

REPORT TITLE: Development of the Quarterly Performance Report to Cabinet

To:

Civic Affairs and Audit Committee

17 November 2025

Report by:

Jane Wilson, Chief Operating Officer

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Wards affected:

All

Director Approval: Jane Wilson confirms that the report author has sought the advice of all appropriate colleagues and given due regard to that advice; that the equalities impacts and other implications of the recommended decisions have been assessed and accurately presented in the report; and that they are content for the report to be put to the Committee.

1.	Recommendations
1.1	<p>It is recommended that the Civic Affairs and Audit Committee</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Note the development of the new quarterly performance report for Cabinet and its role in supporting the Council in delivering on its Local Code of Governance Note the updated financial thresholds in the Risk Management Framework
2.	Purpose and reason for the report
2.1	<p>This report is to bring this Committee's attention to the development of a quarterly performance report for Cabinet.</p> <p>The Civic Affairs and Audit Committee's terms of reference include oversight of the Council's corporate governance arrangements. The development of the new Performance Management Framework – including its Principles and Approach and the Quarterly Performance Report – represents a key enhancement to those arrangements. Noting this development will support the Committee in fulfilling its governance role. Furthermore, these changes will be reflected in the Annual Governance Statement, which the Committee will consider later in the year.</p>

	<p>The quarterly performance report will form an important ongoing plank in our delivery of the Local Code of Governance and delivers on the Performance Management Framework Principles and Approach approved by the Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources following scrutiny at the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee March 2025. The Framework includes a Governance section and references the governance arrangements, including the importance of Civic Affairs and Audit Committee.</p> <p>The committee is also asked to note updated financial thresholds in the Risk Management Framework, the need for which was identified during the detailed development work for the quarterly report. This helps provide the Committee with assurance that the risk management framework is regularly reviewed for effectiveness.</p>
3.	Alternative options considered
3.1	As this item is to note, no alternative options were considered.
4.	Background and key issues
4.1	<p>Background</p> <p>The Quarterly Performance Report for Cabinet is one element in delivering the Council's Performance Management Framework Principles and Approach agreed March 2025. The primary objective of the Framework is to enable the Council to be an effective, efficient and high-performing organisation, successfully meeting its agreed objectives at every level, and enabling effective scrutiny, both internally and publicly, of our performance against those objectives.</p> <p>The development of a Quarterly Performance Report for Cabinet responds both to the Performance Management Framework and the new Cabinet Governance model adopted from May 2025.</p> <p>Rationale for the Quarterly Performance Report</p> <p>The primary purpose of the report is to provide effective strategic oversight, enabling considered decision-making, effective scrutiny, and public visibility.</p>

It will achieve this through a consistent, quarterly, high-level factual snapshot of the overall health of the Council, presented in clear, lay terms. It will complement the more reflective and in-depth Annual Report.

It will bring together performance measures, finance, and risk information into one place. These three sources of information taken together provide a rounded picture of the health of the Council.

Format

The report will focus on the whole Council level, split into two parts:

- The Council's general activities and responsibilities
- The Council as a residential Social Landlord

This separation reflects the financial separation between our General Fund, through which all income and expenditure relating the Council's general activities and responsibilities, and the Housing Revenue Account which is ring-fenced for all income and expenditure relating to the Council as a residential social landlord.

For each part, there will be a high-level narrative overview, making the link between performance, finance and risk, and an appendix with supporting detail. This will incorporate previously separate quarterly reports covering finance, our social landlord function and the quarterly update on the Housing Development Agency. Their integration into the single quarterly report ensures that it provides an effective overview of the Council as a whole.

Style

The intention is for the report to be straightforward and easy to understand using minimal jargon or specialist language, and where specialist terms are unavoidable, they will be explained. The narrative and language used will be objective and evidence based.

Schedule

The Quarterly Performance Report will first go to the Cabinet in December 2025, covering the second quarter of 25/26, and will thereafter go on a quarterly basis, with the expected annual pattern being Q1: September Cabinet, Q2: December Cabinet, Q3: March Cabinet, Q4: June Cabinet.

