



---

**ST HELENS**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Performance Report**  
**Quarter 1 2021/22**

**(Priority 1 focus for**  
**Children and Young People Services**  
**Scrutiny Committee)**

## Contents

1. Borough Strategy Priorities.....	3
2. Purpose of the Report .....	3
3. Executive Summary.....	4
4. Part 1 - Statistical analysis .....	5
4.1 Performance Against Target.....	6
4.2 The Performance Trend.....	6
4.3 Inter Authority Comparison .....	7
4.4 Summary and conclusion of statistical analysis.....	8
5. Part 2 - Commentary on performance against priority and outcome.....	9
Priority 1 - Ensure children and young people have a positive start in life.....	9

## 1. Borough Strategy Priorities

In 2021/22, Performance Management in St Helens Borough Council is focused around achieving the 6 strategic priorities outlined in Our Borough Strategy 2021/30.

**Priority 1 - Ensure children and young people have a positive start in life**



**Priority 2 - Promote good health, independence, and care across our communities**



**Priority 3 - Create safe and strong communities and neighbourhoods for all**



**Priority 4 - Support a strong, thriving, inclusive, and well-connected local economy**



**Priority 5 - Create green and vibrant places that reflect our heritage and culture**



**Priority 6 - Be a responsible council**



## 2. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of the report is to inform and update Elected Members on performance against the 6 priorities of Our Borough Strategy 2021/30 and respective outcomes as set out above. The report covers the period Quarter 1 2021/22 providing the performance position reported over the course of the period. The reporting format splits the report into 2 distinct parts:

**Part 1** of the report is a statistical analysis of the performance position at Quarter 1 2021/22.

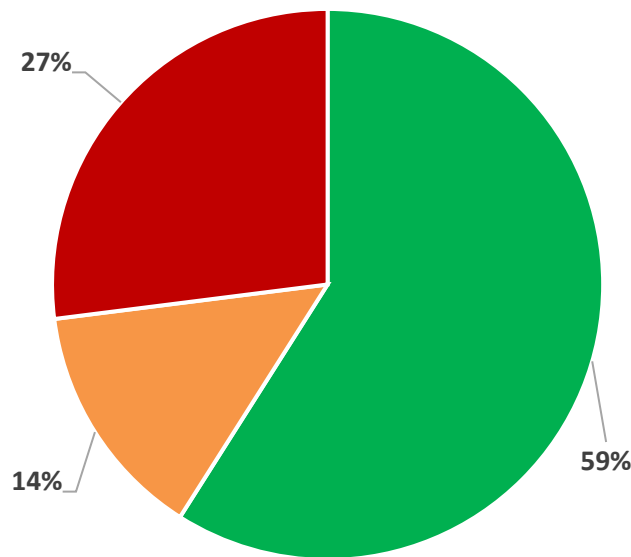
**Part 2** of the report is a commentary on performance against delivery of the 6 strategic priorities and their respective outcomes summarising current performance within the quarter and action being taken to improve performance where required.

### 3. Executive Summary

The charts below provide an overview position of all performance measures across all 6 Borough Strategy priorities as at Quarter 1 2021/22, examining:

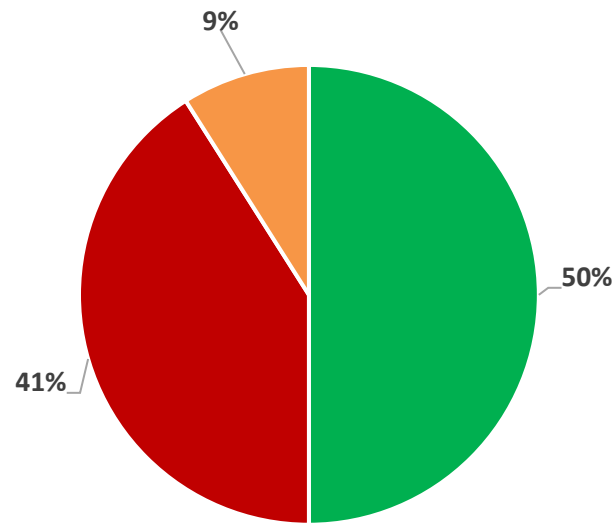
- Performance against target.
- Trend - whether performance has improved / worsened since the position 12 months ago.
- Inter Authority performance - how St Helens' performance compares to that of a family group of authorities similar to St Helens.

