



Friday, 27 December 2024

Tel: 01285 623553

e-mail: Democratic@cotswold.gov.uk

## **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, 6 January 2025 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 Lisa Spivey)

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

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

# 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 7 - 14)  
To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 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. **Climate and Ecological Emergency** (Pages 15 - 20)

### Purpose

For the Committee to receive an update on actions under the Climate Programme.

### Recommendation

That the Committee notes the actions to-date and the ongoing activity to further embed climate action across all the Council's activities and agrees any recommendations it wishes to make to Cabinet.

### Invited

Councillor Mike McKeown, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Sustainability  
Olivia McGregor, Climate Change and Carbon Reduction Lead

10. **Publica Transition Update**

Purpose

For the Committee to receive a presentation on Phase 1 of the Publica Transition.

Recommendation

For the Committee to note the update and agree any recommendations it wishes to submit to Cabinet.

Invited

Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council  
Robert Weaver, Chief Executive Officer  
Andrew Pollard, Programme Director

11. **Financial Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter Two and Update Report**

(Pages 21 - 88)

Purpose

To consider the second budget monitoring position for the 2024/25 financial year (reported to Cabinet on 5 December) and a separate update report on budget monitoring for planning services.

Recommendation

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

1. Reviews and notes the financial position set out in the report and the recommendations detailed in paragraphs 9.3 to 9.9 and 6.2 as approved by Cabinet at its meeting on 5 December 2024.
2. Notes the update report in respect of Development Management.
3. Agrees any recommendations to submit to Cabinet.

Invited

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

12. **Service Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter Two** (Pages 89 - 164)

Purpose

To provide an update on progress on the Council's priorities and service performance (reported to Cabinet on 5 December).

Recommendation

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the report and agrees any recommendations it wishes to submit to Cabinet.

Invited

Robert Weaver, Chief Executive Officer  
Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst

13. **Report back on recommendations**  
There were no recommendations arising from the previous meeting of the Committee.
  
14. **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
  
15. **Work Plan and Forward Plan** (Pages 165 - 180)  
For the Committee to note and review its work plan and to select Cabinet decisions for pre-decision scrutiny at future committee meetings.

(END)

This page is intentionally left blank



Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
04/November2024

## **Minutes of a meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Monday, 4 November 2024**

Members present:

Gina Blomefield – Chair	Gary Selwyn – Vice-Chair	
David Cunningham	Michael Vann	Jon Wareing
Angus Jenkinson	Tony Slater	Tristan Wilkinson
Dilys Neill	Clare Turner	

Officers present:

David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer	Claire Locke, Interim Executive Director
Andrew Brown, Democratic Services Business Manager	Joseph Walker, Head of Economic Development and Communities
Ana Prelici, Governance Officer	Simon Anthony, Business Manager for Environmental Services

Ubico- Marc Osment, Rob Heath, Ian Bourton, Mike Evemy, Joe Harris and Lisa Spivey

Cabinet Members:

Joe Harris, Leader of the Council  
Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance  
Lisa Spivey, Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Safety

### **OS.107 Apologies**

There were no apologies.

### **OS.108 Substitute Members**

There were no substitute Members.

### **OS.109 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**OS.110 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 September 2024 were discussed. The Chair explained that these had been amended after publication, prior to the meeting.

There was no further discussion on the minutes.

RESOLVED: To APPROVE the minutes of the meeting held on 2 September 2024.

**OS.111 Matters Arising from Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The Chair outlined the actions from previous meetings. They explained that two new members of staff had been recruited into Ecology, and they were content that the resourcing issue was resolved.

**OS.112 Chair's Announcements**

The Chair explained that they had attended a meet and greet lunch led by the CEO and supported by the Communications consultant.

The Chair noted the length of the agenda and invited members to keep their comments succinct.

Members introduced themselves and the wards they represented.

**OS.113 Public Questions**

There were no public questions.

**OS.114 Member Questions**

There were no Member Questions.

**OS.115 Report back on recommendations**

There were no recommendations from the previous meeting to discuss.

**OS.116 Community Safety Partnership Update**

The purpose of the item was to provide updates and RAG ratings against the 'Cotswold Community Safety Partnership' Plan for the period of April 2024 to September 2024.

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Safety introduced the item. The Cabinet Member explained that at the previous meeting they had committed to



introducing 'Red Amber Green' ratings and clear actions for delivery. She explained that the report set these targets out.

Members discussed the report, raising the following;

- Members asked how data was captured for the statistics on Antisocial Behaviour was discussed. The Cabinet Member explained that the report relied on people reporting instances of anti-social behaviour (ASB) to the police.
- There was discussion about the Committee's crime and disorder responsibilities under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The Head of Democratic and Electoral Services explained that as part of this, the Committee had the ability to make recommendations to the Council's Cabinet but there was no requirement to do so.
- In response to questions on the structure of the partnership, the Cabinet Member explained that the Community Safety Partnership sat within the broader Gloucestershire partnership.
- The Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service (GDASS) domestic abuse champion scheme was discussed. This was open to Members to attend, and two had completed the training. Democratic Services had written to Members about this and would send a reminder.
- Members stated that the community alerts programme was working well.
- It was stated that the Cotswold Community Safety Partnership could take a more systematic approach on their work. The Cabinet Member stated that they would report this back to the partnership.

RESOLVED: The Committee NOTED the report.

### **OS.117      Feedback on Waste Round Rezoning**

The purpose of the item was to provide the Committee with feedback on the recent waste collection round rezoning project.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the item. In doing so he apologised for the missed bin collections and said that these had been partly caused by exceptional levels of sickness absences at Ubico. The Deputy Leader explained that the levels of missed collections had almost returned to the levels prior to the service change in June. The Business Manager for Contracts and Waste added that missed collections were often collected within 24 hours of the original collection.

In discussing the report, Members raised the following points;

- Whether solutions like what3words could be used for collections. The Ubico Head of Operations explained that, while this was possible, it didn't resolve issues such as historic expectations e.g. of putting the bins out at the rear of the property, which would require historic knowledge.
- Members asked if there were any best practices, e.g. from neighbouring authorities that could be incorporated to make savings. The Ubico Head of

Operations explained that they were not aware of any unexplored. The Deputy Leader stated that they could identify opportunities for savings within the budget setting process.

- It was stated that the reporting process could be improved.

RESOLVED: The Committee NOTED the report

### **OS.118 Waste Services Update**

To provide the Committee with a Waste Services Update including greening the waste fleet, efficiency of collections and data behind service changes

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance did not introduce the item as it followed on from the previous item.

Members discussed the item, raising the following points;

- There was disappointment expressed in the statistics on how much waste was being incinerated. While the recycling rate was considered to be good, Members asked whether more could be done to avoid generating some of this waste. The Cabinet Member explained that the Council had been running several waste minimisation campaigns, such as tackling food waste and encouraging sustainable shopping practices. The Cabinet Member stated that there was always more that could be done to encourage waste reduction and agreed with the objective.
- Members asked whether there was any work to analyse the composition of the waste. The Business Manager for Waste and Contracts explained that this had been carried out through 'bin diving', and the initial results showed that 30% of the waste in black bins was food waste at the kerbside. Recycling had the next lowest rates and more could be done to particularly encourage more resources to be recycled.
- Annex A of the report had mentioned various scores that vehicles and drivers were monitored on. Members raised concerns over the HR implications of this. The Ubico representatives explained that this was to do with acceleration monitoring of the vehicles, and that the individuals were not being monitored.

RESOLVED: The Committee NOTED the update.

### **OS.119 Draft Budget 2025/26 and Medium Term Financial Strategy**

This report sets out the Budget Strategy to support the preparation of the 2025/26 revenue and capital budgets and presents an updated Medium Term Financial Strategy forecast.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the item. They raised the following points;

- The Business rate reset had been delayed, with a three-year settlement expected in 2026/27, and a one-year settlement expected in the interim.
- Inflationary pressures were expected to ease.
- The Local Government Pay Award was at a lower cost than the one budgeted for.
- The minimum wage increase announced by the Government in the autumn budget was expected to have an impact on future pay settlements.
- The numbers within the report showed that further savings and transformation of services were needed.
- There was a change to the business rates pool which was expected to generate income for the Council.
- The draft budget assumed a £5 increase in Council tax for a Band D property.
- The assumption was that the core grant funding to the Council was not going to change.

The Deputy Chief Executive added that the increase in Employers National Insurance Contributions was expected to increase the cost of employing people for the Council. He also stated that there was a new funding stream of £1.1bn across Local Government.

Members discussed the report, raising the following points:

- Members asked about the estimated cost associated with phase two of the Publica transition. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that the second phase was more challenging to estimate due to the roles being fragmented across the different councils.
- Members asked about the prospect of the Council serving a Section 114 insolvency notice, in the context of other councils which had done so across the country. Specifically, Members asked which projects or non-statutory services the Council would get rid of if it meant avoiding being in this position. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that, some investment was necessary to balance the revenue budget, and that in the case of replacing waste vehicles, it was necessary to borrow.
- The Committee asked if it was possible to generate revenue from collecting business waste e.g. from holiday lets. The Cabinet Members stated that while Ubico were working to ensure that no waste from holiday lets was accidentally collected, due to logistical issues it was not a viable income stream.
- Members asked why it had not been possible to set money aside to save for the replacement of refuse trucks instead of borrowing the money and also wished to know whether the length of the contract was the same as the loan period. The Deputy Chief Executive stated that due to the cost of the replacement and the financial pressures that the Council was facing, it was not possible to have set

the money aside. The length of the loan would not exceed the vehicle's lifespan and it was important that the vehicles be managed in order to maintain their life.

- The Cabinet Member stated that the key risk to the Council's budget was reduction of income from the business rates reset.
- Members discussed how the changes to the minimum wage and employer's national insurance contributions would impact Ubico. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that the expectation was that the Government was likely to compensate Local Authorities for this increase in national insurance contributions but that this wouldn't be known until late December. They were engaging with Ubico on the topic of minimum wage.
- The budget consultation was going to be presented to the Committee, but the timescales and approach had not been finalised.
- The Deputy Chief Executive stated that if the issues as presented in the report were not addressed there would be a £10m shortfall by the end of 2027-28.

RESOLVED: The Committee NOTED the report.

#### **OS.120 Work Plan and Forward Plan**

The Committee discussed the work plan, raising the following points:

- The Empty Homes Strategy had been deferred to January.
- The Interim Executive Director stated that a work planning meeting would be scheduled for February, and the Chair stated that members could suggest topics at any time.

RESOLVED: The Committee NOTED the work plan.

#### **OS.121 Updates from Gloucestershire County Council Scrutiny Committees**

Councillor Angus Jenkinson, as the representative on the Gloucestershire Economic Strategy Scrutiny Committee (formerly the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee) provided. They explained that the Committee met on Friday 20 September, and that this was the first meeting for a year. Councillor Jenkinson stated that he thought there was a reduced role for districts in the Committee's arrangement and that he was disappointed in this.

Councillor Dilys Neill reported on the Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. She explained that the focus of the October meeting had been on winter planning. The provision of adequate social care was important for easing pressures on A&E waiting times and therefore ambulance response times. Councillor Neill explained that it was a complicated and interlinked problem.

RESOLVED: The Committee NOTED the report.

The Meeting commenced at 4.00 pm and closed at 7.00 pm

Chair

(END)

This page is intentionally left blank



Council name	<b>COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
Name and date of Committee	<b>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 6 JANUARY 2025</b>
Subject	<b>CLIMATE PROGRAMME UPDATE</b>
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Mike McKeown - Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Sustainability Email: <a href="mailto:mike.mckeown@cotswold.gov.uk">mike.mckeown@cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Olivia McGregor, Climate lead Email: <a href="mailto:olivia.mcgregor@cotswold.gov.uk">olivia.mcgregor@cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Report author	Olivia McGregor, Climate lead Email: <a href="mailto:olivia.mcgregor@cotswold.gov.uk">olivia.mcgregor@cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	To provide an update on actions
Annexes	None
Recommendation(s)	That the Committee resolves to: note the actions to-date and the ongoing activity to further embed climate action across all the Council's activities.
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responding to the Climate Emergency</li> <li>• Delivering Good Services</li> <li>• Supporting Communities</li> <li>• Supporting the Economy</li> </ul>
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Chief Executive Cabinet Service leads across CDC and Publica including Business Managers, Assistant Directors and specialists CLG members Cotswold residents



## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1** The Council's Climate Emergency Strategy of September 2020 contained a target to make emissions from the Council's own operations net-zero carbon as soon as possible, aiming for an 80% reduction by 2030 against a 1990 baseline, and a 100% reduction by 2045. A new need to comply with the GHG Protocol standards for emissions reporting has prompted a carbon emissions accounting review, and once this has been completed an updated report of progress against the net zero target will be carried out.

## **2. MAIN POINTS – EMBEDDING CLIMATE ACTION**

### **2.1** 'Direct Control' actions

The Council's Climate Emergency Strategy of September 2020 identified the Council's different spheres of influence over carbon emissions. These range from emissions under the council's control (for example emissions produced from its own operations) through to those it can have an influence over by enabling District-wide climate mitigation action.

- 2.2** A number of activities to reduce council carbon emissions are being carried out. Solar PV has been installed on CDC Council offices at Trinity Road. A business case has been agreed and an offer has been made to New Brewery Arts for the provision of solar PV too. Works will proceed swiftly if they agree to the proposal. Eight electric vehicle charge points installed in both the Trinity Road car park and Rissington Road car park are fully operational, providing accessible charging facilities for staff and the wider public. UK government grant funding is being sought to enable decarbonisation works across the CDC built estate and Ubico have been instructed to produce a profile of costs associated with waste fleet decarbonisation.

### **2.3** 'Place Shaping' actions

Work is progressing with preparing the climate change policies of the partial update of the adopted Local Plan for a final stage of public consultation, ahead of submitting the updated policies to the Secretary of State for examination in public. This work has included consideration of feedback to the previous public consultation on the draft Local Plan, and taking on-board the findings of evidence base studies that inform the policy updates.





