

<b>LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN</b>	<b>WARDS:</b> All Wards
<b>REPORT TITLE</b> Corporate Performance Report Quarter 2 2022-23	
<b>REPORT OF</b> Executive Directors of Supporting People, Supporting Communities and Corporate Services	
<b>FOR SUBMISSION TO</b> Resources & Corporate Performance Scrutiny Committee Culture and Environment Scrutiny Committee Children, Schools and Families Scrutiny Committee Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee Housing Scrutiny Committee	<b>DATE</b> 16 January 2023 16 January 2023 17 January 2023 17 January 2023 17 January 2023
<b>SUMMARY OF REPORT</b> <p>This report provides an update on service performance in Quarter 2 (Q2) 2022/23 drawn from a broad range of measures from across each directorate and division in the organisation. Individual services have provided a narrative covering key performance challenges and areas of positive improvement.</p> <p>This report is divided into three sections: the individual service data and narrative that seeks to identify key challenges and emerging issues over the next 6 months (i.e. looking ahead to Q3 and Q4) that could have negative impacts on service delivery and performance; the ongoing cost of living crisis; and new emerging issues and organisational health issues i.e. cross-cutting challenges in which corporate services play a key role HR, communications, strategy, finance, legal etc.</p> <p>Taken together, these sections are intended to help the organisation understand the general position and outlook for core service performance and take decisions about any further remedial or improvement activity required over and above activity already underway in services.</p> <p><b>Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information</b></p>	

No documents that require listing have been used in the preparation of this report.

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**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Scrutiny Committees are asked to note the report, including the most recent data and trends and the emerging challenges identified, that relate to the services that fall within their respective remits

Signed:

Jon Rowney

Executive Director, Corporate Services

Date: 20 Dec 2022

## 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. This report provides a strategic summary of the Council's performance during Quarter 2 (Q2) 2022-23 and incorporates a range of core service data that the Council will be reporting on a quarterly basis in the year ahead.
- 1.2. It captures the views of directors across the organisation relating to the upcoming six months and identifies potential strategic challenges and issues that will impact on service delivery and performance – this includes the ongoing cost of living crisis, any emerging new issues and general organisational health challenges.
- 1.3. Throughout 2021/22 we began moving forward with a new approach to insight and accountability, seeking to distinguish between organisational accountability for the delivery of services from the delivery of wider outcomes for our community. The development of our new community strategy, We Make Camden, in 2021/22 being a significant part of the new framework.
- 1.4. This quarterly report has constituted the beginning of our new approach to accountability. It has been consciously aligned to our organisational structure and its content is drawn from a broad range of operational measures from across each directorate and division in the organisation. It allows CMT, Cabinet Members and Scrutiny Committees to have regular line of sight on key operational performance measures.

## 2. Strategic Summary

- 2.1. This section provides an overarching narrative highlighting anticipated challenges and pressures over the coming 6 months resulting from ongoing impacts of the cost of living crisis and other issues.

### Emerging or ongoing issues

*This section includes emerging issues or risks with the potential to impact service performance that are not primarily related to Covid*

### 2.2. Census 2021

- We believe that there has been a significant undercount of the Camden resident population and occupied dwellings based on the inconsistency between the census data and a range of other population estimates and data sources pointing towards increased population and increased numbers of dwellings. This is most likely due to the impact of Covid-19 and the challenge counting Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in Camden.

- A full report on the census results and our planned actions in response was received by CMT on 13<sup>th</sup> July. This detailed our plans for further engagement with the Office for National Statistics (ONS), work with LA and regional partners to develop lobbying plans, and further work to understand potential financial impacts. An update report was taken to CMT on 19<sup>th</sup> October which set out the timescales around our key objective of ensuring that subsequent ONS population estimates based on the census appropriately capture resident population we believe was missing when the census took place.
- There are particular issues to understand in relation to published performance data where it has a population component e.g. measures expressed as “rate per population”. We will highlight any impacts within future performance reports.

### 2.3. **Refugee Response Programme**

- Ongoing support has been provided to Afghan refugees since the Kabul airlift in September 2021. Of the two bridging hotels in the borough, The Radisson, used to house a large number of refugees, but following a lot of hard work and skilful negotiations, the hotel has been successfully decanted and is now closed. All guests had an identified exit route, which in many cases was chosen by the guests. We are now down to one bridging hotel for Afghan refugees in Camden, The Imperial. We have agreed with the Home Office that the closure of The Imperial will be delayed from March 2023 to July 2023.
- Colleagues from Housing have developed a ‘Pledge’ for accommodation offers within the borough. So far 20 properties have been pledged - different household sizes and across different forms of tenure – including Council-owned homes, Housing Associations, and the private sector. We are working with the Home Office to ensure that families from within the bridging hotel portfolio are matched to these homes and supported to access employment, financial and educational support that they need. A number of families have already moved into their new homes.
- In March 2022 Camden was designated as a port authority for Ukrainian arrivals under the Homes for Ukraine scheme owing to the St. Pancras International Eurostar terminal in the borough.
- The number of arrivals of refugees on Eurostar are now at their lowest point since the scheme began and most engagement at the Welcome Centre at St Pancras are made up of arrivals from other ports, returnees and those passing by or walk-ins seeking advice, information and guidance. On 7 November the Welcome Centre went to a reduced hours (3.30-11pm) model.
- The first of the refugees are coming to the end of their six-month sponsorship with around half before the end of November. All existing hosts have been contacted to establish their intentions on retaining their guests. From the responses so far we know that of the 209 arrangements, hosts have advised that 138 are continuing the arrangement, 21 are unlikely to continue and in 50 cases the hosts are yet to decide. Housing Options have so far achieved rematches for 10 households and helped 7

to move into private rented sector housing. They are working to support 22 more households into alternative accommodation, all of whom we are trying to rematch and 17 of whom also want us to help them find private rented accommodation.

