

# Public Document Pack



**COTSWOLD**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Friday, 12 July 2024

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## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be held in the Council Chamber - Council Offices, Trinity Road, Cirencester, GL7 1PX on **Monday, 22 July 2024 at 4.00 pm.**

Rob Weaver  
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
(Councillors Gina Blomefield, Gary Selwyn, David Cunningham, Angus Jenkinson, Dilys Neill, Michael Vann, Tony Slater, Clare Turner, Jon Wareing and Tristan Wilkinson)

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

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

# AGENDA

1. **Apologies**  
To receive any apologies for absence.  
  
The quorum for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is 3 members.
2. **Substitute Members**  
To note details of any substitution arrangements in place for the Meeting.
3. **Declarations of Interest**  
To receive any declarations of interest from Members and Officers, relating to items to be considered at the meeting.
4. **Minutes (Pages 5 - 10)**  
To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 7 May 2024.
5. **Matters Arising from Minutes of the Previous Meeting**  
To consider actions outstanding from minutes of previous meetings
6. **Chair's Announcements**  
To receive any announcements from the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
7. **Public Questions**  
A maximum of 15 minutes is allocated for an “open forum” of public questions at committee meetings. No person may ask more than two questions (including supplementary questions) and no more than two such questions may be asked on behalf of one organisation. The maximum length of oral questions or supplementary questions by the public will be two minutes. Questions must relate to the responsibilities of the Committee but questions in this section cannot relate to applications for determination at the meeting.  
  
The response may take the form of:
  - a) A direct oral response (maximum length: 2 minutes);
  - 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.
8. **Member Questions**  
A maximum period of fifteen minutes is allowed for Member questions. Questions must be directed to the Chair and must relate to the remit of the committee but may not relate to applications for determination at the meeting.

Questions will be asked in the order notice of them was received, except that the Chair may group together similar questions.

The deadline for submitting questions is 5.00pm on the working day before the day of the meeting unless the Chair agrees that the question relates to an urgent matter, in which case the deadline is 9.30am on the day of the meeting.

A member may submit no more than two questions. At the meeting the member may ask a supplementary question arising directly from the original question or the reply. The maximum length of a supplementary question is one minute.

The response to a question or supplementary question may take the form of:

- a) A direct oral response (maximum length: 2 minutes);
- 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.

**9. Report back on recommendations**

For the Committee to note the Cabinet's response to any recommendations arising from the previous Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.

**10. Publica Review- Detailed Transition Plan (Pages 11 - 66)**

Purpose

To consider the Detailed Transition Plan, to note its content and to approve the recommendations therein.

Recommendation

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- I. Agree any recommendations it wishes to submit to the Cabinet Meeting on 25 July

Invited

Joe Harris, Leader of the Council  
Robert Weaver, Chief Executive

**11. Channel Choice and Telephone Access Update (Pages 67 - 80)**

Purpose

The purpose of this report, in light of a continuous decline in customer demand, is to propose that the trial becomes a permanent arrangement following the data gathered. The trial of reduced telephone access hours from 9am – 2pm, to the public has proved the concept and our customers are continuing to shift to digital channels.

Recommendation

That Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves to:

- I. Agree any recommendations it wishes to submit to the Cabinet meeting on 25 July.

Invited

Councillor Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for the Economy and Council Transformation  
Jon Dearing, Interim Executive Director

**12. Service Performance Report 2023-24 Quarter Four (Pages 81 - 152)**

Purpose

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

Recommendation

That Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves to:

- I. Note the update and agree any recommendations it wishes to submit to the Cabinet meeting on 25 July.

Invited

Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council  
Robert Weaver, Chief Executive  
Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst

13. **2023-24 Final Revenue and Capital Outturn Report (Pages 153 - 194)**

Summary/Purpose

This report sets of the outturn position for the 2023/24 financial year.

Recommendation

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves to:

- I. Review and note the outturn financial position set out in this report

Invited

Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance  
David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer

14. **Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report (Pages 195 - 224)**

Purpose

To receive the annual report of the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Recommendation

That Overview and Scrutiny committee:

- I. Recommend that the report be received by Full Council at the meeting on 31 July.

15. **Updates from Gloucestershire County Council Scrutiny Committees**

Purpose

To receive any verbal updates on the work of external scrutiny bodies:

Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee – Cllr Angus Jenkinson  
Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Cllr Dilys Neill

16. **Work Plan and Forward Plan (Pages 225 - 244)**

For the Committee to note and review its work plan and to select Cabinet decisions for pre-decision scrutiny at future committee meetings.

(END)

Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
07/May2024



COTSWOLD  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Minutes of a meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday, 7 May 2024

### Members present:

Gina Blomefield – Chair  
Angus Jenkinson  
Dilys Neill  
Michael Vann

Gary Selwyn – Vice-Chair  
Tony Slater  
Clare Turner  
Jon Wareing

Tristan Wilkinson  
Len Wilkins

### Officers present:

Robert Weaver, Chief Executive  
David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and  
Chief Finance Officer  
Angela Claridge, Director of Governance and  
Development (Monitoring Officer)  
Claire Locke, Assistant Director for Property  
and Regeneration

Sophia Price, Heritage and Design Manager  
Ana Prelici, Democratic Services Officer  
Debbie Smart, Legal Services Change Manager

### Cabinet Members Present:

Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance  
Councillor Juliet Layton, Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services  
Councillor Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for the Economy and Council Transformation

### **OS.61** Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor David Cunningham.

### **OS.62** Substitute Members

Councillor Len Wilkins was a substitute for Councillor David Cunningham.

### **OS.63** Declarations of Interest

In relation to item 9. Ecological Emergency Update, Councillor Angus Jenkinson stated that he was the member with responsibility for Ecology but that as that as he was not the Cabinet Member, he could not fully take part in the discussion on the item.

### **OS.64** Minutes

The following corrections were made;

- Minute OS.56 'CD' should be CB
- Minutes OS.55 and 56, Councillor David Fowles had asked to be referred to as 'he/him' instead of 'they'.

RESOLVED: Subject to the aforementioned amendments, to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 27 April.

Voting record – For 7, Against 0, Abstentions 3

#### **OS.65 Matters Arising from Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Members raised the Programme Initiation Document, as referenced in minute OS.54 of the previous meeting. The Deputy Chief Executive stated that this would be included in July's Cabinet report on the Publica review, which would also be coming to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

There were no further comments on matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

#### **OS.66 Chair's Announcements**

The Chair stated that two all member briefings would be held the following week:

- 14 May, 12.00pm- Affordable Housing and;
- 14 May, 5.15pm- Waste and Recycling.

The Chair encouraged members to attend the briefings and had no further announcements.

#### **OS.67 Public Questions**

There were no public questions.

#### **OS.68 Member Questions**

There were no member questions.

#### **OS.69 Ecological Emergency Update**

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services introduced the report.

The purpose of the report was to update the Committee on progress in implementing the Ecological Emergency Action Plan. The report stated that The Ecological Emergency Action Plan continued to be delivered, focusing on the mandatory elements, for example planning applications (including Biodiversity Net Gain), local plan policy, etc; however, due to lack of resources no action was currently underway to address the new enhanced biodiversity duty requirements. In addition, there was scope for the Council to increase its activity to address the Ecological Emergency in more depth, particularly with local communities and in the context of Green Infrastructure.

The Cabinet Member also congratulated Olivia McGregor on her recent appointment as the new Climate Change Lead.

The Committee discussed the report, commending the quality of it, and raising the following points of discussion which were also addressed by officers;

- While Biodiversity Net Gain could be monitored through the Council's annual monitoring of development, the remainder of the Ecological Emergency Action Plan

would be prohibitively expensive to monitor (i.e. incurring costs larger than the Council's budget). External data, e.g. by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) could not be pinned to the Council's specific interventions.

- All planning applications (with the exception of self-build, retrospective and householder types) made after April 2024 would be liable to the new Biodiversity Net Gain requirements.
- Members raised concerns over resourcing, making reference to the Ecological emergency. The Chief Executive was aware of the need for the further resource, but challenges affected the entire Council and many departments. They suggested that any resource requests would be dealt with as part of the Publica Review.
- The legal monitoring responsibilities under the Environment Act were referenced, which would be partially covered by developer contributions towards Biodiversity Net Gain requirements but would not be fully cost neutral to the Council.

Councillor Angus Jenkinson proposed that the Overview and Scrutiny recommend that Cabinet considers the necessity to increase resourcing for Ecology, given the Council's goal (green to the core), declared climate and ecological crisis and increased legal monitoring obligations. Councillor Jenkinson appreciated the Chief Executive's comments but referenced an urgency of need for additional resource for Ecology.

Councillor Gary Selwyn seconded the proposal.

RESOLVED: That the Overview and Scrutiny

1. Note the report
2. Recommend that Cabinet considers the necessity to increase resourcing for ecology, given the Council's goal (green to the core), declared climate and ecological crisis and increased legal monitoring obligations.

#### **OS.70 Adoption of Asset Management Strategy**

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report, which was an item that had come to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for pre-decision scrutiny. The Cabinet was due to make a decision on the report on Thursday 9 May 2024.

The purpose of the report was for Cabinet to agree to adopt the Asset Management Strategy to provide a clear strategy for future decision making and investment in the Council's land and property assets.

The Deputy Leader stated that a previous interim Chief Finance Officer had recommended that an asset management strategy be put in place. The Deputy Leader explained that at Councils which had issued Section 114 notices recently, a lack of a register of assets had been an issue, which highlighted the importance of the work.

Noting the list of assets at Annex B, members raised some local concerns in their wards, such as;

- Parking concerns in Bourton on the Water and ensuring sustainability for businesses.
- Referencing the local plan partial review, major strategic development in Moreton-in-Marsh, for which strategic engagement with Members would be needed.
- The path and verge in Broadwell were strategically significant in regard to a planning application.

The Chair assured members that these concerns would be dealt with by officers but that they were out of scope of the report they were considering.

Members welcomed the report and stated that it was important. In discussion, members raised the following points which were addressed by the officers and Cabinet Member:

- The Cabinet Member explained that the purpose of the strategy was to plan how assets would be used, not the strategic acquisition of sites. The Deputy Chief Executive added that the strategy followed advice in the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) guide on asset management and that if the Council's priorities around assets shifted, this would be picked up as part of a Corporate plan refresh.
- An LSVT was a Large Scale Voluntary Transfer, in this case it was from the Council to the Housing Association.
- The list of assets at Annex B was fluid and liable to change but it would be updated at least annually. If there were large scale property acquisitions or disposals then the list would be updated more regularly in line with these.
- A 'ransom strip' was a piece of land which would enable a future strategic acquisition of an otherwise landlocked site.
- The Deputy Chief Executive stated that the valuations around these assets were for accounting purposes and would not necessarily reflect a sale price.

RESOLVED: To NOTE the report.

#### **OS.71 Legal Services Partnership Agreement and Transformation Programme Update**

The Cabinet Member for the Economy and Council Transformation introduced the report, which was an item that had come to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for pre-decision scrutiny. The Cabinet was due to make a decision on the report on Thursday 9 May 2024.

The Cabinet Member stated that legal services at all three Publica councils had been shared since 2016. The Monitoring Officer had felt that it was necessary to review the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of the arrangement. The Cabinet Member added that the situation around legal services was positive although they were not fully staffed at all councils, there were no fewer than four members of legal staff at each Council. A case management software (Iken) had also been procured.

Members discussed the report and raised the following points which were addressed by the officers and Cabinet Member:

- The partnership agreement would be different to the Publica arrangement, as only expertise would be shared.
- Members noted the financial challenges faced by the Council and asked how service levels, in particular those around statutory obligations would be maintained in light of these. The Cabinet Member stated that the challenges were evident but that sharing expertise as much as possible would help to alleviate these.
- Members perceived an increased risk of employment tribunals due to the transfer of services from Publica to in-house, and this may impact the legal team's workloads. The Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer) stated that they hoped that would not be the case. Members also mentioned that there was a risk of unbudgeted legal costs arising through planning appeals, which would involve additional support from legal services, and potentially needing to pay compensation if an appellant is successful.



Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
07/May2024

- The Council's procurement processes had been followed in procuring the Iken software. The time tracking feature on the software would be used to look at broader trends but not scrutinised on an individual level.

RESOLVED: To NOTE the report.

Councillor Tony Slater departed the meeting, apologising to the Chair as he needed to attend a Parish Council meeting.

**OS.72 Report back on recommendations**

There were no comments from the Committee on the item.

**OS.73 Updates from Gloucestershire County Council Scrutiny Committees**

Councillor Angus Jenkinson stated the GEGSC had not been meeting while the Cities Region Board was being reorganised.

Councillor Dilys Neill had attended the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting as the representative on this Group on 12 March. Councillor Neill summarised the challenges faced by the NHS, but also shared good news such as a new diagnostic tool for cancer. At the suggestion of the Chair, Councillor Neill stated that she would send her full written report to the Democratic Services Officer to include as a supplement to the minutes.

**OS.74 Work Plan and Forward Plan**

The Chair introduced the work plan and stated that it would be likely to change throughout the year.

Members discussed the work plan, noting the following points:

- On the meeting held on 8 July, the Publica Transition Plan would be considered. The Chair asked that this be dealt with as the first item.
- Housing should be brought forward as an item as well as a member briefing.
- Audit matters were mentioned, but this was the remit of the Audit and Governance Committee, so outside of the scope of the work plan.

RESOLVED: to recommend the work plan to the incoming Committee for 2024/25.

**Voting record**

**For 9, Against 0, Abstentions 0, Absent/Did not vote - 1**

The Meeting commenced at Time Not Specified and closed at Time Not Specified

Chair

(END)

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# Agenda Item 10



**COTSWOLD**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	<b>COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
Name and date of Committee	<b>CABINET – JULY 2024</b>
Subject	<b>PUBLICA REVIEW - DETAILED TRANSITION PLAN</b>
Wards affected	All wards
Accountable member	Cllr Joe Harris, Leader of the Council Email: <a href="mailto:joe.harris@cotswold.gov.uk">joe.harris@cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive Email: <a href="mailto:rob.weaver@Cotswold.gov.uk">rob.weaver@Cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Report author	Robert Weaver Chief Executive Email: <a href="mailto:rob.weaver@Cotswold.gov.uk">rob.weaver@Cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	To consider the Detailed Transition Plan, to note its content and to approve the recommendations therein.
Annexes	Annex A – Detailed Transition Plan Annex B – Equality Impact Assessment
Recommendation(s)	<p>That Cabinet resolves to recommend to Full Council to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Approve the implementation of Phase I of the Publica Transition based on the Detailed Transition Plan and the phasing for the transition.</li> <li>2. Delegate to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, the decision to deal with any final detail matters arising from the Detailed Transition Plan.</li> <li>3. Delegate authority to the Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer), in liaison with the Leader, to update the constitution by making any consequential changes required as a result of Phase I of the Publica Transition.</li> <li>4. Carry out a budget re-basing for the 2026/7 financial year so that the funding provided to Publica is proportionate to the services received.</li> <li>5. Note that following the decision on Phase I, preparatory work for Phase 2 will commence and will be the subject of a separate report</li> </ol>



	<p>6. Note the following as included in the Detailed Transition Plan; <i>Section 2: Transition Planning:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Note the Design-Led principles</i></li> <li>• <i>Note the Key Goals for Transition</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Section 7: Modelling Assumptions and Outputs:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Note the cost modelling for Phase 1.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Section 9: Post-Transition Support:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Note the need for post-transition support.</i></li> </ul>
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivering Good Services</li> <li>• Responding to the Climate Emergency</li> <li>• Delivering Housing</li> <li>• Supporting Communities</li> <li>• Supporting the Economy</li> </ul>
Key Decision	YES
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive & Section 151 Officer, Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer), Leader, Deputy Leader, Cabinet Members, Publica Review Interim Programme Director, Publica Interim Managing Director and through a facilitated workshop with Local Partnerships, Publica Assistant Directors.

## I. BACKGROUND

- I.1. The majority of Cotswold District Council services are currently delivered through Publica, a joint vehicle owned by the Council together with West Oxfordshire District Council, Cheltenham Borough Council and Forest of Dean District Council. A Local Government Association Peer Review in October 2022 recommended an options appraisal be undertaken concerning how services were delivered. An options appraisal was undertaken in 2023 by external advisors Human Engine. Their final report (subsequently agreed by Cabinet and Council in November 2023) recommended that the majority of services should be repatriated to the councils, over 2 phases, and that Publica be reshaped. This work has been developed following the appointment of an Interim Programme Director in January 2024, leading to the Detailed Transition Plan having been prepared.
- I.2. Local Partnerships, supported by the Local Government Association (LGA) South-West Region transformation funding, subsequently delivered a report in February 2024, endorsing the Human Engine Report findings, providing additional supporting detail, and setting out two phases under which the majority of services should be repatriated Phase I comprising a

significant number of services expected to be in/around 2024 and phase 2 expected to commence in/around March 2025.

- I.3. In March 2024, the Council considered the Local Partnerships report which built on the recommendations set out in the Human Engine report, for subsequent agreement by Cabinet / Executive, Overview and Scrutiny and Council. The Council agreed to the recommendations and instructed the Interim Programme Director to prepare a Detailed Transition Plan.
- I.4. To support the Chief Executives of the Shareholders Councils and elected members in implementing the transition of services, an Interim Programme Director was appointed at the end of January 2024 to lead the Publica Transition Programme. The scope of this Programme referenced the Human Engine Report delivered in Autumn 2023 which recommended retaining selected services within Publica, meaning that the majority of services would move to direct control and be shared, via Publica or some other model on a case-by-case basis.
- I.5. The Interim Programme Director established a small, focused Programme Management Office, comprised of an HR expert/lead and a Business Partner Accountant. The programme team engaged with council and Publica key staff (including the Section 151's and Monitoring Officers) via the creation of several workstreams (Finance, Legal, HR, ICT and Communications, initially) as the 'spokes' to the Programme Management Office ('PMO') 'hub'. This flexible model has provided engagement that is both broad and technically defined. In addition, a workshop jointly facilitated with Local Partnerships took place with senior Publica executives and retained officers from the Councils 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 PMO to take the Programme forward.
- I.6. A governance structure was developed to provide oversight, support, and decision-making by way of an Officer Transition Board (comprised of each Council's CEO, the Interim Managing Director of Publica and the Interim Programme Director), with a Council Programme Board providing the bridge link back to the Councils.
- I.7. In developing the Detailed Transition Plan, the PMO carefully considered the Councils' objectives expressed through their corporate plan objectives, the design-led principles outlined at high-level by Local Partnerships in their report and the aims of the Transition in relation to services and service delivery.
  - Deliver more defined local priorities.
  - Better reflect Member priorities and Corporate Plans
  - Be more agile



- Be more sustainable.
- Ensure better control over service.
- Define services more to locality, with residents at the heart

**1.8.** In addition to the initial workshop, and project governance meetings, the PMO has undertaken fact-finding meetings with officers at all levels across the Councils and Publica to help inform the Transition Plan. This helped to develop the rationale for the services to be transitioned in Phase 1 and Phase 2.

**1.9.** Significant work has been undertaken to model the costs associated with the transition of services back to the council, involving the CEOs and S151 officers at each Council. Costings were modelled starting with an assured baseline, then considering risk, opportunity, and risk mitigation. Each element informed the overall project brief. Opportunities for sharing certain services and roles were considered and refined following a CEO workshop. Taken together, this has enabled a Programme GANTT chart to be refined over time providing the backbone to the programme. Through the process, it became clear that Phase 1 needed to take effect on 1 November to allow sufficient time for workforce consultation. The focus of the Detailed Transition Plan has therefore been on Phase 1 and the relevant steps for this. A full programme of Communications has been developed in support, together with documents developed by HR in support of the transition. There are no ICT systems implications and ICT is engaged in developing a series of Council employee portals to support Councils from the 1 November “go live” date onwards.

## **2. DETAILED TRANSITION PLAN**

**2.1** The Detailed Transition Plan attached in Appendix A sets out the services proposed to transfer, the process including phasing, consideration of risks and opportunities, cost implications, practicalities, and timelines. It makes recommendations for a number of elements to be noted and for the phasing for the Transition to be approved.

**2.2** The Detailed Transition Plan has an accompanying employee communications and engagement plan to ensure that all the key information is passed to employees, that they are engaged in the process and that they are consulted with as part of the transition process. The plan follows best practice HR and communications and will follow a clear and prescribed process to ensure the right information is communicated at the right time to ensure employment law is adhered to and that Publica employees are treated fairly. It also focuses on supporting employees through the process and explaining what the future will look like post-transfer via the correct channels.



**2.3** The service areas transferred in Phase I will include:

- Democratic Services and Elections
- Forward Planning
- Development Management (but not 'planning validation and planning support')
- Ecology
- Conservation, Heritage & Design
- Building Control
- Economic Development
- Tourism
- Communities and wellbeing
- Climate change
- Strategic Finance (to include all finance roles apart from transactional finance procurement, insurance, and Treasury Management)
- Communications
- Strategic Housing
- Corporate Planning, policy, and partnerships
- Executive Assistants and Support

**2.4** In addition, an HR Business Partner is to be seconded to the Council, ahead of the transfer, meaning that there will be a dedicated in-house Council resource at an early stage to support the Council directly pre- and post-transfer.

**2.5** The Detailed Transition Plan has an accompanying employee communications and engagement plan to ensure that all the key information is passed to employees, they are engaged in the process, and they are consulted with as part of the transition process. The plan follows best practice HR and communications and will follow a clear and prescribed process to ensure the right information is communicated at the right time to ensure employment law is correctly followed and Publica employees are treated fairly. It also focusses on supporting employees through the process and explaining what the future will look like post-transfer via the correct channels.

### **3. THE COUNCIL PLAN**

**3.1** The Council has agreed on an ambitious corporate plan that recognises and embraces the challenges facing the District and sets out the Council's key priorities.

- Delivering Good Services
- Responding to the Climate Emergency



- Delivering affordable housing
- Supporting Communities
- Supporting the Economy

#### **4. BUSINESS CASE**

**4.1.** The Publica Review provides an opportunity to restructure the Council and invest to deliver the vision and priorities set by the Corporate Plan.

**4.2.** The rationale for the additional costs of Phase I is:

1. A more focused and defined approach to driving the delivery of the Council's priorities as set through the Council Plan.
2. Clear distinction between policy and high-level strategy versus delivery. More defined control for the Council.
3. Greater clarity over roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities – and where direction is set from.
4. Greater clarity and focus for those functions remaining with Publica.
5. Enabling performance and value for money to be more clearly defined and measured by the Council.
6. Simplifying processes and determining whether and how resources can be deployed and redeployed as priorities shift.
7. Greater responsiveness and agility, to be able to deliver Member priorities and adapt to changing circumstances.
8. Greater focus on locality and local services.
9. Employing people locally, using this in support of economic growth.
10. Opportunity to group services and accelerate efficiencies, by identifying synergies between services before moving and re-defining them.
11. Adopting a responsive and business-like approach with a commercial mindset when engaging with businesses, residents, and key stakeholders, ensuring a cost recovery approach is used where appropriate to maximize service efficiencies.
12. Better focus and ability to drive the sustainability agenda of the Council.

In developing the Detailed Transition Plan, the PMO carefully considered the Councils' objectives expressed through their corporate plan objectives, the design-led principles outlined at a high level by Local Partnerships in their report.



- 4.3. It is assumed within the Detailed Transition Plan that with the significant changes to Publica, there will also be a budget re-basing for the 2026/7 financial year. This will ensure that the funding provided to Publica is proportionate to the services received.

## 5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 A detailed financial model has been developed to assess the implications of services transferring from Publica to the Council. For the purposes of this report and the DTP (Detailed Transition Plan), the financial model only considers Phase I services. Further modelling will be needed to prepare for and implement phase 2.
- As with all financial modelling, several critical judgements and assumptions have been made and these are covered in the Detailed Transition Plan (Section 7).
- The 2024/25 Financial Performance reports will provide members with a comprehensive overview of the outturn forecast for the year taking into account the financial implications of Phase I.

### February 2024 MTFS (Medium Term Financial Strategy) assumptions

The financial implications of Phase I are framed in the context of the February 2024 Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), as approved by the Council at the meeting on 21 February 2024. Section 2 of the MTFS outlined the emerging position of the Publica Review and the financial approach to be taken through the review process. In summary, the MTFS recognised the requirement to balance the budget over the MTFS period with service costs contained within the financial envelope set out in the MTFS by taking opportunities to make services as efficient and cost-effective as possible.

- 5.2 To ensure adequate provision is made for the costs and mitigation options over the transition period the MTFS sets out the approach to increase the availability of one-off revenue and capital resources through effective resource management and consideration of flexible capital receipts (where appropriate and in accordance with the Council's policy).
- 5.3 The Table below presents the summary MTFS from February 2024 – budget surplus forecast for 2024/25 and 2025/26 with a significant budget gap identified from 2026/27. It is worth noting that the position set out in the MTFS from 2026/27 was prior to the identification and delivery of additional cost savings or income streams.



	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	(£'000)	(£'000)	(£'000)	(£'000)
<b>MTFS Summary</b>				
Net Service Revenue Expenditure	15,858	15,858	15,858	15,858
Corporate Items/Non Service Income & Expenditure	(1,015)	(649)	(50)	24
Transfers to/(from) earmarked reserves	476	(557)	(701)	(701)
Provision for Inflation	1,117	1,993	2,694	3,414
<b>Service + Corporate Items</b>	<b>16,437</b>	<b>16,645</b>	<b>17,801</b>	<b>18,596</b>
Budget Pressures	584	628	690	740
Technical Adjustments	77	77	77	77
Risk Items	0	0	0	0
Savings and Transformation Plan items	(2,036)	(2,931)	(3,205)	(3,422)
<b>Draft Net Revenue Budget</b>	<b>15,061</b>	<b>14,419</b>	<b>15,362</b>	<b>15,990</b>
<b>TOTAL Funding</b>	<b>(15,577)</b>	<b>(14,743)</b>	<b>(13,852)</b>	<b>(12,479)</b>
<b>Budget Gap / (Surplus)</b>	<b>(516)</b>	<b>(324)</b>	<b>1,511</b>	<b>3,511</b>

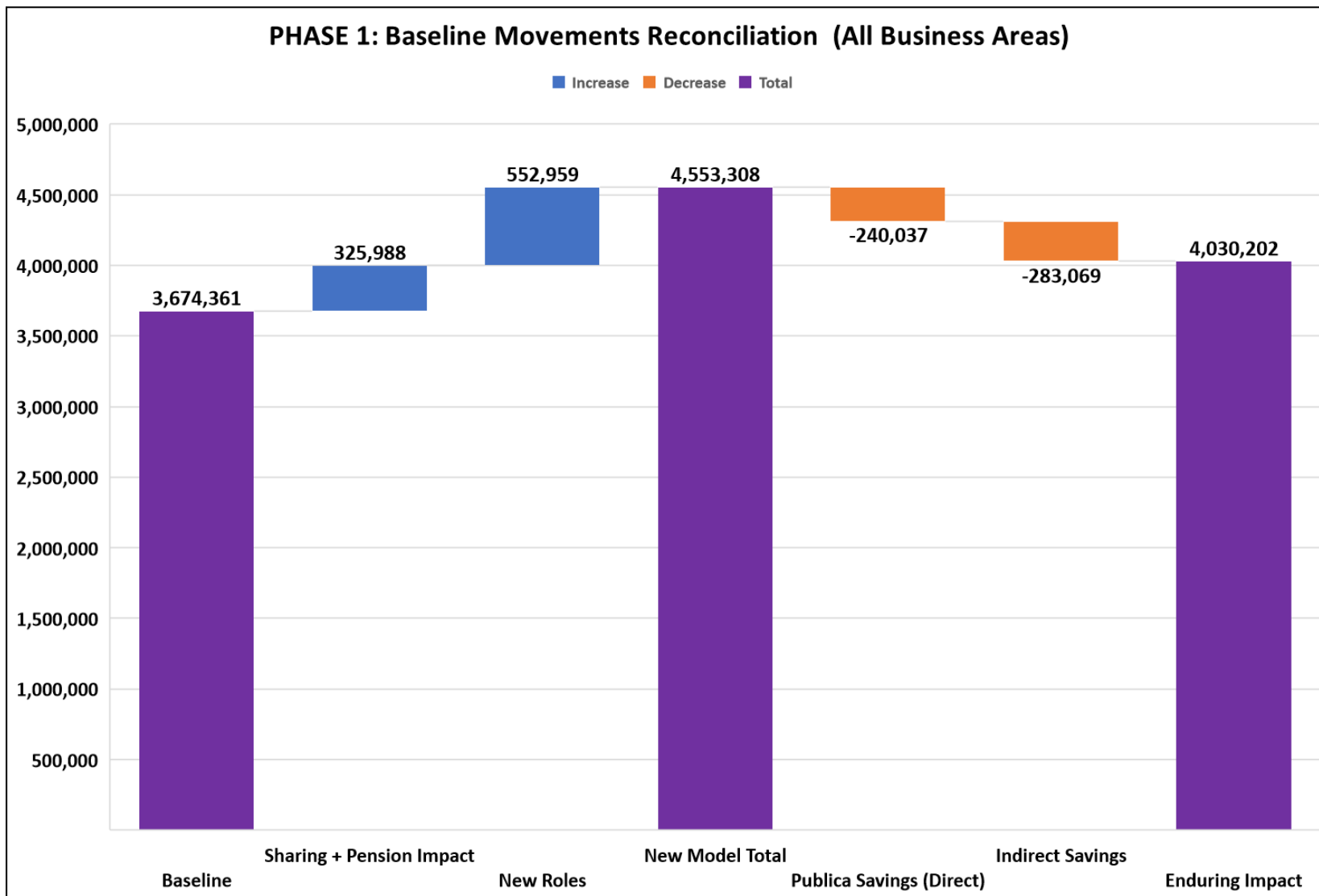
Financial Resilience Reserve forecast based on current MTFS	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	(£'000)	(£'000)	(£'000)	(£'000)
Balance b/f	(2,429)	(2,946)	(3,270)	(1,759)
Use of Reserve	(516)	(324)	1,511	3,511
Addition to Reserve (BRP)				
<b>Balance c/f</b>	<b>(2,946)</b>	<b>(3,270)</b>	<b>(1,759)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Overdrawn Reserve balance c/f</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,752</b>

#### 5.4 Phase I Outline and Methodology

The methodology followed in the financial modelling for Phase I is summarised below:

- Baseline data based on January 2024 payroll information.
- 94 vacant posts were reviewed with 65 vacant posts included in the Baseline.
- 81 posts transfer from Publica to Cotswold District Council including vacant posts.
- Posts identified under the scope of Phase I were built into a 'Phase I Cost Model' to provide an indicative financial impact assessment of the roles transferring to the Councils on an 'As-Is' basis.
- Cost increases attributable to the posts identified under Phase I arise due to post holders currently ineligible for the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) becoming eligible for LGPS at the point of transfer. An increase in the employer pension contribution from 5% (Royal London Scheme) to 20.7% (LGPS).
- The assumption is that there is no subsequent opt-out from LGPS (i.e., 100% of staff eligible to join LGPS do not opt-out). For the purposes of the model, this is a prudent assumption with likely opt-out rates expected to be very low.
- Sharing assumptions with WODC and/or FODC

- A small number of posts are identified as at risk with an estimated cost range included in this report for redundancy, payment in-lieu of notice, and pension strain.
- 5.5** As part of the Phase I transfer, the Organisational Structure of Cotswold District Council has been reviewed to provide senior management oversight of services. A key proposal is that each council has identified the need for a director level post to support the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer as part of the retained senior management team. The new roles have been costed utilising the current Publica Average peer group salary levels and are identified in the Council's waterfall chart.
- 5.6** The summarised impact on the Council service delivery costs is shown in the Waterfall chart below.





## 5.7 Impact on the Council's financial position – UPDATED MTFS and Financial Resilience Reserve

As shown in the table above, the net impact on the Council budget in a full year is £0.356m (Part-year impact in 2024/25 of £0.148m)

	2024/25 (£'000)	2025/26 (£'000)	2026/27 (£'000)	2027/28 (£'000)
<b>MTFS Summary</b>				
Net Service Revenue Expenditure	16,584	16,584	16,584	16,584
Corporate Items/Non Service Income & Expenditure	(1,004)	(651)	(52)	22
Transfers to/(from) earmarked reserves	306	(726)	(871)	(871)
Provision for Inflation	0	875	1,576	2,297
<b>Service + Corporate Items</b>	<b>15,886</b>	<b>16,083</b>	<b>17,238</b>	<b>18,033</b>
Budget Pressures	148	425	425	425
Technical Adjustments	0	0	0	0
Risk Items	0	0	0	0
Savings and Transformation Plan items	(825)	(1,720)	(1,995)	(2,212)
<b>Draft Net Revenue Budget</b>	<b>15,209</b>	<b>14,787</b>	<b>15,668</b>	<b>16,246</b>
<b>TOTAL Funding</b>	<b>(15,577)</b>	<b>(14,743)</b>	<b>(13,852)</b>	<b>(12,479)</b>
<b>Budget Gap / (Surplus)</b>	<b>(368)</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>1,816</b>	<b>3,767</b>
Previous Budget Gap / (Surplus)	(516)	(324)	1,511	3,511
Movement	148	368	305	255
<b>Cumulative Movement</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>821</b>	<b>1,077</b>

Financial Resilience Reserve forecast based on current MTFS	2024/25 (£'000)	2025/26 (£'000)	2026/27 (£'000)	2027/28 (£'000)
Balance b/f	(2,429)	(2,798)	(2,754)	(938)
Use of Reserve	(368)	44	1,816	3,767
Addition to Reserve (BRP)				
<b>Balance c/f</b>	<b>(2,798)</b>	<b>(2,754)</b>	<b>(938)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Overdrawn Reserve balance c/f</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,829</b>

5.8 Without compensating changes to the Council's budget for 2025/26 and over the MTFS period, there is increased pressure on the financial resilience reserve to achieve a balanced budget position.

## 5.9 Actions/Mitigations

It is clear the financial impact of the Phase I transfers will require the Council to carefully consider options for maintaining a balanced budget position over the MTFS period.



It is beyond the scope of this report to present options and recommendations – these will be developed over the Autumn as part of the wider 2025/26 budget-setting process and update of the MTFS. The Council will continue to reflect on the following criteria as part of the budget-setting process:

Emphasis on service transformation – continual review of service outcomes and their net cost with a cultural shift towards a more commercial approach to residents, businesses, and customers. Ensuring service delivery decisions consider the net cost of service delivery, utilising IT solutions to deliver ongoing service efficiencies.

Publica structure post transfer – as the Councils consider the quantum of services that will continue to be delivered by Publica, options should be brought forward to ensure cost efficiencies are a primary consideration, and an appropriate structure is in place to facilitate this analysis and review of service delivery costs and options.

Alternative budgeting methodologies - Zero Based Budgeting (A 'zero-based' budgeting approach builds the budget from scratch and challenges the baseline or previous year's budget) and/or Outcome Based Budgeting (links business planning and budgeting to focus on service outcomes) may offer opportunities over the usual incremental-based approach.

Identification of additional savings, cost reductions, and income streams through the budget-setting process. Linked to service transformation and analysis of service delivery costs.

#### **5.10 Provision for Redundancy**

As set out earlier in the financial implications, there are a small number of posts associated the Phase I transfer that are identified as at risk. A prudent estimate would be for the Council to anticipate around £0.300m of redundancy and associated costs which allows for a level of mitigation. This represents an equal one-third share of the costs with future salary savings allocated on the same basis.

**5.11** The 2023/24 Final Outturn report, considered by Cabinet at their meeting on 25 July 2024, sets out the process by which this will be done.

#### **5.12 Agency Staff Costs**

The financial modelling does not consider the budgetary impact of agency staff costs that the Council will become liable for as part of the Phase I service transfers. There are several vacant posts across the services that are currently backfilled using agency staff.

**5.13** The broad assumption is that at an aggregate level, vacant posts and salary underspends will continue to offset agency costs. However, there may be instances where at service level (e.g., Development Management) agency staff costs may exceed the available budget. Material

service variations will be reported to members through the regular quarterly financial reporting to Cabinet.

## **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**6.1** The Councils established a Legal Workstream with a membership composed of the Monitoring Officers for all four partner councils to Publica, the Interim Head of Legal Services, Business Manager for Business Continuity, Governance and Risk and the Interim Programme Director. This has met regularly to identify legal issues yielded by the proposed transition.

**6.2** The Legal Implications of transferring services back to the Council fall into three principal areas:

- Contractual Obligations (internal and external)
- Governance
- Employment law

### **6.3 Internal Contractual Arrangements**

The contractual relationship between the Council and Publica Group Ltd is the subject of various legal agreements including:

- A members' agreement dated 25 May 2017 between FoDDC (Forest of Dean District), CDC (Cotswold District Council) and WODC (West Oxford District Council)
- Admission Agreements in relation to the Gloucestershire County Council Local Government Pension Scheme dated 14 November 2017 and in relation to Oxfordshire County Council scheme dated 30 November 2017
- A Services Agreement dated 31 October 2017, with a commencement date of 1 November 2017.

**6.4** The Services Agreement sets out the contract periods for general services, support services and for commissioning services, which come to an end on 31 October in 2024, 2026 and 2027 respectively. For now, the Council has agreed with Publica via a series of side letters that the contract will continue in respect of all these services until the Council has made a decision whether to transfer services back in-house, whereupon it will vary the contract or give notice.

### **6.5 External Contractual Arrangements**

Existing contracts with external parties would require novation if the current party were Publica instead of the Council. This was identified as a potential risk in early meetings of the legal workstream, but it has not materialised. The contracts register appears to show that contracts have been properly completed in the name of the Council.



## **6.6 Shared Working**

Phase One of the transition proposes services coming back in-house on a “sovereign council” basis. If there are any proposals to deliver via a shared service, this will have to be established by a legal agreement. Both the existing Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit and Legal Service partnerships offer examples of different legal models for shared services delivered by retained officers.

Any standalone shared posts (not within a shared service) will need to be secured by way of a suitable legal agreement whereby the employing council agrees that its employee is available to carry out duties for the partner council. This is particularly important for posts which discharge statutory functions within the Council’s Scheme of Delegation.

## **6.7 Governance**

The Council will need to evaluate its existing non-executive scheme of delegation and satisfy itself that it either employs or has available to it (for example through shared services) the officers empowered to discharge delegated powers. The Council will also need to remove references to Publica in its Constitution where these are no longer applicable. It is proposed that the Monitoring Officer be given the power to make all consequential amendments to the Constitution that result from members’ decision.

## **6.8 Best Value Consultation**

External legal advice has been sought and obtained on whether the Council is obliged to carry out a public consultation under Section 3 Local Government Act 1999 on its proposals. Based on that advice, the Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officers are satisfied that no duty to consult arises.

## **6.9 Employment Law**

The proposal has at its core a change in the employment relations of all staff it impacts. Whilst this has principally been within the remit of the HR Workstream, The Legal Workstream has interrogated aspects of applicable employment law. There has been extensive discussion with external lawyers over the extent to which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (“TUPE”) applies to the insourcing of services. The conclusions of this are set out in section 4.0 of the Detailed Transition Plan.

**6.10** Where TUPE does apply, the employment of any employees assigned to an organised grouping will transfer automatically to the Council unless they object to the transfer. They would be employed on the same terms and conditions, save for gaining an entitlement to join the Local Government Pension Scheme.





6.11 Where a role is fragmented (shared) and will no longer remain shared post transfer, TUPE will not apply. In these instances, formal consultation will be undertaken with the impacted employees in line with the Publica Redundancy Policy and Procedure following ACAS best practice. Consideration will be given to alternative measures to minimise or avoid redundancies including, but limited to, suitable alternative suitable employment within Publica, or through employment opportunities with the Shareholder Councils.

## **7. RISK ASSESSMENT**

7.1 The Workstreams, the Officer Transition Board and the Council's Programme Board regularly review the Programme Risk Register and the Programme is reviewed periodically through Publica's own risk management framework. This approach of risk management will continue through the Programme.

## **8. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

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

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

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

An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared and is attached.

## **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

9.1 None

(END)

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## A Detailed Transition Plan for Council Services and Publica

## **Contents**

- 1.0 Background**
- 2.0 Transition Planning**
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- 4.0 Service Transition Practicalities**
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- 7.0 Financial modelling assumptions and outputs**
- 8.0 Steps to Transition and Communications**
- 9.0 Ongoing Transition Planning**
- 10.0 Conclusions / Summary Recommendations**

**Appendix I – Project Initiation Document**

**Appendix II – Transition Framework**

## 1.0 Background

In February 2024, Local Partnerships was asked to support the shareholders of Publica through the Local Government Association's South West transformation grant funding programme. The brief was to further develop an initial study delivered by Human Engine in Autumn 2023 as a bridging document to inform the preparation and implementation of a Detailed Transition Plan to repatriate the majority of services from Publica to the District Councils in 2024 and onwards. In their report, Local Partnerships confirmed that doing so would improve control, accountability, and delivery of the Councils' corporate objectives.

In consideration of a Detailed Transition Plan, Local Partnerships stated: *"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"*.

In future the district Councils will directly drive the provision of the majority of services through holding the majority of the resources, with some retained through Publica. This contrasts with the position currently where the service delivery vehicle holds the principal resource with which to do this. It is this change which is central to this Transition.

The Local Partnerships' report, published on 16 February 2024 was approved by the Councils and:

- Built on the work of the Human Engine report and verified much of the early stages work carried out there.
- Clarified the portfolio of Publica services to remain; the sovereign services to be carved out and the services that may be jointly shared in future.
- Set the design guidelines.
- Confirmed the target to extract key services in 6 months from April 2024
- Confirmed the need for a Programme Management Office to drive the transition.

This Detailed Transition Plan builds on the earlier work of Local Partnerships and Human Engine through detailed discussion, analysis, and fieldwork, involving a significant number of Publica and Council officers. In particular, it references the detailed financial modelling that has taken place.

Executive sponsors for this work are:

Rob Weaver, Chief Executive, Cotswold District Council  
Nigel Brinn, Chief Executive, Forest of Dean District Council  
Giles Hughes, Chief Executive, West Oxfordshire District Council.

