

Bristol City Council - 2022/23 Performance Framework

The past year has seen the publication of the Bristol City Council (BCC) [Corporate Strategy 2022-27](#), which provides a new framework for the annual Business Plan. There are 7 Themes within the new framework, each with 3 to 6 Priorities (32 Priorities in total).

At the same time, the Council has carried out a review of how corporate performance is measured, reported and managed. Through this review we have sought to increase the use of technology and new digital tools to improve how we monitor and manage performance, maximising the opportunities from the investment in technology via the Council's Data and Insights programme.

The review is still in its first year; our processes and measures to capture and report on performance will develop.

This document summarises how Bristol City Council will track how well it is achieving against the themes and priorities set out in the new Corporate Strategy 2022-27, and includes:

- A. An overview of the governance and performance management arrangements for 2022/23
- B. Performance reporting plans and how this is different from the current process
- C. Performance metrics for the annual Business Plan

A/ Overview of performance management arrangements 2022/23

The new performance framework, to be published alongside the Business Plan 2022/23, will monitor progress through a blend of actions and performance metrics that will report quarterly and annually and will look at a range of performance measures as well as progress updates. This represents a definite shift from previous years where the focus has been solely on quantifiable metrics.

This revised performance framework focuses on three main component parts:

1/ City Outcomes – Corporate Strategy *Theme* level measures

2a/ Business Plan measures – Corporate Strategy *Priority* level performance metrics

2b/ Business Plan measures – Corporate Strategy *Priority* level actions

1/ City Outcomes – annual indicators centred on the new Corporate Strategy Themes. They are primarily outcome-focused measures that are longer term in nature and slower moving, reporting annually (often in arrears) and look to assess the overall 'health of the city', as opposed to specific Council performance.

For the City Outcomes, we will seek to set 5-year targets in line with the timeframe of the Corporate Strategy. [NB Targets will be published in July 2022 – see section 7. Targets].

2/ Business Plan measures – the engine room of Corporate Strategy delivery, tracked quarterly.

Within each Corporate Strategy Theme are a number of Priorities, which flow through to the annual Business Plan. Each Business Plan Priority contains up to three actions that the Council intends to deliver over the coming 12 months, and most contain performance metrics (though several Priorities do not readily lend themselves to metrics).

A combination of tracking actions and/or performance metrics will be used to show progress throughout the year. This represents a new blended approach, including quarterly narrative updates on actions to demonstrate that the Council is delivering the things it has said it will:

a) Business Plan Priority performance metrics

Primarily quarterly measures*, centred on the new Corporate Strategy Priorities, with direct data available to measure progress throughout the year. These are also metrics the Council has more direct responsibility over, and so will be used to measure Council performance rather than City Outcomes.

Key performance questions will be considered and where progress is not as anticipated, recovery plans will be put in place, drawing on resource from across the wider organisation where appropriate.

*Performance metrics will be reviewed quarterly where data is available; if annual the data will relate specifically to progress achieved in 2022/23, with quarterly narrative on plans to achieve target.

b) Business Plan Priority actions

Progress updates for the actions against each of the Priorities will also be reported on quarterly, whilst noting that some actions may take the majority of the year to deliver. This will provide consistent reporting on all Priorities, including those without specific quantitative metrics, and will give a more rounded view of the Council's performance.

B/ Performance reporting

1/ Business Plan thematic focus

- a) There is a strong focus on the Corporate Strategy Themes, including read across to One City Boards, and each theme is sponsored by a BCC Director, thereby providing direction and accountability to drive activity in meeting the aims of the Corporate Strategy.
- b) Each Theme sponsor will work with performance advisors through quarterly performance clinics and to support an annual narrative on progress for their Theme (see below).

Change to note: Addition of Theme sponsors at Director level, including involvement in thematic performance clinics and production of an annual thematic narrative report

- c) Formal Business Plan reporting will begin at the Executive Director Meetings (EDMs) and progress to Corporate Leadership Board (CLB) to agree recommendations. For EDMs, reports will focus on the measures relevant to that Directorate but be structured by Theme.

Change to note: EDM reports will be structured by Business Plan Themes and Priorities, not by internal Directorate Divisions as is currently the case

- d) The Performance reports will then progress through the Council's pathway to Cabinet Member Briefings, BCC Cabinet and to the Council's Directorate Scrutiny Commissions and Overview & Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB).

Change to note: There will no longer be a separate level of performance indicator that is reported to EDMs and Directorate Scrutiny Commissions but not reported to CLB, Cabinet and OSMB. This is in reflection of the significant increase in reporting that the action tracking will bring at all levels

2/ Quarterly reporting

This will include a summary report of progress against the specific Business Plan measures that period, and headline figures or narrative for each measure accompanied by a Red/Amber/Green (RAG) progress rating. This process, including RAG rating, will be applied to the Business Plan actions as well as the performance metrics.

