



City of Doncaster Council

Report

Date: 28th March 2024

To the Chair and Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee

2023-24 Quarter 3 Finance and Performance Improvement Report

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision?
Mayor Ros Jones Cllr Phil Cole	All	Yes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. As we end quarter three and enter 2024, we are starting discussions on our new budget and corporate plan. The Local Government sector has seen well documented examples of significant difficulties with increasing demands and rising costs portrayed in the national media. Doncaster has, and continues, to face difficult choices but a continued focus on performance, value for money and the achievement of efficiencies is essential to our ongoing delivery for residents and business across the City.
2. Continued conflict in Ukraine and in the middle east contribute to how people are feeling in the UK and will have an impact on world prices in the medium term. The Employment and wage rates are relatively stable and close to the regional average, but the inflationary pressures are still having impact, even though they are falling - levels remain at 4% (CPI December 23). The 'Cost of Living' pressures continue and although some easing, many will still see increasing costs and will be taking difficult decisions as a result.
3. The Council continues to be impacted by these inflationary pressures, however, is managing the position and this is reflected in the balanced position forecast on the revenue budget, at quarter 3. There remain several key pressures, namely overspends on both adults and children's social care costs significantly exceeding budgets, full details on the main variances are provided in paragraphs 134 to 155. It is by using over £4.0m of non-recurrent underspends, including additional one-

off grant funding allocated, that the overspend has been reduced and a balanced position is forecast.

4. The position has improved since quarter 2 (when a £1.7m overspend was projected) largely through the inclusion of the additional one-off grant funding, including -£1.35m additional Top Up Grant and -£0.64m business rate levy surplus included in the local government finance settlement.
5. We continue to explore all options to reopen a functioning airport in Doncaster and a key report was taken to South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority on the 13 February which provided the Outline Business Case and next steps. This is an ongoing piece of work and updates will be released at the appropriate time and in line with key developments.
6. Our Budget and Corporate Plan outlines the investment and savings the Council needs to find whilst also delivering against our 'Great 8 Priorities'. The quality of our Performance and Financial information contained within these reports will enable the Council to be effective and where appropriate address improvement areas so that we continue to deliver for the residents of Doncaster. A new budget and Corporate Plan for 2024-25 is due at Council for agreement in February 24.

EXEMPT REPORT

7. This report is not exempt

RECOMMENDATIONS

8. The Chair and Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee are asked to note and comment on the quarter 3 performance and financial information.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?



TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE

Service Standard	Quarter 2 23-24	Quarter 3 23-24	Target	RAG	D.O.T (long)
(PLA) Area (m2) of Local Authority Land Allowed to Naturalise / Wildflower	1,555,737	1,555,737	1,550,000		
(PLA) Successful household waste and recycling collections	99.95%	99.89%	99.9%		
(PLA) Number of homes retrofitted to improve energy efficiency (cumulative)	154	339	640		

What is going well?

- The Authority continues in the third year of the naturalisation trial. Three of the naturalisation sites have attracted net-gain monies, and work on these sites have been undertaken during quarter 3; this includes sites being cut, arisings removed, and the areas scarified and sown with a variety of seed mixes. A range of information is being gathered and monitored from 4 sites where maintenance varies (regular mown, annually mown and areas left), including Ph levels, soil temperatures at varying depths and ground compaction. Over 100,000 plant bulbs have been ordered and planted to increase the diversity within naturalised sites over this winter.
- We continue to sustain a very high standard in relation to the successful collections of household waste and recycling in this period, with the figure at 99.89% in this quarter, compared to 99.95% in the previous quarter. The figure has remained consistently high since the contract with SUEZ started in 2018.

What needs further improvement?

- There are currently 4 housing retrofit schemes in place. 2023-24 target of 640 homes to be retrofitted across the 4 schemes, each scheme is broken down below:
 - Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.** SLHD thermal improvement programme – target of 250 homes - 94 complete to date. Note this project has been delayed by over 3 months due to a change in location and issues with supply chain.
 - The Great British Insulation Scheme (ECO Plus),** expected to start in August – target of 300 homes. We are currently unable to report on the performance of this project which started mid September and no data has been shared by DESNZ.
 - ECO4 – 50 homes target** - 216 complete to date
 - Boiler on Prescription** – 40 homes target - 29 complete to date

12. 339 homes have been completed to date (660 home energy improvements). The target is offtrack due to a combination of unavailable data and delayed mobilisation on site of two major schemes. However, there are 339 households who have benefited from insulation and heating improvements of significant value in their homes, with improved comfort and lower heating bills.
13. Of the 4 schemes, 2 are over performing. One scheme is lacking data due to lack of sharing by government. We are lobbying DESNZ for the missing data.
14. The Council's Thermal Improvement Programme is behind schedule and will not deliver its target of 250 homes, but is likely to achieve around 150.
15. Current forecast for year-end would be to achieve works to around 500 of the 640 home target.



DEVELOPING THE SKILLS TO THRIVE IN LIFE & WORK

Service Standard	Quarter 2 23-24	Quarter 3 23-24	Target	RAG	D.O.T (long)
(CYP&F) % of Children with First Choice School Placement in Secondary	87% Academic figures for 2023-24	Annual Figure in Q1 Only	85%	✓	↓
(CYP&F) % of Children with First Choice School Placement in Primary	95.9% Academic figures for 2023-24	Annual Figure in Q1 Only	95%	✓	↓
(CYP&F) % of 16/17 year olds not meeting the duty to participate	6.5%	5.6%	8%	✓	↓
(CYP&F) Special Educational Needs Team - Education, Health and Care Plans Issued Within 20 Weeks EXCLUDING Exception Cases	36.51%	58.06%	50.70%	✓	↑
(CYP&F) Secondary schools' persistent absent rate (10% Absenteeism)	29%	27.6%	26%	⚠	↑
(CYP&F) The number of children in Elective Home Education	571	658	575	✗	↓
(CYP&F) % of Children missing in education where referrals are closed following case work.	52.61%	58%	70%	✗	↑
(CEX) Number of Refugees (both asylum and resettlement) supported into ESOL and/or Employment	123	78	-	📊	↑

What is going well?

16. The number of Education and Health Care Plans issued within 20 weeks has risen significantly from 36.51% in quarter 2 to 58.06% in quarter 3, the highest

completion rate since quarter 2 21/22. This was achieved due to an increase in resource in the SEND team.

17. The Participation & Transition Service continues to carry out robust destination tracking and monitoring of the Year 12 and 13 cohort in line with statutory requirements. The cohort for December 2023 was 7,365 an increase of 180 young people (16-18) from December 2022. Doncaster's average of 16/17 year olds not meeting the duty to participate in education, employment, or training (NEET) is 5.6% for quarter 3 (National: 10.2%; Yorkshire and Humber: 8.7%). The number of young people with an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) and a recorded destination of not meeting the duty to participate in education, employment or training (NEET) decreased to 96 (3.63%) in December 23 (from 97 (3.78%) in October 23).

18. As part of the Education and Skills 2030 strategy, a programme was developed to ensure equitable and inclusive learning opportunities for all. The activities below are part of key activities to support the strategies 5 priorities i.e. Best Start, Accelerating Achievement, Post 16, pathways to employment and equity and inclusion. This is further underpinned by the development of a Talent Innovation Eco-system. Key areas of progress are shown below:
 - Work to develop a Doncaster Skills Profile continues at pace.
 - We have now a number of Continuing Professional Development sessions with school and college leaders to consider how the profile can be embedded into their respective curriculums and what to design a prototype profile. Future sessions are planned for February, March and April. We have designed a number of workshops to engage employers from across Health & Care and Digital & Creative.
 - We are currently planning for our second Remake Learning Days Festival, which is scheduled to take place between 22nd and 31st May 2024, as well as an additional 'pop up' event to take place in Mexborough between 12th and 15th February.
 - We have been working to secure a new offer at the building on Carolina Way which formerly hosted the National College for Advanced Transport and Infrastructure and hope to announce details of the new occupant and offer in the next couple of months.
 - The Council has taken on responsibility for running the Apprenticeships Support and Knowledge (ASK), re-invested in the Zero Gravity to make these higher-education access programmes available to all year 12 students.
 - We have submitted a series of proposals under the 'People and Skills' element of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to provide additional activity to support the move into and progression within employment. This includes continued funding of the Youth Hub and Advance services, as well as new activity under a 'Skills Innovation Accelerator' Programme.

19. In the capital programme the works at the Oakwood short break centre are now fully complete.

What needs further improvement?

20. Persistent absence in secondary schools has reduced slightly compared with the same point last year, and in Doncaster it has fallen by more than most Local Authorities. Our ranking is 119 out of 151, which is better than at the same point last year.
21. The number of children who are electively home educated have been as high as 658 this quarter. There have also been a high number of referrals into the service mainly from secondary schools this quarter from parents who are wishing to home educate their children. (the highest being 9 from Trinity academy). Compared to the same quarter last year this is an increase of around 100 young people. The reasons for young people becoming home educated include, parents choosing this because of ethical reasons, not being happy with their current school, making the decision because it is the right decision to support their child's mental health.
22. Officers support parents to make the right choices at the point where the parent informs the school they are deciding to home educate. EHE officers work closely with the family in the first instance to make sure they are fully aware of the responsibility they have when home schooling their children and signpost them to where they can get advice and guidance.
23. Officers check evidence sent in regarding suitability of the education being delivered by the parents and where we deem the education not to be suitable for the child's age, ability and aptitude our officers work with the parent initially to support them to educate their child, or help them apply to return to school or in exceptional circumstances issue a school attendance order through the courts. Once a child is identified to return to school we offer Big picture as an option of supported reintegration back into the mainstream school. In some cases we do have resistance from mainstream academies to re-admit the young person, in this case we ask the standards and effectiveness team to support or challenge the school where necessary.
24. Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school or being electively home educated. This can include children who are moving out of Doncaster into another area, children who have moved abroad, children who have moved into Doncaster and have not applied for a school roll.
25. Schools refer children who leave their school into the attendance and pupil welfare service via an online portal. Where referrals come into the service, they are quickly allocated to officers who contact the parents via telephone or home visits. Information sharing such as benefit checks are done to ascertain the whereabouts of the child. When schools report children have moved out of Doncaster, we work jointly with other Local authorities to make sure we know where the children are and who is safeguarding their welfare after their move; it is only when we are confident that they are in education elsewhere that we remove them from our register. In quarter 3 the team closed 544 (58%) of open cases,

leaving 306 children Missing in Education. These cases will also include children who leave our schools and are under the admissions process in another authority where we hold the case until, we have confirmation that they have enrolled in school.





26. Children missing education (CME) numbers fluctuate week to week as schools refer into the service and our officers do the checks and close the cases (some weeks up to 30 cases are closed when children are confirmed as starting a new school in another area or where they have moved abroad or are identified as attendance issues rather than CME)

27. The Children in Care cohort, Year 12 and 13 caseload currently stands at 171. Of this quarters Year 13 cohort, 40% are out of area and 43% are Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC), a slight rise on quarter 2. There has recently been an influx of UASC mainly in this year group who require support for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) either locally or in the area they are placed. The virtual school continues to effectively support young people to access ESOL courses at colleges or 1:1 in house tuition. The virtual School collaborates with professionals and training providers to support young people with future planning and progression however if they do not meet the duty to participate in education, employment or training (NEET) a referral to Careers support is made to help them with their next steps. The current NEET rate for Year 12 is 20% and Year 13 at 27%. The increase for Y12 will reflect the dropout figures collated from Further Education establishments between October and December 2023.



MAKING DONCASTER THE BEST PLACE TO DO BUSINESS & CREATE GOOD JOBS

Service Standard	Quarter 2 23-24	Quarter 3 23-24	Target	RAG	D.O.T (long)
(CR) Percentage of Non-domestic Rates Collected	97.97%	97.46%	97.30%	🟢	⬆️
(PLA) Increase in city centre footfall figures through the economic recovery plan work	3,615,173	3,522,760	3,400,000	🟢	⬆️
(PLA) Processing of Planning Applications: Major Applications	91.49%	92.06%	94.00%	🟡	⬆️
(CR) % of Local Authority Spend with Doncaster Companies/ Suppliers	64	67	70	🟡	⬇️
(PLA) No. of new jobs FTE equivalent jobs created in the borough with a salary level of over £31k per year through Business Doncaster inward investment, property, and key account activity (average salary from ONS)	115	129	130	🟡	⬆️
(PLA) Overall Investment Gained (into and within Doncaster)	£44.83m	£19.67m	£35m	🔴	⬇️

Service Standard	Quarter 2 23-24	Quarter 3 23-24	Target	RAG	D.O.T (long)
(PLA) Overall new inward investment gained into Doncaster with the support of Business Doncaster	£19.68m	£14.24m	£25m		
(AWC) Number of People with a Learning Disability Helped into Work	4.13%	4.14%	5.1%		

What is going well?

28. In the first three quarters of the year 76.48% of the total debit has been collected. This compares with 76.27% at the same time in 2022/23. This is despite a backlog of work, which has now been reduced and means collection remains on track to maintain its target position.
29. At the end of quarter 3 there were 129 new jobs created over £31,000 salary per annum facilitated by Business Doncaster, compared to 115 in quarter 2, which is right on target. Of the new jobs created, 26 are in the manufacturing sector, 43 in green technology, 17 in CDI, 23 in logistics, 15 in the leisure sector, 3 in construction and 2 in health technologies. It is anticipated that the target for the year will be reached at the end of quarter 4.
30. At the end of quarter 3, footfall figures into the city centre remain 6.7% above target. All three months in quarter 3 footfall were slightly above the target figure, and December saw the biggest footfall of the year, as expected, helped by the Frost Festival and Penguin Trail. The final week before Christmas saw a 15.2% increase in footfall compared to that same week in the previous year (2022); 27.3% more than the weekly average over the year, 4.1% above the North and Yorkshire average and 1.4% more than the UK Average, which is a great achievement.

What needs further improvement?

31. This quarter performance for numbers with a learning disability (LD) helped into work remains static at 4.14% (this amounts to 35 people), just slightly below the regional (Yorkshire & Humber) average of 4.8%. Plans developed by the Employment Working Group are driving activity to increase the number of disabled people (including individuals with a learning disability) to obtain paid employment. The Local Supported Employment (LSE) programme now has 15 people with a learning disability enrolled on the programme, 1 person employed, 2 people entering employment next quarter, 2 in volunteering roles and 3 going onto apprenticeships. The ambition of the programme is to support 28 adults with a LD (known to ASC) into paid employment over a 2 year period.
32. We expect to see this indicator improve and reach our target (of being in line with the Y&H average) by quarter 2 of 24/25. The work to support adults with a disability to obtain and sustain employment however is much wider and broader than the LSE programme. Activity also includes development of supported internships in the council, reviewing our council recruitment practices in line with feedback from

people with lived experience to remove barriers to people with a LD from obtaining employment and work with organisations / employers via an employment forum to support organisations to become more disability friendly.

