Performance Management Framework
2021/2022

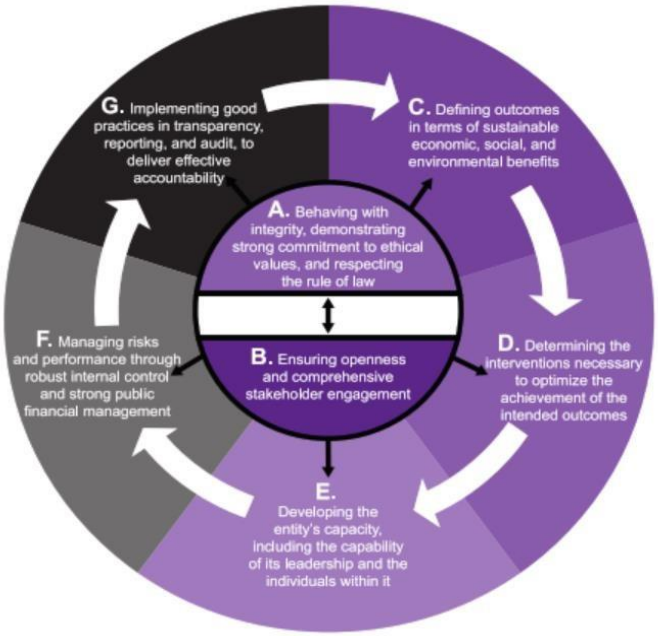
Review Date: January 2022

1. Introduction

The council operates to serve the people of Walsall, against the context of the council's Aim that "Inequalities are reduced and all potential maximised".

Governance supports the council in delivering 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 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).

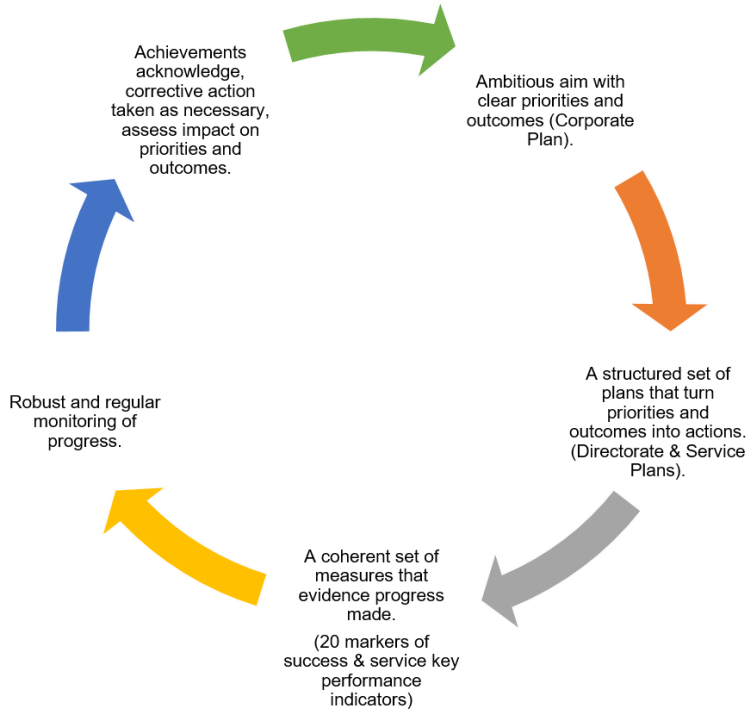
The council's Performance Management Framework (PMF) is an essential element of the council's governance, control and assurance mechanisms to deliver services efficiently and effectively, ensuring the council meets its statutory and legislative responsibilities.

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.

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 is 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.

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 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);
- Clearly defines responsibilities of all engaged in the delivery of council services and change and improvement activity;
- Help to identify and manage risks for the council.

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 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;
- Reporting on statutory performance measures aligned to national outcomes frameworks;
- Inspections of services and settings by external bodies, for example Ofsted and 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 the 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.

The council's ambitious transformation programme, the Walsall Proud Programme (WPP), focuses on enabling the council to maximise the use of technology to modernise and streamline services and the delivery of the Proud Promise to:

- Improve outcomes and customer experience;
- Improve employee satisfaction and engagement;
- Improve service efficiency and performance.