Managers responsible for individual Business Plan actions and performance metrics will provide quarterly updates / narrative. The summation of this will see performance advisors, working with the Director lead/sponsor (or their representative) for each Corporate Strategy Theme, host a quarterly performance clinic at which progress against actions and data for that Theme is reviewed. This would also extend into business challenges, solutions and use of other insight or inputs. Directors and relevant managers would sit down with advisors as “critical friends” to consider key performance issues, solve challenges and course correct if needed. Where progress is not as anticipated, plans will be put in place to draw on resource from across the wider organisation where appropriate. A brief written update on each Theme will then be prepared by the respective lead/sponsor.

Change to note: All Business Plan actions will be subject to formal progress tracking each quarter as well as the metrics; this will be a significant expansion of the information available to show progress

3/ Annual reporting

At year end, an additional summary assessment will be published that sets out progress against the thematic City Outcomes, as well as the final (Quarter 4) quarterly progress report.

Each Corporate Strategy Director theme lead, working with their performance advisor through a thematic performance clinic, will examine the data, perhaps discuss with the relevant One City Board (details tbc) and prepare a narrative around what the data means to BCC and the city, identifying areas where performance is going well and those where action may need to be taken. NB This will be conducted on an annual basis and will conclude in a collective report compiled by the Head of Insight Performance & Intelligence (IPI) on behalf of the Chief Executive for CLB and Cabinet, and then published (either as an addendum to the following year’s Business Plan or as a standalone document).

Change to note: Addition of annual summary report(s) focussed on each of the 7 Themes

4/ Divisional Business as Usual activity

It is recognised that a broad range of activity will be carried out across the Council’s divisions and services that is considered “business as usual”. Whilst there should where possible be a link between this activity and the Business Plan / Corporate Strategy activity, there may be instances where this will not be clear but the activity is considered essential nonetheless and, in some cases, will be a statutory or regulatory requirement. Such activity will also be of interest to Scrutiny Commissions.

Over the course of the year, further insight will be rolled out to services across the Council and this can incorporate key performance measures and targets set, as now, by Directors in conjunction with their Cabinet Members. This will be visualised through automated dashboards and each Directorate will be able to view its own and, where appropriate, other dashboards.

Day-to-day performance of this type will be managed by individual Directors and their Heads of Service supported by a performance advisor from IPI who will act as a business partner and critical friend, helping provide constructive challenge, insight and assurance. The performance advisor will host quarterly performance clinics along the same lines as those above with agreed actions becoming the

formal record of the meetings. A number of indicators of particular relevance or operational importance will be incorporated into a “Corporate Scorecard” for discussion at CLB.

5/ Scrutiny Commissions

A key relationship in this process is Scrutiny. Due to the strong performance focus on the Corporate Strategy Themes, performance metrics for each Scrutiny commission will be formally reviewed, and ideally will be aligned to the Corporate Strategy Themes (tbc). To maximise resources, performance advisors (supported by contributions from officers in relevant services) will provide a written overview of performance in advance of the Scrutiny meetings. The Scrutiny Chair will be asked to identify key lines of enquiry to explore further at the meeting and relevant officers (or Theme lead) will then attend to update and take questions from the Scrutiny committee members.

6/ Key principles

- a) City Outcomes vs Business Plan metrics – there is a clearer distinction between slower moving, annual measures that monitor the “health of the city” at Theme level and those that focus on in-year BCC performance via the Business Plan Priority level.
- b) Business Plan Actions – given the number of priorities within the Corporate Strategy it was decided that a maximum of three actions (per Priority) each year would be used.
- c) Clearly defined - An Appendix of definitions is included with the Performance reports, to be clear on definitions and reporting periods (e.g. per quarter, cumulative or annual).
- d) Transparent – Quarterly performance reports are reported publicly via BCC Cabinet and Scrutiny meetings and are published on [Performance - bristol.gov.uk](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/performance).

7/ Targets

Targets focus on what we want to achieve and monitor whether our objectives are being achieved. Performance targets should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timed).

Targets for 2022/23 will be published in July 2022, to be informed by the 2021/22 year-end results, and will be published on our [Performance](#) page.

Change to note: City Outcome indicators to have 5-year targets in line with the Corporate Strategy

C/ Suite of performance measures 2022/23

The proposed suite of Business Plan measures is drawn from existing metrics, new metrics or new actions designed to monitor progress against the Corporate Strategy Themes and Priorities.

Compilation of the measures was led by the Insight, Performance and Information team based on the Corporate Strategy Themes and Priorities, as well as drawing from Service Plans and Director Summaries for the coming year. These have been reviewed and updated through discussions with Managers, Directors, Cabinet leads and Scrutiny members.

- **For 2022/23 performance metrics** – Thematic City Outcomes and Priority-level performance metrics / actions are listed now under each Theme and Priority in the **Business Plan 2022/23** (and will be included on the **Targets 2022/23** document published in July 2022).