



Title of report: Q4 Performance Report

Meeting: Cabinet

Meeting date: Thursday 5 June 2025

Cabinet member: Cabinet member finance and corporate services

Report by: Director of Strategy and Transformation

Report author: Head of Corporate Performance and Intelligence

Classification

Open

Decision type

Non-key

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose

To review performance for Quarter 4 (Q4) 2024/25 and to report the performance position across all Directorates for this period.

Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet:

- a) review performance for Q4 2024/25; and
- b) agree any outstanding key milestones from the Delivery Plan 2024/25 (see Appendix A) are carried forward to the Delivery Plan 2025/26

Alternative options

Cabinet may choose to review delivery and operational performance more or less frequently however regular updates on performance is essential for good governance, therefore less frequently is not recommended; and quarterly updates on the Delivery Plan is likely to capture a more significant update than on a monthly basis.

Cabinet may choose not to carry forward any outstanding key milestones into the new Delivery Plan (not recommended).

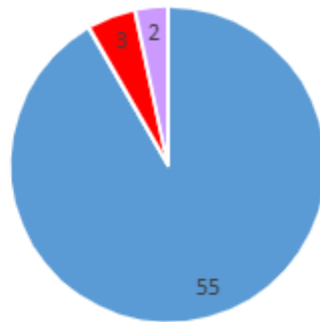
Key considerations

1. This report aligns with the Council Plan 2024-2028 and the associated annual Delivery Plan for the 2024/25 financial year. It provides a summary of the activities undertaken to deliver the key priorities and goals in Q4, and highlights the achievement of key performance indicators (KPIs). Appendix A provides the full breakdown of the Q4 updates on the Delivery Plan milestones that are due to be completed by the end of the financial year. 146 out of 187 (78%) milestones set out in the Delivery Plan for 2024/25 were delivered by the end of the financial year. 9% are red and are being recommended to be carried over into the 2025-26 Delivery Plan (see Appendix A for the remarks on each red milestone). 12% are purple and are also being recommended to be carried over into the 2025-26 Delivery Plan due to the timescale changing due to interdependent activity. One milestone is awaiting an outturn on CO2 emissions to be available for 2024/25 in order to assess whether the target has been met.
2. Beyond the Delivery Plan, the council has achieved many successes in Q4 of 2024/25. The following table presents some of the highlights of the Capital Investment Programme for Quarter 4.

Project	Investment	Where are we...
Peterchurch Primary School – New School Building	£10.8 million corporate borrowing & Capital Receipts	Planning application for the rebuilding of Peterchurch Primary School on the existing site has been submitted with construction, subject to planning approval. Build is planned to commence in September 2025.
Aylestone School Expansion	£13.1 million DFE capital grant	Planning application for the expansion of Aylestone School has been submitted with construction, subject to planning approval, to commence in September 2025.
Improvements to schools under the Schools Capital Maintenance Programme	£275,000 DFE Grant	2 completed projects in Q4 under the Schools Capital Maintenance Programme. Example project: Replacement roof, roof lights and guttering at Ledbury Primary to enhance the life expectancy of a corporate asset.
Estates Capital Improvement Programme	£391,000 corporate borrowing	5 completed projects in Q4 under the Estates Capital Investment Programme. Example project: Roofing works and improvements at Widemarsh Children's Centre to enhance the life expectancy of a corporate asset.
Section 106 Delivery Programme	£134,000 Section 106 funding	6 completed projects in Q4. Example project: Installation of bus shelters on St Martins Way, Ledbury. In addition, an extension to the office area and reception area at Ashfield Park Primary School, Ross has commenced on site.
Schools Accessibility Programme	£205,000 corporate borrowing	2 projects completed in Q4 under the School Accessibility Improvement programme. Example project: Internal adaptations and remodelling at Sutton St. Nicholas Primary School to improve accessibility for disabled pupils.