	<p>Review</p> <p>There will be a review in Summer 2026, so that any revisions can be incorporated from Q1 of the 26/27 reporting cycle. This timescale reflects that this is a new approach as well as a new report for the Council, with an early review and revision part of the process of ensuring it can deliver on its purpose. The Performance Management Framework as a whole will be subject to periodic review by Internal Audit as part of the risk-based audit plan, with outcomes reported to the Civic Affairs and Audit Committee, providing additional assurance on its effectiveness and alignment with the Council's governance arrangements.</p> <p>Link to Local Code of Corporate Governance</p> <p>The Quarterly Performance Report to Cabinet will be an additional route by which the Council adheres to the Local Code of Corporate Governance. Most notably it practically demonstrates the management of risk and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management, and contributes to good practices in transparency, reporting and audit, to deliver effective accountability.</p> <p>Risk Management Strategy update</p> <p>We are integrating our risk management data into the broader Performance Management Framework to strengthen alignment between risk and performance oversight. Our Risk Management Framework includes a scoring matrix that supports consistent risk evaluation and helps prioritise mitigation efforts. This Risk Management Framework was last presented to the Committee in February 2024.</p> <p>As part of good governance, it is important to periodically review the scoring matrix to ensure it remains relevant and proportionate. The existing finance scoring levels have remained unchanged since at least the Committee's 2021 review. In collaboration with the Section 151 Officer, we have developed updated financial scoring factors to reflect current conditions. These are listed in Appendix A below for clarity.</p>
5.	Corporate plan
5.1	<p><i>Explain how the decision links to the Councils Corporate Plan</i></p> <p>Corporate plan 2022-27: our priorities for Cambridge - Cambridge City Council</p>

	The primary link is to objective 4, Modernising the Council to lead a greener city that is fair for all.
6.	Consultation, engagement and communication
6.1	The Performance Management principles and approach were approved by the Exec Cllr for Finance and Resources following a presentation at the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee in March 2025. Members of Cabinet, the two scrutiny committees and the chair and vice chair of this committee were invited to take part in workshops on the format of the report in October 2025. Extensive internal staff engagement has taken place, to inform both the data and the format.
7.	Anticipated outcomes, benefits or impact
7.1	As set out above, the report will provide a quarterly snapshot of the health of the Council, to support effective decision making and scrutiny.
8.	Implications
8.1	Relevant risks
	This report is to note and provide visibility on the new Quarterly Performance Report to Cabinet, there are no associated risks with doing so.
	Financial Implications
8.2	This report is to note and provide visibility on the new report, there are no associated financial implications
	Legal Implications
8.3	This report is to note and provide visibility on the new report, there are no associated legal implications
	Equalities and socio-economic Implications
8.4	There are no equalities or socio-economic implications in noting this report.
	Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental implications
8.5	There are no net zero carbon, climate change or environmental implications in noting this report.
	Procurement Implications
8.6	There are no procurement implications in noting this report.

	Community Safety Implications
8.7	There are no community safety implications in noting this report.
9.	Background documents Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
9.1	<i>n/a</i>
10.	Appendices
10.1	<i>Appendix A – Revised Financial Risk Scores</i>
	To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Jane Wilson, Chief Operating Officer tel: 01223 458760 email: jane.wilson@cambridge.gov.uk

Appendix A Risk Score changes

		1	2	3	4	5
Financial 2021	Failure to effectively manage the Council's assets and finances including budget monitoring, financial priorities, medium/long term planning, fraud prevention.	The level of financial impact is likely to be under £5,000 in any year.	The level of financial impact is likely to be up to £50,000 in any year.	The level of financial impact is likely to be up to £300,000.	The level of financial impact is likely to be up to £500,000 in any year.	The level of financial impact is likely to be over £500,000 in any year.
Financial September 2025	Failure to effectively manage the Council's assets and finances including budget monitoring, financial priorities, medium/long term planning, fraud prevention.	The total level of financial impact is likely to be less than £50,000.	The total level of financial impact is likely to be between £50,000 and £150,000.	The total level of financial impact is likely to be between £150,000 and £500,000.	The total level of financial impact is likely to be between £500,000 and £3 million.	The total level of financial impact is likely to be over £3 million.