

Public Document Pack



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Wednesday, 29 November 2023

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CABINET

A meeting of the Cabinet will be held at Council Chamber - Trinity Road on **Thursday, 7 December 2023 at 6.00 pm.**

Rob Weaver
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Cabinet
(Councillors Joe Harris, Mike Evemy, Claire Bloomer, Tony Dale, Paul Hodgkinson, Juliet Layton, Mike McKeown and Lisa Spivey)

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.

Cotswold District Council, Trinity Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 1PX
Tel: 01285 623000 www.cotswold.gov.uk

AGENDA

1. **Apologies**
To receive any apologies for absence. The quorum for Cabinet is 3 Members.
2. **Declarations of Interest**
To receive any declarations of interest from Members and Officers, relating to items to be considered at the meeting.
3. **Minutes (Pages 5 - 12)**
To approve the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 2 November 2023.
4. **Leader's Announcements**
To receive any announcements from the Leader.
5. **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 Cabinet'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 Leader 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.

6. **Member Questions**
No Member Questions have been submitted prior to the publication of the agenda.

A Member of the Council may ask the Leader or a Cabinet Member a question on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the Cotswold District. A maximum period of fifteen minutes shall be allowed at any such meeting for Member questions.

A Member may only ask a question if:

- a) the question has been delivered in writing or by electronic mail to the Chief Executive no later than 5.00 p.m. on the working day before the day of the meeting; or
- b) the question relates to an urgent matter, they have the consent of the Leader to whom the question is to be put and the content of the question is given to the Chief Executive by 9.30 a.m. on the day of the meeting.

An answer 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. **Issue(s) Arising from Overview and Scrutiny and/or Audit and Governance**

To consider any recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or matters raised by the Audit and Governance Committee.

8. **Council Tax Support Scheme 2024/2025 (Pages 13 - 28)**

Purpose

To present the results of the public consultation on proposals for revising the current Council Tax Support scheme with effect from 1 April 2024.

Recommendation

That Cabinet resolves to:

1. Approve the increase in Council Tax Support as detailed in paragraph 3.4 from 1 April 2024.
2. Approve that any surplus in the Hardship Fund is transferred over to 2024/2025 for reasons detailed in paragraphs 3.6 and 3.7.
3. Approve the amendment to the Council Tax Support Policy as recommended in paragraph 3.8.

9. **Increase in Fixed Penalty Notice fines for fly-tipping, duty of care, littering and graffiti (Pages 29 - 34)**

Purpose

To set out the new maximum level fines proposed by Government to deter and punish the offences of littering, fly-tipping, householder duty of care, flyposting and the distribution of free printed matter. To seek approval to introduce these new fine levels.

Recommendations

That Cabinet resolves to:

1. Note the report.
2. Agree to increase the fine levels to the maximum levels permissible as outlined in paragraph 3.4.
3. Agree an early payment discount as outlined in paragraph 3.4.
4. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive to increase the fine levels as approved.

10. **Proactive Delivery of Affordable Housing (Pages 35 - 40)**

Purpose

This report seeks to outline the council's aspiration for a more proactive approach to increase the supply of affordable housing within the district, outline of how this can be achieved, and the resources required.

Recommendation

That Cabinet resolves to:

1. Explore innovative and proactive models to enhance the council's ability to increase the supply of affordable homes within the district.

11. **Draft Cotswold Housing Strategy (Pages 41 - 120)**

Purpose

To seek approval to consult with partners and the public on a new five year Cotswold

Housing Strategy. The strategy directly responds to the Council's Corporate Plan that seeks to address housing affordability and increase the supply of affordable housing.

Recommendations

That Cabinet resolves to:

1. Approve the draft Cotswold Housing Strategy for public consultation as presented at Annex A and B; and
2. Delegate authority to the Forward Planning Manager, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to agree a questionnaire for the public consultation exercise and to make minor modifications to improve clarity.

12. **Financial Performance Report - Q2 2023/24 (Pages 121 - 176)**

Purpose

This report sets of the latest budget monitoring position for the 2023/24 financial year.

Recommendations

That Cabinet resolves to:

1. Review and note the financial position set out in this report.
2. Endorse the recommendation in paragraph 9.3 that Cabinet continue to review in-year opportunities with Publica and Ubico to mitigate the forecast financial position.
3. Approve the provisional transfer of £0.150m to the Treasury Management reserve.
4. Agree to establish a new earmarked reserve "Contract Smoothing" and approves the provisional transfer of £0.255m from the General Fund Revenue Budget to the earmarked reserve.

13. **Council Priority And Service Performance Report - 2023-24 Quarter Two (Pages 177 - 254)**

Purpose

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

Recommendation

That Cabinet resolves to:

1. Note overall progress on the Council priorities and service performance for 2023-24 Q2.

14. **Schedule of Decisions taken by the Leader of the Council and/or Individual Cabinet Members (Pages 255 - 256)**

To note the decisions taken by the Leader and/or Individual Cabinet Members.

(END)

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Minutes of a meeting of Cabinet held on Thursday, 2 November 2023

Councillors present:

Lisa Spivey - Chair

Claire Bloomer

Tony Dale

Paul Hodgkinson

Juliet Layton

Officers present:

Robert Weaver, Chief Executive

David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and
Chief Finance Officer

Angela Claridge, Director of Governance and
Development (Monitoring Officer)

Frank Wilson, Group Finance Director
(Publica)

Jon Dearing, Assistant Director for Resident
Services

Claire Locke, Assistant Director for Property
and Regeneration

Andrew Brown, Democratic Services Business
Manager

Caleb Harris, Senior Democratic Services
Officer

Ana Prelici, Democratic Services Officer

Observers:

Councillors Patrick Coleman and Nikki Ind

Councillor Joe Harris (joining remotely)

182 Apologies

Apologies were received from the Leader Councillor Joe Harris, and the Deputy Leader Councillor Evely.

Councillor Lisa Spivey assumed the Chair.

183 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest from Members.

The Chair notified Members that a number of officers employed by the Publica Group had a disclosable pecuniary interest in regards to item 11 on the agenda and would leave the chamber for the duration of the item.

184 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 2 October 2023 were considered as presented in the document pack.

Councillor Bloomer proposed to accept the minutes and Councillor Layton seconded.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 2 October 2023 be approved as a correct record.

Voting Record

4 for, 0 against, 1 abstention

185 Leader's Announcements

The Chair noted the announcement of Storm Ciaran and the work of flood wardens and the Council's emergency response team.

186 Public Questions

There were none.

187 Member Questions

There were none.

188 Issues Arising from Overview and Scrutiny and/or Audit and Governance

The Chair noted the recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 31 October. These were included in the supplement.

It was noted that the recommendations would be considered as part of the Parking Strategy and the Playing Pitch Strategy on the agenda.

189 Publica Review

The Chair notified Members that this item would be taken first, and then asked Publica officers who felt that they should leave the room to do so.

The purpose of the report was to present the recommendations from the consultants Human Engine.

The Leader, who had joined the meeting remotely, was invited to introduce the report.

The Leader renewed his apologies to Members for not being able to be present in person due to participation in a peer review exercise at South Cambridgeshire District Council.

The Leader outlined the report and presented the following points;

- Cotswold District Council in 2017 set up the teckal company Publica Group Ltd along with Cheltenham Borough Council, Forest of Dean District Council and West

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Oxfordshire District Council to create a cost-effective model for providing day-to-day services.

- It was noted that the majority of staff in 2017 were transferred to Publica, with the savings achieved through the rationalising of staff structures and not enrolling new employees into the Local Government Pension Scheme.
- It was outlined that the model had mostly achieved the savings it was designed for, but it was noted that the new administrations in the partner councils since its creation, and other challenges such as Covid-19 had presented pressures for the Publica model.
- It was also noted that the Peer Review conducted in 2022 had highlighted challenges such as governance and staff identity between the Council's and Publica as the service delivery company.
- Following the Peer Review recommendations agreed in January 2023, it was outlined that the consultancy firm Human Engine had been commissioned by the partner councils to look at the appropriateness of future services remaining within Publica.
- It was highlighted that the review undertaken had concluded that only repatriating select services would not address the challenges outlined. It was highlighted the recommendation from Human Engine was to return the majority of services to the Council, and to keep a few select services within the Publica partnership.
- The Leader noted that the recommendation from the report would require some upfront costs in the short-term as outlined within section 5.3 of Annex B. However, it was noted that the saving from reducing senior management costs, and Publica contract costs would mitigate these challenges.
- It was highlighted that that the decision was a major change for the Council, but that it was felt to be the best for residents.

It was noted that the Leader was not allowed to vote on the recommendations due to participating virtually.

The Chief Executive was then invited to provide any further comments. The following points were outlined:

- The transition plan was noted as being very important, and would be considered by Cabinet and Council in early 2024.
- It was noted that there was a need to work closely with Publica management to provide support to staff who may be nervous about the transition.
- It was noted that the transition plan would be outlined as soon as possible, providing the recommendations were agreed by all the partner councils.

It was noted that a Special Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting was provisionally scheduled to take place before Full Council considers the recommendation.

The Cabinet wished to thank officers for their work in delivering the report, and to providing the support to staff. The Chair noted the work of staff in going above and beyond to meet the needs of the Council and provide essential services.

Councillor Spivey proposed the recommendations, and Councillor Hodgkinson seconded.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet

AGREED to recommend to Full Council to:

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1. APPROVE the recommendations set out in the Human Engine report (that the majority of services are returned to the Council as per the detail provided on page 12 of the Human Engine report);
2. AGREE That the Chief Executive oversees the creation of a detailed transition plan for subsequent agreement by Cabinet and Council;
3. ENDORSE the approach to the further due diligence outlined in the financial implications of the report including analysis of the detailed payroll data required, which will be essential to calculate the short and long-term costs associated with the recommendations set out in the Human Engine report.

***Voting Record**

5 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions, 3 Absent

*For technical reasons, the vote was taken by a show of hands.

190 Parking Strategy

The purpose of the report was to consider proposals to undertake a full review of the Council's parking provision to ensure the efficient utilisation of the Council's off-street carparks and support access to the District's Town Centres including the gathering of further data on carpark usage ensure best use of Council assets.

The Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation introduced the report and outlined the following points:

- It was noted that the last full review was in 2010 which was then refreshed in 2016.
- It was highlighted that the considerations had changed which included the increase in electric cars, the use of electric bikes and the focus on tackling climate change.
- It was noted that there was a strong desire to involve key stakeholders such as Town and Parish Councils in the review. It was highlighted that Gloucestershire County Council would also be involved as on-street parking was within its remit.
- It was noted that the strategy would seek to make the most of assets, and future-proof car parks. It was also highlighted that technology changes would need to be considered within the future strategy.
- It was highlighted that the Parent and Child Bays trial in the Brewery Car Park in Cirencester, had resulted in a large amount of positive feedback.

It was noted that Overview and Scrutiny Committee has raised a few considerations and the Cabinet's written response had been circulated prior to the meeting:

- Recommendation 1 on widening car parking bays – It was noted that these were part of traffic regulations, but that the car parks that had been renovated which included Sheep Street, The Forum, Rissington Road now had spaces which were 1 metre wider.
- Recommendation 2 on considering the level of need for and provision of disabled parking spaces – It was noted that these vary across the District but will be taken into account across the District.
- Recommendation 3 on the provision of secure bicycle parking – It was noted that there was a lot of sympathy with this recommendation, as standard and electric bikes

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were more valuable now. However, it was noted that the location of parking for bikes would vary depending on need.

There were comments around Northleach, Bourton and Bibury where parking is limited, and how issues like coach parking were examined within the strategy.

There were questions around consultation with businesses and residents, and consideration of long-stay car park nearer to the centre of Cirencester. The Cabinet Member noted that there would be the opportunity for online feedback for residents to provide comments to improve the strategy. It was also commented that considerations around the use of car parks, would be examined within the formation of the strategy.

It was highlighted that the strategy sought to meet the needs of most people as the use of personal vehicle transportation was prevalent.

It was noted that this review would also inform the update of the Local Plan and the Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan.

Councillor Ind as an observer, noted the importance of Town and Parish Council involvement, and the local work in Tetbury.

Councillor Coleman as an observer asked about the review in relation to the paused multi-storey car park development in Cirencester. Councillor Dale responded by noting that this review was about the overall strategy for parking and not moving immediately to solutions for the needs of areas at present.

Councillor Dale proposed and Councillor Layton seconded.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet

1. **AGREED** to review and update the Parking strategy to better reflect the changing needs of service users.
2. **AGREED** to undertake a full review to understand the requirements of the Councils future parking provision as detailed in Annex C.
3. **ENDORSED** the proposal at paragraph 7.1 to employ the services of a professional customer insight gathering company.

***Voting Record**

5 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions

*Due to a technical error, the vote was taken by a show of hands

191 Playing Pitch Strategy

Councillor Dale left the meeting before this item started.

The purpose of this report was to consider the findings and recommendations proposed by consultants commissioned to develop a Playing Pitch Strategy for the District and to approve the Strategy.

The Cabinet Member for Health, Leisure and Culture, Councillor Hodgkinson, introduced the report and highlighted the following points:

- The report covered sports that were played on pitches in the winter (football, rugby, rugby league and hockey) and summer sports of cricket and polo.
- It was noted that this report was a refresh which usually takes place every 3 years.
- It was noted that the strategy was required to form part of the Local Plan to account for land use to meet current and future needs.
- It was highlighted that at present there were sufficient pitches to meet demands across most sports, but that population growth might change this.
- It was noted that the Council would collaborate with local organisations such as sports clubs and Town and Parish Councils to deliver on the action plan.
- The Member thanked the officers and the consultants for their work.

The Overview & Scrutiny recommendations were then examined in addition to the responses published in the agenda supplement:

- Recommendation 1 on the safety of 3G pitches – It was noted that only a part of the pitch would be affected, but that officers were consulting with Sport England on this.
- Recommendation 2 on bowling greens – It was noted that bowling was not considered a pitch sport and not part of the strategy. However, officers would consider other sports and whether they could be considered separately outside of the strategy.
- Recommendation 3 on the Steadings development – It was noted that the pitches had not been created yet within the development but would be added in the monitoring phase.
- Recommendation 4 on the use of Community Infrastructure Levy monies to fund sports facilities – It was outlined that Community Infrastructure Levy funding could be considered and that there were options for the Council and Town and Parish Councils.
- Recommendation 5 on encouraging volunteers to support sports clubs - It was outlined that officers would work with stakeholders to encourage volunteers.

There was a question about accessibility for individuals with disabilities and sports that cover all genders.

It was noted that the strategy was meant to include sports for all genders and that the Cabinet Member would ask officers consider the issue of accessibility for sports. It was highlighted that this would also be considered when those stakeholders were promoting sports.

Councillor Hodgkinson proposed the recommendations and Councillor Bloomer seconded.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet

1. ENDORSED the findings of the consultants and approve the Playing Pitch Strategy, including the key recommendations and site specific action plan;
2. AGREED TO AUTHORISE officers to work in partnership with other organisations to establish the feasibility and funding sources for the projects identified within the strategy and to prepare business cases, where opportunities arise, and bring them forward for consideration;
3. NOTED that the resources needed to develop these partnerships and implement the action plan will be met from existing resources by reprioritising existing work.

4 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention, 4 Absent

192 2024/25 Budget Strategy And Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Update

This report set out the Budget Strategy to support the preparation of the 2024/25 revenue and capital budgets and present an updated Medium Term Financial Strategy forecast.

The Chair then introduced the report in the absence of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance Councillor Evemy. The following points were outlined.

- It was noted that the financial pressures faced by the Council were faced by councils nationally such as inflation and reductions in central government funding. It was highlighted that the Cabinet should be mindful of these factors for the upcoming budget.
- It was highlighted that the Cabinet Transformation Working Group was working with partners in Publica and Ubico to reduce the in-year financial pressures of £860,000 identified and further external pressures of around £450,000.
- It was noted in table ES3 that in 2024 a budget shortfall of £1.3 million was projected.
- It was noted that in the financial years of 2026/27 and 2027/28 the upcoming fairer funding review was projected to reset the position on business rates and lead to a reduction in income from £5 million to £2.3 million.
- It was highlighted that in 2024/25 and 2025/26 that the focus would be on building reserves to mitigate the challenges later in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- It was outlined that capital projects would need to be reviewed carefully in line with their business cases due to increases in interest rates.

The Deputy Chief Executive then addressed Cabinet and outlined the following points:

- It was outlined at paragraph 2.9 of the report that there was no immediate risk of a Section 114 notice needing to be issued, but there is a budget gap which must be closed.
- It was noted that the projected surplus for the next two financial years would be used to build the financial reserves for the year 2026/27 and 2027/28.
- It was noted that the staff pay award for 2023/24 had been agreed with an increase of £1,925 or 3.88% depending on individual salaries.
- It was highlighted that high interest rates were a risk in terms of any borrowing undertaken but had boosted cash balances that the Council holds.
- It was noted that the work up to the budget in 2024 was focussed on financial sustainability and delivering upon the priorities for the Council.

The Cabinet wished to thank officers for their work in driving down the budget gap and providing support to residents.

There were questions about the impact of the Fairer Funding Review and what representations were being made. The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that the impact would be moving funding from district councils to those local authorities with responsibility for Adult Social Care. The Chair then highlighted on the question of representations that these conversations would be brought up through the Local Government Association.

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It was highlighted that the consideration of fees and charges would need to take into account the increase in costs of providing non-statutory services.

Councillor Coleman as an observer asked about contributions to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The Deputy Chief Executive noted at paragraph 4.17, the review and revised employer funding schedule taking place would be taking place resulting in a £531,000 difference between the financial years 2023/24 and 2025/26.

The Chair noted that there was an assumption by the Government when formulating the Local Government Settlement that the maximum increase to Council Tax would be applied by councils. It was highlighted that the 1997 sale of homes by the councils has only provided reserves once and was no longer usable.

It was also noted that a public consultation was taking place from 3 November 2023 to the 8 December 2023 and would be considered at the Cabinet meeting on 11 January 2024.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet

1. APPROVED the 2024/25 Budget Strategy as outlined in Section 4 of the report.
2. NOTED the forecast surplus on the General Fund revenue budget in 2024/25 and proposed transfer to the Financial Resilience Reserve.

Voting Record - 4 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention, 4 Absent

193 Schedule of Decisions taken by the Leader of the Council and/or Individual Cabinet Members

Cabinet noted the decisions taken.

The Meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 7.38 pm

Chair

(END)

Agenda Item 8



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET – 7 DECEMBER 2023
Subject	COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2024
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr Mike Evemy – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance Email: mike.evemy@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Jon Dearing – Assistant Director for Resident Services Email: Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk
Report author	Mandy Fathers – Business Manager for Environment, Welfare and Revenues Email: Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To present the results of the public consultation on proposals for revising the current Council Tax Support scheme with effect from 1 April 2024
Annexes	Annex A – Consultation responses Annex B – Equality Impact Assessment
Recommendation(s)	That Cabinet resolves to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the increase in Council Tax Support as detailed in paragraph 3.4 from 1 April 2024. 2. Approve that any surplus in the Hardship Fund is transferred over to 2024/2025 for reasons detailed in paragraphs 3.6 and 3.7. 3. Approve the amendment to the Council Tax Support Policy as recommended in paragraph 3.8.
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the highest standard of service
Key Decision	YES
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Full public consultation including consulting major precepting authorities. Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer, Monitoring Officer, Interim Head of Legal Services. Assistant Director, Director of Finance (Publica)



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Council Tax Support is a scheme to reduce Council Tax bills for people on a low income and/or who receive benefits. This report brings forward proposals to amend the scheme for 2024 in order to give more support to those on low incomes.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Councils are required to review their Council Tax Support (CTS) schemes each year for those people of working age and decide if they want to make any changes. Before any changes can be implemented, they must be subject to public consultation. In August 2023, officers proposed changes to the scheme, which the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, and the Chief Finance Officer approved to be consulted upon.

3. MAIN POINTS

3.1 The Council implemented its own local CTS scheme of support to help those people on low incomes pay their Council Tax in April 2013. Further changes were made in April 2020 introducing the income banded scheme.

3.2 Since 2021 household income had increased which resulted in some households being moved into a higher income band, and therefore receiving a lesser percentage of support, so in 2022 proposals were made to amend income band 2 by £10.00 a week, income band 3 by £15 a week and income bands 4 to 6 by £25 a week. The Council approved these amendments in February 2023. The scheme was based on the following bands:

Income Band	Single	Couple	Lone Parent 1 Child	Lone Parent 2 Children	Lone Parent 3 Children	Lone Parent 4+ Children	Couple with 1 Child	Couple with 2 Children	Couple with 3 Children	Couple with 4+ Children	Maximum % Entitlement
Net Income £ per week											
1	0 - 135	0 - 160	0 - 185	0 - 205	0 - 225	0 - 265	0 - 245	0 - 265	0 - 285	0 - 325	100
2	135.01 - 185	160.01 - 200	185.01 - 220	205.01 - 240	225.01 - 260	265.01 - 300	245.01 - 295	265.01 - 315	285.01 - 335	325.01 - 375	80
3	185.01 - 235	200.01 - 250	220.01 - 270	240.01 - 290	260.01 - 310	300.01 - 350	295.01 - 345	315.01 - 365	335.01 - 385	375.01 - 425	60
4	235.01 - 285	250.01 - 300	270.01 - 320	290.01 - 340	310.01 - 360	350.01 - 400	345.01 - 395	365.01 - 415	385.01 - 435	425.01 - 475	30
5	285.01 - 335	300.01 - 350	320.01 - 370	340.01 - 390	360.01 - 410	400.01 - 450	395.01 - 445	415.01 - 465	435.01 - 485	475.01 - 525	10
6	335.01 +	350.01 +	370.01 +	390.01 +	410.01 +	450.01 +	445.01 +	465.01 +	485.01 +	525.01 +	0

3.3 With inflation around 6% in August 2023, it is anticipated that national benefit payments will increase by this amount from April 2024. Without changes to the CTS scheme, this would result again in more households being moved into a higher income band and therefore having to pay a higher share of the Council Tax for their property.



3.4 Following discussions with Citizens Advice and Mrs Cobbett, as well as the Deputy Leader and Member for Finance, the Cabinet Member for Cost of Living and Inclusion, and the Chief Finance Officer, and to support resident’s proposals were made to:

- increase income band 1 by 6%, which in turn would increase all subsequent income band.
- increase the maximum entitlement in band 4 from 30% to 40%, and band 5 from 10% to 20%.

Income Band	Single	Couple	Lone +1	Lone + 2	Lone + 3	Entitlement
1	0 - 143.10	0 - 169.60	0 - 196.10	0 - 217.30	0 - 238.50	100
2	143.11 - 193.10	169.61 - 209.60	196.11 - 231.10	217.31 - 252.30	238.51 - 273.50	80
3	193.11 - 243.10	209.61 - 259.60	231.11 - 281.10	252.31 - 302.30	273.51 - 323.50	60
4	243.11 - 293.10	259.61 - 309.60	281.11 - 331.10	302.31 - 352.30	323.51 - 373.50	40
5	293.11 - 343.10	309.61 - 359.60	331.11 - 381.10	352.31 - 402.30	373.51 - 423.50	20
Income Band	Lone + 4	Couple + 1	Couple + 2	Couple + 3	Couple + 4	Entitlement
1	0 - 280.90	0 - 259.70	0 - 280.90	0 - 302.10	0 - 344.50	100
2	280.91 - 315.90	259.71 - 309.70	280.91 - 330.90	302.11 - 352.10	344.51 - 394.50	80
3	315.91 - 365.90	309.71 - 359.70	330.91 - 380.90	352.11 - 402.10	394.51 - 444.50	60
4	365.91 - 415.90	359.71 - 409.70	380.91 - 430.90	402.11 - 452.10	444.51 - 494.50	40
5	415.91 - 465.90	409.71 - 459.70	430.91 - 480.90	452.11 - 502.10	494.51 - 544.50	20

3.5 A consultation took place for a six-week period between 18 September 2023 to 30 October 2023. A summary of response to the consultation can be found in Annex A, attached to this report.

3.6 In 2022/2023 the Council implemented a Hardship Fund to support those residents who were struggling financially and provided the Council with evidence of financial hardship. This fund was created with financial support from Gloucestershire County Council, and Cotswold District Council. The fund was originally set at £40,000. To date there remains in excess of £37,000.

3.7 Recommendations are being made to transfer any funding surplus into the financial year 2024/2025 to ensure the Council continues to support those residents in financial hardship.

3.8 The Council’s client support officers reach out and offer additional support to all those who apply for this funding to ensure any long-term hardship is minimised. This might be through negotiating better deals with utility companies, maximising benefit take-up, addressing expenditure or sign posting to another organisation for support.



3.9 To protect the finances of the authority and in the interests of all council taxpayers, it is also recommended that an amendment to section 101 of the CTS Policy, Counter Fraud and Compliance be made to include:

- Where the Council has evidence of fraud and/or error, it reserves the right to withhold and/or recalculate Council Tax Support whether or not the customer is in receipt of a benefit administered by the Department for Work and Pensions.

3.10 This amendment will avoid delays within administration as well as the council recalculating CTS claims based on evidence obtained.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

4.1 The criteria for the CTS scheme are at the Council's discretion, and therefore various alternative options are open to the Council; however, any amendments must be consulted on, and the scheme must be approved by 11 March 2024.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Council administers a Council Tax Support scheme with an annual expenditure of £4.7 million. In 2013/2014, the government reduced the level of funding for the local scheme effectively creating a grant reduction of 10% a year across all the precepting authorities.

5.2 With effect from 2013/2014 the scheme was funded through Formula Grant rather than direct subsidy and consequently the government has transferred the risk, and therefore the cost, of increased take up within the scheme to the local taxpayer, from the national taxpayer. An increase in cost will lead to a reduced tax-base and therefore reduced income to the precepting bodies.

5.3 The proposed changes increase the cost of the CTS scheme by £68,512. This will be reflected in a decrease in the council tax base and council tax recognised in the collection fund. The decrease in income will be spread proportionately across the major precepting authorities (Gloucestershire County Council, The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Cotswold District Council as well as Town and Parish Councils) Making these proposed changes will decrease the total tax base by around thirty-three band D properties and a loss of income as follows:

Financial Year	GCC	Police	Cotswold	Town/Parish	Total
2024/2025	50,589.12	9,796.58	4,944.44	3,181.86	68,512

5.4 Any surplus funding from the Hardship Scheme will be rolled into 2024/2025.



6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1** The Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolished Council Tax Benefit and instead required each authority to design a scheme specifying the reductions, which are to apply to amounts of council tax.
- 6.2** The CTS scheme is required under Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (“the Act”), as amended. The Act states that for each financial year, Billing Authorities must consider whether to revise their CTS scheme or replace it with another scheme. The prescribed regulations set out the matters that must be included in such a scheme. Before making any changes, under Section 40 of the Act, the Council must:
- Consult with any major precepting authorities.
 - Publish the draft scheme.
 - Consult other parties likely to have an interest in the scheme.
- 6.3** The deadline for making decisions is 11 March in the financial year preceding that for which the revision or replacement scheme is to take effect (under paragraph 5, schedule 1A of the Act). If the council does not make/revise a CTS scheme by 11 March 2024, a default scheme will be imposed on the Council, which will be effective from 1 April 2024.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 7.1** There are two risks to consider:
- That the benefit caseload increases significantly, resulting in expenditure exceeding the levels estimated within this report.
 - That the administrations, collection and recover costs (including the costs for write-offs) could increase as a result of creating additional and relatively small liabilities.

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.1** To ensure compliant with the Equality Act 2010 an Equality Impact Assessment has been conducted which concludes there is no negative impact on any of the protected characteristics.

9. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1** None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

(END)



Annex A

	Agree	Strongly Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Don't know
Do you agree that this would be a fair way to help people on low income and with larger families?	55.56%	0.00%	22.22%	0.00%	0.00%	22.22%

Responses	Currently in receipt of Council Tax Support	
	Yes	No
	44.45%	55.55%

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Annex A

	Agree	Strongly Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Don't know
Do you agree that this would be a fair way to help people on low income and with larger families?	55.56%	0.00%	22.22%	0.00%	0.00%	22.22%

Responses	Currently in receipt of Council Tax Support	
	Yes	No
	44.45%	55.55%

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Equality and Rurality Impact Assessment Form

When completing this form you will need to provide evidence that you have considered how the ‘protected characteristics’ may be impacted upon by this decision. In line with the General Equality Duty the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard for the need to:

- a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

This form should be completed in conjunction with the guidance document available on the Intranet

Once completed a copy should be emailed to cheryl.sloan@publicagroup.uk to be signed off by an equalities officer before being published.

1. Persons responsible for this assessment:

Names: Mandy Fathers	
Date of assessment: 01/11/2023	Telephone: 01285 623571 Email: mandy.fathers@cotswold.gov.uk

2. Name of the policy, service, strategy, procedure or function:

Existing – Council Tax Support Scheme 2024/2025

3. Briefly describe it aims and objectives

To make slight amendments to the Banding in the scheme

4. Are there any external considerations? (e.g. Legislation/government directives)

Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 states a CTS scheme is required and Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 states that the council must consult. Under paragraph 5, schedule 1A of the same Act, the Council is required to have a scheme approved by 11 March 2024.

5. What evidence has helped to inform this assessment?

Source	✓	If ticked please explain what
Demographic data and other statistics, including census findings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Demographic data was used when modelling the scheme
Recent research findings including studies of deprivation	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Results of recent consultations and surveys	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A 6 week consultation was undertaken from 18/9/23 to 30/10/23. A CAB in Gloucestershire as well as Oxfordshire assisted with modelling the scheme
Results of ethnic monitoring data and any equalities data	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Anecdotal information from groups and agencies within Gloucestershire	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A CAB in Gloucestershire had input into the modelling of scheme
Comparisons between similar functions / policies elsewhere	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Comparisons with previous schemes and those of neighbouring LA's has been considered
Analysis of audit reports and reviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	

6. Please specify how intend to gather evidence to fill any gaps identified above:

N/A

7. Has any consultation been carried out?

Yes

Details of Consultation: Consultation took place between 18/9/23 to 30/10/23. This was published on the Councils website. Letters/emails sent to major precepting authorities

If NO please outline any planned activities

N/A

8. What level of impact either directly or indirectly will the proposal have upon the general public / staff? (Please quantify where possible)

Level of impact	Response
NO IMPACT – The proposal has no impact upon the general public/staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
LOW – Few members of the general public/staff will be affected by this proposal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
MEDIUM – A large group of the general public/staff will be affected by this proposal	<input type="checkbox"/>
HIGH – The proposal will have an impact upon the whole community/all staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments: e.g. Who will this specifically impact?	

9. Considering the available evidence, what type of impact could this function have on any of the protected characteristics?

Negative – it could disadvantage and therefore potentially not meet the General Equality duty;

Positive – it could benefit and help meet the General Equality duty;

Neutral – neither positive nor negative impact / Not sure

	Potential Negative	Potential Positive	Neutral	Reasons	Options for mitigating adverse impacts
Age – Young People			✓	The proposal is inclusive to people of different age groups, but it is not specific to age	
Age – Old People			✓	The scheme is for working age people only – Pensioners have a different CTS scheme which is mandated by Central Government	
Disability			✓	The proposal is inclusive to people with disabilities but is not specific to disability	
Sex – Male			✓	The proposal is inclusive to all gender groups, but it is not specific to gender	

Sex – Female			✓	The proposal is inclusive to all gender groups, but it is not specific to gender	
Race including Gypsy and Travellers			✓	The proposal is inclusive to people of all races, but it is not specific to race	
Religion or Belief			✓	The proposal is inclusive to people of all religions, but it is not specific to religion	
Sexual Orientation			✓	This proposal is inclusive to all types of sexual orientation, but it is not specific to sexual orientation	
Gender Reassignment			✓	The proposal is inclusive to all gender groups, but it is not specific to gender	
Pregnancy and maternity			✓	The proposal is inclusive to people who are pregnant and/or on maternity, but it is not specific to this group	
Geographical impacts on one area			✓	The proposal is inclusive to the whole of the Cotswold district	
Other Groups			✓	This proposal is inclusive to all other groups that are not mentioned	
Rural considerations: ie Access to services; leisure facilities, transport; education; employment; broadband.			✓	The proposal is inclusive to the whole of the Cotswold district	

10. Action plan (add additional lines if necessary)

Action(s)	Lead Officer	Resource	Timescale
Change Policy when approved	Mandy Fathers	Craig Fisher	Following full Council approval in early 2024

11. Is there is anything else that you wish to add?

n/a

Declaration

I/We are satisfied that an equality impact assessment has been carried out on this policy, service, strategy, procedure or function and where an negative impact has been identified actions have been developed to lessen or negate this impact. We understand that the Equality Impact Assessment is required by the District Council and that we take responsibility for the completion and quality of this assessment.

Completed By:	Mandy Fathers	Date:	01/11/2023
Line Manager:	Jon Dearing	Date:	01/11/2023
Reviewed by Corporate Equality Officer:	Cheryl Sloan	Date:	06/11/2023

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Agenda Item 9



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council Name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET 7 DECEMBER 2023
Subject	FIXED PENALTY NOTICE LEVEL INCREASES FOR FLY TIPPING AND WASTE CRIME OFFENCES
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr Juliet Layton, Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services Email: juliet.layton@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Jon Dearing, Assistant Director for Resident Services Email: jon.dearing@cotswold.gov.uk
Report author	Philip Measures, Service Leader Email: philip.measures@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To set out the new maximum level fines proposed by Government to deter and punish the offences of littering, fly-tipping, householder duty of care, flyposting and the distribution of free printed matter. To seek approval to introduce these new fine levels.
Annexes	None
Recommendation(s)	That Cabinet resolves to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the report. 2. Agree to increase the fine levels to the maximum levels permissible as outlined in paragraph 3.4. 3. Agree an early payment discount as outlined in paragraph 3.4. 4. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive to increase the fine levels as approved.
Corporate priorities	Deliver the highest standards of service.
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Interim Head of Legal, Monitoring Officer, Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer, Portfolio Holder, Assistant Director, Director of Finance (Publica)



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1** The Government, to tackle fly-tipping and other waste crime, has laid statutory instruments to allow local authorities to increase penalties for offences to act as a greater deterrence. New maximum penalties can be applied to fly-tipping, littering, flyposting and distribution of free matter offences. This report sets out the increases and recommends setting the new maximum penalties with a small reduction to encourage early payment.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** Cotswold District Council, as a rural area suffers from the criminal behaviour of fly-tippers and people who litter or fly-post. To be successful in finding and punishing those responsible we have to investigate to find evidence linking a suspected offender to the waste and we include the help of the public to provide us with further evidence, whether that's witness accounts, CCTV/video footage or pictures. Often those identified from the physical evidence within the fly-tip are not always the actual fly-tippers, but they may still be guilty of a failure of a Duty of Care for having consigned waste to an unlicensed person. We therefore aim to make it wider public knowledge that it is everyone's responsibility to ensure waste is only transferred to licensed handlers and failure to do so is an offence. We are increasing our use of surveillance at identified fly-tip hotspots throughout the district in order to catch those responsible. Many fly-tip offences are dealt with by Fixed Penalty Notice, so the cost of fines is critical in deterring people from committing these offences.
- 2.2** The Government has laid a statutory instrument increasing the upper limits for various fixed penalty notices (FPNs). This means that within Cotswold District, the maximum amount those caught fly-tipping could be fined will increase from £400 to £1,000. The maximum amount those who litter or graffiti could be fined will increase from £150 to £500. The maximum amount those who breach their household waste duty of care could be fined will increase from £400 to £600.

3. Legislative amendments

- 3.1** Under The Environmental Offences (Fixed Penalties) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2023, section 33ZA(9)(a) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 is amended such that the maximum fine for fly-tipping is increased from £400 to £1000. In section 34ZA(8), the maximum fine for household waste duty of care offences is increased from £400 to £600.
- 3.2** Under The Environmental Offences (Fixed Penalties) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2023, The Environmental Offences (Fixed Penalties) (England) Regulations 2017(1) are amended as follows.
- 3.2.1** For regulation 5 the amount of a fixed penalty capable of being specified by the Council for the offences of littering and graffiti is now increased to not less than £65 and not more than



£500, as the principal litter authority under section 88(6A)(a) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the relevant local authority under section 43A(1)(a) of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003.

- 3.2.2** For the distribution of free printed matter on land designated by the Council, the amount of a fixed penalty capable of being specified by a principal litter authority under paragraph 7(4)(a) of Schedule 3A to the Environmental Protection Act 1990 is now not less than £65 and not more than £150. Currently there is no such designation within the district of Cotswold District Council.
- 3.3** The Council has an option of lowering the fine to encourage early payment in each case. 25% discounts are recommended, to strike the balance between deterrence and encouraging early payment.
- 3.4** The proposals for the revised fine levels are set out in the report recommendations and TABLE I below.

Offence	Existing Fine	Fine with Discount for early payment	New fine (Payment within 14 days)	Fine with proposed discount (Payment within 14 days)
Fly-tipping	£400	£200*	£1,000	£750
Duty of Care	£400	£200*	£600	£450
Littering and graffiti	£75	£50 **	£500	£375
Distribution of printed matter	£75	£50**	£150	£112

*Payment within 10 days

**payment within 14 days

- 3.5** Once Cabinet has approved the decision and following the appropriate call-in period, the new charges can be adopted.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1** To remove the early payment discount. This is not recommended in order to encourage and provide an incentive for early payment.



- 4.2** To consider an alternative early payment discount, e.g.;
- 4.2.1** 25% for commercial operators, 50% for non-commercial, on the basis that commercial operators should be more aware of the legislation. However, this is not recommended as different rates will make the issuing of FPNs more complex and ignorance of the law is not an excuse.
- 4.3** To consider different fine levels than those proposed. This is highlighted should Members have different views on the fine levels recommended.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1** Increasing the fine levels is intended to discourage potential offenders and support the costs of dealing with illegal waste disposal. With typically 25 FPNS served in a year, the fines received will be between £20,000 and £25,000 depending of course on the type of offence and whether full recovery is achieved.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1** The legislation outlined in Section 2 defines the fine level range that Councils can set. Councils cannot set fine levels outside the ranges specified.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 7.1** The risk in increasing the fine level is that offenders will not be prepared to pay the fine, or they will be unable to afford the fine. This will increase the number of cases being referred to Court for prosecution. This is mitigated by having an early payment discount. It is also hoped that this risk is mitigated by the deterrent effect of promoting higher fines for these fines.

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.1** Under equality legislation, the Council has a legal duty to pay 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality in relation to:

- Race
- Disability
- Gender, including gender reassignment.
- Age
- Sexual Orientation
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Religion or belief

- 8.2** The recommendations of this report have no particular impact on any of the above groups. It does not introduce a new service or policy requiring an accompanying EIA.



9. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1** Fly-tipping is an environmental hazard, and material dumped may destroy habitats and be poisonous to humans and wildlife. Discarded food waste encourages the growth of rodent populations which are linked to the spread of disease. Measures to reduce fly-tipping will therefore have a positive ecological impact.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1** None

(END)

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Agenda Item 10



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET – 7TH DECEMBER 2023
Subject	Proactive Delivery of Affordable Housing
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Joe Harris - Leader of the Council Email: joe.harris@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Charlie Jackson - Assistant Director, Planning & Sustainability Email: charlie.jackson@publicagroup.uk
Report author	Charlie Jackson - Assistant Director, Planning & Sustainability Email: charlie.jackson@publicagroup.uk
Summary/Purpose	This report seeks to outline the council's aspiration for a more proactive approach to increase the supply of affordable housing within the district, outline of how this can be achieved, and the resources required.
Annexes	None
Recommendation(s)	That Cabinet: I. Agree to explore innovative and proactive models to enhance the council's ability to increase the supply of affordable homes within the district.
Corporate priorities	Provide socially rented homes; We are at the centre of a housing affordability crisis. Housing is key to resilient, supportive communities, health and wellbeing, and a safe place to live and thrive. Without an affordable home, none of these can flourish, and so it's vital we tackle the national housing affordability crisis and strive to provide a home for everyone. We will maximise the opportunities presented by our own assets as well as working with developers and partners to progress affordable housing developments within the District.
Key Decision	NO



Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Consultation with stakeholders, colleagues, portfolio holders and retained officers regarding moving to a more proactive approach. Further consultation required once actions to take forward have been identified.



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Cotswold District Council recognises the national housing affordability crisis and the impact on residents and communities. It is a key corporate priority for the Administration to explore all options to increase the number of affordable homes – especially those within the social rented category, which are ultimately one of the few forms of truly affordable housing. This paper sets out how the council will look to enhance the proactive measures available to take a more proactive approach to the delivery of affordable housing.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Social housing stock has been in steady decline across the county for the past several decades, with former stock being sold off, demolished and not replaced. Shelter report there are 1.4 million fewer households in social housing than in 1980, and 1 million households are currently waiting for social housing. Combined with excessive house prices, making homes unaffordable, this has pushed demand into the private rental sector, where supply has been slow to keep up. The result is above inflationary increases in rents, especially in the south of England and big cities.
- 2.2 Cotswold District Council has identified through its housing register that 1453 households across the district are in need of affordable rented housing and recognises the national housing affordability crisis and the need to do more to combat the effects of this emergency within the district. The Corporate Plan and recently refreshed Housing Strategy, sets out the intent to provide more affordable housing (with the emphasis on social rented accommodation) and provide additional housing to meet the needs of the district. The Council understands the impact of the changing economical environment and wishes to put measures in place to increase the number of truly affordable housing units delivered annually, including the promotion of innovative housing solutions to reduce the housing waiting list and develop and maintain thriving communities.
- 2.3 Cotswold District is a challenging economical environment with house prices being on average around 14 times higher than average earnings.

3. CURRENT DELIVERY METHODS

- 3.1 The council currently seeks to deliver affordable housing through a number of mechanisms, including developer contributions and land led developments (in partnership with housing associations).
- 3.2 Via Section 106 agreements, on schemes over a certain threshold size, developers are required to build affordable housing units as part of their planning permission. This valuable contribution to housing supply helps to create mixed-tenure communities. However, a survey conducted by Inside Housing showed only 49% of the homes completed by housing associations in 2021-22 were acquired via Section 106. Inside Housing considers that this

percentage will continue to reduce meaning alternative methods of affordable housing delivery are required and more housing associations are exploring land led schemes to deliver affordable housing instead.

4. NEXT STEPS

4.1 The council wishes to take a more proactive approach in meeting the affordable housing demands of the district and has identified a number of workstreams to pursue. These include:

- Developing key working relationships with organisations to support the council’s ambitions, identifying existing and new partners to support this proactive approach, including Housing Associations, developers and Homes England.
- Working with partners to identify different models of delivery including building homes on council owned land, acquiring new land, purchasing homes from the open market and reviewing empty homes across the district.
- Creating a blended approach to housing delivery utilising existing resources including council plans and policies, reviewing strategic site allocations and brownfield site opportunities and exploring alternative options such as rural exception sites and the use of Compulsory Purchase Orders.
- Identifying and defining less obvious areas of the district where there are opportunities and a need for affordable housing (what could be termed as “hidden needs”), such as the needs of key workers, supported housing and care leaver requirements.

4.2 There are no doubt further options that can be brought forward to explore, and best practice across the UK can be reviewed and incorporated into these ambitions.

4.3 This approach will be carried out in line with the council’s new Housing Strategy once formalised.

5. RESOURCING

5.1 Cotswold District Council currently has 1 FTE Strategic Housing & Development Officer working within the Housing Strategy Team. This colleague plays a crucial role in shaping the growth and development of communities within the district to ensure housing needs are met.

5.2 The council’s ambition to deliver more affordable homes outside of traditional methods requires additional resource, to enhance and drive the strategic vision, and to seek out new ways of working. To this end a Strategic Housing Development & Enabling Manager will be appointed.



5.3 West Oxfordshire Council share these ambitions so following conversations between the two Councils, the proposal is that this post will be shared.

6. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

6.1 An alternative option would be to continue to seek to deliver more innovative solutions to the affordable housing crisis using existing resources. However, it is unlikely that this approach will allow the Council's ambitions to be realised as this member of staff is already working at capacity.

6.2 It is therefore likely that using existing resource would not allow a truly proactive approach to delivering more affordable housing. This would likely result in an unacceptable step back from the council's ambitions as set out within the Corporate Strategy.

7. CONCLUSIONS

7.1 The housing affordability crisis and need for affordable housing continues to grow. Whilst the Council is effective in delivering affordable housing through traditional methods, there are alternative options that can be explored to take a proactive approach, meet the needs of the district more specifically, and deliver additional truly affordable housing units for our communities.

7.2 In order to achieve this greater capacity and alternative skills are required. A new "Strategic Housing Development and Enabling Manager" role can be appointed using existing budget on a 2 year FTC.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 This paper outlines the proactive approach and ideas to take forward in order to generate additional affordable housing outside of traditional delivery methods. Those workstreams will need to be appraised and costed at the appropriate time and intervals.

8.2 Funding for the new role of Strategic Housing Development & Enabling Manager will be shared between this council and West Oxfordshire District Council. Funding for this role will come from existing budget and will be at no extra cost to the council.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 No additional legal implications.

10. RISK ASSESSMENT

10.1 No significant risks identified.

10.2 Some reputational risk if this proactive approach is not adopted or successful in delivering additional affordable housing as set out within the Council Plan.



10.3 Some risk that existing funds are used for a new role, but benefits are not realised. This will be mitigated through a robust recruitment process, and support provided to the role by the Strategic Housing team, portfolio holder and Assistant Director for Planning & Sustainability.

11. EQUALITIES IMPACT

11.1 Under equality legislation, the Council has a legal duty to pay ‘due regard’ to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality in relation to:

- Race
- Disability
- Gender, including gender reassignment
- Age
- Sexual Orientation
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Religion or belief

11.2 No detrimental impact on the above groups. This report outlines an approach to explore new ways to deliver more affordable housing, to support balanced and cohesive communities and meet the needs of those requiring affordable housing.

11.3 Recruitment for the new role of Strategic Housing Development & Enabling Manager will be done in a fair and transparent manner in accordance with relevant council policies.

12. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

12.1 No impact at this stage.

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

13.1 None

(END)



Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET – 7 December 2023
Subject	Draft Cotswold Housing Strategy 2024-2029
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr Joe Harris, Leader of the Council Email: Joe.Harris@Cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Charlie Jackson, Assistant Director of Planning & Sustainability Email: charlie.jackson@cotswold.gov.uk
Report author	James Brain, Forward Planning Manager Email: james.brain@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To seek approval to consult with partners and the public on a new five year Cotswold Housing Strategy. The strategy directly responds to the Council's Corporate Plan that seeks to address housing affordability and increase the supply of affordable housing.
Annexes	Annex A – Draft Cotswold Housing Strategy 2024 to 2029 – technical consultation document Annex B – Draft Cotswold Housing Strategy 2024 to 2029 – non-technical summary consultation document
Recommendation(s)	That Cabinet resolves to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the draft Cotswold Housing Strategy for public consultation as presented at Annex A and B; and 2. Delegate authority to the Forward Planning Manager, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to agree a questionnaire for the public consultation exercise and to make minor modifications to improve clarity.
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to the climate crisis • Provide socially rented homes • Make our local plan green to the core • Support health and wellbeing • Enable a vibrant economy



Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Interim Strategic Housing Manager, Housing Team, Climate Action Manager, Development Management and Heritage and Design Manager



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1** Cotswold District Council recognises the national housing affordability crisis and the impact it has on local residents and communities. A key corporate priority for the Administration is to explore all options to increase the number of affordable homes; especially those within the social rented category, which are one of the few forms of truly affordable housing in the District.
- 1.2** This report seeks approval to consult (with partners and the public) on a draft Housing Strategy Update 2024 -2029 that sets out how the Council will explore options to address this issue, and where possible mitigate the effects of the national housing affordability crisis.
- 1.3** The Council last updated its Housing Strategy in 2016. The draft Housing Strategy Update 2024 -2029 does not include a Homelessness Strategy as this will be the subject of a separate review carried out by the Housing Team and will be presented to Cabinet in 2024.
- 1.4** The draft Housing Strategy Update 2024 -2029 identifies four broad housing priorities:
 - Planning for everyone's housing needs
 - Providing more affordable homes
 - Delivering sustainable, high quality and climate resilient homes
 - Thriving communities and neighbourhoods
- 1.5** Each priority contains a series of objectives and actions that will be delivered over the next five years. An action plan will be prepared upon adoption of the Housing Strategy.
- 1.6** A non-technical summary is provided at Annex B.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** Social rented housing stock has been in steady decline across the county for the past few decades, with former stock being sold through schemes such as Right to Buy and not replaced. Shelter report there are 1.4 million fewer households in social housing than in 1980, and 1 million households are currently waiting for a social rented home. Spiralling house prices (sales and rentals) and household bills, both of which make housing less affordable, have led to an increased demand in the private rental sector, where the supply of housing has been slow to keep up. The result is above inflationary increases in rents, especially in the south of England and urban areas.
- 2.2** In Cotswold District, local earnings have not kept pace with house prices and the average house in the District is now around 14 times higher than the average local salary. This is a large contributor to the number of households on the Council's housing register. As of 31 October 2023 there were 1,453 households across the District in need of affordable rented housing.