WPP activity is routed in the delivery of our Corporate Plan, priorities and outcomes. As the programme delivers and new ways of working are implemented the measures and data services use to manage performance may change. For example improvements to the way technology is used may create new data sources that can be captured to evidence the delivery of corporate outcomes and priorities. As changes are embedded the impact on existing performance management arrangements should be reviewed and

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.

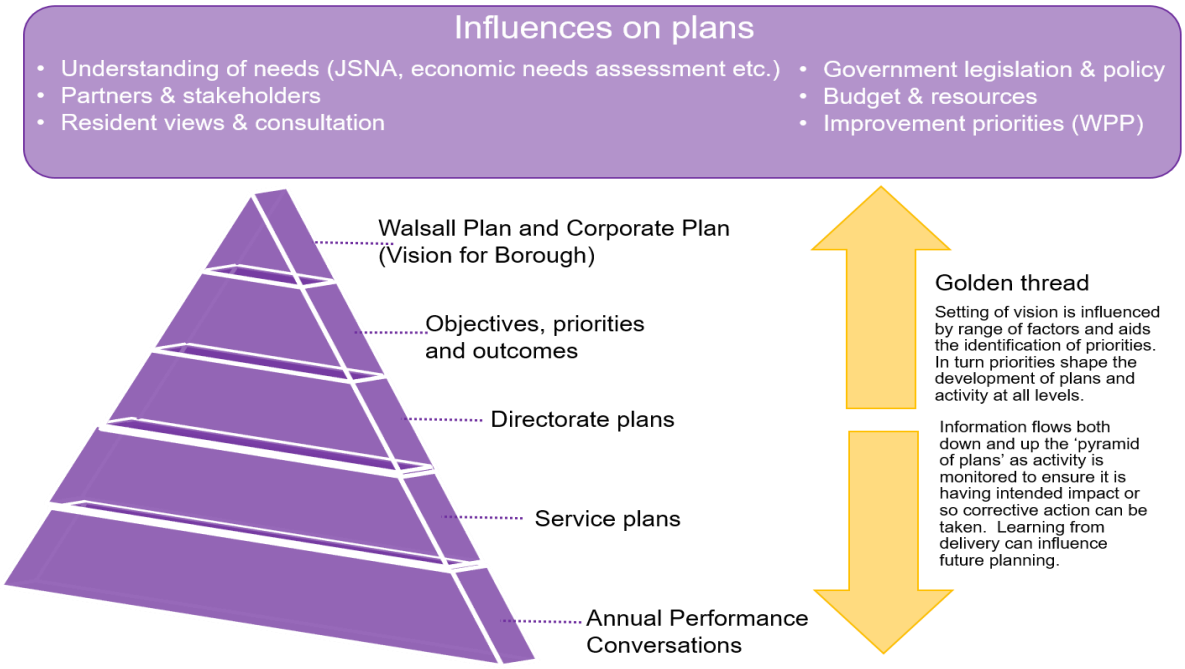
Embedding effective performance management:

- Ensures goals are prioritised and resources are allocated effectively;
- Helps improve services and outcomes for local people;
- Provides 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;
- Ensures significant risks to the delivery of priorities are identified and managed;
- Assures officer and political leaders that service delivery is at expected levels and there are mechanisms to take corrective action where performance is poor;
- Ensures the council and partners achieve what they set out to do and that we focus on what matters most;
- 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.

2.2 Planning Framework

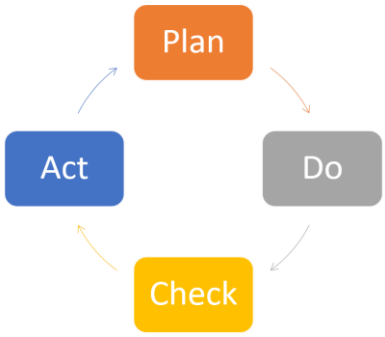
Effective performance management is delivered via a planning framework. Planning occurs at various levels as more operational (service) plans detail the actual activity and delivery that will take place. This provides an important link between the strategic corporate plan and directorate/service/team 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 in to 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