**2.4** 'District-wide enabling' actions

The Council has been successful in securing government grant funding to cover 50% of costs to provide residents without off-street parking with EV charging facilities, to enable the uptake of EVs across the District. Plans to install electric vehicle charge points in Council-owned carparks have progressed. The Council have now entered into a contract with Connected Kerb for delivery of EVCPs in 4 Council owned car parks in Tetbury, Cirencester, Stow on the Wold and Moreton in Marsh respectively. The Portfolio Holder and officers also met with Government representatives to make a case for extending EVCP delivery and funding into 2025/26 to enable more EVCPs to be delivered on sites that have constraints and cannot be delivered in the current March 2025 grant timeframe. We await confirmation from Government representatives regarding the outcome of those discussions.

**2.5** The Council is also working to enable residents to install solar PV by helping them to understand their options, find a reliable installer and secure a fair price through the Cotswold Home Solar scheme. The scheme continues to be promoted and delivered. As a result of the scheme 17 homes have already installed solar panels, 20 have paid a deposit and residents are on track to save nearly £450,000 across the district.

**2.6** Low carbon retrofit of the District's domestic building stock is an essential component of national emissions reduction but remains a huge challenge. The Council has reached a significant milestone however having recruited a Retrofit Engagement Officer to tackle this challenge. External funding for this post has been secured for 1 year until September 2025 (£75k was secured as part a Climate Leadership Gloucestershire partnership bid). The Retrofit Officer is tasked with engaging circa 300 households with EPC D or below to retrofit their homes to lower both running costs and carbon emissions. This forms part of a Gloucestershire wide programme of work on retrofit. Cotswold District Council is contributing to the development of a Gloucestershire-wide retrofit support offer through the Climate Leadership Gloucestershire (CLG) partnership. A contractor has now been procured to carry out this work.

**2.7** The Council is working in partnership with other Gloucestershire-based councils to create a Local Area Energy Plan which is vital to enabling net zero within Cotswold



District since it is needed to build the case to District Network Operators for investment and expansion in electricity grid infrastructure.

- 2.8** Work also continues through Climate Leadership Gloucestershire on delivering the Statement of Shared Intent (SoSI) in which all seven local authorities expressed an ambition to reduce surface transport emissions by 80% by 2030 and to reach net zero by 2050. A policy workshop was held recently regarding development of an EV taxi policy.
- 2.9** Cotswold District Council have directed Rural England Prosperity Funding towards community infrastructure and cultural buildings decarbonisation. For example earlier in 2024 Charlton Rovers AFC and Bowmoor Sailing Club received funding for solar panel and battery solution installation.

**2.10** '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 staff to residents and from businesses to public sector bodies.

A web resource communicating the full suite of Cotswold Climate Initiatives and Future Plans has been created to ensure stakeholders can keep up to date with the wide range of on-going initiatives

<https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/environment/climate-action/frequently-asked-questions-cotswold-s-climate-initiatives-and-future-plans/>

We regularly run communication engagement campaigns to encourage behaviour change amongst District stakeholders. For example, we have run a wear-not-waste campaign to reduce clothing waste.

We continue to provide funding for a business net zero engagement support programme. We have also relaunched Crowdfund Cotswolds which supports and enables local communities to invest in carbon reduction technology and activity. Carbon literacy training continues to be rolled out to staff and councillors. We have



also developed a web resource to communicate to all stakeholders on the work of the council regards climate change.

A District-wide network of individuals and organisations has been created called Cotswold Climate Action Network. This is a citizen group motivated by the climate challenge and researching user needs in order to provide real value. The aim is to replicate the success of West Oxfordshire District Council's 'Green Light' communications platform.

Finally, Mike McKeown of Cotswold District Council has chaired and vice-chaired Climate Leadership Gloucestershire in 2024 which is an important role in securing engagement and buy-in for tackling climate change at scale.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1** Solar panels installed at the Trinity Road office is expected to save circa £42,000 per year in energy bills.
- 3.2** No further financial implications are associated with this report. Individual climate projects will be subject to business cases where this is necessary.

### **4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1** None relevant to this report.

### **5. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1** If the Council does not take action to embed climate action across all services and does not effectively assess its performance in reducing its carbon emissions it will fail to deliver against its climate targets.

### **6. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 6.1** None associated with this report.

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

- 7.1** Covered within the main body of the report.

### **8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 8.1** The Council could decide to reduce its climate activities but will then fail to deliver against its Climate priority.

### **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**



**COTSWOLD**  
District Council

**9.1** None.

(END)



Council name	<b>COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
Name and date of Committee	<b>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 6 JANUARY 2025</b>
Subject	<b>FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT – Q2 2024/25</b>
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr Mike Every, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation Email: <a href="mailto:mike.every@cotswold.gov.uk">mike.every@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 second budget monitoring position for the 2024/25 financial year.
Annexes	Annex A – Capital Programme Outturn Forecast Annex B – Non-Treasury Management Prudential Indicators
Recommendation(s)	That Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 1. Reviews and notes the: - Financial position set out in this report and the recommendations detailed in paragraphs 9.3 to 9.9 and 6.2 as approved by Cabinet at its meeting on the 5 <sup>th</sup> December 2024.
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 second outturn forecast and monitoring position statement for the 2024/25 financial year.
- 1.2** The purpose of this report is to notify members of any significant variations to budgets identified in the second quarterly budget monitor exercise, highlight any key financial issues, and to inform members of options and further action to be taken.
- 1.3** In common with the almost all local authorities, the council faces several external budget pressures that are impacting on its finances over the medium-term. Whilst inflation has fallen back over the course of the calendar year, there remains uncertainty around interest rates and inflationary pressures in the current financial year which exert an influence over the Council's budget both directly and indirectly.

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1** This report sets out the outturn forecast for the financial year informed by Q2 budget monitoring.
- 2.2** Based on the budget monitoring exercise undertaken for Q2 and an assessment of the risks and uncertainties facing the Council, the outturn forecast is an adverse variation of £0.266m

**Table ES1 – Revenue Budget Outturn Forecast (Q2)**

	2024/25 Latest Net Budget (£'000)	2024/25 Actuals to Q2 (£'000)	2024/25 Outturn Forecast (£'000)	2024/25 Outturn Variance (£'000)
<b>Revenue Budget</b>				
<b>Subtotal Services</b>	<b>18,320</b>	<b>8,516</b>	<b>18,697</b>	<b>376</b>
Less: Reversal of accounting adjustments	(1,778)		(1,778)	0
<b>Revised Subtotal Services</b>	<b>16,542</b>	<b>8,516</b>	<b>16,918</b>	<b>376</b>
Corporate Income & Expenditure	(1,481)	(975)	(1,423)	58
Provisions and Risk Items	0	0	(168)	(168)
<b>Net Budget Requirement</b>	<b>15,061</b>	<b>7,541</b>	<b>15,327</b>	<b>266</b>
<b>Funded by:</b>				
Council Tax	(6,597)		(6,597)	0
Retained Business Rates	(5,014)		(5,014)	0
Government Funding - Grants	(3,206)		(3,206)	0
Government Funding - NHB	(287)		(287)	0
Collection Fund (surplus) / Deficit	(473)		(473)	0
<b>TOTAL Funding</b>	<b>(15,577)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(15,577)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Budget shortfall/(surplus)</b>	<b>(516)</b>		<b>(250)</b>	<b>266</b>



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

	Positive variation (£'000)	Adverse Variation (£'000)	Q1 Outturn Variance (£'000)	Movement from Q1 (£'000)
<b>Key Outturn variations</b>				
<b><u>Service variations</u></b>				
Fees & Charges	(65)	138	(6)	79
Car Parks (Fines and Permits)		95	0	95
Commercial Property - Empty Property Costs		100	23	77
Elections		72	54	18
Development Management				0
Car Parks (Business Rates)		0	(58)	58
Bank Charges		0	26	(26)
Trinity Road, service charges and utilities	(37)		0	(37)
Ubico Contract		56	0	56
Waste and Recycling - mobilisation costs		50	72	(22)
Other service variations		5	10	(5)
<b><u>Non-Service/Corporate variations</u></b>				
Publica underspend Q1+Q2 (net of saving target)	(82)		0	(82)
Contingency	(200)		0	(200)
Pay Award below budget	(400)		0	(400)
Risk - Streets Service savings		75	0	75
Treasury Management Income	(367)		(125)	(242)
Publica Review Phase 1 - provision		182	148	33
Less: Vacancy Management savings	(50)		0	(50)
Add: Communications service	(70)	101	0	31
Add: Rebranding		40	0	40
Add: Recruitment costs (Phase 1 posts)		100	0	100
Transfer to Financial Resilience reserve		400	0	400
Transfer to Treasury Management reserve		125	0	125
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>(1,271)</b>	<b>1,537</b>		
<b>Net Outturn Variation</b>		<b>266</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>121</b>

**2.3** The material forecast variations are listed below with further details in Section 4 of this report.



- **Forecast income variations** – underachievement: Publica Conveniences (£47k) Land Charges (£36k), Cemeteries (£30k), Building Control (£25k). Additional Income: Bulky Waste (£40k), Green Waste (£25k)
- **Car Parks** income – underachievement of fines and permit income (£95k)
- **Commercial Property** rental income and vacant property costs (£100k adverse variation)
- **Elections** – Overspend of £72k forecast due to expenditure with Civica on the trial of tablets that cannot be claimed through the parliamentary expenses scheme and higher than budgeted postage and canvassers fees.
- **Trinity Road Offices** – higher than budgeted income from service charges to tenants and lower than forecast business rate (£37k)
- £57k of overspend in respect of premises and insurance costs as part of the **Ubico Waste and Recycling contract**.
- £49k additional expenditure for communications and customer service support associated with the rollout of the **Waste and Recycling rezoning** in July 2024.
- Net underspend on the **Publica contract sum** (net of savings target) of £82k.
- **Contingency** Budget is forecast to remain unutilised (£200k underspend) which mitigates costs associated with the Waste and Recycling rezoning.
- **2024/25 Pay Award** – estimated saving from lower than budgeted pay award (£400k saving to be transferred to the Financial Resilience Reserve)
- Risk of underachievement of budgeted savings from **Street Services review** £75k adverse.
- **Treasury Management** and interest receivable performance (£0.367m positive variation) with £0.125m to be transferred to the Treasury Management Reserve.
- **Publica Review** impact (part-year) of £0.182m included as a provision.
- Less: **Vacancy Management** underspend (Director of Communities and Place) £50k
- Additional costs of **Communications** service (net of vacancy managements underspend of £70k) – £31k net adverse variation
- Additional **recruitment costs** of £100k for Phase 1 posts (Director of Communities and Place and senior Development Management roles.)
- Expenditure associated with the rollout of the **refreshed corporate branding** estimated to be £40k.





- 2.4** The Cabinet Transform Working Group (CTWG) will consider the forecast outturn, financial risks and uncertainties set out in this report. CTWG will specifically be considering proposals from service delivery partners to contribute to the Council's Savings plans and will be closely monitoring the achievement of savings targets.
- 2.5** The outturn forecast is a net overspend/adverse variance of £0.266m. Without positive action, the outturn variation would reduce the level of budgeted surplus in-year (i.e. it would reduce the planned transfer to the Financial Resilience reserve at year end from £0.516m to £0.250m). This is not a desirable outcome and management action must be taken by the Council, Publica and Ubico to mitigate the forecast outturn position. Section 9 of the report sets out these actions in more detail.
- 2.6** A summary of the Capital Programme outturn forecast is shown in the table below.

**Table ES3 – Capital Programme Outturn Forecast**

<b>Capital Programme</b>	<b>2024/25 LAB (£'000)</b>	<b>2024/25 Actuals to Q2 (£'000)</b>	<b>2024/25 Outturn Forecast (£'000)</b>	<b>2024/25 Outturn Variance (£'000)</b>
Leisure & Communities	1,518	767	1,457	(61)
Housing/Planning and Strategic Housing	3,351	1,572	2,405	(946)
Environment	2,458	1,259	1,655	(803)
Retained & Corporate	0	0	0	0
ICT, Change and Customer Services	350	24	150	(200)
UK Rural Prosperity Fund	752	104	752	0
UK Shared Prosperity Fund Projects	134	40	134	0
Land, Legal and Property	880	288	630	(250)
Transformation and Investment	274	203	244	(30)
<b>TOTAL Capital Programme</b>	<b>9,717</b>	<b>4,257</b>	<b>7,427</b>	<b>(2,290)</b>

- 2.7** The table above includes an adjustment of £0.208m of expenditure in relation to Cirencester Leisure Centre decarbonisation work including the installation of solar PV and triple glazing funded through the Government's Swimming Pool Support Fund.
- 2.8** The table above indicates a forecast underspend of £2.29m. This includes an overspend of £200k due to timing difference on Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) funding. Through the pooling arrangements in place with Gloucestershire County Council (GCC), expenditure of up to £1.5m in 2024/25 is provided. Forecast expenditure of £1.7m has



been submitted to GCC. A request has been submitted to GCC for additional funds to meet the expected overspend. It is uncertain at this point as to whether further funding will be approved. This poses a risk to the council, if further funding is not forthcoming, any overspend will need to be funded by the council. It is proposed that a waiting list is put in place for the short-term and to place a hold on any new DFG applications.

- 2.9** Therefore, the underlying position on the capital programme (excluding DFGs) is a forecast underspend of £2.49m. Underspend due to lower than forecast expenditure in respect of the purchase of vehicles for Ubico, Electric Vehicle Charging Points, capital loans to Cotsway Housing Association and proposed Bromford Housing Joint Venture Partnership. Further details provided in section 6.
- 2.10** Financial Performance reports will be presented to members at the January 2025 (Planning Service update only) and March 2025 Cabinet meetings with the outturn position likely to be finalised for the July 2025 Cabinet meeting.

