

Title of report: Q3 Performance Report

Meeting:	Cabinet
Meeting date:	Thursday 26 March 2026
Cabinet member:	Cabinet member corporate strategy and budget
Report by:	Director of Finance
Report author:	Head of Corporate Performance and Intelligence

Classification

Open

Decision type

Non-key

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose

To review performance for Quarter 3 (Q3) 2025/26 and to report the performance position across all Directorates for this period.

Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet:

- a) review performance for Q3 2025/26

Alternative options

Cabinet may choose to review delivery and operational performance more or less frequently; or request alternative actions to address any identified areas of underperformance, including referral to the relevant scrutiny committee.

Key considerations

1. This report aligns with the Council Plan 2024-2028 and the associated annual Delivery Plan for the 2025/26 financial year. It provides a summary of the activities undertaken to deliver the key priorities and goals in Q3 and highlights the key performance indicators (KPIs). Appendix A provides the full breakdown of the Q3 updates on the Delivery Plan milestones that are due to be in progress by Q3. 201 out of 250 milestones (80%) that were due to be in progress by Q3 under the new Delivery Plan for 2025/26 were completed or are on track to be delivered by the end of the financial year.
2. Beyond the Delivery Plan, the council has achieved many successes in Q3 of 2025/26, some of these successes are listed in the table below.

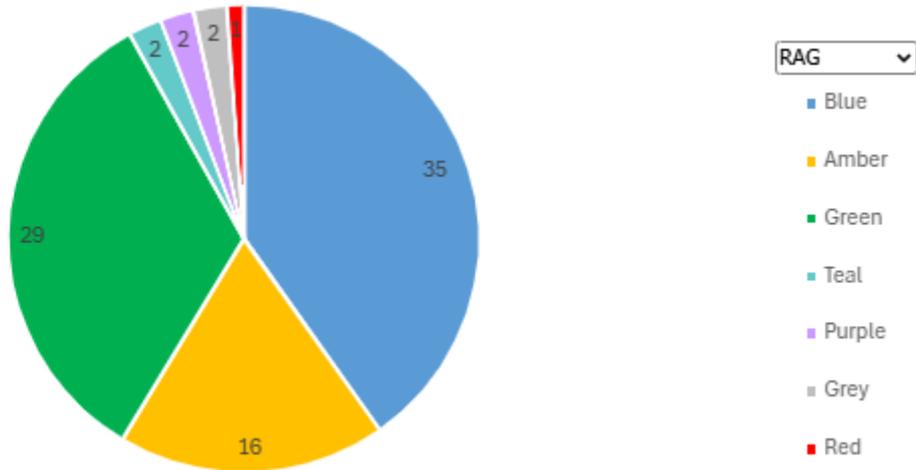
The council has continued to deliver on its Capital Investment Programme. The following table presents some of the highlights for Quarter 3.

Project	Investment	Where are we...
Hereford Transport Hub	£11.6m, of which £6.3m is Levelling-Up grant funding and £1.0m is Active Travel Measures grant funding	The main contractor continues on site with works including drainage to site, trial hole excavation and formation of the new access road. Issues arising are being actively managed with only minor delays to the programme currently.
Holme Lacy Road Active Travel Improvements (Levelling Up Fund)	£7.9m grant funding	Cambrensis, the main contractor has commenced on site following the redesign of traffic management to minimise impact for commuters. Compound and site offices have all been set up and are operational. Phase 1a was commenced with progress also made on Phases 2a and 2b. Issues have arisen and are being proactively managed with some delays to the programme.
Phosphate Mitigation/ Integrated Wetlands	£4.8m grant funding	The second integrated wetland (Tarrington) is now completed and working.
Hereford By-Pass	£40.3m	Cabinet approved the process for starting the Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO) necessary to secure all of the land required for the construction of Phase One of the bypass in December. Negotiations with landowners to reach agreements are progressing well with the hope that CPO will not be required. Tender returns from construction contractors are due back at the end of January and the award of the first stage of the contract is expected in February. Ecology and Archaeology surveys are continuing so that planning conditions can be met ahead of construction potentially starting in December 2026. Engagement with National Highways and Network Rail

