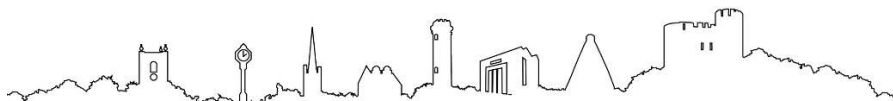


**Meeting of the Children's Services
Select Committee**

**Monday 11th September 2023, at 6pm
In Committee Room 2, The Council House,
Priory Road, Dudley. DY1 1HF**

**Agenda - Public Session
(Meeting open to the public and press)**

1. Apologies for absence
2. To report the appointment of any substitute members serving for this meeting of the Committee.
3. To receive any declarations of interest under the Members' Code of Conduct
4. [To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 19th July 2023 \(Pages 4 to 16\)](#)
5. Public Forum
6. [Children's Services Committee Progress Tracker \(Pages 17 to 19\)](#)
7. [Children's Social Care Complaints, Comments and Compliments Annual Report - 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 \(Pages 20 to 40\)](#)
8. [Quarterly Performance Report 2023/24 – Quarter 1 \(1st April to 30th June, 2023\) \(Pages 41 to 79\)](#)
9. [Report on Child Poverty \(Pages 80 to 90\)](#)



10. [Children's Services Phase Two Redesign \(Pages 91 to 99\)](#)

11. To consider any questions from Members to the Chair where two clear days' notice has been given to the Monitoring Officer (Council Procedure Rule 11.8).

Distribution:

Councillor K Lewis (Chair)

Councillor D Bevan (Vice-Chair)

Councillors C Bayton, R Collins, M Howard, A Hughes, P Lee, S Ridney, D Stanley, C Sullivan and M Webb.

CC – Councillor H Bills (Substitute for Councillor M Howard)

Invitee: Councillor R Buttery – Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Education.

Co-opted Members with voting rights on matters concerning education: -

R May – Archdiocese of Birmingham Education Service Representative

T Reid – Worcester Diocesan Board of Education Representative



Chief Executive

Dated: 1st September 2023

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Minutes of the Children's Services Select Committee

**Wednesday 19th July 2023 at 6.00 pm
At Saltwells Education Development Centre,
Bowling Green Road, Netherton, Dudley**

Present:

Councillor K Lewis (Chair)
Councillor D Bevan (Vice-Chair)
Councillors H Bills, R Collins, J Foster, M Howard, P Lee, S Ridney, D Stanley,
C Sullivan and M Webb; R May (Co-opted Member)

Officers:

C Driscoll (Director of Children's Services), K Graham (Service Director of Children's Social Care), M Palfreyman (Head of Education Outcomes and Inclusion), S Thirlway (Service Director Education, SEND and Family Solutions) and K Buckle (Democratic Services Officer)

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

The Chair welcomed Members and Officers to the meeting and all those present introduced themselves.

2. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors C Bayton and A Hughes.

3. **Appointment of Substitute Members**

Councillors J Foster and H Bills were appointed as substitute Members for Councillors C Bayton and A Hughes respectively for this meeting of the Committee only.

4. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor P Lee declared a pecuniary interest as he was engaged as a Dudley Foster Carer.

Councillor K Lewis declared a pecuniary interest as an Early Years Provider.

5. **Minutes**

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13th March 2023, be confirmed as a correct record, and signed.

6. **Public Forum**

No issues were raised under this agenda item.

7. **Programme of Meetings and Business Items for 2023/2024**

The Committee considered the programme of meetings and items of business for detailed consideration by this Select Committee during 2023/24.

In referring to the suggested items for inclusion Members made the following comments, suggestions, and observations: -

- (a) Councillor S Ridney referred to the item to be considered at the meeting of the Committee in January 2023 regarding the role and responsibilities of the Private Sector Housing Team, suggesting that this should refer to the Local Authorities Housing Section and cover a wider remit including domestic violence and the position in relation to re-housing those suffering from domestic violence.

- (b) Councillor J Foster, referred to a recent report submitted to the Audit and Standards Committee, quoting the comments from the Ofsted report and the decline of the quality of Children's Services, with their responses to challenge being too slow and asked whether the Committee were confident that business included what needed to be scrutinised, and whether it was planned to question the Cabinet Member for Children's Services on not prioritising the needs of vulnerable children.

In response, the Director of Children's Services referred to the detailed reports that were submitted to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on the progress made to date, which had included details of previous Ofsted reports referring to the decline of services from 2018 to 2022. Those reports had referred to the considerable progress made with services during the previous 18 months and improvement work which had resulted in the Department for Education (DfE) expressing that they were confident in the progress made and removed Children's Services out of supervision in January 2023.

Following this there had been the launch of the Family Safeguarding Model during the previous week which was one of the key items covered in the Ofsted report and it was confirmed that Members would continue to receive reports on the improvement work moving forward.

- (c) Councillor D Stanley referred to the item of business on Care Leavers accommodation and the need to have a policy whereby flooring and carpets are not removed from council properties prior to letting them, as some of the floor coverings would be suitable for young people and would save money on replacing them. It was suggested that a representative from Housing Services be requested to advise what was offered to care leavers when considering that item.
- (d) Councillor S Ridney requested that Care Leavers accommodation be considered at an earlier meeting of the Committee, rather than at the end of the municipal year, with a proposal that the Car Free Streets scheme item be considered at the meeting in March 2024.
- (e) R May suggested that the Education report be considered at the November meeting.
- (f) The Chair requested that the offer to Members to attend visits to Family Centres and the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub continue.

- (g) The Chair requested that all Elected Members be offered Safeguarding Training and there followed the request that Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for all Elected Members be updated.

In response the Director of Children's Services confirmed that the requests would be considered further.

- (h) R May suggested that by way of good practice, DBS checks be carried out every three years, whilst confirming that there were no official expiry dates for such checks.

Resolved

- (1) That the report on the programme of meetings and potential items of business for this Committee, be noted.
- (2) That the item entitled 'the role and responsibilities of the Private Sector Housing Team' include the Local Authorities Housing Section, cover a wider remit including domestic violence and the position in relation to re-housing those suffering from domestic violence.
- (3) That Care Leavers Accommodation and issues relating thereto be considered at the meeting to be held on 16th November 2023.
- (4) That the car free streets scheme outlining the advantages and disadvantages be considered at the meeting to be held on 11th March 2024.
- (5) That the Education Report be considered at the meeting held on 16th November 2023.
- (6) That, subject to resolutions (2) to (5) above, the Committee confirm the programme of business as outlined in paragraph 4 of the report submitted, subject to the need for flexibility to reflect any changes that might arise during the municipal year.
- (7) That the Lead for Law and Governance, following consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, be authorised to make all the necessary arrangements to enable this Committee to undertake its programme of scrutiny work during the 2023/24 municipal year.

- (8) That the terms of reference for the Children's Services Select Committee, as set out in the Appendix to the report submitted, be noted.
 - (9) That the Director of Children's Services be requested to:
 - (a) Arrange meetings for Members to the Children's Services Family Centres and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.
 - (b) Provide an offer of Safeguarding training to all Elected Members.
 - (c) Consider the request that Members Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks be updated.
-

8. **Education Report**

Members considered a report of the Director of Children's Services updating the Committee on Education Outcomes.

The Committee were requested to note the contents of the report and highlight any areas where additional scrutiny would be welcomed.

The Head of Education Outcomes and Inclusion presented the report submitted referring to the data contained therein, advising that 2022 was the first-year post covid that secondary school data had been published and the progress for school outcomes was above the national average. Primary school data had not been published, with that data being released during the Autumn Term. There was the intention to examine the secondary school exam data in August and report on that further to Members.

The data in relation to absence and attendance was outlined including that data for those pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

An attendance plan had been rolled out during the previous year and attendance data was in line with the national average.

In relation to school improvement the Local Authority's direct duty was to maintained schools and the Dudley School Improvement Strategy Approach 2022/23 as contained in paragraph 14 to the report submitted was noted.

There was now a 10-point plan for the rag rating system, which provided a clear indication of which schools required intervention. Four secondary schools had required improvement and had subsequently been judged as good and several academies had requested the support of the authority with school improvement work continuing.

Headteacher Liaison/Network Development Meetings were now taking place as a central part of the improvement strategy on a half termly basis.

There was a Graduated Provision Model in mainstream schools for the delivery of education to children with SEND which had been developed, with particular emphasis on mainstream delivery and intervention. The model required mainstream schools to consider from the outset what early support was required, what targeted support was required and then the requirement for special interventions.

Adaptive Teaching training to highlight and raise the importance of meeting individual need had been implemented. This would change the way the curriculum was delivered in mainstream schools.

There was also the development of base provision on mainstream sites for SEND pupils, providing a programme of learning integral to their needs.

From a national perspective a number of schools were running under a licensed deficit, with different connotations emerging from Academy Trusts who were companies in their own right, with some entering into bankruptcy and there was no way to underestimate how schools were currently struggling financially, with the cost-of living-crisis impacting on schools due the soaring energy costs which had increased by 400%.

Ofsted inspections continued in line with the expected schedule and there had been 20 inspections since the start of the academic year. Maintained schools continued to perform well and over the preceding six months. 84% of maintained primary school were now good or outstanding along with 100% of secondary and special schools.

Where concerns were raised about inspections or performance in terms of academy schools, although the Authority had little jurisdiction over their improvement journey concerns were still raised with the DfE.

The Ofsted Update in April 2023 in relation to all school settings as contained in the report submitted were referred to.

It was clarified that in relation to the Ofsted update for September 2022 to April 2023, the nine graded inspections related to those schools that had been inspected previously, the 11 ungraded were those schools that had been inspected for the first time.

It was noted that post covid behaviour had impacted on schools by non-compliance for those pupils who were disadvantaged, poverty aspirations for the future and the cost-of-living crisis.

Although there was a national problem with school attendance, Dudley did perform better than the national average in school attendance data.

There were mental health issues resulting from the constraints during covid and continuing to live with the legacy of covid and there still remained parents who did not feel safe sending their children to school.

Arising from the presentation of the report submitted, Members raised questions and responses were provided by Officers as follows: -

(a) R May referred to the number of exclusions from Academy Trusts.

The Head of Education Outcomes and Inclusion confirmed that conversations would continue with the DfE and Academy Trusts in relation to any exclusions.

The report would be amended in so far as the status of St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Stourbridge, was concerned as this formed part of a Multi Academy Trust.

(b) The Vice-Chair referred to the fragility of education, which remained reliant upon the good will of staff members to support parents and families with covid being the catalyst for many problems, tearing families apart and children witnessing this. Pupils were being collected by school minibuses to attend their GCSE examinations when failing to attend.

(c) Councillor S Ridney referred to the continuing financial pressures in schools, with the majority of financial budgets utilised to meet staff salaries. There were many children with Special Educational Needs and learning difficulties that had resulted from them not being in school for a two year period, with those children unable to cope at school and form friendships. Added to this were financial pressures

with school budgets being further impacted upon by the increases in salaries rising from those budgeted at 3% to a further 3.5%. There continued the need to monitor the situation closely although attendance figures were increasing, with school readiness remaining problematic.

- (d) The Vice-Chair advised that pupils were unable to converse with teachers in school and had behavioural problems that parents were unable to deal with and were looking for support from schools and teachers as to how to deal with such behaviour.
- (e) Councillor H Bills recognised that staffing costs had long been an issue and referred to the fact that Halesowen's Family Centre was in Lye and was a distance from those residents in the Halesowen North area of the Borough.
- (f) Councillor J Foster congratulated Brockmoor Primary School's grading escalating to good following improvements.

The Director of Children's Services referred to the development of localised provision within maintained schools which had translated into better Ofsted judgments which had been greatly assisted by the work of the Head of Education and Inclusion.

- (g) R May enquired whether Dudley used any additional resources to improve schools.

The Head of Education and Inclusion referred to his small team utilising a five-point action plan to assist with bringing additional support to schools working in collaboration with those schools, making a bespoke offer to the schools needs with support being offered by other schools should the need arise.

Resolved

That the contents of the report on Education Outcomes, be noted.

9. **Family Safeguarding Update**

A report of the Director of Children's Services was submitted providing an update on the progress with the implementation of the Family Safeguarding Model.

The Service Director Children's Social Care presented the report submitted advising that the Family Safeguarding Model was a practice adopted by Hertfordshire County Council with the Model evidencing that children's needs were better met and on a more expedient basis.

The DfE were keen to see authorities work within the method the Model provided.

Dudley was the 19th Authority to adopt the Model of working and had acquired funding to do so, with public health funding the capacity to employ the adult workers to provide that support to children and families and adopt the Family Safeguarding approach across all family safeguarding.

Hertfordshire County Council had visited Dudley on 25th June 2023 to conduct an up-to-date health check in relation to the launch of the new model of working and confirmed that they were positive with Dudley's approach.

Dudley had attended a Safeguarding conference the previous week, representatives of which were very complimentary of the multi-disciplinary team working being conducted by Dudley, to reduce the number of children in need of protection and the number of children in need of becoming looked after.

The Dudley Family Safeguarding Partnership Charter and the commitment of those who were signed up to the Charter was referred to and the partners that had signed up to the Charter included Dudley Integrated Health and Care, Dudley Council for Voluntary Services, the Black Country Integrated Care Board, the Probation Service, Dudley Safeguarding People Partnership, West Midlands Police, Black Country Women's Aid and Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

All staff had met at the Council's Corbyn Road facility for both inductions and as an introduction of all staff to each other which also included staff from the Probation Service, and it was noted that no other Authority had gone live with the Family Safeguarding Model with adult workers in post apart from Dudley.

Advanced work was underway with partners to determine the impact of working in new ways had on communities and although it was known that Hertfordshire Country Council had conducted work retrospectively, Dudley wanted to articulate as a partnership as the work happened and how that work impacted on communities.

The inspirational front door Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) would include Family Health Conferences whilst still focusing on early help from Family Hubs.

Care experienced young adults had contributed to the re-design of the service, as the Family Safeguarding Model of service would include provision for those moving from care into permanence with adult services being offered.

Staff numbers were reported upon including those Advanced Practitioners and Social Workers who had been appointed and it was noted that staff would meet to share experiences of working.

Care experienced young people had also been involved in interviews and there was the commitment to involve them in all interviews for staff within Children's Services in the future.

Saturday sessions had taken place with young people which included a combination of activities including an escape room with these providing an opportunity to receive feedback from those present. Staff had expressed their appreciation for the sessions which in their words were really helpful.

The staff consultation on the redesign had closed on 24th May 2023 and overall, the staff were supportive of the changes with no major challenges to the final structure. The final interviews had been conducted on the day of the meeting.

The DfE had agreed to fund some multi-agency system changes and they had commented positively on the redesign work, which was testament to Dudley's delivery and conviction.

Dudley had purchased, configured, and tested the 'Workbook' plug-in for the Liquid Logic Children System with system training being provided, the electronic recording system had been shared with a national team and was recognised nationally as a good approach to recording.

A Family Safeguarding Scorecard had been developed. Data was baselined at the end of March 2023, and this was the position against which impact would be measured. Work was to be conducted with Birmingham University's PhD student support to gather data and measure impact.

In relation to Family Safeguarding Scorecard teams, the data would be set against a child determining permanency, reducing Court proceedings/attendance.

Arising from the presentation of the report submitted, Members asked questions and Officers responded as follows: -

- (a) Councillor D Stanley referred to the need for accountability and future reports to be submitted to the Committee on improvements following the redesign.

The Director of Children's Services referred to the fact that the Family Safeguarding model of working went live on 10th July 2023, and it was therefore too soon to say what difference the service changes had made, however assurances were provided that the scorecard referred to above would be shared with the Committee on a regular basis.

- (b) Councillor P Lee enquired about training for Foster Carers.

The Service Director Children's Social Care stated that much work was being conducted through Fostering Support groups and other fostering networks.

- (c) Councillor S Ridney asked how the difference to children and young people would be evidenced.

The Service Director Children's Social Care reported that it should be evidenced by the reduction in the number of children and young people requiring social work intervention.

The Director of Children's Services referred to the first formal national evaluation by the DfE which evidenced that every authority that had implemented the model had seen a significant reduction in children in care and as everyone was aware the outcomes for children in care were worse than those in the general population, therefore avoiding taking children into care provides better outcomes for children and young people and reduces the need for Child Protection Plans.

Family Safeguarding also provided the opportunity to work with those parents who were struggling in a non-stigmatised method.

It was noted that Elected Members could still make referrals into the service, however there was the desire to work with the community and make community services the most obvious form of support with Family Hubs providing a pivotal role for the support and services.

The Director of Children's Services advised that Halesowen Library were already providing family outreach work.

- (d) R May expressed his appreciation for the passion and confidence of Officers and stated that he hoped the new model would assist with the retention of staff.

The Service Director Children's Social Care advised that one of the huge benefits of the Family Safeguarding Model was the retention of social workers and adult workers.

- (e) R May referred to the two-year funding, requesting assurance that the funding would not be withdrawn.

The Director of Children's Services stated that she was convinced based on evidence that the new model would work and when looking at the resource spent on expensive residential placements even a small reduction in the number of children in care would reduce that resource. There was evidence to support reductions in accident and emergency attendances for mental health services reducing pressure from public services, that were under pressure, with that money saved from children in care being invested further in children's services in the future.

- (f) The Chair referred to Phase II of the new model and the timing of implementation.

The Director of Children's Services in referring to Phase II advised that this would include the area of the work of the Service Director of Education, SEND and Family Solutions, with an open and transparent consultation with all staff being launched on 5th September 2023.

The Director also confirmed that every authority who had adopted the Hertfordshire Family Safeguarding Model had improved their Ofsted grade at their following inspection, as the model has positively impacted on outcomes for children, with Hertfordshire Country Council having an outstanding Ofsted grade.

Resolved

That the information contained in the report submitted on the Family Safeguarding update, be noted.

10. **Questions from Members to the Chair under (Council Procedure Rule 11.8)**

There were no questions to the Chair pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 11.8.

The meeting ended at 7.30pm

CHAIR

Children's Services Select Committee

Progress Tracker

Subject (Date of Meeting)	Recommendation/action	Responsible Officer/Area	Status/Notes
(19 th June 2023) Programme of Meetings and Business Items for 2023/2024	Minute No. 7 Resolution 9(a) – Meetings to be arranged for Members to the Children's Services Family Centres and the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub	Director of Children's Services	Ongoing
	Minute No. 7 Resolution 9(b) – An offer of Safeguarding Training to all Elected Members	Director of Children's Services	Link to level 1 'Child Abuse and Neglect Awareness training emailed to Members on 15/08/2023
	Minute No. 7 Resolution 9(c) – Consider the request that Members DBS checks be updated	Director of Children's Services	Enquiries of the Council's Human Resources Section are ongoing



Future Business 2023/24

<u>Date of Meeting</u>	<u>Work Programme</u>	<u>Responsible Officer/Area</u>	<u>Notes</u>
16th November 2023			
	Integrated Early Years, Family Hubs, and Start of Life in Dudley	Director of Children's Services	
	Care Leavers Accommodation and issues relating thereto.	Director of Children's Services	
	Dudley Children's Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report	The Independent Children's Safeguarding Scrutineer	
	Education Report	Director of Children's Services	

18th January 2024	Serious Violence Strategy	Director of Public Health	
	The Role and responsibilities of the Public Sector Housing Team: what powers of enforcement they have at their disposal and an understanding of how they put the child at the centre of the work they undertake.	Director of Housing and Communities.	
	Medium Term Financial Strategy	Director of Finance and Legal	
11th March, 2024	Dudley Virtual School	Director of Children's Services	
	Annual Report 2023/2024 and potential items of business for 2024/2025	Lead for Law and Governance	
	Ideas and Initiatives Dudley could utilise to develop healthy High Streets and Car Free Streets	Director of Public Health	
	Education Report	Director of Children's Services	

Children's Services Select Committee - 11th September 2023

Report of the Director of Children's Services

Children's Social Care Complaints, Comments and Compliments Annual Report – 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023

Purpose of report

1. Children Services Complaints Annual report for the period 1st April 22 to 31st March 23

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that: -

Members note and comment on the contents of the report and approve the report for public publication in line with statutory requirements.

Background

3. Every Local Authority with a responsibility for Social Care Services is required to provide an annual report in relation to the operation of the complaints and representations procedures.

The annual report provides information relating to all statutory and corporate complaints received in respect of Children's Services during the period 1st April 22 to 31st March 23.

The statutory process is a three-stage process. For a complaint to be registered under this process certain criteria must be met as set out in statutory guidance

Corporate complaints are those that fall outside of the statutory process. This is where the complainant does not meet the requirements to be considered under the statutory process. These cases are registered and managed under the two-stage corporate process.

Additionally, some contacts are registered as comments. This is where someone may wish to raise an issue without it being a request to formally register a complaint.

Finance

4. There are no direct financial implications arising from the contents of this report.

Law

5. The procedures for Children's complaints, are determined by legislation, predominantly involving the: -
 - Children Act 1989, Representations Procedures (England) Regulations 2006
 - The Children and Adoption Act 2002 and Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000.

Risk Management

6. This report has no direct implications for the council in relation to Risk Management

Equality Impact

7. This report has no direct implications for the Council's commitment to equality and diversity. The complaints policy is applied fairly and equitably to all users.
8. This report has no direct implications for the Council's commitment to equality and diversity. The complaints policy is applied fairly and equitably to all users.
9. This report has no impact on children and young people

Human Resources/Organisational Development

10. There are no direct Human Recourses/Organisational Development implications arising from this report.

Commercial/Procurement

11. There are no commercial or procurement implications that require consideration.

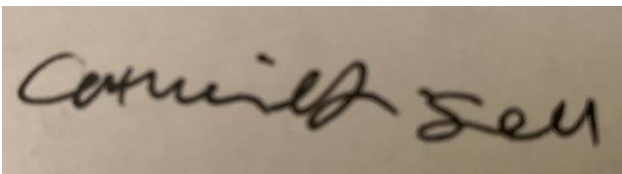
Environment/Climate Change

12. There are no environment/climate change implications that require consideration.

Council Priorities and Projects

13. There are no council priorities and project implications that require consideration.

14. This report has no direct implications on Council and Borough activity and projects.

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature appears to be "Council 504" written in a cursive style.

Director Children's Services

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Children Services Complaints, Comments and Compliments 1st
April 22 to 31st March 23

<https://www.dudley.gov.uk/residents/care-and-health/children-and-family-care/childrens-social-care-compliments-comments-and-complaints/>

Children's Services Complaints, Comments and Compliments

Directorate of Childrens

Annual Report

1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023

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ASS = Assessment Team

CM Pod = Care Management

CIC = Children in Care

EDT = Emergency Duty Team

FAST = Intervention and Prevention Team

ART = Adolescent Response Team

EHCP= Education Health Care Plan

CART= Children Adolescent Resource Team

MASH: Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub

1. PURPOSE

Every Local Authority with a responsibility for Social Care Services is required to provide an annual report into the operation of the complaints and representations procedures.

This report provides information relating to all compliments, statutory and corporate complaints received in respect of Children's Services during the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

2. OVERVIEW OF COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The procedures for Children's complaints are determined by legislation, predominantly involving the: -

- Children Act 1989, Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006.
- The Children & Adoption Act 2002 and Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000.

However, some complaints fall outside the statutory process. This is where the complainant does not meet the requirements to be considered under the statutory process. In these cases, the complaint is dealt with under the two-stage corporate complaint process.

All complaints received are included in this report.

All Children who wish to make a complaint are offered the services of an independent advocate. This is provided by Barnardo's, Telephone 01384 411722, Free phone 0800 1577913, email dudleyadvocacy@barnardos.org.uk. Staff from the Social Care Complaints Team can and do assist children and young people where necessary to ensure details of their complaint are fully obtained and registered.

The Council's website provides full information regarding how to make a complaint. There is also the facility to register a complaint via the website.

Please see following links to Social Care Complaints and Compliments web pages.

Statutory: <http://www.dudley.gov.uk/resident/care-health/children-and-family-care/complaints-and-compliments/>

Corporate: www.dudley.gov.uk/council-community/compliments-comments-complaints

The three stages of the statutory process can be summarised as follows

<p>Stage 1 - Local Resolution: The complaint is investigated by the relevant manager / team. This is overwhelmingly the Stage at which the majority of all complaints are resolved.</p>
--

Stage 2 – Formal Investigation: This is where the complaint has not been resolved at Stage 1 and the complainant has decided that they want an independent investigation into the complaint.

Stage 3 – Panel: Where Stage 2 of the complaint's procedure has been concluded and the complainant is still dissatisfied, they can request further consideration of the complaint by a Review Panel. Generally, the Review Panel should not reinvestigate the complaints, nor should it consider any substantively new complaints that have not been first considered at Stage 2.

Ombudsman: Once the three-stage statutory process has been exhausted a complainant has the right to take their complaint to the Ombudsman.

The Social Care Complaints Team

The Social Care Complaints Team is part of the Access & Prevention within the Adults Directorate. The team are responsible for the day-to-day operation and management of all complaints received for Children's Services.

A substantial proportion of the complaints received can reasonably be described as complex, requiring significant time and effort from the area of service involved.

The Complaints Team work in partnership with Children's Services managers and offer support and guidance to try to find a resolution that is both appropriate and will provide a satisfactory resolution to the complainant.