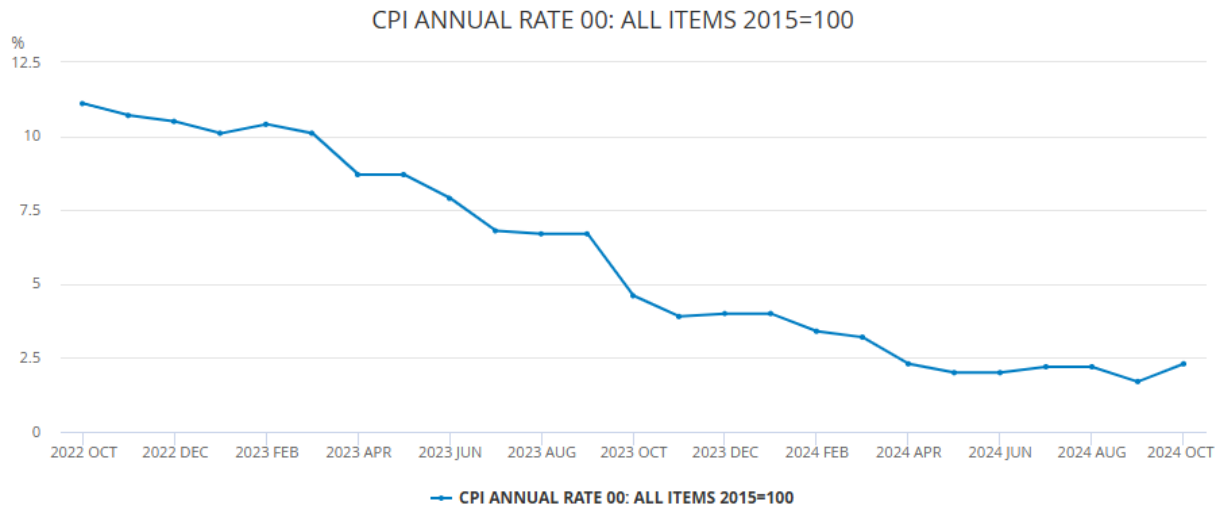
### **3. EXTERNAL ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT**

#### **Inflationary Pressures**

- 3.1** The level of inflation, as measured by the Consumer Prices Index, for October 2024 is 2.3% (up from 1.7% in September 2024). Although it is not the Government's preferred measure of inflation, the Retail Prices Index is 3.4% (2.7% in September 2024). Core inflation (as defined by the Office for National Statistics as the CPI Rate excluding energy, food, alcohol, and tobacco) rose to 3.3% (3.2% in September 2024). Commentary from economists on the inflation rate indicated the rate is likely to remain above the 2% target during 2025 as the impact from energy prices and second round inflation comes through (Second-round effects occur when agents pass on the inflationary impact of the direct and indirect effects to wage and price setting)



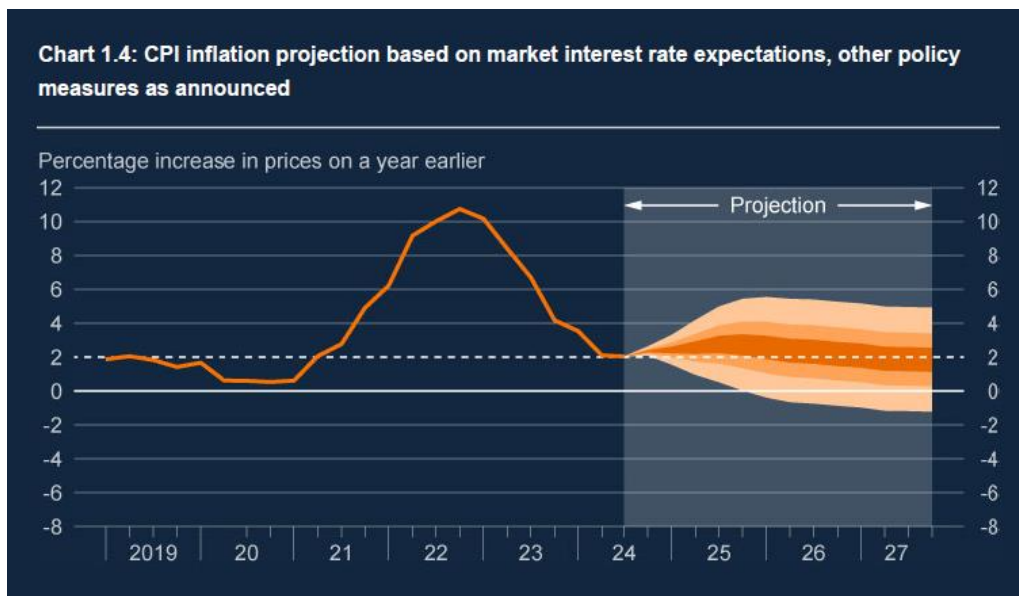
### Graph A – CPI Inflation



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

**3.3** The forecast for inflation is to remain marginally above the Bank of England’s target of 2.0% (CPI) although there was debate when inflation remained at relatively high levels suggesting the bank should consider revising the target to 3.0%. The graph below shows the different CPI forecasts that are published in the quarterly Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee report (November 2024).

### Graph B – Bank of England Fan Chart - Inflation





- 3.4** The lower inflation expectations shown in the Bank of England's Fan Chart above will need to be considered when assessing the impact on 2025/26 revenue and capital budgets and over the MTFS-period.

### **Local Government Pay Award**

- 3.5** The assumption made for the 2024/25 budget was for an average Pay Award of 5% across Publica and Council staff with 6% budgeted for across Ubico. Inflationary provision of just under £1m has been included in the budget for the pay award across Publica and Ubico contracts and for retained staff costs.
- 3.6** The Local Government pay award was settled on 22 October 2024 as set out below. With effect from 01 April 2024:
- an increase of £1,290 (pro rata for part-time employees) to be paid as a consolidated, permanent addition on all NJC pay points 2 to 43 inclusive (equating to an increase of between 2.50% and 5.77% depending on the paygrade)
  - an increase of 2.50% on all pay points above the maximum of the pay spine but graded below deputy chief officer.
  - an increase of 2.50% on all allowances
- 3.7** As set out in the [2025/26 Budget Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Strategy \(MTFS\) Update](#) The financial implications of Pay Award outlined above is within the inflation allowance in the current year's budget. Any surplus provision in 2024/25 will be transferred to the Financial Resilience reserve to maintain financial sustainability over the MTFS period and to mitigate the impact of Phase 1 of the Publica Review. An adjustment to the 2024/25 base salary budget will be included in the February 2025 MTFS once the full impact of the Pay Award has been applied to employee salaries.

### **Interest Rates**

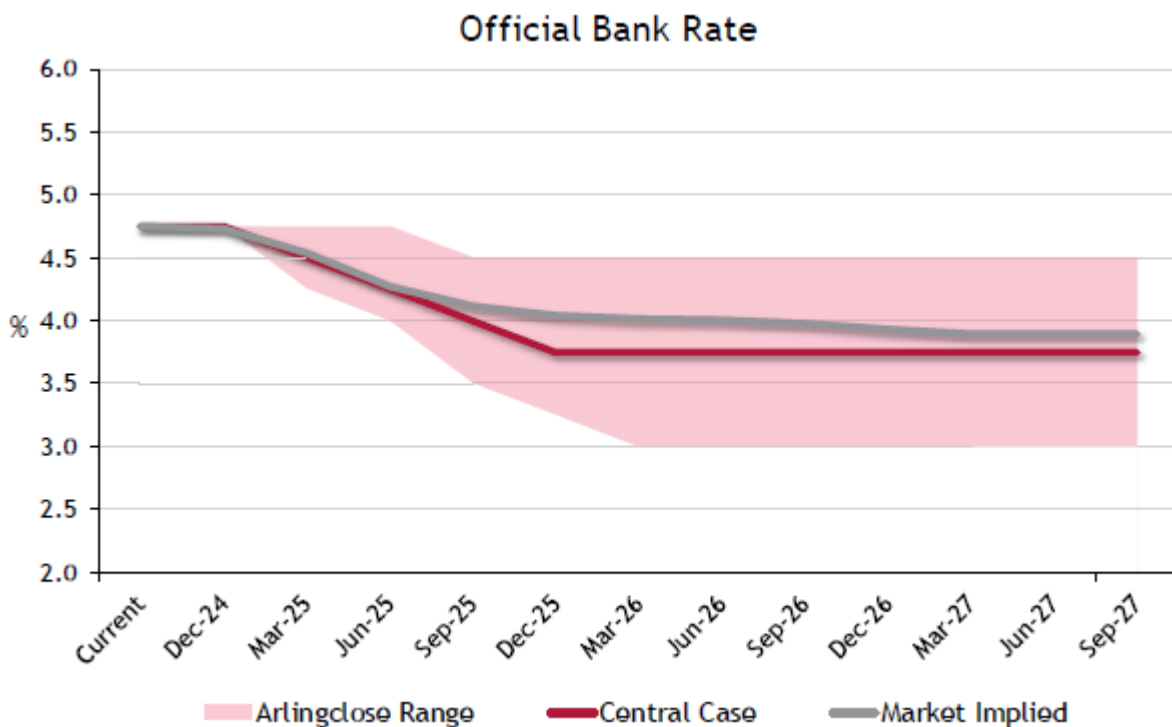
- 3.8** The Bank of England reduced the Base rate in November 2024 by a further 0.25% in response to the easing of inflationary pressures taking the base rate to 4.75%. The council's treasury management advisors have forecast that the rate will continue to



reduce, but more slowly and by less. The next MPC meetings are scheduled for 19 December 2024, and 06 February 2025.

- 3.9** The expectation is for a further rate reduction in February 2025 with further reductions during 2025 (aligned to the publication of the Monetary Policy Report each quarter) to a low of 3.75%.

**Graph C – Interest Rate Forecast**



- 3.10** The Council has limited and reducing internal resources to support the capital programme (capital receipts, earmarked reserves). Unless further capital receipts are received as a result of asset disposals, the Council will need to undertake prudential borrowing.

- 3.11** With these interest rates likely to remain high during the financial year, the Council will need to ensure capital expenditure and capital financing decisions are made 'in the round.' This will ensure that existing and new capital schemes are not considered in isolation and are prioritised against the Council's Corporate Plan and reference to affordability and deliverability.



#### **4. 2024/25 REVENUE BUDGET FORECAST**

**4.1** The Revenue Budget was approved by Council at their meeting on 21 February 2024 with no adjustments made during the financial year to date.

**Table 1 – Revenue Budget reconciliation**

<b>Budget Item</b>	<b>(£'000)</b>
Original Budget (Council, 21 February 2024)	15,061
Adj:	
Adj:	
Adj:	
Adj:	
<b>Latest Budget</b>	<b>15,061</b>

**4.2** The revenue budget will be in a state of flux during the financial year as budgets will be amended to reflect the transfer of services from Publica to the Council in Phase 1 of the Publica Transition. Whilst it is not anticipated that the net budget position (£15.061m) will change, the composition of the budget (i.e. subjective split between Pay and Non-Pay budgets) and net service budgets will be amended.

**4.3** With Phase 1 services and direct budgetary responsibility transferring from Publica to the Council on 01 November 2024, members should expect to see material adjustments to service budgets in the Q3 and Q4 financial performance reports with a revised revenue budget for 2024/25 included with the 2025/26 Budget and MTFS proposals to Cabinet and Council in February 2025. Section 5 of this report provides members with an updated forecast of the net additional impact on the revenue budget in the current year.

**4.4** As of 30 September 2024 (Q2) the Council's net expenditure (excluding Funding and Parish Precepts) was £7.541m against the profiled budget of £6.591m.

**4.5** The outturn forecast for 2024/25 of £15.327m results in a forecast variance of £0.266m. Table 2 provides members with an overview of the material outturn variations that have been forecast across services with Tables 3 and 4 providing detail on the non-service revenue expenditure and income budgets.



**Table 2 – Revenue Budget Outturn Forecast Summary**

	2024/25 Latest Net Budget (£'000)	2024/25 Actuals to Q2 (£'000)	2024/25 Outturn Forecast (£'000)	2024/25 Outturn Variance (£'000)
<b>Revenue Budget</b>				
<b>Subtotal Services</b>	<b>18,320</b>	<b>8,516</b>	<b>18,697</b>	<b>376</b>
Less: Reversal of accounting adjustments	(1,778)		(1,778)	0
<b>Revised Subtotal Services</b>	<b>16,542</b>	<b>8,516</b>	<b>16,918</b>	<b>376</b>
Corporate Income & Expenditure	(1,481)	(975)	(1,423)	58
Provisions and Risk Items	0	0	(168)	(168)
<b>Net Budget Requirement</b>	<b>15,061</b>	<b>7,541</b>	<b>15,327</b>	<b>266</b>
<b>Funded by:</b>				
Council Tax	(6,597)		(6,597)	0
Retained Business Rates	(5,014)		(5,014)	0
Government Funding - Grants	(3,206)		(3,206)	0
Government Funding - NHB	(287)		(287)	0
Collection Fund (surplus) / Deficit	(473)		(473)	0
<b>TOTAL Funding</b>	<b>(15,577)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(15,577)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Budget shortfall/(surplus)</b>	<b>(516)</b>		<b>(250)</b>	<b>266</b>

**Table 3 – Corporate Income and Expenditure**

	2024/25 Revised Budget (£'000)	2024/25 Outturn Forecast (£'000)	2024/25 Outturn Variance (£'000)
<b>Corporate Income and Expenditure</b>			
<b>Contingency, other non-service income and expenditure</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>(88)</b>
Savings & Transformation Items	(709)	(721)	(12)
Treasury Management - Interest Payable	9	9	0
Treasury Management - Interest Receivable	(1,333)	(1,700)	(367)
Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)	12	12	0
Transfer to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	301	826	525
	<b>(1,481)</b>	<b>(1,423)</b>	<b>57</b>



**Table 4 – Provisions and Risk**

	<b>2024/25 Revised Budget (£'000)</b>	<b>2024/25 Outturn Forecast (£'000)</b>	<b>2024/25 Outturn Variance (£'000)</b>
<b>Provisions and Risk</b>			
2024/25 Pay Award		(400)	(400)
Publica Review Phase 1 - Provision		182	182
Recruitment Costs (Phase 1 posts)		100	100
Vacancy Management		(50)	(50)
	<b>0</b>	<b>(168)</b>	<b>(168)</b>

### **Key Variations**

- 4.6** As outlined in paragraph 4.6, the forecast outturn position is a net overspend/adverse variance of £0.266m. Without positive action, the outturn variation would reduce the level of budgeted surplus in-year.
- 4.7** The outturn forecast outlined in this report does not include an estimate for “Planning Services” (as listed below).
- DEV001: Development Control
  - DEV002: Development Control – Appeals
  - DEV003: Development Control – Enforcement
  - DEV004: Development Advice
  - PLP002: Local Development Framework
  - PLP005: Heritage and Design
- 4.8** These services transferred from Publica to the Council as part of Phase 1 and included 46 posts. At the time of drafting this report (25 November 2024) there were 14 vacancies across the teams. Of these vacancies, 6 were covered by agency staff on a short-term basis.
- 4.9** The Council is currently recruiting to 8 posts across the planning service and subject to a successful recruitment process and acceptance of any offers of employment made, this would have a material impact on the outturn forecast for these service areas.
- 4.10** Whilst an assumption could be made for this report, it was likely that those assumptions would be subject to change between the drafting of the reports and the Cabinet meeting.

