

# Public Document Pack



**COTSWOLD**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Monday, 13 March 2023

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## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be held at Council Chamber - Trinity Road on **Tuesday, 21 March 2023 at 4.00 pm.**

Rob Weaver  
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
(Councillors Stephen Andrews, Gary Selwyn, David Cunningham, Gina Blomefield, Claire Bloomer, Patrick Coleman, Roly Hughes, Richard Norris, Nikki Ind and Nigel Robbins)

Recording of Proceedings – The law allows the public proceedings of Council, Cabinet, and Committee Meetings to be recorded, which includes filming as well as audio-recording. Photography is also permitted.

As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record any part of the proceedings please let the Committee Administrator know prior to the date of the meeting.

# AGENDA

1. **Apologies**
2. **Substitute Members**  
To note details of any substitution arrangements in place for the Meeting.
3. **Minutes (Pages 5 - 12)**  
To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> February.
4. **Declarations of Interest**  
To receive any declarations of interest from Members and Officers, relating to items to be considered at the meeting.
5. **Chair's Announcements**
6. **Public Questions**  
To deal with questions from the public within the open forum question and answer session of fifteen minutes in total. Questions from each member of the public should be no longer than one minute each and relate to issues under the Council's remit. At any one meeting no person may submit more than two questions and no more than two such questions may be asked on behalf of one organisation.

The Chair will ask whether any members of the public present at the meeting wish to ask a question and will decide on the order of questioners.

The response may take the form of:

- a) a direct oral answer;
- b) where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or
- c) where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated later to the questioner.

7. **Member Questions**  
To deal with written questions by Members, relating to issues under the Committee's remit, with the maximum length of oral supplementary questions at Committee being no longer than one minute. Responses to any supplementary questions will be dealt with in writing if they cannot be dealt with at the meeting.

8. **Council Priority and Service Performance Report 2022-23 Q3 (30 minutes) (Pages 13 - 88)**

Purpose

To provide an update on progress on the Council's priorities and service performance

Recommendation

That the Committee notes overall progress on the Council priorities and service delivery for 2022-23 Q3

9. **Task and Finish Group - Performance Management and Reporting (30 Minutes)** (Pages 89 - 94)

Purpose

To provide the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on progress for Phase I of the Task and Finish Group's Work.

Recommendation(s)

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

1. Notes and scrutinises the update contained within this report.
2. Recommends to Cabinet to develop and adopt performance indicators related to the areas included at Section 2.6 of this report; and work with Overview and Scrutiny to develop a programme for Phase 2 of this review

10. **Update on Informal Work Planning Meeting (15 Minutes)** (Pages 95 - 98)

Purpose

To review the notes from the informal work planning meeting, which took place on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March.

Recommendation

To note the work planning meeting discussion and recommend the provisional work plan to the new Committee (to follow).

(END)

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
01/February2023



COTSWOLD  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Minutes of a meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Wednesday, 1 February 2023.

### Councillors present:

Stephen Andrews (Chair)  
Claire Bloomer  
Patrick Coleman  
Roly Hughes

Gary Selwyn (Vice-chair)  
Richard Norris  
Nikki Ind  
David Cunningham

Joe Harris  
Andrew Doherty  
Jenny Forde

### Officers present:

Robert Weaver, Chief Executive  
Angela Claridge, Director of Governance and  
Development (Monitoring Officer)  
Claire Locke  
Andrew Brown, Democratic Services Business  
Manager

James Brain, Forward Planning Manager  
Paul James  
Ana Prelici, Democratic Services Officer

### **OS.226** Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Gina Blomefield and Nigel Robbins

### **OS.227** Substitute Members

There were no substitute members.

### **OS.228** Minutes

The committee considered the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on the 22 November 2022 and agreed that they were an accurate recording of the meeting.

**Voting record- For 6, Against 0, Abstentions 2, Absent 2**

**RESOLVED:** That the Committee approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 22 November.

### **OS.229** Declarations of Interest

Councillor Gary Selwyn declared a non-pecuniary interest in the Kemble Community Gardens, consisting of having friends who own several allotments there.

There were no declarations of interest from Officers.

### **OS.230** Chair's Announcements

The Chair announced that item 12 - Broadband Delivery Update would be taken before item 11 – Leisure and Culture Contracts Procurement to accommodate remote participants.

### **OS.231** Public Questions

The committee received two public questions on the Kemble Community Gardens;

Ms. Sara Lawlor asked the committee whether the council had considered the following factors;

- 1) The village has grown and is continuing to grow, do we want to shrink the green space in the middle of it?
- 2) As wildlife is depleted in the UK, and we are hearing this week on the news that were the worst in Europe, have the council considered the need for green space, and for people to live in close proximity to it as part of the decision?
- 3) The mental health implications and the implications for wellbeing, which has been highlighted by the pandemic, which has showed the need for green space

The questions by Ms. Lawlor were noted by the Chair to be addressed as part of item 8.

Mr. Mike McEwen, who works with the Kemble Community Gardens Committee asked;

- Has the decision to call in the decision been politically motivated?
- Specifically in regard to producing the report pack, how much resource has been used to call in the decision?

Members clarified that the purpose of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is apolitical, and the purpose of the called – in decision was to scrutinise whether the process around the decision making was sufficiently followed.

Members also addressed the question raised in regard to resource implications, stating that the majority of the agenda pack had been produced for the other items on the agenda, and the Budget report comprising most of the pack. It was highlighted that the Council was undertaking ongoing work to reduce paper use, which included electronic agenda packs.

### **OS.232** Member Questions

There were no member questions.

### **OS.233** Call in of Cabinet Decision relating to the Lease of Land at Station Road Kemble

The purpose of the report was to consider the call-in of the decision to lease land at Station Road, Kemble, as allotments and community gardens to the local community and de-allocate this site within the adopted Cotswold District Local Plan (2011 to 2031) as a site for housing development.

The Chair introduced the item, highlighting that the purpose of call-in happens when Overview and Scrutiny Committee identifies that there is information that should have been brought to the decision making executive body and/or made available in such a way that members of the public could see that information, and therefore ensure sufficient oversight. The Chair also noted that the call-in request was submitted before the draft minutes of the

meeting were available, and that the availability of the minutes earlier may have allowed a more complete view of the decision that had been made.

The Leader of the Council, who substituted for the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, addressed Ms. Lawlor's questions, stating that the considerations she raised were reasons why the decision to lease the gardens and de-allocate them from the Local Plan had been made.

Members discussed whether the Kemble and Ewen Neighbourhood plan had been sufficiently taken into consideration, and whether sufficient financial details were made available.

Members asked for the additional detail on finances and square footage mentioned by the Assistant Director for Property and Regeneration to be distributed after the meeting.

It was highlighted that through the partial review of the Local Plan, there would be an opportunity for scrutiny of the deallocation of the site, as well as engagement with the local Town and Parish councils.

Members commented that the call-in process had raised issues that had not otherwise come to light about how the decision had been made. Members also stated that the call-in therefore achieved its purposes, but also that it highlighted the need for the additional information to have been incorporated within the original Cabinet report.

Members also raised concerns around whether the process of notifying Overview and Scrutiny committee members was as efficient as it could be, as various members appeared to have been informed at various points in time, with no single notification going out to all members.

The Committee considered the three recommendations set out in the report in reverse order and voted on them.

#### **Voting record;**

The Committee first voted on whether they considered that recommendations c and b were not required;

(c) The matter does not require a Full Council decision, that there are sufficient grounds to refer it to Council and a request is therefore made for it to be added to the next Council agenda

**For 8, Abstentions 0, Absent 2**

(b) To not refer the matter back to Cabinet for further consideration.

**For 8, Abstentions 0, Absent 2**

The Committee discussed the wording of recommendation a) and decided to amend the wording to clarify that there would be further action by the Committee in the form of a written progress report in due course.

(a) They are satisfied that the detail presented here did not fundamentally change the decision that has been made and would receive a written progress report in due course.

**For 8, Abstentions 0, Absent 2**

**RESOLVED:** That the detail presented did not fundamentally change the decision that had been made and the Committee will receive a written progress report in due course.

**OS.234 Annual Presentation of Ubico Business Plan**

The purpose of the item was to receive a business plan and performance presentation from Ubico.

The Chief Executive of Ubico introduced the item, and was joined by the Ubico Chief Finance Officer. This was an annual presentation, ahead of the shareholder meeting receiving the business plan as a shareholder reserved matter.

The Ubico representatives explained that the business plan is split into four pillars underpinning a 5 year vision; people, operational excellence, climate and business development.

The Cabinet Member for the Environment, Waste and Recycling reminded the Committee of the workings of the partnership with Ubico that whilst the Council is responsible for setting policy and strategy, Ubico is responsible for operational work.

The Committee thanked the Ubico staff for their work over the recent difficult weather conditions.

Members also questioned the use of agency staff, what trade union membership was, as well as Ubico's position on pensions. Ubico representatives stated that agency staff was an effective way to close staffing gaps, with a recent improvement of retention due to national pay increases, and that they were undertaking work to increase staff retention, which included looking at employee pension contributions as a package of potential benefits. Ubico representatives also highlighted a strong working relationship with trade unions.

**RESOLVED:** That the committee note the contents of the presentation.

**OS.235 Budget**

The purpose of the report was to present the budget for 2023/24.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the item, highlighting the budget setting process. They stated that the Committee would be scrutinising the processes around the budget setting, and that the financial detail will be considered at Cabinet on the following Monday, which, subject to any revisions will go to the Full Council on the 15<sup>th</sup> of February.

The Chief Finance Officer summarised the context around the budget, and mentioned the handouts that had been distributed to members ahead of the meeting. The Chief Finance Officer stated that the figures in the budget reflect the provisional settlement which had been provided by the Government in December. The final government settlement figures were expected at the beginning of next week, and any applicable amendments to the budget would be made once received. The Government has a requirement for local authorities to set a balanced budget, and this was touched on in the paper, alongside 'stress tests' for the budget and various modelling of scenarios, contained in the additional handouts.

Members asked whether there had been any indication as to what the Local Government Pay award for 2023/24 would be. The Chief Finance Officer advised that a statement from trade unions on 30 January indicated that the claim will be RPI +2%.



Members asked about extended producer responsibility which was identified as a significant new funding stream in the report. The Chief Finance Officer advised that this was a funding stream that had been put forward by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) which would see the Council receive payments from producers who are responsible for packaging material. However, as the overall funding position was still unknown, this stream was flagged as a risk.

Members asked whether Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 fund were shown as revenue. The Chief Finance Officer explained that these funds were generally used to fund the Council's Capital programme, so were not shown as revenue.

Members welcomed the £1.2 million investment in leisure.

Members requested further detail on the contract inflation which was expected to go up 250% between 2023 and 2026. It was explained that this was due to increase in energy prices and challenges in the delivery of the Ubico business plan.

Members requested further detail on;

- £4.2 m which disappears off of assets under business rates. It was clarified that earmarked reserves of £4.2m were set aside. The methodology used to collect business rates means that there is a deficit because of business rate relief, and the Council had set up a larger collection fund, which, although compensated for, it still led to the £4.2 m figure. It was highlighted that this would get paid back next year by the Government
- Provision for financing of Ubico vehicles into 2027, which is £3.5 m. It was explained that the Council own most of the fleet, so the replacement of these are allocated within the capital programme, most of fleet will need replacing in 2027

Further details would be distributed on these by the Chief Finance Officer.

Members also requested detail on the following;

- The pay award for councillors was represented as X% in the report - this was corrected in the council report as 4%
- A point of clarity was requested, on Capital Spending this included some borrowing, the reasons for doing this is not explained within the document, It was explained that the Capital programme is financed through internal and external borrowing over a number of years, and that a prudent view is taken to this.
- Capital programme figures on Annexes E and C should match up, and the reason they didn't was related with timings of the preparation of reports, table 2 will be updated to reflect this for the Council report.

The Chief Finance Officer stated they would be available for all members who wish to have discussion about the budget, and that they would send members further details where these have been requested.

**RESOLVED:** That the committee note the report.

**OS.236**      **Leisure and Culture Contracts Procurement**

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The purpose of the report was to provide the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on the Leisure and Culture Contract Procurements. The Chair highlighted that Full Council had tasked Overview and Scrutiny Committee with monitoring progress on this item, due to its expense and the need to deliver.

If any recommendations need to be made to Full Council, members were encouraged to do so.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing introduced the item and thanked the officers for their work on the project. The Cabinet Member was joined by the Strategic Projects Lead, Business Manager for Contracts and Environmental Services, and the Senior Leisure Specialist.

The Business Manager for Contracts and Environmental Services updated members on the work;

- A procurement process was taking place using a competitive dialogue procedure, which was intended to be an objective review, excluding any subjective view.
- Bidders would be short listed, with successful companies invited to submit revised tenders, which would be scored and moderated, with preferred bidders to be selected.
- The process was on course to be completed in March as planned.

Members asked why the timescale was so aggressive. The Business Manager for Contract and Environmental Health explained that this was because of the time scales associated with the procurement process..

Members also asked why the decision had been made to exclude councillors from the evaluation panel. Officers explained that officer selection panels were considered to be best practice in modern local government procurement, and that members would be able to vote on the recommendation when the report was taken to Cabinet and Council.

Members also requested detail on how much had been spent on the process. Officers advised that £50,000 had been allocated, a third of which was spent on support from Max Associates, the and the rest of which had been spent on legal support from Trowers and Hamblin, due to shortages within the in house legal team. It was explained that a further sum had been approved for legal support, and that the Chief Finance Officer would distribute a breakdown of this.

**RESOLVED:** That the Committee note the report.

**OS.237**      **Broadband Delivery Update**

The Chair highlighted the context for the item, stating that since 2016, the £0.5m of capital has been set aside to assist with delivery of broadband to those in hard to reach areas.

The Economic Development Lead introduced the item, highlighting that the Cabinet Member had sent their apologies. They were joined by a representative from Fastershire. Members received further detail on the following;

- Tewkesbury was ahead of Cirencester on the percentage coverage due to being a larger urban area.
- Degraded copper wires limit the speed, even when using fibre optic. Members asked how consumers could navigate this issue, as many won't get speeds that are promised by providers. This was explained as being due to marketing by the broadband provider, which had been

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appealed to the Advertising Standards Agency, and consumers were able to check whether they had fibre capabilities on the BT wholesale website.

Members asked why there was an inconsistent roll-out in some places. This is was highlighted as being due to damage and capacity in ducts, damaged poles, and physical components which can take around 6-9 months to replace.

As £0.5m was set aside to improve people's ability to connect, members asked would this money be able to be used for related projects such as improving mobile phone signal. It was stated that, for reasons highlighted in the report, the money is difficult to use, and that ring fencing money for something that is unlikely to happen is not good accounting practice.

**RESOLVED:** That the Committee receive no further update as a special item while continuing to review it through normal work planning activities

**Voting record – For 8, Against 0, Abstentions 0, Absences 0**

### **OS.238** Peer Review - Recommendations Relating to Overview and Scrutiny

The purpose of the report was to consider the Local Government Association's Feedback Report, and to review the Action Plan that detailed how the recommendations relating to the responsibilities of this Committee would be implemented.

The Director of Governance and Development introduced the item, and highlighted that they'd already met with the Chair and other senior officers to discuss the outcomes of the report.

Members suggested that the procedure around call-in be looked at, to ensure it is clear for future call ins.

The Chair noted that a future meeting was taking place on 9 February to discuss the Committee's work plan, which would include maximising the use of task and finish groups, as members stated that the Committee was constrained by significant time pressures.

**RESOLVED:** That the Committee note the recommendations, and discuss them further at the work planning meeting on 9 February.

### **OS.239** Quarterly Digest

The purpose of the item was to consider any issues arising out of the Quarterly Digest for future debate and/or action by the Committee.

The Chair introduced the item, explaining that they had attended the meeting of the Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny and offered to take any points from the committee to a future meeting of the Health overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**RESOLVED:** That whether to include the item on future work plans will ne discussed at the future work planning meeting on 9 February.

### **OS.240** Work Plan/ Executive Forward Plan

Purpose of the item was to note the Committee's work plan and the Executive Forward Plan.

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At this point, the Committee voted on whether to extend the meeting by 5 minutes, as the three hour limit had been reached.

**Voting record- For 8, Against 0, Abstentions 0, Absent 2**

The Chair then explained that in order to close the minutes within the additional 5 minutes, this item would be discussed in detail at the future work planning meeting due to the three hour limit being reached.

**RESOLVED:** That the committee discuss the item at the future work planning meeting on 9 February.

The Meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 9.05 pm

Chair

(END)

# Agenda Item 8



**COTSWOLD**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 21 March 2023
Subject	Council Priority and Service Performance Report – 2022-23 Quarter Three
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	All relevant Cabinet Members
Accountable officer	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive Email: <a href="mailto:robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk">robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Report author	Mary-Ann Forrest, Performance and Policy Analyst Email: <a href="mailto:mary-ann.forrest@publicagroup.uk">mary-ann.forrest@publicagroup.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	To provide an update on progress on the Council's priorities and service performance
Annexes	Annex A – Corporate Plan Action Tracker Annex B - Council Priorities report Annex C - Performance indicator report
Recommendation(s)	<i>That the Committee:</i>  <i>1. Notes overall progress on the Council priorities and service delivery for 2022-23 Q3</i>
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver the highest standard of service</li> <li>• Respond to the climate crisis</li> <li>• Provide socially rented homes</li> <li>• Make our local plan green to the core</li> <li>• Support health and wellbeing</li> <li>• Enable a vibrant economy</li> </ul>
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Publica Directors, Assistant Directors, Business Managers, Service Managers and Service Leads



## **I. BACKGROUND**

- I.1** The Council adopted the Corporate Plan 2020-24 ('the Plan') in September 2020, and included recovery work in response to the impact of Covid-19. A spring 2022 'refresh' of the Plan was completed and approved by Council at its meeting in May 2022. The refresh sought to reflect key achievements since the introduction of the Plan, and clarify the priorities over the remaining period of the Plan (to April 2024).
- I.2** The Council invited the Local Government Association (LGA) to conduct a corporate peer challenge in October 2022. A corporate peer challenge provides for an external review of how a council functions and its ability to deliver on its plans, proposals and ambitions. It is good practice for a council to have a peer challenge every 3 – 4 years (the Council's last peer challenge was undertaken in November 2019). The review is undertaken by a team that is knowledgeable and experienced in local government, and includes both officer and councillor representatives. The team acts as a 'critical friend' and produces feedback that provides a health check and commentary on areas of strength and potential areas for further consideration. Further details are provided at Section 4.
- I.3** A high level commissioning statement was approved by Cabinet in January 2020 which sets out the relationship between Publica and the Council and their respective responsibilities. Publica must ensure that it provides the necessary information to the Council so it can assess whether the commissioned services are being delivered in accordance with the agreed quality and standard. The Council's Chief Executive is responsible for reviewing and approving the information provided in this report prior to its publication.
- I.4** The Council's Chief Executive has received a report on progress towards achieving the Council's priorities and service performance. Having assessed performance in line with the high level commissioning statement, the Chief Executive has drawn particular attention to the following:
- The Council has appointed a contractor for the Trinity Road office refurbishments. The revised layouts will create space in the West wing to be let to tenants. The first phase of works started in January and will continue throughout February 2023. The Agile project will proceed in a coordinated way with the roof repairs project which is currently out to tender for the main contractor;
  - The rising energy prices and higher cost of living is affecting householders, in particular those on low incomes. Both Cabinet and Council received a report on how the Council is responding to the Cost of Living and Warm Places Motions. Funding allocations for specific initiatives were approved including match funding of £20,000 for the Council Tax Hardship Fund which could be used to provide one-off support in specific financial circumstances, and £40,000 from the Council Priorities Fund towards establishing a food network. Existing external funding of £75,000 which the Council receives for community



based activity has been ringfenced to the 'Cotswold Connected Community and Food Programme'. A councillor led cross party Cost of Living Crisis steering group is meeting every 2 - 3 weeks to oversee progress on assessing what additional support the Council could offer to residents;

- At the end of Q3, the council tax collection rate was nearly one percentage point up on the previous year, but could still be impacted moving into the final quarter of the year. The Council has completed the £150 Council Tax rebate programme. At the end of December 2022, the Council had paid out £3,830,400 (core scheme), and an additional £135,554 (discretionary scheme) to 26,052 households. Looking ahead, the revised Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme for the next financial year was approved by Cabinet and Council in November 2022. In addition, Cabinet approved the introduction of the Exceptional Hardship Fund in January 2023 to support those residents who are struggling to pay any remaining Council Tax following the application and award of CTS.
- The business rates collection rate is continuing to improve since emerging from the pandemic and was over five and a half percentage points higher than the previous year, although still lower than historical levels. Recovery is expected to take longer due to the impact of the cost of living crisis. The government is continuing to support certain businesses with extended retail relief of 50% during this financial year, and will increase to 75% in 2023-24 for leisure and retail businesses. However, the criteria for eligibility is more stringent than during the pandemic so some businesses will miss out. The service will be writing to those businesses affected. In addition, some businesses will see their rates increase as a result of the business rates revaluation 2023-24;
- The Council is continuing to support the 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme in which people in the UK are sponsoring/hosting a Ukrainian individual or family. As at 22 December 2022 there were 150 sponsors. Some guests are being re-matched with new sponsors as relationships break down or the sponsor does not wish to continue in the scheme. Since government increased the monthly sponsor payments to £500, more sponsors have agreed to continue to support their families past the initial 6-month period;
- Earlier this year, the Council was awarded £1m from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund for the period 2022-23 to 2024-25. The Council's Local Investment Plan, which sets out how the Council proposes to use the funding, was approved by government in December 2022. A further £764,292 was indicatively allocated to the Council from the Rural England Prosperity Fund for financial years 2023-24 and 2024-25. An addendum to the Local Investment Plan was submitted to the government at the end of November 2022;
- Following the decision to retain and enhance the current shared legal service last year, Cadence Innova has been commissioned to support the three partner councils with a detailed service review. Cadence has experience in this field, having undertaken reviews of legal services for Enfield Council and the shared legal service in Gloucestershire (One



Legal representing Tewkesbury BC, Stroud DC, Cheltenham BC and Gloucester City). This commission, whilst ongoing, has already proved invaluable in terms of starting to identify issues and opportunities. One of the observations is the need, for a revised set of key performance indicators for the service, to help monitor performance and service delivery. These will in due course be included as part of the quarterly reports;

- The £380,000 replacement of fitness equipment across the Council's leisure centres has been delivered by SLM Everyone Active (SLM). Initial signs are positive with memberships up by nearly 20% at the end of Q3 compared to a year ago. Rising energy costs continue to be a key issue for leisure operators. The government has announced that the scheme to protect high energy usage companies will not include leisure centres. The risk of high prices will also impact on the Council where a risk share for higher than usual utility tariffs is included in the leisure contract. SLM will continue to raise its concerns with the relevant bodies.

## **2. COUNCIL PRIORITY REPORT**

### **2.1 Progress on actions in the Corporate Plan include:**

- The Council's Local Investment Plan, which sets out how the Council proposes to use the £1m UK Shared Prosperity Fund was approved by the Government in December 2022;
- Following the resolution of technical difficulties, all three phases of the cashless car parking project have been completed. Moving to cashless parking has multiple benefits. It will support the Council's carbon reduction commitment and reduce the costs associated with cash collection and vandalism of pay and display machines;
- Improvement works started at Rissington Road car park, Bourton on the Water in November 2022. The car park requires a new drainage system, resurfacing and layout redesign which will improve the customer experience and comply with industry standards;
- Crowdfund Cotswold continues to attract wide interest across the District. Six projects applied to the Council's 'Autumn Round'. Three projects have already fundraised their target. The Council contributed £26,000 to projects with a further contribution of £10,000 from the Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) resilience fund to eligible projects;
- The Community Wellbeing team in partnership with 'World Jungle' delivered the Holiday Activity and Food programme (HAF) in the Christmas holidays. The offer involved activities from 13 different providers as well as a range of ticketed activities including climbing, cinema, laserquest, ice skating and a visit to Cotswold Wildlife Park;
- Work is progressing on the Changing Places Toilets project (£162,500 award from government). Each of the venues is at a different stage of delivery, with Cotswold Farm





Park being the furthest advanced, having now placed the order with the supplier and the equipment should be installed early in the New Year;

- The Council has secured £137k from GCC for Round 3 of the government funded Household Support Fund for distribution in early 2023. Part of the funding will support families in need with supermarket vouchers as well as registered carers in partnership with Gloucestershire Carers Hub;
- The procurement process for the appointment of Leisure and Culture Management Contractors (2 lots) has commenced. The first stage Standard Selection Questionnaire (SSQ) responses has been completed and the successful bids received an invitation to submit initial tender in mid-October 2022 with a return date of 6 January 2023. Five leisure contractors were invited to bid (one has withdrawn) and two for culture.
- The Council and Bromford Housing have entered into a Collaboration Agreement to deliver the Down Ampney housing development. A planned programme of consultation commenced on 10 October 2022 and will continue through this year, and will help to shape the initial scheme designs for a net carbon zero housing development. The draft Collaboration Agreement was approved by Cabinet at its meeting in November 2022.
- In November 2022, the Government awarded additional funding of £230,000 (together with West Oxfordshire) to further develop and promote digital engagement tools which will be used for further draft local plan consultations
- The A417 Missing Link scheme was approved in November 2022; and Kier Highways has been appointed as the main contractor. The £460m project is designed to reduce congestion and improve road safety on this important link between Cirencester and Gloucester and, more widely, the M4 and M5 motorways

**2.2** An overview of progress against all actions in the Corporate Plan is attached at Annex A and the Council Priority highlight report is attached at Annex B.

### **3. SERVICE PERFORMANCE**

**3.1** Overall performance appears to be mixed. There were improvements in some services such as Planning and Customer services, while other services such as Revenues and Benefits have found it a challenging quarter as they manage the impact of the cost of living crisis. The severe weather conditions in December 2022 affected waste collections, and to a lesser extent high risk food inspections.

**3.2** Over the last year, a number of services have highlighted the potential impact of the cost of living crisis on households, businesses and the Council's services in particular Revenues and Benefits, Planning, Housing Support and Leisure. Some services such as the Revenues and Benefits have reported increased customer contact and workloads while other services such as Planning are reporting a slow-down in applications and potentially fewer applications for large developments due to a loss of confidence in the housing market.



- 3.3 There was an unusually high number of 'Amber' indicators this quarter where performance was close to target. Some targets have been set to be challenging and are exceptionally difficult to meet when numbers are low and then converted into percentages, for example high risk food hygiene inspections and building control satisfaction surveys. There will be a review of targets at the end of the financial year.
- 3.4 There are a number of improvement programmes in progress across services focussed on improving the way services communicate with customers, increasing automation and self-serve options for customers (OpenPortal in Revenues and Benefits and the Channel Choice project), and improving the monitoring of workflows using case management tools to help services to actively manage resources (Enterprise in Planning).
- 3.5 Some of the performance indicators that were short of their targets or showing a downward trend are considered below together with rectifying actions:

- A combination of increased number of claims and change of circumstances and reduced staffing during the quarter has resulted in longer processing times for CTS new claims and HB changes while the average processing days for CTS changes remained comfortably within the target at 3.8 days.

At the end of Q3, the average days to process new CTS claims increased by 3.5 days to 23.5 days; and the average days to process HB changes increased by just under one day to 9.3 days.

The service reports that the cost of living crisis has started to increase overall customer contact and workloads in the service. During the quarter, the Benefits team was down by two full-time experienced officers and another officer left the team in December 2022.

**Resolution:** The team has been prioritising new claims as these households are likely to be in the greatest needs while also being mindful of the impact of delays to processing changes in circumstances, in particular HB changes. At the end of Q3, the percentage of HB overpayment due to LA delay or error was well within the national target of 0.47%.

The team is putting in plans to secure and restore/increase resources to deal with rising workloads, and improve processing times including the use of overtime and accessing Civica On Demand. These actions are expected to reduce processing times for CTS new claims to be within or close to the 20 day target at the end of Q4, as well as reducing the processing times for HB changes which will also be helped by the auto processing of pension credit up ratings and new year rent increases from landlords which are applied during Q4.