#### 2.4. **Adult social care service pressures**

- During Q2 2022/23 Adult Social Care (ASC) continued to face service pressures and rising demand. Whilst Q4 2021/22 and Q1 2022/23 appeared to show a levelling off in demand this has not continued into Q2. Analysis of ASC activity, spend and service pressures alongside the impact analysis for social care charging reform, indicates that this rising demand is likely to continue for the next few years.
- Performance data is starting to indicate that the high level of demand is starting to impact on ASC's strengths-based approach, with more people who contact ASC going on to receive a full Care Act assessment.
- Pressure at the 'front door' of the service, across all services, continues, but waiting lists have continued to stabilise with most services managing new demand more effectively. This is due to the specialist services that were commissioned to deal with these backlogs.
- However, people waiting for OT (occupational therapy) has stayed at unprecedentedly high levels with 566 people waiting for OT interventions.
- ASC is in the process of commissioning a specialist agency to address this backlog. The wait for OT continues to be exacerbated by the backlog in housing repairs completing necessary adaptations for people that need them.
- There remains a high number of vacancies across the service in Q2, particularly in support and safeguarding. A workforce development role has now been recruited to support with resolving this issue.

#### Organisational Health issues

*This section contains systemic issues and risks that considered relevant to our organisational health i.e. our ability to operate effectively and sustainably as an organisation*

#### 2.5. **Recruitment and Retention**

We continue to operate in an unusual and uncertain context, which affects our ability to plan long term responses to challenges. The external economic conditions and increasingly tight labour market have resulted in pressures on our pay scheme and pay policy, alongside increasing turnover rates. Recruitment in the organisation is running at record rates and the post-covid return to offices has also affected the nature and appeal of the Camden offer. We are currently working hard to review our offer and ensure we are competitive in the market whilst working within tight financial constraints. It's likely these challenges will continue through Q3 and 4.

## 2.6. **Cyber and Data Security**

- A significant and widespread disruption to service delivery and performance is possible due to a cyberattack against Council ICT infrastructure. The global cyber security threat level continues to grow, with local and central government remaining a significant target for criminals. Work to improve technical controls leveraging our recent investment in Microsoft 365 'E5' tools, and incident readiness has continued at pace. Considerable progress has been made to further strengthen our disaster recovery processes and procedures to restore critical systems should an incident occur.

### Highlights on Core Provision for 2022/23

*This section of the report provides a summary of our core service delivery for quarter 2 (July-September) 2022/23.*

## 3. **Cost of Living Crisis (updated 12<sup>th</sup> December)**

- The appended corporate performance dashboard includes a section which brings together available data in a “cost of living” dashboard. This dashboard is being developed as part of the Council’s cost of living response and is being organised according to the workstream structure of the programme:
  - o Financial support
  - o Warming homes
  - o Food insecurity
  - o Community response (including warm spaces)
  - o Schools and early years
  - o High risk groups
  - o Support for employers
- For the purposes of the developing the dashboard, we are seeking to understand what measures best illustrate risk / need in the context of each workstream, which measures best capture activity and interventions, and how best to evaluate impact.
- The dashboard remains a work in progress while each workstream fully mobilises and defines their key data requirements. Included below is a brief overview of some of the activity so far relating to community response, financial resilience, and food insecurity.
- ‘Camden’s Warm Welcome’ Offer has more than 40 registered Warm Spaces across the borough opening their doors - in libraries, children's centres leisure centres and including 23 community buildings – free to all, to help everyone stay warm as well as offering activities, an opportunity to meet friends and neighbours and some spaces providing hot food and/or food banks. Several other community organisations are in the pipeline to join the offer.
- The Council agreed a £2m cost of living crisis fund to support residents facing severe hardship due to the cost-of-living crisis. Camden’s voluntary partner organisations – including Citizen’s Advice, Age UK Camden, Somers Town Health

Living Centre and West Hampstead Women's Centre – have been supporting residents to access this crisis fund. We have distributed £537,219 in cash or vouchers to residents in need from our cost-of-living crisis fund so far.

- Food insecurity is a priority for Camden, and our aim is to ensure that those who are struggling financially are treated with dignity and respect. The cost-of-living crisis fund is a key mechanism for delivering on our 'money first' principle. Demand for support is increasing week by week.
- In Camden we have a strong network of community organisations providing direct food support to those in need, this network supports over 2,500 people each week. The support includes services such as food parcels, cooperatives, pantries and other options. New grant funding has been made available to these organisations to support with this service delivery over the winter period. We are also working with our partners across London to secure food supplies into the borough.
- We are also working closely with schools in the borough to identify those eligible for Free School Meals, but do not claim them, to expand our Breakfast Club provision, and to offer other types of wrap around support to children and families who may be struggling with the cost of living.

## 4. Supporting People

### 4.1. Safeguarding children

- Camden has consciously maintained its investment in early help and prevention; this has played a key part in maintaining and improving outcomes and managing need and demand on statutory services over several years.
- The Council is maintaining a strong focus on the numbers of safeguarding referrals, Children in Need, Children Looked After and Children on Child Protection Plans. The volume of referrals through the front door remains high but still remain lower than statistical neighbours. We have put some additional capacity in the front door to make sure the front door continues to be safely managed.
- **Child Protection Plans.** Child protection numbers have seen an increase this term to 181. We will continue to audit both those children who have had plans over 14 months to ensure there is no drift or delay and those children who are taken to conference, and a child protection plan is not made.
- **Children in Need (CIN).** CIN numbers have gradually decreased since 2021/22 as direct interventions have been taking place and plans have been worked through. Our re-referral rates remain below statistical neighbours but we will continue to monitor this closely to make sure we do not have a revolving door.
- **Children Looked After.** The number of Children Looked After slightly increased in Q2. Last year saw 62 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children started to be looked after by Camden. Since April we have had 10 Unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people arrive all of whom require screening and age assessments and need two workers allocated to complete in addition to the allocated social worker. This

means that the social work time needed has greatly increased for this group. As a greater number of young people are arriving at 16 and 17 years of age the number of Care Leavers has also increased.

