

Rother District Council

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date:	5 June 2023
Title:	Performance Report: Fourth Quarter 2022/23
Report of:	Deputy Chief Executive
Ward(s):	N/A
Purpose of Report:	To monitor the delivery of the Council's Key Performance Indicators
Officer	
Recommendation(s):	It be RESOLVED : That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider these findings and recommend any actions to Cabinet, as necessary.

Introduction

1. For the financial year 2022/23, Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) and Cabinet selected a set of 14 key performance indicators (KPIs). These indicators stand as a barometer of the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan and those service areas that Members wish to scrutinise over the year. This was agreed by [Cabinet on 7 February 2022](#) (Minute CB21/80 refers). It should be noted that the committee chose a new set of indicators for 2023/24 at the [January 2023](#) meeting. The new set's first report will be about the first quarter's performance and reported later in the year.
2. For the 2022/23 financial year, the focus had been set on five themes:
 - **Housing and Communities**: four indicators to monitor delivery of the Housing and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
 - **Finance Performance**: three indicators to monitor significant non-tax income as a part of the Council's revenue streams.
 - **Economic Development and Poverty**: three indicators to monitor the impact of the pandemic on household incomes, council tax and business rates collection.
 - **Environment**: two indicators to monitor the Environment Strategy in relation to the proportion of household waste collected that is sent for reuse, composting and recycling and CO2 emissions.
 - **Planning**: two indicators to monitor the processing times of applications.
3. This report is a summary of the Council's performance against the five themes at the end of the fourth financial quarter (1 January 2023 to 31 March 2023) and a summary of the year. The report gives Members an opportunity to scrutinise the progress towards the Council's stated aims, outcomes and actions in the Corporate Plan and make any necessary recommendations to Cabinet for future service delivery.

4. A table of the KPI performance can be found at Appendix A. More detailed explanations or definitions on how the KPI is measured can be found at Appendix B.

Housing & Communities Summary

5. **Homelessness prevented or relieved** - The performance in Quarter 4 2022/23 was 43 preventions and reliefs, up from 33 in Quarter 3, and 29 in Quarter 1, an increase of 52% over the period. These are positive results and demonstrate that the service is moving in the right direction, post-pandemic. While there are still improvements to make, the results are testament to the hard work and dedication of front-line officers as well as the skills and expertise of the new management team that has brought in a raft of new prevention measures in the last two years. In particular, the Rother Tenant Finder service has performed very effectively in its efforts to offer landlord incentives and support for tenants to access rent in advance and deposit. We have recently recruited several new dedicated homelessness prevention officers whom we are confident will improve prevention performance further.
6. **Households in Temporary Accommodation (TA)** - The current number of households in TA is 150, up from 133 in Quarter 3 and 129 in Quarter 1. The number of TA placements overall is significant compared to the same time last year, where there were approximately 90 placements. The Council is limited in its ability to influence the various factors that increase homelessness and the number of households in TA. To this extent, councils in England are increasingly only able to minimise the increase in the number of households in TA, as opposed to reduce it. While it is challenging to accurately compare our performance on TA placement numbers to neighbouring areas, as the information is not commonly published, it should also be noted that the number of households we have in TA is just 27% the number placed by neighbouring Hastings Borough Council (550), whereas the number of homelessness presentations in Rother is 40% of that in Hastings.
7. **Average unit cost of TA** – The new measures to prevent homelessness are supported by the continuation of the Temporary Accommodation Support Scheme (TASS) that has seen the Council acquire properties for use as TA and specialist Housing First accommodation for rough sleepers. The average cost of accommodating a 3-bed household in Rother-owned TA is £6,000 per year, as opposed to £13,000 a year in the private sector, on average. The average unit cost for Quarter 4 is £1,439 up from £1,082 in Quarter 3 and against a target of £1,201. The metric is still new, and we are reviewing how it is best presented accurately. In short, the Council's invoicing processes mean that the result in Quarter 1 is artificially lower than it should be, and the result for Quarter 4 artificially higher. It is helpful therefore to review the metric annually. The average unit cost in 2021/22 was £1,092, compared to an average cost of £1,235 in 2022/23, an increase of 13%. It is relevant to note that the cost of operating RDC-owned TA and private sector TA has increased significantly over the period, due to the increase in energy costs. To put the increase in context, according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in the year to March 2023 gas prices alone increased by 129%*. +

