Performance Management Framework 2022-2025

Ward(s): All

Portfolios: All

Purpose: Review

1. Aim

The Performance Management Framework (PMF) sets out the broad performance management principles for how we approach our work and underlines the performance management responsibilities of everyone working for the council. The framework references the aim, priorities, outcomes and markers as detailed in Our Council Plan 2022-2025 that are the basis of quarterly monitoring reports to Cabinet.

2. Summary

2.1 The report provides Audit Committee with a revised Walsall Performance Management Framework. The main objectives of the framework are to set out how the council ensures the delivery of Our Council Plan 2022-2025, its aim, priorities and outcomes, and secures effective and sustainable improvements for the benefit of our residents.

3. Recommendations

3.1 To review the revised Performance Management Framework.

3.2 To note the monitoring arrangements that are in place to provide oversight for the delivery of priorities of Our Council Plan 2022-2025.

3.3 To recommend the Framework for approval to Cabinet as robust and fit for purpose in setting out how the council can work to ensure the delivery of Our Council Plan 2022-2025 and secure effective and sustainable improvements for the benefit of its residents.

4.   Report detail – know

Background

4.1   A Performance Management Framework provides the structure for the council, directorates and services to effectively manage their performance. It outlines the expectations placed on services in relation to collating and monitoring performance information as part of the management of the service and provides the framework for services and all staff to recognise how their contribution connects back to the priorities of the organisation.

4.2   The council has had a PMF in place since 2002, which is regularly reviewed to consider changes to local priorities and management arrangements along with recognised good practice.   Initially the Framework was one that focussed on centralised monitoring of compliance.   In more recent years it has focused on supporting self-governance within services and directorates.   The PMF being presented reflects the Our Council Plan 2022-25, approved at Council in February 2022, our Proud Promises, our Ways of Thinking approach and our Values.

4.3   Section 3.1 of the Framework focuses on the delivery of our aim, priorities and outcomes and how this will be monitored. The Council Plan sets out 5 areas of focus (EPICC), 10 outcomes and 20 markers of success to assess progress in delivery of the plan. Each of these 20 markers of success will have an agreed baseline set for Quarter 1 (April-July), utilising a range of performance indicators connected to the marker and outcome. Collaborative working across a number of services ensures the indicators selected are appropriate and support reporting on a quarterly basis. CMT will approve the performance monitoring report format, which will be shared with Audit Committee for information. These baselines are the equivalent of 'zero' from which this year's Outcomes are measured and reported to CMT and Cabinet quarterly and annual performance considered.

Control Environment

4.4   Audit Committee has a key role in the council's governance arrangements by ensuring that an effective internal control environment is maintained and for considering the council's framework of assurance to ensure it adequately addresses the risks and priorities of the council. The PMF is part of the overall assurance framework.

4.5   The PMF is part of the council's internal control arrangements and provides the structure against which services and directorates select the data and information used to manage performance. It provides clarity regarding responsibilities at every level of the organisation and the 'plan – do – check – act' cycle that is a foundation of the planning cycle. Effective performance management is also integral to the identification and management of risks and a key process within the council's internal controls and assurance arrangements.

Assurance of Controls

4.6   The PMF and its key principles are underpinned by individual directorate and service performance management arrangements, including appropriate tools such as monitoring performance measures, scorecards, RAG ratings, benchmarking

activity and self-assessment. This provides the flexibility to respond to changing needs and priorities at service and directorate level whilst ensuring performance management controls remain in place.

4.7   As an internal control arrangement, the PMF is reviewed annually as part of the Annual Review of Effectiveness of the System of Internal Controls and is included in the Assurance Mapping processes reported to Audit Committee twice a year.

Strategic Risks/Annual Statements

4.8   Effective performance management supports the identification and mitigation of risks at every level of the organisation including strategic risks. The PMF is part of the council's internal controls and is included in the Annual Governance Statement.

5.   *Financial information*

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report, however effective performance management supports delivery of efficient and effective services and value for money.

6.   Reducing Inequalities

Effective performance management arrangements ensure services focus on the delivery of council priorities that contribute to the delivery of our aim which embodies the Marmot objectives connected to reducing inequalities.

7.   Decide

Audit Committee are asked to review the performance management framework and to consider if it is robust and fit for purpose to enable the Committee to recommend it to Cabinet to approve and implement.

8.   Respond

Audit Committee's view will be included in the report to Cabinet that seeks approval of the Framework.

9.   Review

Audit Committee will be presented with any further changes to the Framework as they occur.

Background papers

None.

Author

Helen Dudson, Corporate Assurance Manager
✉ helen.dudson@walsall.gov.uk
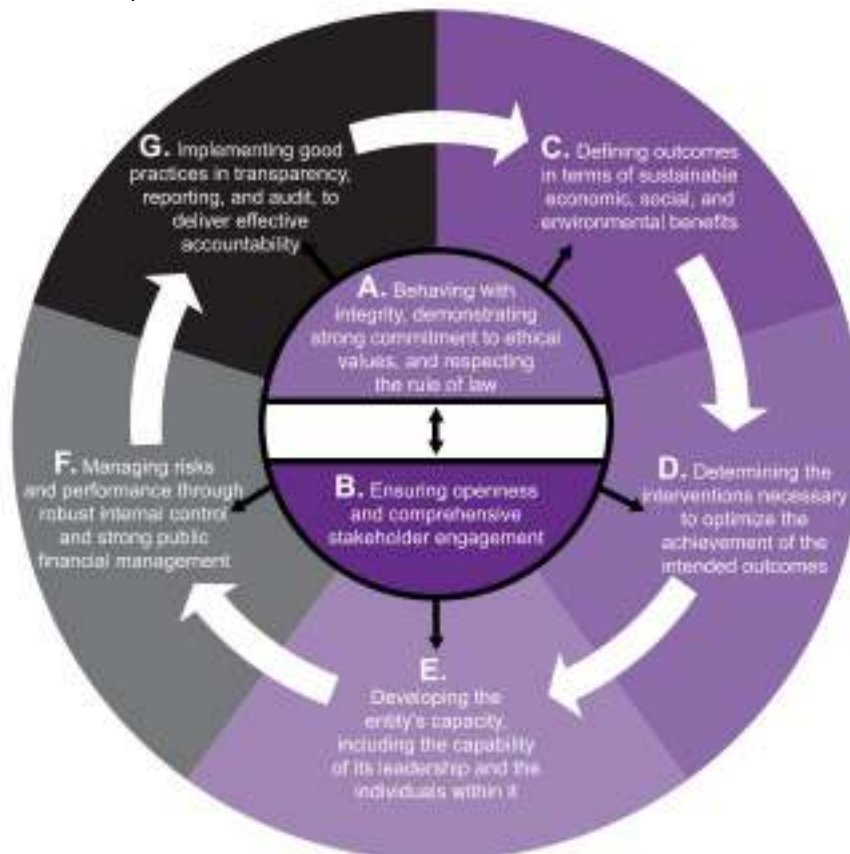
Performance Management Framework
2022/2025