Performance against target (%)



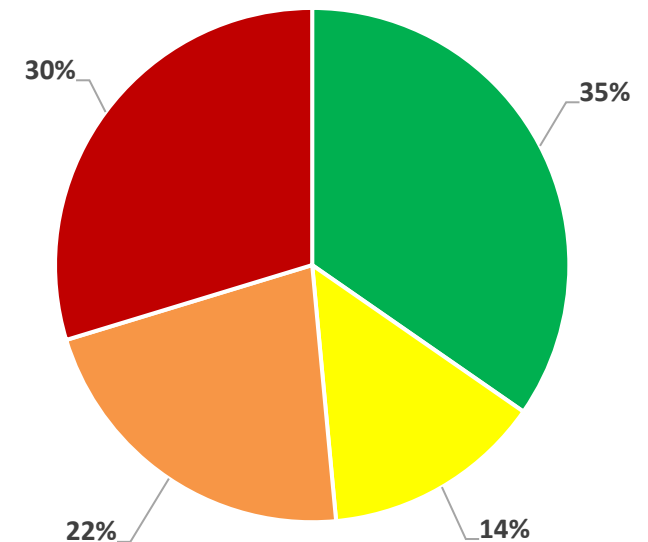
- % target met fully
- % met within 95% of target
- % not met target

Performance trend (where trend can be determined) (%)



- % improved on last year
- % worse than last year
- % the same as last year

Inter Authority performance (where comparative data is available) (%)



- 1st Quartile (Top 25%)
- 2nd Quartile
- 3rd Quartile
- 4th Quartile (Bottom 25%)

## 4. Part 1 - Statistical analysis

To measure performance in Quarter 1 2021/22, the Council is reporting against 75 performance indicators. Additional indicators linked to the outcomes of the 6 strategic priorities will be reported over the course of the year as and when data is available as not all data is available every quarter. The indicators reported are split between Tier 1 and Tier 2:

**Tier 1** – A set of high-level strategic indicators and targets that constitute the Outcomes Framework of the Borough Strategy 2021-2030.

**Tier 2** – A further set of performance indicators and targets to address key priority areas of performance within Directorates / Departments.

In the supporting scorecards for each priority area, this distinction is maintained and both tiers are shown as they are all relevant to an understanding of overall performance.

The Quarter 1 report statistical analysis looks at performance under 3 areas:

1. Performance against targets
2. Trend
3. Inter-authority comparison

## 4.1 Performance Against Target

This measure sets out:

- The percentage of indicators by priority where targets have been fully met or exceeded.
- The percentage of indicators by priority that have not fully met target but are within 95% of target.
- The percentage of indicators by priority that have failed to meet the target by more than 5%.

In the supporting scorecards for each priority area, green, amber, and red colours are used to depict indicators in each of the above three bullet point situations.

Priority	Number of Indicators with data	% target fully met	% target met within 95%	% target not met
1. Ensure children and young people have a positive start	25	48% (12)	20% (5)	32% (8)
2. Health, independence, and care	20	65% (13)	25% (5)	10% (2)
3. Safe and strong communities and neighbourhoods	13	77% (10)	8% (1)	15% (2)
4. Strong, thriving, inclusive and well-connected economy	5	80% (4)	% (0)	20% (1)
5. Green and vibrant places reflecting our heritage and culture	7	43% (3)	0% (0)	57% (4)
6. Responsible Council	5	40% (2)	0% (0)	60% (3)
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>59% (44)</b>	<b>14% (11)</b>	<b>27% (20)</b>
<b>Comments</b>				
This table shows only indicators for which a target has been set. Targets for 5 additional indicators reported in Q1 will be set once baseline data for 2021/22 has been gathered.				

A listing of indicators, which have met or exceeded target, have met within 95% of target, or have failed to meet target by more than 5% are shown within each of the 6 priority scorecards.

## 4.2 The Performance Trend

This measure compares performance at Q1 2021/22 with performance at Q1 2020/21 by setting out:

- The percentage of indicators where performance compared to last year has improved.
- The percentage of indicators where performance compared to last year has declined.
- The percentage of indicators where performance compared to last year is the same.