Road resurfacing across the county	£15 million in total, £5 million in 2024/25 and £10 million in 2025/2026	£4.92m was invested in 2024/25 which rolls on uninterrupted into a projected investment of £10.08m in 2025/26. Resurfaced total was around 135,000 square metres, as well as an extensive surface dressing programme.
Hereford Transport Hub	£11.57 million, of which £6.3 million is Levelling-Up grant funding and £1.0m is Active Travel Measures grant funding	The complex and drawn-out legal agreements with Network Rail and Transport for Wales have been completed during Q4, formalising the essential land transfer and rights. This has allowed contractor procurement to conclude, and McPhillips Wellington Ltd have been secured as preferred contractor to begin construction work in Q1.
Holme Lacy Road Active Travel Improvements (Levelling Up Fund)	£7.914 million grant funding	Detailed design and road safety audits completed, and procurement for construction underway during Q4.
Phosphate Mitigation/Integrated Wetlands	£4.76 million grant funding	Detailed design for the Tarrington wetland completed during Q4 ahead of planned construction in Q1. Contracts have been finalised for land and access rights acquisition for the third wetland.
Shirehall Restoration (phase 1) and Library/Learning Centre	£7.2 million (of which £3.005 million is Stronger Towns funding)	Planning and Listed Building consent was secured during Q4, and a two-stage procurement process for construction delivery got underway.
Hereford Museum & Art Gallery	£19.15 million	Stage 1 contractor procurement concluded during Q4, with Vinci UK Ltd appointed as construction partners moving into a pre-construction design phase involving both design team and contractor. Further grant funding of £1 million has also been secured from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme in Q4 to fund energy efficiency measures already incorporated in the design proposals.
Home Upgrade Grant 2	£4.65 million	The scheme completed in Q4 and delivered thermal and energy upgrades to 220 off-mains Herefordshire households during 2024/25 (against a target of 200) with a value of £3.6 million
Western By-Pass Phase 1	£40.3 million	Design consultants have been appointed during Q4 and the design process begun.

Performance: People



Milestones Colour Key: Blue: Completed; Red: Rolled over to 2025/26; Purple: Delivery timescale changed due to other interdependent activity

Children and Young People

3. Over 300 young people aged 16 to 24 have been referred to the Youth Employment Hub, surpassing the target of 200 referrals for the year. Plans are underway to increase capacity to meet the growing demand.
4. The capacity of specialist Special Educational Needs (SEN) school places has been increased, with an additional specialist places becoming available at the following schools: Aylestone School (8 places from September 2025 and 8 further places from September 2026); Trinity Primary School (16 places from September 2025); Hampton Dene expansion of the Language and Communication Centre (16 places from Easter 2026); Leominster Primary School (8 permanent places from September 2025). These placements will focus on supporting students with autism and Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs.
5. The Herefordshire Safeguarding Partnership has agreed on a Participation Strategy. A 'Voice of the Child and Participation Toolkit' is available on the Herefordshire Council website for use by all partners, supporting strategic planning and service improvement. Additionally, a specific framework has been published for those working within the SEND sector.

Community Wellbeing

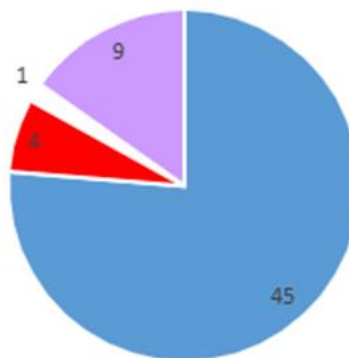
6. The first year of the Community Safety Partnership Strategy has been implemented, focusing on four priority areas: Domestic Abuse, Violence against Women and Girls (Sexual Violence), Misuse of Drugs, and Neighbourhood Crime. Implementation has been carried out through strategic and operational sub-groups aligned with key outcomes. Progress is monitored quarterly by the Community Safety Partnership Board.
7. There are 3 milestones that are being carried over to 2025/26:

- i. The evaluation of the technology pilots within the wider Technology Enabled Living Programme is taking slightly longer than originally anticipated, however work on this is underway to go through all outcomes with the participating customers to undertake the evaluation and will be completed by the end of April 2025.
- ii. Work is also underway to identify three new work opportunities providers to extend the services for people with learning disabilities and mental health issues.
- iii. A full business case is being worked up on the options for investing in, and building, the council's own care facility, and will be considered by Cabinet in Autumn 2025.

Economy and Environment

8. The Hereford Enterprise Zone has supported 7 businesses with employer travel plans to encourage more walking and cycling, exceeding the target.
9. The waiting list of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) has been significantly reduced from 130 to 61 schemes waiting to be started.

Performance: Place



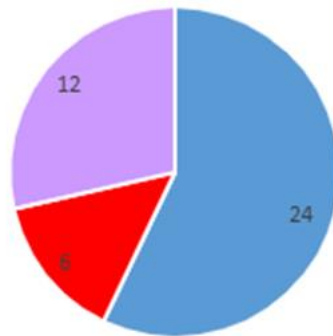
Milestones Colour Key: Blue: Completed; Red: Rolled over to 2025/26; Purple: Delivery timescale changed due to other interdependent activity; Blank: TBC as awaiting data for 2024/25

10. A key area of focus of the Delivery Plan was to expand and maintain the transport infrastructure network in a sustainable manner, with the goal of improving connectivity throughout the county. This includes enhancing existing routes, developing new connections, and ensuring long-term environmental and economic sustainability in transport planning and development. A parking strategy for the city has been developed as part of the transport infrastructure improvement plan.
11. The Library Strategy is progressing following the rigorous analysis of the extensive consultation with key stakeholders and is hoped to be delivered by the end of Q1 of 2025/26. The contractor is also due to be appointed to redevelop the Library and Learning Centre in the Shire Hall by the end of Q2 of 2025/26. Likewise, the construction work to redevelop the

Hereford Museum and Art Gallery is slightly delayed and due to take place during Q1 of 2025/26.