33. An employer's forum has also been established support organisations/employers to become more disability friendly. Adults, Wellbeing and Culture will develop plans to provide leadership and support for employers, employing people with a learning disability or autism. The Making it Real Board will work alongside the workstream to support delivery.
34. The service standard focuses on people with a learning disability who are in contact with Adult Social Care who are supported to gain employment, further work linked to data validation will progress in quarter 4.
35. Overall recorded investment into the city at the end of quarter 3 stands at £79.8 million which is below target. Major investment for the period was from Europool Systems, a new logistics-based investor at the IPort. A split of the £79.8 million is 51.7% assisted investment by Business Doncaster and 48.3% unassisted. The pipeline of investment remains strong, and with several speculative industrial developments expected. The quarter 4 target is still expected to be exceeded at the end of the financial year.
36. At the end of quarter 3 the figure for new inward investment stands at £34.4million, which is below target. However, there have been four big new investments during the quarter, and the pipeline of potential new investment does remain strong. During the period there has been a digital marketing campaign initiated aimed at new investors, and with a number of speculative property developments due to be completed, it is expected that the annual target will be exceeded at the end of quarter 4.
37. At the end of quarter 3 the determination rate for the processing of planning applications was 92.06%, exceeding the 60% national target, but slightly below than the 94% internal stretch target. Put into context, that figure is a result of 5 applications not hitting the determination (or where applicable the agreed extension of times (EOT) date). This figure relies largely on agreement with the applicant. This need to agree an EOT on major applications is not unusual, as many applications are complex by their very nature and commonly require on-going negotiations e.g., Section 106 agreements and committee approvals to seek a positive resolution on the proposals. The Government allows extensions of time for these eventualities. If extensions of time were not taken into consideration our performance for major applications would be 15.87%, which is comparable with last quarter (this figure was at 15% in quarter 2).



BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR HEALTHIER, HAPPIER & LONGER LIVES FOR ALL

Service Standard	Quarter 2 23-24	Quarter 3 23-24	Target	RAG	D.O.T (long)
(AWC) Permanent admissions to residential and nursing care homes, per 100,000 population (18-64 Only)	7.02	9.72	14.09	✓	↓
(AWC) Percentage of Adult Social Care provision rated as Good or Outstanding by the Care Quality Commission	75.17%	70.94%	75%	✓	↓
(CEX) Sexual Health Service: Percentage of contraception that is LARC (Long Acting Reversible Contraceptives)	33%	-	28%	✓	↓
(CEX) Health Visiting: percentage of new birth visits completed within 14 days (Universal Partnership Plus families)	99%	98.3%	90%	✓	↑
(AWC) Duration to complete Adult Social Care Needs Assessment (days) MEDIAN AVERAGE	42	32	42	✓	↑
(CEX) The % mothers quit Smoking during pregnancy	100%	-	85%	✓	↑
(CEX) Tobacco Control: Percentage 4 week quit rate recorded by the Yorkshire Smoke-free service for Doncaster residents	71.1%	70.6%	50%	✓	↑
(AWC) We will ensure you have an annual review of your care	75%	75%	75%	✓	↓
(AWC) Permanent admissions to residential and nursing care homes, per 100,000 population (65+ Only)	153.6	155.3	166.8	✓	↑
(AWC) Proportion of Adults with Learning Disabilities Who Live in Their Own Home or With Their Family	81%	80.2%	81%	⚠	↑
(CEX) Substance misuse service: Percentage of alcohol treatment successful completions residents	-	36.8%	37%	⚠	↓
(AWC) % of people who are still at home 91 days after their period of re-enablement	75.6	77.4	81.0	⚠	↑
(AWC) EDI Percentage of Adult Social Care request for where ethnicity recorded	83.5%	83.5%	100%	⛔	↑
(AWC) Number of Carers Assessments Completed	104	75	-	📊	↑
(AWC) Average number of days from request to adaptation completed (MEDIAN)	67	62	TBC	-	↓
(AWC) Duration to complete OT assessment (days) MEDIAN	2	1	TBC	-	↑

What is going well?

38. New Birth Visits' is a significant core element of the Healthy Child Programme, with the ambition of a Health Worker visit taking place 10-14 days post-delivery, enabling a midwife and health visitor the opportunity to work in partnership to assess health needs. By local agreement, multiple (2nd+ child) families on universal pathway are not included in this calculation. The percentage of new birth visits completed is above target as quarter 3 data shows performance at 99.1%, and the target for all families to have a visit within 21 days after birth is 95%.
39. The Yorkshire Smoke Free service provides smoking cessation services to people in Doncaster. The service can be accessed directly, or people can be referred by a health professional or community service. The latest data shows that the current success rate is 70.6%, compared to 71.1% in the previous quarter, exceeding the 4-week quit rate target once again (50%).
40. Approximately 30% of pregnancies are unplanned, attributed to the effectiveness of some contraceptive methods. By contrast, the effectiveness of long-acting reversible contraceptive (LARC) methods and their increased uptake could help to reduce unintended pregnancy. In quarter 3 for the percentage of people who are being administered LARC has risen to 33%. The service continues to promote LARC as a contraception choice and will continue to do so through a variety of ways including taking forward the recommendations highlighted in the recent audit with GP practices. It is also hoped the newly established community clinics hosted within some Family Hub buildings will continue to have a positive impact on LARC provision and uptake.
41. The percentage of Mothers who quit smoking had seen a decline in previous quarters; in Doncaster we were way behind the target figure of 85%, reporting a 62% success rate in previous quarter. This was attributed to people identified in the period not undertaking the CO2 verification which is patient choice (declined face to face visits and no access visit) which required to verify quitting. A more consistent approach to following up quit attempts to ensure that families receive the support they need to quit during a pregnancy and refrain from smoking beyond the birth of the baby. We are really pleased to see 100% of verified mothers quit in this quarter. The provider has been making additional efforts to ensure mothers who report remaining smokefree at 4 weeks are verified by CO2 monitor to give a more accurate indication of sustained quit. We hope this substantial increase can be sustained into the future.
42. Quarter 3 has seen a further reduction in assessment waiting times linked to the implementation of the new approach to accessing adult social care, reducing from a median average of 42 days to 32 days. The aim is to sustain the median average of 32 days during quarter 4 as a new adult safeguarding model is trialled with safeguarding functions moving into the Central Locality Team and Mental Health Team commencing in April 2024.
43. We have maintained a consistent 75% performance regarding the number of people who have received an annual review of their care and support arrangements in quarter 3. During quarter 4 changes will be made to the referral

process into the Occupational Therapy service, this may impact reporting figures but will be monitored closely.

44. The median average time for an OT assessment to be completed is now one day, in line with the target for all new referrals to be assessed within 48 hours.
45. The number of permanent admissions to residential care for working age adults (aged 18-64 years) remains on track although has still been increasing marginally. Quarter 4 will be critical as it is generally a time when care providers seek fee increases. Staff have received support on how to use an evidence-driven approach to discuss reasonable fee rates with care providers in these circumstances and to maintain focus on helping people receive the least restrictive support that enable their personal safety, choice and control.
46. The number of admissions to residential care for older people (aged 65 years and over) is on target and performance has improved in quarter 3. A weekly practice forum enables discussions as to why placements are proposed and if alternative support options have been considered, this forum will track interventions on a quarterly basis to improve/inform practice.
47. The number of people supported by Council Reablement Services who are still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital has seen an increase in the last quarter rising from 75.6% to 77.4%. Significant work has been completed to improve data quality, however there are still ongoing issues around collection of data from external organisations commissioned to deliver reablement services, this is being addressed through the Home First Board. Current Doncaster performance is below our local target but is in line with the national average

What needs further improvement?

48. The alcohol early interventions team in Aspire works preventatively with people who have identified themselves as being at increasing/harmful alcohol risk. Successful completion of an alcohol treatment programme and freedom from dependence is used as a performance indicator for alcohol treatment services. The data is collated over a 12-month rolling period (i.e., October 2022 to September 2023 for this period's reporting) and the latest data shows that the success rate has fallen slightly, and is at 36.8% for quarter 3, which is slightly lower than in quarter 2 when the success rate was at 37.3%. The national target is 37%.
49. Regarding waiting times linked to adaptations, the median average stands at 62 days from request to adaptation completed. Our breakdown of the data shows that for Local and Private the median number of days taken from referral to order is 42 days (an increase from 37 days) and the median number of days taken from ordering of the adaptation to completion, has decreased to 14 days from 25 days in quarter 2. For Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) the median number of days taken from referral to approval of adaptation is 148 days (an increase from 140 days in quarter 2) and the median number of days taken from approval of adaptation to completion is 70 days (an increase from 64 days in quarter 2). An action plan

remains in place to support adaptations to improve performance following the increase in referrals linked to the change in work in Occupational Therapy. Changes to the reporting system for DFG cases in March 2024/April 2024 will allow for additional oversight and monitoring to ensure progress is being made on the key areas to reduce waiting times with a specific focus on the referral to adaptation timescale which is currently 148 days. Improvements in all areas is expected in Quarter 1 24/25.

50. The percentage of adult social care requests for support with ethnicity recorded has remained static in quarter 3. There is an ongoing focus to improve the data, an audit is currently being undertaken of the records, where stated not known (in quarter 3 this equates to 442 people).

51. In the capital programme the home alarm digital switch over scheme has slipped by £0.4m.



CREATING SAFER, STRONGER, GREENER & CLEANER COMMUNITIES WHERE EVERYONE BELONGS

Service Standard	Quarter 2 23-24	Quarter 3 23-24	Target	RAG	D.O.T (long)
(PLA) Percentage of Fly Tips Investigated and Removed Within 7 Days from Public Areas	96%	99.5%	80%	✓	↑
(PLA & SLHD) Number of affordable homes provided (Council, and private sector provider/build)	182	136	29	✓	↓
(PLA) No. of Parks With 'Green Flag' Status Across the Borough	6 Annual Figure (2022-23)	6 Annual Figure (2023-24)	4	✓	↑
(PLA) Percentage of redeploy able cameras installed within 28-day timescale	0%	100%	100%	✓	-
(AWC) Percentage of Safeguarding concerns and enquiries that are repeats in a 12-month period	36.2%	33.1%	35%	✓	↑
(CEX) Number of Veterans identified and supported within the Communities service (standalone casework and cases within existing themes)	97	90	70	✓	↓
(PLA) Play Areas - Percentage of Quarterly Mechanical Playground Inspections Carried Out	100%	100%	90%	✓	↑
(PLA) Complete all Environmental Permitting regs permit visits within DEFRA required timescales. - Climate control regime	100% Annual Figure (2021-22)	-	100%	✓	-
(PLA) % Licensing Act 2003 Applications Processed Within Statutory Timescales	100%	100%	100%	✓	↑
(AWC) Percentage Feeling Safer After Safeguarding Intervention	78.50%	71.76%	75.00%	✓	↑

Service Standard	Quarter 2 23-24	Quarter 3 23-24	Target	RAG	D.O.T (long)
(PLA) Recycling Rate for Household Domestic Waste	50%	46.7%	50%		
(AWC) Number of identified rough sleepers within the month	24	34	25		
(AWC) Safeguarding: Duration (Average days - Referral to Completed S42)	144.90	155.69	130		
(AWC) Number of High-Risk Cases Referred to MARAC	265	254	-		
(PLA) Net additional homes provided (Council and private sector provider/build)	311	473	-		
(AWC) No of Referrals to the Domestic Abuse Hub	419	372	-		
(CEX) The numbers of Victims of ASB who have met the higher risk threshold, resulting in them being provided with a SPOC and individual support plan	281	205	-		
(CEX) Number of people and families, whereas a single agency we are working to prevent or tackle at an early stage, anti-social behaviour, Hate Crime and low level crime reported to and identified by the Stronger Communities Service.	6,412	6,463	-		
(CEX) Number of Veterans identified and supported within the Communities service (standalone casework and cases within existing themes)	97	90	-		
(PLA) Total number of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) and Community Protection Notices (CPN's) issued by the Neighbourhood Response Team	218	137	-		
(PLA) Total number of incidents attended by the Neighbourhood Response Team	5,730	4,831	-		

What is going well?

52. During quarter 3, our Stronger Communities Area Teams responded to 6,463 early intervention and prevention issues to tackle anti-social behaviour, hate crime and low-level crime. This figure has increased from last quarter and continues to be higher from our pre pandemic level. We are starting to see average case work figures stabilise to a new 'higher norm' due to the number of newly appointed officers now being fully trained and working proactively to deal with issues in a locality. However, this trend needs to be balanced with the fact that the teams are undertaking dedicated and targeted work in some of the hotspot demand locations, where positive partnership working has had the desired outcome and success. This has in turn increased incidents reported to the Communities Service.

53. Stronger Communities Area Teams have continued to identify and support victims of crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) where vulnerability triggers are met using the agreed risk assessment process. The number identified and or supported has reduced this quarter (205 compared to 281 in quarter 2), which is due to dedicated work in identified 'hotspot' locations where there have been repeat issues of ASB. In some locations, this has resulted in the closure of vulnerable victim cases, whilst in other cases, despite the closure, support work has continued by Stronger Communities Area Teams as either a Stronger Family or Wellbeing case.
54. The number of victims who have experienced ongoing or multiple instances of anti-social behaviour has increased from 152 to 281 this quarter, (which is comparable to similar periods) due to targeted work in hotspot locations and focussed work at Neighbourhood Action Group and Joint Action Group (NAG/JAG) meetings. Due to the nature of the work and actions carried out to manage meaningful targeted engagement, we can identify more victims, and this should be viewed as a positive as we are identifying early and proactively before escalation of issues in many cases. All areas where significant engagement work and CIS work has been ongoing to tackle anti-social behaviour, and issues linked to organised crime group activity, are being managed by South Yorkshire Police. There have been a number of reported success stories during this quarter across a number of areas, where Stronger Communities officers have supported residents and enabled positive outcomes.
55. We have seen a decrease in the number of Veterans identified and supported (90 compared to 97 in quarter 2 but this figure is still above the target of 70. A number of significant achievements have been made, including:
- Support requested from Leeds and Barnsley Councils as Doncaster is considered to be best practice
 - Veteran Co-ordinator support for individuals is now being recorded within the 72hrs Rapid Response recording
 - Continuously increasing number of engagement figures from the Doncaster Armed Forces Facebook page
 - Through liaison with the Veteran Co-ordinator, St Leger Homes are now advertising their vacancies through CTP (Career Transitions Partnership), ensuring that those leaving
 - Continued growth of the Armed Forces and Veterans' Forum.
 - Plans to develop a Council Employee Veteran Forum continue to progress
 - Training has taken place with Adult Social Care Teams to ensure that staff understand the importance of asking the question and to raise awareness of what support is available.
56. During quarter 3, the 80% target for removing fly tip waste within 7 days of cases being reported has been exceeded, as 99.5% of reported cases were closed within the time limit. The additional resources allocated to the service in 2021, combined with changes to operational service delivery, have reduced our backlog of cases.

Specialist cases including asbestos removal require us to use an external contractor or specialist equipment and can sometimes take more time to deal with, which accounts for the small number of cases not closed within the agreed time scales. There were 1680 reports of fly tipped waste received and cleared in quarter 3, compared to 2005 in quarter 2 this follows previously evidenced seasonal trends.

57. Licensing Act 2003 applications processed within the statutory timescale continues to meet 100%.

58. Collaborative working between the CCTV suite and Neighbourhood Response Team continues positive results on fixed penalty notices being issued by the Neighbourhood Response Team. This is related to the CCTV suite proactively monitoring several key areas of the Borough, including the City Centre, where it has been especially problematic. In addition to the fixed penalty notices issued in this period, the Neighbourhood Response Team have given 131 verbal warnings in relation to parking, 10 Community Protection Warning letters for noise, and 1 Community Protection notice, again for noise. The Neighbourhood Response Team has attended a total of 4831 incidents in quarter 3, compared to 5,730 in quarter 2.