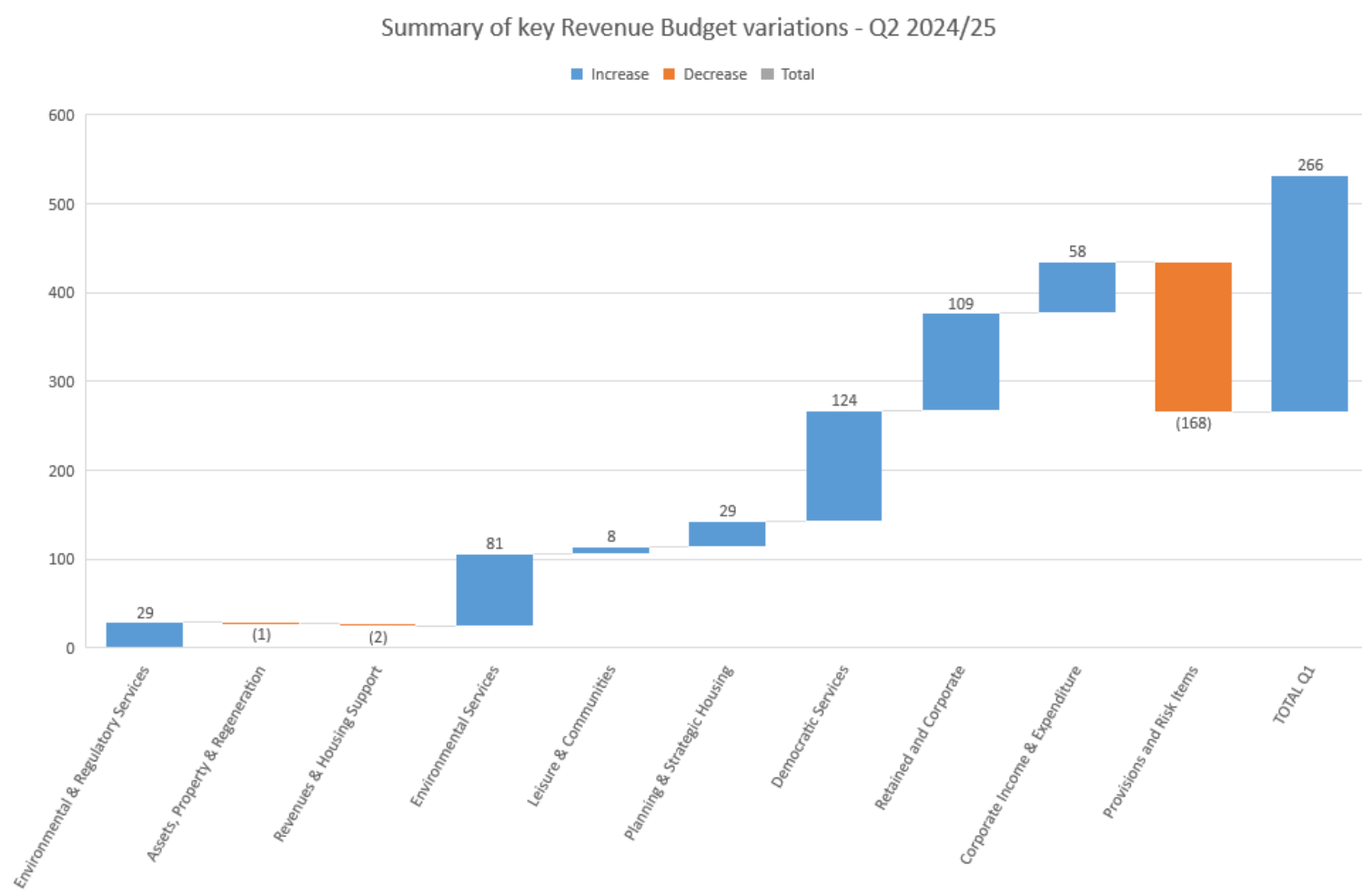




- 4.11** Therefore, the recommendation of the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer was for an update report to be considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet in January 2025. This report will focus on the Planning Services listed above and provide members with a more timely and accurate forecast considering current recruitment activity and likely impact on use of agency staff.
- 4.12** It is worth noting that due to the reduced budgetary pressure from the agreed 2024/25 Pay Award (estimated at £0.400m) the transfer to the Financial Resilience Reserve (FRR) would be in accordance with the planned level of £0.516m.
- 4.13** Whilst the forecast surplus on the revenue budget has reduced to £0.250m it is proposed to transfer £0.650m to the Financial Resilience reserve (£0.400m + £0.250m).
- 4.14** This assumes that there are no additional expenditure commitments that would require support from the FRR. For the avoidance of doubt, the working assumption in the outturn forecast is:
- there is no material deterioration in the outturn forecast in Q3 and Q4
  - additional expenditure in any particular service area is offset by a corresponding decrease in expenditure in other service areas.
- 4.15** Whilst the outturn forecast allows for the planned transfer to the FRR reserves, the net outturn variation is a cause for concern and represents a weaker financial position than would otherwise have occurred. This is not a desirable outcome and management action must be taken by the Council, Publica and Ubico to mitigate the forecast outturn position.



**Table 5 – Waterfall Chart**





- 4.16** 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.
- 4.17** The 2024/25 revenue budget included £1.350m of material increases to fees and charges and cost reductions:
- Car Parks Fees (£0.481m) additional income
  - Garden Waste Fee (£0.169) additional income
  - Waste and Recycling (£0.375m) cost reduction.
  - Streets Service (£0.150m) cost reduction
  - Planning Fees (£0.100m) additional income
  - Customer Service contact centre (0.075m) further cost reduction
- 4.18** The outturn forecast for Q2 indicates not all of the income increases and cost reductions will be achieved in full.
- 4.19** Following changes to **Waste and Recycling** rounds in July 2024, Ubico have confirmed through financial reporting that the part-year efficiency saving of £0.375m has been achieved.
- 4.20** There is a risk that the cost reduction of £0.150m included in the 2024/25 revenue budget for the **Street Cleaning** service may not be achieved in full this financial year. Whilst initial scoping work has identified cost reductions and service efficiencies, a wider review of service options is being undertaken to ensure service standards are clearly defined with corresponding cost reductions. For the purposes of this report, it is assumed that approximately 50% of the budgeted saving will be achieved in the current financial year (£0.075m). Further analysis will be undertaken on the scope and delivery of cost reductions for 2025/26, and this will be considered by Cabinet in February 2025.
- 4.21** Where income shortfalls have been forecast, it is expected that Business Managers and Assistant Directors evaluate options for corrective action. It is unlikely income will recover in the current financial year and may have a detrimental impact on the Council's finances over the medium-term. The evaluation must include an assessment of the service cost and income, market positioning, and unit cost and benchmarking

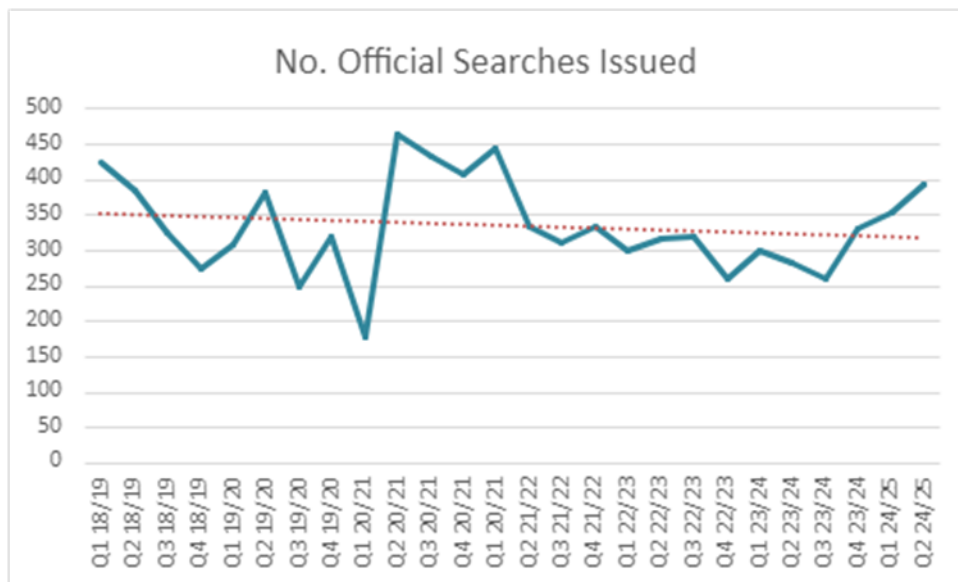


data analysis. Options should outline, if possible, how the service can be financially sustainable.

**4.22** Income from **Land Charges** is below budget with net income received forecast to be £36k below budget at the end of the financial year due (based on the current profiled position). The income budget was reduced for the year by £19k (from £0.208m to £0.189m) recognising the downward trend on income in 2023/24 in part to the rise in free unofficial Personal Searches (through Personal Search Agents)

**4.23** Performance data indicates the service exceeds the target for completing land charge searches within 10 days (96% against a target of 90%). There has been an increase in the number of official searches compared to Q2 (395 compared to 355) and a significant increase when compared to Q2 in 2023/24 (395 compared to 284), however there has been a gradual downward trend in searches since 2018/19. See graph x below.

**Graph D – Land Charges – Number of Official Searches Issued**



**4.24** Further analysis of land charge service cost and income will be undertaken to support the 2025/26 budget setting process.

**4.25 Building Control** –Market share is averaging 61% in Q2 with 151 applications processed. There has been an 8 per cent increase in market share since Q1 and a 4 per cent increase compared to the same period last year. Forecast expenditure is on



budget but an income shortfall of £25k is currently forecast. The team have invested in software and handheld devices for site use which is expected to make officers time on site and the service as a whole more efficient. The team have recently completed an internal audit, and an improvement plan has been produced which will consider options to increase market share and improve efficiency further.

**4.26 Public Conveniences** – income shortfall due to reduced footfall, forecast net income shortfall of £47k. The service was subject to a review by Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Public Conveniences Review Group) and the review and recommendations were reported to Cabinet in January 2024. This report made a series of recommendations and recognised the financial pressures of the service needed to be reduced but that a fully cost recoverable service was not achievable. A reduction in facilities where there were multiple facilities in towns or villages was agreed and toilets have now been closed in both Cirencester and Stow-on-the-Wold as a means of mitigating cost pressures.

**4.27** Further options will need to be considered as part of the 2025/26 budget setting process to ensure the net subsidy required to operate the Public Conveniences can be minimised.

**4.28 Cemetery fees** – forecast shortfall in income of £30k due to lower service provision.

**4.29 Green Waste and Bulky Waste** fees are forecast to achieve £65k more income than budgeted by the end of the financial year.

**4.30** There is a risk that the Council will not receive the budgeted level of commercial rental income from **Investment Properties** given the challenging economic conditions across retail and office sectors and downward pressure on rents. A combined income shortfall and empty property costs of £100k is currently forecast as a worst case but will be reviewed alongside the wider Asset Management Strategy.

**4.31** An overspend of £72k is forecast for the **Elections** service. This is due to expenditure with CIVICA on the trial of Tablets at the Police and Crime Commissioner election in May 2024 and the General Election in July 2024. These costs cannot be claimed through the national election expenses scheme. Trials have been undertaken to assess whether the use of Tablets and software would streamline the election process by reducing the opportunity for polling station errors and streamlining the count process with ballot paper accounts reconciled through the Tablet and software. Other



overspent election costs including postage and canvassers fees, budgets have been reviewed and will be updated as part of the 2025/26 budget setting process.

- 4.32** Income from the Council's **Car Parks** remained positive in Q2 although there is a risk that performance dropped in September due to issues with payment. Income from Car park permits, and Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) is below target for the first half of the financial year and is forecast to be underachieved by £95k in 2024/25.
- 4.33 Recruitment Costs** - £100k of additional spend not covered through vacancy management. These costs will cover the cost of recruitment for the Director of Communities and Plan, three senior planning roles and four other planning roles.
- 4.34 Rebranding** – costs of £40,000 associated with the corporate refresh of branding which is funded from cost savings/additional service charge income at Trinity Road.
- 4.35 Communications** service is forecast to overspend by £31k. Following the transfer of services in Phase 1, the Communications service has been reviewed with additional interim support provided by an external communications agency (Conteur). Whilst there is a projected underspend on staff costs (£70k) the total cost of external support is forecast to be £101k.
- 4.36 Ubico Contract** – the Council's Environmental (grounds maintenance, street cleaning, domestic waste collection, recycling collections etc) are provided by Ubico Ltd. The contract with Ubico for 2024/25 of £8.738m is forecast to cost £8.421m – a net underspend of £0.318m This is predominantly due to the savings achieved of £0.375m from the rezoning but is offset by additional costs of £57k due to higher than estimated premises insurance and property lease costs.
- 4.37** The Council also incurred additional expenditure of £49k for communications and customer service support in relation to the **mobilisation of the Waste and Recycling rezoning** which will be funded from the £92k contingency balance held in relation to Ubico cost.
- 4.38** The table below provides members with an overview of the financial performance of the Ubico Contract (table 7). The net variation on the contract excluding the rezoning saving is an overspend of £57k.