- **No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)** is a status that applies to non-UK nationals who are unable to access benefits due to their immigration status. Over the last 3-5 years Camden has supported between 7 and 13 families at any one time. Currently we are supporting 7 families - 10 adults and 6 children (soon to be 8 children as two women are pregnant). To date in this financial year £40k has been spent on accommodation and subsistence – the budget overall for these cases for the year is £120k.

#### 4.2. **Early Intervention and Prevention**

- **Education, Employment and Training (EET).** Every year in Q2 (July-Sept) the numbers of young people who are EET are very low due to the school and college summer holidays and the end/start of the academic year churn. At the end of September, the enrolment and destination data of leavers is only just starting to be collected. A clearer picture and realistic percentage of EETs/NEET's usually re-emerges around the end of October/middle of November each year.
- **Youth Justice.** In Q2 the data continues with a positive picture reflecting the impact of joint working to achieve the best for some of our most vulnerable children. Of the 13 children where a custodial sentence might have been an option, none were given and alternatives to custody were the outcomes. The low custody figures so far this year (0%) demonstrate the benefits of the strong working relationships between the Youth Justice Service (YJS), social care, the courts and the police to identify and deliver robust alternatives in the community where suitable and appropriate. It also indicates the confidence the courts have in our court reports and proposals for these children.
- **Early Help / Family Support.** There has been a slight increase in the percentage of families who received support from Early Help remaining free from further Early Help or social work intervention for 12 months afterwards, at 80% compared to 79% last quarter. We use this figure as a key piece of evidence of impact to an annual rolling average of over 80% which we have come to expect as usual in Camden. The quality Performance Challenge panel in Early Intervention & Prevention (EI&P) division continues its work and monitors the impact of training on practice.
- **Early Years.** There were 604 families claiming benefits via the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) that were potentially eligible for a 2-year-old funded place in Spring 2022, 451 (75%) were funded on the scheme. During the summer term 2022 there were 607 families potentially eligible for funding and 411 (68%) took up a funded place. This decrease in the summer term was due to children moving on to the 3-year-old funded places in the summer term.



#### 4.3. **Education and schools**

- **School attendance.** Since June 2022 Camden Learning has had access to daily attendance data from schools as part of the Department for Education (DFE) Wonde pilot.. 35 schools across Primary, Secondary and Special agreed to give data to the DFE, currently this is voluntary though will become a statutory requirement from September 2023. Wonde data analysis functions were increased in September 2022. The data enables PAS to access school data to support discussion with school leaders on attendance including persistent absence. Work on resources to support schools to improve attendance have been developed with schools and shared via the Attendance Strategy. Work continues with the virtual school to raise awareness of attendance with social workers and other key staff. Schools reported an increase in parents taking leave in term time towards the end of the summer term as Covid restrictions were lifted and families felt the need to see their families many for the first time in several years. Whilst schools had requested parents not to take leave in term time many still took leave without school's permission. PAS has worked with schools over the summer term to review attendance strategies in preparation for this becoming a statutory obligation for schools from September 2023.
- **School Exclusions.** Q2 2021-22 completes the full year of exclusion data and it is difficult to identify any significant trends. However, provisional data for the past year suggests Primary School suspensions remain low and are below both Inner London and National levels. At secondary, Camden is following the national trend but remains slightly below it, at both National and Inner London levels. Camden's schools are continuing their commitment to inclusion in the borough by funding interventions such as the Rhyl Satellite (Primary) and the CRiB (Camden Reintegration Base) at Haverstock School (Secondary) where these interventions have been evaluated have contributed to a reduction in suspensions for individual pupils.
- **Ofsted.** There are 34 Camden schools in the inspection window, 9 of whom have not been inspected for over 10 years. Three of our primary schools have been inspected so far this academic year. Reports have not been published but no changes to grades are anticipated. There are two schools currently with a Requires Improvement grade, UCL Academy, and William Ellis. Both schools have been offered additional support. All other Camden schools are Good or Outstanding.

#### 4.4. **Adult Social Care (ASC)**

- **Strengths based approach:** The performance measures are designed to capture whether our strengths-based approach is working. The continued pressure on services due to increased demand may be beginning to have an impact on the quality of our strengths-based working – although further quality assurance work is required to fully understand the impact.

- The data shows us that more people who contact ASC are going on to receive a full Care Act assessment. In 2021/22 only 22% went on to have a full assessment, but in Q2 22/23 27% of people who approached ASC via the community route required a full Care Act assessment. This is higher than the projected 'ideal' proportion set out in our performance framework (between 20-25%).
- Assessment demand is much higher this year than last year. If current trends continue then over 900 full Care Act assessments will take place compared to less than 750 last year.
- A further sign that the increased demand is impacting on ASC's strengths-based approach is that only 72% of individuals who receive a full Care Act assessment go on to receive a full package of ongoing care and support. The performance framework suggests this figure should be over 90%.
- The work that took place during Q1 and Q2 to reduce service pressures may take time to show an impact in our approach. There is also a renewed focus on quality assurance of the work we do. Both approaches may start to show an impact in the Q3 data.
- **ASC waiting times for Occupational Therapy (OT)**; there remains a very significant cohort of individuals waiting for OT input of various types, with 566 people waiting at the end of Q2 22/23. A specialist agency is being engaged to support the service in meeting this demand. A significant proportion of this group continue to wait for an adaption to their property.
- These lists are continually reviewed, and risk assessed, with individuals kept updated by practitioners, and we are aware that delays can cause distress for individuals and families and can limit opportunities to work preventatively. The waiting times for OT vary due to the complexity with the people waiting the longest due to the delays with adaptations.

Wait	People	%
0 to 4 weeks	97	17%
5 to 10 weeks	165	29%
11 to 20 weeks	198	35%
21 to 52	104	18%

- **Care and support pressures** – whilst demand remains high, the numbers of people waiting has stabilised with waiting times for social care assessments now close to expected levels for a busy social care service (36 people waiting for 1-2 weeks following the initial enquiry to have a conversation about their needs with an ASC practitioner).