The OpenPortal which provides a facility for customers to self-serve is being promoted by both the Revenues and Benefits service and Customer Services and will help to



reduce customer contact. Further work to improve benefit forms to make them more customer friendly and accessible through the OpenPortal is planned;

- Performance for Land Charges searches despatched within 10 working days has dipped again due to a shortage of staff able to complete internal consultee responses in particular in the Planning service.

**Resolution:** An alternative resource was identified to help clear the backlog of planning responses to land charge searches on an overtime basis; and two new recruits joined the Planning Admin Team in January 2023. There are plans to train the whole of the Planning Admin Team in responding to land charge search consultations which will provide resilience across the partnership.

Action is being taken to improve internal consultation turnaround times more generally, including developing a way to better monitor workflows to better understand where the delays are. The Service Lead will highlight any issues or delay in turnaround times to the appropriate Service Manager. This new process will commence formally half way through Q4, and will require time to embed. Performance is expected to start returning to previous high levels from 2023-24 Q1.

- Planning determination times for all types of applications has improved over the last 12 months, with both 'Major' and 'Minor' applications exceeding their targets. Planning determination times for 'Other' applications (mainly householder applications) has also continued to improved but at a slower rate, partly due to being unable to secure extensions of times. This outturn is reported cumulatively from the beginning of the year which means that fluctuations and improvements are flattened. The cumulative outturn to the end of Q3 was 73.8% while the quarterly outturns were 77.4% for Q3, up from 72.6% in Q2 and 71.5% in Q1. Improvements have continued into January 2023 with the target of 80% having been achieved (Actual: 80.52%).

**Resolution:** Performance is expected to continue to improve, although there is an acknowledged backlog of applications which is being worked through so it is possible that there will be some fluctuations. Caseloads have become more manageable. Since the beginning of Q3, the Development Management team has been operating at full capacity following the recruitment to 3.5 Planning Officer posts vacant at the end of the previous financial year. During Covid-19, there was a significant growth in these types of applications. The service reports that the number of applications into the service is slowing but remains above pre-Covid levels in line with the national trend.

The Planning Advisory Service (PAS) undertook a review of the Planning service and identified a number of areas for improvement, some of which have already been implemented along with other service improvement projects to improve case management and communication with customers (see 'Deliver our services to the



highest standard' in Annex B Council Priority report). A Cabinet report on Phase 3 PAS recommendations has been prepared which will focus on creating further efficiencies but will require more significant changes in the planning process.

- The number of missed bins per 100,000 increased in Q3 due to the severe weather in December 2022 and the suspension of the service for four days. This type of service failure would not usually be recorded as a 'miss', but the high volume of properties affected by the weather conditions created some technical difficulties with In-Cab. The number of missed bins for October and November 2022 was 64 per 100,000, well within the target.

The target was revised at the beginning of this financial year from an average of 110 to a more stringent 80 missed bins per 100,000 to reflect the successful implementation of In-Cab technology and improved performance.

**Resolution:** The service reports that missed bins performance has returned to previous low levels and that there will be a review and lessons learned session in the next few weeks.

**3.6** In spite of the challenges, there have been a number of areas where indicators have improved or are noteworthy:

- There were improvements in both gym membership and the number of leisure visits in Q3 compared to a year ago. Gym memberships increased by nearly 20% and the number of visits increased by 4.7% (Bourton Leisure was closed for the first two weeks of October 2022). The service reports that there has been a positive start to the New Year with increased interest and usage which is usual for this time of the year, but the rise in cost of living and continued pressure on customers may result in a weaker performance;
- The average call waiting time in Customer Services improved from 2 minutes 20 seconds in Q2 to 57 seconds in Q3. Lower call volumes at this time of the year and recruitment to posts during the quarter contributed to this significant improvement. A process for managing communications with residents and customers was recently implemented which should help to 'smooth' Customer Service workloads throughout the year; while further automation should help to reduce overall call volumes;
- The Food Safety team completed 18 out of 23 high risk food inspections despite a shortage of staff and severe weather conditions in December 2022 which made some properties inaccessible. The remaining inspections have since been completed;
- Eight customer satisfaction surveys for the Building Control service were completed in the quarter, of which seven customers were fully satisfied and one partially satisfied.

**3.7** A full report is attached at Annex C.



#### 4. CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE

4.1 The Council invited the Local Government Association (LGA) to conduct a corporate peer challenge in October 2022. The corporate peer challenge team gathers information from a wide range of sources and attends various meetings, whilst also conducting interviews with staff, councillors and the Council's partner organisations. The Council's performance is then reviewed in terms of a core set of assessment areas:

- Local priorities and outcomes – are the council's priorities clear and informed by the local context? Is the council delivering effectively on its priorities?
- Organisational and place leadership – does the council provide effective local leadership? Are there good relationships with partner organisations and local communities?
- Governance and culture – Are there clear and robust governance arrangements? Is there a culture of challenge and scrutiny?
- Financial planning and management – Does the council have a grip on its current financial position? Does the council have a strategy and a plan to address its financial challenges?
- Capacity for improvement – Is the organisation able to support delivery of local priorities? Does the council have the capacity to improve?

4.2 In addition to covering the core assessment areas, the Council requested that the peer challenge team also consider:

- How well equipped the Council is to respond to the challenges and opportunities that are facing local government now and into the future?
- How well does the Council ensure it delivers its ambitions and priorities through its existing partnership arrangements with Publica?

4.3 A corporate peer challenge forms a key element of sector-led improvement, where the process is designed to complement and add value to a council's own performance and improvement thinking. Peers use their experience and knowledge of local government to reflect on the information presented to them by people they meet and material they read. The team provides feedback as critical friends, not as assessors, consultants or inspectors. The team reported that they had been made to feel welcome and had been very well supported throughout the peer review process, and they found those they engaged with to be open and honest.

4.4 The Peer Review team set out a number of recommendations (the feedback report is available on the council's website) which included identifying that there is scope to undertake more detailed and broader (i.e. beyond the Publica councils) benchmarking and

comparison of service delivery performance with ‘nearest neighbour’ authorities, that reflect similar geography, size, demographics and deliver services similar to Cotswold District Council. Benchmarking can be incredibly valuable, provided that the data that is being compared against, is truly valid and comparable. As such Publica will be working with council senior officers to undertake a piece of work to develop a broader benchmarking approach. As such it is likely that in due course, future quarterly performance reports will feature more detailed and broader comparisons of service delivery with other councils.

**5. CABINET**

- 5.1 This summary performance report was reviewed by Cabinet at its meeting on 13 March 2023. Any comments from this Committee will be reported to the Cabinet.

**6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications from this report. A quarterly finance report is now a separate item on this agenda.

**7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 None.

**8. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 8.1 Contained in this report.

**9. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 9.1 None

**10. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 Contained in this report

**11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 11.1 None

(END)

Cotswold District Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024 Update: Progress by end of 2022-23 Q3

<b>Green</b>	On target
<b>Amber</b>	Off target but action being taken to ensure delivery (where this results in a reviewed target date, this is made clear in the table)
<b>Red</b>	Off target and no action has yet been agreed to resolve the situation
<b>Complete</b>	Action completed
<b>Cancelled</b>	Supeseded/cancelled
<b>On Hold</b>	Action on hold

Deliver the highest standard of services

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Ref.	Our aims	Our actions	Commencement	Date due, Achieved	Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	Comment for Q3
SS1	Ensure that road and street cleaning across the district is undertaken proactively and to a high standard, as part of the 'Clean and Green Cotswolds' initiative.	Maintain verges	November 2020	April 2024	Bill Oddy/Scott Williams	Joe Harris	On Target	Ongoing. The wildflower planting of verges to be undertaken by GCC will not be undertaken in this financial year. The UK shared prosperity fund for this financial year has been reallocated to other projects
SS2		Improve road sweeping regimes	November 2020	April 2024	Bill Oddy/Scott Williams	Joe Harris	Complete	An enhanced level of road sweeping along the ring road has been introduced as part of the Clean and Green Cotswold initiative
SS3		Replace worn and damaged street nameplates	September 2020	167 replaced by April '22 Approx. 120 scheduled for replacement summer/autumn 2022	Claire Locke/Alfred Tolley	Joe Harris	Complete	All 160 street name plates scheduled for replacement have been installed, with a few exceptions that require specialist action i.e. wall mounted at height in central Cirencester and require road closure to enable access.
SS4		Keep areas of open space tidy	April 2021	April 2024	Andy Barge/Scott Williams	Joe Harris	On Target	The Clean & Green team continues to engage with community groups, parishes and towns to find ways to keep their open areas tidy. This included a number of educational sessions and facilitating a number of community led litter picks. During Q3, there were 18 requests for litter picks from communities with litter picks taking place in Northleach, Stow-on-the-wold, Lower Swell and Bourton, involving 12 members of the community and 75 children. A number of community projects to introduce wild flower planting were completed
SS5	Deliver an excellent Town and Parish Council engagement programme	Maintain contact with all town and parish councils through a regular newsletter	October 2020	Achieved	Angela Claridge	Joe Harris	Complete	Completed
SS6		Deliver programme of engagement for town and parish councils	October 2021	April 2024 Planning seminar held March 2022	Angela Claridge	Joe Harris	On Target	A new Community Support Officer for Town and Parish Council engagement has been recruited and started in late October 2022. Two provisional dates for the next forums are scheduled for mid to late February
SS7	Roll out cashless car parking to our car parks across the district, including an exemplar car park at Bourton on the Water	Introduce cashless parking in all car parks	July 2020	March 2023	Frank Wilson/David Stanley	Mike Evemy	Complete	All three phases have been completed. All the machines have been upgraded with offline payment software to improve payment processing. The service will continue to monitor performance
SS8		Determine the feasibility of 'pay on exit' parking, and implement if appropriate	March 2021	May 2022	Jon Dearing/Maria Wheatley	Mike Evemy	Complete	Feasibility briefing paper proposes that 'pay on exit' is reconsidered when the current machines are due for replacement
SS9		Review charging periods at all car parks	March 2021	April 2022	Jon Dearing/Maria Wheatley	Mike Evemy	Complete	Completed
SS10		Make the Whiteway car park operational	January 2020	Achieved	Jon Dearing/Maria Wheatley	Mike Evemy	Complete	Completed
SS11		Deliver Improvements to Rissington Road Car Park, Bourton on the Water	November 2022	March 2023	Claire Locke/Andrew Dike	Mike Evemy	On Target	Cabinet agreed additional funding in September 2022. Contractors started on site in November 2022. Work progressing well and on target for completion by Easter 2023



Cotswold District Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024 Update: Progress by end of 2022-23 Q3

SS12	Develop, implement and deliver a strategy for the Cotswold Water Park	Produce a strategy on a page	November 2021	Achieved	Andy Barge/Philippa Lowe	Juliet Layton	Complete	Completed
SS13		Produce Actions Plans for each of the 4 Strategic Elements, holding stakeholder engagement as appropriate.	November 2021	April 2022	Andy Barge/Philippa Lowe	Juliet Layton	Complete	Completed
SS14		Deliver on funded projects	November 2021	March 2023	Andy Barge/Philippa Lowe	Juliet Layton	On Target	Phase 2 is underway including the feasibility study of the Spine Road crossing - designs of the crossing have been prepared by Sustrans for approval by GCC's capital programme management board in January 2023 and onward to GCC Cabinet in March 2023; consultation of the foot/cycleway into Neigh Bridge Country Park has been completed. Vegetation clearance to take place in Spring 2023 and construction post-Easter; and a travel plan for Cotswold Water Park was completed in January 2023
SS15	Establish financial resilience to enable investment in our priorities	Adopt and implement a clear financial strategy that reflects the changing economy and our identified needs	September 2020	Refreshed annually	David Stanley	Mike Evemy	On Target	Cabinet reviewed the Council's draft budget proposals for 2023/24 together with a refresh of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) forecasts in November 2022. The budget proposals were approved for public consultation from 8 November to 9 December 2022
SS16		Adopt and implement recovery investment strategy	September 2020	Refreshed annually	David Stanley	Mike Evemy/Tony Dale	Cancelled	The Recovery Investment Strategy was rescinded in November 2022 due to concerns around borrowing levels and the viability of the schemes. There may still be opportunities that arise from time-to-time for example through transformation that will be considered on a business case basis
SS17		Develop and implement an asset management strategy	March 2021	December 2022	Claire Locke/Andrew Turner	Mike Evemy	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	Consultation with s151 officer has started to agree options. Preferred consultants have been identified. Further discussions between s151 officer and Assets team are required to take this forward
SS18	Create maximised flood protection measures for residential and commercial properties	Provide advice and guidance Promote and deliver flood mitigation measures, where appropriate	September 2020	April 2024	Phil Martin/Laurence King	Andrew Doherty	On Target	Discussions are continuing with Members on options and recommendations from the Flood Risk Management review group. A report to Cabinet is expected in March 2023 Risk of flooding highlighted on social media along with a guide which includes information on how to prepare, what to do in the event of flood and organisations to contact for support
SS19		Roll out the Cotswold Flood Warden Programme	November 2021	November 2022 for the initial pilot year.	Robert Weaver	Andy Doherty	On Target	Seventeen Flood wardens were signed up by the end of Q3, from Bibury, Bledington, Bourton on the Water, Cirencester, Evenlode, Lechlade, Moreton in Marsh, Northleach, Somerford Keynes, Southrop and Upper Slaughter. Following a well-attended meeting on 11th January in Moreton-in Marsh, further wardens will be recruited.
SS20	Provide a trusted, inclusive and transparent planning service	Restructure our team to ensure resilience	September 2020	Achieved	Frank Wilson	Juliet Layton	Complete	Completed
SS21		Relaunch our pre-application service	September 2020	June 2022	Jon Dearing/Phil Shaw	Juliet Layton	Complete	The new fees and charges for both pre-app advice as well as other non-statutory work (that are currently not being charged for) were approved by Cabinet in February and will be rolled out on 1 April 2023
SS22		Improve communication with residents	January 2021	April 2024	Jon Dearing/Phil Shaw	Juliet Layton	On Target	The comms element of the planning process is being re-designed with some elements already implemented. A series of customer 'touch points' has been introduced to help applicants know where they are in the planning process e.g. 7 days from receipt to validation, 7 days from validation to officer contact and is having a positive impact on reducing complaints. A small team has been formed to trial different ways of communicating with stakeholders which will help us to understand the impact of how we communicate and the extent of the communication on throughput
SS23		Develop an ICT enabled proactive approach to planning enforcement	April 2021	April 2024	Jon Dearing/Phil Shaw	Juliet Layton	On Target	The front end has been improved with new forms and documentation to register enforcement issues. The next stage is to reduce the backlog of enforcement complaints, and Members will be asked to help draft the criteria. There will be a report to Cabinet in the next few weeks as part of the monitoring of the improvement programme
SS24		Maximise external funding opportunities	December 2020	April 2024	Jon Dearing/Phil Shaw	Juliet Layton	On Target	In addition to the launch of the pre-app service, the service is planning to introduce charges for additional administrative work created during the processing of planning applications, for example additional work created by the submission of invalid applications. The new fees and charges have been approved and will be implemented on 1 April 2023



### Cotswold District Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024 Update: Progress by end of 2022-23 Q3

SS25	Provide an efficient and competitive building standards service	Compare local markets	March 2021	Monthly, to understand market share	Jon Dearing/Andrew Jones	Juliet Layton	On Target	Since October 2022, the service has increased its focus on marketing letters which is helping to improve market share. Our market share averaged around 61% during Q3 compared to 45% a year ago.
SS26		Maximise opportunities for income generation	April 2021	Ongoing, as an iterative review process.	Jon Dearing/Andrew Jones	Juliet Layton	On Target	Awareness raising and promotion of the BC service through marketing, comms and entry into Quality Awards. Improvements have been made to marketing letters and service office focussed on clarity and are now being sent out to planning applicants. The service is working with the comms team on an update of the the marketing and business plan; and the first local awards has been planned for February/March.
SS27	Provide modern and clean public toilets	Reviewing our estate	April 2022	September 2022	Jon Dearing/Mandy Fathers	Lisa Spivey	Complete	The outcome of the estate review will feed into the Strategy for the provision of public toilets
SS28		Explore opportunities for 'comfort partnerships'	April 2021	September 2022	Jon Dearing/Mandy Fathers	Lisa Spivey	Complete	The resources required to monitor and ensure that the facilities provided by the comfort partners are to standard and remained accessible were deemed to be too burdensome and will not be taken forward
SS29		Develop a strategy for the provision of public toilets	April 2022	September 2022	David Stanley/Jon Dearing/Mandy Fathers	Lisa Spivey	Superseded	A strategy for the Council's public conveniences has been drafted but there is now a change of direction. A report on the costs of provision and new charges was considered at Cabinet in February 2023. There will be a site by site review to roll out card readers to enable cashless payment
SS30	Review how the Council commissions its Legal Services	Complete the review of legal services	March 2022	May 2022	David Stanley	Joe Harris	Complete	Cabinet agreed to retain and enhance the in-house legal team in July 2022, and has since been agreed by partner Councils
SS31		Implement Council decision, following review	May 2022	April 2023	David Stanley	Joe Harris	On Target	Cadence Innova has been commissioned to support the three partner councils with a detailed service review. This commission, whilst ongoing, has already proved invaluable in terms of starting to identify issues and opportunities. One of the observations is the need, for a revised set of key performance indicators for the service, to help monitor performance and service delivery. These will in due course be included as part of the quarterly reports.

## Cotswold District Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024 Update: Progress by end of 2022-23 Q3

### Responding to the climate crisis

	Our aims	Our actions	Commencement	Date due, Achieved	Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	Comment for Q3
CC1	Tackle the climate crisis at home	Develop support to owner-occupiers to invest in energy efficiency, retrofit and decarbonisation works	September 2021	March 2023	Claire Locke/Chris Crookall-Fallon	Rachel Coxcoon	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	Partnership activity convened by Stroud DC, county-wide. District-wide group buying scheme for solar PV and batteries being developed, intending to bring to Cabinet in Q1 2023/4, and go live in Q2. The Council has decided not to proceed with the Listed Buildings Consent Order for solar panels.
CC2	Develop, facilitate and deliver an exemplar public engagement programme in relation to carbon reduction and climate change	Develop a public engagement campaign, building on training delivered to the communications team, councillors and the Local Plan Issues and Options engagement.	April 2022	April 2024	Chris Crookall-Fallon	Rachel Coxcoon	On Target	Still in development, and may need to link with any public consultation on a revised Climate Emergency Strategy and action plan
CC3		Promote the opportunity to invest in the Cotswold Climate Investment, CMI, launched in partnership with Abundance Investment	April 2022	June 2022	David Stanley/Chris Crookall-Fallon	Rachel Coxcoon	Complete	Target investment reached, with funds allocated to District-wide EV charge point installation, and solar PV for Trinity Rd
CC4		Work with partners to establish a Climate Action Network in the District, to support locally driven initiatives	May 2022	April 2024	Chris Crookall-Fallon	Rachel Coxcoon	On Target	Cotswold Climate Action Network (Cotswold CAN) approved in principle by Cabinet. Being developed with help from the Commonplace team, with the intention of hosting it on the Commonplace platform. The Council is working with West Oxfordshire to progress the project
CC5		Prepare and agree an EV Charging Point Delivery Plan	October 2020	Achieved	Rob Weaver Claire Locke	Rachel Coxcoon	Complete	Completed
CC6		Install EV charging points across the District	October 2020	Phase 1 Completion Autumn 2022 Phase 2 Costings Spring 2022, Rollout Winter 2022	Rob Weaver Claire Locke	Rachel Coxcoon	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	Significant delays experienced with previous contractor mean that other installer options have been explored. Project has now re-started with alternative contractor. Rissington Rd carpark chargepoints should be operational by the re-opening of the carpark in time for Easter break 2023. Trinity Rd offices charge point design has started. Phase 1 of EVCP programme estimated for completion by Dec 2023. Phase 2 business case (other sites) to be developed during Q2 2023/4
CC7	Help businesses embed climate change objectives within their operations	September 2020	April 2024 Race to Zero event at Growth Hub in May 2022	Claire Locke/Paul James/CCF	Rachel Coxcoon/Tony Dale	On Target	Race to zero pledge rolling out nationally, but current take-up limited by business confidence. There has been a change in approach as the national rollout has not been particularly successful. We are working with the Growth Hub to support businesses to reduce their carbon footprint. Programme of events is in place	
CC8	Reduce carbon emissions from our own operations	Work with Ubico to adopt ultra-low emission vehicle technology	March 2021	April 2024	Rob Weaver Scott Williams/Chris Crookall-Fallon	Andy Doherty/Rachel Coxcoon	On Target	Vehicle technology not yet at a point where it could be used in a large rural district and is affordable.
CC9		Improve energy efficiency of council premises	March 2021	Phase 1 complete - higher efficiency gas boilers installed at Trinity Rd, LED lighting completed at Moreton Area Centre. <span style="color: red;">Due December 2023</span>	Claire Locke/Chris Crookall-Fallon	Rachel Coxcoon /Lisa Spivey	On Target	Procurement of PV for Trinity road underway. Funding for roof repairs at Trinity Road was approved in September 2022, and the work is out to tender
CC10		Secure energy-efficient, 100% green energy for all Council premises, using renewable energy where possible	March 2021	Achieved	Claire Locke/Chris Crookall-Fallon	Rachel Coxcoon	Complete	Completed
CC11		Complete Public Sector Decarbonisation scheme at our Leisure centres	March 2021	Achieved	Claire Locke/Chris Crookall Fallon	Rachel Coxcoon/Jenny Forde	Complete	Completed
CC12		Provide electric vehicle charging points at all Council premises	September 2020	Phase 1 completion due autumn 2022 April 2024	Claire Locke	Rachel Coxcoon / Lisa Spivey	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	Awaiting outcome of On Street Residential Charging Scheme funding bid before orders can be placed for Trinity Rd. Trinity Rd offices charge point design has started. Phase 1 due for completion by Dec 2023. Phase 2 business case (other sites) to be developed during Q2 2023/4

Cotswold District Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024 Update: Progress by end of 2022-23 Q3

CC13	Achieve a reduction in carbon emissions for the district	Adopt our climate change strategy	September 2020	September 2020	Rob Weaver Claire Locke/Chris Crookall-Fallon	Rachel Coxcoon	Complete	Completed
CC14		Deliver our climate change action plan	September 2020	April 2024	Rob Weaver Claire Locke/Chris Crookall-Fallon	Rachel Coxcoon	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	The Climate Emergency Strategy 2020-30 was adopted 2021. There is a cross over between some of the actions in the Climate Change action plan and the Corporate Plan - progress is provided here against those actions. Given activities since the adoption, a mid term review will be undertaken starting Q4 2023/4
CC15	Increase renewable energy generation within the district	Complete an options appraisal of community energy generation	September 2020	April 2024	Rob Weaver Claire Locke/Chris Crookall-Fallon	Rachel Coxcoon	Off Target and no action has yet been agreed to resolve the situation	Long term action, which needs review and re-fresh. Currently ad-hoc support is being provided to community energy developments in the district, but not a systematic district-wide options appraisal.
CC16		Secure investment in renewable energy such as photovoltaic farms and electricity generation from our own estate and in partnership with others	April 2024	Investment options considered at Council July 2022	Rob Weaver Claire Locke/Chris Crookall-Fallon	Rachel Coxcoon	Cancelled	The recovery investment strategy was rescinded in November 2022
CC17		Support community-led and community-owned renewable energy projects	September 2020	April 2024	Rob Weaver Claire Locke/Chris Crookall-Fallon	Rachel Coxcoon	On Target	Long-term ongoing action. Support continues to be provided to individual community energy groups in the district as they come forwards with proposals.
CC18		Support neighbourhood-wide climate action	September 2020	April 2024	Rob Weaver Claire Locke/Chris Crookall-Fallon	Rachel Coxcoon	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	Long term action. Need for review to clarify the objective, given overlaps with other objectives (eg retrofit support, rooftop PV/battery initiative, etc). Review to be integrated with Climate Emergency Strategy update starting Q4 2023/4
CC19	Take a leadership role on the ecological emergency and nature recovery in the Cotswolds	Adopt and implement the ecological emergency action plan	July 2020	Plan approved July 2020 Cotswold Water Park Nature Recovery Plan published February 2022	Rob Weaver Jon Dearing/Sophia Price	Juliet Layton	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	The ecological emergency action plan was adopted in July 2020, and the plan is being delivered through business as usual although an increase in legislative burdens and staff capacity is making implementation slower. Action is being taken to increase staff capacity
CC20		Create a community and wildlife sanctuary at Chesterton Cemetery	December 2021	March 2023	Claire Locke/Andrew Turner	Andrew Doherty	On Target	Procurement took place in December/January and contractor is now on-site. Some seasonal planting will need to be completed later in the year but the bulk of the work to form wildflower garden, nature pond and rain garden should be complete by the end of March.
CC21	Reduce the carbon footprint of our waste and recycling service	Identify the true carbon footprint of our waste and recycling service	April 2022	March 2023	Bill Oddy/Scott Williams	Andrew Doherty	On Target	One of the six main priority areas of ESIP is reducing carbon produced by environmental services. The annual Green House Gas report 2021-22 has been completed and will be verified by Internal Audit in January. This report provides fuel consumption figures for the waste fleet which will help to identify the carbon footprint of the service
CC22		Consider changes to the waste and recycling service	April 2022	March 2023	Bill Oddy/Scott Williams	Andrew Doherty	On Target	The service has been benchmarked on performance and costs with nearest neighbours and other councils with a similar demographic. The Council is challenging Ubico to reduce cost and improve efficiency

Cotswold District Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024 Update: Progress by end of 2022-23 Q3

Providing socially rented homes

	Our aims	Our actions	Commencement	Date due, Achieved	Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	Comment for Q3
SH1	Deliver social rented and affordable rented accommodation across the district	Deliver a Council led, carbon neutral social housing scheme on the Down Ampney site	January 2022	June 2023	Rob Weaver/Claire Locke/Andrew Turner	Joe Harris / Lisa Spivey	On Target	The Council and Bromford entered into a Collaboration Agreement in November 2022 to deliver the site. A communication strategy has been developed to ensure appropriate engagement with all stakeholders including the Parish Council and local residents and people. A planned programme of consultation commenced on 10 October 2022 and a second round of consultation is taking place in March 2023 prior to the planning application being submitted. The legal transfer of the land to Bromford Housing will take place once planning consnet has been granted.
SH2		Progress a Council led, carbon neutral social housing on Council owned sites in Kemble and/or Southrop	October 2022	March 2024	Rob Weaver/Claire Locke/Andrew Turner	Joe Harris / Lisa Spivey	Cancelled	The Kemble site was paused due to challenges with the site including ecological constraints, and an alternative scheme on the derelict Broadleaze site at Down Ampney is being prepared for delivery first. Following a review of the Kemble site in the context of the cost of living crisis and constraints, Cabinet agreed that the site was not viable for housing development. Cabinet agreed in January 2023 to lease the land for use as allotments and community gardens
SH3		Explore direct delivery options  Work with partners to increase the supply of social rented accommodation  Investigate the feasibility of setting up a housing company	September 2020	April 2024	Claire Locke	Joe Harris	On Target	The draft Collaboration Agreement with Bromford has been finalised and was approved at Cabinet in November 2022
SH4	Provide more affordable housing with the emphasis on social rented accommodation	Adopt an affordable housing delivery strategy that sets out clear aims and objectives	June 2020	Achieved	Rob Weaver Claire Locke	Joe Harris	Complete	Completed
SH5	Embed a Housing First approach to tackling homelessness	Maximise the opportunities of the 'housing first' model	July 2020	April 2024	Jon Dearing/Caroline Clissold	Joe Harris	On Target	Secured 50% of the funding (£19,000 pa) for the next 2.5 years for 6 units from the Rough Sleepers Initiative 2022-25 bid. Aspire and Bromford to match fund.
SH6		Acquire the property approved in July 2020, and put this to use	July 2020	Achieved	Jon Dearing/Caroline Clissold	Joe Harris	Complete	Completed
SH7		Participate in a joint Gloucestershire bid for additional government funding	August 2020	Achieved	Jon Dearing/Caroline Clissold	Joe Harris	Complete	Completed
SH8	Work with housing providers to improve the affordability and sustainability of developments across the district	Examine our existing assets and identify opportunities for housing delivery	September 2020	Achieved	Rob Weaver Claire Locke	Joe Harris	Complete	Completed
SH9		Identify opportunities to acquire properties for homeless accommodation	July 2020	April 2024	Claire Locke	Joe Harris / Lisa Spivey	On Target	In August 2022, the Council purchased the property in Tetbury that it had been leasing since July 2020. The property provides nine self-contained units for homeless people.
SH10		Identify and consider sites for delivery of affordable housing	July 2020	April 2024	Claire Locke	Joe Harris	On Target	Focus on Down Ampney initially
SH11		Explore modern methods of construction in the context of our rural setting	April 2021	First site (Stockwells, Moreton-Marsh) approved December 2021	Caroline Clissold	Joe Harris	On Target	The Stockwells regeneration scheme will be the first social rented, Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) net zero homes within the District. Developers started on site in Q2 and expect to complete during the summer 2023
SH12		Support young people through a 'rent to buy' scheme	April 2021	April 2024	Jon Dearing	Joe Harris	Superseded	This scheme has been superseded by a First Homes scheme launched by the government last year. Any new development must provide a proportion of its properties as First Homes which provides a heavily discounted option (between 30 -50% of the market value) for people to buy properties

Cotswold District Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024 Update: Progress by end of 2022-23 Q3

Make our local plan green to the core

	Our aims	Our actions	Commencement	Date due, Achieved	Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	Comment for Q3
LP1	Develop an updated local plan that delivers our corporate priorities and promotes both carbon neutral development and infrastructure	Identify and allocate land for future housing and businesses.	July 2020	Submit in 2023; Examination 23/24; and adoption 23/24	Andy Barge/James Brain	Rachel Coxcoon	On Target	Officers continue to update the evidence base and local plan policies. A review of the first drafts of policies commenced in October 2022. Submission to Cabinet of the draft Local Plan Review will be May 2023 instead of March 2023 to avoid Purdah/elections. Consultation dates are not changed and will take place in May 2023. Changes to the NPPF - examining how these changes might affect the plan making process - may be some delay of the planning reforms on the plan making process.
LP2		Draft new policies and updating existing policies to give effect to new council strategies, such as the economic recovery strategy, the climate and ecological emergency action plans and the renewable energy strategy.			Andy Barge/James Brain	Rachel Coxcoon	On Target	
LP3		Explore the potential of natural capital and the Community Infrastructure Levy in relation to delivering natural resilience to mitigate or minimise the risks associated with flooding across the district			Phil Martin/Laurence King Andy Barge/James Brain	Andrew Doherty	On Target	
LP4		Develop a new Cotswold Design Guide – building for the future in the Cotswolds	March 2022	March 2023	Andy Barge/James Brain Jon Dearing/Phil Shaw	Juliet Layton	On Target	
LP5	Develop a coordinated strategy for Cirencester town centre that responds positively to the changing nature of the high street	Deliver Cirencester town centre masterplan	2020/21	Framework masterplan has been commissioned and is due to be delivered during 2022; this will include community and stakeholder engagement	Andy Barge/James Brain	Rachel Coxcoon	On Target	Feasibility assessments were carried out in 2022 including two transport studies which were completed in autumn 2022, and further feasibility assessments will continue in 2023.
LP6		Work with Cirencester Town Council to deliver Cirencester neighbourhood development plan			Andy Barge/James Brain	Rachel Coxcoon	On Target	Work is continuing on drafting the Framework Masterplan along with preparations for stakeholder engagement and communication later this year.
LP7		Enable appropriate changes of use			Andy Barge/James Brain	Rachel Coxcoon	On Target	This project will align with both the Local Plan partial update and the emerging Cirencester Neighbourhood Development Plan
LP8		Identify sustainable transport options			Andy Barge/Hannah Fountain	Rachel Coxcoon	On Target	
LP9	Create a programme of work that demonstrates our commitment to public consultation and engagement in the planning process	Update our local development scheme	August 2020	SCI updated November 2020; LDS updated on May 2021; Commonplace online consultation system procured November 2021	Andy Barge/James Brain	Rachel Coxcoon	Complete	Completed
LP10	Update our statement of community involvement	Andy Barge/James Brain		Rachel Coxcoon	Complete	Completed		
LP11	Deliver a sustainable transport strategy	Promote sustainable methods of transport to reduce reliance on car usage for short journeys	To be confirmed in the publication of our local development scheme	April 2024 planning and implementation	Andy Barge/Hannah Fountain	Rachel Coxcoon	On Target	Attitudinal study still being scoped - draft brief expected Q4
LP12		Work with Gloucestershire County Council to provide better sustainable transport routes and options	September 2020	April 2024 planning and implementation	Andy Barge/Hannah Fountain	Rachel Coxcoon	On Target	Several projects and studies in partnership with GCC, including Rural Corridor study, Mass Transit study, Interchange strategy, Overarching Cycle Infrastructure Plan, Cirencester Access and Movement Study and general work on integrating transport and spatial planning.
LP13		Develop a Sustainable Transport Strategy	November 2020	2023, as part of the Local Plan Submission	Andy Barge/Hannah Fountain	Rachel Coxcoon	On Target	Presentation of Stage 1 findings to Members on 12 December 2022. Stage 2 elements (Access and Movement Study, Attitudinal/Behaviour Study) to be commissioned in Q4 if approved.

Cotswold District Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024 Update: Progress by end of 2022-23 Q3

Support health and wellbeing

	Our aims	Our actions	Commencement	Date due, Achieved	Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	Comment for Q3
HW1	Encourage resilient, well-connected and active communities that take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing goals	Review and revise our community grants scheme to focus on our priorities	May 2020	Agreed September 2020 Launched February 2021	Rob Weaver Andy Barge/Joseph Walker/Jacqui Wright	Jenny Forde	Complete	Spacehive launched. Further review programmed for 2023
HW2		Continue to support, develop and communicate the Crowdfund Cotswold Spacehive programme.	September 2020	Programme launched February 2021	Rob Weaver Andy Barge/Joseph Walker/Jacqui Wright	Jenny Forde	On Target	Six projects launched their campaigns on Crowdfund Cotswold in September/October 2022, although one project, Redesdale Hall Kitchen, has since withdrawn. Three of the projects have successfully fundraised their targets.
HW3		Coordinate an asset based community development approach	September 2020	April 2024	Andy Barge/Jacqui Wright	Jenny Forde	On Target	Cotswold connected community and food programme launched (£75k). Engaged with residents and businesses about the Argos alleyway in Cirencester which will see a transformation in 2023 based on community feedback. Supporting Chipping Campden residents with challenges around police, ambulance and MH services. Community meeting that involves representatives from relevant statutory services has been organised and is planned for January. Supported Digital Inclusion Pilot Group in Bourton- course for residents has been very successful, a second course is planned for January. The group keeps meeting without the tutor and our Community Builder is in regular contact via a WhatsApp group. We are encouraging other communities to adopt the model. Made contact with Chipping Campden Schools-planning an event in Spring. Engagement with Bromford Housing neighbourhood coaches and residents about community composting ideas/physical activity initiatives.
HW4		Host regular community forums with community groups and community leaders	July 2020	April 2024	Andy Barge/Jacqui Wright	Jenny Forde	On Target	Regular programme of meetings established Cost of living was discussed at each meeting to keep abreast of any challenges/needs and to facilitate partnership work across the district.
HW5		Continue to raise the profile of the Community Safety Partnership to reduce the fear of crime and ensure residents know how, and where, to get support	July 2020	April 2024	Andy Barge/Jacqui Wright	Jenny Forde	On Target	Supported OPCC 'perceptions of crime survey' Worked on 2 funding applications to the OPCC which will be submitted in early January. Engagement events planned for 2023.

### Cotswold District Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024 Update: Progress by end of 2022-23 Q3

HW6	Promote healthy lifestyles, fun and self-care for all ages	Complete a review of our leisure services	July 2020	May 2022	Rob Weaver / Scott Williams	Jenny Forde	Complete	Completed
HW7		Deliver the Council's Leisure strategy.	November 2020	April 2024	Rob Weaver / Scott Williams	Jenny Forde	On Target	Leisure strategy developed and action plans created for the three themes. Being delivered as part of the Active Cotswold Programme
HW8		Deliver capital programme to replace fitness equipment across the Leisure estate	March 2022	September 2022	Bill Oddy/Stuart Wilson	Jenny Forde	Complete	Completed
HW9		Undertake a Leisure and Culture management options appraisal to inform decision on future service delivery, and implement the agreed model(s).	May 2022	July 2023	Bill Oddy/Scott Williams	Jenny Forde	On Target	The tender notice went out on 2 September 2022 including the first stage Standard Selection Questionnaire (SSQ). Successful bids received an invitation to submit initial tender in mid October with a return date of 3 January 2023, now extended to 6 January. During December, staff responded to clarification questions. Following evaluation of bids and negotiation, a decision will be taken at the end of January as to the bids that will go through to the next round. Report to March Cabinet to recommend the preferred bids
HW10		Develop a updated Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) to inform planning and investment in pitch-based facilities	February 2022	December 2022	Scott Williams/Rachel Biles	Jenny Forde	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	Both winter and summer sport assessments have been completed and reviewed and signed off by the National Governing Bodies. The action plan is being prepared by KKP, which will become part of a single final report to be signed off by Sport England. Some delays are due to availability of external bodies for consultation which is outside of the Council's control
HW11		Improve referrals into physical activity and fitness based programmes, both in our Leisure Centres but also in the community.	February 2023	April 2024	Andy Barge/Rachel Biles/Jacqui Wright	Jenny Forde	On Target	Not yet due to start. The focus has shifted from referrals to developing more community based physical activities and will be delivered as part of the Active Cotswold programme. This is a long term project which will extend beyond the life of this Corporate Plan to 2025. A new part time post, fixed term post (externally funded) has been recruited to support the Active Cotswold programme in developing the physical activity offer in communities

### Cotswold District Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024 Update: Progress by end of 2022-23 Q3

HW12	Improve equal access to quality services across the district	Use targeted initiatives to tackle both childhood poverty and food poverty in the district, so more children and vulnerable families have access to nutritious food	September 2020	Holiday food scheme from Summer 2021, April 2024	Andy Barge/Jacqui Wright	Jenny Forde	On Target	The Holiday Activity and Food programme between 19 and 23 December. The programme offered activities from 13 different providers as well as a range of ticketed activities including climbing, cinema, laserquest, ice skating and a visit to Cotswold Wildlife Park. Families also received supermarket vouchers. Funded 'The Longest Table' initiative delivered by the Long Table which saw 10 community feasts hosted in the District just before Christmas. This was proactively supported by the communities and comms teams. Cotswold Connected Communities and Food programme launched (£75k)
HW13		Work with relevant services and organisations to provide more – and better – quality healthcare services	September 2020	April 2024	Andy Barge/Jacqui Wright	Jenny Forde	On Target	The ILP has run engagement sessions in the Beeches Ward, that has been identified as one of the most deprived Wards in Cotswold. The sessions bring local partners together to build better relationships and to find of working together that support the local community.
HW14		Continue to invest in dementia-friendly communities, improve understanding and communication, and reduce loneliness and isolation	September 2020	April 2024	Andy Barge/Jacqui Wright	Jenny Forde	On Target	Continued to support and work with the 'Dementia Friendly Bourton Group'
HW15		Work with the Cotswold Youth Network to increase investment in, and support for, youth engagement work	July 2020	March 2023	Andy Barge/Jacqui Wright	Jenny Forde	On Target	The Cotswold Youth Network successfully bid and secured just under £300k from the national Lottery in 2020 which is being used to deliver activities
HW16		Work with partners to implement four Changing Places Toilet facilities	September 2021	April 2023	Paul James	Jenny Forde	On Target	Delivery for all four venues is expected in the 2022-23 financial year. Each of the venues is at a different stage, with Cotswold Farm Park being the furthest advanced, having now placed the order with the supplier and the equipment should be installed early in the New Year



Cotswold District Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024 Update: Progress by end of 2022-23 Q3

HW17		Increase the number of people trained in mental health first aid and suicide prevention	September 2020	March 2023	Rob Weaver Andy Barge/Jacqui Wright	Jenny Forde	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	Cotswold Chat' has been running since April 2021 in partnership with Young Glos and is funded through various funding streams incl. Crowdfund Cotswold, GCC, NHS Charities 2gether. The programme is for young people struggling with their mental health, have issues around schooling/attendance, need support to manage their emotions or with a trauma they have experienced. There is currently no capacity to deliver a targeted mental health campaign. This will be considered again in a few months once the pressures caused by the cost of living crisis have eased. The community wellbeing team is however proactively sharing information about mental health services as well as training opportunities through the Cotswold Community Network and contact with TPC's. Equally, the Council's cost of living webpage has a specific area dedicated to 'Looking after your mental health' and sign posts people to a wide range of support opportunities.
HW18		Provide targeted mental health campaigns and support	September 2020	April 2024	Andy Barge/Jacqui Wright	Jenny Forde	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	
HW19	Promote both mental and physical health equally, to increase awareness of mental health issues and improve the community response to people in crisis	Promote mental health activities and initiatives	September 2020	April 2024	Andy Barge/Jacqui Wright	Jenny Forde	On Target	
HW20		Continue to deliver the 'hidden harm' project and targeted work to raise awareness of domestic abuse, in partnership with Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service	July 2020	April 2024	Andy Barge/Jacqui Wright	Jenny Forde	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	
HW21		Work with the DWP, businesses, education and the voluntary sector to create more employment and learning opportunities for young people	September 2020	March 2023	Andy Barge/Jacqui Wright	Jenny Forde/Tony Dale	Complete	The New Start project is completed. The project has faced staffing issues and funding has therefore been withdrawn by DWP. Similar support is however being provided by other organisations.
HW22	Ensure our housing and built environments enable residents to live healthy lives	Plan places with active travel and high-quality green infrastructure	October 2020	April 2023	Andy Barge/James Brain/Hannah Fountain/Sophia Price	Jenny Forde/Rachel Coxcoon	On Target	See Make our local plan green to the core
HW23		Develop design codes that focus on climate change and protect people from overheating risk	October 2020	April 2023	Andy Barge/James Brain/Chris Crookhall Fallon/Sophia Price	Jenny Forde/Rachel Coxcoon	On Target	
HW24		Develop policies for dementia-friendly homes	February 2021	April 2023	Andy Barge/James Brain	Jenny Forde/Rachel Coxcoon	On Target	
HW25		Review local plan policies to facilitate healthy place shaping	October 2020	April 2023	Andy Barge/James Brain	Jenny Forde/Rachel Coxcoon	On Target	
HW26		Deliver health and wellbeing initiatives through the local plan	October 2020	April 2023	Andy Barge/James Brain	Jenny Forde/Rachel Coxcoon	On Target	
HW27	Support residents through the 'cost of living crisis', recognising the disproportionate impact on low income households	Roll out the new £150 Council Tax rebate promptly	April 2022	November 2022	Jon Dearing/Mandy Fathers	Mike Every	Complete	At the end of December 2022, £3,830,400 (core scheme), and an additional £135,554 (discretionary scheme) had been paid out to 26,052 households. This work has concluded although the service is still receiving queries from residents/customers

## Cotswold District Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024 Update: Progress by end of 2022-23 Q3

### Enable a vibrant economy

	Our aims	Our actions	Commencement	Date due, Achieved	Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	Comment for Q3
VE1	Use our investments and assets to boost the local economy	Accelerate the Recovery Investment Fund to bring large scale investments to the Capital Investment Programme Board in order to reach our £1m Revenue target	December 2021	Strategy goes to Council in May 2022 Investment decisions July 2022	David Stanley/ Paul James/Chris Crookall-Fallon	Tony Dale	Cancelled	The recovery investment strategy was rescinded in November 2022
VE2		Focus on growing commercial revenues in the Council that underpin a 'Green Evolution'	December 2021	Car Parking fees revised for 2022/23 April 2024	David Stanley	Tony Dale	On Hold	On hold as this action needs to be reviewed in light of the rescinded investment strategy
VE3		Invest in local projects and development opportunities	September 2020	April 2024	Andy Barge/Paul James	Tony Dale	On Target	Officers continue to hold discussions in relation to a number of potential development opportunities, which would help the Council achieve its corporate objectives. Each will be assessed on a case by case basis.
VE4		Use our assets to generate jobs locally	April 2021	April 2024	Claire Locke/Paul James	Tony Dale	On Target	Trinity Road office layout changes will create space in the West wing of the building to be let to tenants. Contractor has been appointed with works commenced in January 2023. Proposal for the Old Station and OMH cottages to be brought back into use for develop the buildings for cultural and community use, however, external funding will need to be sought
VE5	Support successful businesses in the visitor economy with higher visitor spend and footfall spread across the District rather than just the 'honeypot' locations	Deliver against the six priorities set out in the Cotswold Tourism destination management plan	September 2020	April 2024	Andy Barge/Chris Jackson	Tony Dale	On Target	A Sustainable Tourism Action Plan has been developed and the team will be working with partners such as GWR, Visit Gloucestershire and Cotswold National Landscape to deliver it
VE6		Help to develop high quality visitor experiences	September 2020	April 2024 'Days Out' published March 2022	Andy Barge/Chris Jackson	Tony Dale	On Target	A Local Connections project is underway. It is designed to develop and improve business to business connections between local accommodation providers and businesses providing services or products that would add value or interest to their visitor offer. The project will be going live in March 2023.
VE7		Increase tourism's contribution to the economic, social and environmental sustainability of our communities	April 2021	April 2024 19 Training videos created April 2021 Business survey February 2022, to inform actions in 2022/23	Andy Barge/Chris Jackson	Tony Dale	On Target	Continue to attend trade shows nationally and internationally including one in North America and a virtual trade show in Japan to promote the Cotswold to high spend overseas markets. Secured £5k from Department of International Trade to identify and prepare businesses to access high spend overseas market
VE8	Develop strong networks, collaboration and partnerships with businesses and organisations	Work with partners to support existing businesses and encourage the growth of start-ups	July 2020	April 2024	Rob Weaver Andy Barge/Paul James	Tony Dale	On Target	UKSPF earmarked funds have been allocated to the Growth Hub to support both existing and new business. The Local Investment Plan was approved in early December 2022
VE9		Build a reputation as a business-friendly council	July 2020	April 2024	Andy Barge/Paul James	Tony Dale	On Target	Business Matters continues to be issued regularly, most recently in December. The Cabinet Member and Economic Development Lead undertake regular business visits, with more planned for 2023. A listening to business event on 18 November was organised in partnership with Business West and GFirst LEP

## Cotswold District Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024 Update: Progress by end of 2022-23 Q3

VE10	Develop a high value, highly skilled, low environmental impact economy that includes agritech, digital/cyber, medical equipment and environmental technologies	Work with key sectors to create new highly skilled jobs	September 2020	April 2024	Andy Barge/Paul James	Tony Dale	On Target	Discussions held with Farm491 about creating more offices for agritech and related businesses. Discussions taking place about a potential Centre for Sustainable Aviation.
VE11		Secure the provision and occupation of new commercial space	March 2021	visions agreed for Local Plan special policy areas by March 2023	Andy Barge/Paul James	Tony Dale	On Target	Watermoor point on the former Mitsubishi site - the office element is now 80% let and the warehouse is being repurposed for storage for businesses and individuals; A reserved matters planning application has been submitted for for employment land at the Steadings; RAU Innovation village - project management resource has now been put in place, and a planning application for the site is expected in Spring 2023. A public launch of the project has been scheduled for 20th January 2023.
VE12	Help our town centres recover from COVID-19 and in the face of changing shopping habits	Help towns create long-term plans where needed, such as the Cirencester town centre masterplan	September 2020	April 2024 Masterplan due for completion December 2022	Andy Barge/James Brain	Tony Dale/Rachel Coxcoon	On Target	As covered under Making the Local Plan Green to the core, the Cirencester Masterplan is on target
VE13		Support businesses to enhance their digital presence	July 2020	March 2022	Andy Barge/Paul James	Tony Dale	Complete	£30k allocated from Welcome Back fund to assist town centres to be more digitally resilient. The Council also worked with GFirst LEP to deliver a digital grant scheme to assist businesses (funded by District Councils)
VE14		Develop a 'shop local' campaign to encourage residents to support local businesses	July 2020	April 2024	Andy Barge/Paul James	Tony Dale	Complete	The Council was allocated £81,144 from the 'Welcome Back Fund'; £50k was allocated to projects submitted by Town and Parish Councils
VE15	Attract investment in infrastructure	Work with Fastershire to address broadband market failure	Rolled forward from previous Corporate Plan	April 2024	Robert Weaver/Paul James	Tony Dale	On Target	The County Council has recently announced an increase to the level of the Fastershire Community Broadband Grant to make it more attractive to the infrastructure providers and is also introducing the Gloucestershire Digital Household Scheme to use 4G technology to deliver connectivity in remote locations where fibre is not practical or is prohibitively expensive. A Fastershire Business Grant of up to £20,000 is also being introduced.
VE16		Support completion of the A417 'missing link'	September 2020	April 2024: Development Consent Order hearing underway January 2022	Jon Dearing/Phil Shaw	Tony Dale	On Target	Scheme approved by Secretary of State in November 2022. Work due to start in 2023.
VE17	Offer better qualifications for our young people	Work with our partners to ensure our young people have the skills they need to secure employment in the district	September 2020	April 2024 Cotswold New Start launched October 2021	Andy Barge/Paul James/Jacqui Wright	Tony Dale	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	Cotswold New Start Funding pulled by Job Centre Plus. Cirencester College Digital Skills Centre complete, support on apprenticeships and T-Levels. UKSPF funding will focus on people furthest from labour market and retrofit skills in 2024-25.
VE18		Work with GFirstLEP to improve the Growth Hub provision in the North Cotswolds	January 2021	April 2024 Innovation Lab opening in Chipping Campden Spring/Summer 2022	Andy Barge/Paul James	Tony Dale	On Target	An Innovation Lab at Chipping Campden library opened on 1st August 2022 offering access to digital skill development for all ages and abilities
VE19	Ensure the benefits of the internet and digital technologies are accessible to everyone in the district	Establish needs	October 2020	December 2020	Andy Barge/Paul James	Tony Dale	Complete	Completed
VE20		Identify partners that can deliver improvements	January 2020	March 2021	Andy Barge/Paul James	Tony Dale	Complete	Completed
VE21		Develop and implement an action plan to improve digital inclusion	June 2021	April 2024	Andy Barge/Paul James	Tony Dale	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	Work is progressing through partnership activity. A headline report outlines eight recommendations to help tackle the digital divide and frames a range of questions revolving around next steps. This is supported by digital exclusion risk mapping, community asset mapping (what's out there already) and a 'what we know about closing the digital divide report. Focus on competing priorities, such as UKSPF and REPF has slowed progress on this. <a href="https://www.digitaldivides.co.uk">https://www.digitaldivides.co.uk</a>

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**COTSWOLD**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

**COUNCIL PRIORITIES REPORT**  
**October 2022 - December 2022**

## Cotswold District Council Corporate Plan 2020-24

### Our Aim

To rebuild the Council so it can be proactive and responsive to the needs of our residents and businesses in a fast changing environment, building for the future whilst respecting our heritage

### Our Priorities



### Our Principles

- rebuilding trust and confidence in the council by promoting a culture of openness and transparency
- providing value for money for our residents and businesses by using our resources wisely and investing in the district's fabric and future
- listening to the needs of our community and acting on what we hear

## Executive Summary Highlights

- The Council's Local Investment Plan, which sets out how the Council proposes to use the £1m UK Shared Prosperity Fund was approved by the Government in December 2022;
- Following the resolution of technical difficulties, all three phases of the cashless car parking project have been completed. Moving to cashless parking has multiple benefits. It will support the Council's carbon reduction commitment and reduce the costs associated with cash collection and vandalism of pay and display machines;
- Improvement works started at Rissington Road car park, Bourton on the Water in November 2022. The car park requires a new drainage system, resurfacing and layout redesign which will improve the customer experience and comply with industry standards;
- Crowdfund Cotswold continues to attract wide interest across the District. Six projects applied to the Council's 'Autumn Round'. Three projects have already fundraised their target. The Council contributed £26,000 to projects with a further contribution of £10,000 from the Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) resilience fund to eligible projects;
- The Community Wellbeing team in partnership with 'World Jungle' delivered the Holiday Activity and Food programme (HAF) in the Christmas holidays. The offer involved activities from 13 different providers as well as a range of ticketed activities including climbing, cinema, laserquest, ice skating and a visit to Cotswold Wildlife Park;
- Work is progressing on the Changing Places Toilets project (£162,500 award from government). Each of the venues is at a different stage of delivery, with Cotswold Farm Park being the furthest advanced, having now placed the order with the supplier and the equipment should be installed early in the New Year;
- The Council has secured £137k from GCC for Round 3 of the government funded Household Support Fund for distribution in early 2023. Part of the funding will support families in need with supermarket vouchers as well as registered carers in partnership with Gloucestershire Carers Hub;
- The procurement process for the appointment of Leisure and Culture Management Contractors (2 lots) has commenced. The first stage Standard Selection Questionnaire (SSQ) responses have been completed and the successful bids received an invitation to submit initial tender in mid October 2022 with a return date of 6 January 2023. Five leisure contractors were invited to bid (one has withdrawn) and two for culture;
- The Council and Bromford Housing have entered into a Collaboration Agreement to deliver the Down Ampney housing development. A planned programme of consultation commenced on 10 October 2022 and will continue through this year, and will help to shape the initial scheme designs for a net carbon zero housing development. The draft Collaboration Agreement was approved by Cabinet at its meeting in November 2022;

- In November 2022, the Government awarded additional funding of £230,000 (together with West Oxfordshire) to further develop and promote digital engagement tools which will be used for further draft local plan consultations;
- The A417 Missing Link scheme was approved in November 2022; and Kier Highways has been appointed as the main contractor. The £460m project is designed to reduce congestion and improve road safety on this important link between Cirencester and Gloucester and, more widely, the M4 and M5 motorways.



## Deliver services to the highest standard



### The Context

The Council aims to create services that are inclusive and flexible which meet the diverse and changing needs of its residents and communities. To achieve this, it will be important to listen to residents to understand what is important to them, identify the areas in which they need support, and adapt. In the context of reducing budgets over the last ten years and the phasing out of incentivised income streams such as New Homes Bonus, which has been further exacerbated by the impact of Covid-19, the Council will need to take a strategic approach, and make the best use of the available resources.

The Council will work with a range of public and private sector partners to help deliver its aims and objectives and to provide services seamlessly. The emphasis will be on efficiency and effectiveness whilst remaining true to the Council's commitments on climate change and a green economy.

### Actions we are taking

At its meeting in November 2022, Cabinet reviewed the Council's draft budget proposals for 2023-24 together with a refresh of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) forecasts, and approved the proposals which formed the basis of public consultation between 8 November and 9 December 2022. A wide range of communication channels including Cotswold News, social media and engagement events with Cabinet Members and officers was used to share the key budget messages and highlight the consultation to as many residents, businesses and community organisations as possible.

The Council received 389 responses to the consultation which were summarised in a report for Cabinet in January 2023. The results will be used to inform the final budget proposals to be considered by Cabinet and Council in February 2023.

The Recovery Investment Strategy sets out how capital investment would be used as the tool to address the funding gap and deliver the Council's priorities whilst also recognising that capital investment also needs to support the underlying revenue budget by making an appropriate return. However, the recent increase in government and Council debt costs as a result of the mini budget of 23 September 2022 have caused concern around borrowing levels and the viability of the schemes. In November 2022, Cabinet agreed to recommend to Council that the Recovery Investment Strategy be rescinded. There may still be opportunities that arise from time-to-time for example through transformation that will be considered on a business case basis taking into account any refresh of the budget and MTFS proposals and the affordability of any borrowing at the time.

The key strategic aim of the 'Clean and Green' initiative is to reduce enviro-crime within the District, and deliver the benefit of a high quality environment where economic growth is supported and where the Council positively engages with the community to not only solve immediate issues, but to prevent further recurrences. The Clean and Green team acts as the link between the Council, Councillors and communities developing and delivering initiatives, campaigns and educational programmes as well as supporting and working with partners and organisations. The team has been out and about working with

other community workers including the Police. During Q3, there were 18 requests for litter picks from communities with litter picks taking place in Northleach, Stow-on-the-wold, Lower Swell and Bourton involving 12 members of the community and 75 children. In addition, a number of engagement activities were undertaken including meeting with the new Stow-on-the-Wold Bromford coach (for over 250 properties) to help tackle the persistent dog fouling issues in their areas; and with South Cerney Composting Group to talk about community composting and how their good work can be rolled out across the District to reduce carbon emissions and provide free, sustainable compost.

