

Brighton & Hove City Council

Cabinet

Agenda Item 115

Subject: Mid-year Council Plan performance update 2024/25

Date of meeting: 5 December 2024

Report of: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Service Transformation

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Ward(s) affected: All

For general release

1. Purpose of the report and policy context

- 1.1 Our vision is to deliver a better Brighton & Hove for all where everyone can thrive as part of a healthy, fair and inclusive City and this report provides information on the council's progress towards this vision.
- 1.2 Our vision is set out in our Council Plan under 4 outcomes:
 - A city to be proud of
 - A fair and inclusive city
 - A healthy city where people thrive
 - A responsive council with well-run services
- 1.3 The information in the report outlines the progress made against the delivery of each of these outcomes and highlights what we have achieved and challenges and areas of focus.
- 1.4 The report is a key part of council's Performance Management Framework (PMF) which underpins our statutory duty towards continuous improvement.
- 1.5 The PMF directly supports the Council Plan Outcome 4: A responsive council with well-run services – Good governance and financial resilience.
- 1.6 The report also includes our Risk Management Framework and our current Strategic Risks which affect the delivery of the Council Plan. Cabinet is responsible for ensuring that the council has a robust risk management framework in place. Audit, Standards and General Purposes Committee provides assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the risk management framework.

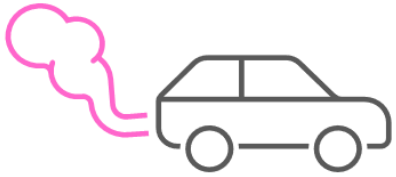
2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet notes the progress made in relation to delivering the Council Plan in 2024/25 as outlined in section 3 and with full details in appendix 1.
- 2.2 Cabinet notes current strategic risks, tabled in section 4, which are managed in line with the Risk Management Framework (appendix 2). Full details of strategic risks are provided in appendix 3.

3. Year-end performance report for 2023/24

- 3.1 The overarching document which sets out the outcomes which the council aims to deliver is [Brighton & Hove City Council's Council Plan 2023 - 2027](#).
- 3.2 Progress towards delivery of the Council Plan outcomes is evidenced by the Corporate KPI results, delivery of the [Corporate Leadership Plan](#) (which are linked to the Council Plan commitments) and updates in relation to other elements of our Performance Management Framework.

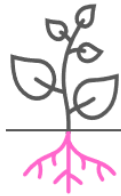
What we've achieved



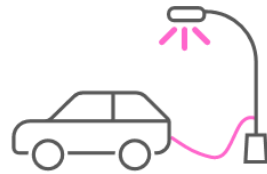
Improvements in air quality across the city (Nitrogen Dioxide levels) from 36.1µg/m³ in Mar 24 to 30.8µg/m³ in Sept 24



Over £3m of investment in creating more accessible and safer streets and footways

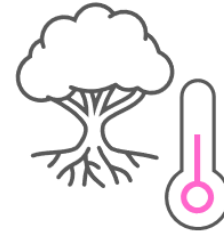


Inspected over 695 miles of highway and treated weeds where needed



Named as the local authority with the best on-street electric vehicle charging coverage in the UK outside of London

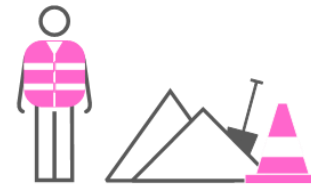
Challenges and areas of focus



Preserving the future of our trees by limiting the spread of disease



Improving the reliability of our refuse and recycling collection service by reducing the number of reported missed collections per 100,000 from 611 to under 512 (*target value*)



£94m backlog of work with £5.1m of additional investment annually required to maintain roads and pavements to their current condition

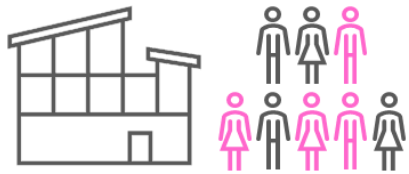


Increase our recycling Rate to from 27.3% to 33.2% and reduce residual household waste from 559kg to below 531kg (*target value*)



Taking action to increase our city's resilience to climate change, improve biodiversity and transition to net zero (*Strategic risk*)

A city to be proud of



Over 850,000 attendances at council owned indoor sports facilities between April and Sept 24, 11% more than the same period in 23



