2023/24 is £157.433 million. Actual spend as at November is £72.592 million.

Budget and Forecast Outturn Position 2023/24

25. The forecast outturn position for 2023/24, based on forecasts made in November 2023 is £159.225 million, against the budget of £157.433 million, giving a forecast in year overspend of £1.792 million.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE 2023/24					
Service Area	Budget 2023/24	Current Year Spend 2023/24	% Current Year Spend Against Reprofiled Budget	Forecast Outturn 2023/24	Forecast Year-end Variance
	£000	£000	%	£000	£000
Adults	14,332	8,095	56	13,902	-430
Childrens Services					
Schools	14,170	6,367	45	14,043	-127
Non-Schools	2,161	548	25	2,161	0
Economy, Environment & Infrastructure					
Transport & Highways	105,028	52,118	50	108,329	3,301
Planning & Economic Development	2,600	17	1	2,561	-39
Environment & Waste	2,046	149	7	2,078	32
Libraries & Registration	942	310	33	1,003	61
Community Safety					
Fire and Rescue Service	631	152	24	631	0
Trading Standards	0	0	0	0	0
Corporate Services					
AMPS	10,744	3,257	30	10,738	-6
Capital Receipts Works Before Sale			0		0
ICT Projects	3,584	1,559	43	3,584	0
Business Service Centre	145	0	0	145	0
Archives & Information Management	30	0	0	30	0
Corporate Resources Misc	0	0	0	0	0
Digital Innovation (Customer)	20	20	100	20	0
Investment and Transformation Fund	1,000	0	0	0	-1,000
Total	157,433	72,592	46	159,225	1,792

Adults

26. The Adults capital programme is forecasting slippage of £430k in 23/24. This is due to a revised start date for The Coombs refurbishment project resulting in slippage from 23/24 to 24/25.

Economy, Environment & Infrastructure Capital Programme 2023/24

Transport & Highways

27. The Transport and Highways Capital programme is forecasting advanced delivery of £3.301 million which reflects updates to project outturn costs and risk profiles, across a number of schemes. This is a result of an in-depth review of risks to individual schemes within the programme and therefore reflects a realistic delivery forecast for year end. This advanced delivery will be funded in year by slippage elsewhere in the capital programme.

Corporate Services

28. The Investment and Transformation Fund is forecasting scheme slippage of £1 million in 23/24, whilst detailed Transformation plans are developed for future years.

29. All other services are forecast to spend within £250k of the current budgets.

Changes to the Capital Programme in 2023/24 and future years

30. It is proposed that Cabinet notes the transfer of funding within the Transport and Highways Capital programme as listed below.

- £2.700 million DfT Block grant from Cheltenham to Bishops Cleeve Cycle track to the B4063 Gloucester to Cheltenham Cycle Route
- £1.500 million DfT Levelling Up Fund Grant from the Gloucester South West Bypass – Llanthony Road to the Gloucester City Centre – Cycle Spine.

31. A capital receipt of £4.980 million from the sale of Coln House School has recently been received. As previously approved by the Secretary of State for Education, this was conditionally linked to the Leckhampton High School capital project. The receipt will therefore be used to replace internal borrowing. There is no overall increase to the budget. The reinvestment of the capital receipt also included £20k for a new trim trail at Fairford Primary School (see paragraph 35 below).

32. It is proposed that the capital budget is increased by a total of £5.564 million, as detailed below.

Schools

33. It is proposed that Cabinet approves an increase of £1.861 million in the Schools capital programme, funded as below:

- £1.176 million Childcare Expansion Capital Grant, announced by the Department for Education on the 4th December 2023, to increase the capacity of early years provision and wraparound care (8am – 6pm) in primary schools.
- £685k s106 developer contribution from a housing development north of Canonbury Street, Berkeley towards the expansion of Berkeley Primary School.