The Council has developed a Strategy on a Page for the Cotswold Water Park with the key ambition for it to reach its full potential as a 'lovely place to walk and cycle where people can get from place to place enjoyably, safely and easily', while also having regard for its importance as a natural habitat with a number of nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Areas of Conservation.

The Strategy has four elements with many proposed activities focussed on 'Active and Sustainable Travel' improvements. The Council has been working with Cotswold Lakes Trust, Sustrans and Gloucestershire County Council to make improvements around Cotswold Water Park that will make it easier for people to walk and cycle around the area as well as helping to disperse visitors more evenly across the Water Park.

Phase Two of the project is underway, and include:

- working with Gloucestershire County Council and Sustrans to assess the feasibility of a signalised crossing of the Spine Road. The aim is to increase use of the National Cycle Network route 45 (the Old Railway Path) and generally improve safety and access for pedestrians and cyclists between Cirencester/South Cerney and Cotswold Water Park/Cricklade/Swindon as there are currently no formal crossings of the Spine Road. A pedestrian survey was undertaken in July 2022 and traffic counts and site visits took place in October 2022. Designs for the crossing are being prepared by Sustrans for approval by Gloucestershire County Council's capital programme management board in January 2023 and onward to GCC Cabinet in March 2023;
- the foot/cycleway into Neigh Bridge Country Park will be an off-road route for pedestrians and cyclists and provides a viable alternative to problematic car travel/parking. Consultation on the path in Autumn 2022 yielded wholly positive responses. Vegetation clearance is scheduled for March 2023, with construction commencing after Easter 2023;
- The Cotswold Water Park travel plan was completed in January 2023. It identifies and prioritises sustainable transport infrastructure improvements in the area which could form a focus for future work/funding bids as well as forming material considerations for the updated Local Plan and Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
- a study of public transport options to improve connections to Kemble station from Tetbury and Cirencester (including links to Cotswold Water Park) was completed in December 2022 and is currently being reviewed;
- Cycle stand installation locations have been identified in Fairford, Lechlade and South Cerney and passed to the contractor for further feasibility and installation in Spring 2023.

All three phases of the cashless car parking project have been completed. Cabinet approved the proposal to remove the option to pay by cash in all its car parks in its meeting on 4 January 2021 in a phased approach. Moving to cashless parking has multiple benefits. It will support the Council's carbon reduction commitment and reduce the costs associated with cash collection and vandalism of pay and display machines. Following the implementation of Phase one and two, some technical issues relating to poor mobile phone signal strength in some car parks, as well as the volume of card transactions, were identified. Following the successful trial of offline card payments, with the aim of speeding up the payment process and reducing the number of times the payment systems became disabled, during the summer 2022, Phase 3 was able to recommence. In addition, the remaining car parks in Phase 1 and 2 (Abbey Grounds, Beeches, Leisure centre and Maugersbury Road) were converted to off-line payment.

In July 2021, the Council agreed to invest in improvements to the Rissington Road car park, Bourton on the Water to improve the customer experience and to ensure compliance with industry standards. The car park requires a new drainage system, resurfacing and layout redesign. This will reduce ongoing maintenance works and provide a long term improved facility for users. Although a contractor was appointed in December 2021, there was insufficient time to complete the works before April 2022 so as to avoid the tourist season which could also result in inconsiderate parking on-street, affecting residents in the area. Unfortunately during the period from contract award to-date, there have been a number of national and global factors which have seen material and labour prices rise substantially. Cabinet agreed additional funding in September 2022 and contractors started on site in November 2022 and are on target to finish at the end of March 2023.

Whilst the provision of toilets is not a statutory function, the Council provides 15 public conveniences across the District which support shoppers and tourism, and prevents negative environmental health impacts from lack of accessibility. A significant refurbishment project was carried out in 2007-8 to ten of the sites. Although all 15 public toilet sites are fit for purpose, the five remaining sites are in need of some investment to bring them up to date. A strategy for the Council's public conveniences is being developed – they should be accessible and clean and 'charged for' to reduce the burden on the public purse while maintaining and improving the customer experience with emphasis on 'no-touch' automation where possible. The small maintenance budget (for the fabric of the buildings) is insufficient to cover structural maintenance and income in 2021-22 represented 30% of all costs. Once the Strategy has been signed off by the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, it will be brought forward to the Cabinet.

The overarching aim of the improvement work in the Planning service is to provide a trusted, inclusive and transparent planning service. A relaunch of the pre-application service has been prepared and the fees schedule is awaiting sign off by the Cabinet Member for Development Management and Licensing, subject to budget approval. In addition, the service has started work on improving both how it communicates with applicants and the timeliness of the communication at key stages of the process. A series of customer 'touch points' has been introduced to help applicants know where they are in the planning process. The three 'touch points' are at 7 days from receipt, the application is acknowledged; during the next 7 days, the case officer makes contact and introduces themselves providing high level comments on the application; and at five weeks, the case officer gives detailed feedback and agrees whether an extension of time is required. Anecdotally, the improved communication appears to be yielding positive benefits with fewer complaints from applicants about not being kept informed of progress. Furthermore, a small team has started a trial to understand the impact of the way we communicate and the extent of

that communication on throughput. For example, what is the impact on throughput if the case officer undertakes all communication with stakeholders versus communication being undertaken by a case officer assistant.

An end to end redesign of the enforcement service is underway starting with improvements in the front end for registering enforcement issues. The next phase is to reduce the backlog of enforcement cases through prioritisation, and councillors will be asked to help define the criteria for prioritisation. Once the backlog has been reduced, the 'back office' processes will be re-designed. A report on the enforcement project is being drafted for Cabinet as part of the wider monitoring of the improvement programme. This project is expected to deliver a reduction in repeat customer contact/chasing, as well as a reduction in the number of non-breach cases from improved online reporting facilities and back office triage.



## Respond to the climate crisis

### The Context

During Q3 the UK government's Net Zero Review was being finalised by Chris Skidmore MP, and is now published. It has been broadly welcomed by those hoping to see faster movement towards net zero carbon goals. Key calls are for reform of the planning system, an infrastructure strategy, and a focus on green homes. It seems however to stop short of the call from bodies such as UK100 to put local government in the driving seat for local progress towards net zero carbon.

Globally, the reported evidence of climate destabilisation continues to harden. Whilst the granularity and confidence in climate modelling continues to improve, in general it can be seen that the speed and extent of the effects of climate destabilisation for example glacier loss, arctic sea ice loss, drought, extreme temperatures, extreme rainfall events, are consistently at the upper end of the ranges predicted by earlier climate modelling. Such real world observations should be motivating governments and corporations to much more urgent action, but there remains very little indication of this, particularly in the context of the central challenge of eliminating fossil fuels. The UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has been increasingly vocal in this regard, repeatedly calling out fossil fuel companies and berating national governments for insufficient commitment and action.

### Actions we are taking

The Council's Climate Emergency Strategy of September 2020 identified the Council's different spheres of influence over carbon emissions in the District. These range from relatively easier interventions with lower impact (e.g. direct and indirect control of the Council's own operations), through to relatively harder interventions with potentially much higher impact (e.g. enabling District-wide action and engaging with all stakeholders).

#### 'Direct Control' actions

The proposed changes to office layout at Trinity Road will increase space efficiency, and reduce associated energy costs and carbon emissions. A contractor has been appointed and work is expected to commence in January 2023. In addition the procurement process is underway for an installer of solar PV and electricity storage at sites owned by the Council, including the Trinity Road office. This is being done in collaboration with other Publica Group councils, in order to maximise economies of scale, and no works will commence without a business case and approval by Council.

In September 2022, Cabinet agreed to pursue a more sustainable solution for the atrium roof repairs at Trinity Road. The better insulation in the proposed replacement roof panels would deliver an 87% reduction in heat loss compared to the existing glazed panels. Installation of the replacement roof will be undertaken in phases to minimise disruption to staff in those areas, and to facilitate occupancy by new commercial tenants as soon as possible.

The analysis of results from the survey into travel and working patterns of Publica staff, started by interns in the summer, is being completed in order to propose a sustainable travel plan for the Trinity Road office. This plan aims to help staff, and by extension the Council itself, to reduce both the cost and carbon emissions of commuting.

#### 'Indirect Control' actions

Waste and recycling collection, aside from being the Council's single largest source of emissions, presents all councils with huge challenges and potential opportunities in environment, the climate emergency, and digital services. The Environmental Services Innovation Programme (ESIP) is a partnership between Cotswold District Council, Forest of Dean District Council, West Oxfordshire District Council, Publica and Ubico to deliver shared innovation projects, and reducing carbon emissions is one of the six main priority areas.

The Council is reviewing the current waste and recycling service over the next year to reduce costs and increase efficiencies. The current service was benchmarked on performance and cost compared to nearest neighbours and local authority areas with similar demographic profiles. Some modelling has been undertaken on the impact of changes such as reduced crew / removal of a vehicle on both carbon emissions and efficiency. However, these changes would be insufficient to secure large carbon savings. More substantial carbon savings will have to be realised over a longer timeframe, making use of emerging technologies such as electric RCVs which are not currently viable for Cotswold District's rural collection routes.

The leisure and cultural services provider procurement which began in Q3 included carbon and energy as one of the selection criteria. Leisure services providers are taking the issue increasingly seriously, given pressure from all councils (see Support Health and Wellbeing priority for an update on progress).

Following increases in the cost of council borrowing, the Recovery Investment Strategy has been rescinded. Any future council investment into renewable energy assets will have to be individually assessed on a case-by-case basis and will need to conform to updated rules on government borrowing. Nonetheless it is likely that roof-mounted solar PV investment 'behind the meter' on buildings owned by the Council will be viable. Further uncertainty over borrowing rules and interest rates, means that the potential for investment into ground-mounted, grid-connected, utility-scale solar farms, as well as 'behind the meter' building-connected solar and storage installations in the District, now require re-assessment. Nonetheless investment into solar PV on council-owned property is likely to remain positive.

#### 'Place Shaping' actions

Work is underway to develop draft policies for the Local Plan partial update which reflect feedback from the Regulation 18 public consultation. Sustainable transport consultants are drafting LP policies in line with the findings of the district-wide Sustainable Transport Strategy research, which have been reported to councillors already.

Consultancy support has been procured to deliver a district-wide carbon emissions 'pathways' study, which builds on similar work already undertaken for the Cotswold National Landscape. The study will establish how steeply emissions need to fall in each sector of the District's economy in order to meet international and national net zero carbon commitments. In addition work is starting on the updated Cotswold Design Code, which will incorporate more climate aspects, and a thorough examination is being undertaken of the amendments proposed by the Planning Inspector in respect of the cutting-edge Local

Plan partial update being pursued by Bath and North East Somerset Council, which shares many of the same climate objectives as Cotswold's own partial update exercise.

Nationally, as locally, electric vehicle charging infrastructure continues to lag EV purchases. There is a need to grow the number of local electric vehicle charge points (EVCPs) , and encourage the shift towards an electric future. The EVCP business case was agreed by Cabinet in March 2022 for Council-owned car parks providing 20 charging connections. Following the replacement of outdated EVCPs at Old Market Way car park, Moreton-in-Marsh and The Beeches car park, Cirencester, further installations are currently running behind schedule due principally to delays in responses from electricity distribution network operators (DNOs) and extreme pressures on all EVCP installers who are trying to keep pace with the rapid growth of the EVCP market. Progress with Rissington Road car park chargers is now advancing quickly.

#### 'District-wide enabling' actions

Retrofitting homes to reduce costs, energy consumption and carbon emissions is an essential component of national emissions reduction, but remains a huge challenge. There is still no consistent government strategy, funding or policy basis, nor any clarity on the expected future role of local authorities. In order to move forward and innovate, a Gloucestershire-wide Local Authority partnership, led by Stroud District Council, now named Retrofit Centre, is taking forward an 18-month project to build LA capacity to deliver retrofit support to householders who wish to invest in energy efficiency and decarbonisation works in their own homes. As part of this project, the partnership is working with London South Bank University (LSBU) which recently ran online interviews with householders to understand their experience of home energy. The research results will help the project partners to design a better home energy retrofit service.

In respect of support for residents for purchasing rooftop PV and battery storage, discussions continue with service providers that are able to channel good value solutions to householders. This area of activity remains a priority, since it is a good opportunity to leverage the Council's brand and reputation to increase householders' trust in solar PV solutions. This is necessary because there have been examples in the past of householders receiving poor value, and it is important for the low carbon transition to ensure householders have the confidence to invest directly in low carbon retrofit actions.

#### 'Engaging' actions

This remains a very important part of the Council's overall climate crisis response, and there is much work to do to help build confidence and momentum among all District-wide stakeholders, from residents to businesses and public sector bodies. We are now working on the creation of a District-wide network of individuals and organisations motivated by the climate challenge, and researching user needs in order to provide real value.

In November 2022, Publica and the Councils took part in Carbon Literacy Action Day, the world's largest climate education training event, and ultimately increasing the number of climate champions across the organisation. Becoming Carbon Literate means taking actionable steps towards tackling the climate emergency.



## Provide socially rented homes

### The Context

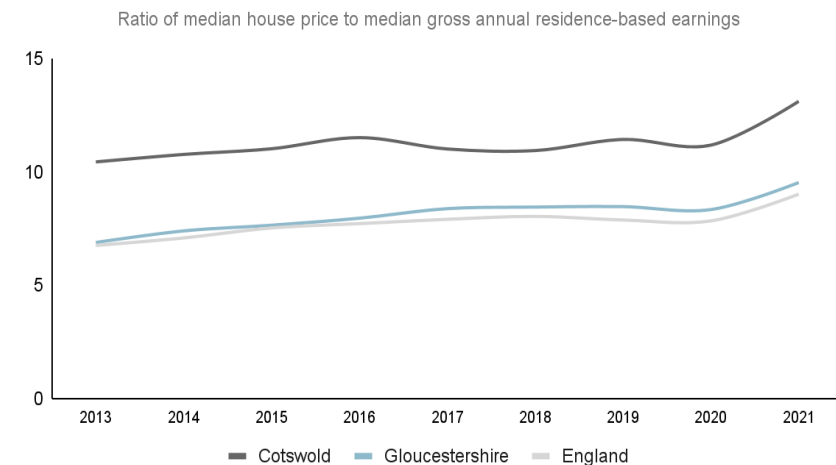
The high quality natural and built environment makes the District a desirable place to live. Cotswold District has a high number of properties owned outright (37.8%, vs 30.6% national average) reflecting the attractiveness of the District as a place to retire or to purchase a second home.

House prices and rents are relatively high. Residents can expect to pay on average 13 times their earnings on purchasing a home in the District (2022 figure not yet available). At the end of June 2022, the median property price in Cotswold District was £394,300 compared to £260,000 in England. House prices are falling due to the cost of living crisis, while rents are increasing. There is a shortage of good quality rented accommodation that is genuinely affordable. Affordable housing helps to meet the District's housing needs and can include low cost home ownership or rented accommodation which typically has a discount of around 20% on the market rent, however this may still not be truly affordable for some residents. Social rented homes have a rent that is lower than affordable rent and therefore provides homes for those on lower incomes or in receipt of full Housing Benefit.

The relatively high house prices and increasingly high rents, coupled with the lower than average earnings from local jobs, means housing affordability is a significant challenge for residents in the District and is being made worse by the cost of living crisis.

### Actions we are taking

The Council's Affordable Housing Delivery Strategy and action plan was adopted by Cabinet on 8 February 2021 and sets out the delivery strategy for the Council to accelerate provision of social rented and affordable homes for local people. The current focus is to facilitate the affordable housing identified within the Local Plan and through rural exception sites and community-led housing opportunities, and to work with Housing Associations to maximise affordable housing delivery. The Council plans to go further and bring forward additional affordable homes through enabling and direct intervention which may include provision of land and other funding. In addition, any development the Council acquires or builds must be carbon zero in support of the Council's Climate Change emergency commitment. Although this will increase the cost of affordable housing, it will reduce ongoing revenue costs for tenants. Based





on the outcomes from the councillor workshop in October 2020, discussions with local Registered Providers (RPs), and a review of delivery options, Officers recommended that the Council establishes a formal partnership with one lead Registered Provider.

An expressions of interest exercise resulted in Bromford being selected as the preferred RP, with the Kemble site to be taken forward via a Contractual Joint Venture (JV). Due to challenges with the site including ecological challenges, the Kemble site was paused, and an alternative scheme on the derelict Broadleaze site at Down Ampney is being prepared for delivery first. Following a review of the Kemble site in the context of the cost of living crisis, the substantial subsidy that would be needed to deliver these homes and the ecological constraints, it was concluded that housing development on this site is not viable. In January 2023, Cabinet agreed to lease the land for use as allotments and community gardens.

The Council and Bromford are continuing to work in partnership to deliver carbon zero affordable homes on the Down Ampney site and formally entered into a Collaboration Agreement in November 2022. A communication strategy has been developed to ensure appropriate engagement with all stakeholders including the Parish Council and local residents and people. A planned programme of consultation commenced on 10 October 2022 and a second round of consultation to share the detailed designs, house types and layouts is expected to take place before the planning application is submitted. However, the planning application will be affected by the Habitat Regulations Assessment requirements as the site is within the Zone of Influence for North Meadow, Cricklade. This means the planning application cannot be determined until a Mitigation Strategy is in place which is being led by Swindon Borough Council. It is anticipated that a planning application will be submitted by February 2023, followed by the legal transfer of the land to Bromford Housing

The Old station, Sheep street was previously assessed for service provision such as homelessness accommodation and other housing options but the conversion was found to be unaffordable. In December 2022, Cabinet agreed to develop the Old Station and Memorial Cottages for cultural and community use, working with local organisations to produce detailed designs, obtain quotations for the renovations and seek external grant funding. If sufficient external funding can be secured a report will be brought back to Council for agreement to proceed. However, if insufficient funding can be secured to achieve a minimum break even position for the Council, then the Council will need to consider other options such as the sale of the property.

The Stockwells regeneration scheme is being delivered by Bromford Housing Association and represents an opportunity for the Council and Bromford to create the first social rented, Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) net zero homes within the District. With funding support from the Council, Air Source Heat Pumps will replace traditional gas boilers, reducing CO2 emissions from heating and hot water by around 80%. In addition, the introduction of a large solar PV system will reduce net carbon emissions of the development to zero. Developers started on site in Q2 and expect to complete during the summer 2023.

In March 2021, the Council allocated commuted sums grants to two projects to deliver low carbon affordable housing. A sum of £478,500 was allocated to provide 100% social rent on a scheme of 15 units at Davies Rd, Moreton in Marsh; previously an open market scheme with 40% affordable housing only. A further allocation of £102,000 will be used to enhance the environmental sustainability of the homes. Cottsway Housing Association successfully submitted an application to Homes England for match funding. The developer, Helix Construction has submitted a planning application for reserved matters to finalise the details of the units and the landscaping which was approved in October 2022, and demolition works have commenced.

The second project has an allocation of approximately £332,000 from commuted sums grants for a scheme of 14 homes at Sunground, Avening, a rural exception site which will be 100% low carbon affordable housing. The scheme has received Homes England funding through Bromford which is developing the scheme on behalf of Gloucestershire Rural Housing Association (GRHA). The scheme will provide nine social rented and five shared ownership homes for local people, incorporating rainwater harvesting, air-source heating, solar panels and biodiversity measures. Due to issues with utilities, construction was delayed but is now expected to begin in February 2022.



## Make our local plan green to the core

### The Context

In July 2019 the Council declared a Climate Change Emergency, and a year later made a further commitment to the environment by declaring an Ecological Emergency. Key to the commitments made in both emergencies is the partial update to the Local Plan and making it green to the core.

Since the adoption of the Local Plan in August 2018, the government's National Planning Policy Framework has introduced new guidance that increases the importance of climate change adaptation and mitigation and the role that Local Plans play. This is in addition to the Clean Growth Strategy, Environment Act (2021) and UK Net Zero Strategy, which represent the Government's ambition to combat climate change and give the environment a bigger mandate.

The Government is currently reforming the English planning system, through its Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. This will radically alter how the Council will prepare future local plans. These reforms are subject to the Bill achieving Royal Assent which is expected in late 2024. The Government has explained that it will put in place arrangements to smooth the transition from the existing plan making process and the new process, therefore allowing the Council sufficient time to update its Local Plan before embarking on a full local plan update under the new planning system from 2025.

### Actions we are taking

At a meeting of Full Council in June 2020, members unanimously resolved to partially update the Local Plan 2011-2031. A review of Local Plan policies is the first step in the Local Plan process and reveals which policies can be left as they are and which policies are likely to need updating. The process of updating the Local Plan will consider the options available to the Council and local communities. Along with international and national pledges made by the Government, the update will reflect the work being undertaken by other services across the organisation.

The Local Plan can be seen as the glue that holds various corporate objectives together and provides physical action; it also translates national legislation to a local level. The partial update of the Local Plan will aid the building of new homes, in the right places, with suitable green infrastructure that promotes the transition to carbon neutrality. It will assist in providing services and opportunities to enhance the area both for the wellbeing of the people living here as well as its visitors. It will also provide the tools to enhance, create and protect the local environment and the biodiversity of the District and its neighbours.

The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is published on the Council's website, and sets out key stages in the local plan making process. This document will be updated later this year to set out milestones for 2023 and 2024. A Local Plan Programme Board, that has membership of all political parties, is monitoring the progress of the Local Plan partial update.

An early stage Local Plan was consulted on in 2022. Overall, the consultation was a great success with approximately 7,500 individual respondents making 2,900 responses, more than any previous Local Plan Regulation 18 (issues and options) consultation that the Council has undertaken. The consultation

generated useful remarks that are helping to shape the emerging Local Plan, as well as ideas as to how to make the next consultation even better. A summary of the consultation responses was presented to Cabinet at its meeting in July 2022 along with an update on the Local Plan project.

The online consultation was carried out on Commonplace, the Council's new consultation system, funded by a government scheme to promote digital engagement. This resulted in a significant shift in people including town and parish councils choosing to submit comments online, and generated responses from all sectors of the community but notably the Council was able to target the District's younger people which was a shortcoming of previous consultations. In November 2022, the government awarded additional funding of £230,000 (together with West Oxfordshire) to further develop and promote digital engagement tools.

Officers are continuing to update the evidence base and studies to support the partial update of the Council's Local Plan, including:

- Cotswold District Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy. The GI Strategy forms part of the Local Plan evidence base and responds to the Council's climate and ecological emergencies and corporate priorities to improve health and wellbeing. A summary of comments received together with a final edit of the Strategy is now underway and will be presented later this year together with the draft Local Plan Partial Update;
- Sustainability Appraisal - this is a statutory and iterative process in the production of the Local Plan; it helps to ensure policies promote sustainable patterns of development;
- Habitats Regulation Assessment - like the Sustainability Appraisal this is a statutory and iterative process; it will examine the effect of proposed development on protected habitats.;
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessments - a key piece of evidence that helps to ensure proposed development is located away from areas that flood.
- Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA - which seeks to identify land that could be suitable for allocation in the updated Local Plan). The latest version was published in October 2021 and local communities have had the opportunity to comment on the document through the Local Plan consultation. An update is due to be published later this year.
- Carbon impact and evidence base - a joint project with West Oxfordshire will provide evidence to support zero carbon policies. Officers met prospective consultants in late 2022 to discuss the project brief, establish indicative costs and confirm capacity to deliver this project;
- Transport assessments in Cirencester (including Kemble Ultra Light Railway) – the Council's consultants, ITP, have shared a final draft for comment. Presentation to key stakeholders was held in November 2022. A project brief for Transport and Access Study, which will also examine parking needs, is currently being set up. The project is expected to be fully commissioned by Spring 2023;
- Design Code – a broad document covering all aspects of design within a Cotswold context including architectural, urban, landscape, ecological and sustainable design. A scoping of the project is expected to commence in early 2023 to ensure the project is focussed and deliverable;

- Housing Strategy - a draft has been prepared and was shared with relevant councillors and senior management in December 2022. The next stage is to present it to Cabinet in March 2023 and then hold a public consultation for local communities and organisations to review it;

An internal review of the first drafts of Local Plan policies commenced in October 2022. Looking further ahead, submission to Cabinet and Council of the draft Local Plan for the next stage of consultation is expected in Summer 2023.

Work continues on the Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan project which was officially rebooted in January 2021. The project is split into two discrete parts, (1) feasibility assessments; and (2) Framework Masterplan.

(1) There are various town centre issues that need exploring to support the production of a masterplan, for example, the changing nature of uses in the high street, parking demand and capacity and the future impact on transport modes of achieving zero carbon. The Council has already completed an assessment of possible changes to uses in the town centre and an updated Cirencester Town Centre Health Check. Both documents are available on the Council's website. Further feasibility assessments were carried out in 2022 including two transport studies which were completed in Autumn 2022. The first of these evaluates potential locations for a transport interchange in the town centre. The second – a component of the Sustainable Transport Strategy (see below) - establishes a possible trajectory to zero carbon transport in Cirencester by 2045, helping to inform the vision of the town's future transport and movement needs, including future parking requirements. Officers will continue to work on these assessments during 2023.

(2) In April 2022, the Council commissioned consultants, Mace, to prepare a Framework Masterplan which will bring the whole project to life and invite local communities to engage and shape the future of their town centre. Councillor workshops were held in July and September 2022 to consider the preferred options for the draft Masterplan. Work continues on drafting the Framework Masterplan along with preparations for stakeholder engagement and communication later this year. The Masterplan project aligns and supports the Council's Local Plan partial update and Cirencester Town Council's emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

In March 2021, the Council appointed its first Sustainable Transport Strategy Lead officer, who is responsible for developing and delivering a new Sustainable Transport Strategy to support the partial update of the Local Plan and the transition to a carbon zero future. The first stage of work on the Sustainable Transport Strategy has been concluded with the latest results presented to informal Cabinet in December 2022, and shared with other partners and stakeholders. The initial phase established future "do nothing" transport carbon forecasts for Cotswold District and quantified the difference between that forecast and the trajectory we need to meet to achieve our aim of net zero carbon emissions by 2045. The next phase explored options to close that gap, identifying high level targets for vehicle mileage reduction to 2045 and interventions to achieve this shift in both rural and more urban areas. In broad terms, the District needs to achieve:

- an overall per capita reduction in total trip mileage of 25%;
- reduction of around one third of car mode share of remaining mileage;
- tripling of both active travel and public transport mileage; and
- electrification of remaining vehicle trips.

The next stage of work focuses on identifying the optimum implementation of measures/interventions and includes a number of studies such as the District-wide access and movement study, transport attitudes and behaviours study and work-related transport study.

The outcomes from the developing Sustainable Transport Strategy are currently being used to inform the update to the Local Plan update and in the preparation of other planning policies, such as the Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan. They are also aligning with similar studies and schemes being progressed by Gloucestershire County Council to ensure a unified and cooperative approach.

## Support health and well-being



### The Context

The health and wellbeing of our residents is generally good and above the England and the county average in most measures. Cotswold District is one of the safest districts with very low crime levels and is surrounded by beautiful countryside. However, there are some challenges. Cotswold District has an ageing population; over the last 10 years, it has experienced greater growth across all 65+ age groups compared to England and Wales. Many older residents live alone, and coupled with the rurality of the District, loneliness and access to services are issues for the District.

The wider determinants of health also need to be taken into account - social, economic and environmental factors such as unemployment, low income, poor housing, and lifestyles which have an impact on people's health and wellbeing. This means that the Council needs to work with a wide range of partners, to pool resources and to apply a whole systems and asset-based approach to address challenges together.

### Actions we are taking

We want Cotswold District to be the best in the country for health and wellbeing, and promoting healthy lifestyles and providing opportunities for people of all ages to be active is key. A Leisure Strategy determined by local priorities and outcomes was developed with the aim of providing effective and sustainable physical activity and sport opportunities for local communities via investment in our stock of leisure facilities and other non-facility interventions. In March 2021, Cabinet authorised officers to work in partnership with other organisations on the feasibility of the projects in the Strategy. Specialist Leads for each of the three themes (Healthier District, Connected Community and Active Environment) have developed action plans for each area. Progress on the projects are being monitored by the Active Cotswolds Programme Board.

The leisure management options appraisal including the Corinium Museum has been completed to determine the most suitable delivery model, contract scope and contract terms for the Council's leisure facilities when the current contract expires on 31 July 2023. The next stage is the commencement of a procurement process for the appointment of Leisure and Culture Management Contractors (separate lots) which was approved by the Council at its meeting in May 2022. The procurement process is being managed by Max Associates supported by the Council and its Legal team. The first stage Standard Selection Questionnaire (SSQ) responses were evaluated during early October 2022 and the successful bids received an invitation to submit initial tender in mid October with a return date of 6 January 2023. Five leisure contractors were invited to bid (one has withdrawn) and two for culture. Throughout December 2022, officers have been responding to clarification questions. Evaluation of the bid (a 50/50 split between price and quality and negotiation will continue throughout January 2023.

Another project in the Leisure Strategy is the development of a Playing Pitch Strategy which will include an assessment of the District's current and future needs for playing pitches for football, rugby, hockey, tennis and polo. Consultants, KKP are undertaking the project, and have now completed both

the winter sport assessment and the summer sport assessment. Both assessments were informed by consultation (1-2-1, telephone and online) with town and parish councils, educational establishments and sports clubs, and have been reviewed by sporting governing bodies with KKP and council officers. The National Governing Bodies have reviewed both assessment reports and signed them off. KKP is pulling together the final action plan which will accompany the report for sign off by Sport England. The report will be the evidence base for current, unmet and future demand for playing pitches and will be used to support developer contribution requests and external funding bids. Once signed off, a report will be prepared for Cabinet.

The Council was awarded £162,500 by the Government to assist with installing Changing Places toilets in locations across the District. The toilets are larger and accessible to people who cannot use standard accessible toilets, with equipment such as hoists, curtains, adult-sized changing benches, and space for carers. The venues in our bid were Cirencester Abbey Grounds, Birdland at Bourton-on-the-Water, the Cotswold Country Park and Beach at South Cerney and Cotswold Farm Park at Guiting Power. Delivery of the Changing Place toilets at all four venues are scheduled to take place in 2022-23 and officers are currently liaising with each of them to progress this project. Each of the venues is at a different stage of delivery, with Cotswold Farm Park being the furthest advanced, having now placed the order with the supplier and the equipment should be installed early in the New Year.

Six projects launched their campaigns on Crowdfund Cotswold in September/October 2022. One project, Redesdale Hall Kitchen, has withdrawn, to allow the trustees to focus on more pressing priorities, and a further project has not got off the starting blocks, which may be considered proof of concept in terms of ensuring projects need local support to progress. The first project to hit its target was Bledington Play Area, which has raised just under £30,000 to invest in play equipment for young children. Cotswold Friends has successfully fundraised for a second time on Crowdfund Cotswold, this time for a £17,400 project to improve digital inclusion for older residents. Thames Head Energy has raised over £16,000 towards solar farm feasibility work, and at the end of Q3, Fairford Town Council had raised over 80% of its target of around £100,000 for a new skate park. The Council contributed £26,000 to these four projects with a further contribution of £10,000 from the GCC resilience fund (Thames Head Energy did not qualify for this fund).

The Council has been looking at ways to support residents with the cost of living crisis. A councillor working group as well as a task force have been set up and meet regularly. Dedicated webpages have been set up with signposting information about available support (<https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/council-tax-and-benefits/help-if-you-re-struggling-with-the-cost-of-living/>). The pages had around 1670 views by the end of Q3. The Community Wellbeing team distributed 'Worrying about money' leaflets containing financial advice digitally as well as hard copies to various local organisations.

The Council has funded a number of projects with the key aim of ensuring no-one goes hungry. The Long Table launched 'The Longest Table' project in November 2022. This project encouraged local communities to host 'community feasts' where people eat together and pay what they can, experiences are shared, connections are made and resilience is built. Ten community feasts were hosted during the Christmas period across the District. The Council also launched its 'Connected Community and Food programme' (£75K) to support local communities to set up community activities and food projects such as community pantries or fridges, community feasts and cooking courses; and pledged an additional £40k towards the development of a district-wide food network. The aim is to develop non-stigmatising and community-led food projects to not just help people who are struggling with the cost of living



but also to tackle food waste

<https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/communities-and-leisure/community-grants-and-funding/cotswold-connected-community-and-food-programme/>).

The Council has secured £137k from Gloucestershire County Council for Round 3 of the Government funded Household Support Fund. The fund will be distributed in early 2023. Part of the funding will support families in need with supermarket vouchers as well as registered carers in partnership with Gloucestershire Carers Hub. Most of the funding will be distributed to Citizens Advice to support eligible residents directly in a holistic way.

The Community Wellbeing team in partnership with World Jungle and Gloucestershire County Council delivered the government funded Holiday Activity and Food programme between 19 and 22 December 2022. This was the 5<sup>th</sup> HAF event, and the scheme is expected to continue to run until 2025. The offer involved activities from 13 different providers as well as a range of ticketed activities including climbing, cinema, laserquest, ice skating and a visit to Cotswold Wildlife Park. Families also received supermarket vouchers during the Christmas holidays to make sure that children did not go hungry.

## Cotswold District - Holiday Activity and Food Programme

Winter HAF 2022



### Feedback from Parents:

"Thank you so much, and you. It's a hard one this year but hopefully ice skating will take the children's minds of things"

"They can not wait to go and also ice skating on the 29th it's things I've never been able to afford so thank you for allowing them the chance to try all these new activities we really appreciate it."

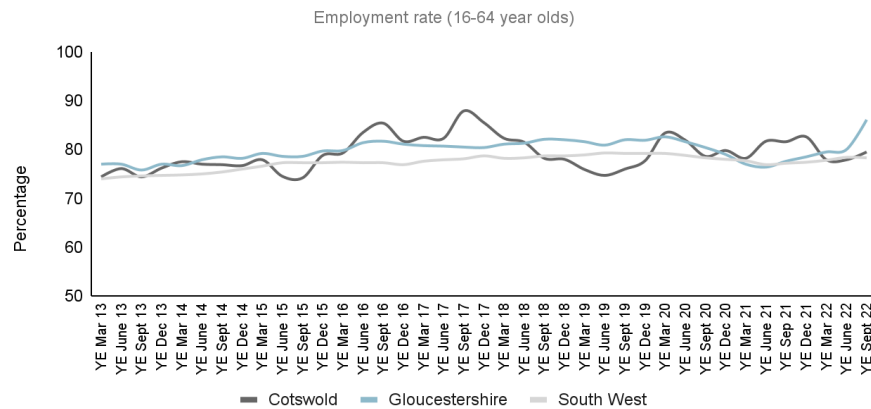
"Its very much appreciated and our gratitude is endless, i can now breath a sigh of relief knowing we can afford everything we need and the kids can have a wonderful christmas after everything. Have a wonderful christmas and new year too. "



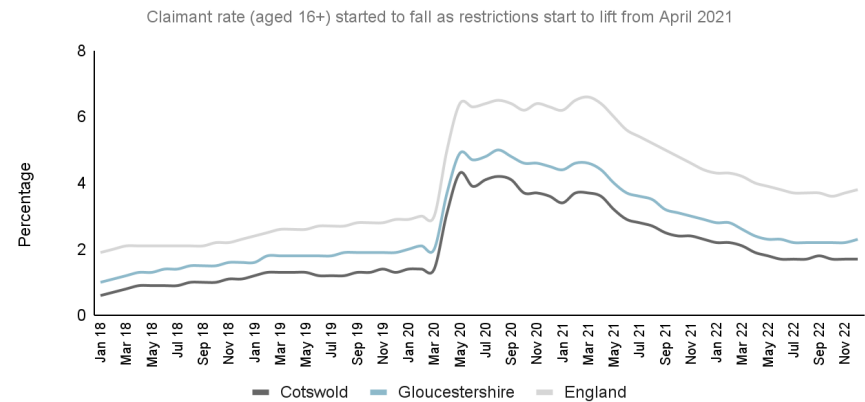


The Context

The District supports an economically active population of around 47,700 and has strengths in finance and business services, ICT including science and technology, retail, and accommodation and food services. A large proportion of businesses are small enterprises employing fewer than 10 people. Median wages for people working in the District are below the national average, and affordability of housing is a significant issue for the District, which can result in skill and labour shortages. Historically, unemployment has been relatively low but increased since the start of the pandemic, although it has fallen back significantly in recent months to 1.7%. The national and global economies face further uncertainty as a result of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and sharply rising prices, particularly for energy and fuel, which is impacting on disposable income and living standards. This is likely to lead to unemployment rising gradually again for a time.



Source: ONS, Annual Population Survey



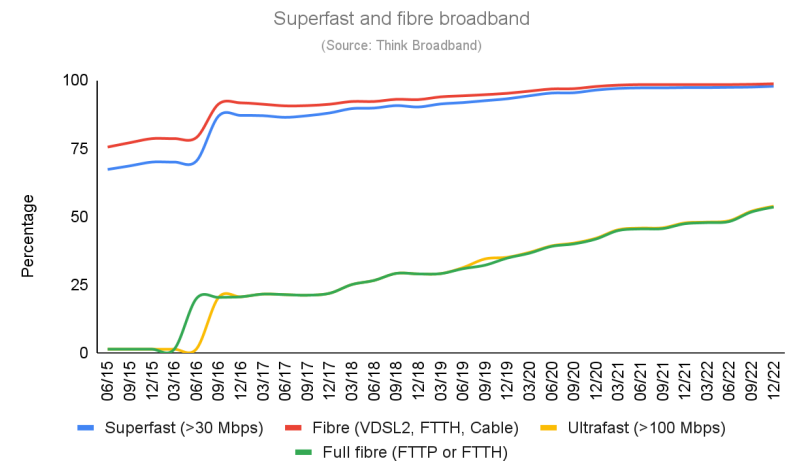
Source: ONS, Crown Copyright Reserved (Nomis)

The Cotswolds is well-known as a popular visitor destination and the visitor economy accounts for a significant proportion of the local economy - 7000 jobs or 18% of the total local job market in 2019. The local visitor economy has taken a huge hit over the last two years and while it is recovering strongly, it has not yet returned to pre-Covid levels. In 2021, the proportion of jobs in tourism was 13% of the total local job market, up from 8% in 2020. Similarly, visitor spend, at £276m in 2021 was up 56% on 2020 but still 17% lower than 2019. Many families took the opportunity to holiday overseas in 2022; the loss to the domestic market was offset by rising but relatively low overseas visitor numbers. Some overseas markets have not returned yet especially Asian markets, while the key North American market is showing signs of recovery. The latest business survey indicated that a lack of overseas visitors was a concern for businesses. During September 2022, the Tourism team undertook targeted marketing of the Cotswolds to the Japanese market and the North American market with the aim of bringing high spend overseas visitors to the area. Visit England is projecting that overseas visitor numbers will approach 2019 levels during 2023.

Domestic visitor attractions in 2022 saw a small drop in visitor numbers since the last year (as families continued to holiday in the UK). All businesses are reporting large cost increases, particularly in wages and energy prices, and concerns of the impact of higher costs of living on consumer spending

The number of job postings remains high, reflecting difficulties in recruitment. There are many companies at the cutting edge of innovation and the opportunity to grow key sectors like agritech, cyber and digital, medical equipment and environmental technologies.

The lack of a reliable broadband connection especially in rural districts can add to social isolation as well as reduce opportunities to be economically active. Openreach has been working in Cirencester and has announced plans to deliver full fibre to Tetbury, South Cerney, Lechlade, Northleach, Fairford and Bourton-on-the-Water by 2026 at the latest. A detailed timetable is awaited, but work in Bourton-on-the-Water is due to start in 2023. Gigaclear has also been onsite in Cirencester and Northleach and has plans to undertake work in Fairford, Tetbury, Bourton-on-the-Water, South Cerney and Stow-on-the-Wold over the next year or so. However, there are still some areas where broadband is poor and even superfast connectivity is not sufficient for some businesses to operate in the way they wish to. The Council is working with the Fastershire Project to address these areas. The County Council has recently taken a decision to increase the level of the Fastershire Community Broadband Grant to make it more attractive to the infrastructure providers and is also introducing the Gloucestershire Digital Household Scheme to use 4G technology to deliver connectivity in remote locations where fibre is not practical or is prohibitively expensive. A Fastershire Business Grant of up to £20,000 is also being introduced. The coverage of both superfast (>30mbps) and ultrafast (>100mbps) continues to edge up according to figures on the ThinkBroadband website (see graph).



Much of our work to enable a vibrant economy will be achieved in partnership with key stakeholders ranging from the County Council, GFirst LEP, Chambers of Commerce and other business groups, town and parish councils, institutions like the Royal Agricultural University and Cirencester College and individual businesses.

### **Actions we are taking**

The Green Economic Growth Strategy 2021-25 sets out the challenges and issues for the District, and how they will be addressed. It identifies the key areas that will deliver growth in the District, as well as a recovery plan for the local economy. The Cotswold Economic Advisory Group which was set up to advise, oversee and challenge the implementation of the Strategy; and provide a link to the main institutions and the wider business community in the District continues to meet regularly and provide valuable advice and assistance. The group has representation from key stakeholders including Cirencester College, the Royal Agricultural University (RAU), Cotswold Airport, Fairford and Lechlade Business Group, the Federation of Small Businesses and GFirst LEP. Most recently, the Group received a presentation on the Visitor Economy from Cotswolds Tourism as well as discussing the implications of the Chancellor's Autumn Statement, which had taken place on the same day as the Group's meeting.

The Council has now completed the 'Welcome Back Fund' and 'Reopening High Streets Safely' project, designed to assist town centres to recover after lockdown. The Council has successfully recovered all of its spending relating to this fund from the government, using around £157k of the £162k allocation. The projects and spend was subject to a random audit request and was given a clean bill of health. Earlier this year, the Council was awarded £1 million over three years from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund for the period 2022-23 to 2024-25. The Council's Local Investment Plan, which sets out how the Council proposes to use the money, was approved by the government in early December 2022. The fund has three themes – Community and Place, Supporting Local Business and, in year three, People and Skills. Year one projects have been decided, following a call for Expressions of Interest and include 'Clean and Green' projects and the feasibility study for the Old Station building in Cirencester. A further £764,292 was indicatively allocated to the Council from the Rural England Prosperity Fund for financial years 2023-24 and 2024-25. This is a capital-only fund to support rural businesses to diversify with new products and services and to provide new community infrastructure. An addendum to the Local Investment Plan was submitted to the government at the end of November 2022 and it is hoped that it will be approved before the end of January 2023. The proposed approach has been to allocate funding for business grants, for active travel and for community projects, including assisting village halls with sustainability-related improvements. An application process will be opened and details issued to councillors once approval for the plan has been received from government.

Town centres are important from both an economic and civic pride perspective. The number of vacant town centre retail units is a measure of a town centre's health and how the Council is meeting its objective of helping town centres to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic. A survey undertaken in August 2021 showed Cirencester had a town centre vacancy rate of 11%, three percentage points below the national average. The vacancy rate improved further in April 2022 to just under 6% and in October 2022 to just under 5%. The smaller towns within the District generally have lower vacancy rates and none of these are of concern at this time, although we need to be mindful of the pace of change on the high street and the potential impact of the cost of living crisis.

Much of Cotswolds Tourism's work this quarter has been centred on sustainability, one of the six priorities set out in the Destination Management Plan. The findings of the Sustainable Tourism Survey are being worked through to identify the organisations and partners best able to assist businesses in the many different areas of sustainability. A Sustainable Tourism Action Plan has been developed and the team will be working with partners such as GWR, Visit Gloucestershire and Cotswold National Landscape.

Working in partnership with Cotswold National Landscape, two circular walks in Bourton on the Water have been developed with the aim of dispersing visitors and easing congestion in the town centre. The walks are aimed at local residents and visitors, with one of them fully accessible to wheelchairs and prams; and are opened in October 2022.

A Local Connections project is underway. It is designed to develop and improve business to business connections between local accommodation providers and businesses providing services or products that would add value or interest to their visitor offer. The project will be going live in March 2023.

The aim of the Real Cotswolds campaign is to encourage interest in less visited towns and away from visitor hotspots by giving greater prominence to less visited towns on the Cotswolds Tourism website, encouraging media interest away from hotspots, controlling where possible the imagery used (e.g. only supplying out of season images of the most popular places). Of the 15 towns being monitored, Bourton's share has now dropped from over 27% to under 17%, while promoted 'Real Cotswolds' towns now account for 38% of web traffic.

The Tourism team with partners secured £5,000 funding from the Department of International Trade to identify businesses who want to access high spend overseas market and help prepare them to do so.

The Council is working with partners to bring sites forward which will support the Council's ambition to grow high value, highly skilled, low environmental impact businesses in key areas including agritech, digital/cyber, medical equipment and environmental technologies, and to enhance the opportunities available for local people, particularly young people so that they have the skills they need to secure employment in the District. The Council is working with:

- the Royal Agricultural University to bring forward their Triangle/University Gate site. The Council's Chief Executive, the Cabinet Member for Economy, and the Economic Development Lead have held a number of meetings with the new Vice Chancellor, Chief Operating Officer and Director of External Relations at the RAU. The RAU has come up with a concept of an 'Innovation Village' which will help to address global challenges around sustainable farming and food security. The plans include teaching and research space, incubator and grow-on business units, a conference centre, hotel and hospitality space. The Council assisted the RAU to secure £100,000 from the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee Strategic Economic Development Fund to assist with the cost of project management over the next two years. The project management resource has now been put in place. It is anticipated that a planning application for the site will be submitted in Spring 2023. A public launch of the project has been scheduled for 20 January 2023.
- the new owners of the former Mitsubishi site in Cirencester, now renamed Watermoor Point. The office element is now 80% let and the warehouse is being repurposed for storage for businesses and individuals. The Cabinet Member for Economy and Transformation visited recently to see improvements to the site. A recent meeting of the Cotswold Economic Advisory Group was hosted at Watermoor Point.

- ZeroAvia which has relocated from Cranfield to Cotswold Airport. ZeroAvia is a leading innovator in decarbonising aviation, and is developing a hydrogen-electric powered aircraft. The Council is working with the Inward Investment Team at GFirst LEP to support ZeroAvia which has increased its staff numbers from 15 to 97 with the plans to continue to grow significantly. The Council and GFirst will continue to support ZeroAvia in its continued growth.
- Bathurst Developments in relation to the first phase of employment land at The Steadings development. They have appointed a developer partner who is confident about the demand for the units. A reserved matters planning application has been submitted for this phase.

The Applied Digital Skills Centre at Cirencester College was officially launched at an event held in May 2022. The new centre will give the District a great opportunity both to develop a workforce with the digital skills needed in the 21st century, and also to grow its digital and cyber sectors. The Council continues to work closely with the College, particularly to identify partnerships with business which would be mutually beneficial. The College has also been awarded £4m of funding from the Government for a new T-level building which will help to provide high level skills in the District. T Levels are based on the same standards as apprenticeships, designed by employers and approved by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education. It is equivalent to 3 A-levels and involves an industry placement. The Economic Development Lead has met with staff from the College to assist them with identifying potential placements for students.

An Innovation Lab at Chipping Campden library opened on 1 August 2022 and is a friendly community space offering access to digital skill development for all ages and abilities, including 360° immersive film, 3D design, print, scanning and prototyping, coding and micro-computers, virtual and augmented reality and advanced digital design and animation. A lab technician will be on hand to support delivery of a range of events, workshops and one-to-one sessions for young people, job seekers, freelancers and creatives, and will also establish a network of volunteers and industry links to help with setting up Code Clubs and STEAM based workshops for local schools.

On infrastructure, the Development Consent Order (effectively the planning application) for the A417 Missing Link was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate by Highways England in June 2021. The examination finished in May 2022 and the scheme was approved in November 2022. Kier Highways has been appointed main contractor. The project, which at around £460m, is the biggest infrastructure investment in the District and indeed the whole county for a generation, is designed to reduce congestion and improve road safety on this important link between Cirencester and Gloucester and, more widely, the M4 and M5 motorways. While new road building projects can be seen as environmentally damaging, much effort has been focused on delivering opportunities for environmental improvements as well as economic benefits. There will be opportunities for local suppliers, contractors and skills. For example, the Council has been in discussions with Kier and the Cotswolds National Landscape regarding a Drystone Walling Academy to help train people to build the 10km of drystone walling included in the scheme.



**COTSWOLD**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Delivering great services locally

**PERFORMANCE REPORT**  
**October 2022 - December 2022**

## A note on performance benchmarking

Benchmarking can be a useful tool for driving improvement; by comparing our performance with other similar organisations, we can start a discussion about what good performance might look like, and why there might be variations, as well as learning from other organisations about how they operate (process benchmarking).

The second annual benchmarking exercise has been completed for the most recent data available (2020-21), and includes CIPFA benchmarking charts and revised Shire Districts' median /top quartile lines. The 2021-22 benchmarking data will be released over the course of the new financial year, and generally concludes around December time, ready for the 2022-23 Q4 performance report.

Two comparator groups that are commonly used to benchmark Councils' performance are: all shire district councils and CIPFA Nearest Neighbours (NN). The CIPFA NN Model is based on family groups; it adopts a scientific approach to measuring the similarity between councils taking into account a range of demographic and socio-economic characteristics. The standard model provides the 15 nearest neighbours to each council. In contrast, the all shire districts comparator group is a much larger dataset of 181 councils, and there will inevitably be a much greater variation between the councils in this group.

When we embark on performance benchmarking, it is important to understand that we are often looking at one aspect of performance i.e. the level of performance achieved. Although the CIPFA NN Model groups councils on the basis of similarity, these factors are external and based on 'place'. The model does not take into account how services are resourced or compare in terms of quality or level of service delivered, for example, how satisfied are residents and customers? Furthermore, each council is unique with its own vision, aim and priorities, and services operate within this context.

Therefore, benchmarking data should be viewed as a 'guide' and as a starting point for discussion. It is important to understand performance within context, and there will be a variety of internal factors that determine performance including costs, workloads and quality.

### Note

The data has been extracted from LG Inform, a benchmarking tool, which contains a range of routinely published data. It should be noted that:

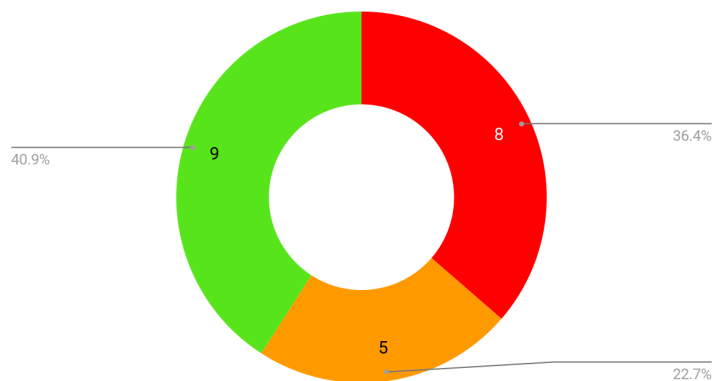
- the extracted data may differ from the Council's own data;
- the median and top (best 25%) quartile lines are based on annual outturns but applied to the quarterly data;;
- 2021/22 benchmarks are not yet available, so the previous year's benchmarks have been used, and will be revised during each benchmarking exercise.



# KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS

## At a glance...

Summary of Performance



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### OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Overall, performance appears to be mixed. There were improvements in some services such as Planning and Customer services, while other services such as Revenues and Benefits have found it a challenging quarter as they manage the impact of the cost of living crisis. The severe weather conditions in December 2022 affected waste collections, and to a lesser extent high risk food inspections.

Over the last year, a number of services have highlighted the potential impact of the cost of living crisis on households, businesses and the Council's services in particular Revenues and Benefits, Planning, Housing Support and Leisure. Some services such as Revenues and Benefits have reported increased customer contact and workloads while Planning has reported a slow-down in applications and potentially fewer applications for large developments due to a loss of confidence in the housing market. The business rates collection rate has been depressed over the last couple of years due to Covid and may now take longer to recover.

There are a number of improvement programmes in progress across services focussed on improving customer communication and increasing automation and self-serve options for customers which should help to reduce customer contact including repeat customer contact

Indicators with targets	Status
Customer satisfaction - phones	Green
Customer satisfaction - F2F	Green
Satisfaction for Building Control service	Orange
CT collection rate	Green
NNDR collection rate	Red
Average days to process CTS new claims	Red
Average days to process CTS change events	Green
Average days to process HB change events	Red
% HB overpayment due to LA error or admin delay	Orange
% major planning applications determined within time	Green
% minor planning applications determined within time	Green
% other planning applications determined within time	Red
Total planning income	Red
Pre-application advice income	Red
% planning appeals allowed	Green
Affordable homes delivered	Orange
% land charge searches dispatched within time	Red
% high risk notifications assessed within time	Green
% high risk food premises inspected within time	Orange
Residual waste per household (kg)	Awaiting data
% combined recycling rate	Awaiting data
Missed bins per 100,000 collections	Red
Leisure visits	Green
Gym memberships	Orange

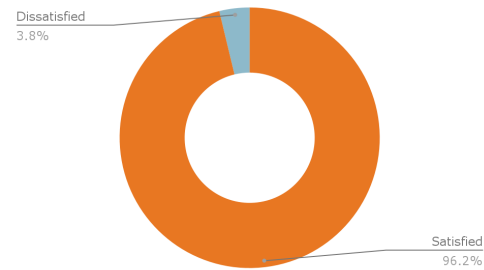
# CUSTOMER SERVICE

## Customer satisfaction

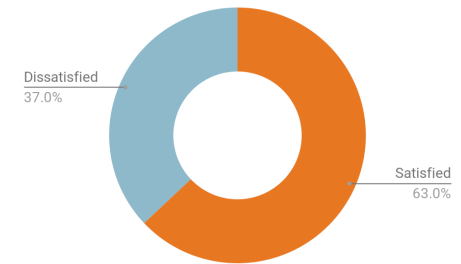
Face to face - 41 respondents



Phone - 213 respondents

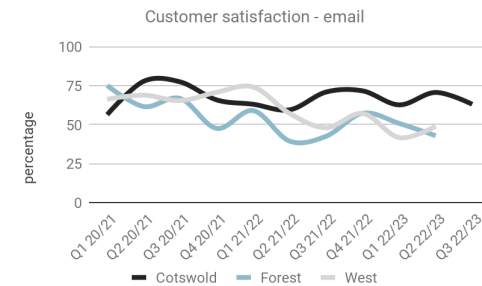
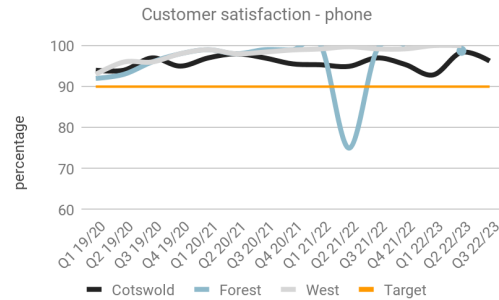
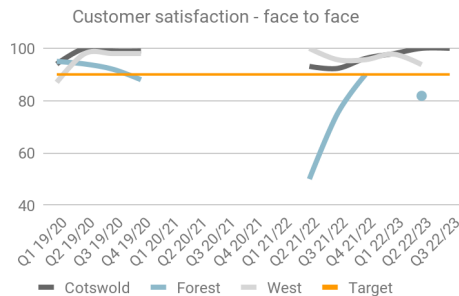


Email - 351 respondents



### What's the trend?

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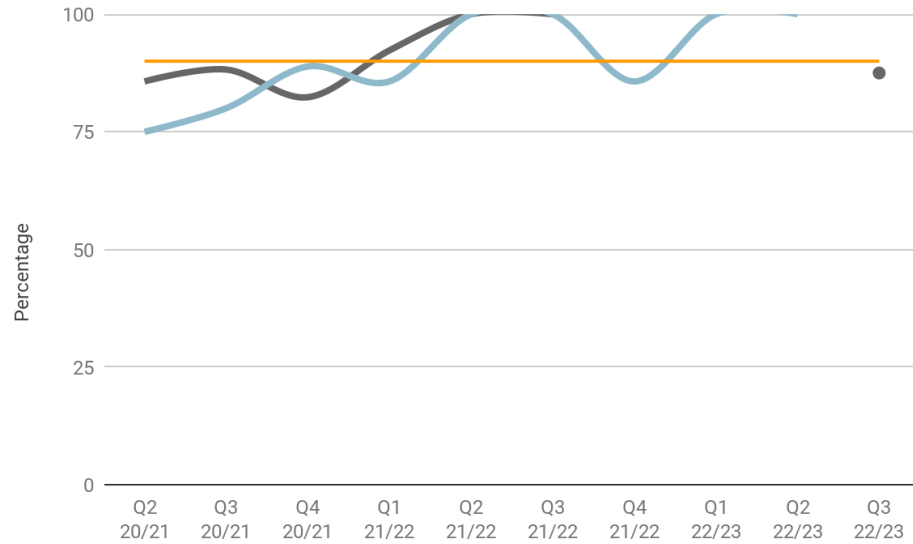
### OBSERVATION:

Satisfaction ratings for services delivered face to face and telephone are indicating high satisfaction for services, although the number of survey responses continues to be relatively low.

F2F surveys (left visible on the reception desk) and telephone surveys require intervention from the advisor; while email surveys are automatically triggered. A greater number of telephone surveys were completed in Q3 helped both by better capacity due to lower call volumes at this time of year; and the Customer Services Support officer who has been promoting the surveys within the service and ensuring that all advisors are trained in transferring customers to the survey to maximise the completion rate. During busy periods, calls waiting are prioritised.

In terms of email surveys, all outbound emails sent by customer services from Salesforce contain a link to the survey. Satisfaction ratings for services delivered via email is indicating a slight downward trend. Some work has been undertaken to ascertain the reasons for dissatisfaction and indicates that much of the dissatisfaction relates to service failure e.g. my bin was missed, rather than the overall experience of the service delivered

## Customer satisfaction for the Building Control service



### OBSERVATION:

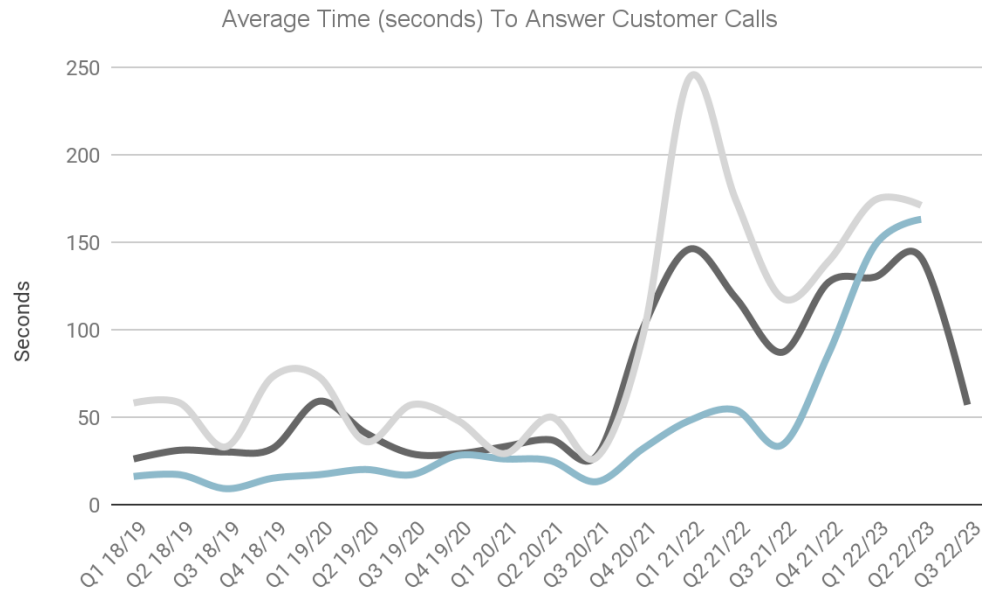
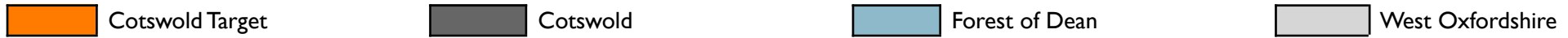
The surveys have been paused temporarily due to a shortage of staff in the service, although a small number of surveys were completed in Q3. Of the eight surveys completed, seven were satisfied and one partially satisfied. The partial dissatisfaction related to the question on value for money.

The service has a proactive approach to customer care. Overall, it receives very few formal complaints and there were no complaints in Q3.

Staff are prioritising workload including marketing letters which appear to be having a positive impact on market share. The Technical Support Officers are supporting the Surveyors, who are either in the process of becoming 'licenced' or who are preparing for the mandatory competency exam. Surveyors are preparing for this exam by undertaking a range of courses that run between 3 months and 9 months equating to a day a week but are staggered to reduce the impact on service delivery. All building control surveyors need to be licenced by April 2024.

Overall, the current survey yields a small number of responses and is relatively time consuming. Survey Monkey has previously been used but did not yield a high response rate. Alternative ways of surveying customers will be considered as a wider piece of work on customer satisfaction in services

## Telephone calls - average waiting time



### OBSERVATION

The Customer services team made significant improvement in the average call waiting time at 57 seconds in Q3, down from two minutes and 20 seconds in the previous quarter.

Lower volumes of calls into the Council (as expected at this time of the year), and recruitment to vacant posts during the quarter contributed to the improved performance.

Workloads are expected to be higher in Q4 due to annual billing, garden waste renewals and the introduction of voter ids.

Retention of staff continues to be challenging and further recruitment is currently taking place as there are leavers in Q4. However, the pay uplift for 2022-23 could help to make this role more competitive and improve retention rates in the service.

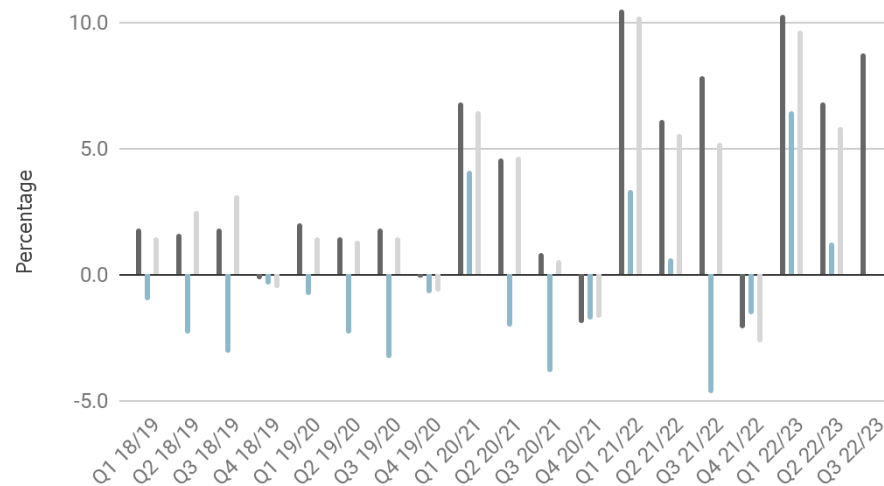
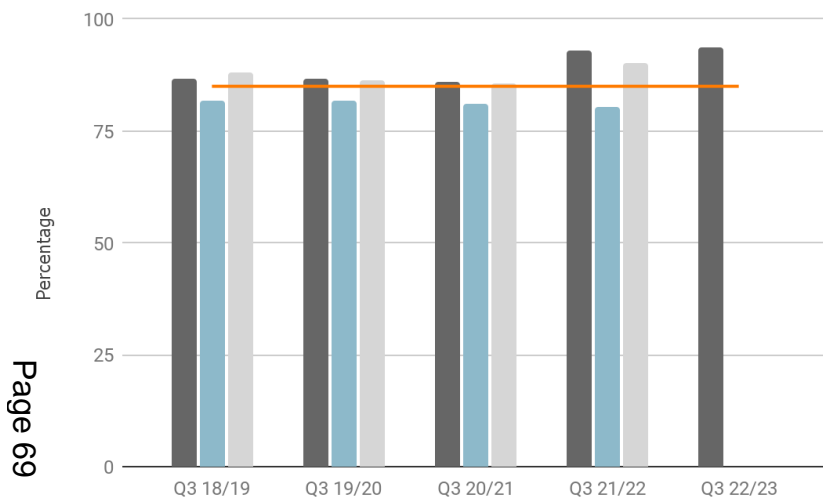
There are a number of improvement projects in the service including the recent implementation of a new process for managing demand through improved engagement with other services. This will mean that communications with residents and customers will be staggered so that workloads are 'smoothed' and can be dealt with more effectively by the team.

Further work on automation and integration of forms to the back office systems is continuing, aimed at improving the on-line offer for customers and reducing call volumes and call length time. For example, the bulky waste online form was integrated with Salesforce and a new sign up to waste alerts was introduced which provides information on waste collection days and changes

## Revenues and Benefits

(Cumulative) Percentage of council tax collected at the end of the quarter & the difference between the % of council tax collected and the target

Cotswold Target
  Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire
  Shire Districts' Median



### OBSERVATION:

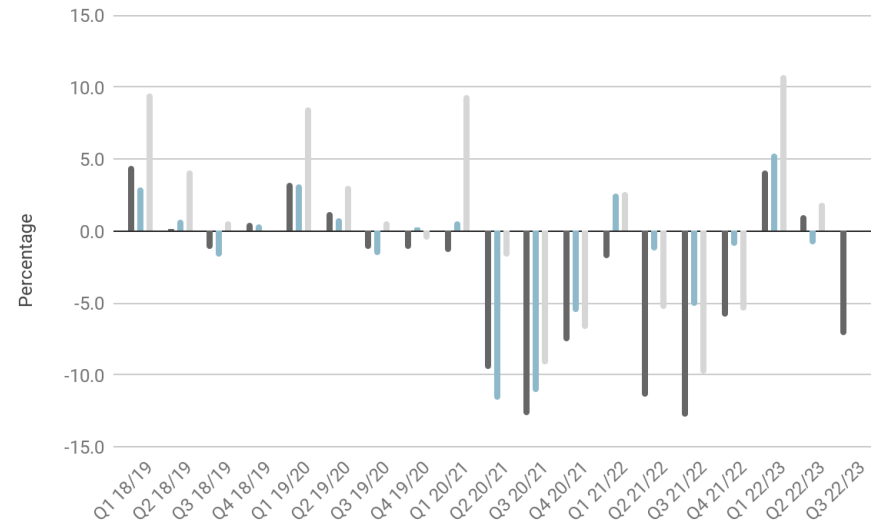
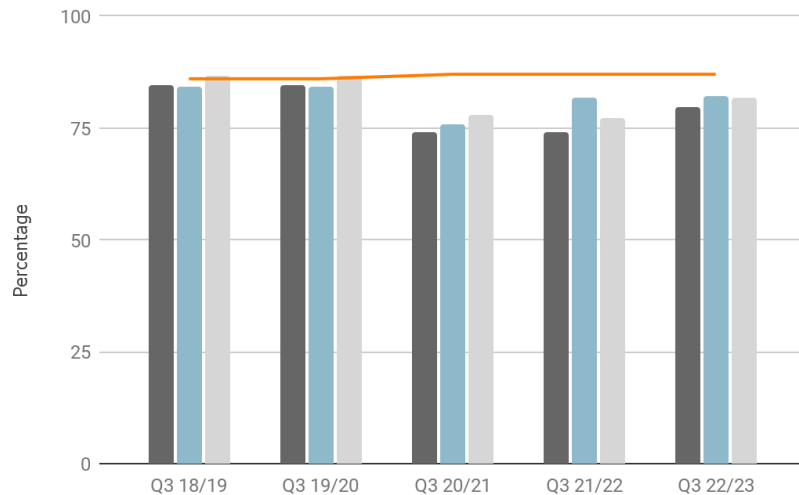
Overall, the collection rate at the end of Q3 is around one percentage point higher than a year ago. The improved collection rate will have been helped by recovery action beginning to take effect (following the pause during the first part of the pandemic) with those households in arrears now on repayment schedules, and potentially the roll out of the £150 council tax rebate (generally paid back to the householder's bank account but some will have had their accounts credited). Payments for both the £150 mandatory and discretionary schemes have been completed with a total of £3,965,954 paid to 26,052 households.

The rising cost of living could potentially affect the annual in-year collection rates and beyond. The service reports that overall customer contact with the service has increased and the number of applications for reductions in council tax in special circumstance (Section 13A) is rising. In January 2022, Cabinet approved the introduction of an exceptional hardship policy to support those households in severe financial difficulties. A revised Council Tax Support scheme designed to support more households will be introduced in 2023-24.

Workloads are expected to increase during Q4 as both the Revenues and Benefits teams will be implementing the additional £25 payment (as a credit on the CT account) to all working age and pension age individuals who are in receipt of Council Tax Support; as well as the alternative energy payments (on behalf of Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy) to those households who do not have a direct contract with an energy supplier e.g. park homes and other shared communities, and therefore did not receive the £400 payment

**(Cumulative) Percentage of business rates collected & the difference between the percentage of business rates collected and the target**

Cotswold Target
  Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire
  Shire Districts' Median



**OBSERVATION:**

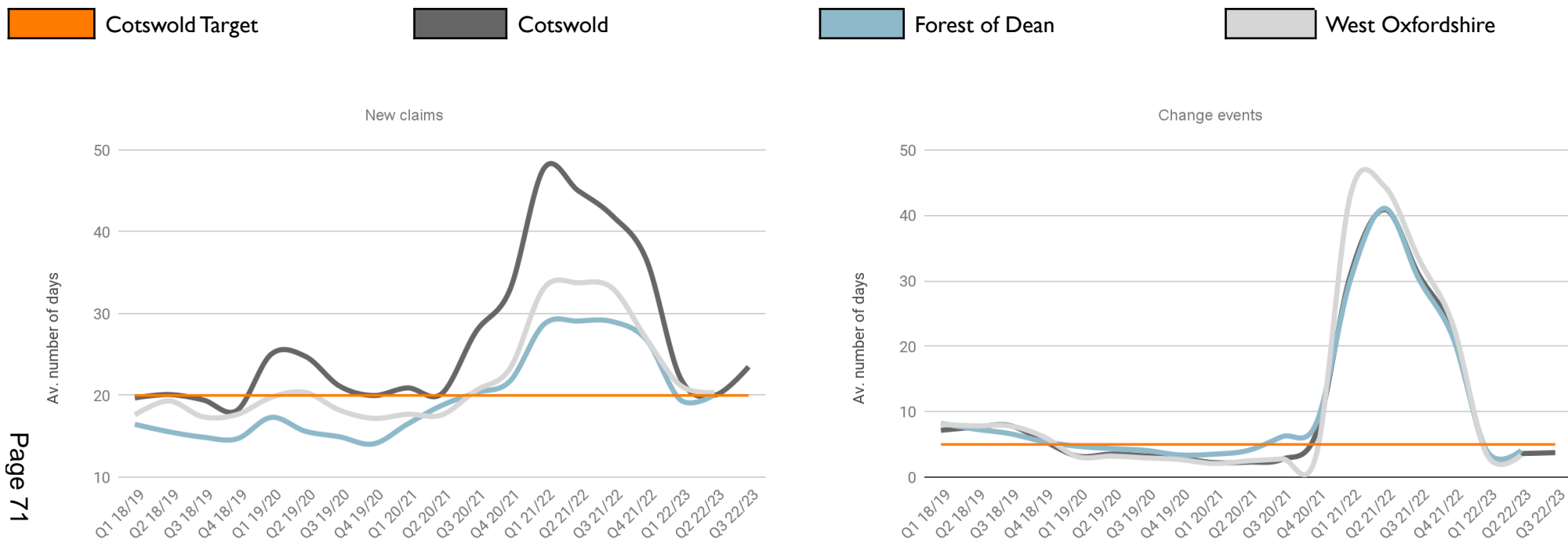
At the end of Q3, the collection rate had increased compared to the same period of the previous year, although it has not yet returned to the level achieved pre-Covid-19.

It is likely that the Covid Additional Relief Fund (CARF) distributed during the year has contributed to the improved collection rate. These businesses have had their business rates accounts credited. Although the grant relates to 2021-22, the timing of the receipt has meant that some businesses have used it to offset the current year's account.

The collection rate was expected to remain depressed as some businesses continue to struggle financially due to the cumulative impact of Covid-19, and the cost of living crisis. Extended retail relief will continue through 2022-23 at a relief of 50%, and will increase to 75% in 2023-24 for leisure and retail businesses. However, the criteria for eligibility is more stringent than during covid times so some businesses will miss out. The service will be writing to those businesses affected. In addition, some businesses will see their rates increase as a result of the business rates revaluation 2023-24.

The service is continuing to support homeowners and businesses including encouraging customers to contact the Council so that they can be supported via manageable repayment plans, or refer them on to other services both internally and externally. The debt, however, can only be secured through recovery action and issuing of a liability order. The service is up to date with in year processes for the recovery of both council tax and business rates. In addition, the Council has asked enforcement agents to put in additional steps during the early stages of debt recovery to help avert court action and higher costs later in the process. The service is also planning to redesign the recovery process during the first six months of 2023-24 with scoping work starting at the end of March 2023.

**(Cumulative) Average number of days taken to process Council Tax Support new claims and change events**



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**OBSERVATION:**

At the end of Q3, the average days to process new CTS claims increased by three days to 23.5 days while the average processing days for CTS changes remained comfortably within the target at 3.8 days.

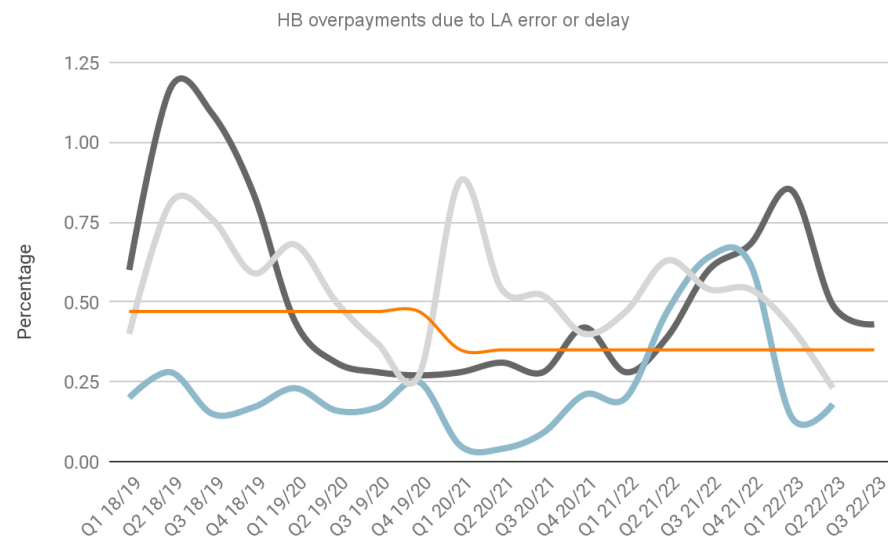
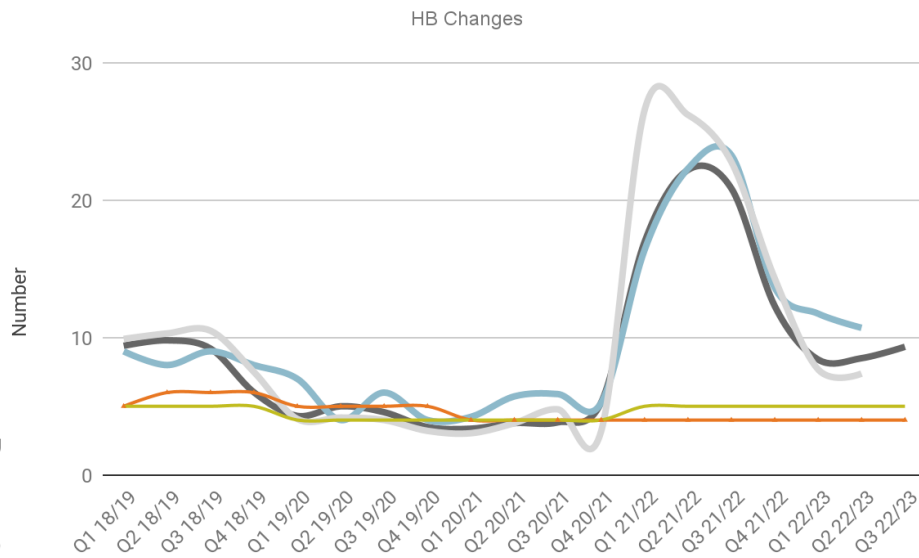
The service reports that the cost of living crisis has started to increase overall customer contact and workloads in the service. A combination of increased number of applications and reduced staffing during the quarter has resulted in longer processing times. During the quarter, the Benefits team was down by two full-time experienced officers and another officer left the team in December 2022. The team has been prioritising new claims as these households are likely to be in the greatest needs, but also mindful of the impact of at any delay in processing HB changes.

The team is working to secure and restore/increase resources to deal with increased workloads and improve processing times. Overtime has also been offered to the team and one permanent post has been successfully recruited to and started in January 2023, however it takes one year to train up benefits staff. In addition, one external resource from Civica On Demand started in November 2022. Processing times for CTS new claims is expected to be within or close to the 20 day target at the end of Q4.

Customers are able to access information about their claim and awards on the OpenPortal. Further work on improving benefit forms to make them more customer friendly and accessible through the OpenPortal is planned which will help to reduce customer contact.



**(Cumulative) Average number of days taken to process Housing Benefit changes of circumstances & % HB overpayments due to LA error /delay**



**OBSERVATION:**

The observation for CTS new claims and changes should be read in conjunction with the observation for HB indicators as the work is performed by the same team.

At the end of Q3, the average days to process HB changes has increased slightly due to higher workloads and reduced staffing. In addition, the service has been prioritising new claims as these households are likely to be in most need while also monitoring HB changes closely as delays could impact on the the HB subsidy that the Council receives.

Resource levels in the service are being addressed through recruitment, overtime and the use of Civica On Demand which should help to bring performance closer to the target next quarter. Processing times will also be helped by the auto processing of pension credit up ratings and new year rent increases from landlords which are applied during Q4.

The % HB overpayment due to LA error/delay is continuing to improve and is inside the national target of 0.47%. This outturn is reported cumulatively from the April 2022 so should continue to improve as the caseload increases over the course of the year as long as there are no sizable errors or delays in processing HB changes.

The service continues to check a sample of cases each month as part of the Department for Work and Pension's (DWP) Housing Benefit Award Accuracy (HBAA) initiative to tackle fraud and error.

Note: the national target is 0.47%. In 2020-21, the service set a more stringent target of 0.35%



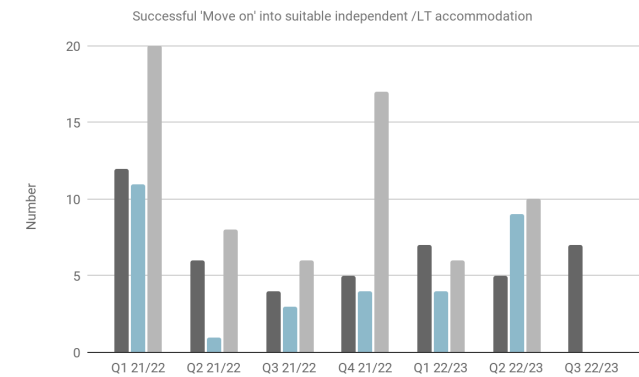
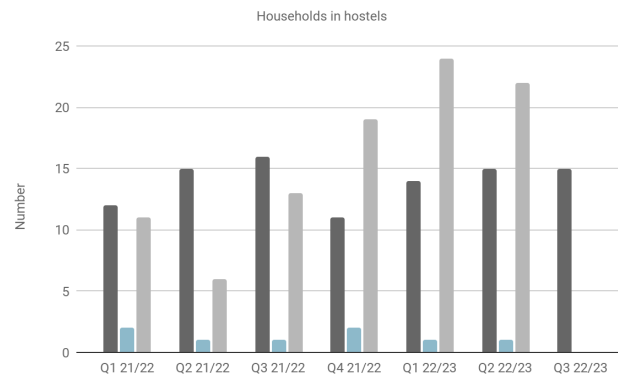
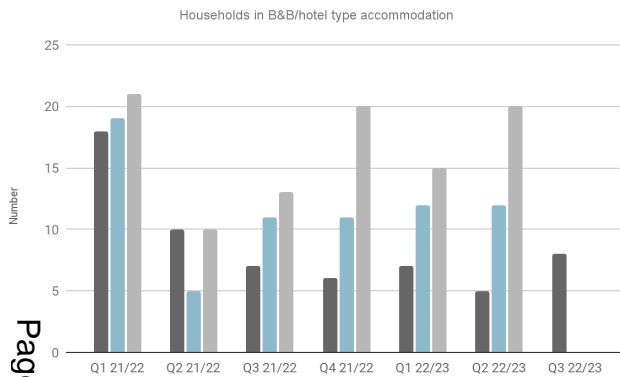
## Housing Support

(Snapshot) Number of households in B&B/hotel-type accommodation & Hostels (LA owned or managed); and Number of successful 'Move On' into suitable independent/long-term accommodation from B&Bs/hotels/hostels

 Cotswold

 Forest of Dean

 West Oxfordshire



### OBSERVATION:

The numbers of people contacting the Housing Team continues to rise in the wake of the current cost of living crisis, the evolving Homes for Ukraine situation and the cold weather in December 2022, therefore the pressures on Housing services, systems and pathways remain high. The Housing Team has refocused more resources on the prevention approach as well as moving people on from emergency accommodation as quickly as possible.

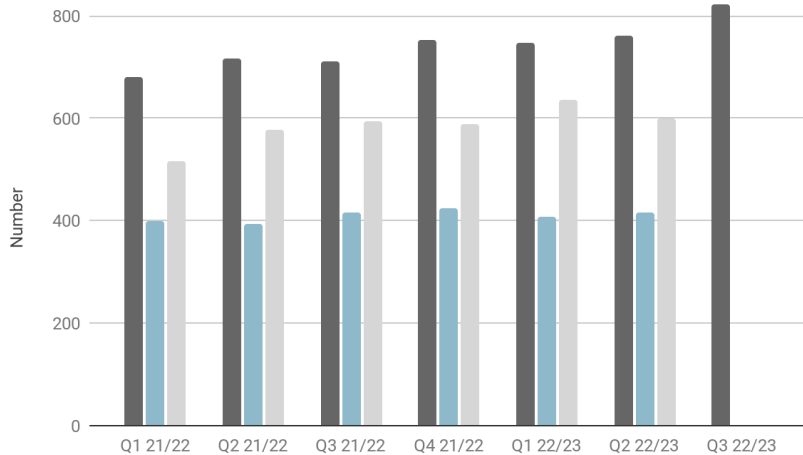
The number of people contacting for advice is slightly lower in Cotswold District than Forest of Dean District and West Oxfordshire District. The cold weather, along with the cost of living crisis has resulted in some people who would normally be staying between family and friends become homeless which has particularly affected Forest and West requiring greater use of hotel placements. The Council's owned and managed hostels continue to operate at capacity.

The Council has received additional Winter Pressures funding to support these increases in homeless cases and resulting pressures on services. Temporary resources have been brought in to assist with moving on people who were accommodated during the recent severe cold weather. The use of specialist Temporary Accommodation officers are able to offer dedicated support and bespoke solutions for helping clients move on successfully from emergency accommodation.

The availability of social housing stock remains low. This is partially due to prevention measures being put in place to assist those affected by the financial implications of the increasing cost of living. These measures are aimed at working with households to enable them to remain in their own home, with reducing rent arrears or covering the costs of increased bills. Accessing the Private Rented Sector in the District remains difficult due to affordability.

The team is also providing advice and assistance to Ukrainian families who will need to source their own accommodation as the scheme moves through the initial 12 month period. On 22 December 2022, there were 150 sponsors/hosts. The specialist Ukraine Housing Officer (funding secured from County) is working with families and hosts to prevent homelessness wherever possible and assist families to secure their own accommodation in the private sector. Where this is not possible, the Officer will source either rematches to different Hosts through the Homes for Ukraine scheme or source emergency accommodation when needed until a longer term solution can be found.

**(Snapshot) Number of Long Term Empty properties (six months and over)**



**OBSERVATION:**

During Q3, 154 properties were removed from the long term empty homes list and 216 added.

The service reports that properties are staying on the LTE list longer; anecdotal evidence suggests there are difficulties in getting building supplies for refurb work as well as the impact of the cost of living crisis. Most properties are individually owned and have to be followed up individually which is resource intensive, and will not result in the removal of large numbers from the LTE list. There is also a large number of housing association properties awaiting demolition.

A range of proactive work is being undertaken to both understand the reasons why properties are coming onto the list so that they can be managed and reduced as well as ensuring that the data is up to date so that these properties are having the correct levy applied and charged for. Improved reporting is helping to identify and better target properties

## Planning and Strategic Housing

### (Cumulative) Percentage of major planning applications determined

% of all applications completed within 13 weeks or an agreed timeframe



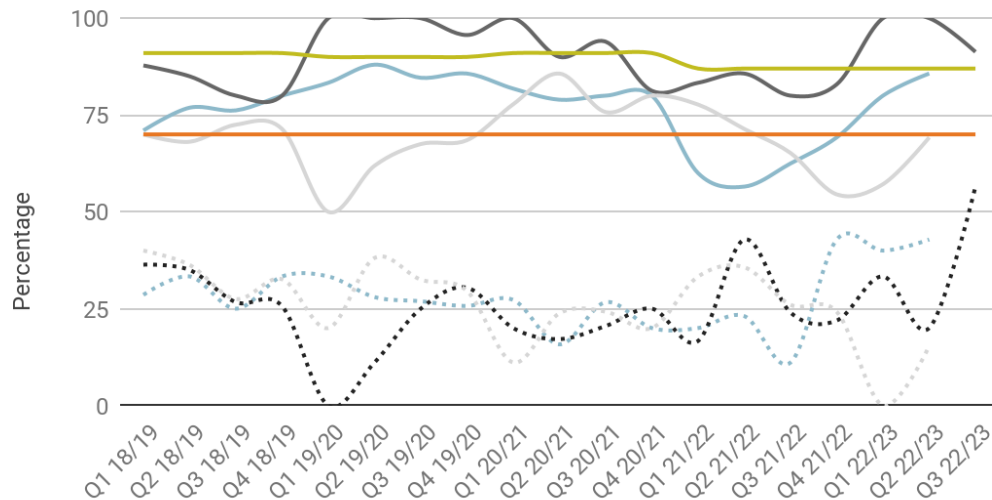
% of all application completed within 13 weeks

----- Cotswold

----- Forest of Dean

----- West Oxfordshire

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#### Note

The charts for the planning performance measures have been separated to demonstrate the number of applications that are completed within the set time frames and the number that are completed as a result of an agreed extension of time.

Extensions of times are often a result of consultees requesting changes to the scheme or because the consultee response is essential but has not been received within the timetable. They are also used where officers are working proactively with applicants to improve schemes and make developments acceptable

#### OBSERVATION:

Thirteen 'Major' applications were determined in the quarter, and 20 for the year so far.

Overall, planning performance for all types of applications has improved over the last 12 months. The service reports that the number of planning applications coming in is slowing, although it remains above pre-Covid times in line with the national trend.

The DM team is now operating at full capacity following the recruitment to 3.5 Planning Officer posts vacant at the end of the previous financial year. The new post holders commenced in Q2. However, there is a shortage of ecologists which is delaying internal consultation on some planning applications but these are mainly the larger applications. In addition, some types of applications (minors mainly) for residential and holiday accommodation have been delayed by Habitat Regulations Assessment issues (relating to land within the two special areas of conservation in neighbouring districts which also extend into the Cotswold District). A mitigation strategy for one area is now in place allowing these applications to be determined.

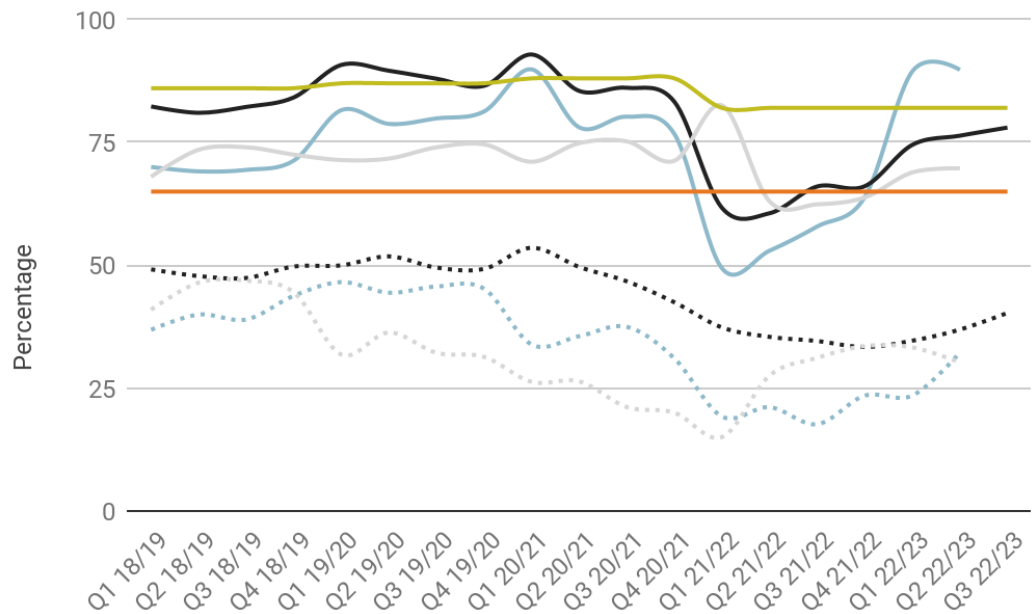
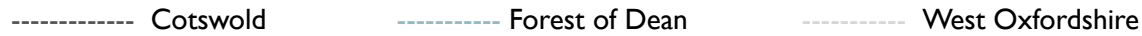
There is an improvement programme and roadmap in place, and progress is being made on improving communication with customers, reducing the backlog of enforcement cases; and a new Planning Checklist designed to improve the quality of the applications submitted and reduce the impact of invalid applications on the validation team went live on 1 February 2023

## (Cumulative) Percentage of minor planning applications determined

% of all applications completed within 8 weeks or an agreed timescale



% of all applications completed within 8 weeks



**OBSERVATION:**

Performance for 'Minor' applications has been improving over the last few quarters.

97 minor applications were determined in Q3, compared to 110 applications in the same period of the previous year.

See Observation for Major applications for further explanation

## (Cumulative) Percentage of other planning applications determined

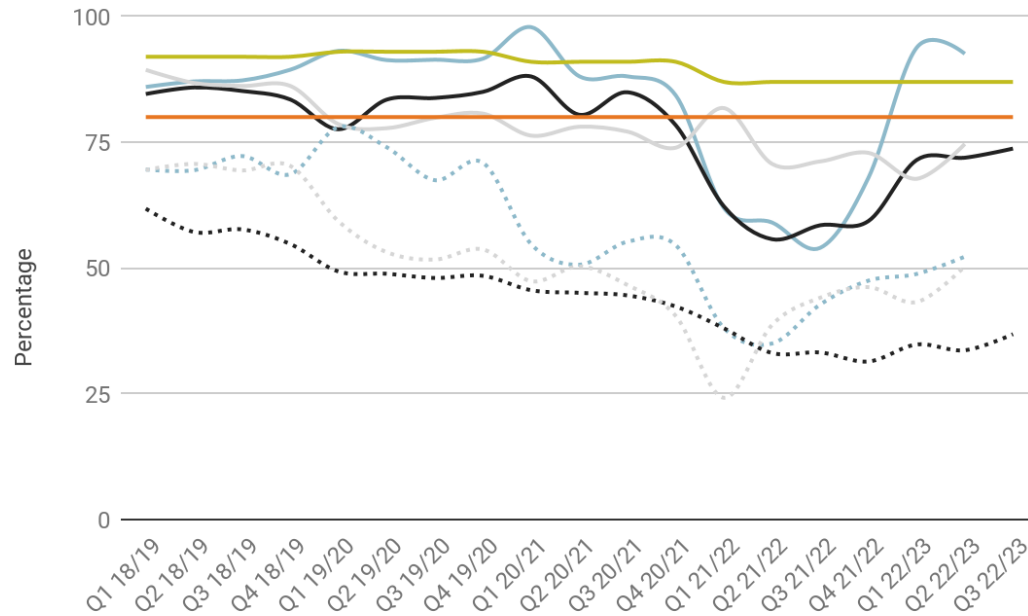
% of all applications completed within 8 weeks or an agreed timescale



% of all applications completed within 8 weeks



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### OBSERVATION:

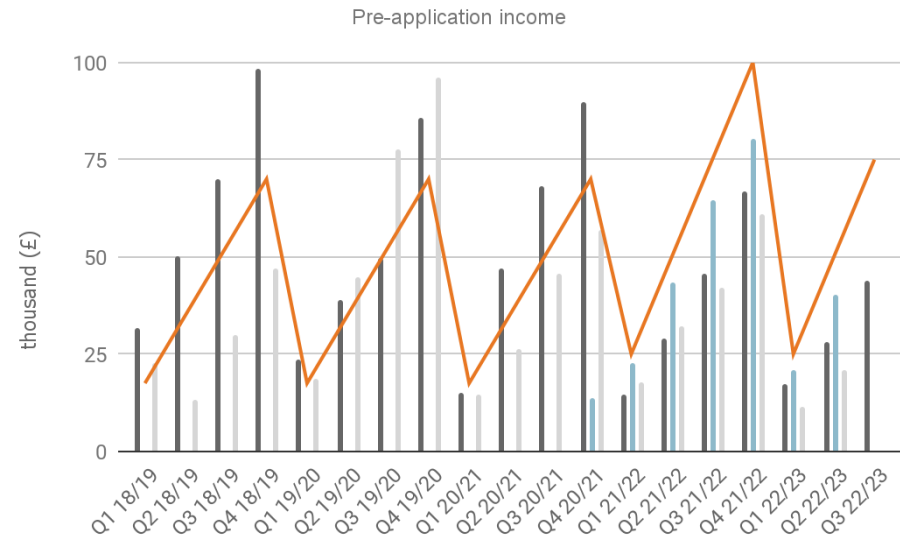
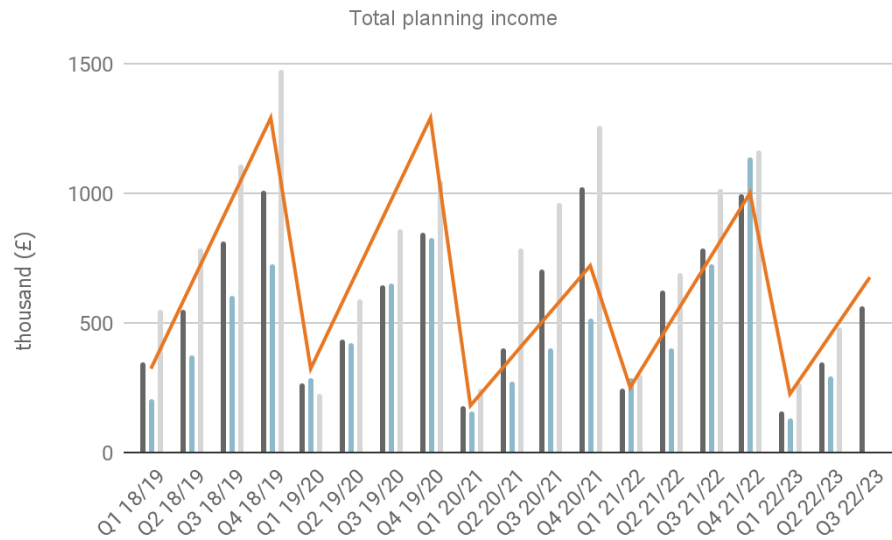
Improvements are being made but at a slower rate than for 'Majors' and 'Minors' partly due to being unable to secure extensions of times. In addition, this outturn is reported cumulatively from the beginning of the year which means that fluctuations and improvements are flattened. The cumulative outturn to the end of Q3 was 73.8% while the quarterly outturns were 77.4% for Q3, up from 72.6% in Q2 and 71.5% in Q1. Improvements have continued into January with 80.52% of 'Other' applications determined in time (Target: 80%).

There is an acknowledged backlog of planning applications and officers are working through them, therefore it is likely that performance will fluctuate but on the whole will continue to show an upward trend.

Further service improvements will be rolled out over the next few months to help streamline processes and get applications out quicker.

See Observation for Major applications for further explanation

**(Cumulative) Planning income**

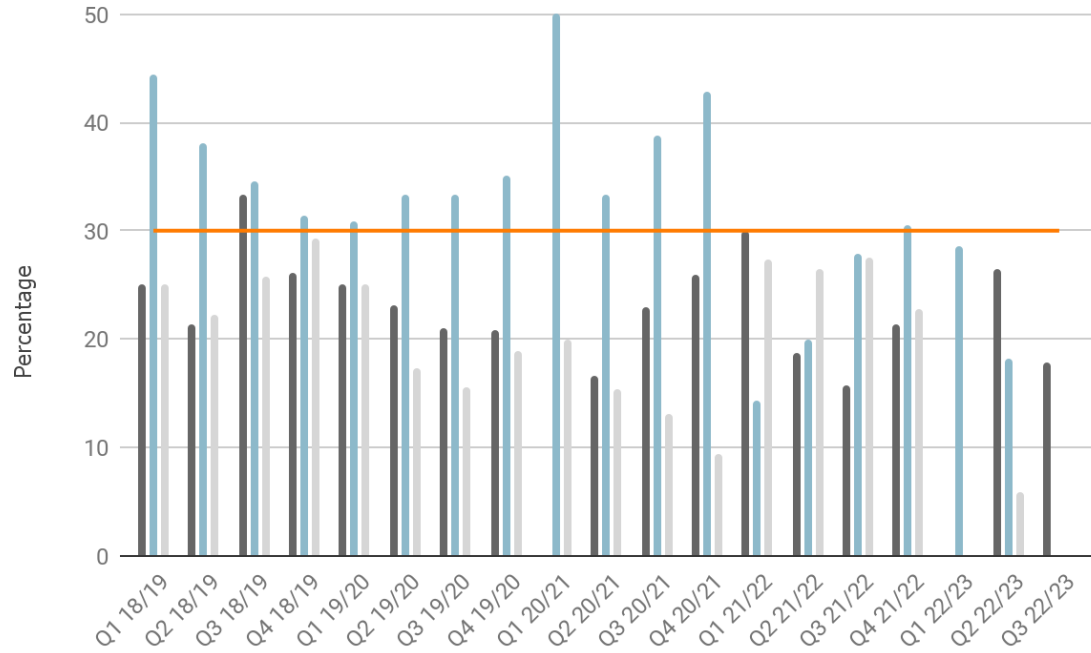
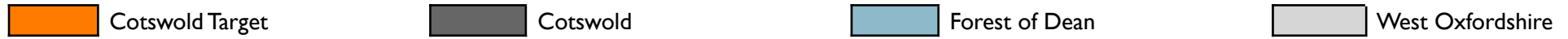


**OBSERVATION:**

At the end of Q3, total planning income was short of its target. The number of applications received is slowing but remains higher than historical levels. Pre-application income was lower than expected due to fewer larger developments which attract a higher fee. It is likely that we will continue to see fewer larger developments due to loss of confidence in the housing market coupled with the fact that Cotswold has a 5 year land supply so gets fewer speculative applications which tend to attract large fees.

A full review of pre-app charges and other services that could be charged for has been undertaken and approved by Cabinet for roll out on 1 April 2023. For example, officer time to deal with enquiries will be charged for and an admin fee will be charged for returning invalid applications. The introduction of new fees and charges will have a positive impact on income; and charging for enquiries may also reduce the number of enquiries allowing officers to focus on determining planning applications. However, the number of applications and types of application is largely driven by external factors such as policy and the economy

**(Cumulative) Percentage of planning appeals allowed**



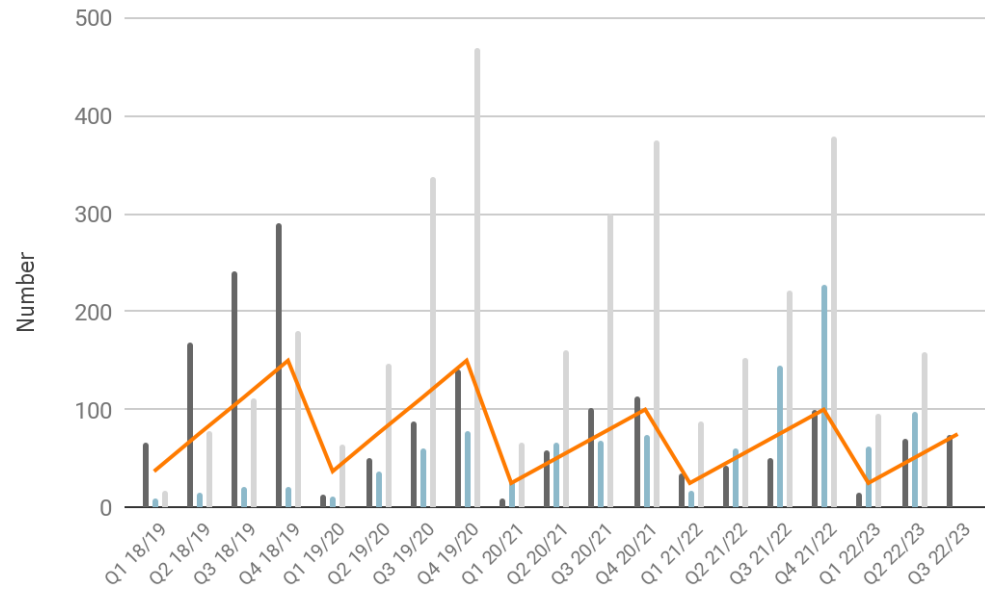
**OBSERVATION:**

This indicator seeks to ensure that no more than 30% of planning appeals are allowed (low is good).

Between 1 April 2022 and 31 December 2022, twenty-eight appeals were decided; 23 decisions were supported.

All but one of the 12 appeals determined in Q3 were supported

**(Cumulative) Number of affordable homes delivered**



**OBSERVATION:**

At the end of Q3, seventy-four affordable homes were completed against a target of 75.

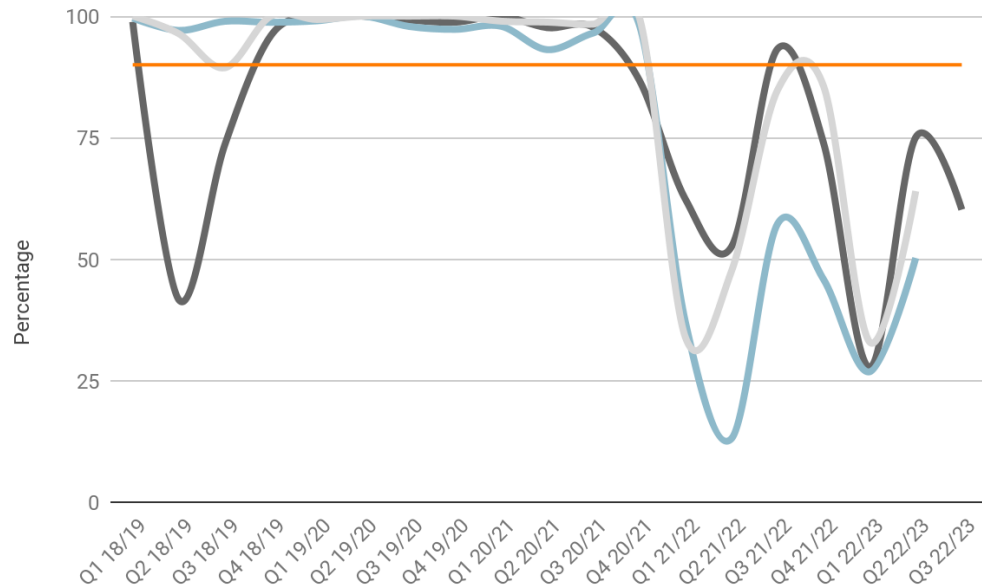
There were three affordable homes completed in Q3, all at Dyers Lane, Chipping Campden. The service reports that completions fluctuate over the year. A housing development period is at least 12 months, with some schemes phased over several years.

The forecast is still to achieve the target of 100 affordable units in this financial year.

Note: this data is collected cumulatively from the beginning of the financial year to account for peaks and troughs



## Percentage of land charge searches despatched within 10 working days



### OBSERVATION:

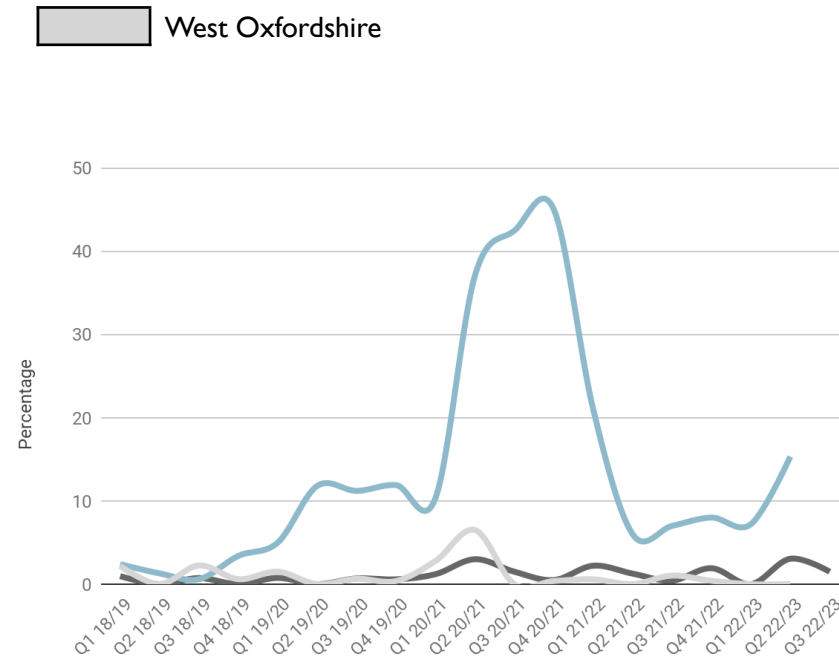
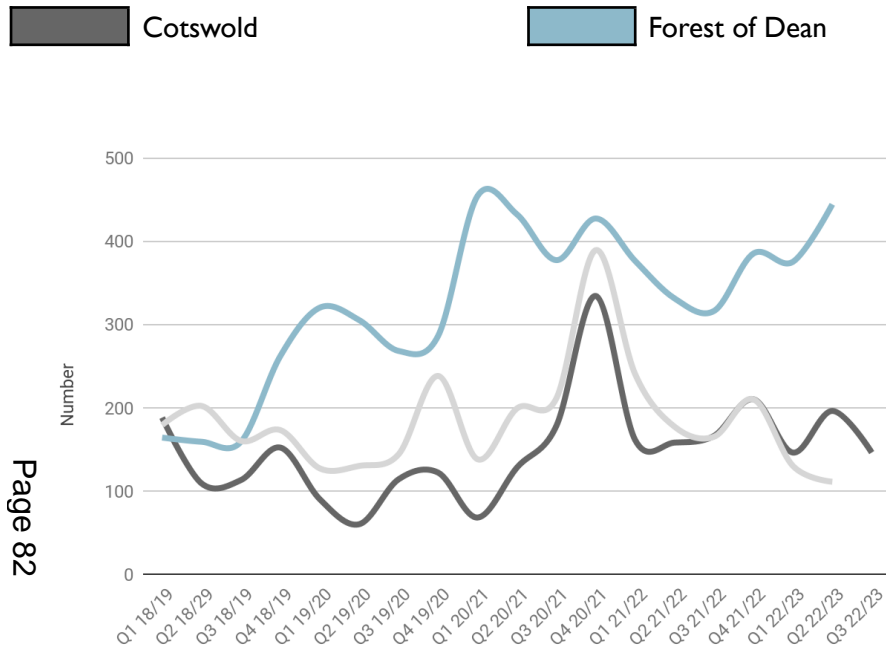
After making good progress in the previous quarter, performance has dipped again due to delays in receiving responses from internal consultees, in particular planning. There was a shortage of staff in the quarter as two Planning Support officers left the organisation. The backlog of planning responses is being cleared by an additional resource. Planning Support officer posts have been recruited to with two new starters in January 2023. Plans are in place to train the whole of the Planning Admin Team to provide resilience across the partnership. There were also some delays with receiving responses from the County Council which the service was advised of.

Action is being taken to improve internal consultation turnaround times more generally, including developing a way to monitor workflows to better understand where the delays are. The Land Charges Service Lead will highlight any issues in performance to the appropriate Service Manager. This new process will commence formally half way through Q4, and will require time to embed. Performance is expected to start returning to previous high levels from 2023-24 Q1

The Her Majesty's Land Registry (HMLR) project has commenced which involves the migration of LLC1 searches to HMLR for all Local Authorities. The project is utilising specialist experience within the team, and will be closely and carefully managed internally, and by HMLR to help mitigate any potential impacts to service delivery

## Environmental and Regulatory

**Number of fly tips collected & % of fly tips that result in an enforcement action taking place (defined as a warning letter, fixed penalty notice, simple caution or prosecution)**



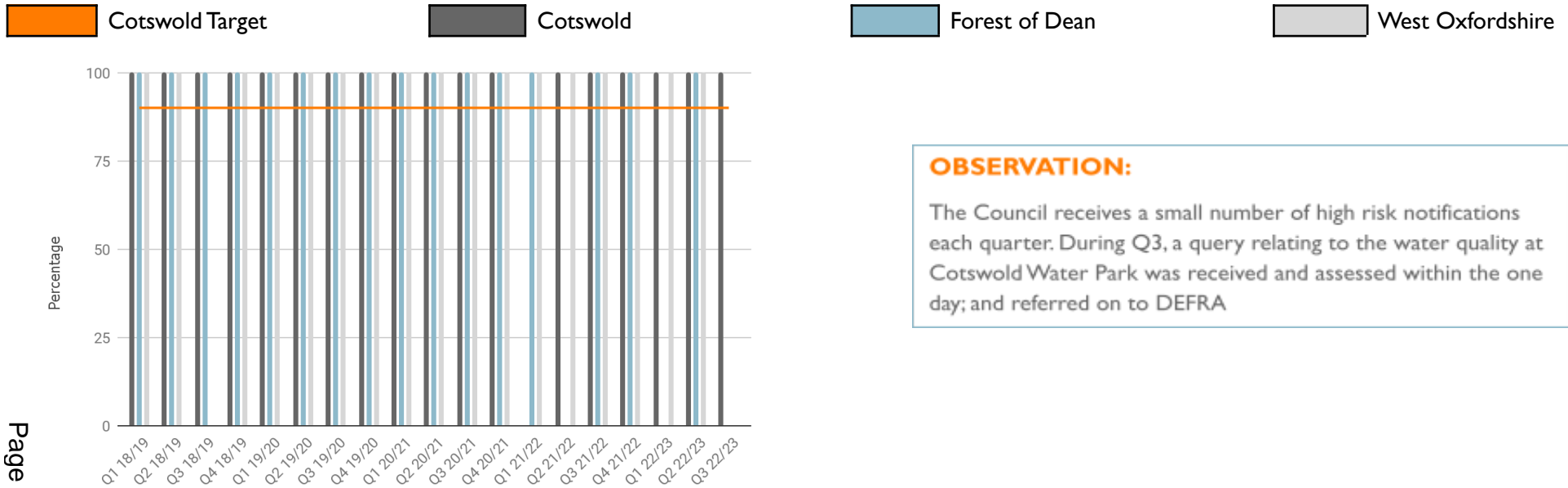
### OBSERVATION:

Fly tips increased during lock down and 'stay at home' messages. The number of fly tips collected has since reduced but does not appear to have fallen back to pre-Covid times. The cost of living crisis may be keeping the numbers relatively high due to an inability or reluctance to pay for the disposal of both household and business waste.