		has been taking place in preparation for seeking their approvals for the elements of Phase One that require their approvals. Phase One continues to remain on track for delivery. Phase Two work continues with traffic modelling work to support the Strategic Outline Business Case which is on track for delivery in 2027 following consultation on the emerging Local Plan.
Employment Land in Herefordshire	£8.0m for Ross-on-Wye	A contractor has been appointed to implement the infrastructure and create the Phase 1 plots at Ross Enterprise Park. Substantive work is planned to begin in mid-February on site.
Peterchurch Primary School – New School Building	£10.9m	Construction of new school building progressing with new building programmed to be completed and occupied by Autumn 2026 with demolition and external works completed for the end of December 2026.
Aylestone School Expansion	£13.6m DFE Grant Funding	Planning approval was granted in November 2025 although this is subject to request for a judicial review. It is anticipated that works will commence in March 2026 with the new sports hall and teaching block being completed in Spring 2027 and internal alterations completed by September 2027.
Hampton Dene Primary School – Extension to LRC	£2.6m DFE Grant Funding	Construction works have commenced on site with completion programmed for July 2026.
Schools Capital Maintenance Programme	£3.2m DFE Grant/Borrowing	Works completed and handed over as part of the Summer 25 programme of works with further tenders issued and evaluated for Spring 2026 start on site.
Estates Capital Programmes Improvements	£2.5m in 25/25	4 projects completed during reporting period and a number of tenders issued and evaluated for works commencing in Spring 2026.
Brookfield School, Hereford – Extensions and Internal Alterations	£5.0m DFE Grant Funding/capital receipts reserve	Works completed on new two classroom teaching block with works to main secondary school building due for completion in January 2026 and sports hall in March 2026.

Performance: People

Q3 RAG status of Delivery Plan Milestones for People



Milestones Colour Key: Green: On Track; Amber: At risk of not being completed by the end of the financial year; Blue: Completed; Red: Significant risk of not being completed by the end of the financial year; Teal: Milestone has been discontinued; Grey: Not due to start yet

Children and Young People

- Partners continue to strengthen multi-agency information sharing to ensure risks of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) are identified early and responded to effectively. Weekly 'Get Safe' meetings provide a coordinated forum for reviewing emerging concerns and agreeing support for children and young people at risk. Recent regional analysis shows that while CSE remains a significant safeguarding issue, it occurs in low numbers locally and predominantly affects vulnerable adolescent girls. In response to these findings, the Child Exploitation and Missing group is developing targeted actions to enhance early identification, prevention and support for victims. This includes reviewing participation and information sharing across agencies to ensure our approach remains proactive, consistent and able to respond to new and emerging risks.
- Work continues across the council and partners to strengthen joint funding arrangements (Joint Commissioning Forum) with health partners that support children and young people with complex needs. While there has been progress in agreeing individual support packages, wider system changes introduced nationally in April 2025 have created challenges that are affecting the pace of this work. These issues have been escalated so that a sustainable, fair and family-centred approach can be agreed. Our priority remains ensuring that no child or family experiences any negative impact while revised arrangements are developed.

Community Wellbeing

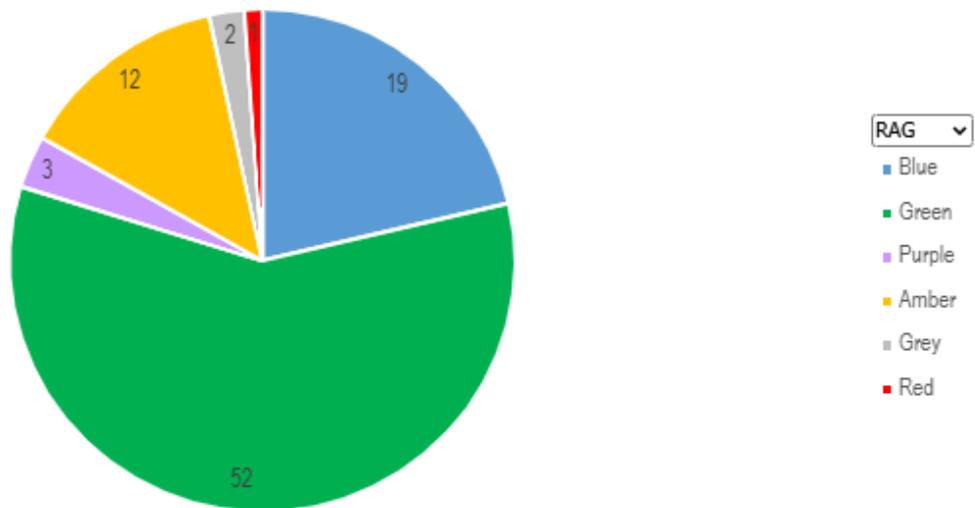
- The council has continued to work closely with adult social care, public health and partners across the voluntary and community sector to codesign the new 'Prevention in Adult Social Care Strategy', which is now nearing completion. Engagement has been central to this development, with two well attended stakeholder workshops held in August and October 2025

to gather insight, test priorities and ensure the strategy reflects the needs and strengths of our communities.

6. As part of our work to improve services for people with learning and physical disabilities, engagement has taken place with people drawing on care and support and their families to review the range of community activities available to them. The focus was on how these activities could be strengthened to promote independence and skills.