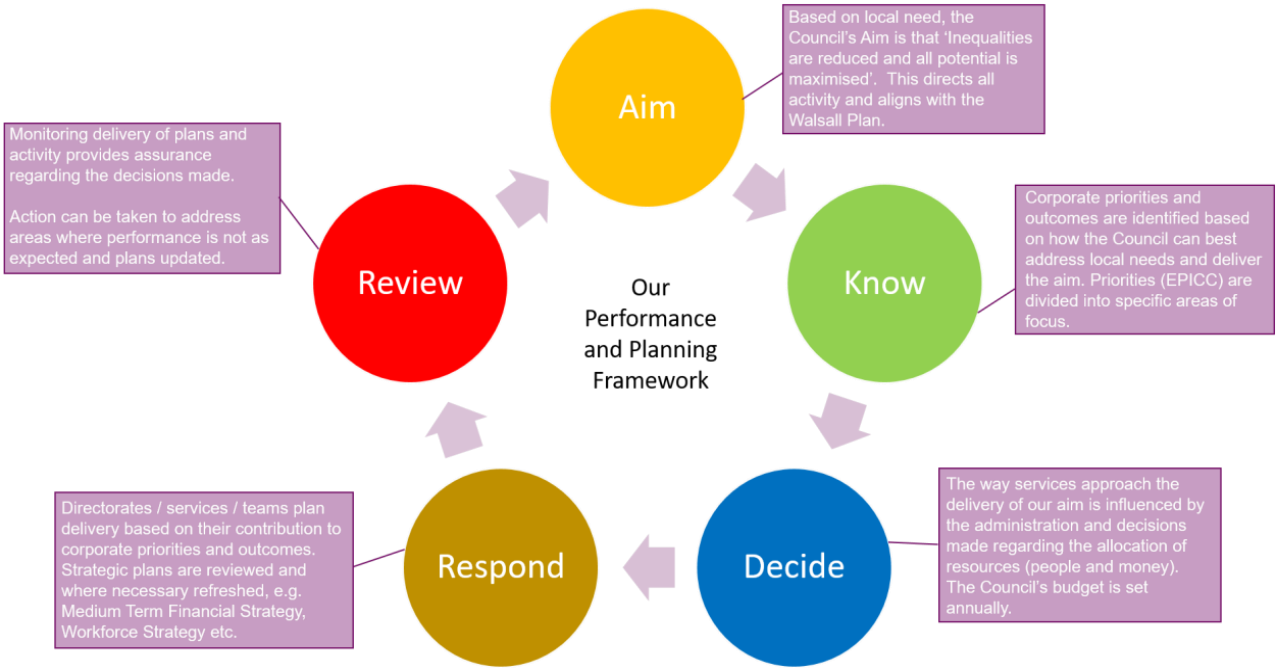
All planning is based on a cycle. Basic cycles are often described as 'plan, do, study (or review) and act'. You **plan** what you need to do, you deliver as planned **(do)** and then you **check** how you delivered and whether it had the intended impact. Once you have reviewed delivery you **act** based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

performance reports on progress against the priorities in the Corporate Plan. Services are responsible for reporting performance within their directorates, ensuring issues are escalated so that appropriate action can be taken.

Learning from Walsall Proud Programme (WPP) activity the council has developed a 'Way of Thinking' model as the approach to decision making. The Ways of Thinking model 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 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 Corporate 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.

