

<b>LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN</b>	<b>WARDS:</b> All Wards
<b>REPORT TITLE</b> Corporate Performance Report Quarter 4/End of Year 2022-23	
<b>REPORT OF</b> Executive Directors of Supporting People, Supporting Communities and Corporate Services	
<b>FOR SUBMISSION TO</b> Culture and Environment Scrutiny Committee Resources & Corporate Performance Scrutiny Committee Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee Children, Schools and Families Scrutiny Committee Housing Scrutiny Committee	<b>DATE</b> 10 July 2023 10 July 2023 10 July 2023 11 July 2023 11 September 2023
<b>SUMMARY OF REPORT</b> This report focusses on Quarter 4 (Q4) 2022/23 and an overview of performance of the whole financial year, using a broad range of measures from each directorate and divisions across the organisation. Individual services have provided a narrative covering key performance challenges and areas of positive improvement in their service areas.  <b>This report is divided into two main sections, namely:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A strategic summary which highlights challenges and anticipated pressures coming in 2023/24, as well as featuring any systemic issues and risks that are considered relevant to our organisational health.</li> <li>- A detailed summary of core service delivery for quarter 4 and the year 2022/23 as a whole across each of our three Directorates.</li> </ul> <p>Taken together, these sections are intended to provide Camden Management Team (CMT) with a picture of performance across the Council and enable CMT to take decisions about any further remedial or improvement activity required over and above activity already underway in services.</p>	

This report includes expanded data on a range of organisational health measures (staff turnover, sickness, complaints etc) by directorate (and division for some measures).

### **Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information**

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

27 June 2023

## 1. STRATEGIC SUMMARY

### Emerging or ongoing issues

This section provides an overarching narrative highlighting current challenges and anticipated pressures in 2023/24

#### 1.1. Cost of Living Crisis

The following summary has been provided by officers leading the workstreams that form Camden Council's Cost of Living (CoL) response:

1.1.1 **'Camden's Warm Welcome' Offer** had 53 registered Warm Spaces across the borough opening their doors at the end of March 2023 - in libraries, children's centres, leisure centres and includes 32 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.

- Monthly Networking sessions are being held with all Warm Welcome Hosts, approximately 20 participants attending sessions, shared best practice and practical support for residents.
- Partnership work with 'Participation and Partnerships' to convene ward level community network meetings to mobilise and coordinate CoL Community Responses. Funding process developed and initiated to provide small grants to enable responses – meetings held for all wards.

1.1.2 **Cost Of Living Funding.** Camden's Cost of Living Crisis Fund applications commenced in September 2022. By the end of March 2023, they had received 6,634 applications and awarded £1.95m+ to Camden residents from the fund. Including additional household support funding the government, the total awarded was £6m with over 16,000 children receiving supermarket vouchers throughout the year, £280,000 awarded to help previously homeless households move into new tenancies and over 900 pensioners and disabled people receiving hardship payments.

- CoL Generalist Advice funded outreach work launched with £200K of funding to increase capacity of the Camden Advice Network, to provide advice in community outreach locations (e.g. community centres, food projects).
- An Equity Fund of £60K for groups supporting residents that have been disproportionately impacted by the CoL crisis - specifically, older people, Black, Asian, and ethnic minority residents, Disabled people, Women, and Carers. Programme designed and launched.
- CoL Business Improvement District Match Funding £30K for wards in the South, convened April 23
- Food insecurity is a priority for the CoL Programme, and our aim is to ensure we can support those residents struggling financially, treating them with dignity and respect. In Camden we have a strong network of community organisations providing

food support to those in need, this network of over 30 organisations supports over 2,500 people each week. The support includes services such as food parcels, cooperatives, pantries and other options. Camden Communities have self-organised into 12 food co-ops, supporting 240 households, with another 4 waiting to start.

**1.1.3 Children and Young People.** We are working with the GLA, Camden schools and our suppliers to implement the GLA-funded roll out of universal, free school meals at Key Stage 2 from September. This includes developing safeguards to maintain pupil premium funding within our primary schools. In addition, we are liaising with our secondary schools on a programme of interventions to improve the take-up and use of free school meals. We are continuing to focus on the roll out of our support for Breakfast Club provision in schools with a particular focus on increasing take up in schools with the highest proportion of pupils coming from families experiencing financial hardship. We continue to support programmes within schools to address the cost-of-living crisis, including: enabling schools to be points of referral for the crisis fund; providing schools with a limited number of discretionary hardship vouchers (up to 100K); and supporting access to the Holiday Activity and Food programme (using the Government's Household Support Fund, the council awarded £2.5m of supermarket vouchers to the families of over 16,000 children last year). We are also developing proposals to support families with the cost of school uniforms.

**1.1.4 Adult Social Care's** cost of living response has initially focussed on a risk stratification process to identify people who were most vulnerable to the crisis this winter. 500 people who draw on care and carers were identified and to date 384 people have received a £300 cost of living payment.

## **1.2. Refugee Response Programme**

Following the Afghan airlift in September 2021 and the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the Council has responded by setting up a new refugee programme board to deliver, coordinate and oversee our multi-agency response to this unfolding crisis and to establish the foundations for future responses in an uncertain world.

**1.2.1** The Camden Pledge is a plan to resettle up to 62 Afghan households, currently living in bridging hotels in the borough, into long term housing options in the borough. In February 2023 the 17<sup>th</sup> family moved into a pledge property. In total, 99 Afghan refugees, made up of 36 adults and 63 children, have now been housed in homes in Camden.

- Work is now progressing to deliver an expanded pledge offer for the remaining 42 households in the Imperial hotel, many of whom wish to make their home in Camden. 27 households have been provisionally matched to offers and further resettlement offers will be generated by Camden's innovative property acquisition programme.

- In April 2022, there were 475 Ukrainian refugees who were enrolled in the Homes for Ukraine (HfU) scheme. As of April 2023, Camden's full matched cohort currently consist of 1190 refugees, matched with 595 sponsors. Of these, 870 (73%) have had their arrival in the UK confirmed by the Home Office. A further 145 have had their visas issued but are yet to arrive. Out of that total cohort, 300 individuals have left the program and have either returned to Ukraine, chosen not to travel to UK or have found private accommodation. We are left with 878 people who are now enrolled in the HfU scheme.
- Funding uncertainty, cost of living pressure and "host fatigue" have all contributed to the risk that Homes for Ukraine host/guest relationships end after the initial 6-month commitment. The Council have responded with an enhanced offer where host guest relationships have broken down and there is a risk of homelessness, including efforts to re-match to a new host family. Additional measures which have been introduced include support for Ukrainian households to navigate steps towards independence; and the Council introduced a "top up" scheme for hosts continuing their participation in the scheme for a full 12 months. The Government have now confirmed that they will be following this lead shown by Camden and other London boroughs and will be increasing their own "Thank you payments" to hosts providing homes for Ukrainian guests.

**1.2.2 Refugee Children and Young People.** With more than a thousand refugee children coming to Camden with their families from Afghanistan and Ukraine, Camden Children's Services have been significantly involved in the Council's response. Both the Afghan and Ukrainian refugees have dedicated early help family support teams putting in place a comprehensive strategic and operational response to support children to have a safe and healthy start to life in the UK, working with local voluntary and community sector (VCS) and public service partners in health, education, early years, employment, adult learning, and also working closely with homelessness prevention services to help reduce risk of family homelessness and prolong hosting arrangements. The Ukrainian family support team have undertaken 114 initial welfare visits to newly arrived Ukrainian families, and a further 68 follow up visits from April 2022 to date.