59. The number of people who reported they felt unsafe prior to safeguarding intervention and said they felt safer afterwards has decreased to 71.7% during quarter 3 from 78.5% in quarter 2. This is due to the number recorded as 'don't know' (19) rather than the number recorded as 'no'. There were 5 people who reported 'not feeling safer after the safeguarding intervention' 6% of the total number of enquiries completed. A deep dive on these cases has been completed to understand the reasons for the person not feeling safer and if needed, further actions to be taken.

60. The indicator for Recycling Rate for Household Domestic Waste reports one quarter in arrears. The recycling rate for Q2 23-24 is 46.7% which is an increase from 45.1% for same period last year. This is due to an increase in the number of households hence 5.75% more household waste collected than this time last year as well as a 10.95% boost in waste being sent for Reuse/Recycling/Composting than this time last year. This is a positive trend which reflects a growing awareness of environmental responsibility.

61. During quarter 3 there were 254 operational play inspections carried out, compared to 236 in quarter 2, which is more than the 90% target. Routine inspections were introduced during summer to carry out additional checks at high usage play areas, over this quarter 116 routine inspections have been completed in addition to the operational inspections. Base line information has been gathered on all play areas within the borough looking at the quality and value of the play equipment provided at each site. This information is being used to complete a list of play areas where investment is most needed with a view to allocating resources where most appropriate.

62. Quarter 3 sees completions of 136 affordable homes, compared to 182 in quarter 2. These include:
- 21 Section 106 units across 4 Private Developer sites
 - 105 Homes England funded units across 2 Housing Association sites
 - 10 St Leger Acquisitions

What needs further improvement?

63. The council has several re-deployable CCTV cameras that are installed in hot spot locations across the Borough with the aim to combat crime and anti-social behaviour. As these cameras are not permanent fixtures, they need to be attached to existing street furniture, such as lighting columns, which includes connection to the electrical supply. These works need to be completed to ensure correct configuration for smartwatch cameras. There are several re-deployable CCTV cameras funded through SS4 which have encountered installation delays and will now be installed in the new financial year.
64. In quarter 2 of 2023, we applied for Green Flag status across 7 sites across the Borough. In quarter 2, we saw the retention of 6 existing Green Flag awards. Work has started in quarter 3 on updating the management plans for the parks which will be entered for a Green Flag award in 2024. Seven Street Scene parks will be entered again this year and it is hoped that all will achieve the award, building upon the six successful parks last year. Work has already started in some of the parks to address any areas of weakness identified during previous judging, for example improved signage in Elmfield Park. Judging will take place after April 2024.
65. Quarter three performance for Safeguarding: Duration (Average days - Referral to Completed S42) has seen a slight increase from the quarter two position and remains above the target of 130 days. Lengthy court proceedings of 780 days for one case have impacted on performance and system issues has affected reporting. There is one further case of over 800 days that is expected to close during quarter 4 which will impact quarter 4 reporting, a new process is now being implemented by the Principal Social Worker to ensure cases can be closed in a timely manner where court proceedings are ongoing (coroner, court of protection, criminal proceedings).
66. The Domestic Abuse Hub has seen a decrease in referrals within quarter 3. This is linked to the change in process for those referrals received from South Yorkshire Police where there was no consent obtained to refer to the Domestic Abuse Hub as reported in the quarter 2 report. If those referrals were included within the performance figures, then referral rates would be consistent with previous quarters. The level of high-risk domestic abuse cases referred to MARAC also remain consistent. Of the 254 cases discussed during quarter 3, 60 were repeat high risk incidents (23.62%).

67. We have seen an increase in the number of monthly rough sleepers. We continue with our monthly analysis of people's 'routes' to the street to understand where we need to focus on identifying prevention opportunities. Over this quarter we have seen a particularly high number of females and couples. This presents particular challenges as emergency temporary accommodation options are limited. The development of the assessment hub (which will provide single rooms) will increase the options for single females.

68. In the housing capital programme external planned contractors works there has been a revision to the delivery plan associated with this work that has resulted in a reduction of the forecast spend of £1m. The deliverable spend is affected by the contractor's capacity to carry out the planned works. The previous delayed starts are affecting the delivery profile of subsequent schemes. Other contributing factors include delays obtaining retrofit assessments needed to complete scheme designs and scaffolding sub-contractors.



NURTURING A CHILD & FAMILY-FRIENDLY BOROUGH EVERYONE BELONGS

Service Standard	Quarter 2 23-24	Quarter 3 23-24	Target	RAG	D.O.T (long)
(CYP&F) Percentage of Children Accessing Their Entitlement for Free Childcare (3 & 4 Year Olds)	99.6%	100%	95%	✓	↑
(CYP&F) Number of Referrals into 'Your Family' Teams	400	2,202	280	✓	↑
(CEX) School Nursing: Number of schools with a Health Profile	99	-	75	✓	↑
(CEX) Number of early intervention stronger families managed and supported by the Stronger Communities Service. Including work within higher level casework and therefore contributing to the National Government Supporting Families Programme	456	417	400	✓	↓
(CYP&F CSC) Number of Referrals processed in 24hrs	93.9%	93%	85%	✓	↑
(CYP&F CSC) Rate of Children in Care - Number per 10,000 Population	82.84	83.93	80.00	✓	↓
(CYP&F CSC) Children with a Child Protection Plan per 10,000 pop aged U18	50.08	48.67	51.00	✓	↑
(CY&F) Increase in confidence and ability of parents / carers to support and provide for their family evidenced through the Outcome Star - FAMILY Star	77.26%	78.93%	65%	✓	↑
(CYP&F CSC) Number of External Residential Placements	39	40	48	✓	↑

Service Standard	Quarter 2 23-24	Quarter 3 23-24	Target	RAG	D.O.T (long)
(CYP&F) Percentage of Children Accessing Their Entitlement to Free Childcare (2 years olds)	79.7%	83.3%	82%		
(CYP&F CSC) Percentage of Care Leavers in Employment, Training and Education (age 19-21 years)	61.9%	63.0%	68.0%		
(CYP&F CSC) Percentage of cases where the lead social worker has seen the child/young person within timescales specified in the CP plan. For all children who were the subject of a CP plan during the year.	78.7%	77.2%	80%		
(CYP&F CSC) Rate of Children in Need	348	337	385		
(CYP&F CSC) Percentage of Single Assessments Completed Within 45 Days (YTD Cumulative)	76.3%	84.5%	85.0%		
(CYP&F CSC) Referrals to Children's Services that are repeat referrals within 12 mths	32.21%	31.86%	22.00%		
(CYP&F CSC) Referrals - Number per 10,000 Population	231	218	154		
(CY&F) Children receiving a Multi-Service Early Help support - rate per 10,000 population	287.2	297.2	326		
(CEX) Deliver a wellbeing offer - Number of wellbeing cases handled by Wellbeing Team within the Communities Service	650	619	-		
(CY&F) PLACEHOLDER % of CiC who achieve legal permanence via adoption, SGO or CAO	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC

What is going well?

69. Demand into the Your Families Teams continues to increase in quarter 3. In total 2,202 cases were seen; 1679 see and solve, 431 triaged local help and 95 discussed in Local Solutions Groups. The top issues are finance, housing and anti-social behaviour. Central locality presenting the most with (728), East (652), North (488) and South (334). Contacts are resolved within 24 hours at 93% using see and solve model.

70. Doncaster continues to be above the national trend for 2-year-olds accessing their 15 hours entitlement to funded childcare, performing 9.3% above the national average at 83.3%. Doncaster continues to have the second highest take up rate with more children compared to Barnsley and Rotherham. Doncaster take up for 3–4-year-olds accessing their entitlement to free childcare reached 100% in quarter 3. Nationally the estimated take up is 94%.

71. Early Help case work evidenced positive impact for children, young people and families as can be seen in quarter 3 results. Through the program this quarter 318 Family Stars were completed. Although there was a decrease of 113 stars

completed since last quarter, there was an increase in outcomes of 1.67%; we are now reporting Outcome Star through mosaic case management system. Most elements of the program evidenced an improved score, these were Boundaries and Behaviour, Family Routine, Physical Health, Education and Learning, Keeping Your Children Safe, and Meeting Emotional Needs. Social Networks did not show any improvement, and Home and Money, Your Wellbeing, and Progress to Work saw a decline in scores.

72. The proportion of social care referrals with a decision within 24hrs has continued to perform higher than target, achieving 93% this quarter. A review has been undertaken in the Early Help process and partnership pathways, which has led to a reduction of contacts into the Front Door. Continued discussions with South Yorkshire Police on a regional footprint ensure that we continue to challenge on duplicate contacts and those that do not meet the threshold for intervention. We expect continued positive impact for quarter 4.

73. The number of children in care per 10,000 per population has shown a slight increase this quarter. In the six months to the end of the quarter 117 children entered care, with 95 children leaving care. The number of children entering care has remained static however we have seen an increase in the number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC). These children either present in the area or are part of the national transfer scheme and so this increase is beyond our control, however we have ensured that they have had a timely age assessment and have been offered safe and suitable accommodation and support.

74. We continue to ensure that decisions regarding children in care, are regularly reviewed to ensure there is ideally an exit out of care back to family or a plan of legal permanence. For the last 2 months we have measured the percentage of children leaving care due to being adopted or a Special Guardianship order being granted. In November 2023 this was 10% and in December this was 20%. Given this is a new measure we will have a clearer target trajectory at the end of quarter 4.

75. Doncaster have seen a slight increase in the number of children placed in external placements from last quarter from 39 to 40. This position remains positive and has been maintained through ongoing focus on strategies to bring children back into Doncaster and by supporting children to return to the care of parents or wider family where it is safe to do so, In the 6 months to the end of quarter 3, 43% of children who left care returned to live with parents or other relative.

What needs further improvement?

76. The rate of children and young people receiving Early Help, per 10,000 population (Early Help Pathway - Level 2 and Level 3) has remained static at 297 in quarter

3. The team continue to ensure children, young people and families receive the right support at the right time.
77. While there has been a small decline in number of referrals and rereferrals this quarter this work remains an area of focus given Doncaster is an outlier in relation to our statistical and local neighbours. The high number of contacts and referrals we have from partners that are not progressing through to intervention have been reviewed. This work has highlighted that we need to continue work with the police to reduce duplication and encourage triage. The second step is to progress with the plan to have more appreciative inquiry discussions at the front door. A shift to the appreciative inquiry model will be progressed via the multiagency MASH steering group and Doncaster Childrens Safeguarding Partnership and as this measure will only improve with positive wider partner engagement.
78. Linked to this is the number of rereferrals within 12 months. An ongoing review is highlighting where we need to target discussions to positively reduce rereferrals. This includes ensuring there is a lead practitioner who supports the team around the family on closure; strengthening testing family networks before we end our involvement and ensuring there is purposeful intervention and measured impact. Given this measure spans 12 months, any evidence of impact will take a full 12 months to fully show in the performance.
79. The percentage of single assessments completed within 45 days has significantly improved in quarter 3 to 84.5%. This is an 8% increase since last quarter and shows positive ongoing upward performance. We endeavour to improve caseload management, training and communication to meet and move beyond our target.
80. The percentage of children subject to Child Protection plans visited within agreed timescales (every 10 working days) has a slight decline in quarter 3. Further investigation into this performance confirmed that the actual timeliness of visits to children on a child protection plan is around 90%. The discrepancy between real time assurance and reported performance are linked to data capture and the time of the month that performance is recorded. We are reviewing a new process to support a more accurate reflection of visits completed in timescale.
81. There continues to be high levels of contacts to Children's Social Care. The third quarter does show a positive reduction but also includes Christmas during which we generally see a spike prior to the holiday season. We are continuing to have conversations in relation to implementing a system to encourage partners to have a conversation prior to submitting a contact. We are also increasing the use of the step-down to Early Help process.
82. The percentage of Care leavers in Education, Employment and Training increased slightly to 63.9% in quarter 3. This is due to internal resourcing in Education, Employment and Training. At this time of year there is usually a downward trend due to Further Education applicants deciding to not progress. In addition, there has been pressure from extra cases of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

also quite rightly seeking support. We are confident that once a full complement of Careers Staff is on board, we will return to our previous outstanding performance of at least 72% in Education, Employment and Training. We will endeavour to ensure that young people get support regarding Education, Employment and Training in a timely manner, by working closely with care homes, foster carers, and education colleagues to ensure each young person has access to Education, Employment and Training opportunities.



BUILDING TRANSPORT & DIGITAL CONNECTIONS FIT FOR THE FUTURE

Service Standard	Quarter 2 23-24	Quarter 3 23-24	Target	RAG	D.O.T (long)
(PLA) Principal Roads not Requiring Major Maintenance	96% Annual Figure (2022-23)	-	96%	✓	↓
(PLA) Non-Principal Roads not Requiring Major Maintenance	98% Annual Figure (2022-23)	-	94%	✓	↑
(PLA) % Estate Roads in Good to Fair Condition	87% Annual Figure (2022-23)	-	85%	✓	↑
(PLA) National Highways Transportation Survey Highways Maintenance Overall Satisfaction Score	45% Annual Figure (2022-23)	43% Annual Figure (2023-24)	43%	✓	↓

What is going well?

83. Work is underway to fulfil the ambition to make Doncaster the centre of excellence for artificial intelligence in the UK via a two-year Doncaster AI Framework. This includes identifying and establishing a 'physical space' that links to a Digital Hub/Doncaster Technology proposition. There are several short and medium-term suggestions on where this could be situated, with a longer-term ambition to host this in the City Gateway office building. The draft Doncaster AI Manifesto has been shaped with input from City of Doncaster Council, Doncaster Chamber of Commerce and Automated Analytics. A steering group has been formed featuring representation from the above-mentioned organisations.

84. The performance indicators in relation to the condition of principal roads, non-principal roads, and estate roads in good to fair condition are reported annually, and in quarter 4 of each year. Doncaster continues to stand in the upper quartile nationally for this indicator and represents ongoing and consistently excellent performance.

85. In the capital programme, the new Iport bridge, 'Porter's Bridge' is now complete, which was designed with the local community in mind and will boost public transport, walking and cycling links to South Yorkshire's major iPort employment site.

What needs further improvement?

86. There has been ongoing discussion around the work on the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority Digital Infrastructure Strategy. The Strategy aims to help improve business productivity and competitiveness, address digital exclusion and digital poverty, and support making South Yorkshire places more attractive to inward investors as digitally enabled places to live and work. This work will align with the Doncaster AI Framework work mentioned above. The Council's Digital Strategy development work continues including identifying a physical Digital Hub in Doncaster.



PROMOTING THE BOROUGH & ITS CULTURAL, SPORTING & HERITAGE

OPPORTUNITIES

Service Standard				Quarter 2 23-24	Quarter 3 23-24	Target	RAG	D.O.T (long)
(AWC)	Customer	Satisfaction	levels reported at Archives	-	80%	70%	✓	-
(AWC)	Customer	Satisfaction	levels reported at Danum Gallery Library and Museum	-	90%	85%	✓	-

What is going well?

87. Since City of Doncaster Council invested in the new Archives facility, the evidence of customer satisfaction has been overwhelmingly positive, predominantly in two areas: quality of customer service, and access to resources provided.

88. The Council's investment into DGLAM is deriving multiple benefits, one of which includes positive customer feedback. Volume of compliments are higher than Archives, consistent with opening times and service provisions. Compliments cover the range of services on offer, customer service, the café offer, and learning and educational service provisions.

What needs Further Improvement?

89. Reports in relation to progress on reducing social isolation and increasing skills through volunteering in libraries will commence from Q4 onwards.



Service Standard	Quarter 2 23-24	Quarter 3 23-24	Target	RAG	D.O.T (long)
(CR) Housing Benefit - Average Number of Days to Process a New Claim	12.38	11.94	18.00		
(CEX) CUST 01 Customers Wait no Longer Than 10 Minutes to be Served	0h 00m 00s	0h 00m 00s	0h 10m 00s		
(CR) Council Tax Support Application - Average Number of Days to Process New Claims	21.76	20.21	30		
(CEX) CUST 04 90% of Telephone Calls Will be Answered Within 150 Seconds	92%	94%	90%		
(CR) % of Council Tax collected in the year	93.83%	93.84%	94.50%		

What is going well?

- 90. The average number of days to process a Housing Benefit claim continues to improve and gets better each quarter. Although the team deal with additional work from the Household Support Fund, the prioritisation of allocating new HB claims within 2 days of receipt, and the clearance of a previous backlog of work has resulted in this improvement this year. Resource from the Benefits Team has assisted the Council Tax Team to reduce their backlog.
- 91. In Quarter 3 Customer Services received 42,909 telephone calls, with 94% being answered within 150 seconds, with an average time to answer of 33 seconds, this exceeds the target set of 90%.
- 92. Council Tax Support Performance in the third quarter has continued to be on target, with the average time to process an application at just over 16 days in the quarter. The overall position is almost half that of the same time last year. This is despite the fact that this indicator does rely on timely information from the DWP relating to Universal Credit claims. The backlog of work on the team has now been cleared and there is relatively little waiting time before an officer is assigned to deal with the claim. It is anticipated this performance will remain at this level despite the increased workload from the Household Support Fund which is still ongoing.

What needs further improvement?

- 93. 74.48% of the total Council Tax debit has been collected in quarter 3 of this year. This compares with 75.02% for the same period in 2022/23. Although this is 0.54% lower than last year, based on previous trends collection tends to pick up in the final quarter. A contributing factor is the backlog of work across the team, which

has also significantly reduced in the quarter, and therefore should aid further improvement. Although an improvement is forecast, it isn't anticipated that the target will be achieved by the end of the year; this is potentially reflective of ongoing cost of living situation affecting individual households and the lower payments being received by residents this year, compared to previously.

Workforce

94. Over the quarter, the overall turnover rate for the council has reduced by 0.51% from 13.81% to 13.30%, which is a decrease of 2.2% compared to quarter 3 in 2022/23; and remains below the local government average rate of 16.4%. The number of job vacancies across the council is still at a relatively high level however there is a large amount of work being undertaken in relation to recruitment and retention. We continue to increase the number of apprentices, trainee and career graded roles. We are looking at certain roles as to those where we can grow our own talent, train and develop with a view of them obtaining the full role in the future. Trainee/career graded posts provide a clear career development path for the employee and reduces the need to recruit. The application form has been shortened to make it easier for applicants to apply. Amended job adverts, job role summaries have started to be used and positive feedback has been received in terms of increasing numbers of candidates that applies. We have now become a sponsorship organisation where we sponsor skilled workers on the skilled shortage occupation list of roles from abroad. This will expand our field and we have already started to recruit Children's Social Workers. We are working with our agency provider on permanent recruitment challenges which have been successful in areas such as front line care roles and specialist social work roles. Recruitment campaigns on specific hard to fill roles continue to reach as many people as possible
95. Sickness absence rate for quarter 3 was 11.54 days per full time equivalent employee, against the corporate target of 10 days. This is a reduction of 0.13 days from 11.67 days in quarter 2. Although a continued reduction overall is a positive trend, it is still significantly above the target of 10 days for the Council. Sickness absence will continue to be monitored to assess impact and ensure effective provisions are in place to manage absence levels across the organisation.
96. Agency worker spend has increased in quarter 2 for the whole Council. Children's Social Care are now included in the overall Council position which is at a spend of £1.69 million, an increase of £80k from quarter 2, the number of assignments at the end of the quarter has remained the same at 99. The overall cost of bookings has increased. Both spend and usage of agency cover will continue to be monitored against the needs and capacity of the business and ongoing recruitment and retention challenges faced both locally and nationally.
97. Mandatory training completion rates have had a slight increase but still further completions are needed. Completion rates for Equality in the Workplace is at 79% completion rate; Data Protection is at 93% complete, Cyber Security is at 83% completion rate for all Council staff; Protecting Vulnerable Children and Adults is 79% for all staff. 59% of all managers have completed their Health and Safety

training. Completion rates for senior managers have also slightly increased, with 70% completing Equality Act module, 83% completing Hate Crime training and 83% completion rates in Prevent. Managers are able to view their dashboard on the e-learning platform which provides details of their direct reports as to who and which modules are outstanding, in addition managers are reminded to ensure that where training is mandatory this is completed by all staff in a reasonable time period.

98. As part of the corporate calendar of EDI events, support and engagement was provided for world mental health day, black history month, international men's day and International Day of Persons with Disabilities

99. The number of employee-reported injuries at work in quarter 3 was 63 compared with 51 in the same quarter last year. There continues to be a higher number of employee injuries reported from those Directorates that have more significant numbers of operational employees carrying out physical work activities. These are now concentrated in the Place (29), AWC (19) and CYPF (13) compared with one incident each reported from CEX and Corporate Resources. The top three main causes of employee injuries reported across the council in Q3 were slips and trips (18), physical assaults (11), and hit by a moving, falling object (8).

100. There have been 4 RIDDOR incidents reported in this quarter compared to 4 in quarter 3 last year. The Corporate Safety Team are supporting services with the investigation process and any subsequent recommendations.



EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION OBJECTIVES

101. The Choose Kindness movement has carried out the following engagement activity:

- The Stronger Communities Teams have briefed all their staff about the movement and have then carried out over 80 engagement sessions with a range of different groups and organisations that they work with in which they promote the aims of the movement and encourage sign up to the pledge.
- Alongside the launch by the Education Service of the 'Be the Kind Kid' book in schools, all schools have received an email about the movement, with links to resources to help engage and promote.
- Kindness was the main theme of the Team Doncaster summit in November which engaged significant partners and representatives of community groups.
- Continued social media promotion - with encouraging levels of engagement to relevant posts.
- Choose Kindness messaging and branding underpinning the council's 'Winter' campaign.
- City of Doncaster Council has taken the pledge and has promoted internally to staff.

102. As a result of the engagement activity, there has been encouraging sign up to the Choose Kindness pledge. At the end of quarter 3 the sign up figures were:

- Individuals x 560
- Businesses x 52
- Schools x 18
- Clubs and societies x 12

103. Based on demographics recorded we know that the majority of those currently taking the pledge are female, white/British and aged between 45-64.

104. Work is underway to establish Choose Kindness Locality Clubs across the four localities, with those involved in the movement tasked to set up. The aim of these is to begin to involve more local people, groups, businesses and schools and promote and share the Choose Kindness message throughout our communities at a more localised level.

Objective 1: Support older adults to remain independent in their own homes

105. There is a focus on reducing the number of older adults who are being supported to reside in a care home on a permanent basis. To ensure that decisions are based on the rights and choices of the person, by providing care and support in the least restrictive way,

106. What older adults describe as being important to them is having control over their daily lives. If an older adult is residing temporarily in a care home our aim is to provide a timely, strengths based review of their care and support to maximise the persons opportunity to return back home, into their community. Evidence suggests that the longer an older adult resides in a care home, the likelihood is that the person becomes institutionalised & loses confidence to return home.

107. There continues to be challenges due to the reduced community provision and gaps within the domiciliary market, which we continue to identify ways to improve this

108. A deep dive of all the new placements into residential care for older adults took place for Q1, to provide a deeper level of understanding into practice. The highlights from this exercise were that:

- 100 new placements were made
- 74 people were in short stay prior to their permanent placements
- The highest reason for short stay was related to a hospital discharge
- The main reason for admission into long stay was due to a person's Mental Health/ Dementia & behaviours, which is consistent with our previous deep dive
- 91% of the placements were deemed to be unavoidable & proportionate to the level of support required by the person

109. We are Developing our practice forum to improve our practice and offer to our older population. We are working towards a locality-based approach for the

reviews of people who are discharged from hospital into a care home for a period of short stay, to maximise their opportunity to go.

Objective 2: Support victims of domestic abuse and work with partners to reduce the levels of abuse in the Borough

110. Our Domestic Abuse (DA) training continues to be delivered by our workforce development officer. A variety of DA training courses are delivered. People attending DA Awareness training are identified as DA Champions and form a network of professionals across the City to offer help and support to people impacted by DA. The DA strategy (2021-24) states that "Domestic abuse is everyone's business" Operational staff deliver DA programmes to educate people affected by DA to increase awareness of the impact that DA has on people's lives.
111. Our survivor liaison workers provide face to face community engagement in localities across the borough. Regular community engagement takes place in localities to ensure the service is visible and accessible. We have a young persons DA Caseworker and a male DA Caseworker to provide support to a wider client base.. Community engagement and survivor liaison work is ongoing to reach out to the LGBT+ community. Other work has started to engage with and support minority communities across the borough. This work is being directed via community groups and the minorities partnership board network. Staff are linking with the People Focussed Group to offer wider support.
112. DA specialist workers continue to work in the Housing Options team at St Leger Homes to enable dedicated and focussed support to people fleeing DA and needing accommodation. This team provides an essential support function for DA Victims.
113. Regular communication takes place through the DMBC communications team, dedicated campaigns are used at different times in the year. A monthly newsletter is circulated to the DA Champions network. The Champions network reaches across the Borough.
114. Governance is provided by the DA Strategic Board and Safer Stronger Doncaster Partnership. The bi-monthly DA/SA Theme Group links into both the Strategic Board and SSDP.

Objective 3: Improve engagement with our most deprived communities to increase access to jobs and skills

115. Business Doncaster offers a range of services including attracting inward investment, support to businesses, tourism, marketing and promotion of the borough and the delivery of various employment and enterprise programmes to residents of the borough. The team work across the whole borough with the employment and enterprise teams working closely with communities teams and when appropriate basing ourselves in various communities to support our activities.

116. The Advance Employment Hub (including Youth Hub) work across the Borough within community areas. Monthly outreach sessions take place with the Your Place locations of Woodlands, Thorne, Central and Denaby, providing local residents the facility to drop-in and access support with application, CV's and careers information advice and guidance.
117. The team have sponsored the Information Zone at Doncaster Pride for the last 2 years and will be sponsoring again for UK Pride in 2024. The team work closely with the Integration and Partnerships team to support with refugees and Ukrainian guests.
118. The team are planning 2 recruitment showcases in 2024 capitalising on the success of the 2nd Recruitment Showcase on the 27th September at The Dome to link local residents with recruiting employers.
119. The team are part of the Employability Hub at HMP Doncaster offering ex-offenders careers advice and guidance and links to local employers.
120. We are working with a number of employers to deliver mental health training to staff
121. We are working with other employees and the council AFCL team on language and learning skills and have had particular success in Edlington with Polypipe
122. Advance have supported 769 people
- 37% of participants are male/ 63% of participants are female
 - 26% of participants are over 50
 - 5.5% of participants are from ethnic minorities
 - 8% are from Single Adult Households with Dependent Children
 - 19% are without basic skills.
123. As part of our 'Meet the employer' support with the DWP, we went to the 'Your Choices' event at the 'Blue building' where we met with various DWP customers to offer employment support when they met with employers there or in the future. 5 DWP clients signed up for and are now receiving YEH support. We also hosted an apprenticeship awareness day where YEH and DWP clients came in to discuss what an apprenticeship is and signed up if interested with the aid of Doncaster College's lead apprenticeship advisor and invited our clients to the CDC's apprenticeship insight day where our lead apprenticeship advisor gave a presentation about the benefits and rewards of starting an apprenticeship with the CDC.
124. To make our Launchpad start up programme more accessible we hold approximately 5 drop in sessions per month across the city so those interested in self employment can meet a Business Adviser and do not have to travel into town. These are promoted on social media, regular venues used are in Thorne, Mexborough, Bentley, Intake and Warmsworth.

125. We run one physical and one virtual employment academies based around 3 key employment sites of the IPort at Rossington, Gateway East on the Airport site. We are also in the process of setting up a physical Unity academy which will be based in Hatfield / Stainforth and outreach with community groups has already taken place in Stainforth.

Objective 4: Improve The Mental Health Of Our Children & Young People

126. As part of our Children and young People's plan we have continued to deliver the local 'Children and Young People's Mental Health Strategy'. We are completing actions for Year 1 and currently listening to children and young people about Y2 priorities. so far our work has included:

- We have ensured that mental health remains prominent in discussions linked to the school culture and the graduated approach by having it as standard agenda item at SENCo networks and inviting all mental health leads to these meetings.
- We have conducted Metal Health audits with 21 schools. To be rolled out across the system Jan- July 2023.
- We have successfully collaborated with SENCos to revamp the GDA referral process in order to improve service delivery and outcomes for children and young people. As a result of our work the GDA (General Developmental Assessment) referral form has now been updated and the SENCo group meeting has been informed of the changes.
- We have aligned key messaging regarding delivery aims and principles across the mental health, early help and SEND strategies and shared this widely. This means that all professionals working in these areas are now able to embed a consistent standard for all communications. We have built the 'pledge' into these communications and have a task and finish group devoted to leading on school cultural change allied to the DfE 'Better Value' project. This will lead to a team of officers being appointed in Spring to deliver this cultural input and lead this aspect of the strategy.

Objective 5: Support those Children and Young people within our care to have a good start to life and have the same life chances as everyone else living in the Borough

127. The rate of children in care per 10,000 per population at the end of Q3 was 80, which is the same as the position at the end of the previous quarter. There was a small increase in the actual number of children in care at the end of the quarter (538) when compared to the end of Q2 (531) In the six months to the end of the quarter 117 children entered care, with 95 children leaving care. As indicated in previous submissions a key change in Doncaster has been the significant increase in the number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) entering care, which at the end of Q3 stood at 55. These children either present in the area or are part of the national transfer scheme and so this increase is beyond our control

128. We continue to ensure that decisions regarding children in care, or those close to this are focussed on achieving permanent, long-term plans for them. In the six months to the end of the quarter 19% of children who left care were made subject to an adoption order or Special guardianship Order. In the 6 months to the end of Q 3 43% of children who left care returned to live with parents or other relative.

129. We have maintained the number of children placed in external placements (39). As noted in previously submitted commentary this is a significant improvement from the previous quarter. This position has been maintained through ongoing focus on strategies to bring children back into Doncaster and by supporting children to return to the care of parents or wider family where it is safe to do so.

FINANCIAL POSITION:

Revenue Budget

130. The forecast for the year-end is a breakeven position. The key factors in service budgets are consistent with the quarter 2 reported position and include: -

- Adults Social care - £3.50m mainly due to a larger number of people being supported in care homes than has been budgeted and higher increases in care home costs for adults of working age than anticipated.
- Children's Social Care - £1.78m due to additional demand and increased average external placement costs.

131. The position has improved since quarter 2 largely through the inclusion of £1.35m additional Top Up Grant and £0.64m business rate levy surplus included in the local government finance settlement.

132. In previous years the position has improved as the year has progressed as cautious projections are gradually reduced. Should the position worsen by the year-end earmarked reserves will need to be released to deal with any overspend.

133. A summary and further details by service area is provided below: -

	Gross Budget £m	Income Budget £m	Net Budget £m	Projection £m	Q3 Variance £m	Q2 Variance £m
Adults, Wellbeing and Culture	167.7	-93.1	74.6	79.0	4.4	3.4
Children, Young People & Families	159.7	-69.6	90.1	92.0	1.9	2.8
Corporate Resources	95.3	-71.1	24.2	24.4	0.2	0.0
Chief Executive	56.1	-35.4	20.7	20.4	-0.3	-0.1
Place	179.1	-89.1	90.0	89.2	-0.8	-0.1
Services Budgets	657.9	-358.3	299.6	305.0	5.4	6.0
Council-Wide budgets	-24.1	-134.3	-158.4	-163.8	-5.4	-4.3
Grand Total	633.8	-492.6	141.2	141.2	0.0	1.7

134. The following sections provide a breakdown of each directorate's projected variances.

Adults, Wellbeing and Culture

	Gross Budget £m	Income Budget £m	Net Budget £m	Project ion £m	Q3 Variance £m	Q2 Variance £m
Adult Social Care	21.8	-13.8	8.0	8.0	0.0	0.1
Communities	132.2	-28.5	103.7	107.4	3.7	2.9
Director Of Adult Services	13.7	-50.8	-37.1	-36.4	0.7	0.4
Adults, Wellbeing and Culture Total	167.7	-93.1	74.6	79.0	4.4	3.4

135. Adults, Wellbeing and Culture is forecast to overspend by £4.45m at quarter 3. This is an increase in overspend to the quarter 2 position by £1.03m.

- £0.52m of this increase arises from direct care costs within Adult Social Care (the "Care Ladder"). The biggest reasons for this are continued growth in the number of older people being supported in care homes and the forecast failure to achieve planned savings in double-handed care.
- £0.12m of this increase arises from indirect care costs within Adult Social Care, there are several positive and negative shifts within this category, but the biggest challenge is an increase in bad debt position from charging people for their care.
- £0.39m of this increase arises from the forecast failure to achieve planned savings in Culture and Heritage.

136. Expenditure on social care and support to Doncaster adults (the Care Ladder) is forecast to overspend by £3.50m, this is an increase of £0.52m to the quarter 2 position. The £3.50m Care Ladder budget includes a residential care forecast overspend of £3.35m, which is offset by an underspend in non-residential care of -£1.18m. There is also a forecast overspend of £1.17m on Supported Living Services and £0.16m on Extra Care and Shared Lives. The residential care £3.35m overspend is made up of: -

- £0.36m Older People - this is due to a significant increase in the number of older people residential care placements in the first part of the year. The current client count is 760, which is a 66 client increase on the budgeted figure. This is a movement of -£0.61m to quarter 2 which is mainly due to Financial Assessments backlog starting to be cleared and resulting in backdated client contribution income and transfer of clients to Supported Living care. This is partially offset by a lower number of leavers during the quarter than previously forecast. A leavers analysis has been carried out for previous financial years and the forecast for quarter 4 has been adjusted to 7% leavers in January and 6% in February and March. Although client numbers are forecast to fall to 729 by the end of the year, the increase in costs has been seen early on in quarters 1 and 2 and therefore results in increased costs for most of the year.
- £2.82m Working Age Adults – this is an increase of £0.16m from the quarter 2 position and is largely due to backdated costs being higher than forecast for quarter 3. The monthly average cost during quarter 3 has increased slightly by 0.5% over the quarter.

- Extensive analysis has been undertaken to understand the driving factors contributing to more older people being supported in residential care and increasing cost of care home placements for working age adults. This analysis (examining the routes and circumstances to people being supported in residential care) continues to take place monthly. In response to gaining this understanding the service have put in place a strategy consisting of several interventions to reduce the number of older people being supported in residential care and reduce the average cost of care home placements for working age adults. This includes the introduction of a weekly practice forum, chaired by the Assistant Director for Adult Social Care where all decisions about permanent residential care for older people are made. This practice forum seeks to uphold people's rights and ensure that everything possible has been exhausted to support people to remain / return home before permanent residential care is agreed. The service is prioritising promptly supporting people who have moved into a care home as an interim arrangement on a short stay (undertaking timely reviews), to maximise the opportunity for people to return home. Activity is also focused on reducing the average cost of care home placements for working age adults. This includes the introduction of a tool to support with open transparent negotiation of costs for specialist care placements. Work is progressing to introduce an agreed process and approach to responding to requests for uplifts from providers. The service is also focusing on proactive support to people who present in crisis / with increasing need and maximising our in-house direct care services before any permanent decisions are made about what people require to meet their needs.
 - £0.18m Short Stay residential Care is -£0.20m lower than quarter 2. The activity is significantly higher (around 550 days higher on average per month) as is the average cost, but this is partly offset by a reduction in the forecast backdated costs. The reduction in the overspend is mainly due to a significant increase in the forecast client contribution income for backdated transactions for Financial Assessments. It is forecast that activity will gradually reduce throughout the year to around 3,500 days per month because of transfers to Domiciliary care.
137. The Non-residential care -£1.18m underspend is made up of: -£1.72m additional income (due to increased costs), £0.24m Domiciliary care and £0.30m direct payments overspend because of recent increases seen in average direct payments. This is a movement to quarter 2 of £0.83m, of which £0.54m relates to savings not being achieved for Two Carers, £0.08m increased costs for Social Care in Prisons and an increase in Domiciliary care over the quarter.
138. Supported Living is expected to overspend by £1.17m which is an increase of £0.34m to quarter 2. The movement includes £0.10m for the Fire Safety compliance and transfer of clients from Older People residential care. There has also been continued increase in monthly hours during the year.
139. Extra Care and Shared Lives are anticipated to overspend by £0.16m due to due to an increase in Shared Lives placements, but the forecast has not changed since quarter 2.
140. Other Communities and Adult Social Care is expected to overspend by a further £0.95m which is an increase of £0.51m to the quarter 2 position. The £0.51m

movement is made up of £0.39m movement in overspends within Culture and Commercialisation, a £0.15m increase in bad debt provision to reflect the quarter 3 debt position and an increased number of debts written off, £0.22m for Future Options for agency costs and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards budget. These overspends are partially offset by a -£0.14m movement on Home First which includes staffing underspends and recharges to the Disabled Facilities Grant for Adaptations staff time.

141. The total Culture and Commercialisation position is forecast to overspend of £0.72m. The movement since quarter 2 of £0.39m follows a review of all Culture savings targets and income budgets, the forecast has been updated for non-achievement of savings and income.

Children, Young People & Families

	Gross Budget £m	Income Budget £m	Net Budget £m	Project ion £m	Q3 Variance £m	Q2 Variance £m
Centrally Managed	11.1	-3.9	7.2	7.5	0.3	0.2
Partnerships, Early Intervention & Localities	35.9	-21.5	14.4	14.4	0.0	0.3
Education Skills Culture & Heritage	31.5	-30.5	1.0	0.8	-0.2	-0.1
Children's Social Care	81.2	-13.7	67.5	69.3	1.8	2.4
Children, Young People & Families Total	159.7	-69.6	90.1	92.0	1.9	2.8

142. Children, Young People and Families is forecast to overspend by £1.90m at quarter 3 (a decrease of -£0.95m since quarter 2), mainly relating to placements and the associated travel assistance. The overspend includes the following variances. -

143. Travel Assistance is projected to overspend by £0.45m based on current routes and net growth to date (an increase of £0.07m since quarter 2 incl. £0.08m because of the SYMCA 25% increase to the cost of a Zoom Zero Travel Pass from 1st November 2023), which was out of the control of the Local authority. £0.41m of the overspend relates to the provision of routes covering special school buses due to lack of drivers/escorts, however there was successful recruitment over the summer, so these routes have reduced from 6 to 3 and these are anticipated to end within the next month. Further to the consolidation of routes in September the overspend had been further mitigated through pro-active management of single route taxis which realised £0.15m savings, in addition to achieving the ITT budget savings required. Pro-active work around delivering the already agreed savings and finding new savings if possible are paramount to the service and directorate.

144. Children's Social Care's projected outturn at quarter 3 is an overspend of £1.78m (a decrease of -£0.64m since quarter 2). The main elements of the overspend are £3.10m on the Care Ladder from additional demand at the beginning of 2023/24 and increased package costs for external placements above the budgeted activity numbers and average costs. A reframed placement panel has been in place from July 2023 chaired by Children's Social Care Assistant Director and continues to ensure the momentum on delivering savings continues with a focus on care planning and trajectory of need. There is also a £2.43m overspend on agency worker costs; offset by staffing (non-Care Ladder) underspends of -£4.11m due to ongoing vacancies, which has contributed to the increase in agency spend.

145. At 31st March 2023 the activity numbers and average costs for Out of Authority (OOA) and External Accommodation for 16+ Children in Care (CiC) were greater than the budgeted amount set for 1st April 2023, therefore costs pressures for these were brought forward into 2023/24. The Care Ladder projected overspend of £3.10m includes: OOA placements including Day Education £2.65m, External Accommodation for 16+ CiC £1.09m, and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) placements £0.84m, offset by underspends for Fostering - £1.00m, Internal Provision (Residential & Internal Accommodation for 16+ CiC) - £1.23m. Further detail is as follows: -

- OOA placements projected overspend of £2.65m is mainly due to the average costs of packages being higher than budgeted throughout 2023/24 £3.10m, and the placement numbers being above budgeted at 1st April 2023, which continued for the first 4 months of the year £0.65m; offset by increased Health contributions towards packages -£1.10m. Please note there are still 7 cases to be heard at Continuing Health Care Eligibility Panel, therefore Health's contribution may increase depending on the outcomes of these cases. The number of OOA placements, at 1st April 2023 was 54, 11 OOA placements above the budgeted 43 mainly due to delays in opening internal provision, which meant a significant budget pressure has been carried forward into 2023/24. The projected placement numbers by the end of March 2024 are 41 (as budgeted) and the average for the year to be 43 (1 more than budgeted); therefore the £0.65m pressure is expected to be temporary for 2023/24. The forecast overspend of £3.10m due to increased package costs appears to be a permanent pressure as provider fees continue to be above the budgeted amount; the average placement cost for the year to date is £326k (net of Health contributions); £45k more than budgeted average cost of £281k per annum. Unfortunately, there is no correlation between cost and quality / outcomes for young people although this remains a key focus on terms of challenging placement providers.
- External Accommodation for 16+ CiC projected overspend of £1.09m is mainly due to the average costs of packages 2023/24 £0.95m, and delays in internal provision being operational £0.14m. The number of 16+ CiC in external Accommodation at 1st April 2023 was 30; 6 placements above the budgeted 24 which meant a significant budget pressure was carried forward into 2023/24. The forecast assumes by the end of March 2024 that placement numbers will be 23 (1 less than budgeted) so this pressure is expected to be temporary for 2023/24. At budget setting it was expected that internal provision at Askern Court would be open for April 2023; this now expected to be

operational in April 2024 due to an increase in the capital works required. The £0.95m forecast overspend due to increased package costs is a mixture of a permanent and temporary pressure as provider fees continue to be above the budgeted amount but what were the 2 most expensive placements have reduced and are expected to reduce further as the children approach turning 18 years old. The average placement cost for the year to date is £168k per annum; £38k more than the budgeted average cost of £130k per annum.

- UASC placements projected overspend is £0.84m. Previously the funding from the Home Office covered the cost of the placements; however, in 2022/23 the outturn spend on UASC placements was £1.97m offset by grant funding of only -£1.62m. Due to the increase in the number of UASC, capacity in the market was stretched and therefore some of the UASC had to be placed with expensive providers leading to the costs being greater than the grant received from the Home Office. This trend has continued into 2023/24, with the forecast spend on placements £4.15m offset by grant funding of only -£2.88m. The gap between expenditure and grant funding is £1.27m (a £0.84m overspend against the budget). The forecast includes an assumption that there are an additional 10 under 18 placements by the end of March 2024. The Care Ladder budget modelling for 2023/24 assumed Home Office contributions would fund 82% of the package costs but the forecast assumes only 69.4% is covered by the Home Office. The increase in the funding gap is due to a continued increase in average package costs, and the Home Office for the 2nd year running keeping their contributions rates unchanged; therefore they are still the same as 2021/22 rates despite the cost of living of crisis and significant inflationary increases from providers.
- The forecast for Fostering at quarter 3 is an underspend of -£1.00m due to the numbers of placements for both In-House Fostering and Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA's) being less than budgeted for at 1st April 2023, which has continued throughout 2023/24. The number of Fostering placements, at 1st April 2023 was 342, 31 less than the budgeted amount of 373 and the projected placement numbers by the end of March 2024 is 302 (56 less than budgeted). The forecast average for the year is 311, split 43% IFA's / In-House Fostering 57%; the budgeted average for the year is 366 fostering placements split 42.9% / 57.1%. therefore, the forecast underspend of -£1.00m is due the number of placements being less than budgeted throughout the financial year.
- Internal Provision (Residential & Unregulated) forecast at quarter 3 is an underspend of -£1.23m. The four existing In House Residential homes (Amersall, Cromwell, Morrison & Pinewood) are forecast to underspend by -£0.10m due to being unable to recruit to staffing vacancies. The forecast for Skylarks (2 x 2 beds), which is not expected to be operational in 2023/24, is an underspend of -£0.74m, again from being unable to recruit the staff required. Askern Court (5 beds) requires capital works to be completed and is not expected to be operational in 2022/24; the forecast underspend due to this is -£0.44m. The Care Ladder budget modelling assumed both Skylarks & Askern Court would be operational for April 2023, therefore the underspends from these homes not opening offset the increased overspends in OOA and External 16+ Accommodation. Hatfield Water Park is a new scheme post

budget setting and is now expected to be operational in Spring 2024 costing £0.05m in 2023/24.

146. The forecast spend on agency workers is £3.33m against a budget of £0.90m. This £2.43m overspend is offset by staffing (non-Care Ladder) underspends of -£4.11m mainly in Social Work Teams, Fostering Team and Parenting and Family Support Service. There has been an increased need for agency social workers to cover vacancies, maternity leave and the retention of some for longer based upon demand / caseloads. Caseloads, particularly in Assessments, the Area Child Protection Service (ACPS) and Children in Care, have continued to be high resulting in additional resource being required via agency placements. The average number of agency workers in December 2023 was 42.2 FTE's, of which 36.5 FTE's were Social Workers. Yorkshire and Humber DCS's have signed a memorandum of understanding in relation to capping agency pay.

Corporate Resources

	Gross Budget £m	Income Budget £m	Net Budget £m	Project ion £m	Q3 Variance £m	Q2 Variance £m
Corporate Resources Director	0.3	-0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Finance & Technology	85.3	-67.9	17.4	17.4	0.0	-0.2
Legal & Democratic Services	9.7	-2.9	6.8	7.0	0.2	0.2
Corporate Resources Total	95.3	-71.1	24.2	24.4	0.2	0.0

147. Corporate Resources is projected to overspend by £0.19m at quarter 3 which is an increase to the position reported at quarter 2 of £0.03m.

148. The main area of overspend is due to a sharp increase in the spend on temporary bed and breakfast accommodation in the quarter which attracts limited subsidy. This pressure has increased from £0.10m in quarter 2 to £0.45m at quarter 3. Work is being undertaken reviewing external funding sources as to the eligibility of utilising them to mitigate some of this shortfall. There is also still an overspend within the Legal Childcare budget of £0.13m (which has reduced slightly) relating to increasing spend on professional experts due to changes in how court proceedings are conducted. The service is looking at ways of reducing spend in other area's such as counsel fees to partly mitigate this.

149. The overspends outlined above are being partly mitigated by staffing and non-pay savings, some of which are in readiness for future year previously approved reductions. These have been achieved through the continued efforts of the teams across the Directorate to reduce expenditure through rationalisation and tight contract monitoring.

Chief Executive

	Gross Budget £m	Income Budget £m	Net Budget £m	Projection £m	Q3 Variance £m	Q2 Variance £m
Public Health	34.0	-28.5	5.5	5.8	0.3	0.3
Policy Insight & Change	22.1	-6.9	15.2	14.6	-0.6	-0.4
Chief Executive Total	56.1	-35.4	20.7	20.4	-0.3	-0.1

150. Chief Executive's is projected to underspend by -£0.34m. This is due to underspends against the apprenticeship programme -£0.09m and salaries budgets in Policy, Insight & Change, Human Resources and Communities, offset by a £0.15m budget shortfall against localities leads posts and a £0.12m overspend by Doncaster Culture & Leisure Trust (DCLT). The development of the community prevention service will allow the localities shortfall to be absorbed in the longer-term as the new service model will specify the roles required within the available budget envelope. DCLT's projected overspend is a result of higher than budgeted energy costs, action has been taken to improve the position and it continues to be closely monitored.

Place

	Gross Budget £m	Income Budget £m	Net Budget £m	Projection £m	Q3 Variance £m	Q2 Variance £m
Economy & Development	40.1	-24.0	16.1	15.0	-1.1	-0.3
Director Of Place	0.2	-0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.2
Environment	107.2	-37.0	70.2	69.7	-0.5	-0.5
Strategic Housing	4.6	-2.2	2.4	2.4	0.0	-0.1
Trading Services	24.2	-24.7	-0.5	0.1	0.6	0.5
Communities - Safer Stronger	2.8	-1.1	1.7	1.8	0.1	0.1
Place Total	179.1	-89.1	90.0	89.2	-0.8	-0.1

151. Place is projected to underspend by -£0.81m at quarter 3, this is an improvement of -£0.76m since quarter 2. The main variances are: -

- Bereavement Services: £0.58m overspend mainly due to a projected shortfall against the income target for cremations as a result of increased competition from a new private crematorium which opened in May. There has been a 29% reduction in cremations up to quarter 3 compared to last year. Fewer cremations mean lower utility costs which partly mitigate the income reduction. The impact of the opening of the new crematorium will continue to be monitored. The position has worsened since quarter 2 by £0.04m mainly due to the write-off of bad debt.
- Flood Risk and Drainage: £0.76m overspend (£0.70m worse since quarter 2) mainly due to overspend additional one-off costs associated with recent storm events (£0.10m relating to storm Henk, and £0.57m relating to storm Babet) full impact still to be confirmed, as well as an overspend on Gulley frames £0.07m.
- Waste: -£0.90m underspend (-£0.20m improvement since quarter 2); mainly due to a projected underspend of -£1.59m on waste PFI due to the inclusion of the estimated 2023/24 power gainshare income of -£1.36m, this estimate has

been reviewed in-line with latest indices and increased by -£0.02m since quarter 2, although the indices used to confirm the payment can be volatile there is more confidence in the accuracy of the projection. This additional income has been reduced by; projected overspend of £0.24m on recycling rebate the price of recyclates is expected to fall, £0.37m overspend on Trade waste mainly due to underachievement of income, £0.21m overspend on Non PFI Disposal due to the increased cost of compliance with the legal requirement to incinerate waste containing Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) found in textiles and foam of upholstered domestic seating.

- Facilities Management: -£0.58m underspend; an improvement of -£0.51m since quarter 2. The main reason for both improvements is due to underspends on utilities -£0.50m (-£0.20m of this underspend is due to vacant buildings and will contribute towards future savings targets). Utilities budgets have been reset based on building forecast usage and projections revised based on actual bills to date. The budget proposals have been adjusted for in 2024/25 using the latest information about energy use and costs.
- Business Doncaster: -£0.33m underspend; an improvement of -£0.15m since quarter 2, mainly due to staffing underspends from vacancies and funding posts from temporary grants. The improvement from quarter 2 is mainly due to increased staffing underspend and -£0.07m due to additional funding from ERDF grant.
- Streetlighting: -£0.2m underspend; an improvement of -£0.23m since quarter 2. The underspend and improvement have been due to -£0.1m underspend on accident damage, -£0.08m due to increased recovery of third-party insurance contributions as a result of proactive work between the service and legal.
- Schools Catering is projecting an overspend of £0.03m; this is an optimistic projection and assumes approx. £0.60m will be recovered from schools in line with the service policy on full cost recovery. This £0.60m is mainly due to reduced income from schools because of changes in agreed meal numbers compared to levels agreed in the quote process. Increased food and staffing costs have been managed within the Schools Catering service though budget efficiencies including reduced equipment spend and reducing kitchen hours.
- Other services forecasting an improved position since quarter 2 include Planning which improved by -£0.12m mainly due to increased income from planning applications and staffing underspends. Regulation and Enforcement improvement of -£0.09m mainly due to increased income from bus gate enforcement, staff savings and reduction in security costs.

Council Wide budgets

	Gross Budget £m	Income Budget £m	Net Budget £m	Projection £m	Q3 Variance £m	Q2 Variance £m
Change Programme	0.0	-0.2	-0.2	-0.2	0.0	0.0
General Financing/Treasury Management	5.5	-0.6	4.9	3.4	-1.5	-1.3
Levying Bodies/Parish Precepts	17.5	0.0	17.5	17.5	0.0	0.0

Other Centrally Funded	2.5	-9.7	-7.2	-9.6	-2.4	-2.9
Revenue Costs Ex	-20.1	20.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Capital Programme						
Technical Accounting	-34.7	0.0	-34.7	-34.7	0.0	0.0
Business Rate Retention	0.0	-143.8	-143.8	-145.2	-1.4	0.0
Severance Costs	5.2	-0.1	5.1	5.0	-0.1	-0.1
Council Wide Budget Total	-24.1	-134.3	-158.4	-163.8	-5.4	-4.3

152. Council Wide is forecast to underspend by -£6.23m at quarter 3. The main underspends are: -

- -£1.82m released from service budgets due to a review of energy price inflation;
- -£1.47m Treasury Management. This is due to increasing interest rates on investments and slippage in the capital programme decreasing the borrowing requirement and delaying the need to borrow until later in the year;
- -£1.35m additional Top Up Grant due to 2023/24 post business rates revaluation adjustment;
- -£0.64m estimated Business Rates levy surplus distribution announced in the final Local Government finance settlement 2024/25;
- -£0.49m release of remainder of COVID-19 earmarked reserve £0.44m and Domestic Abuse Hub earmarked reserve £0.05m.

153. These are partially offset by an overspend on: -

- £0.52m 2023/24 pay award. The estimate was for a 4% pay award but the actual increase is around 7%. Original shortfall of £2.84m reduced by £2.32m through in-year savings. The remaining gap of £0.52m relates mainly to shortfalls from in-year savings from Place (£0.35m) and Adults Wellbeing & Culture (£0.16m).

154. The main changes since quarter 3 are: -

- -£1.35m additional Top Up Grant due to 2023/24 post business rates revaluation adjustment;
- -£0.64m estimated Business Rates levy surplus distribution announced in the final Local Government finance settlement 2024/25.

155. The above figures do not include any estimated loss of income from Council Tax and Business Rates. These form part of the Collection Fund and due to statutory accounting requirements, the impact of gains or losses in the Collection Fund in 2023/24 won't affect the Council's General Fund until 2024/25. The impact on the Collection Fund is discussed below.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

156. The overall projection for the HRA remains largely unchanged from quarter 2, the contribution to balances will be £1.18m and HRA balances are projected to be £7.24m at 31 March 2024.

157. SLHD management fee is up by £0.20m as a result of SLA increases, provision for bad debt is down £0.08m, rent income is up £0.13m, other income is down £0.17m (district heating) and interest on balances is up £0.13m.

158. When compared to the original budget estimate 2023/24 SLHD is projecting an overspend of £0.57m due to higher than budgeted pay award for staff, increases in service level agreements with CDC, also due to higher than budgeted pay award, and higher inflation on a small number of other budgets. An increase of £0.57m is requested in the SLHD management fee, with a reconciliation at year-end to ensure any surplus is returned to the Council. There are resources available within the HRA to fund this increase as efficiencies and savings have been delivered by SLHD during the year in the rent income budget (£0.77m) and the provision for bad debts (£0.16m).

159. Current rent arrears at quarter 3 are £2.59m (3.09% of the rent debit), this is an increase of £0.12m from £2.47m (2.92%) as at quarter 2. At 31 December, the amount of former tenants' arrears was £1.21m an increase of £0.06m from quarter 2, there were no write offs in the quarter.

Fees and Charges

160. The Council's Financial Procedure Rules require any changes to fees and charges to be included in the quarterly finance and performance monitoring reports. There have been no changes in quarter 3.

Capital Budget

161. The 2023/24 capital programme consists of 486 schemes with current projections estimating £123.3m spend within the financial year. The split by directorate is in the table below:

Directorate	Current Year Budget Brought Forward (£'000)	Current Year Budget as at Q3 (£'000)	Number of Schemes	Future Years Budget Brought Forward (£'000)	Projected Future Years Budget as at Q3 (£'000)
ADULTS, WELLBEING AND CULTURE	7,936	5,700	8	19,929	27,420
ADULTS SOCIAL CARE	7,892	5,626	3	19,929	27,420
CULTURE AND COMMERCIALISATION	44	74	5	0	0
CHIEF EXECUTIVE	12,125	10,873	23	2,017	3,895
LEISURE SERVICES	11,475	10,222	22	2,017	3,895
POLICY INSIGHT AND CHANGE	650	650	1	0	0
CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES	13,093	7,435	102	24,612	33,181
CENTRALLY MANAGED	370	113	1	400	600
COMMISSIONING & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT	7,719	3,075	70	20,501	27,115
PARTNERSHIPS AND OPERATIONAL DELIVERY	4,292	3,801	25	3,712	5,200
CHILDRENS SOCIAL CARE	711	445	6	0	266
CORPORATE RESOURCES	9,591	2,743	15	1,470	7,783
FINANCE & TECHNOLOGY	9,391	2,543	14	1,470	7,783
LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES	200	200	1	0	0
PLACE	158,142	96,550	338	216,950	286,674
ECONOMY & DEVELOPMENT	62,888	33,288	92	36,458	69,182
ENVIRONMENT	14,351	13,317	173	21,005	23,839
STRATEGIC HOUSING	71,196	42,286	56	159,246	191,323
COMMUNITIES - SAFER STRONGER	86	127	1	0	0
TRADING SERVICES	9,622	7,533	16	241	2,330
Grand Total	200,888	123,300	486	264,978	358,953

162. At quarter 3 there has been a 39% reduction in the projected in-year spend compared to the opening budget of £200.9m which is a reduction of £77.6m.

Directorate	Current Year Budget Brought Forward (£'000)	Current Year Budget as at Q1 (£'000)	Sum of Q2 Current Year Budget	Current Year Budget as at Q3 (£'000)	% Reduction in forecast at Q3
ADULTS, WELLBEING AND CULTURE	7,936	6,406	6,100	5,700	28%
ADULTS SOCIAL CARE	7,892	6,362	6,056	5,626	29%
CULTURE AND COMMERCIALISATION	44	44	44	74	-68%
CHIEF EXECUTIVE	12,125	12,175	11,400	10,873	10%
LEISURE SERVICES	11,475	11,525	10,750	10,222	11%
POLICY INSIGHT AND CHANGE	650	650	650	650	0%
CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES	13,093	10,604	8,645	7,435	43%
CENTRALLY MANAGED	370	359	107	113	69%
COMMISSIONING & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT	7,719	5,362	4,200	3,075	60%
PARTNERSHIPS AND OPERATIONAL DELIVERY	4,292	4,440	3,894	3,801	11%
CHILDRENS SOCIAL CARE	711	444	445	445	37%
CORPORATE RESOURCES	9,591	6,743	4,343	2,743	71%
FINANCE & TECHNOLOGY	9,391	6,543	4,143	2,543	73%
LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES	200	200	200	200	0%
PLACE	158,142	101,173	100,031	96,550	39%
ECONOMY & DEVELOPMENT	62,888	35,908	34,910	33,288	47%
ENVIRONMENT	14,351	13,257	13,425	13,317	7%
STRATEGIC HOUSING	71,196	42,806	43,743	42,286	41%
COMMUNITIES - SAFER STRONGER	86	86	86	127	-47%
TRADING SERVICES	9,622	9,117	7,867	7,533	22%
Grand Total	200,888	137,101	130,519	123,300	39%

163. The table below shows all schemes with slippage of £0.5m or more:-

Scheme	Variance within Quarter (£'000)
NET ZERO CARBON	-1,570
EXTERNAL PLANNED MAINTENANCE (HOUSING)	-1,000
ARMTHORPE ACADEMY LAND PURCHASE	-797
Grand Total	-4,299

164. Current spend to date is £65.1m which is nearly 53% of the £123.3m projection for the year.

Directorate	Current Year Budget as at Q3 £'000	Current Actuals plus WIP £'000	% Spend after 6 months
ADULTS, WELLBEING AND CULTURE	5,700	4,100	71.9%
ADULTS SOCIAL CARE	5,626	4,069	72%
CULTURE AND COMMERCIALISATION	74	30	41%
CHIEF EXECUTIVE	10,873	5,515	50.7%
LEISURE SERVICES	10,222	5,512	54%
POLICY INSIGHT AND CHANGE	650	3	0%
CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES	7,435	3,742	50.3%
CENTRALLY MANAGED	113	0	0%
COMMISSIONING & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT	3,075	1,979	64%
PARTNERSHIPS AND OPERATIONAL DELIVERY	3,801	1,546	41%
CHILDRENS SOCIAL CARE	445	218	49%
CORPORATE RESOURCES	2,743	1,467	53.5%
FINANCE & TECHNOLOGY	2,543	1,467	58%
LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES	200	0	0%
PLACE	96,550	50,318	52.1%
ECONOMY & DEVELOPMENT	33,288	16,963	51%
ENVIRONMENT	13,317	6,241	47%
STRATEGIC HOUSING	42,286	23,184	55%
COMMUNITIES - SAFER STRONGER	127	123	97%
TRADING SERVICES	7,533	3,806	51%
Grand Total	123,300	65,142	52.8%

165. There are 105 schemes totalling £9.4m which have budget allocated to them but are yet to incur any spend.

Directorate	Count of Budget in year but no spend?	Sum of Total for budgets with no spend in year (£'000)
ADULTS, WELLBEING AND CULTURE	2	21
CULTURE AND COMMERCIALISATION	2	21
CHIEF EXECUTIVE	6	1,618
PUBLIC HEALTH	6	1,618
CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES	24	2,107
CENTRALLY MANAGED	1	113
CHILDRENS SOCIAL CARE	1	85
COMMISSIONING & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT	12	1,197
PARTNERSHIPS AND OPERATIONAL DELIVERY	10	712
CORPORATE RESOURCES	4	493
FINANCE & TECHNOLOGY	3	293
LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES	1	200
PLACE	69	5,180
ECONOMY & DEVELOPMENT	15	1,089
ENVIRONMENT	36	1,589
STRATEGIC HOUSING	15	2,427
TRADING SERVICES	3	75
Grand Total	105	9,420

Current Status of Schemes in the programme

166. 159 schemes have either not started or are still at the planning phase which is over 32% of all the current year schemes.

