

**HEALTH AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
15 JANUARY 2025**

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**PERFORMANCE INDICATORS QUARTER 2 - 2024/25**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide Members with performance data against key performance indicators for 2024/25, up to June 2024 (Quarter 2).

**Background**

2. This report provides performance information in line with an indicator set and scrutiny committee distribution agreed by Monitoring and Coordination Group on 4 June 2018, and subsequently by scrutiny committee chairs. Following agreement at Council on 5 December 2019 to align Scrutiny Committees to the updated Cabinet Portfolios, the indicator set has been re-aligned accordingly.
3. The indicators included in this report are aligned with key priorities. Other indicators may be referenced when appropriate in narrative provided by the relevant Assistant Directors, when providing the committee with performance updates.
4. Thirty-six indicators are reported to the committee, nine of them are updated on a six-monthly basis and twenty-seven annually. The annual indicators are updated throughout the year depending on their national release date.
5. Six indicators are reported by both Housing and Leisure Services and twenty-four by Public Health.
6. Nine indicators have Quarter 2 information, and twelve Public Health indicator have been updated since the 2023/24 Quarter 4 report.

**Housing Indicators**

**April to September 2023/24 comparison to 2024/25**

7. Rent arrears of current Council tenants in the financial year as a percentage of rent debit shows an improvement from the previous year (HBS 013 - 2.94% to 2.88%) and is better than the target of 3.4%. Housing Services collected £15.7 million of rent up to quarter 2 of 2024-25, compared to £14.8 million for the same period in 2023-24. The team continue to collect with care, offering guidance, help and support to customers, assisting with benefit claims and budgeting skills at the beginning of a tenancy and throughout. Enforcement and court action is taken only when all other avenues have been exhausted.

8. The amount of rent collected as a proportion of rents owed on Council homes, including arrears brought forward debit, has increased from the previous year (HBS 016 - 98.8% to 99.6%). There are 2,198 Council tenants in receipt of some element of Universal Credit (UC) and have the five weeks wait, prior to first payments being received. Average arrears for UC customers remain around 5 weeks average rent. The managed migration to UC has started and collection rates are expected to be affected as tenants await their payments and move from weekly to monthly benefits. Housing Services are continuing to work with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to support and guide tenants through the period of migration.
9. The average number of days spent in Bed and Breakfast accommodation for people affected by homelessness has seen a significant increase (HBS 025 – 3,657 to 8,004). The Council has a statutory duty to provide temporary accommodation under the Homeless legislation. The days spent in temporary accommodation has increased due to difficulties moving people on to permanent accommodation. The waiting list for social rented accommodation has increased to over 2,000 and access to the private rented market has become more difficult and expensive. This is a national issue and will be a key action for our new Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. The number of people presenting as homeless remains high, with 751 by quarter 2 of 2024-25, compared to 740 for the same period in 2023-24.
10. The number of positive outcomes where homelessness has been prevented increased (HBS 027i - 252 to 265). There has been a difficulty in moving people on from temporary accommodation due to changes in the housing market, with less private rented accommodation available and increased demands on the social housing waiting list. This has impacted on the positive outcomes the Housing Option team have been able to achieve.
11. The average number of days to re-let empty Council dwellings has increased (HBS 034 – 52.4 to 70.6). This is a significant improvement from 99.4 days at the end of 2023-24. The timescales for completing repairs before letting continues to be high, due to difficulties in recruiting qualified tradespeople in Housing Repairs. A new Repairs Before Letting Manager has been recruited who is currently reviewing processes and resources on the team. We are starting to see the beneficial impact of this post and hope to see further reductions in the re-let times.
12. The percentage of dwellings not with a gas service within 12 months of the last service has date has decreased (HBS 072 – 1.38% to 0.8%). Current performance is on target to meet the 0.5% of all Council properties with gas appliances and due a gas safety check in 2024-25 will be completed, to meet our statutory duties.

## **Leisure Indicators**

### **April to September 2022/23 comparison to 2023/24**

13. Visitor numbers to the Dolphin Centre have increased (CUL 030 – 358,123 to 452,328). This reflects the popularity of the swimming pool following the reopening of all facilities. The main pool reopened in January 2024 with the slides and toddler pool reopening in August 2024. In the first week of the full pool facilities being opened the complex experienced the equal highest number of swimmers in the history of the Centre. Hospitality continues to

attract high numbers and memberships continue to break our own record numbers. Swimming lessons and classes again are welcoming higher number than the same quarter last year.