- In addition, there are five Home Office contingency hotels for people seeking asylum in Camden which currently house 75 children from 34 families. Following visits from Camden's Early Help and Adult Social Care teams to these five in the borough, an action plan has been put together tightening our connection with the contingency hotel estate. The visits revealed some grey areas regarding safeguarding and accountability, and the action plan – with a specific focus on safeguarding - goes above and beyond previous arrangements.
- So far 11 unaccompanied Ukrainian children have made visa applications to join hosts in Camden, of which seven have arrived and have settled well. Ongoing support is provided to these children by Family Early Help and Children's Safeguarding and Social Work.

- Camden schools continue to support the placement of children with refugee status within our schools. Schools have been swift to support the continued education of our Afghan communities that are still being accommodated within the borough. In addition, schools have also accommodated Ukrainian nationals accommodated has part of the HfU scheme.

**1.2.3 Employment, Training, and Education.** In support of the Council's Refugee Response Programme, Good Work Camden are coordinating and leading on activities to support Camden's newly arrived refugee community into good and sustainable employment, training, and education.

- 20 Afghan residents from the Bridging Hotels have secured employment and 91 have registered with the Job Hub Team. Overall 70+ refugees are undertaking ESOL and 32 in other forms of training.

### **1.3. Temporary Accommodation**

**1.3.1** London is suffering a severe housing affordability crisis at a time when the financial pressures on low-income Londoners have never been greater. Average rents across the UK were up 10.8% annually in December 2022. Unsurprisingly, the top ten least affordable places to rent in the UK are all in London – Camden is the second least affordable place to live, with an average monthly rent of £1,750 which accounts for 60% of the average monthly income. The rental market is currently stretched to breaking point, with a lack of stock restricting tenants' choice and benefit shortfalls, as well as an increased competition for places.

- Camden contributed to a report put together by London Councils which reported that the number of London households needing help from boroughs' homelessness services is rising while the availability of temporary accommodation (TA) is shrinking.

**1.3.2** A key factor in London's increasing homelessness pressures is the pressures being felt in the Private Rented Sector (PRS). The DWP use Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates to calculate Housing Benefit for tenants renting from private landlords, but LHA rates have remained frozen, this has had the impact of reducing the number of properties affordable to low-income households reliant on benefits.

- With a cost-of-living crisis and inflation driving up prices of food and energy, such a shortfall is unsustainable and inevitably leads to rent arrears. This significantly increases the risk of homelessness for these individuals and families.
- Buy-to-let landlords are having to increase rents in order to cover their costs due to rising interest rates and energy costs (or are selling up), leaving a shortage of PRS housing to assist with temporary accommodation. Also, commercial property companies are unable to make a profit from the rents that local authorities are willing to pay but can make a profit by letting to the mainstream market instead. London Councils reported 20% fewer PRS properties procured for TA in December 2022 compared to the same month in the previous year.

**1.3.3** This shortage of affordable accommodation has meant boroughs are increasingly reliant on commercial hotels, with use of B&B accommodation as TA beginning to

rise again after years of sustained reductions. The number of households living in TA in London has seen a 51% increase over 10 years from June 2012.

- Camden's TA remained at around 500 homeless households from 2015-2020 but by September 2022, this increased by 8% to 544. As of March 2023, this figure stands at 613 households, a 22.6% increase in 2 years across all forms: B&B hotels, hostels and self-contained accommodation.
- London Councils wants to see a national, cross-cutting homelessness and TA strategy to prevent homelessness and increase the supply of both TA and settled homes. In the long term, more homes will need to be built, specifically more affordable socially rented accommodation. In the short term, increasing LHA rates is the most effective tool currently available to the government to prevent and reduce homelessness.

#### **1.4. Children Looked After Service.**

- The number of Children Looked After by Camden has increased slightly in 2022/23 and is the highest for a number of years. Insufficient court capacity has led to delays in achieving permanence for some children, which had meant fewer children leaving care. The number of children in care proceedings over 26 weeks at the end of March 2023 was 30 cases which was 52 children.
- Additionally, we continue to see the challenge of increased complexity due to the trauma experienced by children coming into care. At the start of June 2023 Camden were looking after 50 unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people, all of whom required screening and age assessments and additional staff resources, in addition to 172 allocated former UASC (young people receiving care leaver services from Camden CSSW). We face the challenge of finding suitable foster placements for children where there are higher levels of complexity and trauma, even in the younger cohort.

#### 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*

#### **1.5. Finance**

- 1.5.1 The Council agreed a new Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) in January 2023 which will help to strengthen financial resilience over the medium term. However, the financial and operating context for the Council remains 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 lower tax base than previously forecast 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.

1.5.2 In 2022/23 the Council has a small underspend of £0.14m. This has required the planned use of reserves to support budget pressures as a result of both the long-term impact of Covid, the cost of living crisis and significant inflationary pressures. In addition, where possible, Directors have taken action in year to address forecast budget pressures. Many of the budget pressures experienced in 2022/23 are as a result of permanent scarring to the economy and the need to provide additional support to vulnerable residents over the longer term. These pressures have been addressed via the Council's new Medium Term Finance Strategy and the successful delivery of the strategy over the next three years will be vital to ensure the Council's financial resilience.

1.5.3 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) has an overspend of £13.1m in 2022/23. This is a result of significant inflationary pressures on energy and repair costs along with emergency action to tackle damp and mould. While the HRA was overspent by £13.1m the HRA reserve was increased by £22.1m mostly as a result of the £19m settlement in relation to the Council's court case against the Chalcots Estate contractor, alongside a £3m planned contribution to reserves as part of the policy to increase the level of financial stability to the Housing Revenue Account. The cost pressures that the Council experienced in 2022/23 are likely to remain over the medium term as inflation remains high. The expected inflationary impacts on budgets were factored into the Council's Medium Term Finance Strategy and help to inform the level of savings needed in both the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account in order to close the expected medium term budget gap.

#### Core Service Provision

This section of the report provides a summary of our core service delivery for 2022/23 including Q4 (January-March)

## **2. SUPPORTING PEOPLE**

### **2.1 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 is higher than previous years but still remains 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. We have noticed greater complexity with the referrals coming through.

- The overall group of Children in Need is made up of children who are receiving different social care interventions:

2.1.1 **Children in Need (CIN):** The Children Act (1989) defines a Child in Need (CIN) as a child who needs services to achieve a reasonable level of health or development. The local authority is responsible for determining what services should be provided. In practice this refers to children who require more support than is currently provided through our Early Help offer and therefore has an allocated social worker or is being supported through the Children with disabilities team. CIN numbers in Camden have increased since last year (1,327 in 2021/22 compared to 1,457 at end of 2022/23). 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.

2.1.2 **Child Protection Plan (CPP):** Child protection is part of the safeguarding process. The CPP focuses on protecting children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. In Camden the numbers of children with child protection plans have increased from last year (145 up to 174). 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.

2.1.3 **Looked After Children (LAC):** this refers to a child is placed outside the home, likely to be with relatives, in foster care, a children's home or placed for adoption. Also includes children in respite care. The number of Children Looked After has come down slightly in this last quarter as some are reaching 18 years of age and some are being placed in their permanent homes. As a greater number of young people are coming into care aged between 15-17 years, there is a sufficiency challenge in terms of in-house placements and placements in the pathway. This has resulted in the use of more placements in the private and voluntary sector for under and over 18's which is a significant pressure on the placement budget. It is notable that adolescents coming into care are also presenting with more complex issues which has resulted in an increase in the application of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards and one secure placement in this quarter (see also para 2.4)

2.1.4 **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 5 years Camden has supported between 7 and 13 families at any one time. Currently there are 9 families of which four have arrived recently from Sudan. The Sudanese families are British citizens but not habitually resident so the cost of accommodation and subsistence falls on the Local Authority until which time they can claim benefits. In 2022/23, the total NRPF expenditure was £98.5k.