Performance: Place

Q3 RAG status of Delivery Plan Milestones for Place

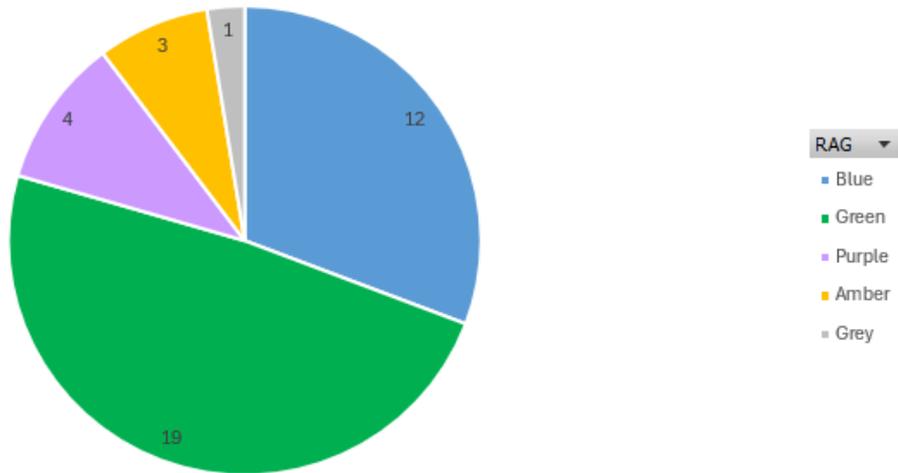


Milestones Colour Key: Green: On Track; Amber: At risk of not being completed by the end of the financial year; Blue: Completed; Red: Significant risk of not being completed by the end of the financial year; Purple: Parked as waiting on other interdependent activity; Grey: Not due to start yet

7. Cabinet approved the new Public Realm contract in December 2025, supporting the continued delivery of highquality and sustainable local services. Alongside this, the Herefordshire Cultural Partnership is leading the development of the county’s new Cultural Strategy, with the council contributing as an active partner to ensure the strategy reflects local priorities and delivers positive outcomes for communities.
8. Delivery of new public electric vehicle charge points has experienced delays, resulting in a red RAG rating. Fourteen additional sockets are scheduled for installation before the end of the financial year, following approval of all proposed sites by the council. However, even with these installations, the year-end target will not be met. As installation is dependent on external providers, the shortfall is outside the council’s direct control. Work will continue with partners to increase provision and support wider access to sustainable transport across the county.

Performance: Growth

Q3 RAG status of Delivery Plan Milestones for Growth



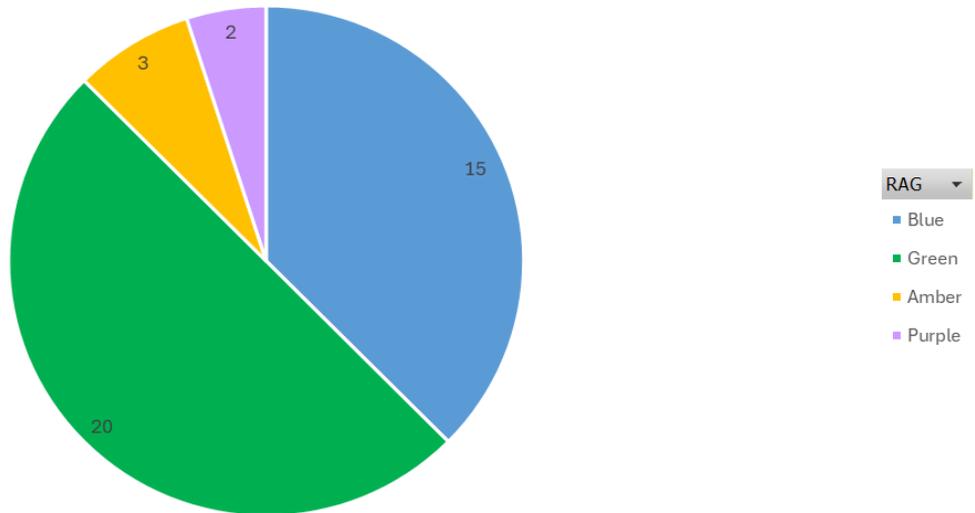
Milestones Colour Key: Green: On Track; Amber: At risk of not being completed by the end of the financial year; Blue: Completed; Red: Significant risk of not being completed by the end of the financial year; Grey: Not due to start yet

9. Work is progressing to develop the new strategy and delivery plan that will strengthen learning pathways and improve access to employment, further training and skills development. National changes, including the publication of the new Ofsted Further Education and Skills framework and the Government’s Post-16 Education and Skills white paper, are informing this work by clarifying expectations and future funding priorities for adults most in need of support. The council’s Self-Assessment Report is currently in draft and will guide the next stage of improvement and strategic planning.