Transport & Highways

34. It is proposed that Cabinet approves an increase of £2.809 million in the Transport & Highways capital programme. This additional grant funding was announced by the Department of Transport on the 17th November 2023 from the Road Resurfacing Fund for local highways maintenance, particularly for the resurfacing of carriageways, cycleways, and footways to prevent potholes and other road defects from occurring, as well as tackling other asset management priorities, such as keeping local bridges and other highway structures open and safe.

35. All other changes are below £250k and are detailed in the table below.

Service Area	Project	Budget change £000	Source of funding
Schools	Sladewood Academy	193	Academy contributions (replaces grant funding)
Schools	Fairford C of E Primary School	20	Coln House School capital receipt
Sustainability	Green Investment - Trees	36	Woodland Trust Grant & Match Funding RCCO
Transport & Highways	Thames and Severn Way	50	s106 contribution, Coln Park, Claydon Pike, Lechlade
Transport & Highways	Bournside School Crossing	47	External Contributions from CBC, Bournside School and Parish Councils
Transport & Highways	Bournside School Crossing	45	Internal Contributions from Think Travel, Barriers to Mobility & Hiwys Locals
Transport & Highways	Bus Shelter Improvements	40	Internal Contribution from Reserves
Transport & Highways	Tintern Wireworks Bridge B575	154	Contribution from Monmouthshire County Council
Transport & Highways	Cycle links	200	Contribution from Active Travel Capability Fund 2023-24
Libraries & Registration	Churchdown Library	109	Developer Contributions
Total budget increase / decrease		894	

D. Prudential Indicators

36. The Prudential Code has been developed by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) as a professional code of practice to support local authorities in determining their programmes for capital investment in fixed assets. Local authorities are required by regulation to have regard to the Prudential Code.

37. The framework established by the Prudential Code is intended to support local strategic planning, local asset management planning and robust option appraisal. The objectives of the Code are to ensure, within a clear framework, that the capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable, and that treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good professional practice.

38. As a result of updates to the Code, GCC is required to report performance quarterly from April 2023, against forward-looking prudential indicators (PIs), for its borrowing and lending activity.

39. The PIs support and record local decision making and are designed to assist members overview of capital spending plans. They are not designed as a comparison tool between authorities due to local factors. In addition, the indicators should not be taken individually; rather the benefit from monitoring will arise from following the movement in indicators over time and the year-on-year changes.

40. All of the PIs for 2023/24 were set within the Capital Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy, when the MTFS was approved in February 2023. The tables below show the 2023/24 quarter 3 position against those initial forecasts and provides an explanation of any movement in the indicator.

2023/24 Indicator	Original per 2023/24 Strategy £m	Forecast as at Q3 Dec 2023 £m
Capital Expenditure (incl lease and PFI)	236.3	160.5
Capital Financing Requirement	544.5	483.3
Operational Limit for External Debt	555.0	500.0
Authorised Limit for External Debt	565.0	520.0
Actual Long Term Debt	376.9	368.9
Liability Benchmark	-13.9	0.2
	%	%
Capital Financing Costs as a % of Net Revenue	5.55	3.40
Net Income from Commercial and Service Activities	0.00	0.00

41. The capital spend (which includes £1.3m related to PFI and lease liabilities in addition to the reported £159.2m capital spend in section C) and capital financing requirement (CFR) for Q3 are lower than originally forecast due to slippage on the capital programme, which then has an impact on future years. More capital spend is now expected to be funded from borrowing during 2023/24, with the borrowing profile lengthened. This then impacts on the CFR, however the profile is less than that originally envisaged when the strategy was set.

42. Actual long term debt is less than envisaged when the strategy was set, and this was due to an opportunity to repay £8m of fixed market loans.

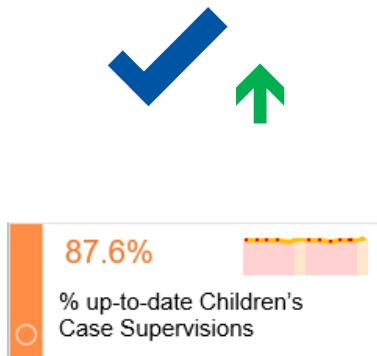
43. The liability benchmark has worsened with additional internal borrowing now expected as at the Q3 position, for 2023/24.