New Economic Plan launched in November 24, which sets out key 'imperatives' to grow the city's economy over the next ten years

A city to be proud of

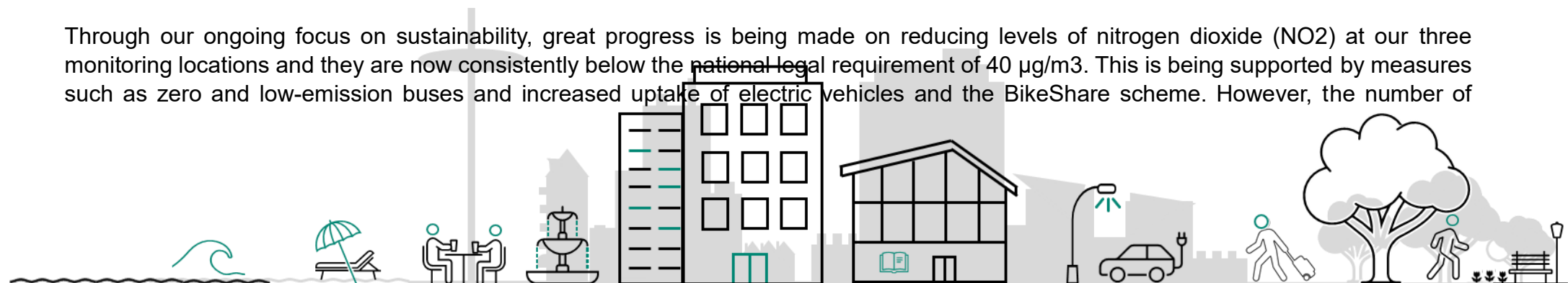
As part of our commitment to developing a flourishing and inclusive local economy we finalised and approved a new three-year Economic Plan for the city during the first half of 2024-25. The Plan aims to build on Brighton & Hove's strengths and adapt to a better future, delivering an economy that is fairer, greener and more productive. It also helps us protect the uniqueness of the city as a creative destination by embedding support for the city's creative and culture sector. As a member of the Local Visitor Economy Partnership, we are collectively working on a strategy for growth to create a brand narrative for the region and attract further investment. Signalling further partnership working and opportunities for economic growth, we also submitted an expression of interest on devolution to government.

Investing in the city to make it a place where people want to live, work and visit continues to be a top priority. All licensing applications have been dealt with on time and 95% of higher-risk food premises have already been inspected. Our Planning service remains high-performing, having decided 93% of major applications over a 24-month period within set timeframes and a low percentage of decisions overturned at appeal. In total this year, £1.7m of road resurfacing works and £1.3m of surface extension treatments (47 roads) have been delivered. A full footway condition survey has been completed and used to carry out lifecycle modelling, however this has identified a significant backlog of footway maintenance.

We continue to invest in the city's cultural and health and wellbeing assets; in the last six months we have granted planning permission for the Royal Pavilion Gardens restoration project, appointed contractors to begin the next phase of restoring Madeira Terrace, and we are undertaking vital roof repairs at the Brighton Museum. We have opened Hove Beach Park wheeled sports area and completed construction of its Outdoor Sports Hub, with tenants in place to occupy the building. Significant steps have also been made with the King Alfred Leisure Centre regeneration project having agreed a site for the new facility. Visitor numbers across our indoor sports facilities remain high with more than 850,000 recorded in the first half of the year.

We continue to protect and enhance the city's natural environment having greatly improved our protection of trees through enhanced enforcement of Tree Protection Orders. We have also focused considerable resource on felling unhealthy trees to limit the spread of disease. Whilst we were unsuccessful in securing external funding for a large nature recovery project on the City Downland estate and heritage project at Stanmer, we have completed significant infrastructure improvements at Stanmer and Preston Parks, making them safer for pedestrians and cyclists.