The Social Care Complaints Team can be contacted for advice and information regarding making a Complaint, Compliment or Comment on 01384 814724 / 812417 or by email at complaints.socialcare@dudley.gov.uk or in writing to The Social Care Complaints Team, 3-5 St James's Road, Dudley, DY1 1HZ

3. HEADLINES

The following information was extracted from the complaints data base on the week ending 2nd June 2022.

The key data for 2022/23 can be summarised as follows:

There was again a decrease in the total number of compliments received for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023. A total of **102** compliments were received over 28 teams compared to **132** for the same period the previous year.

All relevant complaint responses that have been upheld or partially upheld continue to be shared with the Centre for Professional Practice who, where applicable, ensure that cases can be analysed, and any learning identified taken forward.

National Ombudsman data and weekly reports are shared weekly with a range of staff who may be able to identify good practice that can be incorporated into the work of the service.

The total number of statutory and corporate complaints received was **234**. This is less than the **271** received during 2021/22 and represents a **14%** overall decrease

It should be noted that Children's Services received **19448** contacts during 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023, meaning that less than 1.2% of all contacts result in a complaint being raised. Furthermore, it should be noted only 0.37% of all contacts result in a complaint being upheld or partially upheld.

The **234** complaints are broken down as follows:

8 statutory complaints (**27 cases** received 2021/22)

226 corporate complaints (**8% 20 cases**, decrease on 2021/22 when **244** were received)

Therefore, the overall number of complaints has decreased.

The analysis of complaints to ensure they are managed under the correct procedure continues in what is a complex area. The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman has published a further paper in terms of how to treat Children Services complaints and this, in conjunction with other guidance, will be used in this area of work.

Out of a total of **8** statutory complaints received **2**, were upheld, **25%** and **4** were partially upheld **44%**. This compares to a total of **27** statutory complaints received for the period 1st April 2021 to the 31st March 2022 of which **4** were upheld, **15%** and **6** were partially upheld, **22%**.

Therefore, there has been a decrease in the number of statutory complaints upheld and partially upheld

Out of a total of **226** corporate complaints received **69** were upheld **31%** and **48** were partially upheld **21%**. This compares to a total of **244** corporate complaints received for the period 1st April 2021 to the 31st March 2022 of which **36** were upheld, **15%** and **54** were partially upheld, **22%**.

Therefore, there has been an increase in the number of corporate complaints upheld and reduction in those partially upheld.

Additionally, we have received **7** stage two corporate complaints, broken down as follows

- 2 Assessment Team
- 2 CIC Team

- 1 Care Management
 - 1 Fostering Team
 - 1 SEN Team
- Of these 7 cases only **1** case was upheld

Of the **234** statutory and corporate complaints received **4** of these were from young people which is a reduction from **7** the previous year.

The three main issues arising across all complaints concerned quality of service-support, communication-lack and staff behavior and decision. This is broadly the same as the main reasons for complaints during 2021/22.

22 comments were received.

There has been **1** complaint which has progressed to a stage three review panel.

A total of **9** cases proceeded to the Ombudsman. This compares to **6** cases in 2021/2022. The Ombudsman investigations were regarding the following:

- 1 case Assessment Team 1 – ongoing
- 5 cases in relation to SEND and EHCP - 5 Upheld
- 1 CIC Team 1 - ongoing
- 1 Educational Psychology – LGO informed would not investigate
- 1 Fostering Team in relation to overpaid foster care payments - Upheld

There were no public reports issued against the Local Authority. The Ombudsman may issue a public report if it is decided that it is in the public interest to highlight the issues it has raised.

25% of statutory complaints received a response within 10 working days. This is a reduction on the **44%** for 2021/22. Overall, **90%** of statutory complaints received a response within 20 working days.

48% of corporate complaints received a response within 20 working days. This is a decrease on the 2021/22 performance when **58%** were responded to within 20 working days.

Therefore overall, **49%** of all statutory and corporate complaints were responded to within 20 working days compared to **56%** for the previous year.

Services need to work further to improve response times.

The Complaints Team continues to provide regular reminders and offers support where applicable to ensure as far as possible responses are provided within timescale. Additionally, trackers are produced on a regular basis to highlight to Senior Manager cases either coming up to the response deadline or those that have exceeded it.

Where cases have exceeded timescales, managers are now required to provide and explanation for the delay. The main reasons for the delay in providing responses were:

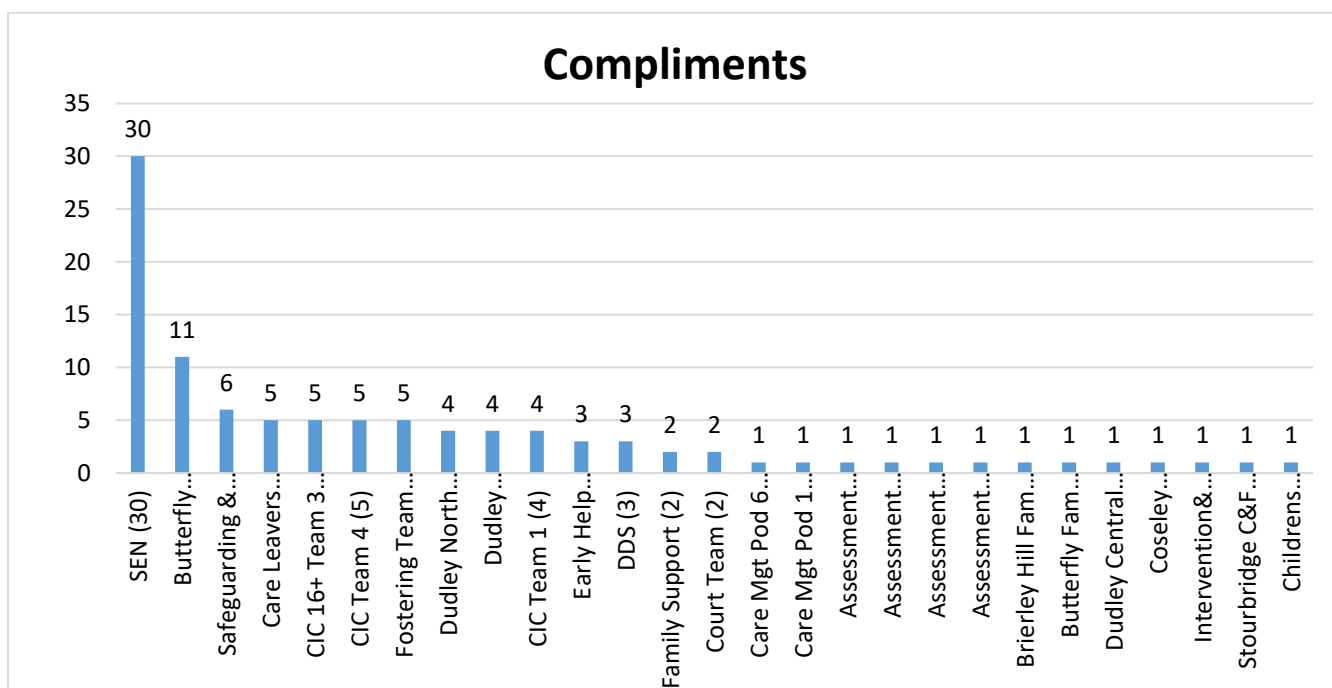
- Staff Absence - 32% (38 cases) of all overdue cases were as a result of this reason
- Complex Cases - 38% (45 cases) of all overdue cases were as a result of this reason.

Other work pressures include, safeguarding, child protection, court hearings

Informal comments: This is where someone may wish to raise an issue without it being a request to formally register a complaint. We recorded **22** such comments this year. Compared to **13** for the period 2021/22 which is an increase of **9 (69%)**.

4. COMPLIMENTS:

The total number of compliments received for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 was **102** compliments divided over 28 teams. This compares to **160** for the same period in the previous year. Compliments originate from internal and external sources. Staff are actively encouraged to pass on compliments for registration as they can also be a useful tool for learning, good practice and for staff morale.



The SEND service received the most compliments (**30**) followed by The Butterfly Centre (**11**)

5. EXAMPLES OF COMPLIMENTS

Below are just a selection of compliments received

Assessment Team 1

Words cannot express my gratitude since you came into our lives you have gone above and beyond bringing our family together when hope was all but lost our shining star giving us hope to believe and that hard work can make it happen.

Assessment Team 3

XX has made a huge difference to XX life supporting our family unit for this we are forever grateful.

CART Adolescent Team

What an amazing job and service the team are doing with XX thank you.

Children Always First

XX is the best social worker that XX has ever had thank you for being proactive and being approachable.

CIC (16plus) Team

XX Solicitor and Judge praised the social worker for hard work, help and assistance in this matter.

Dudley North Family Centre

Don't know how to say or even how to say it knowing you have been there for us has made a massive impact fighting our corner and making a difference your magic thank you.

Fostering Team

Since XX involvement in our family things have actually got better, XX arranges meetings with school, support, professionals then chases people up, phones us when she says she will, we were very lucky to have her and will be missed.

Care Leavers Team

XX has supported three long term placements she has been a consistent figure in their lives always willing to help and always at the end of the phone supporting each as an individual when required thank you for all the hard work and support given to each child/adult.

Youth & Community

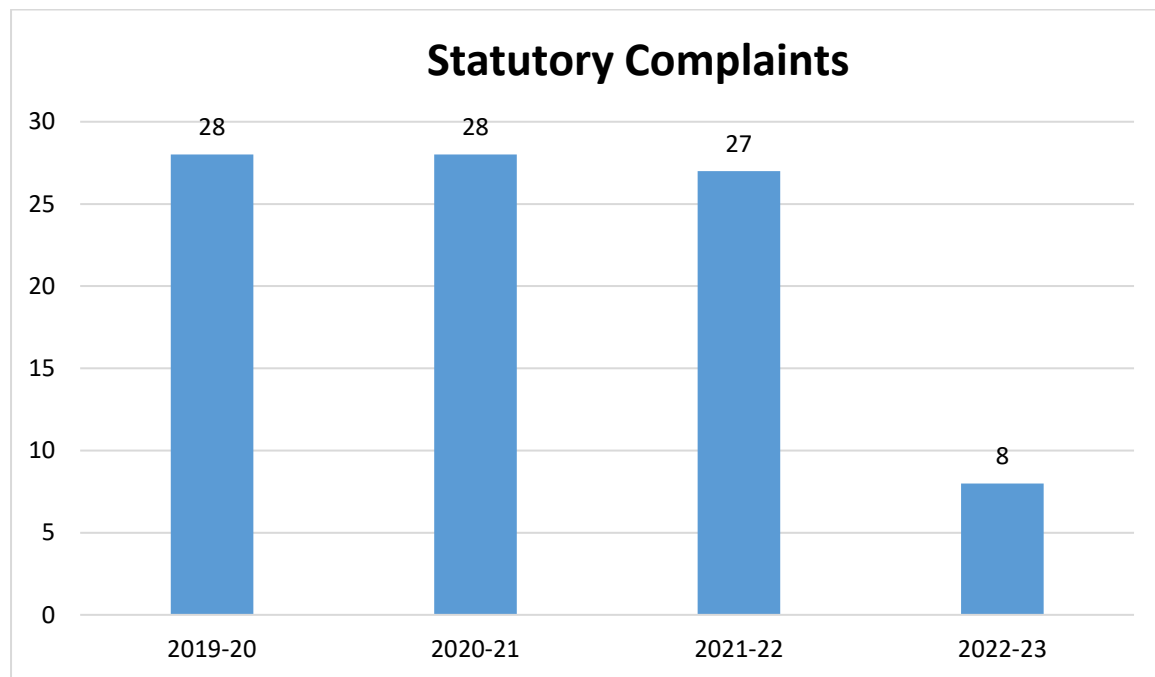
We appreciate everything you have done for XX at school I'd highly recommended you to anyone who needs support always helpful extremely professional and down to earth making XX feel safe and comfortable.

Butterfly Family Centre

XX thanking XX for help and support given at a time of need.

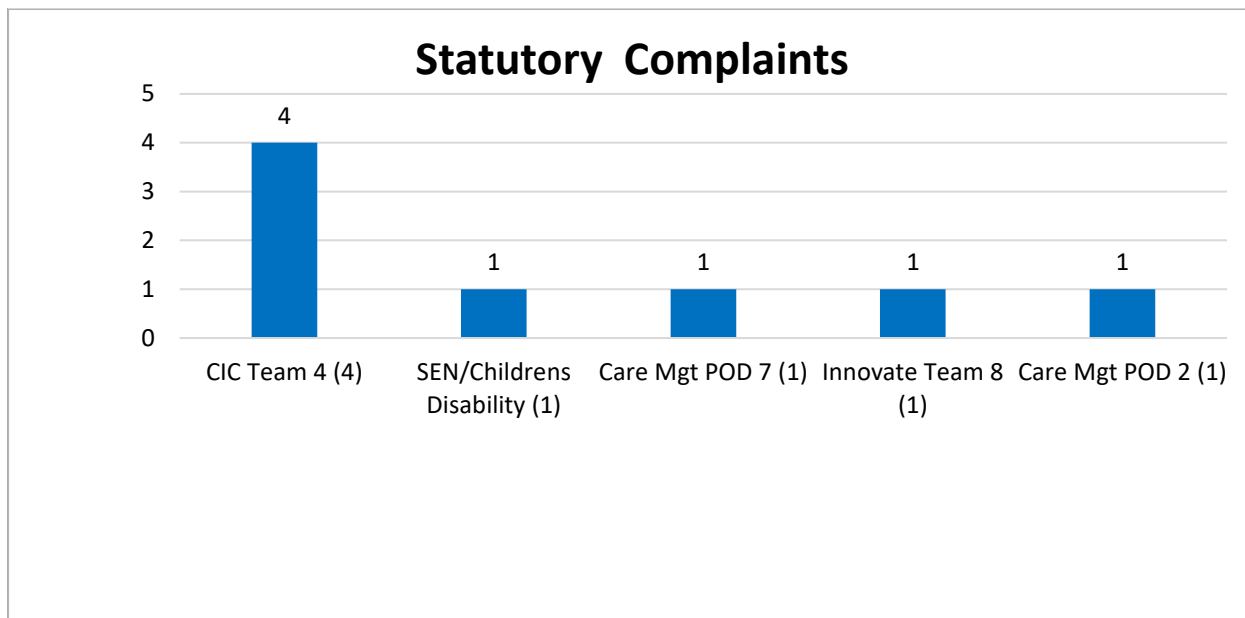
6. STATUTORY COMPLAINT ACTIVITY/SERVICE AREAS

The chart below provides a comparison with regards to the number of **statutory** Children's Services complaints registered over the last 4 years. The second chart shows the service areas against which complaints were registered during 2022/2023.

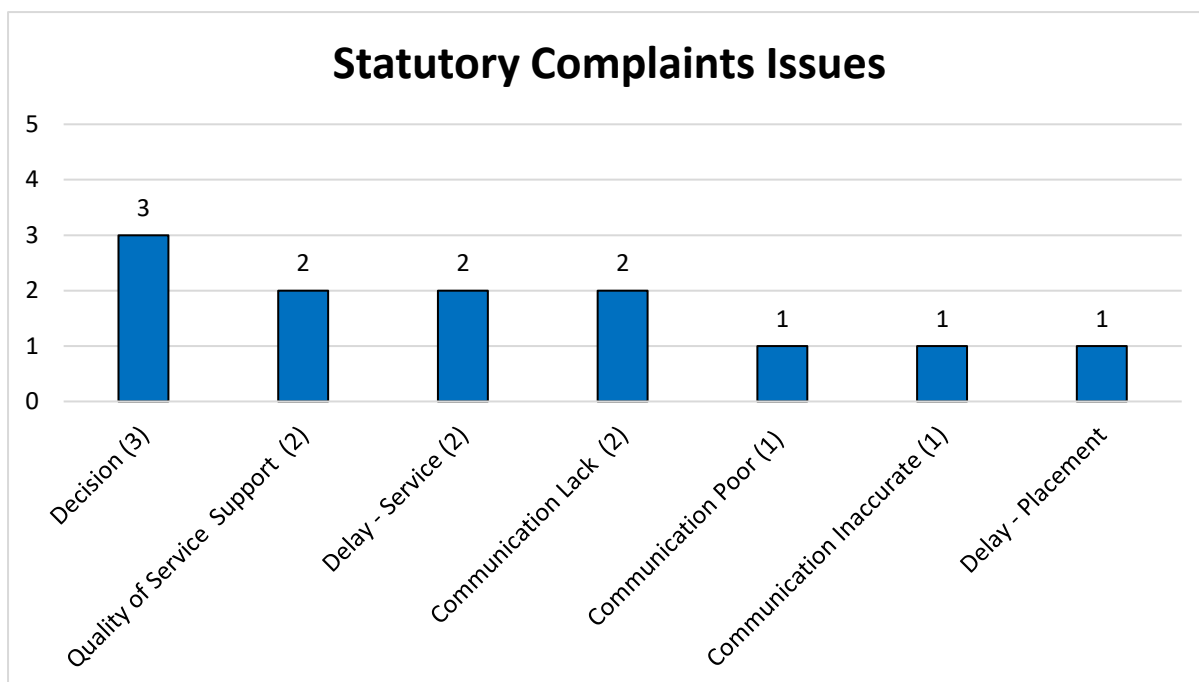


Breakdown of Service areas receiving statutory complaints 2022/23:

The **8** statutory complaints received, during 2022/23 were in respect of the following service areas.



Areas of Complaint: The following chart shows the most common types of complaint issues received for statutory complaints. There have been **12** issues over **7** areas.

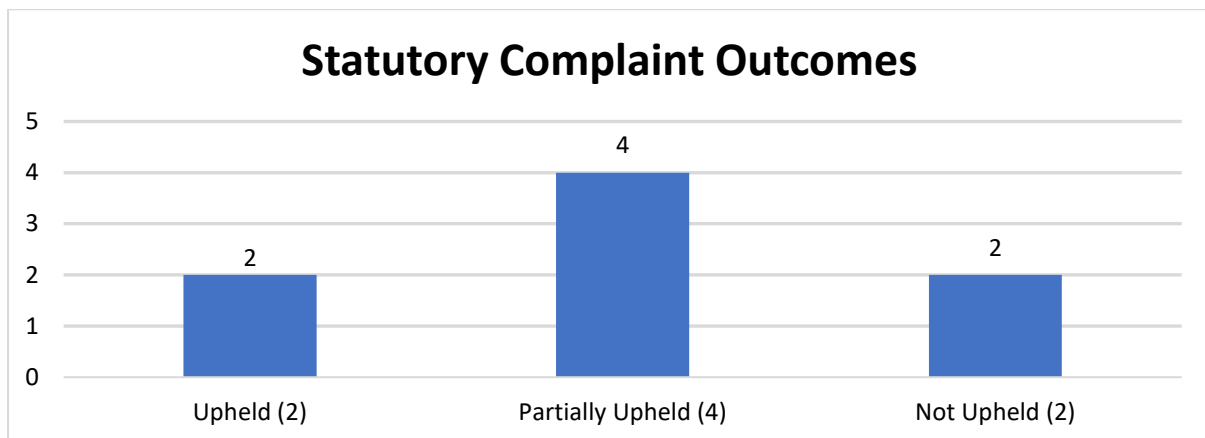


The largest number of issues recorded, were in respect of decision **3**, followed jointly by, Quality of Service Support Delay/Service and Communication/Lack **2**.

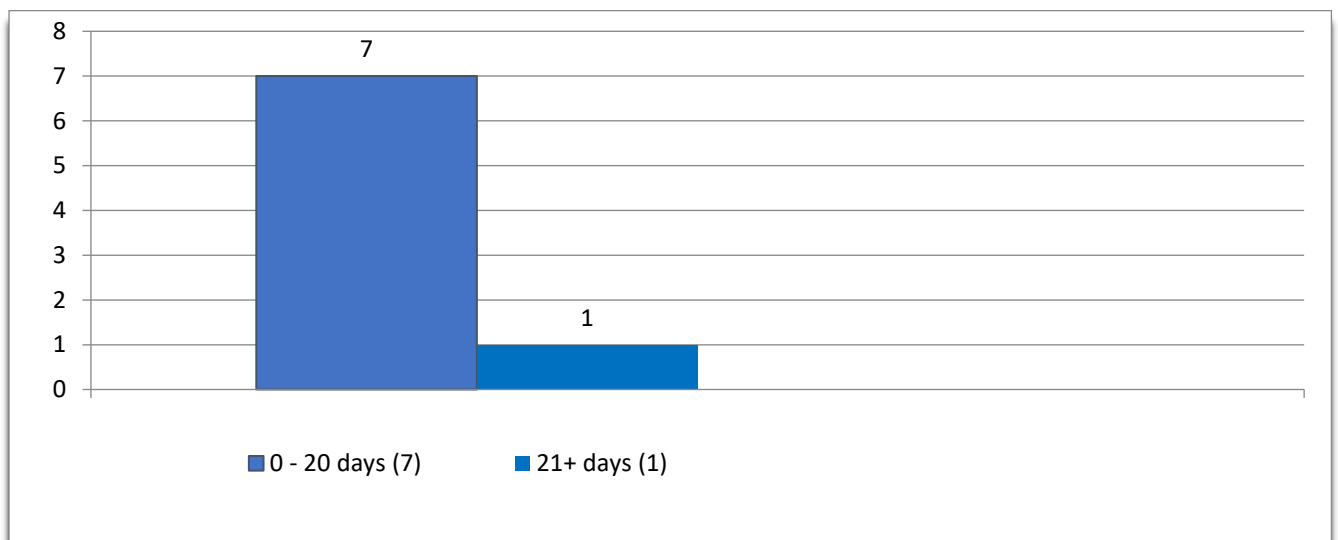
A further analysis of the top three most common areas of statutory complaints has shown that **25%** of complaints were upheld and they were in relation to quality-of-service support, communication and delay.

7. STATUTORY COMPLAINTS OUTCOMES: -

The chart below indicates that for the year 2022-2023, **6 (75%) of all statutory complaints** were upheld or partially upheld compared to **10 (37%)** in 2021/22. This indicates that there has been a significant increase in the number of complaints received, but the number of complaints upheld and partially upheld has decreased.



8. STATUTORY COMPLAINT RESOLUTION TIMESCALES: The chart below shows how quickly complaints were responded to.

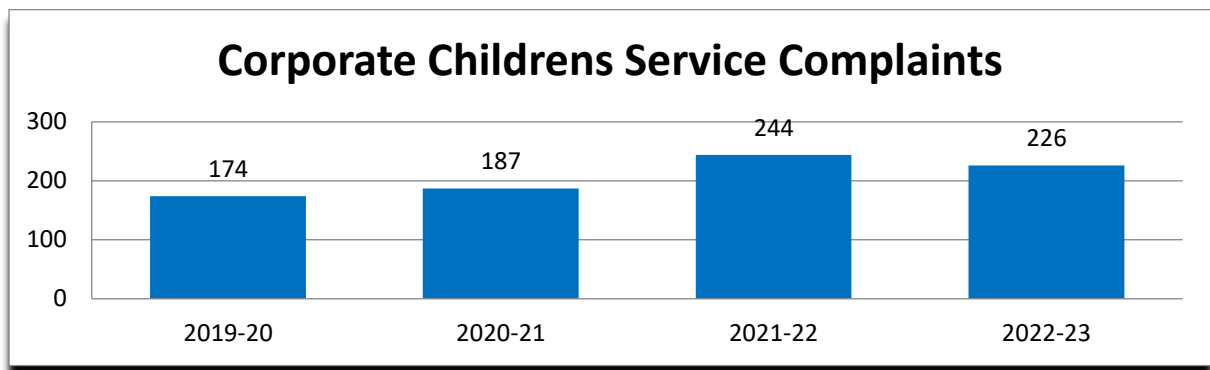


Timescales The statutory timescale for responding to a complaint is 10 working days which can be extended for a further 10 working days.

During 2022/23, **25%** of statutory complaints received a response within the statutory 10 working day timescales. A total of **90%** received a response within 20 working days. This compares to **44%** being responded to within 10 working days in 2021/2022 with a total of **57%** receiving a response within 20 working days.