44. Although capital expenditure is not charged directly to the revenue budget, interest payable on loans and revenue provision to repay the debt (MRP) are. The net annual charge is known as financing costs; this is compared to the net Budget for GCC. Due to slippage on the capital programme the ratio is less than budgeted.

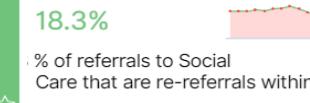
Overview of Performance Quarter 3 2023-24

Achievements and Successes

Up-to-date Children's Case Supervisions	Percentage of Children's Re-referrals	Permanent Admissions to Care Homes	Percentage of Adult Services staff who had an Appraisal in the last 12 months
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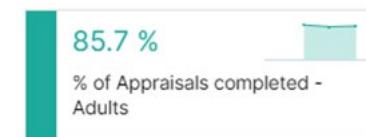
Percentage of Children's Re-referrals



Permanent Admissions to Care Homes



Percentage of Adult Services staff who had an Appraisal in the last 12 months



Regular, good quality case supervision is essential to ensuring progress and risk management for children, as well as providing practice guidance and support to Social Workers. Progress for most children had been discussed in a timely way at the end of December (88%). This is the highest performance since Q1 2021/22 and was within tolerance of target (90%).

Following three quarters of decreasing numbers of referrals, demand increased in Quarter 3 to just under 1,800 referrals received. This is compared to 1,500-1,600 in Quarters 1 and 2. However, this remains lower than the average number of referrals received quarterly in 2022/23 at just under 2,200.

Re-referrals reduced for the third quarter (18.3%, from 28.6% in Quarter 4), with performance over the rolling year at 23.9%. Performance is now better than target (21.5%) and the peer group average (20.8%, 2022/23).

The rate of permanent admissions to residential and nursing homes over the last 12 months remain lower than the 2022/23 peer group average.

The rate for people aged 18-64 is 11.8 per 100,000 population against a peer group average of 15.5. The rate for those aged 65+ is 511.7 per 100,000 population against a peer group average of 539.0.

However, it is of note that admissions of older adults have more than doubled and followed an increasing trend since April 2022 (249.3).

85.7% of staff had an appraisal discussion with their line manager. This is the highest rate across the GCC Directorates and better than the organisation overall (77.9%).

However, despite a high proportion of people having an up-to-date appraisal staff support with sickness (overall, long-term and stress) are all up, with stress almost tripling from the same time last year.

Achievements and Successes

ICT Priority 1 Incidents

(an organisation-wide issue causing an outage or preventing a large volume of staff from working).



4

Total number of ICT Priority 1 incidents raised per quarter



Sickness



2.29

Days lost to Sickness per FTE (excluding Schools and GFRS)



Four Priority 1 (P1) incidents were raised during Quarter 3 (Note: this is an organisation-wide issue, an issue causing an outage or one preventing a large volume of GCC staff from working). All issues occurred within October, which represents improvement in stability in the latter part of the quarter, despite ongoing transformation activity. Incidents related to a variety of root causes including physical component malfunction, software updates, and third-party service failure. All incidents have been remediated, and actions to mitigate reoccurrence are ongoing.

Overall sickness absence (2.29 days in Quarter 3) is in line with seasonal trends and is marginally better than the forecast target (2.30 days). While overall levels are positive, absence rates vary across the organisation, with some areas reporting significantly higher sickness absence. Occupational Health are undertaking a new, proactive approach to wellbeing which will support Human Resources (HR) Business Partners and managers to address sickness hotspots.

Over the rolling year, GCC has lost 8.23 working days per FTE to sickness. This is a marginal increase compared with last quarter; however, levels are lower than of that recorded at the end of Quarter 3 2022/23 (9.07).