8. **Number on the Housing Register** - The number on the housing register is 2,095. The number will reduce significantly once the new process of migrating households to the new Allocations Scheme is completed within 2023. The number on the register is as much a measure of the relative inclusivity of the criteria within the Allocations Policy as it is an indicator of the level of housing need in the district.
9. **Affordable homes built** – There were 90 affordable homes completed over 2022/23. The total of all new homes built this year is 391 (final figures to be confirmed on the publication of the Housing Land Supply Position Statement). A significant improvement over last year and the first time since the beginning of the Local Plan period that we have delivered over 335 (the annualised average requirement in the Core Strategy). The improvement is mainly due to the completion of several large sites, including Preston Hall Farm, Bexhill, Barnhorn Green, Bexhill and Tollgates, Battle as well as continuing delivery on the Worsham Farm, Bexhill, site. In 2022/23 we have begun to observe that the housebuilding sector may be entering a cooling in its output, as we continue to face economic uncertainty and the impact of rising material and labour costs. We also note that Southern Housing (formerly Optivo) are not projecting significant development starting on site beyond 2023, with zero properties likely to be started in 2024. We continue to work closely with Southern Housing to maximise delivery locally; however, the Council will need to consider its strategic response to a potential slow-down in housing development in coming years. To this end, officers are beginning to review the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy with Members and wider stakeholders, for implementation in 2025.

[*Cost of living insights - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

Finance Performance

10. **Income from all assets:** The target/forecast was £1,850,000. The outturn figure for 2022/23 is £2,397,601 and includes existing investment properties prior to the PIS or those purchased from borrowed funds. The increase to the budgeted figure of c£550,000 is mainly due to the expected rental income from the Sainsbury's purchase in April 2022.
11. This is less than was reported in the third quarter report, when the estimate was £2,566,126. The expected purchased for 16-18 Beeching Park estate has not yet completed, so full rental budget of £36,000 for these properties will not be realised this year.
12. In addition, there are several units empty at Malthouse in Peasmarsh, resulting in a year end reduction in expected rents in the region of £16,000.
13. **Additional income:** The target/forecast was £107,000. The total additional income for 2022/23 is £134,124. The additional income is higher than expected due to overhead recharges to Rother Housing Company. The table overleaf shows the breakdown of each additional income that was gained each quarter.

Additional Income	22-23				
	qtr1	qtr2	qtr3	qtr4	total 22/23
Bexhill Fairground Attraction		1,750.00			1,750.00
Amherst Road rent (2nd floor)	13,550.00	13,550.00	13,550.00	13,550.00	54,200.00
Maintenance team - 3party works		1,140.00		530.00	1,670.00
Salary plus overheads recharges for Head Of Service - Housing and Communities (10%), Housing Development Manager (90%),Principal Accountant(50%) to NOV 22,Project Support Officer started 1.7.22(10%) to Rother Housing Company				139,706.79	139,706.79
TOTAL					197,326.79
FSP ELEMENT taken out of salaries					-9,000.00
FSP ELEMENT					-54,200.00
TOTAL ADDITIONAL INCOME					134,124.00

14. The **Council Tax** collection rate was at 97.66% at the end of March 2023 compared to 98.01% for the same period last year. Although collection is slightly down as a percentage of collectable debt, additional Council Tax in the region 4 million pounds has been collected. Council Tax collection has become more challenging over the past year, although, as yet, this has not been overly reflected in the recovery rates. However, this will continue to be closely monitored.
15. The **Business Rates** collection rate was 97.83% at the end of March 2023 compared to 96.99% for the same period last year. However, with the number of different reliefs available to businesses over the past few years it is difficult to compare collection year on year. The last time we had comparable reliefs available to businesses was during 2019/20 and our collection rate for 2022/23 is similar to this period.

Economic Development and Poverty Summary

16. **The number of Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTR)** claimants has not significantly changed over the year. In total at the end of Q4 there was 6,510 CTR claimants made up of 2,791 pensioner households (43.87%) and 3,719 working age households (57.13%). The numbers continue to be closely monitored to try and identify any significant changes as soon as possible.

Environment Summary

17. **Waste and Recycling** As we reported in the previous quarter, the current waste collection system is based on collecting recycling materials co-mingled. That is collecting glass, plastic, cans and cardboard all mixed together in the

resident's green bin and collected by Biffa at the resident's kerbside. The most effective method of collecting these items accurately is at the kerbside, where the waste crews can do a superficial check on each bin for contamination. There are some locations with limited waste storage, such as Bexhill, Rye and Battle town centres, which are collected using pink recycling sacks.