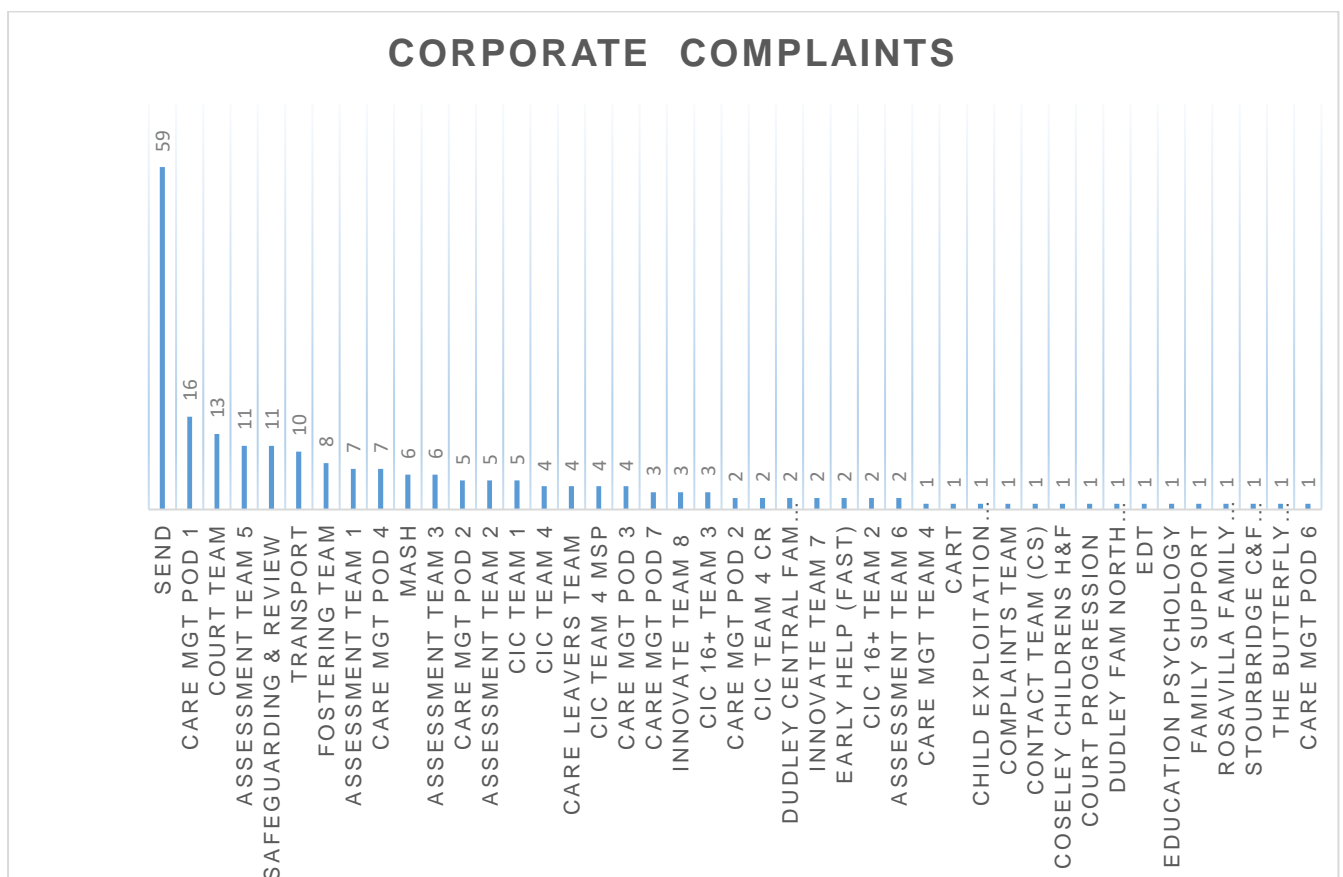
9. CORPORATE COMPLAINT ACTIVITY /SERVICE AREAS

The chart below provides a comparison with regards to the number of **corporate** Children’s Services complaints registered over the last 4 years. The second chart shows the service areas against which corporate complaints were registered during 2022/2023.

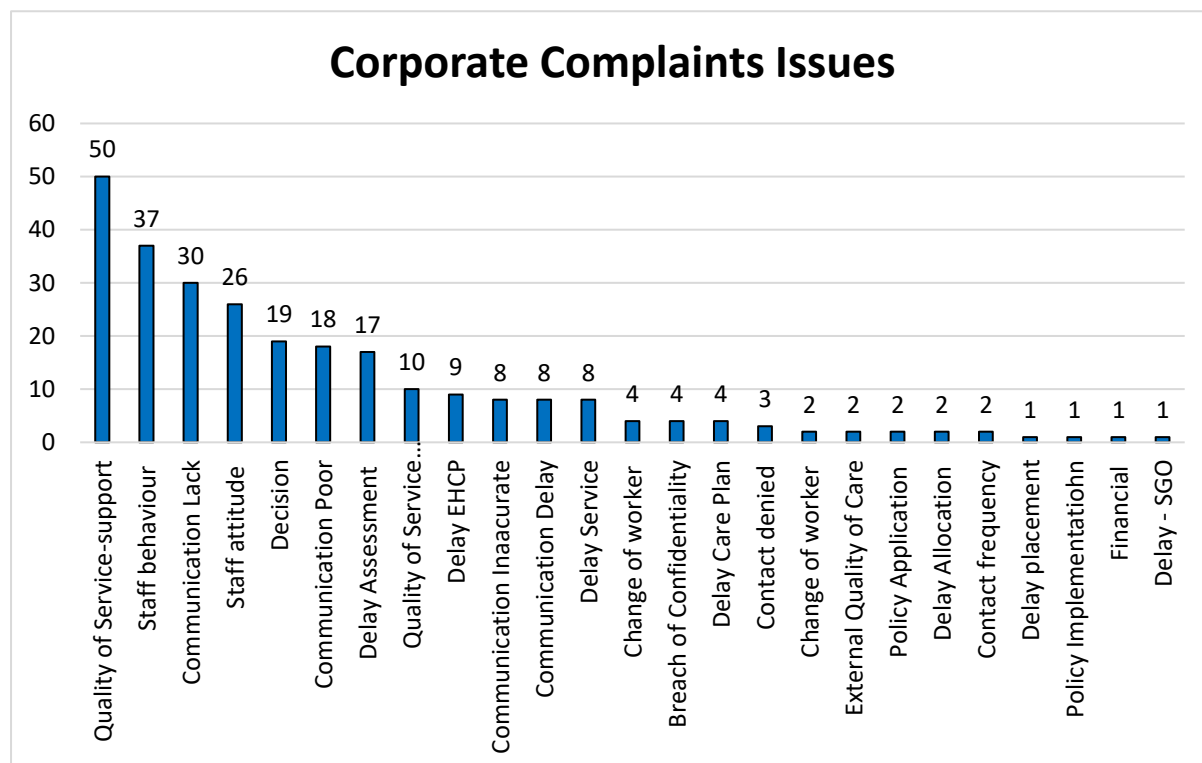


Breakdown of Service areas receiving corporate complaints 2022/23

The **226** corporate complaints received over 44 separate service areas, during 2022/23.



Areas of Complaint: The chart below shows the most common types of complaint issues received for corporate complaints. There have been **270** issues over **25** areas.

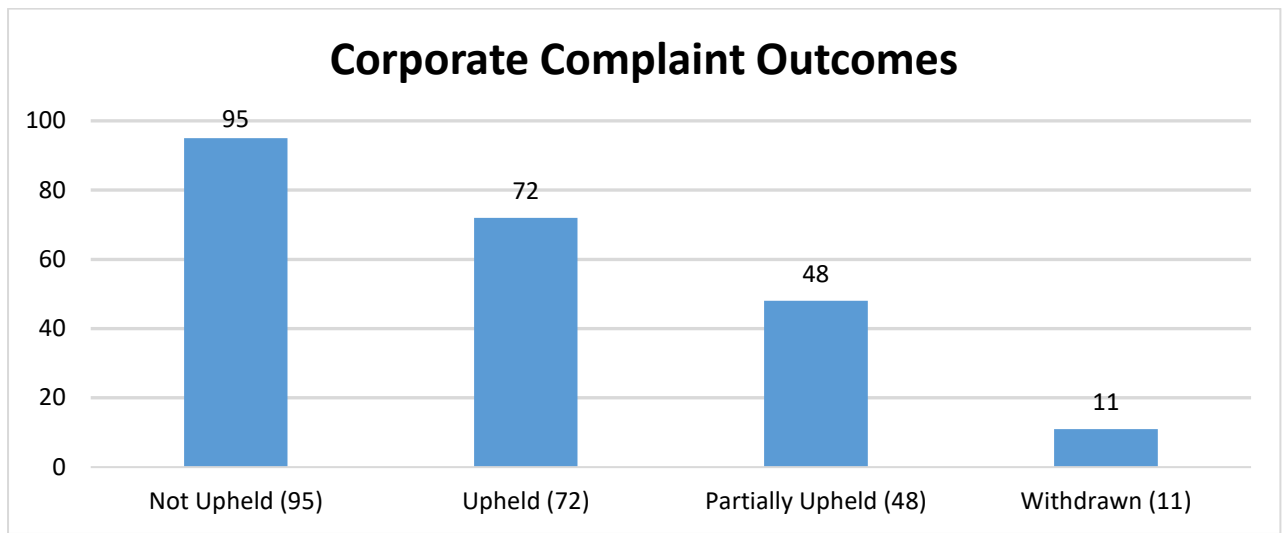


The largest number of issues recorded, were in respect of Quality of Service-support **50**, followed by **37** Staff Behavior, **30** Communication-lack

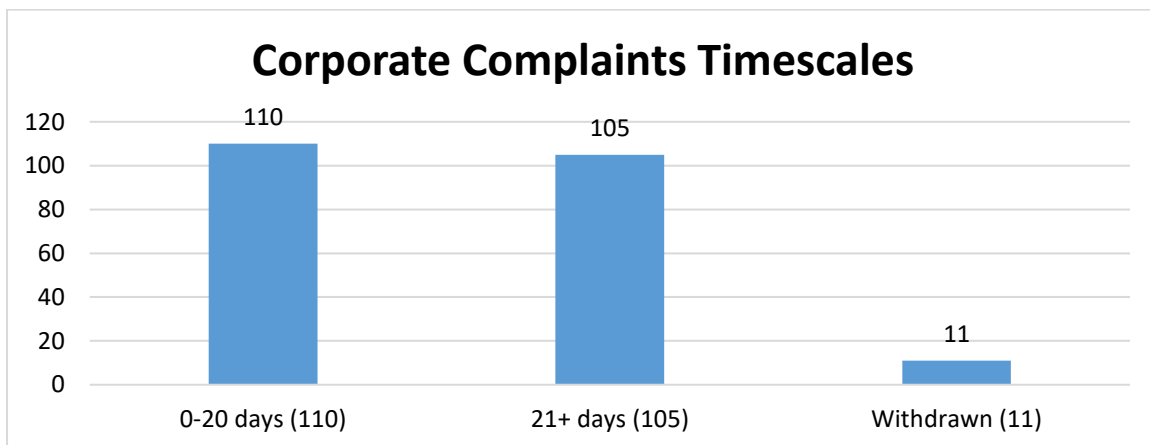
A further analysis of the top three most common areas of corporate complaints has shown that, **28%**, of all complaints regarding quality of service-support, staff behavior and communication-lack were upheld.

10. CORPORATE COMPLAINT OUTCOMES

The chart below indicates that the majority of corporate complaints for the year 2022/23 were not upheld **95 (42%)** compared to **134 (55%)** in 2021/22. This shows that overall, the number of corporate complaints not upheld has decreased.



11. CORPORATE COMPLAINT RESOLUTION TIMESCALES: The chart below shows how quickly corporate complaints were responded to.



During 2022/23, **42%** of corporate complaints received a response within the required 20 working day timescales. This compares to **58%** being responded to within 20 working days in 2021/2022.

Therefore, there has been a decrease in the performance of response times for corporate complaints.

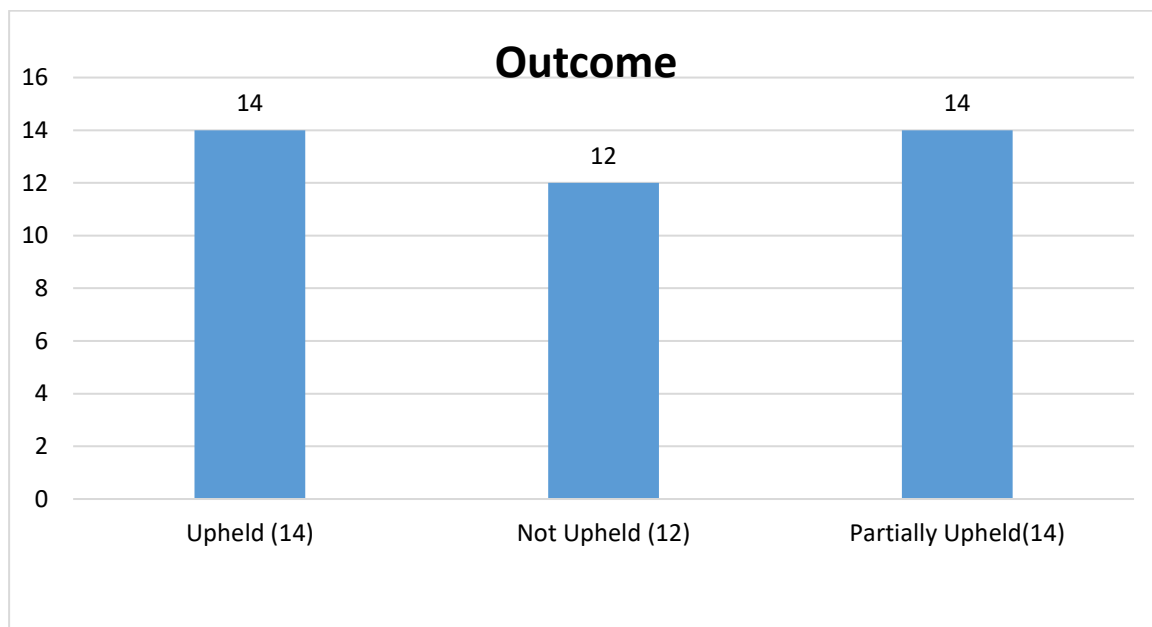
12. COMMENTS

In the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023, **22** comments were received compared to **13** for the period April 2021 to March 2022. A comment is where someone may wish to raise an issue without it being registered as a formal complaint, e.g. query concerning ongoing contact. Comments received by the Complaints Team are recorded, acknowledged and then forwarded to the relevant Team Manager for a response. Comments are monitored in the same way to ensure that a response is provided.

13.SEND

In the period 1st April 22 to 31st March 23, **40** complaints were received during this period in relation to SEND, compared to **44** for the previous period 1st April 21 to 31st March 22 an increase of **30%**.

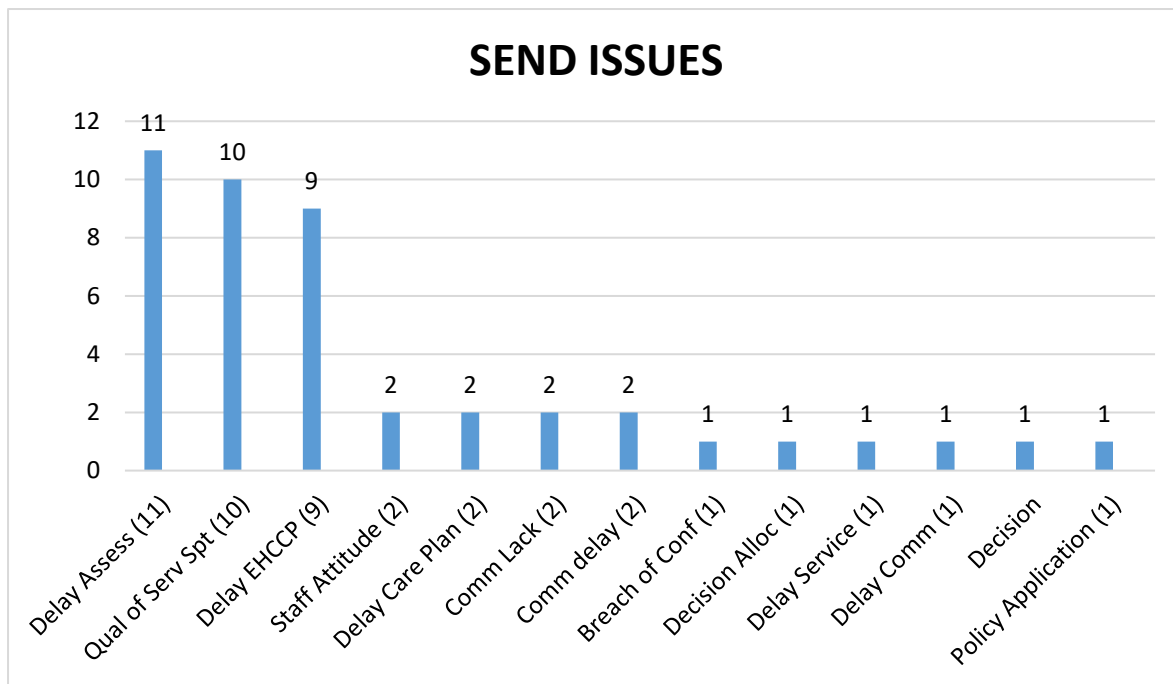
The chart below shows the outcomes of the complaints for the period 1st April 2021 to March 2023



A total of **14 (35%)** of these complaints were upheld compared to **11 (25%)** previous year. The upheld complaints this year related to Delay-assessment, quality of service-support. A further **14 cases (35%)** were partially upheld and these related to the same issues as the upheld complaints. This compares to **13 (30%)** being partially upheld in the previous year.

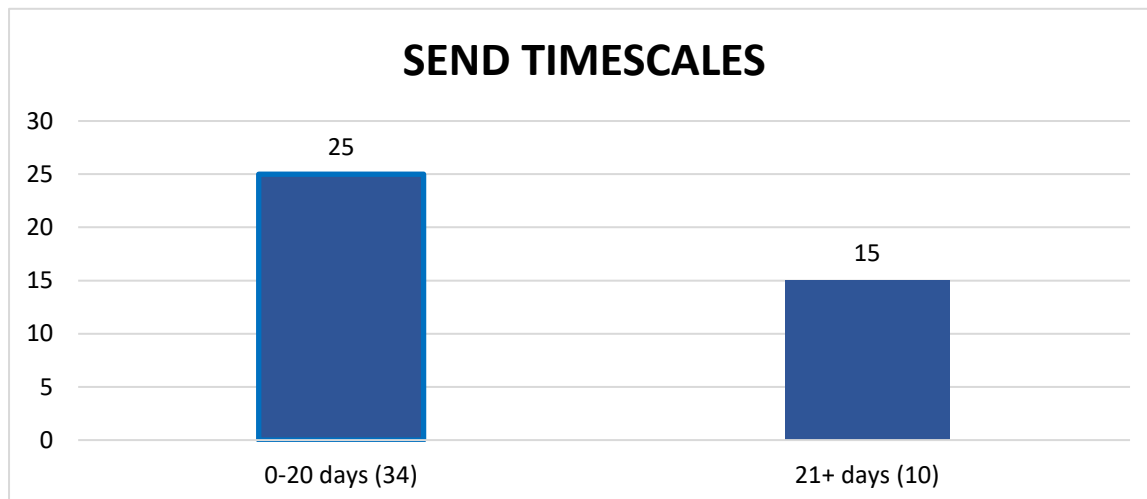
Therefore, the number of complaints received overall has decreased and the number upheld has also increased from 25% to 35%. Partially Upheld complaints have slightly increased from previous year.

The chart below shows **44** issues over **13** separate areas, Delay Assessment **11** being the highest number of which **6 (15%)** were upheld. Comparing this to the period 1st April 21 to 31st March 22 the highest number of complaints related to the delay in producing the EHCP **21**, of which **8 (18%)** were upheld.



The chart below shows the timescales for responding to SEND complaints. The chart shows that **25 (62%)** of complaints were responded to within the 20 working day timescales. For the previous period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022 **34 (77%)** were responded to within 20 working day timescales.

This is a decrease in performance on the previous year



Comments

For the period 1st April 22 to 31st March 23 **2** comments were received compared to **2** in the previous year 1st April 21 to 31st March 22. As previously stated, this is where

someone may wish to raise an issue without it being a request to formally register a complaint.

Compliments

For this period 1st April 22 to 31st March 23, **26** compliments were received compared to **42** which is a decrease to previous year 1st April 21 to 31st March 2022

Compliment Examples

XX is not only approachable XX instigated clear systems and procedures for the families she knows

XX has gone above and beyond for our family you have done more than your predecessors and we're grateful for your support don't know what we would have done without you.

Thank you to XX for making a difference and supporting XX and the family.

Ombudsman Cases

There have been **5** cases received for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 all **5** cases were Upheld, compared to 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022 when **3** cases were received, all **3** cases were Upheld.

14. LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS:-

One of the key objectives in the management of complaints is to identify and learn from complaints, comments and compliments, and to change, review or maintain practices and services accordingly.

Relevant complaint responses that have been upheld or partially upheld continue to be shared with the Centre for Professional Practice. This ensures that these can be analysed and any learning identified and taken forward.

EXAMPLE OF LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS:

Learning	Complaint	Actions
Training	Staff Behaviour	Action: Reflective discussion around communication with Social Worker. Completed: Yes
Improve Communication/ Procedure	Lack of Communication	Action: Service User calls to be returned within 24 hours unless worker on annual leave.

		<p>Handover discussions between teams and all assessments to be completed outside LCS process to be uploaded to LCS within 72 hours of completion</p> <p>Completed- Ongoing process</p>
Practice	Quality of Service – Assessment	<p>Action We have revisited the importance of clear and concise communication between officers working simultaneously on statutory process for EHC plans that are in the Tribunal arena so that important statutory work is not missed</p> <p>Completed-Yes</p>
Training	Decision	<p>Action: Ensure we revisit decision making with children and young people when care plans have changed during statutory visits and direct work</p> <p>Completed-Yes</p>
Practice	Alleged data breach	<p>Action: Out of office messages to be used when not available with clear return date/time recorded. Specific actions: Reminders via email, Team Meetings, 1-1 meetings and Team Development Days</p> <p>Completed -Yes</p>

Completed by Social Care Complaints Team

Meeting of the Childrens Services Select Committee – 11th September 2023

Report of the Director of Childrens Services

Quarterly Performance Report – Quarter 1 (1st April – 30th June 2023)

Purpose of report

1. To consider the Quarter 1 Childrens Services Quarterly Performance report of the financial year 2023/24 covering the period 1st April to 30th June in accordance with the Council Plan.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that the Select Committee review the contents of this report and that any identified performance issues be referred to the Director of Childrens Services.

Background

3. This Quarter 1 performance report provides the committee with progress on the objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) set out in our 2023/24 Childrens Services Directorate Plan as part of the delivery of the 3-year Council Plan priorities and our Future Council Programme:
 - A borough of opportunity
 - A safe and healthy borough
 - A borough of ambition and enterprise
 - Dudley Borough the destination of choice
4. Directorate plans will show the operational activity to deliver the objectives in the Council Plan.

Finance

5. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report

Law

6. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report

Risk Management

7. The risk management of KPIs and corresponding actions presented in this report is subject to a separate scrutiny process framed by the Local Authority's revised risk management framework which is overseen by the Audit and Standards Committee.

Equality Impact

8. There are no special considerations to be made with regard to equality and diversity in noting and receiving this report.

Human Resources/Organisational Development

9. There are no specific direct human resource issues in receiving this report. In terms of the Council's sickness level and the management of attendance, the HR and OD team continues to work with Directors and Heads of Service to assist and provide support in tackling those areas identified as having high levels of sickness.

Commercial/Procurement

10. There is no direct commercial impact.

Environment/Climate Change

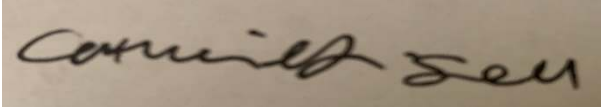
11. There are no implications arising from this report.

Council Priorities and Projects

12. The Council Plan and the Performance Management Framework enables a consistent approach for performance management across the organisation, aligning the Council Plan, Borough Vision and Future Council Programme and provides that 'golden thread' between them.
13. Our Council Plan is built around 4 key priority areas, and our Future Council programme. The Council Plan is a 3-year '[Plan on a Page](#)'. Directorates each have a Directorate Plan that aligns to the priority outcomes that the Council is striving to achieve, as outlined within the Council Plan, and includes an assessment of how the service has

contributed towards these priorities along with a range of key performance indicators to enable us to keep track of progress.

14. Performance management is key in delivering the longer-term vision of the Council. Quarterly Corporate Performance Reports are reported and reviewed by Strategic Executive Board, Informal Cabinet, the Deputy and Shadow Deputy Leader and all Scrutiny Committees.
15. This will help to enable the council to deliver the objectives and outcomes of the Council Plan and in turn the Borough Vision.

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature appears to read 'Catherine Driscoll'.

Catherine Driscoll
Director of Childrens Services

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Q1 Corporate Performance Report 2023/24

Corporate quarterly performance management report **2023-24**

Quarter 1 (1 April to 30 June 2023)

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Click section name to go to that page

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Introduction

This Quarterly Corporate Performance Management Report highlights performance for the period 1 April to 30 June 2023. It provides specific information related to corporate performance indicators and key initiatives/actions that link to outcomes in the Council Plan 2022-25. Measuring indicators and actions allows us to monitor progress towards our Borough Vision 2030.

The main body of the report displays key performance indicators (KPI) and key initiatives/actions identified through our directorate plans reflecting the operational services of the council while maintaining the link to the council plan.

Council plan 2022-25

The Council Plan sets out our priorities and objectives, mapping out our journey to achieving the aspirations of Future Council and the Borough Vision. The plan is refreshed every three years with the current plan being effective from 1 April 2022.