In the supporting scorecards for each priority a black arrow pointing up, downwards or sideways is used to depict indicators in each of the above 3 scenarios.

St Helens Borough Performance Report - Quarter 1 2021/22 – (Priority 1 focus for CYPS Scrutiny Committee)  
 NB. There are a total of 10 new indicators for 2021/22, where performance data in 2020/21 is not available and therefore it is not possible to show a performance trend.

Priority	Number of Indicators with data	% improved on last year	% worse than last year	% the same as last year
1. Ensure children and young people have a positive start	23	39% (9)	48% (11)	13% (3)
2. Health, independence, and care	18	56% (10)	39% (7)	5% (1)
3. Safe and strong communities and neighbourhoods	11	82% (9)	18% (2)	0% (0)
4. Strong, thriving, inclusive and well-connected economy	5	20% (1)	60% (3)	20% (1)
5. Green and vibrant places reflecting our heritage and culture	7	43% (3)	43% (3)	14% (1)
6. Responsible Council	6	50% (3)	50% (3)	0% (0)
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>50% (35)</b>	<b>41% (29)</b>	<b>9% (6)</b>

### 4.3 Inter Authority Comparison

This measure shows how performance in St Helens compares to the performance of a family group of authorities similar to St Helens. It does this by ranking each authority's performance by quartile. The top performing 25 % are in the first quartile and the bottom 25% in the fourth quartile. Authorities in between are placed in either the 2nd or 3rd quartiles. Comparative national data is only available to be used for 37 indicators.

In the supporting scorecards for each priority, where this measure is used, green indicates that St Helens is in the top best performing quartile, red that it is in the bottom quartile or yellow/amber that St Helens is in either the 2nd or 3rd quartile).

Priority	Number of Indicators with data	% in 1st quartile	% in 2nd quartile	% in 3rd quartile	% in 4th quartile
1. Ensure children and young people have a positive start	16	31% (5)	12% (2)	19% (3)	38% (6)
2. Health, independence, and care	13	46% (6)	15% (2)	15% (2)	23% (3)
3. Safe and strong communities and neighbourhoods	0	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)

Priority	Number of Indicators with data	% in 1st quartile	% in 2nd quartile	% in 3rd quartile	% in 4th quartile
4. Strong, thriving, inclusive and well-connected economy	2	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
5. Green and vibrant places reflecting our heritage and culture	4	0% (0)	25% (1)	50% (2)	25% (1)
6. Responsible Council	2	0% (0)	0% (0)	50% (1)	50% (1)
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>35% (13)</b>	<b>14% (5)</b>	<b>22% (8)</b>	<b>30% (11)</b>

The latest available picture of inter authority performance largely relates to the 2019/20 financial year.

#### 4.4 Summary and conclusion of statistical analysis

- **73%** of indicator targets have been either exceeded, met fully, or met within 95% of target.
- **27%** of indicator targets were not met.
- The trend measure indicates over the course of the year **50%** of indicators showed improvement, **9%** of indicators maintained the same performance and **41%** of indicators showed a downward trajectory.
- There has been a marked improvement in the performance indicators for **Priority 3 – creating safe and strong communities and neighbourhoods** with **82%** of indicators showing improvement over the last 12 months.
- Approximately a third of all indicators where comparison is possible are in the top quartile, whilst 30% are in the bottom quartile.
- Annual targets have been set where possible within the context of national, North West, and local authority comparator group data. Equally targets aspire to be challenging but achievable within the context of the available resources. The targets also take account of performance during 2020/21 which was an unprecedented year due to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. The impact of the pandemic on performance within St Helens whether direct or indirect was highlighted within the 2020/21 Performance Outturn Report. The impact of the pandemic in Quarter 1 2020/21 needs to be taken account of when considering the 12-month performance trend in Quarter 1 2021/22. Equally in many areas the impact of the pandemic on performance is yet to be fully realised and understood. However, given the effect of the pandemic on St Helens to date there is the strong likelihood that existing inequalities may be widened. This presents risks for future performance, but particularly in areas such as public health, education and schools and children’s services where current performance is already challenging.