Review Date: January 2025

1. Introduction

The council operates to serve the people of Walsall, against the context of the council's Aim: *Inequalities are reduced and all potential is maximised. Together we are committed to developing a healthier, cleaner and safer Walsall and creating an environment that provides opportunities for all residents, communities and businesses to fulfil their potential and thrive.*

Governance supports the council to deliver outcomes by ensuring there are high standards of conduct and leadership that make sure the council does the right things, in the right way, for the right people in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner. As a public body the council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted with the highest ethical and legal standards and that public money is safeguarded and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

Figure: Achieving the Intended Outcomes While Acting in the Public Interest at All Times (CIPFA/IFAC 2014).

Performance Management is an integral part of the council's wider corporate governance and assurance arrangements which comprise the systems and processes, culture and values the council operates within as a public sector organisation (see section 'F' in diagram above).

The council's Performance Management Framework (PMF) is an essential element of the council's governance, control and assurance mechanisms to deliver services efficiently and effectively, ensuring the council meets its statutory and legislative responsibilities.

Draft for Audit Committee

In order to successfully deliver as an organisation, performance and how it is managed must be of upmost relevance to our strategies, objectives and goals. Delivering effective performance management arrangements assists any organisation in making informed decisions, delivering outcomes that support the overarching aim and play an integral role in service improvement and transformation. Performance management is key to the identification and management of risks and an essential process within our internal controls and assurance arrangements and in the monitoring of the delivery of outcomes and value for money.

In addition to having robust performance management arrangements, as outlined in this framework, it is important that there are checks in place to assure that performance is being managed at every level of the organisation and that monitoring and reporting arrangements are in place. These checks serve to demonstrate that arrangements are effective and identifies if services should strengthen their management and monitoring of performance. The Annual Review of Effectiveness of the System of Internal Controls and assurance mapping processes are the mechanisms by which the effectiveness of the Performance Management Framework is reviewed and informs when refreshes are required.

1.1 Definition

Within the council, performance management comprises the systems, processes, structures and supporting arrangements established by management to ensure the delivery of our aim, priorities and outcomes. Performance management tools and techniques are needed to be able to identify, assess, monitor, and respond to performance issues, and to allow actions to be taken which will contribute significantly to the achievement of agreed priorities and outcomes.

PMF Core Components
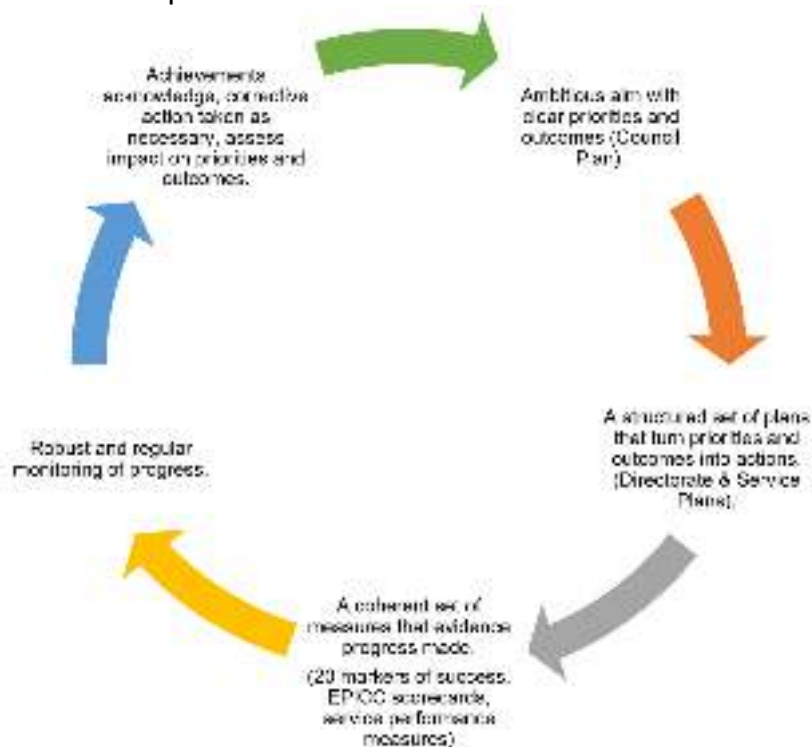
Simply, if we do not know how we are performing, then we do not know where improvements are needed or could be made. In addition, we do not know how well something is being achieved and may not consider the impact that has on our communities. Monitoring and managing performance supports our strategic budgeting approach that aligns our financial resources to the delivery of our key areas of focus and outcomes.