**Table 6 – Ubico Contract Monitoring**

<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 Forecast (£'000)</b>	<b>Outturn Variance (£'000)</b>
Car Parks GM [CTW668]	77	77	76	(2)
CCM001 Cemetery/Churchyards GM [CTW688]	188	188	184	(4)
RYC002 Garden Waste Collection [CTW634]	1,423	1,423	1,369	(55)
WST001 Household Waste [CTW611]	1,722	1,722	1,734	12
RYC001 Recycling [CTW633]	3,089	3,089	2,884	(205)
RYC003 Refuse/Recycling/Food Waste [CTW635]	661	661	662	0
STC001 Street Cleaning [CTW666]	1,558	1,558	1,494	(64)
Trinity Road Offices GM [CTW668]	20	20	19	(0)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>8,738</b>	<b>8,738</b>	<b>8,420</b>	<b>(318)</b>
Less: Rezoning Savings				375
<b>Net variation on contract (excluding Rezoning)</b>				<b>57</b>

### **Treasury Management**

- 4.39** Dividends from the Council's longer-term investments (Pooled funds and Real Estate Investment Trusts) of £0.198m were received in the first half of the financial year achieving a return of 4.84%. Interest from short term cash deposits including the Debt Management Office (DMO) was £0.484m due to interest rates remaining at a higher level than assumed in the budget and MTFS.
- 4.40** It should be noted that the budgeted level of net investment income for 2024/25 is £1.210m – an increase of £0.504m over the 2023/24 budgeted level and recognises the current interest rate position and improved returns. This is a prudent estimate for the year but is lower than the final 2023/24 level of investment income achieved of £1.674m given the forecast interest rate reductions over the financial year.
- 4.41** It is not expected that the current interest rate level will be maintained over the MTFS period, as set out in Section 3 of this report, with expectations of investment income in 2025/26 reducing to around £1m with a further reduction to £0.5m by 2026/27.
- 4.42** A prudent forecast of investment income has been included in the outturn forecast of £1.582m (net income received). This considers the expectation that the base rate will remain at 4.75% until February 2025 when the next rate cut is expected.



**4.43** The level of investment income for the year will depend on the performance of both short-term investments (Money Market Funds, deposits with the DMO) and dividends from the long-term investment. The table below provides members with a high-level overview of the Council’s Treasury Management investments on 30 September 2024

**Table 7 – Treasury Management Investments**

<b>Investment type</b>	<b>Balance invested at 30/06/24 (£'000)</b>	<b>Investment Income received to 30/09/24 (£'000)</b>	<b>2024/25 Forecast (£'000)</b>
Bank of England DMDAF	7,650	223	658
Money Market Funds			
Federated Money Market Fund	3,000	74	144
DGLS Money Market Fund	3,000	65	114
Insight Liquidity Money Market Fu	3,000	39	109
Lloyds Instant Access	1,305	20	32
Other Short-term deposits	1,500	50	55
Real Estate Investment Trusts (REIT)			
Fundamentum Housing REIT	953	8	30
Cash Plus Fund			
Federated Cash Plus Fund	1,185	0	0
Pooled Funds			
CCLA Property Fund	2,146	30	112
Shroders Income Maximiser Fund	855	23	54
CCLA Better World Fund	968	10	31
M&G UK Income Fund	1,819	51	99
Investec Diversified Fund	1,839	40	87
Columbia Threadneedle Bond Fu	1,949	37	74
	<b>31,169</b>	<b>670</b>	<b>1,599</b>

**4.44** With the forecast of Treasury Management investment returns significantly above the budgeted level, it is recommended that £0.125m is transferred to the Treasury Management Risk earmarked reserve to manage higher borrowing costs in the short-term and to mitigate potential changes to the accounting treatment of gains and losses on pooled funds from March 2025.

**4.45** Council approved the Capital Strategy and the Treasury Management Strategy (including the Non-Treasury Management Investment Strategy) at their meeting on 21





February 2024. 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.

- 4.46** The CIPFA Code was updated in 2021 and includes the new requirement, mandatory from 01 April 2023, of quarterly reporting of the treasury management prudential indicators. The non-treasury prudential indicators are expected to be included in the Council's usual revenue and capital monitoring reports. Section 6 and **Annex C** of this report provides members with an overview on the non-treasury position.

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

- 4.47** As outlined in Tables 3 and 4 there are variations forecast across the Corporate Income and Expenditure budgets. These budgets support the General Fund Revenue budget and are typically the non-service items such as Treasury Management, financing, contingency budget, and provisions for risk.
- 4.48** A contingency budget is held centrally to mitigate any in-year cost pressures from inflation or other unforeseen events. This is forecast as uncommitted (£88k) to in-part offset the recruitment and Publica transition additional expenditure highlighted in the paragraphs below.
- 4.49** Savings and transformations are forecast to be overachieved by £12k because of a forecast underachievement of Street Cleaning savings (£75k) and underspend from Publica of £192k against target saving of £109k (-£82k).
- 4.50** As outlined earlier in this section, the performance of the Council's Treasury Management Investments is a result of higher than anticipated interest rates and surplus balances to invest. It is recommended that £0.125m is transferred to the Treasury Management Risk earmarked reserve to manage higher borrowing costs in the short-term and to mitigate potential changes to the accounting treatment of gains and losses on pooled funds from March 2025.



- 4.51** The 2024/25 agreed pay rise is forecast to result in a saving of £0.4m against the original budget, this saving will be transferred to the Financial Resilience Reserve (FRR) to compensate for the lower than budgeted surplus forecast.
- 4.52** As outlined in section 5 below, forecast additional expenditure of £0.182m (£436m for full year impact) for Phase 1 of the Publica transition is included as a risk provision in the Q2 outturn forecast.
- 4.53** Recruitment Costs - £0.100m of additional spend not covered through vacancy management. 3 x senior planning roles, Director, 4 x other planning roles. These can be partly offset against the forecast underspend of £50,000 as a result of the vacancy within the Director of Communities and Place role.

## **5. PUBLICA REVIEW**

- 5.1** Following reports from Human Engine (November 2023) and Local Partnerships (March 2024), Council approved the Detailed Transition Plan ("DTP") report at its meeting on 31 July 2024. This set out the process that would be followed to return the majority of services to the Council with an initial transfer of services taking place on 01 November 2024.
- 5.2** The DTP and covering report provided members with an initial estimate of additional cost of Phase 1 (enduring impact) and the one-off costs (provision for redundancy).
- 5.3** These cost estimates have been updated for this report but should be treated with a degree of caution – they are estimates at the current time and will vary as appointments are made to new roles within the council.
- 5.4** The table and Waterfall chart below provides members with a reconciliation between the financial implications set out in the July 2024 DTP and the current estimate (December 2024) included in this report.



**Table 8 – Reconciliation of Phase 1 Cost Estimate**

Reconciliation of movement in additional cost	July 2024 DTP (£'000)	November 2024 update (£'000)	December 2024 update (£'000)	Change (£'000)
Phase 1 Baseline Cost	3,674	3,616	3,701	27
Sharing + Pension Impact	326	318	321	(5)
New Roles	553	619	619	66
<b>New Model Total</b>	<b>4,553</b>	<b>4,553</b>	<b>4,641</b>	<b>88</b>
Publica Savings (Direct)	(240)	(240)	(221)	19
Indirect Savings	(283)	(282)	(282)	1
<b>Enduring Impact</b>	<b>4,030</b>	<b>4,031</b>	<b>4,138</b>	<b>108</b>
<b>Indicative Annual Increase / (Decrease)</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>436</b>	<b>22</b>

**5.5** The main changes between July 2024 and the current estimate (December 2024) are:

- Additional Communications Team post [+£73k].
- Reduction in Development Management and Forward Planning estimate [-£7k]
- Reduction in estimate of Director and Executive Assistant roles [-£3k]
- Changes to salary levels for senior planning posts [+£22k]
- Other minor changes in cost estimate [-£4k]

**5.6** It should be noted that these cost estimates only cover Phase 1 of the DTP. No provision was made in the MTFS Update (November 2024) for Phase 2. Proposals for the next phase are at a very early stage and will require extensive due diligence before any decision is taken. This is in-line with the approach taken with Phase 1 and is vital to ensure the Council is able to remain financially sustainable given the likely cost increase that will result from Phase 2.

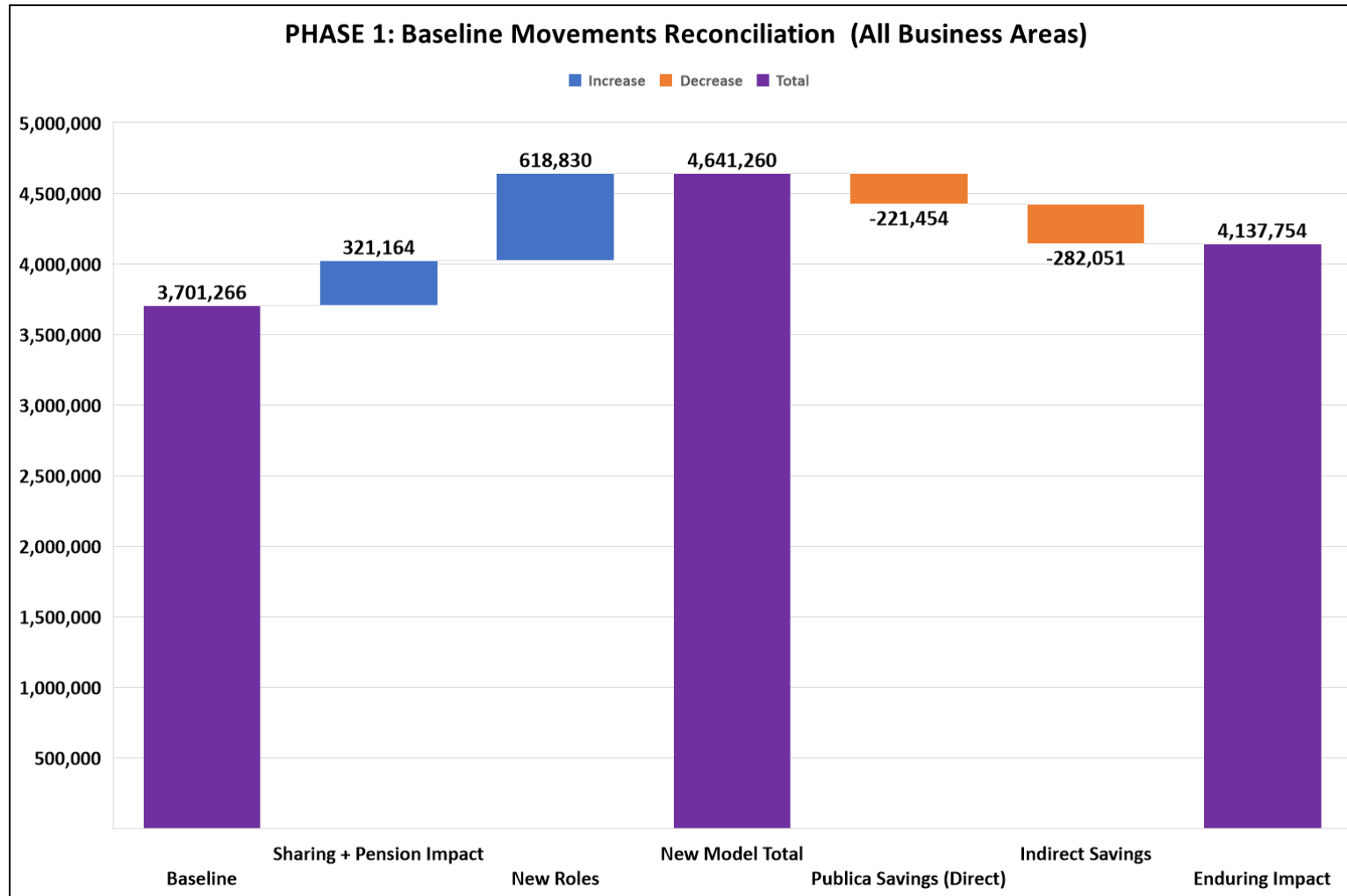
**5.7** It is important to note that the gross increase in cost of Phase 1 (£0.940m in a full year) was net of cost reductions of £0.504m associated with changes made to the Publica management structure (giving the net cost estimate of £0.436m). Elements of the new posts (shown in the waterfall) could be considered as one-off changes to the Council's structure and matched by comparable reductions in the Publica contract sum. The associated cost reductions have been front-loaded and it is not anticipated that similar cost reductions would be realised in Phase 2.