12. The delay in completing the public consultation on the draft of the Local Transport Plan is due to Government changes to the National Planning policy framework and therefore was outside of the council's direct control. The consultation will take place within Q1 of 2025/26
13. The purchase of additional wetland site to deliver on Phase 2 Strategic Mitigation for Phosphate Credits is almost complete and is hoped to be delivered by Q1 of 2025/26.
14. The timelines for the publication of the Nature Recovery Strategy have been adjusted in line with the revised timelines provided by the Department for Environment and Rural Affairs.

Performance: Growth

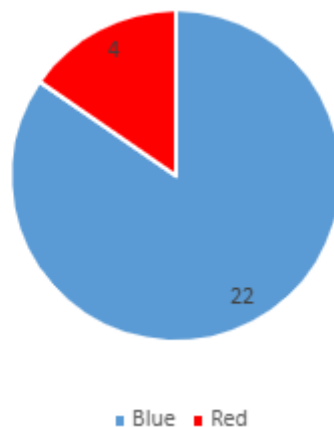


Milestones Colour Key : Blue: Completed; Red: Rolled over to 2025/26; Purple: Delivery timescale changed due to other interdependent activity

15. A key mechanism to bring employment opportunities to the county is to attract businesses. This includes developing and implementing an Inward Investment and Place Marketing plan for Herefordshire. To support this development the recruitment of an inward investment manager has been completed in Q4.
16. We successfully delivered the 3 year £7m UK Shared Prosperity and Rural Prosperity Fund in March 2025. Examples of outcomes delivered include:
 - a. Research and Development Consultancy - 35 businesses provided with over 20 hours of support, plus over 100 businesses engaged
 - b. One to one Business Advice - 9 professional advisors engaged and 120 businesses receiving one to one advice
 - c. One to one Start up - 45 start up businesses supported
17. There have been challenges resolving the section 278 matters for planning in the context of other private developments in the same zone have caused a delay to the finalisation of the design and the procurement for the Ross Enterprise Park. This is now resolved, and tenders will go out during Q1 of 2025/26.

18. The development and implementation of an Inwards Investment and Place Marketing plan for Herefordshire is on track to be delivered during 2025/26.
19. Further support for growth in Herefordshire is slightly delayed but in progress is the allocation of funding for additional employment land and the Careers and Enterprise programme in local schools and colleges to attract students to study in the county.
20. The strategy to support improved network coverage will be better informed following the publication of the results of the 4G/5G mobile coverage by the River Severn Partnership. It will, therefore, be delivered during 2025/26.

Performance: Transformation



Milestones Colour Key: Blue: Completed; Red: Rolled over to 2025/26

21. The Transformation Strategy setting out our strategic transformation programme was published in Q4. Our Strategic Transformation Programme will improve all aspects of the way the council works, and its delivery is fundamental to ensuring that we evolve into a council which is fit for the future. This programme will enable our staff, our council and our residents to grow, develop, prosper, and flourish. Transformation is a core pillar of the Herefordshire Council Plan, and by delivering against this strategy, we can be certain that we will be delivering the best for Herefordshire in all that we do.
22. We recognise that the needs of our customers can vary so there is no one size fits all approach. To ensure we work collaboratively and achieve the best results for the residents and business in Herefordshire we have developed a new set of customer standards which are the foundations for our wider customer transformation programme which is set out in detail in the transformation strategy.
23. Working in partnership to deliver our ambitions for Herefordshire is at the core of the council plan. We have made significant progress towards strengthening our relationships with town and parish councils and the city council in Herefordshire by relaunching and rebranding Parish Summits, and in Q4 we finalise the coproduced Herefordshire Councils Charter which is due to be published in May 2025.