Given the council operates to serve the people of Walsall our customers are at the centre of the services we deliver. Performance Management arrangements:

- Create clarity and constancy of purpose for all services that can be translated to individual activity / contribution, providing individuals with a clear sense of purpose and understanding of their role and their contribution to the delivery of the council's aim, priorities and outcomes.
- Build an intelligence led / informed approach to strategic and operational decision making so there is no change without profound knowledge and understanding of what needs to change and why.
- Help to embed a cultural shift to learning and improvement through trust and transparency that provides development opportunities and supports effective service succession planning.
- Champion and create learning loops for continuous improvement (based on check, plan, review, do) – the opportunity for individuals to feedback from a customer perspective to improve service delivery (recognising the distributed leadership model).
- Provide clearly defined responsibilities of all those engaged in the delivery of council services and change and improvement activity.
- Enable the monitoring of service delivery to ensure the allocation of resources is having the intended impact, allowing successes to be celebrated and corrective action to be taken if needed.
- Help to identify and manage risks for the council.
- Monitor delivery of our Proud Promises: Improve outcomes and customer experience; Improve employee satisfaction and engagement: and Improve service efficiency and performance.
- Supports the use of data and intelligence to forecast future needs and demands to assist planning and resource allocation.

Managing performance includes consideration of numerous sources of quantitative and qualitative information, a detailed understanding of work flows and processes and, as importantly, the perspectives of both customers and staff regarding their experience and satisfaction with services.

1.2 Scope

This PMF sets out the arrangements for the council, directorates and services to effectively manage performance. It outlines the expectations placed on services in relation to collating and monitoring performance information as part of the management of the service and provides the approach for services and all staff to recognise how their contribution connects back to the priorities and outcomes of the organisation.

In setting out the overarching approach, these corporate arrangements recognise the great diversity amongst council services and the differing levels of demand from statutory and regulatory requirements and external performance frameworks. Examples of the external demands that can be placed on services to varying degrees include:

- Submission of data in statutory returns to government bodies which is then collated and published to allow direct comparison with other local authorities (benchmarking).
- Reporting on statutory performance measures aligned to national outcomes frameworks.
- Inspections of services and settings by external bodies, for example Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC).
- Peer challenges and sector led improvement activity (e.g. Food Standards Agency inspection of our enforcement services).
- Investigations by external organisations in response to complaints to them, for example Information Commissioners Office (ICO) and Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO).

The need to comply with external performance requirements means that there must be some flexibility in how different areas implement their own performance management arrangements. This framework applies to all directly managed services and change activity of the council. For those that commission services it is important that they ensure that service providers meet any information requirements to enable services to track the performance measures developed in local frameworks and that contractual arrangements cover the performance of providers.

2. Performance Management Framework

2.1 Why manage performance?

Any business must have a clear aim so to be clear on what it needs to do. Once there is a clear aim plans can be made regarding how that aim is delivered, what needs to be changed and what services are needed to create those changes. In general terms performance management serves as a support or guide for the delivery and improvement of services and to ensure the appropriate level of governance is maintained at all times. Actively managing performance ensures all individuals, teams and the whole organisation know the 'what' and the 'how' they should be doing and enables them to recognise achievements and also where improvements can be made. This applies equally to all services and activities.

Embedding effective performance management arrangements:

- Ensure goals are prioritised and resources are allocated effectively.
- Help improve services and outcomes for local people.
- Provide an environment that helps motivate staff as they are aware of what is expected from them and understand how they contribute to the delivery of council priorities.
- Ensure significant risks to the delivery of priorities are identified and managed.
- Assure officers and political leaders that service delivery is at expected levels and there are mechanisms to take corrective action where performance is poor.
- Ensure the council and partners achieve what they set out to do and that we focus on what matters most.
- Provide opportunities to recognise and celebrate successes and improvements.

- Provides data and intelligence to enable services to predict trends in demand, identify opportunities for improvements in processes and verify the quality of the data the service holds.
- Provides a strong evidence base for improved decision making, assurance that governance arrangements are robust, and the council is effective in its use of resources, demonstrating value for money and robust arrangements for continuous improvement in value for money.

2.2 Planning Framework

Effective performance management is delivered via a planning framework. Planning occurs at various levels in the organisation, with plans including more detail the closer they are to operational activity (e.g., service and team plans). Planning provides an important link between the strategic corporate plan (the Council Plan) and directorate/service/team plans through to individual employee annual performance conversations, supporting all employees to understand their role in the delivery of corporate priorities.