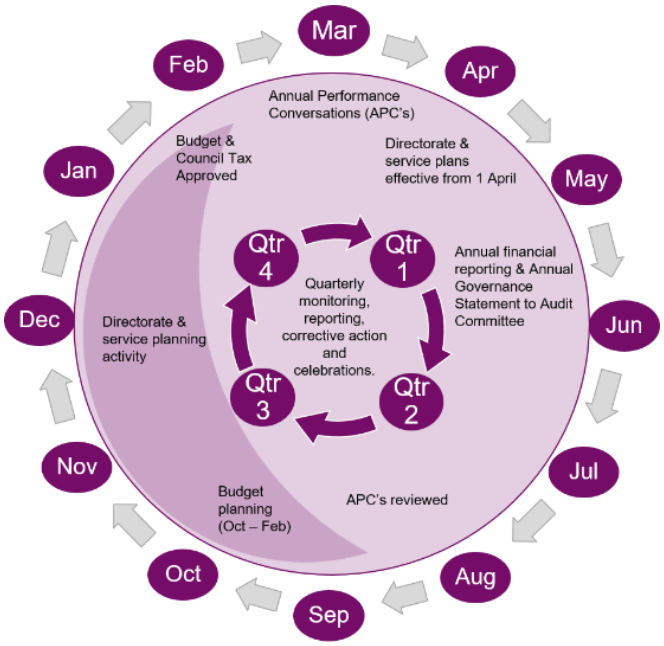
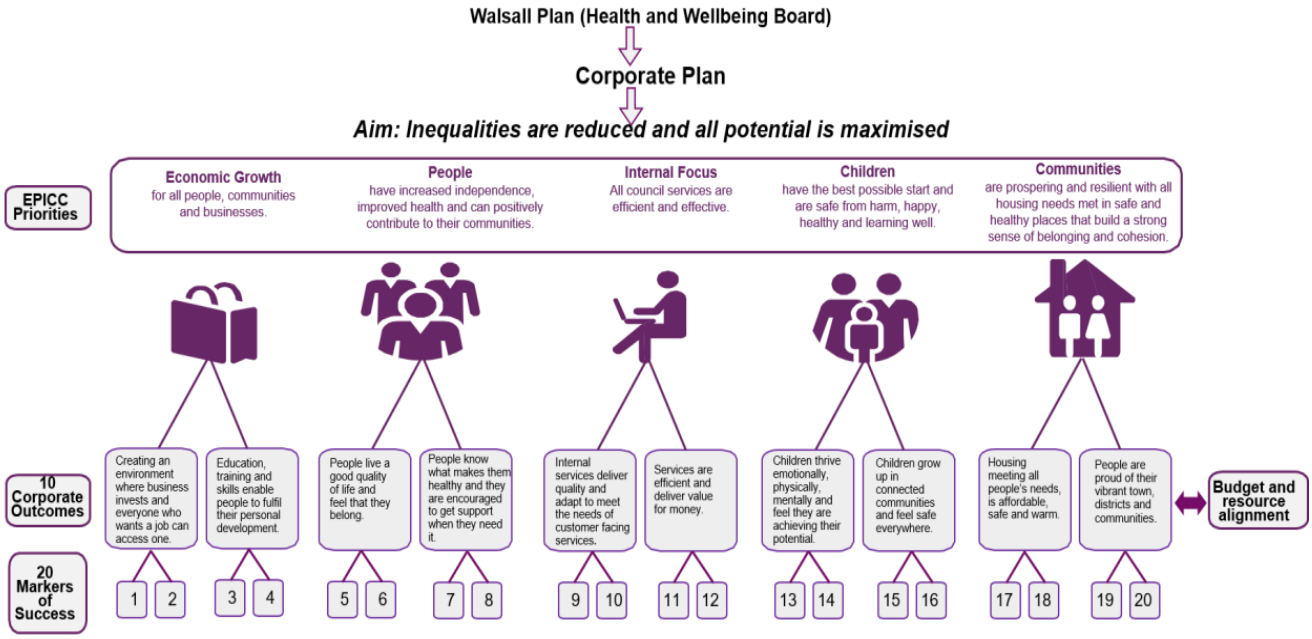


Figure: Planning Calendar

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. For Walsall this is illustrated in the diagram below.