Links to the Human Engine Report and the Local Partnerships Report are here:

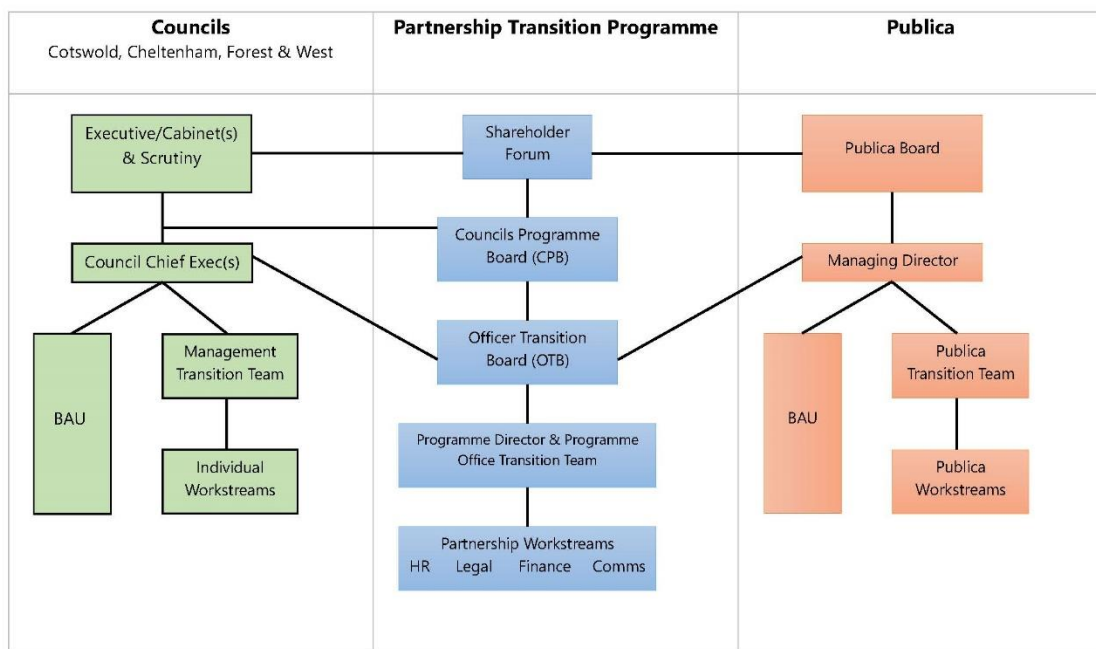
- [Human Engine Report: Strategic Review of Publica Services](#)
- [Local Partnerships Report: Insourcing from Publica](#)

## 2.0 Transition Planning

A small Programme Management Office (PMO) was established in February 2024 in support of the transition comprising an Interim Programme Director plus two Publica employees; one a HR specialist; the other a chartered accountant/modelling specialist. The PMO was set up to operate on ‘hub and spoke’ principles, with the spokes being a set of subject area workstreams: Finance, Legal, Communications, ICT and HR comprising subject matter experts from Publica and the Retained Officer Group.

These workstreams have formed part of a comprehensive Transition Programme Governance Framework, shown below.

Transition Programme Governance Framework



A Programme Initiation Document was created by Publica with progress monitored monthly (see **Appendix I**). The workstreams have provided significant support to the development of the Programme. By way of example, the ICT workstream informed the Programme on key operational elements and risks, as well as providing the basis for consideration of additional infrastructure to support the new Councils’ operations in the form of employee portal development. In addition, statutory officers have contributed to a critical friend brief which, with the output of the workstreams, has made a significant contribution to the development of this Detailed Transition Plan.

A key focus for the Transition Planning was on modelling the potential impacts, risks and delivery planning. Reference was made to Local Partnerships’ advice, the principal elements of which are in the Transition Framework table, updated, at **Appendix II**.

Key goals for the Transition, discussed with the Executive Sponsors, have included ensuring:

- A more focused and defined approach to driving each council's priorities through their corporate plan strategies.
- Greater clarity and focus for those functions remaining with Publica.
- Greater clarity over roles, responsibilities and accountabilities – and where direction is set from.
- How performance and value for money is understood and managed and how it can be more clearly defined and measured.
- Simplification of processes and in determining whether and how resources can be deployed and redeployed as priorities shift.
- Greater responsiveness and agility so as to be able to deliver Member priorities.
- Greater focus on locality and local services.
- Employing people locally, using this in support of economic growth (e.g. apprenticeships), being more accessible and visible and foster the spirit of communities.
- Much better definition between Policy and high-level strategy on the one hand and delivery on the other. More defined control.
- Opportunity to group services to accelerate efficiencies, by identifying synergies between certain services before moving and re-defining services.
- 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 whenever possible to maximise service efficiencies.
- Better focus and ability to drive the sustainability agendas of all Councils.

These are linked to 'design led principles' to ensure that services can maximise delivery of the Councils' corporate plans and Administrations' Values. These include:

- *Councils shaping the delivery of services* - being more mindful of efficient working methodologies and in relation to the Council's corporate plan objectives, which are key.
- *Councils considering the repatriation approach* - where Publica employees work across multiple councils, considering factors such as historic pension strain, relationship led roles with specific councils, otherwise whether roles are shared, in other words whether the majority of work is undertaken principally for a particular

council or not. Also, an approach to the potential future sharing of services by Councils, if appropriate.

- *Consideration of cost* – recognising that there is a cost to bringing services back in-house and it may be difficult to quantify any savings such as on management costs in the short term.
- *Councils employing people locally, being accessible and visible*, with the ambition of making services more local with greater accountability and transparency, building in apprenticeship and graduate programmes to ensure succession planning and improve Equity, Diversity & Inclusion metrics.
- *Grouping services together to accelerate efficiencies*, by identifying synergies between certain families of services before moving services. A good example would be that under the broad header of Sustainability, could sit climate change, environment, flood etc. Grouping services in this way would support efficiencies assuming that employees were employed under a broader brief than is currently the case.
- *Addressing anomalies and driving efficiencies by way of straight through processing where possible*. In the longer term, an example might be grouping planning validation with the whole of planning, rather than in a separate administrative function, as now and potentially, in future, using technology to help triage in the first instance.

A key focus for the transition is to ensure that teams are structured around delivery of the Councils' corporate plans and priorities. Throughout the Councils' corporate plans there are strong areas of common focus around environment, sustainability and climate change related areas, community and local economic development. These aspects have been considered carefully in the modelling of appropriate Council structures.

#### **Recommendations:**

- 1. Note the Design Led principles**
- 2. Note the Key Goals for the Transition**



### 3.0 Planning the Order of Service Transition

Local Partnerships had suggested that the following services could be transitioned in Phase I, around October 2024 (using the descriptions set out in their report):

- Development and Building Control
- Local Plan Team
- Democratic Services and Elections
- Corporate Plan and Policy
- Economic Development
- Communities
- Climate change/environment/sustainability
- Strategic finance
- Strategic HR
- Strategic Housing
- Community Wellbeing

with the following suggested for Phase 2, in/about March 2025:

- Food Safety and Licensing
- Environmental Health
- Performance and Business Intelligence
- Property and Estates
- Project Management
- Communications.

Local Partnership's work did not include modelling the baseline establishment of Publica, nor did it include an analysis of systems associated with service delivery. In addition, the scope did not allow for significant fieldwork. On analysis, however, a helpful distinction can be drawn from the work that Local Partnerships delivered in that the identified Phase I grouping comprises services where only a very modest proportion of employees work across more than one Council, whereas in Phase 2, employees are typically working across several Councils. Such a distinction is helpful in planning for the Transition.

The Transition programme discussions on council priorities clarified that all planning/ planning policy (except for planning validation, and planning support, where there was a consensus on having the resilience associated with sharing across the three councils at this time).

The Transition phases will significantly change Publica's scale and operations as services transition back to the Councils. Accordingly, an assumption has been made that the Publica organisation is simultaneously to be re-structured, together with its governance.

#### 4.0 Service Transition Practicalities

The Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employees ('TUPE') legislation has been in force in the UK since 1981 and applies in many, though not all, instances. It is designed to protect the rights of employees when there is a transfer of the business in which they work resultant either from:

- The transfer from one employer to another of an organised grouping of resources which has the objective of pursuing an economic activity; or
- A service provision change, where activities are switching from one employer to another, and there is an organised grouping of employees whose principal purpose is carrying out those activities.

A number of the services are provided by Publica to a single Council by employees that are now and always have been focused 100% on one Council. This is the case for the majority of Phase I. It would therefore be reasonable for the Councils to conclude that for the most part, TUPE will apply to the insourcing of the services and hence employees in Phase I. In those instances where TUPE does not apply, which relates to roles which are fragmented and/or will no longer remain shared, processes that are objectively fair, reasonable and transparent would be applied.

HR have checklists ready and available for TUPE transfers for both Transferor and Transferee and will also have a suite of documentation ready for use as Councils move to initiate, carry out and complete the TUPE process. Ensuring the process is followed correctly reduces risk and supports employees and the organisations effectively. The aim will be to ensure that employees have a smooth transition from Publica into the Councils to ensure services and the customer experience continue throughout the process to underpin success.

Whilst planning is ongoing, it is imperative that confidentiality is maintained so far as practicably possible. The Programme Office, HR and Communications have working on the basis that the transition of services is under consideration and no more than that. Any direct conversations between Council management and Publica employees could be construed as consultation before formal consultation has been initiated and should therefore be avoided.

All communications to any or all employee(s) in relation to the transition should be conducted through official channels whether that is through the Communications Team or by HR, Trade Unions and the joint consultation process.

## 5.0 Systems and processes

A key element of the transition is ICT as this underpins all operations. It also links closely to communications, which will be key in delivering a successful Transition.

Many of the ICT systems are inter-linked. Some of the systems licences are owned by Publica, some by a single Council, some by all four Councils. No particular issues were identified through the ICT Workstream in terms of systems and processes for the transition. The current ICT set up is flexible to an extent that will relatively easily support the transition that is envisaged, though this will require significant focus and resource from the ICT Team to be able to deliver this.

Microsoft Tenants are becoming more important over time. When Publica was created, Microsoft Tenants in their present form did not exist. Subsequently a single Tenant was created for the three District Councils aligned to objectives for Publica. Whilst this should be maintained for at least Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the transition, logic dictates that the three Councils should move, ultimately, to a single Microsoft Tenant for each Council, as each Council begins to assume a greater role in direct service delivery.

All employees currently have access to a Publica portal and there are three Councillor portals (one for each District Council) in addition. All are hosted and created using a product called Lumapps. In the medium term, it would make sense to look at moving this functionality to Microsoft 365. This is not a sensible approach until there are dedicated Microsoft Tenants for each Council as there is a one-to-one relationship between portals and tenants in Microsoft. The short-term solution is to create three new portals in the LumApps product, one for each Council and the Councillor portals could potentially be merged in and this is to be progressed to ensure that each Council has its own employee portal ahead of Phase 1 'go live' at no additional cost.

## 6.0 Programme Risks and Opportunities

A Programme Risk and Opportunity Register has been developed aligned to each Council's Risk Management Policy with input through the Workstreams and Retained Officers and is available for viewing via the PMO.

Key risks that require continued focus throughout the transition and are elevated on the Risk Register centre around:

- Processes linked to the transition, and the need to follow the law and due process
- People, the need to continue to motivate, attract and retain
- Communications, the need to ensure effective and timely communications for each relevant audience.

## 7.0 Financial modelling assumptions and outputs

The Detailed Transition Plan ("*DTP*") provides the framework for services to transition from Publica to each Council and will have a significant impact on the cost-of-service delivery.

Given the scale and complexity of the Publica Review programme, extensive due diligence on the Human Engine review and Local Partnerships report recommendations has been undertaken.

A detailed financial model has been developed, tested and reviewed with a key output from the financial model considering the affordability of service delivery choices through identification and quantification of:

- Additional costs associated with service delivery of services transferring from Publica to each Council in Phase I
- Reductions in the Publica contract sum as a result

There are two financial models that have been developed in support of the financial due diligence. A Baseline Model (“BM”) developed from Publica’s payroll data and reconciled against the agreed Publica Contract Sum (“PCS”). A subsequent Council Model (“CM”) was developed building on the agreed output from the BM with additional post included to support Phase I services in each Council. The output from the CM is therefore considered within this section of the Detailed Transition Plan.

### Publica Contract Sum/ Baseline Model

The agreed Publica Contract Sum (excluding mark-up and transformation) for the 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years is shown in the Table below.

A. Contract Sum Reconciliation	TOTAL (£)	Cheltenham Borough Council (£)	Forest of Dean District Council (£)	West Oxfordshire District Council (£)	Cotswold District Council (£)
2023/24 Base Contract Sum	30,358,576	966,439	7,388,247	11,266,710	10,737,179
2024/25 Base Contract Sum	32,137,769	826,653	7,888,763	12,259,122	11,163,232

The Baseline Model was developed from Publica Payroll data and reconciled back to the 2023/24 base contract sum. Several material differences were identified and investigated through the reconciliation process:

- Vacant posts – duplication of vacant post due to creation of new post references rather than utilising the vacant post reference.
- Post reference discrepancies between payroll, service establishments and working papers supporting the contract sum budget – allocation of new post references as above.

Posts funded outside of the contract sum (i.e., time-limited posts funded from each Council’s other resources such as earmarked reserves).

The *BM* was subject to check and challenge/peer review by s151 officers through the Finance Workstream. S151 officers were content that the *BM* was based on accurate and reliable financial data, included reasonable financial assumptions to support financial forecasting, and had been prepared following best practice financial modelling principles (ICAEW Financial Modelling Code).

The key output from the *BM* is the identification of the baseline cost of posts/services that transfer to each Council under Phase I of the transition plan and the impact on the baseline cost resulting from the additional employer pension contribution costs associated with the Local Government Pension Scheme (“*LGPS*”).

Service Area	Baseline Cost (£)	Phase I Cost (£)	Change in Cost (£)	% Change in Cost	Posts
BUC001: Building Control	784,321	827,054	42,733	5.45%	19
CCR001: Community Engagement	824,080	873,493	49,413	6.00%	31
COM001: Community Intelligence	125,119	125,119	0	0.00%	2
COM801: Health Delivery	140,244	154,160	13,916	9.92%	18
COR801: Corporate Support	213,682	229,745	16,063	7.52%	5
DEV001: Development Management	2,930,793	3,147,609	216,816	7.40%	64
DRM005: Committee Services	440,648	485,089	44,441	10.09%	12
ECD001: Economic Development	468,704	489,391	20,687	4.41%	9
ELE001: Elections Services	368,726	377,317	8,591	2.33%	12
HOS001: Housing Strategy	245,878	260,182	14,304	5.82%	6
PLP001: Planning Policy	1,136,952	1,187,840	50,888	4.48%	25
PLP004: Heritage & Conservation	901,857	974,956	73,099	8.11%	26
REG023: Environmental Strategy	410,980	463,412	52,432	12.76%	11
SUP003: Human Resources	175,352	175,352	0	0.00%	3
SUP009: Accountancy	721,152	758,499	37,347	5.18%	13
SUP018: Communications	678,593	754,996	76,403	11.26%	15
TOU001: Tourism	221,221	233,880	12,659	5.72%	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10,788,301</b>	<b>11,518,093</b>	<b>729,792</b>	<b>6.76%</b>	<b>276</b>

#### Council Model (RAG rating for each assumption/output)

The *CM* builds on the outputs from the *BM* and includes the costs of additional Council roles that are required to support Phase I services.

Key assumptions and observations made in the *CM* are listed below and assess in terms of robustness, confidence, and materiality on a **Red, Amber, Green** basis.

RED	AMBER	GREEN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Front-loaded Publica cost reductions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Agency cost assumption (not included in model)</li> <li>• Redundancy provision (not included in model)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> LGPS Assumptions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Financial analysis shown in Waterfall Chart</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Vacancy Factor</li> </ul>

- **GREEN** All staff currently outside of the Local Government Pension scheme are auto enrolled. Assumption is that there is no subsequent opt-out from LGPS (i.e., 100% of staff eligible to join LGPS do not opt-out). For the purposes of the model, this is a prudent assumption with likely opt-out rates expected to be very low.
- Whilst the Model includes Publica contract sum reductions, as shown in the Waterfall charts below, this is for completeness and to demonstrate the net financial impact of the changes associated with Phase I. Contract Sum amendments, whether increases or decreases, are recognised as a change to the General Fund Revenue Budget and therefore support the net financial position of the Council. Contract Sum reductions, therefore, should not be viewed as a source of funding for the Phase I transition nor justification for increased service or structure costs.
- **AMBER** It is also important for members to recognise the front-loaded nature of Contract Sum reductions. Cost reductions associated with the removal/deletion of post within the Publica senior management structure (Managing Director (MD), Assistant Director (AD) roles have been allocated in full against Phase I. As a result, no further indirect savings are anticipated across future phases thereby limiting the mitigation of additional costs associated with Phase 2 service transfers.
- **GREEN** The table and waterfall chart show the full-year enduring impact of the Phase I transfer and decisions taken on Council services. For the 2024/25 financial year there will only be a part-year impact as Phase I will not commence until November 2024. However, there may be additional costs in 2024/25 associated with recruitment and retention that have not been included in the modelling and will be identified and reported through each Council's regular financial reporting to members.
- **GREEN** Vacancy Factor – a vacancy factor of 2.5% is applied by Publica to payroll budgets at service level. As services are transferred to Councils it is appropriate for the equivalent vacancy factor to be applied to Phase I budgets (i.e., the net transfer of budget from Publica to each Council will include a reduction equivalent to 2.5%). Each Council will therefore need to determine how to account for and apply their share of the vacancy factor.
- **AMBER** The model does not include any provision for agency staff costs. The CSM includes all posts – whether occupied or vacant. Each Council will need to manage services within the available budget and where vacancies are temporarily covered by agency staff there may not be sufficient budget at service level. Whilst the 2023/24 outturn position in Publica supports the view that at an aggregate level the salary

savings through vacancy management exceed the cost of agency staff (£1.8m salary savings vs. £0.9m agency staff cost), this may be more difficult for each Council to achieve. The regular financial reporting to members will focus on the cost of agency staff at service level and identify through variance reporting budget pressures and management action that can be taken in mitigation.

- **AMBER** For the avoidance of doubt, the model does not include redundancy, payment in lieu of notice (PILON), or pension strain cost (where applicable). These costs are one-off in nature with future salary savings accruing back to each Council. The covering report to the Detailed Transition Plan sets out the financial implications for each Council and addresses the business case justification for redundancy, apportionment of these costs across each Council, and the treatment of salary savings.
- Note: One-off costs incurred are 'paid back' before any cost reduction is recognised in the MTFs and will be judgement for each Council's s151 officer in terms of proper accounting treatment.

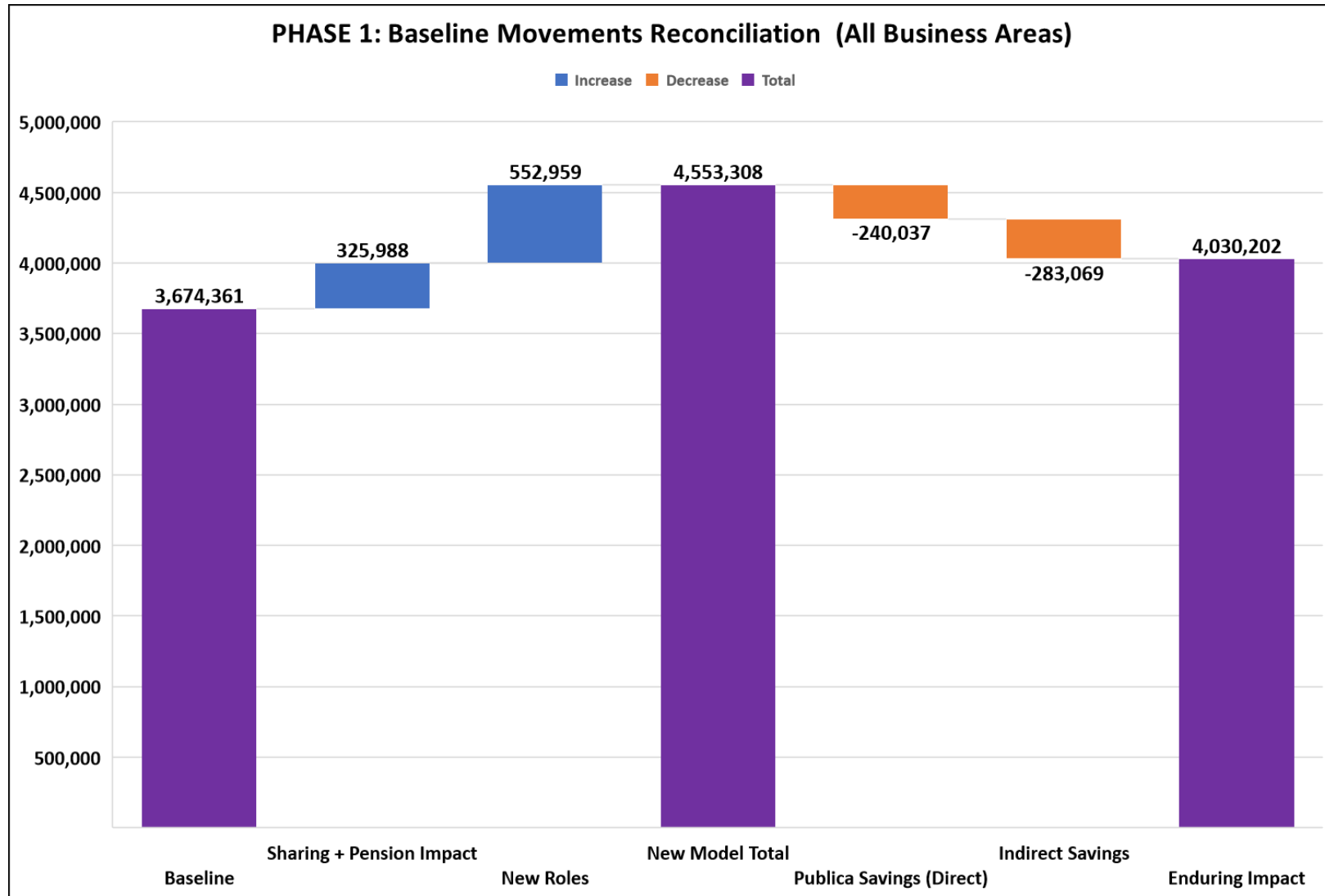
Explanation of headings in the Waterfall chart are listed below and assess in terms of robustness, confidence, and materiality on a **Red, Amber, Green** basis.



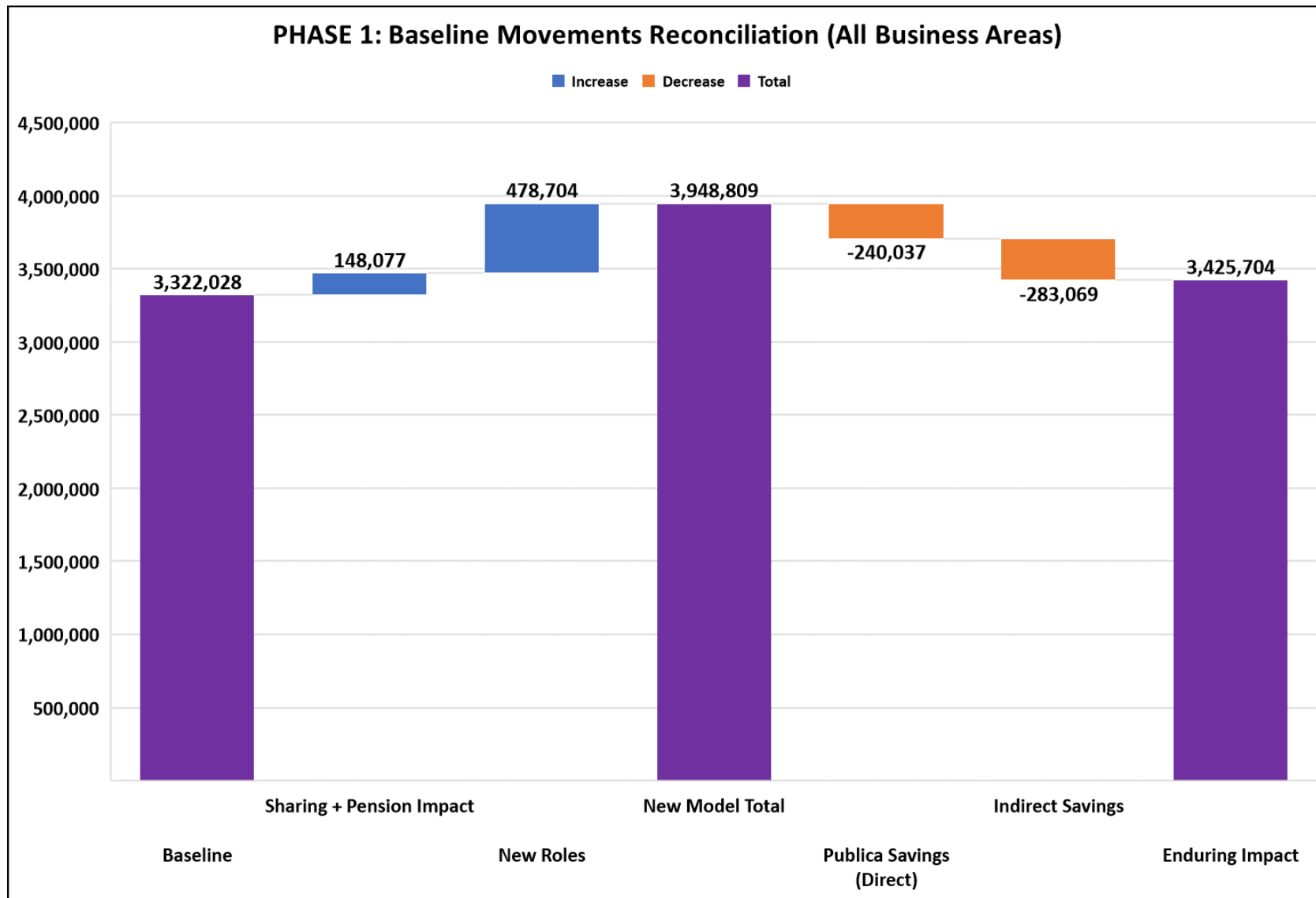
- **GREEN** 276 roles are included within the Phase I review.
- **GREEN** The Baseline cost represents the current cost of roles within each service area.
- **GREEN** 2.5% vacancy factor has been applied as an adjustment to the Baseline.
- **GREEN** The 'Sharing + Pension Impact' represents any impact of a change in split of current role, plus the increase in contributions for new LGPS memberships. This analysis assumes all roles are opted in.
- **AMBER** New Roles are reflective of any new positions created as part of the transition of services back to the Council. (Some of these roles may be offset by 'Publica Savings (Direct)')
- **AMBER** 'Publica CS reduction (Direct)' are those roles which do not naturally transfer to an equivalent position/role within the new Council Organisational structures.
- **AMBER** 'Indirect CS reduction' are informed by the Senior Management restructure across Publica:

The table below summarises the Baseline (starting point) and Enduring Impact (end point) for Cotswold District Council, Forest of Dean District Council, and West Oxfordshire District Council.

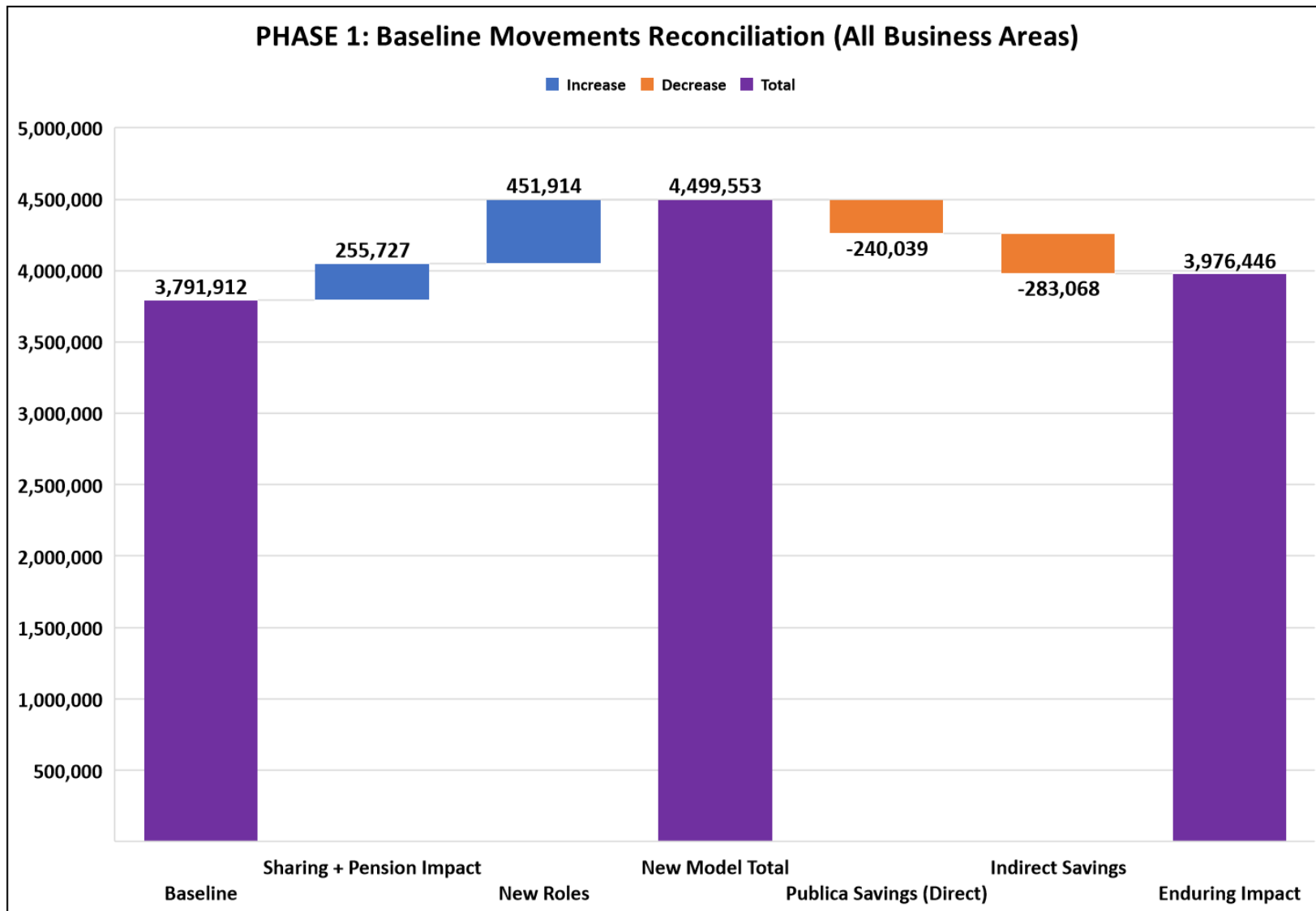




FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL



WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL



## Sharing

The sharing of services is a key element of the design led principles. WODC and CDC have confirmed they are open to sharing certain roles, which would TUPE across. Sharing specialist expertise in this way should support WODC and CDC in the delivery of their corporate plan objectives avoiding the need to either recruit specialists that are not readily available or use of external service providers. It also makes optimal use of specialist skillsets that have been developed within Publica.

## Civil Contingencies Act

All Councils have a statutory duty under the Civil Contingencies Act, and as part of this, Publica currently provides an on-call duty rota 365 days per year to cover Operational and Tactical response. This rota includes Assistant Directors, Business Managers and other key personnel who are trained in Emergency Response. It is assumed that those employees who are currently on the on-call rota will remain, whether they transfer to one Council or not, until a longer-term decision is made on how emergency planning will be managed moving forward. This will be covered through a Section 101 agreement. Strategic responsibility (Gold) will remain with the Statutory Officers for each Council.

## Phase I

Aligned to the priorities expressed by Councils through the Transition planning process, service areas in Phase I will include:

- Democratic Services and Elections
- Forward Planning
- Development Management (but not 'planning validation and planning support')
- Ecology
- Conservation, Heritage & Design
- Building Control
- Economic Development
- Tourism
- Communities and wellbeing
- Climate change
- Strategic Finance (to include all finance roles apart from transactional finance (AP / AR), procurement, insurance and Treasury Management)
- Communications
- Strategic Housing
- Corporate Planning, policy and partnerships
- Executive Assistants and Support.

This currently totals 276 roles.

To support the three District Councils, HR Business Partners are to be seconded, one to each Council, ahead of transfer, meaning that there will be a dedicated in-house Council resource at an early stage to support the Councils directly pre- and post-transfer.

In the light of the significant number of posts being repatriated to each Council and in support of Councils' operations going forward, each District Council is to appoint a Director level post to join their senior leadership team (in a role called 'Director for Communities & Place' or similar). This is envisaged to take effect ahead of the Phase I 'go live', again, to support the transition of Phase I services to the Council and to ensure the smoothest possible transition, with no breaks in service. It is anticipated that Councils would open up such roles with appropriately drafted Role Specifications soon after the Councils resolve to approve the Transition Plan.

At the same time in moving significant numbers of people out of Publica and into the Councils, the Publica organisation will naturally change, with less senior management of a smaller cohort likely to be needed. An early paper setting out options in relation to a revised Publica, was presented at the Publica board at its 8 December 2023 Meeting. For Publica, a new structure has been costed which reflects the reduced size of the organisation, its reduced service needs and budget reflective of Phase I, which based on the agreed Publica Contract Sum for the current full financial year 2024/25 would see turnover reduce from circa £32.14m per annum to £21.56m. The savings associated with this have been taken in to Phase I.

Similarly, it has been assumed that Publica's board will be streamlined as the shape and size of Publica changes. The direction of travel implied by the Publica transition is that the Councils will wish to exert much more direct control than is the case today. This implies less need for boardroom independence as such and a boardroom that is reflective of an organisation structure that will be considerably reduced in scale. Currently the cost of operating the corporate entity is circa £100k per annum. The two largest elements of this are Non-Executive Director fees and external audit fees.

In re-structuring the Publica business, it is assumed that the number of Non-Executives could reduce. With a smaller board, the boardroom skillset is brought into sharper focus. It will be important that Non-Executives with the right individual and collective skills are selected to support and provide strategic oversight and governance to the Publica organisation. With no direction to engage in external trading, there may not be a particular need for independent external advisors to the business given that it is clear that the business will, going forward, be entirely focused on servicing internal Council shareholder focused business and with a narrower focus on support services, particularly systems and process related, as opposed to strategic aspects.

It would be sensible to close the dormant company entities as these have never been used. At the same time, it should be possible to streamline external audit and audit fees aligned to the streamlined business.

It is assumed that the Publica board is re-shaped soon after the end of the 2024 calendar year, after Phase I of the transition is completed. The result should be a simpler, more cost effective set up with no less effective governance, delivering a saving of circa £30k per annum.

It is assumed that with the significant changes to Publica, there would also be a budget re-basing for the 2026/7 financial year.

**Recommendations:**

**Note the Cost Modelling for Phase I**

## 8.0 Steps to Transition and Communications

Subject to the three District Councils deciding to proceed by the end of July 2024, transition timings are assumed to be as follows:

Phase 1 – ‘go live’ 1 November 2024.

A GANTT chart detailing the transition steps was developed by and is being managed and kept up to date by the PMO, focused principally on the steps required for Phase 1. This is available for viewing via the PMO. As soon as the three District Councils have made a decision to proceed with Phase 1, the Programme will move into an implementation phase to deal with the practicalities up to ‘go live’. Consultation will commence in September 2024 aligned to the 1 November target transfer date.

As mentioned, Local Partnerships envisaged that Phase 2 would take effect in/about March 2025. Once Councils have decided to proceed with Phase 1, detailed preparatory and planning work including financial modelling for Phase 2 can begin. The services identified as part of Phase 2 transition typically involve a number of employees working across more than one council. This phase has greater complexity and therefore careful planning and engagement with operational teams will be required ahead of implementation.

A Communications Plan outlining the key communication gateways has been developed and a full programme of communications leading to ‘go live’ will be delivered. There has been a targeted programme of communications up to this point. Going forward, a meeting with Trade Unions is planned for week commencing 1 July and meetings with Publica executives, affected employees (Phase 1) and with all employees in the week commencing 8 July. Publica will lead on the employee communications, however there will also be input from Council Chief Executives. In addition a set of FAQs has been developed in support of the process. As mentioned previously, an employee portal through which to deliver Council led communications will need to be developed for each of the three District Councils and work for this is underway. It is expected that frequent and targeted communications will be developed from the Councils’ decision to progress Phase 1 up to “Go Live” and beyond.

With continued focus on transition into 2025 and with a need for more traditional, rather than strategic, programme management capability in the PMO, it is recommended that from around October 2024, the Councils consider sourcing a Programme Manager to augment the PMO. At this stage it is anticipated that the role of the Interim Programme Director would begin to tail off from then until December to which the current brief runs, though this depends on the degree of progress made towards Phase 2. This was envisaged by the Human Engine report at around that stage as the emphasis on traditional Programme Management functions increases.

### **Recommendation:**

**Approve the Phasing for the Transition.**

## 9.0 Post-Transition Support

In addition to a process of pre-transition due diligence, a transition of this kind is unlikely to be successful without significant post-transition support and investment on an ongoing basis. This is because the transition is engaged in the seeding and establishment of services from scratch within Councils that have not themselves delivered these services for a number of years. Culture needs to be built. This takes considerable time, typically 3 to 5 years minimum and requires significant and ongoing investment in time, particularly in senior leadership commitment and in an organisational development budget. This culture needs to reflect the 'design led principles' that shapes up how Council senior management and elected members want their Council to 'look and feel', including brand and identity. Results need to include:

- Improved Quality of Service for residents
- Improved environments
- Improved operational effectiveness
- Improved productivity

Change needs careful planning and good management. It also needs a full programme of ongoing support in each Council, training, Culture Change, through a Culture Development Plan, to include consideration of:

- Values
- Organisation culture and ways of working
- Key Performance metrics

It may be sensible to introduce consultative committees to drive improvement from the grassroots of each organisation, including in areas such as Health and Safety, particularly.

Looking forward, the new organisations will want to:

- Continuously consider organisational alignment to their evolving corporate plans
- Identify strengths and weaknesses in service delivery
- Ensure an optimal organisation structure and/or approach to service delivery.
- Ensure regular communication and engagement on objectives, opportunities and improvements
- Implement business plans, audit, review, and improvement through further engagement.
- Consider opportunities for further transition and change. This could include further insourcing or shared service arrangements.

Getting this right will also help the Councils in testing "the putative barriers to recruitment", mentioned by Human Engine as part of Option 6.

In addition, Councils will want to ensure that Publica, as its key support services delivery partner evolves and changes as they wish to evolve and change.

The process of transition and change is a dynamic one and one that will continue to evolve. The new organisations will want to *embody culture* from the top, *fuel this* from the middle and *drive this* from the grassroots of the organisations through active engagement. They will wish to promote inclusivity in support of cultural strengthening and to ensure, in a competitive



environment, the ability to attract and retain the best available employees to the organisations, ensuring that they have opportunities to thrive and grow within the organisations and in that way, support organisational and cultural development and prosperity and build the reputation of the organisations within their communities as employers of choice.

The Local Government Association is keen to support the council with the Publica Review through a further contribution from the South West Transformation fund. It is likely that this work will be in the form of assisting the Councils with advice, guidance and recommendations on the future form and function of both Publica and the councils.

In delivering service suites in-house within the Councils, Councils will want to ensure there is leadership from the top in building culture and that this involves key Members as well as Officers. The Chief Executives at each Council have been working with their retained management teams in terms of preparedness for the transition process and the responsibility for a greater number of employees. A programme of further senior level engagement and support may be needed in forming new senior teams that will take on these functions ideally, beginning before this happens.

Getting these aspects right, pre- and post-transition, with an appropriate degree of support, will be fundamental to being able to deliver effectively from “Day 1” after transition as there will then have been suitable preparation for this, smoothing the path to the upcoming and potentially ongoing change that will lie ahead. Ongoing change should be a realistic expectation for Councils and services going forward as demands and pressures change and technologies in support of delivery changes.

The starting point will be in building and embedding a culture of trust across the newly forming Council service delivery organisations as part of strengthening each organisation and ensuring that dynamic conversations of this kind are continuous, with wide engagement. Investment into leadership training and development across the Councils and Publica may be helpful in building the leadership culture needed to take the organisations forward.

**Recommendation:**

**Note the need for Post-Transition support**

## 10.0 Conclusions / Summary Recommendations

This Detailed Transition Plan is designed to deliver key operational objectives for the three District Councils as an evolution of earlier work carried out by Human Engine and Local Partnerships to repatriate most services from Publica. At this stage the focus is on Phase I as the relevant service areas are largely comprised of roles that are now, have always been and will be 100% to a particular Council. In progressing with Phase I, Councils will have much more direct control than before and should be better placed to shape services with residents at the heart.

A number of recommendations have been made throughout this report which are summarised here:

**Section 2, Transition Planning.** This sets out how the Transition Programme has been taken forward, the Design Led principles and summarises the key goals for the Transition. Recommendations:

1. Note the Design Led principles.
2. Note the Key Goals for the Transition.

**Section 7, Modelling Assumptions and Outputs.** This sets out the assumptions that have been used in the modelling and the outputs relevant to Phase I.

Recommendation: to note the cost modelling for Phase I.

**Section 8, Steps to Transition and Communications.** This sets out the proposed phasing for the Transition and key actions.

Recommendation: to approve the phasing for the Transition.

**Section 9, Post-Transition Support.** This outlines how Councils might take forward the development of culture and ways of working.

Recommendation: to note the need for Post-Transition support.

## APPENDIX I – Project Initiation Document (Publica)

### Publica transition plan programme

#### Programme Brief

**Aim:** To develop and implement a comprehensive transition / change strategy following a decision to transfer the majority of services to each Council.

The success of this programme will be measured through cost, the smooth return of services to the Councils' direct management and the continued smooth running of core transactional functions via Publica.

**Background:** In October 2023 the Leaders of Cotswold District (CDC), Cheltenham Borough (CBC), Forest of Dean District (FoDDC) and West Oxfordshire District (WODC) Councils announced their intention to transition the majority of services from Publica to Councils. This announcement was a result of a review of Publica carried out on their behalf by Human Engine, a management consultancy. The key question that the Councils asked Human Engine to report on was: **“How will the Councils’ ensure financial and service sustainability and what are the right operating models for the future?”** The recommendation of this review, which has subsequently been approved subject to due diligence, is Option 6: Retain Selected Services. The Councils therefore now wish to retain selected services within Publica and return the majority of services to the Councils, or operate these on a shared basis or via some other model on a case by case basis.

#### Objectives:

- Develop a transition/change strategy
- Develop a transition plan
- Carry out due diligence, financial, legal and HR prior to seeking agreement to transfer services
- Seek approval of matters in accordance with schemes of delegation
- Coordinate the transition programme activity with individual transition activity at each of the Councils and Publica
- Make any necessary changes to Council constitutions, Publica Articles of Association and contracts
- Transfer employees, budgets, HR/payroll data, email addresses
- Work collaboratively with stakeholders at all levels to execute the transition in a synchronised manner to reduce impact on people and services
- Manage change and communications with stakeholders
- Manage risks to reduce impact on people and services

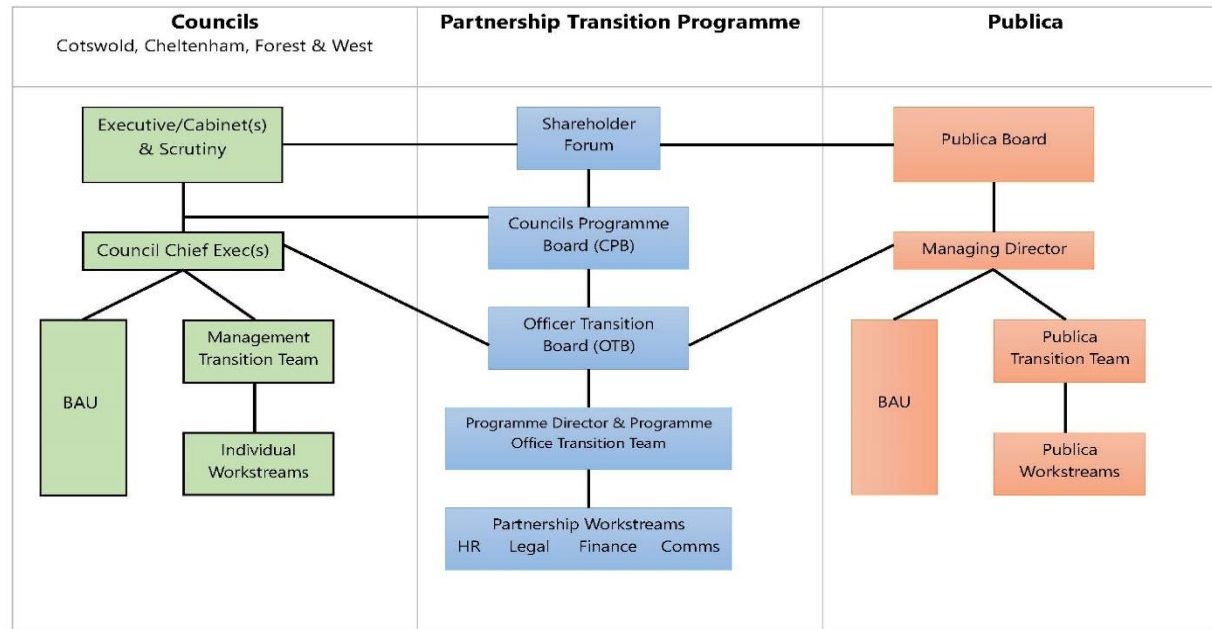
- Ensure effective programme, project management and risk management throughout transfer
- Ensure probity

**Context:** This work will need to take into account Employment Law, in particular TUPE regulations, the statutory requirement placed on s151 officers to ensure a balanced Council budget over a 5-year period, Company Law in relation to changes to Articles of Association and contracts, continuity of pay during transfers and continuity of service during transfers, changes to pension liabilities.