- 5.8** As indicated in the 2025/26 Budget Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Update report, the current estimate for the Council's share of redundancy and pension strain costs is £0.274m and within the amount set aside within the Financial Resilience reserve.
- 5.9** Members have received updates in the financial reports to Cabinet on the costs associated with the Transition Programme. The table below provides an update on costs incurred up to Q2 2024/25 (i.e. 30 September 2024) and a forecast for the remainder of the Phase 1 period (i.e. to 31 March 2025). The forecast to the end of the year indicates that £0.274m of the £0.500m set aside to support the transition programme will have been utilised on Phase 1 preparation and delivery.
- 5.10** The forecast for the Transition Programme includes 'soft' commitments (i.e. principal of expenditure has been agreed but timing and duration of spend not yet confirmed) for additional support for the areas below. The forecast includes estimates for 2025/26 expenditure:
- Finance Business Partnering
  - Project Management Support (Programme Manager)
  - HR Payroll Support
  - Strategic HR support (External oversight and critical friend review of TUPE)



**Graph E – Phase 1 Waterfall**





**Project Office Cost Estimate**

Item	Description	2023/24 Financial Year		2024/25 Financial Year			TOTAL Estimate	CDC Share (£)
		2023/24 Actual (£)	2023/24 CDC Share (£)	2024/25 Actuals to Q2 (£)	2024/25 Forecast (£)	2024/25 CDC Share (£)		
Programme Director	Interim Programme Director (AP) sourced through Tile Hill	56,950	18,983	119,305	92,664	70,656	268,919	89,640
External Legal advice	External Legal advice to support transition of service from Publica to Councils including TUPE advice	14,327	4,776	17,793	27,880	15,224	60,000	20,000
Human Engine Report	Consultancy and support provided July to October 2023	26,400	6,600	0	0	0	26,400	6,600
Local Partnerships	20 days consultancy in 2023/24 - LGA funded	0	0	0	0	0		
Local Partnerships	Additional support outside of the LGA-funded consultancy	0	0	0	0	0		
Support to Councils	Additional Finance Business Partner support	0	0	0	29,072	14,536	116,288	58,144
Programme Office	Programme Manager Nov-March	0	0	0	0	0	42,000	14,000
Programme Office	Backfill costs for Finance Business Partner role	8,925	2,975	59,805	68,715	42,840	137,445	45,815
Programme Office	HR Payroll Support	0	0	0	8,596	2,865	17,192	5,731
Programme Office	External oversight and critical friend review of TUPE conversations and processes	0	0	0	20,000	0	20,000	6,667
Programme Office	Backfill costs for HR Business Partner role	0	0	17,224	23,955	13,726	82,357	27,452
		<b>106,602</b>	<b>33,334</b>	<b>214,127</b>	<b>270,882</b>	<b>159,848</b>	<b>770,601</b>	<b>274,048</b>



## **6. CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

**6.1** Council approved the Capital Programme for 2024/25 at their meeting on 21 February 2024. The Capital Programme has been updated reflecting decisions made by Cabinet and Council since February:

- Additional Capital scheme – Off-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS) £0.393m funded by external grant/Council matched funding (Council, 15 May 2024)
- Carry forward of unspent Capital budgets of £1.513m, as detailed in the Financial Performance Report 2023/24 Outturn report (Cabinet, 25 July 2024).
- Additional DFG budget provision (Cabinet, 7 November 2024).

**6.2** A further revision is recommended in this report to include an additional £0.208m of expenditure within the 2024/2025 capital programme in relation to Cirencester Leisure Centre decarbonisation work, including the installation of solar PV and triple glazing funded through the Government's Swimming Pool Support Fund. (see recommendation 3).

**6.3** The revised capital programme for 2024/25 is £9.717m with a total net spend at £4.257m at 30 September 2024.

**Table 9 – Capital Programme budget reconciliation**

<b>Capital Programme Reconciliation</b>	<b>(£'000)</b>
Original Budget (Council, 21 February 2024)	6,813
ORCS Grant Scheme (Council, 15 May 2024)	383
Slippage from 2023/24 (Cabinet 25 July 2024)	1,513
Disabled Facilities Grant (Cabinet 7 November 2024)	800
CLC Decarbonisation Work Solar PV and Triple Glazing (Cabinet 7 Dec 2024)	208
Adj:	
<b>Latest Budget</b>	<b>9,717</b>



**Table 10 – Capital Programme Outturn Forecast**

	2024/25 OB (£'000)	2024/25 LAB (£'000)	2024/25 Actuals to Q2 (£'000)	2024/25 Outturn Forecast (£'000)	2024/25 Outturn Variance (£'000)
<b>Capital Programme</b>					
Leisure & Communities	1,310	1,518	767	1,457	(61)
Housing/Planning and Strategic Housing	2,289	3,351	1,572	2,405	(946)
Environment	1,857	2,458	1,259	1,655	(803)
Retained & Corporate	0	0	0	0	0
ICT, Change and Customer Services	350	350	24	150	(200)
UK Rural Prosperity Fund	573	752	104	752	0
UK Shared Prosperity Fund Projects	134	134	40	134	0
Land, Legal and Property	300	880	288	630	(250)
Transformation and Investment	0	274	203	244	(30)
<b>TOTAL Capital Programme</b>	<b>6,813</b>	<b>9,717</b>	<b>4,257</b>	<b>7,427</b>	<b>(2,290)</b>

**6.4** The outturn forecast for the current year is an underspend of £2.290m. **Annex A** sets out the detailed forecast outturn with commentary from budget holders and is summarised in table 10 above.

**6.5** The significant variations forecast on the Capital Programme are:

- An overspend of £200k due to timing difference on **Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)** funding. Through the pooling arrangements in place with Gloucestershire County Council (GCC), expenditure of up to £1.5m in 2024/25 is provided. Forecast expenditure of £1.7m has been submitted to GCC. A request has been submitted to GCC for additional funds to meet the expected overspend. It is uncertain at this point as to whether further funding will be approved. This poses a risk to the council, if further funding is not forthcoming, any overspend will need to be funded by the council. It is proposed that a waiting list is put in place for the short-term and to place a hold on any new DFG applications.
- **Cottsway Housing Association Loan** - Forecast underspend of £0.420 due to lower than forecast loan drawdown required due to timing of grant received from Homes England and Cotswold District Council. Loan to be converted to secured long term loan in line with loan agreement during final quarter of 2024/25.





- **Bromford Joint Venture Partnership** (Zero Carbon Affordable Housing Development in Down Ampney) – forecast underspend of £0.720m. Planning application has now been submitted but issues have been identified around drainage and sewerage which are delaying the decision. Expenditure unlikely in 2024/24 and underspend likely to be carried forward to 2025/26 Capital Programme.
- **Electric Vehicle Charging Points** – the forecast position is an underspend of £0.190m following the completion of the EV Charge points at Rissington Road and Trinity Road.
- Additional EV Charge points are being installed through the Off-Street Residential Charge points Scheme (ORCS), forecast underspend of £0.158m due to installation at certain sites having specific constraints that cannot be addressed within the current March 2025 deadline.
- **Planning Documents and Scanning Solution** – not expected to be committed in 2024/25. This relates to the replacement or upgrade of the IDOX system used by Development Management and is likely to be subject to a detailed options appraisal following the transfer of the Development Management service to the Council as part of Phase 1. It is assumed that there will be no expenditure in the current financial year.
- **Provision for financing of Ubico Vehicles** – forecast underspend of £0.503m due to timing of vehicle deliveries, underspend to be carried forward to 2025/26.
- **Asset Management** – forecast underspend of £0.250m due to timing of expenditure which will be carried forward to 2025/26.

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

### **Capital Receipts and Disposals**

**6.7** There have been no disposals or capital receipts during the first half of the financial year. Members should be aware that the Council has sought to dispose of two assets with potential capital receipts likely in Q3/Q4 (former Visitor Information Centre Bourton on the Water, Old Station and Memorial Cottages Cirencester)



**Table 11 – Capital Financing Forecast**

<b>Capital Financing Statement</b>	<b>2024/25 OB (£'000)</b>	<b>2024/25 LAB (£'000)</b>	<b>2024/25 Outturn Forecast (£'000)</b>	<b>2024/25 Outturn Variance (£'000)</b>
Capital receipts	5,006	5,908	3,610	(2,298)
Capital Grants and Contributions	1,732	3,164	3,250	86
Earmarked Reserves	0	192	113	(79)
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO)	0	0	0	0
Community Municipal Investments (CMI)	75	454	454	0
Prudential Borrowing	0		0	0
	<b>6,813</b>	<b>9,717</b>	<b>7,427</b>	<b>(2,291)</b>

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

## **7. NON-TREASURY MANAGEMENT SUMMARY**

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

### **Prudential Indicators**

**7.2** The detailed Non-Treasury Management prudential indicators are included in **Annex B** with the commentary below providing members with a high-level summary.

**7.3** Whilst there is no underlying need to borrow with the Capital Programme financed through internal resources and external grants and contributions, any additional capital expenditure proposed during the year will need to consider the availability and cost of capital financing. The mid-year Treasury Management report to Audit and Governance Committee in November set out the wider impact on the Capital Financing Requirement.

## **8. RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES**



- 8.1** The report outlines several risks and uncertainties around the wider economic environment. Some further risks are briefly outlined below.
- 8.2 Publica Review** – as set out in paragraphs 4.27 and 4.28 this report assumes the additional (part-year) cost of Phase 1 can be contained within the amount identified in the MTFS update £0.182m. Members will be kept informed of progress with Phase 1 through the Q3 Financial Performance report with a detailed reconciliation between the actual costs incurred and the estimated impact.
- 8.3 Publica Review (Agency Staff)** – as outlined in paragraphs 5.12 and 5.13 of the Publica Review – Detailed Transition Plan, there is an emerging risk where the cost of agency staff costs may exceed the available budget for Development Management (DEV001). Further analysis of salary and agency staff costs will be undertaken with scenarios provided to set out the financial implications of options.
- 8.4 Car Park Fees Income** – as set out earlier in the report, income from Car Park fees was at the budgeted level in Q1 and Q2. There remains a risk to the outturn forecast following performance in September due to issues with payment.
- 8.5 Disabled Facilities Grant (DFGs) funding risk** – current level of expenditure is significantly above 2023/24 with funding allocated from the DFG element of the Better Care Fund. There is a risk that total county-wide commitments exceed the available funding which may result in individual Councils providing additional funding. The current forecast as set out in this report is within the agreed allocation – the financial risk is that Occupational Therapy-led referrals place additional financial pressure on the budget.

## **9. CONCLUSIONS**

- 9.1** This monitoring report presents an update on the Council's financial position. As the report sets out, an overspend of £0.266m is forecast for the financial year which. Without mitigating or corrective action this would reduce the level of the budgeted surplus that would transfer to the Financial Resilience Reserve at year end which is not considered appropriate given the scale of the financial challenge over the MTFS period.
- 9.2** Cabinet will continue to consider the impact of the forecast outturn and the impact on earmarked reserves as part of their oversight of the savings and transformation programme.



- 9.3** It is recommended that Cabinet review in-year opportunities with Publica and Ubico and provide an update in February 2025 as part of the 2025/26 Budget reports on options to mitigate the financial position as currently forecast across the MTFS period.
- 9.4** To mitigate the risk around additional expenditure and a potential deterioration of the financial position during the rest of the financial year, the following resolutions are proposed:
- 9.5 **Vacancy Management**** - implement an Authority to Fill process with authorisation for all recruitment activity including time-limited agency cover, limits of day/hourly rates, recruitment costs. Prioritisation of posts/service areas with active recruitment to essential roles only.
- 9.6 **Consultancy support and external commissions**** – s151 to provide guidance to all service leads on criteria under which external agency support can be commissioned (subject to business case which would identify need based on criteria such as supports Corporate Plan delivery, alternative options have been considered, time-critical requirement to ensure project delivery, funding identified and available).
- 9.7** As set out in Section 5 of the [2025/26 Budget Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Strategy \(MTFS\) Update](#) report – accelerate development of **refreshed Savings & Transformation plan** to ensure adequate cost reductions are identified, scoped, and planned over the MTFS period. Savings ideas will be grouped by workstream and clearly indicate outcomes expected in terms of financial and service benefits and set challenging but achievable action plans for delivery by agreed periods.
- 9.8** Linked to the mitigation action above, consider actions for budget holders in 2025/26 to reduce income pressure on revenue budget as part of the review of **fees and charges** from a cost recovery position.
- 9.9 **Publica Review Phase 2**** – whilst not a direct issue for this report, Phase 2 of the review poses the single biggest risk to a balanced budget in 2025/26 and over MTFS period. The design-led principle *Consideration of cost* must ensure that the additional cost of bring services back to the Council are quantified with mitigating actions taken to reduce the potential impact on the MTFS.

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1** The detailed financial implications are set out in the report.



## **11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **12. RISK ASSESSMENT**

**12.1** Section 8 of the report set out the material risks and uncertainties.

## **13. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

**13.1** None

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

**14.1** None

## **15. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**15.1** None

(END)

This page is intentionally left blank

## Annex A Capital Programme Summary Q2

Capital Programme by Service Area	2024/25 Budget [Incl. 23/24 slippage] (£'000)	2024/25 Schemes approved in-year (£'000)	2024/25 Actuals to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Variance to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Committed Expenditure (£'000)	2024/25 Forecast Out-Turn Variance (£'000)	Commentary
<b>Leisure and Communities</b>							
Investment in Leisure Centres	1,150	0	747	(403)	372	(31)	Capital works are progressing with the Freedom Leisure [FL] main contractor. Dryside works are all complete and services re-opened. There has been a delay in the equipment required for the wetside toddler splash areas at Cirencester and Bourton Leisure Centres. It is anticipated that these works will complete by the end of November 2024.