Status	Number of Scheme	% in phase based on scheme numbers
Underway	185	38.07%
Completion Phase	122	25.10%
Block Budget	20	4.12%
Planning Phase	66	13.58%
Not Started	93	19.14%
Grand Total	486	100.00%

167. 185 schemes have been classified as underway and 122 schemes are now in the completion phase.

Future programme

168. Future years spend is now projected at £358.9m in quarter 3 which has increased from the projection of £349.7m at quarter 2 which is mainly due to the slippage of existing schemes.

Capital Receipts

169. Based on current estimates there will be enough capital receipts to cover what is currently estimated to be required in this financial year.

Collection Fund

170. The current position on the Collection Fund for Council Tax and Business Rates is detailed below. For both Council Tax and Business Rates the tables show the Collection Fund as a whole and the Council's share of the Collection Fund: -

- Council Tax:

	Budget £m	Outturn £m	Variance £m	Opening Balance £m	Planned Distribution £m	Closing Balance * £m
Collection Fund	-165.59	-165.73	-0.13	1.73	1.10	2.70
Doncaster Council	-135.10	-135.21	-0.11	1.43	0.92	2.24

* Opening balance, planned distribution of surplus and in-year variance = Closing balance

The council tax collection fund variance in the year is a -£0.13m surplus. This is attributable to the high long-term collection rate -£0.83m and transfers from general fund mainly relating to hardship reliefs -£0.35m, partially offset by lower growth £0.68m and higher levels of Local Council Tax Support granted £0.37m. The in-year surplus reduces the closing balance to a deficit of £2.70m.

The projected closing deficit must be recovered in future years and therefore has an impact on future years' budgets. The council currently receives -£0.92m in surplus redistribution, however based on current budget assumptions this will need to reduce to -£0.25m in future years to recover the deficit.

Council Tax arrears were £24.89m compared to the target of £24.75m at the end of quarter 3. The target for reduction of Council Tax arrears was £1.95m for the quarter and the actual reduction in arrears was £1.49m. The reduction is slightly down on the £1.58m reduction for the same period last year. During the quarter significant progress has been made to reduce the team's backlog which it is hoped will improve the position in the final quarter.

- Business Rates:

	Budget £m	Outturn £m	Variance £m	Opening Balance £m	Planned Recovery £m	Closing Balance * £m
Collection Fund	-108.20	-103.97	4.23	-19.61	20.58	5.20
Doncaster Council	-53.02	-50.95	2.07	-9.61	10.08	2.55

* Opening balance, planned recovery of the deficit and in-year variance = Closing balance

The business rates collection fund variance in the year is a £4.23m deficit. This is attributable to lower growth than anticipated £4.48m, an increase in appeals £0.54m and increased small business rates relief £0.56m. This is partially offset by lower retail relief granted than anticipated -£1.05m (although this gain will be offset by an equivalent loss in section 31 grant which will be managed in 2023/24 using the business rates volatility reserve), lower empty property relief -£0.32m

and lower charitable relief -£0.36m. The in-year deficit means the closing balance is a deficit of £5.20m.

The projected closing deficit must be recovered in the next financial year and therefore has an impact on next year's budget. The council's income from business rates will be reduced by £2.55m in 2024/25 to recover the deficit.

Business Rates arrears were £6.05m compared to the target of £5.65m at the end of quarter 3. The target for reduction of Business Rates arrears was £0.75m for the quarter and the actual reduction in arrears in the quarter was £1.18m. This compares favourably to the same period last year when the level of arrears reduced by £0.88m. During the quarter significant progress to reduce the backlog of work was made which is reflected by the improved reduction.

Schools Funding & Dedicated Schools Grant

171. The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) forecast outturn position for 2023/24 at quarter 3 is a £7.4m overspend, of which £3.3m was anticipated per the medium-term financial plan. The forecast overspend has reduced by £1.1m since quarter 2, mainly resulting from a review of the 2023/24 costs and funding, which will be further refined prior to outturn. This results in an overall overspend on DSG forecast of £27.2m by 31st March 2024.

172. The overspend position is mainly due to pressures within the High Needs Block which includes expenditure on Out of Authority placements (agreed via an education or social care route and review by School's Forum), Specialist Post 16 Institutions, Education Health & Care plan (EHCP) top up payments and additional top up payments to special schools and pupil referral units as well as for alternative provision and tuition. The increase in spend for children placed in SEN out of authority placements, is due to a combination of levels of need and increased demand, including the lack of diversity of local specialist provision against this need, and there have been delays in delivering savings on Looked after children (LAC) placements due to additional demand, increased complexity of children and, in turn, higher package costs. No new homes are open yet as part of the Future Placement Strategy, initially due to the impact of Covid-19 but now due to difficulties in recruiting the staff required. Strategically senior education leads in the council are also liaising with schools regarding the devolution of elements of the DSG to ensure that locally there are the right services in place to support children, improving outcomes and reducing costs.

173. Whilst the overspend position is significant it is not uncommon to other LA positions and Doncaster Council, amongst 55 LAs, is currently participating in the DfE's Delivering Better Value in SEND programme which has looked at plans to manage and reduce the authorities high needs block overspend position through associated investment and based on modelling could potentially realise savings of c.£2m per annum which is factored in from September 2025 subject to progress on the programme. In the last 2 years the Government has partially recognised the position that many LAs face on their High Needs Block and have increased the DSG High Need Grant to LAs with Doncaster receiving an extra £5.7m in 2022/23 compared to 2021/22 levels and a further £5.6m in 2023/24. Based on the latest DfE guidance the projected increases to the grant for future years have been set at 3%, with DfE provisionally announcing a 2024/25 allocation increase of 3.4% for Doncaster. The current high needs medium term plan includes the

expected impact of changes arising from the recommendations made in the Equitable and Inclusive Access to Education for All report at Cabinet in November 2024 including provision development, local support, demand and growth assumptions numbers of children and young people accessing additional support in future years.

Description	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000
DSG High Needs Block grant (after deductions)	48,117	49,717	51,435	53,206
High Needs Block expenditure	55,666	59,100	57,774	58,596
In year High Needs Block variance (less other DSG underspends)	7,437	9,383	6,339	5,390
Overall DSG Balance	27,249	36,633	42,971	48,362

Additional school grants:









174. During quarter 3 of 2023/24 Doncaster's maintained schools have received additional funding from the Department for Education as follows:- School Led Tutoring grant £0.005m, Recovery Premium grant £0.01m and Early Years Teachers Additional Grant £0.01m.













Reserves

175. Earmarked reserves are reviewed each quarter and released where they are no longer required. During quarter 4 earmarked reserves will be reviewed in more detail with a view to releasing them wherever possible. Releasing further reserves would reduce any overspend at year-end, or increase general reserves held for general risks and contingencies. General reserves are currently estimated to be £12.64m at year end.

STRATEGIC RISKS

176. There are currently 11 strategic risks, 10 are shown below and the risk around climate change is being reworded to reflect the current position and we will be in place to report against in Q4.

RAG	Risk Title	Current Score	Target Score	Trend
	Failure to establish sufficiency in local residential placements will increase the cost of residential placements outside of Authority.	16		
	Failure to successfully prevent a major cyber attack	12	6	
	There needs to be a broad range of service delivery, which supports people in the community and in other settings (depending on their needs), without which makes it more difficult for people to live healthy, independent lives	12	10	
	(CR) Failure to deliver the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) would result in an alternative budget being required	12	5	

	with consequential service reductions and impact on achieving Council priorities.			
	(CYPF) Failure to safeguard children and young people across the partnership may result in children and young people being vulnerable and susceptible to risk	12	10	
	(CEX) Failure to implement the Partnership priorities across the Team Doncaster Partnership	9	6	
	(CYP&F) Failure to recruit children social care staff will result in higher caseloads, the use of agency staff and will negatively impact on the quality of social work.	9		
	(AWC) Rising demand for Adult Social Care from the NHS combined with increasing community needs and constraints on workforce capacity increase the difficulty of providing timely care and support	8	5	
	(CEX) (AW) The absence of a well-balanced, resourced & evidence-based combination of interventions & services in our strategic plans will lessen the impact the Council can have in reducing inequality, deprivation and making lives better in the long term	8	6	
	(CEX) Failure to maintain and improve the management of health and safety may impact on the Council's ability to mitigate risk to both colleagues and members of the public and our inability to deliver effective services	8	4	

MARKET ASSET MANAGEMENT (MAM) DONCASTER LTD.

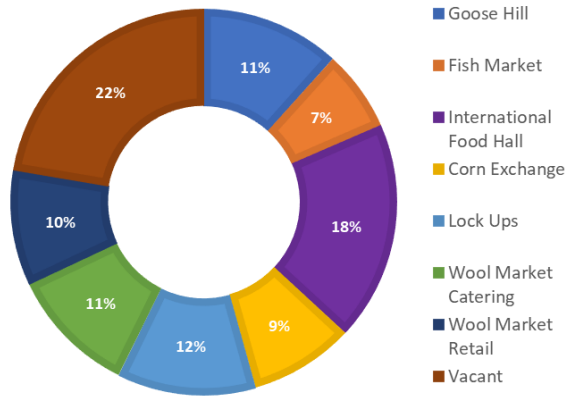
Occupancy Trends at Doncaster and Mexborough Market

177. Occupancy levels between baseline (2019/20) and Q3 (2023/24) have improved overall from 22% vacancy levels to 13%. Doncaster occupancy levels have reduced to be 87% and there are vacancies in the Goose Hill Market and International Food Hall. The Fish Market is full and there is 1 vacant food unit under offer in the Wool Market. Decanted Corn Exchange traders offered a six-month extension to their current lease terms, which lasts until the end of March, currently trading in Goose Hill. Lettings campaign for the Corn Exchange to be launched in January 2024.

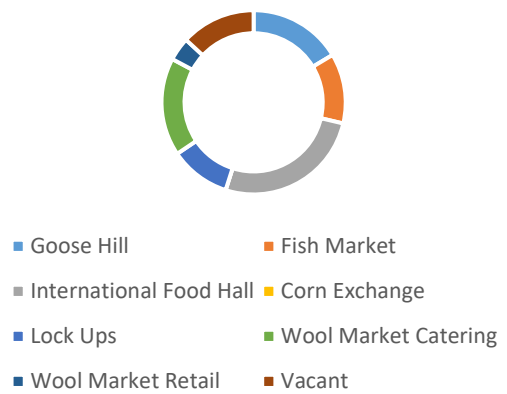
178. In the Wool Market Burgerlicious opened on Thursday 19th October, offering a variety of burgers and sides, meat, vegetarian and vegan, Nero pizza opened on Friday 15th December, offering authentic Neapolitan pizza and starters. Zaytuna and Rustic Pizza leases end on the 23rd of January. Both businesses have successfully gone on to secure their own premises in the wider Doncaster area outside of the city centre. Ongoing campaign for new traders is taking place on social media channels.

Doncaster Market Occupancy Level Changes per area of the estate (Percentage) at Baseline (May 2019) and quarter 2 2023-4

PERCENTAGE OCCUPANCY AT DONCASTER MARKET (BASELINE)



Percentage Occupancy at Doncaster Market (Q3 2023/24)



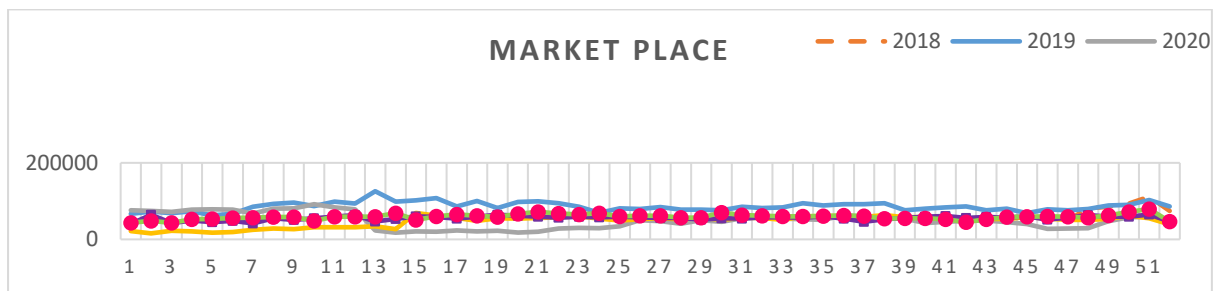
Changes per area of the estate (Percentage) at Baseline (May 2019) and Q3 2023/24

179. Mexborough has seen a reduction to 85% and there are 5 vacant units. Mexborough cafe has now been let and heads of terms have been signed, due to open February/March. Resident Artists have extended their license on one of their units. Toy stall units opened In November for the Christmas period.

180. The comparison of occupancy across the Doncaster estate between baseline (May 2019) and present levels (Q3 2023/24) shows an 8% change in the amount of units in the International food hall from 18% to 26%.

181. As the improvement work on the Corn Exchange continues, the occupancy levels in this area of the Market estate remains at 0%.

Footfall Trends for the Market Place (up to week 52; w/c 29/12/23)



182. Q3 2023/24 has seen a decline in footfall being recorded in the Market Place. Overall footfall average across the quarter was 58,565. The highest footfall year in week 52 was in 2019 with a recorded average of 86,250.

183. The highest footfall for the market place was 79,261 in week 51, the week before Christmas.

184. Footfall trends in the Market Place continue to follow similar trends across all other footfall recording areas of the city centre.

185. Regular updates on the Maintenance Schedules of both Mexborough and Doncaster estates are part of the quarterly KPI return. All aspects of the maintenance schedules are up to date.

Events

186. The free children's discos have been hosted once a month providing entertainment for children up to the age of 10. Reread charity attend every disco, giving out as many free children's books as customers want. The year ended with three well received kid's discos (Halloween disco, Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve discos), holding high attendance another year on. Following the success of the children's monthly free discos the events will continue monthly in 2024.

187. Due to the continuing the success of The Wool Market's weekly smart quiz, these will continue weekly throughout 2024. The Wool Market is still the location for the Doncaster Creative Network networking meetups. Bringing together local creatives to connect and strengthen the community and encourage collaboration.

188. The last Sunday of every month the Wool Market Sunday Session Open Mike takes place where young and up and coming artist and bands have a platform to play and gain experience.