## 5. Part 2 - Commentary on performance against priority and outcome

### Priority 1 - Ensure children and young people have a positive start in life



#### Outcomes

- Children and young people are safe from harm and the lives of children in care improve
- Children and young people's aspirations, attainment and opportunities are raised
- Children and young people are healthy, resilient, confident, involved and achieve their potential

#### Overview of Priority Performance

The tables below show provide an overview of performance at Quarter 1 for the indicators reported.

#### Performance Against Target

Number of Indicators with data	% target fully met	% target met within 95%	% target not met
25	48% (12)	20% (5)	32% (8)

#### The Performance Trend

Number of Indicators with data	% improved on last year	% worse than last year	% the same as last year
23	39% (9)	48% (11)	13% (3)

#### Inter Authority Comparison

Number of Indicators with data	% in 1st quartile	% in 2nd quartile	% in 3rd quartile	% in 4th quartile
16	31% (5)	12% (2)	19% (3)	38% (6)

## Priority 1 - Ensure children and young people have a positive start in life

### Tier 1

Outcome	Ref	Performance Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Higher / Lower is better?	20/21 Outturn	21/22 Target	Q1 June	% Variance from Target	Trend	Comparative Performance
Children and young people are safe from harm and the lives of children in care improve	CYP-01	Percentage of re-referrals into Early Help Services which were within 12 months of a previous early help episode	Quarterly	Lower	19	16	15	6.25%	↑	N/A
	CYP-02	The number of early help episodes that have been closed and stepped down to universal services (or as a % of total closures)	Quarterly	Higher	70	73	64	-1.54%	↓	N/A
	CYP-03	The number of early help episodes that have been closed and stepped up to social care services (or as a % of total closures)	Quarterly	Lower	24	21	28	-27.27%	↓	N/A
	CYP-06	Rate of Children subject to a Child Protection Plan per 10,000	Quarterly	Lower	54.3	52.5	57	-1.79%	↓	3rd Quartile
	CYP-07	Percentage of children subject to Child Protection Plans (CPPs) for a second or subsequent time within two years of last plan ending	Quarterly	Lower	14	14	10	28.57%	↓	N/A
	CYP-08	Children looked after rate (per 10,000 0–17-year-olds)	Quarterly	Lower	129.6	116.6	129	0%	↑	4th Quartile
	CYP-09	Percentage of All looked after children who are placed with in house foster carers (including Kinship Carers)	Quarterly	Higher	44.0	47	40	-9.09%	↓	N/A

St Helens Borough Performance Report - Quarter 1 2021/22

			Reporting	Higher / Lower	20/21	21/22	Q1	% Variance		Comparative
	CYP-10	Percentage of All looked after children who are placed with Independent Fostering Agencies	Quarterly	Lower	28	25	28	0%	↔	N/A
	CYP-11	Percentage former care leavers aged 19-21 years with whom the LA is in touch	Quarterly	Higher	96	96	100	4.17%	↑	2nd Quartile
	CYP-12	Percentage of former care leavers aged 19-21 in suitable accommodation	Quarterly	Higher	94	93	97	4.3%	↔	1st Quartile
	CYP-13	Percentage of former care leavers aged 19-21 years in employment, education, or training	Quarterly	Higher	60.3	60	60.6	1%	↓	3rd Quartile
Children and young people's aspirations, attainment and opportunities are raised	CYP-14	Percentage of Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans completed within a 20-week period	Quarterly	Higher	92	85	100	17.65%	↔	1st Quartile
	CYP-15	Percentage of audits where the voice of the child was graded as good/outstanding	Quarterly	Higher	60	65	54	-16.9%	N/A	N/A
	E&S-05	Percentage of young people academic age 16-17 not in education, employment or training and not known combined	Quarterly	Lower	4.4	5.2	5.3	0%	↑	1st Quartile
Children and young people are healthy, resilient, confident, involved and achieve their potential	PH-01	Hospital admissions as a result of self-harm (10-24 years)	Quarterly	Lower	1105.4	1200	1105.4	-22.82%	↓	4th Quartile
	PH-04	Under 18 conception rate per 1000 15-17-year-old (single year rate).	Quarterly	Lower	37.3	27.8	Awaiting publication of data nationally	%		4th Quartile