14. The number of school pupils participating in the sports development programme has increased by 2,999 (CUL 063 – 3,343 – 6,342). There will be a full School Games programme scheduled in 24/25 now that the Eastbourne Sports Complex is fully re-opened following the investment project in the facilities. The Primary/Secondary Athletics, multiple Quadkids events, Change 4 Life, Community Games, Cross Country and Multi Skill Festivals have all taken place from May onwards. Further events are planned in the Autumn and Winter schedule.
15. Number of individuals participating in the community sports development programme has increased by 996 (CUL 064 - 10,075 to 11,071), following the growth in various Move More projects and activities. These include the Holiday Activity Project, Eastbourne Sports Complex Move More Programme, Haughton Matters, The Sheltered Housing Activity project and numerous new community out reach sessions that the team deliver from walking, inclusive activities, Nordic walking, walking football, weight goals and various other activities.

### **Public Health Indicators**

16. Twelve of the indicators reported by Public Health have had updated information to report since the Quarter 4 report. These are all annually reported indicators.

### **2021/22 comparison to 2022/23**

17. Low birth weight of term babies has remained the same (PBH 009 2.3% - 2.3%). Compared to our North East neighbours Darlington is ranked 12th and is statistically similar to the North East and England. The 0-19 public health service contract includes a specific action for Health Visitors to visit an expectant mother between 28 and 36 weeks of their pregnancy. This visit provides an opportunity to provide information, advice and support to maximise the mother's health and create optimum conditions for a healthy pregnancy.
18. The percentage of HIV late diagnosis has decreased (PBH 050 – 33.3% to 25.0%). Compared to our North East neighbours Darlington is statistically similar to the North East and England against the benchmarked goal of <25%. The 25% of adults identified as being diagnosed late, using the CD4 cell count at diagnosis, corresponds to 2 late diagnosed out of a total of 8 new diagnosis. This impacts on what treatment options can be offered. The Sexual Health Service has increased new patients receiving a HIV risk assessment and more and easier routes to access HIV testing, including postal testing kits. Additionally, there is wider access to condoms through the C Card offer, to help prevent sexually transmitted infections, and provision of Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) to reduce the risk of HIV infection amongst those most at risk.

### **2022/2023 compared to 2023/24**

19. Breastfeeding prevalence at 6-8 weeks after birth has increased (PBH 013c - 38.1% to 40.6%). This is an improving picture and statistically similar to the North East. Although

statistically worse than England the gap is narrowing. The midwifery team in the hospital initiates breastfeeding with new mothers at the time of delivery. When the mother and baby is discharged from the midwifery service the Health Visiting team then provides a proactive offer of structured breastfeeding support. The Health Visiting Service hold UNICEF BFI Gold Ambassador Status, which demonstrates sustainability of good practice.

20. Smoking status at time of delivery has decreased (PBH 014 – 12.9% to 10.6%). Darlington is statistically similar to the North East and statistically worse than England. The gap between Darlington and the North East and England has narrowed since 2020. The NHS provides stop smoking support through local maternity services as part of the Tobacco Dependency Pathway. The Local Authority commissions a specialist stop smoking service that supports women to stop smoking before and after being pregnant. The authority works with partners to encourage all residents, including pregnant mothers, to quit smoking at every opportunity.
21. Prevalence of overweight (including obesity) amongst children in Reception has decreased (PBH 020 – 26.7 to 23.3). Darlington is now statistically similar to the North East and England. It should be noted that the cohort participation rate was only 81.6%, which could impact data quality. The Darlington Childhood Healthy Weight Plan identified evidence-based interventions delivered with partners to address underlying causes of obesity in children and young people. Work includes activity with schools and local commercial food premises to develop a healthy catering standard for a healthy food offer.
22. Prevalence of overweight (including obesity) amongst children in Year 6 has decreased (PBH 021 – 37.3 to 35.4). Darlington is statistically better than the North East and statistically similar to England. It should be noted that the cohort participation rate was only 89.8%, which could impact data quality. The Darlington Childhood Healthy Weight Plan identified evidence-based interventions delivered with partners to address underlying causes of obesity in children and young people. Work includes activity with schools and local commercial food premises to develop a healthy catering standard for a healthy food offer.
23. The prevalence of smoking among persons aged 18 years and over has decreased (PBH 033 – 11.5% to 7.9%). Darlington is statistically better than the North East and England. This is the 4th year with a reduction from a peak of 13.8% in 2020. There is now an established downward trend with fewer people in Darlington identifying themselves as smokers. It is expected that this reduction will be sustained due to the impact of new and existing measures to reduce smoking in the community including new legislation and extra funding to increase access to stop smoking interventions.
24. Successful completion of drug treatment - opiate users has increased (PBH 035i – 4.4% to 7.6%). Darlington is now statistically better than the North East and England. This has now increased for two years from a low of 3.1% in 2020. This rise reflects the increased government investment in substance misuse treatment which has enabled increased access to better quality treatment, resulting in an increase to the numbers in treatment and more positive outcomes. Local services remain focused on evidence-based interventions to ensure services remain effective and optimised.
25. Successful completion of drug treatment - non-opiate users has increased (PBH 035ii – 15.2% to 21.8%). Darlington is statistically similar to the North East and statistically worse