**Funding:** One off programme funding and transition costs – shared equally between 3 councils (CDC, FoDDC, WODC)

**Approach:** The following diagram outlines the Publica Transition Plan Programme Governance Framework. The programme board is accountable for the successful delivery of the programme and realisation of the consequent benefits.

## Transition Programme Governance Framework



Each partnership workstream, individual Council workstream and Publica workstream will have a single responsible workstream lead. Each workstream will produce a workstream brief, risk register and implementation plan agreed by the programme board and provide regular progress reports to ensure successful coordination of the transition. Where there is a lot of activity to manage that is on the critical path, workstreams will involve a project manager.

Partnership workstream leads will be responsible for coordinating activity with individual workstreams.

An overall transition plan and risk register (of significant/escalated risks) will be managed by the programme director and overseen by the programme board.

**Key stakeholders:** This is a significant and complex change that has the potential to unsettle staff and hence have an impact on services. As such excellent change management and effective collaboration amongst stakeholders will be critical to the success of this programme and the ongoing success of benefits realisation. Key stakeholders are staff, managers, senior leadership, trade unions, Cabinets/Executive, Scrutiny, Shareholder Forum and Publica Board,

**Key risks:** A risk register will be developed. Primary risks are around staff retention, staff morale, service provision, cost of transition, compliance with employment law and accuracy of financial due diligence, in support of timely decision making.

**Reason for this piece of work:**

The council's aims are:

- More autonomy over service delivery and shaping future services
- Greater control over service spend
- Greater ability to recruit
- Council specific focus on key service areas and programmes
- Ability to be more 'fleet of foot' - shaping services specifically to the needs of residents and communities rather than adopting a one size fits all approach

The **expected benefits**, as summarised in the Human Engine report are:

- i. Provide flexibility for councils in their approach to delivering individual strategic objectives and greater responsibility in doing so.
- ii. Return a critical mass of strategic oversight to councils, enabling councils to better manage the strategic direction of the organisation.
- iii. Increasing capacity within each council's core operating team(s).
- iv. Greater ownership to deliver own savings plans, through a range of different service arrangements that best align to each council's priorities.
- v. Provides individual council identity for services where this is not currently the case and ensuring council identity where services are delivered through Publica hosted but council specific teams (for example, Planning Services).
- vi. Maintain services within the current model where there is agreement that the service is working well – and therefore removing risk of performance reduction during transition.
- vii. Maintain economies of scale and resilience in back-office services where there is less need for a council-specific USP.
- viii. Reduce the risk of recruitment challenges for local government specific roles.
- ix. Minimising risk disruption to large stakeholder groups (staff, residents, businesses) through the ability to prioritise (or deprioritise) services to be

retained.

x. Reduction in corporate overheads of services retained in the Publica model.

## APPENDIX II – Transition Framework

Phase	Action	Features	Points to note	Indicative timescales	Dependencies
I	Programme office set up  Completed	Membership, TOR, reporting mechanisms	Staff roles and responsibilities agreed, and staff seconded into teams TOR for programme agreed PID produced Meeting schedule developed Project plans including timelines, dependencies, milestones established	Immediate	Reporting lines to be established e.g. to each council's cabinet Delegation of authority/decision-making agreed
I	Creation of Programme Board to support alignment of all stakeholders  Completed	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
I	Development of Target Operating Model  Completed	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  Completed	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 details on current staffing arrangements/alignment etc.  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	June 2024	TOM / Design principles to be agreed to trigger what is implemented
1	Development of Target Operating Model Completed				
<b>Phase I outcome: a settled and detailed transition plan ready for cabinet approvals</b>					
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	Dialogue should commence in good time to allow for meaningful consultation (and where appropriate) negotiation and as a minimum in line with statutory requirements	July 2024	TOM and Organisation Design/ organograms

		their members can be taken into consideration when developing transitional plans.	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		completed and approved. Financial plans and budgets developed and agreed
2	Communications	Staff engagement strategy required.  Regularised updates to be shared with elected members including backbenchers	Engagement and Communications strategy developed and detailed plan produced utilising Platforms e.g. Yammer	July 2024	
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	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	

		/Organisation Design.			
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 process and therefore, appropriate OD interventions, training and use of other support facilities should be made available	Post July 2024	Link to communications and organisational design and development review.
2	Internal Governance	Identification of all relevant governance boards and reporting lines to each by the Officer Transition Board  Consideration of cross-party working group	Audit and Scrutiny Committee Cabinet Shareholder Forum Scrutiny Panel Formation of Member Transition Group to be considered  All-member briefing to gather views on what 'success' looks like	Post July 2024	
2	Publica governance	Implementation of new governance system for Publica following transfer	Shareholder Forum revised to meet current needs  Revised structure of Publica board	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	Regulation 3 of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 will apply where a	Post September 2024	

			<p>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 challenges, Councils are recommended to obtain specific and more detailed HR and legal advice a part of the Officer Transition Board</p>	<p>Indicatively:</p> <p>Phase 1 – 6 months</p>	
2	Transfer of other assets	As above	As above	As above	
<b>Phase 2 outcome: completion of phase 1 transfers in October 2024</b>					
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	
<b>Phase 3 outcome: Completion of identification of further operational efficiencies leading to phase 2 transfer</b>					

**Equality and Rurality Impact Assessment Form –  
Section 8 of CDC- Draft Transition Plan Covering Report July 2024**

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](mailto:cheryl.sloan@publicagroup.uk) to be signed off by an equalities officer before being published.

1. Persons responsible for this assessment:

Names: Andrew Pollard, Interim Programme Director	
Date of assessment: 24/06/2024	Telephone: 01993861297 Email: <a href="mailto:andrew.pollard@westoxon.gov.uk">andrew.pollard@westoxon.gov.uk</a>

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

Is this a new or existing one?
New. Proposal to in-source a number of services currently provided by Publica, back into the respective Councils (Cotswold, West Oxfordshire, Forest of Dean). This will impact circa 270 job roles, currently delivered through Publica.

3. Briefly describe its aims and objectives

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A more focused and defined approach to driving each council’s priorities through their corporate plan strategies.</li> <li>• Greater clarity and focus for those functions remaining with Publica.</li> <li>• Greater clarity over roles, responsibilities and accountabilities – and where direction is set from.</li> <li>• How performance and value for money is understood and managed and how it can be more clearly defined and measured.</li> <li>• Simplification of processes and in determining whether and how resources can be deployed and redeployed as priorities shift.</li> </ul>
--

- Greater responsiveness and agility so as to be able to deliver Member priorities.
- Greater focus on locality and local services.
- Employing people locally, using this in support of economic growth (e.g. apprenticeships), being more accessible and visible and foster the spirit of communities.
- Much better definition between Policy and high-level strategy on the one hand and delivery on the other. More defined control.
- Opportunity to group services to accelerate efficiencies, by identifying synergies between certain services before moving and re-defining services.
- 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 whenever possible to maximise service efficiencies.
- Better focus and ability to drive the sustainability agendas of all Councils.

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

Services that are proposed to transfer from Publica back into the Council will be statutory services and therefore a smooth transition with minimal impact to BAU is required.

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5. What evidence has helped to inform this assessment?

Source	✓	If ticked please explain what
Demographic data and other statistics, including census findings	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Recent research findings including studies of deprivation	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Results of recent consultations and surveys	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Results of ethnic monitoring data and any equality data	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Anecdotal information from groups and agencies within Gloucestershire	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Comparisons between similar functions/policies elsewhere	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Analysis of audit reports and reviews	X	The proposal to insource services has been developed through the commissioning of two reviews/reports from Human Engine and Local Partnerships. Links to reports can be found here: <a href="#">Human Engine Report: Strategic Review of Publica Services</a> <a href="#">Local Partnerships Report: Insourcing from Publica</a>
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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

If the proposal is approved through Cabinet / Executive, Council and Overview and Scrutiny, a full meaningful consultation process will commence with the services and roles that are impacted by this proposal. This will be a formal consultation process under the Transfer of Undertakings, Protection of Employment (TUPE). Any feedback from the consultation process will feed into the decision-making and any proposals which are then taken forward.

7. Has any consultation been carried out?

No

Formal consultation will commence should the proposals be agreed at Cabinet / Executive, Council and Overview and Scrutiny, which will be subject to formal consultation.

Consultation will commence in September and is scheduled to be completed early to mid-October, with a proposed transfer date of 01/11/24.

If NO please outline any planned activities

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

Level of impact	Response
NO IMPACT – The proposal has no impact upon the general public/staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
LOW – Few members of the general public/staff will be affected by this proposal	<input type="checkbox"/>
MEDIUM – A large group of the general public/staff will be affected by this proposal	X
HIGH – The proposal will have an impact upon the whole community/all staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Comments: e.g. employees will be impacted by this proposal. Circa 270+ roles have been identified as potentially transferring under TUPE subject to consultation. TUPE will protect the terms and conditions of employees who transfer.</p> <p>There will be a small number of employees who will fall outside of TUPE due to their roles being fragmented. A formal consultation process will also be completed for these employees.</p>	

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			x	Under TUPE, the new employer should step into the shoes of the old employer, with minimal impact on the transferring employees.	<p>A formal consultation process will be undertaken with all employees who are in scope.</p> <p>Anyone in roles that are fragmented and will not remain shared will have the opportunity to take on new roles at one of the Councils.</p> <p>Any employee who is not on a Local Government Pension scheme will be auto-enrolled onto LGPS.</p>
Age – Old People			x		
Disability			x		
Sex – Male			x		
Sex – Female			x		
Race including Gypsy and Travellers			x		
Religion or Belief			x		
Sexual Orientation			x		
Gender Reassignment			x		
Pregnancy and maternity			x		



Geographical impacts on one area					
Other Groups					
<b>Rural considerations:</b> i.e. Access to services; leisure facilities, transport; education; employment; broadband.					This will not be impacted as the same service will be delivered, it will just be managed directly by the Council rather than through Publica.

10. Action plan (add additional lines if necessary)

Action(s)	Lead Officer	Resource	Timescale
Employee Consultation	Cheryl Sloan / John Llewellyn	Supported by HRBPs	Commencing 2 <sup>nd</sup> September 2024.

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

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**Declaration**

I/We are satisfied that an equality impact assessment has been carried out on this policy, service, strategy, procedure, or function, and where a 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:	Andrew Pollard	Date:	24 June 2024
Line Manager:		Date:	
Reviewed by Corporate Equality Officer:	Cheryl Sloan	Date:	24 June 2024



# Agenda Item 11



**COTSWOLD**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	<b>COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
Name and date of Committee	<b>CABINET – 25 JULY 2024.</b>
Subject	<b>CHANGES TO CUSTOMER TELEPHONE ACCESS TIMES.</b>
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr Tony Dale – Cabinet Member for the Economy and Council Transformation Email: <a href="mailto:tony.dale@cotswold.gov.uk">tony.dale@cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Jon Dearing – Interim Executive Director Email: <a href="mailto:jon.dearing@cotswold.gov.uk">jon.dearing@cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Report Author	Michelle Clifford – Business Manager for Customer Experience Email: <a href="mailto:michelle.clifford@cotswold.gov.uk">michelle.clifford@cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	The purpose of this report, in light of a continuous decline in customer demand, is to propose that the trial becomes a permanent arrangement following the data gathered. The trial of reduced telephone access hours from 9am – 2pm, to the public has proved the concept and our customers are continuing to shift to digital channels.
Annexes	Annex A – Data graphs numbers 1 to 4 Annex B – Equality Impact Assessment
Recommendation(s)	That Cabinet resolves to:  I. Agree to adopt the reduced telephone access arrangements on a permanent basis.
Corporate priorities	Delivering Good Services
Key Decision	Yes
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	All Internal Departments who were previously consulted ahead of the six month trial period (Housing, Building Control, the Elections Teams, Members and the Customer Services Teams) and the Cabinet Member for the Economy and Council Transformation.



## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1** Over the last few years, the Council has been introducing new digital channels and improving those that already existed. This activity coincided with the Covid pandemic, where people accepted the use of alternative service access channels as a result of national restrictions. This resulted in a significant percentage of service requests coming through digital channels, which presented an opportunity for the Council to trial a reduction in the hours of opening for the customer contact centre. The trial has been successful as detailed in this report.
- 1.2** This report outlines the data, customer reaction and outcomes from the trial period. The assumption made prior to this, was that customers would change their routes to contact us and throughout trial period this has been confirmed. The uptake in digital channels has helped to produce a further reduction in telephone calls and, over the last three years, an increase of 350% in the use of digital channels (see Annex A – Chart 1).

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1** In 2021 Resident Services restructured at the Business Manager level. One of the objectives of this change was to allow for a Business Manager dedicated to improving the customer experience. The resultant post of Business Manager for Customer Experience is responsible for leading the Customer Service Teams, improving digital access, redesigning processes to make them customer focussed and supporting Service Managers to performance manage.
- 2.2** This has led to the formation of a multi-skilled 'Channel Choice Team' and the team has continued to work on implementing and improving access to digital services throughout the trial. The Team has created and improved digital access around many processes, particularly in high volume contact areas such as Revenues and Benefits, Waste and Planning, with very high take up rates and this has continued to rise during the trial period of reduction in telephone opening hours. The Council now has more than 20% of households signed up to the Revenues and Benefits 'Open Portal' and this figure continues to increase.
- 2.3** Over the last three years the provision of more and improved digital customer access to services, the impact of the pandemic and the advancement of technology, has led to customers changing their service access habits. During the last three years (2021-2023) the volume of calls (CDC and WODC combined) has reduced by just over 37% (from 230,570 in 2021 to 144,063 in 2023). In the same period (again CDC and WODC combined) the use of digital forms has increased by 350% (from 32,842 in 2021 to 115,255 in 2023). The data from the trial has shown that the assumptions around channel shift were accurate. We are continuing to introduce new and improve upon existing digital offerings and take up continues to increase.



- 2.4** There are obviously variations in call volumes between CDC and WODC throughout the year, and as local initiatives/service changes are implemented; however (on average) the resource needs are almost identical.
- 2.5** It is important to note that if the trial period is to become a permanent arrangement that due to system configuration, any permanent changes to telephone access hours would need to be mirrored across the two Councils (Cotswold District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council).

### **3. MAIN POINTS**

- 3.1** As a result of the changing customer needs and the resultant shift from telephone contact to digital contact, the Customer Services Management Team have undertaken extensive analysis of the telephone data. As well as the significant call volume reductions. The data shows:
- a) A large reduction in calls per week (see Annex A – Charts 2 and 2 (a)),
  - b) Average Wait Times have decreased, as a result of the additional capacity created during the busy lunchtime period (see Annex A – Chart 3),
  - c) Abandonment rate reduced to single figures (see Annex A- Chart 4),
  - d) Customer Satisfaction has improved. The Council has featured in the national top ten for telephone service customer satisfaction in almost every month of the trial and in March 2024 (by far the busiest month of the trial period) was in the top three.
  - e) The Council has received only one formal complaint in relation to this service change. The complaint was not specific to the experience of the individual; it was contending that the change discriminates against the Council's elderly residents. The complaint was not upheld on the basis that the telephone service has not been removed, just reduced.

In addition, surveys show that staff morale has been positively affected and officers have stated that “we have more time to help customers who require more assistance”, that “we are improving the customer experience by answering the calls quicker”. The Customer Service Managers have commented that the shorter telephone access arrangements have provided them with more time to plan, train and interact with ‘back office’ teams more regularly.

- 3.2** Should the Council decide to adopt the changed telephone access arrangements on a permanent basis, this should lead to more success in recruitment as we can offer part time hours for those officers who want it as well as offering opportunities around childcare and school hours where appropriate.
- 3.3** The Out of Hours Service after 5pm remains unchanged externally and in-house provision is in place to take calls between 2pm and 5pm for:



- Reporting dangerous structures (and other life-threatening events). These are very rare, but will always require cover,
- Assisting those who are presenting as homeless or are under the threat of homelessness, and
- Support for residents in the lead-up to an election.

During the trial period, there has been an average of 3 calls per day after 2pm and 87% of these have been in relation to homelessness.

With regards to elections, this will be addressed by a separate (temporary) telephone line that will only be available and resourced in the lead-up to an election (precise timings to be agreed with the Returning Officer and Elections Services Manager).

When customers call after 2pm, they are advised of the new opening hours and given information on how to access services on-line and what to do in an emergency. For non-emergency matters all other channels such as face to face (9am to 5pm every week day), email and the wide range of digital services will be available as normal.

- 3.4** The implementation of these permanent changes will allow most future recruitments to be on a 9am to 2pm basis, creating ongoing efficiency savings. The commitment to effect this change without any mandatory redundancies remains in place. During the trial period the excess hours within the Customer Service Team has been used to help other Services reduce their outstanding workloads; in particular Revenues and Benefits and the Housing Service where demand is high as a result of the Cost-of-Living Crisis. The improvement in performance in those Services means that the need for customers to make repeat calls has reduced; therefore further reducing telephone call volumes and improving the broader Customer Experience.
- 3.5** During the trial the challenging time for the team was March and April 2024 due to the impact of Garden Waste renewals, Benefit Uprating and Annual Billing all creating customer contact at the same time. During this period the waiting times and abandoned rates were compromised (see Annex A – Chart 4). Council Tax Annual Billing and Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support Uprating are statutory services and therefore governed by statutory timeframes. We are exploring how we can reduce the number of high-volume events occurring simultaneously.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1** In the original report proposing the trial period, excluding the Managers and 'Face to Face' Officers required for Face to Face visits at Trinity Road Reception and Moreton Area Centre, each of the 30 Customer Service Officers across CDC and WODC (24.93 fte) will have a reduction in hours of 0.32 fte. This reduction across the 30 Officers equates to a total reduction of 7.98 fte. This makes the total efficiency saving £238,100 to be shared equally between CDC and WODC, but we are on track to achieve £250,000. So, the total **saving for each council will be £125,000 per annum.**



- 4.2** The first £50,000 per annum (per Council) was projected for delivery in 2023/24 and has been achieved subject to the approval of this recommendation. The remaining £75,000 per annum (per Council) will be delivered in 2024/25 but more than £50,000 (per Council) has already been identified. It should be noted that these savings have already been taken account of within the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 4.3** As there will be no redundancies, the cost of implementation will be Support Service resources and will therefore fall within existing budgets.

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1** There are no Legal implications associated with these recommendations.

## **6. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 6.1** There is a risk in not agreeing the recommendations, in that the Council would miss an opportunity to make services more efficient and the Service would have to recruit to the current vacant posts rather than offer them as an efficiency saving.
- 6.2** The data shows that the reduction in telephone access opening hours appears not to have affected the Council's reputation. However, feedback and complaints processes will continue to be monitored.

## **7. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 7.1** No services or service access channels have been taken away, so the impact has been minimal. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed and shared with the Business Manager for Continuity, Governance and Risk.
- 7.2** Encouraging even further shifts to digital and self-serve channels will create even more capacity for Teams to provide support to those customers in the greatest need.

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

- 8.1** The recommendation does not have any climate change implications.

## **9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 9.1** The Council could decide not to make the arrangement permanent, however, this would fail to recognise the customer shift to digital access channels and would miss an opportunity to evolve to reflect changing patterns of behaviour as well as generate any savings.

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 10.1** None.

(END)

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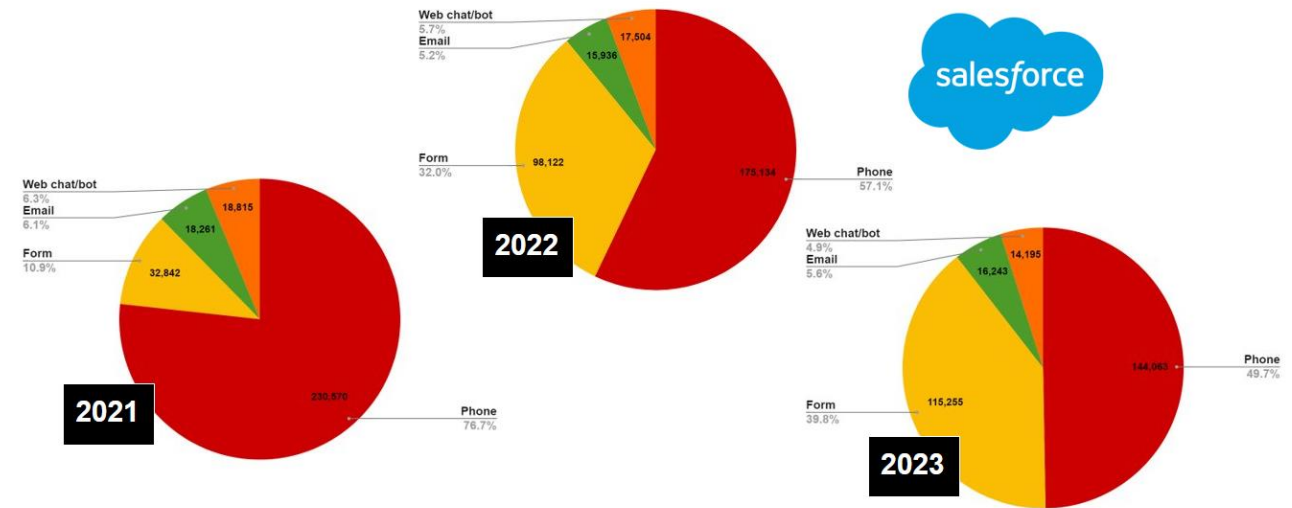




**Annex A**

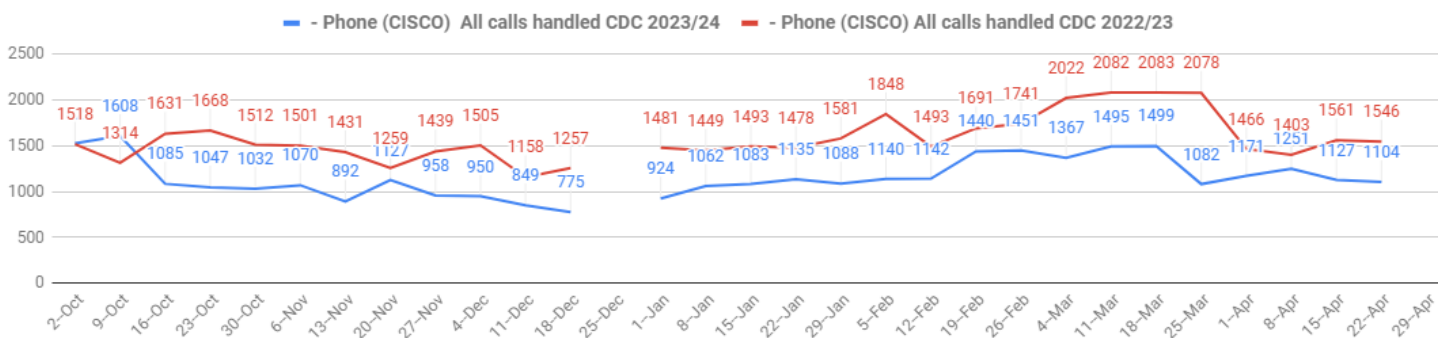
**Chart 1**

Combined (CDC & WODC) CRM Data showing shift from phones to digital



**Chart 2**

Showing drop in volumes between 2022/23 and 2023/24

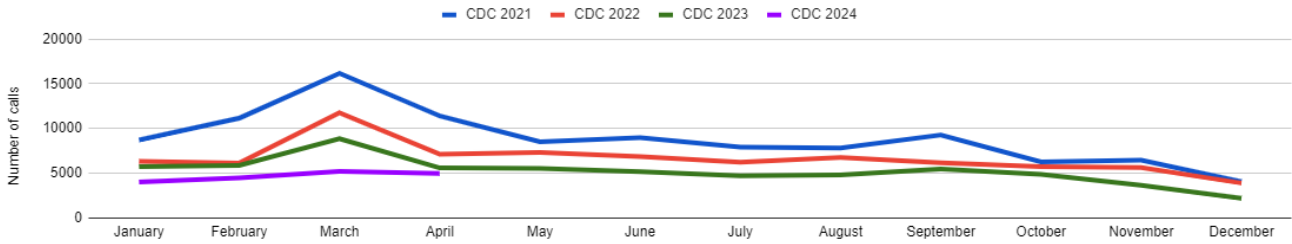


**Chart 2(a)**

Showing year on year drop in calls



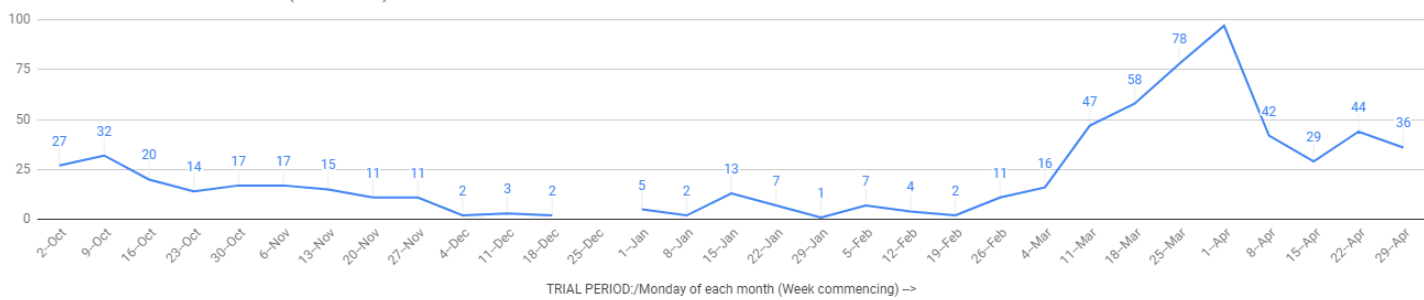
Cotswold Year on Year - Calls Presented



**Chart 3**

Showing waiting times significantly decreasing and spiking due to garden waste and year end

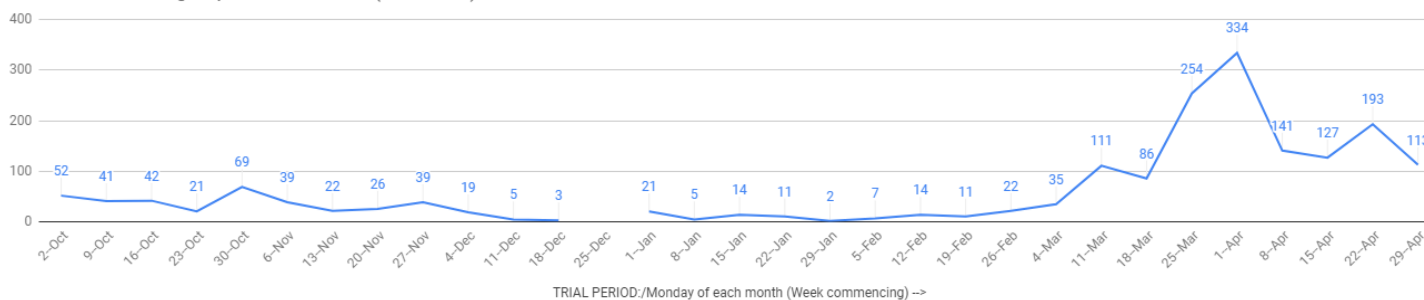
Cotswold - Calls abandoned (Main line)



**Chart 4**

Showing call abandoned rate dropping to single figures and increasing due to increased call volumes due to garden waste and year end

Cotswold - Average speed to answer (Main line)



### Equality and Rurality Impact Assessment Form

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

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

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

Once completed a copy should be emailed to the Council’s Monitoring Officer.

1. Persons responsible for this assessment:

Names: Michelle Clifford	
Date of assessment: 9 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	Telephone: 01993 861272 Email: Michelle.Clifford@publicagroup.uk

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

Telephone Access Hours WODC
-----------------------------

3. Briefly describe it aims and objectives

To reduce telephone access for customers to 9am-2pm every day on a permanent basis. This is following a trial period which started on the 16 <sup>th</sup> October 2023. During the trial there have been two complaints by two individuals on behalf of elderly customers and these were not upheld as the Council has not stopped a telephone service, it is still available from 9am – 2pm. This change if agreed, will reflect the shift to digital access and make an efficiency saving.
---

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

None
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5. What evidence has helped to inform this assessment?

Source	✓	If ticked please explain what
Demographic data and other statistics, including census findings	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Recent research findings including studies of deprivation	<input type="checkbox"/>	
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	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Comparisons between similar functions / policies elsewhere	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	National comparisons with other LA's and Private Sector organisations
Analysis of audit reports and reviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Call volume/pattern data

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

Not applicable
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7. Has any consultation been carried out?

No.
-----

If NO please outline any planned activities

Trial period (October 2023 to April 2024) was used to prove the concept.
--

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

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

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

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

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

*Neutral – neither positive nor negative impact / Not sure*

	Potential Negative	Potential Positive	Neutral	Reasons	Options for mitigating adverse impacts
Age – Young People			✓	The proposal is inclusive to young people.	
Age – Old People			✓	The proposal is inclusive to all ages.	
Disability			✓	The proposal is inclusive to people with disabilities.	
Sex – Male			✓	The proposal is inclusive to all gender groups.	
Sex – Female			✓	The proposal is inclusive to all gender groups.	
Race including Gypsy and Travellers			✓	The proposal is inclusive to people of all races.	
Religion or Belief			✓	The proposal is inclusive to people of all religions.	
Sexual Orientation			✓	This proposal is inclusive to all types of sexual orientation.	
Gender Reassignment			✓	The proposal is inclusive to all gender groups.	

Pregnancy and maternity			✓	The proposal is inclusive to people who are pregnant and/or on maternity.	
Geographical impacts on one area			✓	The proposal is inclusive to the whole of the District.	
Other Groups			✓	This proposal is inclusive to all other groups that are not mentioned.	
<b>Rural considerations:</b> ie Access to services; leisure facilities, transport; education; employment; broadband.			✓	The proposal is inclusive to the whole of the District.	

10. Action plan (add additional lines if necessary)


Action(s)	Lead Officer	Resource	Timescale
Make arrangements permanent	Michelle Clifford		June 2024

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

n/a
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**Declaration**

I/We are satisfied that an equality impact assessment has been carried out on this policy, service, strategy, procedure or function and where a 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:	Michelle Clifford	Date:	9 <sup>th</sup> May 2024
Line Manager:		Date:	9 <sup>th</sup> May 2024
Reviewed by Corporate Equality Officer:		Date:	

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# Agenda Item 12



**COTSWOLD**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	<b>COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
Name and date of Committee	<b>CABINET – 25 JULY 2024</b>
Subject	<b>COUNCIL PRIORITY AND SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT – 2023-24 QUARTER FOUR</b>
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council Email: <a href="mailto:joe.harris@cotswold.gov.uk">joe.harris@cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive Email: <a href="mailto:robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk">robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Report author	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Email: <a href="mailto:democratic@cotswold.gov.uk">democratic@cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	To provide an update on progress on the Council's priorities and service performance
Annexes	Annex A - Corporate Plan Action Tracker Annex B - Council Priorities report Annex C - Performance indicator report
Recommendation(s)	That Cabinet resolves to: I. Note overall progress on the Council priorities and service performance for 2023-24 Q4.
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivering Good Services</li> <li>• Responding to the Climate Emergency</li> <li>• Delivering Housing</li> <li>• Supporting Communities</li> <li>• Supporting the Economy</li> </ul>
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Cotswold District Council retained senior managers, Publica Directors, Assistant Directors, Business Managers, Service Managers and Service Leads.



## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 A high-level commissioning statement was approved by Cabinet in January 2020 which sets out the relationship between Publica and the Council and their respective responsibilities. Publica must ensure that it provides the necessary information to the Council so it can assess whether the commissioned services are being delivered in accordance with the agreed quality and standard. In essence, Publica as contracting agent for the Council must ensure that the Council has sufficient information to challenge the performance of services provided by Publica and others. A similar approach is taken in relation to financial performance data, which will be presented to the 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 Our Cotswolds, Our Plan 2024-28 ('the Plan') in January 2024. The Plan sets out the Council's Aim, and key priorities, and sets out the key measures of success.
- 2.2 Progress on key actions identified in the Corporate Plan for Q4 include:

### Delivering good services

- In January, Full council approved the recommendations set out in the Local Partnerships report and agreed to instruct the Interim Programme Director to prepare a detailed transition plan to build on the recommendations set out in the Local Partnerships report.
- The Revenue Budget, Capital Programme, and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2024-25 were presented and approved at the Full Council Budget meeting in February.

### Responding to the climate emergency

- Progress persists in the implementation of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), especially concerning the allocation of secured funds to fulfil necessary mitigation measures. The first mandatory BNG applications have been received and are presently under review. The primary focus has shifted towards establishing necessary processes, providing training, and ensuring compliance with legal requirements.
- EV charge points are now installed and operational at Trinity Road and Rissington Road. On street residential charge point scheme (ORCS) funding has been secured for last



tranche of installations, with a business case being taken to July Cabinet recommending site allocation.

- Options to optimise delivery of high-quality retrofit support are currently being explored and considered. This includes the submission of a Gloucestershire-wide consortium bid to the South West Net Zero Hub (SWNZH), aimed at securing funding to employ a retrofit engagement officer at the Council.
- The partial Local Plan update to prioritise environmental sustainability is ongoing with the public consultation held on the draft Local Plan policies from 1<sup>st</sup> February to 7<sup>th</sup> April. Consultation responses are now under review, and further supporting evidence is being gathered for the final version of the plan prior to submission to the Planning Inspectorate.

#### Delivering Housing

- Proactive Approach to Affordable Housing Delivery paper approved by Cabinet with the suggestions to be explored, in order to increase the supply of affordable homes within the district. The recruitment process for the Strategic Housing Development and Enabling Manager is currently underway.
- A public consultation on the Housing Strategy ran from 10th January to 21st February to gather residents' views and understand housing challenges and priorities. Feedback will shape Council collaboration with partners, inform funding bids, and ensure priorities align with residents' needs for greater access to affordable housing.
- Planning Application for the zero carbon affordable housing development in Down Ampney was submitted in June.

#### Supporting communities

- A Town and Parish forum event took place on February 28th, with a subsequent event planned for mid-June. Following the May elections, a Town and Parish newsletter is planned for distribution.
- In collaboration with Life Cycle, the Council have installed 51 new community bike stands across the District including in Lechlade, Fairford and South Cerney.
- Grant funding from Safer Streets Round 5 has been distributed to local Town and Parish Councils (TPCs) following engagement efforts. Updates on initiatives are currently being received, indicating progress and the implementation of various safety measures in local communities.
- In collaboration with NHS Integrated Locality Partnership, £116k have been awarded for projects supporting children, young people and families. These projects are being delivered by local voluntary sector organisations. Projects include: youth provision in Chipping Campden and Cirencester, Digital Youth Work, Gloucestershire Young Carers Activity Days.
- Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service (GDASS) conducted training workshops for new champions in February, with over 70 individuals participating. In

March, a quarterly newsletter was launched to facilitate knowledge sharing and collaboration among stakeholders.

#### Supporting the economy

- Collaboration persists with businesses from key sectors, including agritech, cyber/digital, and sustainable aviation, to promote employment opportunities. The most recent meeting of the Cotswold Economic Advisory Group centred on apprenticeships, featuring a presentation by St. James's Place on their programme and the lessons for other employers.
- A legal agreement between Cotswold District Council and Gloucestershire County Council has been agreed to deliver a programme of activities using grant funding from the Shared Prosperity Fund to help those furthest from the employment market.
- Officers continue to liaise with the Royal Agricultural University on their Innovation Village with an outline planning application submitted for consideration in April.

**2.3** Off target actions of the Corporate Plan behind schedule at Q4 are detailed below. Whilst this report is a retrospective account of progress in Q4, where possible, the current status is also included for assurance.

#### Delivering good services

##### **Instigate second phase of activity to replace worn and damaged street nameplates**

**Q4 update:** Currently, revised processes are being finalised with Ubico to prevent any delays in installations. Moreover, there is a comprehensive review of the overall processes to minimise errors in the wording and placement of signs. The list of signs earmarked for replacement is being cross-checked with those already completed. Subsequently, the second tranche of replacements will be planned, providing detailed budgets and timelines for implementation.

**Current Status:** Following a review of processes and signs currently completed and pending, roll out of a further 71 replacement street signs has now been agreed and a delivery plan has been requested from Ubico.

#### Responding to the climate emergency

##### **Explore the business cases for the installation of solar panels on Council owned assets.**

**Update:** The installation of solar panels at Trinity Road has experienced a slight delay due to proposed adjustments to the original design. Written confirmation is now awaited that the supplier will absorb the additional cost. Whilst this has delayed the scheme by a few weeks, it is hoped work will start on-site in May. Terms have provisionally been agreed with New Brewery Arts and Power Purchasing agreement being prepared by legal.

**Current Status:** The installation of solar panels at Trinity Road has experienced a slight delay; however, work commenced on-site in June. Terms have provisionally been agreed with New Brewery Arts and a Power Purchasing agreement is being prepared by legal.



### Supporting communities

**Identify opportunities to influence policy and host a sewage summit with the outcome being reported to the Council in May.**

**Update:** The date for the sewage summit has now been finalised and will take place on the 8th July in the Corinium Museum in Cirencester. All 3 Water companies will be attending, along with the EA and representatives from Earth Watch. A report to Council will be present in September following the event.

- 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:

- Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events (4 days against a target of 5 days)
- Customer Satisfaction (99% against a target of 90%)
- Percentage of major planning applications determined within agreed timescales (100% against a target of 70%)
- Percentage of minor planning applications determined within agreed timescales (84% against a target of 65%)
- Percentage of other planning applications determined within agreed timescales (84% against a target of 80%)
- Percentage of Planning Appeals Allowed (cumulative) (20% against a target of 30%)
- Percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days (95% against a target of 90%)
- Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales (100% against a target of 95%)
- Percentage of high risk notifications risk assessed within 1 working day (100% against a target of 90%)
- Missed Bins per 100,000 (67 against a target of 80)
- Number of gym memberships (3590 against a target of 3500)

### 3.2 Service Performance below target:

**Percentage of Council Tax Collected (98.36% against a target of 99%) and Percentage of Non-domestic rates collected (96.85% against a target of 99%)**

At the end of Q4, the Council observed a slight improvement in their in-year collection rates for Council Tax compared to the previous year, with an increase of 0.34%. While the Council's collection rate fell just short of the year-end target of 99% by 0.64%, there has been a



consistent upward trend in collection rates over recent years, nearing pre-pandemic levels by a margin of 0.48%. For non-domestic rates the Council saw an increase of 1.17% in their collection rates compared to the same period of the previous year, albeit they have yet to reach pre-Covid-19 levels.

**The Resolution:** The service has recently concluded an extensive improvement programme aimed at refining operational procedures. This initiative has led to the successful implementation of dashboards, offering comprehensive insights into individual performance and setting smart targets for objective assessment of success. Through process mapping, areas for optimisation and efficiency were identified, resulting in the adoption of weekly work schedules and heightened automation. These efforts have enabled a more efficient approach to service delivery, ensuring that the in year recovery process remains up to date.

The service remains committed to supporting businesses, actively reaching out through reminders, phone calls, and emails to encourage dialogue with the Councils so that we can support them via manageable repayment plans.

**Processing times for Council Tax Support New Claims (21 days against a target of 20 days) and Housing Benefit Change of Circumstances (5 days against a target of 4 days)**

Q4'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 2 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 tasks received directly from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and customers is currently operating at a level of 60–70%. This automation allows for a heightened focus on processing applications and addressing reported changes. Furthermore, the UC section of the DWP is actively exploring enhancements to the data sent to local authorities. Ongoing testing of the system is underway as part of these improvement efforts.

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 processing times.

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 (93 against a target of 100)**

Forty-eight properties were completed in Cotswold, across Cirencester, Evenlode, Kempsford and Siddington. A total of 93 affordable homes have been delivered during 2023-24, against a target of 100.



**The Resolution:** Challenges with utility connections and heavy rainfall during Q4 have caused delays at two primary sites. Originally planned for completion this quarter, these projects are now anticipated to finish in Q1 of 2024-25.

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 (121,561 visits against a target of 135,000)**

During Q4 visits to the leisure facilities increased by just over 18,000 in comparison to last quarter but decreased by a similar figure compared in comparison to Q4 2022-23.

**The Resolution:** The leisure facilities underwent a management transition to Freedom Leisure at the outset of August, which presented inherent challenges. Despite these hurdles, the service reports that Freedom Leisure contractors have diligently promoted the leisure centres, leading to a steady increase in visits month on month. In total, visits reached 94% of the year-on-year target of 510,000 visits, amounting to 481,734 visits for the 2023–24 period. Currently, Freedom Leisure is developing plans to further promote their mental fitness activities, underscoring their commitment to fostering physical, mental, and social well-being.

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 22 July 2024; and any comments from the Committee will be recorded and shared with relevant Cabinet Members.

#### 5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct financial implications from this report.

#### 6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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



**7. RISK ASSESSMENT**

7.1 Contained in this report.

**8. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.1 None

**9. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 Contained in this report.

**10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

10.1 None

(END)



Our Cotswolds, Our Plan: Action Plan 2024 Update - Progress by end of Q4 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
Not Scheduled to Start	
Cancelled	
On Hold	

Objectives	Priorities	Actions	Commencement	Target Date	Cabinet Member, Lead officer(s)	RAG Rating	Comment for Q4
Delivering good services	Ensure our workforce can deliver for the council and our community	Deliver a programme to bring Council services back in-house, maximising responsiveness and democratic accountability	Nov-23	Projected timeframe of two years, until 2025	Cllr Joe Harris Robert Weaver	On Target	In January, Full council approved the recommendations set out in the Local Partnerships report and agreed to instruct the Interim Programme Director to prepare a detailed transition plan to build on the recommendations set out in the Local Partnerships report.
		Lease spare office space at Trinity Road	Dec-23	Mar-24	Cllr Mike Evemy Claire Locke Suzanne Barton	On Target	Work with Watermoor Point is progressing well with the details of both the legal agreement and the arrangements for fitting out the space well advanced. Works should complete early May with occupation Mid-May.
	Ensure effective oversight of our services, to ensure value for money and good standards	Review the waste service, and undertake an options appraisal	Dec-23	Jun-24	Cllr Mike Evemy David Stanley		
			Enhance our financial resilience and make best use of our assets	Continue to ensure that the Council's MTFS five year strategy reflects economic conditions and the government's funding settlement	Feb-24	Reviewed annually	Cllr Mike Evemy David Stanley
	Apr-24	Review April 2025			Cllr Mike Evemy David Stanley	Not Scheduled to Start During Quarter	
	Play our part in maintaining and enhancing the public realm across the district	Instigate second phase of activity to replace worn and damaged street nameplates	Feb-24	Feb-25	Cllr Joe Harris Claire Locke	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	Revised processes currently being agreed with Ubico to ensure installations aren't delayed and overall processes being reviewed to avoid errors with wording and location of signs. List of signs for replacement being cross checked with those already completed. Second tranche will then be planned in and budget and timeline provided.
			Responding to the climate emergency	Develop and deliver an Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy	Jan-24	Jul-24	Cllr Mike McKeown Claire Locke
Work with partners to implement the Sustainable Transport Strategy	Adoption as part of the Local Plan - projected	Apr-28			Cllr Juliet Layton Charlie Jackson	Not Scheduled to Start During	

		June 2025		James Brain	Quarter	
cycling and walking.	Taxi Transition - explore the opportunity for the creation of an EV Taxi policy	Apr-24	Nov-24	Cllr Mike McKeown Jon Dearing Mandy Fathers	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	Later this year, the policies regarding taxi licensing will be reviewed. Currently, most of our taxi fleet meets the Euro 6 emissions standard. Additionally, we ensure that all new taxi licensing applications are for vehicles that are 5 years old or less. To maintain safety and performance standards, all vehicles, regardless of age, must undergo a 6-monthly MOT. As part of our upcoming policy review, we will also consider the inclusion of electric vehicles (EVs) for licensed taxis.
	<p><b>Cut Council Carbon Footprint, implementing sustainable practices in all council operations, emphasising energy efficiency and renewable energy adoption, across our buildings, fleet and suppliers.</b></p>	Create a Climate Board, agree governance arrangements and key outcomes.	Jan-24	Review January 2025		
Increase renewable energy generation within the district, ensuring local benefit	Support and promote community owned renewables initiatives	Dec-23	Review June 2024	Cllr Mike McKeown Charlie Jackson		
	Explore the business cases for the installation of solar panels on Council owned assets.	Jan-24	Jul-24	Cllr Mike McKeown Claire Locke	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	The installation of solar panels at Trinity Road has experienced a slight delay due to proposed adjustments to the original design. These changes were prompted by concerns regarding the weight of the panels and the structural integrity of the roof. A revised plan has been developed, integrating the PV panels into the roof structure, and has received approval from both Planning and the Structural Engineer. Written confirmation is now awaited that the supplier will absorb the additional cost. Whilst this has delayed the scheme by a few weeks, it is hoped work will start on-site in May. Terms have provisionally been agreed with New Brewery Arts and Power Purchasing agreement being prepared by legal.
Champion initiatives to address the ecological emergency and nature recovery, focusing on reducing CO2 and conserving and enhancing the district's biodiversity and natural beauty.	Implement the new requirements around Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)	Jan-24	Review July 2024	Cllr Juliet Layton	On Target	Progress persists in the implementation of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), especially concerning the allocation of secured funds to fulfil necessary mitigation measures. The first mandatory BNG applications have been received and are presently under review. The primary focus has shifted towards establishing necessary processes, providing training, and ensuring compliance with legal requirements.
				Charlie Jackson		
Reduce CO2 from Buildings: Foster community-led climate action, supporting residents and businesses adopting renewable heating and improving energy efficiency.	Continue to promote and deliver Cotswold Home Solar, in partnership with MakeMyHouseGreen	Jan-23	Review July 2024	Cllr Mike McKeown Charlie Jackson		
	Consider the business case on optimising the delivery of high quality retrofit advice and support	Jul-24	Jul-25	Cllr Mike McKeown Cllr Juliet Layton Charlie Jackson	On Target	Options to optimise delivery of high quality retrofit support are currently being explored and considered. A Gloucestershire-wide consortium bid was submitted to South West Net Zero Hub (SWNZH). If successful CDC would receive funds to employ a retrofit engagement officer. CDC are also contributing to creation of a Gloucestershire-wide retrofit support offer being developed through CLG (Climate Leadership Gloucestershire) partnership. Finally, CDC are considering bidding for funding from the MSC Foundation as part of a consortium.

	<b>Ensure our planning policies deliver our corporate priorities and promotes both carbon neutral development and infrastructure</b>	Subject to proposed legislative changes, complete full review of the Local Plan	Jan-24	Jun-25	Cllr Juliet Layton	On Target	CDC is currently partially updating its adopted Local Plan to make it green to the core. A consultation was held on the draft Local Plan policies between 1 February 2024 and 7 April 2024. Consultation responses are currently being considered and further supporting evidence is being produced before a final version of the Local Plan will be consulted on early in 2025. The Local Plan update will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate before June 2025 for an Independent Examination in Public led by a government appointed Inspector.
					Charlie Jackson James Brain		
		Develop a new Cotswold Design Guide – building for the future in the Cotswolds	Sep-23	Sep-24	Cllr Juliet Layton	On Target	City Science have been commissioned to help deliver the new Cotswold Design Code (note guide!). A draft Design Code has been shared for comment. The final Design Code is currently being worked up.
					Charlie Jackson James Brain		
		Work with Cirencester Town Council on the coordination of the Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan and the Cirencester Neighbourhood Plan policies	Jan-24	Review February 2024	Cllr Juliet Layton	On Target	A consultation was held on the draft master plan between 1 February 2024 and 7 April 2024. Consultation responses are currently being considered, which will inform a more detailed version of the masterplan. Mace, a highly experienced consultancy with a proven track record of delivering masterplans, have been appointed to assist with the delivery of the masterplan. CDC has also been working with Cirencester TC on their Neighbourhood Plan policies and comments have been provided on the draft NDP policies.
					Charlie Jackson James Brain		
<b>Delivering Housing</b>	<b>Working with our partners to explore innovative routes to deliver more affordable homes</b>	Explore innovative approaches to housing delivery	Feb-24	Aug-25	Cllr Joe Harris	On Target	Proactive Approach to Affordable Housing Delivery paper approved by Cabinet with the suggestions to be explored, in order to increase the supply of affordable homes within the district. The recruitment process for the Strategic Housing Development and Enabling Manager is currently underway.
					Robert Weaver Charlie Jackson		
	Deliver an exemplar zero carbon affordable housing development in Down Ampney	Dec-23	Apr-28	Cllr Joe Harris	On Target	Delays with planning application submission initially due to issues with the drainage design and a slow response from the architects and then the new requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain. Planning submitted in June 2024.	
				Robert Weaver Claire Locke			
	<b>Understanding everyone's housing needs</b>	Support refugees to retain adequate housing	Jul-23	Review March 2024	Cllr Joe Harris	On Target	This is an ongoing situation with the Housing Team working with s151's and our countywide partners to ensure that no refugee is left to rough sleep.
					Jon Dearing Caroline Clissold		
		Continue to monitor housing needs, using Homeseeker Plus, to inform housing strategy and implementation	Jan-24	Jul-24	Cllr Joe Harris	On Target	Monitoring housing needs is ongoing with recent increases in homelessness noted. Causes for these increases are varied, but homelessness is rising in most local authorities, leaving more households competing for the same amount of available affordable accommodation. Housing is working with Strategic Housing to source additional long term temporary accommodation as well as working with local independent business to increase the supply of short term accommodation.
				Jon Dearing Caroline Clissold			
	Continue to build on the success of the Housing First Project with a new county wide approach	Jan-24	Jul-24	Cllr Joe Harris	On Target	The Cotswold Housing First project is recognised across the county as being an exemplary example of how projects of this type should be approached. Successful outcomes are above national averages and the Housing Team continue to work closely with Bromford and P3 to ensure the continued success of this project.	
			Jon Dearing Caroline Clissold				
<b>Adopting and implementing our new housing strategy</b>	Consult and adopt the Council's new Housing strategy	Dec-23	Jun-24	Cllr Joe Harris	On Target	A public consultation on the Housing Strategy ran from 10th January to 21st February to gather residents' views and understand housing challenges and priorities. Feedback will shape Council collaboration with partners, inform funding bids	

	Planning strategy	Strategy			Charlie Jackson James Brain		Shape Council collaboration with partners, inform planning process, and ensure priorities align with residents' needs for greater access to affordable housing.
Supporting communities	<b>Strengthen our links with town and parish councils and key stakeholders</b>	Continue the annual programme of Town and Parish Council Forum engagement events	Jan-24	Jan-25	Cllr Joe Harris Angela Claridge	On Target	A forum event was held on 28th February, with the next event scheduled for mid June. A Town and Parish newsletter will be issued after the May elections.
	<b>Address the challenges of flooding and water quality and sewerage discharges</b>	Identify opportunities to influence policy and host a sewage summit with the outcome being reported to the Council in May.	Jan-24	May-24	Cllr Lisa Spivey Phil Martin James Brain	Off Target, but action being taken to ensure delivery	The date for the sewage summit has now been finalised and will take place on the 8th July in the Corinium Museum in Cirencester. All 3 Water companies will be attending, along with the EA and representatives from Earth Watch. A report to Council will be present in September following the event.
		Identify gaps and bolster the Cotswold Flood wardens programme	Jan-24	Jun-24	Cllr Lisa Spivey Robert Weaver Phil Martin	On Target	Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC) appointed a new officer to support the flood warden programme early in the year, but unfortunately she resigned shortly after, so the focus of activity has been on recruitment. This notwithstanding, GRCC were able to run a Flood Warden meeting in February.
	<b>Enhance connectivity, and biodiversity in the Cotswold Water park</b>	Continue to work with Gloucestershire County Council on the creation of a safe crossing of the Spine Road	Jan-24	Review in January 2025	Cllr Juliet Layton Andy Barge Philippa Lowe	On Target	Officers continue to liaise with Gloucestershire County Council on this project and the Council has funded a feasibility study, the results of which are awaited. There is potential funding for the project from UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Sustrans also believe there may be other funding opportunities.
		Install cycle racks, in consultation with the local community	Jan-24	Mar-25	Cllr Juliet Layton Andy Barge Philippa Lowe	On Target	In collaboration with Life Cycle, the Council have installed 51 new community bike stands across the District including in Lechlade, Fairford and South Cerney.
		Work with partners to embed the Nature Recovery Plan for the Waterpark	Jan-24	Review every six months	Cllr Juliet Layton Charlie Jackson Sophia Price		
	<b>Healthy place making through the Local Plan</b>	Embed Healthy Homes Act into the Cotswold Design Code	Jun-25	Jun-25	Cllr Juliet Layton Charlie Jackson	Not Scheduled to Start During Quarter	
		Introduce a requirement for Community Access Defibrillators in new developments	Jun-25	Jun-25	Cllr Juliet Layton Charlie Jackson	Not Scheduled to Start During Quarter	
		Focus on green infrastructure, to enhance biodiversity and community wellbeing	Jun-25	Jun-25	Cllr Juliet Layton Charlie Jackson	Not Scheduled to Start During Quarter	
	<b>Develop and deliver a District Council cultural strategy</b>	Commence development of the cultural strategy	Feb-24	Sep-24	Cllr Paul Hodgkinson Andy Barge Jacqueline Wright	On Target	Initial meetings have been held internally with members and relevant officers as well as external partners. Meeting scheduled with the museum and Freedom Leisure to speak about the strategy and their involvement. Worskop will be organised for June bringing together relevant local organisations to explore the development of a cultural strategy for the district.

Encourage resilient, well-connected and active communities that take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing	Continue to deliver an asset based community development approach	Jan-24	Apr-28	Cllr Lisa Spivey	On Target	Continued engagements with various community groups, including the Chesterton Community Project Group, Bromford Housing, and The Salvation Army, aim to enhance community resilience and improve residents' health and well-being using the ABCD method. Additionally, the organisation, promotion, and support of the 'Getting Connected' Courses for Digital Inclusion for older people have yielded positive results, with over 60 older adults benefiting from the program. Notably, Bourton on the Water, Fairford, and Tetbury have seen significant participation, with attendees forming WhatsApp group chats and socialising outside of the course, effectively reducing isolation and loneliness while increasing digital inclusion.
				Andy Barge Jacqueline Wright		In addition, the planning stages have been completed for the 'DIGI DAY' project, a new initiative for 2024 that aims to further support and enhance community knowledge of digital topics through expert advice and guidance.
	Celebrate success - promote the work being done by partners across the district to inspire communities	Feb-24	Review August 2024	Cllr Claire Bloomer	On Target	Planning for the Unsung Hero Awards has commenced. The scheme will launch in May with first awards being awarded on July 17th.
				Andy Barge Jacqueline Wright		
	Continue to promote community activity through Crowdfund Cotswold	Feb-24	Review August 2024	Cllr Lisa Spivey	On Target	The spring round of Crowdfund Cotswold launched in February, with a deadline for applications of 24th April. The remaining projects from the autumn round met their targets.
				Andy Barge Joseph Walker		
Promote healthy lifestyles, fun and self-care for all ages	Monitor and review delivery of the District leisure contract with Freedom Leisure	Aug-23	Aug-25	Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	On Target	Regular meetings have been scheduled to review performance and to identify and mitigate any risks.
				David Stanley Andy Barge Jacqueline Wright		
	Continue to deliver the Healthier District and Connected Communities objectives and priorities set out in the Active Cotswolds Action Plan, and implement the Playing Pitch Strategy's action plan.	Jan-24	Review January 2025	Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	On Target	Please see Active Cotswold Programme for updates
			Angela Claridge Andy Barge Jacqueline Wright			
Work with partners to develop a consistent, countywide approach to identify opportunities to support to care leavers	Jun-24	Review December 2024	Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	On Target	A member briefing about care leavers and cooperate parenting responsibilities was held in March. Further actions will follow incl. support to access leisure activities locally. Further meetings to be held with district colleagues.	
			David Stanley Andy Barge Jacqueline Wright			
			Cllr Claire Bloomer		Community Support Officer Food Sustainability post has started in Dec 23. The first Financial Inclusion Workshop has been held in	

	<p><b>Work with partners to ensure vital services cover the district, and offer support to our residents if crises hit</b></p>	<p>Continue to be a proactive member of the Cotswold Food Network Steering Group and support initiatives under the network's umbrella</p>	Jan-24	Review January 2025	<p>Andy Barge Jacqueline Wright</p>	On Target	<p>February. Attendance was very good with advice and support services from across the district. This first workshop focussed on mapping and understanding what support and advice is available for people and where the gaps are. A second workshop is scheduled for May to look at how this information can be used to improve the provision across the district.</p>
		<p>Continue to work with the NHS Integrated Locality Partnership to support youth mental health</p>	Jan-24	Review January 2025	<p>Cllr Claire Bloomer  Andy Barge Jacqueline Wright</p>	On Target	<p>£116k have been awarded for projects supporting children, young people and families. These projects are being delivered by local voluntary sector organisations. Projects include: youth provision in Chipping Campden; Cirencester Town Youth Provision, Digital Youth Work, Gloucestershire Young Carers Activity Days; Positive Body Image Performance at Cirencester College; Family Fun and Health Days...)</p>
		<p>Maintain a multi-service response to the cost of living crisis, and other challenges to community wellbeing</p>	Jan-23	Review January 2025	<p>Cllr Claire Bloomer  Claire Locke Jacqueline Wright</p>	On Target	<p>Regular member led working group is reviewing issues and responses to those issues and ensuring support to communities and existing groups and promotion of the help that is available.</p>
	<p><b>Keep residents safe, through awareness raising around domestic abuse and fraud</b></p>	<p>Continue to raise the profile of the Community Safety Partnership to reduce the fear of crime and ensure residents know how, and where, to get support</p>	Feb-24	Review February 2025	<p>Cllr Lisa Spivey  Andy Barge Jacqueline Wright</p>	On Target	<p>The Cotswold Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is launching their new Action Plan in April. The CSP is planning to be part of local community events to raise its profile and share relevant information.</p>
		<p>Deliver Rural Domestic Abuse Champions programme in partnership with other rural Gloucestershire districts and Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Services</p>	Feb-24	Mar-25	<p>Cllr Lisa Spivey/Cllr Claire Bloomer  Andy Barge Jacqueline Wright</p>	On Target	<p>Originally, 70 participated in training for the Rural Domestic Abuse Champion's training, 20 remain in place, with new organisations requesting training such as Cirencester TC, CGL (recently changed to VIA) and Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue service. New online training was provided in March'24 with a quarterly newsletter also offered in March. GDASS are in the process of updating their website to map the gaps in training across the district. Cotswold are following FoD in the 'Cut it Out' project, aimed at beauty providers, giving training on how to deal with information given regarding the risk of a client in a domestic abuse situation.</p>
		<p>Train frontline staff to identify Domestic Abuse and review internal processes to recognise and support victims of abuse</p>	Feb-24	Jul-24	<p>Cllr Lisa Spivey/Cllr Claire Bloomer  Andy Barge Jacqueline Wright</p>	On Target	<p>We have provided information for the Manager's Newsletter to promote GDASS training to all teams. GDASS are offering Rural Champions training, in two parts, to both staff and Members. We will review level of training to ensure victims of DA are given any support we can give.</p>
		<p>Coordinate activity under Home Office's safer Streets Fund to tackle Anti-Social Behaviour and violence against women and girls</p>	Feb-24	Review February 2025	<p>Cllr Lisa Spivey  Andy Barge Jacqueline Wright</p>	On Target	<p>Funds for Safer Streets round 4 and 5 have been distributed to local TPC's after engagement and updates about initiatives are being received.</p>
		<p>Work with key sectors to create new highly skilled jobs, through promotion of apprenticeship opportunities</p>	Feb-24	Apr-28	<p>Cllr Tony Dale  Philippa Lowe</p>	On Target	<p>Officers continue to work with businesses from key sectors, including agritech, cyber/digital and sustainable aviation to promote employment opportunities. The most recent meeting of the Cotswold Economic Advisory Group focused on apprenticeships, with a presentation by St James' Place on their</p>
	<p><b>Supporting the economy</b></p>						

	<b>Work with partners to develop the skills of our residents</b>				Paul James		apprenticeships, with a presentation by St James's Place on their programme and the lessons for other employers.
		Deliver a programme of activities in year 3 of the Shared Prosperity Fund to help those furthest from the employment market	Apr-24	Mar-25	Cllr Tony Dale Philippa Lowe Paul James	On Target	Being delivered through Gloucestershire County Council's Employment and Skills Hub Outreach programme. Output and outcome targets have been agreed. A legal agreement between the two councils has been agreed and is in the process of being executed.
	<b>Attract and manage investment to boost the local economy</b>	Consider the results of the digital and green survey of community buildings, and enable improvements through Rural England Prosperity Fund	Apr-24	Mar-25	Cllr Tony Dale	On Target	Grant programme is being administered by Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC). Three grants have been agreed and there is a rolling programme for applications/approvals. An online information session was held recently which was well-attended and will hopefully result in a number of new applications.
					Philippa Lowe Paul James		
	<b>Support local businesses and farms, to enhance the vibrancy of our towns and villages, and to manage the opportunity and impact of the visitor economy</b>	Continue to deliver against the six priorities set out in the Cotswold Tourism destination management plan	Jan-24	Mar-25	Cllr Tony Dale Philippa Lowe Chris Jackson		
		Continue to support the Local Visitor Economy Partnership, to ensure better coordination of tourism activity and delivery against national growth targets	Jan-24	Review January 2025	Cllr Tony Dale Philippa Lowe Chris Jackson		
		Undertake a refresh of the Green Economic Strategy	Feb-24	Apr-24	Cllr Tony Dale	On Target	Awaiting the adoption of the new Gloucestershire Economic Strategy, which will be considered by the County Council Cabinet and City Region Board in June 2024. A report will be brought to Cabinet later in the year.
					Philippa Lowe Paul James		
	Continue to support the development of the Royal Agricultural University's Innovation Village	Jan-24	Jan-25	Cllr Tony Dale Philippa Lowe Paul James	On Target	Officers and the Cabinet Member continue to liaise with the RAU. An outline planning application was submitted in April 2024.	
	<b>Work with local and county partners to grow a strong and sustainable economy</b>	Continue to work with The Growth Hub to support existing businesses and encourage the growth of start-ups, with a focus on the outreach provision supported by the Shared Prosperity Fund	Jan-24	Mar-25	Cllr Tony Dale	On Target	Funding for 2024-25 was approved by the Chief Executive and Cabinet Member in line with the Cabinet resolution. Officers meet monthly with representatives from the RAU/Growth Hub to monitor progress against outputs/outcomes and are confident the targets will be achieved. The Outreach Navigator continues to work across the district and the first event in the north of the district, held at the Moreton Area Centre, took place in February 2024 and was well-attended.
					Philippa Lowe Paul James		

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COTSWOLD  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL PRIORITIES REPORT  
**January 2024 - March 2024**

# Our Cotswolds, Our Plan 2024-28

## Our Ambition

To tackle some of the big challenges faced by our residents while providing a good level of key services.

## Our Priorities



**Delivering Good Services**



**Responding to the Climate Emergency**



**Delivering Housing**



**Supporting Communities**



**Supporting the Economy**

## 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 with officers conducting monthly meetings with representatives from the Growth Hub to monitor progress against outputs/outcomes. The Outreach Navigator continues to work across the district, with the first well-attended event held at the Moreton Area Centre in February
- The Community Support Officer Food Sustainability post commenced in December 2023. The first Financial Inclusion Workshop took place in February with good attendance and services from across the district. The workshop focused on mapping available support and identifying gaps, with a follow-up session scheduled for May to enhance provision district-wide.
- The Holiday Activity Food programme continues to be a success, with 441 children booking a total of 610 activities during the holiday season.
- A Town and Parish forum event took place on February 28th, with a subsequent event planned for mid-June. Following the May elections, a Town and Parish newsletter is planned for distribution.
- The Public Consultation on the draft Local Plan policies was held between 1 February 2024 and 7 April 2024. Currently, responses are being considered, and further supporting evidence is being produced. A final version of the Local Plan will be consulted on in early 2025 before its submission to the Planning Inspectorate for an Independent Examination in Public led by a government-appointed Inspector.
- The Safer Streets Round 5 Funding of £50,000 has been distributed to Town and Parish Councils (TPCs) following engagement efforts. Updates on initiatives are currently being received, indicating progress and the implementation of various safety measures in local communities.
- Rollout of phase two in the Cotswold Water Park Strategy for cycle stand installations, with 51 stands now deployed across water park locations within Fairford, Lechlade, and South Cerney.
- Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC) successfully facilitated a group meeting for the District's Flood Wardens in February, providing valuable support and coordination efforts in flood preparedness and response.

## Delivering Good Services



### The Context

As a council, our purpose is to provide vital services to our residents, businesses, and visitors. The council is committed to delivering services effectively and efficiently, ensuring they reflect our dedication to addressing climate change and offering value for local taxpayers. The council's services will uphold high standards and deliver value for money. We will collaborate with our contractors and partners, including town and parish councils, to sustain valuable services and contribute to the preservation of the Cotswolds environment that we all take pride in.

### 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 51 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. GCC has been undertaking a peer review of the Sustrans proposals and funding has been allocated from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) for design work. Funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is being considered for the delivery phase.

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.

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 improved markedly 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. These have now been introduced and are expected to deliver a reduction in repeat customer contact and chasing, as well as a reduction in the number of non-breach cases from the

improved online reporting facilities and back office triage. The main piece of work that has recently gone live is the new process associated with the requirements to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) alongside the determination of Planning Applications.

The further improvement works arising from the Planning Advisory Service report and agreed upon by Cabinet have been added to the action plan, with delivery largely completed or on track. In light of the Council's decision to repatriate the Development Management function, some elements of the improvement programme have however, had to be abandoned or severely curtailed as they relied upon shared services and contracts.

## Responding to the Climate Emergency



### The Context

Nationally, the government's recent decision to extend deadlines for decarbonisation targets has sparked debates regarding its impact on the UK's progress towards net-zero emissions. While the shift in deadlines for ending the sale of new fossil-fueled cars and gas-fired boilers may not significantly alter industry trajectories, concerns persist regarding potential repercussions on the nation's climate commitments and international reputation as a leader in combating climate change. Professor Piers Forster, Chair of the Climate Change Committee, urges greater transparency from the government regarding the effects of these policy adjustments on future emissions and the likelihood of meeting targets.

In response to the Climate Change and Ecological Emergencies declared by the Council in July 2019 and a year later respectively, a comprehensive commitment to update the Local Plan in alignment with green principles has been established. This commitment is reinforced by national policies such as the Clean Growth Strategy and the UK Net Zero Strategy, signaling a broader governmental push towards environmental sustainability. Despite impending reforms to the English planning system, the Council remains steadfast in its efforts to update the Local Plan, anticipating a smoother transition facilitated by government arrangements.

### 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).

The update process, initiated following a unanimous resolution in June 2020, encompasses a thorough review of Local Plan policies to ensure alignment with evolving environmental priorities. Public consultations, notably the Regulation 18 consultation in 2022, have yielded valuable insights, shaping the emerging Local Plan. Digital engagement tools have facilitated broader community participation, including previously underserved demographics.

In parallel, the Council is fortifying its evidence base through various studies, encompassing green infrastructure, sustainability appraisals, and housing strategies. Noteworthy initiatives include the development of a Sustainable Transport Strategy and the ongoing Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan project, both pivotal in shaping future transport infrastructure and urban development.

### '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. Delays were encountered due to concerns over the weight of the panels and adjustments have been made to the original design, integrating the PV panels into the roof structure. The new design has received approval from both Planning and the Structural Engineer with work planned on

site in May. Additionally, four dual electric vehicle charge points have already been installed in the Trinity Road car park, providing accessible charging facilities for the public.

### **‘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 Capitol Grant Funding has been secured, which 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**

Efforts are underway to bolster the evidence base for drafting climate policies within the Local Plan (LP) partial update, integrating feedback from the Regulation 18 public consultation and insights gleaned from examinations of other authorities' ambitious climate policies. Concurrently, sustainable transport consultants are aligning LP policies with findings from the District-wide Sustainable Transport Strategy research. Additionally, consultants have been tasked with updating the evidence base and formulating policies for renewable energy and sustainable construction, both integral components of the updated LP. However, progress on further installations of electric vehicle charge points in Council-owned carparks has been impeded by delays with contractors and Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN). Despite setbacks, chargers at Trinity Road are now connected, with units planned for installation later this month. Furthermore, funding has been secured for the next tranche of installations under the On-street Residential Charge Point Scheme (ORCS), and a business case is currently in preparation.

### **‘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 2023 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.



## Delivering Housing

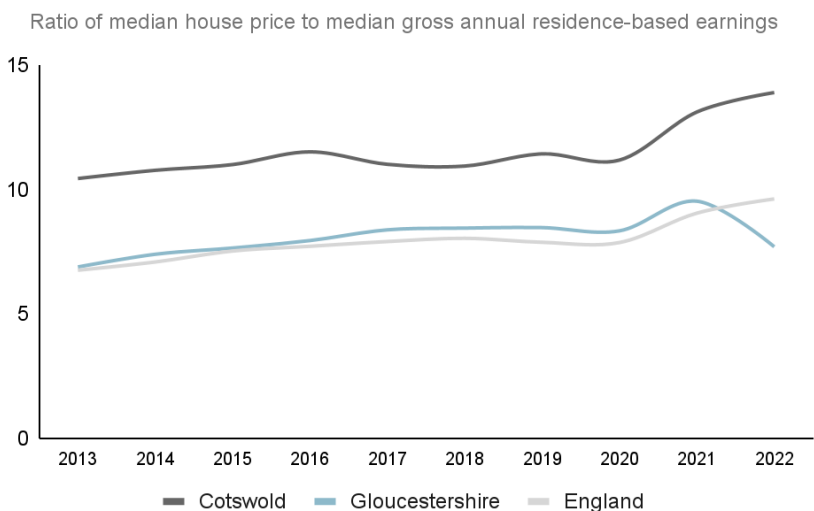


### The Context

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. There have been considerable delays whilst terms for the lease are agreed, however it is anticipated the lease will be finalised this quarter.

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. Delays in submitting the Planning Application arose due to concerns raised during the public consultation regarding drainage issues. Initial drainage designs were rejected by Bromford Housing Association as they were deemed non-adoptable. Although revised designs have been agreed upon, this setback caused the Council to miss the submission deadline before the new Biodiversity Net Gain regulations took effect. Despite this, the Ecological Appraisal has been finalised, with the full report anticipated by the end of April. While it's anticipated that the site may not be large enough to meet the required offset, alternative options such as tree planting on other Council-owned sites or a financial contribution are under review. Importantly, these additional considerations won't impede the planning submission, which is still on track for completion before the end of May.

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 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. The Council therefore put out a 'Call for Interest' at the start of March to attract a new partner who could bring forward funding and development proposals. The Council is engaging with interested parties and will bring the 'Call for Interest' to a close on 25th April. Opportunities and future options for the buildings will then be reviewed and a report submitted to Cabinet in June. In the meantime, funding agreed at Council in February, will enable structural repairs to be made to the unstable wall at the Old Station. Works should commence at the end of April.

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, following serious setback due to the insolvency of the main contractor, it was feared that the scheme may be delayed by many months. However in March this year Members were invited to attend the Grand Opening of the scheme and the 27 homes were counted towards the Council's annual housing target. Residents moved in during March this year and benefit from the modern construction and commitment to low running costs, going some way to meet the council's aim to tackle fuel poverty in the district.

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 has met with an on-site delay due the failure on the part of the Water Utility to complete connection as per contracted, this is outside the control of either the housing association or the council. It is now envisaged that the scheme will be handed over during mid to late Quarter 1. 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. The housing association building out these homes on behalf of GRHA is advising an 8 week delay due torrential rain earlier in the year interfering with the ground works programme. Therefore, the new homes ought to hand over in late Q1.



## Supporting Communities

### 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 was presented to Overview and Scrutiny on 30th January 2024.

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 later this year.

The spring round of Crowdfund Cotswold launched in February, with a deadline for applications of 24th April. There has been strong interest from prospective projects, with over 20 people attending our workshop. The remaining projects from the autumn round met their targets, including the biggest project to date, a multiuser astro turf pitch in Bourton on the Water. Following some initial delays to verification, a project from World Jungle for a mobile youth festival to complement their well established programme of activity for young people launched in quarter and quickly met its circa £30,000 target.

During the Easter Holidays, the Council, in partnership with World Jungle, executed the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme for children on Free School Meals in the Cotswold district, resulting in 441 children booking a total of 610 activities. While some activities were open to all schoolchildren, 63% of the available slots were filled by those on Free School Meals. Emphasising inclusivity, 6% of attending children had an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), 9% were Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) children, and 18% were from the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) community. Providers reserved spots for children with special needs, offering additional support and pre-session familiarisation, enhancing their experience. To engage teenagers, a Youth Pass was offered, with 46 young people participating, providing transport options.

Cotswold, in collaboration with Tewkesbury, Stroud, and Forest of Dean, funded a joint post to promote Rural Domestic Abuse Champions across districts. The post, offering training via Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service (GDASS), aids in identifying and supporting individuals in abusive rural relationships. In Q4, three existing champions underwent refresher training, while seven new champions were trained.

Cotswold relaunched the 'Safe Places' scheme in partnership with the Police, with 13 venues in Cirencester signed up to offer a safe haven to vulnerable individuals. Plans to expand the scheme to other areas are underway, with venues listed on the Safe Places app for easy access.

The Community Wellbeing Team continued to organise and support 'Getting Connected' courses to enhance digital inclusion. Over 60 older adults benefited from these courses, fostering connections and reducing isolation. Additionally, the 'DIGI DAY' project is planned for 2024, providing expert advice on digital topics for the community.

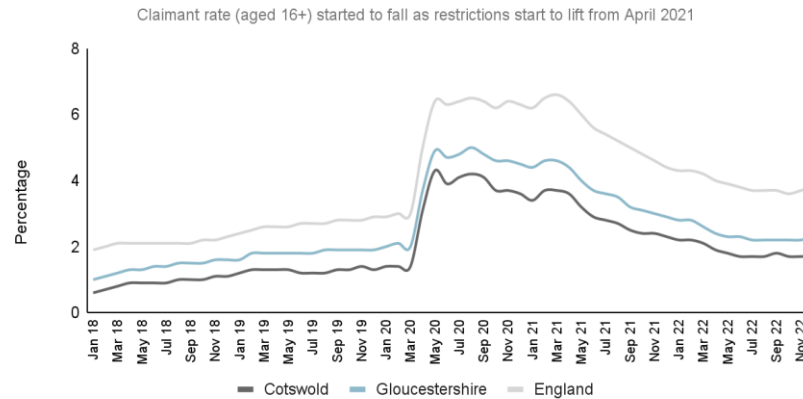
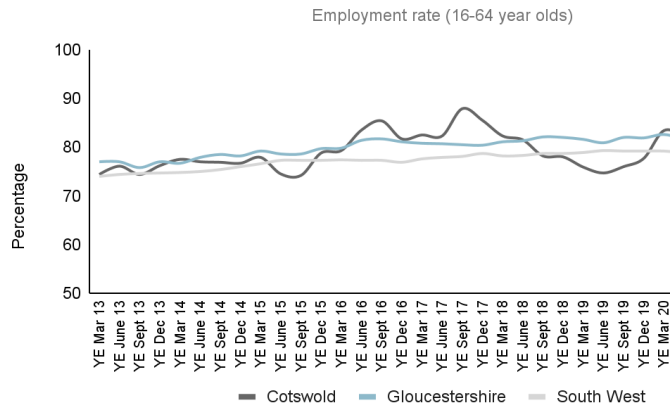
Collaborating with Chesterton Primary School and the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), the council initiated the successful 'DIG DAY' event, leading to the formation of a gardening after-school club. This initiative not only engaged local families but also encouraged children to participate in community-building activities.

# Supporting the Economy



## 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 and now stands at 1.9% - 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 unrest in the Middle East. Sharply rising prices, particularly for energy and fuel, have had an impact on disposable income and living standards. Although energy and fuel costs have dropped back, and the overall inflation rate has fallen significantly, prices overall are still higher than prior to the invasion and food inflation continues to run at a relatively high level.



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 continued 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.

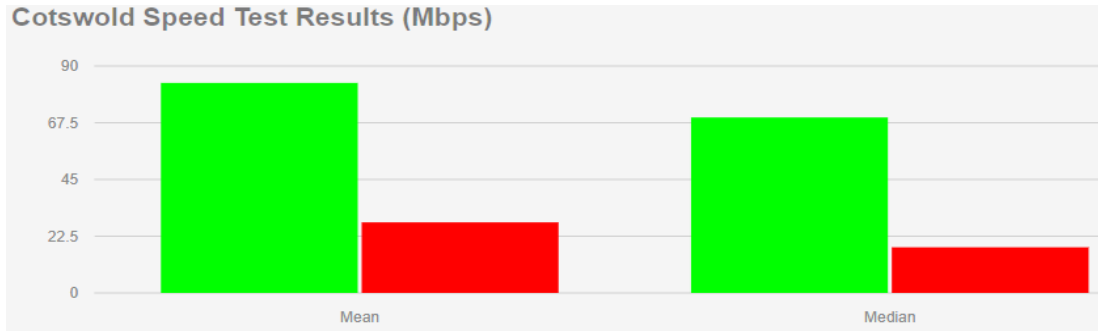
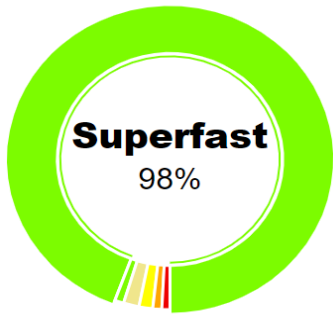
Most visitor economy businesses have seen a relatively positive start to 2024, reporting ahead of the equivalent period in 2023: consumer demand has been stronger than anticipated and other business pressures – particularly recruitment issues and increasing costs – have eased somewhat.

However, due to the cost-of-living crisis, VisitBritain's domestic sentiment research shows most UK adults (66%) are either 'cautious and being very careful' or have been 'hit hard and are cutting back' (22%). The silver lining from this, for domestic tourism, is that 35% of respondents said that as a result they were more likely to choose a domestic rather than overseas trip. An improvement in the weather would undoubtedly have a positive impact: one of the top barriers to taking overnight trips is the UK weather (32% of respondents).

The number of job postings remains high, reflecting continuing challenges in recruitment, but have fallen back from their peak. 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 has been working with the Fastershire Project to address these areas. The Fastershire Project ceased at the end of March 2024 to be replaced by Project Gigabit, run by BDUK. The contract for Project Gigabit's 'Lot18', which includes parts of the Cotswold District was awarded to Gigaclear and an announcement made earlier this year. We will be seeking details of how their programme is going to be rolled out.

The County Council has introduced the Gloucestershire Digital Household Grant to use 4G technology to deliver connectivity in remote locations where fibre is not practical or is prohibitively expensive and residents have speeds of less than 30mbps. The scheme started in the Forest of Dean but is likely to be extended to the east of the county, including parts of Cotswold District, in June 2024. 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 scheme is 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 strategy is in the process of being refreshed and a new draft will be brought to Cabinet later in the year. It will be informed by the new Gloucestershire Economic Strategy, which is due to be considered by the County Council’s Cabinet and the new City Region Board, in June 2024. Both officers and the Cabinet Member have been involved in providing feedback on the draft of the County Economic Strategy.

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 Gloucestershire County Council. Most recently, the Group met at the St James’s Place offices and received a presentation about the company’s work with apprenticeships and financial education.

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, was held on 20th February and was attended by over 20 businesses. Cabinet has already approved a number of projects for 2024-25, including contributions to the former House of Fraser in Cirencester and a net zero housing exemplar scheme in Down Ampney. There is only a relatively small amount of UKSPF funding to be allocated and an open application process is being run until 17th May.

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. Around £400,000 of business grants have been approved out of the overall allocation of £410,000 and these are at various stages of delivery. Three grants for village halls have been approved and there is a rolling programme of applications for the remaining funding. A number of active travel and community and heritage buildings applications have been approved and some applications are still awaiting further information before a decision can be made as to whether to fund them.

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 beginning of April 2024 showed the vacancy rate at 5.1%, 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. Work is underway and the building is expected to be occupied in June 2024. The smaller towns within the District generally have lower vacancy rates, although the vacancies in Tetbury and Moreton-in-Marsh have increased slightly in recent times. 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.

Since the closure of the privately owned coach park in Bourton on the Water, there has been no official coach parking provision in the village. Local stakeholders are still trying to find a viable alternative and Cotswolds Tourism have been communicating the situation to tour operators and interested parties.

Led by Cotswolds Tourism, the Cotswolds Plus Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) – one of 33 nationally accredited LVEPs – has been working to improve co-ordination of regional activity. Cotswolds Tourism have made several successful linked bids for UKSPF and Rural England Fund to councils across the Cotswolds. Preparatory work has now started on the projects which cover a number of separate areas of business support: developing engaging new experiences; marketing new and existing experiences online; helping businesses make their practices more sustainable; building local connections between

accommodation providers and local suppliers and service provider; and significant website enhancements for the main tourism website, Cotswolds.com, which will include a new business support area.

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 (RAU) 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. 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. A planning application was submitted for the scheme in April 2024.
- 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 has been working with the Inward Investment Team at GFirst LEP (now part of Gloucestershire County Council) 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 Inward Investment Team will continue to support ZeroAvia in its ongoing growth. The company has recently undertaken a further successful test flight, staying in the air for 35 minutes – the longest test flight to date. 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 was considered by the Planning and Licensing Committee in March 2024 and authority was delegated to the Interim Development Control Manager to approve the application subject to a number of conditions being satisfied.

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 started on site with various preparatory works and are now moving to the more visible phase of activity. Last year Kier and National Highways presented to a 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.

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**COTSWOLD**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Delivering great services locally

**PERFORMANCE REPORT:  
January 2024 - March 2024**

# Summary Index

Area	KPI Name	RAG	Page
Revenues, Benefits and Housing	<a href="#">Percentage of Council Tax Collected</a>	Orange	6
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	<a href="#">Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims</a>	Orange	8
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Area	KPI Name	RAG	Page
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# Summary Index

Area	KPI Name	RAG	Page
Waste and Environment	<a href="#">Number of fly tips collected and percentage that result in an enforcement action</a>		29
	<a href="#">Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales</a>		30
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## 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 ranking against Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Nearest Neighbours model which uses a range of demographic and socio-economic indicators to identify the local authorities most similar to your own. Cotswold's identified Nearest Neighbours are Chichester, Derbyshire Dales, East Hampshire, Lichfield, Maldon, Malvern Hills, Ribble Valley, Stratford-on-Avon, West Devon, West Oxfordshire and Wychavon. 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.

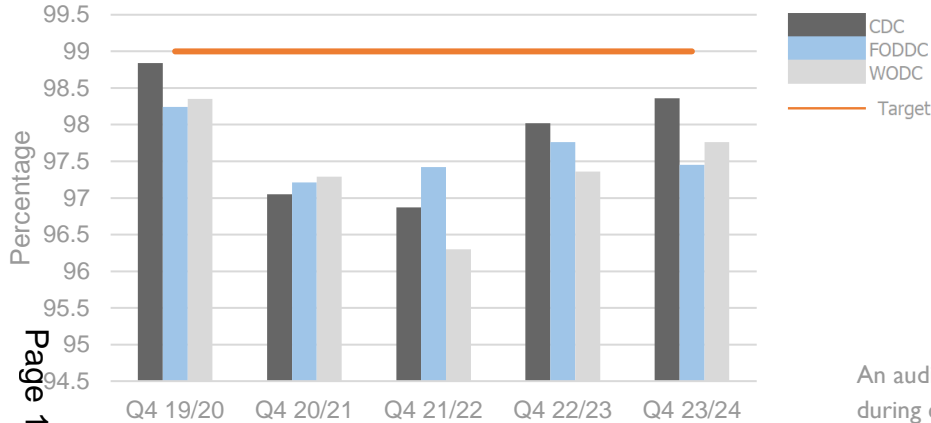


# Overall Performance

The Council's performance has been mixed, with commendable progress in Processing times for Council Tax Support, Housing Benefit Change of Circumstances and Missed Bins per 100,000 Collections. However, there are some indicators that are exhibiting a negative trend including Non-domestic Rates Collection Rates and Percentage of household waste recycled.


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 increased since last year

**2023-24 –  
Higher is Good**

Target: 99%  
Actual: 98.36%

## How do we compare?

Benchmarking via Gov.uk Tables and Individual Council Websites using CIPFA Nearest Neighbours – Latest dataset is 2023-24 Collection Rates

2023-24 Benchmark	%	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
<b>Cotswold</b>	<b>98.36</b>	<b>3/12</b>	<b>Top</b>
Ribble Valley	99.12	1/12	Top
West Devon	98.3	5/12	Second
Derbyshire Dales	97.82	8/12	Third
Wychavon	96.71	10/12	Bottom
Malvern Hills	96.67	12/12	Bottom

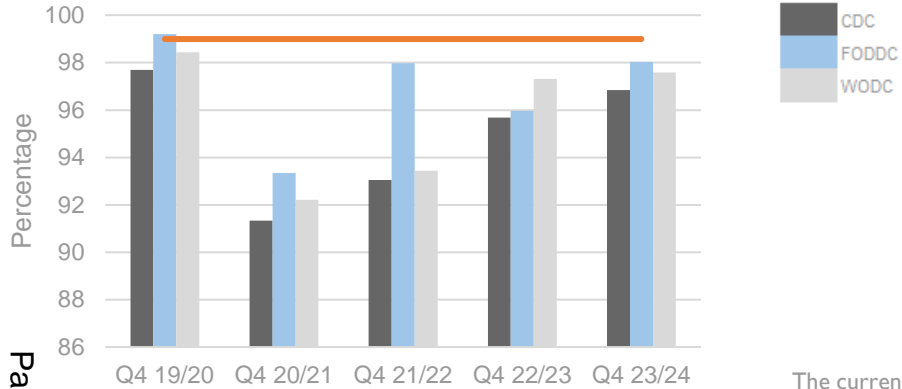
An audit of the Council Tax Services indicated that a significant sum of arrears had accumulated during challenging circumstances associated with the pandemic. Whilst the recovery of arrears had been suspended for a time, it has since been reinstated, and the current recovery cycle is up to date with the service reporting progress in collecting the 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
<b>Balance at Quarter End</b>	£579,248.11	£869,237.08	£995,529.71	£2,444,014.90
<b>% collected</b>	35.54%	36.83%	42.61%	

By March 2023, authorities in England had collected £35.7 billion in council tax for 2022-23, along with an additional £800 million in aged debt. They achieved an average in-year collection rate of 96.0%, marking a 0.2 percentage point increase from 2021-22 (source: [gov.uk](https://gov.uk)).


At the end of Q4, the Council observed a slight improvement in their in-year collection rates compared to the previous year, with an increase of 0.34%. While the Council's collection rate fell just short of the year-end target of 99% by 0.64%, there has been a consistent upward trend in collection rates over recent years, nearing pre-pandemic levels by a margin of 0.48%.

# Percentage of Non-domestic rates collected



## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter: N/A

Against last Year: 

Improved since last year

## 2023-24 – Higher is Good

Target: 99%

Actual: 96.85%

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### How do we compare?

Benchmarking via Gov.uk Tables and Individual Council Websites using CIPFA Nearest Neighbours - Latest dataset is 2023-24 Collection Rates

2023-24 Benchmark	%	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
<b>Cotswold</b>	<b>96.91</b>	<b>11/12</b>	<b>Bottom</b>
Lichfield	99.53	1/12	Top
Ribble Valley	98.69	3/12	Top
East Hampshire	97.81	5/12	Second
Derbyshire Dales	97.31	9/12	Third
Stratford-on-Avon	96.44	12/12	Bottom

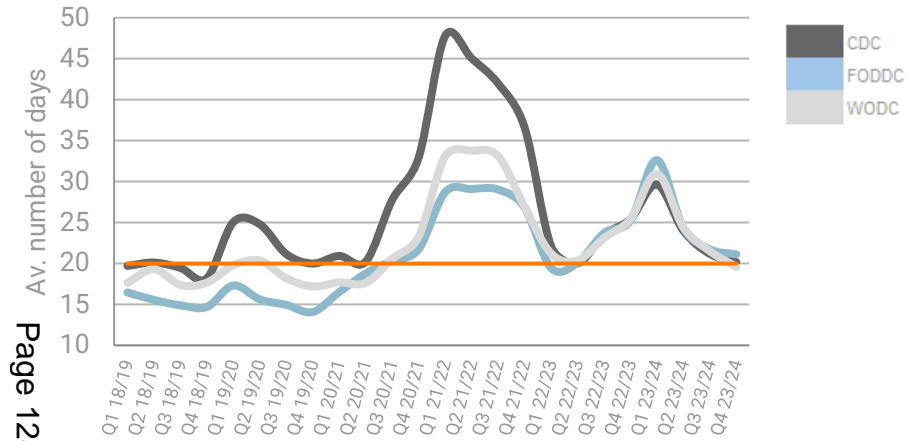
The current recovery cycle is up to date with the service reporting progress in collecting previous year's debt. The below table shows the percentage of aged debt that has been collected and the total outstanding:

	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	Total Outstanding
<b>Balance at Quarter</b>	£136,941.41	£292,569.56	£357,502.62	£787,013.59
<b>% collected</b>	51.18%	44.19%	72.28%	


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.


At the end of the year, the Council saw an increase of 1.17% in their collection rates compared to the same period of the previous year, albeit they have yet to reach pre-Covid-19 levels. The service remains committed to supporting businesses, actively reaching out through reminders, phone calls, and emails to encourage dialogue with the Councils so that we can support them via manageable repayment plans. All in year recovery processes are up to date.

# Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims



## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

**2023-24 – Lower is Good**

Target 20

Actual 21.16

Improved since last quarter and last year

## 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 2024 and the percentage change from March 2023 for each authority, plus the data for all authorities in England

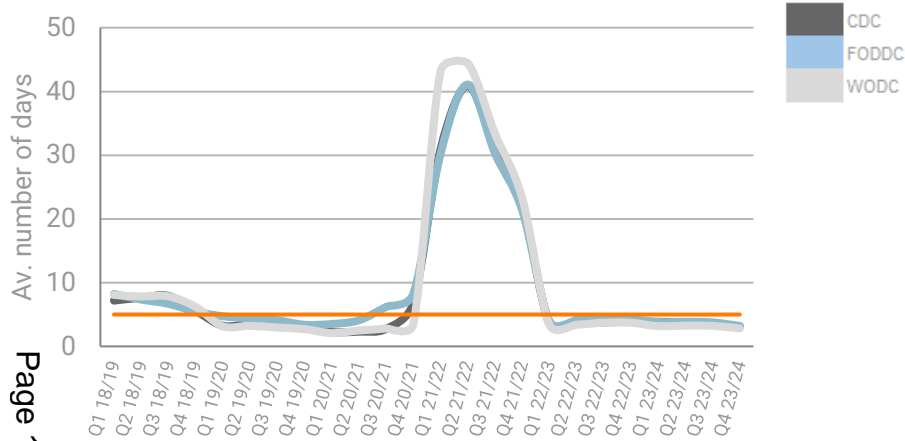
	Number of Claimants at end of March 2024	Percentage Change since March 2023	CIPFA Nearest Neighbours Rank (Higher = less claimants)
<b>Cotswold</b>	<b>3,912</b>	<b>-0.86%</b>	<b>6/12</b>
Ribble Valley	2,153	3.41%	11/12
Lichfield	5,191	6.09%	9/12
Wychavon	6,733	1.52%	12/12

During Q4, the processing times for new CTS claims consistently remained below 20 days, averaging 15.83 days. However, despite this, the Council has slightly exceeded the cumulative 20-day processing target for the year. Nevertheless, it's noteworthy that the cumulative year-end processing times represent the lowest year-end timing since 2019/2020, with a decrease of 1 day from the last quarter.

Automation of tasks received directly from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and customers is currently operating at a level of 60–70%. This automation allows for a heightened focus on processing applications and addressing reported changes. Furthermore, the UC section of the DWP is actively exploring enhancements to the data sent to local authorities. Ongoing testing of the system is underway as part of these improvement efforts.

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 processing times.


# Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events



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## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

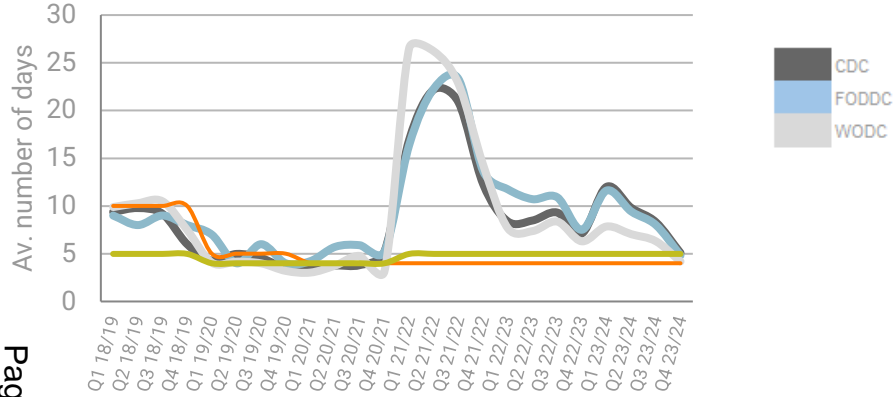
**2023-24 – Lower is Good**

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

**2023-24 – Lower  
is Good**

Target

4

Actual

5.1

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How do we compare?

Speed of processing for HB CoCs – LG Inform. Latest dataset is Sept - Dec '23 (Q3 2023-24)

### Q3 2023-24 Benchmark

	Days	CIPFA Nearest Neighbours Rank	Quartile
<b>Cotswold</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3/12</b>	<b>Top</b>
Derbyshire Dales	2	1/12	Top
Chichester	6	7/12	Second
Lichfield	8	9/12	Third
Malvern Hills	9	10/12	Bottom
Wychavon	10	12/12	Bottom

Please see [Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims.](#)

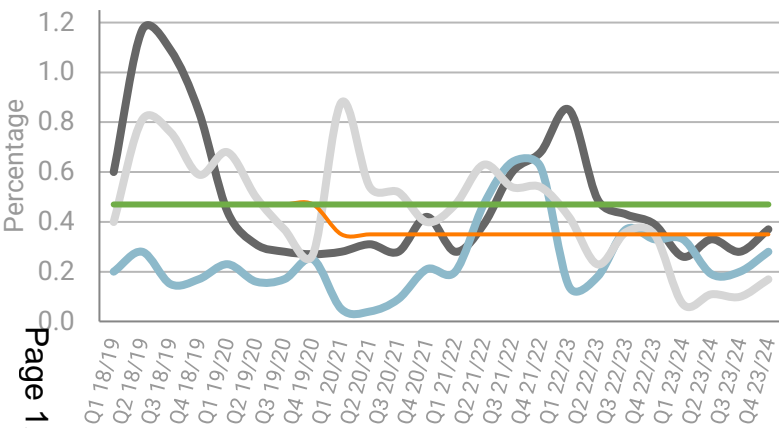
At the end of Q4, the average days to process HB changes decreased, with the Council averaging 2.31 days; however, since the target is cumulative, the ongoing statistics show higher figures. Despite being above the target, the decrease in HB Change applications amplifies the impact of delays in assessing 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.

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 – 2,728  
CTS Changes - 5,088

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



CDC  
 FODDC  
 WODC  
 Target  
 National Target

## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter ↑  
 Against last Year ↓

Increased since last quarter but improved slightly since last year

## 2023-24 – Lower is Good

Target	0.35%
Actual	0.37%

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While the Council meets the national target of 0.47%, it slightly exceeds the service target by 0.02%. Overpayments have increased by 0.09% compared to the last quarter but show a decrease of 0.02% compared to last year.

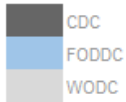
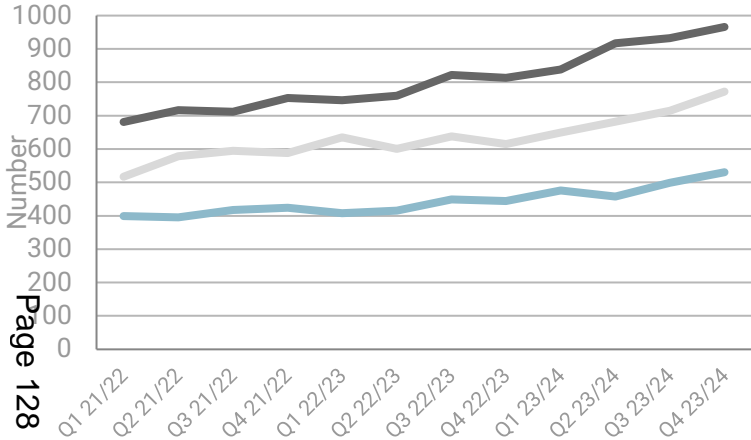
The service is mindful of the impact of increased workloads on delays to processing HB changes which could impact on HB subsidy.

In order to reduce HB overpayments due to local authority error, approximately 20% of the HB caseload undergoes Quality Assurance checks. These checks target areas with high error rates, such as earnings calculations. Additionally, the service is actively participating in the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Housing Benefit Award Accuracy (HBAA) initiative to combat fraud and error.

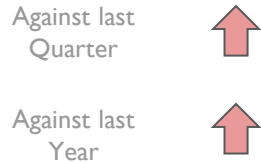
How do we compare?  
TBC

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



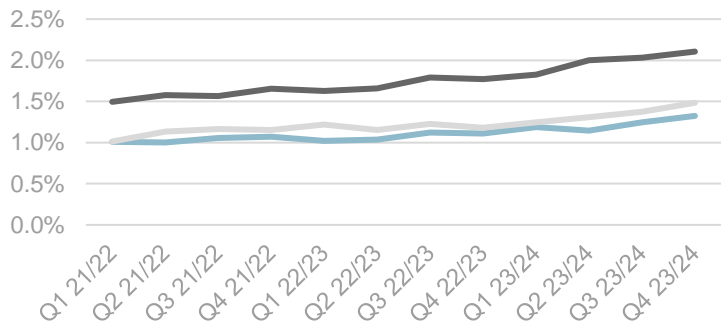
Increased since last quarter and last year

**2023-24 – Lower is Good**

*No Target*

530

## % Long Term Empties of the Total Housing Stock



Properties continue to be added and removed from the list but as the graph indicates there is an upward trend. To address this trend, the Council's Long-Term Empty Homes Strategy is undergoing a refresh. This strategy aims to identify the reasons behind properties remaining empty and seeks to alleviate housing needs within the district. By understanding the causes of empty properties, the Council can develop targeted interventions to address the issue and ensure that these properties are utilised effectively to meet housing demands. Furthermore, approximately 60% of the total Long Term Empty Properties have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for under two years.

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

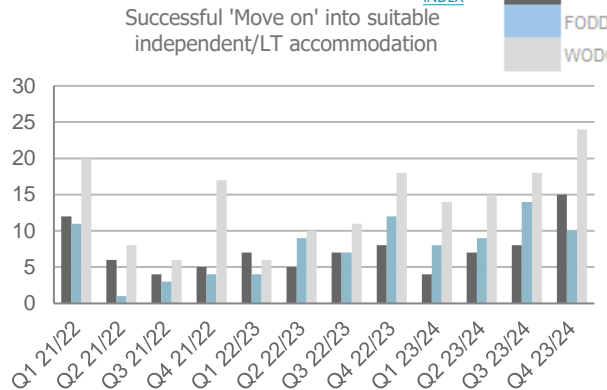
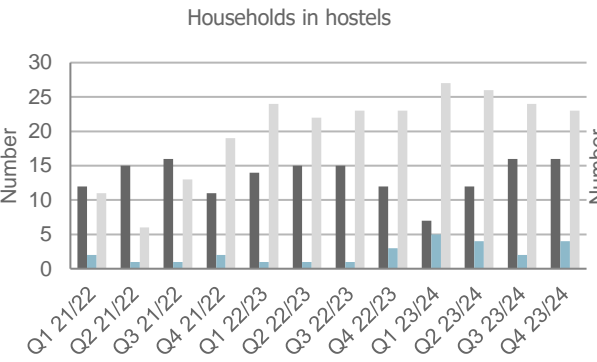
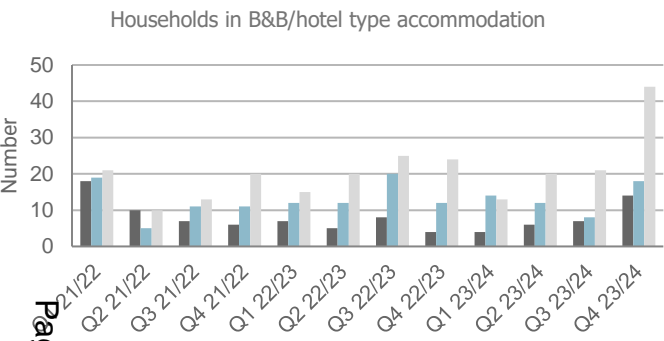


# (Snapshot) Number of households in B&B/hotel-type accommodation & Hostels (LA owned or managed); and Number of successful 'Move On' into suitable independent/long-term accommodation from B&Bs/hotels/hostels

INDEX

Legend for Successful 'Move on' into suitable independent/LT accommodation:

- CDC (Black)
- FODDC (Blue)
- WODC (Grey)



## 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	↑

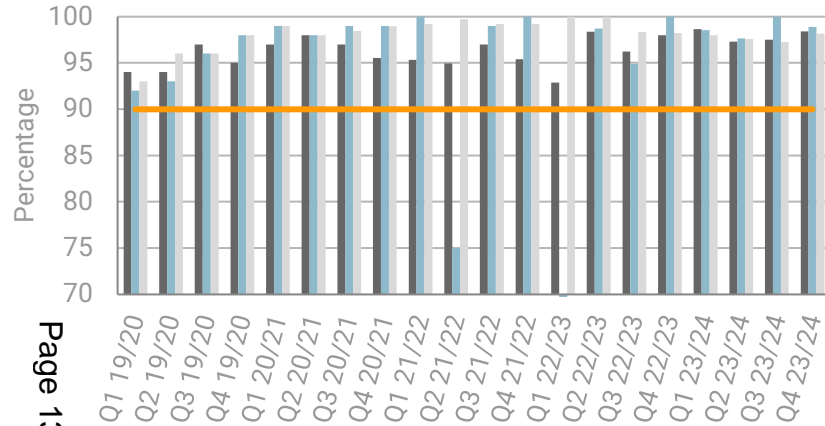
Homelessness remains a significant challenge for all three Councils, putting considerable pressure on Housing services, systems, and pathways. The service has observed a notable surge in homelessness applications during Q4. This rise is attributed to various factors, including heightened pressures on the countywide support system. Contributing to this strain are several factors: an influx of individuals leaving refugee hotels, reduced capacity in adult homelessness pathways, and a scarcity of affordable housing options outside the social rented sector. Additionally, the surge in homelessness has led to increased competition for available social rented accommodations, resulting in prolonged stays for individuals transitioning from hostels and B&Bs.

The team persistently works towards preventing homelessness, successfully averting homelessness for 161 households so far this year—101 within the statutory 56-day period and 60 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



**Higher is Good**

## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Improved since last quarter and last year

Target	90%
Q4 Actual	98.41%
2023-24 Actual	98.14%

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## How do we compare?

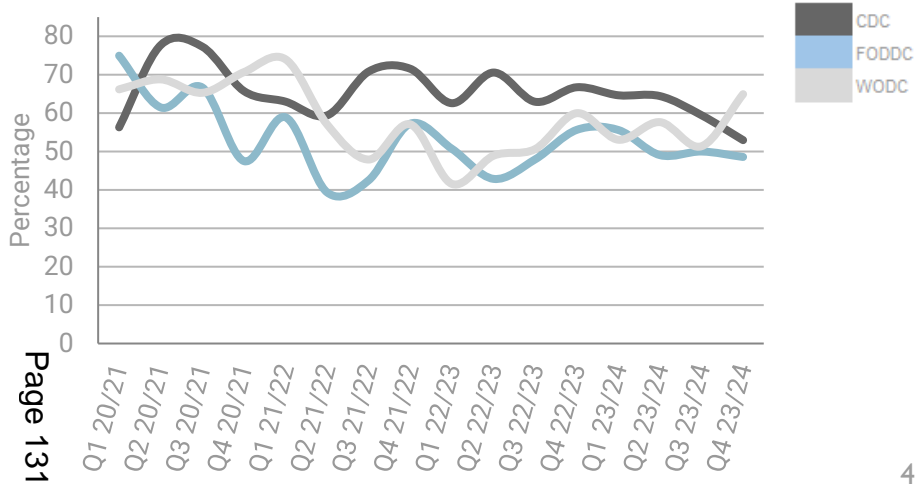
The Govmetric Channel Satisfaction Index is a monthly publication of the top performing councils across the core customer access channels. At least 100 customers need to be transferred to the survey to be included in the league table so even if satisfaction is high, it may not be included i.e. September for the partnership in the below table. This is a national comparator

	Jan Rank	Jan Net Sat.	Feb Rank	Feb Net Sat.	Mar Rank	Mar Net Sat.
Cotswold	4	93%	2	98%	2	97%
Forest	N/A	N/A	1	98%	1	98%
West	1	99%	4	96%	3	96%


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

## Higher is Good

*No Target*

Q4 - 52.97%

2023-24 – 60.15%

472 residents responded to the survey, of which 250 were satisfied. This equates to a rate of 52.97% satisfaction for the quarter, down from 59.46% during Q3.

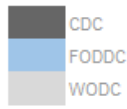
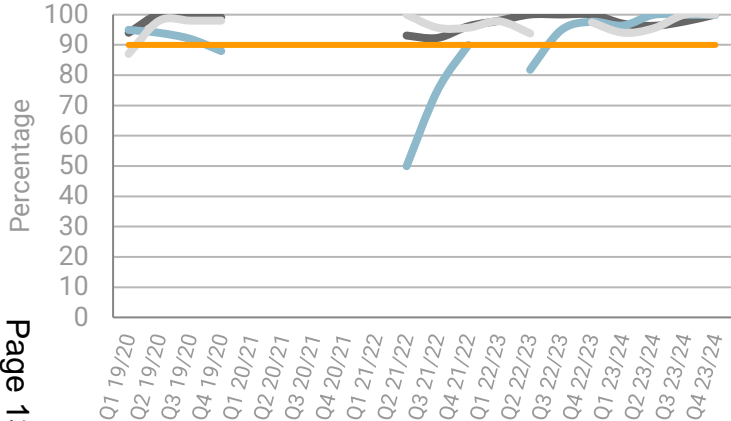
All outbound emails sent by customer services from Salesforce contain a link to the survey.

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



Increased since last quarter and stayed the same since last year

## Higher is Good

Target	90%
Q4 Actual	100%
2023-24 Actual	98.22%

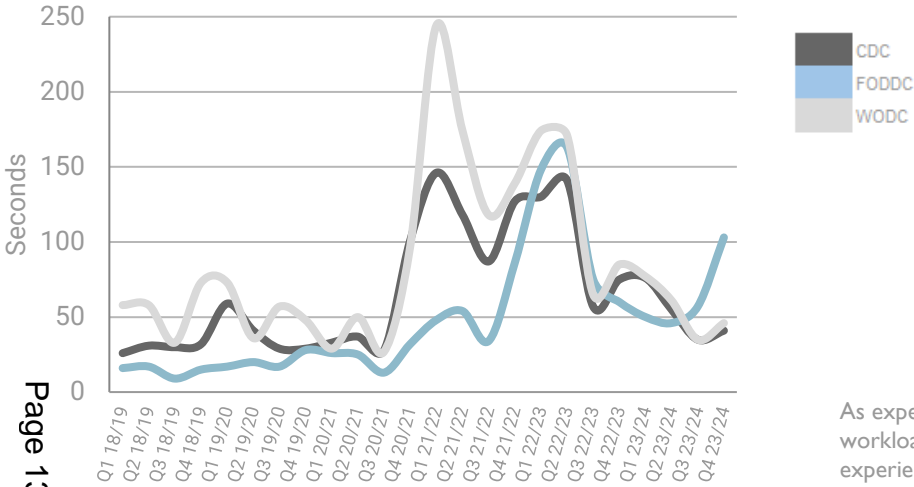
Customer Satisfaction from face to face interactions continues to be high, with a 100% satisfaction rate for the quarter, with all 66 individuals surveyed satisfied with the service.

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.

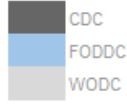
# Customer Call Handling - Average Waiting Time





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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.



## Direction of Travel

- Against last Quarter 
- Against last Year 
- Increased since last quarter but declined since last year

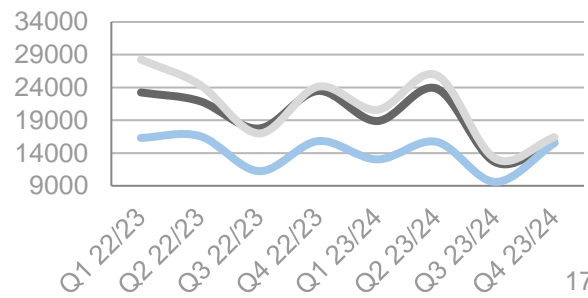
## Lower is Good

*No Target*  
Q4 - 41 Seconds  
2023-24 – 62.5 Seconds

As expected, the average call waiting time increased in Q4, aligning with the traditionally higher workload during this period, primarily due to annual billing and garden waste renewals. The Council experienced a modest increase of 6 seconds compared to the previous quarter but notably decreased by 34 seconds compared to Q4 of the previous year. This decrease in waiting time compared to last year can be attributed to the implementation of the phone trial model at the Council. This model has enabled the strategic allocation of resources to the phone lines during peak demand periods.

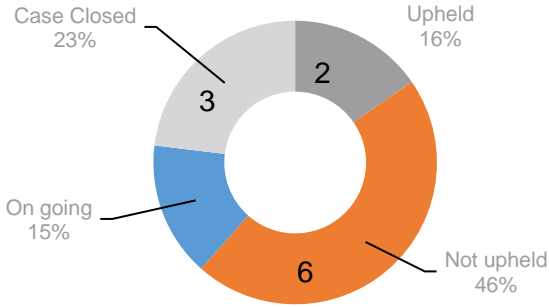
The Council saw a decline of around 7,000 calls compared to the same period the previous year, as depicted in the chart to the right. This data reflects an overarching trend of lower call numbers over time, a trajectory expected to persist owing to sustained initiatives in Channel Choice, aimed at fostering customer self-service options.

## Call Volume over Time



# Number of complaints upheld

Complaints by Status



## Direction of Travel

Complaints upheld or partly upheld at Stage I

Against last Quarter →

Against last Year →

*No Target*

Steady since last quarter and last year

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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. – Latest Dataset is 2022-2023.

2022-23	Complaints Investigated	Percentage Upheld	Upheld decisions per 100,000 residents	Percentage Compliance with Recommendations	Percentage Satisfactory Remedy	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
<b>Cotswold</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8/12</b>	<b>Third</b>
Derbyshire Dales	6	0	0	N/A	N/A	1/12	Top
Chichester	1	100	0.8	100	0	4/12	Second
Lichfield	2	100	1.9	100	0	12/12	Bottom

During Q4, the Council experienced a steady number of complaints received in comparison to 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.

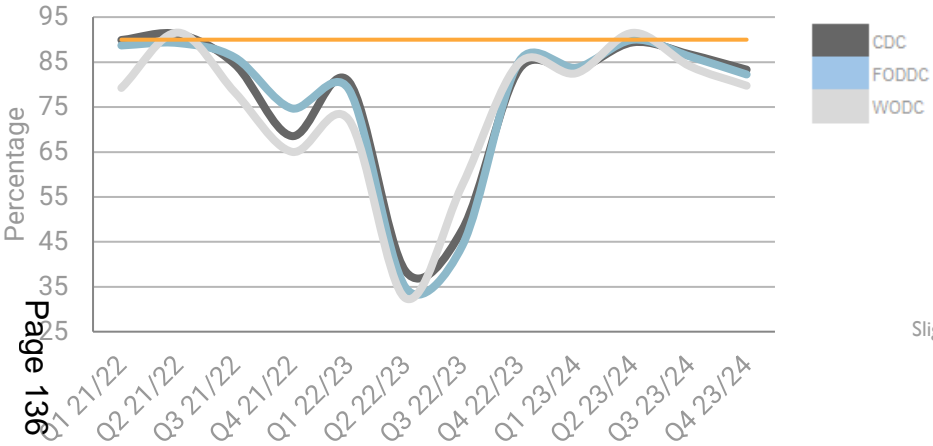
The new process has the following stages:

- 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)
Parking	Unhappy with inability to pay for a parking fine in person at Council Offices	Further guidance given to Customer Services on taking payments when online services are down	Upheld	1
Planning	Unhappy with time taken to assess planning matter	Dealt with by Service	Upheld	10

# Percentage of FOI requests answered within 20 days



## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

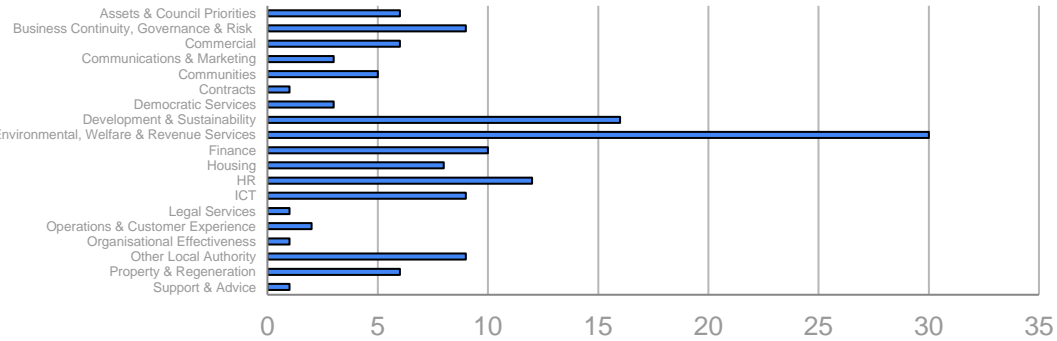
Against last Year 









Slightly declined since last quarter and last year

## Higher is Good

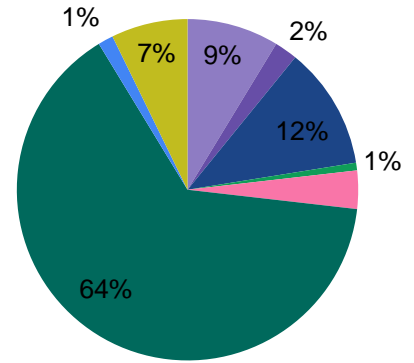
Target	90%
Q4 Actual	83.33%
2023-24 Actual	85.58%

## Requests by Service Area



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

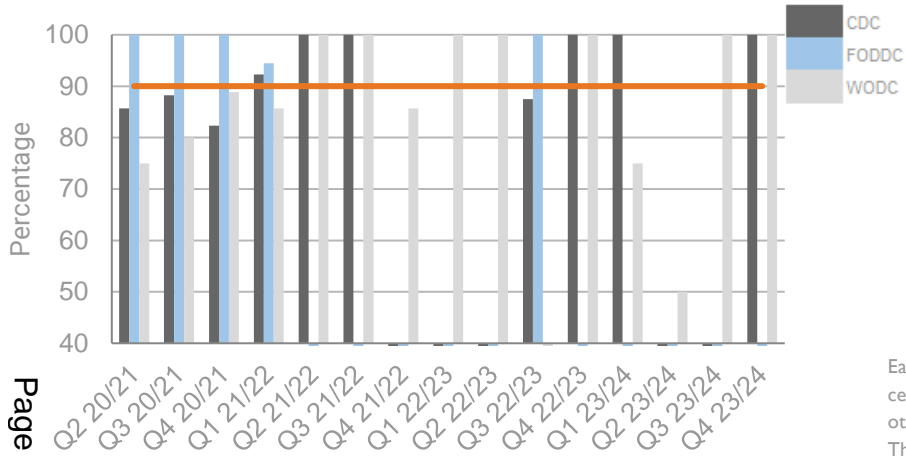
## Response Type



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

**Q4 – Higher is Good**

Target: 90%  
Actual: 100%

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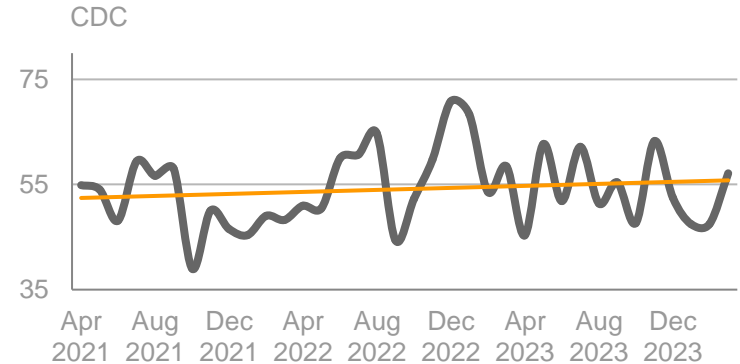
How do we compare?  
Percentage of share in the market

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Number of Apps for Quarter
Cotswold	47%	48%	57%	124
Forest	60%	70%	62%	88
West	73%	67%	75%	136

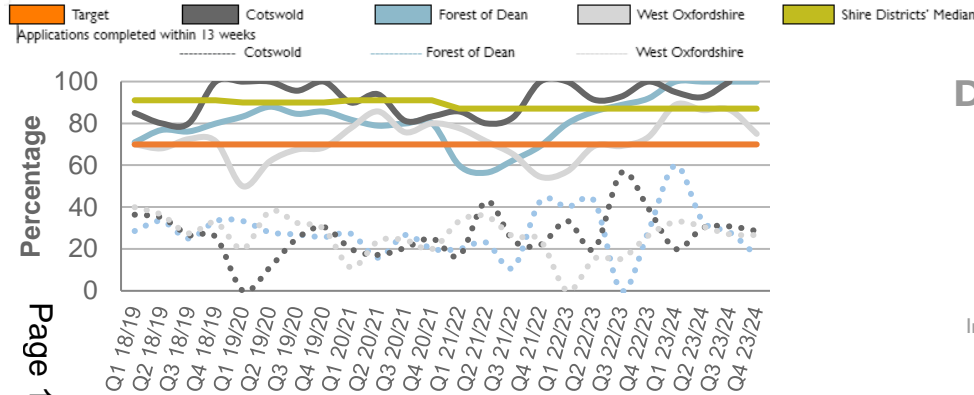
Each month, the service conducts telephone interviews with customers who have received a completion certificate during the month. The customer rates the service on helpfulness of staff, quality of technical advice and other information, responsiveness, value for money, and overall satisfaction.

The data on satisfaction surveys still faces challenges with a low number of returns, with one survey received during Q4.

Building Control had 124 applications in Q4 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))



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How do we compare?

Major Developments - % within 13 weeks or agreed time – LG Inform. Latest dataset is Jan - March '24 (Q4 2023-24)

Q4 23-24 Benchmark	%	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
<b>Cotswold</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1/12</b>	<b>Top</b>
West Devon	100	1/12	Top
Maldon	93	3/12	Second
Stratford-on-Avon	85	8/12	Third
Ribble Valley	75	10/12	Bottom
Lichfield	67	12/12	Bottom

## Direction of Travel

- Against last Quarter 
- Against last Year 

Improved since last quarter and last year

## Higher is Good

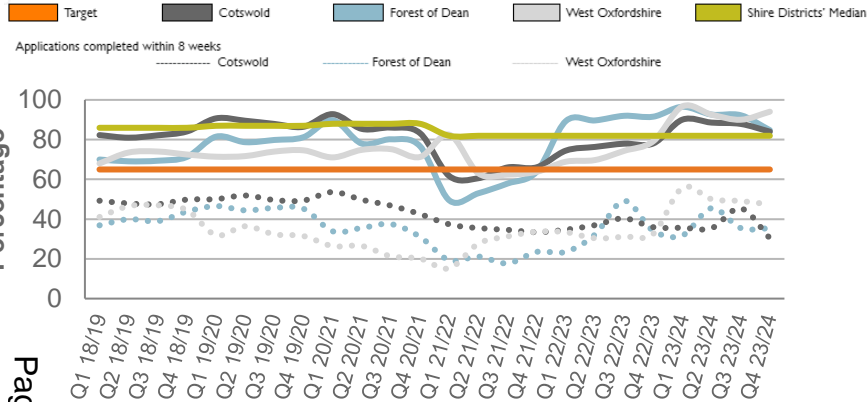
Target	70%
Q4 Actual	100%
2023-24 Actual	94.59%

The service continues to perform very well processing Major applications within time, improving to 100% during Q4.

Nine major applications were determined during Q4, compared to five 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)





## How do we compare?

Minor Developments - % within 8 weeks or agreed time – LG Inform. Latest dataset is Jan - March '24 (Q4 2023-24)

Q4 23-24 Benchmark	%	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
<b>Cotswold</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>6/12</b>	<b>Second</b>
Derbyshire Dales	96	1/12	Top
Ribble Valley	90	3/12	Top
Maldon	80	8/12	Third
Wychavon	76	10/12	Bottom
East Hampshire	62	12/12	Bottom

## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Slightly declined since last quarter but improved since last year

## Higher is Good

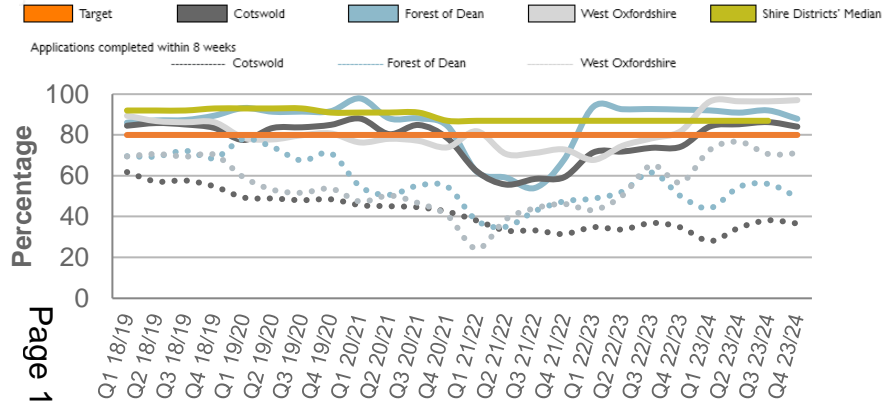
Target	65%
Q4 Actual	84.04%
2023-24 Actual	86.98%

The service has performed very well processing Minor applications within time. 94 minor applications were determined in Q4, compared to 119 applications in the same period of the previous year.

The Development Management Improvement Plan, initiated following the PAS report, remains actively pursued, with significant progress achieved on many key recommendations. Notably, the implementation of a new negotiation protocol for the Councils. Additionally, work is underway on further suggestions, such as the creation of a concise Householder application report template.

In January, changes to the Scheme of Delegation at Cotswold were sanctioned by the Full Council concerning the Call-in of planning applications and notifications to the Planning & Licensing Committee. Elected members now have a period of 28 days from the validation date of the planning application to submit representations if they believe the application warrants consideration at the Planning & Licensing Committee.

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




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## How do we compare?

Other Developments - % within 8 weeks or agreed time – LG Inform. Latest dataset is Jan - March '24 (Q4 2023-24)

Q4 23-24 Benchmark	%	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
<b>Cotswold</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>11/12</b>	<b>Bottom</b>
Maldon	97	1/12	Top
West Devon	94	3/12	Top
Derbyshire Dales	92	5/12	Second
Stratford-on-Avon	89	9/12	Third
Malvern Hills	83	12/12	Bottom

## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Declined since last quarter but improved since last year

## Higher is Good

Target	80%
Q4 Actual	84.11%
2023-24 Actual	85.80%

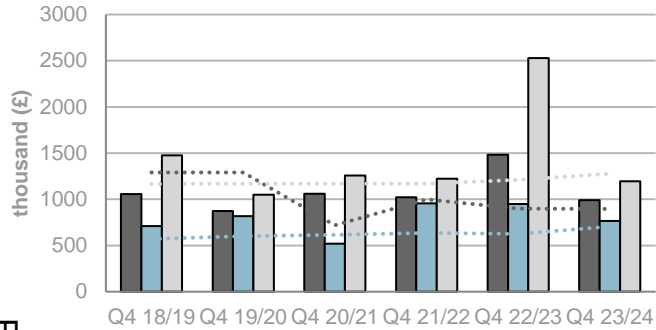
Determination times for Other applications have remained steady since last quarter but have increased since this time last year by 9.8%.

258 Other applications were determined in Q4.

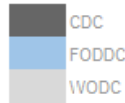
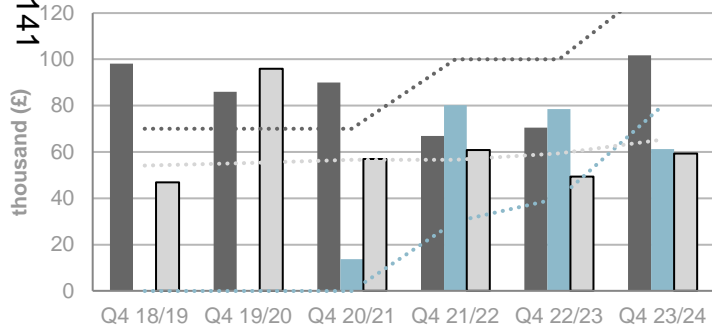
[See slide for Minor Developments for additional narrative](#)

# 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 but declined since last year  
Pre-App Income improved since last quarter and last year

**2023-24 – Higher is Good**

Total Planning Income (£)

Target

894,877

Actual

991,729

Pre-Application Income (£)

Target

135,000

Actual

101,752

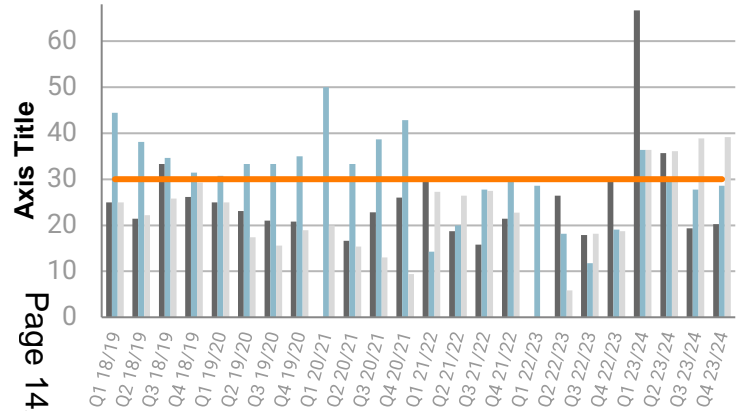
At the close of Q4, planning income for Cotswold exceeded its target by approximately 10%. Conversely, pre-application income for the Council surged by approximately 44% compared to the previous year, despite falling short of its target.

Although the overall income for the year exceeded its target, it was lower than the previous year, which can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, there has been a shift towards fewer but larger developments, likely influenced by a loss of confidence in the housing market. Additionally, the Council's possession of a 5-year land supply has resulted in fewer speculative applications, which typically yield larger fees.

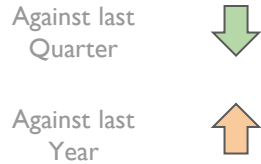
### How do we compare?

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)



## Direction of Travel



**2023-24 – Lower is Good**

Target 30%

Actual 20.27%

### How do we compare?

Percentage of planning appeals allowed – LG Inform. Latest dataset Jan - March '24 (Q4 2023-24)

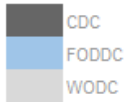
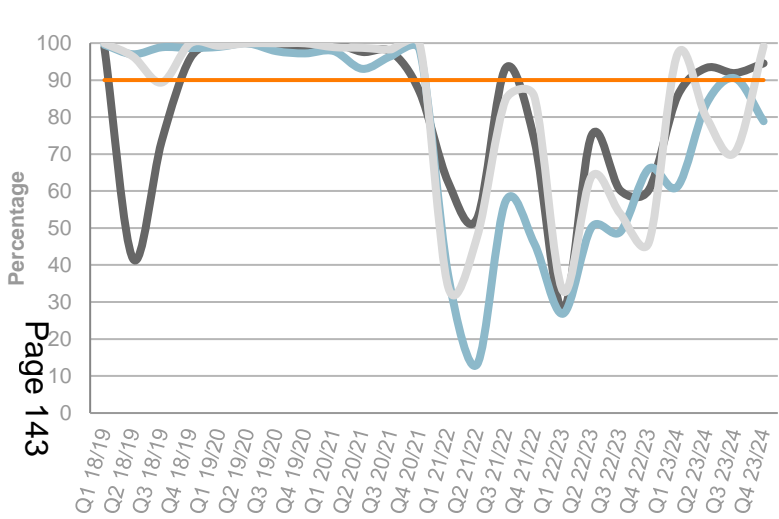
Q4 23-24 Benchmark	%	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
<b>Cotswold</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>12/12</b>	<b>Bottom</b>
Derbyshire Dales	0	1/12	Top
Litchfield	0	1/12	Top
Chichester	20	5/12	Second
Wychavon	31	8/12	Third
Stratford-on-Avon	40	11/12	Bottom

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

Between 1 January 2024 and 31 March 2024 six appeals were decided, with 3 being supported – one appeal includes a spilt decision. This results in an allowance rate of 41.67% for the quarter but a cumulative total of 20.27% for the year, which falls below the target.

The enforcement project, focusing on enhancing the front end for registering enforcement issues, is currently in progress, with the new user forms allowing cases to be triaged quicker. 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.

# Percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days



## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Improved since last quarter and last year

## Higher is Good

Target	90%
Q4 Actual	94.56%
2023-24 Actual	91.27%

The Council's performance has continued to improve since last quarter, remaining above the target, with a notable improvement of 34.18% compared to this time last year.

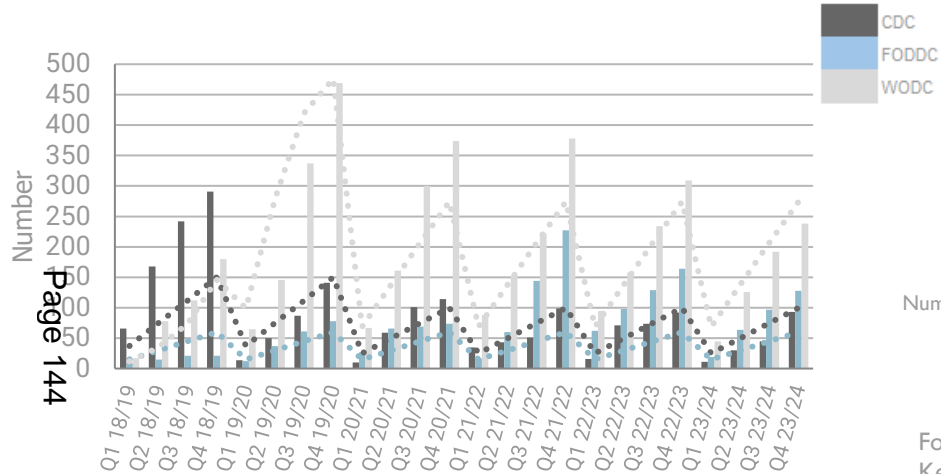
Regarding the HMLR project for Forest, ongoing technical issues with data migration by the external system supplier have resulted in delays. However, testing is currently underway, and results are expected in Q1-Q2 2023-24. Following the completion of the Forest project, work on the Cotswold project will commence.

The Land Charges Lead was recognised at the Local Land Charges Awards and was awarded the Best Performing Searches Team Member award.



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 improved since last quarter and last year

## 2023-24 – Higher is Good

Target	100
Actual	93

Forty-eight properties were completed in Cotswold, across Cirencester, Evenlode, Kempsford and Siddington. Stockwell's regeneration project, despite significant delays caused by insolvency issues, was finalised during Q4. Members were invited to attend the Grand Opening ceremony, marking the completion of the scheme.

The service reports that completions fluctuate over the year. A housing development period is at least 12 months, with some schemes phased over several years.

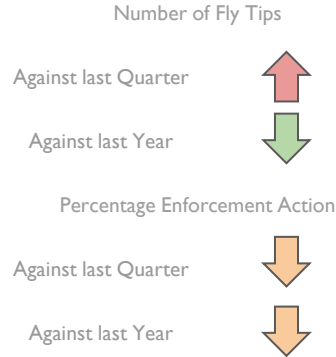
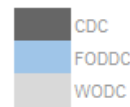
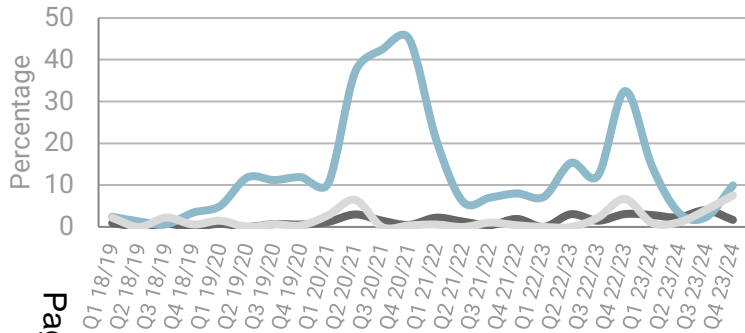
### How do we compare?

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



# 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)



*No Target*  
Number of Fly Tips Collected  
**247**  
Percentage Enforcement Action  
**1.68%**

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## How do we compare?

Number of Fly Tips reported for year 2022-23 for Local Authorities in England – CIPFA.co.uk. The latest dataset available is 2022-23

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

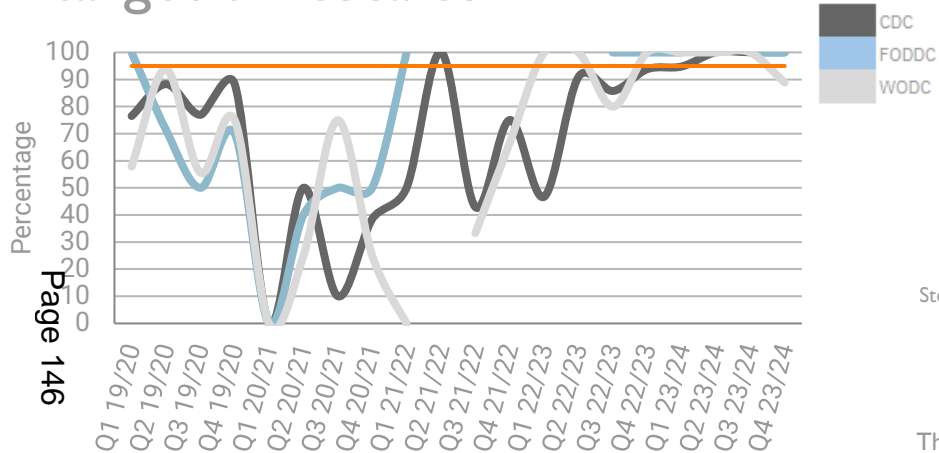
2022-23 Benchmark	Total Fly Tips	Total Enforcement Actions	Total FPNs	% FPNs per Fly Tip	CIPFA Nearest Neighbours Rank	Quartile
Cotswold	1092	99	22	2.01	2/12	Top
Wychavon	878	178	6	0.68	5/12	Second
Chichester	844	109	1	0.12	8/12	Third
West Devon	327	0	0	0	12/12	Bottom

In Q4, there was a notable increase in the number of fly-tipping incidents reported, while the percentage of enforcement actions experienced a slight decline.


To address this trend, the service is proactively reviewed its systems to streamline enforcement efforts. This includes a comprehensive examination of duplicate report input procedures to ensure efficient handling of cases.

Furthermore, the council has successfully secured funding through the Fly-Tipping grant scheme. This funding will be utilised to raise awareness of the household waste duty of care, contributing to efforts to combat fly-tipping.

# 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

## Higher is Good

Target	95%
Q4 Actual	100%
2023-24 Actual	97.91%

The Council had ten inspections, all of which were completed within the timescales. The inspection rate for Q4 remains above target.

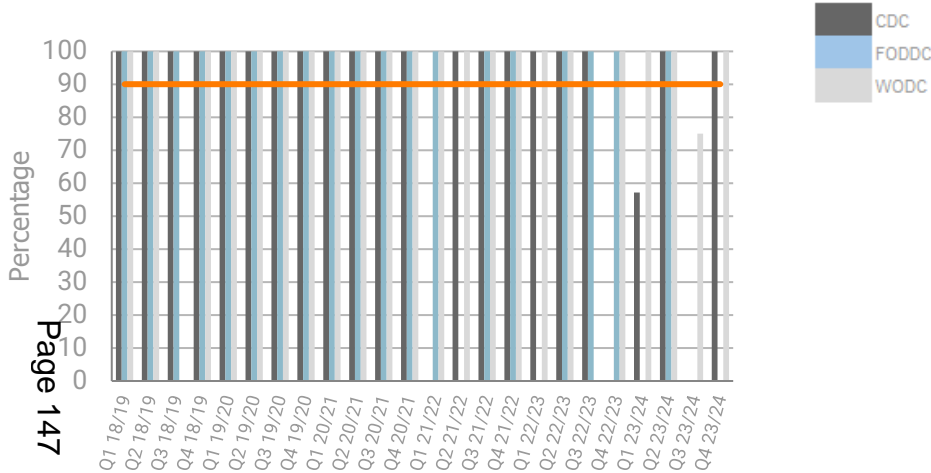
High risk work is naturally prioritised, which can have an impact on lower risk scheduled inspection rates. The service now has a useful dashboard, which is helpful for monitoring team performance and tracking lower risk scheduled inspections within the team.

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)



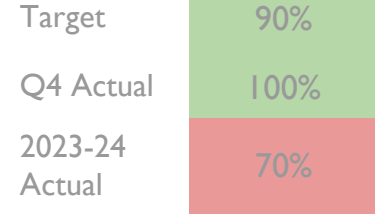
## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter: N/A

Against last Year: N/A

No Notifications received last quarter or last year

## Higher is Good

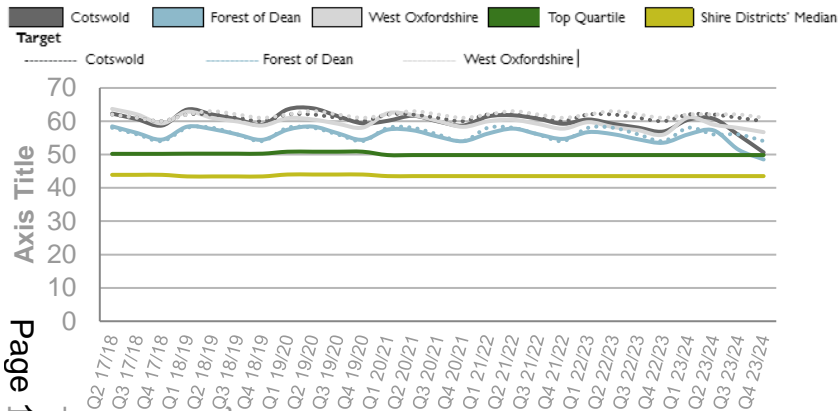


One notification was received during Q4 which was assessed within one working day.

How do we compare?

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

# Percentage of household waste recycled



How do we compare?

Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting – LG Inform. The latest dataset available in April – June '23 (Q1 2023-24) – **Within this Dataset 6 authorities are missing data**

Q1 23-24 Benchmark	%	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
<b>Cotswold</b>	<b>60.2</b>	<b>2/6</b>	<b>Top</b>
Stratford-on-Avon	70	1/6	Top
West Oxfordshire	60.13	3/6	Second
Derbyshire Dales	49	4/6	Third
Litchfield	50.3	5/6	Bottom
Malvern Hills	47.01	6/6	Bottom

## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter



Against last Year



Declined since last quarter and last year

## Higher is Good

Target

60%

Q4 Actual

50.62%

2023-24

Actual

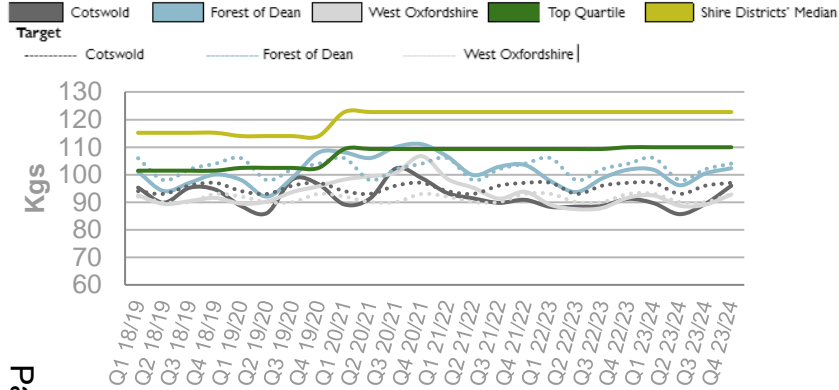
57.08%

During Q4, recycling rates experienced a significant decline, marking the lowest figures recorded since 2017/18, dropping by approximately 6.2% compared to the same period last year. This mirrors a nationwide pattern of declining recycling rates, exemplified by England's recycling rate dipping by 0.8% to 43.3% in 2022/23.

In a bid to combat this trend, the Council actively participated in the national 'Recycle Week 2023' campaign held in October 2023. This year's theme, 'Big Recycling Hunt,' targeted commonly overlooked or unknown recyclable items. Additionally, during Q3, the focus extended to food waste recycling initiatives around Halloween and Christmas, accompanied by tailored messaging promoting recycling and waste reduction during the festive season.

Note: The quarterly recycling targets are profiled to account for seasonal differences.

# Residual Household Waste per Household (kg)



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How do we compare?

Residual household waste per household (kg/household) – LG Inform. The latest dataset available in April – June '23 (Q1 2023-24) – **Within this Dataset 6** authorities are missing data

Q1 23-24 Benchmark	Kg	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
<b>Cotswold</b>	<b>89.62</b>	<b>3/6</b>	<b>Second</b>
Stratford-on-Avon	71	1/6	Top
Derbyshire Dales	83.38	2/6	Top
West Oxfordshire	92.43	4/6	Third
Malvern Hills	97.68	5/6	Bottom
Litchfield	112.88	6/6	Bottom

## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Increased since last quarter and last year

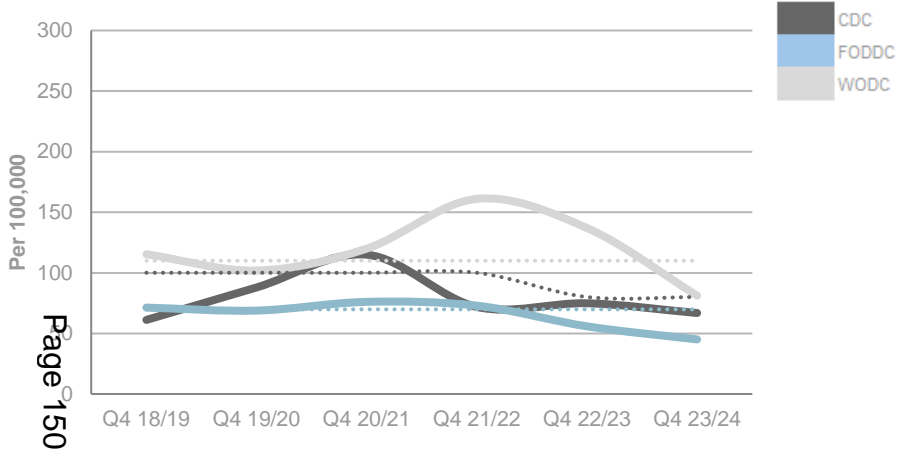
## Lower is Good

Q4 Target	97
Q4 Actual	96
2023-24 Target	383
2023-24 Actual	361


During Q4, the Council observed a rise in the volume of household waste, with an increase of over 6kg compared to the previous quarter, totaling 95.98kg. Furthermore, in comparison to Q4 of the previous year (2022-2023), the tonnage has surged by over 4kg.


Overall, all household waste tonnages have seen a slight increase compared to the previous year (2022-2023), yet they still fall below the levels recorded in 2021-22.

# Missed bins per 100,000



## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Increased since last quarter but improved since last year

## Lower is Good

Q4 Target	80
Q4 Actual	67
2023-24 Target	320
2023-24 Actual	290

## 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

In Q4, the number of missed bins per 100,000 remained below target; however, there was a slight increase compared to the previous quarter. This rise can be attributed to minor flooding issues and road closures, which disrupted collection schedules. Nevertheless, it's worth noting that Q4 of this year marks the best Q4 performance since 2018/19.

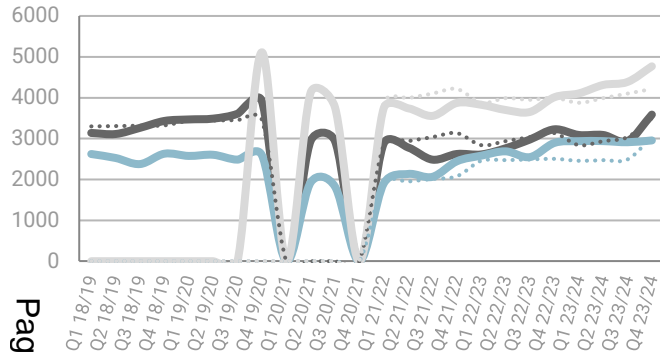
The team is currently working on re-zoning of routes, which may have a negative impact on service performance during Q1.

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.

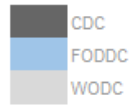
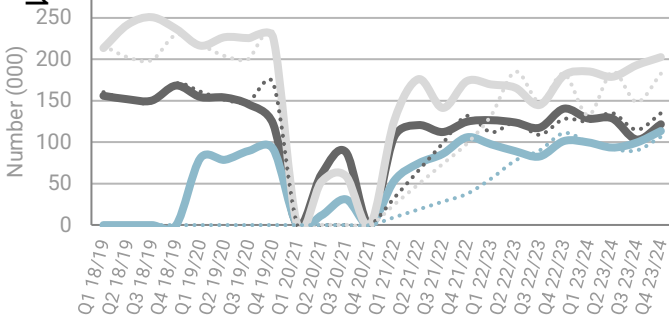
The missed bins target was revised to 80 per 100,000 scheduled collections from 2022-23 Q1 to reflect improvements made over the previous year.

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

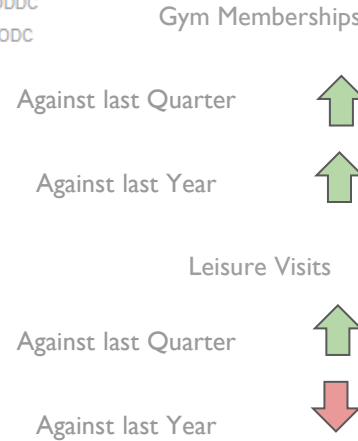
Number of gym memberships



Visits to leisure facilities



## Direction of Travel



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

## Higher is Good

### Gym Memberships

Target	3500
Actual	3590

### Leisure Visits

Q4 Target	135,000
Q4 Actual	121,561
2023-24 Target	510,000
2023-24 Actual	481,734

### How do we compare?

The Data Team are currently working with partners to compile the data return for APSE performance networks which will then provide benchmarking for this metric.

The leisure targets were reviewed at the end of 2021-22 which resulted in increases in the target for visitor numbers.

Visits to leisure facilities in Cotswold increased by 18,000 compared to the previous quarter but declined by a similar figure compared to the same period last year. However, during Q4, gym memberships continued to rise compared to both the previous quarter and the corresponding period last year.

However, Learn to Swim participation figures continue their decline. This trend may persist due to a national shortage of swim instructors and the backlog reduction resulting from the COVID-19 facility closures.

The Council successfully secured over £200,000 in Capital Grant Funding to enhance the energy efficiency of leisure facilities.

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

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# Agenda Item 13



**COTSWOLD**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	<b>COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
Name and date of Committee	<b>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY – 22 JULY 2024</b>
Subject	<b>FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT –2023/24 OUTTURN</b>
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance Email: <a href="mailto:mike.evemy@cotswold.gov.uk">mike.evemy@cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer Email: <a href="mailto:david.stanley@cotswold.gov.uk">david.stanley@cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Report author	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer Email: <a href="mailto:david.stanley@cotswold.gov.uk">david.stanley@cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	This report sets of the outturn position for the 2023/24 financial year.
Annexes	Annex A – Capital Programme Outturn Annex B – Non-Treasury management Investment Prudential Indicators Annex C – Summary of General Fund and Earmarked Revenue Reserves
Recommendation(s)	That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves to:  I. Review and note the outturn financial position set out in this report
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivering Good Services</li> </ul>
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	None



## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This report provides members with the outturn position statement for the financial year 2023/24 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 third quarterly budget monitor exercise, highlight any key financial issues, and ask members to approve the carry forward of unspent capital budget and proposed transfers to and between earmarked reserves.

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report sets out the outturn position for the 2023/24 financial year and will be reviewed by Cabinet at their meeting on 25 July 2024.
- 2.2 The outturn is a positive variation of £0.251m. This represents an improved position for the financial year from the forecast reported at Q3 and is a movement in the variation of £0.196m.



**Table ESI – Revenue Budget Outturn**

	2023/24 Latest Net Budget (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)	Q3 2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)	Movement from Q3
<b>Revenue Budget</b>					
<b>Subtotal Services</b>	<b>18,016</b>	<b>18,578</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>945</b>	<b>(384)</b>
Less: Reversal of accounting adjustments	(1,800)	(1,784)	16	0	16
<b>Revised Subtotal Services</b>	<b>16,217</b>	<b>16,794</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>945</b>	<b>(368)</b>
Corporate Income & Expenditure	(1,168)	(2,368)	(1,200)	(1,398)	198
Provisions and Risk Items	0	377	377	398	(21)
<b>Net Budget Requirement</b>	<b>15,048</b>	<b>14,803</b>	<b>(245)</b>	<b>(55)</b>	<b>(190)</b>
<b>Funded by:</b>					
Council Tax	(6,311)	(6,309)	2	0	2
Retained Business Rates	(5,073)	(5,074)	(0)	0	(0)
Government Funding - Grants	(2,905)	(2,914)	(8)	0	(8)
Government Funding - NHB	(290)	(290)	0	0	0
Collection Fund (surplus) / Deficit	393	393	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL Funding</b>	<b>(14,187)</b>	<b>(14,193)</b>	<b>(6)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(6)</b>
<b>Budget shortfall/(surplus)</b>	<b>861</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>(251)</b>	<b>(55)</b>	<b>(196)</b>

**Table ES2 – Revenue Budget – Reconciliation of variations**

	Positive variation (£'000)	Adverse Variation (£'000)	Q3 Outturn Variance (£'000)	Movement from Q3 (£'000)
<b>Variations at a glance</b>				
Fees & Charges - Income Shortfall		238	242	(4)
Overspend - Waste & Recycling containers		84	44	40
Commercial Property - Rental income shortfall		79	74	5
Old Station - Temporary scaffolding costs		71	48	23
Pay Award (Publica impact)		172	198	(26)
Bad Debt Provision		106	50	56
Additional Transfer to Reserves (TM Reserve)		150	150	0
Increase in Provision (Local Plan)		100	0	100
Savings Target shortfall (risk)		21	82	(61)
Other service variations		17	149	(132)
Ubico Contract forecast overspend (inc Pay Award impact)		138	133	6
ICT underspend	(169)		0	(169)
Elections overspend		113	0	113
Treasury Management Income	(966)		(920)	(46)
Reduced Revenue financing of Capital	(301)		(208)	(93)
Other Corporate Income and Expenditure	(104)		(97)	(7)
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>(1,540)</b>	<b>1,288</b>		
<b>Net Outturn Variation</b>		<b>(252)</b>	<b>(56)</b>	<b>(196)</b>



2.3 Updated material variances are outlined below including improved treasury management investment income, an underspend within ICT and overspend against the Elections budget.

#### Q4 revised variances

- Improved forecast of Treasury Management investment income due to continued higher investment balances and interest rates. Outturn for the financial year is £1.783m, an income surplus of £0.966m.
- Underspend of £0.986m across the total Publica contract sum for all Councils. The amount that is applicable to Cotswold District Council is £0.305m. The underspend has largely arisen due to vacancy management. £0.086m saving achieved from reduction in contact centre staffing and travel costs.
- Additional expenditure incurred during the financial year £113k in respect of Elections costs including staff costs, postage costs and equipment.
- ICT underspend not previously forecast of £169k due to lower than budgeted cyber security, software and IT licence costs.
- Building Control income (no change over Q3 forecast) below budget with a lower number of applications in 2023/24 compared to 2022/23 in part due to continuing financial climate and uncertainty. 505 applications received compared to 612 in 2022/23. £123k income shortfall forecast.
- Public Convenience income shortfall due to reduced footfall. Income shortfall of £47k.
- Household waste bins, bags, and containers - overspend of £88k, overspend due to increased demand, increased cost of materials and longer lead times.
- Land charges income is performing below budget with net income received £68k 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 £71k 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 £79k associated with the investment property formerly occupied by Wilko.
- Ubico - net overspend of £138k due to the pay award (£158k adverse) and vehicle costs (£104k adverse), although lower than estimated diesel costs (£216k favourable) reduce the overall forecast position.
- 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).
- External Audit fees are £66k higher than budgeted due to higher than estimated housing benefit subsidy audit fees for both 2022/23 and estimated for 2023/24.



- Bank charges are £61k higher than budgeted and are in the process of being reviewed for 2024/25.
- 2.4** With the improvement in the outturn position at year end and recognising the need to set aside balances to mitigate risk and uncertainty, the following changes to provisions have been made:
- The increase in provision for sundry bad debts has increased from £50k to £106k following a review of the age debt analysis at 31 March 2024.
  - Provision of £100k included in respect of Legal costs associated with challenge to Local Plan housing requirement.
- 2.5** The adverse income variations outlined above were unlikely to recover in future years 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. The Elections budget will be reviewed to ensure the adequate resources are set aside for the 2027 District Elections as part of the 2025/26 and 2026/27 budget setting process.
- 2.6** 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. Movements from Q3 includes the following which should be viewed as timing differences in committed expenditure between financial years:
- £0.224m (Cottsway Housing Association Loan), drawdown of loan facility now forecast in Q2 of 2024/25.
  - £0.070m slippage in relation to the 'Changing Places' project, completion of Cotswold County Park and Beach accessible toilet facilities expected in Q2 2024/25.
  - £0.163m Rural England Prosperity Projects, grants forecast to complete in 2024/25.
  - £0.161m Trinity Road Agile Working and Roof Repairs, works slipped to Q1 and Q2 2024/25.
  - £0.084m, forecast roof repairs at Trinity Road where it has been identified that water has penetrated the substructure, carried forward to 2024/25.



**Table ES2 – Capital Programme Outturn Forecast**

<b>Capital Programme</b>	<b>2023/24 OB (£'000)</b>	<b>2023/24 REV (£'000)</b>	<b>2023/24 Outturn (£'000)</b>	<b>2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)</b>
Leisure & Communities	1,387	79	132	53
Housing/Planning and Strategic Housing	4,001	4,765	4,547	(218)
Environment	1,956	566	328	(238)
Retained & Corporate	0	0	0	0
ICT, Change and Customer Services	350	100	100	0
UK Rural Prosperity Fund	191	191	12	(179)
UK Shared Prosperity Fund Projects	28	28	25	(3)
Land, Legal and Property	1,024	1,091	511	(580)
Transformation and Investment	4,962	692	328	(364)
<b>TOTAL Capital Programme</b>	<b>13,899</b>	<b>7,512</b>	<b>5,983</b>	<b>(1,529)</b>

- 2.7** 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. Based on the outturn position, the Council will be utilising £0.615m of the Financial Resilience Reserve to support the budget.
- 2.8** Taking into account the improved outturn position, it is recommended that up to £0.300m of the closing balance on the Financial Resilience Reserve is set aside to fund the Council's share of the estimated redundancy costs associated with Phase I of the transfer of services from Publica to the Council.
- 2.9** Whilst this is an improved position, members should note the reliance on the Financial Resilience Reserve over the last 2 financial years of £1.890m to balance the budget which is not sustainable over the medium term.

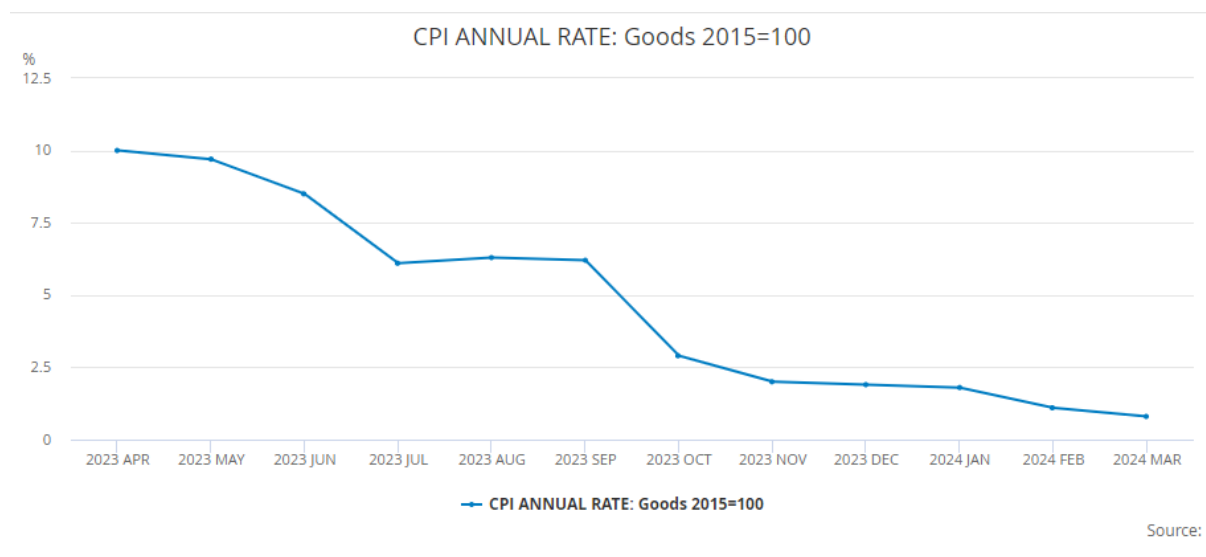


### 3. EXTERNAL ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

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 March 2024 on 17 April 2024. The level of inflation, as measured by the Consumer Prices Index, is 3.2% (down from 3.4% in February 2024). Although it is not the Government's preferred measure of inflation, the Retail Prices Index is 4.3% (4.5% in February 2024). Core inflation (as defined by the Office for National Statistics as the CPI Rate excluding energy, food, alcohol, and tobacco) rose by 4.2% in the 12 months to March 2024 (4.5% in February 2024). The CPI goods annual rate slowed from 1.1% to 0.8%, while the CPI services annual rate eased slightly from 6.1% to 6%. It is this measure that has concerned the Bank of England and led to increases in interest rates during 2023/24.

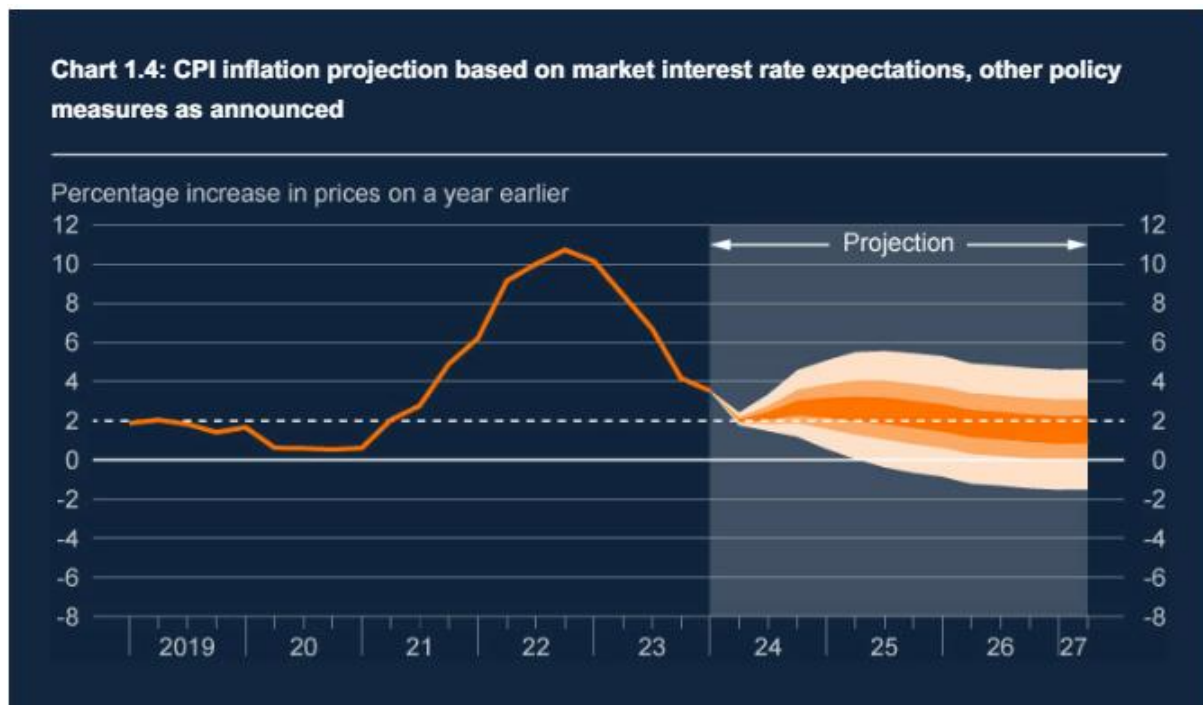


3.3 Although general inflation has reduced since the start of 2023, the Council is subject to specific inflationary pressures on its services (e.g., fuel costs on waste and recycling service) which have tended to track higher than CPI and RPI.

3.4 The latest index has shown a return to the Bank of England's target of 2.0% (CPI) in the 12 months to May 2024, down from 2.3% in the 12 months to April. Core CPI (excluding energy, food, alcohol and tobacco) rose by 3.5% in the 12 months to May 2024, down from



3.9% in April. The CPI goods annual rate fell from negative 0.8% to negative 1.3%, while the CPI services annual rate eased from 5.9% to 5.7%. 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 (May 2024).

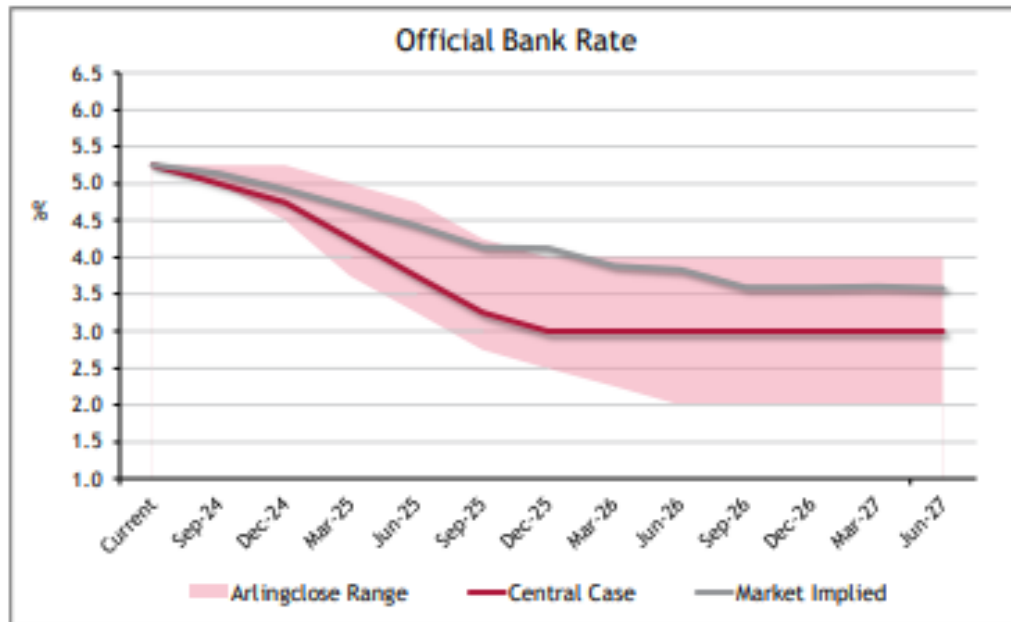


- 3.5** The possibility of a return to elevated levels of inflation throughout the year and the Bank of England's forecast over the medium-term will need to be taken into account when assessing the impact on 2024/25 revenue and capital budgets.

#### 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 20 June 2024 (the Monetary Policy Committee voted by a majority of 7-2 to maintain the official Bank Rate at 5.25%. Two members preferred to reduce the 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 1 August 2024.





- 3.7** To support the Capital Programme, the Council may need to undertake borrowing during the 2024/25 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 2024/25 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** The Asset Management Strategy was adopted by Cabinet in April 2024, Cabinet instructed consultants Carter Jonas to 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.



#### 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:	
<b>Latest Budget</b>	<b>14,363</b>

- 4.2 On 31 March 2024, the Council is reporting net expenditure of £14.803m against the latest net budget of £15.048m, this is the budget adjusted to reflect technical accounting adjustment such as depreciation and movements to/from reserves. These adjustments have no overall impact on the net budget. Funding from Council Tax, Business Rates and Government Grants received is £14.193m against a budget of £14.187m, £0.006m more than budgeted.
- 4.3 The outturn position for 2023/24 results in a in an underspend of £0.251m – a reduction of £0.196m against the Q3 forecast. A deficit of £0.610m is reported against a budgeted deficit of £0.861m. 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 Summary**

	2023/24 Latest Net Budget (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)	Q3 2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)	Movement from Q3
<b>Revenue Budget</b>					
Environmental & Regulatory Services	486	565	80	114	(35)
Business Sup. Svcs - Finance, HR, Procurement	1,120	1,124	4	9	(6)
ICT, Change & Customer Services	2,364	2,174	(190)	(26)	(164)
Assets, Property & Regeneration	749	769	20	94	(74)
Publica Executives and Modernisation	126	128	3	0	3
Revenues & Housing Support	576	559	(17)	73	(90)
Environmental Services	4,829	5,069	240	101	139
Leisure & Communities	2,092	2,102	11	320	(309)
Planning & Strategic Housing	2,191	2,081	(110)	2	(112)
Democratic Services	1,205	1,349	144	17	127
Retained and Corporate	2,279	2,657	378	241	137
<b>Subtotal Services</b>	<b>18,016</b>	<b>18,578</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>945</b>	<b>(384)</b>
Less: Reversal of accounting adjustments	(1,800)	(1,784)	16	0	16
<b>Revised Subtotal Services</b>	<b>16,217</b>	<b>16,794</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>945</b>	<b>(368)</b>
Corporate Income & Expenditure	(1,168)	(2,368)	(1,200)	(1,398)	198
Provisions and Risk Items	0	377	377	398	(21)
<b>Net Budget Requirement</b>	<b>15,048</b>	<b>14,803</b>	<b>(245)</b>	<b>(55)</b>	<b>(190)</b>
<b>Funded by:</b>					
Council Tax	(6,311)	(6,309)	2	0	2
Retained Business Rates	(5,073)	(5,074)	(0)	0	(0)
Government Funding - Grants	(2,905)	(2,914)	(8)	0	(8)
Government Funding - NHB	(290)	(290)	0	0	0
Collection Fund (surplus) / Deficit	393	393	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL Funding</b>	<b>(14,187)</b>	<b>(14,193)</b>	<b>(6)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(6)</b>
<b>Budget shortfall/(surplus)</b>	<b>861</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>(251)</b>	<b>(55)</b>	<b>(196)</b>

**Table 3 – Corporate Income and Expenditure**

	2023/24 Revised Budget (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)	Q3 2023/24 Outturn Variance	Movement since Q3
<b>Corporate Income and Expenditure</b>					
Contingency, other non-service income and expenditure	124	45	(78)	-64	14
Savings & Transformation Items	(500)	(479)	21	82	61
Treasury Management - Interest Payable	99	13	(87)	-91	(4)
Treasury Management - Interest Receivable	(967)	(1,784)	(816)	-920	(104)
Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)	17	3	(13)	-17	(4)
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO)	200	0	(200)	-100	100
Transfer to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	(141)	(166)	(25)	-288	(263)
	<b>(1,168)</b>	<b>(2,368)</b>	<b>(1,200)</b>	<b>(1,398)</b>	<b>(198)</b>



**Table 4 – Provisions and Risk**

<b>Provisions and Risk</b>	<b>2023/24 Revised Budget to (£'000)</b>	<b>2023/24 Actuals to Q4 (£'000)</b>	<b>2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)</b>	<b>Q3 2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)</b>	<b>Movement since Q3 (£'000)</b>
Additional Transfer to Reserves (TM Reserve)		150	150	150	0
Bad Debt Provision		106	106	50	56
Publica Pay Inflation		172	172	198	(26)
Provision in respect of Local Plan		100	100	0	100
	<b>0</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>129</b>

### Key variations

- 4.4** The forecast outturn position is a net positive variance of £0.246m. Whilst this is an improved position compared to Q3, it is important the Council is not complacent. 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.
- Underachievement of income – Building Control (£0.123m), Land Charges (£0.068m), Public conveniences (£0.047m)
  - Overspend on the Ubico Contract (£0.138m overspend, £0.020m underlying underspend excluding the pay award)
  - Additional expenditure of £0.113m on Elections during 2023/24.
  - Deficit (£0.282m) on the Leisure and Culture contracts which will be funded from the Financial Resilience Reserve.
  - Commercial Property net rental income (£0.079m adverse variation)
  - Pay Award impact (£0.172m adverse) – see paragraphs 3.6 to 3.7 and 4.29.
  - Savings Target– Publica underspend of £0.455m (£0.250m target) mitigates in part the £0.250m adverse on Ubico savings target.
  - Treasury Management and interest receivable performance (£0.966m positive variation) – improvement of £0.046m over Q3
- 4.6** With the improvement in the outturn position at year end and recognising the need to set aside balances to mitigate risk and uncertainty, the following changes to provisions have been made



- Adjustments for Bad Debt Provision, a provision in respect of a legal challenge against the Local Plan housing requirement and a proposed additional transfer to earmarked reserves (£0.256m)
- 4.7** 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 2023/24 when compared to prior year (505 applications compared to 612 in 2022/23) in part due to continuing financial climate and uncertainty. £0.123m income shortfall reported.
- 4.8** Income from land charges is below budget with net income received £68k 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.
- 4.9** Public Convenience income shortfall of £0.047m is forecast due to reduced footfall. One-off expenditure reductions reduce the net overspend to £0.042m. 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.
- 4.10** The Council has not received the budgeted level of commercial rental income in 2023/24 due to void costs and rental income losses of £79k associated with the investment property formerly occupied by Wilkinson. This budget has been reduced in 2024/25 and will be reviewed alongside the wider Asset Management Strategy.
- 4.11** 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 cost £8.419m – a net overspend of £0.144m. This is predominantly due to the impact of the pay award (£0.158m overspend), additional costs associated with vehicle repairs and vehicle hire due to the age of the fleet (£0.104m overspend). This is offset by a reduced volume and cost of fuel (£0.216m underspend) which is lower than the assumed cost included in the budget). A £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.



**4.12** The tables below provides members with an overview of the financial performance of the Ubico Contract (Table 5a). The net variation on contract excluding pay award is an underspend of £20k (£12k forecast at Q3).



**Table 5a – Ubico Contract Outturn**

<b>Waste, Recycling, Street Cleaning and Grounds Maintenance Services</b>	<b>Ubico Contract Costs OB (£'000)</b>	<b>Ubico Contract Costs CS (£'000)</b>	<b>Outturn (£'000)</b>	<b>Outturn Variance (£'000)</b>
WST004 Bulky Household Waste	0	0	0	0
Car Parks GM [CTW668]	63	63	66	3
CCM001 Cemetery/Churchyards GM [CTW688]	175	175	184	9
RYC002 Garden Waste Collection [CTW634]	1,315	1,316	1,312	(4)
WST001 Household Waste [CTW611]	1,622	1,623	1,723	100
RYC001 Recycling [CTW633]	2,933	2,935	2,955	20
RYC003 Refuse/Recycling/Food Waste [CTW635]	685	686	627	(59)
STC001 Street Cleaning [CTW666]	1,465	1,466	1,535	69
Trinity Road Offices GM [CTW668]	16	16	17	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>8,275</b>	<b>8,281</b>	<b>8,419</b>	<b>138</b>
Less: Pay Award impact				(158)
<b>Net variation on contract (excluding Pay Award)</b>				<b>(20)</b>

- 4.13** Performance against the Ubico Savings Target is outlined in Section 5 of this report.
- 4.14** Household and recycling waste bins and receptacles – an overspend is reported of £88k, due to increased demand, increased cost of materials and longer lead times.
- 4.15** 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 outturn as forecast at Q3 for 2023/24 is for a deficit (payment from the Council to the operator) of £0.282m. A transfer of £0.282m has been made to the Financial Resilience earmarked reserve to transfer the deficit in respect of the leisure and culture contract in 2023/24.
- 4.16** Based on operator forecasts submitted with tender documentation, the Council has budgeted to set aside adequate funding from the financial resilience reserve in the first five years of the contract, with a surplus on the contract (payment from the operator to the Council) in the remaining years of the contract term.
- 4.17** During 2023/24 the cost of running Elections was £0.213m with £0.100m transferred from the Elections earmarked reserve that had been budgeted for in previous financial years. This resulted in a net overspend of £0.113m and there is an ongoing risk in 2024/25 of an overspend due to the Police and Crime Commissioner election in May 2024 and the General Election in July 2024.



- 4.18** It is not unreasonable to expect cost pressures with running Elections. Clearly, the Council must be able to administer elections in compliance with legislation and guidance from the Electoral Commission. However, it would be appropriate, as it is for all service areas with significant cost pressures, to review the level of resources required to ensure costs are contained and to ensure the Council allocates adequate resource over the MTFS period.
- 4.19** With the Council considering the recommendations from the Boundary Commission later in the year, this would represent an opportunity to review the cost base and resource requirement in advance of the District Elections in May 2027.

### **Treasury Management**

- 4.20** Dividends from the Council's longer-term investments (Pooled funds and Real Estate Investment Trusts) of £0.492m were received in the financial year achieving a return of over 4.72% (pooled funds) and around 2.85% (REIT). Interest from short term cash deposits with the Debt Management Office (DMO) was £0.768m by the end of the year due to larger surplus balances than estimated being available to invest and interest rates at higher rate than budgeted and remaining high. Investment income is £0.966m higher than budgeted at the end of the financial year.
- 4.21** Council approved the Capital Strategy and the Treasury Management Strategy (including the Non-Treasury Management Investment Strategy) at their meeting on 15 February 2023. Audit and Governance Committee have responsibility for reviewing and monitoring treasury management arrangements in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code and receiving performance reports. The Council adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Council to approve, as a minimum, treasury management semi-annual and annual outturn reports.
- 4.22** The CIPFA Code was updated in 2021 and includes the new requirement, mandatory from 01 April 2023, of quarterly reporting of the treasury management prudential indicators. 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.
- 4.23** Audit and Governance Committee will consider the mandatory outturn Treasury Management report at their meeting on 23 July 2024.





### **Corporate Income and Expenditure, Provisions and Risk**

- 4.24** As outlined in Tables 3 and 4 there are several significant variations were forecast in Q3 across the Corporate Income and Expenditure budgets. These budgets support the General Fund Revenue budget and are typically the non-service items such as Treasury Management, financing, contingency budget, and provisions for risk.
- 4.25** Paragraph 4.16 in this report provided members with an initial update on the performance of the Council's Treasury Management Investments. The outturn position resulted in additional income of £0.966m, largely due to the higher than anticipated interest rates.
- 4.26** 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.
- 4.27** As reported in Q3, the Council has in prior years financed ICT capital expenditure from the revenue budget – typically around £0.200m per annum. Following the completion of the 2022/23 external audit, unused capital grant held on the balance sheet was released to finance the capital programme. The grant has been utilised to fund ICT capital expenditure resulting in an underspend of £0.200m (£0.100m forecast at Q3). Members will need to consider how ICT Capital expenditure should be financed in future years given the budget gap forecast over the MTFS period.
- 4.28** The 2023/24 revenue budget includes a net transfer from earmarked reserves of £0.625m to fund specific related expenditure – predominantly around new burdens and homelessness. The latest net budget has reduced this figure to a net transfer from earmarked reserves of £0.141k. Further detail is provided within Annex C.
- 4.29** As outlined in the Q3 report (paragraph 4.23 and 4.17) 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 transfer of £0.282m is made from the Financial Resilience earmarked reserve to transfer the deficit in respect of the leisure and culture contract in 2023/24.
- 4.30** A further transfer of £0.030m is to be transferred to the newly formed ICT reserve to fund expenditure delayed in 2023/24 in respect of information security and the migration of the ICT helpdesk to a cloud platform.



- 4.31** An allowance of £0.172m 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 outturn.
- 4.32** 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.
- 4.33** The 2023/24 revenue outturn includes an allowance to increase the bad debt provision by £105k 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. This increased from a forecast £50k increase reported at Q3 following a detailed review of the aged debt analysis as part of the year end accounts preparation.
- 4.34** A provision of £100k is included in Table 4 in respect of a legal challenge against the 2011-2031 Local Plan housing requirement.

#### **Publica Review**

- 4.35** 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.
- 4.36** Whilst there has not been a material level of expenditure incurred by the end of the 2023/24 financial year, the table below sets out the commitments on the transition programme that have been funded from this reserve in 2023/24.



**Table 6 – Publica Transition Costs**

Item	Description	Provider	Approval Date	2023/24 Outturn (£)	CDC Share (£)
Programme Director	Interim Programme Director (AP) sourced through Tile Hill	Tile Hill	21-Dec-23	67,805	22,602
External Legal advice	External legal advice to support transition of service from Publica to Councils including TUPE advice.	Trowers & Hamblins	21-Dec-23	14,327	4,776
Human Engine Report	Consultancy and supported 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-23	0	0
Local Partnerships	Additional support outside of the LGA- funded consultancy	Local Partnerships	15-Feb-23	0	0
Programme Office	Backfill costs for HR and Finance roles	Publica	29-Feb-24	8,925	2,975
				<b>117,457</b>	<b>36,952</b>

**General Fund and Earmarked Reserves**

- 4.37** Annex C details the reserves held by the Council at 31 March 2024 and the proposed movements to/from and between reserves. The largest of these which affects the outturn position is a transfer of £0.441m surplus on the Business Rate pool to the Financial Resilience Reserve.
- 4.38** The General Fund balance remains at £1.760m and earmarked reserves have reduced by £0.775m (£0.165m transfers from reserves and £0.610m use of financial resilience reserve) from £8.991m to £8.216m
- 4.39** In setting the budget for 2024/2025 a review of reserves was undertaken to assess whether the levels were appropriate considering the needs and risks of the organisation. The movements between reserves detailed in Annex C reflect transfers to/from reserves budgeted for 2023/24 and transfers between reserves as proposed in the 2024/25 Medium term financial strategy.

**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 outturn position on the delivery of the savings agreed as part of the revenue budget.
- 5.4** Table 7 provides members with a summary of position at the end of the financial year.



Table 7 – Savings Update

Savings already adjusted out of Service Budgets	2023/24 Budget Removed (£'000)	Tracker	2023/24 Outturn Position (£'000)	2023/24 Variation (£'000)
<b>Corporate Savings</b>				
LGPS - Secondary Rate (PIA) (Budget savings)	(139)	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(139)	0
<b>Expenditure Savings</b>				
Remove permanent funding for Crowdfunding platfo	(85)	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(85)	0
Insurance Premium	(47)	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(30)	17
Rationalisation of Postage	(20)	Slippage in Savings Delivery	(11)	9
Rationalisation of MFDs (Multifunction Devices)	(25)	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(25)	0
Google / MS 365 Procurement proposal	(10)	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(10)	0
Publica Contract - Net change in Establishment	(67)	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(67)	0
Visitor information centre funding reduction	(27)	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(27)	0
Internal audit days reduction	(20)	Slippage in Savings Delivery	0	20
Planning Appeals Budget	(40)	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(40)	0
Recycling Budget Adjustments	(16)	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(16)	0
Household Waste Budget adjustments	(9)	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(9)	0
Recycling Credits	(90)	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(90)	0
<b>Fees and Charges</b>				
Other Fees and Charges - Cost Recovery	(186)	Slippage in Savings Delivery	(147)	39
Garden Waste - fee increase	(229)	Underway/On-Track/Complete	(270)	(41)
	<b>(1,010)</b>		<b>(966)</b>	<b>44</b>



## 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 outturn with commentary from budget holders and is summarised in Table 9 below. A total of £5.983m has been spent against these schemes at the end of the financial year.

**Table 8 – Capital Programme budget reconciliation**

<b>Capital Programme Reconciliation</b>	<b>(£'000)</b>
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:	
<b>Latest Budget</b>	<b>7,512</b>

**Table 9 – Capital Programme Outturn**

	2023/24 OB (£'000)	2023/24 REV (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)
<b>Capital Programme</b>				
Leisure & Communities	1,387	79	132	53
Housing/Planning and Strategic Housing	4,001	4,765	4,547	(218)
Environment	1,956	566	328	(238)
Retained & Corporate	0	0	0	0
ICT, Change and Customer Services	350	100	100	0
UK Rural Prosperity Fund	191	191	12	(179)
UK Shared Prosperity Fund Projects	28	28	25	(3)
Land, Legal and Property	1,024	1,091	511	(580)
Transformation and Investment	4,962	692	328	(364)
<b>TOTAL Capital Programme</b>	<b>13,899</b>	<b>7,512</b>	<b>5,983</b>	<b>(1,529)</b>



6.2 The capital outturn is a result of an underspend/slippage of £1.529m. This report recommends to members that £1.513m of the unspent capital budget is carried forward into 2024/24 as detailed below:

- Cottsway Housing Association Loan facility (£0.142m)
- Bromford Joint Venture Partnership (£0.120m)
- Provision for financing of Ubico vehicles (£0.086m)
- Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCPs) scheduled for installation at Rissington Road (£0.079m)
- Changing Places Accessible Toilets – Cotswold County Park and Beach (£0.053m)
- UK Rural England Prosperity Fund (£0.179m)
- Trinity Road Carbon Efficiency Works (£0.370m)
- Asset Management Strategy (£0.197m)
- Trinity Road Agile Working and Roof Repairs (£0.287m)

6.3 A full list of expenditure and explanations for variances against the capital programme is attached to this report as Annex ‘A’.

6.4 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.

#### Capital Receipts and Disposals

6.5 The Council received £0.222m from Bromford Housing Association during Q4 of 2023/24 in relation to housing stock previously owned by the Council. All capital receipts will be transferred to the Capital Receipts Reserve to fund future capital expenditure.

**Table 10 – Capital Financing Statement Outturn**

<b>Capital Financing Statement</b>	<b>2023/24 OB (£'000)</b>	<b>2023/24 LAB (£'000)</b>	<b>2023/24 Outturn (£'000)</b>	<b>2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)</b>
Capital receipts	7,986	5,062	4,076	(986)
Capital Grants and Contributions	1,576	1,959	1,853	(106)
Earmarked Reserves	0	0	0	0
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO)	200	100	0	(100)
Community Municipal Investments (CMI)	116	391	54	(337)
Prudential Borrowing	4,021	0	0	0
	<b>13,899</b>	<b>7,512</b>	<b>5,983</b>	<b>(1,529)</b>



- 6.6 The Capital Financing position set out in the table above has been reviewed by the S.151 Officer during the year 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 C** providing further details of the relevant prudential indicators.

## 8. CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 This monitoring report presents the Council's outturn 2023/24 financial position. As the report sets out, an underspend of £0.246m is reported for the financial year which results in a smaller transfer from the Financial Resilience Reserve than forecast of £0.616m (£0.861m budgeted)
- 8.2 Cabinet will continue to consider the impact of the outturn and the impact on earmarked reserves as part of their oversight of the savings and transformation programme.

## 9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

## 10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 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.

**11. RISK ASSESSMENT**

11.1 Considered within this report.

**12. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

12.1 None.

**13. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 Considered within this report.

**14. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

14.1 None

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Annex B - Capital Programme 2023/24 OUTTURN

Capital Programme by Service Area	2023/24 Budget [Incl. 22/23 slippage] (£'000)	2023/24 Revised Budget (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q4 (£'000)	2023/24 Variance to Out-turn (£'000)	Cfwd to 2024/25 Budget	Commentary
<b>Leisure and Communities</b>						
Investment in Leisure Centres	1,200	50	81	31	0	<p>Capital works are underway with the Freedom Leisure (FL) main contractor. Running in parallel with the FL investment works, allowing for easier site management and minimal disruption to customers.</p> <p>Frequent project meetings help between FL, Leisure and Property. Current progress on track and on budget. Majority of expenditure still expected to fall within 2024/25.</p> <p>Works are due to commence at Bourton Leisure Centre at the start of the school summer holidays, materials are currently being ordered in preparation to ensure the contractor can deliver the works within the 6 week holiday period – avoiding any disruption to the school usage.</p>
CLC Pool Works	110	0	0	0	0	<p>This scheme is to address flaking paint from the steel structural support in the Cirencester Leisure Centre pool area. Following unsuccessful attempts to procure a contractor to do the works, due to the specialist nature of the work involved and materials required; Property services has approached the Councils leisure contractor, Freedom Leisure who have agreed to incorporate these works into their capital scheme.</p>

Capital Programme by Service Area	2023/24 Budget [Incl. 22/23 slippage] (£'000)	2023/24 Revised Budget (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q4 (£'000)	2023/24 Variance to Out-turn (£'000)	Cfwd to 2024/25 Budget	Commentary
Government funded decarbonisation	27	27	49	22	0	Late invoice received from the PSDS contractor. Costings were under investigation due to performance of system against project specification. Overspend was to be funded from the contingency approved by Council 26th May 2021 which was removed from the 23/24 capital programme. Overspend to be funded from underspends elsewhere in capital programme.
Crowdfund Cotswold	54	2	2	0	0	The spring round of Crowdfund Cotswold launched in February, with a deadline for applications of 24th April. There has been strong interest from prospective projects, with over 20 people attending our workshop. The remaining projects from the autumn round met their targets, including the biggest project to date, a multiuser astroturf pitch in Bourton on the Water. Following some initial delays to verification, a project from World Jungle for a mobile youth festival to complement their well-established programme of activity for young people launched in quarter and quickly met its target. The spacehive funding platform holds a balance which will be used to fund current projects. Other crowdfund projects have been funded from UKSPF capital funding
<b>Housing/Planning and Strategic Housing</b>						

Capital Programme by Service Area	2023/24 Budget [Incl. 22/23 slippage] (£'000)	2023/24 Revised Budget (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q4 (£'000)	2023/24 Variance to Out-turn (£'000)	Cfwd to 2024/25 Budget	Commentary
Private Sector Housing Renewal Grant (DFG)	908	1,300	1,344	44	0	183 DFG cases were received during the course of 2023/24, of which 139 cases are now complete, 14 cases were withdrawn. The remainder are ongoing live cases. The overspend will be funded from the additional DFG allocation transferred from the County Council in year of £116k and the balance from the DFG capital grants reserve. 2024/25 is likely to see expenditure of £1.4m.
Affordable Housing - Davies Road MiM (S106)	581	290	290	0	0	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	3,055	2,913	(142)	142	Capital loan provided to Cottsway Housing Association to fund affordable housing. Repayment of £1.247 made during year leaving balance due to Council at 31/3/24 of £1.6m.
Bromford Joint Venture Partnership	120	120	0	(120)	120	The Council and Bromford Housing have entered into a Collaborative Agreement to deliver the Down Ampney Housing development. The submission for planning consent will be submitted in Q.1 2024/25.
<b>Environment</b>						
Waste & Recycling receptacles	55	55	52	(3)	0	Rolling budget for the purchase of waste receptacles due to growth in properties or replacements.
Litter Bin Replacement	10	0	0	0	0	Review of service currently underway. Expenditure not likely until 2024/25.

Capital Programme by Service Area	2023/24 Budget [Incl. 22/23 slippage] (£'000)	2023/24 Revised Budget (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q4 (£'000)	2023/24 Variance to Out-turn (£'000)	Cfwd to 2024/25 Budget	Commentary
Provision for financing of Ubico Vehicles	1,646	281	195	(86)	86	Two replacement vehicles for the Street Cleansing fleet [£79k], one bin delivery vehicle [£40k], and one refuse collection vehicle (£76k) have now been received. Budget is fully committed and will be carried forward to 2024/25.
Electric Vehicle Charging Points	200	91	12	(79)	79	16 EVCP's are scheduled for installation, 8 at Rissington Road car park and 8 at Trinity Road offices. There were further delays with the installation of the EVCPs at both Trinity Road and Rissington Road. While groundworks have taken place at both, the DNO connection caused significant delays. The Trinity Road works have completed in Q.1 2024/25 and the budget has been carried forward.
Car Park enforcement - vehicle purchase	45	0	0	0	0	A vehicle is currently being leased. The procurement of an electric vehicle will be considered as part of 2025/26 budget setting process.
Public Toilets - Card Payment (bc)	50	16	16	0	0	The installation of card readers has taken place at 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.
Changing Places Toilets	123	123	70	(53)	53	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 underway and due to complete by Q.2 2024/25.

	2023/24 Budget [Incl. 22/23 slippage] (£'000)	2023/24 Revised Budget (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q4 (£'000)	2023/24 Variance to Out-turn (£'000)	Cfwd to 2024/25 Budget	Commentary
<b>Capital Programme by Service Area</b>						
Car Park improvements (Rissington Road) 2022/23	0	0	-17	(17)	0	Final invoice received lower than value accrued in 2022/3.
<b>Retained and Corporate:</b>						
<b>ICT, Change and Customer Services</b>						
ICT Capital	215	100	100	0	0	Expenditure on networking equipment, replacement servers for disaster recovery and the ongoing laptop replacement programme.
Planning Documents and Scanning Solution	200	0	0	0	0	Awaiting an options paper for the replacement/upgrade of the IDOX system.
<b>UK Prosperity schemes:</b>						
UK Rural Prosperity Fund Projects	191	191	12	(179)	179	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. Funding will be carried forward to 2024/25. All projects expected to continue into 2024/25.
UK Shared Prosperity Fund Projects	28	28	25	(3)	0	Funding has been allocated to supporting the town centres, community and neighbourhood infrastructure, improving green spaces, active travel and impactful volunteering. Grant schemes have been approved and grant agreements issued. £3k of 22/23 expenditure funded from 23/24 grant allocation.
<b>Land, Legal and Property</b>						

	2023/24 Budget [Incl. 22/23 slippage] (£'000)	2023/24 Revised Budget (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q4 (£'000)	2023/24 Variance to Out-turn (£'000)	Cfwd to 2024/25 Budget	Commentary
<b>Capital Programme by Service Area</b>						
Trinity Road Carbon Efficiency Works (Council March 2022)	370	370	0	(370)	370	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 a contract with the supplier to install the roof mounted Solar PV. Delay on install due to revised design ref: structural survey. Work has commenced in June 2024. .
Trinity Road Roof Repairs (Council March 2022)	524	524	511	(13)	13	The work to the roof is complete, outstanding work includes replacement of the vertical glazing in the bistro and conservation areas. Works due to commence in Q2 of 2024/25.
Asset Management Strategy	500	197	0	(197)	197	The £500k budget is for investment in existing assets and will likely include structural repairs at the Old Station. 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. Budget to be carried forward to 2024/25.
<b>Transformation and Investment</b>						
Tetbury Homeless Property (Cabinet May 2022)	294	90	0	(90)	0	Laundry refurbishment funded from revenue homeless prevention grant.



Capital Programme by Service Area	2023/24 Budget [Incl. 22/23 slippage] (£'000)	2023/24 Revised Budget (£'000)	2023/24 Actuals to Q4 (£'000)	2023/24 Variance to Out-turn (£'000)	Cfwd to 2024/25 Budget	Commentary
Trinity Road Agile Working (Council March 2022)	602	602	328	(274)	274	Refurbishment complete subject to a small number of snagging items and additional power sockets. The Elections team are utilising the main west atrium until the General Election. Once the Election work is complete, desks in the open atrium will be installed and the management agreement with tenants finalised. Full handover to Watermoor Point to manage the letting of the space expected in Q2 of 2024/25. T
Strategic Property Acquisition	4,360	0	0	0	0	Acquisition no longer planned.
	15,013	7,512	5,983	(1,529)	1,513	

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<b>Earmarked Reserves</b>					
	<b>Balance 31/03/2023 (£'000)</b>	<b>Budgeted transfer (to)/from Reserves (£'000)</b>	<b>Transfer to/from Reserves (£'000)</b>	<b>Transfer Between MTFS Review (£'000)</b>	<b>Balance 31/03/2024 (£'000)</b>
<b>General Fund</b>	<b>(1,760)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(1,760)</b>
Council Priorities	(3,989)	42	341	647	(2,959)
Financial Resilience Reserve	(1,174)	610	(207)	(1,728)	(2,499)
Risk Mitigation	(304)	(46)	(38)	(162)	(550)
Ringfenced Earmarked Reserves	(438)	15	158	208	(57)
Other Revenue reserves	(3,086)	227	(327)	1,036	(2,151)
<b>Subtotal Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>(8,991)</b>	<b>848</b>	<b>(73)</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(8,216)</b>
<b>TOTAL GF Balance + Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>(10,751)</b>	<b>848</b>	<b>(73)</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(9,976)</b>

<b>Reserve Type</b>	<b>Balance 31/03/2023 (£'000)</b>	<b>Budgeted transfer (to)/from Reserves (£'000)</b>	<b>Transfer to/from Reserves (£'000)</b>	<b>Transfer Between MTFS Review (£'000)</b>	<b>Balance 31/03/2024 (£'000)</b>
General Fund Balance	(1,760)	0	0	0	(1,760)
<b>Corporate Priorities/Investment</b>					
Council Priorities Fund - Allocated	(899)	13	75	660	(151)
Council Priorities Fund - Unallocated	(2,219)	20	6	2,193	0
Council Priority: Transformation and Change	(195)	0	1	(6)	(200)
Council Priority: Publica Review	0	0	29	(500)	(471)
Council Priority: Climate Emergency	0	0	0	(250)	(250)
Council Priority: Housing Delivery	0	0	0	(750)	(750)
Council Priority: Local Plan	(677)	9	260	(500)	(908)
Council Priority: Regeneration/Infrastructure	0	0	0	(200)	(200)
ICT/Digital	0	0	(30)	0	(30)
	<b>(3,989)</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>647</b>	<b>(2,959)</b>
<b>Risk mitigation</b>					
Financial Resilience Reserve (MTFS)	(1,174)	610	(207)	(1,728)	(2,499)
Elections	(43)	(46)	112	(24)	0
Asset Management & Property	0	0	0	(350)	(350)
Treasury Management Risk	0	0	(150)	0	(150)
Housing Benefit	(100)	0	0	50	(50)
Flexible Homeless	(161)	0	0	161	0
	<b>(304)</b>	<b>(46)</b>	<b>(38)</b>	<b>(162)</b>	<b>(550)</b>

Reserve Type	Balance 31/03/2023 (£'000)	Budgeted transfer (to)/from Reserves (£'000)	Transfer to/from Reserves (£'000)	Transfer Between MTFS Review (£'000)	Balance 31/03/2024 (£'000)
<b>Revenue Grants Unapplied</b>					
Business Rates s31 Grants	(300)	0	(196)	0	(496)
COVID/COMF Reserves	(263)	7	35	18	(203)
New Burdens	(358)	203	12	0	(143)
Homelessness	(5)	0	0	(184)	(190)
Housing	(918)	(10)	0	928	0
Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit	(43)	0	(57)	0	(100)
Planning	(126)	0	0	113	(13)
Property Management	(153)	0	0	153	0
Car Parking	(1)	0	0	1	0
Other	(847)	0	(18)	2	(863)
	<b>(3,015)</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>(224)</b>	<b>1,031</b>	<b>(2,008)</b>
<b>Ringfenced Earmarked Reserves</b>					
Capacity Fund - Chesterton Strategic Site [Homes & Communities Agency]	(152)	0	119	33	0
GCCG District schemes linked to ILP objectives (including inequalities) [COM405]	(62)	15	4	0	(43)
Local Authority Parks Improvement [MHCLG]	(14)	0	0	0	(14)
BoTW Tourism Tax	(35)	0	35	0	0
Strategic Property Aquisition Planning App	(175)	0	0	175	0
	<b>(438)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>(57)</b>

Reserve Type	Balance 31/03/2023 (£'000)	Budgeted transfer (to)/from Reserves (£'000)	Transfer to/from Reserves (£'000)	Transfer Between MTFS Review (£'000)	Balance 31/03/2024 (£'000)
<b>Other Revenue Reserves:</b>					
ICT Cyber Security Training [LGA]	(5)	0	0	5	0
Accommodation Guide Glos.	(66)	27	(103)	0	(142)
	(72)	27	(103)	5	(142)
	(10,751)	848	(73)	(0)	(9,976)

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



**1. BACKGROUND**

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.

<b>Capital Expenditure</b>	<b>2022/23 actual (£)</b>	<b>2023/24 outturn (£)</b>	<b>2024/25 budget (£)</b>	<b>2025/26 budget (£)</b>
General Fund services	1,647,737	5,655,000	6,813,000	2,318,000
Capital investments	2,913,000	328,000	0	0

2.2. The main General Fund capital projects include expenditure on Disabled Facilities Grants, Trinity Road Agile Working Project and roof repairs. The Council also incurred £2.913m of capital expenditure in the form of a service loan provided 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.

<b>Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)</b>	<b>31/03/2023 actual (£)</b>	<b>31/03/2024 actual (£)</b>	<b>31/03/2025 budget (£)</b>	<b>31/03/2026 budget (£)</b>
General Fund services	20,211	71,000	435,000	400,000
Capital investments	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL CFR</b>	<b>20,211</b>	<b>71,000</b>	<b>435,000</b>	<b>400,000</b>

**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.

<b>Gross Debt and CFR</b>	<b>31/03/2023 actual (£)</b>	<b>31/03/2024 forecast (£)</b>	<b>31/03/2025 budget (£)</b>	<b>31/03/2026 budget (£)</b>
Debt (incl. PFI & leases)	450,757	357,255	260,000	158,000
Capital Financing Requirement	20,211	71,000	435,000	400,000

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



- 4.2. In the table above, the closing position of the CFR for 2023/24 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 31/3/2024 reflects the 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 2023/24 (£)	Debt as at 31/03/2024 (£)	2023/24 Authorised Limit (£)	2023/24 Operational Boundary (£)	Complied? Yes/No
Borrowing	10,000,000	357,255	10,000,000	10,000,000	Yes
PFI and Finance Leases	0	0	0	0	Yes
<b>TOTAL Debt</b>	<b>10,000,000</b>	<b>357,255</b>	<b>10,000,000</b>	<b>10,000,000</b>	

- 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 reported and forecast to be as indicated below.

	2022/23 actual (£)	2023/24 actual (£)	2024/25 budget (£)	2025/26 budget (£)
Total net income from service and commercial investments	507,019	491,778	495,018	500,819
Proportion of net revenue stream	4.02%	3.46%	3.42%	3.42%



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



6.2. The 2023/24 outturn is lower than that set out in the 2023/24 Capital Strategy due to the £79k net income shortfall reported for commercial property income.

**7. Proportion of Financing Costs 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.

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 rates and general government grants.

	2022/23 actual (£)	2023/24 actual (£)	2024/25 budget (£)	2025/26 budget (£)
Financing costs (£)	6,030	14,000	19,000	40,000
Proportion of net revenue stream	0.05%	0.10%	0.13%	0.27%

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# Agenda Item 14



**COTSWOLD**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	<b>COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
Name and date of Committee	<b>FULL COUNCIL – 31 JULY 2024</b>
Subject	<b>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24</b>
Wards affected	None
Accountable member	Councillor Gina Blomefield, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Email: <a href="mailto:gina.blomefield@cotswold.gov.uk">gina.blomefield@cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Andrew Brown, Business Manager for Democratic Services Email: <a href="mailto:Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk">Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Report author	Caleb Harris, Senior Democratic Services Officer Email: <a href="mailto:caleb.harris@cotswold.gov.uk">caleb.harris@cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	To receive the annual report of the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
Annexes	Annex A – Executive Scrutiny Protocol (Part E10 of the Constitution) Annex B – Recommendations to Cabinet from 2023/24 year Annex C – Current O&S Work Programme
Recommendation(s)	That Full Council resolves to: I. Note the Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2023/24.
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivering Good Services</li> <li>• Responding to the Climate Emergency</li> <li>• Delivering Housing</li> <li>• Supporting Communities</li> <li>• Supporting the Economy</li> </ul> <p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee in its work considers reports from a variety of areas which support the agreed priorities within the Council's Corporate Plan.</p>
Key Decision	NO



**COTSWOLD**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Director of Governance, Interim Executive Director (Publica), Cotswold Local Management Team



## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1** An annual report may be submitted to Full Council to demonstrate the impact of Overview and Scrutiny and the effectiveness of the Executive Scrutiny Protocol under Part E10 (point 10.2) of the Constitution
- 1.2** The Council therefore is asked to note the report for the previous civic year and the future work programme for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1** A Corporate Peer Challenge Feedback Report from October 2022 noted that there were different views about the effectiveness of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny function. The report welcomed the requirement for the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be an opposition member as a mature constitutional change that provided a good foundation. The report also noted that the Leader and Cabinet were clear that they wished to be held to account more by Overview and Scrutiny.
- 2.2** Following the Peer Challenge report, the Council has refocused the role of Overview and Scrutiny on to holding Cabinet to account and contributing to policy development on behalf of the local community.
- 2.3** The Council under the Cabinet and Leader model now operates an effective Overview and Scrutiny Committee which provides pre-decision scrutiny of Cabinet decisions and contributes to the development of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework. The Committee is also empowered to consider other issues that affect the district or its people.
- 2.4** Decisions to be taken by Cabinet are notified on the Forward Plan for 28 days in line with the statutory provisions of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012. These decisions will also include Key Officer Decisions which are delegated by Cabinet. For completeness, Council decisions are also included on the Forward Plan.
- 2.5** The Committee of 10 Members, chaired by an opposition Member, provides oversight of the work of the Cabinet and will question Cabinet Members about proposals within their portfolio responsibilities.
- 2.6** Council passed in November 2022 the Executive Scrutiny Protocol which sets out the relationship between the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Executive (Cabinet).
- 2.7** The protocol describes how important good relations between the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Cabinet will enable strong decision-making.
- 2.8** In paragraph 10.1 of the protocol, it sets out the following requirements to demonstrate the success of the protocol. These are:
  - Recognition of the value of scrutiny;



- A clear record of constructive challenge;
- Valuable scrutiny reviews that achieve impactful outcomes;
- An open and accountable decision-making process

**2.9** Officers have also taken into account the guidance from the work of external bodies such as the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny to help guide the Committee in using best practice to achieve the aims of the protocol.

### **3. THE VALUE OF SCRUTINY AND CONSTRUCTIVE CHALLENGE**

- 3.1** For Overview and Scrutiny to be successful, it must be able to demonstrate its ability to scrutinise and provide a 'critical friend' analysis of the work of Cabinet and proposals that are set to come before Cabinet.
- 3.2** Under the Executive Leader and Cabinet Model operated by the Council, Overview and Scrutiny has a key role in providing democratic checks and balances on the role of the Cabinet.
- 3.3** In the 2023/24 civic year, pre-decision scrutiny has been properly embedded as a feature of the Council's executive decision-making process and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has proven to be effective at undertaking this role.
- 3.4** The Cabinet Forward Plan is published on a monthly basis via the [Cabinet's Forward Plan webpage](#). This enables the Committee to select reports for consideration at future meetings. Annex C provides the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme at present. This work programme is agreed annually but reviewed at each meeting and adjusted to take account of emerging priorities and any adjustments to the Cabinet Forward Plan.
- 3.5** Overview and Scrutiny at each meeting will hear from the Leader/Cabinet Member responsible for each report for pre-decision scrutiny. There is then the opportunity for the Committee to discuss various aspects of reports and ask the Cabinet Member detailed questions. On occasions, Members or public speakers have made representations to the Committee which have informed its deliberations.
- 3.6** Annex B provides the list of recommendations that have been presented to Cabinet in the 2023/24 civic year. Any recommendations are agreed to by the Committee at the conclusion of each item, with the Chair and Vice-Chair confirming with officers the final wording of the recommendations after the meeting if necessary.
- 3.7** Cabinet Members are then given the opportunity to consider the recommendations and the responses are agreed to by Cabinet collectively, before being reported back to the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.



- 3.8** In total, 28 recommendations have been made to Cabinet by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2023/24, with 22 recommendations being accepted, in whole or in part, by Cabinet.
- 3.9** There are a number of recommendations which made a noticeable contribution to the quality of decisions made by Cabinet. These recommendations often took into account the views of other stakeholders including areas of public interest. The issues involved include those around the Local Plan and Public Conveniences where local impacts were brought to the attention of the Committee.

#### **4. VALUABLE SCRUTINY REVIEWS THAT ACHIEVE IMPACTFUL OUTCOMES**

- 4.1** Scrutiny Reviews conducted by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee play an important role in enabling Members to have input into the policy-development process.
- 4.2** Under Article 7.3 of the Constitution, Task and Finish Groups can be set up by the Committee to provide critical oversight of areas of policy within the Council and oversee external policy too.
- 4.3** These groups are made up of a select number of Members on a cross-party basis. The membership of Task and Finish Groups may include non-Executive Members who are not Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 4.4** Since the Peer Review, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has established two Task and Finish Groups in order to scrutinise emerging policy and to influence process and to provide reports and / or recommendations to Cabinet.

#### **EMPLOYMENT POLICIES TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

- 4.5** The Employment Policies Task and Finish Group was established during the 2022/23 civic year on 4 October 2022 with its terms of reference agreed by the Committee membership at that time.
- 4.6** The Employment Policies Task and Finish Group was chaired by Councillor David Cunningham and attended by Councillors Nikki Ind, Julia Judd and Mark Harris. The Group examined the Council's work in updating its HR Policies for Council employees.
- 4.7** The Group, in discussion with officers, oversaw the development of new HR Policies around employment and health and safety. Whilst the Group was largely guided by the specialist knowledge of officers, the group provided valuable cross-party oversight of the process for updating employment and health and safety policies and assurance that the work was progressing in a timely fashion.



- 4.8 These updated policies were presented to [Cabinet on 12 September 2023](#) and approved for use in respect of Council employees.

### **PUBLIC CONVENIENCES WORKING GROUP**

- 4.9 Following the decision by Cabinet to extend the current contract for the service and maintenance of public conveniences on 17 July 2023, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was asked by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Mike Evemy, to establish a task and finish group to inform future Cabinet decisions about the Council's public conveniences facilities.
- 4.10 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed at its meeting on 26 September 2023 to set up this task and finish group with Councillor Tony Slater as its Chair and Councillor Gary Selwyn as the Vice-Chair. Councillors David Cunningham and Dilys Neill were the other serving Members on the group.
- 4.11 The Group, within its terms of reference, was asked to consider a number of options in relation to the future of the public convenience facilities operated by Cotswold District Council. The key primary focusses were:
- To look at the future of the Public Conveniences within the District in regard to which sites would be kept, closed or transferred to Town/Parish Councils (if desired).
  - To review charging structures for the sites and provide recommendations.
  - To consider the merits of retendering the contract and of bringing the service back in-house.
- 4.12 The Group then held a series of private meetings to assess the current situation at the sites and discuss the data to determine the best course of action.
- 4.13 The Group took evidence from Town and Parish Councils, the current contractor Danfo and other organisations such as Crohn's & Colitis UK. It also reviewed financial and usage data for the different facilities across the district.
- 4.14 The recommendations covered a variety of aspects around public conveniences including capital expenditure to refurbish and enhance the existing facilities with card readers, requirements of access to public conveniences and future management of the facilities.
- 4.15 The Group then agreed a report which was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 30 January 2024 and then [Cabinet on 1 February 2024](#). Cabinet accepted the majority of the eleven recommendations that the Group put forward.
- 4.16 The recommendations not accepted were recognised for the points made but needed further information before a decision could be reached. These recommendations were in regard to future capital expenditure and a review of the charging structure for the facilities.





**4.17** This Group was an example of Overview and Scrutiny playing a meaningful and influential role in the development of Council policy.

#### **GWR PROVISION OF RAILWAY SERVICES REVIEW**

**4.18** Overview and Scrutiny is sometimes called upon to review different areas of policy following issues that arise externally which may have an impact on communities.

**4.19** On 20 September 2023, a motion was passed by Full Council titled 'Rail Ticket Offices'. The motion, proposed by Councillor Paul Hodgkinson and seconded by Councillor Angus Jenkinson, was tabled after the announcement of plans by rail operators to close rail ticket offices across England.

**4.20** The motion agreed to refer the issue to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and invite Great Western Railway (GWR) to attend a meeting to discuss its plans and future staffing.

**4.21** It was announced on 31 October 2023 that the Government had asked rail operators to not proceed with the proposals following a public consultation. However, the Committee at a Special Meeting on 21 November 2023 met and discussed railway services within the District with the Director of Business Development for GWR.

**4.22** The Committee discussed some wider challenges which included access to services, the efficiency of railway links provided and the maintenance of infrastructure within the District.

**4.23** Overview and Scrutiny showed its role in engaging with community issues and demonstrated how it can use its position to influence and hold to account organisations outside of the Council.

#### **OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS MADE TO CABINET**

**4.24** Overview and Scrutiny has the authority to make recommendations to Cabinet on any issue that it sees fit regardless of whether it is a Cabinet decision. Whilst the majority of recommendations made to Cabinet were on pre-decision scrutiny items, there were other topical recommendations made.

**4.25** Overview and Scrutiny also made some important recommendations to Cabinet on other community and Council priority items. These were in relation to rivers and sewage and an update on the ecological emergency.

**4.26** The Committee discussed these topics with the relevant Cabinet Members and officers in order to gain background knowledge and understanding of the issues involved.

### **5. AN OPEN AND ACCOUNTABLE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS**

**5.1** Overview and Scrutiny through all of the methods described in the previous sections, promotes the overall objective of open and accountable decision-making processes which is a fundamental part of the decision structures of the Council.



- 5.2** Cabinet is expected within the protocol to be open and honest with the Committee and to assist in allowing the Committee to scrutinise decisions before them.
- 5.3** Cabinet Members for items are invited to meetings of Overview and Scrutiny and are substituted by the Leader or another Cabinet Member where possible if they are not able to attend.
- 5.4** Whilst senior officers in the room may assist in providing specialist details to the Committee, the focus of the Committee has been to engage with Cabinet Members.
- 5.5** The Committee has also used its powers to hold Special Meetings where required in order to provide comprehensive insight on reports such as the Publica Review (the transfer of services from Publica to the Council).
- 5.6** In addition to the pre-decision scrutiny approach outlined above, all Cabinet decisions, Cabinet Member decisions and key decisions taken by officers are subject to call-in by any three members of the Committee (who must be from at least two political groups) within 5 working days of the decision being taken. Call-in is intended to be used in exceptional circumstances where a decision is believed to be contrary to the authority's decision-making principles.
- 5.7** If a valid call-in is made, the decision will be referred to the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (which may be a specially convened meeting). The Committee will hear why the decision was taken and why it was called in before deciding whether the decision can stand and be implemented immediately, or whether the decision is referred back to the decision maker with comments, or in some circumstances, referred to Council.
- 5.8** No decisions were called in during the 2023/24 civic year. The most recent call-in related to the lease of land at Station Road, Kemble, due to concerns about the information available to inform the decision. The call-in was heard by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1 February 2023 with no further recommendations made to Cabinet or Council on the decision.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

- 6.1** The relationship between the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet is important to the overall governance arrangements of the Council.
- 6.2** Overview and Scrutiny performs an important role of checking the authority of Cabinet and providing an accountability mechanism for community issues.
- 6.3** The Executive Scrutiny Protocol (Part E.10) agreed by Full Council sets out the requirements for the relationship to operate in order to provide good policy development and effective pre-decision scrutiny.



- 6.4** The work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee over the 2023/24 Civic Year can be clearly seen in scrutinising the decisions of Cabinet and contributing to overall policies, for example through the work of Task and Finish Groups.
- 6.5** In doing so, the Committee demonstrates its ability within the Council to provide constructive and insightful work within the decision-making processes.

## **7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 7.1** Council is being asked to note the effectiveness of the protocol and the scrutiny processes. It can ask officers to bring a future report in a different format if it wishes to do so.
- 7.2** Council can refer any Constitutional matters regarding scrutiny processes to the Constitution Working Group if any such concerns arise.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1** There are no specific financial implications associated with this report.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1** There are none arising from the report.

## **10. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 10.1** None.

## **11. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 11.1** Not applicable to this report.

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

- 12.1** Members are required to travel to Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings in-person as required by statutory provisions which may have a climate impact. Meetings of Task and Finish Groups as they are not decision-makers are usually held remotely as allowed for the convenience of Members and other participants.

## **13. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 13.1** None.

(END)

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## **EXECUTIVE SCRUTINY PROTOCOL FOR COUNCILLORS OF COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**November 2022**

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 Overview & Scrutiny must be located at the strategic heart of the authority and is a key element of the decision making process acting as a 'critical friend'.

1.2 This Protocol applies to Scrutiny (all members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, including substitutes and any Member who sits on an Overview & Scrutiny Task & Finish Group), and the Executive (all Members of Cabinet and executive officers with delegated authority to undertake executive functions).

### **2. Trust**

2.1 All Members should promote an atmosphere of openness at Overview & Scrutiny meetings and should strive to ensure that questioning and debate takes place within a climate of mutual respect and trust.

2.2 Overview & Scrutiny Members need to trust that Members of the Executive are being open and honest.

2.3 Executive Members need to trust Overview & Scrutiny Members with information and to trust in their views.

### **3. Policy Development and Pre-Decision Scrutiny**

3.1 "Policy Development" refers to the development of the Budget and Policy Framework, which is defined in Article 4 of the Constitution as comprising the following plans and strategies (as agreed by Full Council 14 July 2021):

- Corporate Strategy/Corporate Plan
- Community Strategy
- Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy
- Plans and strategies which together comprise the Development Plan (the Cotswold District Local Plan and the Council's input into the Gloucestershire County Structure Plan)
- Housing Strategy
- Pay Policy
- Licensing Policy Statements (Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005)

3.2 The Budget and Policy Framework also includes a number of budgetary policies which may be more appropriately developed in conjunction with Audit Committee - The Medium-Term Financial Strategy; Capital Programme; Setting the Council Tax; Decisions relating to the control of the Council's borrowing requirements, the control of its capital expenditure and the setting of virement limits, and The Capital, Treasury Management and Investment Strategies.

3.3 The importance of early input from Overview & Scrutiny into policy development is recognised. Scrutiny can act as a sounding board and a think tank in investigating issues coming up on the horizon, bringing in added value. Cabinet Members and Executive Officers should draw to the attention of Overview & Scrutiny Committee any key policy in addition to those in the Budget and Policy Framework that is being developed or is due for review to ensure timely input.

3.4 The development of the Budget and Policy Framework needs to be an inclusive process involving both Cabinet and Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The Cabinet and relevant lead Officer will consider the views of Scrutiny in the development of the policy and provide a response to the recommendations of Scrutiny within 28 days or earlier should the report of the Cabinet require publication. The detail of Scrutiny's involvement shall also be included within the body of the Cabinet report. The Cabinet/Full Council will continue to be responsible for approving and adopting policy.

3.5 Cabinet Members may wish to request views from Scrutiny on a decision before it is taken. The Cabinet Member will be responsible for circulating the details to the relevant Scrutiny Committee Members, through Democratic Services. Utilising this as an option does not exclude the decision from being subject to call-in. However, it will give the Cabinet Member the ability to consider different views and perspectives of a decision to be taken before it is taken.

3.6 Scrutiny may review the Forward Plan and select upcoming decisions for pre-decision scrutiny.

#### **4. Holding Decision Makers to Account**

4.1 A key role of Scrutiny is in holding the Cabinet to account for decisions taken and performance of services. In holding the Cabinet to account Scrutiny Members will:

- Consider decisions taken by the Cabinet, individually and collectively and items on the Forward Plan through formal Overview & Scrutiny Committee meetings;
- Review service performance and performance against policy and targets;
- Be prepared to ask searching questions that provide a constructive challenge;
- Be positive and respectful in their interactions with Cabinet Members and Executive Officers;
- Represent the voice of the public;
- Listen to the responses provided and assist the Cabinet in identifying areas for further consideration and improvement.

4.2 In return, Cabinet Members will:

- Be willing to be open, honest and engaged in providing a response to constructive challenge;
- Value the importance of Scrutiny;
- Be supportive of the scrutiny process and invite and seek opinion from Scrutiny on decisions to be taken, where appropriate;
- Provide a positive contribution to Scrutiny meetings;
- Attend meetings when invited to do so to answer questions and present information:



- By way of a direct answer
- By reference to published publications
- By referring a matter to an Officer in attendance, if they are not able to respond
- If an answer cannot immediately be given, by providing a written answer within five working days unless it is not reasonable to do so. If considered unreasonable, an explanation as to why will be given.
- A combination of the above four options.

4.3 The Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee has a legal role in respect of any key executive decision that has not been notified on the Council's Forward Plan for 28 clear days prior to the date of decision. In exceptional circumstances the Council may need to operate alternative decision making arrangements for a period of time e.g. in response to an emergency. In any such situation it is expected that the Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee would be consulted on any urgent key decisions in the normal way.

## 5. Scrutiny Work Planning

5.1 Prior to the start of each Municipal Year, Scrutiny will hold a Work Planning Workshop. As part of this Workshop the views of the relevant Cabinet Member(s) will be inputted, as will the views of Overview & Scrutiny Members, Officers, any external guests who are invited to contribute, and any members of the public who submit suggestions to the Council. The advice of the Cabinet Member(s) may be sought regarding the priorities of the Council, areas of planned policy development and they will be asked to highlight any areas of conflict and instances where Scrutiny may be invited to assist in work. The Workshop will inform the development of a draft Scrutiny Work Programme. At the beginning of the Municipal Year the views of any new Overview & Scrutiny Committee Members and Cabinet Members will be sought before the draft work plan is presented to the first meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee for their endorsement.

5.2 The Chair & Vice-Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee will informally meet periodically with the Leader and Cabinet Members in order to:

- Discuss upcoming issues and provide for ongoing Cabinet input into Scrutiny work plans;
- Ensure liaison between Scrutiny and the Cabinet over Council priorities, targets and performance;
- Continue to build on the positive working relationship between the two functions.

5.4 In setting and reviewing its work plan, Scrutiny will be mindful of the constraints of the organisation and will take advice from officers on prioritisation, which may be informed by the following considerations (TOPIC criteria):

**Timeliness:** Is it timely to consider this issue?

**Organisational priority:** Is it a Council priority?

**Public Interest:** Is it of significant public interest?

**Influence:** Can Scrutiny have meaningful influence?

**Cost:** Does it involve a high level of expenditure, income or savings?

## 6. Overview & Scrutiny Recommendations to Cabinet

6.1 Scrutiny may make recommendations to the Cabinet about functions for which the Council is responsible or about issues that affect the district and its people through a report arising from a formal Committee meeting or by way of an Overview & Scrutiny Committee Task & Finish Group report.

6.2 Once Scrutiny has agreed a recommendation, the views of the relevant Cabinet Member(s) will be sought within 10 working days (if not already provided at a meeting) and will be included within the report. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee will have the opportunity to meet with the relevant Cabinet Member(s) to discuss the recommendation and the response before the final report is submitted to the Cabinet for consideration. Upon formal receipt of a recommendation from Scrutiny, Cabinet will:

- Give due consideration to any recommendations or views expressed and respond to recommendations in writing within 2 months of receipt of the recommendations;
- Provide an explanation for the reasons why recommendations made by Scrutiny have not been pursued (where applicable).

## **7. What Scrutiny Can Expect From Senior Officers.**

7.1 Whilst Scrutiny undertakes to deliver effective outcomes for local people, it will only be able to do this if senior officers make a commitment to work with and respond to Scrutiny in a constructive manner. The following are proposed as the roles and responsibilities that will govern the Council and Public's relationship with Scrutiny. Senior Officers will:

- Provide professional advice to Scrutiny;
- respect the independence of Scrutiny;
- recognise the value that Scrutiny can add to service improvement;
- co-operate positively with Scrutiny in developing and undertaking its work programme;
- participate in the monitoring of the implementation of recommendations made by Scrutiny that are agreed by Cabinet;
- Contribute to a positive culture that values constructive scrutiny.

## **8. Call-in**

8.1 Decisions may be called in in accordance with the procedure rules set out in Part 4.13 of the Constitution. Cabinet Members will be expected to attend any meetings of Scrutiny at which a call-in request in relation to their area of responsibility is being considered. If the relevant Cabinet Member cannot attend, the Leader or a Deputy Leader should attend in their absence. The purpose of their attendance will be to answer questions of fact not to present the item. The following procedure will take place where call-ins are being considered:

- i. The Member who called in the decision will speak first;
- ii. The Chair will invite the Cabinet Member (decision maker) to respond;
- iii. The Committee will then ask questions of the decision maker, who may ask a relevant Officer to supply further information if necessary;
- iv. Scrutiny debates the issue and votes on the outcome. The Committee will either agree with the decision, in which case it can be implemented immediately, or agree



to refer the decision back to the decision maker with comments. Alternatively the Committee could refer the call in to Full Council.

## **9. Scrutiny Consideration of Confidential or Exempt Decisions**

9.1 Scrutiny Members have a right to access exempt information pertaining to their engagement with policy development or decisions that have been taken or are yet to be taken in order to allow effective scrutiny. Should a Scrutiny Member wish to ask questions pertaining to exempt information at a public Committee meeting, the press and public will be excluded from the meeting in accordance with the Council's Constitution and the Cabinet Member will be expected to answer in an open and transparent manner. The exempt information will remain confidential and all elected Members and Officers who receive that information shall maintain that confidentiality in line with the Codes of Conduct for Elected Members and Officers.

## **10. Ensuring Compliance with the Protocol**

10.1 The Monitoring Officer and the Business Manager (Democratic Services) will be responsible for overseeing compliance with the Cabinet/Scrutiny Protocol which should be used by Members to support the wider aim of supporting and promoting a culture of scrutiny. The success of the Protocol will be determined by:

- Recognition of the value of scrutiny;
- A clear record of constructive challenge;
- Valuable scrutiny reviews that achieve impactful outcomes;
- An open and accountable decision making process.

10.2 An Annual Report may be submitted to Full Council each year with the aim of demonstrating the impact of Scrutiny and the effectiveness of the Protocol. The report may also include the draft Scrutiny Work Programme for the following year.

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## Annex B

### Recommendations to Cabinet from Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2023/24

Recommendation	Agree (Y/N)	Comment	Responsible Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
<b><i>Channel Choice and Telephone Access -26 September 2023</i></b>				
That the trial set out in the report is approved (the outcome of the trial will be reported back to Overview and Scrutiny before a final decision on the service is made by Cabinet), with consideration of when the report should come forward;	Y	It was agreed that the outcome of the trial would come back to Cabinet as soon as we have reliable data to suggest that it has been successful (or not) and that the follow up report would go to O&S before going back to Cabinet.	Councillor Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for Economy and Transformation	Jon Dearing, Assistant Director for Resident Services
That Cabinet Members receive data regarding call volumes for Cotswold District Council and not just the combined figures with West Oxfordshire, and graphs to show trends;	Y	We agreed that I would relay the telephone data at the Cabinet meeting on 2/10/2023, to show the percentage split between CDC and WODC	Councillor Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for Economy and Transformation	Jon Dearing, Assistant Director for Resident Services
That the report that will be received after the six month trial includes an Equalities Impact Assessment;	In part (N + Y)	We said that a report would come in 6 months at the latest but may be earlier if we can demonstrate, earlier, that it has been successful. The EIA has already been agreed by the Monitoring Officer but a follow up EIA will be presented with the follow up report.	Councillor Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for Economy and Transformation	Jon Dearing, Assistant Director for Resident Services
That Cabinet Members consider concerns raised by committee members regarding consultation with affected staff, and whether savings can be realised without redundancies.	N	I thought we addressed this at the O&S meeting. I confirmed that officers have been consulted throughout and assured that there will be no redundancies.	Councillor Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for Economy and Transformation	Jon Dearing, Assistant Director for Resident Services

<b>Car Parking Strategy – 31 October 2023</b>				
That consideration is given to whether more can be done on the widening of car parking bays within the Car Parking Strategy.	Y	As part of the strategy we will be undertaking a review of our bay sizes, and purpose.	Councillor Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for Economy and Transformation	Susan Hughes, Business Manager for Support and Advice
That consideration is given to the level of need for, and provision of, more disabled parking spaces.	Y	The strategy intends to engage fully with all customers and stakeholders, this will ensure that we are identifying and addressing the needs of customers.	Councillor Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for Economy and Transformation	Susan Hughes, Business Manager for Support and Advice
That the provision of secure bicycle parking (for pedal and electric bicycles) is included within the strategy.	Y	We aim to undertake a review of our car parks, assess usage of current cycle racks and where possible increase this.	Councillor Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for Economy and Transformation	Susan Hughes, Business Manager for Support and Advice
<b>Playing Pitch Strategy – 31 October 2023</b>				
That the provision of 3G pitches is reviewed to ensure that the provision is suitable and safe, in view of safety concerns about certain materials used in 3G pitches.	Y	This is an evolving situation and Officers will take the lead from Sport England, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and the Football Foundation who they are in regular dialogue with. But to reiterate, it is only the polymeric infill which the EU is looking to ban, not 3G pitches as a whole facility, and the availability of alternative vegetal or organic infills is growing.	Councillor Paul Hodgkinson, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing	Andy Barge, Assistant Director for Communities/ Rachel Biles, Strategic Projects Lead (Leisure)
That consideration is given to whether it would be appropriate to include the provision of bowling greens within the Playing Pitch Strategy	N	Bowling green facilities are classified by Sport England as other outdoor non-pitch sports. Therefore, they would be assessed using a different methodology to that used in the development of the Playing Pitch Strategy. Cabinet could consider completing an assessment of needs and opportunities on other sports	Councillor Paul Hodgkinson, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing	Andy Barge, Assistant Director for Communities/ Rachel Biles, Strategic Projects Lead (Leisure)

		like bowls, tennis, golf and athletics, but it is not deemed a priority at this point in time		
That the new pitches planned at the Steadings development are factored into the Playing Pitch Strategy, if this has not already been done.	Y	To confirm, the s106 agreement specifies that the mandatory outdoor provision for the development includes three tennis courts and two mini football pitches. As yet the football pitches are not listed in the strategy as they are yet to be constructed but once complete, they will be picked up in stage E of the playing pitch strategy which is the monitoring and review of the strategy annually to ensure it is robust and up to date.	Councillor Paul Hodgkinson, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing	Andy Barge, Assistant Director for Communities/ Rachel Biles, Strategic
That consideration is given to whether the use of Community Infrastructure Levy to fund sports facilities can be formalised in the Local Plan.	Y	We would be able to list the infrastructure recommendations for playing pitches and ancillary facilities within the Local Plan. This would give projects that are taken forward from this list, a greater precedence if Town and Parish Council (and other applicants) chose to submit a bid to the CIL strategic infrastructure fund. A proportion of CIL cannot be safeguarded to deliver sports facility infrastructure development, however Town and Parish Councils can use their neighbourhood proportion to assist the delivery of playing pitches and ancillary facilities as part of any application to access the Council's CIL. An alternative route could also be to secure s106 developer contributions for	Councillor Paul Hodgkinson, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing	Andy Barge, Assistant Director for Communities/ Rachel Biles, Strategic Projects Lead (Leisure)

		projects using the evidence base from the Playing Pitch Strategy to support requests.		
That the Council encourages more volunteers to support local sports clubs.	Y	When business cases are developed with key stakeholder such as sports clubs, volunteers and clubs' capacity will be considered. This will be undertaken in partnership with the Active Cotswold Programme, Active Gloucestershire and governing bodies of sport.	Councillor Paul Hodgkinson, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing	Andy Barge, Assistant Director for Communities/ Rachel Biles, Strategic Projects Lead (Leisure)
<b><i>Draft Cotswold Housing Strategy -28 November 2023</i></b>				
That the Council consults with the Royal Agricultural University to ensure that there is suitable provision of accommodation for students.	Y	New text will be incorporated with the final document to highlight this matter. Text will be prepared by the Forward Planning Manager and agreed with the Leader under delegated authority	Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council	James Brain, Forward Planning Manager/ Charlie Jackson, Assistant Director for Planning and Sustainability
That the Council consults with businesses to ensure local employees have access to housing within the district	Y	Businesses are encouraged to engage with the draft Housing Strategy to share their views and advocate their priorities and opportunities on the matter. Ensuring local employees have good access to housing is a pertinent matter for other council projects and strategies, including the Green Economic Strategy, Local Plan Update, Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan. Businesses are equally encouraged to engage with these plans and strategies when available.	Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council	James Brain, Forward Planning Manager/ Charlie Jackson, Assistant Director for Planning and Sustainability

<b>Cotswold District Local Plan – Partial Update – 8 January 2024</b>				
That the Council establishes a cross-party working group to consider strategic growth at Moreton-in-Marsh.	Y	It has been agreed that Cabinet will ask Council that a Working Group be created to examine strategic growth in Moreton-in-Marsh involving Members and Officers.	Councillor Juliet Layton, Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services	James Brain, Forward Planning Manager
<b>Public Conveniences Review Group – 30 January 2024</b>				
That the Council seeks to re-tender the cleaning and maintenance contract rather than bring the service in house.	Y	Agree to retender contract prior to expiry on 30/09/24. Also, request costings from Ubico to benchmark against tenders from external suppliers.	Councillor Mike Evely, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive Officer
That the Council seeks to reduce the annual revenue cost of providing public conveniences facilities, given that it would not be realistic to seek full cost recovery through charging, or to provide facilities that are free to use.	Y	The current budget provision of £161k for a non-statutory service is coming under increasing pressure hence the request for this review. It's accepted that neither achieving full cost recovery or making the service completely free are viable options.	Councillor Mike Evely, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive Officer
That the Council commits to retaining at least one district council provided public conveniences facility in each town and village within the district that currently has one.	Y	We wish to continue providing this service in locations across the District, but recognise that closing some facilities will reduce costs whilst maintaining a public service.	Councillor Mike Evely, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive Officer
That the Council opens discussions with the relevant Town Councils about the transfer of responsibility for four sites in towns that have more than one district council provided facility, or where town councils are not willing, the Council seeks to close the facilities and repurpose the buildings to generate a commercial opportunity, as set	Y	See comment above.	Councillor Mike Evely, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive Officer

out in Exempt Annex B. This approach is expected to result in a maximum annual revenue saving of £39,061.				
That the Council allocates £47,200 in the capital programme to introduce charging at the four retained sites that are currently free to use, utilising the existing capital budget (of c. £34,000) for purchasing and installing card readers. This investment will ensure that the Council can charge for usage, with card payment as an option, at all district council run facilities and will have a payback period of c. 1 year.	N	It's agreed that the balance of the capital allocation for card readers should be used to facilitate charging at the currently non-charged sites. The proposed capital budget for 24/25 allows for this. We will seek to re-use card readers and charging mechanisms from any closed facilities. Any identified additional capital requirements will come forward as a report to Cabinet following agreement on any closures.	Councillor Mike Evely, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive Officer
That the Council allocates capital funding of £27,650 in priority works to remedy condition (the replacement of paddle gates) at the two sites in Bourton on the Water, in order to protect future income, as set out in Annex B of the Review Group's report	N	It's acknowledged that this investment is required. Funding for this to be identified and subject to a separate Cabinet report alongside the works identified in recommendation 5.	Councillor Mike Evely, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive Officer
That the Council seeks to maintain the condition of its public convenience facilities through the Council's Asset Management Strategy.	Y		Councillor Mike Evely, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive Officer
That usage charges are set at 70p at all retained district council public conveniences facilities. Based on current usage levels this could reduce the cost of the service by a maximum of £62,425 per annum.	N	Given the increase in the charge to 40p in April 2023 and the implementation of card readers at all charging sites in November 2023, it is very difficult to forecast revenue based on these two factors and therefore understand the impact of any price change proposal. It's	Councillor Mike Evely, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive Officer



		proposed to review the charge once we have clarity over the future cost of the service and when we have at least six months of usage and revenue data for currently charged sites.		
That the Council uses signage at public convenience facilities to explain to users that public conveniences are not a statutory service and the usage charge does not cover the full cost to the Council of running the service.	Y		Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive Officer
That the Council continues to provide one disabled access unit at each retained site which can be accessed free of charge with a RADAR key (Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation).	Y		Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive Officer
That the Council encourages key partners such as town and parish councils and local businesses to make their toilets available for public use and to register their toilets on popular public toilet apps.	Y		Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive Officer
<b>River and Sewage – 27 February 2024</b>				
That the Council writes to Severn Trent requesting an interactive flooding map.	Y	Feedback from the Industry has indicated that maps will be made available in the spring.	Councillor Lisa Spivey, Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Safety	Phil Martin, Assistant Director for Business Services
That the Council forms a Rivers and Sewage Working Group, considering the composition and scope through its terms of reference.	N	The current series of meetings that I am holding with the water companies serving the district are informal meetings held at my request as Cabinet Member with responsibility for sewage and flooding.	Councillor Lisa Spivey, Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Safety	Phil Martin, Assistant Director for Business Services

		<p>These discussions are not formal meetings and I would not want them to be. I will be meeting with other individuals and groups in the wider context of sewage and flooding and, again, these meetings will be informal and for information sharing. This is part of the preparation work I am doing ahead of the sewage summit I plan to hold in May which will be a public event and which will be reported back to full council. At this point I do not see any benefit in forming a working group, and in fact, I believe this would hinder progress. I did consider setting up such a group when I began this work, but based on the model deployed by colleagues in West Oxfordshire and on hearing from them directly, I opted for the current approach, which although at its infancy, is proving positive. Thus, at this stage, I do not feel that it would be beneficial to constitute an official working group.</p>		
<b>Ecological Emergency Update – 7 May 2024</b>				
<p>That Cabinet considers the necessity to increase resourcing for ecology, given our goal (green to the core), declared climate and ecological crisis and increased legal monitoring obligations.</p>	<p>Deferred from 9 May Cabinet meeting</p>	<p>We are actively exploring resourcing levels across Planning &amp; Sustainability and specifically Ecology, in order to meet workload demands and council priorities. We have a clear idea of the resources needed and are working through more detailed costings currently.</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services/ Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance</p>	<p>Deputy Chief Executive/ Director of Governance (Monitoring Officer)/ Assistant Director for Planning and Sustainability</p>



**COTSWOLD**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PLAN**  
**1 JULY 2024 – 31 OCTOBER 2024**

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

The Council currently operates the Strong Leader and Cabinet form of governance. The Council has appointed one Overview and Scrutiny Committee which has the power to investigate Cabinet decisions and any other matters relevant to the district and its people, making recommendations to the Council, Cabinet or any other Committee or Sub-Committee of the Council. Scrutiny has an important role in holding the Cabinet to account and in contributing to policy development. The Council has agreed an Executive Scrutiny Protocol to guide how Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will interact with each other.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee operates a work plan which is agreed annually but provides for flexibility to enable the Committee to respond to emerging issues or priorities. The work plan will include a mix of Cabinet reports that have been selected for pre-decision scrutiny, and reports on other Council services, topics or issues which have been specifically commissioned by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

In setting and reviewing its work plan, Scrutiny will be mindful of the constraints of the organisation and will take advice from officers on prioritisation, which may be informed by the following considerations (TOPIC criteria):

**Timeliness:** Is it timely to consider this issue?

**Organisational priority:** Is it a Council priority?

**Public Interest:** Is it of significant public interest?

**Influence:** Can Scrutiny have meaningful influence?

**Cost:** Does it involve a high level of expenditure, income or savings?

**Call in**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider any “call-in” of a decision that has been made but not yet implemented. This enables the Committee to consider whether the decision made is appropriate given all relevant information (but not because it would have made a different decision). It may recommend that the Cabinet, a Portfolio Holder or the Council should reconsider the decision. (It should be noted that Cabinet does not have to change its decision following the recommendation of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee).

Item	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
<b>Monday 22 July 2024</b>		
Service Performance Report 2023-24 Quarter Four Note the 2023/24 Q4 service performance report	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk
2023-24 Final Revenue and Capital Outturn Report	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evemy	Michelle Burge, Chief Accountant michelle.burge@publicagroup.uk
Channel Choice and Telephone Access Update	Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation - Cllr Tony Dale	Jon Dearing, Interim Executive Director jon.dearing@cotswold.gov.uk
Publica Transition - Detailed report To consider the recommendations for service transitions	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk
Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report The purpose of the report is for Full Council to consider the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, compliance with the Executive Scrutiny Protocol (Part E10 of the Constitution), and to receive the draft Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme.		Caleb Harris, Senior Democratic Services Officer caleb.harris@cotswold.gov.uk, Andrew Brown, Democratic Services Business Manager andrew.brown@publicagroup.uk
<b>Monday 2 September 2024</b>		
Sewage Summit report To consider a report arising from the Sewage Summit hosted by Cotswold District Council.	Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Safety - Cllr Lisa Spivey	Phil Martin, Assistant Director for Business Services Phil.Martin@publicagroup.uk
Building the Budget	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and

	Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
Neighbourhood Planning Update	Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services - Cllr Juliet Layton	Joseph Walker, Community Partnership Officer joseph.walker@cotswold.gov.uk
Local Plan Review Progress Update	Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services - Cllr Juliet Layton	Matthew Britton, Interim Forward Planning Lead matthew.britton@cotswold.gov.uk
Service Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter One Note the 2023/24 Q1 service performance report	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk
Financial Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter One	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Michelle Burge, Chief Accountant michelle.burge@publicagroup.uk
<b>Monday 4 November 2024</b>		
Climate Emergency To evaluate the achievement of Net-Zero goals where the Council has direct responsibility and the delivery of measurable contributions in other areas.	Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Sustainability - Cllr Mike McKeown	Charlie Jackson, Assistant Director - Planning and Sustainability charlie.jackson@publicagroup.uk
Draft Budget 2025/26 and Medium Term Financial Strategy	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
Community Safety Partnership Update	Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Safety - Cllr Lisa Spivey	Jacqueline Wright, Business Manager - Leisure and Wellbeing Jacqueline.Wright@Cotswold.gov.uk
Waste Services Update Focus on greening the fleet, efficiency of collections & data behind service changes	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Simon Anthony, Business Manager for Environmental Services Simon.Anthony@publicagroup.uk

Feedback on Waste Round Rezoning	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Simon Anthony, Business Manager for Environmental Services Simon.Anthony@publicagroup.uk
<b>Monday 6 January 2025</b>		
Public Conveniences Update on Changes		Maria Wheatley, Shared Parking Manager maria.wheatley@cotswold.gov.uk
Update on Strategic Plan for North Cotswolds	Juliet Layton, Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services	Matthew Britton, Interim Forward Planning Lead matthew.britton@cotswold.gov.uk
Service Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter Two	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk
Financial Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter Two	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Michelle Burge, Chief Accountant michelle.burge@publicagroup.uk
<b>Empty Homes Strategy (potential Cabinet item TBC)</b>		
<b>Update to HR Policies (potential Cabinet report tbc)</b>		
<b>Monday 3 February 2025</b>		
Budget 2025/26 and Medium Term Financial Strategy	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
<b>Monday 3 March 2025</b>		

<b>Monday 31 March 2025</b>		
Service Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter Three	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk
Financial Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter Three	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Every	Michelle Burge, Chief Accountant michelle.burge@publicagroup.uk
<b>Tuesday 6 May 2025</b>		

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**COTSWOLD**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PLAN  
1 JULY 2024 – 31 OCTOBER 2024**

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

The Council currently operates the Strong Leader and Cabinet form of governance. The Council has appointed one Overview and Scrutiny Committee which has the power to investigate Cabinet decisions and any other matters relevant to the district and its people, making recommendations to the Council, Cabinet or any other Committee or Sub-Committee of the Council. Scrutiny has an important role in holding the Cabinet to account and in contributing to policy development. The Council has agreed an Executive Scrutiny Protocol to guide how Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will interact with each other.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee operates a work plan which is agreed annually but provides for flexibility to enable the Committee to respond to emerging issues or priorities. The work plan will include a mix of Cabinet reports that have been selected for pre-decision scrutiny, and reports on other Council services, topics or issues which have been specifically commissioned by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

In setting and reviewing its work plan, Scrutiny will be mindful of the constraints of the organisation and will take advice from officers on prioritisation, which may be informed by the following considerations (TOPIC criteria):

**Timeliness:** Is it timely to consider this issue?

**Organisational priority:** Is it a Council priority?

**Public Interest:** Is it of significant public interest?

**Influence:** Can Scrutiny have meaningful influence?

**Cost:** Does it involve a high level of expenditure, income or savings?

**Call in**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider any “call-in” of a decision that has been made but not yet implemented. This enables the Committee to consider whether the decision made is appropriate given all relevant information (but not because it would have made a different decision). It may recommend that the Cabinet, a Portfolio Holder or the Council should reconsider the decision. (It should be noted that Cabinet does not have to change its decision following the recommendation of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee).

Item	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
<b>Monday 22 July 2024</b>		
Service Performance Report 2023-24 Quarter Four Note the 2023/24 Q4 service performance report	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk
2023-24 Final Revenue and Capital Outturn Report	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evely	Michelle Burge, Chief Accountant michelle.burge@publicagroup.uk
Channel Choice and Telephone Access Update	Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation - Cllr Tony Dale	Jon Dearing, Interim Executive Director jon.dearing@cotswold.gov.uk
Publica Transition - Detailed report To consider the recommendations for service transitions	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk
Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report The purpose of the report is for Full Council to consider the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, compliance with the Executive Scrutiny Protocol (Part E10 of the Constitution), and to receive the draft Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme.		Caleb Harris, Senior Democratic Services Officer caleb.harris@cotswold.gov.uk, Andrew Brown, Democratic Services Business Manager andrew.brown@publicagroup.uk
<b>Monday 2 September 2024</b>		
Sewage Summit report To consider a report arising from the Sewage Summit hosted by Cotswold District Council.	Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Safety - Cllr Lisa Spivey	Phil Martin, Assistant Director for Business Services Phil.Martin@publicagroup.uk
Building the Budget	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and

	Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
Neighbourhood Planning Update	Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services - Cllr Juliet Layton	Joseph Walker, Community Partnership Officer joseph.walker@cotswold.gov.uk
Local Plan Review Progress Update	Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services - Cllr Juliet Layton	Matthew Britton, Interim Forward Planning Lead matthew.britton@cotswold.gov.uk
Service Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter One Note the 2023/24 Q1 service performance report	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk
Financial Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter One	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Michelle Burge, Chief Accountant michelle.burge@publicagroup.uk
<b>Monday 4 November 2024</b>		
Climate Emergency To evaluate the achievement of Net-Zero goals where the Council has direct responsibility and the delivery of measurable contributions in other areas.	Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Sustainability - Cllr Mike McKeown	Charlie Jackson, Assistant Director - Planning and Sustainability charlie.jackson@publicagroup.uk
Draft Budget 2025/26 and Medium Term Financial Strategy	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
Community Safety Partnership Update	Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Safety - Cllr Lisa Spivey	Jacqueline Wright, Business Manager - Leisure and Wellbeing Jacqueline.Wright@Cotswold.gov.uk
Waste Services Update Focus on greening the fleet, efficiency of collections & data behind service changes	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Simon Anthony, Business Manager for Environmental Services Simon.Anthony@publicagroup.uk

Feedback on Waste Round Rezoning	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Simon Anthony, Business Manager for Environmental Services Simon.Anthony@publicagroup.uk
<b>Monday 6 January 2025</b>		
Public Conveniences Update on Changes		Maria Wheatley, Shared Parking Manager maria.wheatley@cotswold.gov.uk
Update on Strategic Plan for North Cotswolds	Juliet Layton, Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services	Matthew Britton, Interim Forward Planning Lead matthew.britton@cotswold.gov.uk
Service Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter Two	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk
Financial Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter Two	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Michelle Burge, Chief Accountant michelle.burge@publicagroup.uk
<b>Empty Homes Strategy (potential Cabinet item TBC)</b>		
<b>Update to HR Policies (potential Cabinet report tbc)</b>		
<b>Monday 3 February 2025</b>		
Budget 2025/26 and Medium Term Financial Strategy	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
<b>Monday 3 March 2025</b>		

<b>Monday 31 March 2025</b>		
Service Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter Three	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk
Financial Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter Three	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Every	Michelle Burge, Chief Accountant michelle.burge@publicagroup.uk
<b>Tuesday 6 May 2025</b>		

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**COTSWOLD**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN  
INCORPORATING NOTICE OF DECISIONS PROPOSED TO BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE  
SESSION AND NOTICE OF INTENTION TO MAKE A KEY DECISION**

Forward Plan – July 2024 – May 2025

**The Forward Plan**

By virtue of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, local authorities are required to publish a notice setting out the key executive decisions that will be taken at least 28 days before such decisions are to be taken. The Regulations also require notice to be given of any matter where it is proposed that the public will be excluded during consideration of the matter.

This Forward Plan incorporates both of these requirements. In the interests of transparency, it also aims to include details of those items to be debated by the Cabinet that relate to either policy/budget formulation, matters which will be subject to a recommendation to the Council, and other matters due to be considered by the Cabinet. This programme covers a period of four months, and will be updated on a monthly basis. The timings of items may be subject to change.

It should be noted that although a date not less than 28 clear days after the date of the notice is given in each case, it is possible that matters may be rescheduled to a date which is different from that given provided, in the cases of key decisions and matters to be considered in private, that the 28 day notice has been given. In this regard, please note that agendas and reports for Meetings of the Cabinet are made available on the [Council's Web Site](#) – five working days in advance of the Meeting in question. Please also note that the agendas for Meetings of the Cabinet will also incorporate a necessary further notice which is required to be given in relation to matters likely to be considered with the public excluded.

There are circumstances where a key decision can be taken, or a matter may be considered in private, even though the 28 clear days' notice has not been given. If that happens, notice of the matter and the reasons will be published on the Council's Web Site, and available from the Council Offices, Trinity Road, Cirencester, Glos. GL7 1PX.

**Key Decisions**

Key Decisions

The Regulations define a key decision as an executive decision which is likely –

(a) to result in the relevant local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the relevant local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or

(b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the authority.

In financial terms, the Council has decided that a key decision is any executive decision which requires a budget expenditure of £150,000 or more, or one which generates savings of £150,000 or more.

A key decision may only be made in accordance with the Cabinet Procedure Rules contained within the Council's Constitution.

### **Matters To Be Considered in Private**

The great majority of matters considered by the Council's Cabinet are considered in 'open session' when the public have the right to attend.

However, some matters are considered with the public excluded. The public may only be excluded if a resolution is passed to exclude them. The grounds for exclusion are limited to situations where confidential or exempt information may be disclosed to the public if present and, in most cases involving exempt information, where in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. The definitions of these are set out in the Council's Constitution.

### **Documents and Queries**

Formal reports presented relating to any executive decision will be available on the Council's Web Site at least five working days in advance of the Meeting at which the decision is to be made (except insofar as they contain confidential and/or exempt information).

The Decision Notice for each key decision will be published as soon as reasonably practicable after it has been made. We will seek to do this within five working days of the date of the decision. The Decision Notice will be available for public inspection on the Council's Web Site, and at the Council Offices, Trinity Road, Cirencester, Glos. GL7 1PX.

If you have any questions about the Forward Plan, or if you wish to make representations about any of the matters contained within it, please contact the Council's Democratic Services Team. The Democratic Services Team can also, on request, provide copies of, or extracts from, documents listed in the Plan and any which subsequently become available (subject to any prohibition or restriction on their disclosure).

#### **Contact Details:**

Democratic Services, Cotswold District Council, Trinity Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 1PX

E-mail: [democratic@cotswold.gov.uk](mailto:democratic@cotswold.gov.uk) Telephone: 01285 623000 Website: [www.cotswold.gov.uk](http://www.cotswold.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01285 623000; Fax: 01285 623907

### **The Council's Executive Arrangements**

The Council currently operates the Strong Leader and Cabinet form of governance.

By law, the Cabinet can comprise a Leader of the Council, together with up to nine other Members to be appointed by the Leader (one of whom has



to be appointed as Deputy Leader). The Leader will be elected by the Council, for a four-year term; and the Deputy Leader appointment is also for a four-year term.

The Cabinet at Cotswold District Council currently comprises a Leader, a Deputy Leader, and six other Cabinet Members. The structure is as set out in the table below.

Executive decisions are taken either collectively by the Cabinet or individually by Cabinet Members.

The Cabinet generally meets monthly; whereas decision-making by individual Cabinet Members occurs on an 'as and when needed' basis.

Decisions of the Cabinet and individual Cabinet Members are subject to scrutiny by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Joe Harris	Leader	Coordination of executive functions, Policy framework including the corporate plan, Publica, Council communications, Democratic services, Housing and homelessness, Clean and green campaign and street cleaning, Town and parish council liaison
Mike Every (Deputy Leader)	Finance	Financial strategy and management, Property and assets, Waste and recycling, Revenues and benefits, Grants, Public toilets, UBICO
Mike McKeown	Climate Change and Sustainability	Climate and biodiversity emergency response, Community energy, Sustainable transport, Retrofit, Council sustainability
Tony Dale	Economy and Council Transformation	Business transformation, Local Enterprise Partnership and county-wide partnerships, Economic development, Tourism and visitor information centres, Chamber of Commerce liaison, Customer experience and channel shift
Juliet Layton	Planning and Regulatory Services	Development management, Forward planning and the local plan, Heritage and design management, Environmental and regulatory services, Cotswold Water Park
Paul Hodgkinson	Health, Leisure and Parking	Public health, Mental health, Car parking operations and strategy, Leisure centres, Museums, Culture , Young people
Lisa Spivey	Communities and Public Safety	Improving social mobility and social isolation, Flooding and sewage, Safeguarding, Domestic abuse, Police liaison and crime, Refugees, Crowdfund Cotswold, Member Development
Claire Bloomer	Cost of Living and Inclusion	Cost of living support, Liaison with 3 <sup>rd</sup> sector, Diversity and inclusion, Supporting women and minorities

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
<b>25 July 2024 - Cabinet</b>						
2023-24 Final Revenue and Capital Outturn Report	No	Open	Cabinet	25 Jul 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Michelle Burge, Chief Accountant michelle.burge@publicagroup.uk
Service Performance Report 2023-24 Quarter Four	No	Open	Cabinet	25 Jul 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk
Channel Choice and Telephone Access Update	Yes	Open	Cabinet	25 Jul 2024	Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation - Cllr Tony Dale	Jon Dearing, Interim Executive Director jon.dearing@cotswold.gov.uk
Discretionary Rate Relief in excess of £10,000	No	Part exempt Annex A due to financial sensitive information	Cabinet	25 Jul 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Mandy Fathers, Business Manager for Environmental, Welfare and Revenue Service Mandy.Fathers@publicagroup.uk
On-Street Residential Charge Point Scheme - Sites Decision	Yes	Part exempt	Cabinet	25 Jul 2024	Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Sustainability - Cllr Mike McKeown	Andrew Turner, Business Manager - Assets and Council Priorities Andrew.Turner@publicagroup.uk

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
Public Convenience Contract	Yes	Part exempt Report contains commercially sensitive information	Cabinet	25 Jul 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Maria Wheatley, Shared Parking Manager maria.wheatley@cotswold.gov.uk
Publica Transition - Detailed report	Yes	Part exempt	Cabinet Council	25 Jul 2024 31 Jul 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk
Decision on future regeneration of The Old Station and Memorial Cottages, Cirencester	Yes	Fully exempt Likely to contain commercially sensitive information	Cabinet Council	25 Jul 2024 31 Jul 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Claire Locke, Interim Executive Director Claire.Locke@publicagrou p.uk
Continuation of Crowdfund Cotswold	Yes	Open	Cabinet	25 Jul 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Joseph Walker, Community Partnership Officer joseph.walker@cotswold.gov.uk
<b>31 July 2024 - Full Council</b>						
Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report	No	Open	Council	31 Jul 2024		Caleb Harris, Senior Democratic Services Officer caleb.harris@cotswold.go

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
						v.uk, Andrew Brown, Democratic Services Business Manager andrew.brown@publicagroup.uk
Business And Planning Act 2020 - Update to Pavement Licensing Regime	Yes	Open	Council	31 Jul 2024	Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services - Cllr Juliet Layton	Mandy Fathers, Business Manager for Environmental, Welfare and Revenue Service Mandy.Fathers@publicagroup.uk
Report on urgent decision	No	Open	Council	31 Jul 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Caleb Harris, Senior Democratic Services Officer caleb.harris@cotswold.gov.uk
<b>5 September 2024 - Cabinet</b>						
Update on the Council's involvement in and support for Cost of Living related initiatives	No	Open	Cabinet Council	5 Sep 2024 25 Sep 2024	Cabinet Member for Cost of Living and Inclusion - Cllr Claire Bloomer	Jacqueline Wright, Business Manager - Leisure and Wellbeing Jacqueline.Wright@Cotswold.gov.uk
Service Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter One	No	Open	Cabinet	5 Sep 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
						oup.uk
Financial Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter One	No	Open	Cabinet	5 Sep 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Michelle Burge, Chief Accountant michelle.burge@publicagroup.uk
Cotswold Culture Strategy	No	Open	Cabinet	5 Sep 2024	Cabinet Member for Health, Leisure and Parking - Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	Jacqueline Wright, Business Manager - Leisure and Wellbeing Jacqueline.Wright@Cotswold.gov.uk
Community Welfare Grants	No	Open	Cabinet	5 Sep 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Joseph Walker, Community Partnership Officer joseph.walker@cotswold.gov.uk
Infrastructure Funding Statement	No	Open	Cabinet	5 Sep 2024	Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services - Cllr Juliet Layton	Jasper Lamoon Jasper.Lamoon@publicagroup.uk
Community Infrastructure Levy Spending	No	Open	Cabinet	5 Sep 2024	Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services - Cllr Juliet Layton	Jasper Lamoon Jasper.Lamoon@publicagroup.uk

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
Asset Management Plan - Adoption of Asset Plans	Yes	Fully exempt Likely to contain commercially and financially sensitive information	Cabinet	5 Sep 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Every	Claire Locke, Interim Executive Director Claire.Locke@publicagroup.p.uk
<b>25 September 2024 - Full Council</b>						
Amendments to the Constitution - Report of the Constitution Working Group	No	Open	Council	25 Sep 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Angela Claridge, Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer) Angela.Claridge@Cotswold.gov.uk
Community Governance Review - Upper Rissington	No	Open	Council	25 Sep 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Sarah Dalby, Elections Manager sarah.dalby@cotswold.gov.uk
District Boundary Review - Council Size Proposal	Yes	Open	Council	25 Sep 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Andrew Brown, Democratic Services Business Manager andrew.brown@publicagroup.p.uk
Sewage Summit report	No	Open	Council	25 Sep 2024	Cabinet Member for Communities and Public	Phil Martin, Assistant Director for Business

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
					Safety - Cllr Lisa Spivey	Services Phil.Martin@publicagroup. uk
Review of Standards Arrangements	No	Open	Council	25 Sep 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Ana Prelici, Democratic Services Officer Ana.Prelici@cotswold.gov .uk
<b>3 October 2024 - Cabinet</b>						
Green Economic Growth Strategy refresh	Yes	Open	Cabinet	3 Oct 2024	Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation - Cllr Tony Dale	Paul James, Economic Development Lead paul.james@cotswold.gov. uk
Public Health Funeral Policy	No	Open	Cabinet	3 Oct 2024	Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services - Cllr Juliet Layton	Mandy Fathers, Business Manager for Environmental, Welfare and Revenue Service Mandy.Fathers@publicagr oup.uk
Storage of Non-Motor Vehicles and Structures on the Public Highway Policy	No	Open	Cabinet	3 Oct 2024	Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services - Cllr Juliet Layton	Mandy Fathers, Business Manager for Environmental, Welfare and Revenue Service Mandy.Fathers@publicagr oup.uk



Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
<b>7 November 2024 - Cabinet</b>						
Draft Budget 2025/26 and Medium Term Financial Strategy	Yes	Open	Cabinet	7 Nov 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
<b>27 November 2024 - Full Council</b>						
Programme of Meetings	No	Open	Council	27 Nov 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Caleb Harris, Senior Democratic Services Officer caleb.harris@cotswold.gov.uk
<b>5 December 2024 - Cabinet</b>						
<b>9 January 2025 - Cabinet</b>						
UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund update	Yes	Open	Cabinet	9 Jan 2025	Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation - Cllr Tony Dale	Paul James, Economic Development Lead paul.james@cotswold.gov.uk
Financial Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter Two	No	Open	Cabinet	9 Jan 2025	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Michelle Burge, Chief Accountant michelle.burge@publicagroup.uk

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
Service Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter Two	No	Open	Cabinet	9 Jan 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk
<b>22 January 2025 - Full Council</b>						
<b>6 February 2025 - Cabinet</b>						
Budget 2025/26 and Medium Term Financial Strategy	Yes	Open	Cabinet Council	6 Feb 2025 26 Feb 2025	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit Collaboration Agreement	No	Open	Cabinet Council	6 Feb 2025 26 Feb 2025	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Emma Cathcart, Head of Service, Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit emma.cathcart@cotswold.gov.uk
<b>26 February 2025 - Full Council</b>						
<b>6 March 2025 - Cabinet</b>						
<b>19 March 2025 - Full Council</b>						

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
<b>3 April 2025 - Cabinet</b>						
Financial Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter Three	No	Open	Cabinet	3 Apr 2025	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evely	Michelle Burge, Chief Accountant michelle.burge@publicagroup.uk
Service Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter Three	No	Open	Cabinet	3 Apr 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk
<b>8 May 2025 - Cabinet</b>						
<b>21 May 2025 - Full Council</b>						
<b>Key decisions delegated to officers</b>						
Productivity Plan	No	Open	Chief Executive Officer	19 Jul 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk
UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund update	Yes	Open	Cabinet Chief Executive Officer	11 Jan 2024 6 Mar 2024	Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation - Cllr Tony Dale	Paul James, Economic Development Lead paul.james@cotswold.gov.uk

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
Rural England Prosperity Fund	Yes	Open	Cabinet  Chief Executive Officer	17 Jul 2023  19 Mar 2024	Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation - Cllr Tony Dale	Paul James, Economic Development Lead paul.james@cotswold.gov.uk  Robert Weaver, Chief Executive robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk
Disposal of Property in Bourton on the Water	Yes	Open	Deputy Chief Executive (Chief Finance Officer)  Cabinet	9 May 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk  Jasmine McWilliams, Estates Manager jasmine.mcwilliams@publi-cagroup.uk