Positive Direction of Travel

Growth Hub Support for Businesses	Road Safety	Rate of Safe and Well visits per 1,000 population	Average Response Time to Dwelling Fires
 <div>81 No. of light-touch business interactions supported by Growth Hubs</div> <p>There were 81 interactions with business supported by Growth Hubs in Quarter 3, against a target of 80. This is the first time since June 2022 that target has been attained and exceeded, as well as the highest performance seen since September 2021 (74). This compares to 47 last quarter and 64 for the same period last year.</p>	 <div>308 Number of killed and seriously injured people</div> <p>Post-pandemic, we saw higher level of incidents of people killed and seriously injured on our roads, peaking between September-December 2022 (at almost 3 standard deviations from the mean). This has now reduced for a third successive quarter and is in line with the 7-year mean, with 85 people killed or seriously injured (KSI) on Gloucestershire's roads between July and September 2023. Early indications show that incidents for Quarter 4 will be below the level forecast. The Traffic Team continues to analyse serious and fatal incidents to inform the development of intervention schemes, education, and enforcement activities together with the Road Safety Partnership. Rural high-speed routes, urban main road corridors and high footfall areas have been identified as priorities, for which schemes are being developed. Prevention schemes include average speed cameras and 20mph speed limits. It is reported that data from Community Speed Watch camera sites has demonstrated positive early results in improving speed limit compliance.</p>	 <div>1.42 Rate of Safe and Well visits undertaken per 1,000 population</div> <p>In Quarter 3, we completed the highest rate of Safe and Well visits since March 2020 (1.42 per 1,000 population, 924 visits). Performance remains a challenge and is worse than target (1.56 per 1,000 population, 1,000 visits per quarter). Information has been produced using various sources of intelligence to aid self-directed prevention activity and two sprints are planned for January and March to increase visiting opportunities.</p>	 <div>9.12 Average Response times to dwelling fires</div> <p>Timeliness of responding to all attended dwelling fires (National definition) has improved for a third quarter to 9 minutes 12 seconds (down from 10 minutes 31 seconds during Quarter 4 2022/23). Timeliness is similar to the comparator group average (9 minutes 11 second) and is within tolerance of the target (9 minutes).</p>

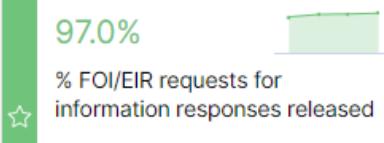
Positive Direction of Travel

% Fire and Rescue Service staff who had an Appraisal in the last 12 months



Just over two-thirds of Fire Service staff (roles – a staff member may hold more than one role) have had an appraisal discussion with their manager in the last 12 months (69%, 341 out of 494 roles). This is an improvement for the second quarter (up from 42% at the end of June 2023).

Timeliness of Freedom of Information (FOI) & Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) Responses

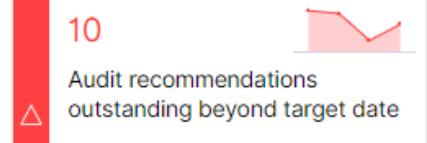


97% of FOI/EIR requests were responded to within timescales, better than the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) recommended target of 90%. Performance has followed an improving trend since reporting began in June 2020 (67%); this is the highest level of performance achieved to date. Improvement has been achieved by monitoring requests at an early stage, increasing management oversight and escalating requests as they approach the deadline.