## 2.2 Early Intervention and Prevention

2.2.1 **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).** It has been 6 months since Camden's Local Area SEND strategy was approved by Cabinet and our strong partnership approach to implementing the strategy continues to thrive and develop.

- In our recent SEN2 data return to the Department for Education, Camden maintained 1446 Educational Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) which is only a small increase from the previous year with 131 plans issues over 2022. 96.9% of plans were issues within the 20 weeks of referral (including exceptions) compared to 57.9% nationally in 2021. Approximately 59% EHCPs were reviewed within the annual review timeframe in 2022 which we are working on as partnership to improve and explore.
- At the point of return 40% of children and young people with EHCPs have an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) recorded as their primary need. Work is currently underway to refresh Camden's all age autism plan in partnership with children, young people, families and professionals to ensure we are meeting the needs of this group.

**2.2.2 Youth Justice.** The data continues with a positive picture reflecting the impact of joint working to achieve the best for some of our most vulnerable children. Not one child received a custodial outcome throughout the whole of 2022/23 demonstrating 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. First time entrant also continues to reduce, with a 33% reduction in last year's data (24 first time entrants in 2022/23 compared to 35 last year).

**2.2.3 Education, Employment and Training (EET).** The performance is really strong at the end of 2022/23 – the team have worked really hard to track all Camden young people – working closely within our own services, schools, and other education providers. Currently, there are only 58 NEET young people in Camden (1.7%) and 16 young people whose destination we do not know (0.49%) against a total cohort of 3,261. The end year figures are an average of December, January and February and Camden continues to show a strong performance in comparison to other central London boroughs with the second highest proportion of young people in EET. This means the team can act quickly when we find young people who are NEET by allocating a careers adviser to support them.

**2.2.4 Early Help / Family Support.** In the second half of 2022/23 there has been a decrease in the percentage of families who remained free from further Early Help or social work intervention for 12 months afterwards. Performance remains at 72% in Q4 (as it was in Q3) compared to 80% in Q2. The quality Performance Challenge panel in Early Intervention & Prevention (EI&P) division continues its work and monitors the impact of training on practice.

**2.2.5 Early Years.** Camden is one of 75 local authorities receiving a share of the £301.75 million Family Hubs & Start for Life Programme funding for 2022-2025, led by Department for Education and Department for Health and Social Care. Camden's 'Start for Life' offer was published on the 30th March 2023 and is the first step in providing a virtual offer within the Family Hubs programme.

- Family Hubs provide a universal ‘front door’ for families to access joined-up support services from conception, throughout a child’s early years, and up to the age of 19 or 25 for young people with special educational needs or disabilities.
- The aim is to provide parents, carers, and their children with a place to easily access help without judgement. Offering a ‘one-stop shop’ of family support services which cover their social care, education, mental health, and physical health needs - with a comprehensive Start for Life Offer for parents and babies at its core.
- The new Camden Family Hubs brand has been established. Five of the existing children’s centres are being transformed into Children’s Centres & Family Hubs, as part of the new ‘Camden Family Hubs network’ and due to be launched in June 2023.

## **2.3 Education and schools**

**2.3.1 School attendance.** Since June 2022 we have had access to daily attendance data from schools as part of the DFE Wonde pilot. This enables PAS to access data for schools and also attendance data for pupils. 51 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.

- The attendance data provided by Wonde at the beginning of March was just below the national average. PAS and schools closely monitor attendance levels and offer support where appropriate. The new court officer began with PAS in January 2023 which has increased capacity within the service.

**2.3.2 School Exclusions.** (‘Suspension’ is an exclusion for a fixed period. ‘Exclusion’ refers to permanent exclusion). Two thirds of the way through the year and provisional data shows that suspensions are low at Primary and continue to reduce at Secondary. Repeat suspensions of pupils with one or more suspension remains low but may level off once the full academic year is completed. Camden continues to stay below National and Inner London levels. At primary suspensions are consistently low. In the last quarter there has been one permanent exclusion of a primary age pupil from a Camden school, this is the first in 4 years. Camden’s Schools continue their commitment to inclusion in the borough by co-operating to find alternatives to exclusion and developing new approaches such as Off-Site Direction at secondary to reduce permanent exclusions. Rhyl Satellite (Primary) and the CRiB at Haverstock School (Secondary) continue to contribute to a reduction in suspensions for individual pupils.

**2.3.3 Ofsted.** So far this year (Autumn and Spring terms), there have been nine Ofsted inspections of Camden schools - five Primary schools: Argyle, Rosary, Fleet, St

Luke's and Brecknock; two secondary schools: Regent, and Parliament Hill; and two special schools, CCfL (now called Harmood) and Swiss Cottage. All were graded as Good except Swiss Cottage, which was graded Outstanding. This was an exceptional achievement as the Ofsted bar for an outstanding judgement is very high. At the end of March, some reports remained as yet unpublished by Ofsted, however the overall percentage of schools who are good or better (97%) has not changed as a result. This is 10% above the National average of all schools that are good or better.

**2.3.4 School places.** The Council continues to respond to the changing and challenging demographics within Camden. As part of our ongoing work to support the overall viability of Camden Family of Schools the Cabinet took the difficult decision to support the Diocese of Westminster with the closure of St Dominic's Catholic School from September 2023. This takes the overall reduction in primary school places to over 9 forms of entry (270 places per year group). Recent pupil population forecasts and entry into to our schools has however seen a stabilisation in overall numbers and a reduction in the overall decline of local birth rates.

## **2.4 Health and Wellbeing - Children**

Services and performance continue to stabilise following the significant impact of the Pandemic. Recruitment and retention of workforce continues to impact on some services, however plans are in place to mitigate these issues. We have seen an increase in demand across a range of services and intervention/assessment backlogs and waiting lists are being managed in the interim through a mixture of short-term measures (ie. temporary staff) and support to those waiting. A number of transformation workstreams have been initiated to develop services that can meet future need.

- Commissioners continue to innovate and work in partnership with other departments, external partners and service users to improve outcomes, an example of this is our successful bid to the DfE Short Breaks Innovation Fund for year 2 funding (£562k) to support CYP with social, emotional and mental health difficulties and preventing school exclusions.

**2.4.1 Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service.** Camden continues to deliver a wide range of high quality CYP Mental Health and Wellbeing services across the Thrive domains. Carenotes, the NHS electronic patient record system, suffered a cyber-attack in August and was shut down to limit the attack. The Tavistock & Portman NHS Foundation Trust who continued by recording contacts manually have reported that Carenotes is back online. The teams are still working on getting the backlog of the manually recorded data loaded into the system so a more complete picture of the year will be available from Quarter 1 2023/24.

**2.4.2 Health Visiting.** New Birth Visits data in Camden is very good, with 94% of them being completed face-to-face within 14 days. Of the remainder, 4% were completed after 14 days, 1% were in neo-natal units with health visitor contact, and a final 1%

(equating to 3 children) were not seen because of unique circumstances concerning hospital sickness and out of borough moves/placements.

- Health Review timeliness for 2-2.5 year olds has significantly improved since the pandemic when some parents were cancelling appointments. Several improvement actions were introduced including greater user engagement, appointment systems and increased clinic spaces. We continue to see a sustained steady improvement on this measure.

## **2.5 Health and Wellbeing - Adults (Q3, 2022/23)**

**2.5.1 Smoking Cessation** The success rate is above target across the service in quarter 3 at 57%. The proportion of 4-week quitters who were CO-verified was 9.8% (CO or carbon monoxide verification is a breath test that confirms a non-smoker). In quarter 2 2022/23 the 4-week quit rate was below target at 52.6%. The 4-week quit rate in Q3 2021/22 was lower at 55%. 75% of all 4-week quits in Q3 were achieved by the community service with a quit rate of 63%.

- The community service is well placed to reach smokers from target populations and is working closely with secondary care trusts to support the implementation of the NHS Long Term Plan which has placed tobacco dependency treatment at the heart of the NHS agenda.
- Smokefree pregnancy continued to be a strong focus for the service with excellent results. This work is embedded within an NCL programme which drives improvements in how maternity services record smoking and support pregnant smokers to quit. 18 pregnant women accessed the service in Q3. There was no increase from Q2. The 4-week quit rate was exceptional at 83%, with 47% CO-verified quits
- The service is successfully reaching socio-economic groups that have health inequalities due to higher smoking rates. 46% of successful quits in Q2 were amongst residents with the highest smoking rates in the borough (according to socio-economic group, including those who are sick, disabled or unable to work, long term unemployed and routine and manual workers).

**2.5.2 Substance Misuse:** No of drug users in treatment - 1,104 / No of alcohol users in treatment – 557

- Performance has exceeded targets - Percentage of unplanned exits for drug users 6.8% (Nationally 16.8%) / Percentage of unplanned exits for alcohol users 2.6% (Nationally 13.2%). Camden's performance against these indicators is significantly better than the national average.
- Services have been revising their in-reach offer to Camden's hostel pathway and have launched a new offer of co-produced creative and social groups as a way of engaging those who may have been reluctant to engage with substance misuse services in the past. This new offer has been developed in response to feedback

from hostel managers that some residents would benefit from a more informal introduction to substance misuse services.

### 2.5.3 **NHS Health Checks**

- Q3 22/23 - 4% against annual target of 5.9% (annual figure will be the sum of each quarter combined)
- Invites were sent to 2,766 eligible patients (out of 58,355) to receive an NHS Health Check in Q3 2022/23, and 2,335 received their NHS Health Check.
- In 2021/22, 4.9% of the eligible population in Camden received an NHS Health Check, and 4% received one in Q3 2022/23. The latest quarter shows a 12.4% increase in the number of NHS Health Checks delivered (2,335 compared to 2,077).
- In Q3 2021/22, 2.1% of the eligible population in Camden received an NHS Health Check. During that quarter, 982 NHS Health Checks were delivered, compared 2,335 delivered in Q3 2022/23.
- This service aims to identify individuals who are at risk of developing a cardiovascular disease (CVD). Evidence suggests that many long-term conditions can be avoided and that 85% of CVD is preventable. The NHS Health Check addresses the top seven risk factors driving not only the burden of CVD, but other non-communicable diseases. One of the wider objectives of this national programme is to help reduce inequalities in the distribution and burden of behavioural risks, related condition and multiple morbidities

2.5.4 **Mental Health and Wider Determinants.** 133 people were trained in Camden in 3 22/23. This figure is comprised of 126 people from Camden alone being trained, and an additional 14 people across Camden and Islington (C&I) trained but their borough was either undisclosed or their organisation worked across both boroughs. These 14 have been equally split 50/50 across C&I so a further 7 people were assigned to Camden bringing the total to 133 people trained.

- A total of 121 people were trained in Camden in Q2 22/23. Q3 22/23 figures represent a 10% increase in the number of people trained compared to Q2 22/23 and an ongoing upward trend in the number of people trained since Q1 22/23.
- In Q3 21/22 Camden and Islington training numbers were not separated. The total number of people trained across the two boroughs during this period was 224. In Q3 22/23 the number of people trained across both boroughs was higher at 251 people trained. This represents a 12% increase on numbers of people trained compared to the same time the previous year across both boroughs.

2.5.5 **Making Every Contact Count (MECC).** In Q3, 21 staff and volunteers from Camden completed MECC training, a decrease from last quarter, though this is partially attributable to a larger than usual uptake from voluntary sector organisations in the previous quarter following some targeted engagement.

- Camden contribute 40% of the costs of the contract, to Islington's 60%, which is reflected in the target training numbers for each borough.
- 21 staff and volunteers were trained during quarter 3, a decrease from the previous quarter. This is partially attributable to a larger uptake of MECC by staff in the voluntary and private sector during quarter 2.
- Participant numbers have increased overall from Q1, following targeted engagement work and the introduction of the Cost of Living and MECC variant of the course.
- Camden participants for this quarter have decreased compared to the same period last year when 46 people completed the MECC training in Q3 21/22. During this period, a large number of voluntary sector staff completed the training.

**2.5.6 Sexual Health Services.** In Q3 2022/23, CNWL provided 306 forms of Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC). This compares favourably with pre-pandemic data from Q3 2019/20, when there were 255 episodes of LARC.

- The service has already exceeded their annual target of 1000 by 56 episodes of LARC activity. This figure is slightly higher than the previous quarter of 282.
- In Q3 2021/22, there were 263 episodes of LARC activity, lower than Q3 of this year.
- This quarter CNWL have increased the uptake of LARC from the previous quarter and already exceed their annual target of 1000.
- This is an exceptionally positive result as the service has had to manage the end of covid restrictions, MPox outbreak management and vaccination and a Hep A cluster outbreak over the same period.

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

**2.6.1 Strengths based approach:** The performance measures outlined in this report are designed to capture how well ASCs strengths-based approach is working to support people who draw on care remain independent and prevent social care needs from escalating. The data for 2022/23 indicates the continued pressure on services due to increased demand has continued to have an impact on the quality of our strengths-based working. There are some indications in the data that this impact has decreased over the last 6 months.

- The data shows us that around 1 in 4 people who contact ASC go on to receive a full Care Act assessment with Q4 showing a significant improvement in this measure at 21% of people who contacted ASC for support going on to a full Care Act. This is within the projected 'ideal' proportion set out in our performance framework (between 20-25%).
- Assessment demand remains significantly greater this year than last year. Q4 levels were consistent with previous quarters assessment figures with a total of 845 full Care Act assessments taking place - compared to 743 last year.

- Through 22/23, 73% of individuals who receive a full Care Act assessment go on to draw on a full package of ongoing care and support. The performance framework suggests this figure should be over 90%. Given that this has measure has never been achieved this is under review as part of the Support and Safeguarding review to ensure that the performance measures can more accurately reflect good practice.

**2.6.2 ASC waiting times for Occupational Therapy (OT);** there has been a marked improvement in the number of individuals waiting for OT input of various types, with 373 people waiting at the end of Q4 22/23. This is 142 people fewer than the previous quarter. This is due to the specialist agency who have been engaged to support the service in meeting this demand.

- There are significantly fewer people waiting for over 21 weeks, with 38 people in this category compared to 124 people in Q3.
- 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.

**2.6.3 Care and support pressures** –demand remains high, and a significant number of people have continued to wait through Q4 22/23.

**Conversation 1** – the initial What Matters conversation, has low numbers of people waiting, with only 1 person currently waiting.

**Conversation 2** – this is where much of the waiting list is held. This is due to the levels of demand in the Access and Response ‘front door’ team. Most people wait between 0-6 weeks for their conversation 2 to be completed, but some have been waiting for up to 20 weeks. There are 104 people currently waiting.

- The review of Support and Safeguarding continues with the development of a new service with capacity focused on creating a service that provides early help and has sufficient capacity to manage this increased demand. We are currently considering how to reduce our waiting lists in the neighbourhood teams and in the meantime the teams continue to review waiting lists and triage and prioritise cases regularly.

### 3. SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES

#### 3.1. Housing

**3.1.1 Rental Income.** The rental income teams have now been established for six months - overall rent arrears have since steadied, and the collection rate has increased.

- There has been a large increase in residents claiming universal credit having their housing costs paid directly to the Council. Feedback from residents suggests that this helps them to manage finances and not get into arrears with the Council.
- Officers have been out and about in neighbourhoods at cost-of-living events which have been well attended by residents The rental income teams have continued to



focus on tenants whose arrears are not reducing to offer support and help them with applications to the cost-of-living fund and signpost to other support services.

- We anticipate a busy period ahead due to rent charge increases and unprecedented rise in communal heating costs. Our teams are ready to support tenants through this challenging period.

**3.1.2 Leaseholders** % income against debit raised – Billing of day-to-day charges increased from £14.8m in 21/22 to £17.6m in 22/23; collection of day to day service charges has increased from £14m last year to £16.3m this year.

- % income against total outstanding – the team missed the target to reduce the outstanding day to day balance to £700k ending the year on £818k. This is still a significant achievement given billing increased by almost £3m from last year. The team collected £6.4m in major works charges during 22/23, exceeding our target and reducing the end of year balance from £10.7m in March 22 to £9.3m in March 23.

**3.1.3 Temporary accommodation (TA).** Camden, and London, continues to suffer a housing affordability crisis at a time when the financial pressure on low-income Londoners is severe. The number of London households needing help from homelessness services is rising while the availability of temporary accommodation is shrinking. The problem has been made worse by rising rents, welfare benefit shortfalls and caps, the acute shortage of affordable housing. See para 2.2.

**3.1.4 Voids.** The average re-let time for empty properties to be relet has reduced slightly from last year from 102 days to 82 days. This void turnaround measure in the dashboard and the data within, have been updated to reflect the method still used by most landlords and to make sure our indicators are comparable where appropriate and consistent with reporting in the sector; this ties in with the LAHS return to the DHLUC which uses this definition as a matter of course. Work is still ongoing to look at each aspect of the void relet process to achieve further improvements.

**3.1.5 Overcrowding.** The number of overcrowded families including dependent children has slightly increased over the year from 3,285 households at the end of 2021/22 to 3,375 households at the end of March 2023.

- In time, our Family Friendly housing work will see some additional larger homes in the pipeline, however we are aware that our overcrowding problem also needs a 'right-sizing' strategy to free up larger size accommodation. 360 under-occupiers age over 60 have been supported to downsize since 2018; and there are a further 332 council tenants age over 60 who currently occupy 2-bedroom to 6-bedroom homes who have expressed an interest in down-sizing. Alongside this, the Low-Income Family Tracker (LIFT platform) indicates that there are around 980 council households affected by the 'bedroom tax' and therefore have at least one spare room. The tenancy visits being carried out by Neighbourhood Housing Officers is enabling initial conversations to be held with impacted households. Additional

support and homes that are attractive enough to encourage downsizers will be required to facilitate moves among those who are interested.

**3.1.6 Number of HMO Properties Licensed.** The number of licences issued varies by month and quarter. This year has been challenging with the loss of some staff and post Covid backlog of cases. As a result of increased fee income the service will be recruiting additional staff in 2023 to increase capacity for inspections. Number of licences issues does vary per quarter based on combination of new applications and renewals due. Since December 2020, the service has issued 250 one-year licences due to landlords failing to complete works, meet licence conditions or let management standards slip. This has added to the workload of the team, however, important not to reward failure to comply. As a result the service now has dedicated resources to undertake targeted compliance inspections to ensure that standards and works are being met within licensed HMOs.

**3.1.7 Rough sleeping.** In the bi-monthly snapshot of those observed on a single night the November count is used as the annual street count figure for 2022 (90 rough sleepers counted). Disappointingly, this was by far the highest number counted all year. Camden has the second highest number of rough sleepers counted in England behind Westminster (250). Other Inner London LAs: City 43, Lambeth 33, Haringey 26, Islington 16.

- There were 443 rough sleepers moved off the street into accommodation or reconnected to home area in Camden in 2022/23 (more than the previous year at 399). This was largely as a result of the efforts made to house people over the cold winter months and the opening of the SWEP (Severe Weather Emergency Protocol). SWEP is a temporary response opening up shelter for people sleeping rough when there is an increased risk of death due to the weather e.g. temperatures fall near or below freezing.

## **3.2. Property Management**

**3.2.1 Satisfaction** with completed repairs remains steady and above 80% for both building repairs and M&E. We are also continuing to gather real time data through SMS surveys for each completed repair with feedback shared promptly with services. We are also monitoring the keeping of appointments to make sure any broken appointments are flagged within the service and appropriate action taken.

- Performance on gas safety certification remains above 99% and the number of outstanding certificates is ranging between 85 and 100 at present. Post-Covid it takes longer to get no access cases into court and this remains an area of focus for the team

**3.2.2 Call volume** varies over time and following the peak at the start of the heating season gradually reduced in Q4. The percentage of orders raised online / SMS / Webchat / What's App is now above 70%. Video calling started at the very end of Q4 for damp and mould and is now being offered across the service.

- 3.2.3 Case management** and work in progress volumes have increased and these both relate directly to our work on damp and mould which has seen demands increase on the service and place pressure on core trades such as plumbing and carpentry.
- Recruitment is underway for additional trade resources so that diary wait times can be improved and work in progress levels can be brought back to a more manageable level. Additional steps are also being undertaken to create capacity across trades and in the management team.
- 3.2.4 Disrepair** volumes increased markedly in Q4 and reflects sector wide trends and extensive marketing by solicitors who are proactively canvassing residents. We will need to respond to this increase with changes to our structure to make sure all the required processes and works are completed within specified timescales
- 3.2.5 Capital programme** saw a range of schemes reach site in Q4 and this will continue into the current financial year with a wide range of schemes reaching site. Good progress continues to be made on the roll out of the CCTV programme and delivery of the Chalcots Major Works project.

### **3.3. Development services**

- To date the Council has completed 1,290 new homes of which 896 are affordable, whether that be social rent, intermediate rent, temporary accommodation, or hostel provision.
- There are currently two live construction sites: Agar Grove and Highgate Newtown Community Centre (HNCC).
- Maitland Park completed in Quarter 4, delivering new social homes, private sale homes and a community centre.
- Abbey Health and Community Centre completed last quarter. Leases have been finalised so that the NHS and the Abbey Community Group can occupy the building.
- Contractors have been appointed for the next phase of schemes which include Tybalds, Central Somers Town and Abbey Phase III.
- A development partner is being sought through a competitive dialogue process for Bacton II.
- CIP sales remain relatively stable. Maitland Park has seen 60% of homes reserved off-plan with 41% of those reservations made by Camden residents.
- Sales homes at HNCC have been removed from the market and a bid submitted to the GLA to enable them to be converted to affordable homes for the immediate use of rehousing refugees already living in bridge hotel accommodation in the borough.

### **3.4. Economy, Regeneration & Investment**

- 3.4.1 Planning applications.** The service continues to take a proactive approach and works with applicants to achieve acceptable developments. In the last quarter for which national statistics are available Camden's approval rate was 2nd highest in

London and well above the average of 80% resulting in less wasted effort for all parties and a relatively low number of appeals of which over 70% are successfully defended.

**3.4.2 Community Infrastructure Levy.** Q4 was another good quarter for SCIL collection. Overall, £9.11m SCIL was collected in 22/23, more than double the £4m factored into the MTFs. This was due to construction commencing on a number of major development sites approved in the last few years including Belgrove House, Camden Goods Yard, and Network Building. £4m of the SCIL has been spent on highways maintenance and £1.17m recycled into the CIP program for social infrastructure. In addition, £17.4m was collected in S106 contributions.

**3.4.3 Apprenticeships.** It continues to be a difficult environment for apprenticeship recruitment outside of construction – numbers had already started to drop following apprenticeship reforms in 2019 and the pandemic accelerated this trend. We have however, seen an uplift in interest in recruiting both internally and externally and have seen an increase in Q4 compared to the previous quarters. Internally, directorates have been set a target of 20 new starts per year and established action plans to achieve this. Supporting Communities has recruited 20 this financial year. Supporting People and Corporate Services have had less success but are making progress. The overall target of 200 will though not be achieved, with 164 being delivered.