Planning frameworks are often seen as providing the 'golden thread' where strategic priorities are transformed into deliverable actions that can be monitored and reviewed so the impact they have can be understood. The council's planning framework is illustrated in the following diagram.
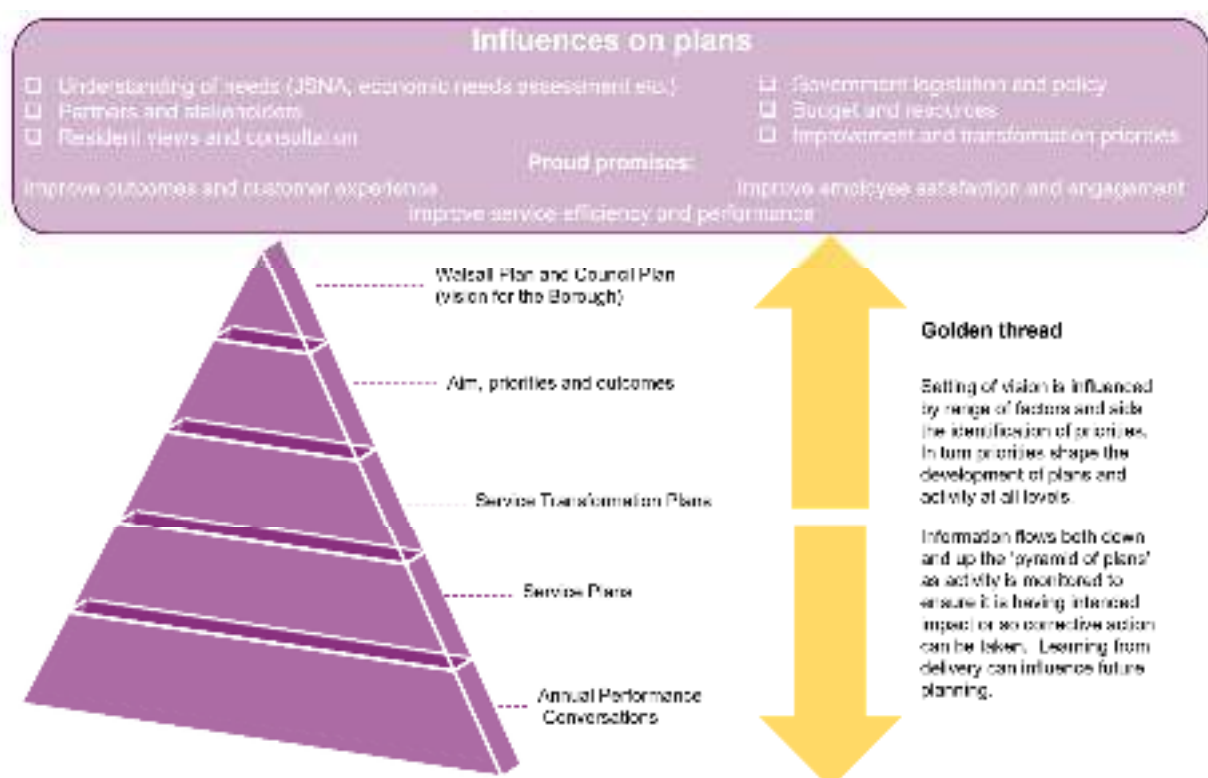

2.3 Planning Cycle

All planning is based on a cycle. Basic cycles are often described as 'plan, do, study (or review) and act'. You **plan** what you need to do, you deliver as planned **(do)** and then you **check** how you delivered and whether it had the intended impact. Once you have

reviewed delivery you **act** based on learning from the review. This could be to continue or increase activity as it is having the desired impact or changing the plan as the impact currently achieved doesn't meet expectations. This is illustrated in the diagram below:

When conducting the check phase is it important to consider all factors that may have influenced the planned delivery in any way. Where areas of concern or underperformance are noted, there is an expectation and requirement that this will be escalated up to, for example, the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Cabinet who will also receive quarterly performance reports on progress against the priorities in the Council Plan. Services are responsible for reporting performance within their directorates, ensuring issues are escalated so that appropriate action can be taken.

The council's 'Ways of Thinking' framework sets out the approach taken to decision making across the council. It centres on being clear about our aims, what we are working towards and what we know. This 'Ways of Thinking' framework can also be applied to performance management arrangements when considering the planning framework.
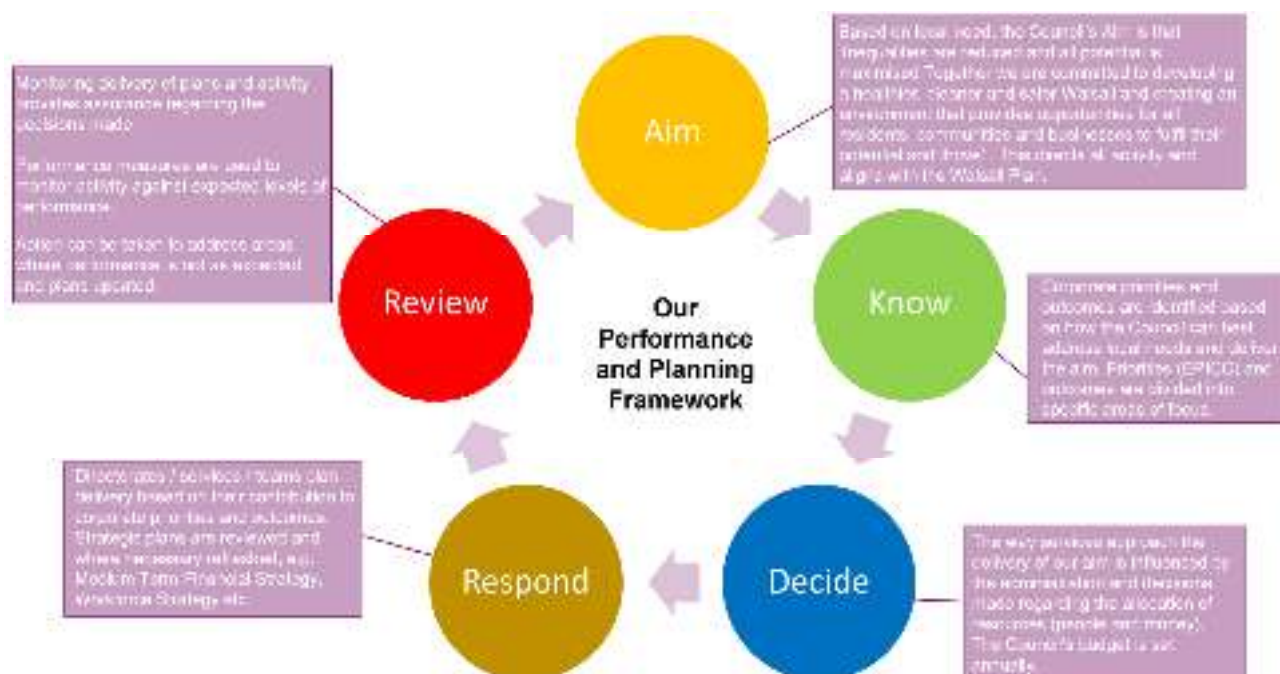
As planning is a continuous process, delivery is monitored, and plans are checked and refreshed. This is holistic from strategic to operational plans with progress being reported on a minimum of a quarterly basis. The quarterly review of performance and