Capital Programme by Service Area	2024/25 Budget [Incl. 23/24 slippage] (£'000)	2024/25 Schemes approved in-year (£'000)	2024/25 Actuals to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Variance to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Committed Expenditure (£'000)	2024/25 Forecast Out-Turn Variance (£'000)	Commentary
CLC Pool Works	110	0	0	(110)	80	(30)	Scheme to address flaking paint from the steel structural support in the Cirencester Leisure Centre pool area. Freedom Leisure [FL] agreed to incorporate these works into their capital scheme, using the same contractor[s]. Work completed during Q.2. Awaiting recharge from FL.
Crowdfund Cotswold	50	0	20	(30)	0	0	The first round this year was very successful, the supported projects had a collective value of £130k. The autumn round closed on 16th



Capital Programme by Service Area	2024/25 Budget [Incl. 23/24 slippage] (£'000)	2024/25 Schemes approved in-year (£'000)	2024/25 Actuals to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Variance to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Committed Expenditure (£'000)	2024/25 Forecast Out-Turn Variance (£'000)	Commentary
							October. Our platform providers, Spacehive, are working with those who submitted projects to get their campaigns live on the Crowdfund Cotswold site.
CLC Decarbonisation works [Solar PV and Triple Glazing]	0	208	0	(208)	0	0	Solar PV agreed, works due to commence during Q.3. Funded through Government Swimming Pool Support Fund.
<b>Housing/Planning and Strategic Housing</b>							

Capital Programme by Service Area	2024/25 Budget [Incl. 23/24 slippage] (£'000)	2024/25 Schemes approved in-year (£'000)	2024/25 Actuals to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Variance to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Committed Expenditure (£'000)	2024/25 Forecast Out-Turn Variance (£'000)	Commentary
Private Sector Housing Renewal Grant (DFG)	700	800	867	(633)	698	200	The recent decision by Gloucestershire County Council [GCC] to use external occupational therapy [OT] agency to clear the waiting list for adaptations has led to an influx of new referrals during Q.2, this will have significant impact on the budget for this year. A forecast of £1.7m has been submitted to GCC, A request has been submitted to GCC for additional funds to meet the expected overspend. It is uncertain at this point as to whether further

Capital Programme by Service Area	2024/25 Budget [Incl. 23/24 slippage] (£'000)	2024/25 Schemes approved in-year (£'000)	2024/25 Actuals to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Variance to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Committed Expenditure (£'000)	2024/25 Forecast Out-Turn Variance (£'000)	Commentary
							funding will be approved. This poses a risk to the council, if further funding is not forthcoming, any overspend will need to be funded by the council. It is proposed that a waiting list is put in place for the short-term and to place a hold on any new DFG applications.
Affordable Housing - Davies Road MiM (S106)	291	0	291	0	0	0	First 50% 'Start on Site' tranche grant was transferred to Cottsway Housing Association last year [2023/24]. The remaining 50% has now been transferred

Capital Programme by Service Area	2024/25 Budget [Incl. 23/24 slippage] (£'000)	2024/25 Schemes approved in-year (£'000)	2024/25 Actuals to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Variance to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Committed Expenditure (£'000)	2024/25 Forecast Out-Turn Variance (£'000)	Commentary
							following notification of completion.
Cottsway Housing Association Loan	840	0	414	(426)	0	(426)	Lower net amount borrowed due to grant received by Cottsway Housing being used to repay loan. Loan balance of £2.110m to be converted to secured loan of £1.897m within Q4 of 25/25.
Bromford Joint Venture Partnership	720	0	0	(720)	0	(720)	Planning application has been submitted but there are issues around drainage being managed by Bromford, which is delaying the decision. Expenditure

Capital Programme by Service Area	2024/25 Budget [Incl. 23/24 slippage] (£'000)	2024/25 Schemes approved in-year (£'000)	2024/25 Actuals to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Variance to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Committed Expenditure (£'000)	2024/25 Forecast Out-Turn Variance (£'000)	Commentary
							unlikely during 2024/25.
<b>Environment</b>							
Waste & Recycling receptacles	80	0	29	(51)	0	0	Rolling budget for the purchase of waste receptacles due to growth in properties or replacements. It is anticipated that this budget will be utilised in full during this financial year.
Provision for financing of Ubico Vehicles	1,660	0	1,098	(562)	59	(503)	This budget is to fund the Capital Fleet Replacement Programme for Ubico. One panel van and five garden waste collection vehicles have been

Capital Programme by Service Area	2024/25 Budget [Incl. 23/24 slippage] (£'000)	2024/25 Schemes approved in-year (£'000)	2024/25 Actuals to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Variance to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Committed Expenditure (£'000)	2024/25 Forecast Out-Turn Variance (£'000)	Commentary
							delivered to date. A Street Cleansing vehicle and a vehicle ramp for Packers Leaze Depot workshop is expected before the end of the financial year. Any underspend will be carried forward to 2025/26.
Electric Vehicle Charging Points	188	0	79	(109)	0	(109)	Installations at Rissington Road and Trinity Road are now complete. Costs reduced from original estimates due to change of supplier. The remaining budget is no longer required for this particular project.

Capital Programme by Service Area	2024/25 Budget [Incl. 23/24 slippage] (£'000)	2024/25 Schemes approved in-year (£'000)	2024/25 Actuals to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Variance to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Committed Expenditure (£'000)	2024/25 Forecast Out-Turn Variance (£'000)	Commentary
On Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS)	0	383	0	(383)	0	(158)	Installations likely to commence during Q.4, the Council has now entered into a contract with Connected Kerb to install EVCPs at four car parks in Tetbury, Cirencester, Stow-on-the-Wold, and Moreton-in-Marsh. A detailed delivery plan from Connected Kerb is currently awaited. Additionally, the Portfolio Holder and officers met with Government representatives to request extended delivery timelines and funding into 2025/26,

Capital Programme by Service Area	2024/25 Budget [Incl. 23/24 slippage] (£'000)	2024/25 Schemes approved in-year (£'000)	2024/25 Actuals to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Variance to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Committed Expenditure (£'000)	2024/25 Forecast Out-Turn Variance (£'000)	Commentary
							aiming to enable EVCP installations at sites with specific constraints that cannot be addressed within the current March 2025 deadline.
In cab technology (Street Cleaning)	60	0	0	(60)	0	0	Expected to be spent in 2024/25 as part of Street Cleaning saving project.
Public Toilets - Card Payment (bc)	34	0	0	(34)	0	(34)	No works planned to date. Any future proposals will be subject to a cabinet report.
Changing Places Toilets	53	0	53	0	0	0	All schemes now finished, other than minor works to complete at Cotswold Country Park & Beach



Capital Programme by Service Area	2024/25 Budget [Incl. 23/24 slippage] (£'000)	2024/25 Schemes approved in-year (£'000)	2024/25 Actuals to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Variance to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Committed Expenditure (£'000)	2024/25 Forecast Out-Turn Variance (£'000)	Commentary
							to enable the facility to be registered.
<b>Retained and Corporate:</b>							
<b>ICT, Change and Customer Services</b>							
ICT Capital	150	0	24	(126)	0	0	Expenditure on networking equipment and the ongoing laptop replacement programme.
Planning Documents and Scanning Solution	200	0	0	(200)	0	(200)	Awaiting an options paper for the replacement/upgrade of the IDOX system.
<b>UK Prosperity schemes:</b>							

<b>Capital Programme by Service Area</b>	<b>2024/25 Budget [Incl. 23/24 slippage] (£'000)</b>	<b>2024/25 Schemes approved in-year (£'000)</b>	<b>2024/25 Actuals to Q.2 (£'000)</b>	<b>2024/25 Variance to Q.2 (£'000)</b>	<b>2024/25 Committed Expenditure (£'000)</b>	<b>2024/25 Forecast Out-Turn Variance (£'000)</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
UK Rural Prosperity Fund Projects	752	0	104	(648)	70	0	All funding has now been allocated to the following grant schemes: Community Infrastructure Grants; Active Travel and Heritage and Cultural Buildings Grant; Business Grants. The majority of grants will be paid out during Q.3 & Q.4. The funding can not be rolled forward as the scheme is due to finish on 31st March 2025.

Capital Programme by Service Area	2024/25 Budget [Incl. 23/24 slippage] (£'000)	2024/25 Schemes approved in-year (£'000)	2024/25 Actuals to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Variance to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Committed Expenditure (£'000)	2024/25 Forecast Out-Turn Variance (£'000)	Commentary
UK Shared Prosperity Fund Projects	134	0	40	(94)	54	0	Funding has been split over 14 projects, the majority of the expenditure will be incurred during Q.3 & Q.4. The funding can not be rolled forward as the scheme is due to finish on 31 March 2025, however, an additional years funding was announced in the autumn budget and therefore this may be subject to change.
<b>Land and Property</b>							
Trinity Road Carbon Efficiency Works (Council March 2022)	370	0	177	(193)	193	0	Solar PV installation complete. Awaiting final invoice from contractor. Further

Capital Programme by Service Area	2024/25 Budget [Incl. 23/24 slippage] (£'000)	2024/25 Schemes approved in-year (£'000)	2024/25 Actuals to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Variance to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Committed Expenditure (£'000)	2024/25 Forecast Out-Turn Variance (£'000)	Commentary
							works will now be reviewed as part of a wider assessment of decarbonisation of the Councils Estate.
Asset Management Strategy	497	0	111	(386)	46	(250)	Budget expenditure and commitments associated with work at the Old Station site, Trinity Road [TR] roof and roof repairs at Abberley house which are planned for early 2025. Update: <u>Old Station</u> : Further costs will be incurred for structural works at the Old Station in Q3 and Q4 ahead of sale of the building. <u>Additional works for TR</u>

Capital Programme by Service Area	2024/25 Budget [Incl. 23/24 slippage] (£'000)	2024/25 Schemes approved in-year (£'000)	2024/25 Actuals to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Variance to Q.2 (£'000)	2024/25 Committed Expenditure (£'000)	2024/25 Forecast Out-Turn Variance (£'000)	Commentary
							<p>roof repairs: £51k has been spent on works to the valley gutters which were not part of the original scheme.</p> <p><u>Works to TR roof following leak:</u> £46k following the leak at TR Offices at the beginning of September, roof work was identified to avoid any possibility of further leaks and damage. The required work could not be claimed against insurance.</p>

<b>Transformation and Investment</b>							
Trinity Road Agile Working (Council March 2022)	274	0	203	(71)	20	(30)	The Management Agreement with Watermoor Point was signed and sealed in August 2024. This key milestone effectively draws the CDC Agile project to a close. There are no more significant costs anticipated - although contractor retentions are in the process of being released; some additional minor costs may be incurred e.g. additional data cabling for tenants, in the event of weak Wi-Fi coverage.
Trinity Road Roof Repairs	13	0	0	(13)	13	0	Works complete, just snagging items remain so invoice should be

							received in November with payment in Q3.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8,326</b>	<b>1,391</b>	<b>4,257</b>	<b>(5,460)</b>	<b>1,605</b>	<b>(2,291)</b>	

This page is intentionally left blank



## ANNEX B NON-TREASURY MANAGEMENT PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS

### 1. BACKGROUND

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

### 2. CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

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

	2023/24 actual (£)	2024/25 forecast (£)	2025/26 budget (£)	2026/27 budget (£)
<b>Capital Expenditure</b>				
General Fund services	5,654,676	7,426,500	1,328,000	6,651,000
Capital investments	328,000	0	0	0

- 2.2 The main General Fund capital projects to date have included investment in Cirencester Leisure Centre, expenditure in respect of Disabled Facilities Grants, purchase of Ubico Vehicles, Trinity Road Agile Working Project and Carbon Efficiency works.

### 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.

	2023/24 actual (£)	2024/25 forecast (£)	2025/26 budget (£)	2026/27 budget (£)
<b>Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)</b>				
General Fund services	70,969	496,000	469,000	4,618,000
Capital investments	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL CFR</b>	<b>70,969</b>	<b>496,000</b>	<b>469,000</b>	<b>4,618,000</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.

	31/03/2024 actual (£)	31/03/2025 forecast (£)	31/03/2026 budget (£)	31/03/2027 budget (£)	Debt at 30.9.2024 (£)
<b>Gross Debt and CFR</b>					
Debt (incl. PFI & leases)	357,255	260,000	16,000	5,000	308,955
Capital Financing Requirement	70,969	496,000	469,000	4,618,000	

## ANNEX B 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 Q2 2024/25 (£)	Debt as at 30/09/2024 (£)	2024/25 Authorised Limit (£)	2024/25 Operational Boundary (£)	Complied? Yes/No
Borrowing	10,000,000	308,955	10,000,000	5,000,000	Yes
PFI and Finance Leases	0	0	0	0	Yes
<b>TOTAL Debt</b>	<b>10,000,000</b>	<b>308,955</b>	<b>10,000,000</b>	<b>5,000,000</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 expected to be as indicated below.

	2023/24 actual (£)	2024/25 forecast (£)	2025/26 budget (£)	2026/27 budget (£)
Total net income from service and commercial investments	491,778	280,000	380,000	390,000
Proportion of net revenue stream	3.46%	2.09%	2.60%	2.80%

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

**6.2** The 2024/25 forecast is lower than the £380,000 budgeted due to additional costs in respect of vacant properties (vacated Wilkinson property and Bourton on the Water Visitor Information Centre) and in-year rental fluctuations.

**7. PROPORTION OF FINANCING COST TO NET REVENUE STREAM**

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

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

	<b>2023/24 actual (£)</b>	<b>2024/25 forecast (£)</b>	<b>2025/26 budget (£)</b>	<b>2026/27 budget (£)</b>
Financing costs (£)	14,000	19,000	40,000	53,000
Proportion of net revenue stream	0.10%	0.14%	0.27%	0.48%

(END)

This page is intentionally left blank



Council name	<b>COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
Name and date of Committee	<b>CABINET – 09 JANUARY 2025</b>
Subject	<b>FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT UPDATE – Q2 2024/25</b>
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr Mike Every, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation Email: <a href="mailto:mike.every@cotswold.gov.uk">mike.every@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 budget monitoring position for “Planning Services” for the 2024/25 financial year.
Annexes	None
Recommendation(s)	1. To note the 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 forecast and monitoring position statement including "Planning Services" for the 2024/25 financial year.
- 1.2** For the purposes of this report, "Planning Services" are
- DEV001: Development Control
  - DEV002: Development Control – Appeals
  - DEV003: Development Control – Enforcement
  - DEV004: Development Advice
  - PLP002: Local Development Framework
  - PLP005: Heritage and Design
- 1.3** This report does not update any other forecast or variation included in the Q2 report that Cabinet considered at their meeting on 05 December 2024.
- 1.4** The purpose of this report is to notify members of any significant variations to budgets identified in the second quarterly budget monitor exercise, highlight any key financial issues, and to inform members of options and further action to be taken.

## **2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 2.1** The Q2 Financial Performance Report was considered by Cabinet at their meeting on 05 December 2024. This report did not include the outturn forecast for "Planning Services". This report provides that outturn forecast and updates the revenue position for the financial year.
- 2.2** The Q2 outturn forecast reported to members in December was an adverse variation of £0.266m., as shown in the table below.
- 2.3** The position for "Planning Services" is set out in the report with the impact on the outturn forecast increasing the adverse variation to £0.297m.