189. The Wool Market will promote prom packages to school and colleges offering a unique and exciting experience.

Financial Position

190. MAM continue to provide monthly income and expenditure reports and quarterly management accounts. Council officers have been through this in detail and are monitoring the position closely however due to commercial sensitivity, the income and expenditure projections are not provided within this report. There has been no financial assistance for MAM in the financial year 2023/24.

BACKGROUND

191. Not applicable

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

192. Not applicable

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

193. Not applicable

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

194. This report provides the performance against service standards and deliverables as outlined within the Corporate Plan & Borough Strategy. It would be too complex to assess the individual contribution or conflict against the great 8 priorities as such this section has been left blank for this report.

Legal Implications [Officer Initials: SRF Date: 15.02.24]

195. Whilst there are no specific legal implications arising out of this report, the individual components, which make up the finance and performance report, may require specific and detailed legal advice as they develop further.

Financial Implications [Officer Initials: RLI Date: 26.01.24]

196. Financial implications are contained in the body of the report.

Human Resources Implications [Officer Initials: KG Date: 16.02.24]

197. Key performance indicator outcomes that are specific to the workforce are detailed within the body of the report along with other key areas of performance worth noting.

Failure to achieve targets for sickness absence can impact on service delivery to customers and increase costs particularly where cover has to be arranged. Work on automatic absence trigger notification is on-going and it is envisaged that this will further assist with swifter notifications and actions. The HR team continues to work with managers works to ensure appropriate action is being taken on staff absences.

Recruitment difficulties continue nationally, and work is ongoing as detailed in the report. This includes marketing roles more via social media, more career graded, trainee and apprenticeships for those posts which are hard to recruit to and have a technical element.

The challenge of meeting mandatory training targets continues; further Health and Training for managers courses have taken place, both on line and classroom based – this is impacting on completion rates.

Technology Implications [Officer Initials: PW Date: 20.02.24]

198. There are no specific technology implications. Technology continues to be a key enabler to support performance improvement and Digital & ICT must always be involved via the technology governance model where technology-based procurements, developments or enhancements are required. This ensures all information is safe and secure and the use of technology is maximised providing best value.

As a service our technology, infrastructure, visions and 5-year plan are used to underpin and support any organisationally defined digital outcome. We will continue to work with the organisation, assisting with the evolution of the Corporate Digital Strategy; ensuring the technology implemented is safe, meets requirement, is fit for purpose, and provides value.

Digital & ICT are also fully engaged and are feeding into the AI Manifesto. Any emerging additional technology requirements will also need Digital & ICT involvement via the technology governance model.

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

199. Specific risks and assumptions are included in the report.

CONSULTATION

200. Consultation has taken place with key managers and Directors at the Directorate Finance & Performance Challenge meetings and Capital Monitoring meetings.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

201. Not applicable

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

202. Not applicable

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Q3



**City of
Doncaster
Council**

Finance Profile

Oct 2023 – Dec 2023

APPENDIX A

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Savings Tracker

	Target 23/24 including under/over 22/23	23/24 achieved	23/24 remainder expected to be achieved in year	One-off 23/24	23/24 (unachieved) / overachieved
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Adults, Wellbeing & Culture	-1.538	-0.395	-0.425	-0.167	-0.551
Chief Executive	-1.213	-1.087	0.000	0.000	-0.126
Corporate Resources	-1.487	-1.487	0.000	0.000	0.000
Council Wide Budgets	-1.863	-1.695	0.000	-0.350	0.182
Children, Young People & Families	-2.795	-0.838	-0.424	-0.088	-1.445
Place	-2.257	-1.575	-0.320	-0.016	-0.346
Total	-11.153	-7.077	-1.169	-0.621	-2.286

Treasury Management Update – Quarter 3 2023/24

1. The CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) Code of Practice for Treasury Management 2021 recommends that members be updated on treasury management activities at least quarterly. This update, therefore, ensures this Council is implementing best practice in accordance with the Code.
2. The forecast position Treasury Management at the end of Quarter 3 is a combined underspend of -£1.474m on interest payable and receivable, due to savings on borrowing costs and increased investment income. Borrowing costs are underspent by -£1.334m as borrowing is only being undertaken when the cashflow position requires it due to high interest rates increasing the cost of borrowing. This position has improved since Quarter 2 slightly as the overall cashflow position has improved. At Quarter 2 another £30m of short-term borrowing was forecast staggered throughout the last three months of the year, whereas this has now reduced to £20m and been delayed until in the middle of February. Investment income is higher than anticipated by -£0.140m due to increased interest rates and investing any surplus cash balances where possible to utilise these high rates.
3. The temporary borrowing that has been undertaken to date to ensure cash balances are being maintained at appropriate levels has all been from other Local Authorities and on a short-term basis to eliminate any interest rate risk. The additional borrowing which will be required before the end of the financial year, and is factored into the forecast above, will be either taken from other Local Authorities or the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) depending on the prevailing rates at the time the borrowing is required. At the time of writing the PWLB rates are more favourable than other Local Authorities, but the market is volatile and that could change.
4. The third quarter of 2023/24 has seen the Bank of England base rate remain at 5.25% after a period of significant rate increases in an attempt to control spiralling inflation. The base rate has gone from an all-time low of 0.01% in November 2021 to 5.25% in August 2023 i.e. in less than two years with successive rate increases following every Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting in that period.
5. The Council has appointed LINK Group as its treasury advisors and part of their service is to assist the Council to formulate a view on interest rates. Their latest forecast was made on 8th January 2024. They are balancing the statements made by the MPC against the trend of the market. After the latest MPC decision on 15th December they reiterated their previous hawkish stance that rates will stay “sufficiently restrictive for sufficiently long”, however, the market is taking a view that rates will have to fall soon and gilt yields have fallen considerably in the last month.
6. Their view on rates is set out in the table below - note the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) rates include the certainty rate reduction of 0.2% which we have also secured. From 15th June the certainty rate applicable to Housing Revenue Account (HRA) borrowing is a further 0.4% reduction from the rates shown below.

Link Group Interest Rate View		08.01.24												
		Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25	Mar-26	Jun-26	Sep-26	Dec-26	Mar-27
BANK RATE		5.25	5.25	4.75	4.25	3.75	3.25	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
3 month ave earnings		5.30	5.30	5.00	4.50	4.00	3.50	3.30	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
6 month ave earnings		5.20	5.10	4.80	4.30	3.80	3.30	3.20	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10
12 month ave earnings		5.00	4.90	4.60	4.10	3.70	3.20	3.20	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.20	3.20
5 yr PWLB		4.50	4.40	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.00	3.80	3.70	3.60	3.60	3.50	3.50	3.50
10 yr PWLB		4.70	4.50	4.40	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.00	3.90	3.80	3.70	3.70	3.70	3.70
25 yr PWLB		5.20	5.10	4.90	4.80	4.60	4.40	4.30	4.20	4.20	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.10
50 yr PWLB		5.00	4.90	4.70	4.60	4.40	4.20	4.10	4.00	4.00	3.90	3.90	3.90	3.90

7. This view of rates staying at higher levels until halfway into the next financial year and then reducing slowly over the next few years is underpinning our current strategy of not borrowing unless it is needed for cashflow purposes.
8. This will result in the Council remaining under borrowed for longer than was anticipated previously which was agreed via the Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2023/24. At the end of 2022/23 the overall under borrowing was £160m which is 25% of the underlying borrowing requirement for both the General Fund (GF) and HRA. Whilst this might seem high, the indications from LINK, show this is comparable to other Metropolitan Authorities. Remaining under borrowed relies on utilising working capital and reserve balances to delay taking external debt.

Borrowing

9. The following table summarises the Council's forecast Debt Portfolio at 31st December 2023: -

Doncaster Council Debt Portfolio and Maturity Profile at 31st December 2023				
	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	Actual	Actual
	%	%	%	£(m)
Under 12 Months	30	0	9.20%	37.5
12 to 24 Months	50	0	2.45%	10
24 Months to 5 Years	50	0	2.90%	11.82
5 Years to 10 Years	75	0	1.24%	5.06
10 Years to 20 Years				62.38
20 Years to 30 Years	95	10	84.21%	49.85
30 Years to 40 Years				148.11
40 Years to 50 Years				82.94
TOTAL			100.00%	407.65

10. The borrowing outlined above in paragraph 2 (a further £20m in the last three months of the year) will all be short term borrowing (less than 12 months) but still well within the limits set.
11. Debt rescheduling opportunities have increased significantly recently as gilt yields, which underpin PWLB rates and market loans, have risen materially. LINK have reviewed our current portfolio and at the moment there is no value to be had by rescheduling or repaying a part of the debt portfolio.
12. The Treasury Management Strategy Statement was agreed by Council on 27^h February 2023 and there have been no policy changes to the TMSS to make members aware of. In light of the revisions to the Capital Programme approved in both the Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 monitoring reports the following prudential indicators have been revised accordingly. Officers confirm there have been no breaches of these revised indicators.

Prudential Indicator 2023/24	Original	Revised Prudential Indicator
	£k	£k
Authorised Limit	713,907	671,956
Operational Boundary	658,376	596,410
Capital Financing Requirement	696,656	634,691

Investment

13. The annual Investment Strategy approved as part of the TMSS sets out the Council's investment priorities as being:

- the security of capital,
- liquidity and
- yield.

14. The Council will aim to achieve the optimum return (yield) on its investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity, aligned with the Council's risk appetite. In the current environment it is considered appropriate to keep investments short term to cover cash flow needs but also to seek out value in periods up to 12 months with high credit quality financial institutions where balances allow. There are no resources within the investment portfolio as at the end of December 2023 as all the funds available were left within the Council's approved banker to cover known commitments over the Christmas period. Given the recent policy of running down cash balances to mitigate the need for borrowing, any funds are now only available for short periods of time due to the timing of receiving grants and income from council tax / business rates and costs in relation to the running of the Council and the Capital Programme.

15. On top of any investments made there is always an available balance of around £15m kept liquid within the main bank accounts of the Council. Due to the positive negotiations within the banking contract this balance attracts a return of base rate less 0.09%, so, at 31st December, 5.16%, therefore we are receiving a favourable level of interest even on our liquid balances.

16. The average investment rate for the first nine months of the year was 4.85% which is slightly lower than the benchmark of 4.96% which is taken from the average SONIA 1-month average for the first nine months as shown below. This is due to our cash balances reducing with a significant proportion being kept liquid.

FINANCIAL YEAR TO QUARTER ENDED 29/12/2023						
	Bank Rate	SONIA	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
High	5.25	5.19	5.39	5.48	5.78	6.25
High Date	03/08/2023	24/11/2023	19/09/2023	30/08/2023	07/07/2023	07/07/2023
Low	4.25	4.18	4.17	4.31	4.46	4.47
Low Date	03/04/2023	04/04/2023	03/04/2023	03/04/2023	06/04/2023	06/04/2023
Average	4.95	4.89	4.96	5.10	5.26	5.36
Spread	1.00	1.01	1.22	1.17	1.33	1.77

17. Treasury Management officers can confirm that the approved limits within the Annual Investment Strategy were not breached during the quarter ended 31st December 2023.

Other

18. Risks were reviewed during the quarter and were managed in line with the Annual Treasury Management Strategy Statement agreed by Council on 27th February 2023. The key risks of our current position are highlighted below.

- a. The Council could be unable to borrow when funding is required due to adverse market conditions and/or budgetary restraints. This risk is mitigated by maintaining sufficient easily accessible funds. Further mitigating actions could be scaling back or re-profiling capital expenditure plans if necessary.
- b. There could be an increased use of reserves and working capital which is currently used to finance the under borrowed position. This risk is mitigated by regular monitoring of the use of reserves and having a robust cash flow forecast, which is monitored on a daily basis

Capital Programme Block Budget Allocations Quarter 3 2023/24

	Funding Source	Allocatio n of block budget 2023/24 £m	Allocatio n of block budget Total £m
<u>Children, Young People & Families</u>			
Centrally Managed			
Adwick school health & safety works	Government Grant	0.005	0.005
DFE – Capital Maintenance Grant	Government Grant	(0.005)	(0.005)
Partnerships and Operational Delivery			
SEND-Toll Bar - Outdoor Area	Government Grant	0.055	0.055
SEND- Coppice School - Module Buildings	Government Grant	0.395	0.395
SEND- New Pastures School - Doors & Lifts	Government Grant	0.030	0.030
SEND- Outwood Academy Woodlands - Sensory Rooms	Government Grant	0.061	0.061
Start For Life -Denaby Family Hub	Government Grant	0.003	0.003
Start For Life - Stainforth Family Hub	Government Grant	0.001	0.001
Start For Life - Central Family Hub	Government Grant	0.004	0.004
DFE – High Needs Provision	Government Grant	(0.541)	(0.541)
DFE – Family Hubs Fund 2	Government Grant	(0.008)	(0.008)
Commissioning and Business Development			
Mallard School Fencing	Government Grant	0.020	0.020
Bentley New Village - Module Building - Safeguarding works	Government Grant	0.007	0.007
Hall Cross School - Increase school places	Government Grant	0.850	0.850
Hayfield School - Increase school places	Government Grant	0.950	0.950
Hatchell Wood School - Increase school places	Government Grant	2.700	2.700
Rossington AS School - Increase school places	Government Grant	(0.150)	(0.150)
DFE – Capital Maintenance Grant	Government Grant	(4.350)	(4.350)
DFE – New Pupil Places	Government Grant	(0.027)	(0.027)
<u>Place</u>			
<u>Economy & Development</u>			
Elmfield Park Pavilion Roof Works	Corporate Resource	0.037	0.037
Retained Buildings - Pavilion Refurbishment Block Budget	Corporate Resource	(0.037)	(0.037)
Adwick Acorns Fire Alarm Replacement	Corporate Resource	0.010	0.010
Whisper Willows Fire Alarm Replacement	Corporate Resource	0.030	0.030

Retained Buildings Block Budget	Corporate Resource	(0.040)	(0.040)
Environment			
Budget for pothole repair has been allocated as follows:			
Highways Permanent Patching	Government Grant	0.456	0.456
Wrancarr Lane, Moss	Government Grant	0.037	0.037
Great Yorkshire Way, A6182	Government Grant	0.040	0.040
Bawtry Road, Rossington	Government Grant	0.043	0.043
Low Road, Conisbrough	Government Grant	0.147	0.147
Windmill Balk Lane, Adwick	Government Grant	0.024	0.024
DFT – Pothole Funding	Government Grant	(0.747)	(0.747)

Virements for Elected Mayor / Cabinet / Portfolio Holder Approval

2023/24 Quarter 3

Financial Procedure Rule B.14 – Proposals for virement between Directorates must be approved by the CFO, up to £250,000 and key decision approval is required for virements greater than £250,000 i.e. by Elected Mayor and/or Cabinet and/or Portfolio Holder. The value of the virement is defined as the gross annual budget.

The following virements are proposed for approval: -

	Reason	Directorate	£
1	Allocation of budgets following the agreement of the 2023/24 pay award.	AWC CYPF CR CH EXEC PLACE CWB	1,415,440 2,311,610 1,006,650 827,250 2,081,310 (7,642,260)
2	Allocation of uncommitted contingency budget to reduce Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) income pressures.	CWB CYPF	(820,000) 820,000