Areas of Focus/Potential Concern

Non-Opiate Treatment	Opiate Treatment	Number of Children Subject to a Protection Plan	Permanent Exclusions and suspensions	Timeliness of issuing draft and final Education Health and Care Plans
 <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="flex: 1;"> <p>28.5 %</p> <p>Proportion of all Non-Opiate Users in treatment, not</p> </div> <div style="flex: 1;">  </div> </div> <p>Successful treatment for people using non-opiates increased from 27.3% last quarter to 28.5% (217 out of 761 people), however, performance remains worse than target (33.2%).</p>	 <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="flex: 1;"> <p>5.1 %</p> <p>Proportion of all Opiate Users left treatment successfully</p> </div> <div style="flex: 1;">  </div> </div> <p>Opiate users who successfully complete treatment outcome demonstrate a significant improvement in health and wellbeing in terms of increased longevity, reduced blood-borne virus transmission, improved parenting skills and improved physical and psychological health. In Quarter 3, 5.1% of people had not re-presented for opiate treatment within 6 months. This is an improvement for the second quarter, up from 4.6 in Quarter 1 2023/24 but remains worse than target (6.3%).</p>	 <p>666 children, equating to 51.7 per 0-17 year old population</p> <p>Compared with a peer group average of 39.9 per 0-17 year old population</p> <p>The number of children subject to a protection plan rose for the third quarter, from 545 children at the end of March to 666 children at the end of December (up 22%). This equates to a rate of 51.7 per 10,000 0-17 year old which shows a greater prevalence of protection plans in Gloucestershire than in England overall (43.2) and our comparator group (39.9 Mar-23).</p>	 <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="flex: 1;"> <p>47</p> <p>No. of pupils permanently excluded (All pupils)</p> </div> <div style="flex: 1;">  </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="flex: 1;"> <p>2,204</p> <p>No. of suspensions (All pupils)</p> </div> <div style="flex: 1;">  </div> </div> <p>There were 47 permanent exclusions in Quarter 3, the highest number in a quarter since March 2017. This is an increase of 57% compared to the same period in 2022/23 when there were 30 permanent exclusions.</p> <p>Suspensions increased by 9.3% compared to the same quarter in 2022/23 (just over 2,200, compared with around 2,000 at the same time last year).</p>	 <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="flex: 1;"> <p>22.3 %</p> <p>% Draft EHCPs issued within 16 weeks</p> </div> <div style="flex: 1;">  </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="flex: 1;"> <p>26.7 %</p> <p>% of EHCP's issued within the statutory 20 week timescale</p> </div> <div style="flex: 1;">  </div> </div> <p>While timeliness of decisions to undertake an assessment remained high in Quarter 3 (97.5%), the timeliness of issuing draft and final EHCPs (within 16 and 20 weeks respectively) has decreased for the third quarter (43% to 36% to 22.3% and 44% to 40% to 26.7% respectively). Both measures are worse than the same quarter last year where performance was 26.5% (draft plans issued) and 28.7% (final plans issued).</p>

Areas of Focus/Potential Concern

Days Lost to Sickness per FTE in Adult Services	Overdue Audit Recommendations	Proportion of Staff with an Appraisal in the Last 12 Months
 <div> <p>3.83</p> <p>Days lost to sickness/absence per FTE - Adults</p>  </div> <p>Days lost to sickness per FTE increased for a second quarter to 3.83 days per FTE (from 2.63 in Quarter 1). The Service had the highest rate of sickness in the organisation and lost an additional day and a half per FTE than the organisation overall (2.34 days lost).</p> <p>Adult's Services has the highest level of long-term sickness (2.4 days lost per FTE) and has higher long-term absence levels than GCC overall (1.34 days), performance is at the highest levels seen for long-term sickness within the last 12 months. The Service also continues to have the highest rate of absence due to stress, with days lost increasing for the fourth quarter, almost tripling compared to the same time last year (0.54 days up to 1.47 in Quarter 3 2023/24). Performance is worse than the organisation overall (0.79 days lost to stress).</p>	 <div> <p>10</p> <p>Audit recommendations outstanding beyond target date</p>  </div> <p>Internal audits provide a transparent independent account of council activity to give assurances of governance and oversight. Through completion of audit recommendations, the organisation has acknowledged and strengthened governance and oversight where it's been identified as needed. The number of audit recommendations rated as 'High' that are outstanding increased from 4 in Quarter 2 to 10 in Quarter 3. Performance is worsening, with 43 audit recommendations were reported as overdue in the last 12 months compared with almost half that in the previous 12 months (29) (this may include the same recommendation reported in more than one successive quarter due to the extent of drift of the action). Of the 10 recommendations, one related to the Youth Offending Service, which has been outstanding since July 2023. Three related to Adult Social Care which were made in June with completion extended to September, but which remained overdue at the end of December. Of the remaining six recommendations four related to the Fire and Rescue Service and two related to Corporate Resources.</p>	 <div> <p>77.9 %</p> <p>% of Appraisals Completed - Rolling Year</p>  </div> <p>Around three-quarters of staff have had an appraisal discussion with their manager within the last 12 months (77.9%). While appraisal completion is worse than target (85%), performance has increased over the last three quarters from 71.1% at the end of March 2023. Completion rates are expected to increase further next quarter. The appraisal process is intended to provide a clear link between the work of individuals to their business plans and the Council Strategy. It also supports the review of learning and development needed to ensure that GCC's workforce has the current skills and knowledge required to deliver its objectives. There remains some variability for staff, with performance ranging from 72% to 86% across Directorates.</p>