10. The council and New Model institute for Technology and Engineering (NMiTE) continue to work proactively to identify and develop opportunities that support shared ambitions for skills, education and economic growth. Current joint work is focused on unlocking the potential for growth within the defence and security sector in Herefordshire. This remains a key area of collaboration where further development is expected to strengthen local skills pathways and contribute to future economic opportunities.

Performance: Transformation

Q3 RAG status of Delivery Plan Milestones for Transformation



Milestones Colour Key: Green: On Track; Amber: At risk of not being completed by the end of the financial year; Blue: Completed; Red: Significant risk of not being completed by the end of the financial year; Purple: Parked as waiting on other interdependent activity

11. The council has successfully piloted a range of AI solutions to identify opportunities that can enhance service quality and efficiency. Following a positive pilot in social care, Magic Notes is now being extended to relevant staff to support improved recording and reduce administrative burden. The pilot of M365 Copilot has also concluded, with ongoing work focused on supporting wider adoption of Copilot Chat to enable staff to work more effectively. As this is a rapidly developing area, progress and opportunities will continue to be reviewed as part of business-as-usual service improvement.
12. The revised contract with Hoople was formally completed in November 2025, providing a strengthened agreement to ensure best value, clearer accountability and improved alignment with the council's future target operating model.

Local Government Outcomes Framework

13. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) announced in July that they are launching a new Local Government Outcomes Framework. The outcomes align with the key national priorities, ranging from preventing homelessness and rough sleeping to community safety and satisfaction. The outcomes are underpinned by metrics to measure progress.
14. This approach is designed to support a move away from hundreds of ringfenced grants to instead focus on a small number of tangible improvements for people and communities.
15. Central government will still take a key interest in outcome delivery and intervene where necessary and MHCLG will work with other government departments to make sure that support and challenge in response to the Framework works.

16. Framework data will also feed into Government's assessment of whether the Best Value Duty is being met.
17. A first draft of Herefordshire Council's own Outcomes Framework has been developed and will soon be shared across directorates for discussion and agreement before being presented to Cabinet.
18. In the meantime, we will continue to report on our top ten indicators:

Key Performance Indicator	Q2 Actual - YTD	Q3* Projection - YTD	Q3* Actual - YTD	Q3* RAG**
Percentage of service users aged 65+ discharged from hospital into Home First who are still at home 91 days after discharge	75.21%	80%	72.84%	Amber
Percentage of Children and Young People social work assessments completed within timescale (45 days)	80.92%	85%	84.24%	Amber
Percentage of children in care who have an up-to-date review	99.38%	95%	100%	Green
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>	88.46%	70%	88.89%	Green
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>	83.48%	80%	83.31%	Green
Number of kg of waste that is not sent to reuse, recycling or composting (per household) <i>Provisional subject to DEFRA confirmation</i>	Q2 data not yet available	120kg (Q1)	126.36kg (Q1)	Amber
Number of affordable homes delivered	166	158	193	Green
Number of people rough sleeping	23	5	12	Red
Value of grants awarded to businesses to support viability and enable growth through UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund	£1,091,301.50	£1,120m	£1,135,184.50	Green
Average days sickness per FTE	8.29	9	8.53	Green

* year to date (April – December 2025) unless stated otherwise

** 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)

19. The number of individuals rough sleeping increased to 12 in December, compared with 4 in November. Despite this rise, and aside from November's unusually low figure, December represents the lowest level of rough sleeping recorded in the past six months. Although the opening of the shelter last month initially contributed to a reduction, several individuals who accessed the provision subsequently chose to return to rough sleeping. In addition, a small number of exclusions from the shelter have contributed to the increase.

Community impact

20. 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.
21. Regularly reviewing performance with a view to identifying actions which will further drive improvement in outcomes or efficiencies helps ensure the council achieves its County Plan priorities.

Environmental Impact

22. 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 County 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

23. 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.
24. Each project within the Delivery Plan will assess its equality impact individually. Where a decision is likely to result in detrimental impact on any group with a protected characteristic it must be justified objectively. This means that attempts to mitigate the harm will be explored. If the harm cannot be avoided, the decision maker will balance this detrimental impact against the strength of legitimate public need to pursue the service change.

Resource implications

25. These recommendations have no direct financial implications, however cabinet may wish to consider how money is utilised in order to meet the council's objectives.

Legal implications

26. 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

27. 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 the Risk Strategy.

Consultees

28. None in relation to this report.

Appendices

Appendix A Q3 Council Plan Delivery Plan Updates

Background papers

Council Plan 2024-2028
Delivery Plan 2025-2026