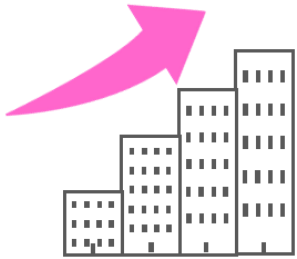
Through our ongoing focus on sustainability, great progress is being made on reducing levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) at our three monitoring locations and they are now consistently below the national legal requirement of 40 µg/m³. This is being supported by measures such as zero and low-emission buses and increased uptake of electric vehicles and the BikeShare scheme. However, the number of



collection vehicles off the road has affected the reliability of our waste service. The number of reported missed collections have been almost 20% higher than our target and rates of recycling are also falling below our target level. Our focus in the coming months will be on waste minimisation and accelerating the service improvement programme to ensure we deliver efficiencies, expand the range of materials that can be recycled and reduce levels of contamination.



What we've achieved



2023/24 saw the highest number of homes delivered (1,075) across the city in a year since 2013. 318 (24%) of those were affordable homes.



'New homes for everyone' strategy approved



104 97.2% of council owned homes meet the government's Decent Homes standard. 0.9% higher than benchmark



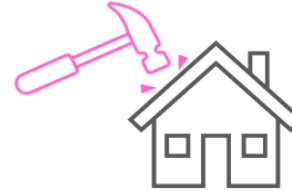
64% [9% above benchmark] of homelessness prevention cases have been closed with a successful prevention outcome, supporting residents into settled accommodation



Thriving Communities Investment Fund approved by Cabinet providing over £7m to deliver the ambitions of the council plan

A fair and inclusive city

Challenges and areas of focus



Increase the number of routine housing repairs completed on time from 50% to 70% (*target value*)
[New jobs are at 67%]



Delivering improvement to the building and fire safety of council homes, with a focus on Large Panel System blocks, following the C3 rating from the Regulator of Social Housing



Improve the telephone and email response times of Housing Needs services to meet the Customer Promise



Reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation from 1,838 to 1,770 (*target value*)



Increase the rent collected from tenants of council owned homes from 92.9% to 95.4% (*target value*)

A fair and inclusive city

A new four-year Thriving Communities Investment Fund was approved by the Cabinet in June 2024. The fund has two main parts: one aims to invest in key voluntary and community sector (VCS) partners, and the other supports grassroots activities to help and empower the city's most marginalized people and communities. This fund supports the council's goal of creating a fairer and more inclusive city. Negotiations for the strategic partnerships will wrap up in the autumn, while the awards for the Community Catalyst Fund for grassroots organizations will be announced in January 2025.

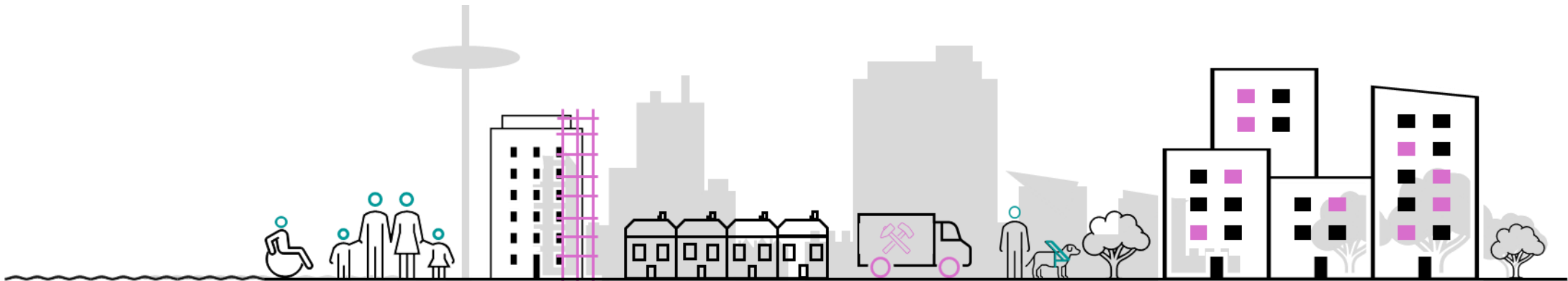
The new Homes for Everyone housing strategy has been approved and it sets out five priorities towards our ambition of tackling the housing crisis, which aim to help focus our efforts to deliver accessible, affordable and high-quality homes for everyone in Brighton & Hove.

There were 1,075 new homes completed in 2023/24, of which 318 (24%) were affordable housing. This is the highest number delivered since 2013 and comfortably above the annualised housing requirement of 660 homes per year. However, due to under-provision in previous years, 890 new homes per year are required to meet the Plan target of 13,200 by 2030.