Long-Term Challenges

Timeliness of Contact Decision Making for Children	Timeliness of Initial Visits for Children following Referral	Timeliness of Children's Assessments	Repeat Child Protection Planning
 <div> <p>60.9% % of final decisions made within time for all contacts.</p> </div> <p>All initial contacts undergo a risk assessment triage. An initial decision for contacts rated as Red (risk to the child is evident and a 4-hour decision is required) was made within timescale for 97% of children in Quarter 3. Where evidence of risk emerged during contact enquiries and a Strategy Discussion was held, 95% were timely; performance was better than target. However, significant improvement is needed for children where a contact subsequently progressed to a Social Care referral, with three-quarters of children having a final contact decision made within 72 hours (74%, against a target of 90%). Overall, decisions for three-fifths of children were made within 72 hours during Quarter 3 (61%). This is down from 69% last quarter and remains significantly worse than target (90%).</p>	 <div> <p>70.5% % Initial visits in time</p> </div> <p>Timeliness of initial visits continued to decline for the second quarter from 77% in Quarter 1 to 71% in Quarter 3. Performance has been worse than the target of 85% since Quarter 1 2021/22. Performance continued to vary across localities, ranging between 58%-74% in the quarter.</p>	 <div> <p>73.0% % Single Assessments completed within 45 working</p> </div> <p>Timeliness of assessments for children declined for the second quarter, from 80% to 73%. Performance has been worse than target since Quarter 3 2021/22. Timely assessment aids swifter understanding as to whether there will be intervention for families and enables us to expedite putting appropriate support and protection in place. Again, there was inconsistency in the pace of response, with performance particularly wide-ranging from 30%-99% across localities.</p>	 <div> <p>31.8% % children becoming subject to 2nd/subsequent protection plans</p> </div> <p>Around one-third of children made subject to a protection plan during Quarter 3 had had a previous plan (31.8%). This remains high and worse than target for the third quarter (25%).</p> <p>Over the last 12 months, 30.8% of children being made subject to a protection plan had had a previous plan (237 of 769 children). This is worse than the peer group average (24.0%, 2022/23).</p> <p>12% have had 3-5 protection plans (81 children). Of the children subject to 3-5 protection plans, a quarter are in pre-proceedings or court proceedings (26%, 22 children).</p>

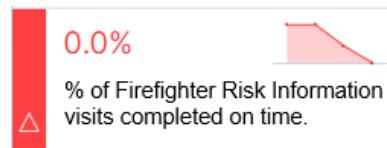
Long-Term Challenges

Risk of Adult Social Care Provider Failure	Firefighter Risk Information Visits	Completion of Fire Service Inspection Plan	Local Government and Social Care (LGSCO) Ombudsman Decisions Upheld
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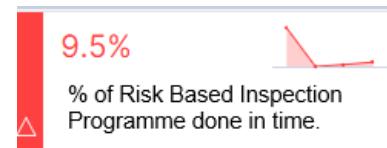


The independent market continues to be in a state of uncertainty. We continue to have a shortage of residential nursing provision across the County, in particular the market struggles to recruit and retain nurses in rural localities. Care Homes are still holding high levels of vacancies and coupled with increased costs, the risk of homes becoming unviable/unsustainable remains high.