## Tier 2

Outcome	Ref	Performance Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Higher / Lower is better?	20/21 Outturn	21/22 Target	Q1 June	% Variance from Target	Trend	Comparative Performance
Children and young people are safe from harm and the lives of children in care improve	CYP-16	% of Children subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time (ever)	Quarterly	Lower	25.7	21	15	0%	↑	4th Quartile
	CYP-17	Percentage of Children in Foster Care who are placed in borough	Quarterly	Higher	54	58	53	-8.62%	↓	N/A
	CYP-21	Percentage of children looked after at 31 March with three or more placements during the year.	Quarterly	Lower	8.3	9	5.7	36.67%	↑	1st Quartile
	CYP-22	Percentage of social work assessments graded good or better through the Audit process.	Quarterly	Higher	53	60	54	-10%	N/A	N/A
	CYP-23	Average number of cases per children and family social worker	Quarterly	Lower	16.7	18	18.3	-1.67%	↓	N/A
Children and young people are healthy, resilient, confident, involved and achieve their potential	PH-13	Percentage of infants being breast-fed at 6-8 weeks	Quarterly	Higher	28	29	28.9	-0.34%	↑	4th Quartile
	PH-14	Smoking status at time of delivery	Quarterly	Lower	15.7	13.4	15.7	-12.14%	↑	3rd Quartile
	PH-15	Under 18 admissions to hospital for alcohol specific reasons	Quarterly	Lower	72.3	79	78.6	2.96%	↓	4th Quartile

St Helens Borough Performance Report - Quarter 1 2021/22

Outcome	Performance Indicator	Reporting Period	Higher / Lower	20/21	21/22	Q1	% Variance	Trend	Comparative	
	PH-17	Percentage of children who received a 2-2 1/2-year Healthy Child Programme review	Quarterly	Higher	77	84	77	-8.33%	↑	2nd Quartile
	PH-18	Percentage of children achieving a good level of development at 2 - 2 1/2 years	Quarterly	Higher	89.1	94	89.1	-5.21%	↓	1st Quartile

Summary of performance against outcome and action for improvement

## Outcome – Children and young people are safe from harm and the lives of children in care improve

### Current Performance

St Helens Early Help Services work across the Borough providing targeted support to children and their families. Performance across this area is showing a mixed picture, Re-referrals into Early Help have reduced compared to a year previously and the number of Early Help episodes closed and stepped down to universal services are within 95% of target but showing a declining trend. Early Help episodes closed and stepped up to statutory social care services are also showing a declining trend and are not meeting the reduction target.

The rate of children subject to a child protection plan has increased this quarter. Although, the rate of children subject to a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time is meeting target, showing an improving trend and is now better than regional and national averages.

At the end of June 2021, St Helens Local Authority Children Looked After (CLA) population, when expressed as a rate per 10,000 under 18-year-old, continues to be above comparable regional and national averages. However, the numbers of children cared for by St Helens have gradually decreased over the past 15 months, a 4% reduction between March 2020 and June 2021. The annual target is challenging, equating to an in-year reduction of approximately 48 children.

Fewer than 6% of looked after children experienced 3 or more placement moves during Quarter 1, which is better than target (9%), showing an improving trend with performance top quartile for the statistical neighbour group.

There is still a challenge to increase the number of in-house foster carers. Of St Helens CLA who are living in foster care, almost one third are currently placed with Independent Fostering Agencies and whilst this is equal to the Quarter 1 target, it will need to reduce further to meet the annual target. The current position is broadly similar to the position in Q1 2020/21.

Social work practice is subject to close monitoring, with social worker caseloads within 95% of the annual target. Audits of social work assessments whilst not yet meeting target, are showing gradual improvement.

Performance against the 3 key outcomes for care leavers is very strong. At the end of quarter 1, the Local Authority is in touch with 100% of care leavers, 97% are housed in suitable accommodation, which places its performance top quartile for its comparator group. The percentage of care leavers in employment, education and training is on target.

### Action for Improvement

Children's Services continues to work with partners to improve our early help offer and the escalation of concerns to statutory services. The conversion rate of Contact and Contact to Referral is kept under review at the Safeguarding Children Partnership and at the Children's Improvement Board.

We have undertaken a series of audits including commissioning an external audit of practice in the area of child protection plans and we are taking action in relation to the findings i.e., improving the quality of assessments, step up and step-down arrangements between early help and children's social care and we are carefully monitoring the impact the pandemic is having on vulnerable families.

The improved oversight, the change in practice and improved permanence planning, appropriate placements in Foster to Adopt, and the edge of care services continues to contribute to the reduction in the rate of looked after children. During 2020/21 the pandemic resulted in a decrease in the discharge rate particularly

in the volume of children leaving care via a plan of adoption and with Court hearings being suspended during the year. We are now seeing the court progressing work. A Demand Management Strategy for Children's Social Care 2021-25 is currently being developed.

Work continues to ensure the consistent application of safeguarding thresholds is beginning to be more consistent, however there is further work to be done reduce the rate of three-month and second and subsequent child protection planning.

There is a continued focus on children who have been on a child protection plan for over 12 months, with the safeguarding unit recently implementing 8-month partnership reviews.

Audit activity has demonstrated that children who are subject to plans for a second or subsequent time are likely to be living in homes where domestic abuse, substance misuse and parental mental health are prevalent. Work continues to further improve step down plans and arrangements to ensure children and families continue to be supported effectively.

In addition to the above, the department continues to implement a range of improvement actions as part of its revised Ofsted improvement plan. The Improvement Plan is a focus for the collation of feedback on challenges from a range of services from an 'on the ground' perspective to address and drive improvement.

## Outcome - Children and young people's aspirations, attainment and opportunities are raised

### Current Performance

There is some strong performance against this outcome and some significant improvement demonstrated over the last 18 months. Support for children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCPs) has improved significantly in the last 18 months. At the end of Quarter 1, all EHCPs were completed within timescale and performance is now top quartile for the nearest neighbour group.

The number of young people aged 16-17 years who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET) has reduced and is performing strongly against target. St Helens position has shown significant improvement over the past 12 months and is now top quartile for its statistical neighbour group. The number of NEET young people with SEND or known to the Youth Offending Service has also reduced.

The percentage of audits where the voice of the child was graded as good/outstanding is currently under performing.

### Action for Improvement

Work is ongoing to ensure the voice of the child is clearly captured, understood, and actioned by Children's Services through the monthly case audit process. As yet there is some improvement needed to ensure all audit practice good or outstanding and this is being kept under close review.

## Outcome - Children and young people are healthy, resilient, confident, involved and achieve their potential

### Current Performance

Children and young people's admission rates for self-harm are very high (latest data is 2019/20). St Helens rate is the highest in the North West and England and more than double the national rate. Teenage conception rates are also very high. The latest 2019 data is due to be published imminently. St Helens single year rate in 2018 was the highest in the North West and more than double the England rate. Performance in areas such as breastfeeding, smoking at time of delivery, and under 18 alcohol related hospital admissions also remain significantly worse than national / comparator rates.

The Healthy Child Programme is showing a mixed picture for performance. Although, the percentage of children receiving their 2-2 ½ year review as part of the Healthy Child Programme is not meeting target, performance is improving and above the median for the statistical neighbour group. Also, for those children reviewed as part of the programme, almost 90% are achieving a good level of development at 2 – 2 ½ years, which is within 95% of target and places St Helens in the top quartile comparator group.

### Action for Improvement

The authority recognises that this outcome is currently an area of significant challenge and has committed to a wholesale review of activity through its internal performance management arrangements.

The People's Board Strategic Plan is being updated with 3 identified priorities - Mental Wellbeing, Tackling Obesity and Community Resilience which seeks to ensure a coordinated collaborative approach to supporting performance improvement within this outcome.

Additional funding has been made available from Public Health England for mental health, and partnership working which includes a focus on improving children and young people's mental health is in place.

St Helens sexual health strategy 2021 to 2024 was recently produced and continues to be delivered. Reducing the number of unintended pregnancies relating to under 18s remains a priority ambition for the borough. A multi-agency response is ongoing, with collaboration between the sexual health service, including the dedicated TAZ Outreach Service, 0-19 service and Family Nurse Partnership.

For more information about individual performance indicators that support the achievement of these outcomes please see the scorecard.