#### 4.5. **Integrated Commissioning Service**

- **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service.** Carenotes, the NHS electronic patient record system, suffered a cyber attack on 3 August and was shut down in order to limit the attack. Since that time, no new information can be entered onto the Carenotes system although patient notes can be accessed on a read-only basis up to the point the system went down. NHS England, who are working urgently to establish a plan for the restoration of services, have declared an internal Critical Incident and implemented the business continuity arrangements required to maintain patient safety and high standards of service. Tavistock & Portman (T&P) should be in the next tranche of data support, though following intervention, Carenotes could still take up to 2 weeks to go live. In the meantime, T&P are recording contacts manually and will upload this data as soon as the system allows.
- **Health Visiting.** Last year there was a significant reduction in the timeliness of 2-2.5 year reviews of children by the Health Visiting Service. A Task Group was set up to explore a range of possible issues and several improvement actions are being implemented. In Q1 22/23 performance increased to 69.5% and in Q2 it further increased to 76.3% demonstrating the service is making good progress. It will take time to demonstrate the impact of all the actions being implemented. They include briefing sessions for parents on health reviews following service user engagement, SMS text messages and a self-booking system, letters to parents from a GP highlighting the importance of reviews, more venues available for appointments, a data review to find and target those missing appointments through other services they may be in contact with, and regular engagement with Camden's nurseries.

#### 4.6. **Public Health (Q1)**

- The public health key performance indicators and targets have been reviewed for a refresh as we move towards business as usual for 2022-23 and are now updated.

##### 4.6.1 **Smoking Cessation**

- The community stop smoking service 'Breathe' offers behavioural support and stop smoking aids to people who live, work or study in Camden & Islington. The 3-tiered service model ensures that smokers receive the support that is appropriate for their needs, lifestyle and circumstances. The service also trains, supports and monitors a network of community pharmacies and GP practices to deliver stop smoking interventions under the locally commissioned service provision (LCS).
- In Q1, the number of smokers achieving the four-week quit rate was on target at 55.7% across the service. This is lower than the previous period Q4 2021-22 and this time last year Q1 2021-22 which was at 61%.
- Quit rates in GP practices are below average at 44% and are attributed to system pressures that is affecting staffing, capacity and prioritisation of smoking cessation

in this setting. However, specialist support in pharmacy settings is achieving an excellent quit rate (71.4%) among a low number of service users.

- The focus for the next quarter is to continue to build strong referral pathways within secondary care, support LCS providers to increase capacity, including training and mentoring of their stop smoking advisors.

#### **4.6.2 Substance Misuse.**

- In Q1, 969 people entered drug treatment and 357 entered alcohol treatment, a small decrease when compared to this time last year (976 for drugs and 373 for alcohol). This can be attributed to services still managing the effects of the pandemic where there was a higher number of people in treatment, due to increased demand at the end of 21/22.

- A further increase in face-to-face delivery and group activities has been returned to a pre-pandemic frequency during this period and has resulted in better retainment of service users within treatment. The percentage of unplanned exits in Q1, for drug users was at \*9.4% in Camden (nationally at 16.5%) and for alcohol users at \*3.8% (nationally at 13.2%), highlighting Camden's performance against these indicators is significantly better than the national average.

\*The performance against both indicators have exceeded targets (12% for drug users and 8% for alcohol users), as the lower the percentage the better.

- Services focused on Blood Borne Virus (BBV) testing during European Testing Week with one provider (CGL), offering all their applicable service users a BBV test and resulting in 90% taking up the offer. Of those testing positive for Hepatitis C, 94% went on to access treatment.
- All services are now working in closer partnership to co-deliver interventions such as the Creative Art Group held at The Living Space. This offers service users the opportunity to engage in community settings for activities which includes painting, drawing, ceramics, and group outings. Substance misuse services will also support any local plans to ensure COVID-19 and flu vaccinations are accessed by vulnerable/targeted groups.

#### **4.6.3 NHS Health Checks.**

- The NHS Health Check is a national prevention programme which assesses the top seven risk factors associated with non-communicable disease. The programme aims to improve the health and wellbeing of adults where appropriate (aged 40-74), through the promotion of early awareness, assessment and management of major risk factors for cardiovascular disease (CVD).
- In Q1, 2.3% (1,604) eligible residents received a health check against an annual target of 5.9%. This is a 40% increase in the number of NHS Health Checks-delivered across 32 Camden GP practices when compared to Q4 2021/22 (1.7%). The latest performance is higher than health checks delivered in the pre Covid-19

pandemic period (based on Q1 2019/22 - 1,380) and despite continued pressures in primary care due to pandemic recovery

#### **4.6.4 Mental Health and Wider Determinants; Number of people receiving mental health awareness training.**

- Prevention, promotion and sustaining good mental health “Ensuring good mental health for all” is one of the five priority areas in the Camden's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019 (refresh).
- In Q1, 81 people were trained against an annual target of 624. Rethink have planned course delivery across the year to account for peak periods and will address the lower group size of courses to move towards pre pandemic levels of participation. The service has planned their first in-person open Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) course on 20th and 21st July and will evaluate the return of face-to-face sessions, to increase attendance rates.

#### **4.6.5 Making Every Contact Count (MECC)**

- MECC is central to how we can better support residents to get the help they need earlier. It provides staff with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to spot opportunities in conversations we already have with residents; to signpost them to support related to health, wellbeing, money/debt advice and housing.
- The number of staff and volunteers completing MECC training in Q1 (37) was just below the quarterly target (40) and lower when compared to the previous quarter (66) and from the same period last year (62).
- Over the summer, Public Health Officers with the training provider have developed and launched a new version of the MECC training; covering the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis and how best to support and signpost residents who may be struggling financially.
- Promotion of the training offer has been stepped up to ensure that the numbers completing the training remain on target for the year.