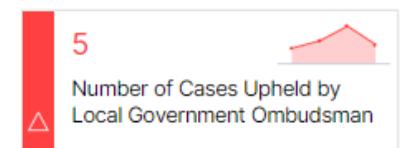
Mitigations include ongoing planning for provider failure, with a focus on supporting people receiving care as quickly as possible and developing work on provider support. Home care is stronger with a continued upward trajectory in terms of delivery of home care hours with the same number of staff. Hyper local commissioning of home care continues to make a positive impact to the financial stability of providers.



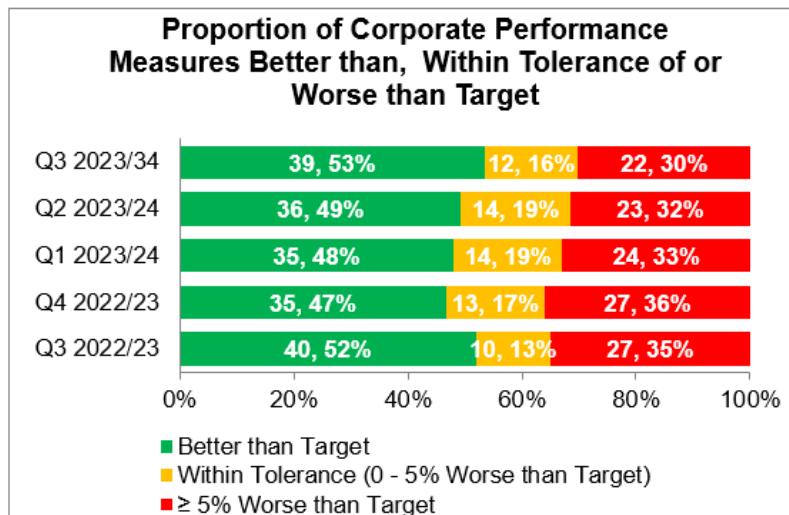
In Quarter 3 there were no Firefighter Risk Information Visits completed (a visit to learn about the building and surrounding areas to prevent injury or death to firefighters) due to staff vacancies. Responsibility for this work will be transferring from the Protection Team to the Response Team in February, once staff vacancies have been filled.



At the end of Quarter 3, delivery was behind the scheduled target (9.5%, 223 premises, against the expected 14%, 330 premises). The target is set based on 5 inspectors completing 11 audits per month. Two new inspectors have been recruited but at least one will take significant development before they can fulfil the role (possibly up to 12 months).



Five decisions were upheld by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) within the quarter. This equates to 71% of decisions upheld which is lower than Quarter 2 (83%) and the rolling 12 month to the end of Quarter 3 (78%). 21 decisions have been upheld in 2023/24 to date, this is 75% higher than the number upheld in the whole of 2022/23 (12 decisions). Of the five decisions upheld in Quarter 3, three related to SEND services and the assessment, review, or provision of services to children with an Education, Health, and Care Plan.



45. At the end of Quarter 3 2023/24, just over two-thirds of corporate performance measures were within tolerance of or better than target (70%). This is an incremental increase for the third quarter (64%) and is better than target for the second quarter (65%).

	Q3 2022/23	Q4 2022/23	Q1 2023/24	Q2 2023/24	Q3 2023/24
	Percentage of Measures Better/Within Tolerance of Target				
Economy, Environment and Infrastructure	89%	82%	88%	81%	94%
Public Health and Communities	67%	67%	67%	67%	67%
Children's Social Care	41%	47%	47%	47%	53%
Education	100%	60%	60%	80%	60%
Adult Social Care	85%	75%	82%	82%	90%
Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service	17%	50%	60%	50%	33%
Corporate Resources	58%	50%	58%	75%	67%

46. There were 22 Corporate Performance measures that were performing worse than target.