plans informs future iterations of plans at every level from the Council Plan to the objectives in an annual performance conversation (APC) or review. This creates a perpetual calendar as outlined below.   The dates for each activity are indicative and reflect the two-way nature of the 'Golden Thread'. For example, the drafting of a directorate or service plan that goes live from April will inform and be informed by the completion of APC's in March.
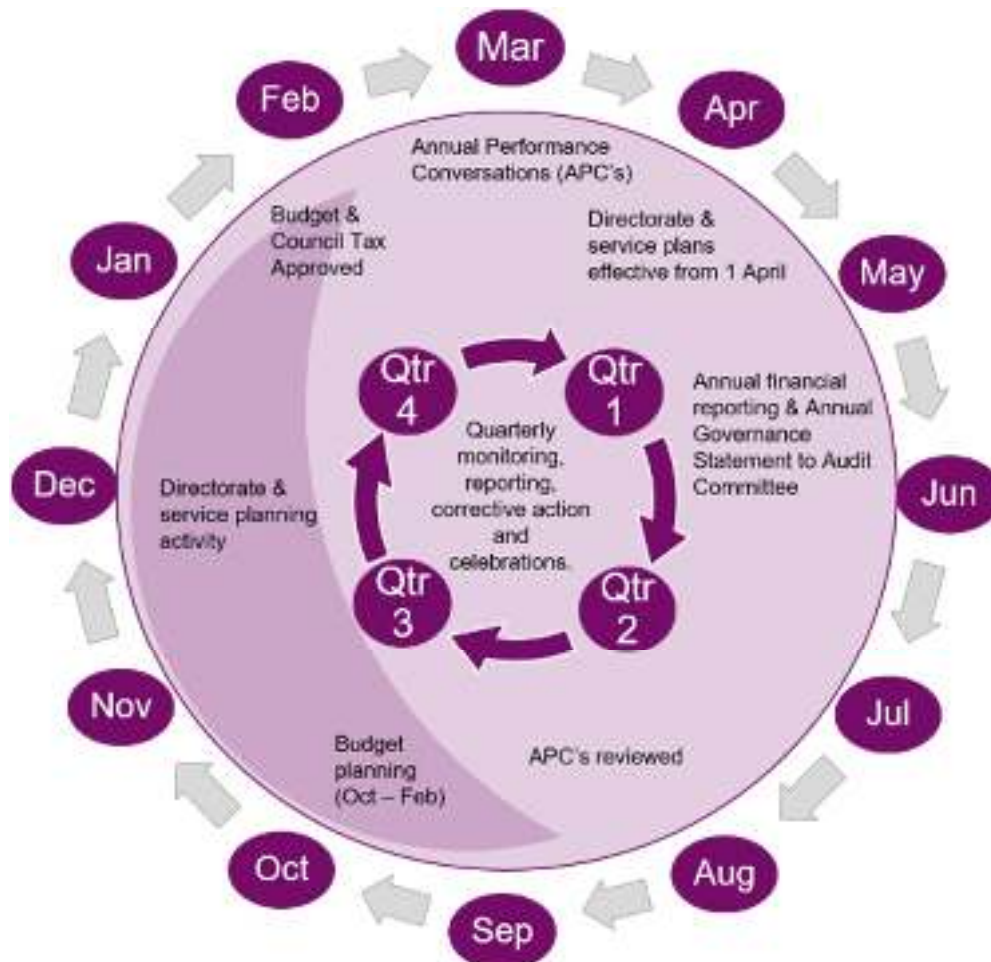

Figure: Planning Calendar

2.4 Planning

Planning at every level in the organisation describes how services and directorates work towards the delivery of the council's aim, priorities, and outcomes. They will also connect to other key strategies such as the Medium Term Financial Framework (MTFF), Workforce Strategy, Customer Experience Strategy and Digital Strategy.

The service transformation planning process enables Directors and senior leaders to routinely monitor the delivery of benefits linked to transformation activity in a holistic way. Our proud promises are key to the delivery of our aim, priorities and outcomes and the service transformation planning process, along with financial management as illustrated below:

As referenced in section 1.2 there is great diversity across the council in the services that are provided and the need to comply with external performance requirements. It is important that the approach to service planning is flexible to enable services to develop plans that align with external performance requirements as well as linking operational activity to the council's aim and priorities. As such there is no set planning template for services to complete. When developing plans, it is important that links and interdependencies with organisational strategies (e.g. Customer Experience Strategy) and activity in other services and directorates are identified and clarified. There some key components all plans will contain:

- Objectives that will link the 'golden thread' from the council's aim, priorities and outcomes to individual employee APC objectives. Objectives should be developed using SMART criteria (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time Based).
- Clarity regarding resources and links to resource strategies and plans (MTFS and workforce strategy).
- Consideration of customer demographics and any specific equalities needs that must be met to ensure accessibility to services for all that need them.
- Measures or indicators that provide opportunity to monitor delivery of our outcomes, our proud promises and that enable services to consider potential future demand to inform future plans.

Planning should not be a laborious process completed annually but rather a continuous 'live' activity that provides clarity regarding objectives and how services and directorates support the organisation's aim and priorities. The regular monitoring of objectives and measures contributes to performance monitoring reports, the annual review and refresh of plans and future resource allocation.