#### **4.6.6 Number of Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) prescriptions in local integrated sexual health services.**

- The uptake and on-going use of LARC supports a reduction in unintended pregnancies, particularly amongst teenagers.
- In Q1, there were 468 LARC fittings which is significantly higher than the quarterly target of 250 and from the position of this time last year when it was at 253.
- When compared to the previous quarter (4), there is a reduction in LARCs (108 less) and is mainly attributed to the prioritisation of the Monkeypox diagnostics and vaccination clinics mobilisation. However, performance remains positive and on track to achieve its annual target.
- Camden continues a reduction in teenage pregnancies in Camden, with some of the lowest conception rates across London. A North Central London (NCL) LARC

maternity group to implement a LARC pathway in maternity services has also now been established.

## 5. Supporting Communities

### 5.1. Community Services

- **Library PC use.** This quarter, the inclusion of children's PCs continues to depress the figures (on average by 3%), but again, even excluding them the figure is about 32%. However, demand for the adult PCs at some libraries is strong, e.g. 54% at Pancras Square in September, and more than 40% Kilburn and Kentish Town.
- There are several possible reasons why we are seeing lower use in PCs. Just before lockdown we invested in Hublets, which are tablets that customers can use within the library premises in preference to using a PC; an increase in bandwidth capacity has led to an increase in Wi-Fi and personal device use instead of public PCs, often preferred post pandemic; and investment in BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) Printing, Scanning and Photocopying, may also impacts level of public PC use as people use their own devices.
- **Visitor figures per 1,000 population.** Numbers continue to increase, and we exceeded the target by 14% this quarter.
- **Food Safety.** The number of food safety inspections gradually increased during Q2, with returns to the Food Standards Agency reflecting the increased level of activity.
- **Concession Membership** currently accounts for just over half of our leisure centre membership, which is higher than the target of 46%. It is believed that this is largely due to corporate members having cancelled their memberships due to covid-19 and the resultant move to working from home. As the recovery from covid continues we are seeing a gradual return of corporate members, with our leisure operator proactively approaching potential businesses about offering memberships for their workers as a key component of the cross subsidy pricing strategy.

### 5.2. Economy, Regeneration & Investment

- **Planning.** The percentage of all planning applications approved increased from below to above target in Q2. Government data is not yet available for Q2 but data for Q1 shows the London has the lowest approval rate in the England at 81%. Within London the approval rates in Q1 ranged from 94% for Hammersmith & Fulham down to 63% for Barking and Dagenham. Camden's performance this quarter is therefore likely to mean it was one of the best performing boroughs in London.
- **Inclusive Economy.** Apprenticeships – it continues to be a difficult environment for apprenticeship recruitment with numbers struggling to recover from the drop experienced in the pandemic. We have however, seen an uplift in interest in recruiting both internally and externally and there are a number of opportunities in

the pipeline which should improve numbers in Q3. The target of 200 for the year remains a real challenge.

- **Construction** jobs are at 47% of the annual forecast so more or less on target. The construction skills centre have run a number of new initiatives in the last quarter with HS2 and their contactors and focusing on women in construction. The team secured £180k of investment from the GLA via our college partners to embed Green Skills equipment in the CSC including Air source Heat pumps and Solar thermal / PV this will lead to formal training programmes in this area.
- **Good Work Camden** - We continue to embed advisors in neighbourhood settings and have been integrating our new welfare advice offer. We have opened our first temporary, physical job hub in Queen's Crescent and are sharing the space with Fixing Factory and the ward councillors who hold their surgeries there once a week. Our refugee specialist has registered 60 people with GWC, supported 26 into education and training and 4 into work. In Q3 we will be recruiting to our pilot Disability Job Hub and launching the youth employment opportunities entitlement.
- **Strategic work** - we have started the area based workshops in relation to the Evening and Night Time Economy Strategy, the Affordable Workspace Strategy will be finalised in Q3 and KQ2050 – the strategy for the inclusive growth of the Knowledge Economy in the area around KX and Euston – will be socialised internally and externally this quarter.

### 5.3. **Property Management**

- The new Govmetrics SMS surveys have enabled the Housing repairs service to receive instant feedback on the work carried to residents' homes. We now have over 8,000 pieces of individual feedback across various streams of work; day to day repairs, mechanical and electrical repairs (M&E) Voids repairs, Capital works, and Case management, and currently working on launching Environment services and CCTV (FM). Current telephony customer satisfaction results for Q2 are 85% for the in-house team and 81% for M&E.
- The channel shift strategy has been very successful and Q2 shows a 62% reduction in call volumes when compared to the same period last year. Customers are utilising their resident accounts to raise repairs jobs, 17% of all customer orders in the last month were via their accounts. In addition, 46% of customers now choose to report a repair via other channels other than telephony. Webchat and SMS have produced 4,500 conversations in the last month alone. This has freed up the telephone lines for our most vulnerable residents. We are looking to launch WhatsApp in the coming weeks; similarly, we are working to improve the chat conversations by introducing "Chatbots".
- Case management volumes have fallen in Q2 and the team continues to close a high proportion of its cases within the target time (81%).
- From reviewing Q2 data we can see further that the number of live repairs orders has increased since the previous period, higher volumes being a general trend post-

pandemic, and we are working hard with the repairs teams to prioritise this work and manage the demand whilst remaining within budget. We are also looking at how targeted capital works can help to relieve pressure on the repairs service and this is under close review ahead of the next financial year.

- Tackling damp and mould has been a priority for the repairs service over the last 12-18 months. As part of this, the Council has been proactively surveying homes and has put in place additional resources for this, along with mould washes and remedial works. We are also planning for the long-term with permanent changes being made to the structure of the repairs team and the introduction of a dedicated option on the phone lines with named staff who will specialise in damp and mould calls. More broadly the Council is looking at how it can continue to take a pro-active approach and work with other agencies to minimise the risk to residents, this recognising the understandable concern and the need for action following the tragic death of Awaab Ishak in Rochdale.