The 20 'Markers of Success' are developed based on the specific focus of activity for the year. This is influenced by knowledge of local need, experience of service delivery to date and what has worked and what hasn't and, ultimately, by Cabinet in the allocation of budgets

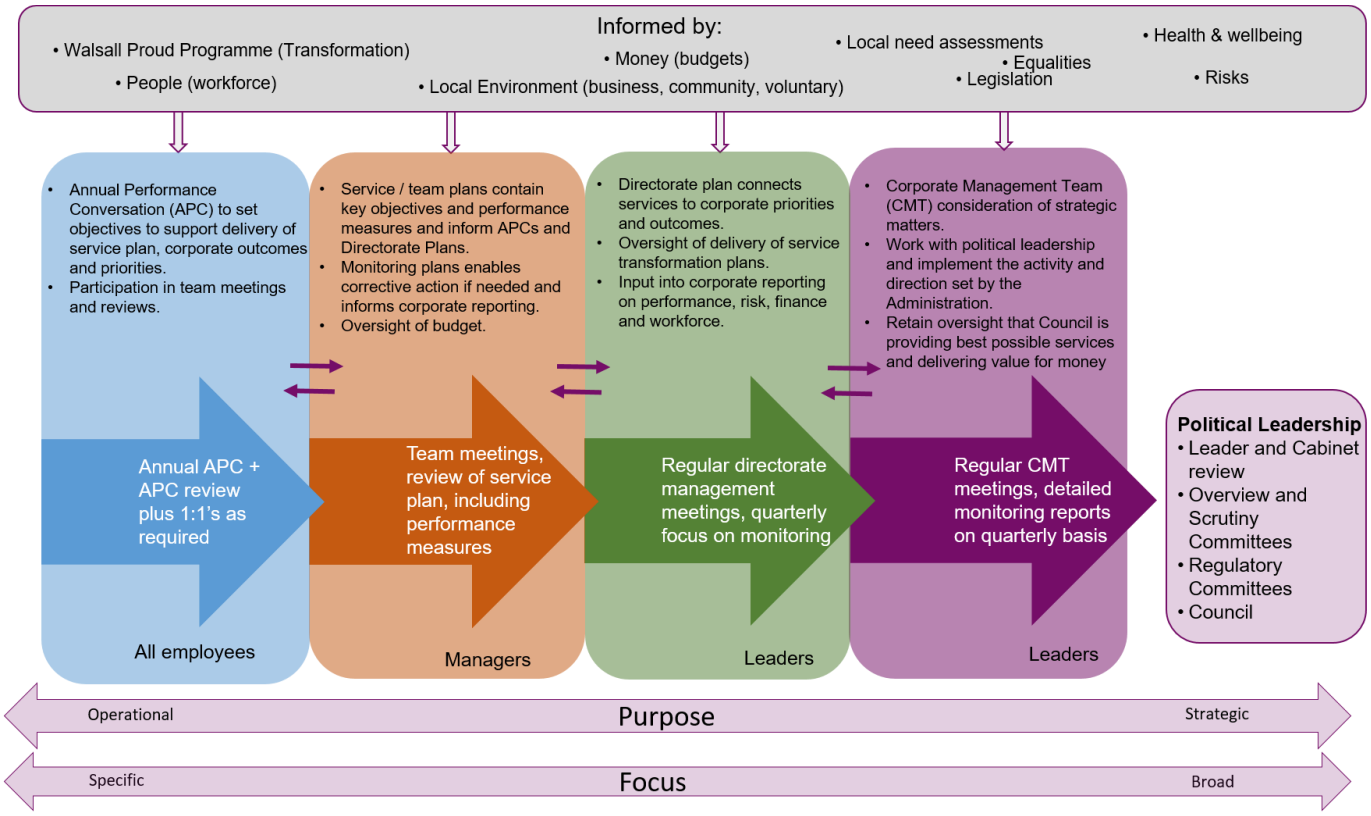
and direction set. The Markers for 2021/22 are detailed in the table overleaf and will form the basis of quarterly reporting to Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Cabinet.