We are projected to deliver 90 additional affordable homes during this financial year. We have introduced a citywide Additional Licensing Scheme for smaller HMO's and a Selective Licensing Scheme in 4 wards. To date 1,712 applications have been received for additional licensing and 979 for selective licensing. Since April 2024 we have contacted 647 landlords of these 380 have improved their EPC rating to meet the requirements of the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards legislation. We are continuing to invest in building and fire safety to meet our duties under the Building Safety Act 2022 and Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022.

The construction of Brickfields is underway and due for completion in early 2026. It will provide 28 supported housing homes for residents with acquired brain injuries and/or physical disabilities, increasing homes for all in our city, reducing the number of people having to leave the city to find appropriate accommodation to meet their needs.

105

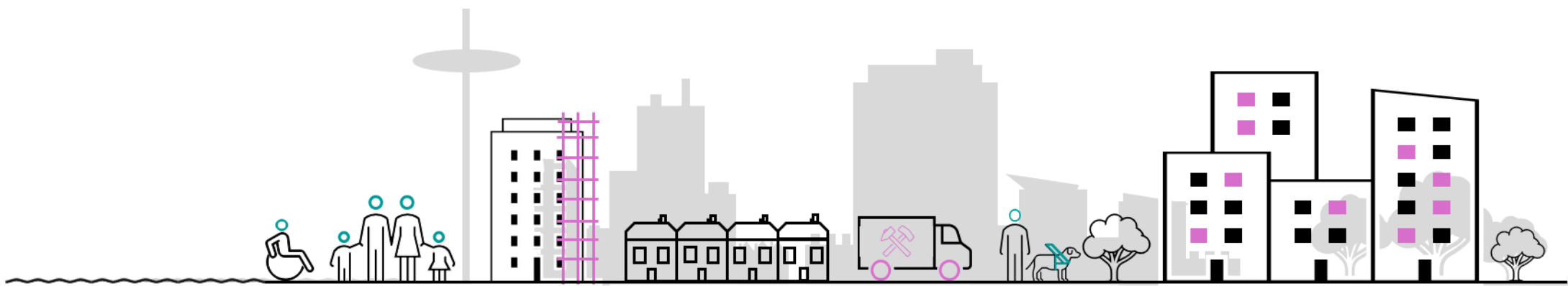


Tenant satisfaction remains over 90% for our Housing Repairs service, however we continue tackling the high volume of repair requests in addition to the number of older backlogged jobs.

The authority continues to experience high demand upon homeless services. Although we have seen an increase of around 3% in temporary accommodation households, but this is much lower than the levels experienced nationally or by comparative local authorities. 47 new temporary accommodation units have been secured with a further 164 projected.

We have embedded a new Housing Advice & Triage 'front door', which has led to 38% increase in Homelessness Preventions, 9% increase in early interventions, 32% increase in emails responses, and 36% reduction in phone waiting times. We have almost doubled the number of applications processed per month on the Housing Register.

The recommissioning of the rough sleeping established services and single homeless pathway has been completed. The count of rough sleepers has reduced over four consecutive months, which contrasts with the rising trend seen in national data.



What we've achieved



Achieved 'Outstanding' rating by Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Children Services



100% of council-run childcare providers rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted

Challenges and areas of focus



Increased complexity in social care cases for adults and children places additional demands on services



Public Health challenges: mental health needs, drug related deaths and deaths by suicide



A healthy city where people thrive



107
Over 89% of adults are physically active, the highest proportion in the country

ABC

Easy read hub created to improve access to information for residents with learning disabilities

Falling numbers of school aged children present significant challenges in school placements and balancing school budgets



Launched school counselling pilot to build on the strengths of our Schools Wellbeing Service



89% [4.5% above benchmark] of Strengthening Family Assessments completed in 45 days, ensuring timely support is initiated to meet family needs



Supporting children at risk of disadvantage through their education to achieve better outcomes