#### 5.4. Housing

- **Voids.** This quarter's figure includes three long term complex voids, two of which took over 1,000 days each. Now the new interim Moving Home Team is in place there is scope to increase the number of early lets and to make further improvements to the voids process.
- **Rental Income.** Our rent teams pilot launched in September, comprising 19 full time equivalent staff and 2 managers. Officers will be taking timely action to improve collection, but with a strong emphasis on:
  - support for residents who may be struggling financially. The focus so far has been on:
    - Refresher training for officers
    - Forging strong links with colleagues in the courts and welfare rights teams
    - Targeted work on accounts in need of progression
    - Contacting residents to discuss accounts
- It is anticipated that the interim teams focus on rent will result in timely support to residents and an improvement in the collection of rent arrears.
- **Temporary accommodation (TA).** The long term (since 2015) period of stability at around 500 households appears to be under threat from post-pandemic factors leading to increased presentations and negative impacts on our ability to prevent and relieve homelessness using the private rented sector. This is a London-wide issue. Most concerning is a Camden and London-wide increase in use of hotels for families. An action plan is in place to try to eliminate use of B&B hotels and reverse the relatively recent increase in the TA total.
- **Overcrowding.** A redesign of the housing allocations scheme is in progress, during which the effectiveness of the scheme at resolving overcrowding for families will be comprehensively reviewed following a stocktake by a consultant at the end of 2021. Family Friendly Camden work will also look at new ways of supporting our



overcrowded families as not all want to or can move home. A new Overcrowding Strategy, addressing overcrowding in a range of ways, will be presented to Cabinet in December.

#### 5.5. **Development services**

- In September 2022, a Community Investment Programme(CIP) strategy report was presented to Cabinet which built on previous ambitions and increased the scale of house building from 3,050 homes to 4,850 homes. With major new developments proposed at Camley Street (350 new homes) and West Kentish Town (c900 new homes) as well as launching a small sites programme.
- Significant progress has been made in the first two quarters of 2022/23 though the CIP Improvement Plan which has reviewed and updated the following:
  - Camden Housing Design Guide and Employer's Requirements
  - Camden CIP Standard Scope of Services and KPIs
  - Camden Development Procedure Manuals
  - Camden Data Library, Benchmarking and Framework of Triggers
  - Camden Reservoir of Information and CIP Development Model
  - Governance boards, reporting, decision-making and change control
- There are currently three live construction sites: Agar Grove, Highgate Newtown Community Centre and Maitland Park. Delivering 258 new homes as well as two new community centres.
- Abbey Health and Community Centre completed in this quarter. Leases are being finalised so that the NHS and the Abbey Community Group can occupy the building.
- Private sale homes are being marketed at Maitland Park. 60% of homes have been bought off plan. The team are monitoring the impact of inflationary increases on mortgages.

#### 5.6. **Environmental Services**

- **Refuse and recycling.** As a general trend across all London boroughs there seems to be a decline in recycling rates due to various local and national factors affecting waste and recycling tonnages, including the summer heatwave that substantially reduced garden waste tonnages.
- The collection service is operating well and remains within the contract standard – an average of 51 per 100,000 missed bin reports in Q2, represents 0.0005% of bin collections missed across the borough.
- Final Q1/Q2 waste and recycling figures are not yet confirmed with the North London Waste Authority (NLWA), but indicative figures suggest a slight rise in recycling for the start of 2022/23.
- **Street cleanliness.** There are 3 tranches of the Keep Britain Tidy survey. There was not one undertaken in Q2 and the next one will be in Q3 in the Autumn. Previous reports illustrate a good performance of cleanliness standards against

the contract targets, with a focus being required on an increasing graffiti level in certain high street areas across the borough.

## **6. Corporate Services**

6.1 Corporate Services continue to perform well, but the challenges identified in the previous quarter have grown. The impact of the government's mini-budget in September and its repercussions have introduced an unparalleled level of uncertainty around future funding settlements and the expectation around the next fiscal event is that it will reduce the spending power of local authorities and other public sector organisations and a time of growing demand. The continuing impact of inflation on Council budgets and services means the Council is preparing to make prudent savings within our medium term financial strategy that help maintain organisational resilience and capacity.

- January's Cabinet meeting will receive a report on the Council's medium-term financial strategy and we expect to continue to update the Council and our communities about our response to the wider financial challenge for public services during 2023. The financial challenge intersects with the Cost of Living Crisis, creating significant pressures on individuals and communities, as well as on the Council as an organisation and partners in the voluntary and community sector (VCS) and wider public sector. Corporate Services plays a coordinating role, supporting a whole council response, with strategic oversight from a Cabinet-level response group. We are seeking to align our long-term plans for service improvement and transformation alongside our response to the financial volatility that provides the context for our Council.
- Despite these headwinds, we remain focused on continuing to evolve our organisation so that it is relational, responsive, and data-led.
- A focus over the next two quarters will be on:
  - developing a consolidated approach to data, led by our Chief Data Officer,
  - the acceleration of our work around digital and design-led approaches with a strong focus on how our citizens experience with the council, and
  - Ensuring our work on debt and financial resilience continues to support our residents at a time of increase financial hardship.

## **6.2 Finance**

- The financial and operating context for the Council is and will remain challenging. Our financial position is stable but characterised by high degrees of uncertainty about the long-term rates of inflation, future demand for services and our long-term funding settlement. The impact of the Covid pandemic has placed considerable strain on the Council's finances over the past two years. This continues to be felt, in particular from a reducing local tax base and falling income from commercial rents as well as additional expenditure supporting the most vulnerable in the borough.

The Council is also meeting new challenges – including the cost of living crisis and the financial and personal hardship this will result in for our communities. Inflationary pressures will also impact the Council and the cost of purchasing goods and commissioning services.

- The Council is currently forecasting an overspend of £10.8m in 2022/23 in the general fund, driven largely by inflationary pressures across services and significant reductions in some fees and charges due to the permanent scarring to the economy caused by the Covid pandemic. There has also been a permanent reduction in income for a number of fees and charges across the Council which have not yet returned to pre-covid levels in all areas.
- The factors described above and others mean that Council's expenditure is forecast to rise faster than the funding available to it over the medium term, creating a funding gap if no action is taken. The uncertainty surrounding these factors make it very difficult to forecast the precise size of this shortfall, however current central estimates assume a figure of £35m - £40m in the General Fund and £8m-£12m in the Housing Revenue Account by the financial year 2025/26, however this may increase if current inflation levels remain over the medium term or if the government funding settlement is lower than forecast. The Council is developing proposals to meet this financial gap over the coming years, and how to prioritise our resources and investments over the next financial period and this will form part of an update to Cabinet in January 2023.
- On the 11th of October 2021 the Council committed to exploring the launch of a Local Climate Bond within 18 months of COP26, aiming to raise funds for local green projects. In March 2022, this was followed by the launch of CCI (Camden Climate Investment 2027), which provided an opportunity for investors to contribute to sustainable schemes in the borough whilst at the same time earning a financial return.
- A target of £1m was set over period of 3 months and by the end of June 2022 the CCI was fully subscribed with contributions mainly from residents and businesses locally as well as the general public. These sums will now be put towards the delivery of local sustainable projects across the borough, including the provision of new electric vehicle charging points, a continuation of the healthy streets programme, new solar panels on public buildings and greening of the council's fleet of diesel and petrol vehicles.

### 6.3 **People and Inclusion**

- In recognition of the cost of living crisis and its impact on staff we have moved in Q2 to offer staff some focused support, including access to financial advice and targeted interest free loans (for example the new childcare deposit loan scheme to cover the large upfront costs of getting a child into nursery provision). Working with staff networks and trade unions we will continue expand the support that we offer.
- See point 2.5 above for Recruitment and Retention.

#### 6.4 **Customer Services**

- The Customer Services division has continued to be impacted by increased workloads linked to the cost of living issues and is playing a critical role in supporting residents and businesses in the borough.
- Over the second quarter, over £8m was awarded to residents through the energy rebate scheme with a further £2m awarded in household support funding to families and pensioners on low incomes. Over £27m from the Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund was awarded to businesses to support them with business rates. In July the Council agreed its own Cost of Living Crisis Fund scheme which was formally launched in September 2022. At the point of writing, the Council is receiving over 150 referrals for awards each week.
- Alongside delivering this work, the Council has launched a new online Council Tax move in/out form that streamlines the process and enables residents to apply for discounts and exemptions at the point of completing the move in form, ensuring initial bills are right first time. The Council also worked with residents and partners including Age UK Camden and disabled groups to launch a new automated menu system on the main Contact Camden number making the system easier to navigate with shorter durations. Lastly a significant restructure took place to merge Council Tax and Business Rates with the Benefits Service under one Head of Service. The new structure went live in September and delivers £500,000 annual saving.
- At the end of Q2 the year to date council tax collection figures were 0.33% above expected target, in actual cash terms it means we were £560,000 above our cash target of £85.77m (to achieve the budgeted 95% collection rate). Our year to date business rates collection rate is down 0.65% on profiled income, which is £4.17m below our cash target of £379.87m for the year to date (to achieve the budgeted 95% collection rate).
- Collection of income across the Council remains challenging however and a new cross-organisational review is starting in quarter 3 to look at how the Council can continue to improve its collection processes whilst identifying and supporting those in greatest need.
- The dashboard includes new performance data on Contact Camden. The service received 138,579 calls over the summer, down from 146,383 in quarter one. This is normal seasonal demand change over the main holiday period but demand increased significantly towards the end of the quarter with the September peak in student claims in council tax having a significant impact. This has been to an extent mitigated through spreading resource internally to smooth the demand peaks and the use of temps. The percentage of calls fully resolved at the first point of contact by Contact Camden increased from 50% to 55%. This reflects significant variations in how much Contact Camden is empowered to do on services' behalf – in Council Tax, resolution was 76% in quarter 2, down slightly from 81% in quarter 1. Due to

staffing shortages over the summer holiday period and the September peak in students, average call wait times increased from 4.42 minutes to 6.36 minutes but the out of hours emergency service continued to respond to over 90% of calls in less than 2 minutes.

- Parking Operations has seen the Council's transport policy objectives beginning to make a difference with a reduction in paid for parking demand and fewer diesel and higher polluting vehicles using the borough's streets.

## 6.5 **Law and Governance**

- Overall performance has remained good. In terms of formal enquiries (Complaints, Freedom of Information requests, Subject to Access Requests, Member Enquiries and MP Enquiries) the service continues to work with the Directorates to improve the quality and timeliness of responses.
- A new MP enquiries system has been launched allowing our teams to monitor and action MP enquiries in a more timely way and making it easier for service managers to look at trends and themes and gathering learning outcomes in real time to inform future service provision.
- The Annual Complaints report for 2021/22 is going to Resources and Corporate Performance Scrutiny Committee on 13th December and Cabinet on 14th December.
- Committee Services, Elections Team and Member support continue to prepare for the move back to the Town Hall.
- Legal services continue to respond to the surge in demand in work levels. The service is reviewing how best to deliver its work areas to meet the needs of the Council departments it supports.

## 6.6 **Digital and Data Service (DDS)**

- Most projects within the Council's Digital Plumbing Programme are now in the delivery phase, although progress continues to be impacted by global supply chain shortages affecting equipment availability and resource constraints. The project to migrate the Council's legacy primary Data Centre from Roy Shaw House to a Crown Hosting Data Centre is now advanced, and we expect to begin migrating critical line-of-business applications at the beginning of November. This project will replace all life-expired equipment, improve the operational performance of front-line applications and reduce the running cost, physical footprint and environmental impact of our ICT environment, freeing up the building for disposal at the end of March 2023.
- The performance of frontline IT services delivered by our IT Service Centre has remained good, although the workload has increased by 4% during the past quarter. We continue to encourage a channel shift away from users reporting issues by telephone. The usage of the self-service support portal has increased by 12% compared to Q1, allowing DDS staff to work smarter and improve productivity. We

are pleased to report a further 11% decrease in incoming support telephone calls to our IT Service Centre from 8,605 in Q1 to 7,730 in Q2, and our average wait time to answer has further reduced to 1 minute and 15 seconds. Our KPI for First Response Time (FRT) for Incidents reported to the Service Desk remains above target at 89% responded to within two hours. Overall, our average resolution time has further reduced from 11.73 hours to 7.65 hours despite a 4% increase in workload. Our burn rate for support tickets remains at 100%, indicating that the IT Service Centre remains on top of the workload.

- Our technical teams in the Technology Backoffice (Infrastructure, Information Security and Technology Adoption teams) and Applications Service continue to deal with a large workload of strategic and business-as-usual projects, with many staff contributing to initiatives as part of cross-functional teams. Response and resolution times to tickets escalated to specialist teams remain stubbornly high and will be an area of focus during Q3.
- Our Microsoft Teams collaboration platform continues to perform well, underpinning communications across the council and enabling hybrid working. During Q2, Teams enabled the exchange of 2.8 million chat messages and facilitated 338,855 1:1 calls and 43,795 organised meetings. Our staff generated 137,133 participant hours of audio calls, 81,914 participant hours of video calls (+12% compared to Q1) and 65,455 participant hours of screen sharing (+11% compared to Q1).
- Having successfully recruited a new Chief Data Officer to deepen our commitment to being data-led, we are working on developing the data architecture and organisational climate for this way of working to succeed and embed in the organisation.
- As we continue to build better in-house capability within the Digital Products and Services Team, the pace at which we deliver value around CRM, Housing Repairs, and Camden.gov.uk is starting to accelerate, with good progress in the last quarter.
- See point 2.6 above for Cyber and Data Security.

## 6.7 **Strategy and Design**

- Good Life Camden and the State of the Borough. The community engagement on the citizen-led Good Life Camden wellbeing framework is underway and will help us understand residents' experience of living in Camden and their priorities for the future. The index will be an important feature of the inaugural State of the Borough report planned for the first half of 2023. The What Matters Fair took place 12th November, led by the Participation team, and saw over 150 residents, staff and partners gather to discuss what makes a good life in Camden. The Joint Chairs of Scrutiny met in October and received an update on the State of the Borough process, agreeing to take a draft of the report to their meetings in February which will enable committees to support its development and reflect the issues they are hearing through their work.

- Renewal Missions. Work is ongoing on delivery of the renewal Missions (covering food, neighbourhoods, young people, and diversity in positions of power) and a range of 'discovery' activity to explore how to take forward the Camden Challenges set out in We Make Camden has taken place during this time. The outcome will be to work with services and directorates to plan engagement and sponsorship for each of the programmes of work. The youth mission took an update to Cabinet in November, covering the development of an overall youth employment entitlement. Work to explore the potential to develop a Camden Community Wealth Fund (suggested by the Renewal Commission) is ongoing, and the Council is beginning a piece of work on mission-orientated approaches to procurement with the Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose (IIPP) through their newly established design studio.
- Increasing design capability in Camden. During this quarter we brought new professions into both the team and the strategy family - Service Designers, Design Researchers, and Delivery Managers. The new team members have been recruited under a new capability framework to inform their work and professional development. Early stage work the team is supporting includes 'discovery' work in Housing Allocations, Debt, Customer Experience and Digital Inclusion Strategy. Activities to research and understand Camden's residents' perspectives and how we can rethink Camden's offer continue to be underway.

## 6.8 Equalities and Disproportionality (E&D)

- Having been set up to focus on tackling racial inequality and disproportionality, the E&D service is now expected to cover wider equalities work, addressing other protected characteristics in the Equality Act. We now need to expand the service, widen the focus, and redefine what a sustainable, long-term approach looks like to this agenda, and how we ensure Equalities is woven through all that Camden does.
- As part of the next phase, we will be exploring the impact that Levelling up will have on the way we provide our services and how we are ensuring that no one is left behind. Our approach will be intersectional which will allow us to provide the best outcomes for our colleagues and residents across the borough.
- Work in progress includes:
  - Creation and development of Camden's first Inclusion calendar
  - An overarching vision for the organisation's Equalities agenda, including an Equity charter.
  - Developing a data dashboard of equalities and disproportionality in Camden both organisationally and for the Borough
  - Continuing the Community of Practice programme approach to community cohesion, partnerships and equalities.
  - Supporting the delivery of the Social Value in Commissioning and Procurement programme of work
- Emerging issues for the next year 2022/23:

- In Autumn 2022 we will be publishing our Strategy for Diversity in the Public Realm. The E&D service then needs to work with supporting communities to oversee the delivery of the strategy
- A holistic equalities work programme to be developed to ensure the organisation doesn't become too siloed in its various action plans. To counteract this the Equalities and Systems Change Lead will oversee the development of a cross-Council equalities and disproportionality strategy.
- A Bill to recognise British Sign Language as a language in the UK is due to be passed in parliament. E&D to help understand the organisational position.
- Equalities training across the Council including Member's training will be developed and coordinated by the Equalities service including revamping the Equalities Impact Assessments.

## **7. Finance Comments of the Executive Director Corporate Services**

- 7.1. The Executive Director of Corporate Services has been consulted on the contents of the report and has no comments to add to the report

## **8. Legal Comments of the Borough Solicitor**

- 8.1. The Borough Solicitor has been consulted on the contents of the report and has no comments to add to the report

## **9. Environmental implications**

- 9.1. There are no environmental implications from the policies set out in this report

## **10. Appendices**

- 10.1. Appendix A – Corporate performance data dashboard, Quarter 2 2022/23

**REPORT ENDS**