In addition to the Future Council programme at the heart of the plan, the four priorities of the current council plan are:

- The borough of opportunity
- The safe and healthy borough
- The borough of ambition and enterprise
- The destination of choice

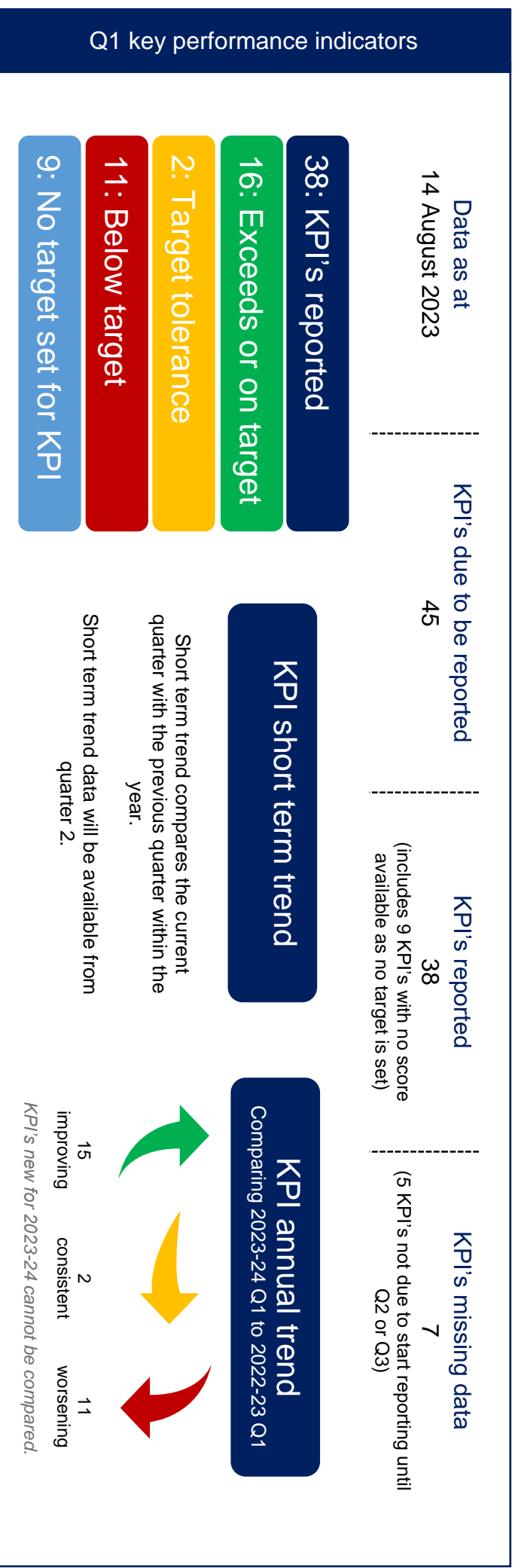
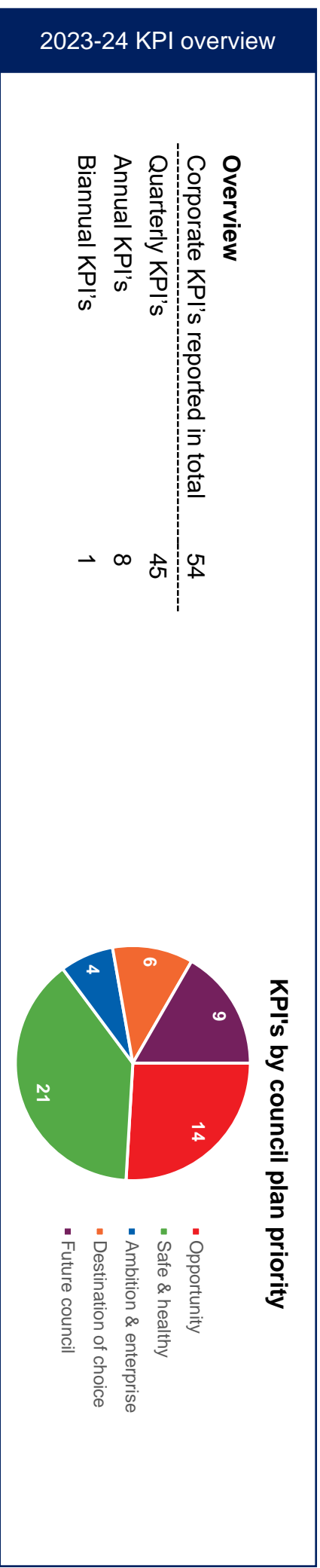
Further information on the Council Plan can be found on the

[dudley.gov.uk/council-plan-pages](https://www.dudley.gov.uk/council-plan-pages)



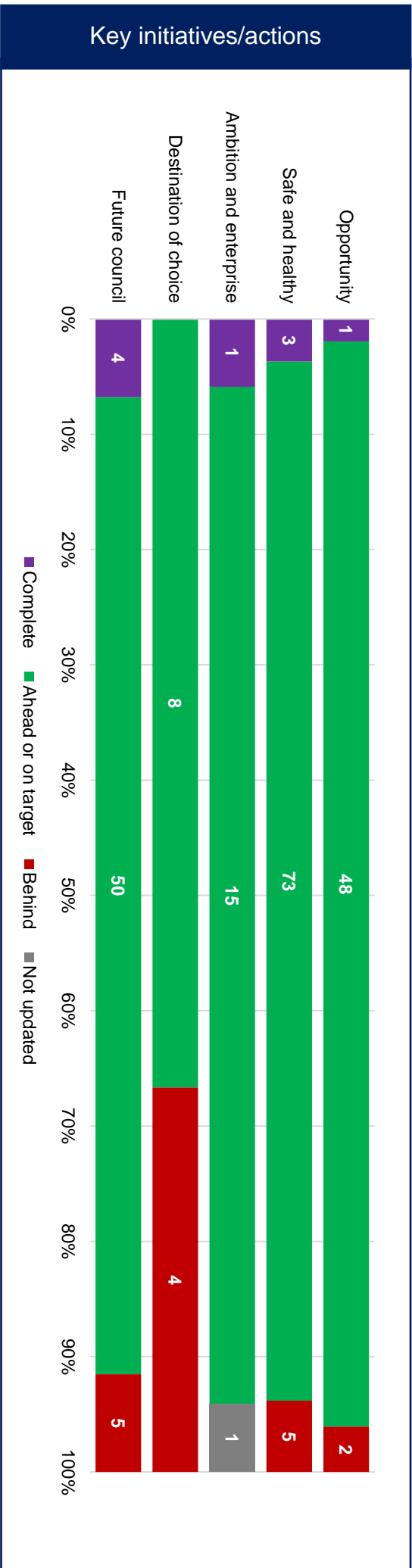
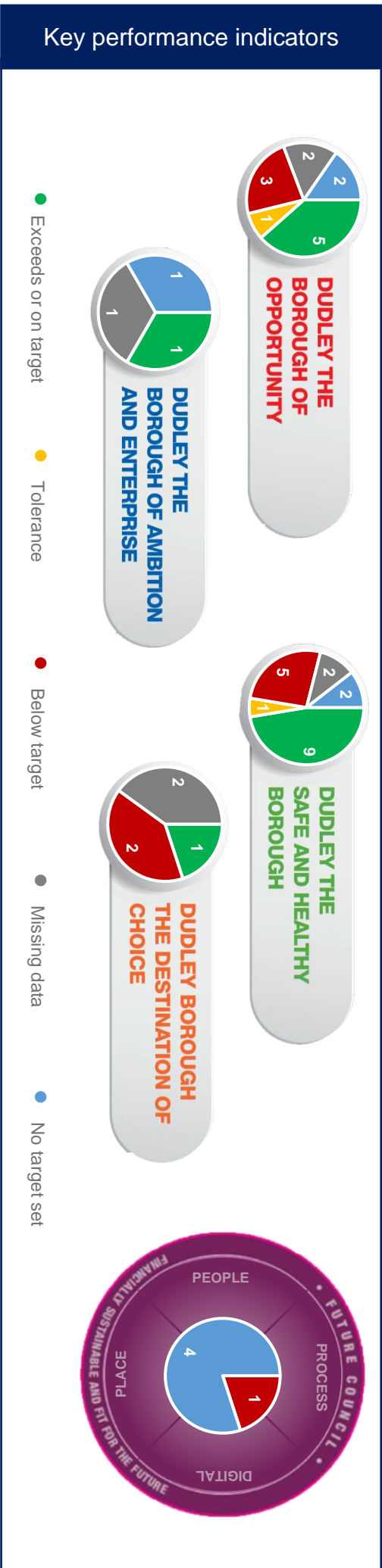
2023-24 Q1 summary overview

This dashboard provides an overview of the number of corporate key performance indicators (KPI) which are monitored and reported via our directorate plans and aligned to our 3-year council plan priorities 2022-25.



2023-24 Q1 summary by council plan priority

This dashboard provides the quarter 1 status of corporate key performance indicators and key initiatives/actions as aligned to the council plan priorities.



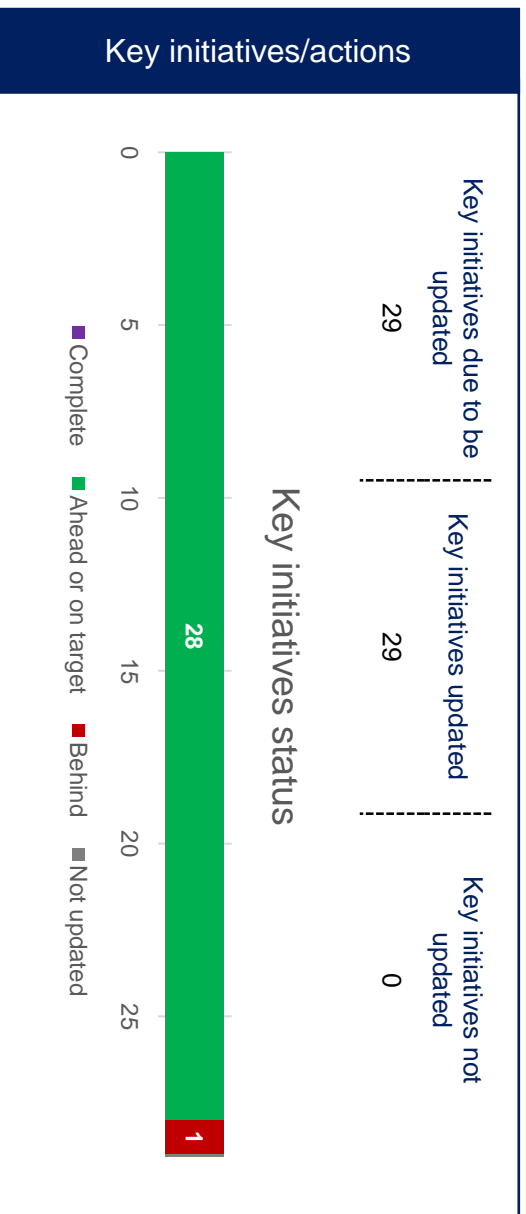
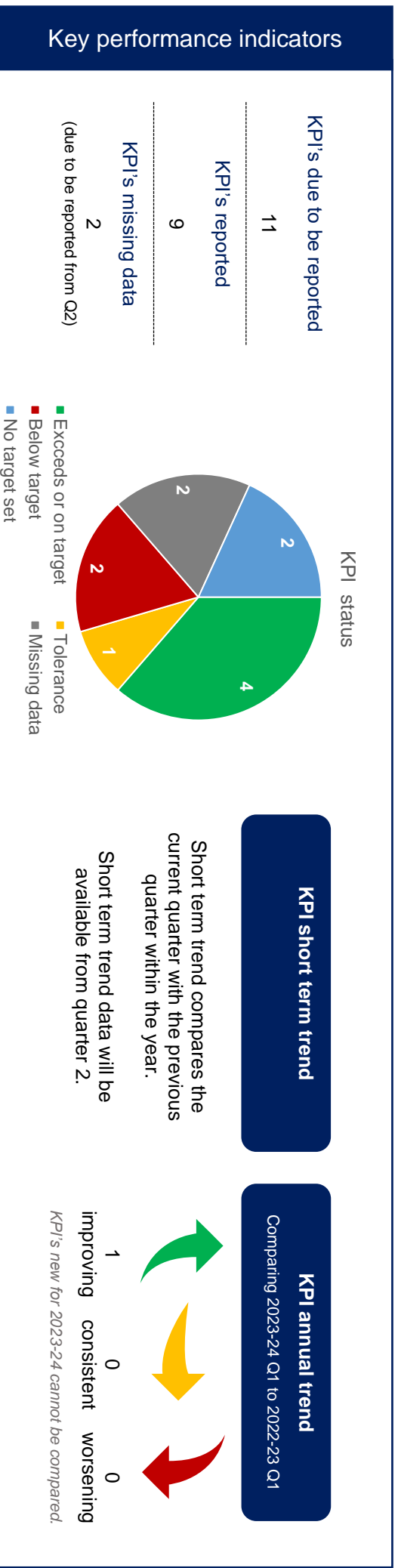
Key performance indicators below target

The following table shows the key performance indicators where the score is below target for the reporting quarter. Where a KPI does not have a target set they will not appear in this table regardless of outcome.

Directorate	Performance indicators below target ▲	Q1 2022-23	Q1 2023-24	2023-24 target	Council plan priority
Adult Social Care	PI.2620 Number of people awaiting a Care Act review where the last review or assessment was over 12 months ago	N/A new measure	522	380	Borough of opportunity
	PI.2621 Number of new people aged over 65 into residential care or nursing care	N/A new measure	119	89	Borough of opportunity
Children's Services	PI.120 16 to 18-year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)	2%	3.2%	2.6%	Borough of opportunity
	PI.1447 % of agency social workers (children's)	19.2%	26.6%	14%	Safe & healthy borough
Digital, Commercial & Customer Services	PI.47 % Corporate Complaints given a full response within 20 working days	69%	77%	85%	Borough of ambition & enterprise
	PI.2027 Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied with their landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour	63.1%	59.8%	70%	Safe & healthy borough
Housing & Communities	PI.1191 V&L05 Average re-let time for Standard Retails	61.7 days	49.26 days	40 days	Destination of choice
	PI.1899 Rent loss: % of potential rent receipts lost (dwellings)	1.92%	2.28%	1.8%	Destination of choice
	PI.2383 % Highway Safety Inspections completed on time	3%	0%	3%	Safe & healthy borough
Environment	PI.1498 % household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting (NI 192)	36.4% Q4	35.5% Q4	38.5%	Safe & healthy borough
	PI.1499 % municipal waste land filled (NI 193)	1.9% Q4	4.5% Q4	1.7%	Safe & healthy borough

Adult Social Care overview

The following pages provide a dashboard overview for the directorate of Adult Social Care. They show the status of corporate key performance indicators and of key initiatives/actions being delivered. KPI scorecards are used to report and monitor performance outcomes for the given quarter along with exception commentary for those measures below target.



Council plan links

Council plan priority	Key initiatives	Corporate KPI's
Dudley the borough of opportunity	25	10
Dudley the safe and healthy borough	0	2
Future council	4	0
Total	29	12

Adult Social Care scorecard

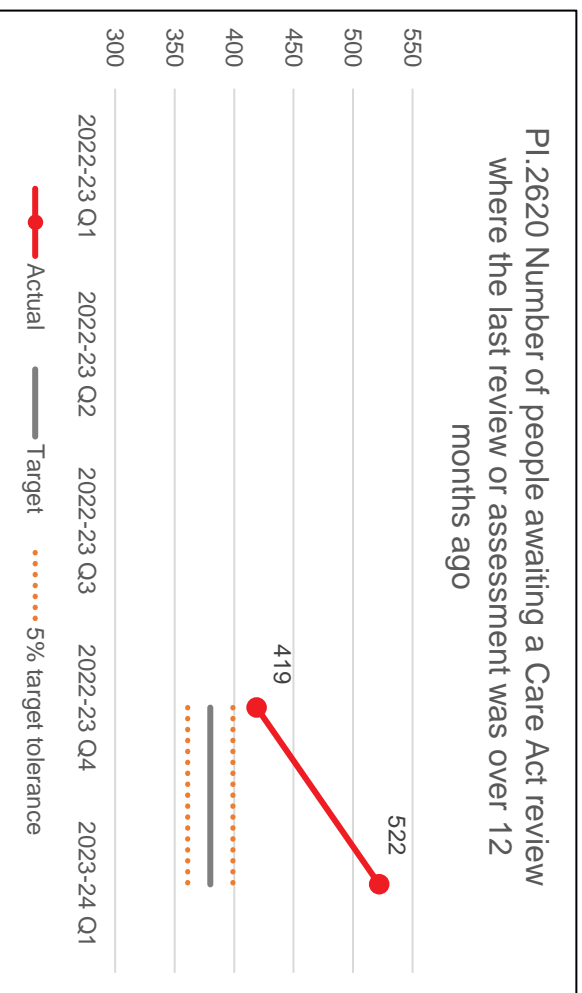
Performance Indicator	2022-23				2023-24				Benchmarking comparator data		
	Qtr. 1 outturn	Qtr. 2 outturn	Qtr. 3 outturn	Qtr. 4 outturn	Qtr. 1 outturn	Target	Score	Short term trend		Annual trend	
	2022-23				2023-24						
Borough of opportunity	PI.2617 Number of new Care Act assessments carried out for people aged over 65	New measure			172	142	147		Available Q2	N/A	Local measure, no external benchmarking available
	PI.2132 % of contacts to adult social care with an outcome of information and advice/signposting	9%	23%	25.6%	26.5%	25%	23%		Available Q2		Local measure, no external benchmarking available
	PI.2618 Total number of carers assessments completed by Carers Network	New measure			46	60	60		Available Q2	N/A	Local measure, no external benchmarking available
	PI.2620 Number of people awaiting a Care Act review where the last review or assessment was over 12 months ago	New measure			419	522	380		Available Q2	N/A	Local measure, no external benchmarking available
	PI.2621 Number of new people aged over 65 into residential care or nursing care	New measure			80	119	89		Available Q2	N/A	Local measure, no external benchmarking available
	PI.2622 Number of new people aged over 65 receiving a long-term care package (home care) in the community	New measure			219	269	214		Available Q2	N/A	Local measure, no external benchmarking available
	PI.2623 Number of people awaiting an OT assessment (18+)	New measure			819	659	700		Available Q2	N/A	Local measure, no external benchmarking available
	PI.2628 % of Adult Social Care Providers with a CQC rating of Inadequate	New measure			0%	0%	See note*	See note*	Available Q2	N/A	1% nationally (inadequate)
PI.2625 % of Adult Social Care Providers with a CQC rating of Good or Outstanding	New measure			70%	72%	See note*	See note*	Available Q2	N/A	53% nationally (good) 3% nationally (outstanding)	
* Measures for information only to illustrate Dudley's market position vs region and national (comparator information is published in the Service Summary Sheet)											
There is a time lag for the following KPI's due to the nature of their collection and validation. Therefore they will be reported three months in arrears i.e., Quarter 1 data presented in Quarter 2.											
Performance Indicator	2022-23				2023-24				Benchmarking comparator data		
	Qtr. 1 outturn	Qtr. 2 outturn	Qtr. 3 outturn	Qtr. 4 outturn	Qtr. 1 outturn	Target	Score	Short term trend		Annual trend	
PI.2626 % of S42 individuals with outcomes expressed, fully achieving their outcomes	New measure				Available Q2	Available Q2		N/A	N/A	Region 62.4%, England 65.8% (2021/22)	
PI.2627 % of S42 individuals with outcomes expressed, fully and partially achieving their outcomes	New measure				Available Q2	Available Q2		N/A	N/A	Region 93.6%, England 94.7% (2021/22)	

Short term trend compares current quarter with previous quarter within the same year. Annual trend compares the same quarter between years.

Adult Social Care exception commentary

PI.2620 Number of people awaiting a Care Act review where the last review or assessment was over 12 months ago

PI	2022-23				2023-24			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Quarter 1			
PI.2620	New measure			419	Outturn	Target	S	T
					522	380	▲	-



Impact: what are the issues/risks for service delivery?

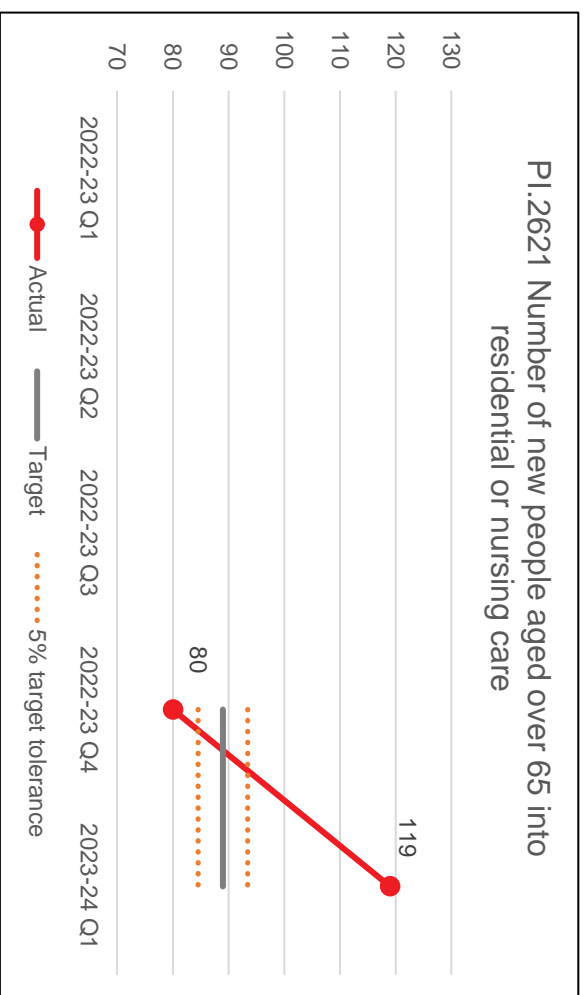
Performance: what is the data telling us?

Plan has been agreed subject to legal checks to increase the capacity of the service to complete reviews and enable more choice in how peoples support plans are reviewed. This will be implemented from September. There will be a rise in numbers caused by ongoing work around LAS trays and ensuring work is being placed in the correct trays.

Assurance: evidence that actions are in place and having an impact

PI.2621 Number of new people aged over 65 into residential care or nursing care

PI	2022-23				2023-24			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Quarter 1			
PI.2621	New measure				80	119	89	S T -



Impact: what are the issues/risks for service delivery?

Currently people are waiting longer in assessment placements awaiting their long term needs to be identified. There has been an increased demand for Pathway 3 discharge beds from hospital due to the pressures within the acute hospitals.

Performance: what is the data telling us?

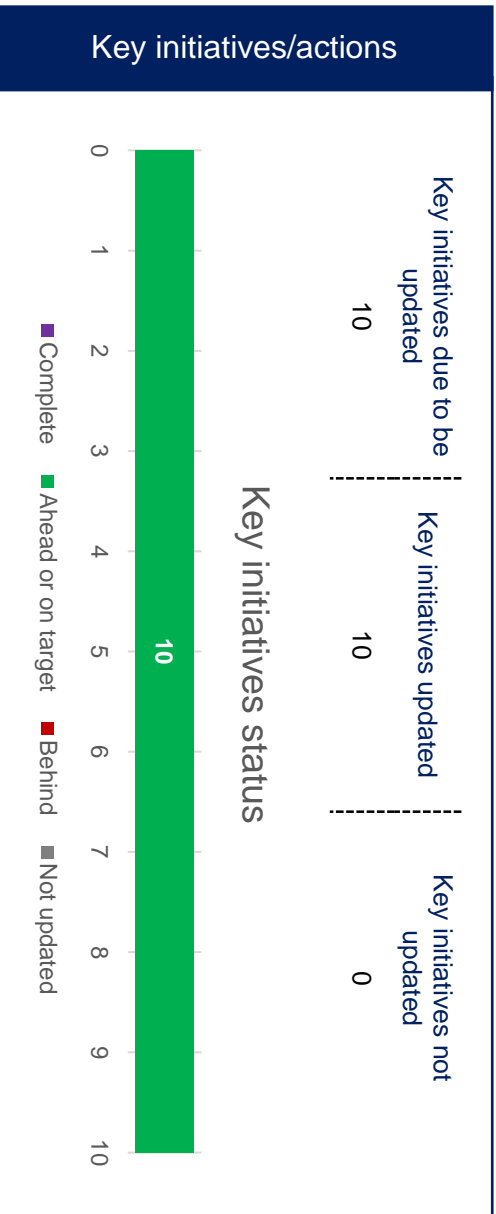
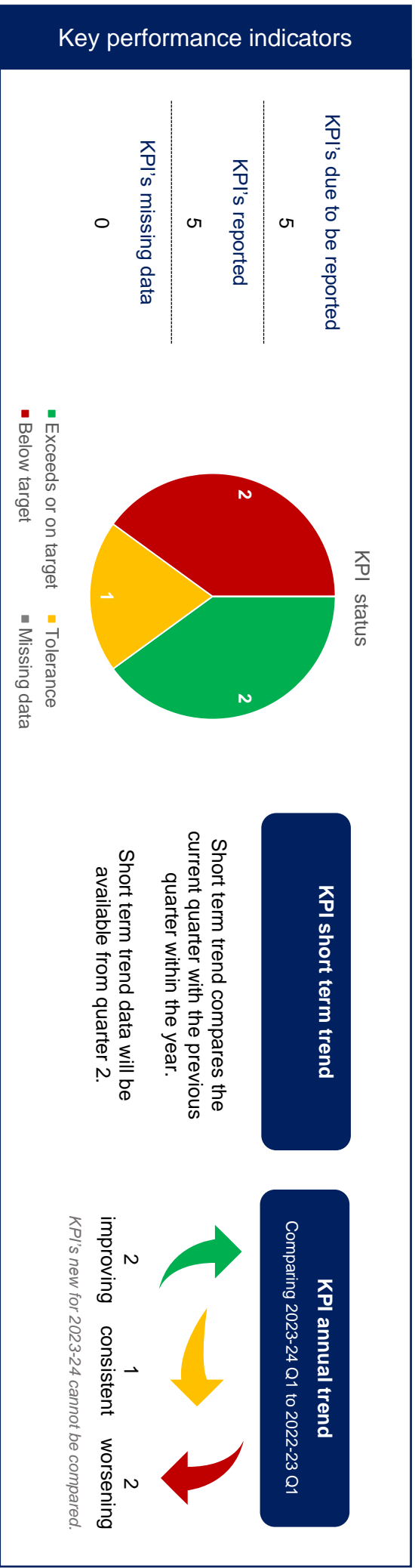
Current level of activity is causing a greater number of people entering residential and nursing care placements than what is targeted for.

Assurance: evidence that actions are in place and having an impact

There is a commitment to reduce the number of Pathway 3 placements currently available within the system to prevent people being discharged into placements inappropriately. A new supported discharge pathway is being implemented to allow more people to be discharge back home into the community which will reduce the number of people transferring straight from hospital to 24hr care.

Children's Services overview

The following pages provide a dashboard overview for the directorate of Children's Services. They show the status of corporate key performance indicators and of key initiatives/actions being delivered. KPI scorecards are used to report and monitor performance outcomes for the given quarter along with exception commentary for those measures below target.



Council plan links

Council plan priority	Key initiatives	Corporate KPI's
Dudley the borough of opportunity	6	2
Dudley the safe and healthy borough	4	4
Total	10	6

Children's Services scorecard

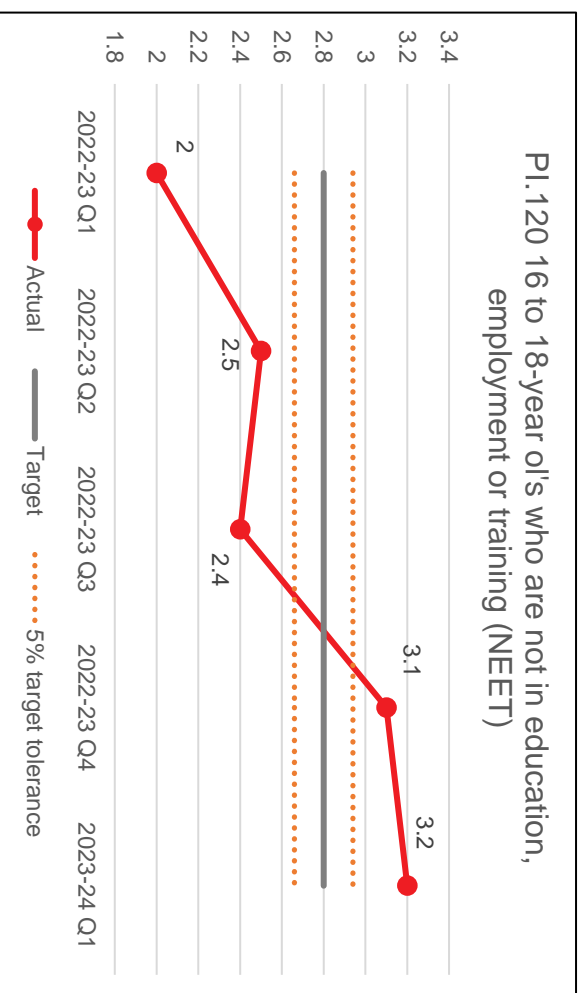
Performance Indicator	2022-23				2023-24				Benchmarking comparator data	
	Qtr. 1 outturn	Qtr. 2 outturn	Qtr. 3 outturn	Qtr. 4 outturn	Qtr. 1 outturn	Target	Score	Short term trend		Annual trend
Borough of opportunity PI.120 16- to 18-year-olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)	2%	2.5%	2.4%	3.1%	3.2%	2.8%	▲	Available Q2	↘	2.2% West Midlands regional data
PI.1447 % of agency social workers (children's)	19.2%	16.1%	8.7%	12.3%	26.6%	15%	▲	Available Q2	↘	17.6% Top Quartile LAIT Annual Figure
PI.432 Number of children looked after per 10,000 of the population	85.2	88.9	88.8	86.2	84.2	83	●	Available Q2	→	70 Top Quartile LAIT Annual Figure
PI.433 Number of children subject to child protection plan per 10,000 of the child population	38.2	37.5	39.5	36.8	28.3	43	★	Available Q2	↗	42.1 Top Quartile LAIT Annual Figure
PI.2250 % of closed Early Help Cases that were not open to Level 4 Services less than 6 months after closure	92.6%	92.3%	92.5%	94.2%	94.9%	90%	★	Available Q2	↗	Local measure, no external benchmarking available.

Short term trend compares current quarter with previous quarter within the same year. Annual trend compares the same quarter between years.

Children's Services exception commentary

PI.120 16- to 18-year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)

PI	2022-23				2023-24	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Quarter 1	Target
PI.120	2	2.5	2.4	3.1	3.2%	2.8%
						S
						T
						-



Impact: what are the issues/risks for service delivery?

The data naturally fluctuates termly throughout the academic year in relation to NEET but this increase has necessitated an action plan detailed in the assurance section for PI.120. The downturn in performance is linked to the concerted effort in securing the employment, education and training status for 16- to 18-year-olds. This better analysis has enabled to local authority to understand outcomes for vulnerable groups including the team's focus on young people affected by SEND, young people who are looked after and those supported via the youth justice service; and respond to them in a more targeted way. Q1 has seen the formal move of Connexions Service to Education Outcomes with the Head of Education outcomes being the data owner from 10 July 2023, the Phase 1 redesign go live date.

Performance: what is the data telling us?

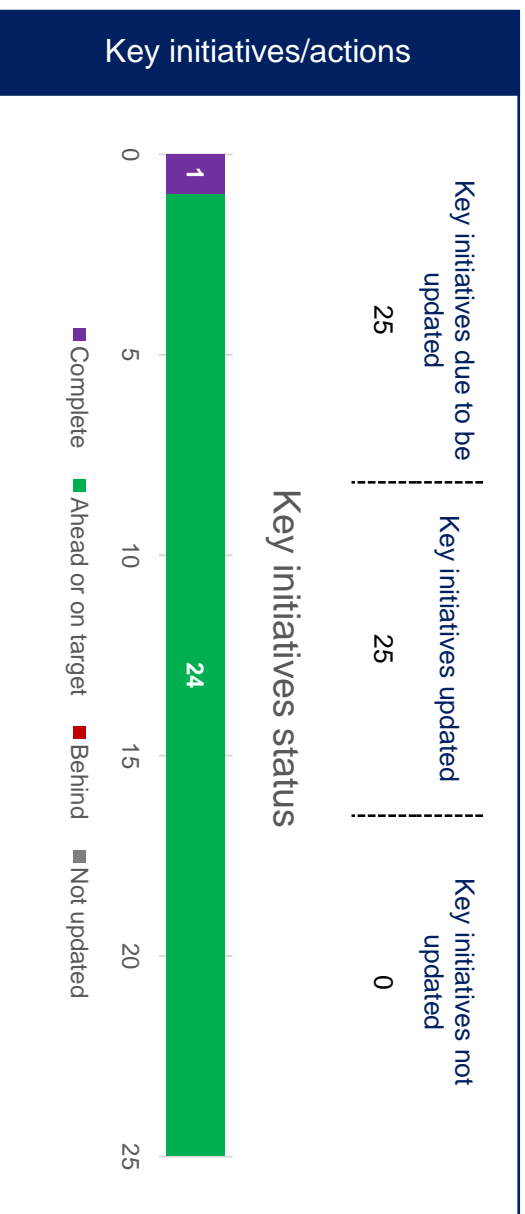
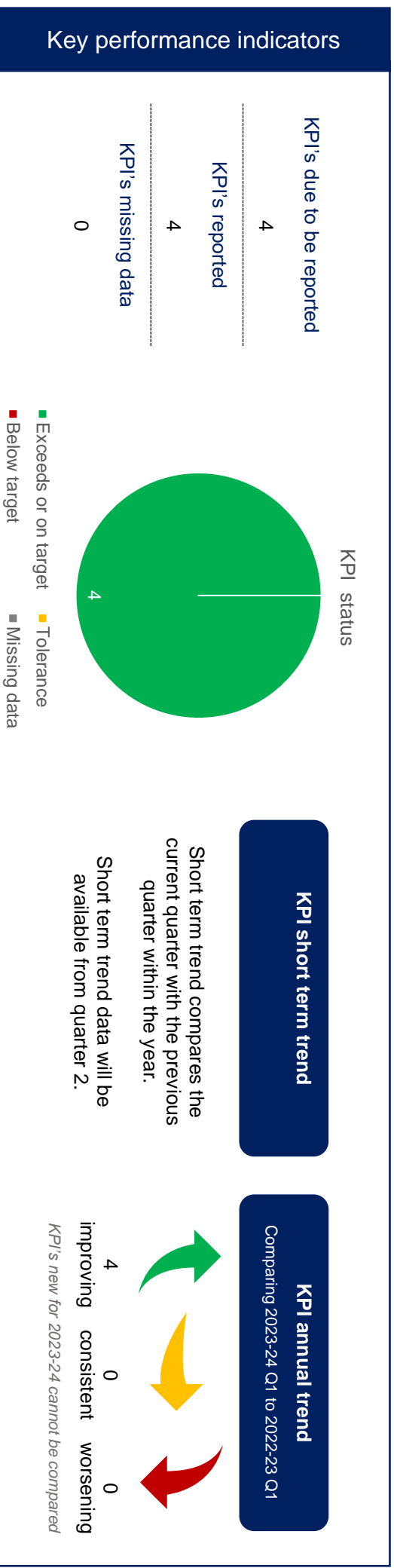
The percentage of 16- to 18-year-olds not in education, employment or training has increased during the quarter with more young people currently seeking EET as a result of a continuing concerted effort by Dudley MBC's Connexions team to focus on young people with a 'not known' status, effectively where the LA is not clear about their Education, Employment and Training status (leading to a known status). This effort has provided a sophisticated and accurate analysis of the 16- to 18-year-old cohort and in tandem, has increased the NEET rate from 3.1% to 3.2%, which enables Connexions staff to engage with those who are NEET and support changed outcomes for these young people.

Assurance: evidence that actions are in place and having an impact

An action plan has been developed by the council's Connexions team to address the upturn in NEET rates and focusses on areas such as addressing inconsistent engagement of young people with a NEET status, improved referrals to Connexions for support, sharing the responsibility for NEET across the numerous stakeholders that have a responsibility for post 16 education, employment and training and improving the limited vocational training for young people. The plan goes on to address the important role of the voice of young people in this work and how this must be improved and supporting the transition arrangements to other courses or EET destinations where first course attempts prove to be unsuccessful.

Public Health & Wellbeing overview

The following pages provide a dashboard overview for the directorate of Public Health & Wellbeing. They show the status of corporate key performance indicators and of key initiatives/actions being delivered. KPI scorecards are used to report and monitor performance outcomes for the given quarter along with exception commentary for those measures below target.



Council plan links

Council plan priority	Key initiatives	Corporate KPI's
Dudley the borough of opportunity	10	0
Dudley the safe and healthy borough	9	4
Future council	6	0
Total	25	4

Public Health & Wellbeing scorecard

Performance Indicator	2022-23				2023-24				Benchmarking comparator data	
	Qtr. 1 outturn	Qtr. 2 outturn	Qtr. 3 outturn	Qtr. 4 outturn	Qtr. 1 outturn	Target	Score	Short term trend		Annual trend
PI.1441 Air Quality completed in actions in accordance with the timetable in the approved Air Quality Action Plan	97.7%	98.9%	98.3%	99.4%	100%	75%	★	Available Q2	↗	Local measure, no external benchmarking available
PI.2257 Value of savings made by prevention (intervention) to the people of Dudley (Scams Team)	£135k	£6k	£633k	£241k	£171k	£150k	★	Available Q2	↗	Local measure, no external benchmarking available
PI.2074 Proportion of premises in the borough that are broadly compliant with food hygiene law (star rating of 3 or more)	89.5%	92.9%	92.6%	91.5%	92.58%	90%	★	Available Q2	↗	
PI.2260 Smoking at time of delivery Dudley Residents	11.5%	8.4%	9.3%	10.9%	7.9%	9.5%	★	Available Q2	↗	

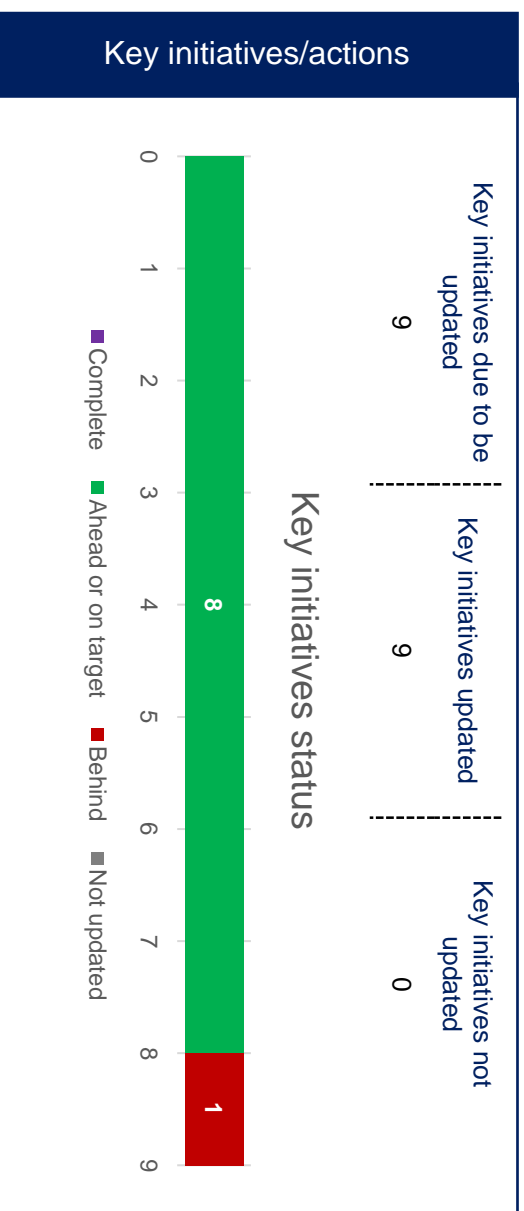
Short term trend compares current quarter with previous quarter within the same year. Annual trend compares the same quarter between years.

Finance & Legal Services overview

This page provides a dashboard overview for the directorate of Finance & Legal Services. The chart shows the status of key initiatives/actions being delivered.

The Finance & Legal Services Directorate do not have separate corporate KPI's due to the directorates corporate supportive role which contributes to the delivery of existing front line KPI's.

In terms of budget General Fund, Outturn and Medium-Term Financial Strategy are reported on and agreed periodically throughout the year following an agreed budget process which includes all Scrutiny committees.

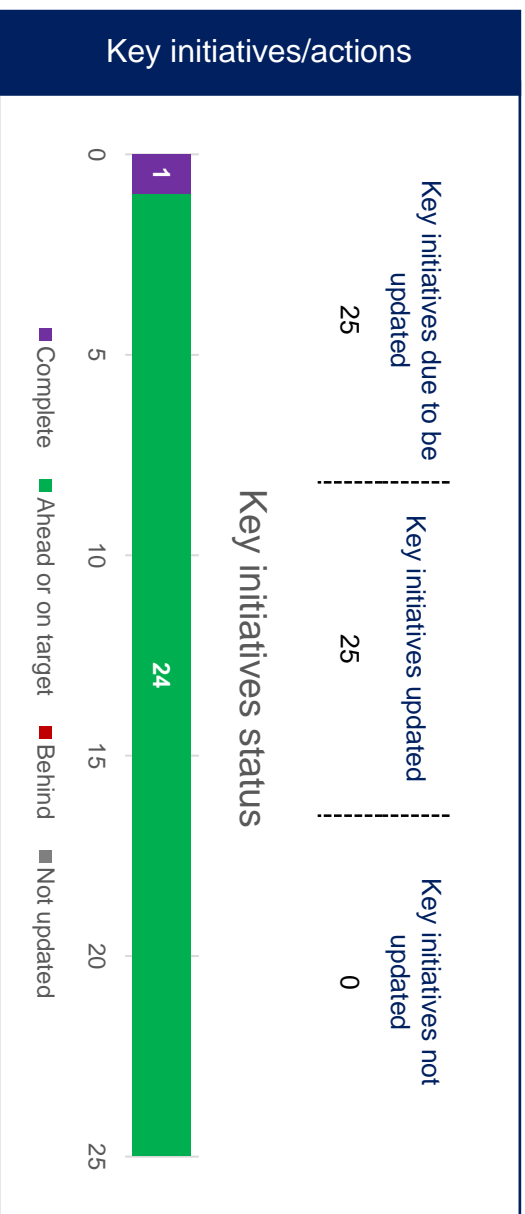
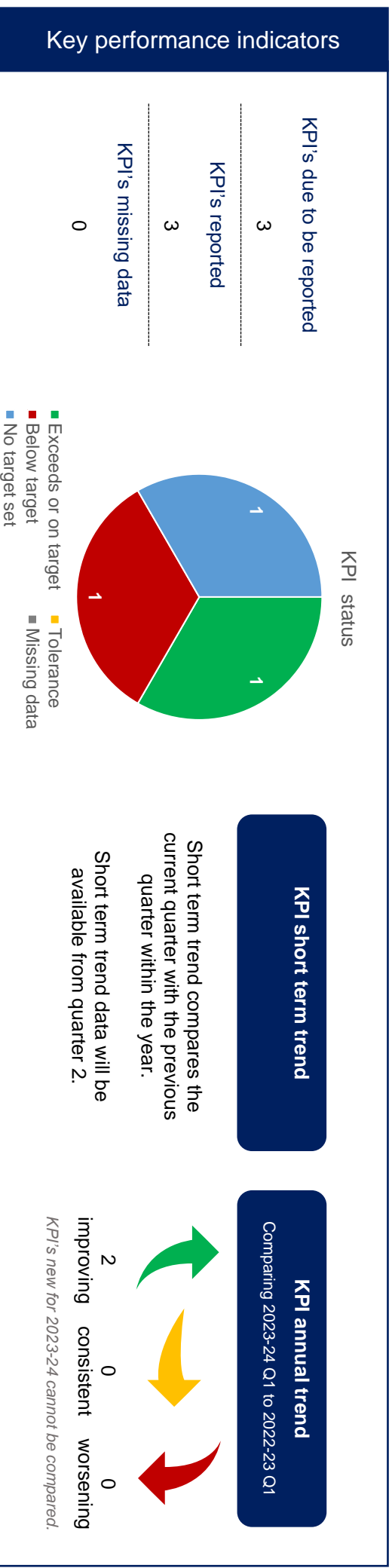


Council plan links

Council plan priority	Key initiatives	Corporate KPI's
Dudley the borough of opportunity	3	0
Dudley the safe and healthy borough	3	0
Dudley the borough of ambition and enterprise	1	0
Future council	16	0
Total	23	0

Digital, Customer & Commercial Services overview

The following pages provide a dashboard overview for the directorate of Digital, Customer & Commercial Services. They show the status of corporate key performance indicators and of key initiatives/actions being delivered. KPI scorecards are used to report and monitor performance outturns for the given quarter along with exception commentary for those measures below target.



Council plan links

Council plan priority	Actions	Corporate KPI's
Dudley the borough of opportunity	4	0
Dudley the borough of ambition and enterprise	4	1
Future council	17	4
Total	25	5

Digital, Customer & Commercial Services scorecard

Performance Indicator	2022-23				2023-24				Benchmarking comparator data	
	Qtr. 1 outturn	Qtr. 2 outturn	Qtr. 3 outturn	Qtr. 4 outturn	Qtr. 1 outturn	Target	Score	Short term trend		Annual trend
Ambition & enterprise PI.2266 Percentage of applicable contracts awarded that include Social Value outcomes	81.6%	80%	81.25%	58.33%	92%	85%	★	Available Q2	↗	Local measure, benchmark against previous years
Future council PI.47 % Corporate Complaints given a full response within 20 working days	69%	69%	69%	71%	77%	85%	▲	Available Q2	↗	Local measure, benchmark against previous years
	New measure				25%	See note*		Available Q2	N/A	New measure, no benchmarking available
PI.2578 % of corporate Complaints Upheld / Justified										

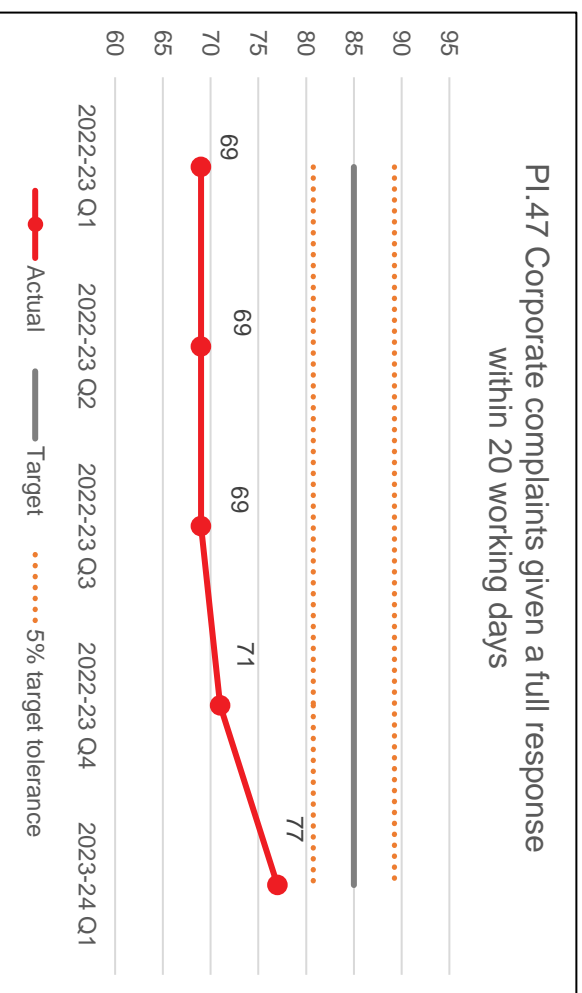
Short term trend compares current quarter with previous quarter within the same year. Annual trend compares the same quarter between years.

* New measure. No target set as 2023-24 will be the baseline.

Digital, Customer & Commercial Services exception commentary

PI.47 % Corporate Complaints given a full response within 20 working days

PI	2022-23				2023-24			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Outturn	Target	S	T
PI.47	69	69	69	71	77%	85%	▲	-



Performance: what is the data telling us?

The target for answering complaints within 20 days remains a stretch at 20 working days. However, Q1 saw an achievement of 77%, the highest achievement in several years.

Housing have implemented significant changes, resulting in dramatic improvement. They did not reach 50% of complaints handled in 20 days in the previous 3 quarters, but in Q1 have now answered 79% in 20 days. From 24/8 the Housing Ombudsman has imposed a target of 10 working days specifically for Housing alone. Associated policy and processes have been reviewed to prepare.

Social care struggled to hit target, achieving 63% for **Children's Services** and 70% for **Adult Social Care** in Q1. However, these outcomes are an improvement on the previous quarter. The Social Care Complaints Team continue to robustly monitor responses to complaints with the services to meet timescales. Request for completion of Monitoring and Learning forms are followed up with service and all learning received is forwarded to the relevant Officers for Learning in both Adults and Children's Services to identify trends and further actions that need to be implemented. Learning is reported in the Quarterly Performance Reports to both Adults and Children's Services Leadership groups.

Impact: what are the issues/risks for service delivery?

The main risk to this target currently is, following on from the Housing Ombudsman change to a 10-day response target, that the Local Government Ombudsman may impose the same. It is clear that the 20-day target is already a stretch target, so 10 days will add extra pressure to the process and teams. In some complex cases this will be impossible. This matter will be raised corporately, and the council will review how a new approach in Housing deals with this.

Assurance: evidence that actions are in place and having an impact

Ongoing focus is placed on complaints policy and management. Training is being arranged later in the year to help complaints handlers focus on simple and consistent responses, share ideas across teams and gain support in learning from complaints.

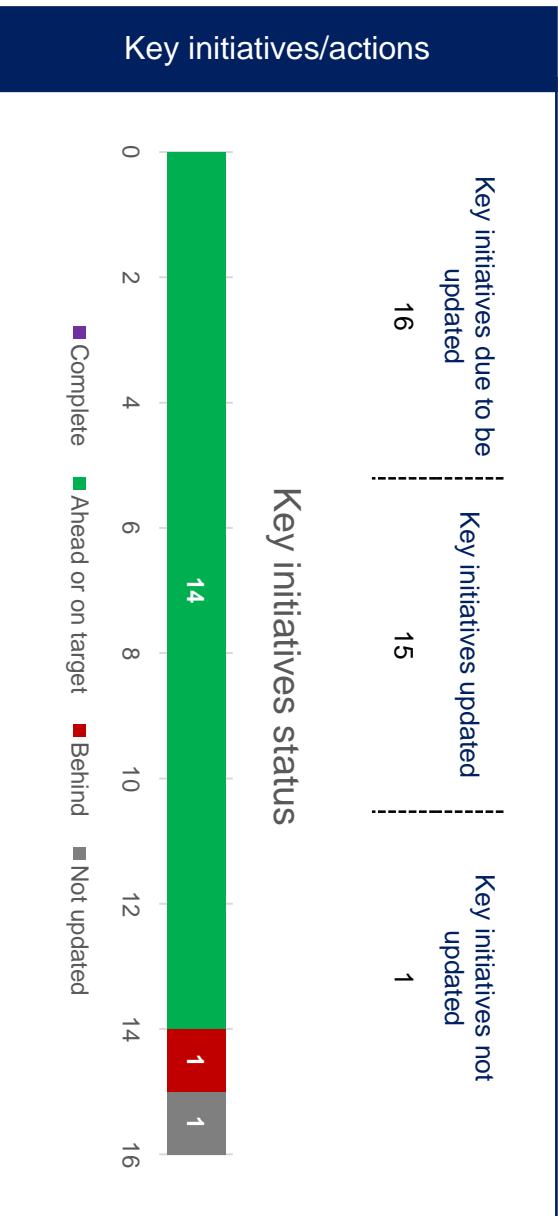
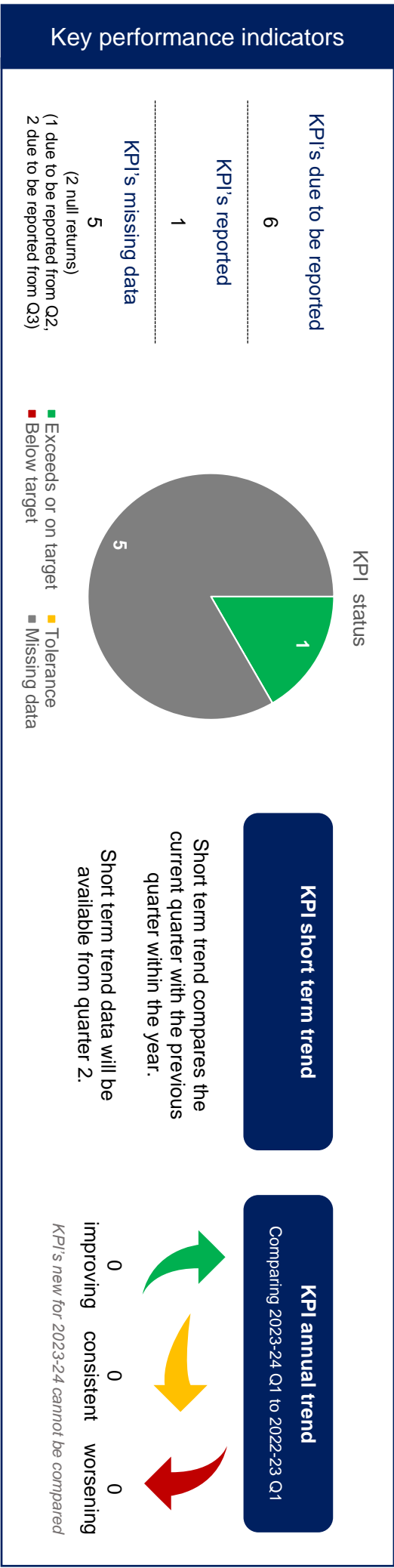
Environment remain consistent in Q1 with Q4 (both much better than previous achievements). However, they report an increase in complaints and enquiries for Green Care this quarter relating to the chemicals used in the weed spraying process. The Environment complaints team have developed a standard response explaining the process followed and schedule of spraying. They are also continuing to work with Arbor with tree complaints and issues to provide updates and timely responses. There have been some complaints in Waste Care regarding a backlog of delivery of new bins and recycling bags and boxes. This was due to low stock and a standard response was sent explaining this is a temporary situation.

There are no outstanding complaints for **Public Health and Wellbeing**, including environmental health and trading standards. The current process of using one central mailbox to manage incoming enquiries for the Directorate is working well to manage complaints, reallocating as service requests when appropriate and dealing with them informally where necessary. All complaints are being answered within deadline. A weekly report is presented to Senior Leadership Team to monitor progress and ensure they are responded to within deadline, this report also enables enquiries to be redirected swiftly if incorrectly received.

Revenues and Benefits (R&Bs) confirm their % of complaints answered within 20 days in Q1 was 97%, however the complaint that exceeded this target received a holding response by the deadline date, with a full response being issued as soon as practically possible to do so. The number of complaints for R&Bs in Q1 was 33 compared to 44 in Q4 22/23 and 129 in Q1 22/23. 1 compliment was received thanking R&Bs for assistance with a business rates query. Within R&Bs, the number of complaints received by Revenues in Q1 is 24 compared to 121 in Q1 22/23. The majority of the 121 related to the Government's Energy Rebate Payments: the number received by Benefits in Q1 is 9, compared to 8 in Q1 22/23. Any learning points identified as part of the complaints procedure are reviewed and where possible processes and procedures adjusted accordingly. There was a need to remind a few R&Bs staff of the importance of reviewing the content of correspondence received in order for it to be processed correctly.

Regeneration & Enterprise overview

The following pages provide a dashboard overview for the directorate of Regeneration & Enterprise. They show the status of corporate key performance indicators and of key initiatives/actions being delivered. KPI scorecards are used to report and monitor performance outcomes for the given quarter along with exception commentary for those measures below target.



Council plan links

Council plan priority	Key initiatives	Corporate KPI's
Dudley the borough of opportunity	2	3
Dudley the safe and healthy borough	1	0
Dudley the borough of ambition and enterprise	5	2
Dudley borough the destination of choice	3	2
Future council	5	0
Total	16	7

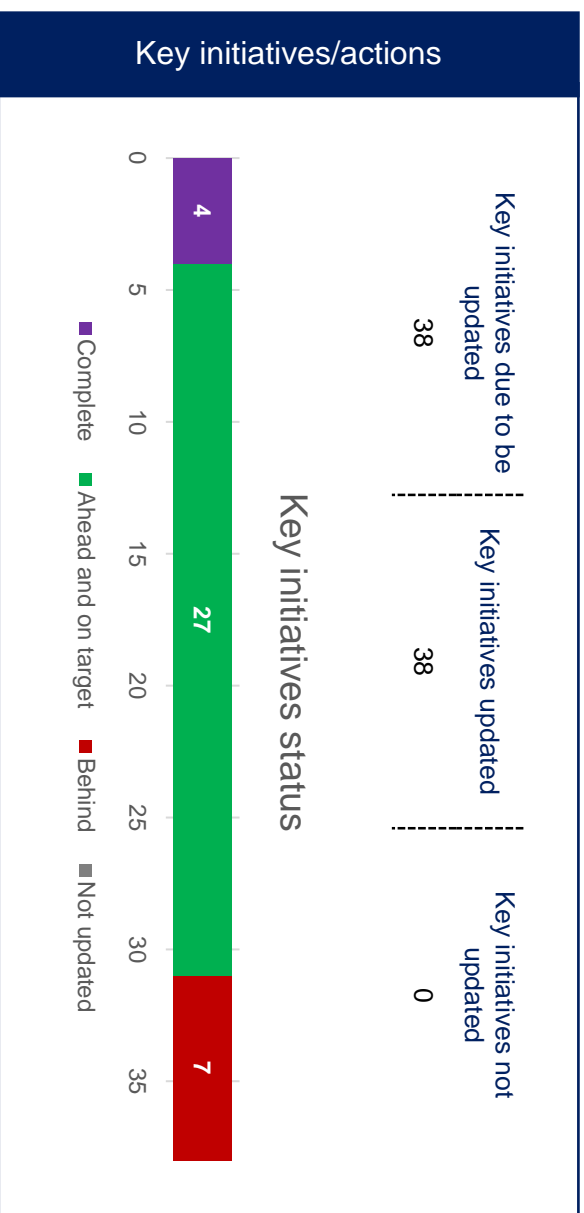
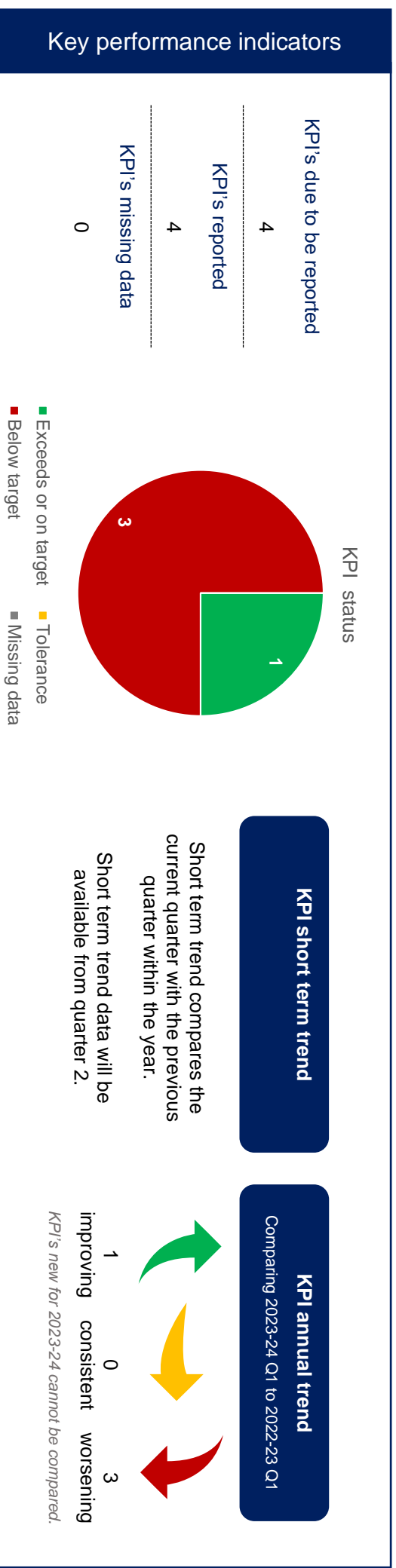
Regeneration & Enterprise scorecard

Performance Indicator	2022-23				2023-24				Benchmarking comparator data	
	Qtr. 1 outturn	Qtr. 2 outturn	Qtr. 3 outturn	Qtr. 4 outturn	Qtr. 1 outturn	Target	Score	Short term trend		Annual trend
PI.2641 Number of adult education programmes (age 19+) developed to support priority sectors of the economy (FAFFA indicator)		New measure			3	2	★	Available Q2	N/A	Local measure, cannot compare against other WMCA authorities
PI.2642 Number of employers, partners and funding agencies worked with us to drive inclusive growth and social value for major investment projects		New measure			Measure available from Q2 (in process of linking with new funding streams)				Local measure, cannot compare against other WMCA authorities	
PI.2643 Number of Community organisations supported to develop and improve community engagement to access learning, training and employment opportunities across the borough		New measure			Measure available from Q3 (in process of linking with new funding streams, partnership and procurement)				Local measure, cannot compare against other WMCA authorities	
PI.2639 Number of Dudley Businesses receiving non-financial support (WMCA UKSPF Performance measure)		New measure			Measure available from Q3 (the project this measure comes from is dependent on WMCA funding due to commence in Q3)				New measure, no benchmarking available	
Destination of choice	PI.1691 % of major applications determined within 13 weeks (large and small scale combined)				Measure amended for 2023-24 so no previous comparable data				Available Q2	1st DCLG ranking (June 2020)
	PI.1693 % of other applications determined within 8 weeks				100%	97.38%	97.53%	96.34%	Available Q2	4th DCLG ranking (June 2020)

Short term trend compares current quarter with previous quarter within the same year. Annual trend compares the same quarter between years.

Housing & Communities overview

The following pages provide a dashboard overview for the directorate of Housing & Communities. They show the status of corporate key performance indicators and of key initiatives/actions being delivered. KPI scorecards are used to report and monitor performance outcomes for the given quarter along with exception commentary for those measures below target.



Council plan links

Council plan priority	Key initiatives	Corporate KPI's
Dudley the borough of opportunity	4	0
Dudley the safe and healthy borough	11	1
Dudley the borough of ambition and enterprise	3	0
Dudley borough the destination of choice	6	4
Future council	14	0
Total	38	5

Housing & Communities scorecard

Performance Indicator	2022-23				2023-24				Benchmarking comparator data	
	Qtr. 1 outturn	Qtr. 2 outturn	Qtr. 3 outturn	Qtr. 4 outturn	Qtr. 1 outturn	Target	Score	Short term trend		Annual trend
Safe & healthy PI.2027 Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied with their landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour PI.913 RP01 Proportion of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard PI.1191 V&L05 Average re-let time for Standard Re-lets. PI.1899 Rent loss- % of potential rent receipts lost (Dwellings) Non-Acct Pl	63.1%	65.9%	64.2%	68.1%	59.8%	70%		Available Q2		60.7% (HouseMark Median 2021/22)
	0.41%	0.46%	0.97%	0.58%	8.04%	20%		Available Q2		
	61.7 days	65.91 days	66 days	60.23 days	49.26 days	40 days		Available Q2		36 days (HouseMark Median 2021/22)
	1.92%	1.95%	1.94%	1.97%	2.28%	1.8%		Available Q2		1.42% (HouseMark Median 2021/22)

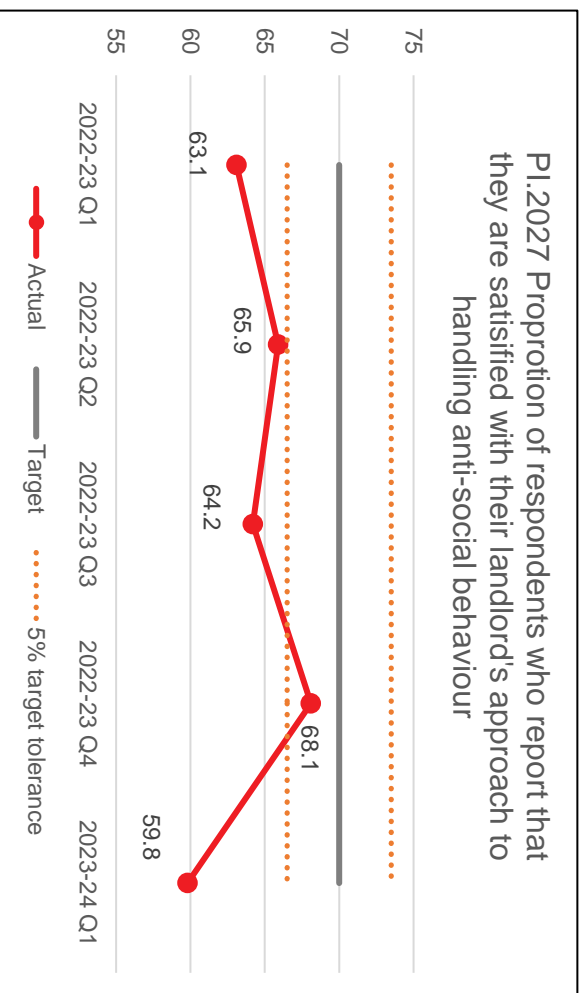
Short term trend compares current quarter with previous quarter within the same year. Annual trend compares the same quarter between years.

* New measure. Targets will be set once a baseline is established.

Housing & Communities exception commentary

PI.2027 Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied with their landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour

PI	2022-23				2023-24			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Quarter 1	Target	S	T
PI.2027	63.1	65.9	64.2	68.1	59.8%	70%	▲	-



Impact: what are the issues/risks for service delivery?

The decrease in satisfaction infers a shortcoming, which if left unaddressed could lead to reputational damage and/or increased risks to service users/tenants. Poor feedback can have an impact on staff morale, leading to staff loss and the inability to deliver services.

Performance: what is the data telling us?

The data tells us that satisfaction with the service is decreasing. Upon reflecting on comments made by service users it indicates a theme around contact and time taken to resolve matters.

This result represents all residents and shows 52 residents were satisfied out of 87 who responded to this question.

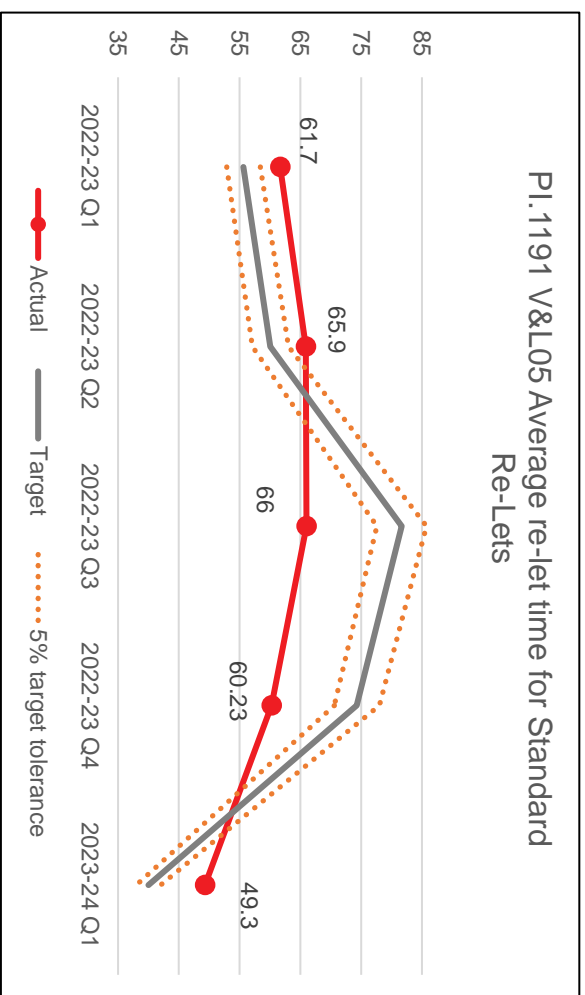
Assurance: evidence that actions are in place and having an impact

The structure and operating model of the team is currently being reviewed and changes have been/will be made.

Work is underway to further interrogate the survey data to identify the extent of any correlation between outcome and satisfaction, and to review the associated cases to get a better understanding of whether there are operational issues that must be addressed or whether customer perception relies entirely upon achieving the desired result.

PI.1191 V&L05 Average re-let time for Standard Re-Lets

PI	2022-23				2023-24				
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Quarter 1				
PI.1191	61.7	65.9	66.0	60.2	Outturn 49.26 days	Target 40 days	S	T	-



Impact: what are the issues/risks for service delivery?

Loss of revenue. Impact on reputation.

Performance: what is the data telling us?

Average re-let times for standard re-lets have shown a decrease from 60.23 days in Q4 2022/2023 to 49.26 days in Q1 2023/2024. This is below the same period last year when the figure for Q1 2022/2023 was 61.7 days.

The re-let time for standard voids continues to vary between property types.

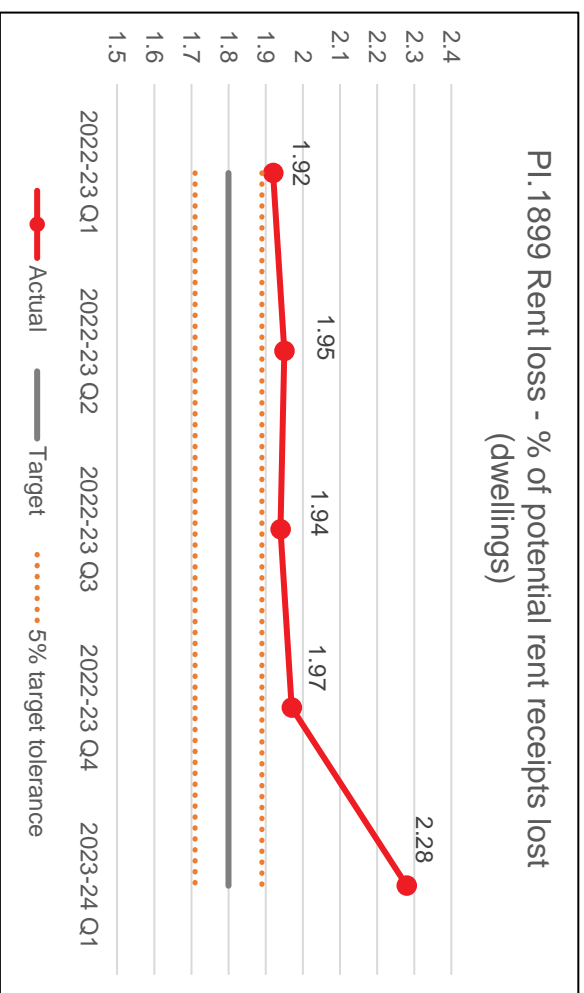
- Performance for houses shows no significant change with a minimal increase to 31 days.
- For bungalows there has been an increase from 36.65 to 51.85 days.
- For maisonettes there has been an increase from 49.22 to 59.13 days.
- For all flats excluding sheltered there has been a decrease from 53.85 to 41.89 days.
- Bedsits excluding sheltered have shown a decrease from 43.24 to 28.33 days.

Assurance: evidence that actions are in place and having an impact

All teams involved in the void process continue to review and refine procedures working together to minimise rent loss and void turnaround times.

Pl.1899 Rent loss - % of potential receipts lost (dwellings)

Pl	2022-23				2023-24		
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Quarter 1	Target	
Pl.1899	1.92	1.95	1.94	1.97	2.28%	1.8%	▲
					Outturn	Target	S
							T
							-



Impact: what are the issues/risks for service delivery?

As a result of delivering our Asset Management Strategy we will continue to have a certain level of rent loss associated with strategic voids, which will be managed through efficient decision making and project management.

We also recognise that routine voids therefore account for over 56% of rent loss, this is a decrease from 70% in Q4 2022/23. There is a significant opportunity to increase our income by improving processes and performance.

Performance: what is the data telling us?

The total cumulative rent loss in Q1 equates to £558,598.31.

The cumulative rent loss due to voids shows an increase from 1.97% in Q4 2022/23. This is an increase from 1.92 for the same period last year.

£119,219.62 is directly attributable to void loss where we are carrying out improvement programmes in our sheltered stock or decanting people to facilitate them. (85 properties)

£19,243.43 is attributable to properties being used for decant or held for future decant (not as part of the sheltered improvement programme) (19 properties)

£108,580.04 is attributable to 95 properties awaiting an investment decision.

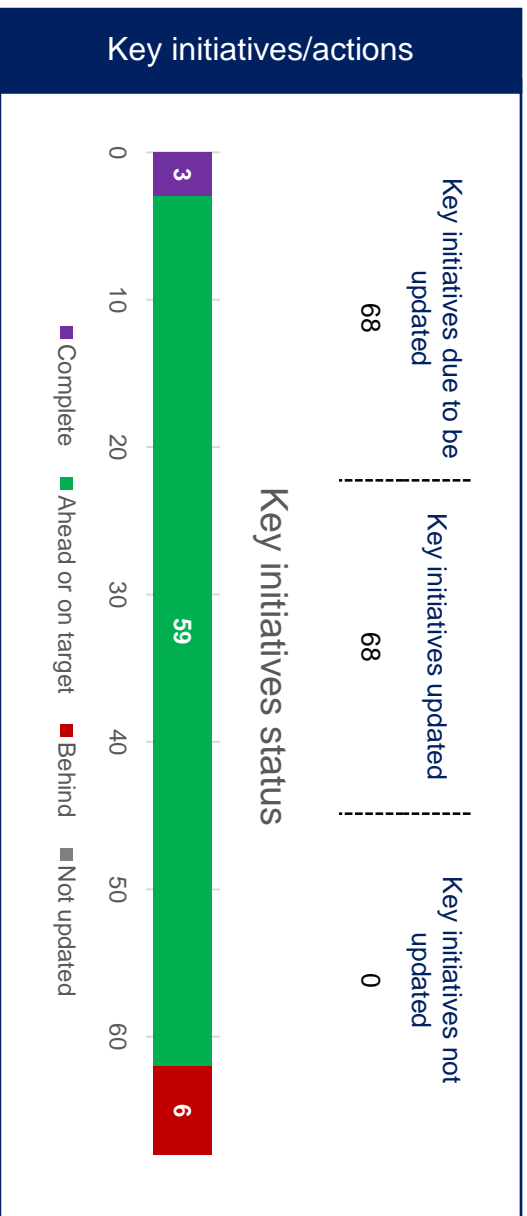
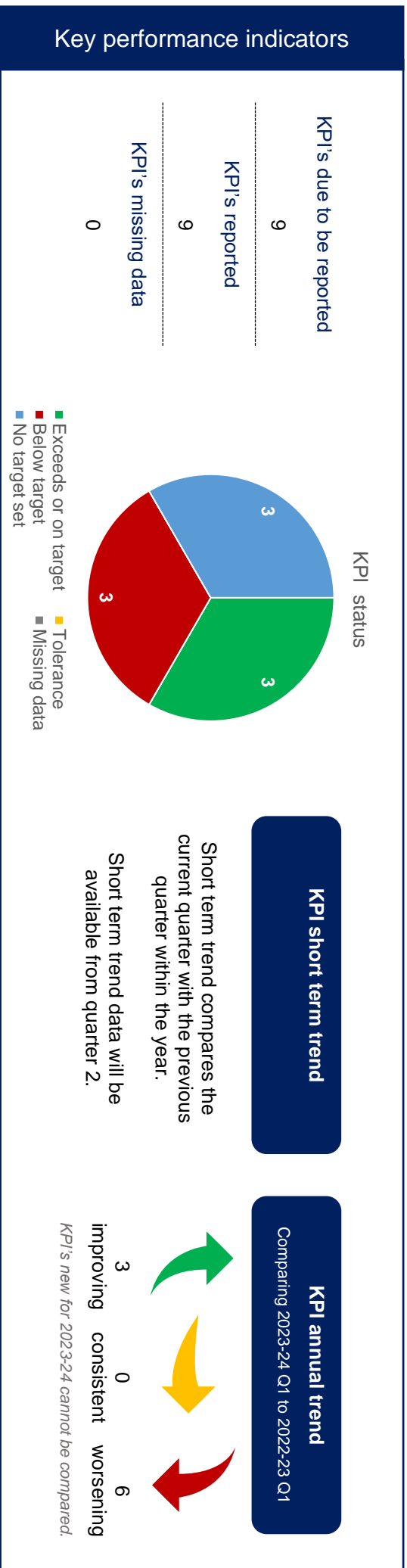
Therefore a total of £247,043.09 of rent loss in Q1 (44% of rent loss) is attributable to 199 properties that were at these statuses at the end of the quarter.