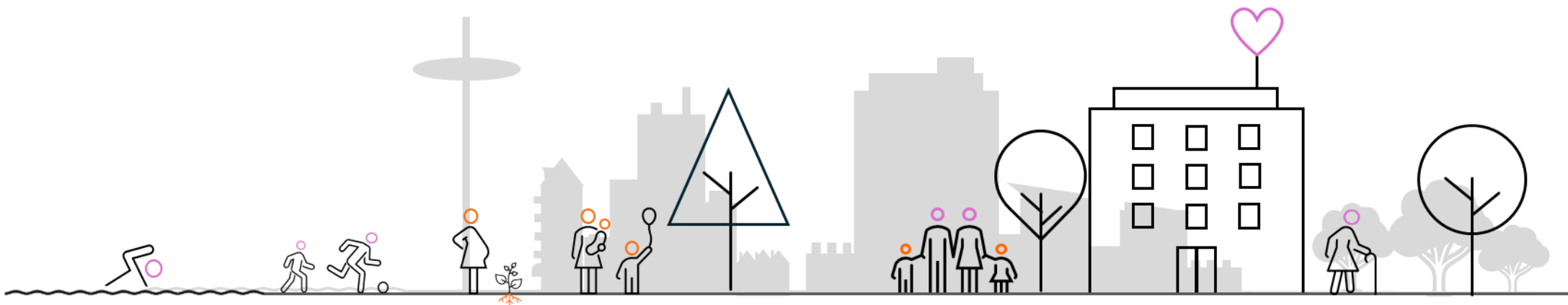
Care Quality Commission inspection for adult social care services

A healthy city where people thrive

Over the last six months we have been gathering feedback and information from our residents on their health and wellbeing. Over 16,500 people responded to the Health Counts Survey, which will be used to understand in detail the health of our residents. This will drive strategies and action planning to improve health and wellbeing outcomes across the city and focus specific work with people who experience most inequality in the city. We have also heard from people and carers who use Adult Social Care services through the NHS Digital surveys and this feedback is being used to refresh our Carers strategy and drive other improvements across our services. Our Learning Disability Partnership Board continue to keep the voice of people with learning disabilities at the heart of implementing our Adult Learning Disability Strategy and the Autism Partnership Board have now started the work of overseeing the implementation of the Adult Autism Strategy. The recently introduced framework for supported living and community support aims to address the existing gaps in service provision. We continue to promote and support the Age & Dementia Friendly business recognition scheme which now has over 60 businesses and organisations signed up. Over 4,000 people attended the Ageing Well Festival designed in collaboration with our Lived Experience Advisory Group. We couldn't do this work without our partners across the health system, independent sector, and the voluntary and community sector.

The city faces significant health and wellbeing challenges, and there are high rates of homelessness, drug-related deaths, and suicides. There is substantial mental health demand among both young people and adults. The need for complex adult social care in younger adults is on the rise, alongside higher market costs, straining the budget further. We have to work even more collaboratively with our partners, who are facing similar challenges, to improve local lives, helping people live healthier longer and ensuring access to essential services.

We remain committed to prioritising prevention, advancing health equity, and reducing inequality. Our efforts are directed towards commissioning and providing quality services and working together with partners and local people to improve health and wellbeing across the city. We are dedicated to supporting the development of the adult social care sector and preparing for forthcoming regulatory inspections by the Care Quality Commission on Adult Social Care. These measures will help us continuously improve services for those with care and support needs.



Families, Children and Learning Services continue to be a heavily inspected and regulated part of council delivery. Our current inspection gradings are 'Outstanding' for the Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (2024), Grade 1 for our Special Educational Needs and Alternative Provision (2023) and 'Outstanding' for our Youth Justice Service (2021).

We are proud of our long-standing continued strong take up of early years places for 2 year olds being well above the national average. Along with 100% of council-run childcare providers rated good or outstanding by Ofsted this means many of our most vulnerable children in the city can access the right support and development opportunities.