3. Performance Management

3.1. Delivering our aim, priorities and outcomes.

As highlight in section 2.2, performance management is linked to the 'Golden Thread' of delivery. This 'golden thread' connects the overarching Walsall Plan for the borough to the Council Plan and Aim. The connection from our aim through to outcomes is illustrated in the diagram below.
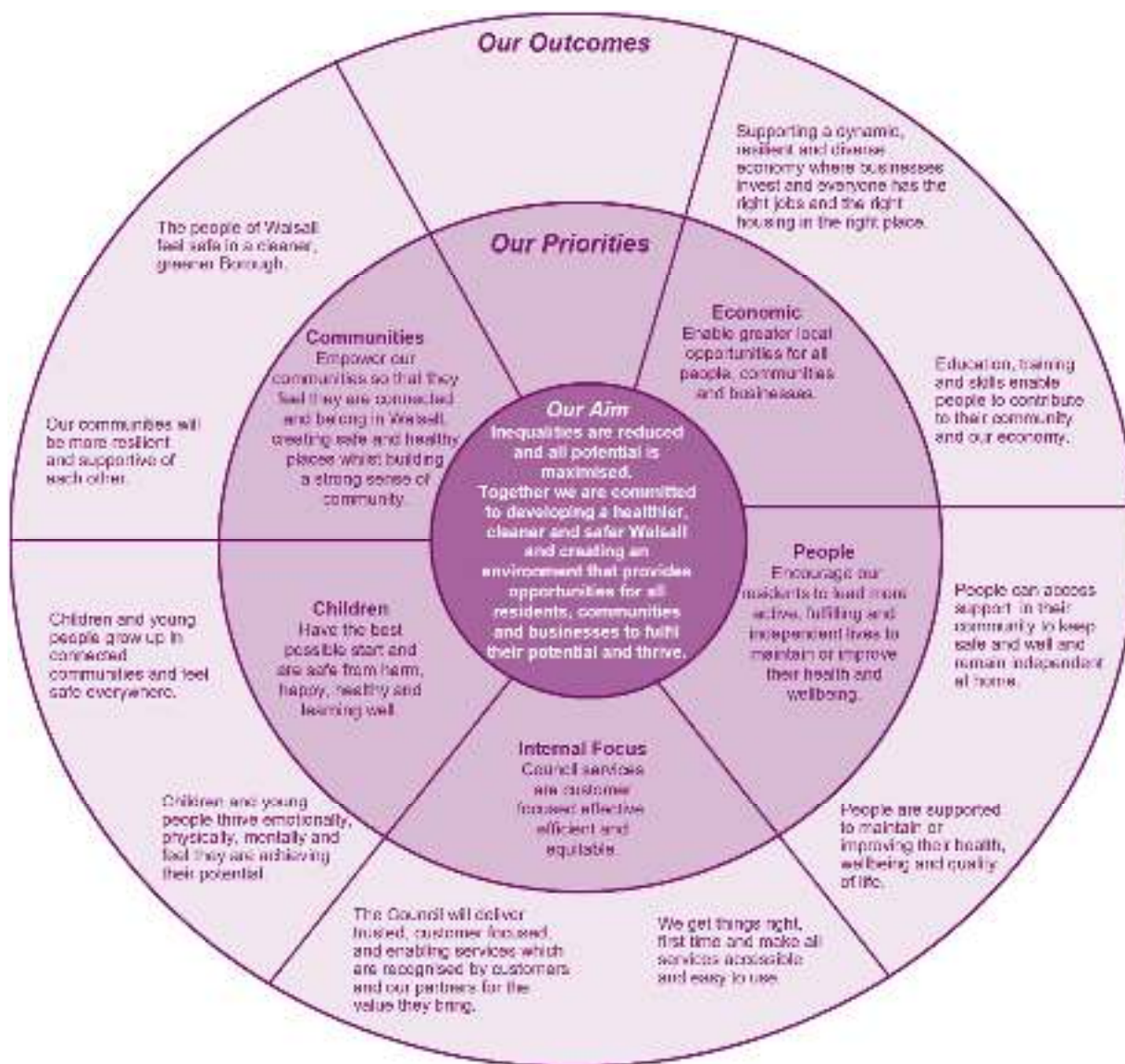
As detailed above, our aim is translated into 5 (EPICC) priorities which is further broken down into 10 outcomes.

These 10 outcomes are further broken down in to 20 'Markers of Success' which are developed based on the specific focus of activity for the year. The 20 markers will be supported by balanced scorecards that will enable the council to assess progress in an open and transparent way, allowing councillors, scrutiny committees and residents to monitor progress.

Outcomes	Markers of Success
1. Supporting a dynamic, resilient and diverse economy where businesses invest and everyone has the right jobs and the right housing in the right place.	1. Better connectivity, improved reliability and well maintained transport networks creating an environment where businesses are supported to thrive and grow.
	2. Regenerating the borough to support places where people are proud to live and work, delivering affordable homes and attracting inward investment.
2. Education, training and skills enable people to contribute to their community and our economy.	3. Provide access to education, apprenticeships and training to improve productivity and skills.
	4. Reducing unemployment through collaborative working with employers and partners.
3. People can access support in their community to keep safe and well and remain independent at home.	5. People are supported to build on their strengths and those in their communities to maintain and/or maximise their independence.
	6. People feel safe in their home and community.
4. People are supported to maintain or improve their health, wellbeing and quality of life.	7. People know how to maintain or improve their health and wellbeing and get timely support for this, where required.
	8. People can access timely social care support and reablement to prevent a hospital admission or facilitate a timely discharge.
5. We get things right, first time and make all services accessible and easy to use.	9. Services will be accessible and easy to use with improved customer satisfaction.
	10. Customers and partners report that they would recommend working with us in the future.
6. The Council will deliver trusted, customer focused, and enabling services, which are recognised by customers and our partners for the value they bring.	11. Services will provide value for money measured through delivery of outcomes within agreed resources.
	12. Services are trusted and customer focused measured through staff satisfaction/ engagement scores.
7. Children and young people thrive emotionally, physically, mentally and feel they are achieving their potential.	13. Children and young people have access to high quality education and training opportunities and schools are more inclusive.
	14. Children and young people with additional needs or in specific circumstances are identified and supported to have their health and education needs met.
8. Children and young people grow up in connected communities and feel safe everywhere.	15. Services and support is responsive to needs of different communities, partners are proactive in responding to these needs and children and families have easier and timelier access to services.
	16. Children and families are better connected with community resources to enable them to build resilience, are involved in developing their plans and can provide regular feedback.
	17. There will be a vibrant and diverse community and voluntary sector providing help and