Assurance: evidence that actions are in place and having an impact

The end-to-end voids review continues and has started to have a positive impact on void turnaround times which will, in turn, impact positively on void rent loss in the future. With the current focus within the service on stock condition we may see an impact on void loss in the short term as additional checks are undertaken at void stage. A further review of voids requiring an investment decision is currently underway and recommendations for each of these properties will be made during Q2.

Environment overview

The following pages provide a dashboard overview for the directorate of Environment. They show the status of corporate key performance indicators and of key initiatives/actions being delivered. KPI scorecards are used to report and monitor performance outcomes for the given quarter along with exception commentary for those measures below target.



Council plan links

Council plan priority	Key initiatives	Corporate KPI's
Dudley the safe and healthy borough	54	10
Dudley the borough of ambition and enterprise	5	1
Dudley borough the destination of choice	3	0
Future council	6	0
Total	68	11

Environment scorecards

Performance Indicator	2022-23				2023-24				Benchmarking comparator data	
	Qtr. 1 outturn	Qtr. 2 outturn	Qtr. 3 outturn	Qtr. 4 outturn	Qtr. 1 outturn	Target	Score	Short term trend		Annual trend
PI.2383 % Highway Safety Inspections completed on time	3%	0.32%	7%	1.74%	0%	3%		Available Q2		Local measure, APSE data being investigated
PI.2390 % of gullies cleansed as per annual programme	10.4%	28.53%	29%	31.02%	28%	25%		Available Q2		No direct comparison, APSE data relating to cost per gully available
PI.2471 % of trees with a valid tree inspection	12.07%	14.63%	16.24%	16.82%	16.17%	16%		Available Q2		Local measure, benchmark against previous years
PI.2393 % street lighting inventory that is LED	19%	24%	25%	25%	25%	25%		Available Q2		Local measure, benchmark against previous years
PI.324 No. incidents of fly-tipping	398	812	1,248	1,984	748	See note*	See note*	Available Q2		1,517 (2022-23 Q1 LG Inform, CIPFA nearest neighbours)
PI.322 % fly-tipping enforcement actions	117	229	332	414	108	See note**	See note**	Available Q2		515 (2022-23 Q1 LG Inform, CIPFA nearest neighbours)
PI.2478 Number of Penalty Charge Notices issued for parking offences	2,540	4,597	6,276	7,954	1,860	See note***	See note***	Available Q2		Local measure

* A target cannot be set for the number of incidents of fly-tipping. The aim is to achieve an ongoing reduction in the number of fly-tipping incidents

** No target figure set, dependent on number of fly-tips and evidence available

*** Guidance for Local Authorities on Enforcing Parking Restrictions (section 2.2) does not allow Local Authorities to set targets

There is a time lag for the following KPIs due to the nature of their collection and validation from the Waste Data flow. Waste Data Flow is the national database for municipal waste data reporting by UK local authorities to government therefore will be reported as actual 3 months in arrears i.e., Quarter 4 data presented in Quarter 1.

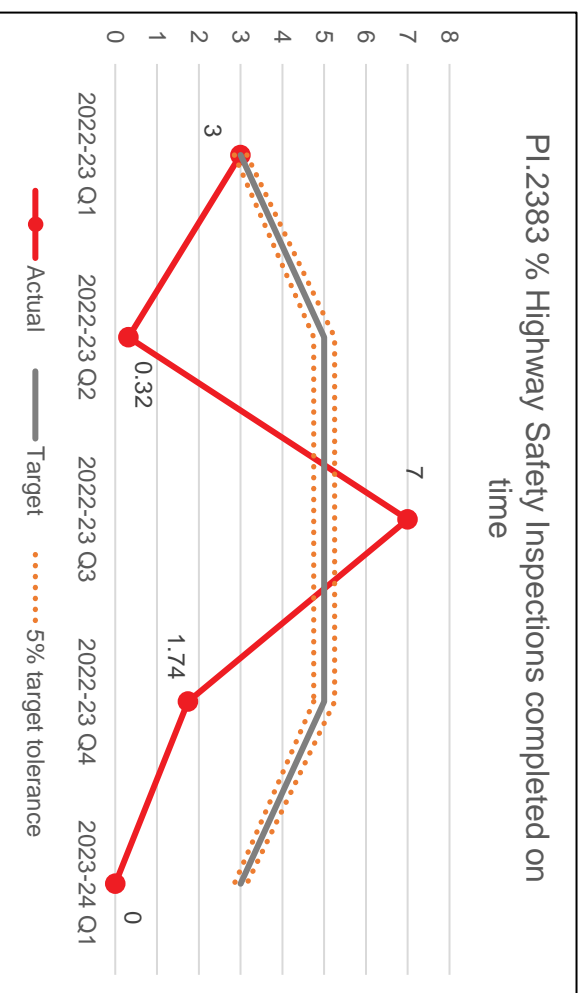
Performance Indicator	2021-22				2022-23				Target	Score	Short term trend	Annual trend	Benchmarking comparator data
	Qtr. 4 outturn	Qtr. 1 outturn	Qtr. 2 outturn	Qtr. 3 outturn	Qtr. 4 outturn	Qtr. 1 outturn	Qtr. 2 outturn	Qtr. 3 outturn					
PI.1498 % household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting (NI 192)	36.4% (46,387.68)	43.5% (15,101.57)	41.16% (12,059.50)	37.7% (35,105.30)	35.5%	38.5%				38.1% CIPFA Family Group Average (Q4 2022/23)			
PI.1499 % municipal waste land filled (NI 193)	1.9% (2,724.05)	4.3% (1,648.73)	2.72% (2,001.76)	2.64% (2,737.59)	4.5% (6,035.78)	1.7%				8.5% CIPFA Family Group Average (Q4 2022/23)			

Short term trend compares current quarter with previous quarter within the same year. Annual trend compares the same quarter between years.

Environment exception commentary

PI.2383 % Highway Safety Inspections completed on time

PI	2022-23				2023-24			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Quarter 1	Target	S	T
PI.2383	3	0.32	7	1.74	0%	3%	▲	-



Impact: what are the issues/risks for service delivery?

The impact this result has is that in the event of any claims for personal injury or damage to vehicle etc, the impact of safety inspection records to show that the authority has taken 'all reasonable steps' to ensure the safety of the highway is somewhat lessened.

Performance: what is the data telling us?

The available data shows that although the actual number of safety inspections undertaken this quarter were twice that of the same quarter for 2022, the majority of these inspections were undertaken on minor roads that in many instances were well overdue.

Although results are disappointing, the data we are currently collecting is invaluable and will assist us greatly in the ongoing work being carried out in relation to the redesign of the Highway Safety Inspection system. Establishing realistic, achievable workloads is the key foundation for the process moving forwards.

A lot of the initial groundwork has been completed, with the review of the road hierarchy now completed, the next (current) stage is underway which involves ensuring that the proposed inspection frequencies tie in with the new hierarchy rating for each road or section of road across the borough.

Once this is completed, we can then start to build up new inspection routes and identify the resources that will be required to meet the new inspection targets.

Assurance: evidence that actions are in place and having an impact

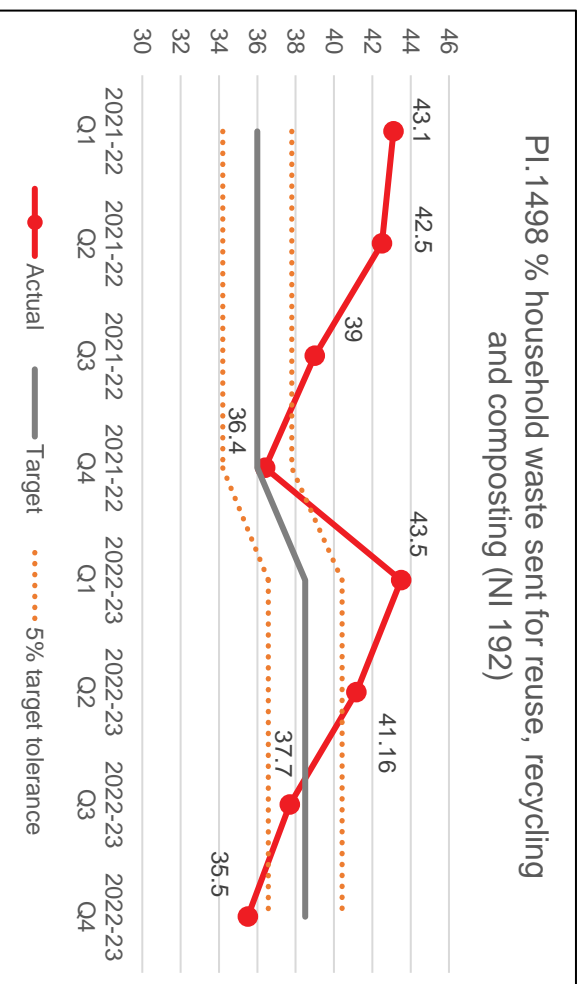
Utilisation of the 'pothole inspector' to undertake safety inspections is increasing the number of inspections undertaken on minor roads, which in turn is enabling us to identify areas that require attention, enabling us to allocate resources to defects before they become too problematic.

The role of the Highway Inspectors includes a multitude of tasks and responsibilities beyond simply carrying out safety inspections. They are in effect the 'eyes and ears' of the team and are very often the first officer involved in general highway enquiries. They deal with licence requests for skips and scaffolds that necessitate the occupation of the highway, investigate/deal with general obstruction issues as well as other highway related enquiries.

Q1 has seen a 100% increase in the number of site investigations made in response to enquiries that required remedial works. This does not include the enquiries dealt with that either required no further/formal action, or where matters were already in hand.

PI.1498 % household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting (NI 192)

PI	2021-22				2022-23				Quarter 4		
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Out-turn	Target	S	T
PI 1498	43.1	42.5	39	36.4	43.5	41.2	37.7	35.5%	38.5%	▲	➡



Impact: what are the issues/risks for service delivery?

Introduction of a mandatory food waste collection will ensure this segregated material is recycled via anaerobic digestion rather than disposed of in the residual waste stream. Recyclable materials are presented as source segregated streams at kerbside but an antiquated fleet struggles with the delivery of the service due to breakdowns and capacity within the vehicles for the 3 streams. Awaiting clarification on upcoming legislation related to the Environment Bill is causing delays on Waste Strategy planning.

Performance: what is the data telling us?

The data highlights the percentage of all household waste collected from households in the Borough that is either recycled, composted or reused. During quarter 4, 27.3% equated to 6,977.78 tonnes, comprising 5,971.12 tonnes of dry recycling (paper, cardboard, plastic, cans and glass) and 1006.66 tonnes of green waste. (The remaining tonnage relates to items sent for reuse).

The rate in quarter 4, 2021/22 was 26.7% (7209.86), 2020/21 was 26.7% (7631.06 tonnes), 2019/20 was 26.3% (7,021.88).

Dudley's recycling rate is 35.5% for the year in comparison to the family group average of 38.1%.

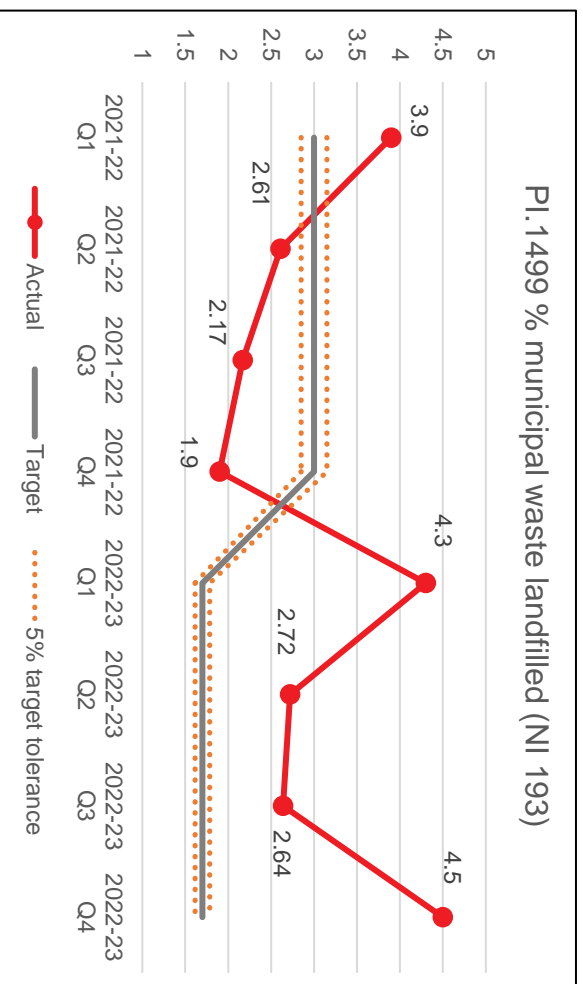
Recycling rates are seasonal and vary through the year, spring and summer higher than autumn and winter. The biggest proportion of recycling activity coincides with the start of the green waste collection season and the Easter holidays, when the largest quantity of material is collected. The summer heat wave has reduced the amount of green waste collected which has significantly reduced the recycling percentage.

Assurance: evidence that actions are in place and having an impact

The recycling collection rounds have been reviewed and modified which has improved efficiencies.

PI.1499 % municipal waste land filled (NI 193)

PI	2021-22				2022-23				Quarter 4		
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Out-turn	Target	S	T
PI 1499	3.9	2.61	2.17	1.9	4.3	2.72	2.64	4.5%	1.7%	▲	↘



Impact: what are the issues/risks for service delivery?

Due to the end of the existing 25 year contract, an unexpected outage period occurred at the start of February, for 2 weeks, to complete remedial works. The new contractor has access to 2 other EFW plants that may mitigate the volume of material requiring disposal at Landfill in future outages.

Performance: what is the data telling us?

The data highlights the percentage of all municipal waste collected in the Borough that is sent for landfill. During quarter 4, this equated to 6035.78 tonnes (YTD).

Municipal waste collected in the Borough that is sent for landfill in Q4 was 3298.19 (11.4%) tonnes.

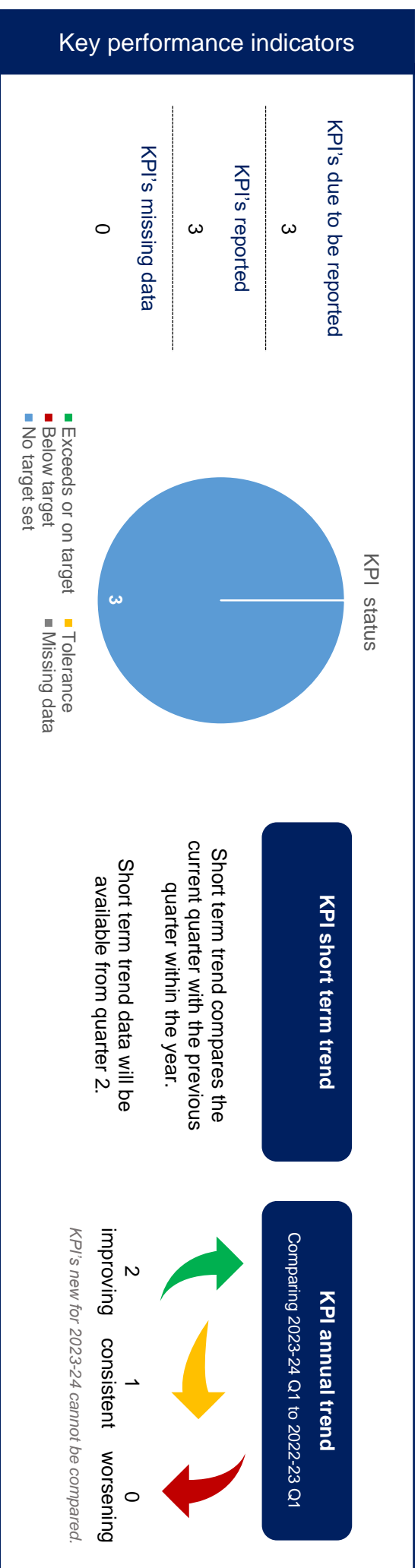
There has been an increase in the amount of material disposed of to landfill due to the extra period of outage at the end of the existing contractual arrangements.

Assurance: evidence that actions are in place and having an impact

Alternative arrangements are being made for the collection and disposal of "Bulky waste" that was previously routed for landfill. Other recovery and treatment processes have been sourced and being utilised, so approximately 200 tonnes per month is diverted from landfill.

People & Inclusion overview

The following pages provide a dashboard overview for the People & Inclusion service area. They show the status of corporate key performance indicators and of key initiatives/actions being delivered. KPI scorecards are used to report and monitor performance outcomes for the given quarter along with exception commentary for those measures below target.



Council plan links

Council plan priority	Actions	Corporate KPI's
Future council	0	5
Total	0	5

People & Inclusion scorecard

Performance Indicator	2022-23				2023-24			Benchmarking comparator data	
	Qtr. 1 outturn	Qtr. 2 outturn	Qtr. 3 outturn	Qtr. 4 outturn	Qtr. 1 outturn	Target	Score		Short term trend
P1.352 Working days/shifts lost per FTE due to sickness absence (excluding Schools) <i>cumulative calculation</i> Sickness as % of FTE days	3.36 days	6.91 days	10.85 days	14.53 days	3.06 days	See note*	Available Q2		7.44 days (West Midlands Employees comparator)
	6.06%	6.23%	6.51%	6.55%	5.52%				
	P1.370 Long term sickness absence per FTE (excluding Schools) <i>cumulative calculation</i> Long-term sickness as % of FTE days	2.34 days	4.91 days	7.69 days	10.4 days	2.38 days	See note*	Available Q2	
P1.371 Short term sickness absence per FTE (excluding Schools) <i>cumulative calculation</i> Short-term sickness as % of FTE days	1.02 days	2 days	3.16 days	4.09 days	0.69 days	See note*	Available Q2		1.65 days (West Midlands Employees comparator)
	1.85%	1.8%	1.9%	1.84%	1.24%				

Short term trend compares current quarter with previous quarter within the same year. Annual trend compares the same quarter between years.

* No target set in line with other local authorities. There will be regular corporate reporting on sickness absence levels across the organisation to monitor trends, identify hotspots and issues requiring potential further action and for benchmarking purposes (against previous quarters/years and other organisations).

Further information

For further information with reference to the corporate quarterly performance report, please contact:

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For additional performance data please visit: <http://appsrvr4/spectrum#>



**Meeting of the Children's Services Select Committee - 11th
September 2023**

Report of the Director of Public Health

Report on Child Poverty

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this paper to provide a summary of Child Poverty in Dudley, and to provide information on initiatives in Dudley to support families living in poverty.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended:
 - That members support development of a system wide strategy coordinating actions to mitigate the impact of poverty on children.
 - That members encourage system participation in the strategic mitigating poverty group.
 - That members join the cost-of-living training opportunity arranged for councillors on 5th October 2023.

Background

3. Children and young people's physical, emotional, and mental wellbeing are significantly shaped by the social determinants of health into which children and young people are born, live, learn and grow. There is a complex interrelationship between the experiences an individual child has in a family and those they experience in the wider community. Negative experiences, both at home and in the community, may mean that children are not only at greater risk of poorer outcomes because of these experiences but also of engaging in harmful activities as they grow up which increase their risks still further. This can perpetuate inequality throughout life and from one generation to the next. It emphasises the importance of addressing the risk factors which make children more

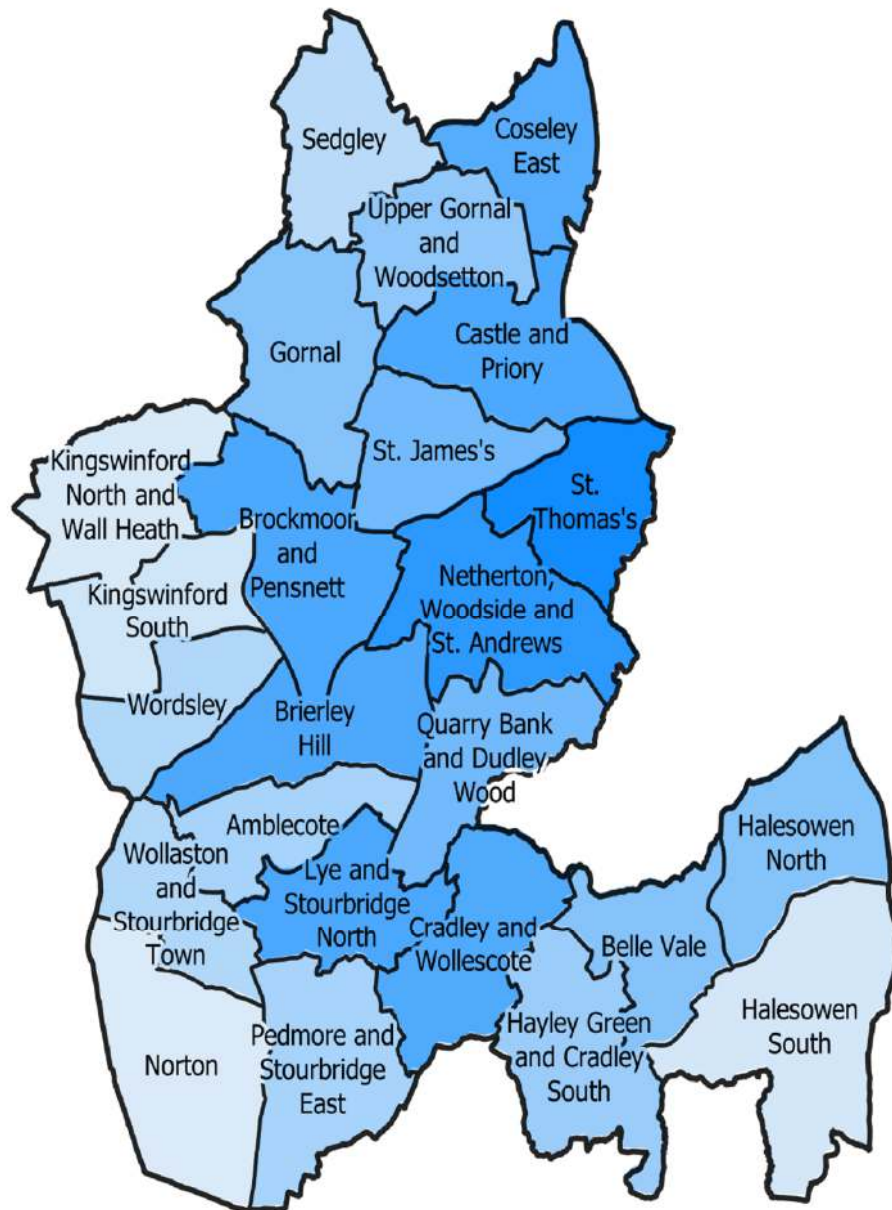
vulnerable at an individual level but also in terms of the causes of wider risk factors in families and within a community.¹

4. Socio-economic disadvantage is one of the main causes of health inequalities in the UK. Factors such as income, employment, education, and community safety contribute around half of modifiable factors affecting health and life expectancy.
5. Poverty can be easily defined as households where expenditure on necessities exceeds income. However, there are a variety of national definitions including relation to mean national income, fuel poverty and eligibility to means tested welfare benefits. Data from 2020/21 indicates that nationally:
 - 25% of children live in low-income households
 - 70% of these children live with an adult who works
 - 40% of people in receipt of Universal Credit are working adults
 - 15% of older people live in low-income households
6. The stress of poverty can hinder children's brain development with lifelong consequences for health and mental wellbeing into adulthood. Poverty is linked with higher infant mortality, low birthweight, and prematurity, with children from poorer households less likely to be ready for school at four, and lifelong impacts on educational attainment and employment opportunities. School attainment, employment opportunities and long-term health conditions all have an impact on socioeconomic status and mental wellbeing.
7. Many of the key health behaviours significant to the development of chronic disease follow social gradient: smoking, obesity, lack of physical exercise, unhealthy diet etc. The current cost of living crisis, coupled with recent Covid-19 pandemic is resulting in ever increasing social and economic inequalities.
8. The current Dudley picture

Indicator	Definition
Relative low income	Households with income below 60% of the median in that year (currently below £18,000)
Absolute low income	Households with income below 60% of (inflation adjusted) median income as it stood in 2011 (currently less than £13,072)

¹ Public Health England (2020) [No child left behind: a public health informed approach to improving outcomes for vulnerable children.](#)

9. Currently, 1 in 4 of Dudley's children live in low-income households, with 1 in 5 living in absolute low-income households. There is geographical disparity across the borough in children living in poverty. The heat map in figure 1 indicates areas of higher numbers of children in low-income families in a darker blue and areas of comparable lower numbers in lighter blue.
10. **Figure 1 Percentage of children living in low-income households, 2022**



- The graph below displays data on the percentage of children per ward living in relative low-income families, ranging from 10.7% in Norton ward, to 43.8% in St Thomas's ward.

Table 1 Percentage of children living in relative low-income families by ward

Ward	Percentage
Amblecote	19.0%
Belle Vale	24.6%
Brierley Hill	33.8%
Brockmoor and Pensnett	34.0%
Castle and Priory	34.0%
Coseley East	32.5%
Cradley and Wollescote	33.3%
Gornal	24.6%
Halesowen North	24.7%
Halesowen South	11.7%
Hayley Green and Cradley South	20.9%
Kingswinford North and Wall Heath	11.1%
Kingswinford South	12.5%
Lye and Stourbridge North	34.1%
Netherton, Woodside and St Andrews	39.4%
Norton	10.7%
Pedmore and Stourbridge East	19.0%
Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood	27.7%
Sedgley	16.2%
St James's	27.6%
St Thomas's	43.8%
Upper Gornal and Woodsetton	22.7%
Wollaston and Stourbridge Town	17.4%
Wordsley	17.4%

What works to reduce poverty?

- There is no quick fix to solving poverty, but several parts of the UK have implemented measures to reduce the impact of poverty in the short term and to reduce poverty in the longer term. This paper highlights three approaches from parts of the UK.

Cost of living crisis in Wales

- Poverty is a longstanding issue in Wales, with almost a third of children living in low-income households. Welsh housing stock is some of the least energy efficient in Europe, with as estimated 45% of households experiencing fuel poverty.

14. The 2023 Child Poverty Strategy for Wales² is currently open to consultation and includes 5 objectives using a Public Health approach to tackle poverty.
 - Reduce costs and maximise family income, including maximising take up of welfare benefit entitlements and the Healthy Start programme, supporting third sector organisations to reduce food poverty and extending provision of free school meals to all primary aged pupils.
 - Creating pathways out of poverty to enable people to fulfil their potential, ensuring all children have the best start in life, ensuring school education is cost neutral, and supporting those with disabilities into good work.
 - Supporting child and family wellbeing, including a child's rights approach across government; prioritising appropriate housing, supporting mental health and ensuring play, sport, and youth opportunities.
 - Building communities, recognising the role of local, accessible services, particularly in rural areas.
 - Challenge the stigma of poverty, enshrining the UN declaration on the Rights of the Child in law, delivering services with kindness and compassion and ensuring all educational settings are inclusive.
 - Collaboration across all services at national, regional, and local level.

Leeds City Council – Cost of Living Response

15. Research demonstrated that the resilience of low-income households to cope with a crisis was becoming weaker, with massive increases in needs for emergency welfare support post Covid-19 pandemic.
16. A Cost of Living and Welfare Board was developed to drive a city-wide solution to welfare provision and addressing the cost-of-living crisis, with a specific focus on food, fuel, housing, and digital inclusion.
17. Targeted interventions were developed including:
 - Heating on Prescription, ensuring that those most at risk of ill health and hospital admissions due to the adverse effects of cold weather could access the Green Doctors service and receive fuel payments where needed.
 - 127 referrals from via Primary care
 - 755 households with a cold related illness were assisted
 - 1116 people were directly assisted to reduce fuel poverty

² Welsh Government (2023) [Child Poverty Strategy for Wales](#)

- The Fire service used social vulnerability index and joint funded winter warm packs to families in need, which included blankets, hats, gloves and scarfs, thermal cup, hot water bottles.
- Workforce Development: Developed resources and training to increase workforce knowledge of the support available in Leeds for fuel poverty and Winter Warmth initiative.

Havering Council – Cost of Living Response

18. In Havering, a third of children live in low-income households, with only a fifth of the population earning the Living Wage. Havering Council partnered with the local NHS to mitigate poverty, with the twin focus to “stay on target” and give “money to those that needed it before they needed it”.
19. The focus was on a specific group of people – those who use high energy medical equipment with long term conditions and disabilities. Using a direct marketing approach, they received 62 applications, including 20 made within the first hour, highlighting the need.
20. Review of the scheme found:
 - Residents were keen to apply, there was very little concern from the public that this could have been a “scam”.
 - People reported that there was an easy application form process.
 - This was an effective use of cost-of-living help services.
21. Havering Council have since developed the model to expand the scope to include more medical equipment and increase the individual funding available.

Dudley position

22. Dudley’s Strategic Mitigating Poverty Group coordinates the system wide actions to prevent and mitigate poverty.
23. In relation to child poverty, local coordination of national initiatives currently supports the following initiatives:

Free school meals

24. 10,5056 school age children receive income related free school meals in Dudley, which equates to 14% of statutory school aged pupils. To receive income related free school meals, families must be in receipt of income related welfare benefits or have a household income less than £7,400 per year. If pupils are in receipt of free school meals, schools also receive a government funded pupil premium to reduce the attainment gap linked to poverty.

Holiday Activity and Food

25. Around half of children eligible for free school meals took part in the Holiday Activity Fund in 2022, with around a third of participants coming from ethnic minority backgrounds. 2,800 children and young people are registered to take part in activities over Summer 2023. Key themes are around food, physical activity, signposting, SEND and supporting families.

Household Support Fund

26. Since 2021, the Department for Work and Pensions have allocated £13,000,000 to Dudley residents via the Household Support Fund. Over half of the government's 23/24 Household Support Fund allocation for Dudley is directed to supporting households with children, with £2,043,393 dispersed over the past 12 months. Proactive support over school holidays has continued with vouchers worth £10 for each child every week of the school holidays issued to families in receipt of free school meals. Family Hubs and School have a pot of hardship funds that they can allocate as required by their families. This has been used for support from a lost bus fare home for a school child to supporting an energy bill for a family.
27. Dedicated funding has been identified for care leavers which has supported with a variety of needs from warm winter clothing to kitchen appliances.
28. Families can also access Household Support Fund via the application scheme, the Cost-of-Living Hubs and community based third sector organisations.
29. *"We didn't know support funds were held via Just Straight Talk until Public Health suggested that we speak with them. Thank you, for supporting the young mom and her baby with such care and compassion to ensure she has a safe home for her baby. I can honestly say I've noticed such a difference in the baby over the last couple of weeks."*

Family Nurse, Black Country Healthcare Foundation Trust

Black Country Food Bank

30. The 12 food banks operating across the borough provided 85,894 meals for children in 2022. In the first 6 months of 2023, demand for support from households with children has increased by 18% compared to 2022.

31. The new Recipe Bag project has launched in Dudley, providing ambient ingredients and a recipe card with a link to a you tube channel showing the family exactly how to cook a meal for a family of four. Through this scheme 500 recipe bags have been provided equating to 2000 meals for families and pupil premium children. 10 recipes are currently 'live' with 10 more in the pipeline. These have also been utilised in a cookery project in partnership with the YMCA targeting child poverty and youth poverty with positive feedback.
32. From September 2023, the Food Banks will be approaching primary schools in Dudley to start cookery sessions with pupil premium families following pilots in Sandwell. These cooking classes will enable families to learn and work together to develop cookery skills and budgeting skills.
33. Due to public donations and funding from DMBC Public Health, the Food Bank has been able to support other third sector organisations with food and toiletry items to enable cooked meals, children's lunches and essential toiletry packs to children including refugee groups, baby banks and youth groups who look after SEND children.
34. Black Country Foodbank report a difficult start to 2023 as the Cost-of-Living Crisis has taken a hold and decreased donations at the same time as increasing demand. To ensure continuity of services, the Food Bank has had to bulk buy food and toiletries using the funding provided by Dudley Public Health.
35. *"This funding has been a lifeline and we are incredibly thankful for the acknowledgement of our services and the support we have received."*
Jen Coleman, Chief Executive Officer, Dudley Food Bank

Brierley Hill Baby Bank

36. In the last year, the Baby Bank have issued 587 packs for expectant and new families, an increase of 54.4% over the past year, and with a value of £700,000 in kind. They have achieved funding from the National Lottery and in-kind support for a van and driver. The volunteers continue to operate in an innovative way to support the support the most vulnerable families in the borough. They have worked with the Council and local NHS to research parents' experiences in the First 1001 Days of life and piloted a reusable nappy project.

Dudley Cost of Living Hubs

37. Dudley and Wolverhampton Citizens Advice have rolled out Cost of Living Hubs across the borough to provide immediate support for households facing crisis. This has been provided in partnership between Dudley Council Public Health and Dudley Health and Care Partnership

Board. 5,719 clients were supported in the first 6 months, with 62% being households with dependent children.

38. The Public Health team and system partner organisations are currently coordinating a system response to mitigate child poverty, by:
- Drafting a child poverty needs assessment and planning a strategic approach to child poverty using evidence-based approaches led by communities.
 - Developing a pathway with NHS and third sector organisations to address infant food poverty in the borough.
 - Working with Children Northeast on pilot programmes to poverty proof maternity and Early Years services, and poverty proofing the school day.
 - Piloting supportive conversations training around financial wellbeing with Family Hub teams.
 - Use Family Hubs and the Start for Life offer as a springboard to increase support in the first 1001 days of a child's life, supporting good parenting and parent and infant mental health.
 - Supporting inclusion in our schools to enable more children and young people to benefit from mainstream education and can engage in training, further education, or work after leaving school.

Finance

39. A total of £500,000 from the Public Health reserves was allocated to support community hardship between 2022 and 2024. The Black Country ICB also supported creation of the Cost-of-Living Hubs via £75k of inequalities funding. In addition, Dudley residents have benefited from over £13 million income from government via the Household Support Fund since September 2021.

Law

40. The Child Poverty Act 2010³ commits the government to reduce child poverty and places specific duties on local authorities to work towards ending child poverty. Specifically, it places a duty on each local authority to:
- cooperate with partners and other bodies to reduce child poverty, and work to mitigate its effects.
 - produce an assessment of the needs of children living in poverty in its area (a child poverty needs assessment).
 - prepare a joint Child Poverty Strategy with relevant partners.

³ HM Government (2010) [Child Poverty Act 2010](#)

Risk Management

41. There are no material risks to the council related to this report.

Equality Impact

42. There is significant inequity with regards to poverty, with children, those living with disabilities or chronic health conditions and those who are carers more likely to experience poverty.
43. This report aims to prioritise those most likely to be impacted by poverty which includes those in groups with protected characteristics.
44. The “Growing up in Dudley” project is due to report in December 2023 and will highlight how children and young people experience poverty. This will be included in strategy development and support the Child Friendly Dudley programme.

Human Resources/Organisational Development

45. Public Health, together with the organisational development team are developing suitable training for councillors, senior leaders and customer facing staff. This will focus on stigma and discrimination regarding poverty and enable staff to have conversations with customers regarding financial matters and signpost to appropriate agencies.

Commercial/Procurement

46. There are no commercial or procurement implications relating to this report.

Environment/Climate Change

47. Measures to mitigate poverty are likely to have a positive impact on environmental sustainability and climate change. For example, improving home insulation reduces both the cost of heating and use of fossil fuels. Improving public transport to meet the needs of those on low incomes also makes public transport more accessible, leading to reduced car use.

Council Priorities and Projects

48. These priorities will support the following Dudley council plan 2022-2025 priorities
 - Poverty is reducing as we address all forms of inequality, improve social, emotional, and mental health and wellbeing.

- Children and young people benefit from the best possible start in life in our Child Friendly borough.
49. This also supports the ambitions of the Borough Vision 2030, levelling up inequalities, tackling poverty, and giving our children the best start in life.
50. Work to mitigate the impact of poverty will have an impact on several council workstreams, including:
- Health and wellbeing, including access to healthcare.
 - Welfare of children, improving educational attainment and parenting capacity.
 - Local deprivation and cost of living.



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Meeting of the Children's Services Select Committee – 11th September, 2023

Report of the Director of Children's Services

Children's Services Phase Two Redesign

Purpose of report

1. This report is to provide an update to Members on the proposals put forward in relation to Children's Services Phase Two.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended:-
 - That members of committee note the content of the report.
 - Members to provide comment on the proposals as part of the formal consultation arrangements.

Background

3. The children's services directorate has a crucial role to play in ensuring that children and young people receive the support they need to achieve their full potential.
4. The gross budget for the directorate is approximately £90m for 2023/24, excluding Designated Schools Grant (DSG). During 2022/23 there has been significant budget pressure resulting in overspends that are not sustainable for the Council. The redesign is designed to change the approach to supporting children and families to deliver better outcomes whilst achieving long term sustainability.

Current context

5. Since 2019, Children's Services have been working on major improvement programmes for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and for Children's Social Care. This work is overseen by DfE and NHS England for SEND, and by DfE and an external improvement advisor for Social Care Services. Progress has been made in a number of areas. There remains a significant amount of further improvement to ensure that our aspiration to deliver consistently good services is achieved and sustainable.
6. Our staff are our most important asset and we are committed to ensuring that the conditions are in place for good professional practice to flourish. The approach to workforce planning and development is to ensure that there is focus on
 - **Capacity** – ensuring there are the right staff in the right place to ensure that outcomes are effectively achieved
 - **Capability** – ensuring that staff are trained, developed and supported to achieve the high expectations that we have. We work in a restorative way providing high support and high challenge
 - **Culture** – ensuring that the way we do things is consistently child focused and that children and young people remain at the heart of everything we do. In order to support a positive culture we will need:
 - An operating model that is truly child focused and fit for purpose
 - Genuine positive engagement, listening and challenge
 - Consistent stable leadership
 - Staff who want to work, grow and learn
 - Accountability both personally and professionally
 - An appreciation of how we all work together to put children at the heart
 - Staff who are well supported and supervised

Current performance and children's experience

7. Our external regulators are telling us our services are not consistently good enough. Our data tells us that we have higher than expected numbers of children in care and with Education, Health and Care Plans and that we do not consistently respond in a timely way to identified need. Our educational outcomes are lower than they should be across our borough. We have made progress in these areas but we have much more to do.

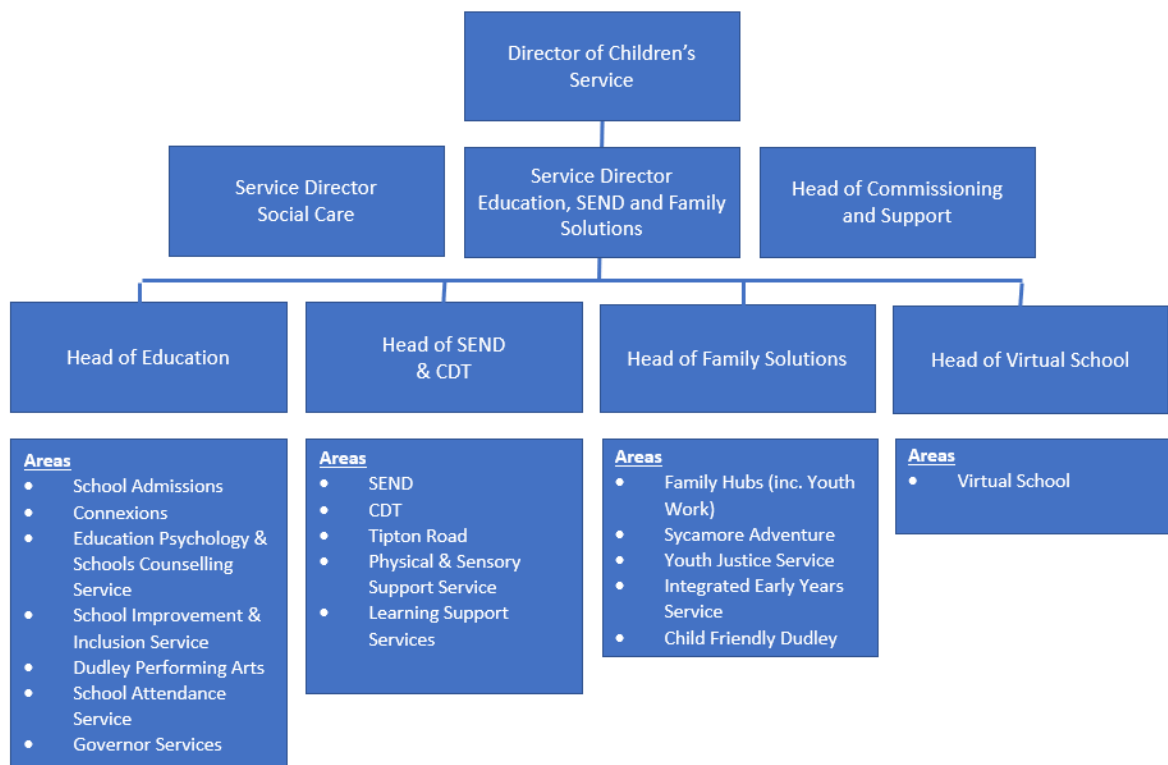
8. In 2022 Ofsted and CQC carried out a revisit of our SEND Written Statement of Action and Ofsted carried out an Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS). We have an Approved Progress Plan (APP) for our SEND services and five key actions to deliver from our ILACS inspection. It is important for us to respond to our regulators, but this redesign is about much more than that. This is about doing the right things for children, supporting positive change in families and building on strengths in families and communities.
9. Over the past two years we have increased our work to understand how children and young people experience our services and what they would like us to consider when working with them. There are key messages about too many changes of worker, handover from team to team, repeating their stories consistently, things taking so long to happen, staff not doing what they say they will do and the need to listen more to the child directly, rather than their parent or carer.
10. Many of these areas can be improved by better ways of working but there are important considerations about whether our services are easy to access so that children and their families receive the right support at the right time to respond early to need.

Case for change

11. The current system is under pressure. Referrals into children's services continued to rise during 2022 and many children bounce between services for too long. We have too much work and too many processes to be able to respond in a flexible and responsive way to families. Our approach to risk of harm is disproportionate and families describe us either over intervening or not doing enough to help them. We assess too much and support too little. Our challenge is to harness the passion and commitment of our staff, to streamline our structure and processes so that capacity is released to work alongside families to improve their experience of our services. We know that we can do this and we are determined to keep children at the heart of everything that we do during this redesign.
12. Our services touch on the lives of all children in the borough from birth through to adulthood (and up to age 25 for some young people). There needs to be different responses for some age groups and levels of need, but there are common principles about early intervention, valuing multi-disciplinary working and only working directly with families for as long as it is helpful and productive. Our role is to support and liberate families to bring up their children with confidence. Our focus is to enable resilience to reduce the need for services. We plan to reduce silos, increase

accountability and ensure that there is strong and effective leadership to support and challenge staff to work in this way.

13. We are revisioning our family centres into **Family Hubs**, providing a vibrant base in local townships where a range of partners and services will come together with children and families. We will ensure that our early years provision is closely aligned with partners through the 1001 Days programme. We will redefine early help to provide clarity about the breadth of definition and will reshape our MASH and Early Helpdesk into a single streamlined Front Door that will respond swiftly to ensure children are moved to the service they need swiftly.
14. As a result of Phase One redesign we have implemented a **Family Safeguarding** model that fits with our valuing family life value and brings together multidisciplinary teams to focus on supporting parents to meet their children's needs. We will ensure that our education teams are focused on driving up educational outcomes for all children, encouraging schools to be inclusive for those pupils with additional needs and focusing on those vulnerable learners who do not achieve as they should. We will design a system that pays particular attention to transition points for children – entry to primary school, move to secondary, moves between different services and teams. For teenagers with complex needs and/or at risk of the range of exploitation challenges, we will ensure that staff with the right skills and experience work with them, again in a multi-disciplinary way.
15. Our redesign will also ensure that we are prepared to implement the DfE direction of travel for Stable Homes, built on love and the implementation plan for the SEND and Alternative Provision Green Paper.
16. Children's Services will be organised in three service areas, with Education, SEND and Family Solutions organised into a further four areas:



17. This structure, whilst similar to our current headline structure, will deliver some significant changes within each service area. It will facilitate the implementation of both our Family Hub and Family Safeguarding programmes and strengthen our organisational support arrangements. The approach to change will be delivered in two phases:
- Phase one – **(COMPLETED)** overall directorate service design, with detailed changes in social care, parts of family solutions and business support, as well as integration of some services currently in ICH
 - Phase two – detailed changes in education, including education business support, SEND, the other parts of family solutions
18. The reason for this is that there was a time pressure to be prepared for Family Safeguarding and Family Hubs implementation, which needed to be progressed in the coming weeks and completed by 10th July 2023. This also allowed the new Service Director for Education, SEND and Family Solutions the time to appropriately work through the Phase Two proposals.
- 19 The Service areas identified above will be responsible as follows:

Education Outcomes

20. This Service will work with key partners in our education system to improve outcomes for all learners. We will move our connexions service from Family Solutions and align within Education outcomes in order to redevelop the relationship between good Education, Employment and Training (EET) outcomes and our Education Outcomes Teams. The service will also respond to new duties in relation to attendance, supporting schools and settings to enable their pupils to remain in school and support their learning. The Service will work closely with all stakeholders in developing an inclusive education system that supports the best outcomes for all vulnerable learners.

SEND & CDT

21. This service will work with key stakeholders, including children, parents and carers, on delivering timely and high-quality Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), and supporting Annual Review activity. The Service will also focus on work with parents and carers on supporting children with a disability, to effectively safeguard and ensure access to opportunities, provision and resources appropriate to meeting children's needs.
22. The Service will also review the operational delivery models of the proposed Physical and Sensory Service and Learning Support Service in order to reflect a greater level of support for schools and settings to increase confidence and skills that lead to greater inclusion.
23. Tipton Road, our residential home for children with disabilities, transferred to SEND & CDT as part of phase 1 redesign, and the service will look to releasing greater opportunity to develop services that respond to need in a more timely way for more children.

Family Solutions

24. This service shall continue the development of the Family Hub agenda, bringing together partners and services within locality areas to provide for families and meet the needs of children and young people. Partnering with health colleagues to ensure the best possible support for expectant mothers and the best start for life for babies and toddlers, supporting early years settings to develop readiness for school for younger children, and delivering youth work to support the needs of young people.

Virtual School

25. The Virtual School supports and challenges schools, carers and all relevant partners to ensure children in the care (CiC) of Dudley Council achieve the best possible educational outcomes and life chances. With expanded duties the Virtual School will also work with Social Care and Settings on championing outcomes for children who have or who have had a Social Worker and will provide ongoing educational support for care experienced young people remaining within education post 16. The Virtual School will provide advice and guidance to children, parents, carers, social workers, schools and others, as appropriate, around the education of CiC and previously looked after children.

Child Friendly Dudley

26. The Service will provide oversight and support to the Child Friendly Dudley programme which works across key partners and stakeholders to put the voices of children and young people at the heart of everything we do and helps shape Dudley in a way that puts children first.

Staff affected by Phase Two of the re-design

27. There are 405 contracts across Education, SEND and Family Solutions, and Business Support in scope of the redesign (some individuals may have more than one contract).
28. The re-design of the Directorate will result in a number of posts deleted from the structure. This will mean that some staff will be placed “at risk” of redundancy. The redesign has also created new or replacement posts within the structure which, along with the vacancies currently being held, will mitigate much of the redundancy risk.
29. It is anticipated that the number of staff placed “at risk” of redundancy will be 31 staff.
30. A comprehensive consultation process will therefore be undertaken with the Trade Unions and those staff who are affected by the re-design.
31. It is anticipated that there will be suitable alternative posts available for some of the affected staff, however some staff may ultimately remain at risk of redundancy.
32. In a redundancy situation it is anticipated that the skills of the individuals will result in redeployment and therefore ultimately minimise the number of redundancies. The Managing Employees at Risk of Redundancy policy

and Retraining and Redeployment policies will be followed when consulting with staff. The costs of redundancy will be funded corporately as part of the Council's MTFS savings approval.

Finance

33. Funding for the redesign is within existing directorate budgets, noting the pressures and savings identified in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). Any redundancy costs will be funded corporately as part of the MTFS.

Law

34. The Council may appoint staff as it considers necessary for the discharge of its functions under Section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Risk Management

35. Any risks are being managed through the Project Risk Register.

Equality Impact

36. An initial Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken for service and staffing and the outcome has indicated that a full impact assessment does not appear to be required based upon the information identified.

Human Resources/Organisational Development

37. The timeline for implementation has been set as the 4th December 2023
38. HR&OD have been part of the proposals for the restructure and we have the Directorate HR&OD Business Partners supporting the process. Positions have been sent for evaluation, time and consideration has been spent on working through the new proposed structures.
39. The restructure will be implemented in accordance with the Council's [Managing Employees at Risk of Redundancy Policy](#).
40. Effective and timely consultation will be conducted between the Council and the affected employees in accordance with statutory requirements. The selection process for redundancy will be consulted on and applied where applicable. Redeployment will be considered for all roles where appropriate and placing employees within the service will be the last resort.

41. Communication plans and information/engagement of staff will need to be considered to ensure that everyone is aware of the timelines, different proposals and phases of implementation.
42. Trade Unions will also need to support as part of the process for individuals. Information will be shared with the Trade Unions as part of the consultation process.
43. Frequently asked questions are also being devised to support individuals throughout the process and help give better communication to any related queries.

Commercial/Procurement

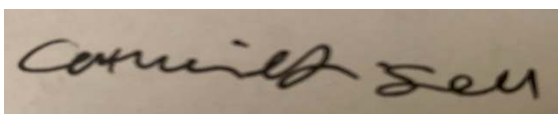
44. There are no commercial or procurement implications to the proposed restructure.

Environment/Climate Change

45. There is no impact in this area.

Council Priorities and Projects

46. The recommendations in this report will support key Council priorities including:
 - Dudley the Safe and Healthy Borough: introducing Family Hubs as part of a broader re-design will ensure that the resources are available to support children and families at the right time and the right place.



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