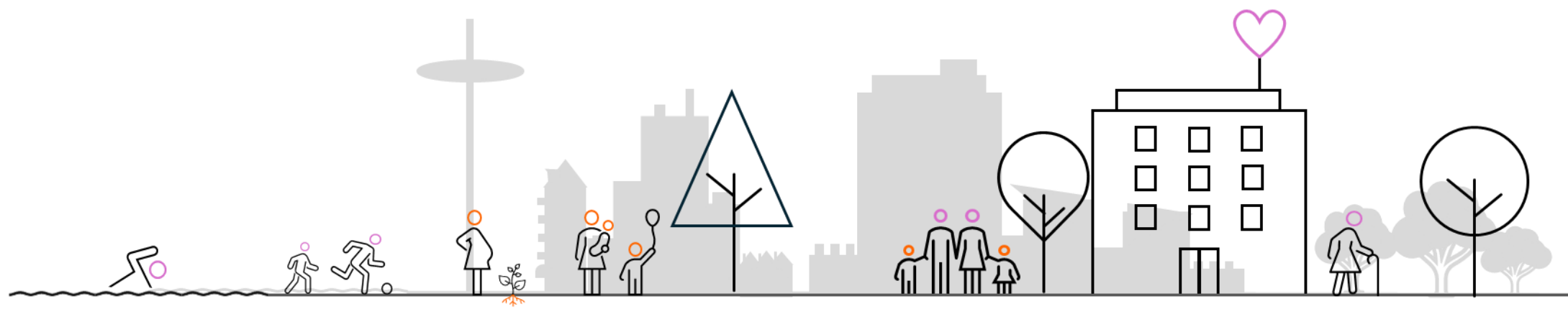
This focus on supporting children at risk of disadvantage continues through their education and remains a high priority and an area of challenge. Effective implementation of the Strategy to tackle educational disadvantage is a key tool in this important area as is the city's SEND Strategy and our work around Anti-Racist Education.

Requests for Education, Health and Care Plans continue to rise and whilst we are still performing above national average for response times, we need to continue to respond to those increasing requests.

We also continue to see an increase in the complexity of need within our social care cases which results in even more pressure upon available suitable placements. We are exploring involvement in the new Regional Care Cooperative to enable greater placement options and opportunities, already utilising some available funding to create some new specialist care placements for disabled children with complex needs.

For children who are entering the social care system we are quicker at turning around their initial assessments, ensuring the right support and plans are in place earlier.

Our school counselling pilot, which builds on the strengths already provided through our Schools Wellbeing Service, is one of the new ways in which we seek to support children and young people.



Managing school budgets is a significant and growing area of concern with more of our city schools facing deficits and requiring budget recovery plans. The implementation of these plans requires careful monitoring to ensure they are delivered. This is in the context of the rising needs of children and young people, as outlined above. Coupled with falling numbers of school aged children in the city there are significant challenges facing our city schools. We are implementing a new School Organisation Strategy to work in partnership with education leaders to tackle these issues.

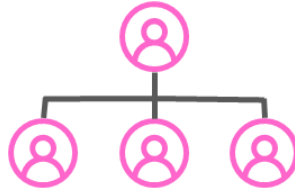
We are proud and excited by the cross-council and partnership work that has enabled the capital investment and works around Brighton Youth Centre and the modular build in the Hangleton and Knoll area.



What we've achieved



Named LLG Legal Service of the year in June 24 for outstanding work in recovering costs, leading judicial review, and promoting well-being, inclusivity, and talent retention



Organisational redesign concluded to achieve 'a better Brighton & Hove for all' and over £1.2m of savings

- ↑↑ Improvement in our workforce profile in Sept 2024 compared to Sept 2023
- > BME from 10.4% to 11.6% [City 12.1%]
- > Disability 8.8% to 9.8% [City 11.7%]
- > LGBT 15.28% to 15.65% [City 12.2%]



A responsive council with well-run services

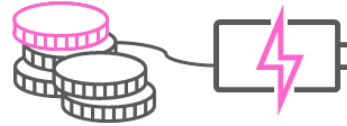


6% better than the national average for complaints upheld by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman in 2023/24



Established the Poverty Reduction Steering Group to improve targeting of support and develop a preventative approach.

Challenges and areas of focus



Financial sustainability & organisational capacity
(Strategic risks)



Reduce the average number of working days lost to sickness from 11.81 to 10.9 (target value)



Improve telephone and digital response times of Council Tax service to meet the Customer Promise



Strengthening governance controls to improve from 'partial assurance' to 'reasonable assurance'



Digital data & technology governance



Improve our Stage 1 complaint response rate from 74.6% to 80% (target value) and reduce our Stage 1 to Stage 2 escalation rate from 11.5% to under 10% (target value)

A responsive council with well-run services

Our ambition to be a responsive council with well-run services underpins the delivery of the rest of our Council Plan, ensuring that resources are focused on the right areas to deliver a better Brighton & Hove for all.

Our Legal Services were awarded the Lawyers in Local Government (LLG) Legal Team of the Year Award for their outstanding work in recovering costs for securing the Grade II listed Royal Albion Hotel, leading judicial review challenging on Home Office policy, and promoting well-being, inclusivity, and talent retention within our authority.

We have concluded an organisational redesign to shape the future of the council and deliver 'a better Brighton & Hove for all' along with over £1.2m in savings.

We established a new Poverty Reduction Steering Group in August that aims to bring together all areas of the council to review our holistic support and practice, undertake research through the Policy Team to inform policy development and analyse data provided by the council and partners to improve targeting of support and develop a preventative approach.

We have seen improvement in our workforce profile with the rates of BME (from 10.4% to 11.6%), disabled (from 8.8% to 9.8%) and LGBT (from 15.28% to 15.65%) staff all increasing when comparing data from September 2023 to September 2024, however, further improvement is still required for BME and disabled staff to align with the city demographic (BME 12.1% and Disability 11.7%) and be more reflective of the communities we serve.

There are still a number of challenges to address, such as improving customer services in our Council Tax service, and we continue to see an increase in complaints received across the council, in line with national trends. We have been working hard to improve our internal



processes to provide faster and more comprehensive responses. Where complaints were escalated to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman in 2023/24, we performed 6% better than the average for similar authorities in the rate of upheld complaints.

Increasing costs and demands across council services mean that significant challenges remain in delivering a Medium Term Financial Plan to ensure the financial sustainability and resilience of the council and this will be a focus of the budget setting process for 2025/26 over the coming months.

A key area of work over the next six months is to strengthen our governance controls in response to the 'partial assurance' rating delivered by internal audit in 2023/24. A particular area of focus is aligning our digital, data and technology governance to ensure we focus on supporting the delivery of council plan priorities and modernisation of service delivery.



4. Strategic Risks

- 4.1 The council operates a Risk Management Framework, detailed in appendix 2, which outlines the process and controls in place to manage risks that may impact the council’s ability to deliver the Council Plan.
- 4.2 Our Risk Management approach was audited in 2023/24 and received ‘substantial assurance’. The purpose of the audit was to provide assurances that the controls are in place to meet the following objectives:
- Actions are identified in response to the Council’s strategic risks are implemented fully and timeously
 - Strategic risk registers are updated regularly and provide clear communication to senior management, on the progress of actions. This would include where actions are implemented, in progress, have been delayed or need to be changed.
- 4.3 Going forward, the intention is to include ‘Risk Implications’ section in all cabinet reports to detail the identified risks and management.
- 4.4 The below table contains the current strategic risks, their initial risk score and their target risk score (Likelihood x Impact). The full Strategic Risk Register is detailed in appendix 3.

Risk Ref and Owner	Risk Title	Initial Risk Score	Target Risk Score
SR25 Corporate Director Corporate Services	Failure to use the council’s resources and capabilities to deliver the Council Plan and adapt to the evolving needs of the city	25 5 x 5	20 5 x 4
SR02 Chief Finance Officer	Failure to develop and deliver a Medium-term financial strategy (MTFS) to ensure financial sustainability and resilience	20 5 x 4	16 4 x 4
SR38 Corporate Director City Services	Failure to take effective action to increase our city’s resilience to climate change, improve biodiversity and transition to net zero	20 5 x 4	15 5 x 3

SR10 Corporate Director Corporate Services	Failure to adequately protect information assets from a successful cyber-attack impacting our ability to deliver a responsive council with well-run services	16 4 x 4	12 3 x 4
SR18 Corporate Director Corporate Services	Failure to invest in and maximise use of digital technology to enable a responsive council with well-run services	16 4 x 4	12 3 x 4
SR13 Corporate Director Housing, Care & Wellbeing	Failure to ensure effective safeguarding arrangements to keep adults safe	16 4 x 4	12 3 x 4
SR15 Corporate Director Families, Children & Learning	Failure to ensure effective safeguarding arrangements to keep children and young people safe from harm and neglect	16 4 x 4	12 3 x 4
SR21 Corporate Director Housing, Care & Wellbeing	Failure to optimise council housing stock, make best use of available housing in the city and deliver new affordable homes	16 4 x 4	12 4 x 3
SR24 Corporate Director Corporate Services	Failure to provide a coordinated approach to ensure equity of access, outcomes and experiences for all	12 4 x 3	9 3 x 3
SR39 Corporate Director Housing, Care & Wellbeing	Failure to maintain building and fire safety of council homes and property	New risk: scores under development	
SR40 Corporate Director City Services	Failure to deliver an accessible, clean, and well maintained city that develops a flourishing and inclusive local economy	New risk: scores under development	