3. The draft Cotswold Housing Strategy 2024 to 2029

- 3.1** Tackling the issues raised by the national housing affordability crisis is impossible to do in isolation. The draft Housing Strategy therefore sits alongside other local and national strategies, plans and work programmes.
- 3.2** The draft Housing Strategy has been shaped by national policy and local context and is informed by data and information about the District's housing market. It also provides a foundation on which to base Local Plan policy updates and their supporting justification.
- 3.3** The purpose of the draft Housing Strategy is to:
- inform our partners and residents about the housing challenges and priorities in the area;
 - be a catalyst for delivering further affordable housing and, in particular, social rented housing;
 - focus resources and effort on agreed priorities;
 - highlight the importance of reducing inequalities;
 - maintain a strategic overview of housing development and support a revised Local Plan; and
 - drive our statutory duties.
- 3.4** The draft Housing Strategy will shape and focus the Council's work with partner organisations and registered housing providers, as well as landowners, developers and community-led organisations. It will also support funding bids.
- 3.5** The draft Housing Strategy includes a long-term vision to 2050 that sees a world where everyone in Cotswold District will live in a healthy, affordable, low carbon home that meets their needs within a safe, sustainable and thriving community, which is accessible to all.
- 3.6** The draft Strategy contains a multitude of short-term objectives and actions that begin the journey of delivering this long-term aspiration. Actions and objectives are organised into four broad housing priorities.
- 3.7** Priority 1: Planning for everyone's housing needs: Everyone in Cotswold deserves to live in a suitable home. This requires having the right properties to meet individual needs in the right locations, with great infrastructure, services and support. Cotswold District has not only an ageing population, but an average house price on the open market is 14 times the average wage.
- 3.8** Priority 2: Delivering more affordable housing: There are not enough affordable homes within our district. The high cost of buying or renting through the private market requires people to pay a high proportion of their income towards housing costs. This is being compounded by the additional pressure of mounting bills and inflation, with experts predicting that this will result in higher levels of debt and homelessness.



- 3.9** Priority 3: Sustainable, high quality and climate resilient homes: Housing is responsible for about one quarter of the District's total greenhouse gas emissions, so it has a significant contribution to make in fulfilling our pledge to become carbon neutral by 2045. Good quality low carbon housing is essential for the health and wellbeing of residents, so it is vital that we work to ensure that existing homes are warm, safe, meet the needs of the occupants, are affordable to run, and are resilient to the impacts of climate change.
- 3.10** Priority 4: Thriving communities and neighbourhoods: Everyday needs should be easily accessible within a short distance from home. This includes safe and equitable access to fresh groceries, nature, healthcare, jobs or workspaces and other essential services, facilities and infrastructure. It also means listening and working together with communities on things that matter to them and ensuring new development fits well and enhances existing communities and neighbourhoods.
- 3.11** The draft Housing Strategy will be reviewed regularly during the five year period to ensure it continues to respond to the housing needs across Cotswold, and to reflect changes in local context, national policy, legislation and strategy. An action plan will be prepared upon adoption of the Housing Strategy.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1** Unlike the Homelessness Strategy, a Housing Strategy is not a statutory requirement so an alternative option would be to not update the Housing Strategy. Taking such option would not aid a focussed and co-ordinated approach to increasing the supply of affordable housing in the District. It would also make it more difficult to update the Council's Local Plan.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1** The national housing affordability crisis and need for affordable housing continues to grow. Whilst the Council has been successful with delivering affordable housing through traditional methods, there are alternative options that can be explored to take an even more proactive approach, which meets the needs of the District in a more targeted way, and delivers more truly affordable housing for our communities.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1** There are no immediate implications of approving the draft Housing Strategy for public consultation. However, the adoption of the Housing Strategy will place a commitment on various services, notably the Strategic Housing, Forward Planning and Development Management teams. For example, Strategic Housing may have more development proposals to negotiate; Forward Planning may have an increased requirement to plan and monitor affordable housing developments; and Development Management may need to provide more pre-application advice and may experience an increase in planning applications.



7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 No additional legal implications.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT

8.1 No significant risks identified.

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT

9.1 The Housing Strategy, once adopted, is likely to have a positive impact on equality by increasing the supply of affordable housing.

10. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The draft Housing Strategy Update, together with other strategies and plans (i.e. the Council's updated Local Plan and the Design Code), contains various actions that will positively address climate change and aid nature recovery.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 None.

(END)



COTSWOLD HOUSING STRATEGY 2024-2029



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Action Plan [separate document] and to be prepared following the public consultation and adoption of the Housing Strategy



Foreword

We are at the centre of an affordability crisis in our district and we set out in our Corporate Plan¹ our intentions to tackle the issues surrounding this.

The housing challenges facing our district are constantly evolving, with the effects of the pandemic and pressures on services continuing to be felt, combined with the increased financial pressures on our residents from the Cost of Living crisis. Our commitment to provide good quality homes for all alongside our commitments to end rough sleeping, prevent homelessness and offer a safe place to live for people fleeing war zones add to the challenge.

More decent, affordable housing is needed but land is scarce and there is a shortage of good quality, genuinely affordable housing to rent.

The Council is determined to rise to these challenges and make a real difference and this strategy will set out our plans on how we intend on tackling these.

There is no escaping the size of the challenge. We need to deliver genuinely affordable homes in a district that is extremely constrained by the high quality built, historic and natural environment. There are very few 'easy' sites to develop. That's why we have to make the most of every available opportunity to provide new affordable housing. We also need to ensure that we are addressing the issue of poor quality housing across our district whilst ensuring that we meet our commitments to respond to the climate crisis.

There is no single silver bullet to solve the issue. There are, however, various things we can do to make improvements. Some of them can make a big difference, whereas others will make small marginal gains which, when brought forward together, can also deliver a significant increase. We look forward to working with partners and communities to deliver on our commitments and to making sure Cotswold is a place where people can prosper.



Councillor Joe Harris
Leader of Cotswold District Council

¹ [Cotswold District Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024 - Update Spring 2022](#)

Introduction

The impacts of not having access to good quality affordable homes have devastating effects on people, health and our economy. Our aim is to help everyone in Cotswold to access housing that meets their needs and that they can afford. It will be supported by a rolling one year Action Plan. Since the implementation of our Housing Plan in 2016, and our Homelessness Strategy in 2018, there have been many successes along the way. We have increased the supply of affordable housing, invested in partnerships to deliver affordable, carbon neutral homes, as well as providing assistance to those facing homelessness. However, there is still much work to be done in addressing the current housing crisis and the evolving cost of living crisis and there are many challenges to overcome:

- The cost of living crisis and financial pressure on residents is likely to lead to increased numbers in households becoming homeless or threatened with homelessness;
- The challenges of adapting to post pandemic levels of demand continue to affect both businesses, employment and local services;
- Public services are under significant financial pressure and we will need to make tough decisions in the coming years. Our ability to generate income has been severely affected over the past two years during the pandemic and into the cost of living crisis;
- High inflation impacts on the viability of delivering affordable housing, including land, build, materials and labour costs;
- The high costs of borrowing will be passed from landlord to tenant, further increasing the affordability gap between real rents and the Local Housing Allowance rates;
- We are working with partners to deliver affordable homes in the coming years, however this needs to go further. Innovation will be key in finding the less 'obvious' schemes to bring forward to make a real difference in the supply of affordable housing;
- Innovation in the way we deliver our Prevention from Homelessness services will need to continue to evolve to respond to financial pressures and demands on the service. Due to the complex nature of Homelessness, a standalone strategy was created in 2018, and is due for review in 2023;
- Climate change and the impact of this has led us to declare a climate emergency. There is an urgent need to deliver zero carbon homes that are accessible to local services and facilities through active travel; and
- Local residents have opened their homes to a high number of people fleeing the war in Ukraine. We will continue to work with both the hosts and the families fleeing conflict to find long term, sustainable housing solutions.

These are not small challenges, therefore the aims and priorities set out in this strategy need to be ambitious, innovative and embrace the unique nature of our district.



Our Council Priorities

Our [Corporate Strategy](#) sets out the overall vision for the Council:

To recreate a council that's proactive and responsive to the needs of our residents and businesses in a fast-changing environment, and to build for the future while respecting our heritage.

We will achieve this by focussing on:

1. Delivering our services to the highest standards;
2. Responding to the challenges presented by the climate crisis;
3. Providing good quality social rented homes;
4. Presenting a local plan that's green to the core;
5. Helping residents and communities access the support they need for good health and wellbeing; and
6. Supporting businesses to grow in a green, sustainable manner, and to provide high value jobs.

Tackling the issues raised by the housing crisis is impossible to do in isolation, therefore this Housing Strategy sits alongside existing and emerging strategies, plans and work programmes. It has been shaped by national policy and local context and is informed by data and information about our local housing market. We have set out our ambition for housing in Cotswold District and will use it to improve the delivery of high quality, sustainable housing that local people can afford. This Housing Strategy is not the same as the Local Plan, which contains the policies used to determine planning applications and sets out locations for future development. However, it provides an important foundation within which to shape Local Plan policies and supporting evidence.

The purpose of the strategy is to:

- inform our partners and residents about the affordability challenges and priorities in the area;
- be a catalyst for delivering further affordable housing and in particular social rented housing;
- focus resources and effort on agreed priorities;
- highlight the importance of reducing inequalities;
- maintain a strategic overview of housing development and support the update of the Council's Local Plan; and
- give strategic context for some of our housing related statutory duties.

The strategy will shape and focus our work with partner organisations and Registered Providers, as well as landowners, developers and community-led organisations. It will also support bids for additional funding. The strategy will be reviewed during the five year period to make sure it continues to respond to the housing needs across Cotswold, and to reflect changes in national policy, legislation and strategy.



Evolution of the housing affordability crisis

The 3rd FASTEST HOUSE PRICE GROWTH in SOUTH WEST

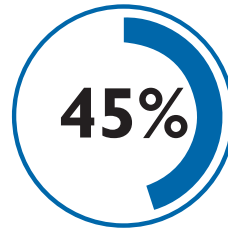
Owning with a mortgage is the most common tenure in the South West.



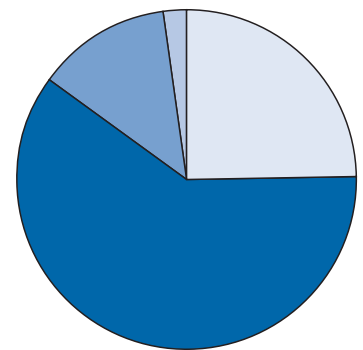
Between 2011-2021 house prices increased by

61%

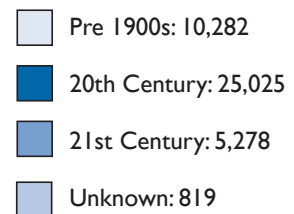
Cotswold is the 2nd most expensive place to buy a house in the South West.



of households are owner occupiers.



Cotswold has an ageing stock of housing.



AVERAGE HOUSE PRICES IN THE COTSWOLDS ARE ALMOST



LOCAL SALARIES

Local earnings have not kept pace with house price rises.

WORSENING LIVING CONDITIONS...

and increased demand for council services.

With people continuing to work from home, the popular rural areas, such as the Cotswolds will likely continue.

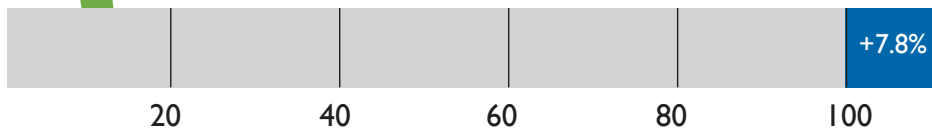
A GROWING PRIVATE RENTAL SECTOR...

with increasingly high rents and competition.

In South West
between
2019-2023



Rightmoves's Rental Price Tracker shows that rents in the South West have increased by **7.8%** in the last year alone.



The average new build market housing in the district is not affordable to a resident with **AVERAGE EARNINGS** of

£34,825

PER YEAR

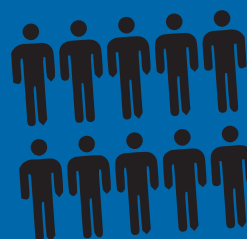
+1,500

more people now live in privately rented accommodation than in 2011.

This is being caused by a shortfall of supply and a surging demand.

There are now **10** tenants for every **1** available property nationally.

X 10 TENANTS



X 1 AVAILABLE PROPERTY

A CONTINUING NEED FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING



Approx, **2,500 households** are unable to afford market rented housing in Cotswold District and 4,800 households aspire to home ownership.



1,460

PEOPLE ARE ON COTSWOLD'S HOUSING WAITING LIST



There is a need for approximately **6,900 adapted homes** in Cotswold District between 2021 to 2041.



500

properties are overcrowded in the District

The average South West resident was paying an estimated

33%

of their basic pay on rent in 2022.



How we have responded so far?

A STRONG DELIVERY TRACK RECORD so far

 **6,277**

new homes in the district over the last ten years.

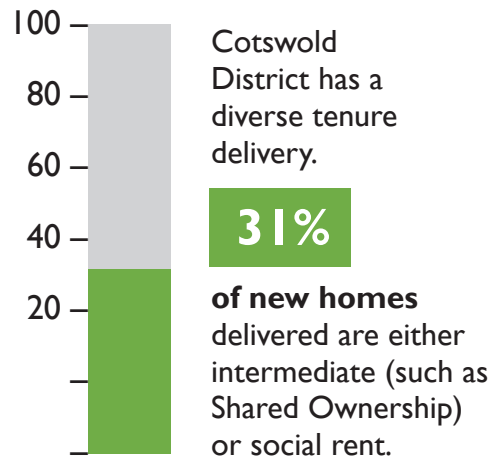
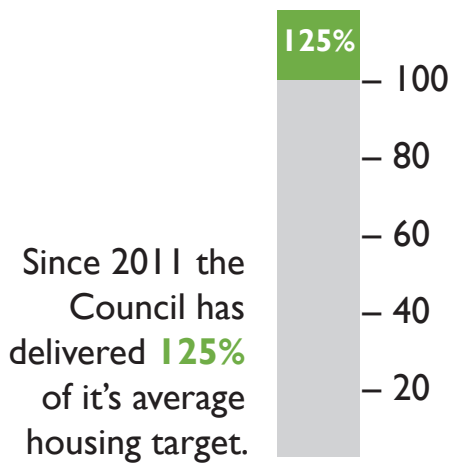
WHICH HAS UNLOCKED THOUSANDS of NEW AFFORDABLE HOMES...

1,972

AFFORDABLE HOMES

have been built since 2022.

This has secured homes for people on the waiting list.



The changing delivery context...

A CHALLENGING DELIVERY CONTEXT

FUEL PRICES

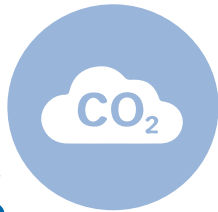
BUILD COSTS

FUEL POVERTY

**HOUSE PRICES
UNCERTAIN**

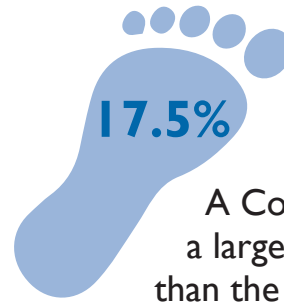
The vast majority of affordable homes have been delivered through Section 106 agreements with developers or by Registered Providers (such as Housing Associations)

The cost of tackling the climate emergency

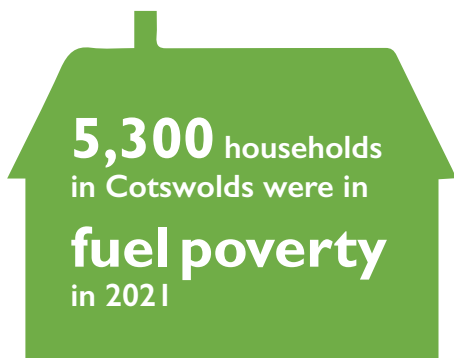


17%

of Cotswolds' CO₂ emissions are from domestic use



A Cotswold resident has a larger carbon footprint than the average UK resident



5,300 households in Cotswolds were in **fuel poverty** in 2021

Govt. research puts the **average cost to upgrade** each tenure type to an EPC band rating at

£7,600 Private Rented;

£6,000 Social Rented; and

£8,600 for owner-occupiers



Analysis shows estimated costs to upgrade all housing in the UK to EPC band C

= £156 billion



Our Housing Vision and Priorities

Priorities for 2024-2029

By 2050 everyone in Cotswold District will live in a healthy, affordable, low carbon home that meets their needs within a safe, sustainable and thriving community, which is accessible to all.

Priority 1: Planning for everyone's housing needs

Why? Everyone in Cotswold deserves to live in a suitable home. This requires having the right properties to meet individual needs in the right locations, with great infrastructure, services and support. Cotswold District has not only an ageing population, but an average house price on the open market of 16 times the average wage.

Priority 2: Delivering more affordable housing

Why? There are not enough affordable homes within our district. The high cost of buying or renting through the private market means that people need to pay a high proportion of their income towards housing costs. This is being compounded by the additional pressure of mounting bills and inflation, with experts predicting that this will result in higher levels of debt and homelessness.

The starkest issue affecting housing in our district is its deteriorating affordability. What this means in practice is that many people, particularly younger people and first time buyers, are unable to afford a home close to where they work, grew up or have a close connection to. This has an impact on the local economy and the viability of some services. Furthermore, it can lead to an increase in commuting from areas where housing is less expensive, which runs counter to our ambition – and indeed our national requirement – to tackle climate change and improve health and wellbeing.

Annex B further explores the causes of deteriorating housing affordability and affordable housing delivery in Cotswold District.

Priority 3: Sustainable, high quality and climate resilient homes

Why? Housing is responsible for about one quarter of the district's total greenhouse gas emissions², so it has a significant contribution to make in fulfilling our pledge to become carbon neutral by 2045. Good quality low carbon housing is essential for the health and wellbeing of residents, so it is vital that we work to ensure that existing homes are warm, safe, meet the needs of the occupants, are affordable to run, and are resilient to the impacts of climate change.

Priority 4: Thriving communities and neighbourhoods

Why? Everyday needs should be easily accessible within a short distance from home. This includes safe and equitable access to fresh groceries, nature, healthcare, jobs or workspaces and other essential services, facilities and infrastructure. It also means listening and working together with communities on things that matter to them and ensuring new development fits well and enhances existing communities and neighbourhoods.

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2020>

Good Housing Can



REDUCE INEQUALITIES



IMPROVE HEALTH & WELLBEING



HELP TO PREVENT CLIMATE CHANGE



BE AFFORDABLE



MEET THE HOUSEHOLD'S NEEDS



BE SAFE



BE ACCESSIBLE, OR CAN BE MADE ACCESSIBLE



BE PART OF A THRIVING AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY



HELP IMPROVE EDUCATION, SKILLS AND ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT



GIVE CHILDREN THE BEST START IN LIFE



ENABLE PEOPLE TO MEET THEIR FULL POTENTIAL



A Summary of our Housing Objectives

Each priority is supported by a series of objectives and each objective contains specific actions that we will carry out over the life of this plan to 2029.

PRIORITY 1: Planning for everyone's housing needs

- 1.1 Better understand and meet local housing need
- 1.2 Work in partnership to deliver identified needs
- 1.3 Support people to continue to live safely and independently
- 1.4 Support young people to get their first home

PRIORITY 2: Delivering more affordable housing

- 2.1 Update the Cotswold District Local Plan
- 2.2 Deliver affordable housing through Neighbourhood Plans
- 2.3 Deliver more affordable housing through the planning application process
- 2.4 Increase delivery of affordable housing in rural areas
- 2.5 Cirencester Town Centre Framework Master Plan

PRIORITY 3: Sustainable, high quality and climate resilient homes

- 3.1 Deliver low and zero carbon homes
- 3.2 Retrofit homes to enable carbon reduction and greater energy efficiency
- 3.3 Respond to the increasing cost of living
- 3.4 Increase the use of Modern Methods of Construction where appropriate

PRIORITY 4: Thriving communities and neighbourhoods

- 4.1 Neighbourhoods that people want to live in and where nature thrives
- 4.2 Ensure adequate infrastructure and access to amenities
- 4.3 Address challenges of second homes and short-term holiday lets
- 4.4 Improve private rented accommodation
- 4.5 Bring long-term empty homes back into use

Priority I: Planning for everyone's housing needs

Objectives

- 1.1 Better understand and meet local housing need
- 1.2 Work in partnership to deliver identified needs
- 1.3 Support people to live safely and independently
- 1.4 Support young people to get their first home



Everyone in Cotswold deserves to live in a suitable home. This requires having the right properties, locations, infrastructure, services and support. Whilst the affordability and accessibility of suitable local housing has declined over the past decades, for the majority of households, it is within their own means to choose where to purchase or rent their home, albeit to varying degrees.

The task for us is to make sure that homes are delivered, adapted and improved to ensure market supply that addresses all needs. There is a proportion of households who either do not have sufficient income or have a level of need, or both, and who are unable to make their own arrangements. This includes those who live in unsatisfactory housing conditions, have disabilities, insecure tenure, medical or welfare needs. We must ensure the provision of suitable housing for everyone.

Objective 1.1: Better understand and meet local housing need

What we will do:

- A. Undertake regular local housing needs assessments to inform our understanding of what is needed in the district, including the needs of specific groups, to inform policy and delivery.
- B. Support a programme of Parish Housing Needs Surveys in rural areas to inform proposals for parishes based on the identified local needs.
- C. Utilise our own internal data and intelligence and that of our partners to build on and improve our understanding of specific and localised housing needs.
- D. Actively allocate housing sites in the Council's updated Local Plan to meet identified needs.
- E. Ensure we provide a variety of house types and sizes to suit a range of households and income levels, particularly affordable housing.
- F. Support the delivery of different types of affordable housing, such as self & custom build and community-led housing schemes, to offer maximum choice for local people to meet their housing needs.
- G. Maintain the self-build register and work to develop a pipeline of plots for self-build and custom housebuilding, seeking a proportion from residential developments.



Why is this important?

Understanding housing needs is an essential part of planning for future housing requirements. The Council commissions various pieces of research to look at the housing need across the district, usually in partnership as housing markets tend to span more than one local authority area.

The research helps us understand the need and demand for different forms of housing including the need for affordable housing, giving us insights into the long term requirements for a whole range of households across all sectors. We also use our housing register Homeseeker Plus³ to give us additional information on local rented needs.

A list of data sources that have helped inform this strategy and provide information regarding housing needs can be found in Annex C. These needs are then translated into the Local Plan, which either specifically allocates sites for development or sets criteria in policies to support the planning application process.

Local Housing Needs Assessment

The six Gloucestershire district and borough councils published a jointly commissioned [Local Housing Needs Assessment \(LHNA\)](#)⁴ in 2020. The survey data gives a picture of the current and future need for different types, tenures and sizes of affordable homes in the district, including households aspiring to affordable home ownership. The LHNA also assesses the needs of different groups, such as older and younger people, people with disabilities as well as a range of other groups that may need specific types of accommodation. This survey ensures we have a good understanding of what might be required in future and can shape policies and delivery to meet this need. The current LNHA is due for renewal in 2024.

Parish Housing Needs Surveys

Different measures of assessing local housing needs can provide different perspectives on the extent and nature of housing requirements in an area. Affordable rural housing should be tailored to its community and environment.

Local evidence, including Parish Housing Needs Surveys and information from the Council's housing register, will indicate the number and type of affordable homes that are required in a parish. Parish Housing Needs Surveys consider all types of housing, from rent to self-build, both affordable and market.

A Parish Housing Needs Survey is also an opportunity to consult with the local community and may help in land coming forward. Proposals can then be drawn up individually for each parish based on the identified local needs. In some circumstances local market housing can also be provided.

³ <https://www.homeseekerplus.co.uk/choice>

⁴ [Gloucestershire Local Housing Needs Assessment \(ORS, September 2020\)](#)

Community-led housing schemes

Community-led housing schemes deliver new homes that will be owned or managed by the community. Developments can be for the benefit of the local community, a specific group of people, or both. It can be a new build or refurbishment, in a rural area or a town. This is considered an alternative to developer-led housing through empowering community groups to meet their own housing needs

There are many different types and organisations involved in community-led housing including Community Land Trusts, Co-housing and housing co-operatives. This can be in partnership with a Housing Association, private land owner, a parish council or a developer.

The Council is supportive of the Community-led Housing approach and will continue to work with local groups and the Rural Housing Enabler through the work of the Housing Strategy team.

The Community Led Homes website⁵ has a comprehensive list of funding sources for Community-led housing. The Council also has a small amount of funding to support groups in the Cotswolds with their Community-led housing projects. There are two grants available; the start-up grant of up to £1,000, for groups to become established in their community and incorporate into a formal organisation and a pre-development grant (up to £10,000) for established groups who are progressing their housing project to planning application stage. Please email the Housing Strategy team on housing.strategy@cotswold.gov.uk

Self build register

The Council has a duty to deliver self and custom build plots through the Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended by the Housing and Planning Act 2016). Self-build and custom-built homes could be a route for some to get onto the property ladder and for others to build their ideal home.

The Council maintains a self build register....(reference CDC Self build paper here)

The Council's Local Plan requires proposals of more than 20 dwellings to provide 5% of dwelling plots for sale as serviced self or custom build plots unless it can be demonstrated that there is a higher or lower demand for plots.⁶

⁵ <https://www.communityledhomes.org.uk/>

⁶ Cotswold District Local Plan - policy H1: Housing mix and tenure to meet local needs <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/k2kjqv3b/cotswold-district-local-plan-2011-2031-adopted-3-august-2018-web-version.pdf>

Objective 1.2 Work in partnership to deliver identified needs

What we will do

- A. Continue to work in partnership with Registered Providers, local landowners and private developers and public sector organisations to enable the delivery of specific housing needs and maximise affordable housing.
- B. Work with our affordable housing delivery partners on the regeneration of sub-standard affordable housing stock. Through this process, we will seek to deliver more social rented homes and increase the number of affordable homes on the renewal sites where this is feasible.
- C. Consider working with local community-led housing organisations and partner organisations to bring forward community led housing and rural housing schemes to give choice and empowerment at a local level.

Using Council Assets and Investments

- D. Consider using assets to support delivery of social rented, carbon zero priorities where a solid business case exists and need can be established, rather than subsidy through private housing.
- E. Identify a pipeline of sites to be delivered through the collaboration agreement with Bromford Housing Group.
- F. Review and prioritise Council owned sites to enable further reports to be brought forward for decision on:
 - i. Council owned sites suitable for development in line with the Affordable Housing Delivery Strategy; and
 - ii. Council owned sites suitable for disposal as open market sites/ plots or self build plots (as appropriate), with capital receipts earmarked for re-investment in affordable housing delivery.
- G. Acquire / develop accommodation where:
 - i. The development will be financially sustainable not relying solely on subsidy from s106 funding / contributions or any Council annual subsidy.
 - ii. It is understood that cross subsidy in the form of private housing for sale or rent may be necessary and acceptable to ensure financial viability of the development as a whole.
 - iii. The level of cross subsidy required from either private housing or Affordable Home Ownership tenure types will be considered on a case by case basis due to variations in costs etc due to site constraints and risks.
- H. Progress planning applications for the development of Council-owned sites that are allocated in the Local Plan.
- I. Consider the use of grant funding to deliver additional social rented homes and affordable homes, above the planning policy threshold, on new development sites.

Why is this important?

Partnership working has been a major success in boosting the supply of affordable housing in the district.

The Council is developing options to ensure the Council's ambitions to provide good quality, well designed, net carbon zero homes are delivered through partnership collaboration agreements, initially with Bromford Housing Association. This partnership will support shared learning in the delivery of innovative housing development, seeking to demonstrate to developers that net carbon zero affordable homes can be financially viable. The first scheme being delivered through this collaboration agreement is at Broadleaze, Down Ampney, where early engagement and thorough consultation with local people has been key to the development of proposals.

In recent years, we have developed excellent partnership arrangements with several housing associations, including Bromford, Cirencester Housing and Cottsway. This has helped deliver 100% affordable housing developments and renewal schemes across the district with more on the way.

The Council's Climate Emergency⁷ declaration and our Corporate Plan aim to deliver more affordable housing, reduce household bills and improve peoples' health and wellbeing. This ambition aligns with that of our partner housing associations, who want to have healthy and happy customers by providing them with high quality accommodation that is efficient to run.

The Council's corporate strategy to deliver more affordable homes has helped to boost delivery and will continue to do so. 100% affordable and renewal schemes that have been, or are set to be delivered are outlined in Annex D.

Using grant funds to deliver more affordable housing

The Council has often supported housing associations to use grant funding, typically from Homes England or from affordable housing commuted sums held by Cotswold District Council. This includes buying market homes from developers for affordable housing and grant funding additional affordable homes, above the planning policy threshold on new development sites.

Committed Sums are 'off-site' financial contributions in lieu of affordable housing, provided by developers in exceptional circumstances where affordable housing is not provided on site. In these circumstances developers are required to pay a commuted sum to the Council which is then used to fund affordable housing delivery elsewhere in the district.

In August 2022, the Council sold The Cotswold Club in Cirencester to invest in more net zero affordable housing⁸. This is a further commitment from the Council to boost the delivery of affordable housing through the realisation of its assets.

⁷ <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/environment/climate-action/cotswold-climate-and-ecological-emergencies/>

⁸ <https://news.cotswold.gov.uk/news/cotswold-district-council-sells-the-cotswold-club-to-invest-in-more-net-zero-affordable-housing>

The basis of our partnership working arrangements

We will continue to increase the provision of social and affordable housing by developing schemes that have a solid business case and that meet the needs of local people. We will seek to deliver provision of:

- Good quality housing for rent.
- Housing that is affordable over its whole life cost, both rent and running costs.
- Build housing that is net zero carbon over its lifetime.
- Affordable housing that is available in perpetuity, where possible, supporting the well-being of the residents and the local communities.
- Housing stock needs to be more accessible and adaptable⁹ to allow people to stay in their homes longer and meet an individual's changing needs over their life.
- Homes that support diverse and inclusive communities and provide housing, where there are specific needs for: Older people; Young people; Military veterans; and Families.
- Encourage innovative carbon zero or low carbon affordable housing which utilises local trades and therefore supports the local economy.

⁹ Access to and use of buildings: Approved Document M <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-and-use-of-buildings-approved-document-m>

Objective 1.3: Support people to live safely and independently

What we will do

- A. Ensure new homes are adaptable for a variety of potential users using “inclusive design principles” and minimum space standards.
- B. As part of the Local Plan update consider opportunities to:
 - i. prevent smaller properties being demolished and recognise the importance that smaller properties, including bungalows, can play in providing opportunities to first time buyers and renters and downsize.
 - ii. require the delivery of accessible and smaller sized house types, which are typically cheaper to run to accommodate our ageing population and increase the availability of family sized homes.
- C. Provide innovative solutions with our partners to support people in our community to remain living independently for as long as possible.
- D. Work with housing providers, Gloucestershire County Council and public health organisations to reduce the number of instances of adaptations being removed and sent to landfill.
- E. Explore opportunities for intergenerational housing schemes or other new models which combine care and support within the setting.
- F. Work to fulfil our duties outlined in the [Disabled Facilities Grant Policy](#).

Why is this important?

A suitable home can help disabled people of all ages to build and sustain their independence and maintain connections in their community. Many older and disabled people live in homes that are poorly designed for older age or changes in care needs. This makes it difficult for them to do everyday tasks or get out and about easily. Home adaptations give people the choice to continue living independently and safely in their own homes for longer, reducing delays in hospital discharge and preventing premature moves to residential care.

The provision of dedicated older person housing will form an important part of the overall housing mix. The identified need for additional three and four-bedroom homes could be reduced if more of the existing stock could be released by providing suitable housing in the community which older people find desirable and suitable to live in as they age.

Improvements need to be made both in terms of data collection but also the sharing of information between housing associations, local authorities and health organisations, specifically in relation to homes with existing adaptations. Existing policies can lead to unintended consequences such as existing adaptations having to be removed and thrown away once the current user no longer requires them. This creates an unnecessary financial and environmental burden. Improved intelligence and data sharing will help to ensure housing stock is being used efficiently and reduce instances of adaptation being removed. Where adaptations have to be removed opportunities should be explored to improve the reuse and recycling of adaptations.

Disabled Facilities Grants

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) are capital grants funded through the Better Care Fund (BCF) programme to support local systems to successfully deliver the integration of health and social care in a way that supports person-centred care, sustainability and better outcomes for people and carers.

DFGs are available to people of all ages and in all housing tenures (i.e. whether renting privately, from a social landlord or council, or owner-occupiers) to contribute to the cost of adaptations. They are administered by local housing authorities in England and enable eligible disabled people to continue living safely and independently at home. This includes autistic people, those with a mental health condition, physical disabilities, learning disabilities, cognitive impairments such as dementia, and progressive conditions such as Motor Neurone Disease. It includes those suffering from age-related disabilities and can also include those with terminal illness. DFGs are a support measure that a local authority can use to help enable people to live independently and safely at home and in their communities.

Cotswold District Council, in its role as a local housing authority, is under a statutory duty by virtue of the provisions of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 to provide DFGs for private sector and housing association residential adaptations where the appropriate legislative conditions are met.

Objective 1.4: Support young people to access housing

What we will do

- A. Investigate a First Homes policy, with greater discounts to address the local gap in affordable homeownership prices and lower wages
- B. Continue to support the use of a range of affordable home ownership products, such as Help to Buy, shared ownership and shared equity, to assist local people into home ownership.

Why is this important?

Many of the actions within this strategy will go a long way to benefit young people. This part of the Strategy considers further actions that we can do specifically to support young people to afford a home in our district.

First Homes

Specific actions that can support young people to afford a home in our district could include the recently introduced First Homes¹⁰, which aims to help first time buyers onto the housing ladder by offering discounts of 30% and up to 50%, on new build properties. This discount is retained in perpetuity for future buyers of the property.

National policy now enables us to include a policy in our Local Plan, which will help to deliver entry-level exception sites, suitable for first time buyers or those looking to rent their first home. National policy has strict criteria that entry level exception sites must accord with.

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/first-homes-scheme>

Priority 2: Increase the supply of affordable housing

Objectives

- 2.1 Update the Cotswold District Local Plan
- 2.2 Deliver affordable housing through Neighbourhood Plans
- 2.3 Deliver more affordable housing through the Planning Application process
- 2.4 Increase delivery of affordable housing in rural areas
- 2.5 Cirencester Town Centre Framework Master Plan



There are not enough affordable homes within our district. The high cost of buying or renting through the private market means that people need to pay a high proportion of their income towards housing costs. With the additional pressure of mounting bills and inflation, this is becoming increasingly difficult, with experts predicting that this will result in higher levels of debt and homelessness.

Objective 2.1: Update the Cotswold District Local Plan

What we will do

- A. Examine the housing requirement (the overall housing target) within the adopted Local Plan.
- B. Update Local Plan policies, with the specific aim of delivering more affordable, in particular social rented, homes. For example:
 - i. allocate further sites in the Local Plan and give greater preference in the site selection process to sites that commit to delivering higher levels of affordable housing or higher levels of social rented housing;
 - ii. test the viability of returning to a historic policy that delivered 50% affordable on sites or a greater focus on the delivery of more social rented homes.
- C. Continue to investigate innovative ways of delivering additional affordable housing.

Why is this important?

The Local Plan is one of the most powerful tools at the Council's disposal, which can be used to boost the delivery of affordable housing. We are currently undertaking a partial update of our adopted Local Plan. One of the principal objectives is to boost the delivery of genuinely affordable housing, particularly social rented housing.

The adopted Local Plan has a requirement for a minimum of 8,400 homes over the period 2011 to 2031 (an average of 420 homes a year). It allocates sites across the district to deliver the housing requirement and has an affordable housing strategy, part of which requires the delivery of 30% affordable housing on qualifying brownfield sites and 40% affordable housing on qualifying greenfield sites. To date, this has been effective in delivering a large number of affordable homes across the district.



Evidence of local housing needs

The Council has reviewed its adopted housing requirement to understand whether it should be updated to reflect the current calculation of the number of homes that are needed over the Local Plan period. This is available to download on the Council's website at the following [link](#). The Review found that the adopted housing requirement does not need to be updated.

Between 2011 and 2023, the district had already delivered nearly 6,300 homes, around 2,000 of which were affordable homes. It is currently expected that over 3,700 further homes will be delivered up to 2031, taking the total up to over 10,000 homes. A large proportion of these homes will be affordable homes.

We do not believe that flooding the district with open market housing developments is the answer to tackling the housing affordability issue. The right types, tenures and sizes of homes are needed in the right locations. Furthermore, housing affordability needs to be considered comprehensively alongside the various other issues considered in this strategy.

Translating the housing need into a housing requirement

The Council's review of its housing requirement assessed various matters that contribute towards determining whether the Local Plan housing requirement should be higher, lower or the same as the district's housing need. For example, the Local Plan housing requirement may be increased above the housing need in order to deliver more affordable housing. The protection and enhancement of the district's high quality built and natural environments is also a key consideration.

A balance has to be struck between delivering more housing, whilst at the same time protecting the things that make Cotswold District so special. We have to be smart by maximising affordable housing delivery where we can whilst also delivering sustainable development.

Whilst the review found that the housing requirement does not currently need to be updated, which will continue monitor the situation to check whether this continues to be the case.

Allocating additional land for development

If the Local Plan housing requirement needs to be updated in future, we would have to allocate additional sites to deliver that requirement. We would use a range of criteria to help us choose the sites to allocate in the Local Plan and as part of this process we could give more preference to sites that are able to deliver more affordable housing. Additionally, we could give preference to sites with the best accessibility to services, facilities and employment.

Updated national policy

Since the Local Plan was adopted, the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance has been updated. New policies have been introduced and some existing policies have been altered, which now enable the Council to update the Local Plan policies to deliver more affordable homes. For example, lower site size thresholds can be set for requiring affordable housing. There are also some subtle changes that can be made to policies that will deliver more affordable homes, such as calculating the affordable housing requirement based on the gross rather than net number of homes being developed.

Vacant Building Credit

To support the re-use of brownfield land, where vacant buildings are being reused or redeveloped, national policy allows any affordable housing contributions due to be reduced by a proportionate amount. This should be equivalent to the existing gross floorspace of the existing buildings and does not apply to vacant buildings which have been abandoned.

National policy is not clear on what defines 'vacant'. Furthermore, unlike some local authorities, the Council does not have a Vacant Building Credit policy that would otherwise provide this clarity. Consequently, a lot of affordable homes that could potentially be required are being lost.



Objective 2.2: Deliver affordable housing through Neighbourhood Plans

What we will do

- A. Support the adoption of Neighbourhood Development Plans in our district and local aspirations to address issues including an increase in the supply of affordable housing for existing and future generations.
- B. Support Town and Parish Councils to deliver affordable housing through their share of the Community Infrastructure Levy.
- C. Consider focusing the spend of commuted sums to deliver affordable housing projects in Neighbourhood Planning Areas that wish to deliver affordable homes.

Why is this important?

Neighbourhood Plans are a well-established part of the plan making process in England. Cotswold District has seven made plans¹¹ and 12 plans in various stages of preparation¹². They are mostly prepared by town and parish councils and generally align with the plan period set out in the Local Plan i.e. to 2031. We know that some of our town and parish councils and neighbourhood planning groups have identified the need for affordable housing in their neighbourhood areas. However, land availability and site constraints make it difficult to do so. In early 2023, two Neighbourhood Plan areas are actively identifying additional land for new homes – Fairford and Stow-on-the-Wold - detailed in Annex E.

This objective should also be seen within the context of objective 1.1 which seeks to offer more support to those Town and Parish Councils wishing to deliver additional affordable housing through the preparation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

¹¹ Made plans as listed on the [Cotswold District website](#) at time of publication.

¹² Emerging plans as listed on the [Cotswold District website](#) at time of publication.

Objective 2.3: Deliver more affordable housing through the Planning Application process

What we will do

- A. Provide a high level assessment of potential affordable housing development sites in our Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment.
- B. Actively challenge those avoiding their obligation to contribute towards the supply of affordable housing.
- C. Consider prioritising planning applications that seek to deliver social rented housing.
- D. Deliver affordable housing through planning obligations to the following standards:
 - i. Nationally Described Space Standards;
 - ii. M4(2) (accessible housing);
 - iii. Secured by Design (Silver); and
 - iv. a proportion of the affordable housing will be built to M4(3) standard (wheelchair adaptable housing).

Why is this important?

We understand that bringing forward an affordable housing development can entail some uncertainty in terms of whether a site is suitable for development and what is needed to obtain planning permission. We're keen to remove as much of this uncertainty as possible and make it easy, convenient and quick for anyone wishing to bring forward an affordable housing development to do so.



Objective 2.4: Increase delivery of affordable housing in rural areas

What we will do

- A. Continue to support Gloucestershire Rural Housing Partnership and the Rural Housing Enabler.
- B. Consider applying to the Secretary of State to designate the part of the district that is not within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and not within the development boundaries of Cirencester, Fairford, Moreton-in-Marsh and South Cerney as a rural area.
- C. As part of the Local Plan update, propose to reduce the site size threshold where affordable housing would be required in designated areas from 6 to 10 dwellings to 3 to 9 dwellings.

Why is this important?

Affordable housing can make a huge contribution to a rural parish as it not only meets the housing needs of local people but can help maintain local services and amenities such as a local school, village shop or post office. It may also help maintain the social balance and social networks within the parish.

About 40% of the district's population lives in rural locations. Whilst the adopted Local Plan concentrates on directing development towards the 17 most sustainable settlements, this does not mean that rural housing needs beyond those towns and villages will not be met. In addition to small-scale housing development allowed in rural settlements under Policy DS3, Rural Exception Schemes will be encouraged under Policy H3 where there is a proven unmet need for affordable housing.

To help community resilience and sustainability, and increase the affordable rural housing stock, Policy H3 also promotes a 'self-help' scheme where qualifying people can find and build their own affordable home on single plot exception sites.

To support delivery of rural housing in the district, we work with the Gloucestershire Rural Housing Partnership (GRHP). Members are local authorities and housing associations as well as host Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC). Cotswold District Council alongside the partners of the GRHP provides funding for Gloucestershire's Rural Housing Enabler. Working in local communities, GRHP helps to identify unmet housing needs in rural areas and promote opportunities for rural housing development.

Rural Exception Sites

Most affordable housing developed in rural parishes is located on Rural Exception Sites. These are sites within or adjacent to a rural settlement where market housing would not normally be acceptable. Housing development is permitted on these sites as an exception to planning policy though all the other usual planning criteria must be met.

The housing must be affordable housing for local people and remain so in perpetuity. Annex D highlights some of the rural schemes that have been developed as a result of our work with the Gloucestershire Housing Partnership and the Rural Housing Enabler.

Designated Rural Areas

National policy draws a distinction between affordable housing requirements inside and outside designated rural areas. Local plans can include a lower affordable housing requirement inside designated rural areas.

In Cotswold District, 80% of the district is located inside the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (the AONB) and is therefore already designated as a rural area.

The Local Plan requires affordable housing contributions on developments of:

- 6 to 10 dwellings (net) in designated rural areas; and
- 11 or more new dwellings (net) in all other parts of the district.

The ongoing partial update of the Local Plan proposes to lower the site size where affordable housing is required in designated rural areas from 6 to 10 dwellings down to 3 to 9 dwellings. The Council can also apply to the Secretary of State for other parts of the district to be designated as a rural area. This can be done independently and ahead of the ongoing partial update to the Local Plan. We have assessed the 20% of the district that is not within the AONB and have found that the entire area is suitable to become a designated rural area, with the exception of the area inside the development boundaries of Cirencester, Fairford, Moreton-in-Marsh and South Cerney.

Designating additional land as a rural area would mean that development sites of 6 to 10 dwellings in that area would need to contribute financially towards affordable housing. This could help to deliver more affordable homes as a result. Furthermore, if the proposal to reduce the affordable housing requirement in designated rural areas to 3 to 9 dwellings is adopted, it would help to deliver even more affordable homes in those areas.

Objective 2.5: Cirencester Town Centre Framework Master Plan

What we will do

- A) Identify opportunities to increase the supply of affordable housing in Cirencester town centre.

Why is this important?

Cirencester Neighbourhood Plan and Cirencester Town Centre Master Plan

We are working with Cirencester Town Council and its emerging Neighbourhood Plan to prepare a plan for Cirencester Town Centre and the wider Town. This is an ambitious undertaking but it has been a fantastic example of community-led town planning. The Town Council is leading the delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan¹³ and we are leading on the Town Centre Master Plan but in truth we are supporting one another to deliver a coordinated and seamless plan for Cirencester.

The Town Centre Master Plan is intended to serve as an urban design framework for the town centre. It is a visionary document that will fulfil a number of functions, including those described in summary below. It will:

- describe and illustrate how planning and design policies and principles should be implemented across Cirencester town centre;
- include a vision and development objectives for the town centre as a whole, establishing a context for proposed and potential interventions, including the delivery of new housing.
- take opportunities to progress our priority to respond to the challenge posed by climate change, ensuring all development proposals and principles in Cirencester work towards the target of achieving Net Zero carbon emissions across all sectors by 2045;
- identify potential areas of change within the town centre, including the delivery of new housing.
- Coordinate the phased delivery of more detailed development briefs for specific sites within the town centre, as and when the need for them arises.

The following image shows the opportunity areas for regeneration within the Town Centre.

¹³ <https://cirencesternp.org/>

Opportunity sites



PRIORITY 3: Sustainable, high quality and climate resilient homes

Objectives

- 3.1 Deliver low and zero carbon homes
- 3.2 Retrofit homes to enable carbon reduction and greater energy efficiency
- 3.3 Respond to the increasing cost of living
- 3.4 Increase the use of Modern Methods of Construction where appropriate



Housing is responsible for about one quarter of the district's total greenhouse gas emissions¹⁴, so has a significant contribution to make in fulfilling our pledge to become carbon neutral by 2045. More than 80% of the UK housing stock projected for 2045 already exists, which is why we have made improving (retrofitting) existing housing stock a priority.

Good quality low carbon housing is essential for the health and wellbeing of residents, so it is vital that we work to ensure that existing homes are warm, safe, meet the needs of the occupants, are affordable to run, and are resilient to the impacts of climate change.

Objective 3.1: Deliver low and zero carbon homes

What we will do

- A. Update the Local Plan and Cotswold Design Code to require improved construction, energy and thermal standards of new homes and consider embedding the Town and Country Planning Association's Healthy Homes Act Campaign¹⁵.
- B. Deliver built examples of the application of the Council's Net Carbon Zero Toolkit, such as the Broadleaze development at Down Ampney, to showcase to developers.
- C. Work with private landlords to incentivise them to provide better insulation and energy efficiency measures in their properties and make it as easy as possible for them to do so.
- D. Adopt a comprehensive sustainability checklist in order that the Council's development planning officers can support developers to achieve the highest practicable sustainability.

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2020>

¹⁵ <https://tcpa.org.uk/collection/the-healthy-homes-act/>



Why is this important?

Good, well-designed and constructed housing is critical in mitigating the risks that climate change poses in the UK. Studies have shown that in the UK we tend to spend about 90% - 95% of our time indoors, and that about 66% of that indoor time is at home. UK climate change could amplify existing health risks related to building overheating, indoor air pollution, flood damage and biological contamination. New buildings should therefore be designed to address these potential health effects, but also to minimise the use of fossil fuels, which contribute to both climate change and poor air quality. New buildings should also make more use of low carbon energy sources and can incorporate technologies that help reduce energy use, and therefore the impact of the built environment on our climate.

Whilst low or net carbon zero housing was once experimental and challenging, there are now many examples of developments of every scale where the net carbon zero design and build process has been mainstreamed, with very beneficial results to owners or tenants. The delivery of net carbon zero or low carbon housing would not only contribute to the Council's carbon reduction targets but would also reduce the running costs of the home, which will benefit occupants and contribute to a reduction in fuel poverty. This is particularly important in the context of the cost of living crisis.

The design and provision of zero carbon housing is something that needs to be developed further. Whilst local Housing Associations wish to embrace this provision, it is new for them and comes with risk.

To fully embed zero carbon delivery of social rented and affordable properties, all projects need to be considered from the outset to ensure carbon reduction is maximised at the pre-planning stage so that factors such as orientation can be designed in. Specialist designers/ advisers will need to be engaged on all projects to provide this support and ensure opportunities to utilise new and innovative technologies are maximised.

The Council's Climate Change Emergency declaration and our Corporate Plan¹⁶ aim to deliver more genuinely affordable housing, reduce household bills and improve peoples' health and wellbeing. This ambition aligns with that of our partner housing associations, who want to have healthy and happy customers by providing them with high quality accommodation that is efficient to run.

The Council will work with registered providers to seek exemplar small schemes, which can be used to trial zero carbon and alternative methods of constructions. In considering refurbishment of existing properties carbon emissions will be reduced as far possible taking into consideration constraints, options and costs.

Down Ampney

In Down Ampney, we have entered into a partnership with Bromford Housing Association to provide residents with local affordable homes¹⁷. The development will look to use new technology to reduce the carbon footprint of the homes and their electricity needs, making them more affordable for tenants. Residents will be given the opportunity to input into the design of the homes.

We aim to make these homes truly affordable to buy, cheaper to run and cause much less damage to the environment - tackling two of the key issues for the Cotswolds - the lack of affordable homes and responding to the climate emergency. We will be using land owned by the Council to build these homes and set a much higher standard than what we see from many housing developers. We hope this example will drive higher standards across the Cotswolds by showing what is possible.

¹⁶ [Cotswold District Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024](#) – see pages 9-10

¹⁷ <https://news.cotswold.gov.uk/news/cotswold-district-council-and-bromford-form-a-ground-breaking-partnership-to-deliver-more-affordable-low-carbon-homes-for-cotswold-people>

Objective 3.2: Retrofit homes to enable carbon reduction and greater energy efficiency

What we will do

- A) Work with registered provider partners to upgrade poorly performing properties.
- B) Lobby government at a local and regional level to influence future policy, strategy and funding.
- C) Seek funding where possible to enable more retrofit in the district, including boosting resilience to direct climate impacts such as overheating.
- D) Update the Climate Emergency Action Plan and work with partners in the county and the region to take forward and develop innovations to support domestic retrofit.
- E) Consider working in partnership with a Social Enterprise Lender to provide loans to enable people to improve insulation and upgrade heating systems including renewable technology.
- F) Signpost homeowners to sources of advice in the pre-application (and early stages) of the planning application process e.g. further promote the Council's Net Carbon Zero Toolkit to enable homeowners to best retrofit their homes.
- G) Work with expert external partners to improve the quality of retrofit advice to occupants of older and solid stone walled properties typical of the Cotswolds.

Why is this important?

Retrofitting existing housing stock to bring it up to a near-net zero carbon standard is a key requirement for the district.

Emissions from buildings (that is, principally, heating) has barely dropped in 30 years - energy efficiency of the UK's housing stock is generally poor, and improving household energy efficiency (whilst being vital, and bringing dramatically lower energy bills to householders) will be expensive and disruptive, requiring, e.g., the replacement of gas boilers by high efficiency electric heating, and increasing insulation.

Impacts from hot weather are already being felt in the UK - the ONS estimates excess mortality of around 2,800 from the summer 2022 high heat periods¹⁸. Government climate advisers warn that, without adaptation, increasingly hot summers could triple existing health, wellbeing and productivity impacts¹⁹. However, many effective strategies exist to limit these impacts, relating both to new build and retrofitting.

¹⁸ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/articles/excessmortalityduringheatperiods/englandandwales|june31august2022>

¹⁹ <https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Risks-to-health-wellbeing-and-productivity-from-overheating-in-buildings.pdf>

Direct climate impacts in the form of pluvial (run-off) flooding from intense rainfall events are increasing, and can directly affect existing homes. The Environment Agency estimated in 2018 that three million properties in England are susceptible, greater in number than those at risk of fluvial (river level) and coastal flooding²⁰ but that number will increase as the climate continues to destabilise. Pluvial flood resistance and resilience measures can be retrofitted where buildings are at risk, principally in urban areas.

The Council may be able to support homeowners to access government support for energy retrofit actions by quality assuring and signposting homeowners to sources of advice.

Further commentary on retrofitting can be found in the Council's Climate Emergency Strategy 2020 to 2030, specifically section 13.4.2²¹. Also the Council's Issues and Options local plan consultation (2022)²² provides further commentary on retrofitting buildings within the context of the Local Plan.

20 <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/surface-water-the-biggest-flood-risk-of-all>

21 https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/8d8eab9716634de/cdc-climate-emergency-strategy-adopted-2020_09_23.pdf

22 <https://issuesandoptions.commonplace.is/en-GB/proposals/aaresponding-to-the-climate-crisis/step1>



Objective 3.3: Respond to the increasing cost of living

What we will do

- A) Reducing household bills by:
 - i) requiring new homes to be highly energy efficient so they are cool in summer and warm in winter;
 - ii) supporting existing homeowners and landlords to retrofit homes with insulation and other energy saving measures; and
 - iii) ensuring new homes include rainwater attenuation systems, such as ponds, tanks and water butts, so that occupants can make use of free rainwater and 'grey water' for toilets, gardens and other similar uses.
- B) Reducing food costs by creating spaces for people to grow their own food.
- C) Target and support/enforce the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) in the private rented sector.
- D) Tackle fuel poverty through our Warm and Well Scheme delivered in partnership with the Gloucestershire Authorities through energy advice and support, insulation and heating grants and loans.
- E) Work with partners to obtain more detailed information on the cost of living crisis and its impact on those living in social housing.

Why is this important?

In July 2022, Cotswold District Council declared a cost of living emergency, as we are extremely concerned how surging energy and food prices are already exacerbating poverty in the area and the impact further price rises will have on already struggling families. According to the latest figures, one in five children in the Cotswold is in poverty.

Reducing the requirement for heating homes in winter, cooling homes in the summer and reducing the consumption of mains water makes financial and environmental sense. Reducing the cost of household bills will also make a positive contribution to people's health and wellbeing and their ability to actively participate in local activities. This is essential to enable people to remain fit and able to work, which links back to people being able to afford a home.

The Council will encourage new developments to provide spaces for more allotments, community grow spaces and require gardens within new developments to have features that enable people to grow their own food and sufficient storage to accommodate necessary tools and equipment.

There are various grants available to those in need, including:

- the Gloucestershire Welfare Support Scheme²³;
- Household Support Fund²⁴; and
- Council led grants such as the warm and well grant, relocation grants, disabled facilities grants²⁵.

²³ <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/gloucestershire-welfare-support-scheme/>

²⁴ <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/gloucestershire-welfare-support-scheme/household-support-fund-find-out-more-and-apply/>

²⁵ <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/housing/private-housing/housing-grants/>

Objective 3.4: Increase the use of Modern Methods of Construction where appropriate

What we will do

- A. Lobby suppliers and government at a local and regional level to influence future policy, strategy, and funding streams to enable the development of Modern Methods of Construction products that comply with our policies
- B. Encourage the use of appropriate Modern Methods of Construction products on developments where it can actively accelerate the delivery of housing and diversify the market without affecting the delivery of the other objectives of this strategy.

Why is this important?

Modern methods of construction - also known as MMC or 'smart construction' is a fast way of delivering new buildings, by maximising the efficiency of material and human resources. RICS²⁶ recognises that the UK construction sector is struggling to meet growing demand, with issues such as supply and demand imbalances contributing to unaffordability and in extremes, homelessness.

MMC is capable of delivering more consistent low-carbon, low-energy performance in finished buildings since most of the construction phase takes place off-site in factory conditions, enabling better quality control over energy-critical aspects such as air tightness and insulation.

MMC is seriously being considered by the government in helping to rapidly increase the supply of housing and address skill shortages and import costs. RICS explains there is an identified skills crisis in mainstream construction, which will likely result in a decrease of 20-25% in the workforce over the next decade. The workforce is ageing, and the rate of new entrants is lagging behind those leaving. They explain that this is likely to be exacerbated by Brexit as one in eight UK construction workers are foreign. In addition, the weakening pound has increased the cost of imported materials, with some 20% of bricks and brickmaking components imported, mostly from the EU. Rapidly rising energy costs coupled with the high levels of energy consumed in making bricks amplify the need to consider MMC.

²⁶ Modern Methods of Construction A forward-thinking solution to the housing crisis? <https://www.rics.org/globalassets/rics-website/media/news/news--opinion/modern-methods-of-construction-paper-rics.pdf>

PRIORITY 4: Thriving communities and neighbourhoods

Objectives

- 4.1 Neighbourhoods that people want to live in and where nature thrives
- 4.2 Ensure adequate infrastructure and access to everyday amenities
- 4.3 Address challenges of second homes and short-term holiday lets
- 4.4 Improve private rented accommodation
- 4.5 Bring long-term empty homes back into use



This priority is about focussing on the wider context ensuring everyday needs are accessible within a short distance from home and focussing on specific matters to support, grow and create new thriving communities and neighbourhoods.

Objective 4.1: Neighbourhoods that people want to live in and where nature thrives

What we will do

- A. Ensure partnership working delivers the vision, aim and objectives of the Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Strategy and is integrated within the updated Local Plan.
- B. Consider encouraging developers to follow and adopt the Building for Life standard for well designed homes.
- C. Provide a variety of house types and sizes to suit all households and income levels.
- D. New developments to deliver principles and objectives of the Cotswold District Green Infrastructure Strategy and support wider nature recovery.
- E. Improving the ability of local communities to have a say in the Local Plan making process.
- F. Consider the needs of children in the plan making process.
- G. Work with partners, including The Steadings Community Management Trust, to create a thriving new community at The Steadings, Cirencester.



Why is this important?

We aim to promote an inclusive and integrated society, where development enhances people and nature to thrive.

It is important that our housing strategy aligns with the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy²⁷, which aims to improve the lives of people in Gloucestershire. Their vision is that Gloucestershire is a place where everyone can live well, be healthy and thrive - housing is a core component of their vision.

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy recognises the importance of accessing Green Infrastructure and work undertaken by Wildlife Trusts have shown the significant nature-based interventions to treat diagnosed illnesses in the UK²⁸. The Council has committed to updating its Green Infrastructure Strategy and this will influence the design of future developments in the district. It will help to guide new developments to actively contribute to nature's protection, and help improve connectivity to drive a healthier and more biodiversity rich towns, villages and countryside. The Town and Country Planning Association have provided a useful summary of what Green Infrastructure is on its website.²⁹

The largest and most significant new community that will be created during the 2020s will be The Steadings, Cirencester. This will be a new community on the edge of Cirencester consisting of 2,350 new homes as well as land for employment, retail and community infrastructure. The Council is working with The Steadings Community Management Trust and other partners to deliver on the goal to build a strong, healthy and cohesive community, encouraging a green lifestyle that will support a healthier future.³⁰

We will examine opportunities to update the Local plan to reflect findings of the RTPI's Children and Town Planning Practice advice note³¹ and Make Space for Girls³². When children and young people grow up in a quality built and natural environment it can have a positive impact on their health, well-being and future life chances.

To do this effectively local communities, including children, should have a say in what these places look like. At the beginning of 2022 the Council invested in a new digital engagement system, Commonplace, having been awarded £65,000 from the government to improve digital engagement within Planning. The CIRP awarded the Council a silver award in October 2022 for its innovative approach to engagement and professionalism to use social media tools to drive engagement in the Local Plan issues and options consultation. The Council continues to work with the government and in November 2022 we secured an additional £240,000 to further enhance our ability to engage with our local communities.

27 <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/gloucestershire-health-and-wellbeing-board/our-focus/#:~:text=The%20Gloucestershire%20Health%20and%20Wellbeing,well%2C%20be%20healthy%20and%20thrive>

28 https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/sites/default/files/2018-05/r1_literature_review_wellbeing_benefits_of_wild_places_lres.pdf

29 <https://tcpa.org.uk/what-is-green-infrastructure/>

30 <http://steadingscmt.org.uk/>

31 <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/media/8848/children-and-town-planning-july-2021.pdf>

32 <https://makespaceforgirls.co.uk/case-studies/>

Objective 4.2: Ensure adequate infrastructure and access to everyday amenities

What we will do

- A. Examine the possibility of enshrining the principle of 20 minute neighbourhoods, or equivalent, in the updated Local Plan.
- B. Maximising developer contributions.
- C. Ensure the timely provision of essential infrastructure and digital connectivity.
- D. Encourage infrastructure providers and organisations to access a proportion of the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy to deliver identified strategic infrastructure.

Why is this important?

Part of our ambition to support thriving communities and neighbourhoods, and indeed our response to climate change, is to try to reduce the need for car journeys and focus on other forms of sustainable and more active forms of transport. The ambition is to create neighbourhoods where everyday requirements are within a 20-minute walk (around 1 mile) or cycle (around 3 miles) in the larger towns. This will include improving access to employment opportunities, transport, and local amenities.

Sustainable Transport Strategy

In March 2021, the Council appointed its first Sustainable Transport Strategy Lead officer, 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. A key consideration will be making it easier for people of all ages and abilities to safely access their local centres or high streets by public transport and active travel (e.g. walking, mobility scooters, pushchairs and bikes, cargo bikes) and increasing options to reduce the reliance on cars.

Developer Contributions

Through the Local Plan updating process the Council will examine opportunities to improve the securing of developer contributions towards education, affordable housing, community facilities, transport, open space amenities, walking and cycling, transport links, etc. We will also seek to ensure development is designed and contributions are made to provide opportunities for physical activity for all, including play equipment, formal and informal sport, allotments, and open spaces with good access so everyone can benefit from amenities.

When legally securing these provisions the Council will also be mindful to ensure infrastructure is delivered in a sensible and timely manner and making sure new development mitigates the impact on existing local communities.

The Council will be inviting bids to access money secured by the Community Infrastructure Levy for the first time in 2023, details, including how to bid for levy, are available on the Council's website.

Objective 4.3: Address challenges of second homes and short-term holiday lets

What we will do

- A. Assess whether a new Local Plan policy can be introduced to restrict second homes, Airbnb style holiday rentals and holiday home renting in new properties.
- B. Continue to actively investigate breaches of planning conditions and thoroughly investigate any complaints where holiday homes or Airbnb style holiday rentals are operating without the correct permission and/or are breaching environmental regulations.
- C. Enable the provision of short-term holiday let accommodation in suitable locations to redirect the demand for this accommodation away from unsuitable locations and /or stressed locations.
- D. Continue to lobby the government on the second home, holiday home and Airbnb style holiday rental issues, especially in official consultations, so this issue remains on their agenda.
- E. If the legislation is introduced that allows us to do so, we will impose higher rates of council tax on empty and second homes.
- F. Support the proposal for a tourist accommodation registration scheme.
- G. Consider extending additional tourism charges on key car parks and other council assets across the district to mitigate the impact of tourism on local communities. Additional money will be focussed on new / updated infrastructure and new affordable homes.

Why is this important?

We are aware of the impact the second homes, holiday homes and Airbnbs are having on communities within the district. We undertook a consultation between February and March 2022 on our ongoing partial update to the Local Plan. This issue was raised on numerous occasions in responses to the consultation and in the conversations with residents at our drop in events with many saying it is negatively affecting communities and housing affordability.

The majority of people supported the idea of the Local Plan restricting second home / holiday ownership in new developments and less than one-fifth were against the idea. Two thirds of respondents thought restricting second home ownership in new developments would make the overall housing stock more affordable with 5% thinking it would become less affordable.

We also asked, 'should the restriction apply to all new housing that is built or a proportion of new housing?' A considerable majority of respondents (71%) thought that second home restrictions should apply within all new housing developments.

Of course, planning restrictions can only apply to new developments. The majority of second homes, holiday homes and AirBnBs are already in existence and the Council has limited powers to intervene. However, we have been lobbying the government to do so, for example, in our consultation response to the Planning White Paper.

The government has listened to our and other authorities in a similar situation and in January 2022 the [government introduced legislation](#) that will prevent owners of second homes from abusing a tax loophole by claiming their often-empty properties are holiday lets, thereby avoiding paying normal tax rates.

The Levelling-Up and Regeneration Bill also intends to introduce further restrictions:

- Councils will also be granted powers to impose higher rates of council tax on empty and second homes (double the standard council tax rate on any home left empty for longer than a year, rather than two years as is currently the case).
- The government also committed in June 2021 to look into the possibility of a “tourist accommodation registration scheme” in England, through the [Tourism Recovery Plan](#).

The government also recently announced that second-home owners may face an Airbnb ban, which would aim to protect tenants living in tourist hotspots.



Objective 4.4: Improve private rented accommodation

What we will do

- A. The Council will investigate undertaking a Stock Conditions Survey to identify priority areas for improvement.
- B. The Council will appeal to private landlords to insulate their properties, install double glazing and other energy features, to support their residents and reduce their maintenance costs. We will also provide guidance on the best means to do this through our support to the Warm and Well programme.
- C. The Council will target landlords whose properties do not meet the legal Minimum Energy Efficiency standards, to ensure their compliance.
- D. The Council will continue to undertake mandatory licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's) to drive up the quality and safety of shared housing.
- E. The Council will drive up the quality and safety of shared housing and identify and take enforcement action against unlicensed HMO's.
- F. The Council will work with private landlords and take enforcement action where necessary to tackle hazards and improve the quality of rented accommodation where many of our most vulnerable residents live.

Why is this important?

With many people unable to afford to buy a home, the private rented sector in the district is also seeing a surge in demand. As with the cost of owning a home in the district, which has substantially increased, rental prices have also increased. We need to support people so they can afford to rent a home which is safe to live in.

This report already includes a section on how we can reduce household bills but private landlords have extra responsibilities in this regard to make sure their properties have the necessary insulation, double glazing and other energy and water saving features so that the utility bills of their tenants can be reduced. A well maintained property will keep energy and other costs down and landlords have legal responsibilities to ensure the condition of the property meets health and safety standards for occupation.

It is in the interest of landlords to have well-insulated housing which is in good condition as tenants are healthier and happier and likely to extend their contracts.

Objective 4.5: Bring empty homes back into use

What we will do

- A. Continue to work through towards achieving the key Priorities detailed in the strategy:
 - i. To maintain accurate information about the number of long term empty properties;
 - ii. Provide advice and information to help raise awareness and address issues around empty properties; and
 - iii. Bring empty properties back into use to increase the supply of quality, affordable homes for residents in housing need.
- B. Continue to apply Council Tax Premiums (Levies).
- C. Continue to appeal to the owners of long term empty properties to make their properties available for sale or to rent.
- D. Consider undertaking work to understand the causes and barriers preventing properties being brought back into use

Why is this important?

In common with many other districts, Cotswold District Council faces an increasing shortage of affordable homes for its residents. This gives rise to increased homelessness and difficulty accessing affordable accommodation for many people. Empty properties seriously affect the lives of people in the vicinity and can be a magnet for anti-social behaviour and an unnecessary drain on public services. Tackling empty homes will not only help provide additional much-needed homes within the district, but will contribute to the improvement of the local environment and benefit communities.

Empty homes can cost their owners thousands of pounds a year in council tax, insurance, mortgage and repairs. The district suffers from a lack of housing and we have hundreds of households who have registered for affordable rented homes via that council's Choice Based Lettings system, HomeseekerPlus and many are in housing need.

We are committed to reducing the number of long term empty homes in the district. For more information read our [Long Term Empty Homes Strategy](#).

ANNEX A: KEY LEGISLATION AND POLICIES

A useful library of housing related Acts - <https://thebla.co.uk/housing-acts/>

Housing Act 1985 (as amended) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1985/68/contents>

Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (as amended) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/53/contents>

Housing Act 2004 (as amended) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/34/contents>

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/section/106>

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/contents>

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents>

Localism Act 2011 (as amended) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted>

Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/17/contents/enacted/data.htm>

Housing and Planning Act 2016 (as amended) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/22/contents/enacted>

Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homes-fitness-for-human-habitation-act-2018/guide-for-landlords-homes-fitness-for-human-habitation-act-2018>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/gove-closes-tax-loophole-on-second-homes>

National Planning Policy Framework, 2021 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), 2022 <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

NPPG: Housing and Economic Needs Assessment, 2022 <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments>

Tourism Recovery Plan (policy paper) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tourism-recovery-plan>

First Homes scheme: discounts for first-time buyers <https://www.gov.uk/first-homes-scheme>

Building Regulations 2010. Access to and use of buildings: Approved Document M, 2015 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-and-use-of-buildings-approved-document-m>

Cotswold Climate and Ecological Emergency Declaration <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/environment/climate-action/cotswold-climate-and-ecological-emergencies/>

Cotswold District Local Plan 2011 to 2031 <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/k2kjqv3b/cotswold-district-local-plan-2011-2031-adopted-3-august-2018-web-version.pdf>

Town and Country Planning Association: Healthy Homes Act Campaign <https://tcpa.org.uk/collection/the-healthy-homes-act/>



ANNEX B: WHAT ARE THE CAUSES OF DETERIORATING HOUSING AFFORDABILITY?

Many of the causes of housing unaffordability in Cotswold District are beyond the control of the District Council. For example:

- Wages have not kept pace with house price rises.
- Developers can ‘drip-feed’ new homes into the market to ensure house prices remain high to maximise profits (or put another
- Land banking (i.e. land being used as a financial asset to increase share prices rather than to deliver housing).
- Right to Buy has left a shortage of social-rented housing nationally.
- Both low interest rates and the increased ability of people being able to get a mortgage have fuelled an increase in house prices.
- Stamp Duty holidays have fuelled increased demand for housing. With more money to spend on buying a home, house prices have risen.
- Second homes, holiday homes and buy to let have removed housing from the market that could otherwise be made available to those who want to own a single home, and the resulting increased demand within a reduced pool of housing stock inflates house prices and worsens affordability.
- The Covid Pandemic resulted in an initial ‘dash to the countryside’ where there is more space than city living. However, a longer term effect has been the wider societal acceptance of remote and home working with workplaces becoming commutable on the basis of a longer journey that is required less frequently. This has made Cotswold District a more desirable location to live, especially for those working in the West Midlands, South East and the Avon area.
- Not enough new social-rented housing has been built across the country. Subsidies for building social housing have been cut and, more recently, funds have had to be diverted towards resolving fire safety concerns and cladding issues. Subsidies will also be needed to retrofit homes with insulation.
- We also recognise that simply building more and more open market housing is not the right approach. We need a strategy at both a local level and a national level to help deal with the housing (affordability) crisis.

To summarise the context in which this Strategy operates, housing affordability is a multi-faceted national housing issue and the Council’s efforts to provide an effective response will always only be part of the solution. Be that as it may, delivering affordable housing helps local people to afford a home.

Delivering housing in a constrained district

We also have to bear in mind that we operate in an incredibly constrained district. For example, 80% of the district is within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (the AONB). National policy requires that this nationally protected landscape, which has the highest status of protection, must be conserved and enhanced. The scale and extent of development within AONBs must be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the AONB³³.

The current Local Plan seeks to focus the majority of housing growth in 17 Principal Settlements³⁴, which are the most sustainable locations with the best access to services, facilities and employment. However, eight of the district's Principal Settlements are completely within the AONB³⁵. A further five Principal Settlements are bound by the AONB on one or more sides and form part of the setting of the AONB³⁶.

A further 6% of the district is designated as a Special Landscape Area, much of which provides an important setting and an effective buffer for the AONB. A further 6% of the district is located within Cotswold Water Park, a large proportion of which is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest³⁷, which also has the highest status of protection.

The district also has:

- 33 registered historic parks and gardens
- 144 Conservation Areas (more than any other district in England)
- 5,004 entries on the statutory list of buildings of special architectural and historic interest (second after City of Westminster)
- 238 Scheduled ancient monuments
- Various habitats sites, including:
 - » 2 internationally designated [Special Areas of Conservation](#)
 - » 37 other nationally designated [Sites of Special Scientific Interest](#) and 1 [National Nature Reserve](#)
 - » Various other locally designated sites, such as Local Sites, [Key Wildlife Sites](#) and [Local Nature Reserves](#)
 - » Various areas of Priority Habitat³⁸

The current affordable housing strategy

The Local Plan contains an affordable housing strategy, which seeks to deliver around 64% of the district's affordable housing need (approximately 100 affordable homes a year of an identified need of 157 affordable homes a year between 2015 and 2031³⁹). The Inspector of the examination of the Local Plan concluded that the affordable housing need could not be met in full. A balance had to be struck in order to achieve sustainable development with regard to delivering affordable housing and the need to protect the high quality built and natural environment and the need to avoid long distance commuting. The Inspector concluded that the Local Plan affordable housing policies were sound⁴⁰.

³³ NPPF paragraph 176

³⁴ The Principal Settlements are identified by Policy DSI of the adopted Local Plan

³⁵ Andoversford, Blockley, Bourton-on-the-Water, Chipping Campden, Northleach, Stow-on-the-Wold, Tetbury and Upper Rissington

³⁶ Cirencester, Kemble, Mickleton, Moreton-in-Marsh and Willersey

³⁷ [Cotswold Water Park confirmed as a Site of Special Scientific Interest](#)

³⁸ These are wildlife habitats that are listed at section 41 of the [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006](#) as being [habitats of principal importance for biodiversity](#).

³⁹ [Cotswold District Council SHMA Further Update, Affordable Housing \(HDH Planning, 2016\)](#) and the accompanying [Errata Note \(May 2017\)](#)

⁴⁰ See paragraphs 55, 56 and 209 of the Report on the Examination of the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031 (PINS, 5 June 2018, PINS Ref: PINS/F1610/429/2)

The bulk of affordable housing delivery comes from Local Plan Policy H2, which requires up to 30% affordable housing on qualifying brownfield sites and up to 40% affordable housing on qualifying greenfield sites. There are several additional policies that add to the affordable housing supply⁴¹. Local Plan Policy H1 also requires a suitable mix of house types and sizes, which deliver the smaller house types and sizes that are typically more affordable.

Since the Local Plan was adopted, several additional years of monitoring data have become available, which provide some useful data:

- Between 2015 and 2022, the district delivered 1,244 affordable homes (an average of 178 affordable homes a year). This included 111 social rented homes (an average of 16 per year).
- Between 2022 and 2031, developments with planning permission and remaining Local Plan site allocations are expected to deliver 836 additional affordable homes (net) (an average of 93 per year). Based on historic delivery and future trends, it is conservatively estimated that around 215 further affordable homes will be delivered as windfalls between 2022 and 2031 (an average of 24 per year)⁴². Based on the current housing land supply, total affordable housing delivery between 2022 and 2031 is therefore expected to be 1,051 affordable homes (an average of 117 per year).
- Total affordable housing delivery between 2015 and 2031 is expected to around 2,295 homes (net) (130 affordable homes per year on average).

The average annual delivery rate of 178 affordable homes a year between 2015 and 2022 and the estimated total affordable housing delivery rate of 130 affordable homes a year between 2015 and 2031 far exceed the 100 affordable homes year figure which the Local Plan Inspector considered to be a reasonable number of affordable homes over the plan period.

The estimated number of affordable homes that would be delivered across the plan period was also a conservative figure, as it is better to underestimate than overestimate for the purpose of a Local Plan examination. However, housing delivery has been strong in the district and the Local Plan housing requirement has not been used as a maximum. This in itself has yielded a higher return of affordable homes; nearly 10,000 dwellings (all tenures) being estimated to be delivered over the plan period, which is 117% of the 8,400 dwelling Local Plan housing requirement.

⁴¹ Local Plan Policies H3 and H4

⁴² NPPF (2021) Annex 2 defines windfall sites as “Sites not specifically identified in the development plan.” An explanation of how the estimate of future windfall delivery in Cotswold District is calculated and the justification for using a windfall allowance in the housing trajectory is provided at pages 7 to 18 of the [Housing Land Supply Report](#) (CDC, July 2022). In addition to the guidelines provided in that report for assessing windfall delivery, the following additional guidelines have been used for determining whether affordable housing developments count as windfalls:

Any additional affordable housing delivered on 100% affordable housing sites are counted as windfall affordable housing (the number of windfalls excludes the 30% or 40% requirement that would already have been delivered on those sites if the site is within or adjacent to the development boundaries of one of the 17 Principal Settlements identified in the Local Plan).

Market homes bought with grant funding and have been converted into affordable housing are counted as windfall affordable homes.

Affordable housing delivered to date

Between 2011 and 2022, a total of 5,927 new homes have been built within the district. This is a significant over-delivery (28% higher) than the 4,620 homes that were required for that period⁴³.

Of the 5,927 homes that were built, 1,880 (32%) were affordable homes. This includes 401 social rented homes, which contribute 8% of the total number of homes delivered and 21% of the number of affordable homes delivered.

Affordable housing delivery in Cotswold District between 2011 and 2022 (gross)

Year	Affordable Rent	Social Rent	Shared Ownership	Equity Model	Key Worker	Total
2011/12	18	140	64	0	0	222
2012/13	9	92	81	0	0	182
2013/14	32	37	27	4	0	100
2014/15	64	21	36	11	0	132
2015/16	55	0	12	25	0	92
2016/17	160	6	62	34	0	262
2017/18	139	3	74	29	0	245
2018/19	176	22	85	8	0	291
2019/20	57	20	54	10	0	141
2020/21	49	17	33	2	13	114
2021/22	12	43	36	8	0	99
Total	771	401	564	131	13	1,880

⁴³ The housing requirement of Cotswold District is a minimum of 8,400 dwellings (420 a year) for the period 2011 to 2031, which is set out in Policy DSI of the [Cotswold District Local Plan 2011 to 2031](#).

ANNEX C: DATA SOURCES AND RESOURCES

Children and Town Planning. RTPI 2021 <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/media/8848/children-and-town-planning-july-2021.pdf>

Cirencester Neighbourhood Plan
<https://cirencesternp.org/>

Community Led Housing
<https://www.communityledhomes.org.uk/>

Cotswold Climate and Ecological Emergencies
<https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/environment/climate-action/cotswold-climate-and-ecological-emergencies/>

Cotswold District Council and Bromford form a ground-breaking partnership to deliver more affordable, low-carbon homes for Cotswold people
<https://news.cotswold.gov.uk/news/cotswold-district-council-and-bromford-form-a-ground-breaking-partnership-to-deliver-more-affordable-low-carbon-homes-for-cotswold-people>

Cotswold District Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024 - Update Spring 2022
<https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/kbqj5lw/cdc-corporate-strategy-2022.pdf>

Cotswold District Local Plan 2012 to 2031
<https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2011-to-2031/>

Cotswold District Local Plan evidence - housing to meet local needs
<https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/evidence-base-and-monitoring/>

Cotswold Housing Grants
<https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/housing/private-housing/housing-grants/>

English Housing Survey data on owner occupiers, recent first time buyers and second homes
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/owner-occupiers-recent-first-time-buyers-and-second-homes#full-publication-update-history>

English indices of deprivation 2019
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

Excess mortality during heat-periods: 1 June to 31 August 2022. ONS
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/articles/excessmortalityduringheatperiods/englandandwales1juneto31august2022>

First Homes scheme: discounts for first-time buyers
<https://www.gov.uk/first-homes-scheme>

Gloucestershire Local Housing Needs Assessment, 2020
<https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/b43lc0lk/3110-gloucestershire-local-housing-needs-assessment-sept-2020.pdf>

Gloucestershire Welfare Support Scheme
<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/gloucestershire-welfare-support-scheme/>

Homeseeker Plus
<https://www.homeseekerplus.co.uk/choice/>

House Price Statistics. Land Registry 2022
<https://landregistry.data.gov.uk/app/ukhpi/browse?from=2021-09-01&location=http%3A%2F%2Flandregistry.data.gov.uk%2Fid%2Fregion%2Fcotswold&to=2022-09-01&lang=en>



House price to workplace-based earnings ratio. ONS, 2022

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/ratioofhousepricetoworkplacebasedearningslowerquartileandmedian>

Long Term Empty Homes Strategy 2019 to 2024

<https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/sjsf1whf/long-term-empty-homes-strategy-2019-2024-cdc.pdf>

Make Space for Girls

<https://makespaceforgirls.co.uk/case-studies/>

Modern Methods of Construction A forward-thinking solution to the housing crisis?

<https://www.rics.org/globalassets/rics-website/media/news/news--opinion/modern-methods-of-construction-paper-rics.pdf>

NOMIS official census and labour market statistics

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157373/report.aspx?town=cotswold>

Population projections for local authorities

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/datasets/localauthoritiesinenglandtable2>

Risks to health, wellbeing and productivity from overheating in buildings. Climate Change Committee, July 2022

<https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Risks-to-health-wellbeing-and-productivity-from-overheating-in-buildings.pdf>

Surface Water: The biggest flood risk of all. GOV.UK, 2018

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/surface-water-the-biggest-flood-risk-of-all>

The Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/gloucestershire-health-and-wellbeing-board/our-focus/#:~:text=The%20Gloucestershire%20Health%20and%20Wellbeing,well%2C%20be%20healthy%20and%20thrive>

The Steading Community Management Trust

<http://steadingscmt.org.uk/>

UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics, 2005 to 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2020>

Wellbeing benefits from natural Environments rich in wildlife

https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/sites/default/files/2018-05/r1_literature_review_wellbeing_benefits_of_wild_places_lres.pdf

What is Green Infrastructure?

<https://tcpa.org.uk/what-is-green-infrastructure/>



ANNEX D: SCHEMES DELIVERED OR IN THE PIPELINE

Here is a list of [rural] schemes that have been, or are to be, delivered across the district as a result of our work with our Registered Provider partners, the Gloucestershire Rural Housing Partnership (GRHP) and the Rural Housing Enabler.

Land adjacent to Broadleaze, Down Ampney (a social rented housing development - Bromford).

Cotswold District Council own land adjacent to Broadleaze in Down Ampney, which is allocated in the Local Plan for housing development. The Council is currently working with Bromford Housing, assembling two plots of land, to bring forward an exemplar scheme for carbon zero social rented, energy efficient homes.

Patterson Road, Cirencester (36 social rented homes - Bromford)

In 2020, 36 new, energy efficient homes were completed to update and replace existing affordable housing that was no longer fit for purpose. These provide a mix of affordable rent and shared ownership homes, built to modern energy efficiency standards, for local residents.

Churnbridge Row, North Cerney (12 affordable homes - Cirencester Housing)

In 2020, 12 new affordable homes were completed in North Cerney. The Council granted funding for the completion of the development, which played a big part in ensuring that these will always be affordable homes for local people. The scheme comprises 10 houses and flats for affordable rent and two houses for shared ownership.

Wickhams Field, Tetbury (30 social rented homes - Bromford)

In April 2022, a 30-dwelling affordable housing development was completed at Wickhams Field, Tetbury. The site is now fully occupied with most residents having a connection to the town. The 30 homes are a mixture of two and three-bedroom houses and one-bedroom flats, all of which are for social rent.

Chesterton Halt, Cirencester (24 affordable homes - Bromford)

Bromford acquired the Chesterton Halt site in Cirencester for a 100% affordable housing development of 24 no. 1 and 2 bedroom apartments. The scheme was completed in 2019.

Akeman Court, Cirencester

In 2015, Bromford completed the delivery of six houses and seven apartments at Akeman Court in Cirencester on land that had stood empty for some time.

Fortey Road, Northleach

Bromford demolished an abandoned affordable housing block at Fortey Road, Northleach, which had stood empty for many years. In its place, 22 new affordable rent and affordable home ownership homes were completed in 2016.

Chamberlayne Close, Stow-on-the-Wold (18 social rented homes - Bromford)

In July 2022, 18 energy efficient homes for social rent were completed in Stow-on-the-Wold. The previous homes were identified under the Sheltered Housing Review as being no longer fit for purpose for elderly customers and they had a poor energy efficiency rating.



Stockwells, Moreton-in-Marsh (28 social rented homes - Bromford)

Stockwells cul-de-sac in Moreton is being redeveloped to provide 28 new net zero carbon social rented homes. The development will be the first affordable modular build of its kind in the Cotswolds.

The existing homes at Stockwells were built in the 1950s and were not energy efficient. The scheme involves demolishing the 24 existing homes and replacing them with 28 modern, energy-efficient homes which are affordable for tenants to run. The new homes will be completely gas-free and all homes will be fitted with air source heating and solar panels to align with the Council's drive for all affordable housing to be green to the core.

Leaholme Court, Cirencester (44 apartments - Bromford)

44 new apartments for social rent were completed at Leaholme Court in summer 2022, replacing 46 flats built in the early 1960's that were no longer fit for purpose.

Cross Tree Crescent and Oakley Flats, Kempsford (27 1-3 bedroom houses and 2 bedroom bungalows - Bromford)

A scheme is underway to demolish 14 sub-standard existing houses and 12 flats and to rebuild 27 new affordable 1, 2 and 3 bedroom houses and 2 bedroom bungalows. Oakley Flats are currently under construction and due for completion spring 2023. Cross Tree Crescent is to follow thereafter. These will be modern, energy efficient homes, which are affordable for people to live in and run.

The Sunground, Avening (14 new social rented and shared ownership homes - Bromford)

Work has commenced on the development of three 2-bedroom and six 1-bedroom social rented homes and four 2-bedroom and one 3-bedroom shared ownership homes. These will include various features that will make the homes more carbon efficient and cheaper to operate, such as the homes having an air source heat pump for heating and hot water; electric vehicle charging points; solar panel; provision of water butts; secure cycle storage; and provision of broadband.

Land at Davies Road, Moreton-in-Marsh (15 social rented homes - Cottsway)

This development, located at Davies Road in Moreton-in-Marsh, will provide 15 low-carbon homes for social rent, including a mix of one, two and three-bed properties. The scheme is due to be completed in 2024 and will include sustainable features such as air-source heat pumps and enhanced levels of insulation.

Berrington Road Garages, Chipping Campden (4 1-bed bungalows for social rented - Bromford)

Bromford acquired a site in 2019 at Berrington Road in Chipping Campden in 2019 and completed a development of four no. 1-bedroom affordable bungalows in 2021.



ANNEX E: NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS



Stow on the Wold and The Swells Neighbourhood Plan

The supply of affordable housing in Stow on the Wold has been historically low compared to other settlements across the district, even when land is available other more lucrative development has occurred often at ours and the Town Council's objection. The hill top town is completely surrounded by long views across the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural beauty which makes it incredibly sensitive to new housing developments on the edge of the town.

Stow on the Wold Town Council and Swells Parish Council have jointly embarked on preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. It has set a vision which seeks to ensure by 2031 the whole community will have benefitted from new genuinely affordable, energy efficient homes with robust connectivity, and other carbon-neutral developments providing educational and leisure provision, new employment space and greatly improved parking provision. It will thus sustain an energetic and productive community of all ages.

The Town Council finds the attractiveness of the Stow area has brought housing pressures leading to high property values that are unaffordable for those on the average (median) income in Cotswold District. The Town Council believes a lack of an appropriate mix of housing, particularly affordable housing, has led to more economically-active people, particularly the young, being forced to look elsewhere for somewhere to live. Local businesses link difficulties in recruiting staff on high house prices, lack of public transport, high commuting costs and lack of parking to support existing services and facilities.

We agree with the Town Council that improving the availability of affordable housing would enable local young people and others to take up local employment opportunities and help provide sufficient accommodation for an economically active population. The challenge will be to do so in a way that protects and enhances the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a national landscape designation.



Fairford Neighbourhood Plan

Similar to Stow on the Wold and The Swells Neighbourhood Plan, Fairford has also embarked on a Neighbourhood Plan for its area. Their plan is far more advanced and a final draft plan is due to be consulted on in 2023. It contains policies to help preserve the historic character of Fairford, protect green spaces, ensure necessary infrastructure is provided on a timely basis, and ensure that development does not create or increase flood risk.

Their plan directs new housing development to an area, close to the schools, between Leafield Road and the northern extension of Hatherop Road. This will deliver additional affordable housing in the Town over the next decade.

ANNEX F: DELIVERY AND MONITORING

We will need to work in partnership with government agencies, public organisations, the voluntary sectors and private sector providers to deliver the strategy. We will also work with our neighbouring authorities on cross-boundary housing issues and priorities.

We will monitor and assess our progress towards achieving the objectives in this strategy through an action plan. To help us respond to a continually changing environment, we will review our actions annually to make sure they remain effective.

A Housing Strategy Action Plan 2024-25 will be prepared following adoption of the Housing Strategy and will set out what we plan to achieve in year one.





COTSWOLD
HOUSING STRATEGY



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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COTSWOLD
HOUSING STRATEGY
2024-2029

Executive Summary

DRAFT



Introduction

There is a housing affordability crisis in the Cotswolds.

Our aim is to help everyone across the district to access housing that meets their needs and that they can afford.

We have seen many successes since the implementation of our Housing Plan in 2016 and our Homelessness Strategy in 2018.

We have increased the supply of affordable housing, invested in partnerships to deliver affordable housing, invested in carbon neutral homes, as well as providing assistance to those facing homelessness. However, there is still much work to be done in addressing the current housing crisis and the evolving cost of living crisis.

The housing strategy includes a wealth of detail that explains the context of issues, their impacts and the specific nature of our response. It is appreciated that not everyone will relish the thought of reading a largely technical document so we have prepared this summary document. It gives a snapshot of the main issues, priorities and actions.



The Housing Strategy

Tackling the issues raised by the housing crisis is impossible to do in isolation, therefore our Housing Strategy sits alongside existing and emerging strategies, plans and work programmes.

It has been shaped by national policy and local context and is informed by data and information about our local housing market. It also provides an important foundation within which to shape Local Plan policies and supporting evidence.

The purpose of our strategy is to:

- inform our partners and residents about the housing challenges and priorities in the area;
- be a catalyst for delivering further affordable housing and in particular social rented housing;
- focus resources and effort on agreed priorities;
- highlight the importance of reducing inequalities;
- maintain a strategic overview of housing development and support a revised Local Plan; and
- drive our statutory duties.

The strategy will shape and focus our work with partner organisations and registered housing providers, as well as landowners, developers and community-led organisations. It will also support bids for additional funding.

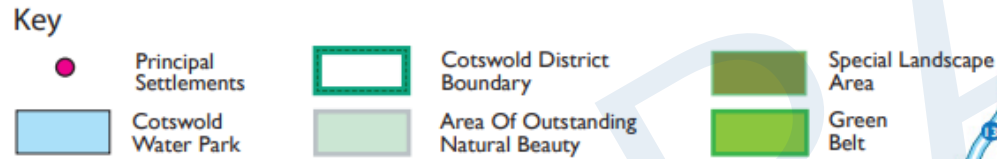
The strategy will be reviewed during the five year period to make sure it continues to respond to the housing needs across Cotswold, and to reflect changes in local context, national policy, legislation and strategy.



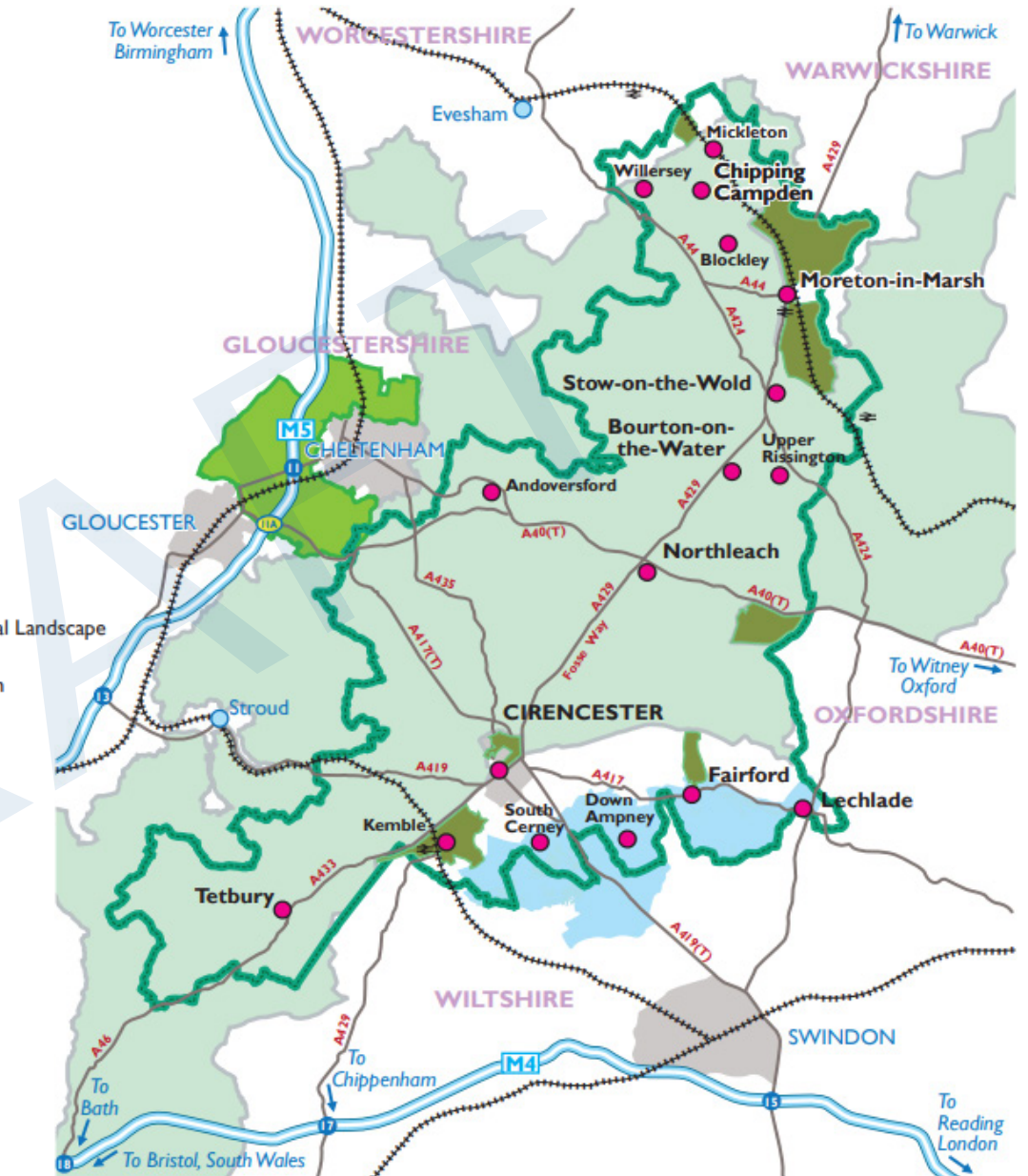
Where we are now

Cotswold District is a large rural area situated in the east of the county of Gloucestershire, covering almost a half of the entire county. The district is not to be confused with the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which stretches from Warwickshire in the north east to Somerset in the south west.

Figure 1: Map showing the main settlements in the district, Cotswolds AONB, Special Landscape Areas, Cotswold Water Park and the Gloucester and Cheltenham Green Belt.

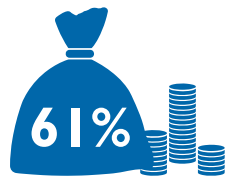


Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database rights 2015



Evolution of the housing affordability crisis

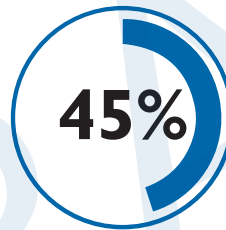
The 3rd FASTEST HOUSE PRICE GROWTH in SOUTH WEST



Between 2011-2021 house prices increased by

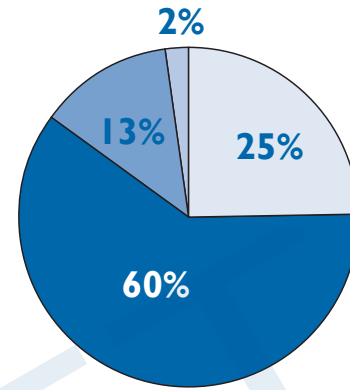


Cotswold is the 2nd most expensive place to buy a house in the South West.



of households are owner occupiers.

Owning with a mortgage is the most common tenure in the South West.



Cotswold has an ageing stock of housing.

- Pre 1900s: 10,282 houses
- 20th Century: 25,025 houses
- 21st Century: 5,278 houses
- Unknown: 819 houses

AVERAGE HOUSE PRICES IN THE COTSWOLDS ARE ALMOST



LOCAL SALARIES

Local earnings have not kept pace with house price rises.



WORSENING LIVING CONDITIONS..



and increased demand for council services.

A GROWING PRIVATE RENTAL SECTOR...

with increasingly high rents and competition.

In South West between **2019-2023**

PRIVATE RENT INCREASED BY

12%
IN 4 YEARS

TO LET

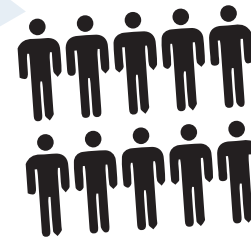
Rightmoves's Rental Price Tracker shows that rents in the South West have increased by **7.8%** in the last year alone.



+1,500

more people now live in privately rented accommodation than in 2011.

X 10 TENANTS



X 1 AVAILABLE PROPERTY

The average new build market housing in the district is not affordable to a resident with **AVERAGE EARNINGS** of

£34,825

PER YEAR

This is being caused by a shortfall of affordable supply and a surging demand.

There are now 10 tenants for every 1 available property nationally.

A CONTINUING NEED FOR AFFORDABLE HOMES



Approx, **2,500** households are unable to afford market rented housing in Cotswold District and 4,800 households aspire to home ownership.



There is a need for approximately **6,900 adapted homes** in Cotswold District between 2021 to 2041.

1,460 PEOPLE ARE ON COTSWOLD'S HOUSING WAITING LIST



500 properties are overcrowded in the District.



The average South West resident was paying an estimated

33%

of their basic pay on rent in 2022.



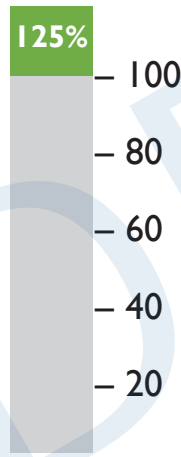
How have we responded so far?

A STRONG DELIVERY TRACK RECORD so far

6,277

new homes in the district over the last ten years.

Since 2011 the Council has delivered **125%** of its average housing target.



1,972 AFFORDABLE HOMES have been built since 2022.

WHICH HAS UNLOCKED THOUSANDS of NEW AFFORDABLE HOMES...

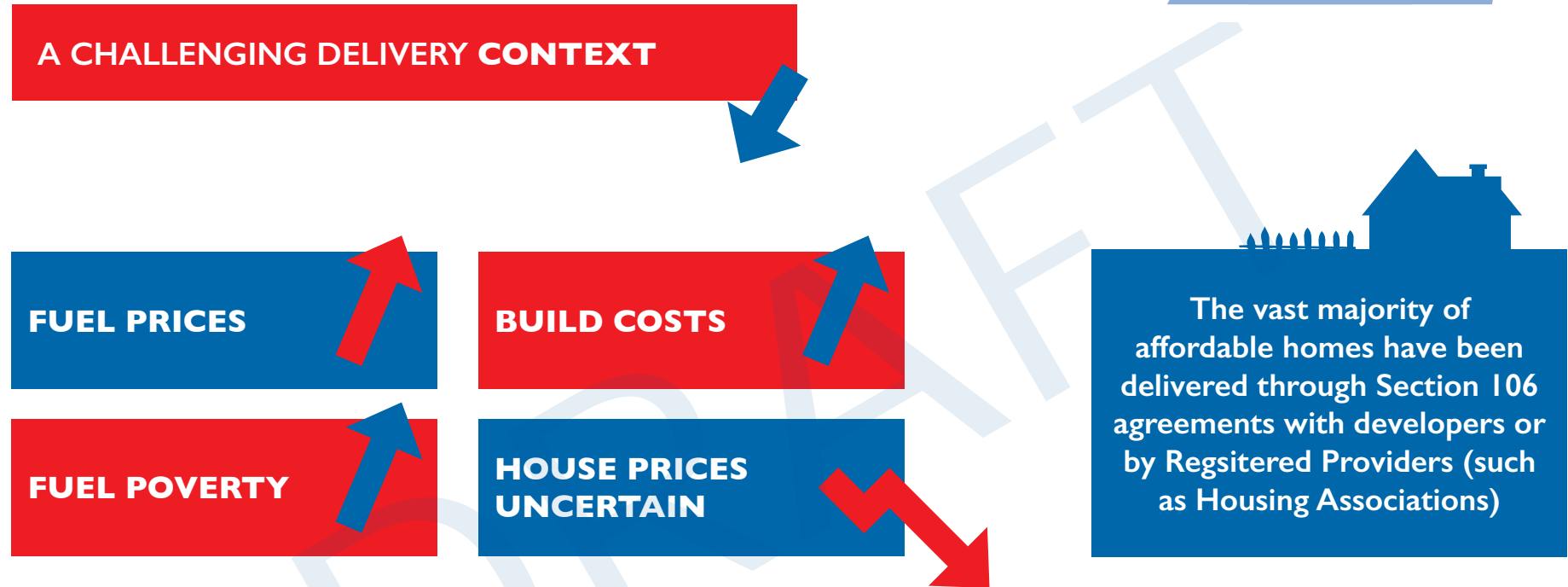
Cotswold District has a diverse tenure delivery.

31%

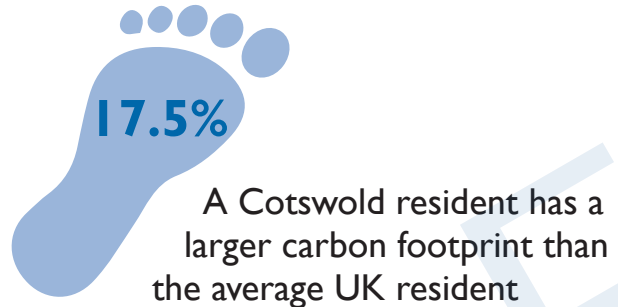
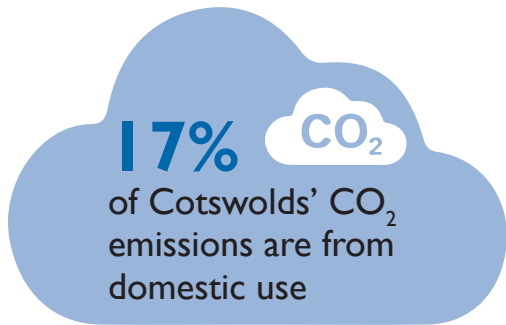
of new homes delivered are either intermediate (such as Shared Ownership) or social rent.

This has secured homes for people on the waiting list.

The changing delivery context...



The cost of tackling the climate emergency



Analysis shows estimated costs to upgrade all housing in the UK to EPC band C

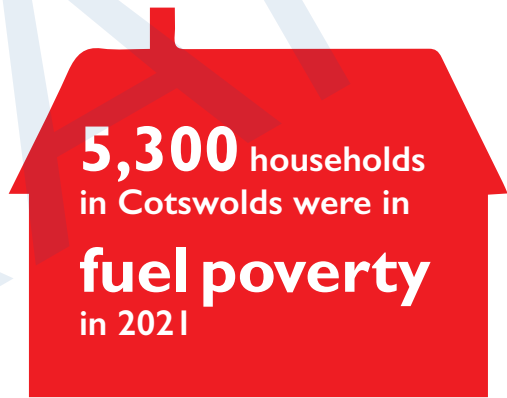
= £156 billion

Government research puts the **average cost to upgrade** each tenure type to an EPC band rating C at

£7,600 Private Rented;

£6,000 Social Rented; and

£8,600 for owner-occupiers



Our Vision

By 2050 everyone in Cotswold District will live in a healthy, affordable, low carbon home that meets their needs within a safe, sustainable and thriving community, which is accessible to all. We firmly believe housing should:



REDUCE INEQUALITIES



IMPROVE HEALTH & WELLBEING



HELP TO PREVENT CLIMATE CHANGE



BE AFFORDABLE



MEET THE HOUSEHOLD'S NEEDS



BE SAFE



BE ACCESSIBLE, OR CAN BE MADE ACCESSIBLE



BE PART OF A THRIVING AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY



HELP IMPROVE EDUCATION, SKILLS AND ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT



GIVE CHILDREN THE BEST START IN LIFE



ENABLE PEOPLE TO MEET THEIR FULL POTENTIAL



Our Priorities

Planning for everyone's housing needs

Everyone deserves to live in a suitable home that meets their needs. This requires having the right properties, locations, infrastructure, services and support. Whilst the affordability and accessibility of suitable local housing has declined over the past decades, for the majority of households, it is within their own means to choose where to purchase or rent their home, albeit to varying degrees.

The task for us is to make sure that homes are delivered, adapted and improved to ensure market supply that addresses all needs. There is a proportion of households who either do not have sufficient income or have a level of need, or both, and who are unable to make their own arrangements. This includes those who live in unsatisfactory housing conditions, have disabilities, insecure tenure, medical or welfare needs. We must ensure the provision of suitable housing for everyone.

Our top actions

1. Ensure that we have good, reliable and up-to-date information on specific and localised housing needs so that it can inform council and partner projects and new developments.
2. Supporting people to live safely and independently by ensuring new homes are adaptable for a variety of potential users and explore opportunities for intergenerational housing schemes or other new models which combine care and support within the setting.
3. Support young people to access housing by investigating the introduction of a First Homes policy that offers greater discounts for younger people to access housing.

Providing more, affordable homes

There are not enough affordable homes within our district. The high cost of buying or renting through the private market means that people need to pay a high proportion of their income towards housing costs. With the additional pressure of mounting bills and inflation, this is becoming increasingly difficult, with experts predicting that this will result in higher levels of debt and homelessness.

Our top actions

1. Working with like minded partners

Long gone are the days that the Council owned, built and maintained council housing; this housing stock was transferred to registered housing providers many years ago. While we still have some in-house expertise we no longer have the capacity to embark on a new building programme like city and metropolitan authorities. Therefore, we need to cut our cloth accordingly. We will continue to work with like minded registered housing providers, land owners, private developers, community-led housing organisations and charities to deliver new affordable housing.

2. Increase the supply of affordable housing

We will work with our housing association partners to collectively deliver approximately 700 new affordable homes by April 2031, the end of the Local Plan plan period. With a focus on delivering more low cost rental properties.

3. Update our Local Plan

Every few years we update (to varying degrees) our Local Plan. The Local Plan plays a central role in establishing how many new homes are needed in the District and where they should be delivered over the next decade or so. We commit to update the Local Plan so that we can examine ways to further increase the amount of affordable housing achieved from new developments. We have also committed to prepare a masterplan for Cirencester Town Centre, where we will examine opportunities to deliver new affordable housing and student accommodation in the heart of the town.

4. Increase delivery of affordable housing in rural areas

Apply to the Secretary of State to designate the part of the district that is not within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and not within Cirencester, Fairford, Moreton-in-Marsh and South Cerney as a rural area. Designating additional land as a rural area would mean that development sites of 6 to 10 dwellings in that area would need to contribute financially towards affordable housing. This could help to deliver more affordable homes.

Delivering sustainable, high quality and climate resilient homes

Housing is responsible for about one quarter of the district's total greenhouse gas emissions¹, so has a significant contribution to make in fulfilling our pledge to become carbon neutral by 2045. More than 80% of the UK housing stock projected for 2045 already exists, which is why we have made improving (retrofitting) existing housing stock a priority.

Good quality low carbon housing is essential for the health and wellbeing of residents, so it is vital that we work to ensure that existing homes are warm, safe, meet the needs of the occupants, are affordable to run, and are resilient to the impacts of climate change.

Our top actions

1. Deliver zero carbon homes with lower household bills

We will update the Local Plan and Cotswold Design Code to mandate energy and thermal standards that will deliver zero carbon homes. The code will embrace healthy homes principles advocated by the Town and Country Planning Association.

2. Supporting you to retrofit your home

There are a range of activities that we will investigate to help make it easier and cheaper for you to retrofit your home. We will lobby the government to influence national policy, regulations and open up sources of funding. We will investigate ways of supporting owners of historic and listed buildings to sympathetically retrofit their homes through the local planning process. And we will consider working in partnership with a Social Enterprise Lender to provide loans to enable people to improve insulation and upgrade heating systems including renewable technology

3. Deliver an exemplar zero carbon affordable housing development in Down Ampney

We have entered into a partnership with Bromford Housing Association to provide residents with local affordable homes. We aim to make these homes truly affordable to buy, cheaper to run and cause much less damage to the environment - tackling two of the key issues for the Cotswolds - the lack of affordable homes and responding to the climate emergency. These will act as a proof of concept to show new development can deliver zero carbon affordable homes.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2020>

Thriving communities and neighbourhoods

Everyday needs should be easily accessible within a short distance from home. This includes safe and equitable access to fresh groceries, nature, healthcare, jobs or workspaces and other essential services, facilities and infrastructure. It also means listening and working together with communities on things that matter to them and ensuring new development fits well and enhances existing communities and neighbourhoods.

Our top actions

1. Working with landlords to improve the quality and safety of private rented accommodation.
2. Continuing to lobby the government to prevent the loss of residential properties to second homes and short-term holiday lets and control the increase of 'party homes'.
3. Ensure adequate infrastructure and access to everyday amenities by maximising developer contributions to pay towards local infrastructure and encourage infrastructure providers and organisations to access our Community Infrastructure Levy.





COTSWOLD
HOUSING STRATEGY

DRAFT



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

UNITED WE SERVE

Agenda Item 12



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET– 07 DECEMBER 2023
Subject	FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT – Q2 2023/24
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance Email: mike.evemy@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer Email: david.stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
Report author	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer Email: david.stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	This report sets of the latest budget monitoring position for the 2023/24 financial year.
Annexes	Annex A – Revenue Budget Summary Annex B – Capital Programme Summary Annex C – Treasury Management Summary
Recommendation(s)	That Cabinet resolves to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review and note the financial position set out in this report. 2. Endorse the recommendation in paragraph 9.3 that Cabinet continue to review in-year opportunities with Publica and Ubico to mitigate the forecast financial position. 3. Approve the provisional transfer of £0.150m to the Treasury Management reserve. 4. Agree to establish a new earmarked reserve “Contract Smoothing” and approves the provisional transfer of £0.255m from the General Fund Revenue Budget to the earmarked reserve.
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering our services to the highest standards
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No



Consultees/ Consultation	None
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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This report provides members with the second outturn forecast and monitoring position statement for the 2023/24 financial year and should be viewed in the context of the *2024/25 Budget Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Update* report considered by Cabinet in November 2023.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to notify members of any significant variations to budgets identified in the second quarterly budget monitor exercise, highlight any key financial issues, and to inform members of options and further action to be taken.
- 1.3 In common with the almost all local authorities, the council faces several external budget pressures that are impacting on its finances over the medium-term. There remains significant uncertainty around inflation and interest rates in the current financial year which exert an influence over the Council's budget both directly and indirectly.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report sets out the outturn forecast for the financial year informed by the Q2 budget monitoring.
- 2.2 Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered this report at their meeting on 28 November 2023. In reviewing the report and the outturn forecast for Q2, members of the committee recommended that future reports include a visual overview of the financial position and a summary statement on key budget variances. The committee's view was to improve accessibility and provide readers of the report with a summary statement on what the figures mean – in particular whether forecast outcomes were expected, whether the impact of the forecasts are short-term or would have a longer-term impact on the Council.
- 2.3 Based on the budget monitoring exercise undertaken for Q2 and an assessment of the risks and uncertainties facing the Council, the outturn forecast is an adverse variation of £0.263m



Table ESI – Revenue Budget Outturn Forecast (Q2)

	2023/24 Latest Net Budget (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q2 (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Forecast (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)	Movement from Q1
Revenue Budget					
Subtotal Services	17,501	9,194	18,409	908	506
Less: Reversal of accounting adjustments	(1,636)	0	(1,636)	0	0
Revised Subtotal Services	15,866	9,194	16,773	908	506
Corporate Income & Expenditure	(1,503)	(767)	(2,546)	(1,043)	(689)
Provisions and Risk Items	0	0	398	398	(2)
Net Budget Requirement	14,363	8,428	14,625	263	(185)
Funded by:					
Council Tax	(6,311)		(6,311)	0	0
Retained Business Rates	(4,389)	(1,744)	(4,389)	0	0
Government Funding - Grants	(2,905)	(1,530)	(2,905)	0	0
Government Funding - NHB	(290)		(290)	0	0
Collection Fund (surplus) / Deficit	393		393	0	0
TOTAL Funding	(13,503)	(3,274)	(13,503)	0	0
Budget shortfall/(surplus)	861	5,154	1,123	263	(185)

Table ES2 – Revenue Budget – Reconciliation of variations (Q2)

	Positive variation (£'000)	Adverse Variation (£'000)	Movement from Q1 (£'000)
Variations at a glance			
Fees & Charges - Income Shortfall		256	(14)
Overspend - Waste & Recycling containers		50	0
Commercial Property - Rental income shortfall (risk)		75	9
Pay Award (Publica impact)		198	(2)
Pay Award (Ubico impact)		0	(200)
Bad Debt Provision		50	50
Additional Transfer to Reserves (TM Reserve)		150	150
Savings Target shortfall (risk)		250	151
Other service variations		354	296
Ubico Contract forecast overspend (inc Pay Award impact)		173	215
Treasury Management Income	(796)		(596)
Reduced Revenue financing of Capital programme	(203)		(103)
Other Corporate Income and Expenditure	(294)		(140)
Subtotal	(1,293)	1,556	
Net Outturn Variation		263	(185)

2.4 The material forecast variations are listed below with a detailed table of all service variations in Annex A. Please note that the actual spend to date shown in Table ESI differs from the



detailed position shown in Annex A as this adjusts for the timing difference on Housing Benefit Payments.

- Building Control income is below budget with a lower number of applications in quarter one when compared to the same period in prior year (264 applications in Q1 and Q2 2023/24 compared to 315 in Q1 and Q2 2022/23) in part due to continuing financial climate and uncertainty, £110k income shortfall forecast.
- Public Convenience income shortfall due to reduced footfall. Forecast income shortfall of £82k.
- Household waste bins, bags, and containers - overspend forecast of £50k, overspend due to increased demand, increased cost of materials and longer lead times.
- Land charges income is performing below budget with net income received forecast to be £81k below budget at the end of the financial year in part due to the rise in free unofficial personal searches as well as current economic uncertainty leading to a reduced demand.
- Ubico are currently forecasting a net overspend of £134k due to the pay award (£145k adverse) and vehicle costs (£90k adverse), although lower than estimated diesel costs (£95k favourable) reduce the overall forecast position.
- Forecast deficit (£0.255m) on the Leisure and Culture contracts which will be transferred to a new Contract Smoothing reserve – see paragraphs 4.16 to 4.18.

2.5 The adverse income variations outlined above are unlikely to recover over Q3 and Q4 due to longer-term under performance against income budgets in previous financial years. This will need to be addressed for the 2024/25 budget and over the MTFS period.

2.6 The Cabinet Transform Working Group (CTWG) will continue to consider the forecast outturn, financial risks and uncertainties set out in this report. The CTWG will specifically be considering proposals from service delivery partners to contribute to the Council's Savings plans and will be closely monitoring the achievement of savings targets.

2.7 Without any improvement in the forecast outturn for the year, corrective action, or additional savings the outturn variation would have to be met from the Financial Resilience reserve. Clearly, this is not a desirable outcome and further management action must be taken by the Council, Publica and Ubico to mitigate the current forecast position. Members should note that the budgeted use of the Financial Resilience reserve utilised to set a balanced budget was £0.861m. Without mitigating and corrective action, this would increase to £1.124m and is clearly not an acceptable position.

2.8 A summary of the Capital Programme outturn forecast is shown in the table below.



Table ES2 – Capital Programme Outturn Forecast (Q2)

	2023/24 OB (£'000)	2023/24 LAB (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q2 (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Forecast (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)	Movement from Q1 (£'000)
Capital Programme						
Leisure & Communities	1,387	1,391	12	79	(1,312)	(1,312)
Housing/Planning and Strategic Housing	4,001	4,209	2,443	4,765	556	847
Environment	1,956	2,129	159	628	(1,501)	45
Retained & Corporate	0	0	0	0	0	0
ICT, Change and Customer Services	350	415	(0)	100	(315)	0
UK Rural Prosperity Fund	191	191	0	191	0	0
UK Shared Prosperity Fund Projects	28	28	0	28	0	0
Land, Legal and Property	500	870	(0)	567	(303)	(303)
Transformation and Investment	5,486	5,780	157	1,216	(4,564)	0
TOTAL Capital Programme	13,899	15,013	2,770	7,574	(7,439)	(723)

- 2.9** As set out in the *Financial Performance Report 2022/23 Outturn* report to Cabinet in July 2023, slippage of £1.114m from the 2022/23 capital programme has been included in the revised capital programme set out in Table ES2 above. The initial outturn forecast for the current year is an underspend of £7.439m with slippage likely of £3.520m.
- 2.10** The forecast assumes that the Strategic Property Acquisition (included in the summary line Transformation and Investment) will not proceed in the current financial year. With interest rates remaining relatively high, any future acquisition decision will need to be supported by a full business case setting out the wider benefits and financial impact over the immediate and longer-term.
- 2.11** The report outlines several risks and uncertainties regarding the outturn forecast, particularly around income performance assumptions given the volatility.
- 2.12** Financial Sustainability – The 2023/24 revenue budget is held in balance using £0.861m of the Financial Resilience Reserve. It should be noted that without any improvement in the forecast during the year, corrective action, or additional savings the outturn variation would have to be funded from the same reserve at year end. Clearly, this is not a desirable outcome and further management action must be taken by the Council, Publica and Ubico to mitigate the current forecast outturn.



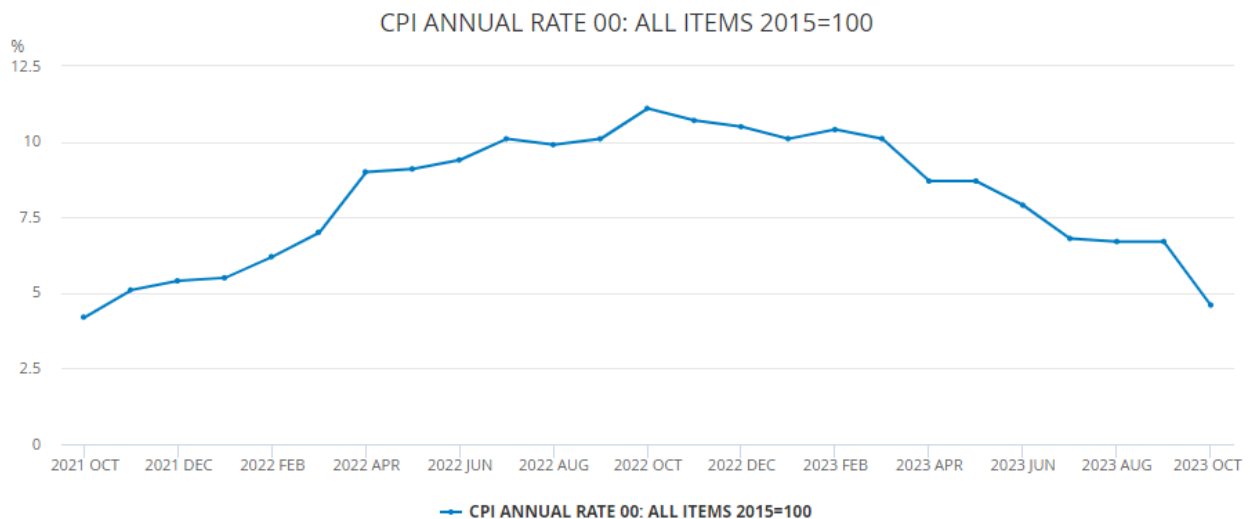
- 2.13 When taken with the 2023/24 Revenue Budget, the Council would be utilising £1.173m of the Financial Resilience reserve to support the budget which is not sustainable over the medium-term.
- 2.14 Financial Performance reports will be presented to members at the March 2024 Cabinet meeting with the outturn position likely to be finalised for the July 2024 Cabinet meeting.

3. EXTERNAL ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

- 3.1 The *2024/25 Budget Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Update* report to Cabinet in November 2023 set out the external economic pressures on the Council.

Inflationary Pressures

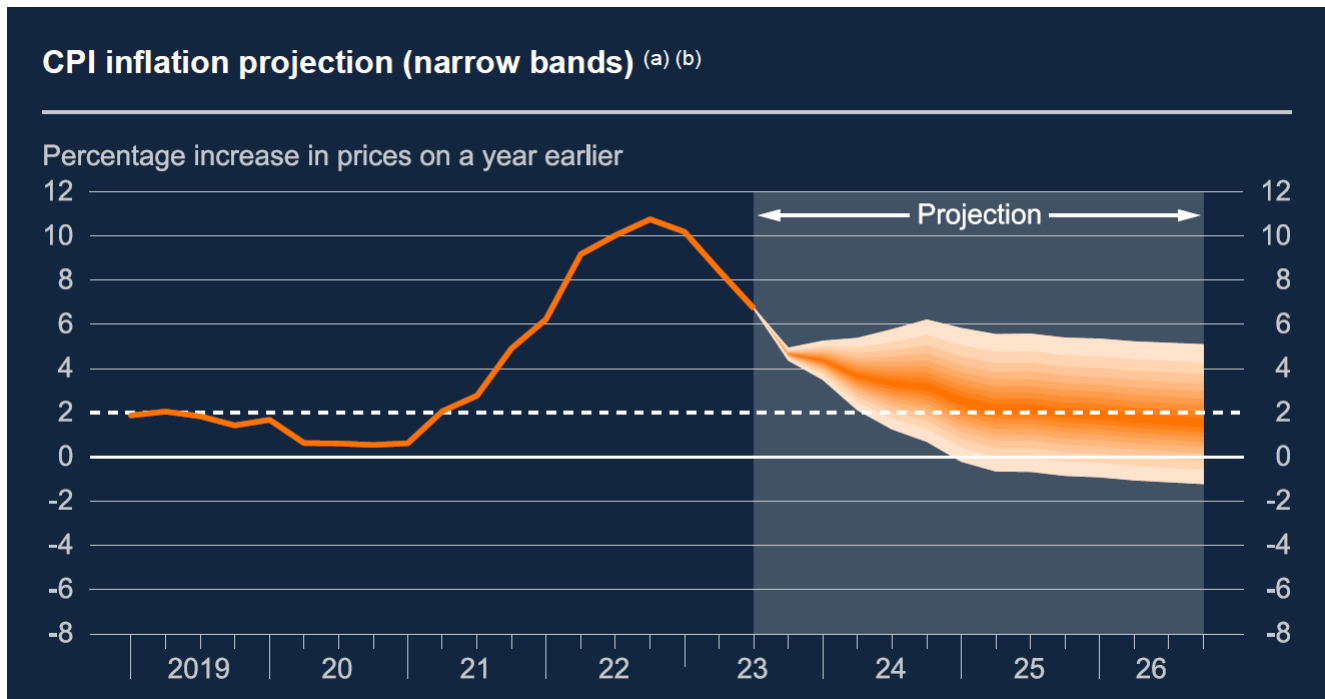
- 3.2 The level of inflation, as measured by the Consumer Prices Index, for October 2023 is 4.6% (down from 6.7% in September 2023). Although it is not the Government's preferred measure of inflation, the Retail Prices Index is 6.1% (8.9% in September 2023). Core inflation (as defined by the Office for National Statistics as the CPI Rate excluding energy, food, alcohol, and tobacco) fell to 5.7% (6.1% in September 2023). It is this measure that has concerned the Bank of England and led to increases in interest rates over the last 18 months.



- 3.3 Although general inflation has reduced since the start of the calendar year, the Council is subject to specific inflationary pressures on its services (e.g., fuel costs on waste and recycling service) which have tended to track higher than CPI and RPI.



- 3.4 The forecast for inflation is for a return towards the Bank of England's target of 2.0% (CPI) although it is worth noting recent commentary suggesting the bank should consider revising the target to 3.0%. The graph below shows the different CPI forecasts that are published in the quarterly Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee report (November 2023).



- 3.5 The continuation of elevated levels of inflation throughout the year and the Bank of England's forecast over the medium-term will need to be considered when assessing the impact on 2024/25 revenue and capital budgets.

Inflationary Pressures – Pay Award

- 3.6 The assumption made for the 2023/24 budget was for an average Pay Award of 4% across Publica, Ubico and Retained staff. Inflationary provision of £1.2m has been included in the budget for the pay award across Publica and Ubico contracts and for retained staff costs.
- 3.7 As notified to the Council on 01 November 2023 agreement was reached on the pay award for 2023/24 based on the Local Government employers final offer from March 2023. With effect from 01 April 2023, the agreed pay award is:
- an increase of £1,925 (pro rata for part-time employees) to be paid as a consolidated, permanent addition on all NJC pay points 2 to 43 inclusive (equating to an increase of between 3.88% and 9.42% depending on the paygrade)

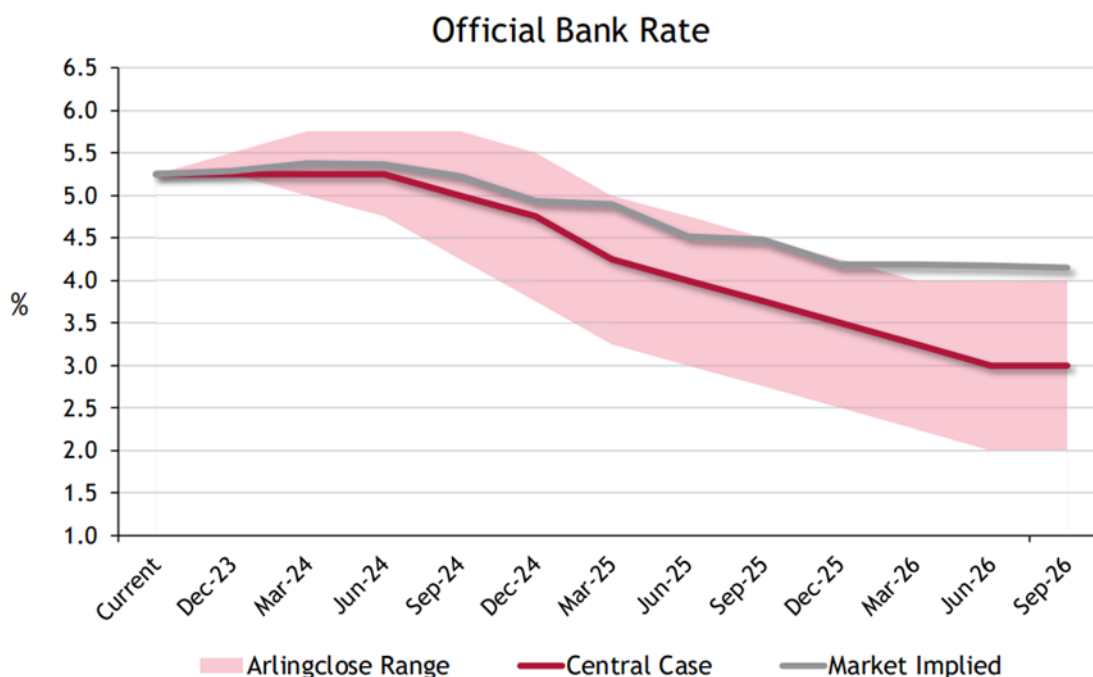


- an increase of 3.88% on all pay points above the maximum of the pay spine but graded below deputy chief officer.
- an increase of 3.88% on all allowances

3.8 As highlighted to members in previous financial reports during the year, the financial implications of the pay awards outlined above is broadly similar in terms of cost when compared to 2022/23 although the Council has allowed for a higher level of pay inflation in the current year's budget. **The additional financial impact of the pay award is £0.342m with the additional cost on the Ubico contract reflected in the service forecast and a provision held 'below the line' for the Publica contract.**

Interest Rates

3.9 The Bank of England has increased interest rates fourteen times since December 2021 to mitigate inflationary pressures with the last increase of 0.25% taking the base rate to 5.25% on 04 August 2023. The MPC voted to maintain rates at 5.25% at their latest meeting on 02 November 2023 (6-3 in favour of maintaining at 5.25% with 3 members voting for a 0.25% increase). The council's treasury management advisors have forecast further increases during the year with an expectation that the base rate may peak at 5.50% to 5.75%. The next MPC meetings are scheduled for 14 December 2023 and 01 February 2024.



3.10 To support the Capital Programme, the Council may need to undertake borrowing during the current financial year although this is dependent on several factors. Clearly, with PWLB



interest rates remaining relatively high compared to the previous 12 years, this will impact the expenditure required to service any borrowing the Council undertakes. The capital financing position is set out in more detail in section 6.7 of this report.

- 3.11 The Council has limited and reducing internal resources to support the capital programme (capital receipts, earmarked reserves). This is not unique to Cotswold District Council with reports in specialist press (e.g., Public Finance) of Councils shelving or scrapping planned capital projects as other costs continue to rise and/or the need to find savings to balance the budget.
- 3.12 With interest rates expected to remain relatively high during the financial year, the Council will need to ensure capital expenditure and capital financing decisions are made 'in the round'. This will ensure that existing and new capital schemes are not considered in isolation and are prioritised against the Council's Corporate Plan and reference to affordability and deliverability.
- 3.13 An updated Asset Management Strategy is being prepared which will review and assess the Council's assets and bring forward recommendations for the retention or disposal of the Council's land and property holdings linked to the Council's Corporate Plan and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). Asset disposals would generate a capital receipt which could be utilised in place of external borrowing. The Asset Management Strategy will be considered by Cabinet in January 2024.

4. 2023/24 REVENUE BUDGET

- 4.1 The Revenue Budget was approved by Council at their meeting on 15 February 2023 with no adjustments made during the financial year to date.

Table 1 – Revenue Budget reconciliation

Budget Item	(£'000)
Original Budget (Council, 15 February 2023)	14,363
Adj:	
Adj:	
Adj:	
Adj:	
Latest Budget	14,363



- 4.2** On 30 September 2023 the Council's is reporting net expenditure of £8.428m against the profiled budget of £8.699m. The financial position is expected to remain challenging during the financial year with the Council facing significant budget pressures as outlined earlier in the report.
- 4.3** The outturn forecast for 2023/24 of £14.626m results in a forecast variance of £0.263m – a reduction of £0.185m against the Q1 forecast. Table 2 provides members with an overview of the significant outturn variations that have been forecast across services with Tables 3 and 4 providing detail on the non-service revenue expenditure and income budgets.

Table 2 – Revenue Budget Outturn Forecast Summary

	2023/24 Latest Net Budget (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q2 (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Forecast (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)	Movement from Q1
Revenue Budget					
Environmental & Regulatory Services	486	302	596	110	(19)
Business Sup. Svcs - Finance, HR, Procurement	1,120	750	1,143	23	23
ICT, Change & Customer Services	2,359	1,126	2,359	0	0
Assets, Property & Regeneration	725	312	751	26	(64)
Publica Executives and Modernisation	131	65	131	0	0
Revenues & Housing Support	615	436	677	62	62
Environmental Services	4,820	2,373	5,101	281	198
Leisure & Communities	1,918	888	2,183	265	230
Planning & Strategic Housing	1,947	984	1,947	0	0
Democratic Services	1,104	821	1,096	(8)	(8)
Retained and Corporate	2,277	1,137	2,426	150	84
Subtotal Services	17,501	9,194	18,409	908	506
Less: Reversal of accounting adjustments	(1,636)	0	(1,636)	0	0
Revised Subtotal Services	15,866	9,194	16,773	908	506
Corporate Income & Expenditure	(1,503)	(767)	(2,546)	(1,043)	(689)
Provisions and Risk Items	0	0	398	398	(2)
Net Budget Requirement	14,363	8,428	14,625	263	(185)
Funded by:					
Council Tax	(6,311)		(6,311)	0	0
Retained Business Rates	(4,389)	(1,744)	(4,389)	0	0
Government Funding - Grants	(2,905)	(1,530)	(2,905)	0	0
Government Funding - NHB	(290)		(290)	0	0
Collection Fund (surplus) / Deficit	393		393	0	0
TOTAL Funding	(13,503)	(3,274)	(13,503)	0	0
Budget shortfall/(surplus)	861	5,154	1,123	263	(185)



Table 3 – Corporate Income and Expenditure

	2023/24 Revised Budget (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q2 (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Forecast (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)	Movement since Q1 (£'000)
Corporate Income and Expenditure					
Contingency	200		120		0
Other non-service expenditure	157		0		0
Other non-service savings	(218)		0		0
Contingency, other non-service income and expendit	139	0	120	(19)	115
Savings & Transformation Items (See Tables 7a and 7b)	(500)		(250)	250	150
Treasury Management - Interest Payable	99	5	14	(86)	(86)
Treasury Management - Interest Receivable	(817)	(758)	(1,613)	(796)	(596)
Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)	17	0	0	(17)	(17)
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO)	200	0	100	(100)	0
Transfer to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	(641)	(14)	(916)	(275)	(255)
	(1,503)	(767)	(2,546)	(1,043)	(689)

Table 4 – Provisions and Risk

	2023/24 Profiled Budget to Q1 (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q2 (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Forecast (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)	Movement since Q1 (£'000)
Provisions and Risk					
Ubico Pay Inflation			0	0	(200)
Additional Transfer to Reserves (TM Reserve)			150	150	150
Bad Debt Provision			50	50	50
Publica Pay Inflation			198	198	(2)
Forecast Risk			0	0	0
	0	0	398	398	(2)

*Ubico pay inflation of £148k included within contract service lines.

Key variations

- 4.4** The forecast outturn position is a net overspend/adverse variance of £0.263m. Whilst this is an improved position compared to Q1, further improvement, corrective action or additional savings are required. Without positive action, the outturn variation would have to be funded from the Financial Resilience reserve at year end. Clearly, this is not a desirable outcome and further management action must be taken by the Council, Publica and Ubico to mitigate the current forecast outturn position. Members should note that the budgeted use of reserve utilised to set a balanced budget was £0.861m. Without mitigating and corrective action this would increase to £1.124m and is clearly not an acceptable position.
- 4.5** Annex A provides a detailed analysis and includes commentary against the most significant variances.



- 4.6** The material items which have had an impact on the Council's revenue budget are summarised below with narrative explaining the reasons(s) for the variation in the paragraphs that follow.
- Forecast underachievement of income – Building Control (£0.110m), Land Charges (£0.081m), Public conveniences (£0.082m)
 - Forecast overspend on the Ubico Contract (£0.134m overspend, £0.011m underlying underspend excluding the pay award)
 - Forecast deficit (£0.255m) on the Leisure and Culture contracts which will be transferred to a new Contract Smoothing reserve – see paragraphs 4.16 to 4.18
 - Commercial Property rental income (£0.075m adverse variation)
 - Pay Award impact (£0.198m adverse) – see paragraphs 3.6 to 3.8 and 4.26.
 - Savings Target Risk (£0.250m adverse) – see Section 5 of the report.
 - Treasury Management and interest receivable performance (£0.796m positive variation)
 - Reduced Revenue financing of Capital programme (£0.202m positive variation)
 - Adjustments for Bad Debt Provision and a proposed additional transfer to earmarked reserves (£0.200m)
- 4.7** Where income shortfalls have been forecast, it is expected that Business Managers and Assistant Directors evaluate options for corrective action. It is unlikely income will recover in the current financial year and may have a detrimental impact on the Council's finances over the medium-term. The evaluation must include an assessment of the service cost and income, market positioning, and unit cost and benchmarking data analysis. Options should outline, if possible, how the service can be financially sustainable.
- 4.8** The building control service operates in a competitive market, although the Council has retained its market share income is below budget with a lower number of applications in quarter one when compared to the same period in prior year (264 applications compared to 315 in Q1+Q2 2022/23) in part due to continuing financial climate and uncertainty, £0.110m income shortfall forecast.
- 4.9** Income from land charges is below budget with net income received forecast to be £80k below budget at the end of the financial year due in part to the rise in free unofficial Personal Searches (through Personal Search Agents). Current economic uncertainty, the rise in interest rates and inflation along with forecasts of falls in house prices into 2023 and 2024 has reduced demand for this service.



- 4.10** Public Convenience income shortfall of £0.082m is forecast due to reduced footfall. One-off expenditure reductions reduce the forecast net overspend to £0.066m. Cabinet approved increases to the service charges for the Council's Public Conveniences from 01 April 2023. The service is subject to a review by Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Public Conveniences Review Group) and is due to report the outcome of the review and recommendations in January 2024.
- 4.11** There is a risk that the Council will not receive the budgeted level of commercial rental income given the challenging economic conditions across retail and office sectors and downward pressure on rents. An income shortfall of £0.075m is currently forecast but will be reviewed alongside the wider Asset Management Strategy.
- 4.12** The Council's Environmental Services (grounds maintenance, street cleaning, domestic waste collection, recycling collections etc.) are provided by Ubico Ltd. The contract with Ubico for 2023/24 of £8.275m is currently estimated to cost £8.415m – a net overspend of £0.134m. This is predominantly due to the impact of the pay award (£0.145m overspend), additional costs associated with vehicle repairs and vehicle hire (£0.089m overspend) and other minor budget overspends (£0.020m). This is offset by a reduced volume and cost of fuel (£0.192m underspend) which is lower than the assumed cost included in the budget).
- 4.13** The tables below provides members with an overview of the financial performance of the Ubico Contract (Table 5a) and non-Ubico expenditure and income from fees and charges (Table 5b)

Table 5a – Ubico Contract Outturn Forecast (Q2)

Waste, Recycling, Street Cleaning and Grounds Maintenance Services	Ubico Contract Costs OB (£'000)	Ubico Contract Costs CS (£'000)	Outturn Forecast (£'000)	Outturn Variance (£'000)
WST004 Bulky Household Waste	0	0	0	0
Car Parks GM [CTW668]	63	63	68	4
CCM001 Cemetery/Churchyards GM [CTW688]	175	175	188	12
RYC002 Garden Waste Collection [CTW634]	1,315	1,316	1,383	67
WST001 Household Waste [CTW611]	1,622	1,623	1,703	80
RYC001 Recycling [CTW633]	2,933	2,935	2,939	4
RYC003 Refuse/Recycling/Food Waste [CTW635]	685	686	645	(41)
STC001 Street Cleaning [CTW666]	1,465	1,466	1,472	6
Trinity Road Offices GM [CTW668]	16	16	17	1
Grand Total	8,275	8,281	8,415	134
Less: Pay Award impact				(145)
Net variation on contract (excluding Pay Award)				(10)



Table 5b – Ubico, Non-Ubico, Fees & Charges performance (Q2)

	Gross Service Cost LAB (£'000)	Income LAB (£'000)	Net Service Cost (£'000)	Exp ⁿ Forecast (£'000)	Income Forecast (£'000)	Net Service Forecast (£'000)	Net Service Variation (£'000)
Waste, Recycling, Street Cleaning and Grounds Maintenance Services							
WST004 Bulky Household Waste	57	(79)	(22)	57	(79)	(22)	0
Car Parks GM [CTW668]	63	0	63	68	0	68	4
CCM001 Cemetery/Churchyards GM [CTW688]	175	0	175	188	0	188	12
RYC002 Garden Waste Collection [CTW634]	1,353	(1,301)	52	1,419	(1,301)	118	67
WST001 Household Waste [CTW611]	1,781	(24)	1,757	1,911	(24)	1,887	130
RYC001 Recycling [CTW633]	3,245	(950)	2,295	3,249	(950)	2,299	4
RYC003 Refuse/Recycling/Food Waste [CTW635]	686	0	686	645	0	645	(41)
STC001 Street Cleaning [CTW666]	1,504	0	1,504	1,510	0	1,510	6
Trinity Road Offices GM [CTW668]	16	0	16	17	0	17	1
Grand Total	8,880	(2,353)	6,527	9,064	(2,353)	6,711	184

4.14 Performance against the Ubico Savings Target is outlined in Section 5 of this report.



- 4.15** Household waste bins and receptacles – an overspend is forecast of £50k, due to increased demand, increased cost of materials and longer lead times. As part of the 2024/5 budget setting review, revenue and capital budget provision will be updated to reflect underlying demand and consideration of developer contributions.
- 4.16** The contract with Freedom Leisure to operate the Council’s Leisure and Cultural services commenced in August 2023 for an initial period of 10 years. In common with contracts of this type, there is an uneven profile of payments to and from the operator over the duration of the contract. The forecast for 2023/24 is for a deficit (payment from the Council to the operator) of £0.255m and this is reflected in the net adverse variance of £0.230m for the Leisure and Communities summary line in Table 2.
- 4.17** Based on operator forecasts submitted with tender documentation, the Council will need to set aside adequate funding from the financial resilience reserve in the first five years of the contract, with a surplus on the contract (payment from the operator to the Council) in the remaining years of the contract term.
- 4.18** Therefore, it is recommended that an earmarked reserve is established (Contract Smoothing reserve) that is linked to the Financial Resilience reserve to smooth the cashflow over the contract term and minimise the impact on the revenue budget one year from the next. It is proposed to transfer this forecast deficit of £0.255m to the earmarked reserve.

Treasury Management

- 4.19** Dividends from the Council’s longer-term investments (Pooled funds and Real Estate Investment Trusts) of £0.281m were received in the first half of the financial year achieving a return of over 4% (pooled funds) and around 3% (REIT). Interest from short term cash deposits with the Debt Management Office (DMO) was £0.288m by the end of the second quarter due to larger surplus balances than estimated being available to invest and interest rates rising at higher rate than budgeted. Investment income is forecast to be £0.796m higher than budgeted at the end of the financial year. The table below provides members with a high-level overview of the Council’s Treasury Management investments on 30 September 2023.



Table 6 – Treasury Management Investments on 30 September 2023

Investment type	Balance invested at 30/09/23 (£'000)	Investment Income received to 30/09/23 (£'000)	2023/24 Forecast (£'000)
Bank of England DMDAF	15,087	288	641
Money Market Funds			
Federated Money Market Fund	3,013	63	136
DGLS Money Market Fund	0	55	122
Insight Liquidity Money Market Fund	10	35	86
Lloyds Instant Access		51	89
Real Estate Investment Trusts (REIT)			
Fundamentum Housing REIT	997	14	29
Cash Plus Fund			
Federated Cash Plus Fund	1,122	0	0
Pooled Funds			
CCLA Property Fund	2,212	56	103
Shroders Income Maximiser Fund	782	41	63
CCLA Diversified Income Fund	936	18	34
M&G UK Income Fund	1,723	66	100
Investec Diversified Fund	1,766	40	78
Columbia Threadneedle Bond Fund	1,821	45	74
	29,469	774	1,556

4.20 With the expectation of improved investment returns during the financial year, it was agreed at July Cabinet that any additional investment income above the budgeted level is transferred to a new earmarked reserve (“Treasury Management Risk”) to manage higher borrowing costs in the short-term and to mitigate potential changes to the accounting treatment of gains and losses on pooled funds from March 2025.

4.21 Council approved the Capital Strategy and the Treasury Management Strategy (including the Non-Treasury Management Investment Strategy) at their meeting on 15 February 2023. Audit and Governance Committee have responsibility for reviewing and monitoring treasury management arrangements in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code and



receiving performance reports. The Council adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Council to approve, as a minimum, treasury management semi-annual and annual outturn reports.

4.22 The CIPFA Code was updated in 2021 and includes the new requirement, mandatory from 01 April 2023, of quarterly reporting of the treasury management prudential indicators. The non-treasury prudential indicators are expected to be included in the Council's usual revenue and capital monitoring reports. Section 7 and Annex C of this report provides members with an overview on the non-treasury position.

4.23 Audit and Governance Committee considered the mandatory mid-year Treasury Management report at their meeting on 30 November 2023.

Corporate Income and Expenditure, Provisions and Risk

4.24 As outlined in Tables 3 and 4 there are several significant variations forecast across the Corporate Income and Expenditure budgets. These budgets support the General Fund Revenue budget and are typically the non-service items such as Treasury Management, financing, contingency budget, and provisions for risk.

4.25 Paragraphs 4.19 highlighted the performance of the Council's Treasury Management Investments, largely due to the higher than anticipated interest rates. The outturn forecast is additional income of £0.796m.

4.26 With the strong performance of Treasury Management Investments, it is recommended that £0.150m is transferred to the Treasury Management Reserve to mitigate the potential change to accounting treatment of Pooled Funds from March 2025.

4.27 The Council has in prior years financed ICT capital expenditure from the revenue budget – typically around £0.200m per annum. With the outturn forecast on ICT Capital indicating expenditure of £0.100m for the year the forecast for the revenue contribution (RCCO) has been matched leading to an underspend of £0.100m. Members will need to consider how ICT Capital expenditure should be financed in future years given the budget gap forecast in 20204/25 and over the MTF5 period.

4.28 The 2023/24 revenue budget includes a net transfer from earmarked reserves of £0.625m to fund specific related expenditure – predominantly around new burdens and homelessness. A



further £20k transfer from the Transformation and Investment Programme reserve is proposed to fund external consultancy commissioned by Ubico to support the delivery of future savings and efficiencies.

4.29 As outlined in paragraph 4.23 and 4.18 above it is recommended that;

- a transfer of £0.150m is transferred to the Treasury Management Reserve to mitigate the potential change to accounting treatment of Pooled Funds from March 2025.
- A provisional transfer of £0.255m is made to a newly established “Contract Smoothing” earmarked reserve to transfer the forecast deficit in respect of the leisure and culture contract in 2023/24.

4.30 An allowance of £0.198m is included in Table 4 recognising the Publica element pay award impact the revenue budget. The impact of the pay award on Ubico costs has already been included in the service revenue expenditure forecasts.

4.31 A contingency budget is held centrally to mitigate any in-year cost pressures from inflation or other unforeseen events. This is reported as uncommitted to in-part offset the pay award risks highlighted in the paragraphs above.

4.32 The 2023/24 revenue outturn forecast includes an allowance to increase the bad debt provision by £50k to reflect the increased probability of sundry, council tax and business rate debtors remaining unpaid because of the cost-of-living crisis and recessionary pressures on the economy.

5. SAVINGS AND TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME DELIVERY

5.1 The 2023/24 Revenue Budget includes savings, cost reduction and additional income of £1.510m to mitigate budget pressures and to enable a balanced budget to be achieved. This included third party contract savings (£0.500m), expenditure savings (£0.456m), additional income from fees and charges (£0.415m), and corporate savings (£0.139m).

5.2 Savings proposals were reviewed to ensure they were robust and could be delivered. There is always a risk with a savings programme – savings may not be delivered in full or on time. Close monitoring of the savings programme through the Cabinet Transform Working Group (CTWG) and through the quarterly financial performance reporting is important to highlight any issues and for action to be taken to bring savings or the budget back in line.



- 5.3** This section sets out the current forecast position on the delivery of the savings agreed as part of the revenue budget identifying any issues and options available to the Council to address under delivery.
- 5.4** CTWG's role is primarily to receive regular updates on progress against the Council's Savings and Transformation programme (including Publica and Ubico savings and efficiencies targets) as part of an ongoing strategy to mitigate the budget gap, any further adverse variation that may arise during the year, and to assess proposals for 2024/25 and later financial years.
- 5.5** Table 7a provides members with a summary of position at the end of Q2.



Table 7a – Savings Update

	2023/24 Budget Removed (£'000)	Tracker	2023/24 Forecast Position (£'000)	2023/24 Variation (£'000)	Movement since Q1 (£'000)
Savings already adjusted out of Service Budgets					
Corporate Savings					
LGPS - Secondary Rate (PIA) (Budget savings)	(139)	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(139)	0	0
Expenditure Savings					
Remove permanent funding for Crowdfunding platform	(85)	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(85)	0	0
Insurance Premium	(47)	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(30)	17	0
Rationalisation of Postage	(20)	Slippage in Savings Delivery	(11)	9	0
Rationalisation of MFDs (Multifunction Devices)	(25)	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(25)	0	0
Google / MS 365 Procurement proposal	(10)	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(10)	0	0
Publica Contract - Net change in Establishment	(67)	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(67)	0	0
Visitor information centre funding reduction	(27)	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(27)	0	0
Internal audit days reduction	(20)	Slippage in Savings Delivery	0	20	0
Planning Appeals Budget	(40)	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(40)	0	0
Recycling Budget Adjustments	(16)	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(16)	0	0
Household Waste Budget adjustments	(9)	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(9)	0	0
Recycling Credits	(90)	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(90)	0	0
Fees and Charges					
Other Fees and Charges - Cost Recovery	(186)	Slippage in Savings Delivery	(122)	64	20
Garden Waste - fee increase	(229)	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(229)	0	0
	(1,010)		(900)	110	20



- 5.6** The forecast in Table 7a indicates £0.900m of the £1.010m savings already adjusted out of the revenue budget (89.1%) will be achieved. £0.110m (10.9%) is off-target and is largely due to under-performance of fees and charges income (Public Conveniences, Land Charges, Cemeteries) as outlined earlier in the report. Expenditure savings arising from lower Insurance Premiums have been achieved, although this is below the anticipated level. A reduction in the level of audit days is not likely to take effect until 2024/25 due to notice periods required to make significant changes to the agreement with South West Audit Partnership (SWAP).
- 5.7** Table 7b provides members with an update on the performance against the Publica and Ubico savings targets (third party contract savings). Several savings initiatives were identified as part of the 2023/24 budget setting process and were reviewed at Publica and Ubico shareholder forums. These initiatives have been developed and scoped in more detail with the recent Council decision on Contact Centre hours illustrating the outcome from the due diligence process.

Table 7b – Savings Update

Savings & Transformation Items [Savings held 'below the line']	2023/24 Original Saving Target (£'000)	2023/24 Forecast Savings (£'000)	2023/24 Variation (£'000)	Movement since Q1 (£'000)
Savings held 'below the line'		0	0	
Publica Savings	(250)		250	250
Contact Centre		(50)	(50)	(50)
WFP: Cabinet Support Officer		(32)	(32)	(32)
WFP: Pensions		(25)	(25)	(25)
Agile Working		(36)	(36)	(36)
One-off Savings		(107)	(107)	(107)
Subtotal Publica	(250)	(250)	0	0
Ubico/ESIP Savings	(250)	0	250	100
Other Corporate Savings		0	0	0
Additional in-year savings (as per Tracker)		0	0	0
Item 1				0
Item 2				0
	(500)	(250)	250	100



- 5.8 The forecast on the identification and delivery of savings against targets indicates Ubico savings (£0.250m) will not be delivered in the current financial year. As set out in section 4 of this report, the outturn forecast on the contract is a net over spend of £0.134m (£0.011m underspend when the pay award is excluded). An update on the strategic options available to the Council on mitigating the current overspend position and/or cost reduction measured will be provided to CTWG in November and December.
- 5.9 Publica savings proposals against the £0.250m target are broadly in-line with the operating model set out in the Publica Business Plan 2022-2025 document ([link to Publica Business Plan](#)). Savings and efficiencies continue to be monitored and challenged through CTWG for robustness in terms of deliverability and the wider business case.

6. CAPITAL PROGRAMME

- 6.1 Council approved the Capital Programme for 2023/24 at their meeting on 15 February 2023. Cabinet approved the carry forward of unspent Capital budgets of £1.114m in the Financial Performance Report 2022/23 Outturn report to Cabinet in July 2023. The revised capital programme for 2023/24 is £15.013m. Given the budget profile of some of these schemes there has been a relatively low level of expenditure over Q1 and Q2 with a net total spend of £2.770m (£1.179m when the service loan is excluded).

Table 8 – Capital Programme budget reconciliation

Capital Programme Reconciliation	(£'000)
Original Budget (Council, 15 February 2023)	13,899
Slippage from 2022/23 (Cabinet, 17 July 2023)	1,114
Adj:	
Adj:	
Adj:	
Latest Budget	15,013



Table 9 – Capital Programme Outturn Forecast Q2

Capital Programme	2023/24 OB (£'000)	2023/24 LAB (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q2 (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Forecast (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)	Movement from Q1 (£'000)
Leisure & Communities	1,387	1,391	12	79	(1,312)	(1,312)
Housing/Planning and Strategic Housing	4,001	4,209	2,443	4,765	556	847
Environment	1,956	2,129	159	628	(1,501)	45
Retained & Corporate	0	0	0	0	0	0
ICT, Change and Customer Services	350	415	(0)	100	(315)	0
UK Rural Prosperity Fund	191	191	0	191	0	0
UK Shared Prosperity Fund Projects	28	28	0	28	0	0
Land, Legal and Property	500	870	(0)	567	(303)	(303)
Transformation and Investment	5,486	5,780	157	1,216	(4,564)	0
TOTAL Capital Programme	13,899	15,013	2,770	7,574	(7,439)	(723)

6.2 As set out in the Financial Performance Report 2022/23 Outturn report to Cabinet in July 2023, slippage of £1.114m from the 2022/23 capital programme has been included in the revised capital programme set out in the table above. The outturn forecast for the current year is an underspend of £7.439m with slippage likely of £3.520m.

6.3 A summary of the key activity and variations forecast to date is provided below with Annex B providing a detailed overview of expenditure and explanation for variances against the capital programme.

6.4 The forecast assumes that the Strategic Property Acquisition (included in the summary line Transformation and Investment) will not proceed in the current financial year. With interest rates remaining relatively high, any future acquisition decision will need to be supported by a full business case setting out the wider benefits and financial impact over the immediate and longer-term.

6.5 At their meeting on 31 October 2023 Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended that the Capital Programme should be kept under review to ensure the revenue impact of capital expenditure and financing decisions were fully considered.

Capital Receipts and Disposals

6.6 The Council received a capital loan repayment of £0.295m from Cottsway Housing in Q2 2023/24 in line with the terms of the unsecured development loan facility. The Council did not make any asset disposals during Q1 and Q2 2023/24.



Table 10 – Capital Financing Statement Forecast Q2

Capital Financing Statement	2023/24 OB (£'000)	2023/24 LAB (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Forecast (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)
Capital receipts	8,036	8,469	5,512	(2,957)
Capital Grants and Contributions	1,576	1,907	1,546	(361)
Earmarked Reserves	0	0	0	0
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (F	150	150	50	(100)
Community Municipal Investments (CMI)	116	466	466	0
Prudential Borrowing	4,021	4,021	0	(4,021)
	13,899	15,013	7,574	(7,439)

- 6.7 The Capital Financing position set out in the table above will be reviewed by the s151 Officer during the year as expenditure forecasts are updated to ensure a balanced use of capital resources and mitigation of current and future interest rates.

7. NON-TREASURY MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

- 7.1 The CIPFA Code was updated in 2021 and includes the new requirement, mandatory from 01 April 2023, of quarterly reporting of the treasury management prudential indicators. The non-treasury prudential indicators are expected to be included in the Council's usual revenue and capital monitoring reports.

Prudential Indicators

- 7.2 The detailed Non-Treasury Management prudential indicators are included in Annex C with the commentary below providing members with a high-level summary.
- 7.3 With the lower level of capital expenditure forecast for the financial year, this will reduce the underlying need to borrow. The mid-year Treasury Management report to Audit and Governance Committee will set out the wider impact on the Capital Financing Requirement.



8. RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

8.1 The report outlines several risks and uncertainties around the wider economic environment. Some further risks are briefly outlined below.

- Assumptions made in the forecast are based on projections for inflation and interest rates. Uncertainty remains around Government policy, volatility of GBP (£) against other currencies, interaction between increased UK interest rates and the level of inflation.
- This report includes initial forecasts for income from fees and charges and this remains a risk to the Council given the impact of higher prices, energy costs on the cost of living, and the impact of recessionary pressures on the economy. This may lead to reduced demand for council services and hence lower income from fees and charges.
- The Council is dependent on several key partners (e.g., Ubico, Publica, Freedom Leisure) for the delivery of core Council services and may be more exposed to fluctuations in income and expenditure. Any additional income or expenditure pressures would increase the financial pressure facing the Council and would need to be funded through reserves or savings found elsewhere.
- Publica Review – At their meeting on 02 November 2023, Cabinet recommended that Council approve the recommendations set out in the Publica Review report undertaken by Human Engine. The report highlighted the need for a transition plan (to be reported to Cabinet and Council in the new year) and the completion of extensive due diligence. For the purposes of this report, it is worth highlighting the uncertainty around the level and profile of costs required to support the due diligence process. A notional £0.200m has been allocated from the Council Priorities Fund and this will be reviewed once the transition plan has been completed to ensure the adequate one-off resources are made available.
- Publica Review – The Human Engine report identified the preferred option of returning the majority of services to the Council. There is a risk over the remainder of the financial year to service delivery outcomes (ability to provide services at current levels if staff turnover increases) and to costs (increased cost associated with agency/interim staff). The impact from the review outcomes will need to be kept under scrutiny over the coming weeks. As with many insourcing and transformation projects, there is an increased level of uncertainty amongst staff.

9. CONCLUSIONS

9.1 This monitoring report presents an update on the Council's financial position. As the report sets out, an overspend of £0.263m is forecast for the financial year which. Without mitigating or corrective action this would be financed from the Financial Resilience Reserve at year end



which is not considered appropriate given the scale of the financial challenge over the MTFS period.

- 9.2 Cabinet will continue to consider the impact of the forecast outturn and the impact on earmarked reserves as part of their oversight of the savings and transformation programme.
- 9.3 It is recommended that Cabinet review in-year opportunities with Publica and Ubico and provide an update in February as part of the *2024/25 Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Medium-Term Financial Strategy Report* on options to mitigate the financial position as currently forecast across the MTFS period.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The financial implications are set out in this report.

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Under Part 2 Local Government Act 2003, the Council must, from time to time during the year review the calculations it has used to set its budget. The Council's Chief Financial Officer is required to report to the Council on the robustness of estimates made for the purposes of calculating the annual budget, and on the adequacy of proposed financial reserves. Members must have regard to that report when making decisions about the calculations in connection with which it is made.

12. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 12.1 Section 8 of this report sets out the financial risks and uncertainties.

13. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 13.1 None.

14. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 Considered within this report.



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

15.1 None

(END)

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Revenue Outturn Q2 For 01/04/2023 to 30/09/2023									
Service Area	Original Budget (£)		Budget (£)		Actual (£)		Under / Over Budget (£)	Forecast Variance (£)	Comments
	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Net Variance		
Environmental & Regulatory Services	£1,113,820	-£628,920	£548,173	-£293,307	£534,386	-£232,382	£47,137	£110,000	Underachievement of Building Control Income Forecast overspend on SWAP Internal Audit Services
Business Support Services - Finance, HR, Procurement ICT, Change & Customer Services	£2,325,541	-£1,205,522	£1,131,660	-£386,793	£1,132,426	-£382,698	£4,860	£23,000	
	£2,436,054	-£77,526	£1,164,676	-£42,736	£1,181,543	-£55,694	£3,908		
	£1,357,561	-£639,878	£656,299	-£328,699	£668,127	-£356,306	-£15,778	£26,280	Land Charge Income underachievement (£80k) overachievement of unbudgeted tenant service income (£55k)
Assets, Property and Regeneration Publica Executives and Modernisation	£131,136	£0	£65,073	£0	£65,010	£0	-£63		
	£13,212,034	-£12,597,115	£6,541,305	-£6,120,673	£7,359,204	-£6,923,287	£15,284	£62,000	Rental income from hostels lower than budgeted due to period of closure during refurbishment, higher than estimated. HB overpayments recovered lower than estimated.
Revenues & Housing Support									
	£10,922,585	-£6,119,588	£6,029,836	-£3,703,789	£6,002,222	-£3,629,157	£47,018	£281,155	Ubico pay rise in excess of budget (£145k), £11k underspend on remainder of Ubico contract, £60k underachievement of public convenience income, underachievement of cemetery income (net £47k overspend)
Environmental Services									
	£1,941,972	-£24,021	£1,006,548	-£79,577	£1,056,847	-£168,795	-£38,919	£265,001	Dual Use Agreement CPI increase (£10k). Leisure and Culture contract £255k in excess of budget for year one of contract, to be funded from earmarked reserves.
Leisure & Communities Planning & Strategic Housing Democratic Services	£2,908,344	-£961,795	£1,586,430	-£597,717	£1,993,057	-£1,008,478	-£4,134		
	£1,140,111	-£25,905	£787,548	£956	£862,726	-£42,021	£32,200	-£8,430	
	£3,383,593	-£1,467,099	£1,822,990	-£773,052	£1,907,747	-£980,693	-£122,884	£378,490	Savings unachieved, included £250k Ubico savings target. Rental Income from Wilko unachieved due to liquidation and closure. Bank Charges higher than estimated, currently under review with merchant acquirer.
Retained and Corporate Services									
Cost of Services (Gross)	£40,872,751	-£23,747,369	£21,340,539	-£12,325,386	£22,763,295	-£13,779,512	-£31,370	£1,137,495	
Cost of Services (Net)		£17,125,382		£9,015,153		£8,983,782			

Revenue Outturn Q2									
For 01/04/2023 to 30/09/2023									
Service Area	Original Budget (£)		Budget (£)		Actual (£)		Under / Over Budget (£)	Forecast Variance	Comments
	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Net Variance	(£)	
Publica Pay Increase in Excess of Budget	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£198,000	Publica pay increase in excess of budget
Treasury Management - Interest Payable	£99,485	£0	£49,743	£0	£5,908	£0	-£43,835	-£85,823	No further external borrowing undertaken or expected in second half of the financial year.
Treasury Management - Interest Recivable	£13,000	-£830,316	£6,500	-£359,424	£15,777	-£774,124	-£405,424	-£796,000	£836k investment income, £40k under achievement of loan int.
Minimum Revenue Provision	£16,607	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	-£16,607	MRP not required as capital expenditure not funded via borrowing
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO)	£200,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	-£100,000	Capital expenditure funded by revenue estimated to be £100k in 2023/24.
Reversal of Depreciation/Amortisation		-£1,635,591	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Increase in Bad Debt Provision	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£50,000	Increase in Bad Debt Provision
Transfer (from) to/Reserves	£0	-£625,102	£0	-£14,054	£0	-£14,054	£0	-£125,000	Investment (£20k Ubico) £150k transfer to Treasury
General Government Grants		-£3,195,635	£0	-£1,530,452	£0	-£1,530,452	£0	£0	
Council Tax Income		-£6,308,796	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Non Domestic Rates Income and Expenditure		-£3,998,000	£0	-£2,772,415	£0	-£1,744,078	£1,028,337		
(Surplus)/Deficit		£861,034	£21,396,782	-£17,001,731	£22,784,979	-£17,842,220	£547,708	£262,065	

Environmental & Regulatory Services									
For 01/04/2023 to 30/09/2023									
Cost Centre Description	Original Budget (£)		Budget (£)		Actual (£)		Under / Over Budget (£)	Forecast Variance	Comments
	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Net Variance	(£)	
Building Control - Fee Earning Work	£189,206	-£360,000	£91,898	-£180,000	£92,657	-£124,823	£55,935	£110,000	Building control is retaining market share, however number of apps is down. Income is below target due to the current financial climate. With the uncertainty on inflation and interest rates etc., this is likely to continue throughout the financial year. For the period April to September 264 applications were received compared to 315 for the same period last year. Small saving from terminated SLA with GCC to be used to fund admin support post in second half of 23/24.
Building Control - Non Fee Earning Work	£60,144	£0	£29,356	£0	£29,358	£0	£2		
Dangerous Structures	£2,500	£0	£1,250	£0	£710	£0	-£540		
Building Control	£251,850	-£360,000	£122,504	-£180,000	£122,725	-£124,823	£55,398	£110,000	
Emergency Planning	£24,904	£0	£12,375	£0	£7,167	£0	-£5,208		
Environment - Service Management and Support Services	£108,961	£0	£54,481	£0	£55,457	£0	£977		
Private Sector Housing - Condition of Dwellings	£191	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0		
Home Energy Conservation	£135	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0		
Licensing	£231,751	-£213,920	£114,624	-£81,807	£115,532	-£83,415	-£700		
Environmental Protection	£214,368	-£53,000	£104,070	-£30,500	£98,972	-£21,085	£4,317		
Pollution Control	£142,043	£0	£72,067	£0	£67,215	£0	-£4,852		
Food Safety	£137,944	-£2,000	£67,303	-£1,000	£67,207	-£2,259	-£1,355		
Health & Safety At Work	£0	£0	£0	£0	£112	£0	£112		
Statutory Burials	£1,591	£0	£750	£0	£0	£0	-£750		
Abandoned Vehicles	£82	£0	£0	£0	£0	-£800	-£800		
Public Protection	£861,970	-£268,920	£425,669	-£113,307	£411,660	-£107,559	-£8,260	£0	
Environmental & Regulatory Services	£1,113,820	-£628,920	£548,173	-£293,307	£534,386	-£232,382	£47,137	£110,000	

Business Support Services - Finance, HR, Procurement									
For 01/04/2023 to 30/09/2023									
Cost Centre Description	Original Budget (£)		Budget (£)		Actual (£)		Under / Over Budget (£)	Forecast Variance	Comments
	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Net Variance	(£)	
S & S Holding Account	£0	£0	£0	£0	£2,801	-£2,801	£0		Overspend on SWAP internal audit services.
Accountancy	£438,383	-£39,120	£215,042	£0	£205,709	£0	-£9,333		
Creditors	£119,144	-£63,580	£57,357	£0	£56,274	£0	-£1,083		
Debtors	£60,710	-£15,480	£28,140	£0	£27,060	£0	-£1,080		
Insurances	£67,856	-£53,690	£33,928	£0	£33,930	£0	£2		
GO Support and Hosting	£63,219	-£50,360	£31,610	£0	£31,775	£0	£166		
Accountancy	£749,312	-£222,230	£366,077	£0	£357,549	-£2,801	-£11,329		
Internal Audit	£93,121	-£22,217	£46,560	£0	£58,004	£0	£11,444	£23,000	
	£513,181	-£513,182	£241,794	-£174,748	£233,240	-£166,195	-£0		
Glos. Counter Fraud Unit									
Audit	£606,302	-£535,399	£288,354	-£174,748	£291,244	-£166,195	£11,443	£23,000	
Human Resources	£618,281	-£298,760	£304,258	-£149,380	£310,818	-£149,380	£6,560		
Health & Safety	£37,906	£0	£18,802	£0	£19,385	£0	£583		
Training & Development	£141,211	-£61,580	£69,347	-£30,790	£67,957	-£30,790	-£1,390		
Human Resources	£797,398	-£360,340	£392,407	-£180,170	£398,161	-£180,170	£5,754		
Payroll	£105,808	-£63,750	£51,462	-£31,875	£50,124	-£31,875	-£1,338		
Payroll	£105,808	-£63,750	£51,462	-£31,875	£50,124	-£31,875	-£1,338		
Central Purchasing	£66,721	-£23,803	£33,360	£0	£35,349	-£1,658	£331		
Procurement	£66,721	-£23,803	£33,360	£0	£35,349	-£1,658	£331		
Business Support Services - Finance, HR, Procurement	£2,325,541	-£1,205,522	£1,131,660	-£386,793	£1,132,426	-£382,698	£4,860	£23,000	

ICT, Change & Customer Services									
For 01/04/2023 to 30/09/2023									
Cost Centre Description	Original Budget (£)		Budget (£)		Actual (£)		Under / Over Budget (£)	Forecast	Comments
	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Net Variance	Variance (£)	
Business Improvement/Transformation	£125,418	£0	£62,083	£0	£62,082	£0	-£1		
Business Continuity Planning	£22,277	£0	£10,011	£0	£10,014	£0	£3		
Freedom of Information Act	£12,221	£0	£6,111	£0	£6,108	£0	-£3		
Street Naming	£10,352	-£25,000	£5,025	-£12,500	£6,195	-£12,262	£1,409		
Business Transformation	£170,268	-£25,000	£83,230	-£12,500	£84,399	-£12,262	£1,408		
Moreton-in-Marsh, Offices	£95,605	-£29,861	£40,304	-£19,491	£42,714	-£24,921	-£3,021		
FOH - Moreton	£116,657	-£3,665	£56,885	-£1,245	£56,758	-£111	£1,006		
Moreton - Stock Trading a/c	£0	£0	£0	£0	£739	-£3,844	-£3,106		
	£624,024	£0	£310,587	£0	£310,308	-£41	-£319		
FOH - Trinity Road									
Customer Services	£836,286	-£33,526	£407,776	-£20,736	£410,518	-£28,917	-£5,440		
ICT	£1,318,774	-£19,000	£618,307	-£9,500	£614,369	-£4,349	£1,213		
Application Support	£110,726	£0	£55,363	£0	£72,257	-£10,167	£6,727		
ICT	£1,429,500	-£19,000	£673,670	-£9,500	£686,626	-£14,516	£7,940		
ICT, Change & Customer Services	£2,436,054	-£77,526	£1,164,676	-£42,736	£1,181,543	-£55,694	£3,908		

Assets, Property and Regeneration										
For 01/04/2023 to 30/09/2023										
Cost Centre Description	Original Budget (£)		Budget (£)		Actual (£)		Under / Over Budget (£)	Forecast Variance (£)	Comments	
	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Net Variance			
Trinity Road, Offices	£645,376	-£368,692	£305,494	-£190,444	£306,978	-£250,485	-£58,558	-£55,000	£40k underspend on Elec and Gas currently offsetting overspends on Business Rates and Programmed R&M consisting of Lighting Upgrades at Trinity Road (£16k) and Chamber cooling installation (£29k). The underspend is actually an overachievement of income due to service charges of £55k not budgeted for.	
Moreton-in-Marsh, Offices - Maintenance	£34,907	£0	£17,453	£0	£11,691	£0	-£5,763			
Property and Estates Projects	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0			
Corinium Museum - Maintenance	£31,750	£0	£15,875	£0	£788	£0	-£15,087			
Housing Enabling Properties	£8,004	-£22,481	£3,740	-£13,903	£34,807	-£11,827	£33,143			
22/24 Ashcroft Road	£10,500	£0	£5,250	£0	£1,209	£0	-£4,041			
Asset Management	£730,537	-£391,173	£347,813	-£204,347	£355,472	-£262,313	-£50,306	-£55,000		
Local Land Charges	£124,531	-£248,705	£60,583	-£124,353	£69,675	-£93,993	£39,451	£81,280		Underachieved land charge income. Expected slump in housing market due to mortgage rates will have impact plus resource issues within service causing delays and loss of customers to the private sector.
Land Charges	£124,531	-£248,705	£60,583	-£124,353	£69,675	-£93,993	£39,451	£81,280		
Property Services	£502,493	£0	£247,903	£0	£242,980	£0	-£4,924			
Property Services	£502,493	£0	£247,903	£0	£242,980	£0	-£4,924			
Assets, Property and Regeneration	£1,357,561	-£639,878	£656,299	-£328,699	£668,127	-£356,306	-£15,778	£26,280		

Publica Executives and Modernisation									
For 01/04/2023 to 30/09/2023									
Cost Centre Description	Original Budget (£)		Budget (£)		Actual (£)		Under / Over Budget (£)	Forecast Variance (£)	Comments
	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Net Variance		
2020 Vision	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0		
Chief Executive	£131,136	£0	£65,073	£0	£65,010	£0	-£63		
Managing Director & Support	£131,136	£0	£65,073	£0	£65,010	£0	-£63		
Publica Executive and Modernisation	£131,136	£0	£65,073	£0	£65,010	£0	-£63		

Revenues & Housing Support									
For 01/04/2023 to 30/09/2023									
Cost Centre Description	Original Budget (£)		Budget (£)		Actual (£)		Under / Over Budget (£)	Forecast Variance (£)	Comments
	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Net Variance		
Rent Allowances	£12,530,146	-£12,105,831	£6,261,330	-£6,023,798	£6,664,724	-£6,431,329	-£4,138	£35,000	Overpayments recovered is £35k below budget. £14k of debtors re previous yrs has also been w/of
Benefit Fraud Investigation	£0	£0	£0	£0	£9	£0	£9		
Benefits	£12,530,146	-£12,105,831	£6,261,330	-£6,023,798	£6,664,733	-£6,431,329	-£4,129	£35,000	
Homelessness	£115,634	-£76,266	£57,806	-£38,133	£140,265	-£114,719	£5,874		Rental income lower than budgeted due to closure between 24.04-19.06.23 and HB overpayments from prior yrs reclaimed. Refurbishment work to the Croft to be funded from reserves.
Refugees	£19,129	-£19,129	£9,564	-£9,564	£266,512	-£271,567	-£5,056		
Homelessness Hostel Accommodation	£29,062	-£35,500	£4,902	-£17,750	£14,374	-£6,978	£20,244	£15,000	
Temporary Emergency Accommodation	£107,584	-£62,856	£37,402	-£31,428	£27,558	-£31,830	-£10,246		
Private Sector Housing Grants	£31,855	£0	£15,927	£0	£15,948	£0	£21		
Housing Management	£303,264	-£193,751	£125,602	-£96,875	£464,658	-£425,094	£10,837	£15,000	
Council Tax Collection	£295,021	-£89,000	£113,715	£0	£174,033	-£47,909	£12,409	£12,000	Civica System Maintenance higher than budgeted
SNDR Collection	£66,836	-£208,533	£32,516	£0	£49,028	-£18,954	-£2,442		
Concessionary Travel	£16,767	£0	£8,143	£0	£6,396	£0	-£1,747		
Security Carriers	£0	£0	£0	£0	£357	£0	£357		
Revenues	£378,624	-£297,533	£154,373	£0	£229,814	-£66,864	£8,577	£12,000	
Revenues & Housing Support	£13,212,034	-£12,597,115	£6,541,305	-£6,120,673	£7,359,204	-£6,923,287	£15,284	£62,000	

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Environmental Services										
For 01/04/2023 to 30/09/2023										
Cost Centre Description	Original Budget (£)		Budget (£)		Actual (£)		Under / Over Budget (£)		Forecast Variance (£)	Comments
	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Net Variance			
Car Parks	£994,207	-£2,990,972	£516,152	-£1,567,657	£513,597	-£1,491,453	£73,650	£3,735		
Car Parks - Maintenance	£35,700	£0	£17,850	£0	£22,572	£0	£4,722	-£2,110		
Car Parks - Tetbury The Chippings	£39,075	-£54,000	£19,537	-£23,000	£12,421	-£24,917	-£9,033	-£1,875		
Car Parks - Chipping Campden	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	-£18,007	-£18,007	£540		
Bourton on the Water Tourism Levy	£50,000	-£50,000	£31,690	-£32,000	£19,188	-£29,240	-£9,742	-£4		
Car Parking	£1,118,982	-£3,094,972	£585,229	-£1,622,657	£567,778	-£1,563,616	£41,590	£286		

Environmental Services									
For 01/04/2023 to 30/09/2023									
Cost Centre Description	Original Budget (£)		Budget (£)		Actual (£)		Under / Over Budget (£)		Comments
	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Net Variance	Forecast Variance (£)	
Cemetery, Crematorium and Churchyards	£177,940	-£136,830	£99,504	-£68,415	£101,191	-£58,734	£11,367	£51,062	Income from cemetery fees lower than budgeted (£32k) . Ubico Contract: Increase of £18k due to pay inflation and the cost of weed spraying.
Cemeteries - Maintenance	£26,520	£0	£13,260	£0	£31,713	£0	£18,453		Reactive repairs during the first half of the year have resulted in an overspend - resurfacing, replacement roller shutter door, roof repairs and repairs to memorials. This budget is part of the councils wider BMF and any overspend will be funded from underspends elsewhere in the BMF.
Waste - Cemeteries	£0	£0	£0	£0	£578	-£2,836	-£2,257		
Animal Control	£49,287	-£17,505	£24,424	-£8,753	£12,885	-£385	-£3,172	-£5,462	Net underspend for year due to no longer providing pest control service.
Public Conveniences	£277,351	-£110,055	£123,267	-£78,335	£80,200	-£32,672	£2,597	£65,669	£80k underachievement of income. Offset by duplicate accrual for March 23' cleaning contract and £2k one off Business Rate Refund relating to prior period.
Recycling	£3,243,553	-£949,783	£1,804,307	-£379,743	£1,797,313	-£379,848	-£7,098	-£2,706	Ubico Contract: Increase of £4k due to pay inflation offset by lower diesel costs. £7k underspend on minor contractors fees.
Green Waste	£1,359,603	-£1,301,000	£786,523	-£1,298,500	£786,807	-£1,329,669	-£30,885	£66,753	Ubico Contract: Increase of £67k due to pay inflation, vehicle hire costs and repairs, partially offset by lower diesel costs. Savings have been made for Green Waste due to reducing loaders on the garden waste rounds, however the service is currently experiencing higher repairs, maintenance and hire costs. This is due to an aging fleet that is due to be replaced imminently.
Refuse / Recycling Organic & Food Waste	£841,351	-£156,000	£464,788	-£65,000	£465,196	-£61,204	£4,204	-£40,534	Ubico Contract: Underspend of £41k due to pay inflation offset by lower diesel costs.
Street Cleaning	£1,506,055	£0	£874,907	£0	£874,904	£0	-£3	£6,094	Ubico Contract: Increase due to pay inflation offset by savings generated through lower diesel costs, resource management and agency usage.
Household Waste	£1,789,781	-£23,780	£1,023,228	-£11,890	£1,063,177	-£6,890	£44,948	£139,993	Ubico Contract: Increase due to pay inflation £33k partially offset by lower diesel costs. A potential overspend of £60k on household waste bins and receptacles is estimated this year. This is due to increased demand, increased costs of materials and longer lead times. This will be reviewed as part of the 24/25 budget setting process.
Bulky Household Waste	£72,537	-£78,537	£36,269	-£39,269	£39,628	-£60,893	-£18,265		
House-Stow Fair	£11,553	£0	£1,352	£0	£4,815	£0	£3,463		
South Cerney Depot, Packers Leaze	£105,772	-£228,466	£22,007	-£114,233	£32,299	-£114,570	£9,955		
Environmental Services Client	£9,461,303	-£3,001,956	£5,273,834	-£2,064,137	£5,290,705	-£2,047,701	£33,306	£280,869	

Environmental Services										
For 01/04/2023 to 30/09/2023										
Cost Centre Description	Original Budget (£)		Budget (£)		Actual (£)		Under / Over Budget (£)		Forecast Variance (£)	Comments
	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Net Variance			
Climate Change	£119,264	£0	£59,621	£0	£60,583	£0	£962			
Climate Change	£119,264	£0	£59,621	£0	£60,583	£0	£962			
Land Drainage	£122,619	-£22,660	£61,152	-£16,995	£57,955	-£17,840	-£4,041			Underspend on 'other contractors fees' & Qrt3 income included in period 6
Flooding	£122,619	-£22,660	£61,152	-£16,995	£57,955	-£17,840	-£4,041			
							£0			
Environmental Strategy	£100,417	£0	£50,000	£0	£25,201	£0	-£24,799			Underspend on Clean and Green Grant Scheme. Funded from CPF, unspent budget will be held within reserves.
Waste & Recycling Policy	£100,417	£0	£50,000	£0	£25,201	£0	-£24,799		£0	
Environmental Services	£10,922,585	-£6,119,588	£6,029,836	-£3,703,789	£6,002,222	-£3,629,157	£47,018		£281,155	

Leisure & Communities									
For 01/04/2023 to 30/09/2023									
Cost Centre Description	Original Budget (£)		Budget (£)		Actual (£)		Under / Over Budget (£)	Forecast Variance (£)	Comments
	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Net Variance		
Consultation, Policy & Research	£98,103	£0	£56,434	£0	£56,178	£167	-£89		
Corporate Planning	£98,103	£0	£56,434	£0	£56,178	£167	-£89		
Corinium Museum	£284,621	£0	£44,375	£0	£44,461	-£433	-£347	£7,000	Freedom Culture contract in excess of budget, balance to be funded from reserves
Collection Management	£8,102	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0		
Northleach Resouce Centre	£19,953	£0	£8,250	£0	£0	£0	-£8,250		
Ciren - Centre Management	£561,975	£0	£183,162	£0	£177,466	£0	-£5,696	£248,000	Freedom Leisure contract in excess of budget, balance to be funded from reserves
Ciren - Dryside Areas	£12,021	-£24,021	£0	-£16,725	£0	-£17,284	-£560		
Cirencester Leisure - Maintenance	£33,000	£0	£16,500	£0	£7,894	£0	-£8,606		
C Campden - Centre Management	£114,231	£0	£62,538	£0	£72,539	£0	£10,001	£10,001	Increase in dual use agreement, CPI
Bourton - Centre Management	£142,108	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0		
Bourton - Maintenance	£43,000	£0	£21,500	£0	£0	£0	-£21,500		
Leisure Management	£1,219,011	-£24,021	£336,325	-£16,725	£302,360	-£17,718	-£34,958	£265,001	
Health Policy	£28,426	£0	£13,817	£0	£12,720	£0	-£1,097		
Community Liaison	£113,150	£0	£56,246	£0	£52,651	£0	-£3,595		
Youth Participation	£128,646	£0	£50,760	£0	£50,760	£0	-£0		
Health Development	£56,994	£0	£309,976	£32,820	£309,976	£32,820	£0		
Community Welfare Grants	£173,019	£0	£107,402	£0	£107,353	£0	-£49		
SPF Community and Place	£0	£0	£0	£0	£5,350	-£5,350	£0		
SPF Supporting Local Businesses	£0	£0	£0	£0	£70,995	-£70,995	£0		
Community Liaison	£500,235	£0	£538,201	£32,820	£609,805	-£43,525	-£4,741		Budget adjusted to reflect lower than estimated transfer from reserves for Cotswold Crowdfund.

Leisure & Communities									
For 01/04/2023 to 30/09/2023									
Cost Centre Description	Original Budget (£)		Budget (£)		Actual (£)		Under / Over Budget (£)	Forecast Variance (£)	Comments
	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Net Variance		
Community Safety (Crime Reduction)	£25,203	£0	£12,378	£0	£13,244	£0	£867		
Community Safety	£25,203	£0	£12,378	£0	£13,244	£0	£867		
Tourism Strategy and Promotion	£16,376	£0	£8,188	£0	£8,190	£0	£2		
Partnership Grants	£27,000	£0	£27,000	£0	£27,000	£0	£0		
Cotswold Tourism Partnership	£56,044	£0	£28,022	-£95,672	£33,184	-£100,834	-£0		
Tourism Discover England Fund - Project	£0	£0	£0	£0	£6,885	-£6,885	-£0		
Cotswolds Plus LVEP	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0		
Tourism Policy	£99,420	£0	£63,210	-£95,672	£75,259	-£107,719	£2		
Leisure & Communities	£1,941,972	-£24,021	£1,006,548	-£79,577	£1,056,847	-£168,795	-£38,919	£265,001	

Planning & Strategic Housing For 01/04/2023 to 30/09/2023									
Cost Centre Description	Original Budget (£)		Budget (£)		Actual (£)		Under / Over Budget (£)	Forecast Variance	Comments
	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Net Variance	(£)	
Development Control - Applications	£980,451	-£894,877	£486,247	-£447,438	£506,198	-£478,138	-£10,748		£25k overachieved on Planning Apps, £8k underachieved on Pre-App Advice
Development Control - Appeals	£94,119	£0	£46,685	£0	£47,686	£0	£1,002		
Development Control - Enforcement	£209,750	£0	£103,870	£0	£103,872	£0	£2		
Development Advice	£373,591	£0	£185,255	£0	£185,256	£0	£2		
Planning Advice For Land Charges	£12,714	£0	£6,257	£0	£6,258	£0	£2		
Planning - Section 106 Agreements	£0	£0	£0	£0	£261,325	-£261,325	-£0		
Development Services Holding Account	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0		
Development Management	£1,670,625	-£894,877	£828,313	-£447,438	£1,110,595	-£739,463	-£9,742		
Heritage & Design	£246,394	-£25,818	£133,808	-£39,716	£126,181	-£29,348	£2,741		
SC111 - Habitat Regulation Assessment	£0	£0	£0	-£71,126	£0	-£71,126	£0		
Heritage & Conservation	£246,394	-£25,818	£133,808	-£110,842	£126,181	-£100,474	£2,741		
Housing Advice	£308,614	£0	£159,558	£0	£159,847	£0	£289		
Housing Strategy	£166,843	£0	£74,540	£0	£74,544	£0	£4		
Housing Partnerships	£27,506	£0	£13,575	£0	£13,572	£0	-£3		
Strategic Housing	£502,963	£0	£247,673	£0	£247,963	£0	£290		
Community Infrastructure Levy	£72,824	-£40,000	£36,412	-£38,887	£163,089	-£164,835	£729		
Local Development Framework	£374,723	-£100	£179,875	-£50	£179,015	-£72	-£882		
Fwd Plan work for Dev Con	£18,606	£0	£9,197	£0	£9,198	£0	£1		
Local Development Framework Reserve	£0	£0	£137,924	£0	£137,924	£0	-£0		
Planning - Service Management and Support Services	£22,209	-£1,000	£13,230	-£500	£19,094	-£3,635	£2,730		
Planning Policy	£488,362	-£41,100	£376,637	-£39,437	£508,319	-£168,541	£2,578		
Planning & Strategic Housing	£2,908,344	-£961,795	£1,586,430	-£597,717	£1,993,057	-£1,008,478	-£4,134		

Democratic Services									
For 01/04/2023 to 30/09/2023									
Cost Centre Description	Original Budget (£)		Budget (£)		Actual (£)		Under / Over Budget (£)	Forecast Variance (£)	Comments
	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Net Variance		
Committee Services	£124,185	£0	£49,302	£0	£51,751	-£560	£1,889		6X Annual Subs - budget WP adjusted accordingly - includes LGIU annual sub with no budget
Corporate Subscriptions	£21,980	£0	£21,980	£0	£25,550	£0	£3,570	£3,570	
Committee Services	£146,165	£0	£71,282	£0	£77,301	-£560	£5,459	£3,570	
Press & PR/Communications	£101,333	£0	£25,969	£0	£30,613	£0	£4,644		Overspend postage to be recharged across services.
Postal Services	£25,036	£0	£12,518	£0	£23,834	£0	£11,316		
Communications	£126,369	£0	£38,487	£0	£54,447	£0	£15,960		
Registration of Electors	£17,000	£0	£37,087	£0	£37,087	-£2,952	-£2,952		
District Elections	£0	£0	£221,078	£0	£221,078	£0	£0		
Elections Support/Overheads	£152,923	-£1,880	£76,098	-£940	£108,223	-£33,227	-£162		
Parliamentary Elections	£0	£0	£0	£0	£18	£0	£18		
Parish Elections	£5,000	-£2,000	£0	-£1,000	£5,532	-£12,127	-£5,595	-£12,000	Election costs recharged to Parish Council
Police & Crime Commissioner Elections	£0	£0	£0	£13,909	£0	£13,909	£0		
Elections	£174,923	-£3,880	£334,263	£11,969	£371,939	-£34,397	-£8,690	-£12,000	
Democratic Representation and Management	£131,537	£0	£65,757	£0	£66,617	£0	£859		
Councillors Allowances	£333,185	£0	£167,597	£0	£173,526	£0	£5,929		
Servicing Council	£4,361	£0	£10,856	£0	£13,763	£0	£2,907		
Member Support	£469,083	£0	£244,210	£0	£253,905	£0	£9,696		
Printing Services	£223,571	-£22,025	£99,307	-£11,013	£105,134	-£7,064	£9,776		
Print & Design	£223,571	-£22,025	£99,307	-£11,013	£105,134	-£7,064	£9,776		
Democratic Services	£1,140,111	-£25,905	£787,548	£956	£862,726	-£42,021	£32,200	-£8,430	

Retained and Corporate Services										
For 01/04/2023 to 30/09/2023										
Cost Centre Description	Original Budget (£)		Budget (£)		Actual (£)		Under / Over Budget (£)	Forecast Variance (£)	Comments	
	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Net Variance			
Commercial Properties - General	£15,468	-£160	£7,710	-£80	£1,955	-£497	-£6,172		Scaffolding, wall repairs undertaken at Old Station.	
Old Memorial Hospital (inc Cottages)	£17,887	-£7,265	£4,892	-£4,229	£3,952	-£4,229	-£940			
Dyer Street	£0	-£120,000	£0	-£60,000	£0	-£60,000	£0			
Old Station	£21,571	£0	£7,323	£0	£42,457	£0	£35,134	£35,000		
Brewery Court, Arts & Niccol Centre	£294	-£56,142	£0	-£42,107	£4,077	-£44,409	£1,775			
GCC Depot, Chesterton Lane	£1,053	-£2,015	£0	-£1,488	£0	-£45	£1,443			
Abberley House/44 Black Jack St.	£30,580	-£87,339	£13,387	-£54,653	£5,599	-£45,634	£1,232			
Compton House	£1,500	-£14,626	£750	-£8,532	£0	-£8,532	-£750			
1st Floor Church Rms, Bourton-on-the-Water	£120	-£4,570	£0	-£3,397	£0	-£3,256	£142			
Bourton VIC	£1,567	-£8,000	£0	-£6,667	£0	-£6,000	£667			
Wilkinson's West Bromich	£6,006	-£89,635	£2,438	-£66,942	£0	-£34,792	£29,713	£75,335		Under achievement of income due to closure of Wilko store. Forecast overspend represents lost rental income , NNDR liability, security and installation/removal costs.
Superdrug Hereford	£652	-£62,155	£0	-£51,250	£0	-£46,125	£5,125			
Esco's Seaford	£1,098	-£93,180	£0	-£69,251	£743	-£68,935	£1,059			
27 -27A Dyer Street	£21,421	-£128,777	£10,000	-£63,811	£3,351	-£59,552	-£2,391			
Discretionary Pension Payments	£1,632,916	£0	£816,458	£0	£822,935	£0	£6,477	£12,954	Discretionary pension payments higher than estimated.	
Parish Council Precepts	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0			
Corporate I&E	£1,752,133	-£673,864	£862,957	-£432,407	£885,068	-£382,005	£72,512	£123,289		

2023/09/27

Retained and Corporate Services									
For 01/04/2023 to 30/09/2023									
Cost Centre Description	Original Budget (£)		Budget (£)		Actual (£)		Under / Over Budget (£)	Forecast Variance	Comments
	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Net Variance	(£)	
Corporate Finance	£115,123	£0	£57,136	£0	£109,668	-£51,818	£714		
External Audit Fees	£96,368	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	-£0	£3,000	Additional fee for IAS19 pension work as part of 21/22 audit.
Bank Charges	£61,065	£0	£30,533	£0	£46,032	£0	£15,500	£30,000	Bank charges higher than estimated. Currently under review with merchant acquirer.
Savings and Growth Items	-£398,818		£0	£0	£62,927	-£51	£62,875	£229,818	£250k savings from Ubico unlikely to be achieved in 2023/24. Posts funded from contingency. £20k underspend on contingency.
Publica Group	£575,836	-£537,864	£287,918	-£268,932	£287,918	-£479,999	£156,726		
Strategic Directors	£661,417	£0	£329,767	£0	£323,858	£0	-£5,909		
Legal	£394,107	-£166,982	£189,798	-£71,713	£141,562	-£64,544	-£41,067		Underspend on staff costs to be utilised to fund a locum lawyer within team to assist with backlog.
CDC Counter Fraud Unit	£104,124	-£88,389	£53,762	£0	£45,527	-£1,200	-£9,435		
Corporate Management	£1,609,222	-£793,235	£948,914	-£340,645	£1,017,492	-£597,613	£179,405	£262,818	
Corona Virus	£22,238	£0	£11,119	£0	£11,615	£0	£496		
Business Lockdown Grants	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0		
Contain Outbreak Management Fund	£0	£0	£0	£0	£113	£0	£113		
Restart Grants	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0		Repayment to BEIS
COMF - Licencing	£0	£0	£0	£0	-£7,617	£0	-£7,617	-£7,617	Accrual for Agency staff costs from 22/23 funded from vacancies in Publica base budget.
COMF - DHSC	£0	£0	£0	£0	£1,075	-£1,075	£0		
	£22,238	£0	£11,119	£0	£5,186	-£1,075	-£7,008	-£7,617	
Retained and Corporate Services	£3,383,593	-£1,467,099	£1,822,990	-£773,052	£1,907,747	-£980,693	£244,910	£378,490	

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Annex B - Capital Programme 2023/24 - Q.2

Capital Programme by Service Area	2023/24 Budget [Incl. 22/23 slippage] (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q2 (£'000)	2023/24 Variance to Q2 (£'000)	2023/24 Committed Expenditure (£'000)	2023/24 Forecast Out-Turn (£'000)	Commentary
Leisure and Communities						
Investment in Leisure Centres	1,200	10	(1,190)	0	50	The Capital project has commenced and is at the design phase. Majority of Expenditure will fall into 2024/25.
CLC Pool Works	110	0	(110)	0	0	This scheme is to address flaking paint from the steel structural support in the Cirencester Lesiure Centre pool area. Property services are working with the Councils leisure contractor, Freedom Leisure. Due to the specialist nature of the work involved and materials required, currently scoping for a potential contractor following unsuccessful procurement process. These works are likely to be aligned with the timelines of Freedom Leisures proposed capital works in 2024/25.
Government funded decarbonisation	27	0	(27)	0	27	Final payment due in Q.3 - Snagging and system performance being reviewed with installation contractor.
Crowdfund Cotswold	54	2	(52)	0	2	The sixth edition of Crowdfund Cotswold concluded in September with four projects actively seeking community contributions, while an additional three are in the verification process. These projects offer a diverse thematic and geographical range, addressing issues from climate change to children's play provision in both the North and South of the district. The Spacehive funding platform hold a balance of £21k which will be used to fund the current projects.

Annex B - Capital Programme 2023/24 - Q.2

Capital Programme by Service Area	2023/24			2023/24 Committed Expenditure (£'000)	2023/24 Forecast Out-Turn (£'000)	Commentary
	Budget [Incl. 22/23 slippage] (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q2 (£'000)	2023/24 Variance to Q2 (£'000)			
Housing/Planning and Strategic Housing						
Private Sector Housing Renewal Grant (DFG)	908	561	(347)	250	1,300	There are 72 live cases, 19 of which have been approved with committed expenditure of £250k. It is anticipated that the majority of the remaining 53 cases are likely to be completed this financial year resulting in a further £1m of expenditure. With another 100 referrals expected to be received in the next nine months it is likely that the annual expenditure will exceed £1.3m. Further funding will be requested from the BetterCare fund (via the County Council) to meet the expected overspend.
Affordable Housing - Davies Road MiM (S106)	581	290	(291)	290	290	50% 'Start on Site' tranche grant was transferred to Cottsway Housing Association in Q.2. The following 50% will be transferred upon notification of completion which is currently expected to be during Q.2 2024/25.
Cottsway Housing Association Loan	2,600	1,591	(1,009)	1,464	3,055	Capital loan provided to Cottsway Housing Association. Forecast based on latest drawdown forecast to 31/3/24. Repayments of £1.247m forecast by 31/3/24. Leaving an estimated loan balance due to the Council at 31/3/23 of £1.808m
Bromford Joint Venture Partnership	120	0	(120)	0	120	The Council and Bromford Housing have entered into a Collaboration Agreement to deliver the Down Ampney housing development. The submission for planning consent is scheduled to be submitted in Q.3.

Annex B - Capital Programme 2023/24 - Q.2

Capital Programme by Service Area	2023/24 Budget [Incl. 22/23 Actuals to slippage] (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q2 (£'000)	2023/24 Variance to Q2 (£'000)	2023/24 Committed Expenditure (£'000)	2023/24 Forecast Out-Turn (£'000)	Commentary
Environment						
Waste & Recycling receptacles	55	50	(5)	0	55	Rolling budget for the purchase of waste receptacles due to growth in properties or replacements. This budget will be utilised in full during this financial year.
Litter Bin Replacement	10	0	(10)	0	0	Review of service currently underway. Expenditure not likely until 2024/25.
Provision for financing of Ubico Vehicles	1,646	79	(1,567)	1,064	343	Two replacement vehicles for the Street Cleansing fleet have now been recieved [£79k]. A further eight vehicles are on order, two for Street Cleansing [£224k] and one bin delivery vehicle [£40k], delivery is expected during Q.3. Five RCVs [Rear Compaction Vehicles] [£1,064] which will be delivered during 2024/25. The budget will be committed in full by the end of this financial year, however due to lead times, it's unlikely that any further expenditure will be recognised before the end of the year.
Electric Vehicle Charging Points	200	0	(200)	91	91	4 EVCPs have been installed at Trinity Road specifically for service vehicles. 16 EVCP's are scheduled for installation, 8 at Rissington Road car park and 8 at Trinity Road offices. There has been a delay with installation and communication is ongoing with the supplier. It is now expected that all works will commence during Q.3 with completion by the end of Q.4.
Car Park enforcement - vehicle purchase	45	0	(45)	0	0	A vehicle is currently being leased. The procurement of an electric vehicle is likely in 2024/25.
Public Toilets - Card Payment (bc)	50	0	(50)	16	16	A purchase order has been placed for installation of card readers at the following public toilet locations within the district: Stow Square, Maugersbury Road [Stow], Forum, Brewery Court and London Road [Cirencester], Bibury, Moreton-in-Marsh and Fairford. Installation is scheduled to take place during the course of Q.3.
Changing Places Toilets	123	30	(93)	93	123	Funding allocated to the Council from DLUHC to install four accessible 'Changing Places' toilets across the district for people with severe disabilities. The Changing Places Toilet Facilities are complete at Cotswold Farm Park and Abbey Grounds, Cirencester with Birdland due to start in the coming month. Cotswold Country Park and Beach is in the planning and procurement stages and will be delivered early in 2024.

Annex B - Capital Programme 2023/24 - Q.2

Capital Programme by Service Area	2023/24			2023/24 Committed Expenditure (£'000)	2023/24 Forecast Out-Turn (£'000)	Commentary
	Budget [Incl. 22/23 slippage] (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q2 (£'000)	2023/24 Variance to Q2 (£'000)			
Retained and Corporate: ICT, Change and Customer Services						
ICT Capital	215	0	(215)	45	100	Networking equipment that was ordered in January 2022 has now been received following delays due to world-wide computer chip shortages. Expenditure expected in Q.3. There is committed expenditure for replacement servers for disaster recovery and the ongoing laptop replacement programme.
Planning Documents and Scanning Solution	200	0	(200)	0	0	Awaiting an options paper for the replacement/upgrade of the IDOX system.
UK Rural Prosperity Fund Projects	191	0	(191)	191	191	Funding is phased over two years £191k in 2023/24 and £573k in 2024/25. Over the two years, the funding is allocated £410k capital grants to businesses and £354k for community related capital projects. Any underspend at the end of each financial year will need to be returned to government. Progress is ongoing with all existing projects and all the projects are now in contractual agreements or in the final stages of procurement. The majority of the spend for these projects is expected in Q3 & Q4, with all the projects continuing into year 3 (2024/25). Cotswold currently has an expressions of interest [EOI] open for the remaining funding and discussions are already underway with stakeholders and project promoters developing the additional people and skill schemes for year 3 (2024/25).
UK Shared Prosperity Fund Projects	28	0	(28)	28	28	Funding has been allocated to supporting the town centres, community and neighbourhood infrastructure, improving green spaces, active travel and impactful volunteering. All funding has to be spent/committed by the end of this financial year. Progress is ongoing with all existing projects and all the projects are now in contractual agreements or in the final stages of procurement/recruitment. The majority of the spend for these projects is expected in Q3 & Q4, with all the projects continuing into year 3 (2024/25).

Annex B - Capital Programme 2023/24 - Q.2

Capital Programme by Service Area	2023/24			2023/24 Committed Expenditure (£'000)	2023/24 Forecast Out-Turn (£'000)	Commentary
	Budget [Incl. 22/23 slippage] (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q2 (£'000)	2023/24 Variance to Q2 (£'000)			
Land, Legal and Property						
Trinity Road Carbon Efficiency Works (Council March 2022)	370	0	(370)	210	370	The proposal for Solar PV on Trinity Road Council offices went to Cabinet and then on to Full Council in July with a resolution of approval of the funding.
Asset Management Strategy	500	0	(500)	500	197	This £500K budget is for investment in existing assets and will likely include structural repairs at The Old Station, cost estimate £200K but awaiting tenders [Council report in Q4], expenditure not expected until 2024/25. Works have commenced on the roof at Trinity Road, where it has been identified that water has penetrated the substructure and needs to be replaced. This will result in additional costs of approx. £84k.
Transformation and Investment						
Tetbury Homeless Property (Cabinet May 2022)	294	0	(294)	16	90	The refurbishment of the laundry room on the ground floor of the annex at Ridgeway House is now complete. Invoices expected during Q.3
Trinity Road Agile Working (Council March 2022) <i>[Includes Trinity Road Roof Repairs]</i>	1,126	157	(969)	308	1,126	Agile: Refurbishment of the east side of the building is largely complete. New desk layouts in place and staff moves to the east atrium are complete. Refurbishment continues in the west side of the building. Main atrium and bistro refurb will be completed once the roof works are complete and scaffolding removed. Roof: Cost of roof repairs will increase due to water penetration of the substructure, estimate is £84k and will be funded from the Asset Management Strategy capital budget.
Strategic Property Acquisition	4,360	0	(4,360)	0	0	It is currently assumed that this acquisition will not proceed in the current financial year.
	15,013	2,770	(12,243)	4,566	7,574	

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**ANNEX C
NON-TREASURY MANAGEMENT PRUDENTIAL
INDICATORS**



The Council measures and manages its capital expenditure, borrowing and commercial and service investments with reference to the following indicators. It is now a requirement of the CIPFA Prudential Code that these are reported on a quarterly basis.

Capital Expenditure

Cotswold District Council has undertaken and is planning capital expenditure as summarised below

	2022/23 actual (£)	2023/24 forecast (£)	2024/25 budget (£)	2025/26 budget (£)
Capital Expenditure				
General Fund services	2,969,737	4,519,000	2,318,000	1,277,000
Capital investments	1,591,000	3,055,000	0	0

The main General Fund capital projects to date have included expenditure on Disabled Facilities Grants. The Council also incurred £1.591m of capital expenditure in the form of a service loan provided to Cottsway Housing Association.

Capital Financing Requirement

The Council's cumulative outstanding amount of debt finance is measured by the capital financing requirement (CFR). This increases with new debt-financed capital expenditure and reduces with Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) and capital receipts used to replace debt.

	31/03/2023 actual (£)	31/03/2024 forecast (£)	31/03/2025 budget (£)	31/03/2026 budget (£)
Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)				
General Fund services	20,211	486,000	2,900,000	2,800,000
Capital investments	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CFR	20,211	486,000	2,900,000	2,800,000

Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement

Statutory guidance is that debt should remain below the capital financing requirement, except in the short term. The Council has complied and expects to continue to comply with this requirement in the medium term as is shown below.

	31/03/2023 actual (£)	31/03/2024 forecast (£)	31/03/2025 budget (£)	31/03/2026 budget (£)	Debt at 30.9.2023 (£)
Gross Debt and CFR					
Debt (incl. PFI & leases)	450,757	356,000	2,800,000	2,600,000	404,515
Capital Financing Requirement	20,211	486,000	2,900,000	2,800,000	

In the table above, the closing position of the CFR for 2022/23 was lower than the level of debt. This is referred to as an "over borrowed" position and is forecast to change based on the capital expenditure plans set out above. The Council's debt position at 31/03/2023 reflects the balance remaining of the Cotswold Climate Investment (£500,000 target was reached in August 2022). The need for further borrowing will be kept under review.

**ANNEX C
NON-TREASURY MANAGEMENT PRUDENTIAL
INDICATORS**



The Cotswold Climate Investment was not purely a treasury decision and the “over borrowed” position can be seen as a timing difference between achieving the investment in 2022 ahead of planned expenditure in 2023/24 and 2024/25. The Council has mitigated the cost of holding this debt through treasury management investments of the cash balance (achieved >5% with the Government’s Debt Management Office (DMO) which is significantly above the interest payable of 2.1% on the Climate Investment.)

Debt and the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary

The Council is legally obliged to set an affordable borrowing limit (also termed the Authorised Limit for external debt) each year. In line with statutory guidance, a lower “operational boundary” is also set as a warning level should debt approach the limit.

Debt, Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary	Maximum Debt Q2 2023/24 (£)	Debt as at 30/09/2023 (£)	2023/24 Authorised Limit (£)	2023/24 Operational Boundary (£)	Complied ? Yes/No
Borrowing	10,000,000	404,515	10,000,000	10,000,000	Yes
PFI and Finance Leases	0	0	0	0	Yes
TOTAL Debt	10,000,000	404,515	10,000,000	10,000,000	

Since the operational boundary is a management tool for in-year monitoring it is not significant if the boundary is breached on occasions due to variations in cash flow, and this is not counted as a compliance failure.

Net Income from Commercial and Service Investments to Net Revenue Stream

The Council’s income from commercial and service investments as a proportion of its net revenue stream has been and is expected to be as indicated below.

	2022/23 actual (£)	2023/24 forecast (£)	2024/25 budget (£)	2025/26 budget (£)
Total net income from service and commercial investments	507,019	494,000	490,000	600,000
Proportion of net revenue stream	4.02%	3.68%	3.65%	2.98%

The 2023/24 forecast is lower than that set out in the 2023/24 Capital Strategy due to the £75k income shortfall forecast on commercial property income.

**ANNEX C
NON-TREASURY MANAGEMENT PRUDENTIAL
INDICATORS**



Proportion of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

Although capital expenditure is not charged directly to the revenue budget, interest payable on loans and MRP are charged to revenue.

The net annual charge is known as financing costs; this is compared to the net revenue stream i.e. the amount funded from Council Tax, business rates and general government grants.

	2022/23 actual (£)	2023/24 forecast (£)	2024/25 budget (£)	2025/26 budget (£)
Financing costs (£)	6,030	5,908	251,000	257,000
Proportion of net revenue stream	0.05%	0.04%	1.84%	2.31%

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Agenda Item 13



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET – 7 DECEMBER 2023
Subject	COUNCIL PRIORITY AND SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT – 2023-24 QUARTER TWO
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council Email: joe.harris@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive Email: robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk
Report author	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Email: democratic@cotswold.gov.uk
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)	That Cabinet resolves to: I. Note overall progress on the Council priorities and service performance for 2023-24 Q2.
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the highest standard of service • Respond to the climate crisis • Provide socially rented homes • Make our local plan green to the core • Support health and wellbeing • Enable a vibrant economy
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Publica Directors, Assistant Directors, Business Managers, Service Managers and Service Leads.



1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1** 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. In essence, Publica as contracting agent for the Council must ensure that the Council has sufficient information to challenge the performance of services provided by Publica and others. A similar approach is taken in relation to financial performance data, which will be presented to the Head of Paid Service and the Chief Finance Officer; and where it will be for the Chief Finance Officer to advise in terms of assurance.
- 1.2** The Council's Chief Executive is responsible for reviewing and approving the information provided in this report prior to its publication.
- 1.3** Following a helpful discussion at Overview and Scrutiny it was agreed to explore options relating to how Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rate collection targets are presented to prevent any confusion. Additionally, it was agreed to review actions within the Corporate Plan Action Tracker with a view to remove those that are no longer in progress.

2. COUNCIL PRIORITY REPORT

- 2.1** The Council adopted the Corporate Plan 2020-24 ('the Plan') in September 2020, A spring 2022 'refresh' of the Plan was completed and approved by Council at its meeting in May 2022.
- 2.2** Progress on actions in the Corporate Plan for Q2 include:
 - "Spotlight on Planning" Town & Parish Council Forum events held during September in Cirencester and Moreton in Marsh.
 - Round I of Phase Two of the Water Park Strategy for installing cycle stands is complete, with 19 out of the 46 now in place across Fairford, Lechlade and South Cerney. Positive discussions have been held for the Spine Road Crossing between GCC and Cotswold District Council Officers to agree the next steps forward including options for allocation of funding from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to support the design and delivery phases of the project.
 - The Planning Enforcement project to develop an ICT enabled proactive approach to the service recommenced in September.
 - The proposal for Solar PV on Trinity Road Council offices went to Cabinet and then on to Full Council in July with a resolution of approval of the funding.



- The Collaboration Agreement entered into by the Council and Bromford Housing to deliver the Down Ampney housing development had been delayed due to drainage concerns, but progress is now underway with drawings approved by members and a Planning Application due to be submitted in November.
- Housing Requirement paper approved by Council, concluding there has not been a significant change in housing needs since the Local Plan (LP) was adopted in 2018 and therefore the LP housing requirement remains up-to-date and does not need updating.
- The sixth edition of Crowdfund Cotswold concluded in September with four projects actively seeking community contributions, while an additional three are in the verification process. These projects offer a diverse thematic and geographical range, addressing issues from climate change to children's play provision in both the North and South of the district.
- The Cotswold Community Network (CCN), aimed at networking and sharing information about what is happening in communities throughout the district, has grown in members with successful presentations by Guest Speakers through Q2 including Fraud Awareness, Community Connexions Transport and Mental Health resources.
- The Community Safety Partnership has reviewed and drafted and update for its Action Plan for 2024/25 with the report presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in October.
- Majority of shortlisted areas have been visited for the Safer Streets Cotswolds proposals. Once the visits have been completed, alongside more local engagement, the decision will be taken on which areas will receive the improvements to make them safer.
- Additional events and classes under the Active Cotswold Action Plan have been positively received, including a successful live event featuring Mr. Motivator.
- The Holiday Activity Food programme continues to be a success with the number of attendants doubling in comparison to last year.
- The Integrated Locality Partnership (ILP) held a workshop with service providers from both statutory and voluntary sectors to explore how partners can work together to provide better support to young people and families and in areas of high need.
- The Changing Places Toilet Facilities are complete at Cotswold Farm Park and Abbey Grounds, Cirencester with Birdland due to start in the coming month. Cotswold Country Park and Beach is in the planning and procurement stages and will be delivered early in 2024.
- Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service (GDASS) have successfully recruited a Rural Domestic Abuse Champions Network Co-Ordinator with training workshops to be organised for professionals and community leaders.
- The County Council Digital Household Grant scheme is now live, and Officers continue to liaise with Fastershire and the main infrastructure companies like Openreach and Gigaclear to bring forward improvements in the district.



2.3 Off target actions of the Corporate Plan behind schedule at Q2 include:

- **Develop and implement an Asset Management Strategy.**

Update: Costs are currently being finalised with a consultant to prepare the Asset Management Strategy. A broad strategy is expected to be completed by December, followed by a property-specific strategy in the New Year.

- **Develop support to owner-occupiers to invest in energy efficiency, retrofit and decarbonisation works.**

Update: A report was presented and approved at Cabinet on 17 July for the decision to set up district wide owner occupier rooftop PV scheme. The 'Make My House Green' scheme has since launched.

- **Install EV charging points across the District and Provide electric vehicle charging points at all Council premises.**

Update: There have been significant delays due to the previous supplier and more recently the Distribution Network Operator SSE. Phase one has been completed with installations at Rissington Road Bourton on the Water and at Trinity Road Cirencester. Phase 2 is due for completion during Q3 2023-2024.

- **Complete an options appraisal of community energy generation, Support community-led and community-owned renewable energy projects, and Support neighbourhood-wide climate action.**

Update: Options to support this being considered as part of work to refine priorities over the next four-year term

- **Adopt and implement the ecological emergency action plan.**

Update: The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) mitigation strategies are complete for Cotswolds Beechwoods and North Meadow so planning applications can be determined. A briefing note for HRA issues has been circulated to management. The Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) project is progressing, and interim guidance for developers has been completed.

- **Deliver a sustainable transport strategy.**

Update: The Sustainable Transport Decarbonisation Strategy is due to be completed by the end of October and a member briefing will be organised in the run up to Christmas. The strategy identifies a series of carbon reduction interventions in Cirencester and the



wider district. During the summer months the Council commissioned Systra to prepare an access and movement study to examine parking needs and opportunities to improve active travel. The council has completed a public transport study that examined the links between Kemble to Cirencester and an assessment of sites to locate a new public transport hub in Cirencester Town Centre.

- **Develop an updated Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) to inform planning and investment in pitch-based facilities.**

Update: The final version of the updated PPS has been received and signed off by Sport England with the strategy presented and approved at Cabinet on 2 November.

- **Work with our partners to ensure our young people have the skills they need to secure employment in the district.**

Update: Cirencester College T level building now completed. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) funding includes provision in Year 3 (2024/25) to support those furthest from the labour market and for green skills. Officers are liaising with key contacts in the County Council about this.

- **Develop and implement an action plan to improve digital inclusion.**

Update: Work is progressing through the partnership with a headline report produced outlining 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.

- 2.4** 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 Service performance above target:

- Percentage of Council Tax Collected (60.12% against a target of 53%)
- Percentage of Non-Domestic Rates collected (67.85% against a target of 57%)
- Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events (3.72 days against a target of 5 days)
- Percentage of Housing Benefit overpayment due to LA error/admin delay (0.33% against a target of 0.35%)



- Customer Satisfaction (97% against a target of 90%)
- Percentage of minor planning applications determined within agreed timescales (88.6% against a target of 65%)
- Percentage of major planning applications determined within agreed timescales (95% against a target of 70%)
- Percentage of other planning applications determined within agreed timescales (85.31% against a target of 80%)
- Number of visits to the three leisure centres & (Snapshot) Number of gym memberships (3090 memberships against a target of 2936 memberships and 128512 visits against a target of 120000)
- Percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days (93.31% against a target of 90%)
- Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales (100% against a target of 95%)
- Percentage of high risk notifications risk assessed within 1 working day (100% against a target of 90%)

3.2 Service Performance below target:

Processing times for Council Tax Support New Claims (23.98 days against a target of 20 days) and Housing Benefit Change of Circumstances (9.83 days against a target of 4 days)

Q2's standalone figures show that Council Tax New Claims are being processed in 16.76 days, against the target of 20 days and Housing Benefit Changes of Circumstance are being processed in 6.83 days against a target of 4 days, however, as the targets are cumulative the rolling statistics are above target for average processing days.

(Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events however remains well within the target of 5 days.)

The Resolution: Following procedural changes to manage the work received directly from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and customers, we are now achieving a level of 60-70% of automation for the DWP work up from 40-45% in Q1 allowing for more focus on applications and other reported changes. The Universal Credit (UC) section of DWP is currently investigating improvements to the data that is sent through to local authorities via a Working Group. Once the improvements have been made there is the potential, in conjunction with our software supplier, to automate additional DWP work items.

The outstanding workload is reducing week by week and management of the resource to support the reduction is underway. The improvements to the automation system have freed up officer capacity to help reduce the backlog of claims. It is anticipated that the trial for reduced phone line opening hours at Cotswold will further free up capacity for officers to process claims.

Publica remains committed to further improving its performance and service delivery and is actively investing in the development and implementation of automation and self-serve options



for customers. By providing accessible and efficient self-help tools, customers can address their queries and concerns independently, leading to a decrease in the need for repeated interactions with services. Publica will continue to monitor, assess, and report on the impact of improvement programs in reducing customer contact and enhancing operational efficiency.

Missed Bins per 100,000 (88 against a target of 80)

The number of missed bins per 100,000 remains unchanged at 88 from Q1 to Q2. This is above target and higher than this time last year. This has been attributed to a stand-in driver navigating unfamiliar routes due to sickness and a vehicle being off the roads. Both have now been rectified.

The Resolution: Additional training with crews and supervisors to bring the misses down. Performance will be continuously under review by the Contract Monitoring Team.

Number of Affordable Homes Delivered (30 against a target of 50)

Nineteen properties including 8 for affordable rent and 11 for shared ownership have been delivered in Cotswold at Evenlode and Siddington during Q2 with eleven delivered during Q1.

The Resolution: Delays were encountered at one housing development site due to the insolvency of the main contractor, leading to the site remaining inaccessible for several months before a replacement contractor could be legally engaged. The legal issues have since been resolved, a new contractor has been engaged, and construction has recommenced. It is anticipated that the 28 affordable units on the site will be delivered within the next quarter.

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.

3.3 A full performance report is attached at Annex C.

3.4 As previously agreed, where possible, broader benchmarking has been included in the full performance report to gain a more robust and insightful evaluation of performance. Where benchmarking data is not currently available or outdated, this is noted, and further investigations will be undertaken to look at options.

4. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

4.1 This report will be reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 28 November 2023; and any comments from the Committee will be recorded and shared with relevant Cabinet Members.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct financial implications from this report.



6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None specifically because of this report. However, a failure to meet statutory deadlines or standards in some services may expose the Council to legal challenge and/or financial liability.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 Contained in this report.

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.1 None

9. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Contained in this report.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 None

(END)

Cotswold District Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024 Update: Progress by end of Q2 2023-2024

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

Deliver the highest standard of services

Ref.	Our aims	Our actions	Commencement	Date due, Achieved	Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	Comment for Q2
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 / Simon Anthony	Joe Harris	On Target	Review of Grounds Maintenance Service scheduled to start in November
SS2		Improve road sweeping regimes	November 2020	April 2024	Bill Oddy/ Simon Anthony	Joe Harris	Complete	
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	Costs prepared and provided to CFO in July for replacement in Stow. Awaiting budget agreement as costs exceed budget
SS4		Keep areas of open space tidy	April 2021	April 2024	Andy Barge/Simon Anthony	Joe Harris	On Target	Review of Street Cleansing review and Grounds Maintenance Service scheduled to start in November
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	Latest edition distributed September 2023.
SS6		Deliver programme of engagement for town and parish councils	October 2021	April 2024	Angela Claridge	Joe Harris	On Target	"Spotlight on Planning" Town & Parish Council Forum events held in September in Cirencester and Moreton in Marsh.
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	Tony Dale	Complete	
SS8		Determine the feasibility of 'pay on exit' parking, and implement if appropriate	March 2021	May 2022	Jon Dearing/Maria Wheatley	Tony Dale	Complete	
SS9		Review charging periods at all car parks	March 2021	April 2022	Jon Dearing/Maria Wheatley	Tony Dale	Complete	
SS10		Make the Whiteway car park operational	January 2020	Achieved	Jon Dearing/Maria Wheatley	Tony Dale	Complete	
SS11		Deliver Improvements to Rissington Road Car Park, Bourton on the Water	November 2022	March 2023	Claire Locke/Andrew Dike	Tony Dale	Complete	
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	
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	
SS14		Deliver on funded projects	November 2021	March 2023	Andy Barge/Philippa Lowe	Juliet Layton	On Target	19 of the 46 new cycle stands have now been installed as part of round 1 of provision. Locations are at the Memorial Hall in Lechlade; Hilary Cottage Surgery & the Football Club in Fairford; the One Stop Shop, Village Hall and Upper Up Playing Field in South Cerney. Delivery of a further 8 stands is part of phase 2 and discussions continue on a further group of sites for the final stands. A number of meetings have been held with GCC managers and officers to discuss options for progressing to the feasibility to the next design stage. An updated proposition is awaited from GCC but discussions were positive and GCC have confirmed their support. There is still an on-going issue regarding the detailing of the finish of the new cycle way access point to the car park at Neigh Bridge which again has been raised with GCC for resolution.

SS15		Adopt and implement a clear financial strategy that reflects the changing economy and our identified needs	September 2020	Refreshed annually	David Stanley	Mike Evely	On Target	
SS16	Establish financial resilience to enable investment in our priorities	Adopt and implement recovery investment strategy	September 2020	Refreshed annually	David Stanley	Mike Evely/Tony Dale	Cancelled	
SS17		Develop and implement an asset management strategy	March 2021	December 2022	David Stanley/Claire Locke	Mike Evely	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	Cost being finalised with consultant. Broad strategy due to be complete by December then property specific strategy in New Year.
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	Lisa Spivey	On Target	The FRM team inputted into the Water Summit day held at CDC on the 13th October. The team is continually mitigating against the risk of flooding from new developments by commenting on between 20-30 new applications for minor development per month. The team is overseeing the work of UBICO who maintain the CDC owned watercourses and trash screens. The team also respond to reports of flooding which has so far included only 1 report of internal flooding to a residential property this quarter.
SS19		Roll out the Cotswold Flood Warden Programme	November 2021	November 2022 for the initial pilot year.	Robert Weaver	Lisa Spivey	On Target	The new officer started at GRCC in late July, and over the months since then, has met with officers at the Council and with current flood wardens, undertaking a number of site visits to consolidate relationships with current wardens, and spend some time developing links with other strategic partners at the LRF, Environment Agency and Thames Water. At quarter end, there are 24 wardens recruited, from 13 settlements around the district.
SS20	Provide a trusted, inclusive and transparent planning service	Restructure our team to ensure resilience	September 2020	Achieved	Frank Wilson	Juliet Layton	Complete	
SS21		Relaunch our pre-application service	September 2020	June 2022	Charlie Jackson/Phil Shaw	Juliet Layton	Complete	
SS22		Improve communication with residents	January 2021	April 2024	Charlie Jackson/Phil Shaw	Juliet Layton	On Target	No Change
SS23		Develop an ICT enabled proactive approach to planning enforcement	April 2021	April 2024	Charlie Jackson/Phil Shaw	Juliet Layton	On Target	Enforcement project re commenced in September
SS24		Maximise external funding opportunities	December 2020	April 2024	Charlie Jackson/Phil Shaw	Juliet Layton	Complete	
SS25	Provide an efficient and competitive building standards service	Compare local markets	March 2021	Monthly, to understand market share	Charlie Jackson/Phil Shaw	Juliet Layton	On Target	No Change
SS26		Maximise opportunities for income generation	April 2021	Ongoing, as an iterative review process.	Charlie Jackson/Phil Shaw	Juliet Layton	On Target	No Change
SS27	Provide modern and clean public toilets	Reviewing our estate	April 2022	September 2022	Jon Dearing/Mandy Fathers	Mike Evely	Complete	
SS28		Explore opportunities for 'comfort partnerships'	April 2021	September 2022	Jon Dearing/Mandy Fathers	Mike Evely	Complete	
SS29		Develop a strategy for the provision of public toilets	April 2022	September 2022	David Stanley/Jon Dearing/Susan Hughes	Mike Evely	Superseded	
SS30	Review how the Council commissions its Legal Services	Complete the review of legal services	March 2022	May 2022	David Stanley	Joe Harris	Complete	
SS31		Implement Council decision, following review	May 2022	April 2023	David Stanley	Joe Harris	On Target	

Responding to the climate crisis

	Our aims	Our actions	Commencement	Date due, Achieved	Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	
CCI	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	Mike McKeown	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	Report approved and Make My House Green scheme launched
CC2		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	Mike McKeown	On Target	

CC3	Develop, facilitate and deliver an exemplar public engagement programme in relation to carbon reduction and climate change	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	Mike McKeown	Complete		
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	Mike McKeown	On Target		
CC5		Prepare and agree an EV Charging Point Delivery Plan	October 2020	Achieved	Rob Weaver Claire Locke	Mike McKeown	Complete		
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 Charlie Jackson	Mike McKeown	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	Phase 1 complete, phase 2 due for completion Q3 2023/24	
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	Mike McKeown/Tony Dale	On Target		
CC8		Reduce carbon emissions from our own operations	Work with Ubico to adopt ultra-low emission vehicle technology	March 2021	April 2024	Rob Weaver /Chris Crookall-Fallon	Mike Evemy/Mike McKeown	Off Target and no action has yet been agreed to resolve the situation	Vehicle technology is not yet viable for rural district use. Situation is being kept under review.
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. Due December 2023	Claire Locke/Chris Crookall-Fallon	Mike Evemy/Mike McKeown	On Target	The project team are currently preparing a financial appraisal report for the CFO to review and approve.
CC10	Secure energy-efficient, 100% green energy for all Council premises, using renewable energy where possible		March 2021	Achieved	Claire Locke/Chris Crookall-Fallon	Mike Evemy/Mike McKeown	Complete		
CC11	Complete Public Sector Decarbonisation scheme at our Leisure centres		March 2021	Achieved	Claire Locke/Chris Crookall Fallon	Mike McKeown/Paul Hodgkinson	Complete		
CC12	Provide electric vehicle charging points at all Council premises		September 2020	Phase 1 completion due autumn 2022 April 2024	Claire Locke	Mike Evemy/Mike McKeown	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	See CC6	
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	Mike McKeown	Complete		
CC14		Deliver our climate change action plan	September 2020	April 2024	Rob Weaver Claire Locke/Chris Crookall-Fallon	Mike McKeown	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery		
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	Mike McKeown	Off Target and no action has yet been agreed to resolve the situation	Options to support this being considered as part of work to refine priorities over the next four year term	
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	Mike McKeown	Cancelled		
CC17		Support community-led and community-owned renewable energy projects	September 2020	April 2024	Rob Weaver Claire Locke/Chris Crookall-Fallon	Mike McKeown	On Target	As for CC15	
CC18		Support neighbourhood-wide climate action	September 2020	April 2024	Rob Weaver Claire Locke/Chris Crookall-Fallon	Mike McKeown	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	As for CC15	
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	HRA mitigation strategies in place for Cotswolds Beeches and North Meadow, however further work is required to deliver these and to update them. Briefing note on HRA issues across Publica circulated to management. Work on BNG continues, with interim guidance for developers finalised (currently being made accessible for the web) - partnership project with other LPAs in Gloucestershire.	

CC20	recovery in the Cotswolds	Create a community and wildlife sanctuary at Chesterton Cemetery	December 2021	March 2023	Claire Locke/Andrew Turner	Mike Evely	On Target	Work has commenced and is projected to take a number of months due to the planting cycles.
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 2024	Simon Anthony	Mike Evely	On Target	Ongoing
CC22		Consider changes to the waste and recycling service	April 2022	March 2024	Simon Anthony	Mike Evely	On Target	Options presented to the Cabinet Transformation Working Group in September and further modelling working being undertaken.

Providing socially rented homes

	Our aims	Our actions	Commencement	Date due, Achieved	Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	
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	On Target	Drawings approved by members with the Planning application due to be submitted by November.
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	Cancelled	
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	Charlie Jackson/Claire Locke	Joe Harris	On Target	
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	
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	Complete	
SH6		Acquire the property approved in July 2020, and put this to use	July 2020	Achieved	Jon Dearing/Caroline Clissold	Joe Harris	Complete	
SH7		Participate in a joint Gloucestershire bid for additional government funding	August 2020	Achieved	Jon Dearing/Caroline Clissold	Joe Harris	Complete	
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	
SH9		Identify opportunities to acquire properties for homeless accommodation	July 2020	April 2024	Claire Locke	Joe Harris	On Target	
SH10		Identify and consider sites for delivery of affordable housing	July 2020	April 2024	Charlie Jackson	Joe Harris	On Target	
SH11		Explore modern methods of construction in the context of our rural setting	April 2021	First site (Stockwells, Moreton-Marsh) approved December 2021	Charlie Jackson	Joe Harris	On Target	
SH12		Support young people through a 'rent to buy' scheme	April 2021	April 2024	Jon Dearing	Joe Harris	Superseded	

Make our local plan green to the core

	Our aims	Our actions	Commencement	Date due, Achieved	Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	
LPI		Identify and allocate land for future housing and businesses.			Charlie Jackson/James Brain	Juliet Layton	On Target	Housing Requirement paper approved by Council, it concludes there has not been a significant change in housing needs since the Local Plan was adopted in 2018 and therefore the LP housing requirement remains up-to-date and does not need updating. The Local Plan continues to identify a sufficient supply of sites to meet total plan needs (by 2031) and shorter term requirements (5YHLS and Housing Delivery Test). The regulation 18 consultation programmed for Jan 2024 will show any additional housing sites.

LP2	Develop an updated local plan that delivers our corporate priorities and promotes both carbon neutral development and infrastructure	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.	July 2020	Submit in 2023; Examination 23/24; and adoption 23/24	Charlie Jackson/James Brain	Juliet Layton	On Target	Draft policies will feature in the regulation 18 consultation document programmed for January 2024.
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 Charlie Jackson/James Brain	Lisa Spivey	On Target	Sewage workshop scheduled for 13 October 2023, which will explore natural interventions. Water Cycle Study due to be completed by the end of the year.
LP4		Develop a new Cotswold Design Guide – building for the future in the Cotswolds	March 2022		March 2023	Charlie Jackson/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	Charlie Jackson/James Brain	Juliet Layton	On Target	During the summer months the council has commissioned various feasibility studies to aid the preparation of the masterplan e.g. it appointed Systra to assessment parking demand within the town centre and measures to meet needs in the future. A consultation on an emerging draft is scheduled to run alongside the Cirencester NDP
LP6		Work with Cirencester Town Council to deliver Cirencester neighbourhood development plan			Charlie Jackson/James Brain	Juliet Layton	On Target	Cirencester NDP (Reg14) is programmed to be consulted upon in January 2024
LP7		Enable appropriate changes of use			Charlie Jackson/James Brain	Juliet Layton	On Target	Policy SI (cirencester) is being update and will form part of the partial update.
LP8		Identify sustainable transport options			Charlie Jackson/Hannah Fountain	Juliet Layton	On Target	The Sustainable Transport Decarbonisation Strategy is due to be completed by the end of October and a member briefing will be organised in the run up to Christmas. The strategy identifies a series of carbon reduction interventions in Cirencester and the wider district. During the summer months the Council commissioned Systra to prepare an access and movement study to examine parking needs and opportunities to improve active travel. The council has completed a public transport study that examined the links between Kemble to Cirencester and an assessment of sites to locate a new public transport hub in Cirencester Town Centre. The decision to pause recruitment to the Sustainable Transport post remains.
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	Charlie Jackson/James Brain	Juliet Layton	Complete	
LP10		Update our statement of community involvement			Charlie Jackson/James Brain	Juliet Layton	Complete	
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	Charlie Jackson/Hannah Fountain	Juliet Layton	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	See LP8.
LP12		Work with Gloucestershire County Council to provide better sustainable transport routes and options	September 2020	April 2024 planning and implementation	Charlie Jackson/Hannah Fountain	Juliet Layton	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	See LP8.
LP13		Develop a Sustainable Transport Strategy	November 2020	2023, as part of the Local Plan Submission	Charlie Jackson/Hannah Fountain	Juliet Layton	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	See LP8.

Support health and wellbeing

Our aims	Our actions	Commencement	Date due, Achieved	Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	
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HW1	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	Lisa Spivey	Complete	
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	Lisa Spivey	On Target	The sixth round of Crowdfund Cotswold closed on 13th September. At the point of writing, four projects are actively campaigning for community contributions, and a further three are undergoing verification. These projects promise a good thematic and geographical spread, covering North and South Cotswolds and interventions from climate change to children's play provision. A number of projects supported in earlier rounds are completing works, with the launch of Bledington Play area on 1 October.
HW3	Coordinate an asset based community development approach	September 2020	April 2024	Andy Barge/Jacqui Wright	Lisa Spivey	On Target	Following on from the successful CHEQ's (Coln St Aldwyns, Hatherop, Eastleach, Quenington and Southrop) community event, the Community Builder's (CB's) held another very well attended 'Meet & Greet' at Upper Rissington as part of an Autumn/Winter plan to engage with more villages, find out what residents would like to see happen in their communities, reduce isolation, support people to take action and signpost to relevant groups/organisations in the district. We are supporting Digital Inclusion groups in Bourton and Tetbury to help older residents, both of these are well attended and have given excellent feedback. Both CB's have linked in and attended a number of planned events such as HAF, Foodbank and Fun Days to speak with as many residents as possible.
HW4	Host regular community forums with community groups and community leaders	July 2020	April 2024	Andy Barge/Jacqui Wright	Lisa Spivey/Claire Bloomer	On Target	The Cotswold Community Network is going strong with 115 members from 65 different organisations. We have had Guest Speakers present on subjects such as Fraud Awareness, Community Connexions Transport, Adult Education, Healthy Lifestyles, Mental Health resources and more. Many links and collaborative working continues to stem from the network.
HW5	Encourage resilient, well-connected and active communities that take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing goals						<p>Safer Streets Funding: Majority of shortlisted areas have been visited.</p> <p>Crime Perception Survey: The CSP held a Crime Perception Survey in March using the same engagement platform under the Safer Streets Cotswold branding. The three funded engagement events that took place this summer were used to ask people to complete the short survey. The survey received 115 responses. The main findings can be viewed on request. The data shows, that there is an overall feeling of safety. However, crime as well as ASB is perceived to have increased over the last 3 years. The majority of people seem to be confident in knowing how to report crime. However, too many residents are not confident, and some are not sure. This is an area that the CSP needs to look into. The contributions were generally rather positive and the majority of residents that have completed the survey are feeling safe in their local areas with low levels of perceived crime and ASB.</p> <p>Engagement events: Cotswold CSP has applied for and received £6.8k from the OPCC for community engagement activities. In 2023 the CSP has organised 3 engagement events: Cirencester 31st March, Upper Rissington 29th August and Tetbury 30th August. These events were family events with free activities for children and young people. CSP members like Trading Standards, GDASS, Fire service, Neighbourhood Policing Team, Bromford Housing, Cotswold Friends, The Churn project and others attended and supported the event with valuable information for residents. All events were successful and very well attended and valuable conversations with residents about community safety perceptions were held.</p> <p>CSP Action Plan: The CSP has reviewed its Action Plan and drafted an updated plan for 2024/25. A report will be presented at the October O&S committee to update on the CSP's achievements as well as to present the new Action Plan. Reporting times for the plan will change to align with the financial year, hence the new plan will go live in April 2024.</p>
HW6	Complete a review of our leisure services	July 2020	May 2022	Rob Weaver / Scott Williams	Paul Hodgkinson	Complete	

HW7		Deliver the Council's Leisure strategy.	November 2020	April 2024	Rob Weaver / Jackie Wright	Paul Hodgkinson	On Target	Captured in Active Cotswold Programme
HW8		Deliver capital programme to replace fitness equipment across the Leisure estate	March 2022	September 2022	Bill Oddy/Stuart Wilson	Paul Hodgkinson	Complete	
HW9	Promote healthy lifestyles, fun and self-care for all ages	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	Paul Hodgkinson	Complete	
HW10		Develop a updated Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) to inform planning and investment in pitch-based facilities	February 2022	December 2022	Jackie Wright/Rachel Biles	Paul Hodgkinson	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	Report for adoption going to Cabinet in November 2023.
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	Paul Hodgkinson	On Target	Updates are captured as well in Active Cotswold Action Plan. Joined the Ramblers Wellbeing Walk scheme in partnership with West Ox with the first Walk Leader Training undertaken in September. Officers attended various groups to talk about 'Live Longer Better' and to demonstrate resistance band workouts. Further FIT KITS have been donated to South Cerney, Bourton, Morton in Marsh making a total of 6 distributed. Successful Active Cotswold Live Event with Mr Motivator on Sunday 1st October at Bingham hall in Cirencester with great participation in all activities and very positive feedback. Motivation Club has been set up in September. Meeting held with Freedom Leisure about joint working on Active Cotswold program. Agreed in principle to deliver all community based activities under the Active Cotswold branding and to work together on this as one team.
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	Claire Bloomer	On Target	Have run another successful HAF programme this summer with the number of attendants doubling in comparison to last year. Bloodhound continue to be our Community Connectors, providing excellent support to families with both digital support in making bookings, and providing transport to allow children to attend provision across the district. Cotswold Food Network Cotswold Food Network has launched with a steering group having been brought together consisting of CDC officers from economic development, benefits/welfare, community wellbeing and climate action as well as feeding Gloucestershire aiming to improve food equity holistically A workshop is planned in November to discuss community growing.
HW13		Work with relevant services and organisations to provide more – and better – quality healthcare services	September 2020	April 2024	Andy Barge/Jacqui Wright	Paul Hodgkinson	On Target	The ILP held a workshop with service providers from both statutory and voluntary sector, with two more to follow in October. The workshops are exploring how partners can work together to provide better support to young people and families and in areas of high need. Chipping Campden Working with our community in Chipping Campden to discuss the challenges of delivering services in our rural towns and villages. Discussions highlighted two main areas of concern; accessing mental health support when it's needed and support for young people with diminished youth services, initially regarding drug and alcohol issues. CGL and Gloucestershire Police have plans to work together in the area, to raise awareness of drug and alcohol in the town. We're also exploring several funding options to provide counselling for young people on long waiting lists.

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	Claire Bloomer	On Target	no update	
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	Paul Hodgkinson	On Target	The youth network has identified a gap in provision for Cirencester in particular due to the increasing issue of ASB, concerns from schools and street gangs. The town would benefit from targeted youth support which is being considered by the ILP (row 112) as well as a funding application that is being put in to the Big Lottery by the Youth Network. Other needs include: mobile youth provision to reach isolated areas, where youth clubs are not viable due to small numbers, youth provision in Chipping Campden. Both themes are also being looked at by the ILP as well as being included in the funding application.	
HW16		Work with partners to implement four Changing Places Toilet facilities	September 2021	April 2023	Paul James	Claire Bloomer	On Target	Abbey Grounds, Cirencester now complete. Birdland due to start this month and Cotswold Country Park and Beach should also be onsite soon.	
HW17	Promote both mental and physical health equally, to increase awareness of mental health issues and improve the community response to people in crisis	Increase the number of people trained in mental health first aid and suicide prevention	September 2020	March 2023	Rob Weaver Andy Barge/Jacqui Wright	Paul Hodgkinson	On Target	No Change	
HW18		Provide targeted mental health campaigns and support	September 2020	April 2024	Andy Barge/Jacqui Wright	Paul Hodgkinson	On Target		
HW19		Promote mental health activities and initiatives	September 2020	April 2024	Andy Barge/Jacqui Wright	Paul Hodgkinson	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	Lisa Spivey/Claire Bloomer	On Target		The Rural Domestic Abuse Champions network Coordinator has been recruited successfully by GDASS. Once the postholder has settled, work across all the rural districts will commence and will include setting up training workshops for professionals as well as community leaders, opportunities to network, as well as targeting specific groups like farmers and the beauty industry. As part of our work trying to increasingly look at preventing DA in the first place, we are currently researching how much knowledge on healthy relationships, Domestic Abuse etc. is being shared at Secondary Schools in the district.
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	Paul Hodgkinson	Complete		
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	Charlie Jackson/James Brain/Hannah Fountain/Sophia Price	Juliet Layton	On Target		
HW23		Develop design codes that focus on climate change and protect people from overheating risk	October 2020	April 2023	Charlie Jackson/James Brain/Chris Crookhall Fallon/Sophia Price	Juliet Layton	On Target		
HW24		Develop policies for dementia-friendly homes	February 2021	April 2023	Charlie Jackson/James Brain	Juliet Layton	On Target		

HW25		Review local plan policies to facilitate healthy place shaping	October 2020	April 2023	Charlie Jackson/James Brain	Juliet Layton	On Target	
HW26		Deliver health and wellbeing initiatives through the local plan	October 2020	April 2023	Charlie Jackson/James Brain	Juliet Layton	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 Evemy	Complete	

Enable a vibrant economy

	Our aims	Our actions	Commencement	Date due, Achieved	Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	
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	
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	
VE3		Invest in local projects and development opportunities	September 2020	April 2024	Andy Barge/Paul James	Tony Dale	On Target	Investment opportunities, including in Cirencester town centre, continue to be looked at 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	
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	
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	
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	
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	Cabinet approved funding for the Growth Hub in March 2023. The legal agreement with them requires them to focus on start-ups and provide an outreach service across the District and includes a target for the number of new businesses created. Monthly monitoring meetings are held with the Growth Hub.
VE9		Build a reputation as a business-friendly council	July 2020	April 2024	Andy Barge/Paul James	Tony Dale	On Target	
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	Farm491 funding for new offices agreed from UKSPF. Work on this was due to start in October. Proposals for a Centre for Sustainable Aviation at Cotswold Airport appear to be gathering momentum. The Rural England Prosperity Fund has now opened for applications so will create more opportunities.
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	No significant update. Steadings employment land planning application awaiting resubmission to take into account the comments from planning officers. RAU Innovation Village moving forward but still some way from delivery.
VE12		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	Charlie Jackson/James Brain	Tony Dale/Juliet Layton	On Target	

VE13	Help our town centres recover from COVID-19 and in the face of changing shopping habits	Support businesses to enhance their digital presence	July 2020	March 2022	Andy Barge/Paul James	Tony Dale	Complete	Completed.
VE14		Develop a 'shop local' campaign to encourage residents to support local businesses	July 2020	April 2024	Andy Barge/Paul James	Tony Dale	Complete	Completed.
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	County Council Digital Household Grant scheme is now live. Officers continue to liaise with Fastershire and the main infrastructure companies like Openreach and Gigaclear to bring forward improvements in the district.
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	No Change
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	Cirencester College T level building now completed. UKSPF funding includes provision in Year 3 (2024/25) to support those furthest from the labour market and for green skills. Officers are liaising with key contacts in the County Council about this.
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	Legal agreement for UKSPF funding for Growth Hub requires them to operate an outreach service covering the whole district. A new Business Navigator is now in post to help provide this service. It is anticipated that for the north of the district, the Moreton Area Office will be used as a base.
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, although there is limited collective capacity to make headway. 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. https://www.digitaldivides.co.uk



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL PRIORITIES REPORT
July 2023 - September 2023

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

- Cabinet approved funding for the Growth Hub in March 2023. The legal agreement requires them to focus on start-ups and provide an outreach service across the District and includes a target for the number of new businesses created.
- Crowdfund Cotswold continues to attract wide interest from across the District with four projects actively seeking community contributions, while an additional three are in the verification process. These projects offer a diverse thematic and geographical range, addressing issues from climate change to children's play provision in both the North and South of the district.
- The Holiday Activity Food programme continues to be a success with the number of attendants doubling in comparison to last year.
- The Changing Places Toilet Facilities are complete at Cotswold Farm Park and Abbey Grounds, Cirencester with Birdland due to start in November. Cotswold Country Park and Beach is in the planning and procurement stages and will be delivered early in 2024.
- The Council and Bromford Housing have entered into a Collaboration Agreement to deliver the Down Ampney housing development. There have been delays due to drainage concerns, however, progress is now underway with drawings approved by members and a Planning Application due to be submitted by November.
- 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. Kier have started on site with various preparatory works and presented to the most recent meeting of the Cotswold Economic Advisory Group in September.
- "Spotlight on Planning" Town & Parish Council Forum events held during September in Cirencester and Moreton in Marsh.
- Round 1 of Phase Two of the Water Park Strategy for installing cycle stands is complete, with 19 out of the 46 now in place across Fairford, Lechlade and South Cerney.
- Cotswold Home Solar was launched at the start of September with four residents so far having placed deposits for installations through the scheme partner, MakeMyHouseGreen.

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

Phase Two elements of the Water Park Strategy include projects to make it easier for people to walk and cycle around the area, which disperses visitors more widely and enables people to be more physically active.

Funded projects include a new foot/cycle path at Neigh Bridge that is largely complete with outstanding issues still being pursued with Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) in liaison with the Cotswold Lakes Trust. Work is on-going to deliver 52 new cycle stands, with 19 already installed in locations in Lechlade, Fairford and South Cerney. Plans are in place for additional stands in those locations and more are being investigated.

A new section of bridleway under Wildmoor Lane has been commissioned and will be delivered by GCC Rights of Way team following agreement from landowner to dedicate required land take.

The on-going objective to deliver a crossing on the Spine Road is still seen as a critical project and efforts are focused on maintaining the momentum gained on key steps already achieved. During Q2, a productive discussion took place between GCC and Cotswold District Council Officers to agree the next steps forward including options for allocation of funding both from Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to support both the design and delivery phases of the project.

Work is also under way to agree a Memorandum of Understanding with Wiltshire Council regarding both Cotswold and Wiltshire Council's approach to local plan policy development which takes a holistic approach to the Water Park area.

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. At the cabinet meeting 6 February 2023 the decision was made to increase the 10 charged

units to 40p to start 1 April as a result of current income only providing one third of the required budget to maintain the facilities. In addition, Cabinet delegated the decision to install cash and card payment facilities on a site-by-site basis to the Assistant Director for Resident Services. Work is underway to install card readers at all of the charged public toilets. Two out of the 10 charged sites already have card readers with a future eight sites planned in the next few months.

The overarching aim of the improvement work in the Planning service is to provide a trusted, inclusive and transparent planning service. In that regard performance has improved markedly over the last year or so and the Government has confirmed that it no longer is minded to consider designating the Council for poor performance. Following the work already undertaken to the pre-application service, validation checklist, fee schedule, communication with applicants and the timeliness of the communication at key stages of the process the recent priority has been the reduction in backlogs in the enforcement function. This work is preparatory to implementing the new processes in that element of the service starting with improvements in the front end for registering enforcement issues and then a series of customer touch points and a customer journey to help keep customers informed. This project is underway and 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.

The further improvement works arising from the PAS report were agreed by Cabinet in June and have been added to the action plan with delivery scheduled to be completed late 2023/early 2024. The next main piece of work following completion of the PAS related elements and the work associated with the impending requirements to deliver BNG will be improving the IT platform.



The Context

In national policy terms, Q2 2023/24 was notable for the government's announcement on relaxing decarbonisation targets (PM's announcement on 20 September). The deadline for ending the sale of new fossil fuelled cars was set back from 2030 to 2035, and the date for ending the installation of gas fired boilers in new homes buildings was set back from 2025 to 2035. Some commentators have observed that these changes may not greatly change the actions of housebuilders or car manufacturers, which are largely committed to these changes anyway, whilst others have expressed concern that these changes will materially damage both the UK's timely achievement of its net zero goals, and its international standing as a climate leader.

Following Professor Piers Forster, Chair of the Climate Change Committee, stated "We remain concerned about the likelihood of achieving the UK's future targets, especially the substantial policy gap to the UK's 2030 goal. Around a fifth of the required emissions reductions to 2030 are covered by plans that we assess as insufficient. Recent policy announcements were not accompanied by estimates of their effect on future emissions, nor evidence to back the Government's assurance that the UK's targets will still be met. We urge the Government to adopt greater transparency in updating its analysis at the time of major announcements."

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 business case and Council investment decision for solar PV and battery storage at the Council's offices at Trinity Road and one other tenanted site was agreed by Cabinet and Council in July. System design discussions are now well underway with the appointed installer, with the expectation of installation before the end of the year. The installation of electric vehicle charge points in the Trinity Road carpark, which will also be accessible to the public, is delayed but due to be installed before the end of Q3.

'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. Whilst the bulk of waste collection vehicle replacements are scheduled for some years hence, attention is turning now to the potential for electrification of part of the waste collection fleet. The new leisure services operator is in place, and a new application for government

funds has been made which, if successful, will enable the installation of further solar PV power on the Cirencester leisure centre, further reducing the cost of electricity for the site.

‘Place Shaping’ actions

Work is underway to build the necessary evidence base for draft climate policies for the Local Plan (LP) partial update, taking account of feedback from the Regulation 18 public consultation, as well as the results of recent examinations of other authorities’ Local Plans which contain ambitious climate policies. Sustainable transport consultants are drafting LP policies in line with the findings of the district-wide Sustainable Transport Strategy research. Consultants have been appointed to deliver an updated evidence base and policies for renewable energy in the district, and an evidence base and policies for sustainable construction, both key planks of the updated LP. In addition the updated Cotswold Design Code will be procured during Q2, which is likely to contain important components of low carbon building design. Further installations of electric vehicle charge points in Council-owned carparks continue to run behind schedule. It is now expected that the Rissington Road and Trinity Road car park charge points will be installed before the end of Q3, and funding secured from the DfT’s On-Street Residential Charging Scheme will enable local residents without off-street parking to charge overnight and outside of office hours.

‘District-wide enabling’ actions

Cotswold Home Solar was launched at the start of September, and had strong initial interest, with four residents so far having placed deposits for installations through the scheme partner, MakeMyHouseGreen. The communications team is working on ways to refresh and sustain a marketing campaign to make sure as many residents as possible can make use of the scheme. Retrofitting homes to reduce costs, energy consumption and carbon emissions is an essential component of national emissions reduction, but remains a huge challenge. The announcements of the energy security strategy (Powering up Britain) include some measures that support home energy retrofit, but the national retrofit strategy, such as it is, remains the preserve of a non-statutory body (the Construction Leadership Council) and the national retrofit hub is in a very early stage of development. The increase in Boiler Upgrade Scheme grant to £7.5k announced in September should encourage more households to fit low carbon heat pumps.

‘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, and aiming to replicate the success of West Oxfordshire District Council’s ‘Green Light’ communications platform.

Provide socially rented homes



The Context

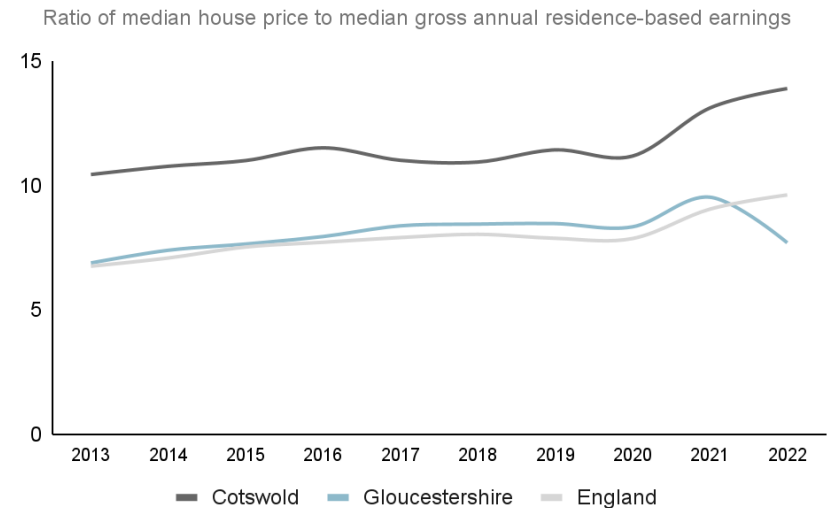
The high quality natural and built environment makes the District a desirable place to live. Cotswold District has a high number of properties owned outright (37.8%, vs 30.6% national average) reflecting the attractiveness of the District as a place to retire or to purchase a second home.

House prices and rents are relatively high. At the end of September 2022, the median property price in Cotswold District was £400,000 compared to £275,000 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 establish 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. A revised valuation of the land based on its redesignation to community gardens has been undertaken to facilitate a lease agreement.

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 took place in March ahead of a planning application being submitted. It has previously been highlighted that the planning application would 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 could not be determined until a Mitigation Strategy was in place. Swindon Borough Council have now completed the mitigation strategy so applications in the affected area can now be processed. There have been some delays with the submission of the Planning Application as concerns regarding drainage were raised during the public consultation. It has taken some time to work through these issues. However site drawings have been approved by Members with the Planning Application expected to be submitted in November. A financial appraisal is to be reviewed by Officers shortly.

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't 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 Council is currently working with local organisations who are applying for external grant funding to support the delivery of this renovation and conversion and some funding has now been secured although there is currently a funding gap. New Brewery Arts have developed a couple of alternative designs for the renovation and conversion of the building and Listed Building Consent has been applied for. Consultants are preparing costs based on the preferred design and these should be received in November. The Council will then need to update the original business case based on capital costs, likely grant funding available and the revenue from leasing the building to New Brewery Arts. A structural survey revealed a gable end wall was unstable and therefore structural scaffolding has been installed to render the wall safe until building works can take place. Procurement of the wall repair works was completed in July and will form part of the costed proposals which will come to Cabinet and Council early in the New Year.

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 2022-23, however, delays have been encountered due to the insolvency of the main contractor, leading to the site remaining inaccessible for several months before a replacement contractor could be legally engaged. The legal issues have since been

resolved, a new contractor has been engaged, and construction has recommenced. It is anticipated that the 28 affordable units on the site will be delivered within the next quarter.

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 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.

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 in Autumn 2023 which will set out the next milestones and will indicate when the next formal public consultation will be held. 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.

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 Very Light Railway) – the Council's consultants, ITP, have produced a final draft, findings of which were presented to the funding body (GEGJC) in March 2023. A project brief for Transport and Access Study for Cirencester, which will also examine parking needs, is currently being set up.
- **Design Code** – a broad document covering all aspects of design within a Cotswold context including architectural, urban, landscape, ecological and sustainable design. Design consultants, LDA, were commissioned in October 2023 with the project due to complete in July 2024.
- **Housing Strategy** - a draft strategy will be published for public consultation in Autumn 2023. With the aim of adopting the strategy in early 2024.

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 at the end of 2023 / early 2024. In August 2023 the council published a review of its local plan housing requirement which concludes that housing needs have not changed significantly and therefore it can continue to demonstrate over five years supply of housing land.

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.

These framework targets were approved by Cabinet in March 2023 and will now be used to direct the next stage of work focusing on identifying the optimum implementation of measures/interventions to deliver these targets. This is likely to include 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 – including the new Local Transport Plan, expected next year - 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 and are reported to the Portfolio Board.

The leisure management options appraisal including the Corinium Museum was completed to determine the most suitable delivery model, contract scope and contract terms for the Council's leisure facilities for when the previous contract expired on 31 July 2023. The procurement process to appoint a new external Leisure and Culture Management Contractor is complete and the new contract with Freedom Leisure commenced 1 August 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. All National Governing Bodies of the relevant sports have signed off the report, just awaiting feedback from Sport England, A steering group is due to meet at the end of March 2023. Final report was received June 2023 and is anticipated to go to Cabinet in September 2023. Due to delays with Officer and Member holidays the presentation of the PPS for Cabinet have been pushed to November 2023.

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. The Changing Places Toilet Facilities are complete at Cotswold Farm Park and Abbey Grounds, Cirencester with Birdland due to start in the coming month. Cotswold Country Park and Beach is in the planning and procurement stages and will be delivered early in 2024.

The sixth round of Crowdfund Cotswold closed on 13th September. At the point of writing, four projects are actively campaigning for community contributions, and a further three are undergoing verification. These projects promise a good thematic and geographical spread, covering North and South Cotswolds and interventions from climate change to children's play provision. A number of projects supported in earlier rounds are completing works, with the launch of Bledington Play area on 1 October.

The Active Cotswold programme has distributed seven Community Fit Kits to date. The Council has joined 'Ramblers Wellbeing Walk Scheme' (<https://www.ramblers.org.uk/go-walking/ramblers-wellbeing-walks.aspx>) in partnership with West Oxfordshire District Council. Our Community Support Officer Kate has delivered a first training session to 8 volunteer walk leaders in September. The training took place at Sherbourne Estate. More walk leader training sessions are planned in due course. Officers visited 16 groups with barriers to Physical Activity and given demonstrations and talks and there have been 2 successful Chair Exercise class trials. A new outdoor movement class that is free to participants for the first 12 weeks has started in Fairford in September. The session has 12 attendees and will continue indoors in the coming weeks.

The council is working in partnership with 'Mr Motivator' and has hosted an Active Cotswold Live Event at Bingham Hall in Cirencester where he was the main act. Other activities included Zumba, Yoga, Chair Exercise, a Smoothie Bike as well as activities for children. Partner organisations such as Active Gloucestershire, Healthy Lifestyles Service, Freedom Leisure, Slimming World and the Falls prevention team provided information and were available for people to answer any questions. The event attracted over 100 local people and was a big success. A second event is planned for the North of the district in Spring 2024. The Council has launched the 'Mr Motivator Motivation Club'. This club provides free access to all of Mr Motivators online content including classes and nutrition advice. Residents sign up to the club by completing this [Google Form](#) or email Community.support@cotswold.gov.uk.

Following on from our successful 'Meet your Community Builder' event in the CHEQ's villages, which as a result has seen the set-up of a new Art Club by residents in Eastleach, which prior to this engagement had no clubs at all. The Community Builders held another very well attended 'Meet & Greet' at Upper Rissington as part of their Autumn/Winter plan to engage with more villages, find out what residents would like to see happen in their communities, reduce isolation, support people to take action and signpost to relevant groups/organisations in the district.

Following the successful Digital Inclusion Group that was set up by a resident in Bourton on the Water with the support of our Community Builder, a new group has started in Tetbury helping residents to get online. Both groups are well attended and receive excellent feedback.

The Council is hosting bi-weekly Cotswold Community Network meetings which are informal virtual meetings for local statutory and voluntary organisations/groups of all sizes. The network has 115 members from 65 different organisations. The last quarter has seen guest speakers presenting on subjects such as Fraud Awareness, Community Connexions Transport, Adult Education, Healthy Lifestyles, Mental Health resources and more. Many links and collaborative working continue to stem from the network.

The council continued to partner with World Jungle to deliver the Government funded Holiday Activity and Food programme (HAF). HAF has gone from strength to strength, this summer it more than doubled the number of children on free school meals, who attended the provision, compared to last year. The number of activities on offer also increased and over 200 food hampers were provided to families. 'Bloodhound Education' continue to be the HAF Community Connectors, providing excellent support to families with both digital support in making bookings, and providing transport to allow children to attend provision across the district. This project has increased the Council's engagement with the most vulnerable families as well as building connections with Social Care and key organisations that support families across the district. The Council is now looking at a wider project to continue the good relationships built with families and to maintain the connections with youth provider organisations to meet the needs of the most vulnerable families after HAF funding comes to an end, in early 2025. The infographic below displays the highlights of the Summer HAF programme.

Cotswold District - Holiday Activity and Food Programme



The community wellbeing team held recent engagement event with Army families, in South Cerney, which has helped to improve relationships and reduce the isolation often experienced due to the transient nature of the camp and their families having limited time to integrate with their community outside of the camp, before they move on. The team plans to provide a Fun Day in August 2024 for the new and existing children looking ahead to a new school term. The team is working with Gloucestershire County Council to find a solution to the lack of safe pavements between the camp and Cirencester town centre. We aim to maintain and increase our engagement into 2024, bringing many of our partner organisations and the support they can offer, with us.

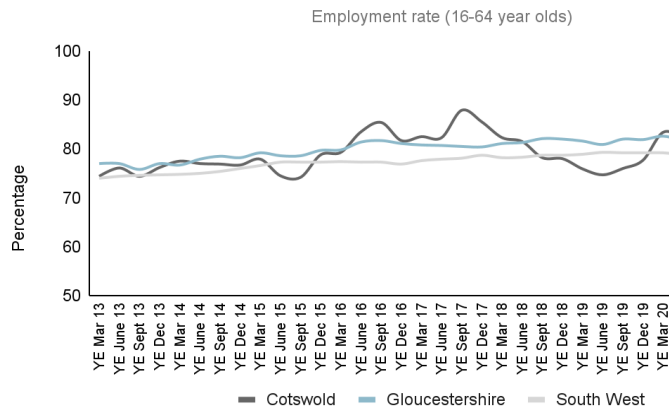
The Council in partnership with Feeding Gloucestershire and with input from various local organisations has developed the 'Cotswold Food Network'. The overarching aim of the Network is to improve food equity across the district and beyond, so that everyone has access to nutritious and delicious food and some to eat it with, no matter of background. The network brings together a wide range of partners to enable a focus on food not just from 'farm to fork, but also through the lenses of climate change, cost of living (financial inclusion/food insecurity) as well as economic development & tourism. The network will enable bottom up activity that is reflecting our communities assets and ideas through engagement and co-production. The first emerging theme is community growing and a workshop to explore this further is planned for November.

The network is also currently planning a 'Cost of Living Round Table' event that will bring together all relevant support agencies to look strategically at how support can be provided more effectively across the district. Also planned are two community events for the North and South of the district, which will provide space to connect and interact, activities as well as information and advice around food, financial inclusion and health and wellbeing.

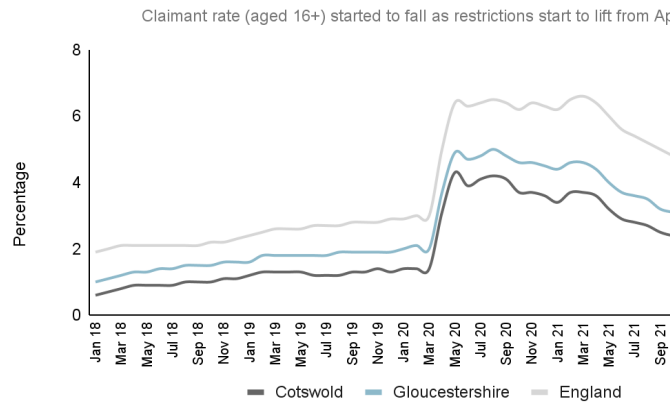


The Context

The District supports an economically active population of around 47,100 and has strengths in finance and business services, ICT including science and technology, retail, and accommodation and food services. Around 90% 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 during the pandemic. It has fallen back significantly to 1.6% - the lowest in the county, but still slightly above the pre-pandemic level. The national and global economies have faced 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. Although energy and fuel costs have dropped back, they are still significantly higher than prior to the invasion and food inflation continues to run at very high levels.



Source: ONS, Annual Population Survey



Source: ONS, Crown Copyright Reserved (Nomis)

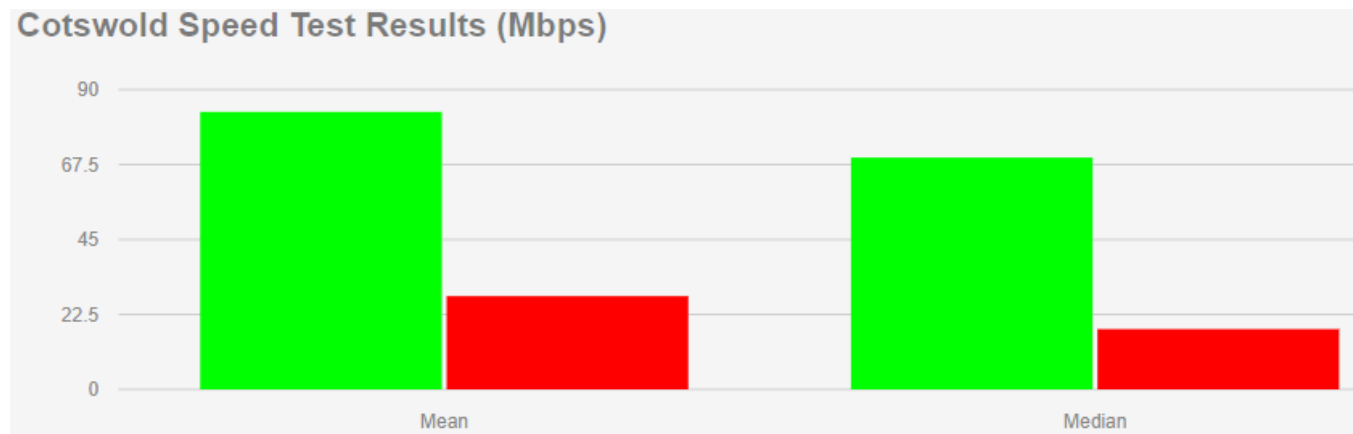
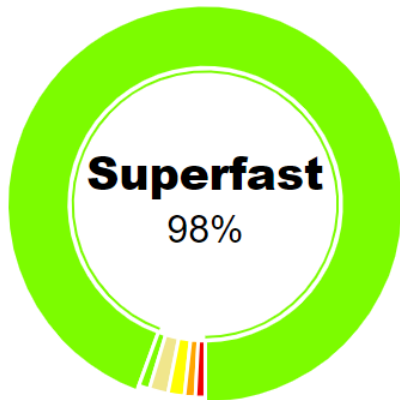
Businesses within the visitor economy, particularly within hospitality, continue to face a particularly challenging scenario: huge increases in wage costs – not only to recruit and retain staff amid continuing labour shortages, but also with the increase in the minimum wage; significant, continuing increases in costs, particularly for

food and drink purchases; and all against the backdrop of a major squeeze on customer spending. The rising cost of living has impacted consumer behaviour and spending with shorter staying trips, less day trips and an increased interest in cheaper or free options for things to do.

Overall overseas visitor numbers were still down on pre-pandemic levels (about 10%), however the high-spending US market continued to be buoyant and preliminary figures suggest spending by overseas visitors is up on pre-pandemic figures. The annual economic impact study is due to be released in early November.

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 have been on site at Moreton-in-Marsh and were due to connect 700 premises by the end of 2022 and 1700 by September 2023. Fairford, Tetbury, Bourton-on-the-Water, South Cerney and Stow-on-the-Wold are due to be delivered in 2023. 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 superfast (>30mbps) has increased slightly and ultrafast (>100mbps)/full fibre has moved up quite quickly according to figures on the ThinkBroadband website.



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 from the Chief Executive of the National Star College and from Kier and National Highways on the A417 Missing Link project.

In 2022, 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 largely been completed, including 'Clean and Green' initiatives, new offices at The Growth Hub/Farm491 and a feasibility study for the Old Station building in Cirencester. Cabinet in March agreed to allocate up to £135,000 to the Growth Hub in Cirencester to provide business support. One positive benefit of this funding is that the Growth Hub will be able to expand its outreach programme across the District, particularly in the north in areas like Moreton-in-Marsh and Chipping Campden. Applications are currently open for the remaining 2023-24 projects to be funded shortly and an open call will be run for 2024-25 projects, which represents the majority of the funding.

A further £764,292 was 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 was approved in early April 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. The Council has procured a delivery partner for the business grants (ALP Synergy Ltd) and the village hall grants (Gloucestershire Rural Community Council) jointly with the Forest of Dean District Council. The business grant applications are now open and we anticipate the village hall grants will be open soon once GRCC have completed an audit of the buildings.

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 latest count at the end of March 2023 showed the vacancy rate edging up to just above 5%, with a number of the remaining units either under offer or undergoing refurbishment. Another count is due in October 2023, although it is encouraging that the longest-standing vacant building, the former House of Fraser on the Market Place, has now been let to the Grace Network. 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. In some of the smaller towns, a loss of retail space to residential is of more concern as it can affect the town's 'critical mass' and therefore its ability to attract visitors.

The current provision for coach parking in Bourton on the Water will cease at the end of December. However a local stakeholder group, including representatives from the Council, Gloucestershire CC Highways, Bourton Parish and Bourton Business Network, have been working to find a suitable alternative site. We are optimistic that a viable solution, involving a drop off point in the centre of the village and coach parking on the industrial estate, can be found.

Bookings for coaches visiting Bourton on the Water are currently handled by the Visitor Information Centre and the Economic Lead has been liaising with the VIC to help them work towards financial sustainability. The expectation is that the VIC will continue to handle coach bookings and that the resultant income will help with their financial sustainability.

Cotswolds Plus, the newly accredited Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) led by Cotswolds Tourism, is now up and running joining the national portfolio of 22 accredited LVEPs. The Cotswold Plus LVEP partners include Marketing Cheltenham, Visit Gloucester, Visit Gloucestershire, Visit DeanWye and the Cotswold National Landscape. The work of the LVEP is concentrated on co-ordinating regional activity to eradicate duplication and improve collaboration, ensuring a cohesive strategic approach across the visitor economy that aligns local and regional priorities with national strategic goals.

The LVEP has eight agreed workstreams: sustainability (transport and active travel); sustainability (business practices and bio-diversity); accessibility and inclusion; skills and training; research and data; business support; travel trade; and business events. LVEP status affords us greatly enhanced support from the national tourism body, VisitEngland, including amongst other potential benefits additional training, toolkits and advice. One of the toolkits that will be available to Cotswolds Tourism staff covers Grant Funding and Bid Writing.

The tourism team have just gone out with renewals for annual membership of Cotswolds Tourism. Nationally Destination Management Organisations are reporting that the considerable financial challenges facing visitor economy businesses have led to up to a 20% drop off in paid membership. Full figures for Cotswolds Tourism will not be available until the end of October but, while we have seen some businesses unable to renew or downgrading their membership level, preliminary results are encouraging and we anticipate only a small drop off in membership levels and income.

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, the Business Manager for Localities 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 at some point before the end of 2023. A public launch of the project took place on 20 January 2023 and attracted considerable media attention. The council continues to liaise actively with the university on this project.
- the new owners of the former Mitsubishi site in Cirencester, now renamed Watermoor Point. The office element is now over 90% let. The owners have also introduced an innovative and flexible co-warehousing solution, offering businesses a private, secure space within the warehouse, ranging from 1,000 to 10,000 square feet. Businesses also benefit from shared mechanical handling equipment and an on-site qualified forklift driver. Watermoor Point has been granted planning permission to install an additional 310 PV solar panels in addition to its existing 50kWh array, demonstrating its commitment to sustainability.
- 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 150 onsite, with the plans to continue to grow significantly. The Council and GFirst will continue to support ZeroAvia in its continued growth. Other sustainable aviation businesses, such as Vertical Aerospace and S&C Thermofluids, are already based at Cotswold Airport and the council is working with the airport's owners and others to promote it as a hub for such innovative businesses.
- Bathurst Developments in relation to the first phase of employment land at The Steadings development. They have appointed a developer partner. A reserved matters planning application has been submitted for this phase and is awaiting resubmission to reflect the comments made by the Council's planning officers.

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 was also awarded £4m of funding from the Government for a new T-level building, which has now been completed and 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. The College has most recently been awarded £3.5 million, in June, to create a Student Wellbeing Hub.

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 by the Secretary of State 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. Kier have started on site with various preparatory works and presented to the most recent meeting of the Cotswold Economic Advisory Group in September. They are committed to using local labour, contractors wherever possible and there is an opportunity for the council to work with local training providers, particularly around training for drystone walling.



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Delivering great services locally

**PERFORMANCE REPORT:
July 2023 - September 2023**

Summary Index

KPI Name	RAG	Page
Percentage of Council Tax Collected	Green	6
Percentage of Non Domestic Rates collected	Green	7
Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims	Red	8
Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events	Green	9
Processing times for Housing Benefit Change of Circumstances	Red	10
Percentage of Housing Benefit overpayment due to LA error/admin delay	Orange	11
Customer Satisfaction - Telephone	Green	12
Customer Satisfaction - Email	Grey	13
Customer Satisfaction - Face to Face	Green	14
Customer Call Handling - Average Waiting Time	Grey	15
Building Control Satisfaction	No Data	16

Summary Index

KPI Name	RAG	Page
Percentage of minor planning applications determined within agreed timescales (including AEOT)	Green	17
Percentage of major planning applications determined within agreed timescales (including AEOT)	Green	18
Percentage of other planning applications determined within agreed timescales (including AEOT)	Green	19
Total Income achieved in Planning & Income from Pre-application advice	Green	20
Percentage of Planning Appeals Allowed	Orange	21
Percentage of household waste recycled	Orange	22
Residual Household Waste per Household (kg)	Green	23
Missed bins per 100,000	Red	24
Number of visits to the leisure centres & (Snapshot) Number of gym memberships	Green	25
(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	Grey	26

Summary Index

KPI Name	RAG	Page
Percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days	Green	27
(Snapshot) Long Term Empty Properties	Grey	28
Number of fly tips collected and percentage that result in an enforcement action	Grey	29
Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales	Green	30
Number of affordable homes delivered	Red	31
% High risk notifications risk assessed within 1 working day	Green	32
Complaints	Grey	33
Percentage of FOI requests answered within 20 days	Grey	35

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).

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. It 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.

Benchmarking has been included wherever possible and additional investigations are underway to provide it for those metrics that are missing comparisons.

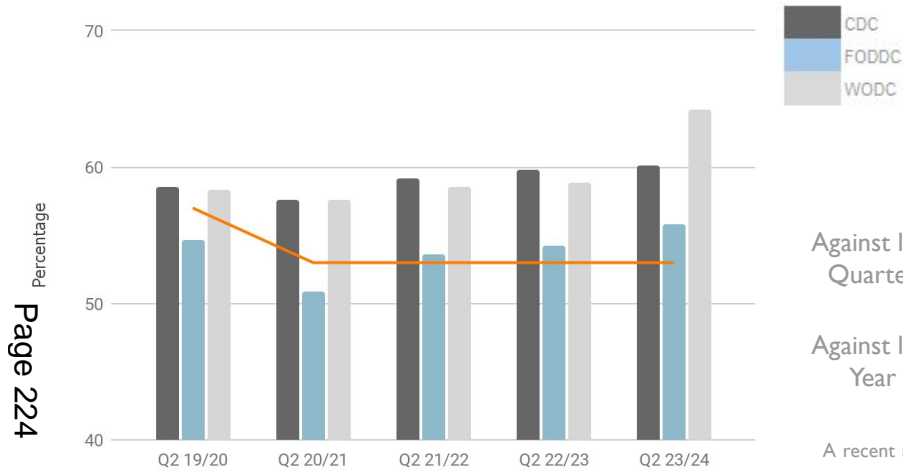
Overall Performance

The Council's performance has been mixed, with commendable progress in Tax Collection Rates and Official Land Charge Search Times. However, the cost of living crisis continues to result in increased customer contact for certain services. The challenging economic situation has put additional strain on residents, leading to an upsurge in queries and concerns.

There are some indicators that are exhibiting a negative trend including the Missed Bins per 100,000 and Number of Affordable Home Delivered.

The Council remains committed to further improving its performance and service delivery and actively investing in the development and implementation of automation and self-serve options for customers. By providing accessible and efficient self-help tools, customers can address their queries and concerns independently, leading to a decrease in the need for repeated interactions with services. It will continue to monitor and assess the impact of improvement programs in reducing customer contact and enhancing operational efficiency.

Percentage of Council Tax Collected



Page 224

How do we compare?

Council tax collected by 31 March 2023 as a % of amount collectable - SPARSE
There are 181 district councils in England. All 3 councils are predominantly rural

2022-23 Benchmark	%	District Rank	County Rank	Predominantly Rural Rank	Quartile
Cotswold	97.97	52/181	3/6	32/72	Second
Forest	97.76	70/181	4/6	40/72	Second
West	97.12	94/181	4/5	49/72	Third

Direction of Travel

	CDC	FODDC	WODC
Against last Quarter	N/A	N/A	N/A
Against last Year	↑	↑	↑

Target for Q2

53%

Target for 2023/24

99%

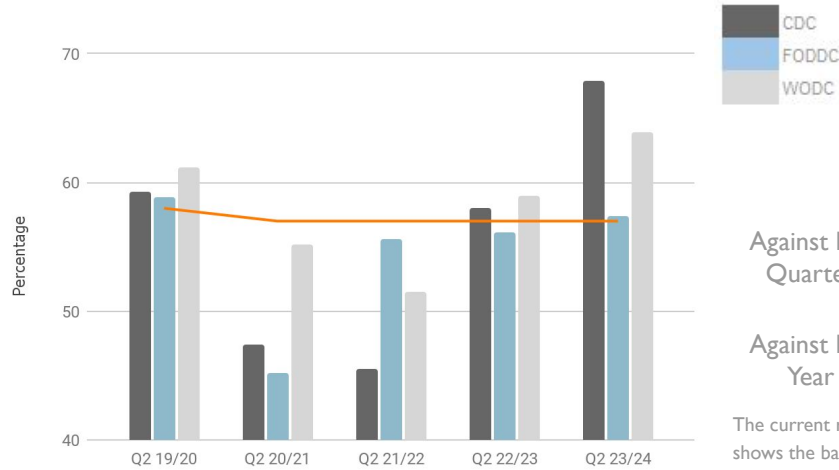
A recent audit of the Council Tax Services indicated that a significant sum of arrears had accumulated during challenging circumstances associated with the pandemic. The recovery of these arrears had been suspended to support customers in difficult financial circumstances and to facilitate the adoption of a new Council Tax platform enabling self service payments. The recovery process has now been reinstated and the current cycle is up to date, resulting in significant improvements in the collection of those arrears through manageable payment schedules for those residents affected. The service reports progress in collecting previous year's debt. The below table shows the balance at the end of the quarter for aged debt and the total outstanding:

	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	Total Outstanding
Balance at Quarter End	£717,592.74	£1,075,749.93	£1,307,883.43	£3,101,226.10

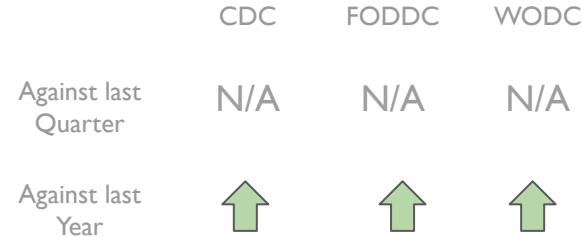
By the end of March 2023, authorities in England had collected £35.7 billion of council tax that related to 2022-23 (plus an additional £800 million of aged debt) and achieved an average in-year collection rate of 96.0%, an increase of 0.2 percentage points over 2021-22.

The collection rates for Q2 are well above target and are the highest they have been since prior to 2018/19.

Percentage of Non-domestic rates collected



Direction of Travel



Target for Q2

57%

Target for 2023/24

99%

The current recovery cycle is up to date with the service reporting progress in collecting previous year's debt. The below table shows the balance at the end of the quarter for aged debt and the total outstanding:

	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	Total Outstanding
Balance at Quarter End	£912,363.51	£1,096,711.92	£1,331,903.79	£3,340,979.22

How do we compare?

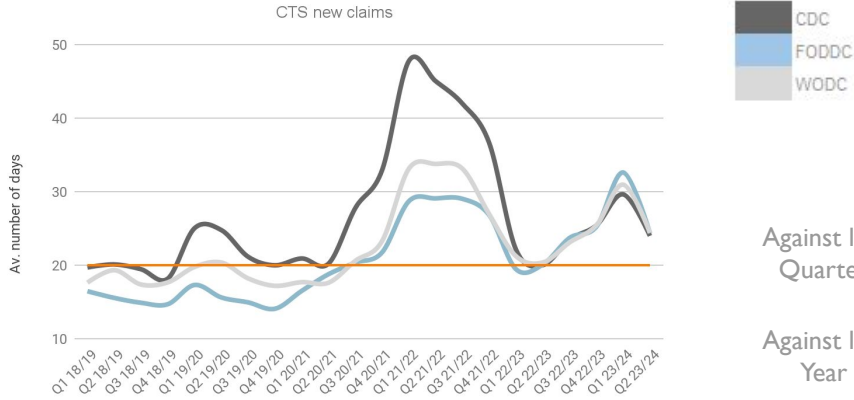
Non Domestic Rates collected by 31 March 2023 as a % of amount collectable - SPARSE
There are 181 district councils in England. All 3 councils are predominantly rural

2022-23 Benchmark	%	District Rank	County Rank	Predominantly Rural Rank	Quartile
Cotswold	94.07	177/181	6/6	71/72	Bottom
Forest	95.97	161/181	5/6	67/72	Bottom
West	98.39	53/181	2/5	20/72	Second

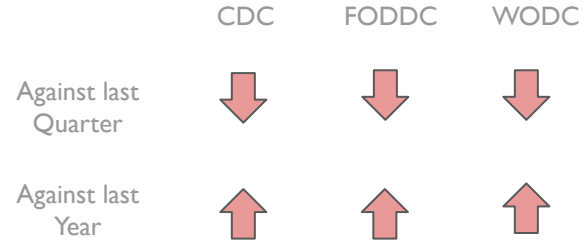
The arrears outstanding for previous year's debts for Business Rates include some data where the amount outstanding now is more than that brought forward at the beginning of the financial year. There are some processes which can increase the amount that needs to be collected, such as Rateable Value changes and amendments to liability. As Business Rates deals with large amounts of money, the outcome can outweigh the amount that has been collected. This is emphasized in Cotswolds, where funds collected for previous years arrears are presently credited to the current year pending the processing of additional assessments and changes by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA).

The collection rate for Cotswold during Q2 is back to pre-pandemic standards and the highest it's been since prior to 2018/19. It should be noted that the amount collected at Cotswolds is c.10% higher than typical levels due to a complex property settling some outstanding arrears which have been credited to the current year's account. The service is currently awaiting the VOA to finalise additional assessments and changes to ensure the correct allocation of funds to the respective years. Once completed it is anticipated the collection rate will align with previous years in the next quarter.

Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims



Direction of Travel



Target for Q2

20

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How do we compare?

Gov.uk produces tables to show a snapshot of the number of CTS claimants at the end of each financial year. The below table shows number of claimants at the end of March 2023 and the percentage change from Q4 2022 for each authority, plus the data for all authorities in England

	Number of Claimants at end of March 2023	Percentage Change since March 2022
Cotswold	1,926	-0.7%
Forest	2,240	-4.1%
West	1,745	-2.0%
England	1,393,323	-1.9%

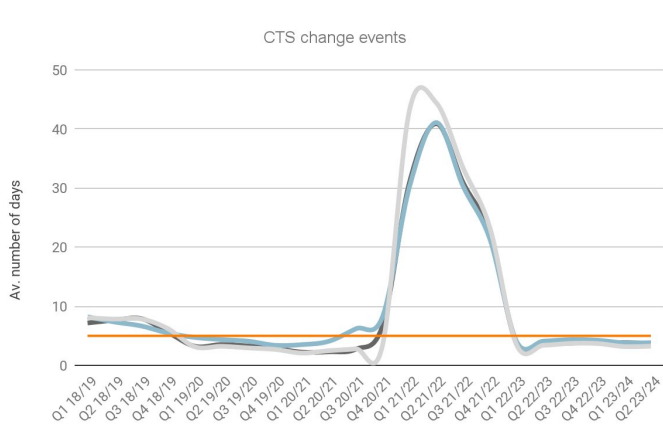
The processing stats for new CTS claims for Q2 are below the target of 20 days with Cotswolds averaging 16.76 days, however, given the target is cumulative, the rolling stats are above target. It should be noted that the cumulative processing time decreased by 5.65 days from last quarter.

Following procedural changes to manage the work received directly from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and customers, we are now achieving a level of 60-70% of automation for the DWP work up from 40-45% in Q1 allowing for more focus on applications and other reported changes. The Universal Credit (UC) section of DWP is currently investigating improvements to the data that is sent through to local authorities via a Working Group. Once the improvements have been made there is the potential, in conjunction with our software supplier, to automate additional DWP work items.

The outstanding workload is reducing week by week and management of the resource to support the reduction is underway. The improvements to the automation system have freed up officer capacity to help reduce the backlog of claims. It is anticipated that the trial for reduced phone line opening hours at Cotswold will further free up capacity for officers to process claims, however, pressure on the team remains high.

It is worth making clear that, especially for HB COCs, our main sources of HB changes come about after Christmas and in early January when we receive uprating information & rent increases from housing associations. The service indicates that processing days will reduce, but it will not be a rapid process.

Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events



Direction of Travel

	CDC	FODDC	WODC
Against last Quarter	↓	↑	↑
Against last Year	↑	↓	↓

Target for Q2

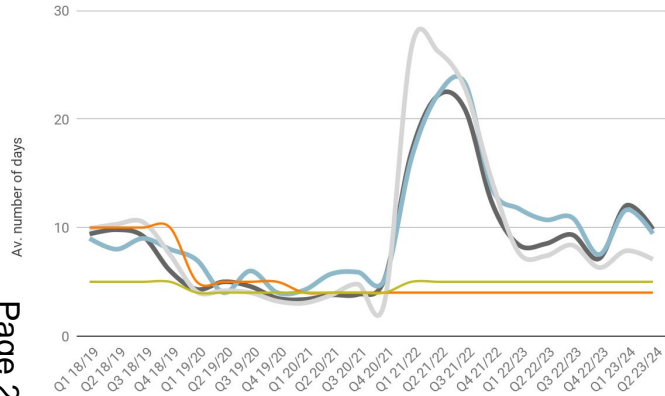
5

Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events remains well within the target of 5 days. Although there has been a small increase from this time last year, the change is only marginal (0.11).

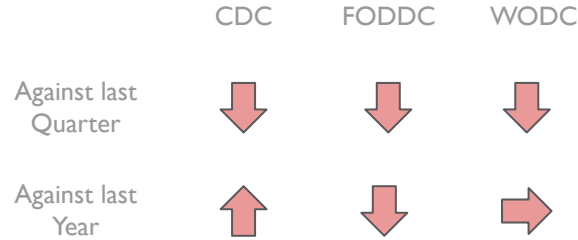
How do we compare?

Benchmarking currently not available. The Data & Performance Team will investigate options.

Processing times for Housing Benefit Change of Circumstances



Direction of Travel



Target for Q2

4

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How do we compare?

SPARSE provide benchmarking data on the speed of processing for HB CoCs. The latest data set is 2022-23

2022-23 Benchmark	Days	District Rank	County Rank	Predominantly Rural Rank	Quartile
Cotswold	7	143/176	2/5	59/70	Bottom
Forest	8	155/176	3/5	63/70	Bottom
West	6	137/176	4/4	57/70	Third

Please see [Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims](#).

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

At the end of Q2, the average days to process HB changes decreased to 6.83 days, however, since the target is cumulative, the ongoing statistics show higher figures. Although above target, the reduction in HB Change applications means any delay in assessing an application due to outstanding evidence required has a more visible impact to the average processing days. As a significant amount of changes that affect HB are usually received during Q4 we may potentially see a decrease to the processing times.

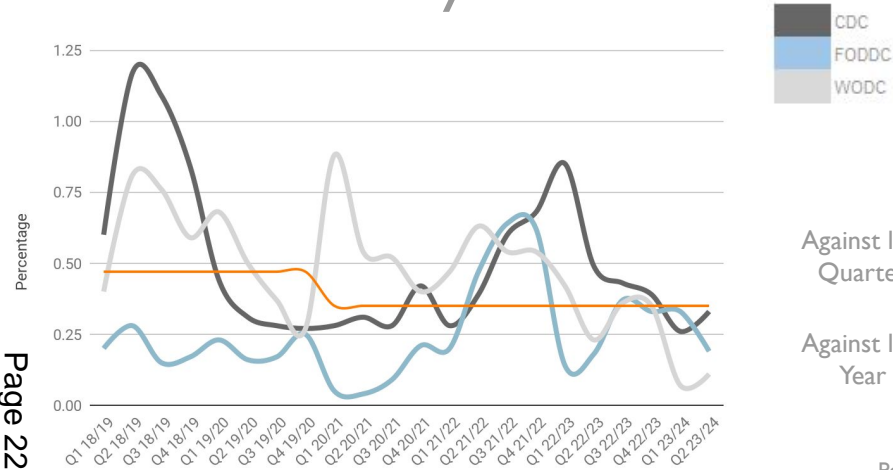
It should be noted that the number of expected changes that would affect Housing Benefit are reducing significantly as can be seen by the number of HB changes assessed compared to the number of CTS changes assessed.

HB Changes - 702
CTS Changes - 2644

Managed migration of Housing Benefit to Universal Credit is being rolled out from April 2024 across the country.

Percentage of Housing Benefit overpayment due to LA error/admin delay

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Direction of Travel

	CDC	FODDC	WODC
Against last Quarter	↑	↓	↑
Against last Year	↓	→	↓

Target for Q2

0.35%

Percentage of Housing Benefit overpayment error is 0.33% for Q2.

Measures are in place to ensure that HB overpayments due to local authority error are reduced as far as possible. Around 20% of the HB caseload is checked by Quality Assurance officers who target areas which have high error rates such as calculation of earnings. In addition to this work, the service is signed up to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Housing Benefit Award Accuracy (HBAA) initiative to tackle fraud and error.

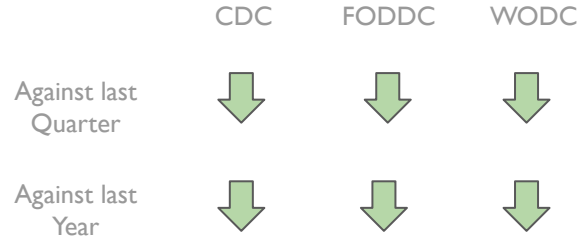
How do we compare?
TBC

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

Customer Satisfaction - Telephone



Direction of Travel



Target for Q2

90%

Target for 2023/24

90%

How do we compare?

The Govmetric Channel Satisfaction Index is a monthly publication of the top performing councils across the core customer access channels. At least 100 customers need to be transferred to the survey to be included in the league table so even if satisfaction is high, it may not be included i.e. September for the partnership in the below table. This is a national comparator

	July Rank	July Net Sat.	Aug Rank	Aug Net Sat.	Sept Rank	Sept Net Sat.
Cotswold	5	96%	3	97%	N/A	N/A
Forest	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
West	4	96%	1	98%	N/A	N/A

Services provided via the telephone consistently yield high satisfaction, and there has been a notable uptick in survey participation compared to the previous quarter. In Q2, there was a concerted effort to encourage advisors to actively promote the survey among residents.

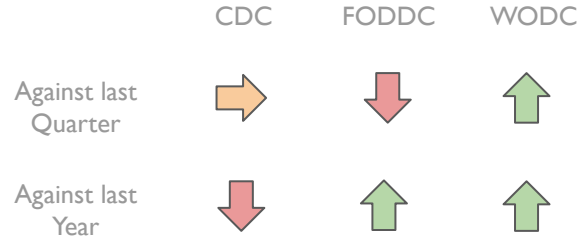
Cotswold continues to achieve top-tier performance levels, when a sufficient number of surveys are included in the Satisfaction Index. Although this is a very small proportion of our calls, numbers are comparable to other District Councils, hence the 'league tables' being a useful comparator.

Customer Satisfaction - Email

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Direction of Travel



Target for Q2

No Target

374 residents responded to the survey of which 241 were satisfied. This equates to a rate of 64.44% satisfaction for the quarter. All outbound emails sent by customer services from Salesforce contain a link to the survey.

A piece of work was undertaken to review the responses from the email surveys due to the more negative responses. Upon review it appears to be dissatisfaction surrounding service failure; missed bins, container deliveries, responses from Planning or Housing etc. System and process improvements by the individual services are being implemented which may affect these figures in the future.

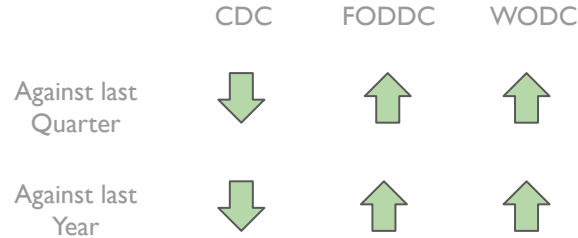
How do we compare?

Benchmarking currently not available. The Data & Performance Team will investigate options.

Customer Satisfaction - Face to Face



Direction of Travel



Target for Q2

90%

Target for 2023/24

90%

Customer Satisfaction from face to face interactions continues to be high with a 96.29% satisfaction rate for the quarter. 26 out of 27 surveyed were satisfied with the service.

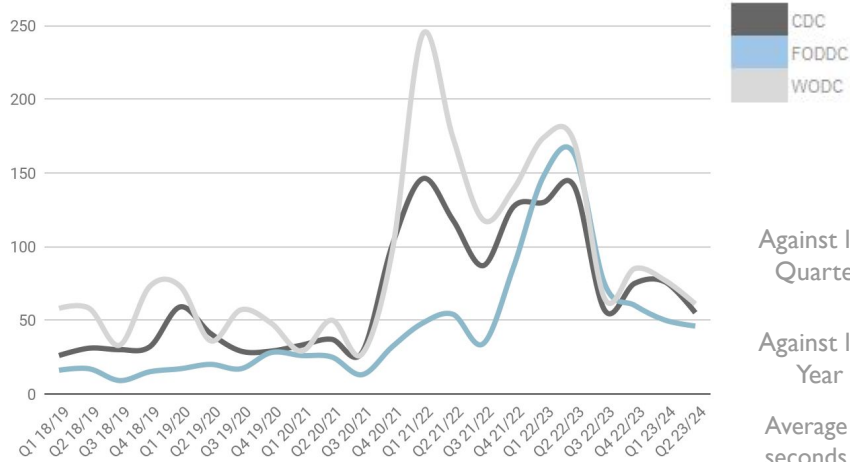
How do we compare?

Benchmarking currently not available. The Data & Performance Team will investigate options.

Note that any gaps in the data indicate no surveys were returned. This is especially apparent when the offices were closed during the pandemic.

Customer Call Handling - Average Waiting Time

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Direction of Travel

	CDC	FODDC	WODC
Against last Quarter	↓	↓	↓
Against last Year	↓	↓	↓

Target for Q2

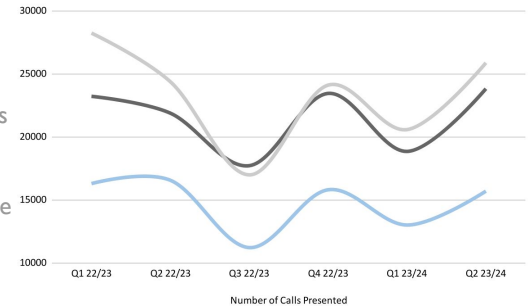
NO TARGET

How do we compare?

SPARSE are investigating pulling together Customer Services benchmarking data and if there is sufficient demand and suitably similar metrics to provide comparison across similarly rural local authorities we will work with them to assess any crossover in metrics and potential presentation.

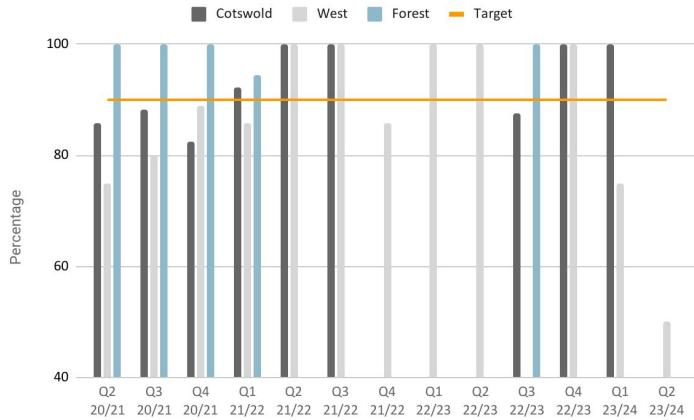
Average call waiting time for the Council saw reductions in comparison to last quarter by 21 seconds to an average of 55 seconds. There has been a marked improvement from Q2 2022-23 with reductions in average from just under a minute and a half.

Call numbers increased in comparison to last year and last quarter as can be seen from the chart to the right. The data indicates an overall decline in call numbers over time which is expected to continue with further work surrounding Channel Choice encouraging customers to self-serve where possible. The service are proactively working with other services to reduce processing times and repeat contact by using direct links to back office systems resulting in improved customer experience.



Building Control Satisfaction

Direction of Travel



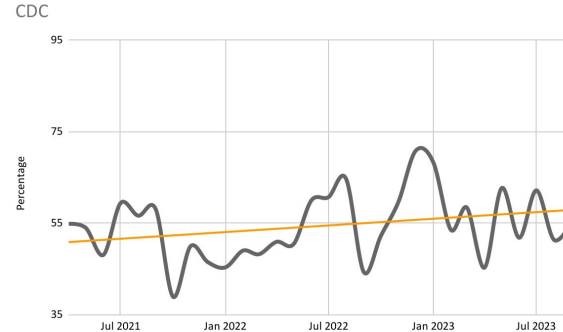
	CDC	FODDC	WODC	Target for Q2
Against last Quarter	N/A	N/A	↓	90%
Against last Year	N/A	N/A	↓	Target for 2023/24 90%

Each month, the service conducts telephone interviews with customers who have received a completion certificate during the month. The customer rates the service on helpfulness of staff, quality of technical advice and other information, responsiveness, value for money, and overall satisfaction.

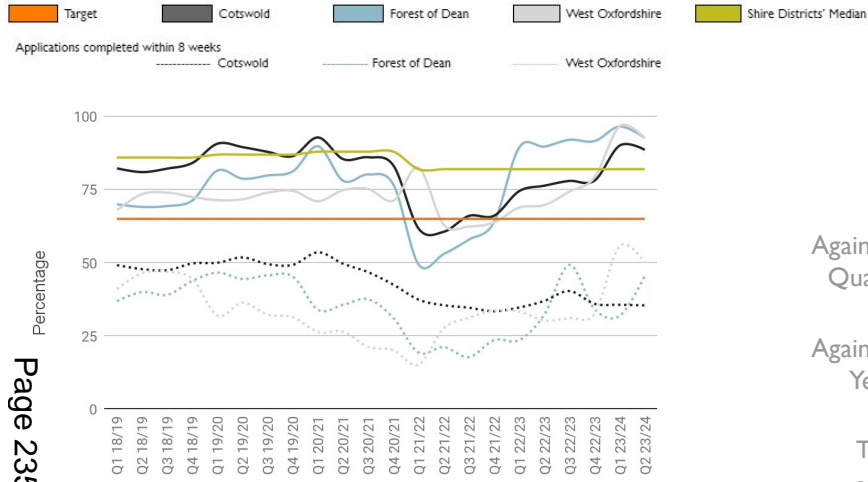
The data still suffers from low numbers of satisfaction survey returns within none having been returned during Q2. Discussions are proposed with ICT to investigate an SMS notification service linking customers to an online survey. Building Control had 140 applications in Q2 and retains a strong hold in the share of the market. The below chart show market share over time.

How do we compare?
Percentage of share in the market

	July	August	September	Number of Apps for Quarter
Cotswold	62%	52%	55%	140
Forest	84%	61%	55%	112
West	74%	88%	75%	167



Percentage of minor planning applications determined within agreed timescales (including AEOT)



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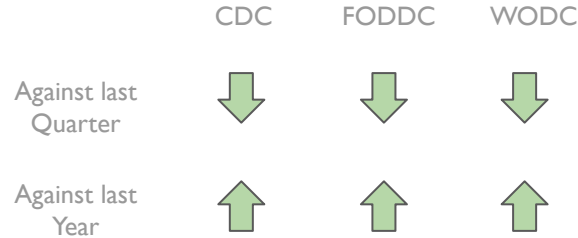
How do we compare?

Minor Developments - % within 8 weeks or agreed time

PLEASE NOTE SPARSE PROVIDE BENCHMARK DATA FOR CALENDAR YEARS AND THE CHART ABOVE AND STATS IN THE NARRATIVE ARE ROLLING

June 2022 - June 2023 Benchmark	%	District Rank	County Rank	Predominantly Rural Rank	Quartile
Cotswold	82.21	97/164	4/6	33/59	Third
Forest	93.18	25/164	1/6	6/59	Top
West	85.58	83/164	2/5	27/59	Third

Direction of Travel



Target for Q2

65%

The service has performed very well processing Minor applications within times. 92 minor applications were determined in Q2, compared to 105 applications in the same period of the previous year.

Performance for Development Management continues to improve across the application types.

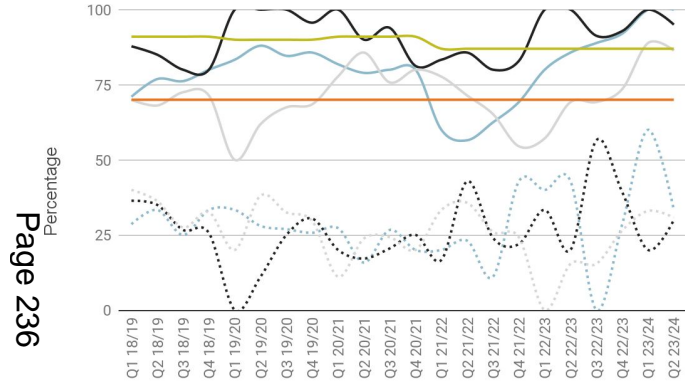
The key findings requiring Member authorisation from the PAS report that went to cabinet this quarter are currently being implemented with the Negotiation Protocol the first to be rolled out.

The Pre-App service continues to generate increased revenue and fewer speculative inquiries. This has led to a reduction in officer time dedicated to such queries which has had a positive impact on the turnaround times for applications.

The service reports that due to impending resourcing challenges within DM, it is anticipated that the number of applications determined within time is likely to decrease over the next quarter.

Percentage of major planning applications determined within agreed timescales (including AEOT)

■ Target
■ Cotswold
■ Forest of Dean
■ West Oxfordshire
■ Shire Districts' Median
 Applications completed within 13 weeks
 ----- Cotswold
 ----- Forest of Dean
 ----- West Oxfordshire



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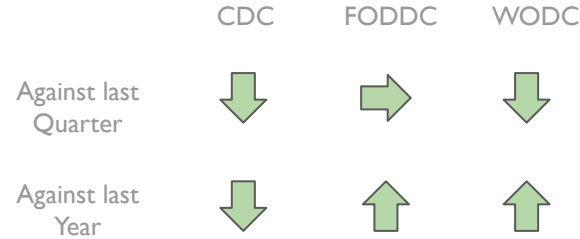
How do we compare?

Major Developments - % within 13 weeks or agreed time

PLEASE NOTE SPARSE PROVIDE BENCHMARK DATA FOR CALENDAR YEARS AND THE CHART ABOVE AND STATS IN THE NARRATIVE ARE ROLLING

June 2022 - June 2023 Benchmark	%	District Rank	County Rank	Predominantly Rural Rank	Quartile
Cotswold	90.00	83/164	3/6	29/59	Second
Forest	96.77	31/164	1/6	9/59	Top
West	83.33	117/164	5/5	43/59	Third

Direction of Travel



Target for Q2

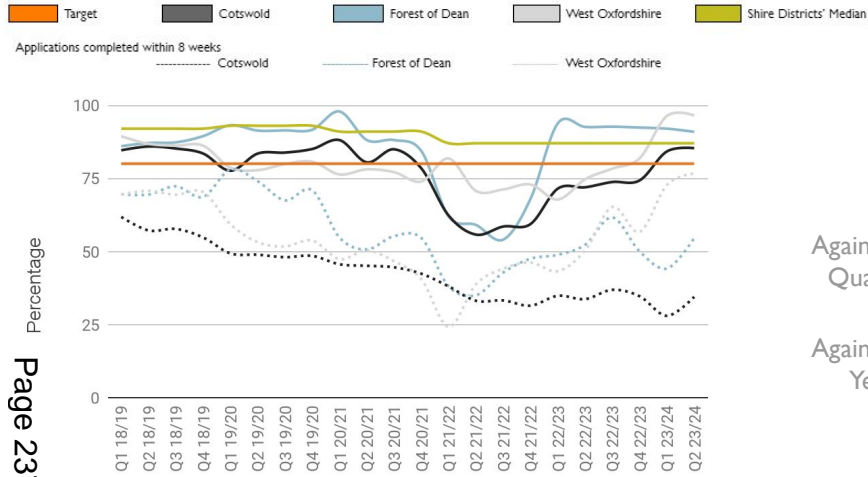
70%

The service has also performed very well processing Major applications within times, slightly dipping in comparison to last year and last quarter from 100% to 95% for Q2.

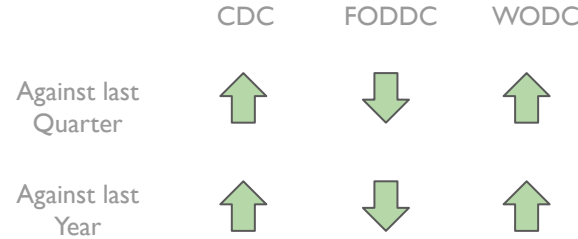
Fifteen major applications were determined during Q2, compared to seven applications in the same period of the previous year.

[See slide for Minor Developments for further narrative](#)

Percentage of other planning applications determined within agreed timescales (including AEOT)



Direction of Travel



Target for Q2

80%

How do we compare?

Other Developments - % within 8 weeks or agreed time
PLEASE NOTE SPARSE PROVIDE BENCHMARK DATA FOR CALENDAR YEARS AND THE CHART ABOVE AND STATS IN THE NARRATIVE ARE ROLLING

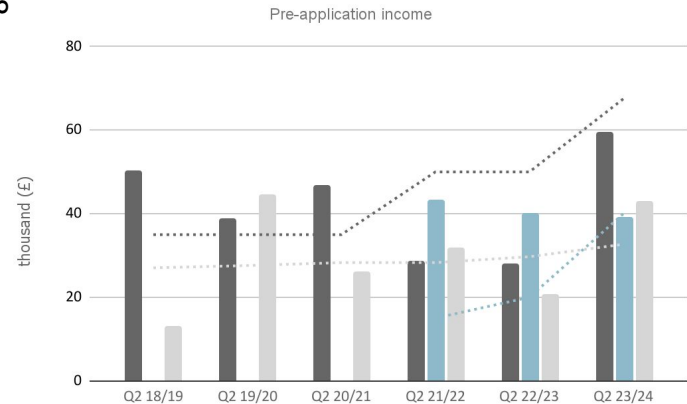
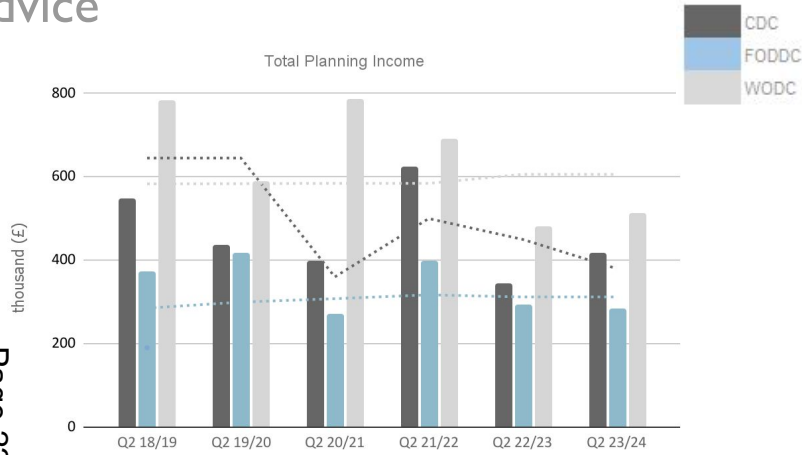
June 2022 - June 2023 Benchmark	%	District Rank	County Rank	Predominantly Rural Rank	Quartile
Cotswold	77.33	154/164	6/6	55/59	Bottom
Forest	91.90	68/164	1/6	21/59	Second
West	89.49	85/164	4/5	30/59	Third

Determination times for Other applications have also improved reaching a rate of 85.31% for the quarter, the highest they have been since Q1 2020-21.

289 Other applications were determined in Q2.

[See slide for Minor Developments for additional narrative](#)

Total Income achieved in Planning & Income from Pre-application advice



Direction of Travel

	CDC	FODDC	WODC
<i>Total Income</i>			
Against last Qtr	↑	↓	↓
Against last Year	↑	↓	↑
<i>Pre App Income</i>			
Against last Qtr	↑	↓	↑
Against last Year	↑	↓	↑

Targets Q2

Total Planning Income

379939

Pre App Income

67500

At the end of Q2, total planning income for the Council exceeded the target. In comparison to Q2 2022-23, pre-app income has more than doubled, along with an increase for total planning income, although the target for Q2 pre-app income was not met.

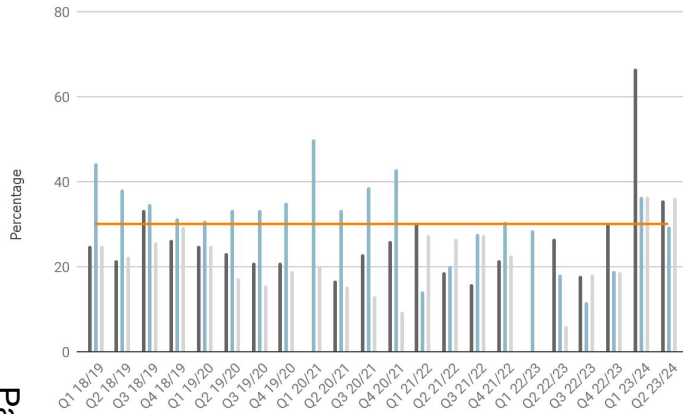
Due to the cost of living crisis and the slow down in the economy, we may be seeing a slow down in larger developments in particular which could have an impact on income.

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 the Council has a 5 year land supply so gets fewer speculative applications which tend to attract large fees.

How do we compare?

Planning Advisory Service (PAS) planned to benchmark back in [2021](#). No data is available in the public domain, but the data team has been in contact with PAS to find further information and are awaiting an update.

Percentage of Planning Appeals Allowed (cumulative)



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Direction of Travel

	CDC	FODDC	WODC
Against last Quarter	↓	↓	↑
Against last Year	↑	↑	↑

Target for Q2

30%

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

Between 1 July 2023 and 30 September 2023, eleven appeals were decided; of which eight decisions were supported.

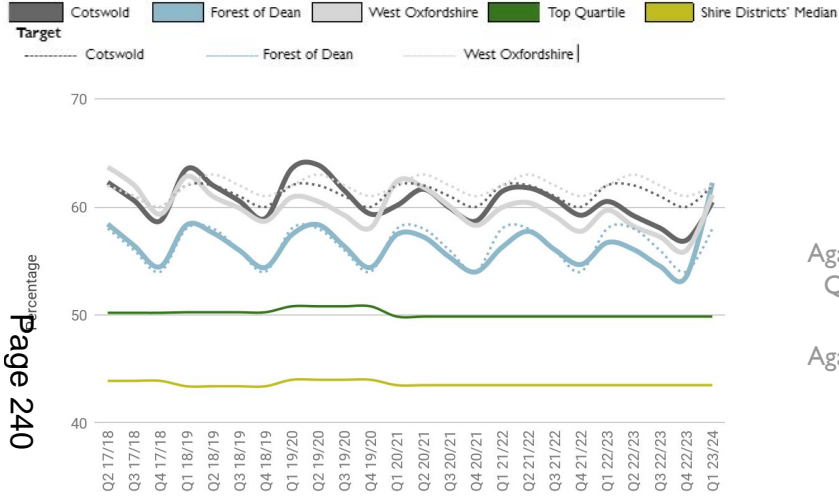
This equates to a percentage of 27.27% for this quarter but a cumulative total of 35.71% for the year which is slightly above the target. As this metric is cumulative, it may well reduce throughout the year depending on how many appeals are received.

The service reports there has been a substantial reduction in enforcement cases.

How do we compare?

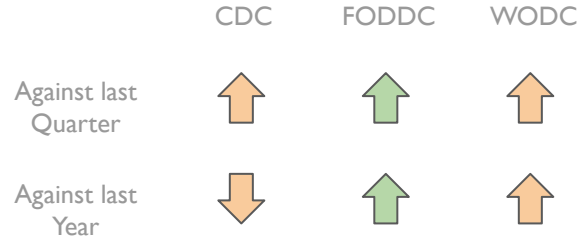
The Data and Performance Team have been in touch with the Planning Inspectorate to obtain a full data set.

Percentage of household waste recycled



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Direction of Travel



Target for Q1

62%

How do we compare?

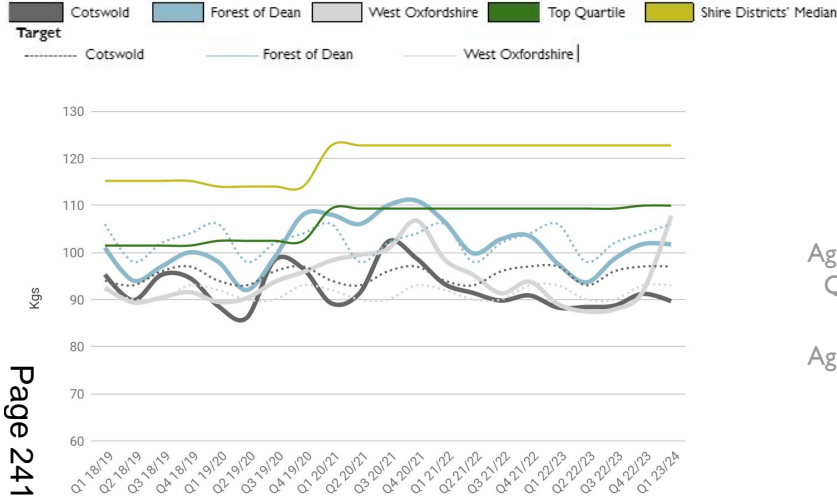
Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting

2021-22 Benchmark	%	District Rank	County Rank	Mainly Rural Rank	Quartile
Cotswold	59.20	9/174	1/6	2/37	Top
Forest	54.30	25/175	3/6	8/37	Top
West	57.70	15/175	3/5	4/37	Top

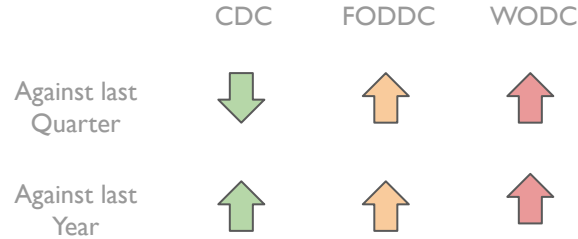
The data regarding recycling rates is received by the data team from Gloucestershire County Council, but it is a quarter behind. Therefore, the narrative and graphs pertain to Q1 2023/2024 (April - June).

During Q1, recycling rates improved in comparison to last quarter by 3.56% to 60.46% but sit slightly below the 62% target. Rates are slightly lower than this period last year by 0.05%.

Residual Household Waste per Household (kg)



Direction of Travel



Target for Q1

97

How do we compare?

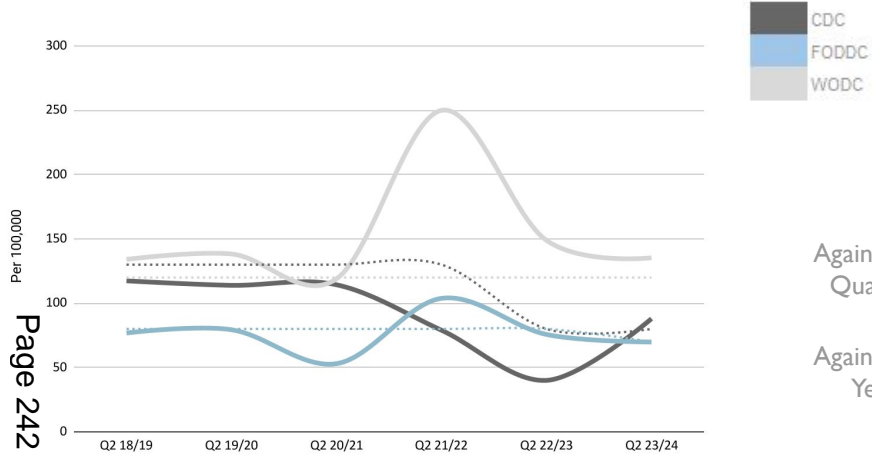
Residual household waste per household (kg/household)

2021-22 Benchmark	Tonnage	District Rank	County Rank	Mainly Rural Rank	Quartile
Cotswold	364.70	16/174	2/6	4/37	Top
Forest	412.10	38/174	4/6	12/37	Top
West	377.90	23/174	4/5	10/37	Top

The data regarding tonnage is received by the data team from Gloucestershire County Council, but it is a quarter behind. Therefore, the narrative and graphs pertain to Q1 2023/2024 (April - June).

In Q1, Cotswold continues to fall below the target for tonnage of household waste, slightly decreasing since last quarter by 1.58kg to 89.62 kg. In comparison to Q1 2022-2023 the tonnage has increased by 1.34kg.

Missed bins per 100,000



Direction of Travel

	CDC	FODDC	WODC
Against last Quarter	→	↑	↑
Against last Year	↑	↓	↓

Target for Q2

80

The number of missed bins for Q2 are above target and are higher than this time last year but remains unchanged from last quarter. This has been attributed to a stand-in driver navigating unfamiliar routes due to sickness and a vehicle being off the roads, both have since been resolved.

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.

How do we compare?

The Data Team are currently working with partners to compile the data return for APSE performance networks which will then provide benchmarking for this metric.

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



Direction of Travel

	CDC	FODDC	WODC
Gym Memberships			
Against last Quarter	➡	⬆	⬆
Against last Year	⬆	⬆	⬆
Leisure Visits			
Against last Quarter	➡	⬆	⬆
Against last Year	⬆	⬆	⬆

Target for Q2

Gym Memberships
2936

Leisure Visits
120k

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How do we compare?

The Data Team are currently working with partners to compile the data return for APSE performance networks which will then provide benchmarking for this metric.

The leisure targets were reviewed at the end of 2021-22 which resulted in increases in the target for visitor numbers.

Visits to leisure facilities remained relatively consistent compared to the previous quarter, showing an increase of over 4k compared to quarter two 2022-23, despite the change in providers.

Gym memberships remain steady in comparison to last quarter with an uplift in memberships compared to quarter two 2022-23.

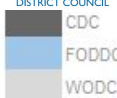
The Learn to Swim figures experienced a minor dip this quarter; a trend not uncommon in this flexible program. Typically, numbers decline during the summer holidays due to changing routines.

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

(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

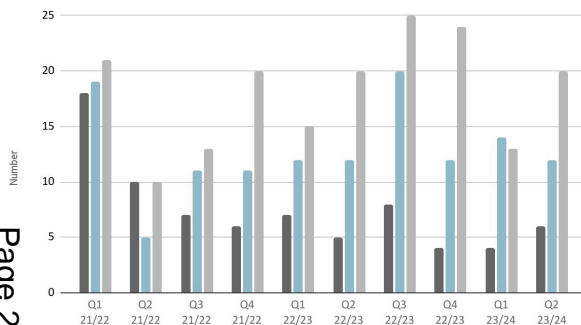


COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

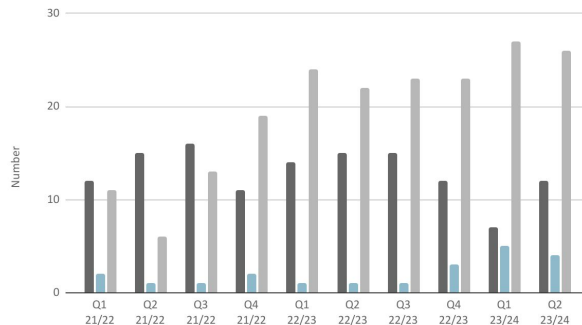


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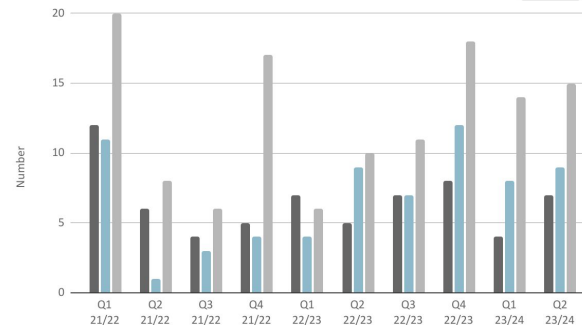
Households in B&B/hotel type accommodation



Households in hostels



Successful 'Move on' into suitable independent/LT accommodation



Direction of Travel

		CDC	FODDC	WODC
Against last Quarter	B&B/Hotels	↑	↓	↑
Against last Year	B&B/Hotels	↑	→	→
Against last Quarter	Hostels	↑	↓	↓
Against last Year	Hostels	↓	↑	↑
Against last Quarter	Move Ons	↑	↑	↑
Against last Year	Move Ons	↑	→	↑

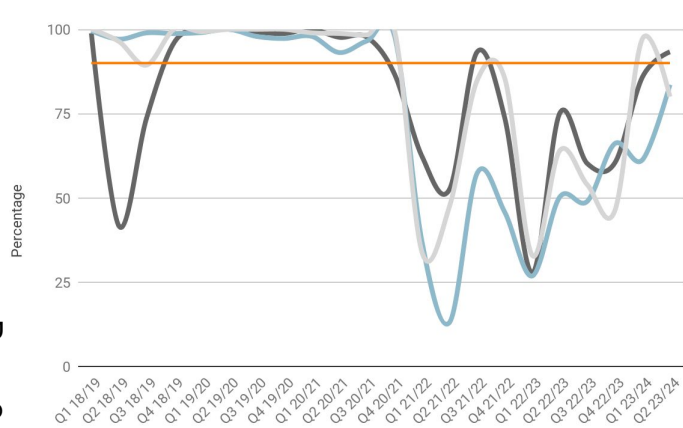
Although homelessness continues to be an issue, the number of households presenting as homeless has stabilised at Cotswold, largely due to our strong prevention and early intervention focus. During Q2 there has been a slight increase in households in temporary accommodation and move ons in comparison to last quarter.

As there has been a reduction in homelessness at Cotswold, West and Forest households have been able to utilise hostels in the district, therefore they are still running at capacity, with costs being recharged to the relevant authority. There are 3 hostels located in Cotswold district, one of which is exclusively for Cotswold Households.

How do we compare?

No benchmarking currently available. The Data & Performance Team will investigate options

Percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days



Direction of Travel

	CDC	FODDC	WODC
Against last Quarter	↑	↑	↓
Against last Year	↑	↑	↑

Target for Q2

90%

The Councils performance has improved since last quarter and has succeeded in getting 93.31% which is above target for the first time since Q3 2020-21.

The monthly performance meetings with the AD responsible for the majority of the answering teams have been successful. Workshops are being arranged to offer additional support and guidance to the teams, emphasizing the importance of timely responses to searches and requests.

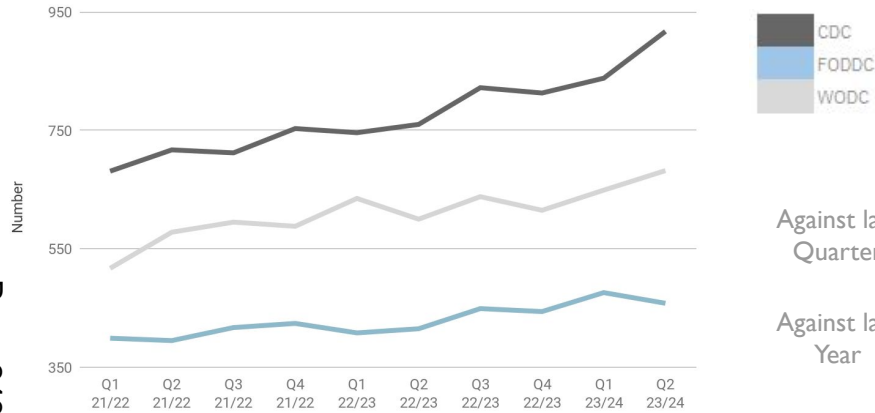
Due to impending resourcing challenges across the partnership within the answering teams, it is anticipated that the number of searches completed within 10 days is likely to decrease over the next quarter.

The HLMR project will start later in the new year.

How do we compare?

No benchmarking currently available. The Data & Performance Team will investigate options

(Snapshot) Long Term Empty Properties



Direction of Travel

	CDC	FODDC	WODC
Against last Quarter	↑	↓	↑
Against last Year	↑	↑	↑

Target for Q2

No Target

Properties continue to be added and removed from the list but as the graph indicates there is an upward trend.

Maintaining registers of long-term empty properties, can help monitor the situation, target interventions, and communicate with property owners more effectively. The LTE list is constantly being addressed with all owners being contacted by email, phone or letter in an attempt to bring properties back into use.

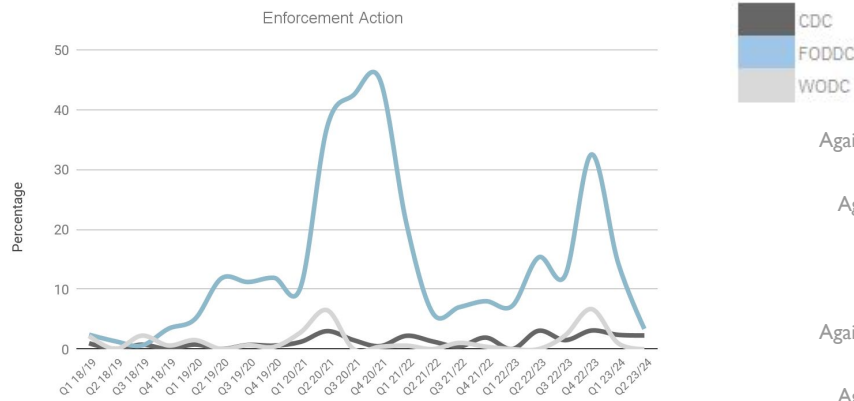
The service reports that the LTE figures continue to be affected by the new Retirement Village in Cirencester as they reach the six months empty point. It's common for properties of this nature to experience a lengthier selling process.

How do we compare?

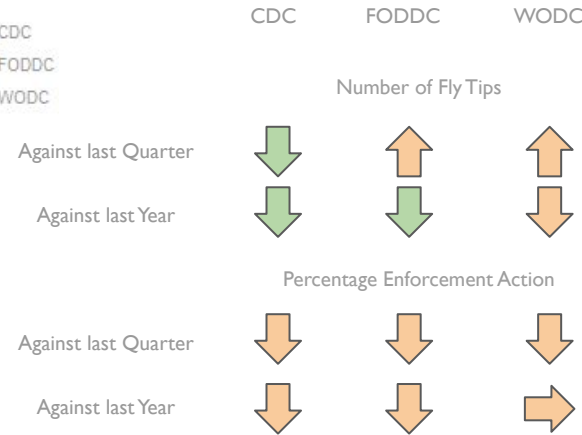
No benchmarking currently available. The Data & Performance Team will investigate options

Number of fly tips collected and percentage that result in an enforcement action

(defined as a warning letter; fixed penalty notice, simple caution or prosecution)



Direction of Travel



Target for Q2

No Target

How do we compare?

Number of Fly Tips reported for year 2022-23 for Local Authorities in England

There are 301 authorities with a total of 995545 Fly Tips reported (Range - 34830)

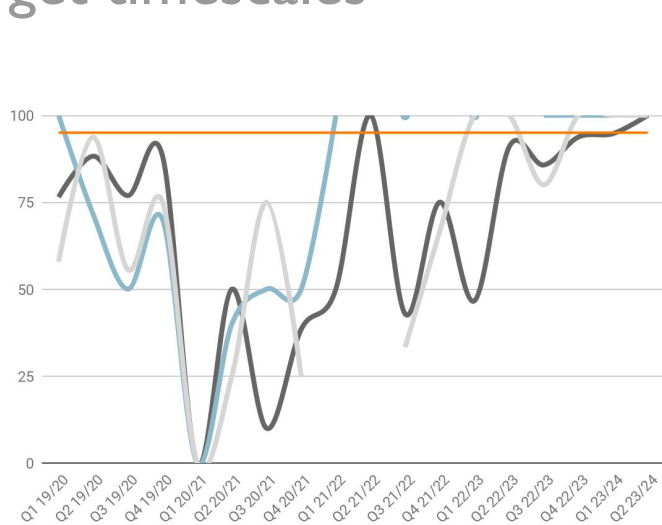
	No. Fly Tips for 2022-23	% Total Fly Tips	Absolute Value from Highest No. Fly Tips	Absolute Value from Lowest No. Fly Tips
Cotswold	1092	0.11	33738	1092
Forest	1569	0.16	33261	1569
West	1150	0.12	33680	1150

There was a reduction in fly tipping across the district from last quarter. This has been attributed to the installation of CCTV cameras at fly tipping hot spots. This has also facilitated gathering evidence for enforcement action.

Q2 saw a slight drop in the enforcement action percentage to 2.28%. However, the Council achieved a successful prosecution in Q2 under section 34 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, resulting in a fine of £1,672. Currently, three cases, including one for fly tipping at Green Lane, are recommended for prosecution. Additionally, five warning letters were issued in the quarter. The amendment for increased powers for Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) has not yet been implemented.

Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales

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Direction of Travel

	CDC	FODDC	WODC
Against last Quarter	↑	N/A	→
Against last Year	↑	N/A	→

Target for Q2

95%

The Council had 11 inspections, all of which were inspected within the timescales. The inspection rates for Q2 are well above target and the highest they have been since Q2 2021-2022.

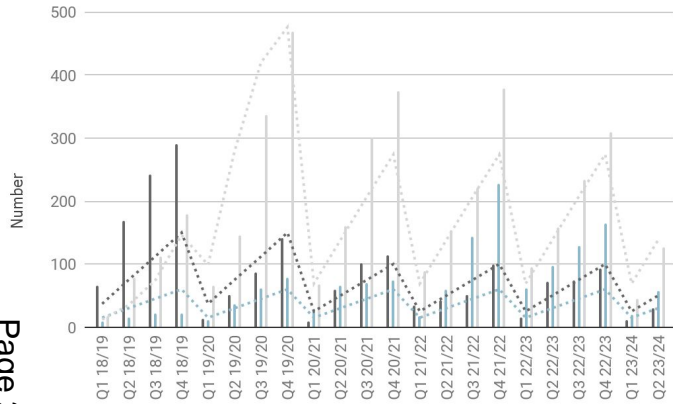
High risk work is naturally prioritised which can have an impact on lower risk scheduled inspection rates. The service now has a useful dashboard which is helpful for monitoring team performance and tracking lower risk scheduled inspections within the team.

How do we compare?

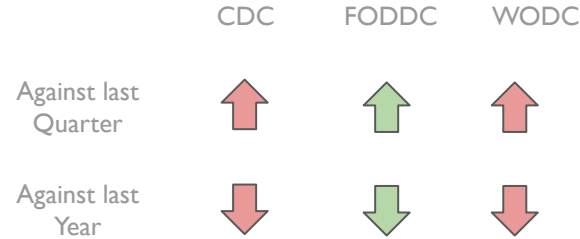
APSE performance networks are introducing benchmarking for environmental sectors for 2023-24

Number of affordable homes delivered (cumulative)

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Direction of Travel



Target for Q2

50

Nineteen properties including 8 for affordable rent and 11 for shared ownership have been delivered in Cotswold at Evenlode and Siddington. A total of 30 affordable homes have been delivered during Q1 and Q2 against a target of 50. Although this falls below target, delays were encountered at one housing site due to the insolvency of the main contractor, leading to a temporary halt in construction. The legal issues have since been resolved, a new contractor has been engaged, and construction has recommenced. It is anticipated that the homes will be delivered within the next quarter.

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.

How do we compare?

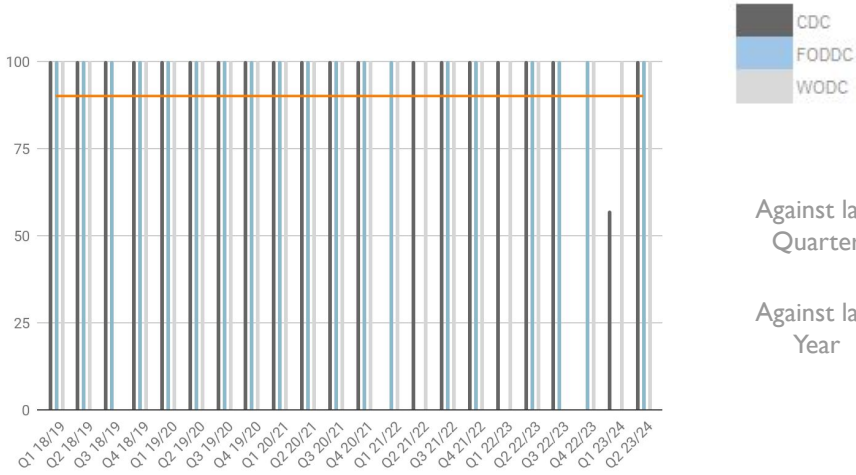
No benchmarking currently available. The Data & Performance Team will investigate options

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

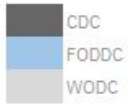
% High risk notifications risk assessed within 1 working day

(including food poisoning outbreaks, anti-social behaviour, contaminated private water supplies, workplace fatalities or multiple serious injuries)

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Direction of Travel



	CDC	FODDC	WODC
Against last Quarter	↑	↑	→
Against last Year	→	→	→

Target for Q2

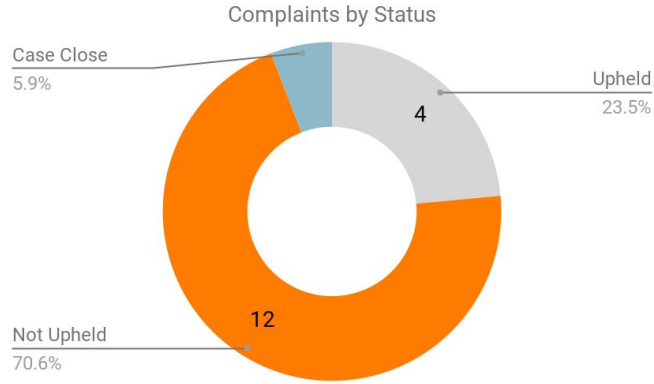
90%

There were two notifications received within Q2 regarding the death of a Premises Licence Holder and a Private Water Supply contamination. Both were assessed within one working day.

How do we compare?

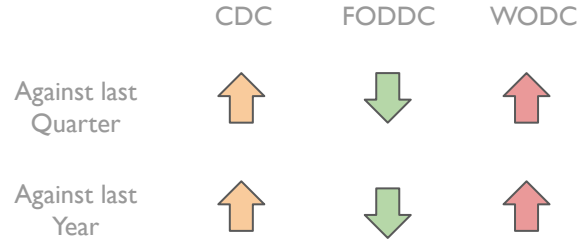
No benchmarking currently available. The Data & Performance Team will investigate options

Number of complaints upheld



Direction of Travel

Complaints upheld or partly upheld at Stage 1



Target for Q2

No Target

Target for 2023/24

No Target

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How do we compare?

The complaints and enquiries received in the period by the Ombudsman

The decisions made in the period by the Ombudsman

Compliance with recommendations recorded during the period by the Ombudsman

2022-23	Received	Investigated	Percentage Upheld	Percentage Compliance with Recommendations	Percentage Satisfactory Remedy
Cotswold	10	1	100	N/A	0
Forest	6	1	100	100	0
West	12	2	50	N/A	100
Similar Organisation			59	100	15

During Q2, the Council experienced an increase in complaints received from last quarter. The majority of the cases were not upheld.

See the table on the following page for a breakdown of those upheld and partially upheld.

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

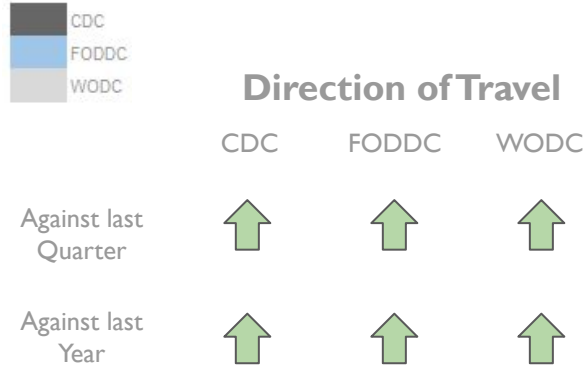
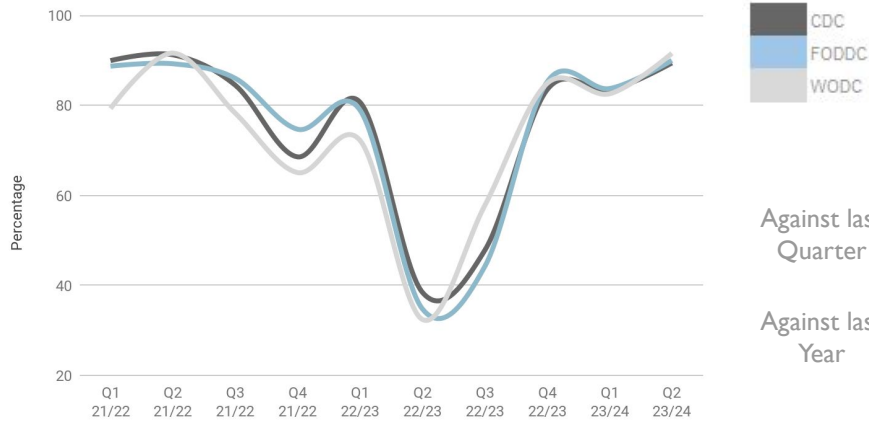
The new process has the following stages:

- 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

Complaints Upheld or Partially Upheld Breakdown

Service area	Description	Outcome/learning	Decision	Response time (days)
Planning	Unhappy with planning delays and lack of response	Dealt with by Service	Upheld	10
Waste and Recycling	Unhappy with delay for refuse collection	Dealt with by Depot/Contact Monitoring Officer	Upheld	4
Legal	Unhappy with the receipt of late notice of intent for Assets of Community Value	Dealt with by Service	Upheld	7
Council Tax	Upset the Council didn't add key information to account resulting in action against them.	Dealt with by Service	Upheld	6

Percentage of FOI requests answered within 20 days

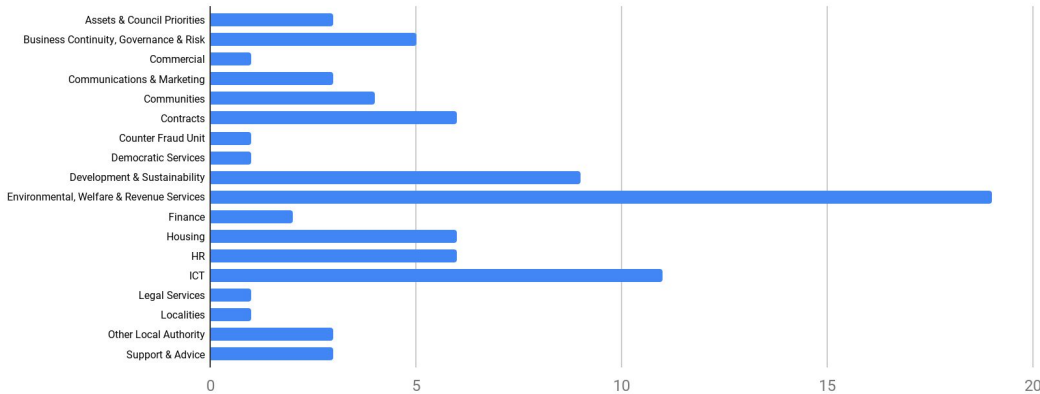


Target for Q2
No Target

Target for 2023/24
No Target

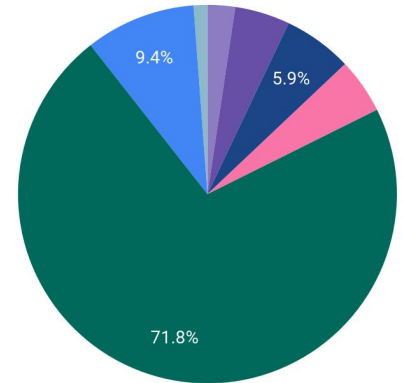
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Requests by Service Area



Response Type

- Directed to other Local Authority
- Directed to Website
- Exemption Applied
- Information Not Held
- Information Provided in Full
- Information Provided in Part
- No Response



Note: This is a new metric and the Data Team would welcome comments on the preferred observations

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COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 7 December 2023

SCHEDULE OF DECISION(S) TAKEN BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBERS

Note: Further details regarding the decisions are available in the relevant Decision Notices



Cabinet Member	Meeting Date	Subject	Decision(s)
Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services – Councillor Juliet Layton	3 November 2023	Neighbourhood Planning: Regulation 15 Decision for The Stow and The Swells Neighbourhood Development Plan	The Cabinet Member considered the recommendations of the officer and agreed to APPROVE both recommendations 1 and 2 of the report.
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance	14 November 2023	Discretionary Council Tax Discount – Application 1	The Deputy Leader considered the amended recommendation of the officer and the application for Discretionary Council Tax discount submitted under Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) and resolved to APPROVE the application and recommendations in the report (as amended) to award the discretionary discount of £864.96.
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance	14 November 2023	Discretionary Council Tax Discount – Application 2	The Deputy Leader considered the recommendations of the officer and the application for Discretionary Council Tax discount submitted under Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended and resolved to REFUSE the application as recommended by the officer.
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance	14 November 2023	Discretionary Council Tax Discount – Application 3	The Deputy Leader considered the recommendations of the officer and the application for Discretionary Council Tax discount submitted under Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and resolved to APPROVE the application as recommended by the officer.

(END)