9. Our communities will be more resilient and supportive of each other.	support where people need it with a range of volunteering opportunities.
	18. Trust will be built within and between communities across the Borough.
10. The people of Walsall feel safe in a cleaner, greener Borough.	19. The Borough's streets are clean, green and welcoming, with more waste recycled and less going to landfill.
	20. People feel safe in their local area and anti-social behaviour and crime – particularly environmental crime is reduced.

3.2 Performance Management Responsibilities

Performance is everyone's responsibility. It is an essential part of all activity from daily operations and strategic planning.

Our Council Values are key to the delivery of our priorities as they underpin the way we operate as an organisation. They influence our choices and behaviour.

Professionalism	We understand the importance of our roles, show respect for all, act appropriately and deal with issues in a moderate and straightforward manner whenever possible.
Leadership	We motivate and inspire people to engage with our aim, recognise and encourage individual talents, providing opportunities to allow those talents to be utilised for the betterment our organisation.
Accountability	We adhere to a standard of professionalism and hold ourselves responsible for upholding the purpose of our organisation.
Transparency	We ensure the availability of information which can be made public.
Ethical	We work with integrity, honesty and are mindful of the rule of law to successfully practice and promote transparency of government.

All employees are responsible for how they operate and perform. They are jointly responsible for the delivery of services, the delivery of outcomes and how well services perform in terms of meeting the needs of our customers, the delivery of our priorities and improvements to services. We know from our employee survey in 2021 that managing performance matters to our staff and, like so many things, there is always opportunity to improve. Just as important as what we do, our priorities and outcomes, is the way we deliver. Whilst our values underpin how we operate, support is available to ensure the delivery of performance management arrangements:

- The Behaviour Framework Guidance has recently been refreshed and there is additional information for Leaders and Managers regarding expected behaviours.
- Annual Performance Conversations provide an opportunity to have brave conversations, employee to manager and manager to employee, to drive performance improvement. Additional information is available from the Learning and Development team.

The following diagram illustrates the relationship between various levels of activity and roles and how the Golden Thread and delivery of corporate priorities and outcomes is embedded at every level.
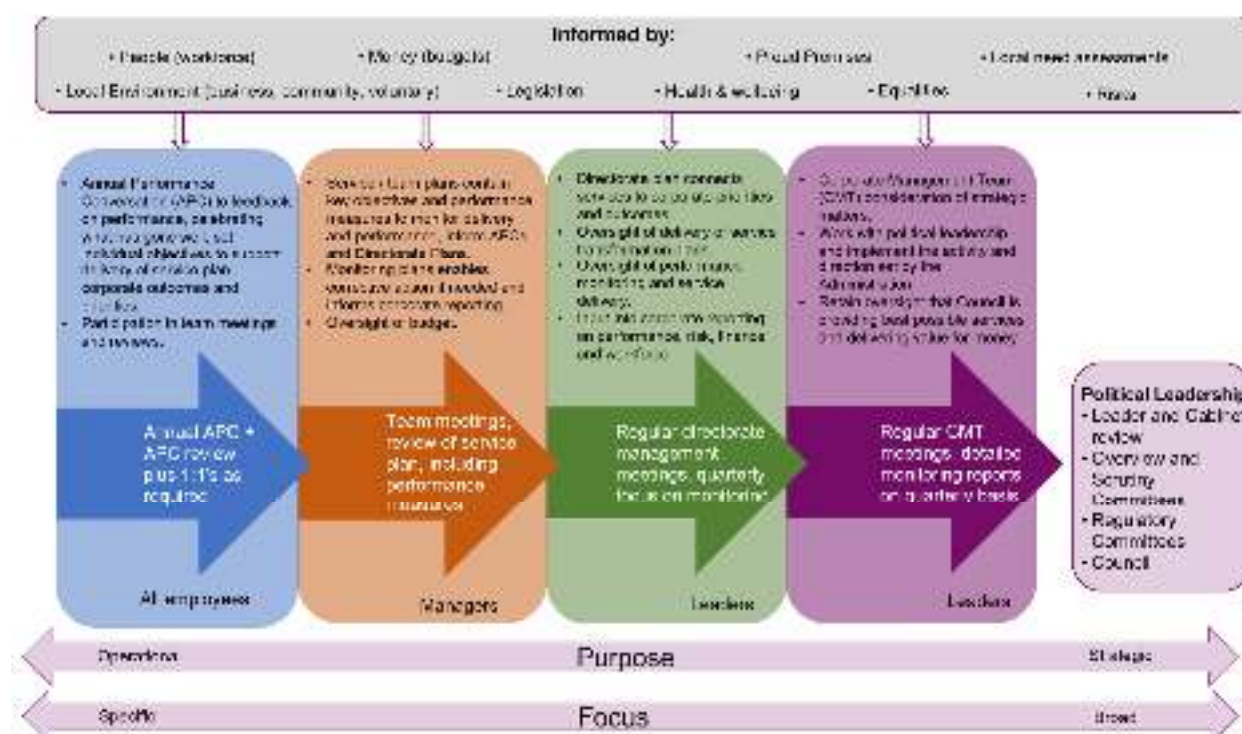
All Employees
- Deliver quality services to ensure customer needs are met, taking into consideration the variety of internal and external customers they have, and the various ways customers may contact and engage their service.
- Recognise and understand how their role and service aligns to the Council Plan, priorities and outcomes, working within the resources available to the service and seeking at all times to remove waste from processes, be customer focussed, efficient and effective.
- Actively participate in the annual performance conversation process and service / team planning and monitoring activity. Utilising this opportunity to review past achievements and performance whilst planning future objectives. The APC process provides the opportunity to identify successes and opportunities for training and development.
- Ensure the data and information captured and used by services is accurate, where necessary cleansed and anonymised appropriately so can be used to inform reporting on performance, inform trend analysis and decision making at every level.
- Abide by the Employee Code of Conduct at all times.