than England. This rise reflects the increased government investment in substance misuse treatment which has enabled increased access to better quality treatment, resulting in an increase to the numbers in treatment and more positive outcomes. Local services remain focused on evidence-based interventions to ensure services remain effective and optimised.

26. Successful completion of alcohol treatment has increased (PBH 035iii – 18.0% to 28.1%). Darlington which is statistically similar to the North East but remains worse than England. There has been a growth in demand for alcohol treatment services in Darlington. There has also been an increase in the levels of dependency in people presenting for treatment. This improvement in outcomes reflects the success of the service in meeting demand and providing a quality service. There is a wider multiagency action to respond and mitigate the wider impacts of alcohol in our communities.
27. The percentage of eligible population aged 40-74 offered an NHS Health Check who received an NHS Health Check in the five-year period has decreased, (PBH 046 – 45.8% to 41.6%). Darlington is statistically better than England and the North East. Performance is monitored quarterly, with an annual target for each GP Practice to offer a health check to 20% of the eligible population (40–74-year-olds) annually. This is incentivised to encourage the GP Practices to offer a health check to the maximum number eligible.
28. The rate of chlamydia detection per 100,000 young people aged 15 to 24 per 100,000 population has decreased (PBH 048 – 1,972 to 1,519). Darlington rate has reduced faster than England and the North East. The council commissions a specialist Sexual Health Service which has been working to improve uptake of screening by targeting younger people under 25 yrs, including access to online testing for over 16 years. This has increased the number of people getting tests. The School Nursing team work with schools to ensure Chlamydia screening is promoted appropriately within the curriculum.

### **Performance Summary**

29. Nine indicators have Quarter 2 information. When taking into consideration what is best performance for each indicator:
  - a) 7 of the 9 indicators show performance better than from when last reported.
  - b) 2 of the 9 indicators show performance not as good as when last reported.
30. Twelve annual indicators have been updated since the 2023/24 Quarter 4 report. When taking into consideration what is best performance for each indicator:
  - c) 9 of the 12 indicators show performance better than from when last reported.
  - d) 2 of the 12 indicators show performance not as good as when last reported.
  - e) 1 of the 12 indicators showed performance had remained the same.
31. A detailed performance scorecard is attached at Appendix 1.
32. Detailed performance graphs and narratives for each indicator is attached at Appendix 2.

## Recommendation

33. It is recommended that performance information provided in this report is reviewed and noted, and relevant queries raised with appropriate Director / Assistant Director.

**Anthony Sandys**  
AD – Housing and Revenues

**Ian Thompson**  
AD – Community Services

**Lorraine Hughes**  
Director of Public Health

## Background Papers

Background papers were not used in the preparation of this report.

Council Plan	This report contributes to the Council Plan by involving Members in the scrutiny of performance relating to the delivery of key outcomes with regards to Health and Housing.
Addressing inequalities	This involves members in the scrutiny of the level to which Health and Housing contributes to ensuring that opportunities are accessible to everyone, with a focus on ensuring a good job, home and/or social connections for all.
Tackling Climate Change	This report does not identify any issues relating to climate change.
Efficient and effective use of resources	This report allows for the scrutiny of performance which is integral to optimising outcomes and ensuring efficient use of resources.
Health and Wellbeing	This report supports performance improvement relating to improving the health and wellbeing of residents.
S17 Crime and Disorder	This report supports the Councils Crime and Disorder responsibilities.
Wards Affected	This report supports performance improvement across all Wards.
Groups Affected	This report supports performance improvement which benefits all groups
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers.