

Chamberlain 2024-25 Business Plan Quarterly Report
Q4 1 January - 31 March 2025
Report completed by

Executive Summary

Our Impacts 2024/25
2024 saw unprecedented numbers of applicants admitted to the Freedom of the City of London, continuing to work with our stakeholders and building relationships. Development medium term cash flow modelling for both City Fund and City's Estate is now business as usual enabling advice on internal borrowing caps, external borrowing requirements/limits, draw down on financial investments and reserves held in illiquid asset classes such as property. Internal Audit achieved the baseline target of 600 audit days delivered in 2024/25 and remains on target to achieve the longer term target of 1000 audit days per year by 31/03/2026. This has provided sufficient work for the Head of Internal Audit to for an opinion on the overall adequacy of the Internal Control Environment, Governance and Risk Management arrangements. Programme Sapphire (ERP) completed the build and testing for the first deliverable; the learning management system. The new system is far more user friendly and we should see benefits of this in the coming year. Secured HCL as our delivery partner for Programme Sapphire which will enable us to deliver the programme to target.

Summary of Q4
The Chamberlain's Department have made good progress against the departmental business plan for 2024/25. In Quarter 4 the Internal Audit team achieved the baseline target of 600 audit days delivered in 2024/25 and remains on target to achieve the longer term target of 1000 audit days per year by 31/03/2026. Sufficient work has been completed to enable the Head of Internal Audit to form an opinion on the overall adequacy of the Internal Control Environment, Governance and Risk Management arrangements, this opinion will follow on completion of the detailed analysis of audit findings. In-year collection rates for Council Tax during Q4 2024/25 was 97.9% which is an increase of 1.3% when compared to Q4 23/24. This is the best in-year collection performance since 2018/19 and the best since the COVID Pandemic. The Commercial Service has completed significant work in readiness for the new procurement act which is now in effect. Training sessions have been rolled out to stakeholders across the Corporation and the appropriate policies, templates and processes have been updated to reflect the legislative changes. The new Project Management System, Cora, has been developed and configured. Training on the new system will commence in Q1 25/26. Work continues on the new project procedure and gateways which will be presented for committee approvals in July 2025.

Cross - cutting themes:					
1. EEDI		Chamberlain's colleagues are very active in staff Networks with many of our colleagues taking part as members co-chairs or sponsors. The team contribute to the Corporate EEDI Groups and colleagues are also encouraged to join networks. EQIAs are completed on projects. We have recently been active participants in the EEDI corporate review. having relaunched our EEDI group we have just agreed our Terms of Reference with the following objectives. •Responsible for driving Chamberlain's activities to support the delivery of the City of London Corporation's equality objectives and priorities. •A forum to escalate and discuss EEDI issues and to make decisions as appropriate. •A forum to discuss good news stories. □			
2. Transformation		Programme Sapphire (ERP) completed the build and testing for the first deliverable; the learning management system. Work continues the design of the chart of accounts for the new SAP system. A key focus for Q4 was resourcing the team to deliver the programme and enabling the change and engagement workstreams. The Digital, Data and Technology Strategy 2024-2029, was launched at the end of 2024 and the Chamberlain's Transformation Board met in January to identify opportunities across the department where the new strategy can be utilised to create efficiencies, such as through AI bots to answer general enquiries, automation of reporting and modernising our processes. The Financial Services Transformation (FIT Strategy) is under development, whilst the strategy is being refined, the transformation works have continued; a skills assessment was completed for all team members to inform the training programme for 2025/26, the budget setting process reset was delivered for 2025/26 and will be refined for 2026/27 and reporting templates have been updated. Further transformation is planned for 2025/26, in preparation for the implementation of the SAP Finance system in April 2026. The Commercial Improvement Programme is now underway, Q4 of 2024/25 was focused on designing the new service, with consultation being completed on transitioning to a category structure (taking effect from 1st April 2025). The Procurement Act 2023 has come into effect in February and internal and supplier facing documentation and processes have been updated in conjunction with the Comptrollers team to comply with the legislative changes. Engagement was commenced with internal commercial service users on the new upcoming Procurement Policy, which will be presented to Members of this committee in June. Finally, the Training and Development workstream, undertook a training needs analysis for all Commercial Team Members to design the 2025/26 training programme. As part of the Financial Improvement and Transformation (FIT) Strategy, budget manager training workshops have been conducted during quarter 3 and 4. These workshops are initial steps toward a self-service monitoring process. 3 training sessions have occurred with 50 invited and 24 attending. There will be a pause on training during March and April 2025 due to prioritising year-end closing with a view to increase training with multiple sessions per month starting from May. We have booked 32 training sessions between May and August to which 18 of these have a Finance Business Partner attending to which they are still being signed up to. Finance Business Partners will be inviting their Budget Managers to the training sessions. The training is still on track to reach all 450 budget managers by December 2025. Feedback has been positive from the sessions and are continually evaluated to ensure the benefits of the training are being met. The FIT strategy, being officially launched in June 2025, aims to transform operations and processes within FSD to align with modern and best practices, enhancing efficiency, accuracy, and accountability in financial management. This strategy is important for current operations and prepares for future innovations and advancements, such as the new ERP system. Additionally, the FIT Strategy will provide a framework for continuous improvement and adaptability. By focusing on skill development, process optimisation, and strategic alignment, we aim to create a finance function that is prepared for future needs.			
3. Risk and interdependencies		The Chamberlain's Senior Leadership team review risk regularly including horizon scanning. There are 2 risks are currently emerging which are being scoped and will be escalated through the appropriate channels in coming months.			
Workstream	Workstream Assessment	RAG Status	Next Steps	Corporate Plan 2024-2029 Outcomes	Measures data submitted? Y/N
"Collection of: -Business Rates -Council Tax"	In Year collection rates for business Rates during Q4 2024/25 is at 97.32%. Council Tax collection has increased by 1.3% on 23/24 to 97.9% in Q4. This is the highest collection rate reported since 2018/19.	G		Providing Excellent Services	Y
Payment of Housing and Council Tax Benefits	New Claims were processed within 10.42 days which was faster than in Q3. Change of Circumstances were processed within 3.23 days which is a marginal increase on 3.05 days in Q3.	G		Providing Excellent Services	Y

Brilliant Basics - capital and revenue reporting through to statement of accounts	Regular reporting on capital and revenue will continue, with an emphasis on training budget holders and project accountants to assume greater responsibility. Additionally, the Finance Team will be upskilled to play a more strategic role instead of completing tasks for the budget holders. This transition will involve extensive training and a cultural shift, with full benefits expected after the implementation of the new ERP system.	A	The FIT Strategy will remain a priority and is scheduled to be officially launched in June 2025.	Providing Excellent Services	Y
Delivery of a programme of Internal Audit work to inform the Head of Internal Audit Annual Opinion on the adequacy of the Internal Control Environment, Governance and Risk Management arrangements	Programme of work delivered - the spread and depth of coverage is sufficient to form an overall opinion.	G		Providing Excellent Services	Y
Planning, organisation, delivery and administration of Freedom Ceremonies and events at the Guildhall	Freedom recipient numbers were 2200 for 2024. A fantastic effort from the team. Numbers are expected to be lower than this in 2025 as this was an unprecedented year, but the current trajectory still looks to be above that of 2023.	G		Providing Excellent Services	Y
Develop medium term cash flow modelling for both City Fund and City's Estate enabling advice on internal borrowing caps, external borrowing requirements/limits, draw down on financial investments and reserves held in illiquid asset classes such as property	This workstream has now transitioned into Business As Usual. At their February meeting, the Investment Committee received an update on the latest cashflow forecast position, considering significant decisions made around the Barbican Renewal Programme and Markets. This collaborative effort between Chamberlain's and the City Surveyors team informs Members about the cash flow requirements for City Fund and City's Estate over the medium-term financial plan. It also proposes a capital realisation strategy to ensure sufficient liquidity for major project costs, daily operations, and unforeseen expenses. Additionally, for City's Estate, the proposed strategy aligns with the broader asset allocation targets, considering the timeframes necessary for the disposal of illiquid property investment assets.	G	Business As Usual	Providing Excellent Services	Y
"Enterprise Resource Planning system implementation across Finance, HR, Payroll, IT and Procurement"	<p>The Programme has made good progress and is tracking to both plan and budget. The first go live milestone (the Learning Management System) was approved for 1st April, the remaining Wave 1 deliverables are progressing well (Performance & Goals / Recruitment) with go live planned in Quarter 1 2025/26</p> <p>The scale and complexity of the programme requires additional risk mitigation for Wave 2 (HR & Payroll) and Wave 3 (Finance). There has been no change in the plan and the focus is on taking proactive steps to mitigate any delivery risks. All risks are being managed at Programme Board level.</p> <p>The status has been put at Amber while the replan is completed.</p> <p>The principle of "Adopt not Adapt" is being maintained and there have been minimal changes proposed. A quality assurance partner (SAP) has been appointed to provide additional confidence and help drive the transformation work.</p>	A	<p>Deploy Build of Wave 2 (HR & Payroll to be advanced)</p> <p>Build of Wave 3 to be in progress (Finance)</p>	Providing Excellent Services	N/A
Proactive deployment of measures to prevent and detect fraud against the City of London Corporation and provision of a corporate wide responsive fraud investigation service	Investigation service continues to be responsive to concerns raised, case management system is providing useful management information. Proactive work is focussed on Failure to Prevent Fraud obligations.	G		Providing Excellent Services	Y
Automation of Invoice Payments	The e-invoicing project is currently on hold while we implement SAP.	A	This project will be stood up again following the implementation of SAP.	Providing Excellent Services	Y

Provide high level executive & programme management support to Chamberlain's senior leaders in the strategical and operational delivery of CHB's transformation programme	The Chamberlain's Transformation Programme will continue to support the delivery of chamberlain's transformation workstreams, the focus for 2025/26 is supporting the delivery of the Commercial improvement programme, implementation of the ERP Programme and financial service transformation programme.	G	Utilisation of the new project management reporting tools to improve portfolio reporting.	Providing Excellent Services	Y
Training and Development/Succession planning	Chamberlain's Learning and Engagement Board continue to meet on a monthly basis. The Chamberlain's learning policy has been refreshed and a lunch and learn programme has been developed. Over the last quarter two lunch and learn sessions took place on SharePoint and were attended by around 70 staff. Staff continue to complete the CIPFA Competency Framework tool which will assist in identifying team and individual development requirements. Workshops have also taken place in relation to the Finance Improvement and Transformation Strategy.	G		Providing Excellent Services	Y
Portfolio management implementation	The new Project Management System: Cora has been developed and configured. Training on the new system will commence in Q1 25/26. Work continues on the new project procedure and gateways which will be presented for committee approvals in July 25.	A	Roll out training on the new Cora system, conduct officer and member engagement sessions on the new project procedure and gateways. Reports on track to be presented to committees in June/July 25	Providing Excellent Services	Y
Commercial maturity assessment and improvement plan (procurement governance review)	The Commercial maturity assessment was completed in Nov-24, with the recommendations and improvement plan signed off by PPsC in Dec-24. Q4 2025/26 focused on stakeholder engagement and creating workstream project plans to deliver throughout 2025.	G		Providing Excellent Services	Y
Data and insights – understanding our impact	The Impact and Reporting team are now fully resourced. There is an initial focus on developing a business plan for the CCPD Division for 25/26. Work has commenced on data cleansing on the contracts register following the transition to the new Jaggaer system. The Corporate Benefits Realisation Model delivery plan has been mapped for delivery about 2025/26.	G		Providing Excellent Services	Y
Transformation and improvement framework (embedding RPR)	In Q4 work continued across the 4 transformational pillars: Organisational Excellence, Innovative Collaboration, Entrepreneurial Spirit and Future First. Boards and working groups for each pillar have been established. Work also progressed on procuring a transformation partner to deliver the workstreams across the corporation, this anticipated to go to market in Q1 2025/26.	A	Onboard transformation partner	Providing Excellent Services	Y
Service development – capacity and capability	The CCPD Service is now fully resourced, skills and competency assessments are being undertaken and a learning and development programme will be launched alongside start of year appraisals.	G		Providing Excellent Services	Y
Procurement Act implementation	The procurement act is now in effect and the appropriate policies, templates and processes have been updated to reflect the legislative changes. These will be monitored for any improvements in 2025.	G		Providing Excellent Services	Y
"DITS Strategy Implementation"	Following on from the approval of our Shared DDAI Strategy that was approved last year, we have commenced work to deliver the Strategic Outcomes set out in the Strategy. This includes the work we have commenced around network and connectivity improvements where we have seen a 97% drop in network dropouts across the wider corporation estate. We have now implemented Microsoft Fabric, which will form the foundation for a Corporation-wide data hub. We are also working on a single CRM system for the wider organisation, with support from our Institutions. Work is continuing around convergence across the wider organisation, with closer ties with Barbican and GSMD being forged, and federating our estate allowing greater trust between the Corporation and Institutions. We are also testing several AI bots which are due to be deployed shortly, and are increasing our work around automation. We have deployed a single Cyber Security training package across every part of the Corporation with the exception of the Police, who have their own training suite and there has been an 82% takeup. Work around a new Shared Services Agreement between the Corporation and the City of London Police is still in progress, with PWC being engaged.	G		Providing Excellent Services	Y

"Managed Print Service"	<p>The initial procurement exercise for our Managed Print solution was abandoned as there were concerns raised by the Print Room regarding the suitability of the preferred supplier. A new procurement exercise is currently underway with the Print Room and the Managed Print Service split into two lots and an updated specification. The new approach will allow the maximum level of benefit to be achieved whilst ensuring that the unique requirements of the Print Room can be accommodated.</p>	A		Providing Excellent Services	Y
Network Refresh	<p>We have agreed a direction of travel for our future network and will be carrying out a full refresh with a "wireless first" approach. Work is continuing to ensure effective procurement of the new solution.</p> <p>This solution will be a blueprint for our wider organisation, allowing colleagues across the Corporation – including Institutions, to connect without friction to a network regardless of which building they are working from.</p> <p>We are currently moderating the selection questionnaire and will shortlist 3-5 bidders who will be invited to tender, evaluating tenders, with an award expected by July and work to commence in early 2026.</p>	G		Providing Excellent Services	Y

"SharePoint migration (COL and COLP)"	SharePoint migration is complete. We are now optimising our storage and decommissioning the file shares.	G		Providing Excellent Services	Y
"Data Maturity Programme"	<p>Following on from a successful proof of concept, we received transformation funding for a "Data Lighthouse" project, which will bring together disparate CRM systems from across the wider organisation.</p> <p>We are looking to sign off requirements and complete user workshops by next week, and have opted to use Microsoft Dynamics, which fits in well with our wider architecture. A new Dynamics 365 Customer Insights specialist has been recruited.</p> <p>A Transformation Bid has been submitted to fund further phases of the project.</p>	G		Providing Excellent Services	Y

*Key
<p>Blue: Completed</p> <p>Green: On track, milestones achieved in this quarter to the planned timeline</p> <p>Amber: Slippage to planned progress / milestones not achieved to planned timeline but will be achieved by end of next quarter</p> <p>Red: Slippage to planned progress is significant and cannot be achieved in the next quarter. Risk of non-delivery.</p> <p>Black: A decision to pause or stop workstream activities has been taken.</p>

Provide Rag Status (*refer to key)

G
A
R
B
P

Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes: