

Public Document Pack



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Wednesday, 28 February 2024

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CABINET

A meeting of the Cabinet will be held in the Council Chamber - Council Offices, Trinity Road, Cirencester, GL7 1PX on **Thursday, 7 March 2024 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 7 - 16)**
To approve the minutes of the previous meeting of Cabinet on 1 February 2024.
4. **Chair's Announcements**
To receive any announcements from the Leader of the Council.
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 Chair will ask whether any members of the public present at the meeting wish to ask a question and will decide on the order of questioners.

The response may take the form of:

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

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

A Member of the Council may ask the Chair, the Leader, a Cabinet Member or the Chair of any Committee 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 Chair 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**

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

8. **Lechlade Air Quality Management Area Revocation (Pages 17 - 28)**

Purpose

To obtain approval for the revocation of the Lechlade Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).

Recommendation

That Cabinet resolves to:

1. Approve the revocation of the Lechlade AQMA

9. **Council Tax Reduction for Care Leavers (Pages 29 - 40)**

Purpose

To consider proposals to extend the age that Care Leavers can receive a reduction in Council Tax from 21 years to 25 years.

Recommendations

That Cabinet resolves to recommend to Full Council to:

1. Approve to extend the age that a care leaver can receive a reduction in their council tax from 21 years to 25 years;
2. Approve to include those care leavers from outside of Gloucestershire County within the offer;
3. Approve the amended Eligibility Criteria as set out in Annex A

10. **Council Tax Premium - Second Homes And Long-Term Empty Properties (Pages 41 - 48)**

Purpose

To consider the proposals to introduce a Council Tax Premium on second homes and apply a premium to long term empty properties after one year.

Recommendations

That Cabinet resolves to recommend to Full Council to:

1. Agree from 01 April 2024 to levy the maximum level of premium for Empty Homes as set out in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023:
 - i) Premium of 100% for dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (Empty Homes Premium) after 1 year up to 5 years of becoming empty;
 - ii) Premium of 200% for dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (Empty Homes Premium) between 5 years and 10 years;
 - iii) Premium of 300% for dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (Empty Homes Premium) for 10 years or more.

2. Agree in principle from 01 April 2025 to the implementation of a premium (Second Homes Premium) of 100% for dwellings that are no one's sole or main residence and which are substantially furnished
3. Agree to issue the mandatory notice of 12 months to all owners of second homes that a premium will commence from 1 April 2025; and,
4. Note that where premiums are to be applied, the Council is mindful of the current consultation by government which recommends exceptions in certain circumstances outlined within this report. Subject to the outcome of that consultation, a further report may be presented to Cabinet and Council prior to the implementation of the Council's policy on premiums taking into account statute, the Council's requirements and any guidance given by the Secretary of State.

11. **Business Rates Relief: 2024/2025. Retail, Hospitality And Leisure Scheme (Pages 49 - 56)**

Purpose

To consider a scheme of rate relief for retail premises as outlined by Government in the Autumn Statement 2023.

Recommendations

That Cabinet resolves to:

1. Approve the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure scheme as set out in Annex A for 2024/2025
2. Delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Resident Services the award of such reliefs

12. **Pay Policy Statement 2024/25 (Pages 57 - 68)**

Purpose

To consider the Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25.

Recommendations

That Cabinet recommends to Council to:

1. Approve the Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25.
2. Agree that the Pay Policy Statement 2024/25 will be updated and republished to reflect any changes to the senior management structure at that point.

13. **Gloucestershire City Regions Board (Pages 69 - 92)**

Purpose

To consider the emerging form and function of the Gloucestershire City Region Board, the nature of its authority, terms of reference, membership, and joint scrutiny arrangements.

To enable the Council to play an active part in the formalisation of a new Gloucestershire Region Board to support the delivery of developing a vision for the future growth of the economic success for the whole of the Gloucestershire economic area.

Recommendations

That Cabinet resolves to:

1. Agree to the establishment of the Gloucestershire City Region Board (GCRB);
2. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet

Member for Economy and Council Transformation, to finalise and complete the Inter-Authority Agreement (including the Constitution) and other key documentation and to take all necessary steps to create the GCRB, including finalising the terms of reference for the GCRB;

3. Agree that the above recommendations will not be effective until all Gloucestershire Councils pass equivalent resolutions;
4. Agree upon the establishment of the GCRB to;
 - 4.1 Delegate this Council's functions as are necessary for the delivery of the functions identified in the Terms of Reference at Annexe A to this report to the GCRB;
 - 4.2 Confirm the appointment of Gloucestershire County Council as the Administering Authority;
 - 4.3 Appoint the Cabinet member for Economy and Council Transformation of Cotswold District Council to the GCRB as the nominated member of the Board and to nominate a deputy to be agreed.

14. **Council Priority and Service Performance Report - 2023-24 Quarter Three (Pages 93 - 174)**

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 Q3.

15. **Financial Performance Report Q3 2023/24 (Pages 175 - 208)**

Purpose

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

Recommendation

That Cabinet reviews and notes the Q3 financial position set out in this report.

16. **Publica Review - Local Partnerships Transition Plan (Pages 209 - 244)**

Purpose

To consider the Local Partnerships report and to approve the recommendations therein.

Recommendations

That Cabinet resolves to recommend to Full Council to:

1. Approve the recommendations set out in the Local Partnerships report
2. Instruct the Interim Programme Director to prepare a detailed transition plan, building on the recommendations set out in the Local Partnerships report, for subsequent agreement by Cabinet and Council.

17. **Decision Taken Under Urgency Powers (Pages 245 - 250)**

Purpose

To report to Cabinet and Council on a decision taken by the Chief Executive Officer under urgency powers.

Recommendations

That Cabinet resolves to:

1. Note the decision taken as set out in Annex A.
2. Recommend to Council to note the decision taken as set out in Annex A.

18. **Schedule of Decisions taken by the Leader of the Council and/or Individual Cabinet Members**

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

(END)

Cabinet
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Minutes of a meeting of Cabinet held on Thursday, 1 February 2024

Councillors present:

Joe Harris - Leader
Claire Bloomer
Paul Hodgkinson

Mike Evemy – Deputy Leader
Juliet Layton
Lisa Spivey

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, Interim Managing Director
(Publica)

Claire Locke, Assistant Director for Property
and Regeneration
Andrew Brown, Democratic Services Business
Manager
Caleb Harris, Senior Democratic Services
Officer
Kira Thompson, Election and Democratic
Services Support Assistant

223 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Dale.

224 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Bloomer declared a pecuniary interest in respect of Agenda item 13 and would leave the room before Cabinet considered the item.

There were no declarations of interest from Officers.

225 Minutes

Cabinet considered the minutes from 11 January 2024 as presented in the document pack.

The minutes were proposed by Councillor Joe Harris and seconded by Councillor Evemy

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 11 January 2024 be approved as a correct record.

Record of Voting

For 4, Against 0, Abstention 2, Absent/Did not vote 2

For	Against	Abstention	Absent/Did not
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			vote
Joe Harris		Claire Bloomer	Mike McKeown
Juliet Layton		Lisa Spivey	Tony Dale
Mike Evely			
Paul Hodgkinson			

226 Leader's Announcements

The Leader started by making an announcement around the additional £500 million made available for local authorities. Whilst the additional funding was welcomed, it was stated that the funding would not be sufficient against the projected reduction in funding. It was also highlighted that the funding would largely go to authorities with responsibility for adult social care and children social services.

227 Public Questions

There were no public questions.

228 Member Questions

There were no member questions.

229 Issue(s) Arising from Overview and Scrutiny and/or Audit and Governance

Other than the report of the Public Conveniences Working Group (item 7a), there were no recommendations/issues arising from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or the Audit and Governance for Cabinet to consider.

a) Report of the Overview and Committee's Public Conveniences Review Group

The purpose of the report was to present to Cabinet the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Public Conveniences Review Group.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Evely, introduced the report and made the following points:

- Following a request from the Deputy Leader, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee set up the Public Conveniences Review Group on 26 September 2023 to look at the future provision of public conveniences within the District.
- The Deputy Leader highlighted the work done by the Review Group and thanked the group and the lead officer, Claire Locke - Assistant Director for Property and Regeneration, for their work.
- It was noted that the current contract for the maintenance of public conveniences with Danfo was in place until 30 September 2024. It was noted that in the lead up to this, the purpose of the review was to examine options for the future provision of public conveniences as a discretionary service.
- Following the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet, Councillor Evely tabled the responses to each recommendation (as listed in Cabinet response published).

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During the tabling of the recommendations, the following points were noted:

- It was noted that the view of the group which the Cabinet shared was that a public convenience service should be continued across the District.
- It was recognised that the financial pressures of the service faced by the Council would need to be reduced but that a nil-cost option for taxpayers would not be achievable. Therefore a reduction in the number of facilities where there were multiple facilities in a town or village would be required.
- It was noted that any closures would be done in consultation with Town and Parish Councils who would have the opportunity to take on responsibility for continuing to run the facilities should they wish to do so.
- It was noted at recommendation 5 that whilst it was agreed that the current system of charging needed to be made consistent across all facilities, it was proposed that the capital programme was not changed at this time but that proposals would come forward in a separate report to Cabinet as required.
- In regard to recommendation 8, it was noted that with the recent introduction of card readers, there currently wasn't sufficient data available to accurately forecast revenue. It was proposed that Cabinet maintain the current charge and review it when the contract is retendered and there is a minimum of 6 months of usage data.

Councillor Spivey in seconding the Cabinet response also wished to thank the Review Group for their work, and wished to propose a further response about looking at additional ways to commercialise the public convenience facilities to seek any additional revenue that can be raised such as through advertising. Councillor Evely accepted this additional response to ask officers to investigate opportunities for generating further commercial revenues from the public convenience facilities.

Councillor Evely also noted that the Equality and Rurality Impact Assessment tabled at the meeting would be published to the meeting page online.

The Cabinet response was tabled and proposed by Councillor Evely and seconded by Councillor Spivey.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet considered and AGREED its response to the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Voting Record

6 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention, 2 Absent/Did not vote

For	Against	Abstention	Absent/Did not vote
Claire Bloomer			Mike McKeown
Joe Harris			Tony Dale
Juliet Layton			
Lisa Spivey			
Mike Evely			
Paul Hodgkinson			

230 Discretionary Rate Relief in excess of £10,000

To purpose of the report was to consider one new application in respect of Hardship Relief in excess of £10,000 for the 2021/2022 to 2022/2023 financial years.

The Deputy Leader introduced this item and outlined the following points:

- The business applicant for relief had faced some difficulties caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic and by the UK withdrawal from the European Union.
- It was noted that at paragraph 3.10 that £167,498.25 had been repaid but an outstanding liability of £33,904.43 remained. It was proposed by officers that a hardship payment of 50% of the liability totally £16,952.21 be given to support their recovery. The remaining balance would be covered by a payment plan agreed between the applicant and the agent.
- It was outlined at paragraph 5.2 that the cost was split between the major preceptors and the UK Government and therefore the loss on the collection fund which the Council would see totalled £6780.88.
- It was noted that the business supported local jobs within the District and the business had provided confidential financial information to support the decision.

Cabinet asked if there were any other businesses that had applied for relief as these applications were rare. It was confirmed by the Business Manager - Environmental, Welfare & Revenue Service that this was the only application at present and any other similar applications that arise would need to be considered by Cabinet. It was also confirmed that the revenues team worked with businesses to secure payment, and this hardship relief was after all options had been exhausted and appropriate evidence had been provided.

Cabinet also asked if there could be a repeat application and how that would be processed. It was confirmed that whilst a new application could be submitted, this would need to be considered with appropriate evidence.

Cabinet noted the significant hardship faced by the business and that this would be an appropriate use of Hardship Relief powers to protect local jobs.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Evely and seconded by Councillor Joe Harris

RESOLVED: That Cabinet

1. APPROVED a Hardship relief award of £16,952.21; and
2. AGREED to instruct officers to make a suitable repayment plan to recover the remaining £16,952.22

Voting Record

6 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention, 2 Absent/Did not vote

For	Against	Abstention	Absent/Did not vote
Claire Bloomer			Mike McKeown
Joe Harris			Tony Dale

Juliet Layton			
Lisa Spivey			
Mike Evey			
Paul Hodgkinson			

231 2024/25 Budget – Fees and Charges Report

The purpose of this report was to present a revised schedule of fees and charges for 2024/25. The report also described the rationale for the revised charges compared to current charges for 2023/24.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report and outlined the following points:

- It was highlighted that the charges within the annual report covered all of the charges other than the parking fees and charges considered at the January Cabinet meeting.
- It was highlighted that the Garden Waste charge was the largest with the proposed changes providing £169,000 for the revenue budget which would cover the increasing cost of the discretionary service provided.
- The majority of charges would see a 6.7% increase unless they were frozen or had an alternative change due to circumstances such as already providing a full cost recovery.
- The decision within the report would see additional revenue of £169,000 on garden waste and £27,000 on the remainder of the charges.

Cabinet asked about the increase in charges in line with inflation as this rate had been much higher. The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed the September figure was the standard mediate figure used although it was recognised there had been a more volatile inflationary economic environment over the past 2 years.

Cabinet asked about the increases to Green Waste Collection and whether there would be a discount for those receiving state benefits. The Deputy Leader confirmed that there was a 50% discount for those receiving council tax support and housing support payments.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Evey and seconded by Councillor Joe Harris

RESOLVED: That Cabinet

1. ENDORSED the rationale for revising fees and charges as set out in the report; and
2. APPROVED the implementation of revised fees and charges for 2024/25 as detailed in Annex A from 1 April 2024.

Voting Record

6 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention, 2 Absent/Did not vote

For	Against	Abstention	Absent/Did not vote
Claire Bloomer			Mike McKeown

Joe Harris			Tony Dale
Juliet Layton			
Lisa Spivey			
Mike Evey			
Paul Hodgkinson			

232 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/25

The purpose of the report was to consider recommending to Full Council the 2024/25 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Evey introduced the report and outlined the following points:

- It was outlined that the indicative position with the fairer funding review was currently £5 million gap in 2026/27.
- It was noted that there had been a number of Section 114 Notices declared by local authorities who were unable to obtain a balanced financial budget due to financial and service delivery pressures.
- It was reaffirmed that there was no immediate risk to the Council of a Section 114 Notice but action needed to be taken now.
- It was highlighted that there were upcoming pressures for the Council around areas like homelessness.
- It was noted that the proposals would increase the average Council Tax Band D precepts by £5 a year.
- It was noted that the Publica Review had been identified as one of the larger risks which the Council needed to manage through the Budget with £500,000 allocated to support the transition. It was outlined in Paragraph 1.18 that the key focus for services transferred back to the Council would be efficiency and cost-effectiveness.
- It was noted that at this stage the cost of providing services throughout the transition from Publica to the Councils had not been changed other than accounting for inflation.
- It was outlined in table ES1 that the Budget would seek to put £500,000 back into the reserves to ensure these were replenished ahead of the funding challenges in 2026/27.
- On the Capital Programme it was noted that the capital allocation would be rolled over into next year for Leisure & Communities and for Environment as the work was still ongoing.
- It was outlined there was no borrowing projected other than the Community Municipal Investment Bond that had met its investment target.

The Leader noted that this proposed Budget would be considered at the Full Council meeting on 21 February where there would be opportunity to discuss the measures within.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet **AGREED** to recommend to Council to approve:

1. the Medium-Term Financial Strategy set out in Annex B
2. the Savings and Transformation items for inclusion in the budget, set out in Annex C
3. the Council Tax Requirement of £6,596,813 for this Council
4. the Council Tax level for Cotswold District Council purposes of £153.93 for a Band D property in 2024/25 (an increase of £5)
5. the Capital Programme, set out in Annex D
6. the Annual Capital Strategy 2024/25, as set out in Annex E

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7. the Annual Treasury Management Strategy and Non-Treasury Management Investment Strategy 2024/25, as set out in Annex F
8. the Strategy for the Flexible use of Capital Receipts, as set out in Annex H
9. the balances and reserves forecast for 2024/25 to 2027/28 as set out in Section 6 of the report.

Cabinet APPROVED the delegation to the Council's Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance to:

10. Agree changes to the General Fund Summary arising from the Local Government Finance Settlement and the Business Rates Retention Scheme estimates prior to submission to Council.
11. Agree any changes to the General Fund Summary arising from the recommendations to Cabinet made within the Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Public Conveniences Review Group

Voting Record

6 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention, 2 Absent/Did not vote

For	Against	Abstention	Absent/Did not vote
Claire Bloomer			Mike McKeown
Joe Harris			Tony Dale
Juliet Layton			
Lisa Spivey			
Mike Evely			
Paul Hodgkinson			

233 Future of the Old Station and Memorial Cottages Cirencester

The purpose the report was to seek agreement and allocation of funding to carry out structural works to rebuild an unstable wall at the Old Station, Cirencester.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance introduced this report and highlighted the following points:

- The Old Station building was noted as one of the historic assets the Council owned which required structural renovation works to make the wall at the station safe.
- It was outlined that the Council had been in discussion with New Brewery Arts regarding potential projects with the Old Station but that they had now withdrawn from these discussions.
- It was outlined that Cabinet would be asking Full Council to approve the £158,000 of capital funding to repair the wall to make it safe.

It was noted that this building would be a part of the Asset Management Strategy being developed and would be considered by Cabinet in due course.

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The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Evemy and seconded by Councillor Joe Harris.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet AGREED to recommend to Council to:

1. AGREE to carry out the works to rebuild the unstable wall at The Old Station, utilising £158,000 of capital budget from the Asset Management Strategy capital scheme.

Voting Record

6 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention, 2 Absent/Did not vote

For	Against	Abstention	Absent/Did not vote
Claire Bloomer			Mike McKeown
Joe Harris			Tony Dale
Juliet Layton			
Lisa Spivey			
Mike Evemy			
Paul Hodgkinson			

234 Agile working update and tenancy proposals for Trinity Road Council Offices in Cirencester

Councillor Bloomer having declared an interest left the room before the start of this item.

The purpose of the report was to update Cabinet on the work that had been completed to make changes to the Trinity Road offices to facilitate agile working and free up space for tenants and to make recommendations on a future tenant for the space created.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report and outlined the following points:

- The Agile Working Project originated around the changes in working practices due to Covid-19 Pandemic and the empty space provided.
- It was noted that the decision could be made under delegated authority but it was felt that it was important for Cabinet to make this decision for openness and transparency.
- It was noted that around 30% of the building had been made available for let and potential tenants had been identified.
- It was noted that other options had been considered but that some of these models would require additional resources which was not preferred.
- It had been noted by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that the forecast revenue was around £115,000 and would be less than that projection within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy of £151,000.
- It was highlighted that a 3-year agreement proposed would minimise any financial risk.

Cabinet welcomed the work done of the reassessment of the building and whilst the provider would not be taking on the whole building, it was highlighted that this would help the Council maximise the use of the asset.

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The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Evemy and seconded by Councillor Joe Harris.

RESOLVED That Cabinet:

1. AGREED to enter into a legal agreement with the Serviced Office Provider shown in Annex A as the Preferred Tenant.
2. DELEGATED AUTHORITY to the Deputy Chief Executive and S.151 Officer in consultation with the Head of Legal Services to agree the appropriate form and terms of a legal agreement.

Voting Record*

5 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention, 3 Absent/Did not vote

For	Against	Abstention	Absent/Did not vote
Joe Harris			Claire Bloomer
Juliet Layton			Mike McKeown
Lisa Spivey			Tony Dale
Mike Evemy			
Paul Hodgkinson			

**Due to an issue with the presentation of the vote outcome, Cabinet confirmed the outcome by a show of hands.*

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

No decisions had been taken by the Leader and/or Individual Cabinet Members.

236 Matters exempt from publication

Cabinet did not enter private session.

237 Exempt Annex B for Item 7a

Cabinet did not enter into private session to consider this Annex.

238 Exempt Annexes for Agenda Item 8

Cabinet did not enter into private session to consider this Annex.

239 Exempt Annex for Agenda Item 11

Cabinet did not enter into private session to consider this Annex.

240 Exempt Annex for Agenda Item 12

Cabinet did not enter into private session to consider this Annex.

Cabinet

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The Meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 6.51 pm

Chair

(END)

Agenda Item 8



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET – 7 MARCH 2024
Subject	REVOCATION OF LECHLADE AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREA
Wards affected	Lechlade, Kempsford & Fairford South
Accountable member	Juliet Layton, Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services Email: juliet.layton@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Jon Dearing, Assistant Director Resident Services Email: Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk
Report author	Susan McPherson – Senior Officer, ERS Email: Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To obtain approval for the revocation of the Lechlade Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).
Annexes	Annex A – DEFRA Appraisal of 2023 Annual Status Report
Recommendation(s)	That Cabinet resolves to: I. Approve the revocation of the Lechlade AQMA
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responding to the Climate Emergency • Supporting Communities
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	No consultation is required as the AQMA in Lechlade has met the relevant criteria, as required by Defra to trigger the revocation of the AQMA status.



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Lechlade Air Quality Management Area

The Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in Lechlade was declared on 2 April 2014. The area incorporates a 35m section of north Thames Street from the junction of the A417. Please refer to Figure 1. The AQMA was declared due to exceedances in the annual average concentrations of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) above the UK objective of 40µg/m³.

1.2 Air Quality Improvements

Following changes to the signalling sequence of the traffic lights at the junction of Thames Street and the A417 (High Street) in 2017, the air quality in Lechlade has steadily improved, and has been comfortably below the objective for five years, please refer to Figure 2.

1.3 Revocation

Defra's recommends revocation following a minimum of three consecutive years where the pollutant(s) of concern are 10 per cent below the relevant objective. The Lechlade AQMA has met this criteria (excluding 2020 and 2021 because of the pandemic), and Defra have requested the council considers revocation of the AQMA.

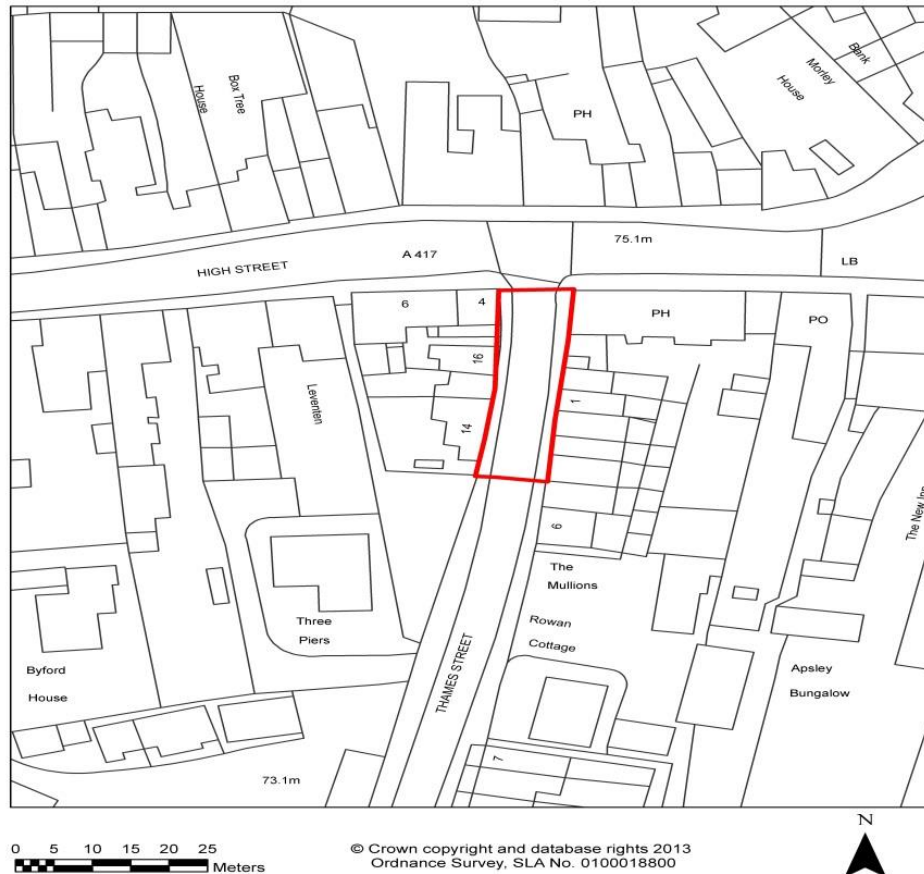
2. BACKGROUND AND AQMA DECLARATION

2.1 Under the Environment Act 1995, local authorities are required to monitor and improve air quality in their area. The legislation targets certain pollutants which may pose a health risk to humans should they enter the body, primarily by inhalation. These pollutants have been assigned objective concentrations which reduce the health risks to an acceptable level.

2.2 Where concentrations are found to be above the associated objective, the local authority must declare the area as an AQMA, and demonstrate it is putting in measures to improve air quality. In Lechlade, the area of Thames Street, south of the junction with the A417 (High Street) exceeded the objective for NO₂ (40µg/m³) from the year monitoring began at this location (2008). Formal recognition of the issue in 2013, was followed by agreement to declare by Cabinet in March 2014, with the AQMA formally declared later that year. The location and extent of the AQMA is shown in Figure 1.



**Cotswold District Council
Air Quality Management (Thames Street, Lechlade 2014) Area**



3. POLLUTION SOURCE AND MITIGATION

- 3.1 The primary, if not exclusive, source of NO₂ in the Lechlade AQMA is petrol/diesel vehicle exhaust gases. The traffic signals at the junction of Thames Street and the A417, frequently caused congestion on the Thames Street approach. This, coupled with incidences of fog during weather inversion conditions (due to its proximity to the River Thames) and, the restricted dispersal of exhaust gases caused by the relatively high buildings either side of the narrow road, resulted in a build up of NO₂ within this northern section of Thames Street.
- 3.2 Of the three factors contributing to the high concentrations of NO₂, improvements to traffic flow was the only practicable option to mitigation the issue.
- 3.3 Following discussions with Gloucestershire County Council Highways, the sequencing of the traffic lights was changed in 2017. Since this change, the air quality in Lechlade has steadily improved

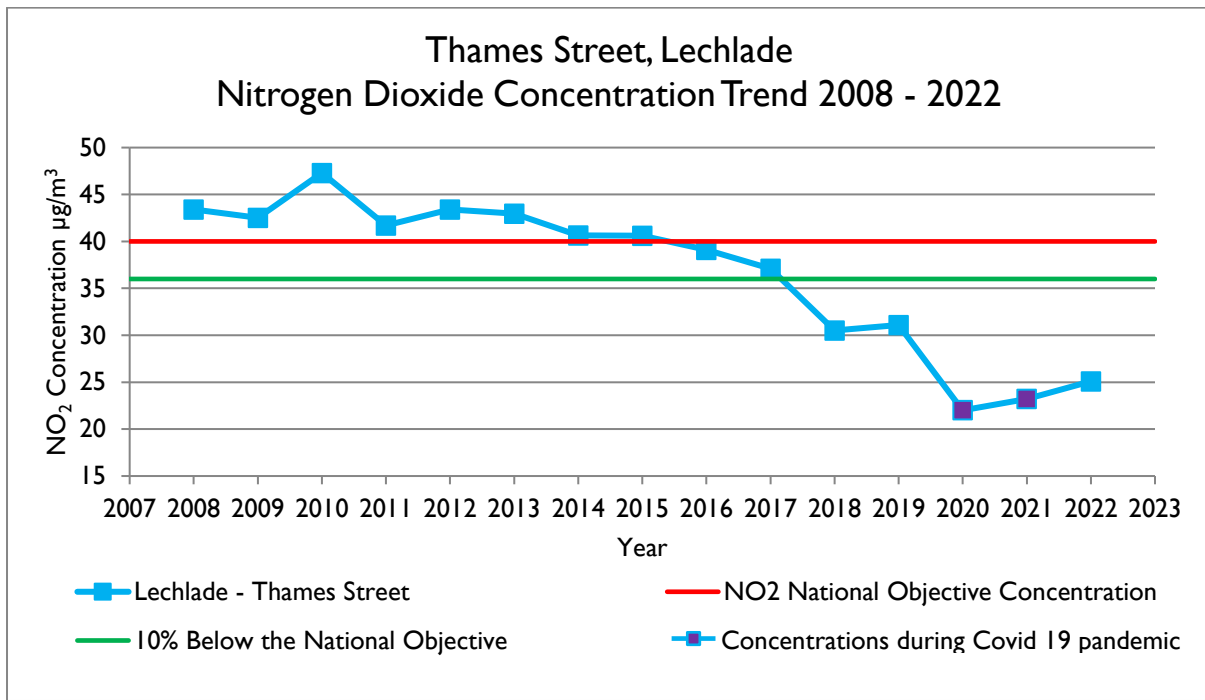


Figure 2 Trend in NO₂ concentrations at Thames Street, Lechlade between 2008 and 2022

- 3.4** To revoke an AQMA, Defra’s Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance (TG22) states that concentrations of the pollutant of concern must be shown to be below to associated objective by 10 per cent (36µg/m³ for NO₂), for three consecutive years. This excludes 2020 and 2021, where travel restrictions imposed by the Government to control the spread of Covid 19, resulted in a sharp drop in all pollutants associated with motorised road vehicles across the UK.
- 3.5** Excluding 2020 and 2021, Figure 2 clearly shows the Lechlade AQMA has been compliant for the required three consecutive years, and as a consequence there is an expectation from Defra for this AQMA to be revoked (please refer to highlighted text in document in Annex A).

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1** The only alternative would be not to revoke this AQMA, however there is no benefit in retaining this status.



5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1** To conclude, concentrations of NO₂ are no longer a cause for concern in Lechlade, which is good news for the health of, not only those who live in the affected area, but for the population of the town as a whole.
- 5.2** Compliance with the national objective, in accordance with TG22, has been demonstrated, and consequently the council are in a position to revoke the AQMA, as requested by Defra. In addition, air quality in Lechlade is likely to continue to improve as petrol/diesel engines become more efficient, and low emission and ultra low emission vehicles become more popular.
- 5.3** Revocation of the Lechlade AQMA will leave only one further such area in the district, located at the Air Balloon roundabout. It is anticipated that this AQMA will also be revoked three to five years following the opening of the 'Missing Link' infrastructure project.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1** There are no financial implications associated with this revocation.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1** The Council is meeting its statutory obligations for air quality management. There are no legal implications associated with this revocation.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 8.1** There are no risk implications associated with this revocation.

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 9.1** There are no equality implications associated with this revocation.

10. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1** Revocation of the AQMA will not impact on the climate and ecological emergency. Conversely, this revocation demonstrates an improvement in air quality with positive implications for climate change.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

(END)

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Local Authority:	Cotswold District Council
Reference:	ASR23-1778
Date of issue	July 2023

Annual Status Report Appraisal Report

The Annual Status Report sets out new information on air quality obtained by Cotswold District Council as part of the Review & Assessment process required under the Environment Act 1995 (as amended by the Environment Act 2021) and subsequent Regulations.

Defra recommends that Directors of Public Health approve draft ASRs. Sign off is not a requirement, however collaboration and consultation with those who have responsibility for Public Health is expected to increase support for measures to improve air quality, with co-benefits for all. Please bear this in mind for the next annual reporting process.

Cotswold District Council have declared two AQMAS:

- Air Balloon Roundabout, Birdlip – declared in 2008 for exceedances in the NO₂ annual mean objective
- Thames Street, Lechlade – declared in 2014 for exceedances in the NO₂ annual mean objective

The Lechlade AQMA has been compliant with the NO₂ annual mean objective for 6 years. The Council have not yet initiated the revocation of this AQMA due to traffic levels still being affected by the COVID-19 lockdowns. Figure 3.3 highlights that concentrations within the AQMA have been below the objective since 2017. Not including years affected by COVID-19 (2020 and 2021), this provides enough evidence that the AQMA should be revoked. The LAQM Technical Guidance 2022 is clear in this respect.

The revocation of an AQMA should be considered following three consecutive years of compliance with the relevant objective as evidenced through monitoring. Where there have been no exceedances for the past five years, local authorities must proceed with plans to revoke the AQMA.

"There should not be any declared AQMAs for which compliance with the relevant objective has been achieved for a consecutive five-year period." (Point 3.57, page 50).

Please be aware that unless a likely exceedance has been identified in the area, Defra will not appraise AQAPs for AQMAs that have been in compliance for five years. Local Authorities will instead be advised to revoke the AQMA.

Local Authority:	Cotswold District Council
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AQMAs should identify areas where air quality objectives are not being met or are likely to be at risk of not meeting them. Keeping AQMAs in place longer than required risks diluting their meaning and impacting public trust in LAQM.

Local authorities that do not have an AQMA should continue to monitor for exceedances and should still have a local air quality strategy in place to ensure air quality remains a high-profile issue, thereby enabling a quick response should there be any deterioration in condition. See LAQM Statutory Policy Guidance 2022 for more information.

Cotswold District Council did not undertake any automatic monitoring in 2022.

Passive monitoring was undertaken at 16 passive monitoring sites across the District in 2022. This includes two sites in the Lechlade AQMA and one site in the Birdlip AQMA. A maximum NO₂ concentration of 42.1 µg/m³ was recorded at NAS39, located within the Birdlip AQMA. Concentrations within the Lechlade AQMA remain well below the objective, with a maximum concentration within the AQMA of 28.7 µg/m³. NO₂ concentrations have increased at seven sites since 2021, including at NAS37 in the Lechlade AQMA and at NAS39 in the Birdlip AQMA.

QA/QC procedures have been discussed. No annualisation was required as all monitoring sites had a data capture greater than 75%. Distance correction was required for one site, NAS39, as the site is not at relevant exposure and recorded a concentration greater than 10% of the annual mean objective. Following distance correction, this site had an adjusted concentration of 29.1 µg/m³. This is well below the annual mean objective. A national bias adjustment factor of 0.76 was used for adjustment of monitored concentrations. No local bias adjustment could be determined as no co-location study was completed.

The Council have highlighted that a proposed link road between the M4 and M5, which bypasses the Air Balloon Roundabout, is expected to begin construction in Autumn 2023. The Council have detailed the findings of the air quality assessment associated with this proposed scheme and have stated that no exceedances of the NO₂ objective are expected with the scheme operational. Improvements in NO₂ concentrations are expected at nearby receptors as a result of traffic flows moving further away.

On the basis of the evidence provided by the local authority the conclusions reached are **accepted** for all sources and pollutants. Following the completion of this report, Cotswold District Council should submit an Annual Status Report in 2024.

Local Authority:	Cotswold District Council
Reference:	ASR23-1778
Date of issue	July 2023

Commentary

The report is well structured, detailed, and provides the information specified in the Guidance. The following comments are designed to help inform future reports:

1. The Council are strongly encouraged to review data and begin the process of revoking the Lechlade AQMA. Concentrations within this AQMA have consistently been below the objective since 2016. This provides over three years of compliant pre-pandemic, which is sufficient evidence for the revocation of the AQMA.
2. Two monitoring sites, NAS27 and NAS32 were moved at the beginning of 2022. It would be useful for the Council to highlight the reasoning for the movement of the monitoring sites.
3. There are a few minor formatting errors within the report including:
 - a. Cross-referencing errors in Section 2.2.2 and Section 3.1.2
 - b. The exceedance recorded at NAS39 is not in **bold** within Table A.2.
4. The Council is commended for adding additional monitoring locations to assess the impact of the School Streets scheme and should continue monitoring at these locations to fully assess impacts.
5. Figures and graphs have been provided which are clear and well-presented. The location of monitoring sites on the provided figures are easy to determine.
6. It may be useful to clarify what "NR" stands for within Table F.1.
7. The current AQAP for the Birdlip AQMA was published in 2011. The Council is encouraged to update this AQAP to ensure measures are appropriate for current conditions.

This commentary is not designed to deal with every aspect of the report. It highlights a number of issues that should help the local authority either in completing the Annual Status Report adequately (if required) or in carrying out future Review & Assessment work.

Issues specifically related to this appraisal can be followed up by returning the attached comment form to Defra, Welsh Government, Scottish Government or DOE.

For any other queries please contact the Local Air Quality Management Helpdesk:
Telephone: 0800 0327 953
Email: LAQMHelpdesk@bureauveritas.com

Local Authority:	Cotswold District Council
Reference:	ASR23-1778
Date of issue	July 2023

LAQM Guidance Notes – 2023

Changes to the Local Air Quality Management Framework

Through the Environment Act 2021 and updated Local Air Quality Management Statutory Policy Guidance 2022, the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) framework has been considerably strengthened. This page highlights some of the changes for delivery to help you prioritise action for improved air quality:

1. Strengthened Criteria for Air Quality Action Plans (AQAPs)

Where a Local Authority is not meeting air quality objectives, they must create an AQAP setting out their intentions to improve air quality in the area. Without current action plans in place, Local Authorities risk negatively impacting their communities by not proactively working to reduce air pollution in the area.

The requirements and guidance around AQAPs were recently strengthened under the Environment Act 2021 and revised LAQM Statutory policy guidance, which Local Authorities must have regard to. The key criteria for action plans are that they:

- set out the measures they will take to secure the achievement, and maintenance, of air quality standards and objectives
- specify a date by which each measure will be carried out
- are revised no later than every five years

2. New Escalation Process for Reporting

Government is committed to increasing transparency by requiring timely and accurate publication of Annual Status Reports (ASRs) and AQAPs by local authorities, as set out in the [Environmental Improvement Plan 2023](#). These documents are public-facing and serve to keep local communities informed of the steps being taken by their local authority to improve air quality.

To ensure ASRs and AQAPs are delivered on time, Defra has introduced a new reminder and warning letter system for Local Authorities. This system was set out in the [LAQM Statutory Policy Guidance 2022](#) and started to apply from 30 June 2023.

Local Authority:	Cotswold District Council
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If reporting requirements continue to be missed, the matter can be escalated to a Section 85 Secretary of State direction to the relevant Local Authority Chief Executive specifying action. You are therefore advised to ensure all statutory reporting duties for LAQM are met on time.

3. Public Bodies Required to Contribute to Action Plans

The Environment Act 2021 amended the Environment Act 1995 to increase the number of public bodies that have a duty to co-operate with Local Authorities for LAQM. Air quality partners are certain other public bodies that a Local Authority identifies as having responsibility for a source of emissions contributing to an exceedance of local air quality objectives. This could be a neighbouring authority, National Highways, or the Environment Agency. Once identified, there is a statutory requirement for such public bodies to engage and to contribute actions they will take to secure achievement of the local air quality objective and to maintain achievement thereafter.

All tiers of local Government are also now required by law to collaborate to address exceedances of Air Quality Objectives. County councils, the Mayor of London and combined authorities have similar duties to air quality partners. The difference is that, when requested, they must contribute to an action plan being prepared by a Local Authority, regardless of whether the local authority has identified them as being responsible for a source of emissions.

Under the new legislation, you may choose to request the support of another public body in the development of an AQAP and the same may be requested of your organisation.

Please refer to the LAQM Statutory Policy Guidance 2022 for more information. Should you require further assistance, please contact the LAQM Helpdesk: <https://laqm.defra.gov.uk/air-quality/featured/england-exc-london-policy-guidance/>

Web: <http://laqm.defra.gov.uk/helpdesks.html>

FAQs: <http://laqm.defra.gov.uk/laqm-faqs/>

Tel: 0800 032 7953

Email: laqmhlpdesk@uk.bureauveritas.com

The Air Quality Hub also provides free online information and is a knowledge sharing resource for local authority air quality professionals: <https://www.airqualityhub.co.uk/>

Local Authority:	Cotswold District Council
Reference:	ASR23-1778
Date of issue	July 2023

Appraisal Response Comment Form

Contact Name:	
Contact Telephone number:	
Contact email address:	UKLAQMAappraisals@aecom.com

Comments on appraisal/Further information:

Agenda Item 9



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET – 7 MARCH 2024
Subject	COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION FOR CARE LEAVERS
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr Mike Evemy – Deputy Leader and 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 Email: Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To consider proposals to extend the age that Care Leavers can receive a reduction in Council Tax from 21 years to 25 years
Annexes	Annex A – Proposed Amended Policy for Care Leavers Annex B – Equality and Rurality Impact Assessment
Recommendation(s)	That Cabinet resolves to recommend to Full Council to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve to extend the age that a care leaver can receive a reduction in their council tax from 21 years to 25 years; 2. Approve to include those care leavers from outside of Gloucestershire County within the offer; 3. Approve the amended Eligibility Criteria as set out in Annex A
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering Good Services • Supporting Communities
Key Decision	YES
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer, Monitoring Officer, Interim Head of Legal Services, Finance Business Partner, Assistant Director, Director of Finance (Publica)



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out a proposal to extend the age that a Care Leaver can receive a reduction in their Council Tax from 21 years to 25 years. It also recommends that the Policy be expanded to include those care leavers who settle in the Cotswold District from outside the Gloucestershire County.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In the Government's care leavers' strategy, Keep on Caring, published in July 2016, councils were encouraged to consider the role of a Corporate Parent 'through the lens of what any reasonable parent does to give their child the best start in life'. In relation to this, local authorities were encouraged to consider exempting care leavers from Council Tax using powers already at their disposal.
- 2.2 In August 2016, through their report into homelessness, the then Communities and Local Government Select Committee recommended to Government that care leavers be made exempt from Council Tax up to at least the age of 21.
- 2.3 Cotswold District Council approved a policy for such an exemption on 17 January 2019 which included:
- Where a property is solely occupied by Care Leaver(s) 100% council tax discount would be awarded; and,
 - Where a Care Leaver is in occupation and jointly liable with others a 50% discount would be awarded.
- 2.4 This policy, which the 6 Gloucestershire District/Borough Councils and Gloucestershire County Council had worked together to agree a common Council Tax discount scheme came into force on 1 April 2019.

3. MAIN POINTS

- 3.1 All young people setting up a home for the first time need particular support and guidance at this period of transition. Those who leave care often have little choice over accommodation options. While being supported by the County Council's leaving care service, care leavers are faced with a new set of often overwhelming responsibilities without the wide-ranging family support that most other people rely upon. Once care leavers have a tenancy, they can find it difficult to keep their independent accommodation for a myriad of reasons, including the demands made on their often-limited income.
- 3.2 Although the council's current policy gives some support to Care Leavers it places a restriction on age, up to 21 years. Gloucestershire County Council have approached all Gloucestershire local authorities to request their policies be amended to extend the age up to 25 years; and to include not just those care leavers from within the county for whom the



County holds a corporate parental responsibility, but to those care leavers entering the county from other areas of England.

- 3.3 It is recognised that the journey from care can often be difficult for young people, and the degree of success can have an impact on outcomes well beyond early adulthood.
- 3.4 As corporate parents the County Council and its partners want to ensure young people are well equipped and understand their own level of skill and aspirations for their future. Having access to safe and appropriate accommodation is key to young people achieving positive outcomes, however this is much more than just finding them a place to stay.
- 3.5 Evidence from the Children’s Society suggests that care leavers can be vulnerable to homelessness, particularly when they struggle to maintain tenancies. By granting the exemptions as detailed within Annex A from Council Tax the council will be providing real practical help to those leaving care who are starting out in life on low incomes, whilst they are working to develop budgeting and independent living skills.
- 3.6 The proposal is to implement the scheme jointly with all Gloucestershire Councils from 1 April 2024.
- 3.7 Gloucestershire County Council, as the corporate parent, remains responsible for supporting care leavers to access Council Tax reductions that they may be eligible for.
- 3.8 Cotswold District Council and its precept partners will accept their proportions of the financial liability in the same proportions as the Council Tax Support Scheme.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 There are no alternatives to consider.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Billing Authorities are required to fund any section 13A discounts in full; however, by way of a local voluntary agreement, the major precepting authorities will fund their share of the costs for the discounts.
- 5.2 The cost of awarding care leaver discounts based on any of the above recommendations would depend both on the number of care leavers liable for Council Tax and their meeting the eligibility criteria.
- 5.3 An indicative estimate of the financial implication of this policy is shown below based on 2023/2024 council tax data:

District	No. of care leavers	Gross Council Tax	County Liability	District Liability	Police	Town/Parish
CDC	2	£1,930	£1,425	£139.36	£276	£89.55



5.4 These figures are based on the gross liability without any additional statutory discounts and/or exemptions which may also be applicable. It is also dependant on which band(s) of property potential qualifying cases will be resident in as to how much it might cost the District Council. The financial impact is however expected to be minimal.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Billing Authorities have discretion under Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to reduce the amount of Council Tax payable for individuals, or for classes of council taxpayers. This includes the power to reduce the amount payable to nil.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT

7.1 Failure to aware the eligible discount could lead to a potential reputational risk for the local authority.

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.1 To ensure compliant with the Equality Act 2010 an Equality Impact Assessment has been conducted and is attached at Annex A 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

10.1 None

(END)

Appendix A

Eligibility Criteria

- a) For the purpose of this document a Care Leaver is defined as a young person aged 18 – 25 who was formerly a child in the care of Gloucestershire County Council, or any County Council or Unitary Council in England and then became a ‘former relevant care leaver’ as defined by the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000. The Care Leaver must be resident and liable for council tax on a property within the Cotswold District Council area.
- b) A Care Leaver must be aged 18 – 25 years old to qualify for a reduction under the care leavers discount scheme. A Care Leaver will cease to qualify for the discount from the date of their 26th birthday.
- c) A Care Leaver must be the liable person for Council Tax, either solely or jointly and severally with other(s), at the dwelling in respect of which the application is made. The Council Tax account must be in their name.
- d) Where the Care Leaver lives in a Housing of Multiple Occupation or other property where they are not the council taxpayer, no discount will be awarded.
- e) The Care Leaver discount will apply to occupied properties only.
- f) Confirmation that a claimant is a Gloucestershire County Council ‘former relevant care leaver’ or care leaver from outside of the County must be received from Gloucestershire’s 11– 25 Permanency Service.

Care Leaver Discount

The Care Leaver Discount is effective from 1 April 2024.

Care Leavers that meet the eligibility criteria listed above will be eligible to apply for a discretionary discount as follows:

- Where a property is solely occupied by Care Leaver(s), 100% will be awarded
- Where a Care Leaver is in occupation and jointly liable with others, 50% discount will be awarded.

The Care Leaver discretionary discount will be awarded after statutory discounts, exemptions, disability discount and local council tax support.

Application Process and Administration

Gloucestershire County Councils Permanency Service will provide information to confirm the name, address and date of birth of Care Leavers living in the Cotswold District area who will qualify for the discount.

A Care Leaver discount may also be awarded where the following information is provided and the Care Leaver status has been verified with Gloucestershire County Council’s Permanency Service.

An application should provide the following information:

- Full name
- Date of birth
- Current address
- Details of any other adults in the property and relationship to them
- Details of any circumstances that would be relevant to entitlement to legislative discounts, disregards or exemptions
- Contact details
- Name of Leaving Care Worker if known

Awards will be made directly by a discount in council tax liability and notification of the discount being awarded will be by way of the council tax 'amended' bill.

The Revenues and Housing Support department will undertake periodic reviews appropriate to the individual of each case.

The Care Leaver, or his/her appointee or a recognised third party acting on his/her behalf, must advise Cotswold District Council of any changes in circumstances which may affect entitlement to the discount within 21 days of the change occurring.

Any overpaid Care Leaver discount will be reclaimed through the relevant council tax account and collected and recovered under the Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992.

Review of Decision / Backdating

Under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, there is no right of appeal against the Council's use of discretionary powers. However, the Council will accept a written request for a reconsideration of the initial decision. The request must be supported by further information or evidence and be made within one calendar month of the decision. The reconsideration will be undertaken by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet member for Finance.

The Council will accept applications backdated to the beginning of the financial year, or to the date the care leaver became responsible for council tax so long as the date is not more than 12 months prior to the date of application. The Care Leaver discount cannot be awarded prior to 1 April 2024.

Equality and Ruralty 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: 06.12.2023	Telephone: 01285 623571 Email: mandy.fathers@cotswold.gov.uk

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

COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION FOR CARE LEAVERS
--

3. Briefly describe it aims and objectives

To amend the current Policy for Care Leavers council tax reductions to extend the age from 21 to 25 years and include those care leavers from out of County

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

Legislation under Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended allows for such discounts

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"/>	Data from Gloucestershire County and districts
Recent research findings including studies of deprivation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Central Governments strategies
Results of recent consultations and surveys	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Results of ethnic monitoring data and any equalities data	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Anecdotal information from groups and agencies within Gloucestershire	<input type="checkbox"/>	
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"/>	

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

N/A

7. Has any consultation been carried out?

N/A

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	✓
LOW – Few members of the general public/staff will be affected by this proposal	
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		✓		By supporting those young individuals leaving care	
Age – Old People	✓			This Policy is for those leaving care only	If a person is on a low income, regardless of age, they can apply for other council tax discounts
Disability			✓	If the person is a care leaver of 25 years or under they will benefit	People in receipt of disability benefits can apply for other discounts
Sex – Male			✓	If the person is a care leaver of 25 years or under they will benefit	If a person is on a low income, they can apply for other council tax discounts
Sex – Female			✓	If the person is a care leaver of 25 years or under they will benefit	If a person is on a low income, , they can apply for other council tax discounts
Race including Gypsy and Travellers			✓	If the person is a care leaver of 25 years or under they will benefit	If a person is on a low income, regardless of age, they can apply for other council tax discounts

Religion or Belief			✓	If the person is a care leaver of 25 years or under they will benefit	If a person is on a low income, , they can apply for other council tax discounts
Sexual Orientation			✓	If the person is a care leaver of 25 years or under they will benefit	If a person is on a low income, they can apply for other council tax discounts
Gender Reassignment			✓	If the person is a care leaver of 25 years or under they will benefit	If a person is on a low income, they can apply for other council tax discounts
Pregnancy and maternity			✓	If the person is a care leaver of 25 years or under they will benefit	If a person is on a low income, they can apply for other council tax discounts
Geographical impacts on one area			✓	If the person is a care leaver of 25 years or under they will benefit	If a person is on a low income, they can apply for other council tax discounts
Other Groups			✓	This Policy is for those leaving care only	Other groups may be eligible for other discounts
Rural considerations: ie Access to services; leisure facilities, transport; education; employment; broadband.			✓		

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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:	6.12.23
Line Manager:	Jon Dearing	Date:	6.12.23
Reviewed by Corporate Equality Officer:	Cheryl sloan	Date:	07.12.2023

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Agenda Item 10



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET – 7 MARCH 2024
Subject	COUNCIL TAX PREMIUM – SECOND HOMES AND LONG-TERM EMPTY PROPERTIES
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Mike Evemy – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance Email: mike.evemy@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Mandy Fathers – Business Manager for Environmental, Welfare and Revenues Email: democratic@cotswold.gov.uk
Report author	Mandy Fathers – Business Manager for Environmental, Welfare and Revenues Email: democratic@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To consider the proposals to introduce a Council Tax Premium on second homes and apply a premium to long term empty properties after one year.
Annexes	None
Recommendation(s)	That Cabinet resolves to recommend to Full Council to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree from 01 April 2024 to levy the maximum level of premium for Empty Homes as set out in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) Premium of 100% for dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (Empty Homes Premium) after 1 year up to 5 years of becoming empty; ii) Premium of 200% for dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (Empty Homes Premium) between 5 years and 10 years; iii) Premium of 300% for dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (Empty Homes Premium) for 10 years or more.



	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Agree in principle from 01 April 2025 to the implementation of a premium (Second Homes Premium) of 100% for dwellings that are no one's sole or main residence and which are substantially furnished 3. Agree to issue the mandatory notice of 12 months to all owners of second homes that a premium will commence from 1 April 2025; and, 4. Note that where premiums are to be applied, the Council is mindful of the current consultation by government which recommends exceptions in certain circumstances outlined within this report. Subject to the outcome of that consultation, a further report may be presented to Cabinet and Council prior to the implementation of the Council's policy on premiums taking into account statute, the Council's requirements and any guidance given by the Secretary of State.
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering Good Services • Supporting Communities • Delivering Housing
Key Decision	YES
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Leader and Deputy Leader, Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer, Interim Head of Legal Services, Finance Business Partner, Assistant Director Resident Services, Director of Finance (Publica)



I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- I.1** This report sets out for consideration the introduction of a 100% Council Tax premium in respect of Second Home properties commencing on 1 April 2025 as well as reducing the period a premium can be applied to a Long-Term Empty property from two years to one from 1 April 2024.

I. BACKGROUND

- I.1** The Government encourages all billing authorities to adopt Council Tax premiums on empty properties with a view to incentivising property owners to bring those properties back into use. Premiums can currently be charged where properties are left unoccupied and unfurnished for periods exceeding 2 years.
- I.2** In May 2022, the Government published the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill (“the Bill”). The Bill includes proposals aimed at further addressing empty properties through the reduction in the time after which a premium on an empty property can be charged (from 2 years to 1 year) in addition to measures which seek to recognise the impact that high levels of second home ownership can have in some areas of the country.
- I.3** The intention of the Bill is to:
- reduce the minimum period for the implementation of a Council Tax premium for empty premises from two years to one year; and
 - allow Councils to introduce a Council Tax premium of up to 100% in respect of second homes.
- I.4** The Bill received Royal Assent on 26 October 2023.
- I.5** The premium for second homes can only be implemented if the Council has given at least one-year's notice to council taxpayers. Therefore, the Council would need to make a decision before 01 April 2024 in order to apply this premium from 1 April 2025.
- I.6** Several councils are planning to make use of the new powers in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act to charge a Second Homes Premium. According to the Local Government Chronicle (22 January 2024), almost 30 Councils were listed in an article including Cornwall and North Yorkshire which have similar second homes pressures as this Council.



2. CHANGES TO EMPTY HOMES PREMIUMS (FROM 01 APRIL 2024)

- 2.1** Legislation was introduced in 2013 to allow premiums to be charged on empty properties with a view to encouraging homeowners to occupy homes and not leave them vacant in the long term. Initially premiums could only be charged at 50% but current legislation has now changed to allow a progressive charge to be made as follows:
- Dwellings left unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for 2 years or more, up to 100%;
 - Dwellings left unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for 5 years or more, up to 200%; and
 - Dwellings left unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for 10 years or more, up to 300%.
- 2.2** Section 80(1)(b) of the 2023 Act will permit billing authorities in England to impose an empty homes premium after one year instead of two.
- 2.3** Section 80(1)(a) provides that billing authorities must have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State when deciding whether to implement an empty homes premium and it is expected that the current guidance drafted by government in 2013 will be updated. This change to guidance will come into effect from the 2024/25 financial year.
- 2.4** Sections 81(2) and 81(4) provide that from 1 April 2024, a property can be charged an empty homes premium at 100% after one year, even if it became empty before 1 April 2024.

3. INTRODUCTION OF PREMIUM FOR SECOND HOMES (FROM 01 APRIL 2025)

- 3.1** For Council Tax purposes, a second home is defined as a dwelling, which is not a person's sole or main home and is substantially furnished. There are approximately 1,500 second homes in the Cotswold district. These properties are subject to the full 100% Council Tax charge.
- 3.2** Second home ownership within parts of the district is significant and is recognised to have a negative impact in terms of the supply of homes available to meet local housing need. The Bill recognises the impact that high levels of second home ownership can have, and that more needs to be done to disincentivise people from simply doing nothing with their property, or not using it to its full potential.
- 3.3** Now that the Act has received Royal Assent and is now legislation, it allows councils to apply a Council Tax premium of up to 100% if the mandatory 12-month notice has been given to second homeowners.



- 3.4** With increased pressure on the Council to find houses for local people in need, the implementation of this premium will support the Council's priorities by providing additional Council Tax revenue for housing needs across the district. The intention of the premium is to return second homes to the local housing market thereby increasing the level of available stock for permanent residents.
- 3.5** There are some wider issues to consider.
- Incentivise owners of empty properties to bring these back into use.
 - Properties available to let can be treated as a business and therefore could be subject to business rates. There are certain conditions that are applied to be eligible for assessment under the business rates system. Properties should be available to let for more than 140 nights in a calendar year and were available to let for more than 140 nights in the previous year and were actually let for at least 70 nights in the last 12 months).
 - Couples who own second homes may claim that they are living separately and are single occupants of each respective property (information supplied to claim any discount can be checked and verified. Financial penalties can be imposed where false information is provided).
- 3.6** It is recognised that there are a number of second homes in the district that were built as holiday homes and are subject to certain restrictions on their occupation – largely those within the Cotswold Water Park.
- 3.7** The intention of the second homes premium, as set out in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act, is to increase the supply of the available housing stock for permanent residents. Purpose built holiday homes located within the Cotswold Water Park or elsewhere are not suitable or available for permanent residents, so their sale would not bring accommodation onto the market. Therefore, it is proposed that subject to relevant guidance and/or legislation, the Council would not seek to charge a Second Homes Premium on these properties.
- 3.8** A further report may be brought to Cabinet and Council when the guidance has been issued to provide details around the administration and implementation of the Second Homes Premium.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1** If a 100% premium on second homes was charged, the additional revenue would be approximately £3.3 million with the District Council retaining around £240,000 (prior to accounting for any reduction for second home properties that may be excluded as set out in paragraphs 3.7 and 3.8 above).
- 4.2** In recognising the policy objective of charging the Second Homes Premium, it is proposed that the District Council's share of the additional revenue is set aside in the Council Priority:



Housing Delivery reserve to facilitate the provision for additional affordable housing units across the district. This proposal will be subject to ongoing review by the Leader and Deputy Leader, in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive to ensure the level of funding available to support the Council priority and the Council's wider financial sustainability objectives are met.

- 4.3 With a significant proportion of the Second Homes Premium being collected on behalf of Gloucestershire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire, it is recommended that the Leader and the Chief Executive hold discussions with the major preceptors on how the additional Council Tax revenue would be utilised to the benefit of residents in the District.

Cotswold District Council	Gloucestershire County Council	Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire	Total tax base for Town and Parish Councils	Total
£246,038	£2,483,268	£478,950	£157,518	£3,365,774

(Note: Gloucestershire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner would receive more than 90% of the total raised):

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Section 79 of the levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 ("the Act") amends the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (LGFA) by reducing the period a premium can be applied to a long-term empty property from two years to one.
- 5.2 Section 80 of the Act amends the LGFA by introducing the ability to levy a 100% premium on Second Home properties.
- 5.3 There will need to be a review of the legalities once the guidance has been issued. A further report will be brought back to Cabinet once this has been received.

6. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 There is a risk that second homeowners may seek to migrate from Council Tax to Business Rates assessments which would reduce the level of Council Tax available to the local authority and the preceptors.



7. EQUALITIES IMPACT

7.1 None.

8. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are none associated with this report.

9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

9.1 The Council could choose:

1. Not to introduce a premium on either Second Homes or Long-Term Empty Properties that have been empty for one year; or
2. Introduce a premium of Second Homes only; or
3. Introduce the premium of Long-Term Empty Properties that have been empty for one year.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

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Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET - 7 MARCH 2024
Subject	BUSINESS RATES RELIEF: 2024/2025. RETAIL, HOSPITALITY AND LEISURE SCHEME
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Mike Every – Deputy Leader and Member for Finance Email: mike.every@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Jon Dearing - Assistant Director for Resident Services Email: Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk
Report author	Mandy Fathers – Business Manager Email: Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To consider a scheme of rate relief for retail premises as outlined by Government in the Autumn Statement 2023
Annexes	Annex A –Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Discount Criteria
Recommendation(s)	That Cabinet resolves to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure scheme as set out in Annex A for 2024/2025 2. Delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Resident Services to award of such reliefs
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering Good Services • Supporting Communities • Supporting the Economy
Key Decision	YES
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer, Monitoring Officer, Interim Head of Legal Services, Finance Business Partner, Assistant Director, Director of Finance (Publica)



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out the Governments intention to continue its retail, hospitality and leisure scheme for the financial year 2024/2025.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The government has recognised that ongoing difficulties as well as longer-term challenges continue to face the retail, leisure and hospitality sectors.
- 2.2 The government is therefore continuing its relief for eligible retail, hospitality and leisure businesses in England to support local high streets as they evolve and adapt to changing consumer demands for 2024/2025.

3. MAIN POINTS

- 3.1 The Chancellor announced in his Autumn Budget that eligible hereditaments will continue to receive 75% business rate relief up to a cash cap of £110,000 per business.
- 3.2 Local authorities are expected to use their discretionary relief powers (under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, as amended) to grant these discounts in line with the relevant eligibility criteria as detailed within Annex A (attached).
- 3.3 The Council will be compensated for the cost of granting these discounts through a section 31 grant from government.
- 3.4 Guidance has been provided in respect of which businesses should benefit from this relief and those that should not as detailed within the attached Annex. The Council's Discretionary Rate Relief policy will also be amended with a separate annex detailing the qualifying criteria.
- 3.5 These changes will take effect from 1 April 2024.
- 3.6 The team responsible for the administration of Business Rates will identify those businesses eligible for this relief and apply it to their 2024/2025 liability. Those eligible businesses will see the reduction on their annual business rate demand notice.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 None

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Central government will fully reimburse local authorities for the local share of relief awarded to those qualifying businesses entitled to this relief using a grant under section 31 of the Local Government Finance Act 2003 providing the council adopt the recommended approach when granting relief.



6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The government is not changing the legislation around the relief available to businesses and expects councils to grant the relief under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1988, as amended.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT

8. There are no risks associated with this report as the Council will be following central government guidance.

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 9.1 None

10. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 None

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 None

(END)

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Annex A

Expanded Retail Discount Criteria

This discount will apply to occupied retail, leisure and hospitality properties in the year 2024/25. There will be no rateable value limit on the discount

Properties that will benefit from the discount will be occupied hereditaments that are wholly or mainly being used:

- a) As shops, restaurants, cafes, drinking establishments, cinemas and live music venues;
- b) For assembly and leisure; or
- c) As hotels, guest and boarding premises and self-catering accommodation.

The Government has issued guidance relating to which types of establishments should be considered in (a) as follows:

- i. **Hereditaments that are being used for the sale of goods to visiting members of the public:**
 - Shops (such as florists, bakers, butchers, grocers, greengrocers, jewellers, stationers, off licence, chemists, newsagents, hardware stores, supermarkets, etc.)
 - Charity shops
 - Opticians
 - Post offices
 - Furnishing shops / display rooms (such as carpet shops, double glazing, garage doors)
 - Car/caravan showrooms
 - Second-hand car lots
 - Markets
 - Petrol stations
 - Garden centres
 - Art galleries (where art is for sale/hire)
- ii. **Hereditaments that are being used for the provision of the following services to visiting members of the public:**
 - Hair and beauty services (such as hairdressers, nail bars, beauty salons, tanning shops etc.)
 - Shoes repairs/key cutting
 - Travel agents
 - Ticket officers e.g. for theatre
 - Dry cleaners



- Launderettes
 - PC/TV/domestic appliance repair
 - Funeral directors
 - Photo processing
 - Tool hire
 - Car hire
 - Employment agencies
 - Estate agents and letting agents
 - Betting shops
- iii. **Hereditaments that are being used for the sale of food and/or drink to visiting members of the public:**
- Restaurants
 - Takeaways
 - Sandwich shops
 - Coffee shops
 - Pubs
 - Bars
- iv. **Hereditaments that are being used as cinemas**
- v. **Hereditaments that are being used as live music venues:**
- Live music venues are hereditaments wholly or mainly used for the performance of live music for the purpose of entertaining an audience. Hereditaments cannot be considered a live music venue for the purpose of business rates relief where a venue is wholly or mainly used as a nightclub or a theatre, for the purposes of the Town and County Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended).
 - Hereditaments can be a live music venues if used for other activities, but only if those activities (i) are merely ancillary or incidental to the performance of live music (e.g. the sale/supply of alcohol to audience members) or (ii) do not affect the fact that the primary activity for the premises is the performance of live music (e.g. because those other activities are insufficiently regular or frequent, such as a polling station or a fortnightly community event).

The Government has issued guidance relating to which types of establishments should be considered in (b) as follows:



i. **Hereditaments that are being used for the provision of sport, leisure and facilities to visiting members of the public (including for the viewing of such activities)**

- Sports grounds and clubs
- Museums and art galleries
- Nightclubs
- Sport and leisure facilities
- Stately homes and historic houses
- Theatres
- Tourist attractions
- Gyms
- Wellness centres, spa, massage parlours
- Casinos, gambling clubs and bingo halls

ii. **Hereditaments that are being used for the assembly of visiting members of the public**

- Public halls
- Clubhouses, clubs and institutions

The Government has issued guidance relating to which types of establishments should be considered in (c) as follows:

i. **Hereditaments where the non-domestic part is being used for the provision of living accommodation as a business:**

- Hotels, Guest and Boarding Houses
- Holiday homes
- Caravan parks and sites

The list below sets out the types of uses that the government does not consider to be an eligible use for the purpose of relief:

i. **Hereditaments that are being used for the provision of the following services to visiting members of the public:**

- Financial services (e.g. banks, building societies, cash points, bureaux de change, short term loan providers)
- Medical services (e.g. vets, dentists, doctors, osteopaths, chiropractors)
- Professional services (e.g. solicitors, accountants, insurance agents/financial advisers)
- Post office sorting offices
- MOT test centres



ii. **Hereditaments that are reasonably accessible to visiting members of the public**

- In line with legal restrictions in section 47(8A) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, billing authorities may not grant the discount to themselves or a precepting authority.

State Aid

The business rates expanded retail, leisure and hospitality discount 2024/2025 is not a state aid.

Agenda Item 12



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET – 7 MARCH 2024
Subject	PAY POLICY STATEMENT
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr 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	John Llewellyn, Business Manager for People Email: john.llewellyn@publicagroup.uk
Summary/Purpose	To consider the Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25.
Annexes	Annex A – Pay Policy Statement
Recommendation(s)	That Cabinet recommends to Council to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25. 2. Agree that the Pay Policy Statement 2024/25 will be updated and republished to reflect any changes to the senior management structure at that point.
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the highest standard of service
Key Decision	YES
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	<p>Helen Blundell, Interim Head of Legal Services Email helen.blundell@fdean.gov.uk</p> <p>Angela Claridge, Director of Governance & Development (Monitoring Officer) Email angela.claridge@cotswold.gov.uk</p> <p>David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive Officer CDC Email david.stanley@cotswold.gov.uk</p>



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of the Pay Policy Statement is to clarify the Council's strategic stance on pay in order to provide direction for members and officers making detailed decisions on pay and to provide the residents of the Cotswold district with a clear statement of the principles underpinning decisions on the use of public funds.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Under section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to appoint officers on such reasonable terms and conditions, including remuneration, as the authority thinks fit. This Pay Policy Statement sets out the Council's approach to pay policy in accordance with the requirements of Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011. The purpose of the statement is to provide transparency with regard to the Council's approach to setting the pay of its employees.
- 2.2 Once approved by the full Council, the statement will come into immediate effect and will be published by no later than 01 April each year, subject to review on a minimum of an annual basis in accordance with the relevant legislation prevailing at that time
- 2.3 The Council has published information on senior pay for a number of years on its website and in its Statement of Accounts. It has also responded openly and in full to Freedom of Information Act requests for such details.

3. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2024/25

- 3.1 The Local Government Transparency Code 2015 places additional publication requirements on local authorities to publish data on their websites. This includes the requirement either to publish the data on their website or place a link on their website to such data. Additional requirements of the Code include the requirement for local authorities to publish
- A list of responsibilities of senior staff
 - Details of bonuses and "benefits-in-kind" for all employees whose salary exceeds £50,000
 - The pay multiple, defined as the ratio between the highest paid taxable earnings for the given year and the median earnings figure of the whole of the authority's workforce.
- 3.2 This information is available on the Council's website and includes reference most Cotswold District Council staff transferred to Publica who now provide services on the council's behalf. A small number of staff continue to be employed by the council
- 3.3 Over the coming 12 months, it is likely that a number of staff will transfer back from Publica to Cotswold District Council following the decision to return the majority of services from Publica back to Councils. The direction of travel and indicative timetable for the return of



services was set out in the Publica Review- Local Partnerships Transition Plan report to Cabinet in March 2024.

3.4 Therefore, this Pay Policy Statement should be viewed in the context of the Publica Review outcomes and indicative Transition Plan.

3.5 The Pay Policy Statement is set out in Annex A to this report.

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Council will keep the Pay Policy Statement under review informed by the Publica Review Transition Plan. Once adopted, the Pay Policy Statement will be published on the Council's website

4.2 Please note: The Pay Policy Statement allows for transparency and sets out the following elements:

- pay for each of the in scope officers
- remuneration of lowest paid officer
- the pay relationship between the highest paid officers and other officers
- performance related pay and bonuses, termination payments, transparency
- other aspects of remuneration.

Below is a list of those officers covered by the policy statement:

- Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service)
- Deputy Chief Executive (s 151 officer)
- Director- Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer)
- Other officers of the Council.

4.3 Section 5 deals with senior pay.

4.4 The pay differential between the highest paid officer and the median officer is set out in section 10.2 The resultant Multiple is 2.91

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no legal implications other than those set out elsewhere in this report.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None

(END)

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Pay Policy Statement - Cotswold District Council 2024/25

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1. Background

1.1. This statement is intended to meet the requirements of:

- s 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 which requires the Council to approve a Pay Policy Statement annually prior to the commencement of the financial year.
- the Council's obligations under the associated statutory guidance set out in the Openness and Accountability in Local Pay: Guidance under section 40 of the Localism Act (February 2012) together with the Local Government Transparency Code 2015.

2. Scope of this policy statement

2.1. To avoid confusion and provide transparency this statement will only apply to all officers that are employees of Cotswold District Council although a number of officers hold dual employment contracts with Publica (a Council owned service company).

2.2. Details of senior staff pay at Publica can be found within their statement of accounts.

2.3. The current statement sets out the following elements:

- pay for each of the in-scope officers
- remuneration of lowest paid officer
- the pay relationship between the highest paid officers and other officers
- performance related pay and bonuses, termination payments, transparency
- other aspects of remuneration.

3. Officers covered by the policy statement

3.1. Below is a list of those officers covered by the policy statement:

- Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service)
- Deputy Chief Executive (s 151 officer)
- Director- Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer)
- Other officers of the Council.

3.2. Officers not covered by this statement include officers who are wholly or primarily employed by Publica and who retain dual employment contracts to deliver statutory elements of their roles such as Parking Appeal decisions or delegated planning decisions which require an employment relationship with the Council.

4. General Statements

- 4.1. The Council has a range of Human Resources policies that apply equally to all officers across the Council from the highest paid to the lowest paid. These policies cover a wide range of Human Resources issues including annual leave arrangements and sickness arrangements.
- 4.2. As part of the formation of Publica, the Council determined that directly employed staff should in future adopt similar policies as the Publica employees in the interests of fairness and equity.
- 4.3. Subsequent to Publica merging its multiple pay and grading structures in 2020 and adopting a new comprehensive job evaluation scheme to ensure equal pay compliance, the Council has adopted a scheme built on similar principles in line with the previous Council resolutions.
- 4.4. The new Pay and Grading structure was designed in consultation with the Trade Unions and seeks to provide flexibility for the Council to adapt to changes in pay pressures and market conditions whilst retaining equal pay protection. The scheme also provides for local pay increases in addition to the national (cost of living) pay award in a similar way to incremental pay in the current scheme.
- 4.5. Following the conclusion of the staff consultation process, the new pay structure was implemented in June 2022 (pay back dated to 1st April 2021). This new pay structure does not cover statutory roles which remain subject to the previous benchmark approach as agreed by Council.

5. Policy on remuneration of senior officers

- 5.1. The policy for the year 2024/2025 in respect of statutory officers is to maintain the level of pay in the same bands as the current year subject to any cost-of-living award that may be agreed nationally in relation to year 2024/2025.

Statutory Officers – individual posts graded via benchmark exercise.

Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) - £112,298

Deputy Chief Executive (s 151 officer) £91,287

Director – Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer) £91,287

Other Senior Pay

- 5.2. In respect of other senior pay the revised scheme was implemented in June 2022 (pay back dated to 1st April 2021). This will also be subject to the national pay award in respect of 1 April 2024.
- 5.3. The new scheme is made up of four levels based upon the nature of the role with each level sub divided into generic job groups and specific comparable pay peer groups. Senior officer pay (other than statutory officers) falls within the translate pay level.

The pay levels are: -

Core	£23,151 - £37,459
Implement	£28,444 - £51,665
Guide	£42,957 - £64,436
Translate	£54,297 - £81,445

5.4. At the time of publication of this policy statement no annual pay award has been agreed for 2024/2025. These pay levels will be automatically upgraded by the agreed pay award.

5.5. Other factors relating to pay:

- Officers are generally placed upon the bottom pay point on appointment, but this can be varied by the approval of the appropriate appointments panel.
- A local pay award can be made annually to allow progression within job groups typically to the mid-point
- Pay levels above the mid-point need to be supported by special factors such as market forces
- No performance related pay exists for any Senior Officer.
- No bonuses are available for any Senior Officer.
- Termination benefits payable will be in line with that available to all other officers as set out in the Redundancy and Retirement Policies in line with Employment Rights Act tables.
- Full Council will retain the decision to make any new appointment of an officer where the pay (incorporating all payments and benefits in kind) exceeds £100,000.
- Full Council will retain the decision to approve any severance payments where the compensation payments exceed £100,000

5.6 The details of the payments in respect of all these officers are set out in the [Transparency page](#) of the Councils website.

5.7 None of the Senior Officers are entitled to receive overtime payments for time worked beyond the contracted hours and out of ordinary working hours.

5.8 The Returning Officer for election purposes also receives a payment for the statutory duties undertaken by virtue of the specific, additional appointment to that role in addition to other responsibilities. For national elections and referenda, the amount is set and is payable by the government. For District and Town/Parish Council elections, the fees are payable by the District Council in accordance with an approved scale.

6. Tax avoidance

6.1. The Council does not and will not employ senior managers in permanent positions via service companies that could be construed as avoiding tax and national insurance contributions. From time to time the Council may employ individuals via service companies to cover interim or short-term project roles. However, the Council will

comply with its responsibilities regarding the application of HMRC regulations on payments made to personal service companies (known as IR35) by applying income tax and national insurance deductions to the payment.

7. Relationship with other officers' pay

7.1. Statutory Officers positions are benchmarked by the HR Business Manager using external data and are subject to an annual increase in line with the annual cost of living awards for staff covered by NJC Terms and Conditions.

7.2. A full list of the job groups and associated pay ranges is attached to this policy.

8. Market forces supplement

8.1. Evidence from our market and recruitment data shows that for some professions a higher salary may be necessary to attract and retain staff. Our most recent market data indicates that for some professions this could be as high as 15% above the mid-point and this is already built into the grading structures that have been proposed utilising the in-built flexibility above mid-point.

9. Retention payment scheme

9.1. A retention payment scheme is available to all areas of the Council, and might be used in the following cases:

- Difficulty in recruiting the most suitable candidate for a post.
- Difficulty in retaining key people where their leaving would significantly affect internal and/or external service delivery.

9.2. All additional payments will be time limited and reviewed at predetermined intervals to reconsider their appropriateness against the prevailing job market.

9.3. The scheme may be applied flexibly and can mean:

- Paying someone at a higher salary level
- Making a one-off payment.

9.4. These can be used in combination with other benefits that the Council offers. A package to suit the particular circumstances should be used and no individual should receive benefits that equate to more than 15% above the maximum of their substantive grade.

10. Lowest paid employees

10.1. Lowest paid employees of the Council are defined as those employees (excluding Apprentices) who are in a full time or part time role, who are above the age of 21, and are paid within the Core category of the new Job Evaluation scheme (the lowest band). From 1st April 2023 the lowest Core Grade was £23,151. This amount is subject to a pay award pending in respect of April 2024.

10.2. The pay differential between the highest paid officer and the median officer is set out below:

Highest	£112,298
Median Employee	£38,615
Multiple	2.91

11. Pay protection

11.1. The Council seeks to ensure that all employees receive equal pay for work of equal value. To be consistent with equal pay principles the Council's protection arrangements will not create the potential for pay inequalities (e.g., open-ended protection).

11.2. There may be times when the grade for an individual's role changes for reasons unrelated to their performance e.g., restructures. In such cases the protection arrangements outlined will apply for 3 years from the date of the change.

12. Severance payments

12.1. The Council has a consistent method of calculating severance payments which it applies to all employees without differentiation. The payment is intended to recompense employees for the loss of their livelihood and provide financial support whilst they seek alternative employment.

12.2. In line with the statutory redundancy payment scheme, the Council calculates redundancy severance payments using the following calculation. The calculation is based on an employee's age and length of continuous local government service (please note that employees must have a minimum of 2 years' continuous service to qualify for a redundancy payment) the multiplier for the number of weeks is then applied to the employee's actual weekly earnings.

12.3. The amount of redundancy pay will be calculated as:

- 0.5 week's pay for each full year of service where age at time of redundancy is less than 22 years of age.
- 1 week's pay for each full year of service where age at time of redundancy is 22 years of age or above, but less than 41 years of age.
- 1.5 weeks' pay for each full year of service where age at time of redundancy is 41+ years of age.

12.4. The maximum number of service years taken into account is 20. The maximum number of weeks' pay is 30 for anyone aged 61 years of age or older with 20 years or more service

13. Honorarium payments

13.1. Payment of honoraria is a method by which the Council may reward an employee who has temporarily undertaken the duties and responsibilities of a higher graded

post, or who has worked excessive hours whilst not being entitled to overtime payments.

14. The Real Living Wage

14.1. The Council and Publica are committed to paying the Real Living Wage (RLW). The RLW rate from October 2023 is:

- £12.00 per hour across UK (except London - £13.15) for workers 18 years and older.

14.2. The RLW is voluntary and is independently calculated based on what people need to get by. The Government encourages all employers that can afford to do so to ensure their employees earn a wage that meets the costs of living, not just the government minimum.

14.3. For Council employees whose substantive post is less than the RLW they will automatically receive the rate set out in 14.1 above.

15. Other pay and conditions in operation

- Stand by and call out payments
- Long service award

16. The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

16.1. The LGPS provides for the exercise of discretion that allow for retirement benefits to be enhanced. The Council will consider each case on its merits but has determined that it does not normally enhance pension benefits for any of its employees, nor does it operate any discretions under the Local Government (Discretionary Payments) (injury Allowances) Regulations 2011.

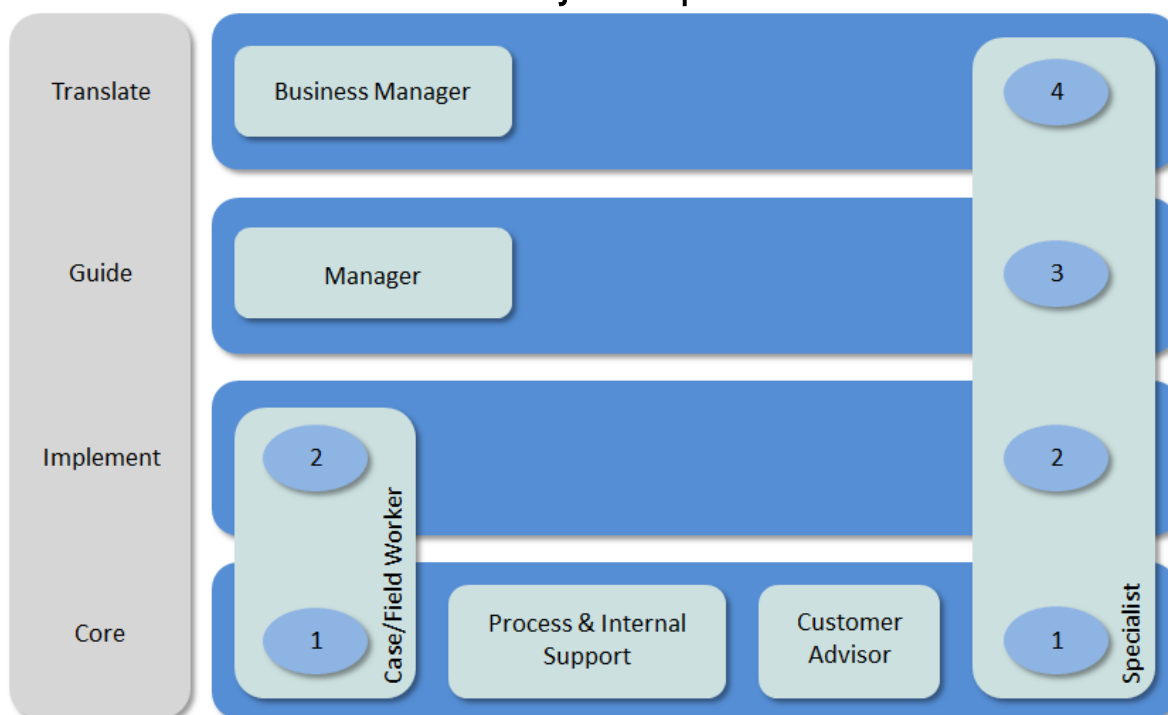
16.2. Further information regarding the [Gloucestershire County Pension Scheme pensions](#) administering body for the Council is available from the Gloucestershire County Council website.

17. The Performance and Appointments Committee (PAC)

The PAC are responsible for:

- The salaries and contractual T&Cs of the statutory officers.
- Retirement/redundancy issues relating to the CEO,
- Any grievance and/or disciplinary matters in respect of the statutory officers.

Evaluate framework Job Groups:



Job Groups	From (£) *	Mid-Point (£) *	Top (£) *
Business Manager	54297	67871	81445
Level 4 Specialist	54297	67871	81445
Level 1 Manager	42957	53697	64436
Level 3 Specialist	42957	53697	64436
Level 2 Specialist	34443	43054	51665
Level 2 Case / Field Worker	28444	35555	42666
Level 1 Specialist	24973	31216	37459
Level 1 Case / Field Worker	23151	27766	33319
Customer Advisor	23151	27298	32758
Process / Internal support	23151	27298	32758

Note: Not all job groups will be utilised

Agenda Item 13



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET – MARCH 2024
Subject	GLOUCESTERSHIRE CITY REGION BOARD
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Tony Dale Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation Email: tony.dale@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Robert Weaver Chief Executive Email: Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk
Report author	Robert Weaver Chief Executive Email: Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	<p>To consider the emerging form and function of the Gloucestershire City Region Board, the nature of its authority, terms of reference, membership, and joint scrutiny arrangements.</p> <p>To enable the Council to play an active part in the formalisation of a new Gloucestershire Region Board to support the delivery of developing a vision for the future growth of the economic success for the whole of the Gloucestershire economic area.</p> <p><i>Note - reports with similar recommendations are being taken to the Cabinet/ Executive of each principal Local Authority in Gloucestershire, in parallel.</i></p>
Annexes	Annex A – Terms of Reference. Annex B – Principles for the administration of the SEDF Fund
Recommendation(s)	<p>That Cabinet resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree to the establishment of the Gloucestershire City Region Board (GCRB); 2. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation, to finalise and complete the Inter-Authority Agreement (including the Constitution) and other key documentation and to take all necessary



	<p>steps to create the GCRB, including finalising the terms of reference for the GCRB;</p> <p>3. Agree that the above recommendations will not be effective until all Gloucestershire Councils pass equivalent resolutions;</p> <p>4. Agree upon the establishment of the GCRB to;</p> <p>4.1 Delegate this Council’s functions as are necessary for the delivery of the functions identified in the Terms of Reference at Annexe A to this report to the GCRB;</p> <p>4.2 Confirm the appointment of Gloucestershire County Council as the Administering Authority;</p> <p>4.3 Appoint the Cabinet member for Economy and Council Transformation of Cotswold District Council to the GCRB as the nominated member of the Board and to nominate a deputy to be agreed.</p>
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the Economy
Key Decision	YES
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	<p>Leadership Gloucestershire (a group comprising the Leaders and Chief Executive Officers of all Councils in Gloucestershire) has considered and supports the proposal to establish the Gloucestershire City Region Board.</p>



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report considers the emerging form and function of the Gloucestershire City Region Board, the nature of its authority, terms of reference, membership, and joint scrutiny arrangements.
- 1.2 **Reasons for Recommendation:** To enable the Council to play an active part in the formalisation of a new Gloucestershire City Region Board to support the delivery of developing a vision for the future growth of the economic success for the whole of the Gloucestershire economic area. Similar recommendations are being taken to the Cabinet/ Executive of each principal Local Authority in Gloucestershire, in parallel.
- 1.3 **Resource Implications:** The Gloucestershire County Council will act as Administering Authority in the overall management of the Board. This will involve Gloucestershire County Council's Democratic Services and its Legal team supporting the Committee formation process and ongoing Committee Secretariat function, plus additional lead Officer input, including SI51 and Monitoring Officer, as required, in support of the Council's role as Administering Authority.
Future resource requirements over and above these commitments will be duly considered through the Board.
Note: [CRB PROSPECTUS EOI.pdf](#) (gloucestershire.gov.uk) - £50K funding for the City Region Prospectus
- 1.4 **Timeline:** January 2024: Inter-authority Agreement finalised and agreed by all Gloucestershire Local Authorities.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Gloucestershire local authorities have worked jointly together through membership of several Boards (Severn Vale, Rural Ambitions and Central Gloucestershire City Region) together with the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC) for several years. Following a review of the joint working arrangements, Leadership Gloucestershire agreed that the three boards and the Joint Committee should be merged into a single forum under the name of Gloucestershire City Region Board serving the whole of the county. This report sets out the emerging form and function of the Gloucestershire City Region Board, the nature of its authority, terms of reference, membership, and joint scrutiny arrangements.

3. THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE CITY REGION BOARD

- 3.1 The overall aims of the new Board will be to develop and deliver a vision for the future growth of the economic success for the whole of the Gloucestershire economic area. The

new City Region Board will also provide an opportunity to establish the City Region as a nationally defined single economic functional area. The 'City Region' will include urban and rural areas that have inter-related economic activities which have the potential for increased success through coordinated interventions which benefit the whole. Gloucestershire is a county with significant growth aspirations and ambitions which integrate with and support the national and regional growth agendas.

4. PRINCIPLES OF THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE CITY REGION BOARD

- 4.1** The proposed terms of reference set out in **Annex A** provide details of the Board's purpose, powers, and administrative arrangements.
- 4.2** The following detailed matters explain the nature of the authority given to the Board which 'empowers' the Board to make binding decisions but subject to the following governance arrangements:
- Whilst the Board's remit is as wide as possible, partner Councils will not 'delegate' economic development or other broader functions to the Board. These will remain within the remit of the district council.
 - Leaders will still need to operate within the authority delegated to them by their own Councils when participating at the Board's meetings. Leaders and officers will therefore need to work with their own Councils to secure the necessary authority to facilitate the Board's decisions.
 - A partner Council will be free to undertake any economic activity it deems necessary within its own area. Notwithstanding this, it will be necessary for partner Councils to agree a protocol that they will not decide or undertake any activity which is contrary to those decisions made by the Board.
 - In order to protect the interest of partner Councils it will be necessary to agree a protocol that although the Board's decisions are by majority, the Board will not make a decision which impacts upon one council's area, without that council's agreement.
- 4.3** The following principles for the operation of the Gloucestershire City Region Board were developed, following consultation and engagement with Leadership Gloucestershire and all the Gloucestershire authorities:



- The proposed membership of the Board will be through elected representatives from each of the seven Gloucestershire Local Authorities. Each member will have an equal vote at the Board.
- The proposal is for the Chair of the Board to be a Gloucestershire County Council Cabinet Member. This supports the Governments arrangements through the levelling up agenda where the upper tier authority in a two-tier county, such as Gloucestershire, is given the lead role in negotiation of any county devolution deals. Therefore, Gloucestershire local authorities recognise the opportunity for a county deal is more about providing devolution from central government to Gloucestershire, rather than a mechanism for realigning and removing powers from an individual Gloucestershire local authority.
- Meetings will remain in public and external attendees will be invited to present and engage in the discussion about the economy and growth in Gloucestershire.
- The future development of the Board will be dependent on any County Deal that is negotiated and agreed with Central Government.

- The Senior Officer Group comprising of nominated senior officers from each of the seven Gloucestershire local authorities will continue to support the work of the Board. The County Council's GEGJC Scrutiny Committee will be re-constituted and reviewed to re-focus it on having oversight if the activities of the GCRB. This will potentially include monitoring the delivery of projects that have received investment from the Strategic Economic Development Fund (SEDF) or making suggestions to the GCRB on potential areas of future investment of the fund.

4.4 The proposed Board's operational arrangements between the Gloucestershire Authorities will be the subject of an inter-authority agreement. The agreement will include (amongst other things):

- the establishment of the Board (as a Joint Committee),
- agreed terms of reference (as set out in Annex A)
- the operational arrangements mentioned above,
- the Board's resourcing and the role of the County Council as administering authority
- business -plan formulation



- the arrangements should the Board wish to widen its powers (which would require all the Gloucestershire authorities to agree such a change) and
- the overall constitutional arrangements for the Board

4.5 Article 12 of the County Council’s Constitution already recognises the Cabinet’s power to establish joint arrangements with other Local Authorities to exercise Cabinet functions, including the appointment of joint committees, whose members may include elected members of other Local Authorities.

4.6 The exercise of the Board’s powers will, as mentioned above, require each constituent council to provide the authority to exercise such powers at the Board, together with amendment to the County council’s Constitution to include details of the new Board. The County Council’s Monitoring Officer proposes to exercise his delegated powers under the Constitution’s Scheme of Delegation, to update the Constitution to include the Board’s governance arrangements set out in Annex A.

5. STRATEGIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND

5.1 The Gloucestershire local authorities established the Business Rates Pool which enabled part of the Pool to create the Strategic Economic Development Fund (SEDF). The former GEGJC administered the fund through an approved eligibility and project approval process in November 2018.

5.2 At the GEGJC’s final meeting in September 2023, members welcomed the reported growth of the Business Rates Pool and fund. The GEGJC asked whether a more strategic approach could be taken when considering and allocating SEDF funding. The fund operated under the GEGJC on an ad hoc approach – on a first come first served basis. GEGJC noted that projects are not always strategic in nature which risks funding being allocated to projects that may not maximise economic benefit and growth to the county.

5.3 The proposal is for the Board to administer the SEDF. This will enable the Board to reconsider the approach to the allocation of bids by developing a longer vision and a portfolio approach to assessing funding bids in the pipeline. This will enable the Board to apply a more rigorous selection of projects that would deliver and add value in supporting the growth of the local economy through a more strategic approach.

5.4 The former GEGJC considered it was important to establish a new strategic process in advance of the inauguration of the City Region Board. It was suggested that this strategic approach could be lined up with the Economic Dashboard data and the emerging

Countywide Economic Strategy. (Led by the County Council, with each district contributing/collaborating)

- 5.5 The former Joint Committee Senior Officer Group proposed an approach to the Board's administration of the SEDF Fund as set out in Annex B, which will be considered at the Board's inaugural meeting.

6. SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS

- 6.1 The activities of the previous GEGJC were scrutinised by the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Scrutiny Committee. (GEGSC). This was a County Council scrutiny committee whose membership comprised seven County Councillors and 6 Co-opted District Councillors.
- 6.2 Through consultation with all Gloucestershire Authorities, it has been agreed that a joint scrutiny function will continue to exist to scrutinise the work of the GCRB. As before each local authority will be able to nominate a representative to that committee
- 6.3 The creation of a new GCRB provides a timely opportunity to undertake an appropriate review of the GEGSC to ensure that it aligns with the future activities of the GCRB
- 6.4 The review of the scrutiny function is proposed to include (not an exhaustive list):
- Scope the committee
 - Review of scrutiny's oversight and monitoring of SEDF Bids
 - Development of devolution and the implementation of any agreed County Deals
 - Monitoring outcomes and benefits through the implementation of the Gloucestershire Economic Strategy
- 6.5 It is proposed that following this review a report is provided to the GCRB and Leadership Gloucestershire to ratify and agree the future scope and activities of the GEGSC.

7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 7.1 As part of the development of the GCRB alternative options were discussed and discounted
- 7.2 Retaining both a GCRB and a GEGJC was deemed to create significant duplication and would not be effective
- 7.3 Disbanding any joint governance for Gloucestershire authorities to operate individually was also not considered as an option. Without a collective decision-making forum to invest pooled business rates funding via the SEDF and Gloucestershire Authorities would be

significantly financially worse off without a joint forum in place. In addition, disbanding a joint decision-making forum and not proceeding with the GCRB would likely limit Gloucestershire's ability to proceed with and secure further devolution and county-wide powers.

8. OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 It is recommended that Cabinet Member(s) agree to

- the establishment of the Gloucestershire City Region Board through the creation of a Joint Committee in accordance with Sections 101 and 102 of the Local Government Act 1972
- give the delegated authority to the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Cabinet member for Economy and Council Transformation of Cotswold District Council, to finalise and complete the Inter-Authority Agreement (including the Constitution) and other key documentation, on terms to be approved by the Council's legal advisers as set out in the recommendations at the beginning of this report.

9. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT – FOLLOW UP.

9.1 The Gloucestershire economic Growth scrutiny Committee will provide overarching scrutiny of the work of the Board and the Scrutiny's overall remit will be taken forward as set out in this report at sections 6.1 – 6.5

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The inter-authority agreements (IAA's) provide for a contribution towards the County Council's Administering Authority role, which includes committee administrative support together with the statutory officer responsibilities.

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Statutory Authority: Section 101(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 enables two or more local authorities to discharge any of their functions jointly and arrange for the discharge of those functions by a Joint Committee.

11.2 Section 9EB of Part A Chapter 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 Act enables the Secretary of State to make Regulations permitting arrangements under Section 101 (5) where any of the functions are the responsibility of the executive of the authority. The relevant regulations



are the Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012/1019.

- 11.3** Regulation 11 makes provision for joint arrangements to involve a joint committee under Section 101 (5) of the 1972 Act and the Council's constitution (Paragraph 11.02.3) allow the decision to establish the Joint Committee and determine the number of members to be appointed to the Joint Committee and their terms of office to be made by the Cabinet. (Set the context for the report and refer to any previous relevant decisions.)
- 11.4** An Inter Authority Agreement between the participating Authorities is necessary to formalise the arrangement. A draft has been agreed with the Head of Legal Services for the Council.

12. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 12.1** If the GCRB is not established there will be no mechanism to take decisions on the investment of SEDF
- 12.2** If the GCRB is not established, it will limit Gloucestershire's potential for future devolution
- 12.3** If the GCRB is not established there will be no Gloucestershire-wide forum to support and drive and monitor the implementation of the Gloucestershire Economic Strategy.

13. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 13.1** There are no specific implications in relation to the above matters in establishing the Board. However, the Board will consider such implications in making its decisions and in administering the SEDF.

14. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1** There are no specific implications in relation to the above matters in establishing the Board. However, the Board will consider such implications in making its decisions and in administering the SEDF.

15. DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT (DPIA)

- 15.1** There are no DPIA implications in relation to this decision There are no DPIA implications in relation to this decision

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS



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

- Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee: 9 February 2023
- [GEGJC Future Governance Update V2.pdf \(gloucestershire.gov.uk\)](#)
- Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee: 25 September 2023
- [GEGJC Pool Update Sept 2023.pdf \(gloucestershire.gov.uk\)](#)

16.2 These documents will be available for inspection online at www.cotswold.gov.uk or by contacting democratic services democratic@cotswold.gov.uk for a period of up to 4 years from the date of the meeting.

(END)

Annex A.

Terms of Reference and Constitution for the Gloucestershire City Regions Board

1. Governance

- 1.1 The Gloucestershire City Region Board ("**GCR Board**") is a Joint Committee under ss101(5), 102 Local Government Act 1972 and under Part IA Chapter 2 Section 9EB of the Local Government Act 2000 and pursuant to the Local Authorities (Arrangement for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 1.2 Political Proportionality rules will not apply to the GCR Board as so constituted.
- 1.3 The GCR Board will include all of the Partner Authorities.

2. Host Authority

- 2.1 The GCR Board will be hosted under local government arrangements by Gloucestershire County Council. The Host Authority will provide Secretary/Clerk, s151 and Monitoring Officer roles of the GCR Board.

3. Functions of the GCR Board

- 3.1 Each of the Partner Authorities empowers the GCR Board to:
 - 3.1.1 engage in strategic discussion and act as the primary consultative forum to set a dynamic vision for Gloucestershire and to present and discuss issues relating to the following:
 - (a) economy and growth;
 - (b) funding and bids;
 - (c) devolution; and
 - (d) skills and employment;
 - 3.1.2 develop and support a shared vision for strategic growth and economic success for the County of Gloucestershire;
 - 3.1.3 champion that shared vision and its delivery with a single voice inside and outside Gloucestershire, including with strategic partner organisations such as the Western Gateway Partnership.

- 3.1.4 lobby and bid for funding and support via government growth programmes and Western Gateway Partnership and other partners to support the delivery of the GCR Board's ambitions;
- 3.1.5 promote the success of the Gloucestershire City Region and its strengths to attract inward investment and growth;
- 3.1.6 work closely with all sections of the Gloucestershire City Region communities, businesses and agencies to engage them in the generation and delivery of the vision;
- 3.1.7 build upon the inter-related strengths of the communities of the Gloucestershire City Region to fulfil the ambitions of each place and maintain their identities;
- 3.1.8 create a positive vision for vibrant rural communities, businesses and infrastructure to maximise their contribution to Gloucestershire;
- 3.1.9 work with partners to ensure the Gloucestershire City Region Vision can guide and integrate with future strategic spatial and infrastructure plans;
- 3.1.10 ensure the development of a Gloucestershire Vision complements other visioning and strategic plans in the County of Gloucestershire;
- 3.1.11 aim to create, through the Gloucestershire City Region Vision, a special county which has uniquely attractive offers as a place to live and visit and a vibrant economy firmly based on modern commercial activity, built on the strengths of our communities;
- 3.1.12 discharge on behalf of Partner Authorities the power to do anything it considers likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic wellbeing of the area of Gloucestershire together with such additional functions as the respective constituent Councils may determine from time to time;
- 3.1.13 facilitate and enable collaboration between the Partner Authorities on economic development, employment and skills, and associated activities;
- 3.1.14 formulate and agree the GCE Strategy from time to time and other plans and strategies related to economic growth, and to work jointly to ensure their delivery;
- 3.1.15 lobby and carry out other activities that help achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic wellbeing of the area of Gloucestershire;
- 3.1.16 promote the vision contained in the GCE Strategy;

- 3.1.17 seek the allocation of resources to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic wellbeing of the area of Gloucestershire; and
- 3.1.18 ensure a co-ordinated approach to and liaise with such relevant Groups/Boards as the Partner Authorities and/or the Senior Officer Group may determine from time to time.

3.2 To provide political and democratic accountability by:

- 3.2.1 monitoring the delivery of each priority, plan, project or programme included in the GCE Strategy and by ensuring that action is taken to review and prepare revised action plans as necessary;
- 3.2.2 monitoring the Annual Budget;
- 3.2.3 advising and making recommendations to the Administering Authority;
- 3.2.4 providing Leadership Gloucestershire with regular updates in respect of the work of the GCR Board and (where appropriate) the governance of the GCR Board.

4. Membership of the GCR Board and appointment of the Chair

4.1 The GCR Board shall be comprised of:

- 4.1.1 One member from each of the District Authorities ; each such member to be an appointed executive member (where executive arrangements are in place)from the relevant District Authority (voting); and
- 4.1.2 One member from the Administering Authority, such member to be an appointed executive member (where executive arrangements are in place) from the Administering Authority (voting), who shall also act as the Chair.

The GCR Board may from time to time at its absolute discretion appoint one non-voting member to the GCR Board from Gloucestershire's business community. Each such appointment shall continue for a fixed term to be determined by the GCR Board unless removed earlier by the GCR Board.

- 4.2 Each District Authority shall appoint a substitute member (being an executive member of the relevant District Authority where executive arrangements are in place). The substitute member shall have the same rights of speaking and voting at meetings as the member for whom the substitution is made.

- 4.3 The Administering Authority shall appoint a substitute member (being an executive member of the Administering Authority where executive arrangements are in place). The substitute member shall have the same rights as the member for whom the substitution is made in respect of speaking, voting and acting as the Chair at meetings.
- 4.4 Each GCR Board member appointed by a Partner Authority shall remain in office until removed and replaced by his or her appointing Partner Authority, or in the case of an executive member, until he or she ceases to be a member of the Executive of the appointing Partner Authority.

5. Voting

- 5.1 One member one vote for each Partner Authority .
- 5.2 Normal rules as to declarations of interest to be applied in accordance with the Gloucestershire County Council Code of Conduct.
- 5.3 Except as otherwise provided by the Local Government Acts 1972 and 1985 and subject to the protocol in respect of the Chair's casting vote set out in **Error! Reference source not found.**, all matters shall be decided by a majority of the votes of the voting members present.
- 5.4 Subject to the protocol in respect of the Chair's casting vote set out in **Error! Reference source not found.**, in the event of an equality of votes the Chair shall have the casting vote in addition to their vote as a member of the GCR Board.

6. Quorum

- 6.1 The quorum for a meeting shall be the member from the Administering Authority together with 3 (three) other voting members. No business shall be transacted unless quorum is reached. If quorum is not reached within thirty (30) minutes of the start of the meeting (or if quorum ceases to be present during a meeting), the meeting shall be adjourned to the same time and venue to a date determined by the Chair.

7. Meetings

- 7.1 The Chair of the meeting shall be the member from the Administering Authority or their substitute, also from the Administering Authority
- 7.2 Each member entitled to attend will send a substitute member as per paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3 in the event of his or her unavailability. The Secretary/Clerk for the GCR Board shall be informed prior to the commencement of the meeting of any substitute members attending.

7.3 A meeting of the GCR Board must be convened by the Chair within twenty-eight (28) days of the receipt of a requisition of any two voting members of the GCR Board addressed to the Secretary/Clerk to the GCR Board. All requisitions shall be in writing and no business other than that specified in the requisition shall be transacted at such a meeting.

8. **Constitution**

8.1 The Constitution of Gloucestershire County Council shall apply to the GCR Board.

9. **Attendance**

9.1 Members of the SOG, together with the Administering Authority's s151 Officer, Legal Advisor and the Clerk shall be entitled to attend meetings of the GCR Board to advise the GCR Board on matters relevant to the functions and activities of the GCR Board but shall have no voting rights.

9.2 Each Partner Authority may send any of its officers (as it considers to be appropriate) to meetings of the GCR Board, or any sub-committee thereof, to support its GCR Board Members or those invited to observe the meeting.

10. **Responsibilities of the Chair and (if applicable) their substitute**

10.1 The role of the Chair and (if applicable) their substitute, is to ensure that the meetings of the GCR Board are conducted efficiently and in accordance with the Standing Orders and Rules of Procedures.

10.2 The role of the Chair's substitute is to deputise for the Chair during any period of the Chair's absence or at other times as appropriate and his responsibilities shall be the same as those of the Chair.

10.3 Subject to the protocol in respect of the Chair's casting vote set out in **Error! Reference source not found.**, the Chair or (if applicable) their substitute shall have a second or casting vote in the event of an equality of votes when presiding at a meeting of the GCR Board.

11. **Meetings of the GCR Board**

11.1 Part I of Schedule 12 of the LGA 1972 shall apply to meetings of the GCR Board.

11.2 At its first meeting and at each Annual General Meeting thereafter the GCR Board shall:

11.2.1 adopt a Scheme of Delegation; and

11.2.2 approve the schedule of meetings for the remainder of the year.

- 11.3 Subject to paragraph 11.5 below, and the need exceptionally to call additional meetings, the GCR Board shall meet at least four times each year. The Chair shall decide the venue, date and time of all meetings of the GCR Board. Wherever practicable, at least ten (10) Business Days' notice of such meetings shall be given to each GCR Board Member, the Senior Manager, the Administering Authority's s151 Officer, the Legal Advisor and to each of the Partner Authorities by the Clerk.
- 11.4 Meetings of the GCR Board shall be open to the public and press except during consideration of items containing confidential or exempt information in accordance with the provisions of sections 100 to 100K of the LGA 1972; and reports to and the minutes of the GCR Board shall (subject to the provisions of sections 100 to 100K of the LGA 1972) be available to the public and press as though they were the reports or minutes of a meeting of a Partner Authority.
- 11.5 Any GCR Board Member may requisition a meeting of the GCR Board by giving notice of such requisition to the Chair and to the Clerk. Immediately upon receipt of such requisition, the Chair shall call a meeting of the GCR Board in accordance with paragraph 11.3 which shall be no later than ten (10) Business Days after the receipt by the Clerk of the notice of requisition.
- 11.6 The Standing Orders and Rules of Procedure shall be applicable to meetings of the GCR Board. The Standing Orders and Rules of Procedure may only be amended or replaced if the amendment or replacement is agreed by not less than three-quarters of the GCR Board Members
- 11.7 If a quorum is not present within thirty (30) minutes of the time set for the commencement of a meeting of the GCR Board (or a quorum ceases to be present during a meeting) the meeting shall be adjourned to the same time and venue five (5) Business Days later or to such other date, time and venue as the Chair (or other person who is chairing the meeting) shall determine.
- 11.8 The Chair shall normally preside at all meetings of the GCR Board. If the Chair is not present within fifteen (15) minutes of the time for the commencement of a meeting, or being present does not wish to preside or is unable to do so, then their substitute shall preside at that meeting. If (in the event of the absence or non-availability of the Chair) their substitute is not present within fifteen (15) minutes of the time for the commencement of the meeting or does not wish to preside or is unable to do so, the meeting shall be adjourned to the same time and venue five (5) Business Days later.

12. Delegation to Sub Committees and Officers

- 12.1 The GCR Board may arrange for any of its functions to be discharged in accordance with the provisions of a Scheme of Delegation as approved by the GCR Board.
- 12.2 The GCR Board may appoint working groups consisting of GCR Board Members, officers from the Administering Authority (including of the SOG) and officers of any of the Partner Authorities to consider specific matters and report back to the GCR Board or any sub-committee with recommendations.

13. Scrutiny Arrangements

- 13.1 Subject as set out in this paragraph 13 the decisions made by the GCR Board shall for the time being be subject to the Scrutiny Arrangements of each Partner Authority and each Partner Authority acknowledges the requirements in paragraph 13.8 below for cooperation between the respective Scrutiny Committees of each Partner Authority.
- 13.2 Any decision of the GCR Board, except those agreed as urgent in accordance with paragraph 13.3 shall not be implemented until the Scrutiny Arrangements of the Partner Authority whose membership has called in the decision or action has been completed.
- 13.3 Where the GCR Board decides that a decision must be implemented without delay and as a matter of urgency it shall record the reasons for such urgency in the minutes of the meeting and any subsequent 'call in' of that decision should normally relate only to the process leading to the decision and not to the decision itself and the chairmen of the Partner Authorities Scrutiny Committees shall be advised immediately.
- 13.4 A summary record of decisions made by the GCR Board will be made available to the public via the website of the Administering Authority within two (2) Business Days of the decision being made. At the same time the Administering Authority will provide a copy of the summary record of decisions to all Partner Authorities for them to make available to their members as they see fit. The summary record will indicate which of the decisions are subject to the urgency provision and therefore are not available to be 'called in' prior to implementation.
- 13.5 All decisions of the GCR Board (unless urgency is specified in accordance with paragraph 13.3) to be subject to call-in processes of each Partner Authority. If not called in during that period any decision shall then be available for implementation.
- 13.6 The GCR Board Members and the relevant officers from each Partner Authority shall fully cooperate with the relevant Scrutiny Committee of any of the Partner Authorities and

attend as directed by the Scrutiny Committee. The GCR Board Chair may nominate the GCR Board Member(s).

- 13.7 Where a decision is called in by more than one Partner Authority, the Scrutiny Committee of each of the Partner Authorities calling in the decision will be invited to request the County Council to convene a meeting of the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Overview and Scrutiny Committee to hear evidence, views, options considered, reasons for decision and to ask questions of appropriate GCR Board Member(s) and officers of the Administering Authority (including of the SOG) and others invited to participate.
- 13.8 After these "hearings", each relevant Scrutiny Committee will meet separately to decide on what comment, view or recommendations (if any) it wishes to make to the GCR Board.
- 13.9 Where the account to be given to the Scrutiny Committee requires the production of a report, then the GCR Board Member or officer concerned will be given sufficient notice to prepare the documentation.
- 13.10 Once it has formed recommendations on a call-in (or proposals for development in accordance with paragraph 13.13) a Scrutiny Committee shall prepare a formal report and submit it for consideration by the GCR Board.
- 13.11 The GCR Board shall consider the report of a Scrutiny Committee at its next suitable meeting and shall issue a formal response to such a report.
- 13.12 The Clerk shall monitor the operation of the provisions relating to call-in and urgency annually, and submit a report to the GCR Board with proposals for review if necessary.
- 13.13 A Scrutiny Committee should notify one of the GCR Board Members for its Partner Authority if it includes in its work programme any aspect of policy development or review relating to the work or functions of the GCR Board.

14. Annual Budget

- 14.1 The GCR Board and the Partner Authorities will prepare the Annual Budget for future Financial Years in accordance with the following deadlines:

- 14.1.1 No later than 31 July in each Financial Year the Administering Authority or the Senior Manager (if appointed) shall submit a draft Annual Budget to the SOG in respect of the next Financial Year;

- 14.1.2 The SOG shall within twenty (20) Business Days of receipt of the draft Annual Budget consider and provide comments on or suggest amendments to be included in a revised draft Annual Budget;
 - 14.1.3 No later than 30 September in each Financial Year the GCR Board will approve the draft Annual Budget;
 - 14.1.4 Each Partner Authority will consider, as part of its budget setting process the draft Annual Budget;
 - 14.1.5 No later than 30 November in each Financial Year each Partner Authority will provide any comments or proposed amendments to the draft Annual Budget to the GCR Board;
 - 14.1.6 No later than 15 January in each Financial Year the Administering Authority's s151 Officer will insert the actual costs to the GCR Board into the draft Annual Budget and circulate it to the s151 officer and to the GCR Board;
 - 14.1.7 No later than 18th February in each Financial Year each Partner Authority will approve any amendments to the draft Annual Budget; and
 - 14.1.8 The GCR Board will approve the Annual Budget by no later than 28 February in each Financial Year.
- 14.2 If the Partner Authorities or the GCR Board are unable to approve the draft Annual Budget for a Financial Year before 26 February in any year, the GCR Board shall perform its delegated functions and activities set out in paragraph 2 in conformity with the approved Annual Budget for the previous Financial Year, subject to an adjustment for inflation using indices determined by the Administering Authority's s151 Officer from time to time, until such time as an Annual Budget is approved in accordance with this paragraph 14.
- 14.3 At any time within a Financial Year the GCR Board may agree by a majority vote amendments to the Annual Budget for that Financial Year to accommodate any unforeseen change in circumstances and to assist the GCR Board in performance of its functions.
- 14.4 Where the GCR Board is to consider amendments in accordance with paragraph 14.3 above, the County Council or the Senior Manager (if appointed) shall forthwith notify the Chief Executive of each of the Partner Authorities of the proposed amendments to the Annual Budget. Each Partner Authority shall have a period of twenty (20) Business Days from receipt of the proposed amendments in which to consider them and to notify the County

Council or the Senior Manager (if appointed) that such amendments require the approval of the Partner Authority.

- 14.5 Where no Partner Authorities serve notice (in accordance with paragraph 14.4) on the County Council or the Senior Manager (if appointed) the GCR Board may implement such proposed amendment.
- 14.6 Where one or more of the Partner Authorities has notified the County Council or the Senior Manager (if appointed) that it needs to approve the proposed amendments, the GCR Board shall not implement such proposed amendments unless and until the notifying Partner Authority has approved the proposed amendments and informed the County Council or the Senior Manager (if appointed) that it has approved such proposed amendments.
- 14.7 The Partner Authorities shall pay any due contribution of the Annual Budget to the Administering Authority in accordance with clause **Error! Reference source not found.** of the Agreement and any additional contributions which may arise as a result of the operation of paragraphs 14.3 to 14.6 above shall be paid in accordance with clause **Error! Reference source not found.** of the Agreement.
- 15. GCR Board Member Conduct**
- 15.1 GCR Board Members shall be subject to the code of conduct for elected members adopted by the Partner Authority that nominated them to be a GCR Board Member.
- 16. Liability of GCR Board Members**
- 16.1 A GCR Board Member shall have the same responsibilities and liabilities as those that apply when sitting on other committees and bodies as an appointed representative of his nominating Partner Authority.

Appendix 2

Principles for the administration of the SEDF Fund

- To establish two calls for funding bids in a financial year – for 2023/24. These are currently proposed as November 2023 and April 2024. This will enable the Senior Officer Group and City Region Board to have a pipeline of projects to consider at any time.
- The Fund to remain open to other partners and organisations, as well as all the Local Authority Partners, and LEP successor. Any potential bids will still need to have a Local Authority or LEP successor project sponsor for it to be submitted and considered.
- Strategic Alignment/Fit – important that any funding requests align with strategic priorities, as the basis for filtering those bids that can be considered and assessment through the SEDF process. SOG recommend using the strategic priorities in the emerging County Economic Strategy.
- To maximise the impact of the funding, projects need to demonstrate their reach and benefit to as many districts/areas and local communities as possible.
- Projects/bids will need be able to clearly demonstrate the leverage and impact that any SEDF funding would achieve in particular the economic & social benefits and outcomes. Projects/bids that identify/secure other direct match funding will be viewed favourably.
- Financial sustainability is an important factor, and any projects or bids would need provide details as part of an exit strategy, to show how they will be financially sustainable once any SEDF funding awarded has been spent.
- For those more commercially focussed projects, to consider on a case-by-case basis, the potential to recover a proportion of any SEDF awarded – use of a super profits clause (as per Local Growth Deal funded contracts).
- To establish a more robust monitoring regime to assist with the testing of the value for money, and demonstrating the added value and impacts against envisaged benefits and outcomes. This would also assist officers with spotting worthy proposals and bids for future consideration. The scale of monitoring required will also be commensurate to the value of the funding sought/awarded. We would expect more monitoring of a £200k project compared to a £20k project. Officers will amend the current Expression of Interest form and add an evaluation section for applicant to complete that identifies SMART measures such as amount of public/private sector leverage, job creation/retention, number of beneficiaries, geographic areas that have benefitted.
- To retain the current eligibility criteria, and officers to review the current guidance on the nature and type of projects that could be eligible for funding, and review and revise the current assessment template including the criteria, which translates into a point system.
- To investigate and put in place a light touch independent/external appraisal for any project that makes through the initial pipeline shift process, for consideration for funding by the

SOG and City Region Board. This approach has been in place previously for the LEP Growth Deal and Get Britain Building Fund, as well as the GIIF loan funding.

Annex B.

Principles for the administration of the SEDF Fund

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Agenda Item 14



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET – 7 MARCH 2024
Subject	COUNCIL PRIORITY AND SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT – 2023-24 QUARTER THREE
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 Q3.
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	Cotswold District Council retained senior managers, Publica Directors, Assistant Directors, Business Managers, Service Managers and Service



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

	Leads.
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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 Chief Executive 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.

2. COUNCIL PRIORITY REPORT

- 2.1** The Council adopted the Corporate Plan 2020-24 ('the Plan') in September 2020. A spring 'refresh' of the Plan was completed and subsequently approved by Council at its meeting in May 2022.
- 2.2** Progress on key actions identified in the Corporate Plan for Q3 include:
- Rollout of phase two in the Cotswold Water Park Strategy for cycle stand installations, with 27 out of the 46 stands now deployed across water park locations within Fairford, Lechlade, and South Cerney.
 - The Digitalisation of Planning Enforcement focuses on developing an ICT-enabled proactive approach to the service. New online forms for reporting suspected breaches of planning control have completed user testing and are scheduled for launch in February. These forms aim to improve case triage, expedite responses to high-priority reports, and enhance the overall customer experience by clearly outlining service standards and communication timelines.
 - Installation of Solar PV on the roof at Trinity Road Council offices is on track, the installation is set to commence in the coming months.
 - The sixth round of Crowdfund Cotswold concluded on September 13th, with four projects selected in November. Among these, 'Moreton Cinemarsh' successfully reached its funding target shortly before Christmas. Projects in Bourton on the Water and Ampney Crucis have achieved over 90% of their funds, and another project in Kemble has garnered significant support. The Council has awarded a total of £24,000 towards these projects, which have a collective value of over £215,000.
 - The Community Wellbeing initiated a free "Grow Your Own" education course at Roots & Seeds in Cirencester. Scheduled to run for 10 weeks starting in January, this



collaborative effort with Cirencester College, Roots & Seeds and Down to Earth Stroud seeks to equip participants with skills for cultivating their own food. The course aims to address various challenges, including the Cost of Living, reducing isolation, and enhancing mental health.

- The Safer Streets Round 5 Funding of £50,000 has been allocated to Cirencester and Moreton in Marsh, with the majority of the funding to be administered and actions taken forward by the local Council.
- The Holiday Activity Food programme continues to be a success, with 703 children booking a total of 782 activities during the holiday season.
- In collaboration with Kingsley House Care Home, a Dementia Café has been established in Tetbury, featuring bi-weekly visits from Mind Song.
- The Changing Places Toilet Facilities are complete at Cotswold Farm Park, Abbey Grounds, Cirencester and Birdland, Bourton-on-the-Water. The design for Cotswold Country Park & Beach has now been approved 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 organised for new champions in February.

2.3 Off target actions of the Corporate Plan behind schedule at Q3 include:

- **Develop and implement an Asset Management Strategy (SS17).**

Update: As previously reported, consultants were commissioned in November, with data gathering and interviews with key staff taking place in December. A strategy is now being prepared. There was a slight delay in the appointment and, therefore, the completion of work as there were some negotiations around the scope of work and costs. An Asset Management strategy will be presented to April Cabinet.

- **Install EV charging points across the District and provide electric vehicle charging points at all Council premises (CC6 and CC12).**

Update: As previously reported, there have been considerable delays initially tied to the previous supplier and more recently associated with the Distribution Network Operator (DNO) SSE. The installation at Trinity Road, Cirencester, and Rissington Road, Bourton on the Water, began in late December, with a connection date currently awaited from the DNO. It is anticipated connections will be made by the end of April. Applications are currently being prepared for government funding to contribute towards the cost of installing more charging points across other Council owned car parks. Priority will be given to locations that would provide a good geographical spread of EVCP infrastructure district-wide; however, electrical grid capacity and other external factors may limit the ability to install chargers in some locations.

- **Adopt and implement the ecological emergency action plan (CC19)**

Update: The Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) system is currently operational, and functioning; however, additional efforts are needed for the delivery of mitigation and



monitoring components. Concurrently, a brief document addressing the enhanced biodiversity duty and its reporting requirements has been prepared.

Defra has confirmed that mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) will be in effect on 12 February. Starting from this date, BNG will be applicable to all major applications, and it will extend to small sites from 2 April.

The implementation of (BNG) involves the acquisition of Mycelia software to streamline the process, with ongoing assessment by officers of supplementary guidance released by the government in late November.

- **Deliver a Council led, carbon neutral social housing scheme on the Down Ampney site (SHI).**

Update: There have been a number of delays to the project with new drainage designs received by Bromford Housing Association in late November. Upon review, it was determined that the design was not adoptable. Consequently, revised designs have been produced and agreed by the project team and lead Members and a Planning application is due to be submitted in early February.

- **Develop and implement an action plan to improve digital inclusion (VE21).**

Update: Work is progressing through the partnership with a headline report produced outlining eight recommendations to help tackle the digital divide and framing 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 (Tracking Well Toward Achieving the 99% Year-End Target. 94% collected by end of Q3)
- Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events (4 days against a target of 5 days)
- Customer Satisfaction (98% against a target of 90%)
- Percentage of major planning applications determined within agreed timescales (93% against a target of 70%)
- Percentage of minor planning applications determined within agreed timescales (88% against a target of 65%)
- Percentage of other planning applications determined within agreed timescales (86% against a target of 80%)
- Percentage of Planning Appeals Allowed (cumulative) (19% against a target of 30%)



- Percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days (92% against a target of 90%)
- Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales (100% against a target of 95%)
- Missed Bins per 100,000 (47 against a target of 80)

3.2 Service Performance below target:

Percentage of Non-domestic rates collected (Currently 81% against a target of 87% for the end of Q3 – 99% Year-End Target)

During Q3, the collection rate has slightly increased by 0.88% compared to this time last year, with collection rates c. 2% lower than pre-pandemic levels. The service indicates that many businesses since the pandemic have opted to extend the payment of Business Rates over 12 months instead of the usual 10 months to evenly distribute the cost over the year.

The Resolution: In accordance with previous years' data, there has been a notable uptick in the collection rate during the fourth quarter, particularly when individuals opt for a 12-month payment plan. Consequently, this is not a concern at present.

The service recently completed a thorough improvement programme designed to enhance operational processes. As a result, successful dashboards were implemented, providing detailed insights into individual performance and establishing smart targets for objective measurement of success. Process mapping was conducted to identify areas for optimisation and efficiency, leading to the implementation of weekly work programmes and increased automation. This has facilitated a more streamlined approach to service delivery, leading to a considerable reduction in the backlog of work. The improvements have enabled the service to stay up to date with reminders, which should prove beneficial during Q4 when striving to meet the 99% collection target for the year.

Processing times for Council Tax Support New Claims (21 days against a target of 20 days) and Housing Benefit Change of Circumstances (8 days against a target of 4 days)

Q3's standalone figures show that Council Tax Support New Claims are being processed in 16 days, against the target of 20 days and Housing Benefit Changes of Circumstance are being processed in 5 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: Automation of the work received directly from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and customers remains at a level of 60-70%, allowing for a heightened focus on applications and other reported changes. The Universal Credit (UC) section of DWP is actively investigating improvements to the data sent to local authorities via a Working



Group. Once implemented, there is potential, in collaboration with our software supplier, to automate additional DWP work items.

The automation of processing applications for the DWP and the trial for reduced phone line opening hours have released capacity for officers to process claims, contributing to the reduction in the outstanding workload and processing times.

During Q3, the service effectively reduced the outstanding workload to clear the backlog by December. However, partly due to the Christmas break, there has been a natural increase in the number of outstanding applications.

It's important to emphasise that the processing times commence from the moment the service receives an application, irrespective of its completion status. Therefore, even incomplete applications are included in the count from receipt, potentially exaggerating the figures.

Number of Affordable Homes Delivered (45 against a target of 75)

Fifteen properties including 8 for affordable rent and 6 for shared ownership have been delivered in Cotswold at Cirencester, Evenlode and Siddington. A total of 45 affordable homes have been delivered year to date, against a target of 75.

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. Although completions were initially expected this quarter, further delays have occurred, pushing them back to the next quarter or early next financial year.

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.

Number of visits to the leisure centres (103,149 visits against a target of 109,003) & (Snapshot) number of gym memberships (2,941 against a target of 3,035)

During Q3 visits to the leisure facilities dropped by just over 25,000 in comparison to last quarter and just over 14,000 in comparison to Q3 2022-23. Gym memberships saw a modest decline of approximately 5% compared to the previous quarter and around 1% compared to the same period last year.

The Resolution: The leisure facilities' management transitioned to Freedom Leisure at the beginning of August, and some of the declines can be linked to this change. Furthermore, adverse weather conditions during recent storms led to a leak at Cirencester Leisure Centre, causing damage to an electrical control panel for the swimming pool. Consequently, the pool was temporarily closed during the repair work. However, despite these challenges, the service reports that contractors Freedom Leisure continue to actively promote the leisure centres, resulting in an uptick in memberships and visits month on month.

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 27 February 2024. Any comments provided by the Committee will be documented and integrated into this report prior to its publication for 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 Q3 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 Q3
SS1	Ensure that road and street cleaning across the district is undertaken proactively and to a high standard, as part of the 'Clean and Green Cotswolds' initiative.	Maintain verges	November 2020	April 2024	Bill Oddy / Simon Anthony	Joe Harris	On Target	Review currently taking place. No further update.
SS2		Improve road sweeping regimes	November 2020	April 2024	Bill Oddy/ Simon Anthony	Joe Harris	Complete	Review complete and being taken to transform group.
SS3		Replace worn and damaged street nameplates	September 2020	167 replaced by April '22 Approx. 120 scheduled for replacement summer/autumn 2022	Claire Locke	Joe Harris	On Target	Project still ongoing
SS4		Keep areas of open space tidy	April 2021	April 2024	Andy Barge/Simon Anthony	Joe Harris	On Target	Review currently taking place. No further update.
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	
SS6		Deliver programme of engagement for town and parish councils	October 2021	April 2024	Angela Claridge	Joe Harris	On Target	
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 reasibility 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	27 of the 46 new cycle stands have now been installed as part of phase 2 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. 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 Evemy	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 Evemy/Tony Dale	Cancelled	
SS17		Develop and implement an asset management strategy	March 2021	December 2022	David Stanley/Claire Locke	Mike Evemy	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	Consultants were commissioned in November, with data gathering and interviews with key staff taking place in December. A strategy is now being prepared. There was a slight delay in the appointment and, therefore, the completion of work as there were some negotiations around the scope of work and costs. An Asset Management strategy will be presented to April Cabinet.
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 recent storm Henk caused only minor disruption and so far only one property is reported to have flooded internally. The FRM team liaised with UBiCO to help residents in fear of being flooded by using pumps but principally by clearing trash screens of debris across the district. A new working group has been set up to meet with the water companies that serve the Cotswolds with a view to scrutinising and exploring their investment plans as well as their responses to local sewerage issues raised to CDC.

SS19		Roll out the Cotswold Flood Warden Programme	November 2021	November 2022 for the initial pilot year.	Robert Weaver	Lisa Spivey	On Target	GRCC is currently in the middle of a recruitment process for Community Flood and Resilience Officer, interviewing in the week commencing 15th January. These staffing challenges notwithstanding, an event was held in Chedworth in October, and a further event planned for February to allow discussion on flooding events over the winter 2023/2024. 24 flood wardens have been recruited and supported, across 13 settlements, with further residents keen to stay engaged with the project.
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	Better communication now more embedded in processes. Final phase will be to improve data for monitoring of customer contacts
SS23		Develop an ICT enabled proactive approach to planning enforcement	April 2021	April 2024	Charlie Jackson/Phil Shaw	Juliet Layton	On Target	Enforcement project continues. Process has been reviewed and new forms have been user tested at all three sites and are nearly ready for use. Next stages will be changes to website/self service information
SS24		Maximise external funding opportunities	December 2020	April 2024	Charlie Jackson/Phil Shaw	Juliet Layton	Complete	Additional 100k funding secured from Central Government to assist in heritage and ecology support to DM
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	Market testing has occurred and is ongoing. Market share is holding up
SS26		Maximise opportunities for income generation	April 2021	Ongoing, as an iterative review process.	Charlie Jackson/Phil Shaw	Juliet Layton	On Target	Fees have been reviewed against the competitors. BC are not legally enabled to make "profits" and so cost recovery is the desired aim.
SS27	Provide modern and clean public toilets	Reviewing our estate	April 2022	September 2022	Jon Dearing/Mandy Fathers	Mike Evey	Complete	
SS28		Explore opportunities for 'comfort partnerships'	April 2021	September 2022	Jon Dearing/Mandy Fathers	Mike Evey	Complete	
SS29		Develop a strategy for the provision of public toilets	April 2022	September 2022	David Stanley/ Jon Dearing/Susan Hughes	Mike Evey	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	
CC1	Tackle the climate crisis at home	Develop support to owner-occupiers to invest in energy efficiency, retrofit and decarbonisation works	September 2021	March 2023	Claire Locke	Mike McKeown	On Target	Cotswold Home Solar was launched at the start of September and had strong initial interest. 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.
CC2	Develop, facilitate and deliver an exemplar public engagement programme in relation to carbon reduction and climate change	Develop a public engagement campaign, building on training delivered to the communications team, councillors and the Local Plan Issues and Options engagement.	April 2022	April 2024	Charlie Jackson	Mike McKeown	On Target	
CC3		Promote the opportunity to invest in the Cotswold Climate Investment, CMI, launched in partnership with Abundance Investment	April 2022	June 2022	David Stanley	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	Charlie Jackson	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	The installation at Trinity Road, Cirencester, and Rissington Road, Bourton on the Water, began in late December, with a connection date currently awaited from the DNO. It is anticipated connections will be made by the end of April. Applications are currently being prepared for government funding to contribute towards the cost of installing more charging points across other Council owned car parks. Priority will be given to locations that would provide a good geographical spread of EVCP infrastructure district-wide; however, electrical grid capacity and other external factors may limit the ability to install chargers in some locations.
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	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	Mike Evey/Mike McKeown	On Target	Driver behaviour modification software has been installed on Council HGV waste fleet (28 vehicles), resulting in a reduction of both fuel consumption and emissions. Quarterly reports on reductions are made to the Environmental Services Partnership Board, the first of which was delivered in December 2023
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	Mike Evey/Mike McKeown	On Target	Solar PV will be installed on the roof of Trinity Road Council offices, subject to Planning approval, early in the New Year.
CC10		Secure energy-efficient, 100% green energy for all Council premises, using renewable energy where possible	March 2021	Achieved	Claire Locke	Mike Evey/Mike McKeown	Complete	
CC11		Complete Public Sector Decarbonisation scheme at our Leisure centres	March 2021	Achieved	Claire Locke	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 Evey/Mike McKeown	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	EVCPs for pool cars/vans has been installed and will be available once building works is complete. Publically available EVCP are covered by CC6.
CC13	Achieve a reduction in carbon emissions for the district	Adopt our climate change strategy	September 2020	September 2020	Rob Weaver Claire Locke	Mike McKeown	Complete	
CC14		Deliver our climate change action plan	September 2020	April 2024	Rob Weaver Charlie Jackson	Mike McKeown	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	The Climate Emergency Strategy 2020-30 was adopted 2021. There is a crossover between some of the actions in the Climate Change action plan and the Corporate Plan - progress is provided here against those actions. Given activities since the adoption, a mid term review will be undertaken starting Q4 2023/24
CC15	Increase renewable energy generation within the district	Complete an options appraisal of community energy generation	September 2020	April 2024	Rob Weaver Charlie Jackson	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	April 2024	Investment options considered at Council July 2022	Rob Weaver Claire Locken	Mike McKeown	Cancelled	

CC17	Support community-led and community-owned renewable energy projects	September 2020	April 2024	Rob Weaver Charlie Jackson	Mike McKeown	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	Options to support this being considered as part of work to refine priorities over the next four year term	
CC18	Support neighbourhood-wide climate action	September 2020	April 2024	Rob Weaver Charlie Jackson	Mike McKeown	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	Options to support this being considered as part of work to refine priorities over the next four year term	
CC19	Take a leadership role on the ecological emergency and nature recovery in the Cotswolds	Adopt and implement the ecological emergency action plan	July 2020	Plan approved July 2020 Cotswold Water Park Nature Recovery Plan published February 2022	Rob Weaver Jon Dearing/Sophia Price	Juliet Layton	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	The Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) system is currently operational, demonstrating effective functionality; however, additional efforts are required for the delivery of mitigation and monitoring components. Simultaneously, a paper addressing the upgraded biodiversity duty and its reporting requirements has been prepared. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) implementation includes the acquisition of Mycelia software to streamline the process, with ongoing assessment by officers of supplementary guidance released by the government in late November. Defra has confirmed that mandatory BNG will go live on 12 February. From this date, BNG will apply to all major applications. BNG will apply to small sites from 2 April.
CC20	Create a community and wildlife sanctuary at Chesterton Cemetery	December 2021	March 2023	Claire Locke/Andrew Turner	Mike Evey	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	There have been some delays but phased delivery has been rescoped and agreed with contractor.	
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 Evey	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	Ongoing - discovery work, particularly with regards to vehicle fuel due to start in Spring 24
CC22	Consider changes to the waste and recycling service	April 2022	June 2024	Simon Anthony	Mike Evey	On Target	Further modelling work is continuing.	

Providing socially rented homes

Our aims	Our actions	Commencement	Date due, Achieved	Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating		
SH1	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	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	There have been a number of delays, partly due to the MMC contractor going into administration but also with slow progress by the Architects. Drainage designs were received by Bromford Housing Association in late November but they flagged the design was not adoptable. Revised designs have been produced and agreed by the project team and lead Members and a Planning application is due to be submitted in early February.	
SH2	Deliver social rented and affordable rented accommodation across the district	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	September 2020	April 2024	Charlie Jackson/ Claire Locke	Joe Harris	On Target		
SH4	Provide more affordable housing with the emphasis on social rented accommodation	June 2020	Achieved	Rob Weaver Claire Locke	Joe Harris	Complete		
SH5	Maximise the opportunities of the 'housing first' model	July 2020	April 2024	Jon Dearing/Caroline Clissold	Joe Harris	Complete		
SH6	Embed a Housing First approach to tackling homelessness	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		Examine our existing assets and identify opportunities for housing delivery	September 2020	Achieved	Rob Weaver Claire Locke	Joe Harris	Complete	
SH9	Work with housing providers to improve the affordability and sustainability of developments across the district	Identify opportunities to acquire properties for homeless accommodation	July 2020	April 2024	Claire Locke	Joe Harris	On Target	Ridgeway House acquired in 2022 providing 9 self contained units.
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	
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LP1	Develop an updated local plan that delivers our corporate priorities and promotes both carbon neutral development and infrastructure	Identify and allocate land for future housing and businesses.	July 2020	Submit in 2023; Examination 23/24; and adoption 23/24	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		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 <u>renewable energy</u>			Revised Timetable approved by Cabinet: Submit in Q2 2025; Examination 25/26; and adoption Q3 2026	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				Phil Martin/Laurence King Charlie Jackson/James Brain	Lisa Spivey	On Target	Sewage workshop undertaken in October 2023, which explores natural interventions.
LP4		Develop a new Cotswold Design Guide - building for the future in the Cotswolds			March 2022	March 2023 Revised Timetable approved by Cabinet and is now due to be delivered Q2 2025	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 (Reg14) and Cotswold District Local Plan (Reg18) consultation document in January 2024.	
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				Revised Timetable approved by Cabinet and is	Charlie Jackson/James Brain	Juliet Layton	On Target

LP8	Identify sustainable transport options		now due to be delivered Q2 2025	Charlie Jackson	Juliet Layton	On Target	The Sustainable Transport Decarbonisation 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.
LP9	Create a programme of work that demonstrates our commitment to public consultation and engagement in the planning process	Update our local development scheme		Charlie Jackson/James Brain	Juliet Layton	Complete	
LP10	Update our statement of community involvement	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	
LP11	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	Juliet Layton	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	Regulation 18 Consultation is underway (1 February to 24 March 2024) for the Local Plan update which will partly provide potential opportunities to improve sustainable methods of transport within the District.
LP12	Work with Gloucestershire County Council to provide better sustainable transport routes and options	September 2020	April 2024 planning and implementation	Charlie Jackson	Juliet Layton	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	The Assistant Director is currently reviewing resourcing and delivery options.
LP13	Develop a Sustainable Transport Strategy	November 2020	2023, as part of the Local Plan Submission	Charlie Jackson	Juliet Layton	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	The Sustainable Transport Decarbonisation Strategy identifies a series of carbon reduction interventions in Cirencester and the wider district. The draft report has been received from the Consultants with a members briefing to be organised in Spring 2024.

Support health and wellbeing

Our aims	Our actions	Commencement	Date due, Achieved	Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	
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	

HW6	Promote healthy lifestyles, fun and self-care for all ages	Complete a review of our leisure services	July 2020	May 2022	Rob Weaver / Scott Williams	Paul Hodgkinson	Complete	
HW7		Deliver the Council's Leisure strategy.	November 2020	April 2024	Rob Weaver / Jacqui 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		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	Complete	Playing Pitch Strategy has been adopted
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	Captured in Active Cotswold Programme
HW12		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	<p>During the Christmas Holidays the Council in partnership with World Jungle offered another great HAF programme (Holiday Activities and Food) for children on Free School Meals, in the Cotswold district. 65% of children on Free School Meals were provided with an activity, succeeding our target of 50%. 703 children booked onto 782 activities during the Xmas holiday. We also opened some activities to all school children in the district, but 83% of places went to children on Free School Meals.</p> <p>HAF aims to be as inclusive as possible with 51% of children attending having an EHCP in place, and 28% from the BAME community. Our providers also offered children with special educational needs, 65 places, with extra support in place and offering a system for children to see the venue, meet the staff beforehand, which helps to make the sessions less anxious.</p>

HW13	Improve equal access to quality services across the district	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	
HW14		Continue to invest in dementia-friendly communities, improve understanding and communication, and reduce loneliness and	September 2020	April 2024	Andy Barge/Jacqui Wright	Claire Bloomer	On Target	Dementia Friendly Tetbury - have helped set up a Dementia Café at Kingsley House Care Home with Mind song visiting bi-weekly.
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	
HW16		Work with partners to implement four Changing Places Toilet facilities	September 2021	April 2023	Paul James	Claire Bloomer	On Target	Birdland's facility opened in December 2023, meaning that three out of the four projects are now completed. The design for Cotswold Country Park & Beach has now been approved and is expected to start on site soon.
HW17		Increase the number of people trained in mental health first aid and suicide prevention	September 2020	March 2023	Rob Weaver Andy Barge/Jacqui Wright	Paul Hodgkinson	On Target	
HW18		Provide targeted mental health campaigns and support	September 2020	April 2024	Andy Barge/Jacqui Wright	Paul Hodgkinson	On Target	

HW19	Promote both mental and physical health equally, to increase awareness of mental health issues and improve the community response to people in crisis	Promote mental health activities and initiatives	September 2020	April 2024	Andy Barge/Jacqui Wright	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 DA Champions Coordinator has started their role and existing DA Champions have been contacted. Some have moved on but there are still some active champions remaining. New training sessions have been planned: Part 1 of the first training session for new champions will be 10-12 Thursday 22nd February 2024 with Part 2 on Thursday 29th February 10-12.
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	Excess space at Trinity Road can be rented out once necessary works have taken place. A number of parties are interested in taking space.
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/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 Jamesn	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	Excess space at Trinity Road can be rented out once necessary works have taken place. A number of parties are interested in taking space.
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	April 2021	April 2024 19 Training videos created April 2021 Business survey February 2022, to inform actions in	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	Business Matters continues to be issued monthly. Several Business Engagement visits have taken place in recent months with photos/videos taken for social media use.

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 and have now been completed. Proposals for a Centre for Sustainable Aviation at Cotswold Airport are moving forward. The Rural England Prosperity Fund Business Grant applications have now closed. A number of grants have been agreed for projects which will create jobs.
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 our town centres recover from COVID-19 and in the face of changing shopping habits	Help towns create long-term plans where needed, such as the Cirencester town centre masterplan	September 2020	April 2024 Masterplan due for completion December 2022	Charlie Jackson/James Brain	Tony Dale/Juliet Layton	On Target	
VE13		Support businesses to enhance their digital presence	July 2020	March 2022	Andy Barge/Paul James	Tony Dale	Complete	
VE14		Develop a 'shop local' campaign to encourage residents to support local businesses	July 2020	April 2024	Andy Barge/Paul James	Tony Dale	Complete	
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	On Target	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 Business Navigator is now in post to help provide this service. For the north of the district, the Moreton Area Office will be used as a base and the first event there, a marketing workshop, is being held on 20th February.
VE19		Establish needs	October 2020	December 2020	Andy Barge/Paul James	Tony Dale	Complete	

VE20		Identify partners that can deliver improvements	January 2020	March 2021	Andy Barge/Paul James	Tony Dale	Complete	
VE21	Ensure the benefits of the internet and digital technologies are accessible to everyone in the district	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
October 2023 - December 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 selected during the sixth round. Among these, 'Moreton Cinemarsh' successfully reached its funding target shortly before Christmas. Projects in Bourton on the Water and Ampney Crucis have garnered over 90% of their funds, and another project in Kemble has achieved significant support. The Council has awarded a total of £24,000 towards these projects, which have a collective value of over £215,000.
- The Holiday Activity Food programme continues to be a success, with 703 children booking a total of 782 activities during the holiday season.
- The Changing Places Toilet Facilities are complete at Cotswold Farm Park, Abbey Grounds, Cirencester and Birdland, Bourton-on-the-Water. The design for Cotswold Country Park & Beach has now been approved and will be delivered early in 2024.
- The Digitalization of Planning Enforcement focuses on developing an ICT-enabled proactive approach to the service. New online forms for reporting suspected breaches of planning control have completed user testing and are scheduled for launch in February. These forms aim to improve case triage, expedite responses to high-priority reports, and enhance the overall customer experience by clearly outlining service standards and communication timelines.
- The Safer Streets Round 5 Funding of £50,000 has been allocated to Cirencester and Moreton in Marsh, with the majority of the funding to be administered and actions taken forward by the local Council.
- Rollout of phase two in the Cotswold Water Park Strategy for cycle stand installations, with 27 out of the 46 stands now deployed across water park locations within Fairford, Lechlade, and South Cerney.
- Installation of Solar PV on the roof at Trinity Road Council offices is on track, the installation is set to commence in the coming months.

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 the 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 while 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 ongoing to deliver 52 new cycle stands, with 27 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 an agreement from the landowner to dedicate the required land.

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. After prior discussions between GCC and Cotswold District Council Officers to determine the next steps, including funding allocation options from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for supporting both the design and delivery phases, the next meeting is slated for February 2024.

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.

While the provision of toilets is not a statutory function, the Council provides 15 public conveniences across the District that support shoppers and tourism and prevent negative environmental health impacts from a 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 complete to install card readers at all of the charged public toilets.

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 on the pre-application service, validation checklist, fee schedule, communication with applicants and timeliness of communication at key stages of the process, the recent priority has been the reduction in backlogs in the enforcement function and designing and testing the new enforcement form. 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 and chasing, as well as a reduction in the number of non-breach cases from improved online reporting facilities and back office triage. Additionally, new online forms for reporting suspected breaches of planning control have undergone user testing and are set for launch in February. These forms are designed to enhance case triage, expedite responses to high-priority reports, and improve the overall customer experience by clearly outlining service standards and communication timelines.

The further improvement works arising from the PAS report were agreed upon by Cabinet in June and have been added to the action plan, with delivery largely on track. In light of the Council's decision to repatriate the DM function, some elements of the improvement programme have however, had to be abandoned or severely curtailed as they relied upon shared services and contracts. The next main piece of work that will go live is the new process associated with the impending requirements to deliver BNG alongside the determination of Planning Applications.



The Context

In terms of national policy, the government's announcement to relax decarbonisation targets extended the deadline for ending the sale of new fossil-fueled cars from 2030 to 2035, and the date for concluding the installation of gas-fired boilers in new homes was pushed back from 2025 to 2035. Some observers note that these changes may not significantly alter the actions of housebuilders or car manufacturers, as they are already largely committed to these transitions. However, others express concern that these adjustments could impact the UK's timely achievement of its net-zero goals and its international standing as a climate leader.

Professor Piers Forster, Chair of the Climate Change Committee, emphasised, '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, along with another tenanted site, were approved by Cabinet and Council in July. System design discussions are currently in progress with the appointed installer, and installation is anticipated to commence early in the New Year, pending planning approval. Additionally, the installation of electric vehicle charge points in the Trinity Road car park, accessible to the public, commenced in December 2023.

'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 the environment, the climate emergency, and digital services. While the bulk of waste collection vehicle replacements are scheduled for some years, attention is now turning 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. Further installations of electric vehicle charge points in Council-owned carparks continue to run behind schedule. The charging points at Rissington Road and Trinity Road car parks commenced in December 2023.

‘District-wide enabling’ actions

Cotswold Home Solar was launched at the start of September and had strong initial interest. 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 the 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, aiming to replicate the success of West Oxfordshire District Council’s ‘Green Light’ communications platform.

Provide socially rented homes

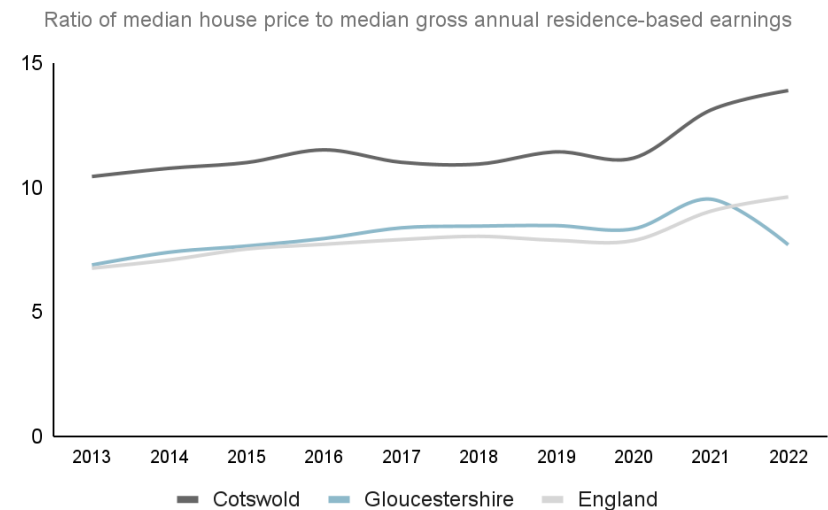


The Context

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. the 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 provide homes for those on lower incomes or in receipt of full Housing Benefits.

The relatively high house prices and increasingly high rents, coupled with the lower than average earnings from local jobs, mean 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 set out the delivery strategy for the Council to accelerate the 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 the 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. This is now being finalised.

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. Initial drainage designs were rejected by Bromford Housing Association as the drainage would not have been adoptable. Consequently, revised designs have been produced and agreed by the project team and lead Members and a Planning application is due to be submitted in early February.

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. The Council have been working with New Brewery Arts, who have prepared designs and costings to extend and renovate both buildings to provide Art studios, related offices and space that could be used for multiple community and small business purposes. Unfortunately, in December, New Brewery Arts concluded that the capital costs involved and the relatively limited grant funding that could be secured meant neither building is viable for renovation and conversion. Cabinet will therefore consider a report in February on options for retaining or disposing of both buildings. A structural survey revealed a gable end wall of the Old Station 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 a decision to proceed with works will be included in the February report.

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 the 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. Although completions were initially expected during Q3, further delays have occurred, pushing them back to Q4 or early next financial year.

In March 2021, the Council allocated commuted sum 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. This scheme is slightly ahead of schedule currently, with the handover of all 15 homes due in April 2024. The scheme is on track in terms of the environmental sustainability standards and the developer is targeting an EPC A rating, which, if achieved, would be in excess of the agreed standard. Funding for the start on site stage has been paid to Cottsway by CDC in line with the grant agreement.

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 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. A report on the progress of Active Cotswold and contract mobilisation is due to be presented to Overview and Scrutiny on 30th January 2024.

Another project in the Leisure Strategy was the development of a Playing Pitch Strategy, which included an assessment of the District's current and future needs for playing pitches for football, rugby, hockey, tennis and polo. The strategy report was signed off by the National Governing Bodies of Sport and Sport England. The report is 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. The final report was received June 2023 and was adopted by Cabinet 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 and Birdland. 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. Four projects were taken forward for decision in November. Of these, one, 'Moreton Cinemarsh', hit its funding target shortly before Christmas. Projects in Bourton on the Water and Ampney Crucis have raised over 90% of their funds, with a further project in Kemble attracting a high number of supporters but with some distance to travel to its funding target. The Council has awarded a total of £24,000 towards these projects, which have a collective value of over £215,000. The spring round will launch in February, but there's already some interest.

The Council, as part of the Cotswold Food Network, hosted two free Christmas events in Cirencester and Moreton in Marsh for all residents in the District to attend. This was an opportunity for people to come together and find out what support is available to them and information on help with the Cost of Living etc. from the CDC Community Wellbeing Team and various partner organisations, including the Foodbank and local charities. The events featured the provision of fresh food, hot beverages, baked goods, children's activities, and a free raffle. All items were sourced and donated by local businesses engaged by the team, with some businesses contributing staff for assistance. Attendees enjoyed the events with the leftover food donated to the local Food Pantry.

In collaboration with Feeding Gloucestershire, as part of the broader Food Network, the Council hosted a network meeting to discuss Community Growing Projects, attracting active participation. A spreadsheet capturing outcomes and details from the meeting was developed, with a second meeting undertaken on January 9th to discuss next steps and project evolution.

Following meetings initiated by the CDC Community Wellbeing team to explore Community Growing options, a free Grow Your Own (GYO) education course is planned at Roots & Seeds, Cirencester, starting in January for 10 weeks. The course, a joint effort with Cirencester College and Down to Earth Stroud, aims to empower participants with skills to grow their own food, addressing issues such as the Cost of Living, reducing isolation, and improving mental health. Roots & Seeds will provide a space for a Community Growing Scheme, run by volunteers, with plans to expand such community courses in the District.

During the Christmas Holidays, the Council, in collaboration with World Jungle, successfully implemented the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme for children on Free School Meals in the Cotswold district. Exceeding our target of 50%, 65% of children on Free School Meals participated in activities, with 703 children booking a total of 782 activities during the holiday season. While some activities were open to all school children in the district, 83% of the available slots were filled by children on Free School Meals. The HAF program prioritises inclusivity, with 51% of attending children having an EHCP in place and 28% belonging to the BAME community. Additionally, our providers reserved 65 places for children with special educational needs, offering extra support and a system to familiarise children with the venue and staff beforehand, contributing to a more comfortable and less anxious experience during the sessions.

Applications for support for individuals aged over 55 in Tetbury and the surrounding villages persist, facilitated by the Steepleton Section 106 Care contribution funding. Recent applications have been received from entities such as Tetbury Goods Shed, Tetbury Men in Sheds and the Friendship Café, among others. Funding is released upon the sale of each 25% of homes within the Steepleton development, and the next instalment is expected imminently.

Following a Community and Statutory Services meeting in Chipping Campden last year, we identified two key areas requiring improvement and support within the Chipping Campden area. Firstly, addressing the needs of young people concerning drug and alcohol use, coupled with a deficiency in youth provision. Secondly, enhancing mental health support across all age groups. Given the challenges faced by statutory services in providing these services due to the rural nature of the district and funding constraints, the CDC is collaborating with local Police and Drug and Alcohol Services. Together, we are actively engaging with the community by walking the streets in the area to establish better connections and gain a deeper understanding of local issues. Additionally, efforts are underway to explore funding options for a counsellor specialising in trauma-based therapy, a service currently lacking in the Cotswold district, particularly in our more rural towns and villages.



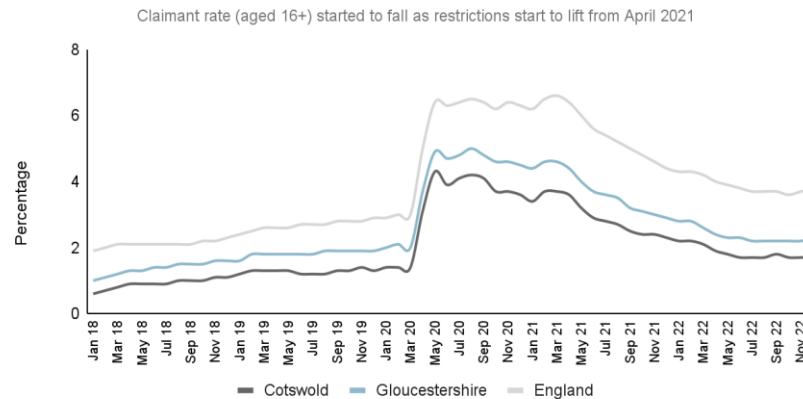
The Context

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 1.7% - 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, and the overall inflation rate, have dropped back, they are still significantly higher than prior to the invasion and food inflation continues to run at a high level.

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Source: ONS, Annual Population Survey



Source: ONS, Crown Copyright Reserved (Nomis)

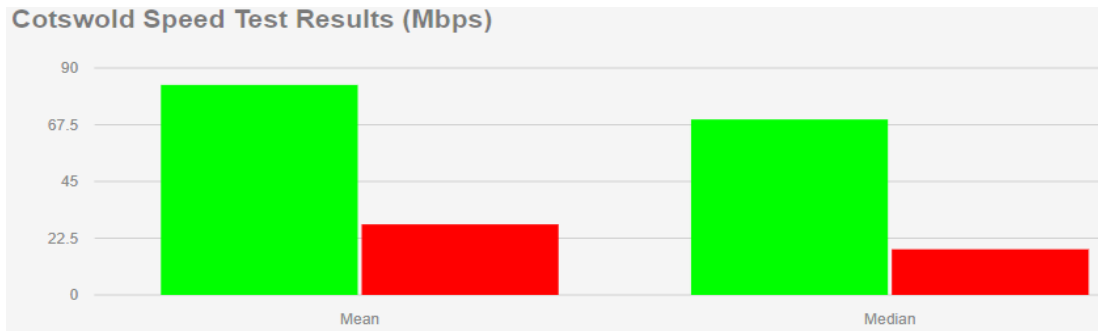
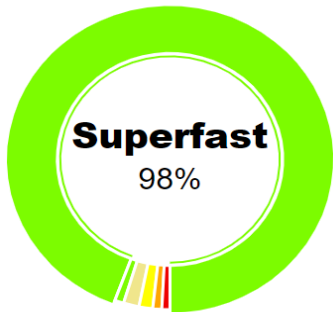
Businesses within the visitor economy, particularly within hospitality, continue to face a particularly challenging scenario: increases in wage costs – not only to recruit and retain staff amid continuing labour shortages, but also with the increase in the minimum wage; significant, continuing increases 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.

Provisional figures at a national level, show overseas visitor numbers for 2023 were up 30% on 2022 but still 7% down on 2019 levels. At a local level our annual economic impact study (South West Research Company Ltd – published December 2023) showed that visitor related spend in Cotswold District in 2022 totalled £342million with 576,000 staying visitor trips and 5.5million day visits. Estimated FTE employment was 4,417 - 13% of all employment.

The number of job postings remains high, reflecting continuing challenges 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. 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 has also introduced 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. This reflects the ongoing work by the infrastructure providers and the fact that commercial activity is concentrated on providing a full fibre service to the ‘easier to reach’ areas whereas the last 2% who do not yet have superfast broadband fall firmly within the ‘difficult to reach’ category, which the County Council schemes are seeking to address.



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 Club, the Federation of Small Businesses and GFirst LEP. Most recently, the Group met with students from Cirencester College to understand their outlook on work and the challenges and opportunities they are facing.

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 2023 agreed to allocate up to £135,000 a year for 2023-24 and 2024-25 to the Growth Hub in Cirencester to provide business support. One positive benefit of this funding is that the Growth Hub has been able to expand its outreach programme across the District, particularly in the north in areas like Moreton-in-Marsh and Chipping Campden. The Business Navigator for the outreach programme will use the Council's Moreton Area Office as their base when working in the area. The first business event in the north of the District, a marketing workshop, will be held on 20th February. An application process has been run for the remaining 2023-24 and 2024-25 funding and a report is going to Cabinet in January seeking approval for the 2024-25 projects, including contributions to the former House of Fraser in Cirencester and a net zero housing exemplar scheme in Down Ampney.

A further £764,292 was allocated to the Council from the Rural England Prosperity Fund over the 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 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 have closed and have been considered by the Grants Panel. A number have been approved and others are awaiting further information before a final decision is made. Applications for the grants for village halls, active travel and community and heritage buildings have closed and are in the process of being considered.

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 September 2023 showed the vacancy rate at 5.7%, with a number of the remaining units either under offer or undergoing refurbishment. The longest-standing vacant building, the former House of Fraser on the Market Place, has now been let to the Grace Network although is not yet occupied. The smaller towns within the District generally have lower vacancy rates, although the vacancies in Tetbury and Moreton-in-Marsh have increased slightly. Neither 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 and we will continue to monitor closely. 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 provision for coach parking in Bourton on the Water has now ended. Unfortunately, no viable alternative solution had yet been found, although local stakeholders are continuing efforts to find a workable solution.

Cotswolds Plus, one of just 22 nationally accredited Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEPs) is now well established. Led by Cotswolds Tourism, the Cotswold Plus LVEP partners include Marketing Cheltenham, Visit Gloucester, Visit Gloucestershire, Visit DeanWye and the Cotswold National Landscape. The LVEP is working to provide a unified voice for the regional visitor economy, to ensure better co-ordination of regional activity and to help align 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. Each workstream has an associated action plan clearly outlining work areas where the LVEP will lead activity, areas where the LVEP will look to influence and areas where the LVEP will monitor relevant activities being undertaken by other organisations. A number of co-ordinated bids have been submitted to partner councils for UKSPF/REF funding to enable some of this activity to take place.

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, although this is likely to evolve as the project progresses. 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 in place for some time. It is anticipated that a planning application for the site will be submitted at some point in Spring 2024. 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 former Mitsubishi site in Cirencester, is now renamed Watermoor Point and is home to a number of businesses. 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 relocated from Cranfield to Cotswold Airport in 2021, 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 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 2023, 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 a recent meeting of the Cotswold Economic Advisory Group. National Highways is looking to restart the A417 Business Forum, which will give local businesses the opportunity to be engaged with the project.



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Delivering great services locally

**PERFORMANCE REPORT:
October 2023 - December 2023**

Summary Index

Area	KPI Name	RAG	Page
Revenues, Benefits and Housing	Percentage of Council Tax Collected	Green	6
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	Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims	Orange	8
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	Complaints		18
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Development Management and Land Charges	Building Control Satisfaction	No Data	21
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	Percentage of other planning applications determined within agreed timescales (including AEOT)		24
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	Percentage of Planning Appeals Allowed		26
	Percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days		27
	Number of affordable homes delivered		28

Summary Index

Area	KPI Name	RAG	Page
Waste and Environment	Number of fly tips collected and percentage that result in an enforcement action		29
	Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales		30
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	Percentage of household waste recycled		32
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	Missed bins per 100,000		34
Leisure	Number of visits to the leisure centres & (Snapshot) Number of gym memberships		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.

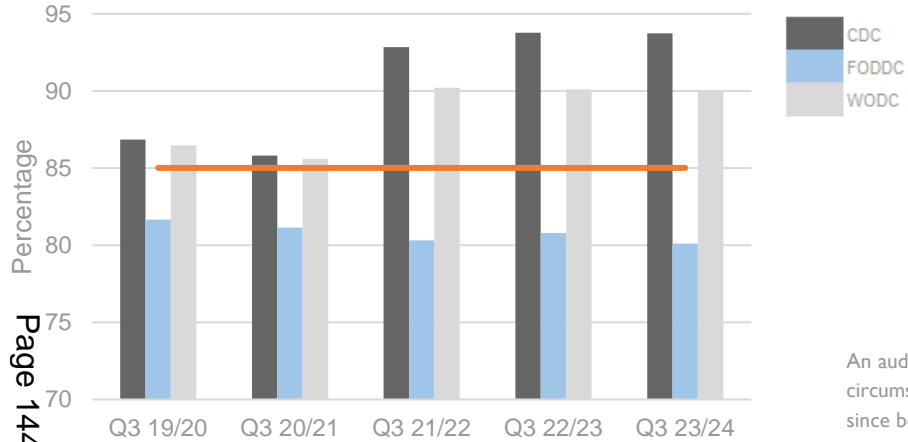
A RAG (red, amber, green) status has been applied to each KPI to provide a quick visual summary of the status of that KPI for the quarter. Additionally, RAG status has been added to the direction of travel for each metric to show how the performance against last quarter and the same quarter compared to last year is progressing.

Overall Performance

The Council's performance has been mixed, with commendable progress in Council Tax Collection Rates and Processing times for Council Tax Support and Housing Benefit. However, there are some indicators that are exhibiting a negative trend including Non-domestic Rates Collection Rates 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



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter: N/A

Against last Year:  Slightly declined since last year

Q3 – Higher is Good

Target: 85%

Actual: 93.73%

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

An audit of the Council Tax Services indicated that a significant sum of arrears had accumulated during challenging circumstances associated with the pandemic. While the recovery of arrears had been suspended for a time, it has since been reinstated and the current recovery cycle is up to date with the service reporting progress in collecting previous year's debt. The below table shows the percentage of aged debt that has been collected and the total outstanding:

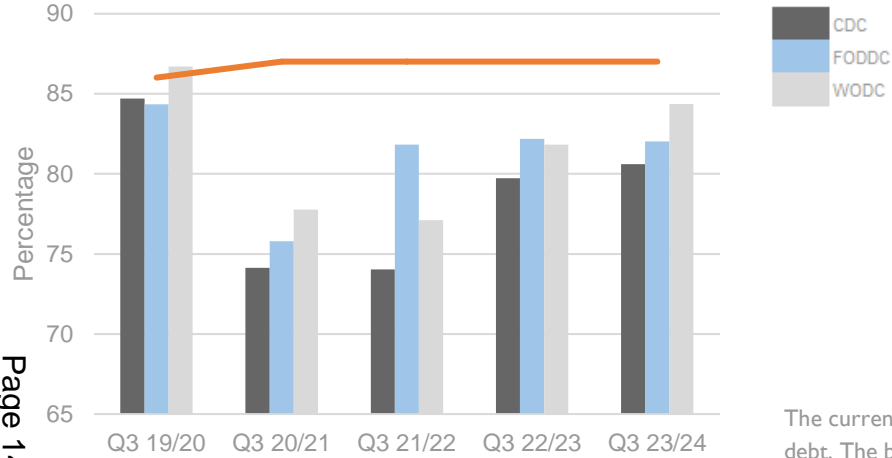
	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	Total Outstanding
Balance at Quarter End	£652,510.82	£970,260.40	£1,137,634.06	£2,760,405.28
% collected	27.38%	29.49%	34.42%	

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 (source: [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)).

The collection rates remain well above target but are slightly lower than this time last year by 0.05%.


The service recently completed a thorough improvement programme designed to enhance operational processes. As a result, successful dashboards were implemented, providing detailed insights into individual performance and establishing smart targets for objective measurement of success. Process mapping was conducted to identify areas for optimisation and efficiency, leading to the implementation of weekly work programmes and increased automation. This has facilitated a more streamlined approach to service delivery, leading to a considerable reduction in the backlog of work.

Percentage of Non-domestic rates collected



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter: N/A

Against last Year: 

Slightly improved since last year

Q3 – Higher is Good

Target: 87%

Actual: 80.61%

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

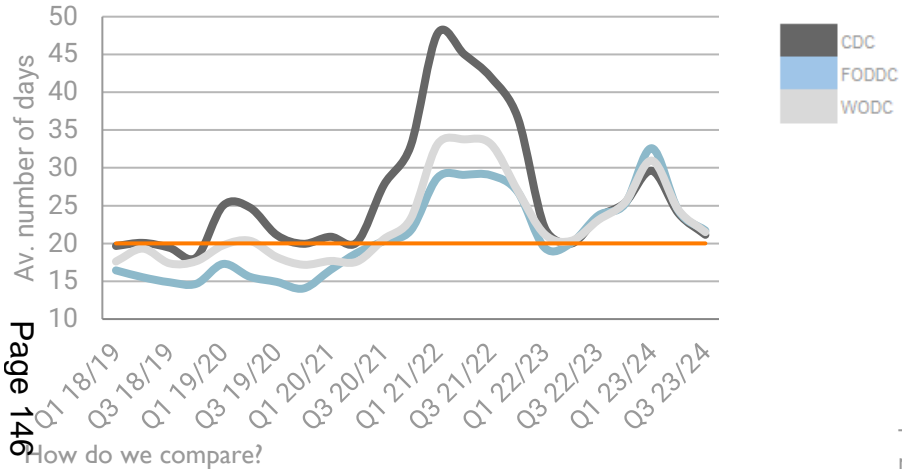
The current recovery cycle is up to date with the service reporting progress in collecting previous year's debt. The below table shows the percentage of aged debt that has been collected and the total outstanding:

	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	Total Outstanding
Balance at Quarter	£220,022.85	£387,307.48	£501,419.16	£1,108,749.49
% collected	21.56%	26.12%	61.12%	


The arrears outstanding for previous year's debts for Business Rates include some data where the amount outstanding now is greater than that brought forward at the beginning of the financial year. There are some processes that can increase the amount that needs to be collected, such as Rateable Value changes and amendments to liability. As Business Rates deal with large amounts of money, the outcome can outweigh the amount that has been collected.


During Q3, the collection rate has slightly increased by 0.88% compared to this time last year, with collection rates c. 2% lower than pre-pandemic levels. The service indicates that many businesses since the pandemic have opted to extend the payment of Business Rates over 12 months instead of the usual 10 months to evenly distribute the cost over the year.

Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Improved since last quarter and last year

Q3 – Lower is Good

Target 20

Actual 21.16

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 times for new CTS claims during Q3 are consistently below 20 days, averaging 15.64 days. Nonetheless, since the target is cumulative over the year, the Council has slightly exceeded the 20-day processing target. Notwithstanding this, it's notable that the cumulative Q3 processing times represent the lowest Q3 timings since Q3 20/21, with a decrease of 2.82 days from the last quarter.

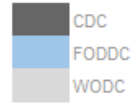
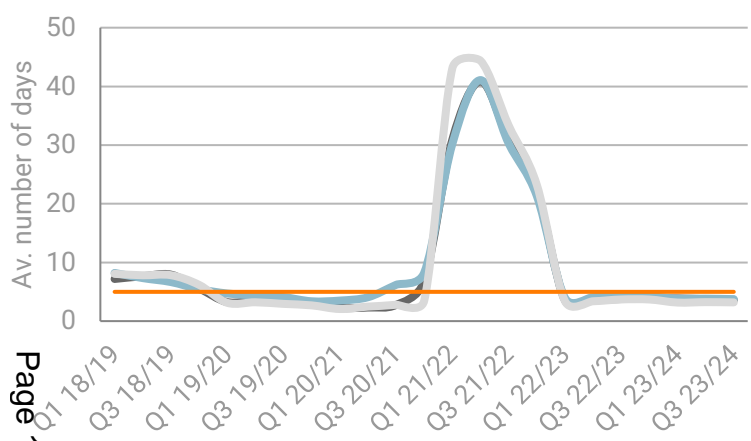
Automation of the work received directly from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and customers remains at a level of 60-70%, allowing for a heightened focus on applications and other reported changes. The Universal Credit (UC) section of DWP is actively investigating improvements to the data sent to local authorities via a Working Group. Once implemented, there is potential, in collaboration with our software supplier, to automate additional DWP work items.

The automation of processing applications for the DWP and the trial for reduced phone line opening hours have released capacity for officers to process claims, contributing to the reduction in the outstanding workload and processing times.

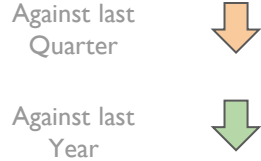
During Q3, the service effectively reduced the outstanding workload to clear the backlog by December. However, partly due to the Christmas break, there has been a natural increase in the number of outstanding applications.

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 and rent increases from housing associations. The service indicates that processing days should reduce, but it will not be a rapid process.

Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events



Direction of Travel



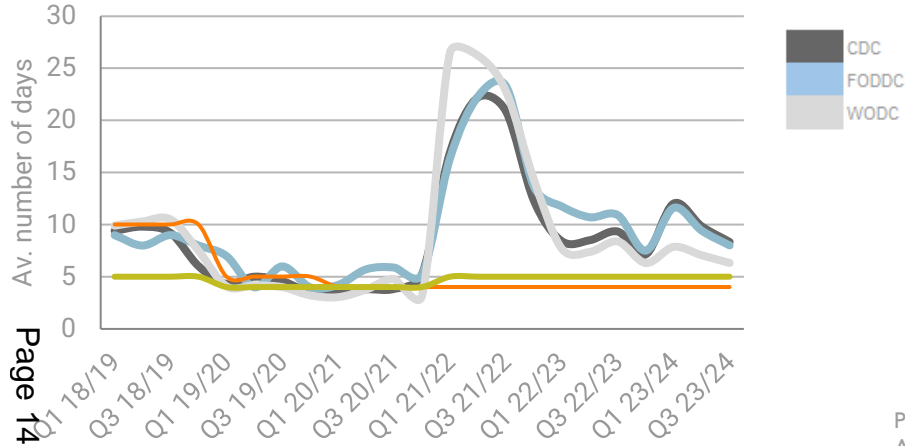
Q3 – Lower is Good

Target	5
Actual	3.56


The processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events continue to comfortably meet the target of 5 days, with processing times decreasing compared to both the last quarter and the previous year.


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

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Improved since last quarter and last year

Q3 – Lower is Good

Target 4

Actual 8.33

Page 148

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.](#)

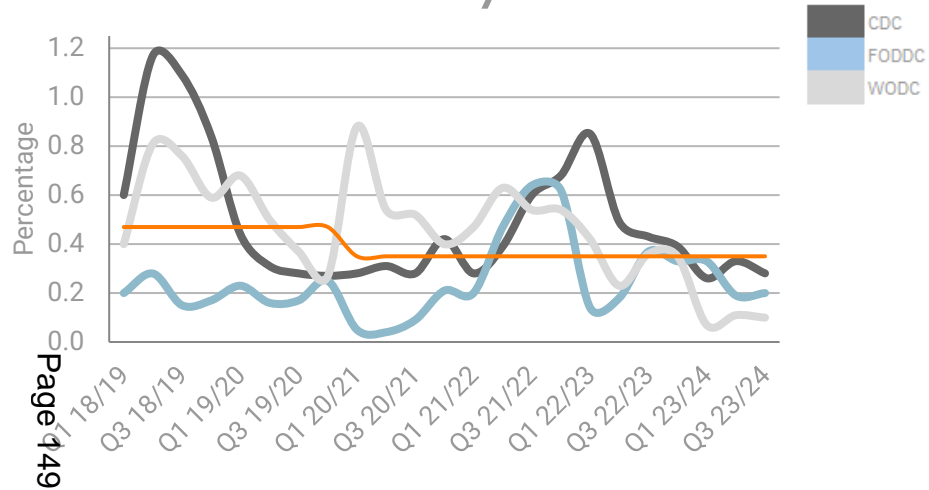
At the end of Q3, the average days to process HB changes decreased, with the Council averaging 4.8 days; however, since the target is cumulative, the ongoing statistics show higher figures. Despite being above the target, the decrease in HB Change applications amplifies the impact of delays in assessing an application due to outstanding evidence required on average processing days. It's important to emphasise that the processing times commence from the moment the service receives an application, irrespective of its completion status. Therefore, even incomplete applications are included in the count from receipt, potentially exaggerating the figures.

As a significant amount of changes that affect HB are usually received during Q4, we may potentially see a decrease in 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 - 701
CTS Changes - 3045


Managed migration of HB to Universal Credit is being rolled out from April 2024 across the country.

Percentage of Housing Benefit overpayment due to LA error/admin delay



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Improved since last quarter and last year

Q3 – Lower is Good

Target	0.35%
Actual	0.28%

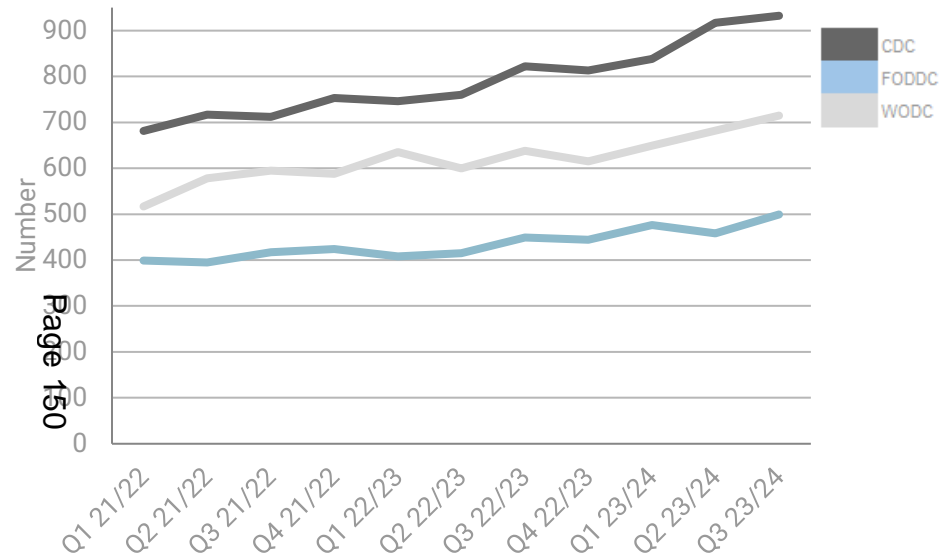
Measures are in place to ensure that HB overpayments due to local authority error are reduced as far as possible. Around 20% of the HB caseload is checked by Quality Assurance officers who target areas which have high error rates such as calculation of earnings. In addition to this work, the service 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%

(Snapshot) Long Term Empty Properties



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Increased since last quarter and last year

Q3 – Lower is Good

No Target

932

Properties continue to be added and removed from the list but as the graph indicates there is an upward trend.

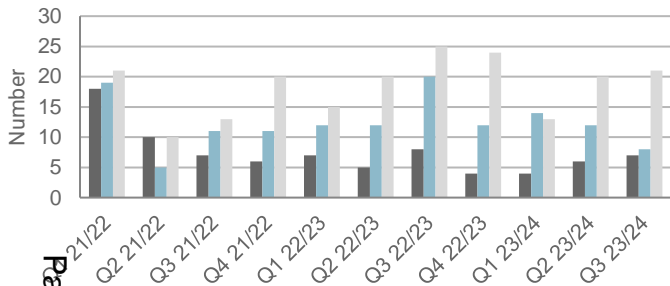
Maintaining registers of long-term empty properties, can help monitor the situation, target interventions, and communicate with property owners more effectively. The LTE list is constantly being addressed with all owners being contacted by email, phone or letter in an attempt to bring properties back into use.

How do we compare?

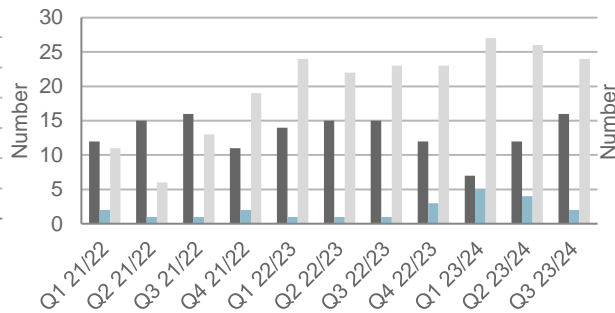
No benchmarking currently available. The Data & Performance Team will investigate options

(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

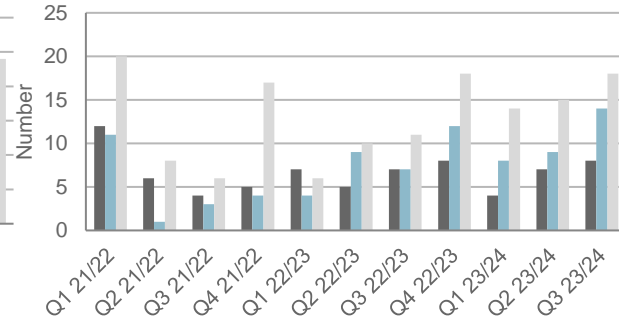
Households in B&B/hotel type accommodation



Households in hostels



Successful 'Move on' into suitable independent/LT accommodation



Direction of Travel

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 Q3, there has been a slight increase in households in temporary accommodation and move ons in comparison to last quarter.

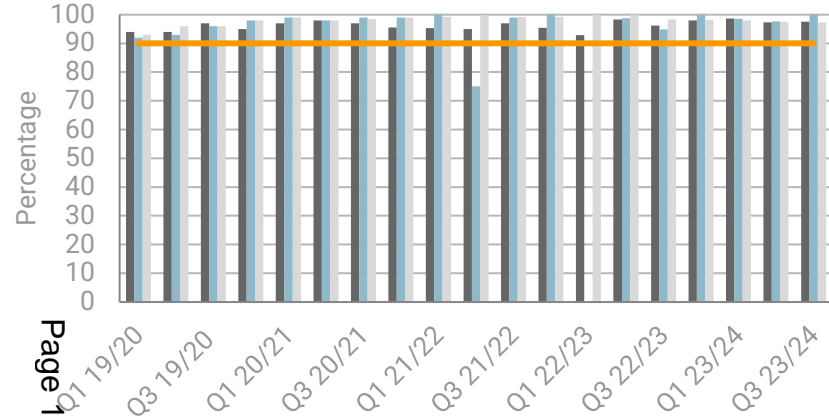
As there has been a reduction in homelessness at Cotswold, West and Forest households have been able to utilise hostels in the district; therefore, they are still running at capacity, with costs being recharged to the relevant authority. There are 3 hostels located in Cotswold district, one of which is exclusively for Cotswold Households.

The team persistently works towards preventing homelessness, successfully averting homelessness for 98 households so far this year—63 within the statutory 56-day period and 35 before statutory duties were triggered. It's important to note that these figures are approximations and have not yet been officially confirmed through the reporting system.

How do we compare?

No benchmarking currently available. The Data & Performance Team will investigate options

Customer Satisfaction - Telephone




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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

	Oct Rank	Oct Net Sat.	Nov Rank	Nov Net Sat.	Dec Rank	Dec Net Sat.
Cotswold	2	95%	3	96%	N/A	N/A
Forest	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
West	1	97%	6	91%	N/A	N/A

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Slightly improved since last quarter and last year

Q3 – Higher is Good

Target

90%

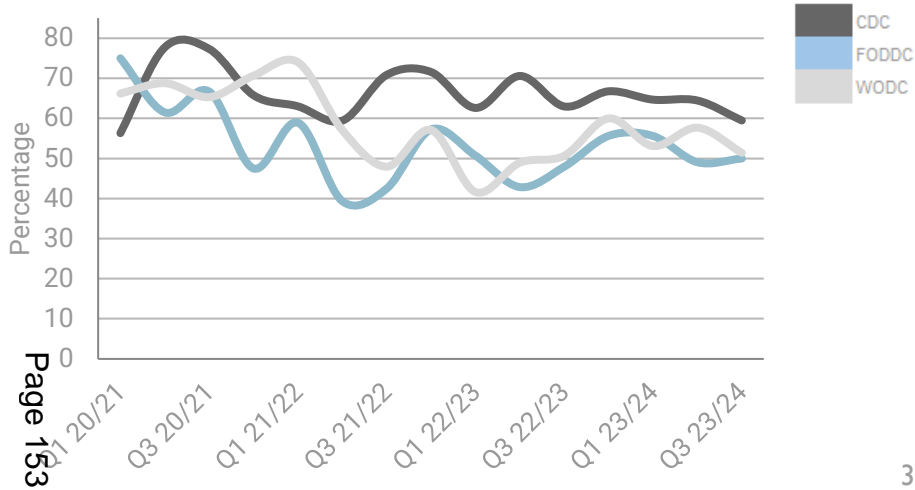
Actual

97.49%


Services provided via the telephone consistently yield high satisfaction.


The Council 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, the numbers are comparable to those of other District Councils, hence the 'league tables' being a useful comparator.

Customer Satisfaction - Email



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Declined since last quarter and last year

Q3 – Higher is Good

No Target

59.46%

333 residents responded to the survey, of which 198 were satisfied. This equates to a rate of 59.46% satisfaction for the quarter, down from 64.44% during Q2.

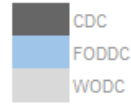
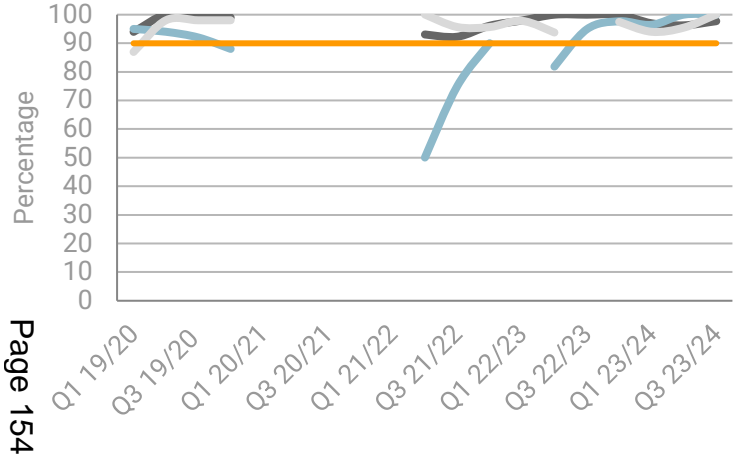
All outbound emails sent by customer services from Salesforce contain a link to the survey.

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 such as 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

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Increased since last quarter but slightly declined since last year

Q3 – Higher is Good

Target	90%
Actual	97.73%

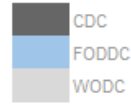
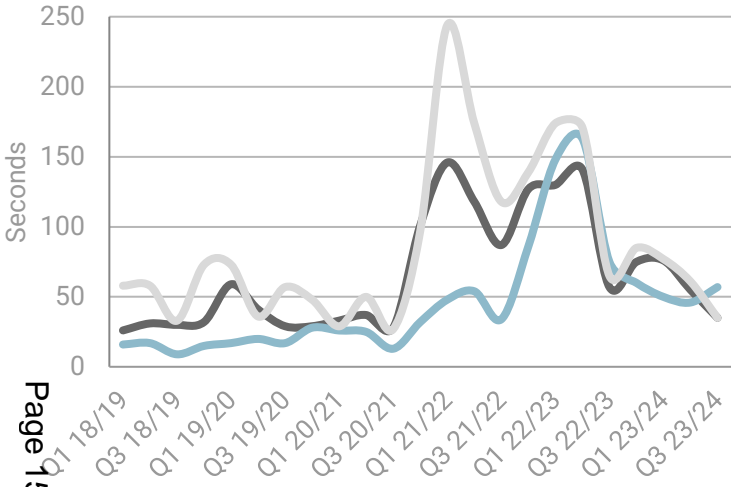
Customer Satisfaction from face to face interactions continues to be high, with a 97.73% satisfaction rate for the quarter, with 44 of 43 individuals surveyed satisfied with the service.

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



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Improved since last quarter and last year

Q3 – Lower is Good

No Target

35 Seconds

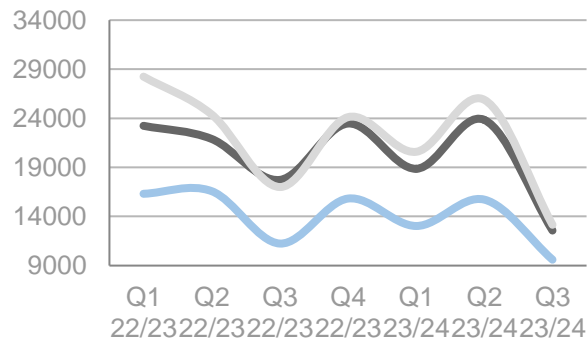
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How do we compare?

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.

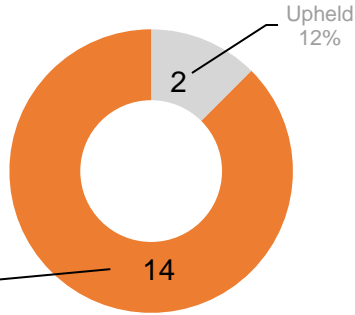
The average waiting times for Q3 has decreased by 20 seconds compared to the previous quarter. The decrease in average waiting times can be attributed to the ongoing phone line trial. This trial allows for scheduling employee breaks after the phone lines close, ensuring that advisors are available throughout high volume lunch times.

Call numbers decreased 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 an improved customer experience.



Number of complaints upheld

Complaints by Status



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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

Direction of Travel

Complaints upheld or partly upheld at Stage 1

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

No Target

Decreased since last quarter but increased since last year

During Q3, the Council experienced a slight decrease 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.

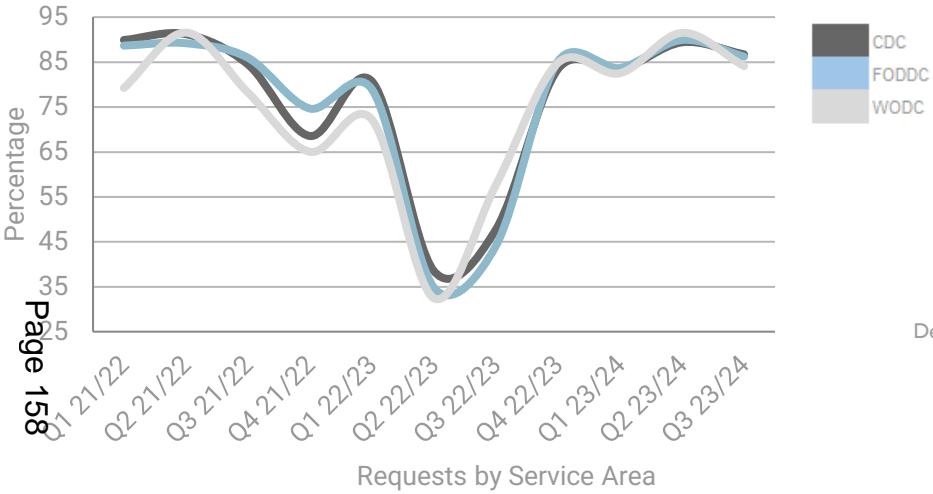
The new process has the following stages:

- 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)
Revenues and Benefits	Unhappy with lack of response	Dealt with by Service	Upheld	10
Revenues and Benefits	Unhappy with lack of response	Dealt with by Service	Upheld	9

Percentage of FOI requests answered within 20 days



Direction of Travel

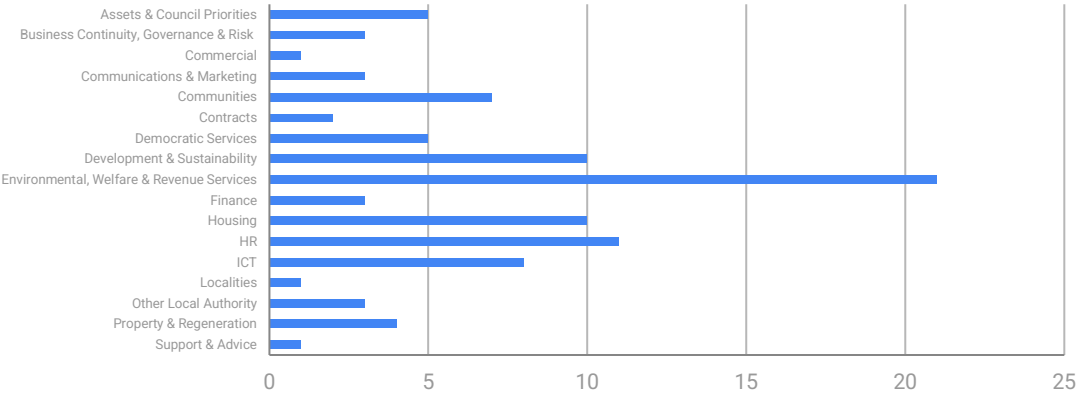
- Against last Quarter 
- Against last Year 

Declined since last quarter but improved since last year

Q3 – Higher is Good

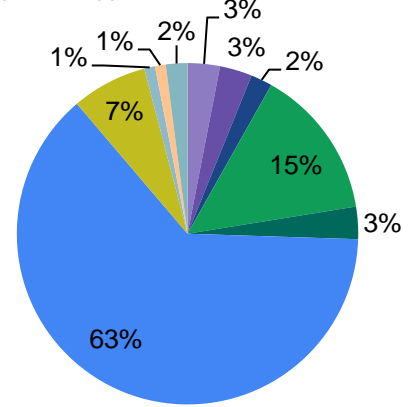
No Target

86.73%



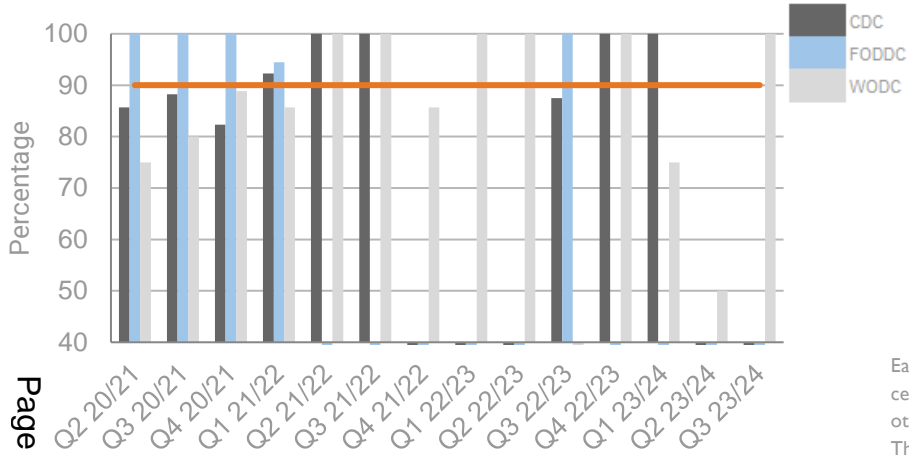
- Directed to other Local Authority
- Directed to Website
- Duplicate
- Exemption Applied
- FOI Closed - no clarification
- Information Not Held
- Information Provided in Full
- Information Provided in Part
- Transferred to DPO
- Transferred to ERS
- Outstanding

Response Type



Note: This is a new metric and the Data Team would welcome comments on the preferred observations

Building Control Satisfaction



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter: N/A

Against last Year: N/A

No Data

Q3 – Higher is Good

Target: 90%

Actual: No Data

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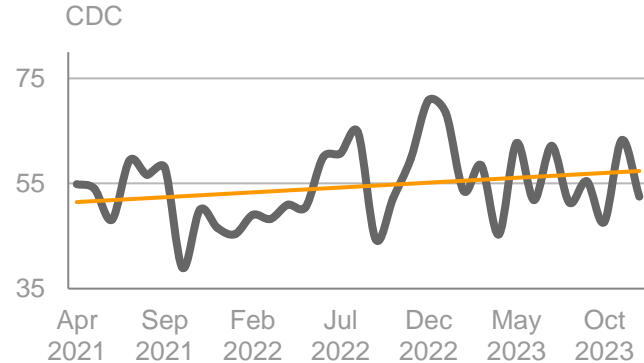
How do we compare?
Percentage of share in the market

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Number of Apps for Quarter
Cotswold	48%	63%	53%	108
Forest	69%	64%	57%	85
West	82%	77%	79%	141

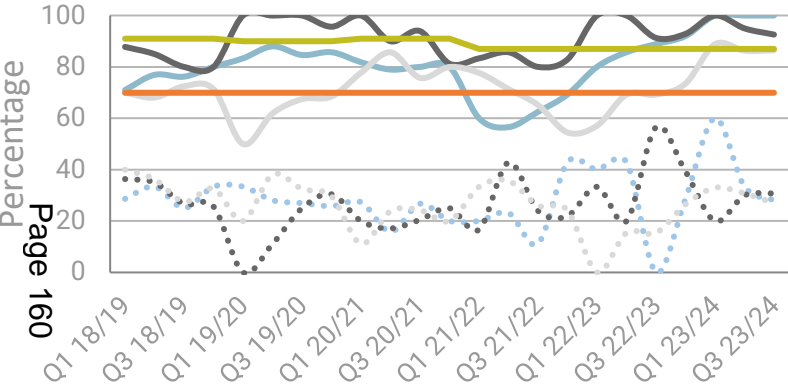
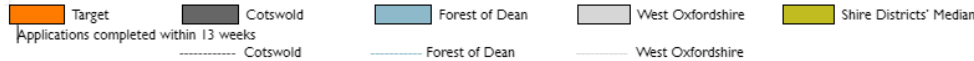
Each month, the service conducts telephone interviews with customers who have received a completion certificate during the month. The customer rates the service on helpfulness of staff, quality of technical advice and other information, responsiveness, value for money, and overall satisfaction.

The data on satisfaction surveys still faces challenges with a low number of returns, with no surveys received during Q3.

Building Control had 108 applications in Q3 and retains a strong hold in the share of the market. The below chart shows market share over time.



Percentage of major planning applications determined within agreed timescales (including Agreed Extensions of Time (AEOT))



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

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Slightly declined since last quarter but improved since last year

Q3 – Higher is Good

Target

70%

Actual

92.59%

The service continues to perform very well processing Major applications within time, slightly dipping from 95% to 92.59% during Q3.

Seven major applications were determined during Q3, compared to thirteen applications in the same period of the previous year.

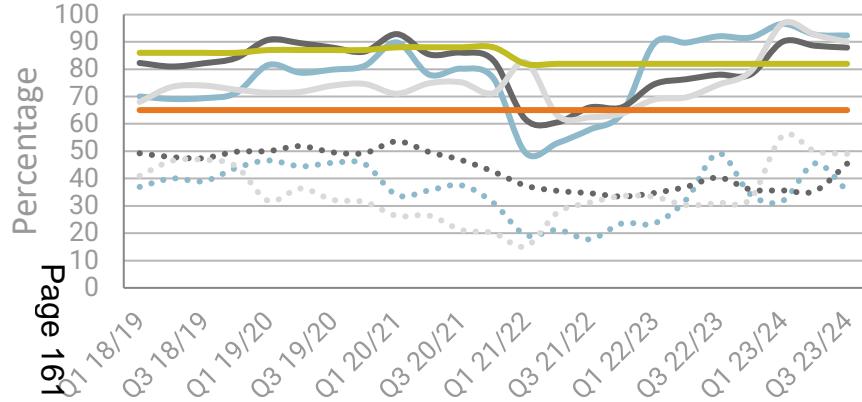
[See slide for Minor Developments for further narrative](#)

Percentage of minor planning applications determined within agreed timescales (including AEOT)

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

Applications completed within 8 weeks

- - - - Cotswold
 - - - - Forest of Dean
 - - - - West Oxfordshire



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter ↓
 Against last Year ↑

Q3 – Higher is Good

Target 65%
 Actual 87.93%

Slightly declined since last quarter but improved since last year

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

The service has performed very well processing Minor applications within time. 98 minor applications were determined in Q3, compared to 97 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 authorization from the PAS report, presented to the Executive last quarter, are currently being implemented across the partnership. The first to be rolled out is the Negotiation Protocol, already sent to Planning Agents in anticipation of its publication on the Councils' individual websites during Q4.

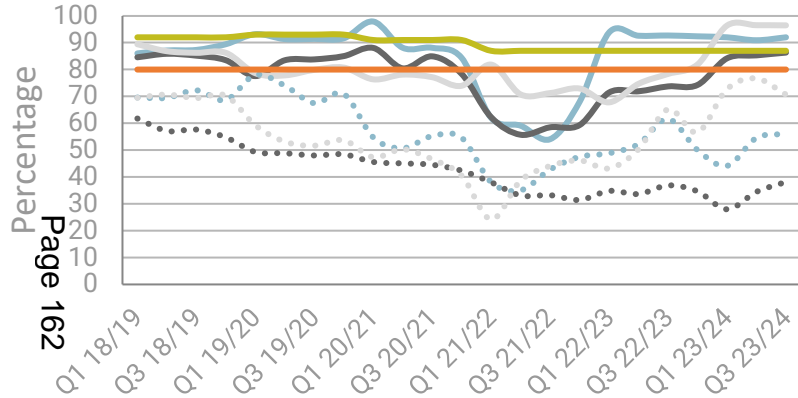
Despite resource challenges, the service maintained performance above target in Q3. Notably, three planning vacancies were successfully filled by the end of Q3, with expected start dates in early Q4.

Percentage of other planning applications determined within agreed timescales (including AEOT)

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

Applications completed within 8 weeks

- - - - - Cotswold
 - - - - - Forest of Dean
 - - - - - West Oxfordshire



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

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Steady since last quarter but improved since last year

Q3 – Higher is Good

Target 80%

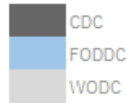
Actual 86.35%

Determination times for Other applications have remained steady since last quarter but have increased since this time last year by 12.6%.

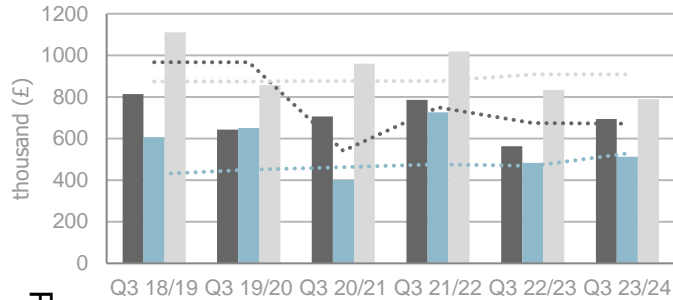
253 Other applications were determined in Q3.

[See slide for Minor Developments for additional narrative](#)

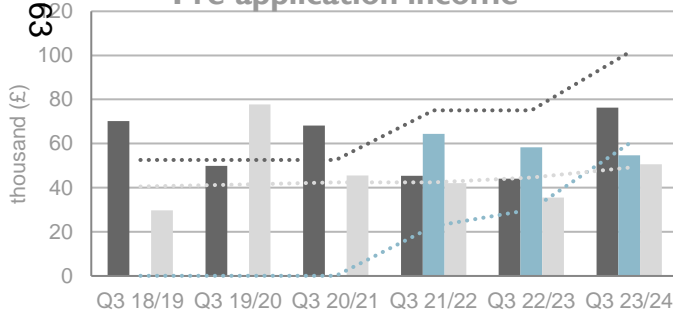
Total Income achieved in Planning & Income from Pre-application advice



Total planning income



Pre-application income



Direction of Travel

Total Planning Income

Against last Quarter



Against last Year



Pre-Application Income

Against last Quarter



Against last Year



Total Income improved since last quarter and last year
Pre-App Income slightly declined since last quarter and last year

Q3 – Higher is Good

Total Planning Income (£)

Target

671,157

Actual

693,291

Pre-Application Income (£)

Target

101,250

Actual

76,351

At the end of Q3, total income for planning for the Council exceeded the Q3 target, but pre-app income was below target. In comparison to Q3 2022-23, the Council had an increase in these revenue levels.

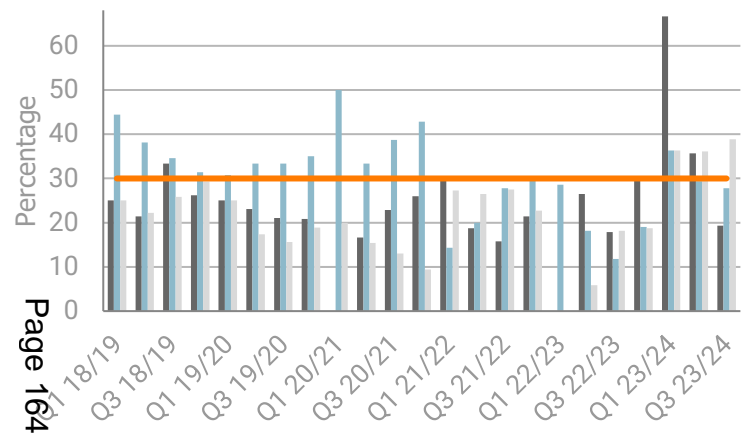
The service indicates a decrease in the number of major applications submitted, which generate significant revenue, leading to a reduction in income for this quarter.

It is likely that we will continue to see fewer larger developments due to a loss of confidence in the housing market coupled with the fact that the Council has a 5 year land supply, resulting in 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

- Against last Quarter 
- Against last Year 

Q3 – Lower is Good

Target	30%
Actual	19.35%

This indicator seeks to ensure that no more than 30% of planning appeals are allowed.

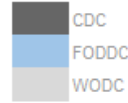
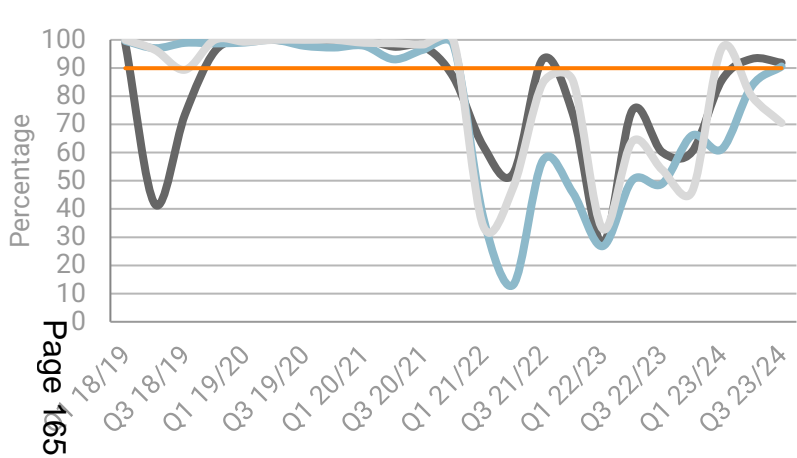
Between October 1, 2023, and December 31, 2023, seventeen appeals were decided, with sixteen being supported. This results in an allowance rate of 5.88% for the quarter but a cumulative total of 19.35% for the year, which falls below the target. Given the cumulative nature of this metric, it may continue to decrease throughout the year, depending on the number of appeals received.

The enforcement project, focusing on enhancing the front end for registering enforcement issues, is currently in progress, with the testing of a new form completed during Q3. It is anticipated to result in a decrease in repeat customer contact/chasing, as well as a reduction in the number of non-breach cases due to improved online reporting facilities and back office triage.

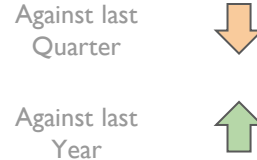
How do we compare?

The Data and Performance Team have been in touch with the Planning Inspectorate to obtain a full data set.

Percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days



Direction of Travel



Slightly declined since last quarter but improved since last year

Q3 – Higher is Good

Target	90%
Actual	91.92%

The Councils performance has slightly declined since last quarter but has remained above target, with a significant improvement since this time last year of 31.73%.

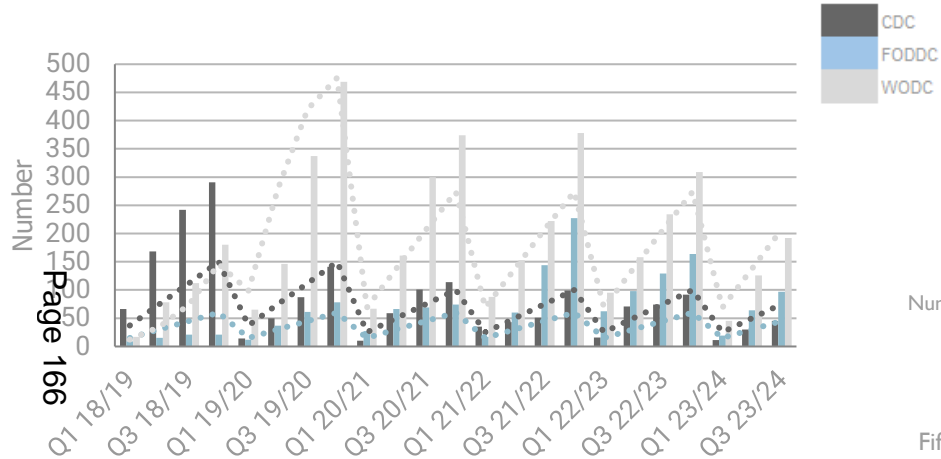
Performance meetings are scheduled to address team issues and processes, aiming to ensure targets are met, although much remains in the hands of individual respondents within services.

The HMLR project for Forest has encountered delays due to data import issues, and it is now expected to be delivered by the end of Q4. Following its completion, the project for Cotswold will commence.


How do we compare?

No benchmarking currently available. The Data & Performance Team will investigate options

Number of affordable homes delivered (cumulative)



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Number of completions declined since last quarter and last year

Q3 – Higher is Good

Target	75
Actual	45

Fifteen properties, including 8 for affordable rent and 6 for shared ownership have been delivered in Cotswold at Cirencester, Evenlode and Siddington. A total of 45 affordable homes have been delivered year to date, against a target of 75.

While this falls short of the target, delays were experienced at a housing site due to the insolvency of the main contractor, resulting in a temporary suspension of construction. The legal challenges have now been resolved, a new contractor has been secured, and construction has resumed. Although completions were initially expected this quarter, further delays have occurred, pushing them back to the next quarter or early next financial year.

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.

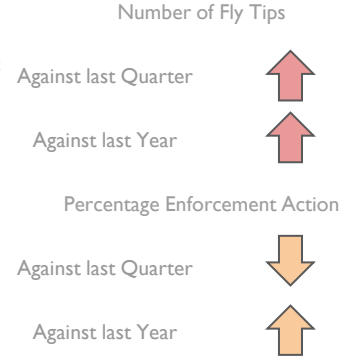
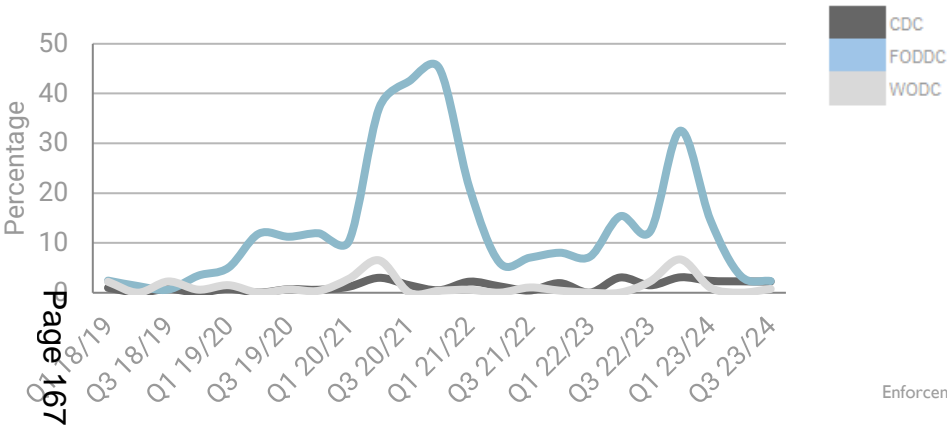
Note: this data is collected cumulatively from the beginning of the financial year to account for peaks and troughs

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)



Fly Tips – Increased since last quarter and last year
 Enforcement Action – Slightly decreased since last quarter but slightly increased since last year

No Target
 Number of Fly Tips Collected
 303
 Percentage Enforcement Action
 2.31%

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)

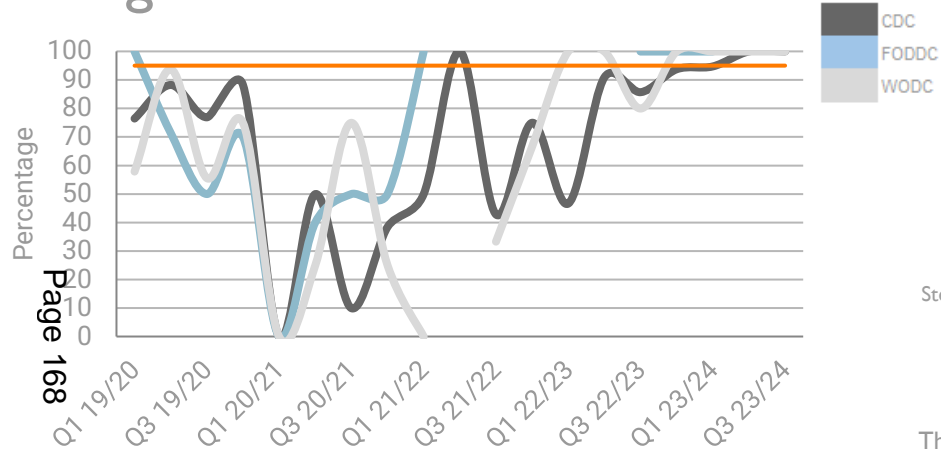
	No. Fly Tips for 2022-23	% Total Fly Tips	Absolute Value from Highest No. Fly Tips	Absolute Value from Lowest No. Fly Tips
Cotswold	1092	0.11	33738	1092
Forest	1569	0.16	33261	1569
West	1150	0.12	33680	1150

There was a marginal rise in fly tipping across the district from last quarter. The enforcement action percentage has slightly declined since the last quarter but has slightly increased from the same period last year.

In Q3, members accepted an amendment for enhanced powers for Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs), allowing for an increase in the upper limits for various FPNs, including:

- The maximum fine for fly-tipping, increasing from £400 to £1,000.
- The maximum fine for litter or graffiti, increasing from £150 to £500.
- The maximum fine for those breaching their household waste duty of care, increasing from £400 to £600.

Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales



Direction of Travel

- Against last Quarter →
- Against last Year ↑

Steady since last quarter but increased since last year

Q3 – Higher is Good

Target	95%
Actual	100%

The Council had eight inspections, all of which were completed within the timescales. The inspection rate for Q3 remains above target.

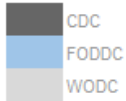
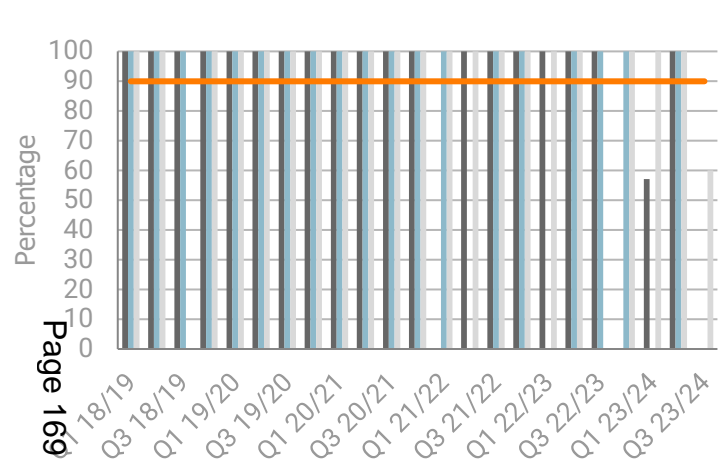
High risk work is naturally prioritised, which can have an impact on lower risk scheduled inspection rates. The service now has a useful dashboard, which is helpful for monitoring team performance and tracking lower risk scheduled inspections within the team.

How do we compare?

APSE performance networks are introducing benchmarking for environmental sectors for 2023-24

% 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)



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter: N/A
 Against last Year: N/A
 No Notifications

Q3 – Lower is Good

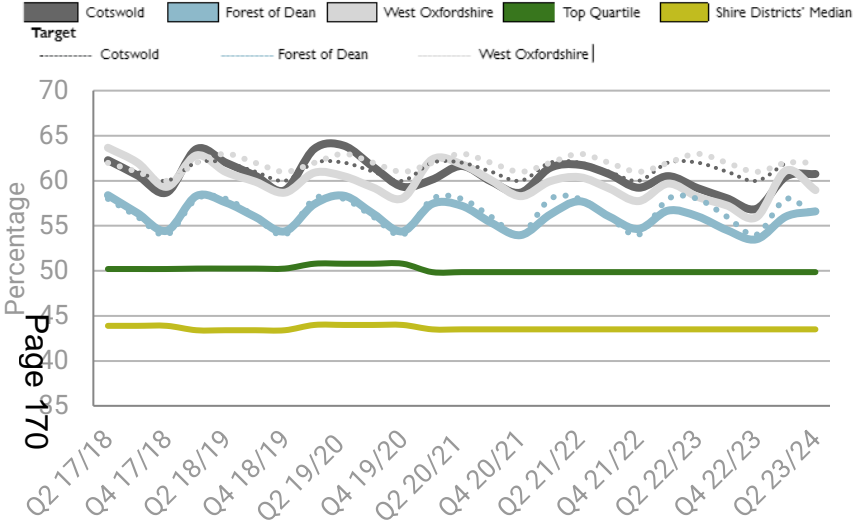
Target: 90%
 Actual: N/A

No notifications received during Q3.


How do we compare?


No benchmarking currently available. The Data & Performance Team will investigate options

Percentage of household waste recycled



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Slightly improved since last quarter and last year

Q2 – Higher is Good

Target  62%

Actual  60.75%

How do we compare?

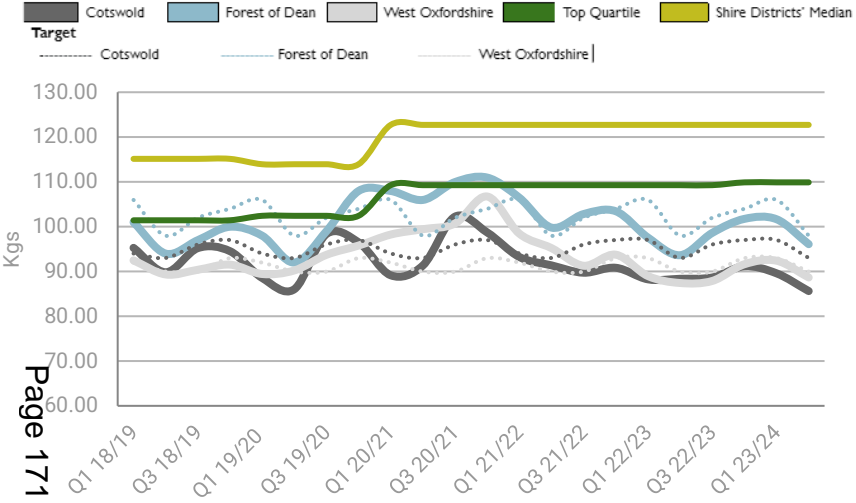
Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting

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 Q2 2023/2024 (June - September).

During Q2, recycling rates saw a slight improvement of 0.28% from the previous quarter. Compared to the same period last year, rates showed a modest improvement of 1.56%.

Residual Household Waste per Household (kg)



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Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Decreased since last quarter and last year

Q2 – Lower is Good

Target 93

Actual 85.66

How do we compare?

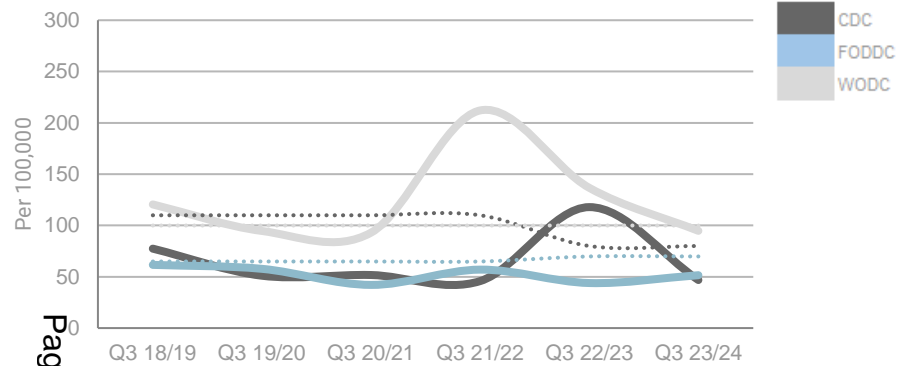
Residual household waste per household (kg/household)

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 Q2 2023/2024 (June - September).


In Q2, the Council saw a decline in the tonnage of household waste in comparison to last quarter, decreasing by 3.96kg to 85.66kg. In comparison to Q2 2022-2023, the tonnage has decreased by 2.74kg.

Missed bins per 100,000



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Improved since last quarter and last year

Q2 – Lower is Good

Target **80**

Actual **47**

How do we compare?

Missed collections per 100,000 collections (full year) - APSE

2022-23 Benchmark	Missed collections per 100,000 collections	Family Group Rank	Family Group Quartile	Whole Service Rank	Whole Service Quartile
Cotswold	109.89	12/14	Bottom	39/45	Bottom

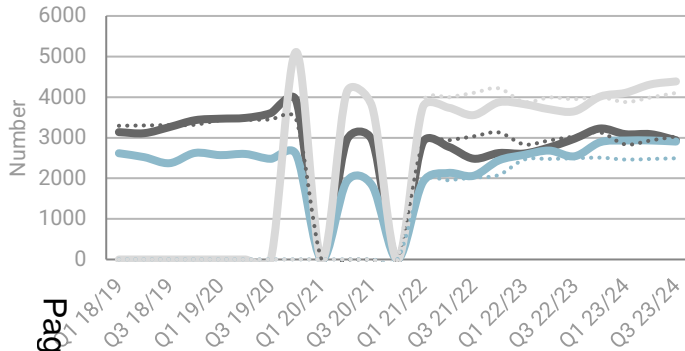
Despite Christmas, the Council fell below target for Q3 and registered lower numbers than the previous quarter. Cotswold's missed instances decreased by 71 compared to this time last year.

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.

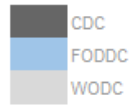
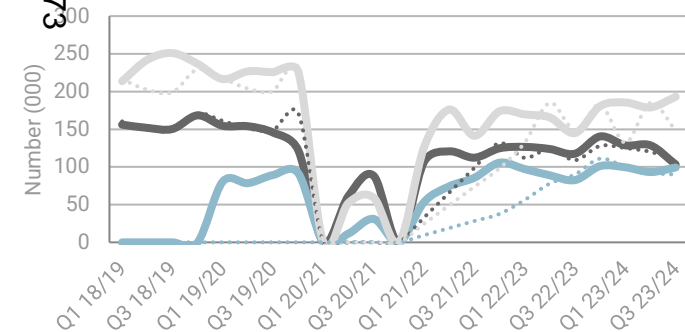
The missed bins target was revised to 80 per 100,000 scheduled collections from 2022-23 Q1 to reflect improvements made over the previous year.

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

Number of gym memberships



Visits to leisure facilities



Direction of Travel

Gym Memberships

Against last Quarter



Against last Year



Leisure Visits

Against last Quarter



Against last Year



Gym Memberships – Slightly declined since last quarter and last year
 Leisure Visits – Declined since last quarter and last year

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 dropped by just over 25k in comparison to last quarter, with gym memberships slightly dropping by around 150 memberships. This decrease is linked to the change of service provider and challenges related to the pool, which was temporarily closed due to electrical issues caused by a roof leak and has since been repaired.

The Learn to Swim figures experienced a minor dip this quarter, a trend not uncommon in this flexible programme during the winter months.

A bid has been submitted for Capital Grant Funding for funding to improve the energy efficiency of leisure facilities, the results of which have been delayed until Q4.

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

Q3 – Higher is Good

Gym Memberships

Target 3035

Actual 2941

Leisure Visits

Target 109,003

Actual 103,149

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.

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Agenda Item 15



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET – 7 MARCH 2024
Subject	FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT – Q3 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 – Capital Programme Outturn Forecast Annex B – Non-Treasury management Investment Prudential Indicators
Recommendation(s)	That Cabinet reviews and notes the Q3 financial position set out in this report.
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering Good Services
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	None



1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1** This report provides members with the third outturn forecast and monitoring position statement for the 2023/24 financial year and should be viewed in the context of the *2024/25 Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Medium-Term Financial Strategy* report considered by Cabinet and Council in February 2024.
- 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 some uncertainty on the impact from inflation and interest rates on the final quarter's financial performance.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1** This report sets out the outturn forecast for the financial year informed by the Q3 budget monitoring. Members should note this is based on early outcomes from the budget monitoring work given the publication deadlines for Overview and Scrutiny Committee. A complete view on the Q3 monitoring position will be included in the updated report that Cabinet will consider at their meeting on 07 March 2024.
- 2.2** Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered an early draft of this report at their meeting on 27 February 2024.
- 2.3** Based on the budget monitoring exercise undertaken for Q3 and an assessment of the risks and uncertainties facing the Council, the outturn forecast is a positive variation of £0.056m. This represents a much-improved position for the financial year and is a movement in the variation of £0.318m.



Table ES1 – Revenue Budget Outturn Forecast (Q3)

	2023/24 Latest Net Budget (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Forecast (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)	Q2 2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)	Movement from Q2
Revenue Budget					
Subtotal Services	17,534	18,479	944	907	37
Less: Reversal of accounting adjustments	(1,636)	(1,636)	0	0	0
Revised Subtotal Services	15,899	16,843	944	907	37
Corporate Income & Expenditure	(1,536)	(2,933)	(1,398)	(1,043)	(355)
Provisions and Risk Items	0	398	398	398	0
Net Budget Requirement	14,363	14,308	(56)	263	(318)
Funded by:					
Council Tax	(6,311)	(6,311)	0	0	0
Retained Business Rates	(4,389)	(4,389)	0	0	0
Government Funding - Grants	(2,905)	(2,905)	0	0	0
Government Funding - NHB	(290)	(290)	0	0	0
Collection Fund (surplus) / Deficit	393	393	0	0	0
TOTAL Funding	(13,503)	(13,503)	0	0	0
Budget shortfall/(surplus)	861	805	(56)	263	(318)

Table ES2 – Revenue Budget – Reconciliation of variations (Q3)

	Positive variation (£'000)	Adverse Variation (£'000)	Q2 Outturn Variance (£'000)	Movement from Q2 (£'000)
Variations at a glance				
Fees & Charges - Income Shortfall		242	256	(14)
Overspend - Waste & Recycling containers		44	50	(6)
Commercial Property - Rental income shortfall (risk)		74	75	(1)
Old Station - Temporary scaffolding costs		48	0	48
Pay Award (Publica impact)		198	198	0
Pay Award (Ubico impact)		0	0	0
Bad Debt Provision		50	50	0
Additional Transfer to Reserves (TM Reserve)		150	150	0
Savings Target shortfall (risk)		82	250	(168)
Other service variations		149	138	11
Ubico Contract forecast overspend (inc Pay Award impact)		133	134	(1)
Treasury Management Income	(920)		(796)	(124)
Reduced Revenue financing of Capital programme	(208)		(202)	(6)
Other Corporate Income and Expenditure	(97)		(39)	(58)
Subtotal	(1,225)	1,169		
Net Outturn Variation		(56)	263	(319)



2.4 Improvements in Treasury Management Investment

Income and an increase in the underspend reported by Publica across all partner Councils are the updated material variations. The majority of forecast variations from Q2 remain materially unchanged with additional variations reported on Old Station and Investment Property income.

Q3 revised variances

- Improved forecast of Treasury Management investment income due to continued higher investment balances and interest rates. Forecast outturn for the financial year is £1.763m, an income surplus of £0.946m.
- Forecast underspend of £0.900m across the total Publica contract sum for all Councils. The indicative amount that is applicable to Cotswold District Council is £0.275m. The underspend has largely arisen due to vacancy management.
- Building Control income (no change over Q2 forecast) below budget with a lower number of applications in Q1 and Q2 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. Q3 applications received 108. £110k income shortfall forecast.
- Public Convenience income shortfall due to reduced footfall. Forecast income shortfall of £55k.
- Household waste bins, bags, and containers - overspend forecast of £44k, 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 £77k 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.
- Old Station – additional revenue cost of £48k for temporary scaffolding to ensure the property is safe prior to the commencement of capital works.
- Investment Property – void costs and rental income loss of £74k associated with the investment property formerly occupied by Wilko.
- Ubico are currently forecasting a net overspend of £133k due to the pay award (£145k adverse) and vehicle costs (£82k adverse), although lower than estimated diesel costs (£204k favourable) reduce the overall forecast position.
- Forecast deficit (£0.282m) on the Leisure and Culture contracts which will be transferred to the Contract Smoothing reserve (a sub-reserve of the Financial Resilience reserve).

2.5 In the Q2 report it was indicated that the adverse income variations outlined above were unlikely to recover over Q3 and Q4 due to longer-term under performance against income



budgets in previous financial years. The 2024/25 budget and MTFs approved by Council on 21 February 2024 has revised down the income budgets for Building Control and Land Charges.

- 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** The 2024/25 Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Medium-Term Financial Strategy to Cabinet and Council provided members with an updated capital budget for the financial year and is shown in the table below. This is not materially different from the Q2 outturn forecast although there is slippage of £0.370m into 2024/25 across the Trinity Road (Carbon Efficiency) and £0.126m Trinity Road (Agile Working) projects which accounts for the majority of the additional forecast outturn variance.

Table ES2 – Capital Programme Outturn Forecast

Capital Programme	2023/24 OB (£'000)	2023/24 REV (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q3 (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Forecast (Q3) (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)
Leisure & Communities	1,387	79	83	102	23
Housing/Planning and Strategic Housing	4,001	4,765	2,789	4,727	(38)
Environment	1,956	566	285	565	(1)
Retained & Corporate	0	0	0	0	0
ICT, Change and Customer Services	350	100	25	100	0
UK Rural Prosperity Fund	191	191	0	175	(16)
UK Shared Prosperity Fund Projects	28	28	0	20	(8)
Land, Legal and Property	500	567	(0)	84	(483)
Transformation and Investment	5,486	1,216	623	1,025	(191)
TOTAL Capital Programme	13,899	7,512	3,805	6,798	(714)

- 2.8** Financial Sustainability – The 2023/24 revenue budget is held in balance using £0.861m of the Financial Resilience Reserve. It was noted in the Q2 report 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 was not a desirable outcome and further management action must be taken by the Council, Publica and Ubico to mitigate the current forecast outturn.
- 2.9** When taken with the 2023/24 Revenue Budget, the Council would be utilising £0.805m of the Financial Resilience reserve to support the budget. Although this is an improved position,



members should note the reliance on the Financial Resilience reserve over the last 2 financial years to balance the budget (£2.047m) which is not sustainable over the medium-term.

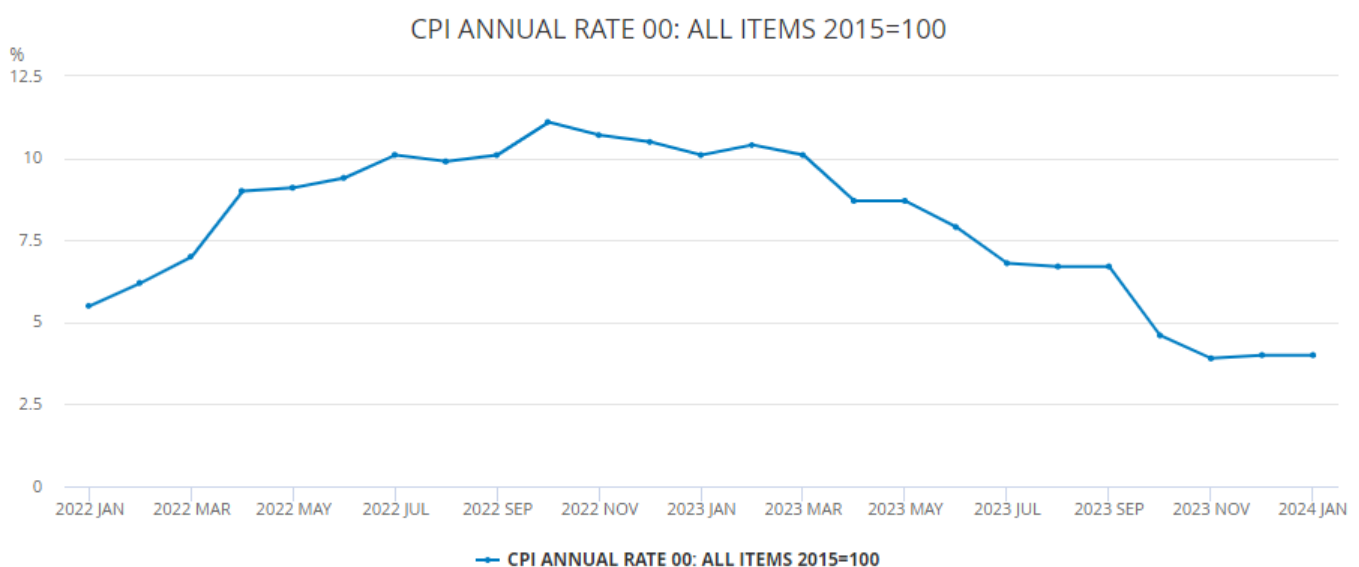
2.10 The draft outturn position will be reported to the July 2024 Cabinet meeting.

3. EXTERNAL ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

3.1 The *2024/25 Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Medium-Term Financial Strategy* report to Cabinet and Council in February 2024 set out the external economic pressures on the Council.

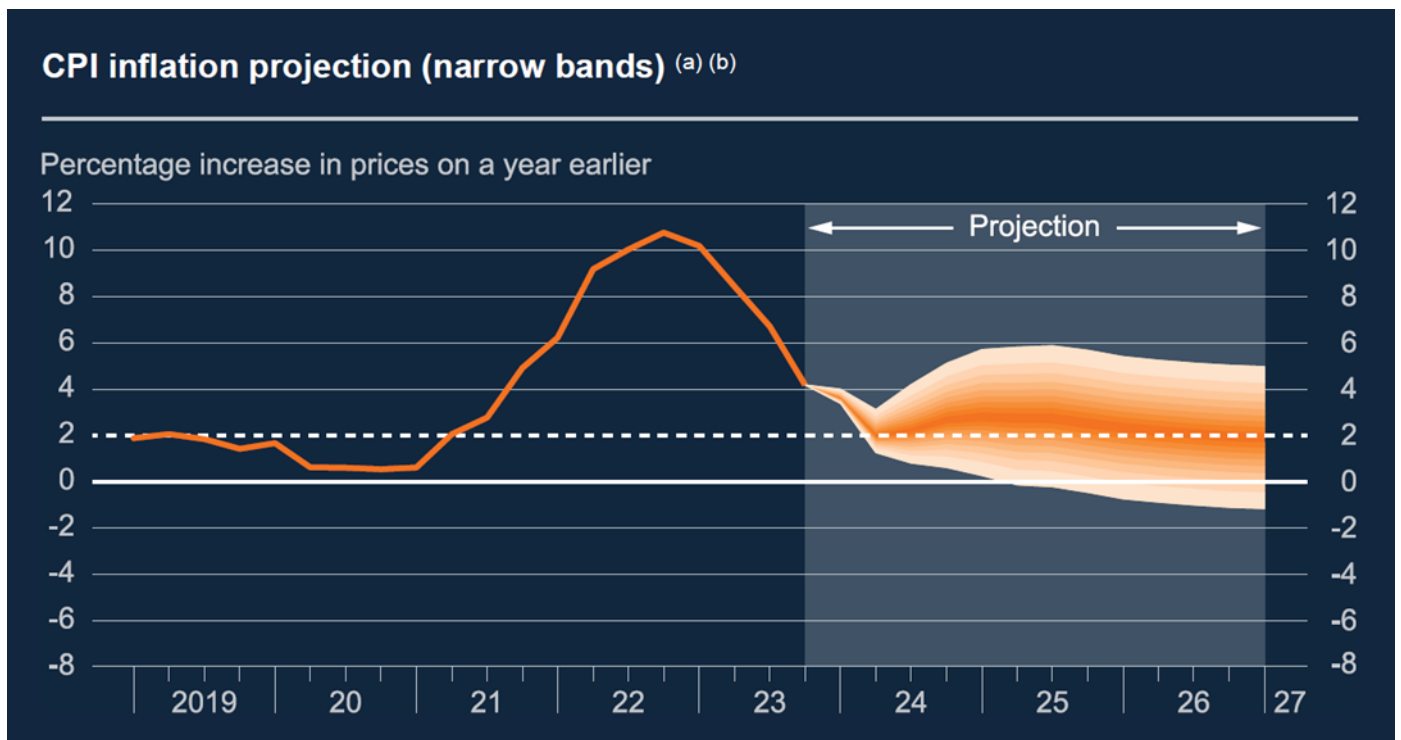
Inflationary Pressures

3.2 The Office for National Statistics (ONS) released inflation figures from the 12 months to January 2024 on 14 February 2024. The level of inflation, as measured by the Consumer Prices Index, is 4.0% (no change from December 2023). Although it is not the Government's preferred measure of inflation, the Retail Prices Index is 4.9% (5.2% in December 2023). Core inflation (as defined by the Office for National Statistics as the CPI Rate excluding energy, food, alcohol, and tobacco) remained at 5.1% for the third month (5.1% in December 2023). Whilst prices of food and beverages reduced this was offset by the impact of increased fuel prices. It is this measure that has concerned the Bank of England and led to increases in interest rates during 2023.





- 3.3 Although general inflation has reduced since the start of 2023, 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 (February 2024).



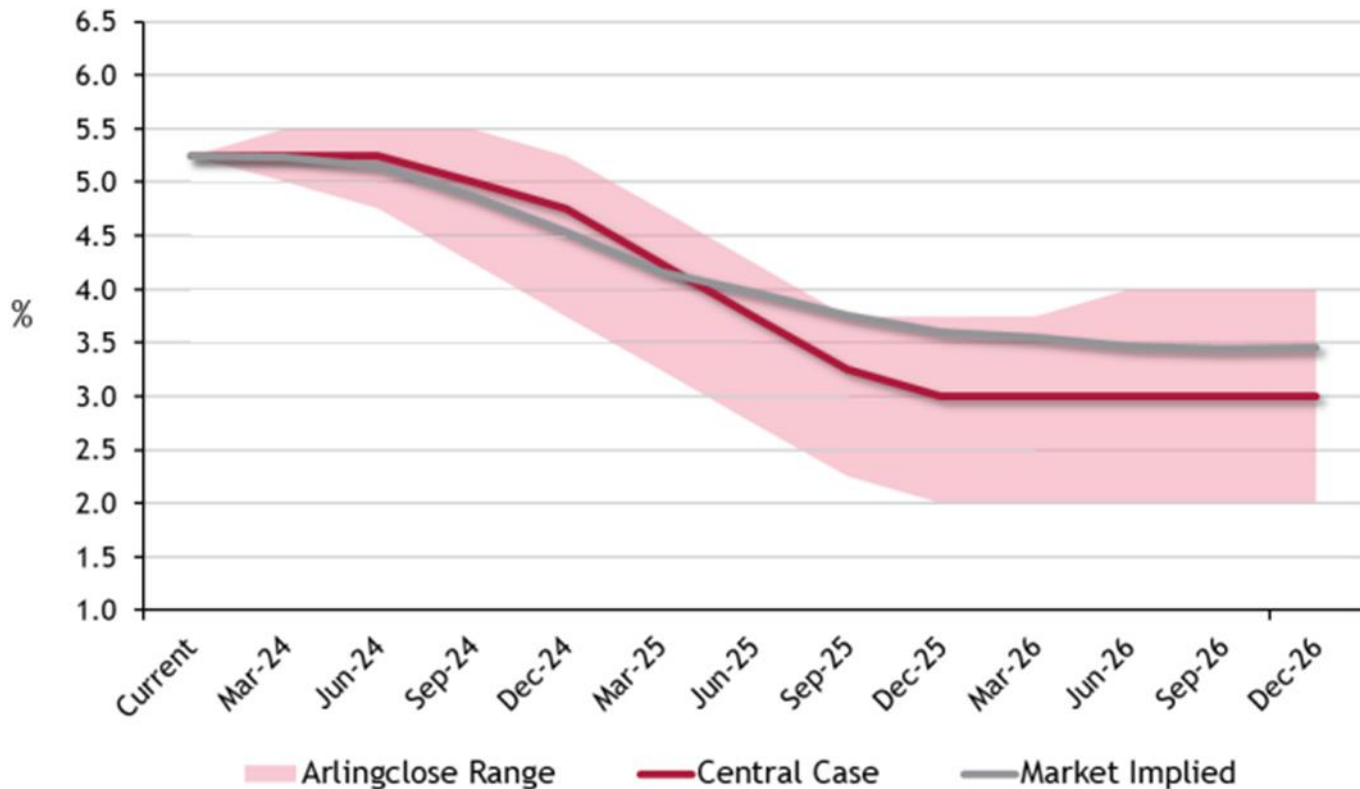
- 3.5 The continuation of elevated levels of inflation throughout the year and the Bank of England's forecast over the medium-term will need to be taken into account when assessing the impact on 2024/25 revenue and capital budgets.

Interest Rates

- 3.6 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 01 February 2024 (the Monetary Policy Committee voted by a majority of 6-3 to maintain the official Bank Rate at 5.25%. Two members preferred to increase Bank Rate by 0.25 percentage points, to 5.5%. One member preferred to reduce Bank Rate by 0.25 percentage points, to 5%). The council's treasury management advisors believe this is the peak for the bank rate. The next MPC meeting is scheduled for 21 March 2024.



Official Bank Rate



- 3.7 To support the Capital Programme, the Council may need to undertake borrowing during the current financial year although this is dependent on several factors. 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.
- 3.8 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.
- 3.9 With interest rates expected to remain high during the forthcoming 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.
- 3.10 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 April 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 31 December 2023, the Council is reporting net expenditure of £10.443m against the profiled budget of £10.804m. The financial position is expected to remain challenging during the remainder of the financial year and into 2024/25 with the Council facing significant budget pressures as outlined earlier in the report.
- 4.3 The outturn forecast for 2023/24 of £14.308m results in a forecast variance of £0.056m – a reduction of £0.318m against the Q2 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 Outturn Forecast (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)	Q2 2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)	Movement from Q2
Revenue Budget					
Environmental & Regulatory Services	486	599	114	110	4
Business Sup. Svcs - Finance, HR, Procurement	1,120	1,129	9	23	(14)
ICT, Change & Customer Services	2,359	2,333	(26)	0	(26)
Assets, Property & Regeneration	725	819	94	26	68
Publica Executives and Modernisation	131	131	0	0	0
Revenues & Housing Support	615	688	73	62	11
Environmental Services	4,815	4,916	101	281	(180)
Leisure & Communities	1,918	2,238	320	265	55
Planning & Strategic Housing	1,947	1,949	2	0	2
Democratic Services	1,104	1,121	17	(8)	25
Retained and Corporate	2,315	2,556	241	149	92
Subtotal Services	17,534	18,479	944	907	37
Less: Reversal of accounting adjustments	(1,636)	(1,636)	0	0	0
Revised Subtotal Services	15,899	16,843	944	907	37
Corporate Income & Expenditure	(1,536)	(2,933)	(1,398)	(1,043)	(355)
Provisions and Risk Items	0	398	398	398	0
Net Budget Requirement	14,363	14,308	(56)	263	(318)
Funded by:					
Council Tax	(6,311)	(6,311)	0	0	0
Retained Business Rates	(4,389)	(4,389)	0	0	0
Government Funding - Grants	(2,905)	(2,905)	0	0	0
Government Funding - NHB	(290)	(290)	0	0	0
Collection Fund (surplus) / Deficit	393	393	0	0	0
TOTAL Funding	(13,503)	(13,503)	0	0	0
Budget shortfall/(surplus)	861	805	(56)	263	(318)



Table 3 – Corporate Income and Expenditure

	2023/24 Revised Budget (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Forecast (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)	Movement since Q2 (£'000)
Corporate Income and Expenditure				
Contingency, other non-service income and expenditure	105	41	(64)	(45)
Savings & Transformation Items	(500)	(418)	82	(168)
Treasury Management - Interest Payable	99	8	(91)	(6)
Treasury Management - Interest Receivable	(817)	(1,737)	(920)	(124)
Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)	17	0	(17)	0
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO)	200	100	(100)	0
Transfer to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	(639)	(927)	(288)	(13)
	(1,536)	(2,933)	(1,398)	(355)

Table 4 – Provisions and Risk

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

Key variations

- 4.4** The forecast outturn position is a net positive variance of £0.056m. Whilst this is an improved position compared to Q2, it is important the Council is not complacent on the Q3 position. Without the continuation of positive action, any adverse outturn variation would have to be funded from the Financial Resilience reserve at year end. Clearly, this would not be 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.
- 4.5** 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 (£0.077m), Public conveniences (£0.055m)



- Forecast overspend on the Ubico Contract (£0.133m overspend, £0.012m underlying underspend excluding the pay award)
- Forecast deficit (£0.282m) on the Leisure and Culture contracts which will be transferred to the Contract Smoothing reserve.
- Commercial Property rental income (£0.074m adverse variation)
- Pay Award impact (£0.198m adverse) – see paragraphs 3.6 to 3.8 and 4.26.
- Savings Target Risk – Publica Q3 forecast of £0.275m underspend mitigates in part the £0.250m adverse on Ubico savings target.
- Treasury Management and interest receivable performance (£0.920m positive variation) – improvement of £0.124m over Q2
- Reduced Revenue financing of Capital programme (£0.208m positive variation)
- Adjustments for Bad Debt Provision and a proposed additional transfer to earmarked reserves (£0.200m)

- 4.6** 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. 108 applications received in Q3. £0.110m income shortfall forecast.
- 4.7** Income from land charges is below budget with net income received forecast to be £77k 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.
- 4.8** Public Convenience income shortfall of £0.055m is forecast due to reduced footfall. One-off expenditure reductions reduce the forecast net overspend to £0.052m. Cabinet approved increases to the service charges for the Council's Public Conveniences from 01 April 2023. The service was subject to a review by Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Public Conveniences Review Group) and reported the outcome of the review and recommendations in January 2024.
- 4.9** 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 £0.074m is forecast but will be reviewed alongside the wider Asset Management Strategy.



4.10 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 £8.414m – a net overspend of £0.133m. This is predominantly due to the impact of the pay award (£0.145m overspend), additional costs associated with vehicle repairs and vehicle hire (£0.082m overspend). This is offset by a reduced volume and cost of fuel (£0.204m underspend) which is lower than the assumed cost included in the budget).

4.11 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 (Q3)

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	69	5
CCM001 Cemetery/Churchyards GM [CTW688]	175	175	190	15
RYC002 Garden Waste Collection [CTW634]	1,315	1,316	1,347	31
WST001 Household Waste [CTW611]	1,622	1,623	1,711	88
RYC001 Recycling [CTW633]	2,933	2,935	2,917	(18)
RYC003 Refuse/Recycling/Food Waste [CTW635]	685	686	642	(44)
STC001 Street Cleaning [CTW666]	1,465	1,466	1,520	54
Trinity Road Offices GM [CTW668]	16	16	17	1
Grand Total	8,275	8,281	8,414	133
Less: Pay Award impact				(145)
Net variation on contract (excluding Pay Award)				(12)



Table 5b – Ubico, Non-Ubico, Fees & Charges performance (Q3)

Waste, Recycling, Street Cleaning and Grounds Maintenance Services	Gross Service Cost LAB (£'000)	Income LAB (£'000)	Net Service Cost (£'000)	Expⁿ Forecast (£'000)	Income Forecast (£'000)	Net Service Forecast (£'000)	Net Service Variation (£'000)
WST004 Bulky Household Waste	73	(79)	(6)	73	(79)	(6)	0
Car Parks GM [CTW668]	63	0	63	69	0	69	5
CCM001 Cemetery/Churchyards GM [CTW688]	175	0	175	190	0	190	15
RYC002 Garden Waste Collection [CTW634]	1,353	(1,301)	52	1,383	(1,301)	82	31
WST001 Household Waste [CTW611]	1,781	(24)	1,757	1,919	(24)	1,896	138
RYC001 Recycling [CTW633]	3,245	(950)	2,295	3,227	(950)	2,277	(18)
RYC003 Refuse/Recycling/Food Waste [CTW635]	686	0	686	642	0	642	(44)
STC001 Street Cleaning [CTW666]	1,504	0	1,504	1,558	0	1,558	54
Trinity Road Offices GM [CTW668]	16	0	16	17	0	17	1
Grand Total	8,896	(2,353)	6,543	9,079	(2,353)	6,725	183

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



- 4.13 Household waste bins and receptacles – an overspend is forecast of £44k, due to increased demand, increased cost of materials and longer lead times.
- 4.14 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 £0.282m and this is reflected in the net adverse variance of £0.320m for the Leisure and Communities summary line in Table 2.
- 4.15 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.

Treasury Management

- 4.16 Dividends from the Council's longer-term investments (Pooled funds and Real Estate Investment Trusts) of £0.383m were received in the three quarters of the financial year achieving a return of over 5.15% (pooled funds) and around 2.85% (REIT). Interest from short term cash deposits with the Debt Management Office (DMO) was £0.5m by the end of the third quarter due to larger surplus balances than estimated being available to invest and interest rates rising at higher rate than budgeted and remaining high. Investment income is forecast to be £0.960m higher than budgeted at the end of the financial year.
- 4.17 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.
- 4.18 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.



4.19 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. An overview of the non-treasury management performance is set out in Section 6 of the report (Capital Programme) with Annex B providing further details of the relevant prudential indicators.

4.20 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

4.21 As outlined in Tables 3 and 4 there are several significant variations were forecast in Q2 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.

4.22 Paragraph 4.16 in this report provided members with an initial update on the performance of the Council's Treasury Management Investments. The outturn forecast is additional income of £0.920m, largely due to the higher than anticipated interest rates.

4.23 With the strong performance of Treasury Management Investments, the Q2 report 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.

4.24 As reported in Q2, 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 MTFS period.

4.25 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.

4.26 As outlined in the Q2 report (paragraph 4.23 and 4.18) further transfers were agreed to mitigate risk.



- 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 £0.282m is made to the “Contract Smoothing” earmarked reserve to transfer the forecast deficit in respect of the leisure and culture contract in 2023/24.

4.27 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.

4.28 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.

4.29 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.

Publica Review

4.30 Members will be aware from *Publica Review* report in November 2023 ([Publica Review report link](#)) and the *2024/25 Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Medium-Term Financial Strategy Report* in February 2024 ([Budget and MTFS report link](#)) that £0.500m has been set aside in the Corporate Priorities: Publica Review reserve to fund the transition programme cost.

4.31 Whilst there has not been a material level of expenditure incurred by the end of Q3, the table below sets out the commitments on the transition programme that will be funded from this reserve in 2023/24.



Table 6 – Publica Transition Costs

Item	Description	Provider	Approval Date	2023/24 Forecast (£)	CDC Share (£)
Programme Director	Interim Programme Director (AP) sourced through Tile Hill	Tile Hill	21-Dec-2023	70,785	23,595
External Legal advice	External Legal advice to support transition of service from Publica to Councils including TUPE advice	Trowers & Hamlins	21-Dec-2023	10,000	3,333
Human Engine Report	Consultancy and support provided July to October 2023	Human Engine	N/A	26,400	6,600
Local Partnerships	20 days consultancy in 2023/24 - LGA funded	Local Partnerships	21-Dec-2023	0	0
Local Partnerships	Additional support outside of the LGA-funded consultancy	Local Partnerships	15-Feb-2024	0	0
Programme Office	Backfill costs for HR and Finance roles	Publica	29-Feb-2024	11,900	3,967
				119,085	37,495

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 7 provides members with a summary of position at the end of Q3.



Table 7 – Savings Update

	2023/24 Budget Removed (£'000)	Issue highlighted in budget monitoring?	Tracker	2023/24 Forecast Position (£'000)	2023/24 Variation (£'000)
Savings already adjusted out of Service Budgets					
Corporate Savings					
LGPS - Secondary Rate (PIA) (Budget savings)	(139)	No	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(139)	0
Expenditure Savings					
Remove permanent funding for Crowdfunding platform	(85)	No	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(85)	0
Insurance Premium	(47)	No	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(30)	17
Rationalisation of Postage	(20)	Yes	Slippage in Savings Delivery	(11)	9
Rationalisation of MFDs (Multifunction Devices)	(25)	No	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(25)	0
Google / MS 365 Procurement proposal	(10)	No	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(10)	0
Publica Contract - Net change in Establishment	(67)	No	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(67)	0
Visitor information centre funding reduction	(27)	No	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(27)	0
Internal audit days reduction	(20)	Yes	Slippage in Savings Delivery	0	20
Planning Appeals Budget	(40)	No	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(40)	0
Recycling Budget Adjustments	(16)	No	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(16)	0
Household Waste Budget adjustments	(9)	No	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(9)	0
Recycling Credits	(90)	No	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(90)	0
Fees and Charges					
Other Fees and Charges - Cost Recovery	(186)	Yes	Slippage in Savings Delivery	(122)	64
Garden Waste - fee increase	(229)	No	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(229)	0
	(1,010)			(900)	110



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, as approved by Council in February 2024 is £7.512m. Annex A sets out the detailed forecast outturn with commentary from budget holders and is summarised in Table 9 below.

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
Revised budget changes	(7,501)
Adj:	
Adj:	
Latest Budget	7,512

Table 9 – Capital Programme Outturn Forecast Q3

	2023/24 OB (£'000)	2023/24 REV (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q3 (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Forecast (Q3) (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)
Capital Programme					
Leisure & Communities	1,387	79	83	102	23
Housing/Planning and Strategic Housing	4,001	4,765	2,789	4,727	(38)
Environment	1,956	566	285	565	(1)
Retained & Corporate	0	0	0	0	0
ICT, Change and Customer Services	350	100	25	100	0
UK Rural Prosperity Fund	191	191	0	175	(16)
UK Shared Prosperity Fund Projects	28	28	0	20	(8)
Land, Legal and Property	500	567	(0)	84	(483)
Transformation and Investment	5,486	1,216	623	1,025	(191)
TOTAL Capital Programme	13,899	7,512	3,805	6,798	(714)

- 6.2 The capital programme no longer includes the Strategic Property Acquisition scheme (included in the summary line Transformation and Investment). 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.



- 6.3 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

- 6.4 The Council received a capital loan repayment of £0.956m from Cottsway Housing in Q3 2023/24 in line with the terms of the unsecured development loan facility. The Council did not make any asset disposals during Q1 to Q3 2023/24.

Table 10 – Capital Financing Statement Forecast Q3

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	5,062	4,424	(638)
Capital Grants and Contributions	1,576	1,959	1,933	(26)
Earmarked Reserves	0	0	0	0
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO)	150	100	50	(50)
Community Municipal Investments (CMI)	116	391	391	0
Prudential Borrowing	4,021	0	0	0
	13,899	7,512	6,798	(714)

- 6.5 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.
- 7.2 An overview of the non-treasury management performance is set out in Section 6 of the report (Capital Programme) with Annex B providing further details of the relevant prudential indicators.



8. RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

8.1 The risks and uncertainties outlined in the Q2 report and in the 2024/25 Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Medium-Term Financial Strategy report to Cabinet and Council remain relevant.

- 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 does not include updated 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 in the final quarter.
- 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. 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.
- It is difficult at this early stage to set out the financial impact of the transition plan on the Council's finances. Cabinet and Council will consider the initial Local Partnerships Transition Plan report in March 2024.
- The transition of services from Publica to Council will clearly have a material impact on the Council's resources and budget over the next two years. For the purposes of the 2024/25 revenue budget and the MTFS, it is assumed the cost of services will remain within the cost envelope set out over the medium-term.



- In order to fund the one-off costs of transition, Council approved £0.500m to be set aside in the Corporate Priority: Publica Review reserve.

9. CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1** This monitoring report presents an update on the Council's financial position. As the report sets out, an indicative underspend of £0.056m is forecast for the financial year which. Without continued mitigating or corrective action any adverse variation 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.

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.

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

15.1 None

(END)

Annex A - Capital Programme 2023/24 - Q.3

Capital Programme by Service Area	2023/24 Budget [Incl. 22/23 slippage] (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q3 (£'000)	2023/24 Variance to Q3 (£'000)	2023/24 Committed Expenditure (£'000)	2023/24 Forecast Out-Turn (£'000)	Commentary
Leisure and Communities						
Investment in Leisure Centres	1,200	56	(1,144)		75	The Capital project has commenced and the works are currently out to tender, with a date set for returns at end of February 2024. Once returns have been evaluated there is a potential for works to commence in March 2024. An element of the works (shower replacements) has been pulled forwards and is now complete at a cost of £8,912.40. Majority of expenditure is expected to fall within 2024/25.
CLC Pool Works	110	0	(110)		0	This scheme is to address flaking paint from the steel structural support in the Cirencester Leisure 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 24/25.
Government funded decarbonisation	27	25	(2)		25	Final payment made in Q.3 - Snagging and system performance reviewed with installation contractor.
Crowdfund Cotswold/Community Grants	54	2	(52)		2	The sixth edition of Crowdfund Cotswold concluded in September with four projects awarded a total of £24,000 with a collective value of £215,000. At the time of writing two of these projects have hit their funding targets. The spring round launches on 22nd February. 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 holds a balance which will be used to fund current projects and the capital and revenue split will be reviewed as part of year end closedown of the accoutns.

Capital Programme by Service Area	2023/24 Budget [Incl. 22/23 slippage] (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q3 (£'000)	2023/24 Variance to Q3 (£'000)	2023/24 Committed Expenditure (£'000)	2023/24 Forecast Out-Turn (£'000)	Commentary
Housing/Planning and Strategic Housing						
Private Sector Housing Renewal Grant (DFG)	908	908	0		1,300	42 DFG referrals received in Q3 (105 in Q1/2), total expenditure in Q3 of £346k (£561k in Q1 and 2) . This is significantly higher than previous years and other districts.) CDC have 90 live cases with 31 cases that are committed (approved). Annual expenditure expected to exceed £1.3m. Further funding will be requested from the BetterCare fund (via the County Council) to meet the expected overspend. The building of accessible properties is essential to meeting the needs of the district's growing disabled population.
Affordable Housing - Davies Road MiM (S106)	581	290	(291)		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)		3,137	Capital loan provided to Cottsway Housing Association. Forecast based on latest drawdown forecast. Repayment of £1.247m forecast by 31/3/24. Leaving an estimated loan balance due to the Council at 31/3/24 of £1.89m
Bromford Joint Venture Partnership	120	0	(120)		0	The Council and Bromford Housing have entered into a Collaborative Agreement to deliver the Down Ampney Housing development. The submission for planning consent is scheduled to be submitted in Q4.
Environment						

Capital Programme by Service Area	2023/24 Budget [Incl. 22/23 slippage] (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q3 (£'000)	2023/24 Variance to Q3 (£'000)	2023/24 Committed Expenditure (£'000)	2023/24 Forecast Out-Turn (£'000)	Commentary
Waste & Recycling receptacles	55	50	(5)	5	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)			Review of service currently underway. Expenditure not likely until 2024/25.
Provision for financing of Ubico Vehicles	1,646	153	(1,493)	1,064	280	Two replacement vehicles for the Street Cleansing fleet have now been received [£79k] and one refuse collection vehicle (£74k) vehicle. A further eight vehicles are on order, two for Street Cleansing [£87k] and one bin delivery vehicle [£40k], delivery is expected during Q.4. Five RCVs [£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 go through before the end of the year.
Electric Vehicle Charging Points	200	12	(188)		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 have been some further delays with the installation of the EVCP at both Trinity Road and Rissington Road. While groundworks have taken place at both, the DNO connection is still causing significant delays. Contractors are still aiming for the completion of these works by the end of Q4.
Car Park enforcement - vehicle purchase	45	0	(45)		0	A vehicle is currently being leased. The procurement of an electric vehicle will be considered in 2024/25.
Public Toilets - Card Payment (bc)	50	0	(50)	16	16	The installation of card readers took place at the the following public toilet locations within the district: Stow Square, Mangersbury Road [Stow], Forum, Brewery Court and London Road [Cirencester], Bibury, Moreton-in-Marsh and Fairford.

Capital Programme by Service Area	2023/24 Budget [Incl. 22/23 slippage] (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q3 (£'000)	2023/24 Variance to Q3 (£'000)	2023/24 Committed Expenditure (£'000)	2023/24 Forecast Out-Turn (£'000)	Commentary
Changing Places Toilets	123	70	(53)		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, Abbey Grounds (Cirencester) and Birdland. The remaining project at Cotswold Country Park and Beach is awaiting planning approval and thereafter can start almost immediately. It is possible this may slip into the early part of the 2024/25 financial year.
ICT, Change and Customer Services						
ICT Capital	215	25	(190)	50	100	Networking equipment that was ordered in January 2022 has now been received following delays due to world-wide computer chip shortages. Expenditure will go through in Q.4. 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	Awaiting an options paper for the replacement/upgrade of the IDOX system.
Prosperity Grant Schemes						
UK Rural Prosperity Fund Projects	191	0	(191)		175	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. All funding has to be spent/committed by the end of this financial year. Grant schemes have been approved and grant agreements issued. Significant expected spend in Q4, with a small roll over into Q1 of 2024/25. All projects expected to continue into 24/25.

Capital Programme by Service Area	2023/24 Budget [Incl. 22/23 slippage] (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q3 (£'000)	2023/24 Variance to Q3 (£'000)	2023/24 Committed Expenditure (£'000)	2023/24 Forecast Out-Turn (£'000)	Commentary
UK Shared Prosperity Fund Projects	28	0	(28)		20	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. Grant schemes have been approved and grant agreements issued. Significant expected spend in Q4, with a small roll over into Q1 of 2024/25. All projects expected to continue in 2024/25.
Land, Legal and Property						
Trinity Road Carbon Efficiency Works (Council March 2022)	370	0	(370)	270	0	The Council has now obtained planning consent for the installation of Solar PV on the Trinity Road Council office building and the Council has entered into contract with the supplier to install roof mounted Solar PV on both the Council offices and the New Brewery Arts building in the centre of Cirencester. Lead in times for the manufacture and delivery of the panels and related infrastructure mean installations at both these buildings will commence in the late Spring.
Asset Management Strategy	500	0	(500)	500	84	The £500k budget is for investment in existing asset and will likely include structural repairs at the Old Station, cost estimate £158k 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	25	The refurbishment of the laundry room on the ground floor of the annex at Ridgeway House is now complete.

Capital Programme by Service Area	2023/24 Budget [Incl. 22/23 slippage] (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q3 (£'000)	2023/24 Variance to Q3 (£'000)	2023/24 Committed Expenditure (£'000)	2023/24 Forecast Out-Turn (£'000)	Commentary
Trinity Road Agile Working (Council March 2022) [Includes Trinity Road Roof Repairs]	1,126	623	(503)	308	1,000	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 along side the Roof Project which is ongoing. 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	It is currently assumed that this acquisition will not proceed in the current financial year.
	15,013	3,805	(11,208)	2,229	6,798	

ANNEX B NON-TREASURY MANAGEMENT PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 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

2. CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

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

Capital Expenditure	2022/23 actual (£)	2023/24 forecast (£)	2024/25 budget (£)	2025/26 budget (£)
General Fund Services	2,969,737	3,661,000	6,813,000	1,328,000
Capital Investments		3,137,000	0	0

- 2.2 The main General Fund capital projects to date have included expenditure on Disabled Facilities Grants and Trinity Road Agile Working Project. The Council also incurred £2.155m as at 31 December 2023 of capital expenditure in the form of a service loan to Cottsway Housing Association.

3. CAPITAL FINANCING REQUIREMENT

- 3.1 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.

Capital Financing Requirement	2022/23 actual (£)	2023/24 forecast (£)	2024/25 budget (£)	2025/26 budget (£)
General Fund Services	20,211	387,000	435,000	400,000
Capital Investments	0	0	0	0

4. GROSS DEBT AND THE CAPITAL FINANCING REQUIREMENT

- 4.1 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.

	31/3/2023 actual (£)	31/03/2024 forecast (£)	31/03/2025 budget (£)	31/03/2026 budget (£)	Debt at 31/12/23
Debt (incl PFI and leases)	450,757	356,000	260,000	158,000	404,515
Capital Financing Requirement	20,211	387,000	435,000	400,000	

- 4.2 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 overborrowed position and is forecast to change based on the capital expenditure plans set out above. The Council's debt position at 31/3/2023 reflects the

ANNEX B NON-TREASURY MANAGEMENT PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS

balance remaining of the Cotswold Climate Investment (£500k target was reached in August 2022). The need for further borrowing will be kept under review.

- 4.3 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).

5. DEBT AND THE AUTHORISED LIMIT AND OPERATIONAL BOUNDARY

- 5.1 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 Q3 2023/24 (£)	Debt as at 31/12/2023 (£)	2023/24 Authorised Limit (£)	2023/24 Operational Boundary (£)	Complied?
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	

- 5.2 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.

6. NET INCOME FROM COMMERCIAL AND SERVICE INVESTMENTS TO NET REVENUE STREAM

- 6.1 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	505,004	495,018	500,819
Proportion of net revenue stream	4.02%	3.74%	3.42%	3.42%

- 6.2 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.

7. PROPORTION OF FINANCING COST TO NET REVENUE STREAM

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

ANNEX B
NON-TREASURY MANAGEMENT PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS

7.2 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 Rate, and general government grants.

	2022/23 actual (£)	2023/24 forecast (£)	2024/25 budget (£)	2025/26 budget (£)
Financing costs (£)	6,030	9,000	19,000	40,000
Proportion of Net revenue stream	0.05%	0.07%	0.13%	0.27%

(END)

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Agenda Item 16



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET - 7 MARCH 2024
Subject	PUBLICA REVIEW- LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS TRANSITION PLAN
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	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive Email: robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To consider the Local Partnerships report and to approve the recommendations therein.
Annexes	Annex A – Local Partnerships Report
Recommendation(s)	That Cabinet resolves to recommend to Full Council to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the recommendations set out in the Local Partnerships report 2. Instruct the Interim Programme Director to prepare a detailed transition plan, building on the recommendations set out in the Local Partnerships report, for subsequent agreement by Cabinet and Council.
Corporate priorities	Ensure that all services delivered by the Council are delivered to the highest standard.
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive & Section 151 Officer, Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer) CDC Leader, Deputy Leader, Portfolio Holder for economic Development and Cabinet Transformation, CDC Cabinet Members, Publica Review Programme



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

	Director, Publica Interim MD, Publica Assistant Director Organisational Development and Transformation.
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- 1.1 A Local Government Association Peer Review in 2022 highlighted the need to ensure the council was best placed to maximise opportunities associated with an ambitious Administration and Corporate Plan. It recommended that an options appraisal be undertaken, considering the appropriateness of some services remaining within Publica.
- 1.2 An options appraisal review was undertaken by a company called Human Engine in 2023. The final report recommended that a significant number of services should move from Publica and return to being under greater control of the councils. This would leave Publica delivering a range of support and customer services for the Councils.
- 1.3 The Human Engine report and its recommendations were approved by Full Council in November 2023 and work then started to recruit a programme director who would support the Chief Executives and elected members in implementing the transition.
- 1.4 A programme director has now been appointed, following a two-stage interview process involving both officers and Leaders and is working on behalf of the 3 Councils, under the leadership of the Chief Executives, to develop and implement the transition.
- 1.5 It was clear that following approval of the Human Engine report, and whilst the recruitment of a programme director was taking place, it was important to maintain momentum. Local Partnerships was therefore asked to support the councils, as part of its South West transformation grant funding programme, in the development of a 'bridging report' that built on the work undertaken by Human Engine and to inform the preparation and implementation of detailed transition plan that will be presented by the Programme Director and Chief Executive later in the year.
- 1.6 The Local Government Association runs a Transformation Fund programme through its partner organisation Local Partnerships. Local Partnerships LLP is a consultancy firm jointly owned by the LGA, Treasury and Welsh Government, delivering value for the public purse. Local Partnerships come with a wealth of experience and are well placed to be able to refer to the wider public sector's experience of insourcing to provide illustrations of governance, organisational design and service transformation, having been involved in undertaking service reviews for a number of Councils in the past. This knowledge and approach facilitates bringing services back in-house following best practice, rather than simply 'lift and shift'.
- 1.7 The brief agreed with Local Partnerships was for the provision of a high-level set of recommendations, following those set out in the Human Engine report, to enable the



councils to take the project forward. The Councils were granted the equivalent of 20 consultancy days to provide high-level advice based on their experience of supporting councils with transition plans and from evidence gathered from other insourcing projects across the sector. Therefore timescales set out are indicative but realistic based on previous experience. Furthermore the Local Partnerships report did not intend to seek to identify all service areas to be transferred, but to give a high level overview of and suggest key phases of services as part of the transition. It will be for the Interim Programme Director to develop this further with more specific detail in due course. It is envisaged that the detailed transition plan will be completed by the end of April, with subsequent reporting back through the Council's scrutiny and decision-making meetings.

- 1.8** The Local Partnerships commission was undertaken in a similar way to a Peer Review. The Local Partnerships team carried out interviews with the four CEOs, Interim MD of Publica and the Programme Director to understand the current position from their perspective and their views and ambitions for the insourcing project.
- 1.9** In addition a half-day workshop took place with key staff from both the councils and Publica, to understand more about the views of the wider stakeholder group regarding the transition. This information was then used to develop an outline framework for the transition of services to enable the programme team to take this forward. Their report covers key governance, risk and structural principles to support the transition from Publica back to the councils.

1.10 NEXT STEPS

1.11 Governance

- 1.12** It is important that there are arrangements in place to ensure Councillors are provided with regular updates and the opportunity to be part of the review process. In addition to input and oversight from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, and of course the key decision making meetings, following the Full Council meeting in November, it was agreed that a small cross party member working group be created. This group would receive updates on the Publica Review work. The Chief Executive will draft a terms of reference and liaise with Group Leaders regarding membership.
- 1.13** In addition, it is proposed that a facilitated session, open to all members takes place to provide an opportunity to brief all members on the review progress, and to gain member's views on what 'success' will look and feel like (from their perspective) as services are



returned to the councils. It is likely that this session would be facilitated by colleagues from the Local Government Association, supported by the Programme Director and Chief Executive.

2. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1** There are no financial implications associated with this report. The Local Partnerships work was grant funded by the Local Government Association at no cost to the Councils. The As set out in earlier reports, the financial impact of the proposals will be developed as part of the due diligence process over the coming weeks and included in the detailed Transition Plan.
- 2.2** Although there will be further reports to Cabinet and Council throughout the transition period, it is recommended that the quarterly financial performance reports to Cabinet include timely and relevant financial updates.

3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1** There are no legal implications associated with this report. As per financial implications, the legal implications associated with the Publica Review have been previously reported and will remain a key part of the due diligence process.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 4.1** The commissioning of Local Partnerships and their subsequent report provides additional independent advice and recommendations associated with the return of services to the Council. The recommendations are based on assessment of the original Human Engine report, conversations with key officers and their experience based on best practice elsewhere. As such their report is beneficial in terms of providing additional assurances to the Council on the key elements of the review, phasing and the direction of travel. This approach of risk management will continue as the service review develops. In addition, clarity around the transition plan will also help to minimise risks associated with staff feeling unsettled and unsure of their future, which in turn should minimise risks around day-to-day service delivery.

5. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 5.1** 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

When considering this recommendation, no barriers or impact on any of the above groups has been identified.

6. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 This recommendation has no climate change implications.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Annex A Local Partnerships report and recommendations.

(END)



JOINTLY OWNED BY



Insourcing from Publica Review

Version No: Final Report

Issue Date:15 February 2024



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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Supporting the insourcing of some council services from the arm's length company, Publica

Local Partnerships LLP is a consultancy firm jointly owned by the LGA, Treasury and Welsh Government, delivering value for the public purse. We help transform services across the public sector. As a key interface between local and central government, we provide expert advice and practical resources alongside project/programme delivery support, enabling public services to thrive.

Local Partnerships was asked to support the councils, as part of its South West transformation grant funding programme, in the development of a 'bridging report' that built on the work undertaken by Human Engine and that will usefully inform the preparation and implementation of detailed transition plan that will be presented to the Councils, later in the year.

Cotswold District Council, Cheltenham Borough Council, Forest of Dean and West Oxfordshire District Council are all shareholders of Publica, a Local Authority Teckal Company (LATCO) which has been delivering the majority of council services for the past six years. Since Publica was formed, the context for the shareholders has changed because of changes to political control and changes at senior management level, with all four councils having re-instated Chief Executive positions.

A recent LGA peer review recommended that the delivery options for some services should be reviewed, including whether they should be brought back in-house. It also recommended that the commissioner/provider relationship between Publica and the councils be re-considered. Following this, the councils commissioned an independent strategic review of Publica services to provide options for the future of service delivery, the outcome of which was that it was recommended that the majority of services would benefit from being brought back in-house.

The councils have approved the recommendations that the Chief Executives and their retained management teams will work with Leaders and the Publica Board and Executive to consider in detail the requirements for a smooth transition, via preparing and presenting a detailed transition plan for subsequent approval by the cabinet/executive and councils.



1.2 Our brief

The purpose of this work is to provide a high-level set of recommendations, following those set out in the Human Engine report, to enable the councils to take the project forward. It does not seek to identify all service areas to be transferred and as such does not provide a detailed transition plan. It is designed to provide high-level advice based on experience of supporting councils with transition plans and from evidence gathered from other insourcing projects across the sector. Because of the constraints of timing and number of days available, it has not been possible to provide further detail. Therefore timescales set out are indicative but realistic based on previous experience and it will be for the Interim Programme Director to develop this further with more specific detail in due course.

1.3 Our approach

Following the Human Engine report's findings which proposed the transfer of the majority of council services back in-house, we have taken the transition to the next stage.

We have carried out the following:

- Carried out interviews with the four CEOs, MD of Publica and the Interim Programme Director to understand the current position from their perspective and their views and ambitions for the insourcing project
- Co-facilitated a half-day workshop with the Interim Programme Director (see section 4 for list of consultees) to understand more about the views of the wider stakeholder group regarding the transition
- Reviewed the Human Engine report and other reports provided to us
- Used this information to develop an outline framework for the transition of services to enable the programme team to take this forward. This covers key governance, risk and structural principles to support the transition from Publica back to the councils, ensuring that the councils operate in 'lockstep' including governance boards, terms of reference and decision-making documents to mandate contributions from all
- Referred to the wider sector's experience of insourcing to provide illustrations of governance, organisational design and service transformation. This is to facilitate bringing services back in-house following best practice, rather than simply 'lift and shift', including collective criteria regarding how the services might look



- Provided recommendations on the governance of the reduced scale Publica.

This report and its recommendations will then lead into the detailed transition work being carried out by the transition team led by the Interim Programme Director.



2 Findings and Recommendations

2.1 Introduction

This report follows the work conducted by Human Engine consultants which concluded that the majority of council services should be brought back to the sovereign councils (the 'what'). This now requires further detail and an implementation plan to enable it to happen (the 'how') which will be facilitated by the Officer Transition Board, reporting to the owning councils and led by an Interim Programme Director.

The overarching vision for the new way of working has been agreed, which is to bring back control of the majority of services to the councils.

Through discussions with those interviewed (see section 4 for details), the rationale for insourcing is more than simply the overall cost of service delivery. A key consideration is the ability for the councils to set their own direction and ensure services are delivered in a sustainable way, whilst being focussed on positive results for residents and businesses of their administrative area.

Other key considerations have been identified as:

- Recruitment and retention
- Capacity
- Sustainability
- Sovereignty
- Affordability
- Resilience
- Maintaining 'business as usual'
- Risk management
- Trusted partnerships
- Pragmatism
- Control
- Duplication of managerial costs
- Simplifying operational arrangements.



We have used these as the basis for our recommendations.

There has been a general trend of insourcing across the local government sector in recent years. In addition to cost saving, reasons for this are wide-ranging and include:

- Building greater flexibility, rather than being at the behest of a third-party provider, even if it is owned by the authority as it is still arm's length from it
- Greater control of service delivery in an uncertain economic landscape
- Ensuring better service continuity
- Addressing poor performance
- Improving the quality of services
- Better opportunity for governance and alignment to political ambitions
- Increased integration of services
- Community wellbeing and satisfaction.

Typical services insourced tend to be administrative-related functions such as revenues and benefits and HR. Environmental services also are often insourced because of the inflexibility of long-term contracts. However, in the case of some arm's length wholly owned or joint venture companies, there is often a wide range of services delivered through this means.

While there are many examples of where previously outsourced services have been brought back in-house, there are no examples that are similar to the arrangement with Publica. This is due to the relatively high number of shareholders (four) and having set a company delivering most of the councils' services which are not also trading externally. It is therefore difficult to draw a true comparison. However, some learning can be drawn. The most relevant examples that have been found are included in section 5.

It is good practice to undertake regular reviews of how services are delivered and from research it seems that practicalities rather than ideology have been at the root of why decisions have been taken to revert to insourcing. Service delivery models that were appropriate at one point in time may no longer be appropriate as the landscape changes, so the review of Publica at this stage in its evolution, as with many other public organisations, is timely.

Recognising that there are demonstrable benefits to insourcing, it must be implemented carefully as it is not without its challenges and there are a range of factors that need to be considered, including the cost of the transition. There is no guarantee that costs will reduce



because of it. It is often difficult to determine whether insourcing has been successful as savings such as a reduced establishment and fewer resources needed in relation to governance are not easily quantifiable and may not be realised until sometime after the transition. Some examples of insourcing have reported cost savings, whilst others have resulted in additional costs, however, many report that the wider benefits have made it worthwhile. Others have forgone the benefits of income generation by the outsourcing company achieved through external trading, however, this is not the case for Publica which was not set up for that purpose, but rather was established purely for the purpose of providing services to the owning authorities and it is doubtful that trading to external parties could easily be established at Publica without significant investment given that it has not traded externally before. Although Publica has not generated external income, it has generated cost savings. Whilst it is recognised that some of these savings may be lost in the insourcing process, it is expected that other savings will be made possible.

2.2 Overview of Transition

Insourcing requires careful planning and management to ensure continuity of service delivery, the successful transfer of intellectual property and knowledge, and the effective integration of services including ensuring the people who deliver them to ensure they are fully engaged in the process.

Transitioning from an out-sourced delivery model to a wholly in-house service model, or hybrid arrangement involves several key stages. A good practice template of stages for transition and progress against it to date is set out in section 6. This has been used as the basis for the transition framework at section 2.4, which in turn will be further developed by the Interim Programme Director.

As noted above, the Human Engine report and its recommendation to bring the majority of services back in-house has been taken as the starting point for this phase of work.

A summary of the output from this work is shown below. This is a starting point for development rather than a definitive list and has been tested as part of this work through the interviews and workshops to determine to what extent there is agreement.



Retained in Publica	Sovereign	Opportunities to Share
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Services • Complaints • Revenues and Benefits • Housing Services • ICT • Data Protection • Freedom of Information • Subject Access Requests • Procurement • Transactional Finance • Transactional HR including Payroll 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Finance • Accountancy • Insurance • Economic Development • Tourism • Parking • Property and Estates • Communications • Community Safety and Engagement • Business Intelligence • Corporate Performance • Organisational Development • Electoral Services • Democratic Services • Members Services • Waste • Grounds Maintenance • Leisure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Housing • Development Management • Building Control • Land Charges • Risk Management • Health and Safety • Emergency Planning and BCP • Flood Risk • HR Policy and Employee Relations • Legal Services • Commercial Contract Management (could include Waste, Grounds and Leisure) • Environmental Health • Food Safety & Licensing

The detail around alternative delivery models has not been considered in this report. However, there are opportunities for sharing services and possibly looking to use Ubico for additional service provision. Initial discussions have taken place between Cotswold and West Oxfordshire councils to explore the scope to share certain services and roles, with Forest of Dean most likely looking to provide direct service delivery or consider other neighbouring authorities for potential partnering opportunities. Stakeholder interviews together with an initial workshop with officers involved in the process has been carried out as part of this review, focusing upon exploring the preferred option as set out in the Human Engine report. This has provided the opportunity to understand the thoughts and take on board the particular considerations of those involved.



In terms of the phasing to repatriate services, the workshop identified the following, based on the rationale of number of staff involved, complexity of service and need for systems/infrastructure, ease of disaggregation time/cost implications, and ability to trade in the future should services remain in Publica. This has been used as an indicative list of services to be transferred, with approximate timings, for the first two phases.

The Officer Transition Board will be responsible for confirming which services will transfer in each phase. The third phase will be decided by the parties at a later date.

The first phase should be completed as soon as possible and within no longer than six months. This progress can then be used to provide some certainty of direction of travel and generate reassurance within the teams of meaningful progress.

To achieve some early wins, those services that are relatively more straightforward to move across, such as democratic services and elections, could be in the first phase.

2.3 Recommendation 1: Consider adopting the proposed phasing

Phase 1 (6 months from April 2024)	Phase 2 (12 months from April 2024)
Development and building control	Food safety and licencing
Local plan team	Environmental health
Democratic services and elections	Performance and Business intelligence
Corporate plan and policy	Property and estates
Economic development	Project management
Communities	Communications
Climate change/environment/sustainability	
Strategic finance	



Strategic HR	
Strategic housing	
Community wellbeing	

The decision regarding which services should remain in Publica will be decided at a later date. Any future governance framework will depend on the outcome of the decision on this matter.

At the workshop officers identified that there could be further opportunity to include some services in the first phase which were allocated to future phases, as it was noted that some services would be relatively ease to 'lift and shift'. Further work to reach agreement as to which services should be allocated in which phase may need to be reviewed more corporately (e.g. sustainability could be grouped with flood risk management), thinking more innovatively in line with the new ways of working.

The Office Transition Board will take this work forward. Together with team members, it will look at and agree the most appropriate way forward for each service. This will consider all relevant factors including HR, finance and other practical considerations so that informed decisions may be made. The timescales provided are indicative and may change in due course as more detailed planning is undertaken.

2.4 Design-led principles

These principles will be fundamental to the success of the insourcing project. The re-patriation principles and criteria will need to be decided as part of the planning stage, where opportunities for changing the way in services are delivered can be considered against the needs of the individual councils and their corporate objectives. Each council will need to articulate its ambitions for success and consider if this aligns with other councils. Corporate plans will need to be assessed in terms of their alignment to one another and the shared ambition. This should assist in embedding the councils to a new organisational culture into the ways of working, rather than creating a like-for-like structure.

2.5 Recommendation 2: Consider adopting the proposed design-led principles criteria

- *Being responsive and business like* - adopting a more commercial mindset when considering engagement with businesses, residents, and key stakeholders, ensuring a cost recovery approach is implemented wherever possible to maximise service efficiencies etc.
- *Shaping delivery of services* - being more mindful of efficient working methodologies (travel routes etc.)



- *How best to repatriate staff* - where staff work across multiple councils (taking the provisions of TUPE into account), considering factors such as historic pension strain, relationship lead roles with specific councils, whether as part of a shared role, the majority of work is undertaken principally for a particular council
- *Cost* – recognising that there is a cost to bringing services back in-house and it may be difficult to quantify any short/medium-term savings such as senior management salaries and reduced costs of running a company
- *Employing people locally, being accessible and visible*, with the ambition of making services more local with greater accountability and transparency
- *Group services to accelerate efficiencies*, by identifying synergies between certain services before moving services.

These criteria will be important in ensuring clarity is provided to staff and members on how the repatriation process will be agreed and should be developed further as part of the more detailed transition plan.

2.6 Transition framework

A proposed outline framework for transition is set out below. Further information is included in the table in section 6. Because there are various uncertainties, it is not prudent to identify timescales after June 2024 when the detailed transition plan is expected to be completed. The number of tasks required to reach this point is significant and will require dedicated resource and alignment across all stakeholders. However, there are some quick wins that may be achieved early on to provide certainty regarding direction of travel. This framework is intended as a starting point for development into a detailed plan by the Interim Programme Director as lead of the Office Transition Board, working on behalf of the Councils.

2.7 Recommendation 3: Consider adopting the proposed outline transition framework

Phase	Action	Features	Points to note	Indicative timescales	Dependencies
1	Programme office set up	Membership, TOR, reporting mechanisms	Staff roles and responsibilities agreed and staff seconded into teams TOR for programme agreed PID produced Meeting schedule developed	Immediate	Reporting lines to be established e.g. to each council's cabinet Delegation of authority/decision-making agreed



			Project plans including timelines, dependencies, milestones established		
1	Creation of Programme Board to support alignment of all stakeholders	Articulation of agreed principles underpinning the project	Any red lines of each council to be noted Recorded and minutes of meeting required	Immediate	Details may take time to be agreed
1	Development of Target Operating Model	Stages of transfer, confirm which services are moving and when, what is remaining in Publica Development and agreement of design-led principles	Ethos of new organisations to be established and new organisation design developed – see below Early indication of the future look of Publica and its relationship with councils Review services coming across and in what order Defining new approach e.g. more commercial approach to service delivery Councils may not all agree on principles and phasing of transition	Immediate	Other partnerships (shared services) may be being considered in parallel but not to be a distraction Agreement may not be reached by June 2024
1	Organisational Design Model incorporating individual organisations organograms	Review current management structure to ensure adequate capacity to manage and lead future insourced functions	Review the current management structure within each council in order to identify any functional/capacity gaps e.g. Human Resources, OD/Culture and transformation requirements Primary responsibility sits with each of the councils to determine their own organograms with the assistance of Publica to share	June 2024	TOM / Design principles to be agreed to trigger what is implemented



			<p>details on current staffing arrangements/alignment etc.</p> <p>Purpose to set a clear direction of travel for the councils, to review and evaluate and update its practices, policies, procedures and ways of working, ensuring an improved customer experience post transfer of services</p>		
1	Development of Target Operating Model				
Phase 1 outcome: a settled and detailed transition plan ready for cabinet approvals					
2	Financial plans and future operating budgets developed and agreed	Detailed financial analysis of impact of transfer	Costs of transfer including programme board costs, transfer related costs, any redundancies, branding etc. Benefits may be measured against these	June 2024	Depending on decision regarding Publica's future look
2	Consultation with recognised Trade Unions	Establishing a partnership approach with Trade Unions so that their views and those of their members can be taken into consideration when developing transitional plans.	<p>Dialogue should commence in good time to allow for meaningful consultation (and where appropriate) negotiation and as a minimum in line with statutory requirements</p> <p>Consultation documents to be developed including business case for change, benefits to services to be realised, current and future establishments and any resulting impacts on staff etc</p>	July 2024	<p>TOM and Organisation Design/ organograms completed and approved.</p> <p>Financial plans and budgets developed and agreed</p>
2	Communications	Staff engagement strategy required.	Engagement and Communications strategy developed and detailed plan	July 2024	



		Regularised updates to be shared with elected members including backbenchers	produced utilising Platforms e.g. Yammer		
2	Individual Employee Consultation	Within the wider consultation process and in addition to the formal consultation process undertaken between management and Trade Union representatives.	Individual consultation with affected staff should commence once business case for change has been developed and shared with Trade Unions Employees given the opportunity to express their own preference as to where they transition to prior to any final decisions being taken by management	July 2024	Consultation document prepared and shared with Trade Unions.
2	Managing Change protocols	Single agreed set of protocols to be developed and consistently applied by all councils when filling new vacancies arising out of TOM /Organisation Design.	A single, transparent, fair and equitable approach to 'Managing Change' protocols should be developed and adopted by all parties in consultation with Trade Unions, incorporating i) appointment process ii) redeployment process iii) Pay protection and iv) Employment law	Post July 2024	
2	Organisation Development/Culture change programme	Encouraging dialogue/ identify Staff champions	Recognising that change is a difficult process consideration as to how staff will be supported through the transition should be developed Managers will have a key responsibility throughout the	Post July 2024	Link to communications and organisational design and development review.



			process and therefore, appropriate OD interventions, training and use of other support facilities should be made available		
2	Internal Governance	<p>Identification of all relevant governance boards and reporting lines to each by the Officer Transition Board</p> <p>Consideration of cross-party working group</p>	<p>Audit and Scrutiny Committee Cabinet Shareholder Forum Scrutiny Panel Formation of Member Transition Group to be considered</p> <p>All-member briefing to gather views on what 'success' looks like</p>	Post July 2024	
2	Publica governance	Implementation of new governance system for Publica following transfer	<p>Shareholder Forum revised to meet current needs</p> <p>Revised structure of Publica board</p>	Post July 2024	
2	Risk management	Development of risk register	Monitoring arrangements	Post July 2024	
2	Transfer of existing staff	Transfer of staff from Publica to sovereign councils	<p>Regulation 3 of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 will apply where a service provision of an organised group is transferred back into one or more of the councils</p> <p>Since TUPE transfers can be detailed, time consuming and fought with legal and contractual</p>	<p>Post September 2024</p> <p>Indicatively: Phase 1 – 6 months</p>	



			challenges, Councils are recommended to obtain specific and more detailed HR and legal advice a part of the Officer Transition Board		
2	Transfer of other assets	As above	As above	As above	
Phase 2 outcome: completion of phase 1 transfers in October 2024					
3	Development of new roles e.g. client commissioner roles, new senior team officers	Client roles to be set up to manage contracts remaining with Publica	May be drawn/appointed from Publica transferees subject to Managing Change protocols	Post July 2024	
3	Explore further opportunities for sharing	Opportunities to share between each other and/or with others	This could be carried out as a second stage	Post July 2024	
3	Benefits realisation assessment	Reviewed regularly to ensure no problems escalate	Part of Transition team's remit and circulated to stakeholders	Post July 2024	
Phase 3 outcome: Completion of identification of further operational efficiencies leading to phase 2 transfer					

The timescales set out are indicative but realistic based on previous experience and will be for the Interim Programme Director to develop this further with more specific detail.



Governance of Publica

This will depend on what services remain in Publica. As noted above, it is likely that in the short-medium term, Publica will be leaner and focussed on a smaller number of largely support/back-office services. With a phased approach to transition, Publica will remain in existence in some form for the foreseeable future. As a smaller organisation, a decision will need to be made regarding whether to retain it and potentially make it a more commercial entity e.g. through trading services externally. This will need to be balanced with the level of resource that would be required for its effective governance to determine if it is worthwhile keeping a separate company.

Factors to take into account should include the resource needed to continue to invest in Publica when there is a significant transition programme of insourcing also requiring officer time whilst still ensuring council services are not disrupted.

In the transition period however, governance may be strengthened both in terms of strategic and operational matters by the following:

- Refreshing the shareholder forum through a review of composition and terms of reference to ensure that it has sufficient oversight of Publica in its current form
- Reviewing the board of directors, ensuring that its size and nature is appropriate for the revised size of Publica, and that non-executive directors have the relevant skills to steer the company through the next phase e.g. with transition/business change skills
- An updated business plan setting out the proposed approach over the next year
- Ensuring that council-side committees such as Audit and Governance Overview & Scrutiny are regularly reviewing the performance of the company in accordance with the councils' requirements
- Ensuring that there is a strong clienting function to manage the day-to-day oversight of remaining the Publica contract. There may be challenges because of the way the contracts have been set up which do not lend themselves to KPI management, but there is still an opportunity to make changes to the way the contract is managed.

The governance of Publica is reliant on clarity from the councils regarding its role and what its objectives will be in its new form.



3 Conclusion and Next Steps

3.1 Summary of recommendations

Consider adopting the recommendations as set out above, which in summary are:

- The proposed phasing of service transfers
- The proposed design-led principles
- The proposed outline transition framework

It is envisaged that the transition of the majority of Publica services will take place in three phases over the next 18 months or longer. This is a major programme of work of great complexity and intricacy that will require significant resource and consensus for it to be successful. However, some initial progress may be made in the first phase, as soon as possible and ideally within the first six months, to demonstrate progress and reduce levels of uncertainty.

At this stage there are some unknowns and agreement will be needed in relation to the exact timescales for completion, which services will remain in Publica and whether there is any desire to trade. It is hoped that this framework will provide additional context and thought that will help to ensure the programme delivers against the key objectives summarised in section 1.

With a lack of direct comparison of service reviews of this type, (because of the unique nature of Publica i.e. four shareholders and a comprehensive range of services being in-sourced) there will be an emphasis on the Interim Programme Director, CEO's, key members and Publica management to ensure that assurance processes are put in place to enable the project to be successful in achieving its objectives. However, the other examples of insourcing provide some learning opportunities.

The development and continued implementation of the existing Officer Transition Board and recruitment of a dedicated Interim Programme Director will support this work. The team will now take forward more detailed plans in relation to the framework set out in this report as the next step in transition.



4 List of consultees

The list of those interviewed and/or attended the workshop is set out below:

Name	Role	Interviewed	Attended workshop
Rob Weaver	CEO, Cotswold DC	Yes	Yes
Giles Hughes	CEO, West Oxfordshire DC	Yes	Yes
Gareth Edmundson	CEO, Cheltenham BC	Yes	
Nigel Brinn	CEO, Forest of Dean DC	Yes	
Andrew Pollard	Interim Programme Director	Yes	Yes
Frank Wilson	Interim MD, Publica	Yes	Yes
Phil Martin	AD, Business Services		Yes
Jon Dearing	AD, Residents' Services		Yes
Bill Oddy	AD, Commercial Development		Yes
Zoe Campbell	AD, Organisational Effectiveness		Yes
Andy Barge	AD, Communities		Yes
Claire Locke	AD, Property and Regeneration		Yes
John Llewellyn	Business Manager, HR		Yes



Sian Roxborough	MO, Forest of Dean DC		Yes
David Stanley	S151, Cotswold DC		Yes
Andrew Knott	S151, Forest of Dean DC		Yes
Andrea McCaskie	MO, West Oxfordshire DC		Yes
Angela Claridge	MO, Cotswold DC		Yes



5 Other examples of insourcing

London Borough of Islington

One of the largest insourcing examples. Since 2011 has brought back in-house £380m of services for the purposes of delivering better quality and value which for the majority of service has proved to be the case. A key outcome was enabling better terms and conditions of 1,200 frontline staff and generated net savings to the Council in the region of £14m. Services brought in included cleaning, housing repairs and maintenance, waste and recycling, grounds maintenance and temporary accommodation. For the phase of insourcing in 2019, the council ran a consultation to residents. Businesses, services users and those with an economic interest in the borough.

London Borough of Barnet

The decade-long partnership with Capita, set up in 2013, was one of the country's largest local authority outsourced contracts. Its aim was to deliver significant benefits with savings of £31m and improved customer satisfaction. In the early years savings were made but as the contract continued, these failed to be sustained. As income targets amongst other issues failed to be met, the Council decided to insource services from the company (Re). Its various contracts with Capita encountered various problems including a major fraud and did not deliver against targets despite generating savings, for which it had to pay compensation. There were particular problems with IT performance.

300 staff were re-patriated from highways, planning and environmental health in a first phase, with estates, building services, facilities and print transferring in a second phase. HR and finance systems transfer after that, but IT, customer services, and revenues and benefits will remain for some time because of the complexities and would result in further costs associated with redundancies and cuts to services. All back-office services are expected to be insourced by 2026, to allow more time to make arrangement for the future of these services as swiftly as possible. The insourcing of Re is expected to save up to £204k per annum. Three years has been allowed for insourcing to allow breathing space to consider options, including sharing services with neighbouring London boroughs,

Shropshire Council

Shropshire's wholly owned company, IP&E Limited, was set up in 2012 to facilitate a strategic commissioning framework for all council services, transferring services across in phases. It was wound up in 2016 as it was loss-making and all services (comprising a large proportion of Council services) were brought back in-house. Significant overheads were unsustainable and exacerbated by a lack of external trading. High overheads arose from buildings and the appointment of senior staff which was unmatched by rise in income. Catering, cleaning, facilities



management, finance, HR, legal and print services were initially re-patriated. Then communications, public health, development management, building control, public protection and regulation of private sector housing were transferred in a second phase.

South Holland and Breckland District Councils The two councils mutually agreed to end their eleven-year partnership of a shared management and joint working arrangement in 2021, in order to pursue new local strategic partnerships at each council. They reported that, as well as producing productive joint working on strategy and policy development, helping to protect front-line services, and the recruitment and retention of skilled officers, the partnership has also saved taxpayers' money totalling around £4.4million, plus ongoing annual benefits to each council in excess of £0.5m, proving its value at a time where councils have found themselves under particular financial pressure.

However, with temporary separate management teams put in place to deal with the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as ongoing national discussion around the Local Government Review process and the potential outcomes of this for each council, senior leaders at both sides have recognised the need to review their partnership and explore the case for changing the way the councils work together.

Both have decided that the best decision for the districts and its residents would be to develop a new strategic partnership within existing county boundaries, which will support them to carry on delivering great outcomes for their communities whilst also giving them the flexibility to adapt to a fast-changing and challenging local government environment.

South Holland has since entered into the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership with Boston and East Lindsey district councils. The three will share a management team and workforce. The ambition is to provide the councils with the opportunity to share a stronger voice at a local, regional, and national level and will enable savings of up to £42m to be achieved over the next ten years. The shared workforce is almost 1,000 officers, the partnership will look at providing improved services to local communities with greater efficiency whilst also working to identify and secure investment for growth and regeneration in strategic infrastructure across the partnership area.

South Worcestershire Civica Partnership

The three south Worcestershire districts of Worcester City, Malvern Hills and Wychavon District Councils had been in a long-term partnership with Civica for the delivery of revenues and benefits and customer services. However, in early 2022 Civica expressed its intention to exit the partnership and therefore the three councils had to make alternative arrangements. Civica's budget had reduced because of the councils' desire to make efficiencies and it was no longer a viable model. After looking at alternative service providers, they decided to bring the services back in house, continuing to work together as a shared service. This began in January 2023 and took approximately one year to complete. The staff, comprising approximately 70 people, were transferred from Civica to Malvern Hills District Council. No money was saved because all efficiencies had already been found. Although no cost savings were achieved, the councils have reported that morale and productivity is higher



and service standards have improved. It is not clear exactly why, but it is believed that it is because the service has been brought closer into councils and this has supported a feeling of greater purpose.



6 Insourcing good practice template

Stage 1 – Pre-Transition Assessment	Activity	Progress against plan
1. Future State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be clear about what the insourced service will look like once it has been transferred from Publica (the ‘Transferor’) to the receiving organisation/s (the ‘Transferee/s’). • Identify what your BAU operating model will be since this will help inform the next steps in the transition process and the degree to which some of those steps may overlap with one another. • Failure to define the ‘future state’ or new ‘TOM’ will potentially lead to confusion; disrupt service delivery and may damage your external reputation with service end users. • By clearly defining how you intend to operate your services post-transition, you are likely to be able to return to BAU more quickly; avoid or mitigate any service delivery or reputational risks associated with the transition; reduce the impact on staff and avoid potentially costly employee relations issues. • It also becomes increasingly difficult to be able to assess the success of the project post-implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Engine report sets out the general approach i.e. to insource the majority of services • Workshop clarified preferred phasing of services to be brought back in • Further work on TOM needed to provide extra detail including which services may be shared between the councils and/or more widely
2. Review existing Contract with Publica and negotiate exit terms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important to fully understand and consider the contractual terms and conditions associated with terminating the current arrangements. It is important to ensure that adequate notice or any other legal requirements within the contract are adhered to, in order to avoid any potential claims 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services may be removed at any time with a notice period



	<p>of breach of contract and ensure the disaggregation process is legally compliant.</p>	
<p>3. Establish Transition Oversight Team with supporting Task and Finish Workstreams Leads</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Interim Programme Director responsible for leading the transition will need to establish a team of senior personnel to oversee the development and implementation of the transitional plan. The main function of the Officer Transition Board is to provide strategic direction, make key decisions including removing barriers likely to impact the successful implementation of the programme, secure any necessary resources, identify and manage any emerging risks, ensure politicians are kept informed of progress and approve communications strategies. • Some of the key roles to include on the Transitional Programme Board are Finance; HR/Workforce; Legal; Communications and Heads of Service/Function as appropriate. • Underneath the Transition Programme Board will be the various Task and Finish Groups led by the Programme Board leads who will be responsible for implementing various aspects of the transition plan e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ HR/Workforce responsible for conducting consultation with recognised trade union representatives, handling staff transfers including TUPE ensuring appropriate 'due diligence assessments' are carried out as well as ensuring a continuous programme of staff engagement is implemented. They will also be responsible for ensuring effective Change Management processes are developed and implemented consistently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversight board created and Interim Programme Director appointed • Further work to ensure sufficient relevant resource is committed to this project will be needed, including the setting up of separate task and finish groups as required • Robust governance and reporting procedures to be established to ensure compliance with any legal obligations, ensure transparency to all key stakeholders, and to ensure any emerging risks are quickly identified and mitigating action take to eliminate or reduce the impact on service delivery.



	<p>where organisational restructures are required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Communications responsible for ensuring the drafting of key messages, producing newsletters and internal communiques, responding to any external data information and FOIs are responded to according to legal requirements etc.○ Legal responsible for reviewing contracts include licence renewals etc.○ IT/Systems where any changes to information and/or technical processes are required; manage the transfer of any physical assets to ensure continuity of service throughout the transition period.	
4. Develop Transition Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Develop a comprehensive transition plan that captures the various workstream actions setting out the specific steps required to exit the current outsourced arrangements so that services are transferred smoothly and effectively.● The Transition plan should include details of the phasing of each service to be transferred with appropriate timescales, key milestones, reporting periods and risks registers.● Identify any processes that need developing to facilitate the transition, such as the development of any Management of Change protocols, processes and procedures.● Identify any capacity issues detailing out any recruitment / change management processes that need to be actioned before any service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Outlined in this report with further detailed plans to be developed by the Interim Programme Director by May 2024



	<p>(TUPE) transfers take place aligned to the new TOM/organisation structure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure statutory consultation periods are captured and built into the plan making sure sufficient time is allocated to make for meaningful consultation with both recognised trade unions and effected staff.• Build in requirements for staff / management briefings.	
5. Develop Reporting and Performance Tracker Templates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop relevant Programme Management reporting templates to ensure progress can be tracked, risks and mitigating actions are captured and monitored effectively throughout the transition period. Communications are logged and recorded including relevant Q&As developed and published for staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To be developed by the Interim Programme Director
6. Commence Implementation of the transition plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Once approval of the implementation plan is gained start initiating the transition process ensuring regular assessments are undertaken of any impact on service delivery to minimise disruption and maintain operational effectiveness,• Beginning the transition by facilitating the transfer of the most straight forward services to move across demonstrates commitment and sets the foundation for the successful implementation of future service transitions.• Ensure any training requirements are identified and address as soon as possible making sure that all the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively deliver the services are in place and	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Subject to approval by the constituent Council Members.



	<p>any identified gaps are closed as soon as practical.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Progress any recruitment required to support the delivery of the incoming services or top fill gaps as a result of non TUPE transfers.	
7. Review and amend	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Post transfer, actively assess the performance of the returned service/s to ensure they are delivering as expected. It may be necessary to adjust or amend allocation of resources, revisiting processes etc. in order to maintain effective standards of performance as well as look for opportunities for continuous service improvement.• Track performance by setting clear KPIs; seeking feedback from staff and service users.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To be implemented post-transfer



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Agenda Item 17



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET – 7 MARCH 2024 COUNCIL – 20 MARCH 2024
Subject	DECISION TAKEN UNDER URGENCY POWERS
Wards affected	None
Accountable member	Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council Email: joe.harris@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive Officer Email: robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk
Report author	Andrew Brown, Democratic Services Business Manager Email: Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To report to Cabinet and Council on a decision taken by the Chief Executive Officer under urgency powers.
Annexes	Annex A – Urgent decision notice
Recommendation(s)	That Cabinet resolves to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the decision taken as set out in Annex A. 2. Recommend to Council to note the decision taken as set out in Annex A.
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering Good Services • Responding to the Climate Emergency • Delivering Housing • Supporting Communities • Supporting the Economy
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	The Leader of the Council and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were consulted and agreed to the taking of the urgent decision.



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report is to formally notify Cabinet and Council of a decision taken by the Chief Executive under urgency powers. The decision taken was to recommend to Council to approve the Corporate Plan 2024-28.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council's Constitution at Part D8 includes the following provision for matters of urgency:

The Council's Chief Executive has delegated authority to take any action they consider necessary in the interests of the Council in cases of urgency. They must only act after consultation with the Leader of the Council, the Chair of the Council or the appropriate Committee and the relevant Ward Member(s), if any. Any action taken in this way shall be reported to the first available meeting of the Council, Cabinet or relevant Committee, as appropriate.

3. URGENT DECISION

- 3.1 The urgent decision taken by the Chief Executive, including the reasons for it and why it was treated as urgent, are set out in the decision notice attached at Annex A.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 The alternative options considered are set out in the decision notice at Annex A.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Chief Executive is authorised to take any action he considers necessary in the interests of the Council in cases of urgency.

- 6.2 The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 provide that key decisions may be taken without being notification being advertised on the Council's Forward Plan in cases of special urgency if the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees agrees that the making of the decision is urgent and cannot reasonably be deferred. In this case the decision had been notified on the Forward Plan for 28 days but with Cabinet rather than the Chief Executive as the decision maker.

- 6.3 The Constitution (Part D8) provides that any decisions taken in this way will be reported to a meeting of the Cabinet, Council or committee, as appropriate. In this case the decision was an executive function that would have ordinarily be taken by Cabinet. The Constitution



also requires (at Part C1, 1.3.19) that, following the taking of an urgent decision, the Leader will provide a full report to the next available Council meeting explaining the decision, the reasons for it and why it was treated as urgent.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT

7.1 There are no risks associated with the recommendations in this report.

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.1 There are no impacts on equalities.

9. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no climate and ecological emergency implications.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None.

(END)

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Delegated Decision Notice (DDN)

This form is used to record any delegated decision which has been taken by officers under delegated authority.

Decision title	Urgent Decision – Recommendation of Corporate Plan to Full Council for approval.
Decision date	15 January 2024
Decision maker	Chief Executive Officer
Source of delegation (resolution or Constitution – please reference)	<p>Part D8 of the Constitution authorises the Chief Executive to take any actions necessary in the interests of Council:</p> <p>The Council’s Chief Executive has delegated authority to take any action they consider necessary in the interests of the Council in cases of urgency. They must only act after consultation with the Leader of the Council, the Chair of the Council or the appropriate Committee and the relevant Ward Member(s), if any. Any action taken in this way shall be reported to the first available meeting of the Council, Cabinet or relevant Committee, as appropriate.</p>
Decision taken	To recommend to Council to approve the Corporate Plan 2024-28.
Reasons for the decision	<p>Following the withdrawal of the Corporate Plan item from the agenda of Cabinet on 11 January 2024 due to further consultation being required on the final document, the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader approved the revised version to go to Full Council. The reason for the urgent decision was due to the Corporate Plan needing approval by Council in advance of the formulation of the Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2024/25. The Corporate Plan will inform elements of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the budget setting process needs to be cognisant of the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan and the means of delivering them. As such delaying the Corporate Plan until the full Council in February was not deemed to be a viable option.</p>
Alternative options considered	<p>Officers did consider alternative options for approving the Corporate Plan, but none were considered possible in order for approval to be granted within the required timeframe.</p> <p>The deferral of the Corporate Plan decision to a later Council meeting was considered but not having the Corporate Plan in place before the budget Council meeting was not deemed to be a suitable option.</p>



Key or non-key?	Key (significant impact on 2+ wards)
Subject to urgency rules?	<p>Yes</p> <p>The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that the making of the decision was urgent and cannot be reasonably deferred, in accordance with Under Regulation 11 of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.</p> <p>The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee further agreed that the usual call-in arrangements be disapplied, in accordance with the Council's Constitution (Part C1.3.17).</p>
Affected wards	All Wards
Details of consultation undertaken	Leader of the Council, Deputy Leader of the Council, Deputy Chief Executive, Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer), Business Manager for Democratic Services, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Lead officer	Rob Weaver, Chief Executive
List of documents considered	Corporate Plan 2024-2028 (to be published as part of the Full Council agenda on 16 January 2024)



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 7 March 2024

SCHEDULE OF DECISION(S) TAKEN BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBERS

Note

- Any decision that is still subject to call-in by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is marked with the expiry date of call-in at the standard close of business time of 5pm.
- Further information on the decision taken and the webcast link can be found within the hyperlink for each 'subject'.



Cabinet Member	Meeting Date	Subject	Decision(s)
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance – Councillor Mike Evely	4 March 2024	Applications For Discretionary Rate Relief	The Deputy Leader considered the recommendation of the officer and the contents of the report and resolved to APPROVE applications 1 – 12 as recommended within the report and REFUSE applications 13-15 as recommended within the report. <i>(Subject to call-in expiring on 12 March 2024)</i>
Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation – Councillor Tony Dale	5 March 2024	Whiteway Car Park Permits	The Cabinet Member considered the recommendation of the officer, the contents of the report and resolved to APPROVE the officer's recommendation to introduce a monthly season ticket permit at the Whiteway car park. <i>(Subject to call-in expiring on 14 March 2024)</i>
Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services – Councillor Juliet Layton	6 March 2024	Neighbourhood Planning: Representation To The Cirencester Regulation 14 Draft Consultation	That the Cabinet Member considered the recommendations of the officer and the draft representation presented at Annex B of the report, and subject to any amendments, AGREED this for submission to Cirencester Town Council <i>(Subject to call-in expiring on 14 March 2024)</i>
Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services – Councillor Juliet Layton	6 March 2024	Neighbourhood Planning: Decision To Make The Down Ampney Neighbourhood Development Plan	That the Cabinet Member considered the recommendation of the officer and the referendum result and AGREED to make the plan. <i>(Subject to call-in expiring on 14 March 2024)</i>