5. Analysis and consideration of alternative options

- 5.1 Appendix 1 provides the supporting information to section 3 and further details on council performance. Information in appendix 1 has been analysed to provide summary of performance updates included in section 3.
- 5.2 Appendix 2 provides the council's approach to managing risks and Appendix 3 includes further details on the current strategic risks which feeds into developing summary of performance updates included in section 3.

6. Community engagement and consultation

- 6.1 This is an internal performance reporting mechanism and as such no engagement or consultation has been undertaken in this regard.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The council believes it has a robust Performance Management Framework as evidenced by this report to meet the challenges of delivering the Council Plan in the financial context that local authorities are now working in.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from the recommendations of the report, however, addressing performance and risk issues may require additional resources that can have financial consequences for services which will be considered by the relevant directorate in managing its overall budget position.
- 8.2 Where performance remains sub-optimal, despite implementing improvement actions, the financial implications for the longer-term improvement of services may need to be considered for inclusion in future years' budget setting processes and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
- 8.3 More generally, poor performance and/or a lack of robust actions to treat identified risks can result in poor value for money or financial loss to the authority. The external auditor will therefore seek evidence, as provided in this report, that demonstrates the authority has an effective framework for monitoring, reporting and managing performance and risk.

Name of finance officer consulted: Nigel Manvell

Date consulted: 19/11/2024

9. Legal implications

- 9.1 The Risk Management Framework described here and the actions reported on are a key part of the arrangements put in place by the council to ensure that it meets its general duty (pursuant to section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999) to ensure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions.
- 9.2 No other direct legal implications have been identified.

Name of lawyer consulted: Elizabeth Culbert

Date consulted: 22/11/2024

10. Equalities implications

- 10.1 Being a fair and inclusive council is one of the four outcomes of the Council Plan as outlined above in section 3, and with equalities related actions within the Corporate Leadership Plan, detailed in appendix 1.
- 10.2 The council monitors workforce profiles for groups with protected characteristics through the PMF and Corporate KPIs detailed in appendix 1.

11. Sustainability implications

- 11.1. There are a number of actions directly linked to sustainability within the Corporate Leadership Plan, detailed in appendix 1.
- 11.2. Sustainability related KPI measures are included within this report, detailed in appendix 1. These relate to:
 - % of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting
 - % of municipal waste landfilled
 - Nitrogen Dioxide levels in Brighton and Hove ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ - micrograms per cubic meter): Lewes Road, North Street and Wellington Road
- 11.3 The council has a strategic risk linked to Net Zero and the adaptation and mitigation of climate change detailed in appendix 3.

12. Other Implications

Social Value and procurement implications

- 12.1 We are committed to working with suppliers who share our values and align their own vision with our priorities, ensuring each commissioning and procurement exercise we undertake includes an element of social value to create a positive impact on our local economy, environment and communities. We do this by agreeing social value action plans with contractors and monitoring social value outcomes, alongside other key performance indicators, at contract performance meetings.

Through building social value outcomes into key contracts our suppliers are delivering workplace apprenticeships, trainee placement days, and work experience programmes in the city. Some are committed to employing significant numbers of their workforce locally and from particular groups, such as ex forces or the homeless community, and are working towards becoming accredited as age and dementia-friendly employers. Others are training their staff, who are out on the city's streets, to be CPR-certified; donating funds and equipment to charities and schools in the city; sharing industry-specific training and knowledge free of charge; and giving staff time, skills and labour to make physical improvements across the city. No further significant implications arising from this report.

Crime & disorder implications:

12.2 No further significant implications arising from this report.

Public health implications:

12.3 There are a number of actions directly linked to public health within the Corporate Leadership Plan, detailed in appendix 1.

Supporting Documentation

1. Appendices

1. Mid-year Council Plan performance update 2024/25: supporting information
2. Risk Management Framework
3. Strategic Risk Register