PRIORITIES	OUTCOMES	MARKERS OF SUCCESS
Overall Aim: Inequalities are reduced and all potential is maximised		
ECONOMIC Growth for all people, communities and business	1. Creating an environment where businesses invest and everyone who wants a job can access one	1. Businesses accessible to staff, suppliers and customers. Transport networks free from defects and congestion.
		2. A combination of low unemployment figures and high vacancy figures
	2. Education, training and skills enable people to fulfil their personal development	3. Partnership working with businesses to offer apprenticeships, graduate programmes and training programmes for those wishing to re-enter the workforce
		4. Increase in local supported employment and educational opportunities for residents who have additional needs. Numbers of folk from hard to reach groups helped into training
PEOPLE have increased independences, improved health and can positively contribute to their communities	3. People live a good quality of life and feel that they belong	5. Increase in people accessing reablement opportunities. Less number of vulnerable residents who are in statutory services or having out of area placements
		6. Increase numbers of residents not requiring ongoing services and living independently in the community. Information and advice is accessible and signposting at the front door of community services
	4. People know what makes them healthy and they are encouraged to get support when they need it	7. Reduced numbers of residents having formal ASC assessments who are empowered to take control and informed choices with the correct information
		8. More people using active travel modes. Safe and convenient cycleways and footways
INTERNAL Focus – All Council services are efficient and effective	5. Internal services deliver quality and adapt to meet the needs of customer facing services	9. Smarter commissioning of service resulting in required outputs being delivered to realise quality outcomes
		10. Internal Services are regularly reviewed and delivered within budget.
	6. Services are efficient and deliver value for money	11. Internal Services have staff and processes able to adapt to meet the emerging needs of customers
		12. Online portals that allow self-service, payments and order tracking are in place for ease of use for all.
CHILDREN have the best possible start, are safe from harm, happy, healthy and learning well	7. Children thrive emotionally, physically, mentally and feel they are achieving their potential	13. Children have access to high quality education and training opportunities and schools are more inclusive. Children and young people engage with education, fewer children are excluded and educational outcomes improve.
		14. Children with special educational needs and disabilities are identified and supported effectively. Children in care and care leavers are supported physically and emotionally through access to health checks and health histories and are able to achieve their potential through high quality education, employment and training opportunities.
	8. Children grow up in connected communities and feel safe everywhere	15. Children, young people and families are involved in service design and development and the needs of children and families are well understood in each locality. 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. More children and young people are supported in their family home, the response in meeting the needs of vulnerable adolescents is local and proactive with risks around exploitation reduced and fewer young people enter the Criminal Justice system.
COMMUNITIES are prospering and resilient with all housing needs met in safe and healthy places that build a strong sense of belonging and cohesion	9. Housing meeting all people's needs - is affordable, safe and warm	17. Less residents in statutory building based services
		18. Increase in residents who are accessing community voluntary sector opportunities
	10. People are proud of their vibrant town, districts and communities – Paul Gordon	19. Council and partners maintain open communication with all communities and engage in cultural awareness resulting in wide range and high quality cultural offers
		20. High quality, well maintained public realm and safe community spaces

3.2 Performance Management Responsibilities

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

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. The following diagram illustrates the relationship between various levels of activity and role 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 Corporate Plan, priorities and outcomes, working within the resources available to the service and seeking at all times to remove waste from processes;
- Actively participate in the Annual Performance Conversation process and service / team planning and monitoring activity;
- 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;
- Use planning and key performance indicators, both quantitative and qualitative to provide intelligence that supports informed decision making. 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, reporting of key performance data and surveys;
- Escalate areas of concerns 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;
- Hold service and team managers to account for performance and assist in identifying how improvements can be achieved;
- Ensures 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 deliver of Walsall Proud Programme 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 Corporate 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 in order to maximise, improve or turn

around poor performance. They receive quarterly reports on the delivery of Corporate 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 Corporate 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. Understand of local need, in partnership with detailed needs analysis from the Business Intelligence 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 actions is a key part of the framework and responsibilities across all levels of the organisation

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. Managers should also utilise the Annual Performance Conversations to have brave conversations with staff and utilise these to drive performance improvement. Additional information is available from the Learning and Development team.

- The Corporate Assurance team currently produce corporate monitoring reports, can assist with inspection preparation, provides co-ordinated horizon scanning for the organisation and supports the development of individual performance management arrangements, data collection and interpretation by working closely with director data and performance teams. This activity will move to the Hub and specifically the Policy and Strategy and Business Intelligence Units as implementation of this WPP work stream progresses. The quarterly monitoring reports are an essential part of our performance management arrangements to provide assurance that the components of the framework are embedded and that activity is positively impacting on the delivery of outcomes.

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 also to inform future priorities.