**3.4.4 Good Work Camden.** Outcomes are running slightly ahead of our target profile. We continue to embed advisors in neighbourhood settings and have been seeing good take up of our welfare advice offer. Our new Disability Job Hub Lead started in March, and we are recruiting another refugee support specialist using external funding secured. We held an education and training fair in Regent's Park in January, which was attended by 114 residents, 26 of whom were refugees from our Bridging Hotels. There were 239 individual registrations for different training and employment services. In total 1854 people have been supported into work, training or to start a business in the last financial year, either by GWC directly or through our commissioned surveys.

**3.4.5 Strategic work** – The Evening and Night Time Economy Strategy Citizens Assembly has completed its work and the findings are now being collated for further engagement and consultation. The Affordable Workspace Strategy 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 and launched in May.

### **3.5. Environmental Services**

**3.5.1** Through our work within the Climate Action Plan, Future Neighbourhoods (Somers Town) and community-lead re-use, repair and sharing projects we are testing and promoting new models of material management that reduce waste by re-circulating

materials in a circular way and extending the useful life of materials and products. These approaches will continue to be championed and developed to enable Camden's communities to further reduce waste levels across the borough.

**3.5.2 Recycling rate** – Camden's 2022/23 is around 27% (awaiting final confirmation). There has been a lot affecting waste / recycling tonnages across all of London and the North London boroughs, much attributed to the cost-of-living crisis creating drops in all material streams impacting recycling rates. During Q3 there was a review in the way we declare our commercial waste tonnages to NLWA which has contributed to a drop-in domestic recycling rate. An error had been identified in these figures which was rectified in Q4 and lead to an increase in the recycling rate in line with previous quarters. This will be kept under review for when more accurate figures are available and a review of rates across the North London area has started.

**3.5.3 KGs per household of waste** – This indicator is subject to wide seasonal variations and quarterly updates do not give a very accurate picture of the waste produced, if this measure was to be maintained it would be recommended to be annual rather than quarterly. It is proposed to replace this measure with fly tip information including 'cleared within SLA' and 'KBT scores' as these might provide more valuable information, supplementing environmental cleanliness performance.

**3.5.4 Street cleanliness.** There are 3 tranches of the Keep Britain Tidy survey, which measures street cleanliness across the borough, the third of which was undertaken in Q4. This latest survey recorded much higher than normal levels of litter and we are working with Veolia to understand this, the main issues seem to be on commercial high streets.

- In 2023 Camden is developing a Climate Adaptation Strategy. This work will further support services in reviewing and developing their approaches to maintaining service standards and working together within more extreme and less predictable weather conditions.

**3.5.5 Bin Collection.** Over the year an average of 43.75 missed bins per 100,000an improvement on last year and well below the target of 60. Over the coming year national waste collection funding and regulation changes may have impact on all borough collection services. Officers will continue to work with regional and national agencies to better understand upcoming regulations and their impact on services.

## **3.6. Recreation Services**

**3.6.1 Library Visitor figures per 1,000 population.** The service are responding to the changing attitudes of the community with a wide programme of activities continue to be offered at each site, directly of in partnership with the community. The target

set for 2022/23 was 1,800 visits per 1,000 (or 450 per quarter). In Q4 there were 626 visits (per 1,000) giving an annual figure for 2022/23 of 2,066 visits per 1,000 of the borough population.

- Library PC use. An increase on last year but still below target. Children's PCs have been included in the calculation which wasn't the case in previous years. This skews the performance because it has been noticeable post pandemic that the children's PCs are not being used as heavily.
- Demand for the adult PCs at some libraries is very strong and our spaces are being used by the community in the new hybrid way of working undertaken by many sectors.
- There are several possible reasons why we are seeing lower use in PCs. An increase in bandwidth capacity has led to an increase in Wi-Fi and personal device use instead of public PCs but also we think that home learning during the pandemic has led to more families buying home PCs, laptops, and equipment for children.

**3.6.2 Leisure Centre Concession Membership.** Of Camden's current 23,622 leisure centre members, 12,024 are concessions. This is 51% of the total membership who received discounted access to our facilities. This is an increase of 575 members on the previous quarter and 705 year-on-year. The quarterly increase is expected due to the January surge in new members, while the year-on-year improvement demonstrates that concession memberships are recovering post-Covid.

- The leisure market is evolving and low-cost gyms are challenging the sector, in response a one centre only membership has been launched at Swiss Cottage Leisure Centre. This forms part of a new marketing strategy that allows the opportunity for local people to connect with their local centre.

### **3.7. Public Safety**

**3.7.1 Food Hygiene related inspections** increased during Q4 by approximately 20%. The performance level was influenced by a 3-month project developed in partnership with the Food Standards Agency which created additional capacity (on a temporary basis) to increase the number of inspections whilst ensuring a continued focus on supporting food businesses rated as high risk. A recent review of food safety related data highlighted that 92% of food business in Camden have achieved a food hygiene rating of 3 (broadly compliant) and above.

**3.7.2 Health and safety** incidents continue to be responded to in line with the relevant 100% response performance target. The current Health & Safety service model prioritizes the response to incidents reported via the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR). The number of reported incidents which require Council intervention/investigation remains relatively stable.

**3.7.3 Noise nuisance** The Council's ability to respond to noise related complaints (particularly those received out of hours) remains high with 95% of reported incidents responded to within the one-hour target. The Noise/Pollution service continues to prioritise the need to minimise the number of repeat noise nuisance

cases/complaints despite the significant challenge given the continued high level of demand.

- 3.7.4 Community Safety engagement** activity has continued during the Q4 period with activity focusing on attendance at local Safer Neighbourhood Ward Panels and the delivery of both Housing Estate and area based walkabouts. The Community Safety service is currently finalising proposals to establish pop-up Enforcement Hubs in order to deliver a sustained increase in engagement activity designed to further improve the response to local crime and anti-social behaviour related issues.
- 3.7.5 % ASB cases responded to within 48hrs** Investigations into 83% of the anti-social behaviour referrals to the Community Safety service were commenced during the relevant target period. A review of the case management process is currently being completed in order to identify/implement options designed to increase the response to concerns raised by residents impacted by anti-social behaviour.
- 3.7.6 Civil emergencies** Incidents were responded to during Q4 in line with the existing Council emergency management related protocols. A review of the existing out of hours emergency management system is currently being completed in order to further develop the Council's capacity to respond effectively to civil emergencies which often require a partnership response with other statutory organisations.

## **4. CORPORATE SERVICES**

### **4.1 Finance**

- 4.1.1** The 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. On 18 January 2023 Cabinet received a report on the Council's medium-term financial strategy recommending a number of budget savings for both the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account that were agreed by Cabinet Members. These budget savings have reduced the expected budget gap and mean that the Council is on track to set a balanced budget in 2023/24. The Council will continue to update our response to the wider financial challenge for public services during 2023.
- 4.1.2** The development and adoption of the new Medium Term Finance Strategy, agreed by Cabinet in January 2023 represents a major milestone in ensuring the Council's ongoing financial resilience and our ability to deliver the outcomes of We Make Camden.

- 4.1.3** In 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.
- 4.1.4** 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.