Services and teams
- Use data and intelligence to challenge and improve performance and to identify, manage and mitigate risks. Data and intelligence can also inform needs and demands, informing service improvement and so it is important that the quality of data is sufficient.
- Use planning and key performance indicators, both quantitative and qualitative to provide intelligence that supports informed decision making and forecasting future demand. Where required and necessary, based on the data available, services

> should consider development of measures that include customer experience and satisfaction.
- Ensure delivery of any national frameworks applicable to the service. This includes inspection frameworks, and the reporting of key performance data and surveys.
- Escalate areas of concern and key achievements to directorate level and participate in the review and monitoring of plans to inform future direction.

Directorates
- Maintain oversight of use of resources across all services in the directorate via regular monitoring of financial, workforce and risk management in addition the key performance indicators from services. This includes monitoring delivery of Strategic Transformation Plans.
- Provide a strategic overview (plan on a page) of the key deliverables for services linking these to corporate priorities and outcomes. As a minimum the plan connects corporate priorities, outcomes and markers to directorate deliverables, including activity and performance measures.
- Constructively challenge data quality, hold service and team managers to account for performance and assist in identifying how improvements can be achieved.
- Ensure learning and opportunities are shared across operational and change activity to keep staff informed and also identify good practice that can be shared and implemented in other areas.

Corporate Management Team (CMT)
- Provide visible officer leadership to ensure the council's aim, priorities and outcomes are delivered.
- Ensure excellence in respect of customer service, people management, corporate governance, performance management, financial management and control, risk management and change management.
- Monitor delivery of transformation activity, Proud promises and set the strategic direction.
- Receive quarterly reports to monitor the delivery of corporate priorities and outcomes, support Cabinet with any realignment of resources based on the delivery of outcomes.

Political Leadership
- **Full Council** is ultimately accountable to the public for how the council performs, sets the policy framework and overall budget envelope for the delivery of priorities and outcomes as agreed by the council and expressed in the Council Plan.
- **Cabinet** are the administration and lead the setting of policy and priorities in relation to service delivery, agreeing performance objectives for the services within their portfolios. They work closely with CMT and Executive Directors to monitor service performance and to review intelligence that informs decision making. They know and are accountable for what services are doing to maximise, improve or turn around poor performance. They receive quarterly reports on the delivery of Council Plan priorities and outcomes.
- **Audit Committee** is a regulatory committee and has delegated powers to ensure an effective internal control environment is maintained as this is key to the council's governance arrangements. This includes delegated powers to consider the effectiveness of performance management arrangements and how they are embedded.

- **Overview and Scrutiny Committees** are responsible for holding Cabinet to account for the delivery of corporate priorities and outcomes as expressed in the Council Plan. As such they may request and review performance data and make recommendations to Cabinet.
- **Ward Councillors** as community leaders and representatives of specific areas and communities understand the needs of those they represent and champion the concerns and priorities of residents, communities and businesses. Understanding of local need, in partnership with detailed needs analysis from the Business Insight Hub, influences and informs corporate decision making.

All employees have a responsibility to be aware of and deliver the requirements of this framework to support the council's governance arrangements. Regular monitoring that informs action is a key part of the framework and responsibilities across all levels of the organisation.

3.3 Quality Matters

As highlighted in the roles and responsibilities section quality is a key factor in terms of performance management. Quality matters in a number of ways:

- The quality and accuracy of data and information captured and used to monitor performance and service delivery informs decision making. This can be anything from the time taken to complete a task to the customer satisfaction at the end of the engagement. Data and information that is of poor quality or inaccurately recorded may lead to poor prioritisation and resource allocation. Services must take sufficient action to improve data quality where possible and ensure it is maintained at the highest level possible.

- Having good quality data and information, both quantitative and qualitative is vital to the management of performance and to enable the council to monitor delivery, celebrate successes and take corrective action when needed. Good quality data and information informs the 'know' for our way of thinking which in turn ensures decision making is intelligence led and based on accurate information so that the council responds in the appropriate way.

- Under Data Protection Regulations and law every employee has a duty and responsibility for ensuring information that is collected, stored, processed and or shared is accurate, up to date, captured in a timely manner and shared on a need to know basis. Every employee that has responsibility for recording data in a council system has a responsibility for the quality of that data.

- Understanding local needs is based on the interpretation of a number of data sets about Walsall and its communities. This includes, for example, demographic, economic and health profile data. How these data sets are analysed and collated is vital intelligence regarding local needs which informs decision making. The accuracy of analysis and data is key due to the influence it has on decision making.

- Increasingly, qualitative information is crucial to the development of services. It is as important to understand what customer's value, want and see as priorities. As previously identified, the council operates to serve Walsall residents. Capturing

and utilising quality customer data and consulting customers regarding services provides vital data and information to inform decision making at every level.

All activity should connect to the delivery of the aim, priorities, outcomes and the Proud promise. Knowing how an activity or service is contributing to these strategic aims is key to ensuring resources are not wasted and that the council is focussing on what matters most. It is important that where possible council services efficiently capture and analyse information that can be used to evidence that services are having the impact intended in terms of delivering outcomes and to inform future priorities.