Local Authority Data Explorer

24. The Office for Local Government (Oflog) was an office of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) launched in July 2023 and set up the Local Authority Data Explorer. Oflog has since closed, however the Local Authority Data Explorer continues to be maintained by the MHCLG.
25. The aim of the tool is to create an overlapping and holistic picture of local government performance, with the facility to easily view metrics across different domains.
26. At present, the Explorer covers six areas of performance. These are: waste management, planning, adult social care, roads, adult skills, corporate and finance.
27. Some of the data published in this tool is historic and therefore should be interpreted with caution.
28. The following top ten indicators have, therefore, been selected to demonstrate a more meaningful indication of the latest performance:

Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Q3 Actual	Q4* Projection	Q4* Actual	Q4* RAG**
Percentage of service users aged 65+ discharged from hospital into Home First who are still at home 91 days after discharge	78.75%	80%	79.83%	
Percentage of Children and Young People social work assessments completed within timescale (45 days)	63.5%	85%	67.7%	
Percentage of children in care who have an up-to-date review	99.5%	95%	98.25%	
Percentage of major planning applications dealt with within 13 weeks (or 16 weeks if subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment), or with an agreed extension of time <i>Provisional subject to DLUHC confirmation</i>	88.89%	70%	94.59%	
Percentage of non-major (minor and other) planning applications dealt with within 8 weeks, or with an agreed extension of time <i>Provisional subject to DLUHC confirmation</i>	77.63%	80%	77.71%	
Number of kg of waste that is not sent to reuse, recycling or composting (per household) <i>Provisional subject to DEFRA confirmation</i>	325.08kg (YTD Nov 2024)	360kg (YTD Dec 2024)	366.40kg (YTD Dec 2024)	

Number of affordable homes delivered	209	260	276	
Local count of Herefordshire homelessness	5	5	1	
Value of grants awarded to businesses to support viability and enable growth through UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund	£2,960,138	£2,647,783	£2,927,548	
Average days sickness per FTE	8.04	9	8.02	

* year to date (April 2024 – March 2025)

** RAG (Red Amber Green) Key: Green (target met/ exceeded); Amber (within 10% threshold); Red (away from target by 10%+ in an adverse direction); Grey (not targeted/ monitoring only)

29. In relation to the percentage of children and young people social work assessments completed within timescale, the trend through 2024/25 has improved each quarter from 57% to 67.7% but remains a challenging indicator with social work staffing vacancies and instability in the Assessment Teams creating fluctuating caseloads. In stable periods, for example December 2024, we saw 84% of assessments completed in timescales. Mitigations are in place and the council has launched a new recruitment campaign (April 2025) which to date is proving successful.

Community impact

30. In accordance with the accepted code of corporate governance, the council must ensure that it has an effective performance management system that facilitates effective and efficient delivery of planned services. To support effective accountability the council is committed to reporting on actions completed and outcomes achieved, and ensuring stakeholders are able to understand and respond as the council plans and carries out its activities in a transparent manner.
31. Regularly reviewing performance with a view to identifying actions which will further drive improvement in outcomes or efficiencies helps ensure the council achieves its Council Plan priorities.

Environmental Impact

32. This report details how progress is being made in achieving the Delivery Plan which details how the council is working to deliver the environmental ambitions set out in the Council Plan. Individual projects and deliverables included within the Delivery Plan will all be subject to their own governance arrangements and assessment of environmental and ecological impact.

Equality duty

33. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. Each project within the Delivery Plan will assess its equality impact individually.

34. The equality impact assessments that will be undertaken prior to commencing projects set out in the Delivery Plan will assess where a decision is likely to result in detrimental impact on any group with a protected characteristic. Mitigations and positive actions will be identified for each project in planning stages.

Resource implications

35. These recommendations have no direct financial implications.

Legal implications

36. This Council is a best value authority designated under the Local Government Act 1999. It is required to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way it exercises its functions. Measuring performance is a tool to evidence such improvement.

Risk management

37. The risks associated with the council's business are recorded on the relevant service risk register and escalated in accordance with the council's Performance Management Framework and Risk Management Plan. The highest risks, i.e. those scoring greater than 16 after controls, are escalated to the council's Corporate Risk Register.

Consultees

38. None in relation to this report.

Appendices

Appendix A Q4 Council Plan Delivery Plan Updates

Background papers

Council Plan 2024-2028
Delivery Plan 2024-2025

Report Reviewers Used for appraising this report:

Governance	John Coleman	Date 09/05/2025
Finance	Karen Morris	Date 13/05/2025
Legal	Sean O'Connor	Date 28/05/2025
Communications	Luenne Featherstone	Date 07/05/2025

Equality Duty	Harriet Yellin	Date 08/05/2025
Procurement	Claire Powell	Date 13/05/2025
Risk	Paige McInerney	Date 13/05/2025

Approved by	Rosie Thomas-Easton	Date 12/05/2025
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