## **4.2 People and Inclusion**

- 4.2.1** **Turnover** levels have remained at a similar level with overall turnover around 12-12.5% and voluntary turnover around 7.5-8%. Recruitment activity has also remained high. This is a combination of replacement posts and new posts around some growth areas – for example additional resourcing in Housing to deal with mould.
- 4.2.2** We have progressed the work around developing our approach to pay across the board that protects our position as an employer who wants to provide an upper quartile pay offer. This will provide greater progression and a level of discretion to respond to both the recruitment market and individual capability or performance. Further details will go to the June meeting of the Audit Committee after which we will be able to report in more detail.
- 4.2.3** The organisation has also been continuing to ensure business continuity arrangements are in place for the rising number of strikes taking place across sectors, including trains, health and most recently schools. It is likely this disruption will continue throughout 2023, however post pandemic we have strong policies in place to support staff to work flexibly if they are affected. We are keeping this under review and adjusting our approach as required.
- 4.2.4** We have undertaken recruitment processes for two Executive Director roles – Children and Learning, and Adults and Health, following the news that our Executive Director for Supporting People, and Deputy Chief Executive Martin Pratt is retiring. Both are Member appointments. An internal candidate has been appointed to the ED Adults and Health role and the other ED role process is still underway and the results will be communicated shortly. We are working closely with colleagues across the affected services to ensure continuity of service delivery.
- 4.2.5** We have continued to focus on supporting staff through the cost-of-living crisis and more generally in their well-being by launching our new well-being microsite. We want to be a truly inclusive organisation – and a place where everyone feels



supported and able to be themselves and our employees health and well-being is one of our biggest priorities – and that’s why we’re launching our brand new microsite. The site brings together a whole range of information, advice and support – to make sure that you are able to find help whenever you need it.

### **4.3 Customer Services**

**4.3.1** 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.

- The teams received over 7000 referrals for cost-of-living support and awarded over £2.3million in hardship payments in the last seven months of the year. In addition, £2.5m was awarded to families through supermarket vouchers over the course of the year. The welfare support team in Contact Camden received 30929 calls from residents worried about food, energy, debt, eviction and other wellbeing concerns and worked in collaboration with a wide range of partners including Camden Advice Network, other community organisations, health, schools, social landlords and services across the Council to identify and support residents in need.

**4.3.2** The year end Council Tax collection figures were 1% below target at 94%.

Collection remains challenging in the context of the financial pressures facing many households over the last year.

- The year end Business Rates collection rate was 1.47% above target at 96.47% despite the government reducing reliefs. The collection of income across the Council remains challenging however and a cross-organisational review is now pulling together its conclusions and recommendations on how the Council can continue to improve its collection processes whilst identifying and supporting those in greatest need.

**4.3.3** The dashboard includes new performance data on Contact Camden. The service saw a significant increase in the last quarter, receiving 150,000 calls. March in particular saw almost double the normal number of calls for council tax and housing relating to new bills being issued. Many were concerned about affordability. This has raised the overall average waiting time notably to 7.26 minutes. Efforts to improve the customer journey continue to have a positive impact on our first contact resolution with over half of calls resolved at first point of contact (% of calls answered without transfers). Our pulse survey feedback showed 95% of staff felt empowered to do the right thing for citizens.

**4.3.4** Parking Operations continues to see the Council’s transport policy objectives making a difference with a reduction in paid for parking demand and fewer diesel and higher polluting vehicles using the borough’s streets.

### **4.4 Law and Governance**

**4.4.1 Complaints.** Figures for the full year 2022/23 indicate that there continues to be a significant increase in the number of complaints received. Stage 1 has continued to

increase and there has been a corresponding increase in the next appeal/ review stage 2. Nearly 50% of the complaints in Q4 are Housing Repairs, and complaints have more than double over the last year. Work has now commenced on pulling together the in-depth performance figures for 2022/23 Annual Complaints Report. The Information Governance service area of Business Support is continuing to work closely with services to seek to improve quality and timeliness. In particular work has been commissioned to carry out a deep dive into Housing related complaints and how improvements can be made.

- The Complaints team have recruited to address the increase in stage 2 complaints and ensure that they are responded to in a timely manner. There is currently a backlog, which is being actively managed and reviewed weekly by the management team. In addition, the team will be reviewing the stage 2 processes to understand the reasons why people are not satisfied with the outcome of a stage 1 complaint.
- Aligned to the significant annual increase in Complaints there has been a correlated increase in the number of housing disrepair claims received by the Legal team. This is ongoing and is being looked at in conjunction with the increase in complaints.
- Throughout 2022/23 the FOI team has continued to perform very highly with 100% of FOI being responded to within the timeframe. The team won the FOI team of the year award at the FOI awards along with the team leader winning the Practitioner of the year. The awards recognise the significant work achieved by the FOI community. The awards are evidence of the team's excellent delivery of FOIs - in the quality and timeliness of their responses and our overall requester - focussed approach.

**4.4.2 Procurement.** The service continues to work on developing a cross-Council approach to securing and delivering social value and ensuring our approach to social value is aligned with the Council's priorities. They are also working with departments harder than ever to drive wider value to contribute to the Council's saving requirements.

**4.4.3 Committee Services, Elections Team and Member Support** were well prepared for the move back to the Town Hall in the Spring 2023.

- The Elections Team are also working on the changes to electoral law, in particular the requirements for ID, and ensuring this requirement is widely understood in the borough. There is now a by-election on the 1<sup>st</sup> June so this will be the first election which will require voter ID.
- The Freight Consolidation Centre which aims to reduce the number of vehicle deliveries of goods into and around the Borough in order to receive financial, environmental, operational and economic benefits has successfully transferred to the Crowdale Centre and now utilises the use of an electric bike and electric vehicle to align with our environmental priorities.

**4.4.4** Legal services continue to respond to the surge in demand in work levels (particularly housing repair cases), although the number of JR pre-action protocol letters has continued to decline. The service is reviewing how best to deliver its work areas to meet the needs of the Council departments it supports.

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

**4.5.1** The Council's Digital Plumbing Programme has continued to be a significant focus for DDS. The project to migrate the Council's legacy primary Data Centre from Roy Shaw House to a Crown Hosting Data Centre has replaced all life-expired equipment, improving the operational performance of front-line applications and reducing the running cost, physical footprint and environmental impact of our ICT environment. Delivery has now passed the 90% mark with all critical line-of-business applications, and all connectivity successfully migrated. The Network Refresh project has now upgraded connectivity at 66 out of 90 sites, using modern SD-WAN technology to improve performance, availability and flexibility while reducing running costs. Our focus will now move on to replacing the life-expired network equipment at 5 Pancras Square, including deploying upgraded Wi-Fi, which we plan to deliver by the end of Q1 2023/2024.

**4.5.2** The performance of frontline IT services delivered by our IT Service Centre has remained good against a backdrop of increasing workload. The number of cases, including incidents and requests for DDS Teams, continues to increase, with an overall 18% increase in cases raised during the past quarter. The number of telephone calls to the IT Service Desk has plateaued, with engineers handling 7,234 calls in Q4. We continue to encourage colleagues to raise cases using the self-service portal, with 6,230 tickets raised in the portal during Q4 representing a 15% increase from Q3. While seeing more colleagues using the self-service portal is positive, the volume of telephone calls remains unsustainable. Our Technology Adoption Team has been tasked with analysing the workload and taking a data-led approach to devise a strategy to reduce telephone support demand to a level which is sustainable and efficient. Our average wait time to answer the telephone has increased to 3 minutes and 19 seconds, our longest wait time is 33 minutes and 13 seconds, and our percentage of abandoned calls has increased to 10%. Our KPI for First Response Time (FRT) for Incidents reported to the Service Desk remains above target at 88% responded to within two hours. Our average resolution time for the Service Desk has increased from 7.29 hours to 9.88 hours, attributed to increased workload and continuing resourcing and recruitment challenges. Our burn rate for support tickets for the quarter was 100.5%, indicating that the IT Service Centre remains on top of the workload closing more cases than were opened.

**4.5.3** 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.

significant and widespread disruption to service delivery and performance remains a major risk 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 investment in Microsoft 365 'E5' tools, and incident readiness has continued at pace. Considerable progress has been made to strengthen our disaster recovery processes and procedures to restore critical systems should an incident occur.

## **4.6 Strategy and Design**

**4.6.1 Good Life Camden and the State of the Borough.** The Good Life Camden wellbeing framework and the first State of the Borough report were both launched at the We Make Camden Summit in March this year. The State of the Borough report has since been presented to Full Council and the plan to produce this report annual was endorsed. The State of the Borough report and process will bring together the Good Life Camden framework with a range of evidence from across the borough to help us understand progress in delivering our strategy and in particular the Missions and Challenges identified within it. The focus in the coming year will be embedding and expanding the Good Life Camden framework, and developing the 2<sup>nd</sup> State of the Borough report, with further engagement with key partners.

**4.6.2 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. Recent work has focussed on standing up governance arrangements for missions and challenges within the organisation. A series of CMT sessions and Member Deep Dives has been arranged are taking place from the end of May 2023.

**4.6.3 Increasing design capability in Camden.** During this quarter we brought new professions into both the team and the strategy family. We have also launched our associate route to recruit internal candidates at entry level design roles in the team. The new team members have been recruited under a new capability framework to inform their work and professional development. Design work in Housing Allocations, Debt, Customer Experience, Social Value procurement is underway and we are currently evaluating opportunities for progressing to the next phase. Activities to research and understand the cost of living award and its impact on Camden residents is also underway. We have also contributed with activities and awareness sessions on design capability for the IIN as well as recruiting two Changemaker roles to work in design projects in the team.

## **4.7 Equalities and Community Strength**

**4.7.1 Equalities and Cohesion.** The Council is now a non-accredited member of the Borough of Sanctuary network for our work with refugees in the community. We are now convening meetings with our VCS and business partners to mobilise the work on refugees in a collaborative approach.

- The first ever Camden Inclusion calendar is now launched following cross council meetings and staff sessions throughout the year.
- Diversity in the Public Realm strategy launched and action plan begun. This work includes street naming, plaques, and all public realm.
- Facilitating the Disability Oversight Panel committee meetings and a programme of work for this. Liaising with the Chair of the Disability Oversight Panel on issues surrounding the disabled community of Camden and the council's services.
- Mind the Gender Gap event for Members and staff was hugely successful for International Women's Day with over 400 staff attending.
- Town Hall – diversity and inclusion work underway with the Town hall becoming more diverse and accessible than previously.
- New EQIA screening tool and form launched in the organisation. This is following cross council workshops on the current processes and developing easier methods to fill out EQIAs. For the first time this also includes social economic inclusion characteristics.
- Plaque unveiled in St Giles for Black disabled American busker, Billy Waters.
- Faith and Belief Forum review of the FLF and action plan is nearly complete. Implementation of recommendations will include delivery of joint events/ initiatives such as education sessions and forward planning with Faith Leaders and VCS partners around opportunities for outreach, engagement and information sharing, for example throughout South Asian Heritage month.
- Faith Organisations are invited to attend and apply for funding via the Cost-of-Living Equity Fund, and it is envisaged that Faith Organisations will also be able to access project funding as part of the VCS grants programme for delivery of initiatives that support community cohesion.

**4.7.2 Strategic Partners/VCS Grant Funding.** VCS Annual Reviews process completed identifying key areas of risk around Governance, Finance, Business Planning, Communications, Safeguarding, Data Protection and Premises.

- Development of VCS Risk Register – identifying and prioritisation of key organisational interventions and support measures finalised, and actions discussed and agreed with Cabinet Member.
- 34 Grants have been awarded a Resilience Fund Grant designed to address key organisational risks. These grants started in April 2023 and will run for 12 months.
- Nine organisations have been invited to submit a second stage bid. Six of these are small equalities organisations who are being provided additional support to apply for up to £6k of funding. Three of these are organisations who can apply for grants of up to £30k but need to amend their action plan and budget to align with the risks identified through the application process and annual reviews.
- The commitment to a new 7 year, £4m a year VCS investment programme was made at full cabinet in March 2023. The insight and engagement phase of this work is underway. Initial design ideas have been shared with the sector via a survey. A

series of engagement workshops with the VCS sector; London funders; internal council services and Councillors will take place from 27th April through to 5th June.

- The engagement workshops with the sector will be jointly facilitated by Voluntary Action Camden. The design and launch of VCS Grants Programmes will take place in May and June 2024, with a phased launch of the key grants in the new programme from 5th June 2024.

**4.7.3 Cost of Living Response** is summarised in para 1.1 of this report.

**4.7.4 Camden Refugee Programme** is summarised in para 1.2 of this report.

## **4.8 Participation, Partnerships and Communications**

**4.8.1 Budget and Council Tax** A central focus of Quarter 4 was the Council's Budget and Council Tax setting for 2023-24. A refreshed approach to the council tax letter was developed and supported with other financial communications, including the rent and heating charges letter and communications to support the publication of our new MTFS.

**4.8.2 Cost of Living.** We continued to deliver our cost of living crisis communications campaign, promoting the help and support available to residents – including the 'warm welcome' spaces and advice bus. We sent our advice and support booklet to all private renters and homeowners and targeted promotion of financial support. The service worked closely with local newspapers and used the spring Camden Magazine to emphasise the additional funding and support the council was making available to residents and the voluntary sector in the cost-of-living crisis.

- As part of our cost-of-living work, we completed a series of 20 ward conversations in local community settings in Q4. The conversations were convened by ward councillors and brought together, VCS and faith organisations, schools, GPs and other active citizens to discuss impact of the cost of living locally and gaps in local service provision and support. As part of the work organisations were able to apply for cost-of-living community response funding and over 90 projects have been funded. The work of The Camden Women's Forum and their report into the impact of the cost of living crisis was the focus of International Women's Day.

**4.8.3 Borough of Sanctuary.** Camden Council has become a 'Borough of Sanctuary' for refugees, securing positive coverage in local newspapers on our plans to withdraw CIP flats from private sale at Highgate Newton to use as homes for refugees. The first year anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine was marked by Little Amal's visit to Camden which was supported and promoted.

**4.8.4 Citizens' Assembly.** We supported a citizens' assembly on Camden's evening and night-time economy (ENTE), bringing together representatives from Camden's diverse communities for three days of discussions on the ENTE and their ideas and thoughts for the future of this important economy.

**4.8.5 We Make Camden Summit 2023.** Working with policy design team, the We Make Camden Summit 2023 was successfully delivered, bringing together 150 attendees representing multi-sector partners from across the borough as well as active

citizens. At the event we launched the new annual State of the Borough report and the Good Life Camden Framework.

**4.8.6 Internal Communications** for our staff have reflected many of our external priorities – we have continued to share cost of living and mental health support for staff, marked Race Equality Week and Trans Day of Visibility, and celebrated Ramadan, Passover and Easter. We have also continued to communicate about the ambitious Future of Work programme.

**4.8.7 Member Services.** The number of member enquiries remain very high. Members offer flexible face to face surgeries across the borough and residents are often turning to them as a first point of contact with the council. Overall performance is well below the targeted 90% within 10 working day window but the high volume should be noted. Supporting People include a number for our public sector partners such as housing associations who are unable to adhere to our 10 day turnaround period, though overall their numbers are low, especially compared to Supporting Communities who received over 1,000 MEs in the last quarter alone. Member Support are continuing to work with colleagues across the council to improve responses and improve turnaround times.

**4.8.8** The Head of Member Support attended a LGA programme with the Head of Media & External Relations on assisting members with dealing with online abuse. Work underway to consider how this national work can complement existing support and advice here in Camden.

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

5.1 The Director of Finance has been consulted on this report and has no additional comments.

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

6.1 The Borough Solicitor has been consulted and has no comments to add to this report.

## **7. Environmental Implications**

7.1 There are no proposals with environmental implications made in this report.

## **8. Appendices**

8.1 Appendix A: Corporate Performance Data Dashboard End of Year/Q4 2022/23