During Q3, 31 flytips were referred for investigation resulting in three FPNs. The Council takes a proactive and preventative approach to fly tipping, and duty of care work has been carried out with businesses and households to support them to manage their waste responsibly. A number of mobile surveillance cameras have been purchased and set up in areas that attract relatively high levels of fly tipping, accompanied by the relevant GDPR and privacy notices. Stop and Search /road side checks to ensure waste carriers have the appropriate transfer notes and permits are scheduled for January 2023.

Note: This data source does not contain all types of fly tips e.g. asbestos, at all locations e.g. bring sites. Forest of Dean appears to collect a higher number of fly tips than Cotswold and West as it counts fly tips at bring sites

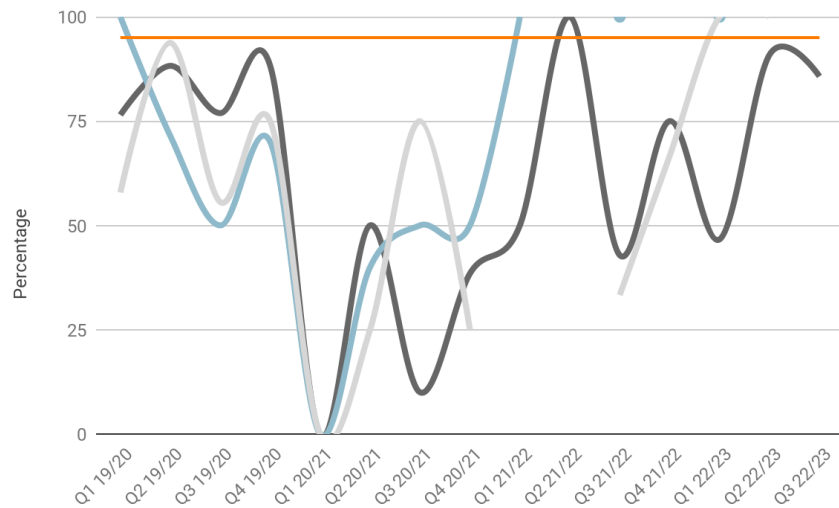
**Percentage of high risk notifications (including food poisoning outbreaks, anti-social behaviour, contaminated private water supplies, workplace fatalities or multiple serious injuries) risk assessed within 1 working day**



**OBSERVATION:**

The Council receives a small number of high risk notifications each quarter. During Q3, a query relating to the water quality at Cotswold Water Park was received and assessed within the one day; and referred on to DEFRA

**Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales**



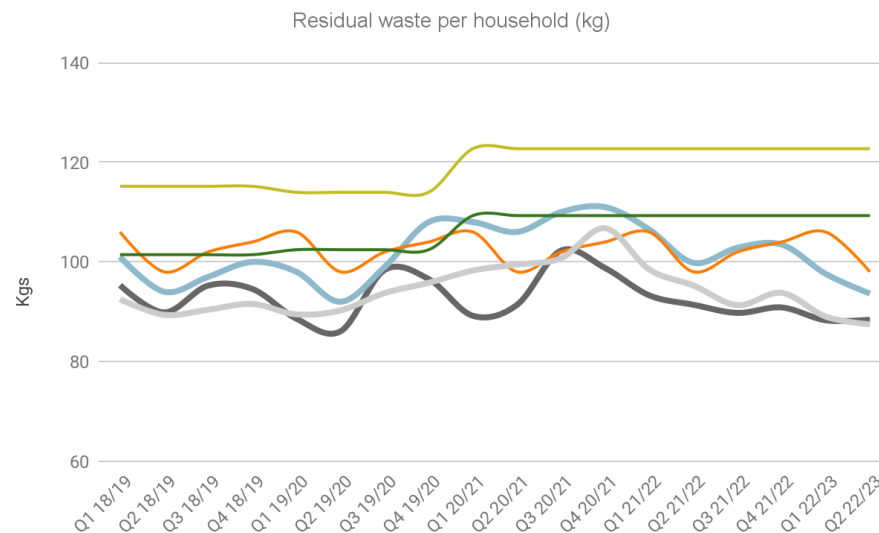
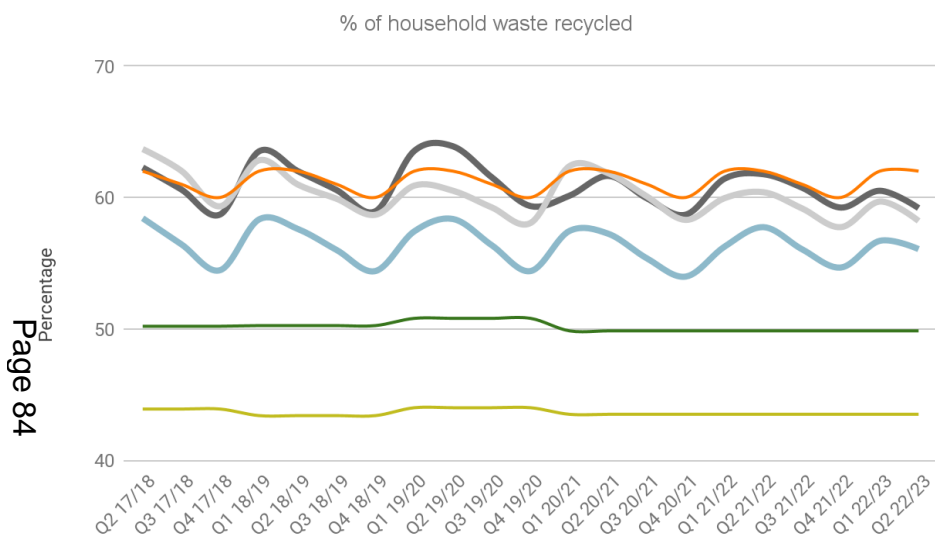
**OBSERVATION:**

Despite a shortage of staff during the quarter and poor weather conditions in December 2022 which made some properties inaccessible, a good level of performance has been achieved. During Q3, twenty-one high risk food inspections were due, of which 18 were completed within the target timescale, The remaining inspections have since been completed.

The service has previously been unable to recruit senior environmental health officers who are qualified to do high risk food inspections. The service is being re-designed to increase capacity at the senior level

## Waste Management

### (Cumulative) Percentage of household waste recycled & Residual household waste per household (kg)



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#### OBSERVATION:

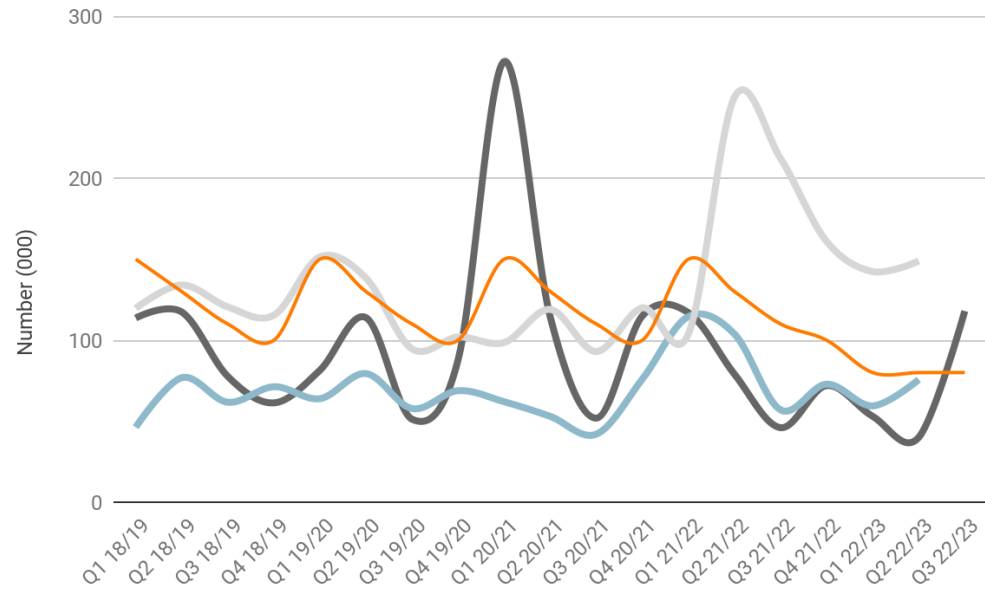
Awaiting December data. The combined recycling rate for April to November 2022 was 58.93% compared to 61.3% in 2021-22. The lower rate was mostly attributable to a fall in the composting rate due to the dry weather conditions over a prolonged period of time, as well as just over one half a percentage fall in the dry recycling rate. Although the dry recycling rate at 22.7% for the period to November 2022 has fallen over the last two years, it is higher than the pre-Covid year, 2019-20 at 21%.

Since emerging from the pandemic, total household waste (tonnages) have fallen, however, residual waste has not fallen as fast as other waste streams; and for the period to November 2022 is similar to the pre-Covid year. Taking into account the growth in households, the District produced 6 kg less residual waste per household between April and November 2022 than a year ago, and nearly 9 kg less than 2019-20.

The Council supported national 'Recycle Week 2022' in October. This year's theme was 'Let's Get Real' and challenged perceptions and myths around recycling, and targeted contamination to improve recycling behaviours. The Council produced a 'behind the scenes' video for social media showing residents what happens to their recycling once Ubico has collected it. There was also a focus on food waste recycling at both Halloween and Christmas as well as other specific messages on recycling and reduction at Christmas time.

Notes: Composting and food waste was a single waste stream prior to 2020-21. The quarterly recycling targets are profiled to account for seasonal differences. The data is also presented cumulatively which will flatten out some of these differences

## Number of missed bin per 100,000 scheduled collections



### OBSERVATION:

The number of missed bins per 100,000 increased in Q3 due to the severe weather in December 2022 and the suspension of the service for four days. This type of service failure would not usually be recorded as a 'miss', but the high volume of properties affected by the weather conditions created some technical difficulties with In-Cab. There will be a review and lessons learned session in the next few weeks.

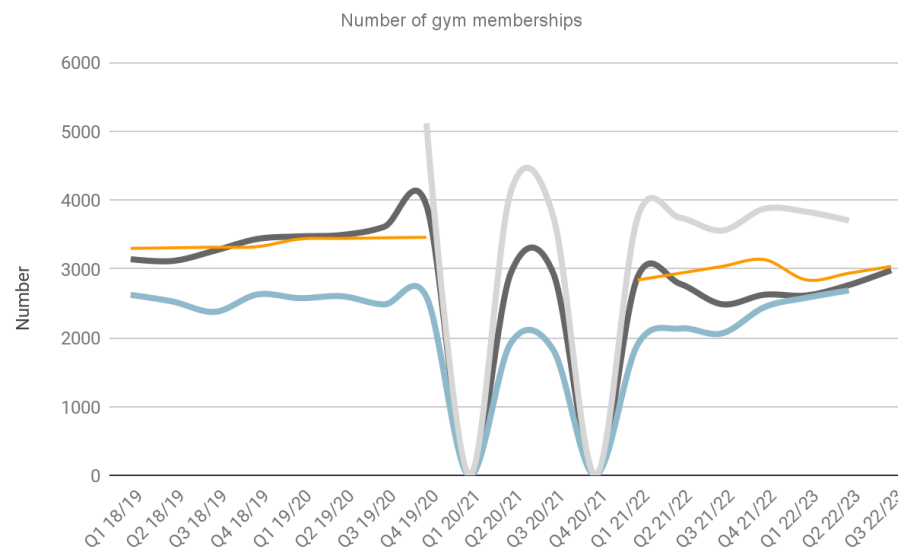
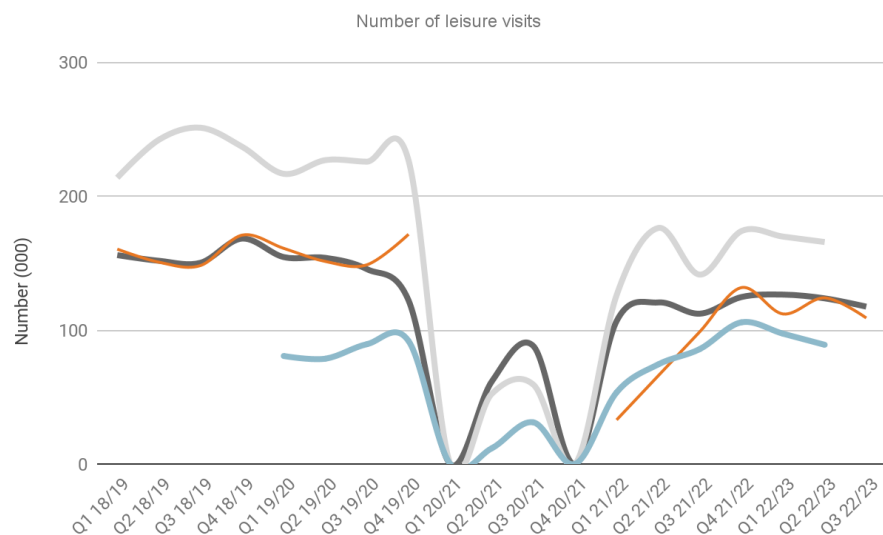
The number of missed bins for October and November 2022 was 64 per 100,000, well within the target. Performance has since returned to normal levels.

Note: since the implementation of In-Cab technology, the data source for missed collections is Alloy, In-Cab's back office system. This data source is more accurate than the previous data source.

The missed bins target was revised to 80 per 100,000 scheduled collections from 2022-23 Q1 to reflect improvements made over the previous year

## Leisure

### Number of visits to the three leisure centres & (Snapshot) Number of gym memberships



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#### OBSERVATION:

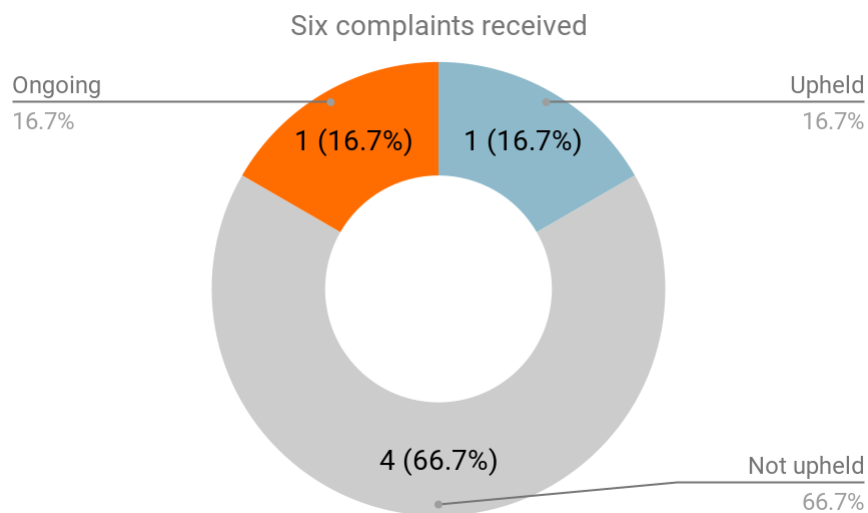
Cirencester Leisure and Bourton Leisure closed for two weeks at the end of September/beginning of October 2022 while they underwent a £380,000 refurbishment including new layouts and equipment to improve energy efficiency and reflecting current trends in exercising. There have been positive signs since the re-openings. The number of visits increased by nearly 5% on our position a year ago (note that Bourton was closed for 2 weeks in Q3) and overall, usage for the year to the end of Q3 has overachieved against the target (Actual: 367,561, Target: 359,100).

Memberships, although slightly short of the target, increased by nearly 20% compared to the same quarter a year ago. The service reports a positive response in the New Year, following a more historic pattern with increased interest and usage, but as the cost of living crisis continues to put pressure on customers, it is possible that the January boom will not be as strong as previous years. The learn to swim programmes have continued to rebuild and grow, with the current position being that waiting lists are forming due to a lack of swimming instructors. This is a national picture and operators are looking at ways to attract more staff into this field.

Following the announcement that the government scheme to protect high energy using companies will not include leisure centres the cost of energy continues to be a key issue for the leisure operators. The risk of current high prices will also impact on the Council where a risk share for higher than usual utility tariffs is included in the leisure contract. SLM will continue to raise its concerns with the relevant bodies.

Note: Gym memberships were frozen during the first and third lockdowns. No targets were set for 2020-21

## COMPLAINTS - ARE WE DOING THE 'DAY JOB' REALLY WELL FOR OUR COUNCILS?



### OBSERVATION:

A new Customer Feedback Procedure went live on the 1st October 2021.

The new process has the following stages:

**Stage 1:** Relevant service area responds to complaint within 10 working days

**Stage 2:** Complaint is reviewed by Corporate Responsibility Team, response is signed off by relevant Business Manager, and sent to complainant within 10 working days

**Stage 3:** Complaint is reviewed by relevant Business Manager, signed off by relevant Group Manager, and sent to complainant within 15 working days

The complaints shown below only include complaints which were upheld or partly upheld at Stage 1.

Service area	Description	Outcome/learning	Decision	Response time (days)
Waste and Recycling	Green waste bin was not collected for four weeks. The customer reported it via the correct channels on three occasions	An apology was offered and the bin was emptied on the next available date. Officers will look into why the issue was not resolved after being reported correctly so that lessons can be learned	Upheld	5

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# Agenda Item 9



**COTSWOLD**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	Overview and Scrutiny Committee 21 <sup>st</sup> March 2023
Subject	Task and Finish Group – Performance Management and Reporting. Phase I Completion
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	CLlr Patrick Coleman - Chair of Task and Finish Group Email: Partick.Coleman@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Bill Oddy Assistant Director – Commercial Email: <a href="mailto:bill.oddy@publicagroup.uk">bill.oddy@publicagroup.uk</a>
Report author	Stuart Rawlinson Business Manager – Performance, Resources, Data, Growth Email: <a href="mailto:stuart.rawlinson@publicagroup.uk">stuart.rawlinson@publicagroup.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	To provide the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on progress for Phase I of the Task and Finish Group's Work.
Annexes	None
Recommendation(s)	<i>That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:</i>  <i>1. notes the update and endorse recommendations contained within this report.</i> <i>2. Recommends to Cabinet to develop and adopt performance indicators related to the areas included at Section 2.6 of this report; and work with Overview and Scrutiny to develop a programme for Phase 2 of this review.</i>
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver the highest standard of service</li> </ul>
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	Councillors Andrews, Coleman, Cunningham Senior Officers at Cotswold District Council and Publica



## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1** As part of its programme of work during 2021/22, The Overview and Scrutiny Committee proposed the formation of a working group to make recommendations to the Cabinet in relation to the extant Key Performance Indicator Suite
- 1.2** This task and finish group was formed in Q.1 of 2022/23 with the express purpose of “Reviewing the current data provided as part of the quarterly performance report with a view to establishing whether it is fit for purpose, provides the information required and make recommendations to Cabinet on proposed changes to the data and presentation thereof.”
- 1.3** Delivery of this objective has been addressed through a multi-phase plan agreed by the working group consisting of:
  - 1.3.1** Foundation Phase: Review of Corporate Plan and alignment of indicators to council priorities
  - 1.3.2** Phase 1: Initial Review - Addressing any immediate improvements that could be made to KPI indicators and supporting information
  - 1.3.3** Phase 2: Detailed Review - A deeper, forensic assessment of services and current measures to support assurance to the Cabinet and management of services
- 1.4** The purpose of this report is to provide an update on progress made during Phase 1 and provide recommendations for changes to extant indicators and introduction of new metrics in Q1 2023/24.

## **2. MAIN POINTS (This title can be changed to suit the specifics of the report if appropriate)**

- 2.1** Progress has been made over the winter, principally meeting with the remaining thematic areas to discuss recommendations.
- 2.2** The current position is that the group has completed delivery of meetings between service experts, Cabinet members, and the task and finish group in the following Portfolios:
  - 2.2.1.1** Leader
  - 2.2.1.2** Finance
  - 2.2.1.3** Climate Change and Forward Planning
  - 2.2.1.4** Health and Wellbeing



**2.2.1.5 Development Management and Licensing**

**2.2.1.6 Corporate Services**

**2.2.1.7 Environment Waste and Recycling**

**2.2.1.8 Economy and Transformation**

**2.3** As mentioned previously, delivery has extended slightly beyond the original remit of Phase 1, as it quickly became apparent that discussion of immediate changes and improvements were intrinsically linked to the longer term review of assurance indicators. The resultant position is that both matters have been discussed, providing both the foundations for and reducing the burden on key personnel during Phase 2.

**2.4** The main focus of the work has been amendments and improvements to the KPI framework, however, discussions have also led to the following recommendations:

**2.4.1** Improvements in relation to the reporting style and way in which we report, which will be resolved through discussions with the Chief Executive

**2.4.2** Improvements to the level of Management Information available, which will be resolved through work with the relevant Business Manager and Assistant Director.

**2.5** The group has concluded that the current suite are, in the main, useful for demonstrating the performance of key headline services, but could be improved to cover a greater extent of the corporate plan, particularly when used in conjunction with the portfolio framework which reports on key projects.

**2.6** Recommendations for amendment or enhancement of performance indicators have been proposed by the group in the following areas:

**2.6.1 Climate and Forward Planning**

**2.6.1.1** Uptake of Carbon Literacy Training

**2.6.1.2** Reduction in Scope 1&2 emissions against baselines

**2.6.2 Health and Wellbeing**

**2.6.2.1** Number of visits to our facilities and services

**2.6.2.2** Bookings by community groups

**2.6.3 Development Management and Licensing**

**2.6.3.1** Successful communication with the applicant at key stages of a Planning Application

**2.6.3.2** The percentage of commercial applications using the Pre-Application Service

**2.6.4 Corporate Services**

**2.6.4.1** Removal of the calls picked up within 20 seconds indicator

**2.6.4.2** Adoption of an average response time within GovMetric best practice (<2 minutes)



## **2.6.5 Environment Waste and Recycling**

**2.6.5.1** Missed bins per household

**2.6.5.2** % of areas at risk of flooding which have adopted the Flood Warden scheme

## **2.6.6 Economy and Transformation**

**2.6.6.1** Removal of the Parking Enforcement Hours Metric

**2.6.6.2** Metrics of footfall and vacant units in town centres

**2.6.6.3** Occupancy and income (Finance Portfolio) of Car Parks

**2.7** Some portfolios have not have not required additional KPIs during Phase I, as further work was needed to deliver the indicator and/or they were already well covered by KPIs

## **3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

**3.1** Nil

## **4. CONCLUSIONS**

**4.1** Pending confirmation of any changes to the Corporate Plan, that a recommendation is passed to the new administration to develop and adopt performance indicators related to the areas included at Section 2.6 of this report; and

**4.2** The new administration work with Overview and Scrutiny to develop a programme for Phase 2 of this review.

**4.3** Adoption of the above measures will meet the original objectives of the group by making recommendations to facilitate improved coverage of the corporate plan, doubling the number of strategic aims covered by KPIs

**4.4** The following key milestones now form the immediate forward plan:

**4.4.1** Agreement to the recommendations made within this report

**4.4.2** Recommendations to adopt thematic indicators

**4.4.3** Capture of the data pertinent to any enhanced indicators, which are accepted by The Cabinet

**4.4.4** Any indicators formally adopted by will be deployed in Q1 of 2023/24.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**5.1** Nil

## **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**6.1** Nil



## **7. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1** The primary risk associated with the work of the group is associated with the availability and capacity of key personnel. Whilst being an exceptionally useful format to develop recommendations for enhancement of the KPI suite, it has proved challenging to achieve mutually agreeable group dates. As all sessions are now complete, this risk has been mitigated.

## **8. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 8.1** No specific impact in relation to equalities has been identified during the group's work.

## **9. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1** The recommendations set out in the report would provide a greater visible focus within the KPI suite in relation to the key corporate priority "Respond to the Climate Crisis". For this reason, the recommendations are aligned to our work relating to the Climate and Ecological Emergency.

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 10.1** The following documents have been identified by the author of the report in accordance with section 100D.5(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 and are listed in accordance with section 100 D.1(a) for inspection by members of the public:

- none.

- 10.2** These documents will be available for inspection online at [www.cotswold.gov.uk](http://www.cotswold.gov.uk) or by contacting democratic services [democratic@cotswold.gov.uk](mailto:democratic@cotswold.gov.uk) for a period of up to 4 years from the date of the meeting.

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## Overview and Scrutiny informal work planning meeting

### notes

1 March 2023

Attendees; Stephen Andrews (Chair), Gary Selwyn (Vice Chair), Nikki Ind, David Cunningham, Patrick Coleman

Officers: Angela Claridge, Claire Locke, Andrew Brown, Ana Prelici

#### 1. Executive Scrutiny Protocol

The purpose of the item was to consider embedding this way of working in light of the commitment to do so in the peer review action plan.

The Committee reflected on several changes and improvements, the principle ones were:

- The new room layout, the Committee wished to amend this so that the Chair and Vice-Chair would be facing the Committee, which would make it easier to chair.
- Indicative timings on the agenda should be implemented to help the Committee focus on questioning.
- Democratic Services will brief report authors that papers will be taken as read, and members will be able to pre-submit questions to the authors, with the Committee to focus on follow-up questions.

The Committee also discussed the pre-circulation of planning applications which go to committee in someone's ward, to members of all affected wards where there were impacts on neighbouring wards. This would be discussed as part of a Development Management service update.

**RESOLVED:** That Democratic Services implement the suggested changes.

#### 2. Formulation of Work Plan for 23/24

The Committee considered the formulation of the work plan for 2023/24.

The Assistant Director for Property and Regeneration compiled a list of potential items for the work plan, and the Chair compiled a long list of work topics. The Committee considered the items, prioritising the routine items using a pairwise comparison technique.

	Round 1		Round 2		Round 3		Round 4		Round 5		Round 6	
	H	L	H	L	H	L	H	L	H	L	H	L
PC	13	26	12	24	10	22	14	28	15	32	30	19
GS	14	23	16	22	15	24	30	18	17	11	33	22
DC	10*	25	19	22	16	24	15	28	14	13	29	11
NI	13	23	17	25	16	24	15	26	14	20	30	28
SA	16	22	17	28	11	20	23	26	27	25	33	32

\*to include items 17 and 19

As part of this discussion, the Committee discussed several service-specific topics, most notably Planning, and Local Plan related items. It was suggested by the Assistant Director for Property and Regeneration that Local Plan related items could be dealt with as part of a single session. Democratic Services Business Manager added that certain issues could be dealt with through pre-decision scrutiny, whereby the Committee could consider decision reports before they were presented to Cabinet and make any comments or recommendations.

**RESOLVED:** To agree the prioritisation as discussed

### **Report on Approach to Pre-Decision Scrutiny**

The Business Manager for Democratic Services presented the report and explained that pre-decision scrutiny would involve the Overview and Scrutiny Committee seeing the report before a Cabinet meeting. The Cabinet reports would be circulated a few days after the Committee papers, to avoid delays to the decision making process.

The Committee welcomed this approach as members highlighted it may have prevented the recent call in, as the additional information that was presented to the committee would have been available ahead of the Committee.

Members also highlighted that minutes from Cabinet meetings should be circulated within the period of call-in.

**RESOLVED:** The Committee:

01. Agree the approach to pre-decision scrutiny described in this report, whereby selected Cabinet reports will be circulated to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the Friday before a Tuesday meeting.



02. Agree that as a general rule the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will generally consider no more than two Cabinet reports for pre-decision scrutiny at a single meeting.
03. Agree that when considering the Cabinet Forward Plan the Committee will agree a priority order of reports for pre-decision scrutiny at the next meeting.
04. Agree to allow sufficient capacity on the Scrutiny work plan for the consideration of future Cabinet reports in addition to the items prioritised as part of the work planning exercise.

### **3. Time limit for Overview and Scrutiny**

The Committee discussed agenda construction, and agreed changes that would allow meetings to be shorter. This included changes such as; shorter, more focussed agendas, pre-scrutiny of Cabinet items, and reports being taken as 'read', The Committee agreed that three hours would be a good time limit, with a comfort break around halfway through the meeting.

Members commented that a 5pm start would mean that many would have to leave after two hours on days when Town and Parish meetings were taking place.

**RESOLVED:** That the Committee agree the recommendation of a three hour time limit, and that their comments be passed on to the Constitution Working Group.

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