18. The recycling rate is a measurement of the total volume of material collected for recycling (co-mingled recycling, garden waste) as a percentage proportion of all household materials collected.
19. Currently, we are in the process of inviting residents to renew their annual subscription for July 2023/2024. We currently have 20,714 garden waste collection subscribers. Their garden waste tonnages are included in the recycling tonnages, and so very much contributes to the overall recycling and composting percentage of collected household waste, because garden waste weighs more than dry recycling.
20. Residents also have had access to various recycling 'bring sites' across the district which offered the same co-mingling recycling facilities. Despite concerted efforts to enforce accurate use of the containers, including officer monitoring and use of CCTV and posters, these sites all suffer from excessive contamination; for example, people mixing general refuse in with the recycling. This has meant that these contaminated 'bring site' containers have had to be emptied as refuse rather than recycling which has a negative impact on our recycling rate.
21. As mentioned previously, a far better quality of material is collected at the resident's kerbside and so the 'bring sites' are gradually being phased out over a period of time. The closure of these sites is nearly complete with Ticehurst closing recently and five more left to close. These closures will encourage people to use their green containers more, and excess recycling material can be presented alongside their green container on recycling collection days, suitably contained in a clear plastic bag. There is no restriction on the amount of recycling material that can be presented on recycling collection days.
22. Alternatively, it may encourage people to use their local tips more. This will also improve the quality of recycling as tips are closely monitored by East Sussex County Council (ESCC). However, the tonnages collected will not count towards the RDC recycling percentage.
23. As we have reported previously, during COVID the general household waste tonnages increased as people shopped and worked from home. Pre-COVID (2019-2020) rates rose from 18K tonnes to 20.5K tonnes in 2021-2022. During the same pre-COVID period, recycling was at 18K tonnes and increased to 19.5K tonnes in 2021-2022. This rise is largely due to the increase in garden waste subscribers. The amount of dry recycling tonnages has remained static throughout the period.
24. The focus is to work both on improving the quality of the recycling material collected and the amount of recycling material collected.

25. For the first quarter, April 2022 to June 2022, recycling percentage was at 52.49% compared with 50.79% for the same quarter 2021/2022. For the second quarter, July 2022 to September 2022, the recycling percentage is 47.7% compared with 52.34% for the same quarter 2021/2022. The garden waste tonnages were significantly down in the second quarter 2022 due to the drought and this had a negative impact on the overall recycling rate. Once again, this emphasises the role that garden waste plays in our overall results. For the third quarter, October 2022 to December 2022, the recycling rate was 49% which is an increase compared to the previous year's figure of 47.75%. This reflects residual waste (i.e. black bag/container waste) tonnages falling back to normal levels (pre-Covid) after the higher tonnages experienced over the Covid pandemic. The garden waste tonnages for the third quarter, October 2022 to December 2022, were also higher than the same period in 2021 which further supports this higher recycling rate.
26. Accurate recycling data is verified via a number of sources (ESCC, Biffa and other third parties) meaning that there is a delay whilst tonnages have been checked and approved, resulting in Rother recycling performance information being always one quarter behind in relation to this report.
27. A number of actions are being taken to improve recycling and re-use. As reported above, the project to close recycling 'bring sites' and divert recycling to the more effective method of residents' kerbside collections is almost complete. Campaigns using promotional banners and social media were used last summer to encourage visitors to the tourist beaches and towns to 'take their litter home with them' to aid recycling using their green bin. Further public communications are planned around reducing contamination and specifically educating residents to put recycling in containers loose and not in bags, especially not in black sacks which creates contamination.
28. The current focus being worked on across the waste partnership and ESCC is with regards to the separate kerbside collection available for the recycling of small electrical items and batteries, often termed small WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment). Residents are encouraged to present small electrical items such as toasters, power drills, hair dryers etc in a plastic bag on top of their bin on their collections days and Biffa will collect these items and store in them in a separate compartment on the waste vehicle. If collected separately, these items are managed and disposed by Light Brothers who are specialists in recycling these items, stripping down metal for reuse and separating out hazardous waste.
29. The above actions all make significant contributions towards the quality of recycling. But they may not necessarily be reflected in an increase in the recycling percentage rate, which this year (2022/2023) may well drop overall due to last summer's drought affecting garden waste tonnages.
30. Going forward, as we reported in the second quarter, the waste industry still waits for further directives from Government on secondary legislation regarding the impact of the UK Environment Bill on the future of recycling. The main impact will be an anticipated separate collection of food waste, expected to commence in April 2025; the introduction of 'extended producer responsibility'

whereby producers are made responsible for the entire life of the packaging they introduce into the marketplace; and the 'deposit return scheme' whereby people are encouraged to return drinks containers (plastic and aluminium cans) for recycling in return for a small amount of money. A date for the introduction of these two schemes is not yet determined by DEFRA.

31. In relation to the measurement of CO₂, we reported in the previous quarter that the target setting is pending the current review of the Environment Strategy. At the time of writing this report, there is no new government data to report. However, it is anticipated new figures will be available to report to the Climate Change Steering Group at its meeting in September. This information will come to the Overview and Scrutiny, as the parent committee, later in the year.

Planning Processing Summary

32. In terms of quarter 4, 100% major housing development applications were determined on time (13 weeks or agreed terms) for months October to December 2022. In the same period minor development application and other applications ranged between 78 and 96% determined in 8 weeks. Although these figures appear poorer when considered overall, in the future benchmarking against neighbouring district planning authorities could provide a better picture. However, for quarter 4 2022/23, national figures are at 87% for all majors determined in time; 83% for minors and 87% for others; 86% for all decisions.
33. Figures for the period April 2022 to February 2023, indicate some improvement with 100% of majors determined in time, between 50 to 96% of minors determined in time and between 69 to 78% of others determined (including EOT). Although, this indicates a slight improvement, it is still below the target.
34. At present, based on the above, we are working the best way we can with limited resource. However, we aim to keep this at an upward trend but with particular attention to risks. We have a risk analysis to help do this.

Conclusion

35. This report sets our performance against the agreed key performance indicators for the five themes for the fourth quarter of 2022/23 and a summary of the year's performance.
36. Members are requested to consider performance against targets or forecasts and the delivery of the council's Corporate Plan and to pass recommendations for action to Cabinet for consideration.












Other Implications	Applies?	Other Implications	Applies?
Human Rights	No	Equalities and Diversity	No
Crime and Disorder	No	External Consultation	No
Environmental	No	Access to Information	No
Risk Management	Yes	Exempt from publication	No

Deputy Chief Executive:	Lorna Ford
Report Contact Officer:	Joanne Wright
e-mail address:	joanne.wright@rother.gov.uk
Appendices:	A – Summary KPI Table B – KPI Definitions
Relevant previous Minutes:	CB21/7, OSC22/35, OSC22/49,
Background Papers:	None
Reference Documents:	None







Summary of All KPIs




A summary of the KPI performance is set out in the table below. Performance is compared to the previous quarter result and to the same quarter the previous year.

	Status	Target	Q1 Result	Q2 Result	Q3 Result	Q4 Result	Compared to previous quarter (Q3)	Compared to Q4 2021/22 (last year)
Housing & Communities								
Number of all households in temporary accommodation		60	129	136	133	150		
Number of households on the housing register		1,200	2021	2068	2,095	2,140		
Number of affordable homes delivered (gross) (supply target: end of year)		106	43	21 YTD: 64	Q3: 16 YTD: 80	Q4: 10 YTD: 90		
Homelessness Prevented and Homelessness Relieved (new KPI)		Quarter: 30 Year: 120	Prvt: 15 Relv: 14	Prvt: 16 Relv: 14	Prvt: 16 Relv: 15	Prvt: 23 Relv: 20 Year: 133		(New in 2022/23)
Cost of temporary accommodation (new for 2022/23)		£1,201	£833	£1,585	£1,082	£1,439		
Finance Performance								
Net income from all investment assets		£1,850,000	£2,566,126	£2,566,126	£2,566,126	£2,397,601		
Additional income generation		£107,000	£54,200	£55,200	£93,846	£134,124		
Economic Development and Poverty								
Number of Council Tax reduction claimants: Total, Pensioners and Working Age		Tot: 6,960 P: 3,041 WA: 3,919	Tot: 6,556 P: 2,905 WA: 3,651	Tot: 6,548 P: 2,853 WA: 3,696	Tot: 6,452 P: 2818 WA: 3,634	Tot: 6,604 P: 2,790 WA: 3,814		
Council Tax collection rates (income received as a % of collectable debit)		98.3%	29.81%	57.13%	81.13%	97.66%		

	Status	Target	Q1 Result	Q2 Result	Q3 Result	Q4 Result	Compared to previous quarter (Q3)	Compared to Q4 2021/22 (last year)	
Housing & Communities									
Business Rates collection rates (income received as a % of collectable debit)		98%	29.71%	59.17%	84.57%	97.83%			
Waste Collection									
ESCC Waste re-used, composted and recycled (reported one quarter in arrears)		54%	52.58%	47.7%	49%	Not yet due			
Carbon baseline (new for 2022/23) a) Rother District Council tCO2 b) Rother district CO2 Kt		Pending revised strategy in 2023	There is no new data yet. New, annual figures will be reported to the Climate Change Steering Group in September 2023.						
Planning Processing									
Major applications: weeks to process or calendar days to process		13 weeks or 91 days	34 wks, 2 days or 240 days	26 wks, 4 days or 186 days	17 wks & 6d: or 125 days	28 wks & 5 days or 201 days			
Minor applications: days to process		8 weeks or 56 days	26 wks, 4 days or 186 days	19 wks, 4 days or 137 days	16 wks & 5d: or 117 days	17 wks or 119 days			

Key:

- Performance on target or better than target 
- Performance not on target but improving towards target 
- Direction of travel better than previous quarter 
- Direction of travel no change from the previous quarter 
- Direction of travel better than the same quarter last year 
- Direction of travel the same as the same quarter last year 

- Performance not on target and getting worse 
- Direction of travel worse than previous quarter 
- Direction of travel worse than the same quarter last year 

Notes on KPI Measurement Definitions**Number of all Households in Temporary Accommodation**

1. This measurement is the number of households that the Council has placed in temporary accommodation (TA) and are resident in TA on the last day of the quarter. Mainly these are households either waiting for a decision on their application for homelessness or accepted as homeless and waiting for suitable permanent accommodation.

Average Weeks in Temporary Accommodation

2. This measurement is the average number of weeks that the households who are in TA have been living in TA.

Number of Households on the Housing Register

3. This measurement is the number of households on the housing register on the last day of the quarter. This list covers all households who have met the criteria to be able to join the register.

Additional Homes Provided

4. This measurement counts the number of all new homes in Rother, allowing for demolitions and change of use to give a net gain. This measurement monitors the delivery of the Corporate Plan outcomes to manage spatial development and the provision of affordable and decent housing stock.
5. As the Core Strategy is now more than five years old, the Local Plan target has been replaced with a Local Housing Need figure based on the standard method (until a new Local Plan is adopted).
6. This indicator has two components: the supply target and the Local Housing Need figure. The supply target is based on the projected delivery for the year, as set out in the April 2022 Housing Land Supply and Trajectory report.

Affordable Homes Built

7. This measurement is the gross number of new affordable homes that have been completed in the district. By completed we mean that the home has been built and handed over from the developer to the provider for occupation by a tenant or purchaser. The home may not yet be occupied. This measurement monitors the delivery of the Corporate Plan outcome for affordable and decent housing stock, specifically the action to support the development of affordable accommodation.
8. The indicator has two targets: the supply target and the Local Plan target. The supply target is based on anticipated delivery from planned sites that we knew about at the time of setting the target.

Number of Council Tax Reduction Claimants

9. This measurement monitors the total number of council tax reduction (CTR) claimants (working age and pensioner) in a receipt of a reduced council tax bill.

Council Tax Collection Rates

10. This measurement monitors the percentage of collected council tax as a percentage of the estimated collectable debt in the year.

Business Rates Collection rates

11. This measurement monitors the percentage of business rates collected of the estimated collectable debt in the year.

Household waste Re-used, Composted and Recycled

12. This measurement is the percentage of collected household waste sent to be re-used, recycled and composted.
13. This is based on data reported by East Sussex County Council (ESCC), which includes all waste collection streams and is reported one quarter in arrears. The target in each quarter varies, depending on the time of year, leading to an average of 52%.

Net Income from All Investment Assets

14. This measurement is forecast annual net income from investments calculated from gross income less expenditure, excluding borrowing and interest payments.
15. The Asset Income total does not include 'community' assets which might also generate an income, such as sports facilities, allotments etc.

Additional Income Generation

16. This measures additional income generation through increased or new fees for discretionary services.

Days to Process Major Housing Development Applications

17. This measurement is the average number of weeks, or calendar days, to determine 'major' planning applications from the date of receipt of the application to the date that the council made a decision. Major planning applications is a reference to major or larger housing developments.

Days to Process Minor Housing Development Planning Applications

18. This measurement is the average number of calendar days to determine 'minor' planning applications. Minor applications is a reference to smaller housing developments. It does not include changes to single homes.