**Table ES1 – Revenue Budget Outturn Forecast including “Planning Services”**

	2024/25 Latest Net Budget (£'000)	2024/25 Actuals to Q2 (£'000)	2024/25 Outturn Forecast (£'000)	2024/25 Outturn Variance (£'000)
<b>Revenue Budget</b>				
<b>Subtotal Services</b>	<b>18,320</b>	<b>8,516</b>	<b>18,827</b>	<b>507</b>
Less: Reversal of accounting adjustments	(1,778)		(1,778)	0
<b>Revised Subtotal Services</b>	<b>16,542</b>	<b>8,516</b>	<b>17,049</b>	<b>507</b>
Corporate Income & Expenditure	(1,481)	(975)	(1,423)	58
Provisions and Risk Items	0	0	(268)	(268)
<b>Net Budget Requirement</b>	<b>15,061</b>	<b>7,541</b>	<b>15,358</b>	<b>297</b>
<b>Funded by:</b>				
Council Tax	(6,597)		(6,597)	0
Retained Business Rates	(5,014)		(5,014)	0
Government Funding - Grants	(3,206)		(3,206)	0
Government Funding - NHB	(287)		(287)	0
Collection Fund (surplus) / Deficit	(473)		(473)	0
<b>TOTAL Funding</b>	<b>(15,577)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(15,577)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Budget shortfall/(surplus)</b>	<b>(516)</b>		<b>(219)</b>	<b>297</b>

### 3. 2024/25 REVENUE BUDGET FORECAST

**3.1** As previously reported to member in December, the outturn forecast for 2024/25 of £15.327m results in a forecast variance of £0.266m. Table 2 provides members with an overview of the material 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 1 – Revenue Budget Outturn Forecast Summary (excluding “Planning Services”)**

	2024/25 Latest Net Budget (£'000)	2024/25 Actuals to Q2 (£'000)	2024/25 Outturn Forecast (£'000)	2024/25 Outturn Variance (£'000)
<b>Revenue Budget</b>				
<b>Subtotal Services</b>	<b>18,320</b>	<b>8,516</b>	<b>18,697</b>	<b>376</b>
Less: Reversal of accounting adjustments	(1,778)		(1,778)	0
<b>Revised Subtotal Services</b>	<b>16,542</b>	<b>8,516</b>	<b>16,918</b>	<b>376</b>
Corporate Income & Expenditure	(1,481)	(975)	(1,423)	58
Provisions and Risk Items	0	0	(168)	(168)
<b>Net Budget Requirement</b>	<b>15,061</b>	<b>7,541</b>	<b>15,327</b>	<b>266</b>
<b>Funded by:</b>				
Council Tax	(6,597)		(6,597)	0
Retained Business Rates	(5,014)		(5,014)	0
Government Funding - Grants	(3,206)		(3,206)	0
Government Funding - NHB	(287)		(287)	0
Collection Fund (surplus) / Deficit	(473)		(473)	0
<b>TOTAL Funding</b>	<b>(15,577)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(15,577)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Budget shortfall/(surplus)</b>	<b>(516)</b>		<b>(250)</b>	<b>266</b>

### Planning Services

**3.2** The outturn forecast outlined in this report includes an estimate for “Planning Services” (as listed below).

- DEV001: Development Control
- DEV002: Development Control – Appeals
- DEV003: Development Control – Enforcement
- DEV004: Development Advice
- PLP002: Local Development Framework
- PLP005: Heritage and Design

**3.3** These services transferred from Publica to the Council as part of Phase 1 and included 46 posts. At the time of drafting this report (05 December 2024) there were 14





vacancies across the teams. Of these vacancies, 6 were covered by agency staff on a short-term basis.

- 3.4** It is vital that the Council is able to provide a planning service to ensure that planning applications are assessed, and decisions made within the prescribed time periods and that work on progressing the Council's Local Plan is adequately resourced. For planning applications statutory time limits apply
- (13 weeks for applications for major development
  - 10 weeks for applications for technical details consent and applications for public service infrastructure development
  - 8 weeks for all other types of development (unless an application is subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment, in which case a 16-week limit applies).
- 3.5** Should the Council not be able to achieve the speed or quality of decisions, there is a risk that the Secretary of State would intervene using powers under Section 62A or 62B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This could result in a designation requiring the Council to improve performance or in some circumstances the local authority could lose the ability to determine applications. Specific criteria would need to be met to be de-designated.
- 3.6** The Government published (12 December 2024) the updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and this will clearly have strategic, service delivery, and financial implications for the Council. The increase in the Local Housing Need (LHN) numbers from 504 to 1,036 per annum will require the Council to ensure it has a 5-year Housing Supply.

#### Recruitment and Retention

- 3.7** The Council has an active programme of recruitment with 8 posts across the planning service. The following posts have been filled following the recruitment process
- Assistant Director – Planning (Start date March/April 2025)
  - Head of Planning Services (Start date January 2025)
  - Head of Planning Policy and Infrastructure (Start date March/April 2025)
- 3.8** The following roles are currently subject to active recruitment:
- Principal Planning Enforcement Officer
  - Senior Planning Enforcement Officer



- Principal Planning Officer (DM)
- Senior Planning Officer (DM)
- Senior Conservation and Design Officer
- Assistant Conservation Officer
- Landscape Officer
- Sustainable Transport Officer (Fixed Term)

**3.9** Interim agency cover is provided for the following roles with the broad assumption that interim cover will be required until the end of the financial year.

- Assistant Director – Planning
- Development Management Lead/Head of Planning Services
- Principal Enforcement Officer
- Senior Enforcement Officer
- Senior Planning Officer x 2
- Principal Planning Officer (Planning Policy & Infrastructure)

#### Expenditure Forecast

**3.10** As set out in paragraphs x to x of the report, there is considerable reliance on interim agency cover to deliver planning services given the number of vacancies across the teams.

**3.11** As part of Phase 1 of the Publica Review, Planning Services transferred from Publica to the Council on 01 November 2024. 46 posts transferred to the Council with salary budgets. As part of the transfer arrangement, the Council increased the pay and pay-related budget recognising the additional cost associated with providing the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) for those staff who were outside of the scheme when employed by Publica. A breakdown of this budget is shown below.



**Table 2 – “Planning Services” – Phase 1 Budgets**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Baseline Cost (£'000)</b>	<b>Sharing + Pension Impact (£'000)</b>	<b>New Roles (£'000)</b>	<b>New Model Total (£'000)</b>	<b>2024/25 PY Impact (£'000)</b>
DEV001 - Development Control (All)	1,112	113	80	1,305	544
PLP001 - Local Development Management	403	8	0	411	171
PLP004 - Heritage & Design	438	28	0	467	194
<b>Subtotal "Planning Services"</b>	<b>1,954</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>2,183</b>	<b>909</b>

**3.12** For the purposes of financial reporting, the service budget includes the “**Baseline Cost**” with variation reported against this element only. The other elements – “**Sharing + Pension Impact**” and “**New Roles**” are reported as part of the Phase 1 Publica Review Provision. This is to ensure there is no double counting of budget and/or variation.

**3.13** The expenditure forecast is based on the following assumptions informed by the recruitment process outlined earlier in the report:

- Salary costs from November 2024 to March 2025 including the impact of the 2024/25 pay award
- Agency cost forecast based on current interim placements at known rates with placements assumed to continue to the end of March 2025. No assumption has been made on changes to agency/interim composition.

**3.14** On this basis, the forecast for Planning Services is shown in the table below



**Table 3 – “Planning Services” Expenditure forecast**

<b>Service</b>	<b>PY Baseline Costs (£'000)</b>	<b>Forecast Spend - Salaries (£'000)</b>	<b>Forecast Spend - Agency (£'000)</b>	<b>TOTAL (£'000)</b>	<b>Variance (£'000)</b>
DEV001 - Development Control (All)	463	264	323	587	124
PLP001 - Local Development Management	168	147	44	192	24
PLP004 - Heritage & Design	183	163	0	163	(20)
<b>Subtotal "Planning Services"</b>	<b>814</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>942</b>	<b>128</b>

**3.15** Taking into account a forecast net underspend on Planning Appeal costs and Local Plan support costs of £14k (previously included in the Q2 forecast), the net expenditure position for Planning Services is a forecast overspend of £114k.

**3.16** In addition, recruitment costs of £100k have been included in the Q2 forecast with these costs directly attributable to Planning Services.

Income Forecast

**3.17** At the end of Period 8 (November), income from Planning applications and pre-application advice was £120k above the profiled budget position. If this trend was replicated over the remainder of the financial year the outturn position could be £180k higher than the budgeted income level.

**3.18** However, for the purposes of this report a prudent estimate of £120k of additional income over the budgeted level has been assumed. This ensures optimism bias in the forecast is mitigated. The level of income will continue to be closely monitored.

**3.19** [Annex C of the Council Priority and Service Performance Report – 2024-25 Quarter Two](#) report considered by Cabinet on 05 December provided details on income performance.

**3.20** A key point to note is that additional income does not in itself justify additional expenditure. In the analysis of expenditure and income set out in this report, the level of expenditure incurred, and forecast is based around maintaining service delivery first and foremost.



Revised Q2 Outturn Forecast

**3.21** The impact on the Q2 position including “Planning Services” is shown in the table below. The outturn forecast moves from a £266k adverse variation to £297k.

**3.22** Other things being equal, this would reduce the net surplus to £219k (from £250k)

**Table 4 – Revised Revenue Budget Outturn Forecast Summary**

	2024/25 Latest Net Budget (£'000)	2024/25 Actuals to Q2 (£'000)	2024/25 Outturn Forecast (£'000)	2024/25 Outturn Variance (£'000)
<b>Revenue Budget</b>				
<b>Subtotal Services</b>	<b>18,320</b>	<b>8,516</b>	<b>18,827</b>	<b>507</b>
Less: Reversal of accounting adjustments	(1,778)		(1,778)	0
<b>Revised Subtotal Services</b>	<b>16,542</b>	<b>8,516</b>	<b>17,049</b>	<b>507</b>
Corporate Income & Expenditure	(1,481)	(975)	(1,423)	58
Provisions and Risk Items	0	0	(268)	(268)
<b>Net Budget Requirement</b>	<b>15,061</b>	<b>7,541</b>	<b>15,358</b>	<b>297</b>
<b>Funded by:</b>				
Council Tax	(6,597)		(6,597)	0
Retained Business Rates	(5,014)		(5,014)	0
Government Funding - Grants	(3,206)		(3,206)	0
Government Funding - NHB	(287)		(287)	0
Collection Fund (surplus) / Deficit	(473)		(473)	0
<b>TOTAL Funding</b>	<b>(15,577)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(15,577)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Budget shortfall/(surplus)</b>	<b>(516)</b>		<b>(219)</b>	<b>297</b>

**4. CONCLUSIONS**

**4.1** This monitoring report presents an update on the Council’s Q2 outturn forecast. As the report sets out, an overspend of £0.297m is now forecast for the financial year which. Without mitigating or corrective action this would reduce the level of the budgeted surplus that would transfer to the Financial Resilience Reserve at year end which is not considered appropriate given the scale of the financial challenge over the MTFS period.



- 4.2** With a significant financial pressure in 2024/25 it is essential that Planning Services expenditure is brought in line with the budget. Subject to the conclusion of current recruitment activity, there is adequate salary budget across the service. However, should there be further turnover of staff in 2025/26, the service will need to manage vacancies accordingly to cover any additional cost of recruitment and interim agency staff costs.
- 4.3** An item for consideration in the 2025/26 budget and over the MTFS-period will be assessing the level of resources required to complete the Local Plan update and deliver a new Local Plan.
- 4.4** Cabinet will continue to consider the impact of the forecast outturn and the impact on earmarked reserves as part of their oversight of the savings and transformation programme.
- 4.5** It is recommended that Cabinet review in-year opportunities with Publica and Ubico and provide an update in February 2025 as part of the 2025/26 Budget reports on options to mitigate the financial position as currently forecast across the MTFS period.
- 4.6** To mitigate the risk around additional expenditure and a potential deterioration of the financial position during the rest of the financial year, Cabinet approved the following recommendations:
- 4.7 **Vacancy Management**** - implement an Authority to Fill process with authorisation for all recruitment activity including time-limited agency cover, limits of day/hourly rates, recruitment costs. Prioritisation of posts/service areas with active recruitment to essential roles only.
- 4.8 **Consultancy support and external commissions**** – s151 to provide guidance to all service leads on criteria under which external agency support can be commissioned (subject to business case which would identify need based on criteria such as supports Corporate Plan delivery, alternative options have been considered, time-critical requirement to ensure project delivery, funding identified and available).
- 4.9** As set out in Section 5 of the [2025/26 Budget Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Strategy \(MTFS\) Update](#) report – accelerate development of **refreshed Savings & Transformation plan** to ensure adequate cost reductions are identified, scoped, and planned over the MTFS period. Savings ideas will be grouped by workstream and clearly indicate outcomes expected in terms of financial and service benefits and set challenging but achievable action plans for delivery by agreed periods.



**4.10** Linked to the mitigation action above, consider actions for budget holders in 2025/26 to reduce income pressure on revenue budget as part of the review of **fees and charges** from a cost recovery position.

**4.11 Publica Review Phase 2** – whilst not a direct issue for this report, Phase 2 of the review poses the single biggest risk to a balanced budget in 2025/26 and over MTFs period. The design-led principle *Consideration of cost* must ensure that the additional cost of bring services back to the Council are quantified with mitigating actions taken to reduce the potential impact on the MTFs.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**5.1** The detailed financial implications are set out in the report.

## **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**6.1** 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.

## **7. RISK ASSESSMENT**

**7.1** Section 8 of the report set out the material risks and uncertainties.

## **8. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

**8.1** None

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

**9.1** None

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**10.1** None

(END)

This page is intentionally left blank





Council name	<b>COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
Name and date of Committee	<b>CABINET – 5 DECEMBER 2024</b>
Subject	<b>COUNCIL PRIORITY AND SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT – 2024-25 QUARTER TWO</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:  1. Note overall progress on the Council priorities and service performance for 2024-25 Q2.
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 Q2 include:

### Delivering good services

- The detailed transition plan, building on the recommendations from the Local Partnerships report, was presented to and approved by Cabinet and Full Council in July. The formal consultation process for employees included in Phase 1 began in September, with employees transferred to Council employment effective from 1st November.
- Works are complete for the leasing of the spare office space at Trinity Road, following a short delay the first tenant has moved in. Regular meetings will now take place between S.151, Assistant Director, Estates team and Watermoor Point to monitor and manage onboarding of new tenants and income against projections.
- The Adopted Asset Management Strategy is now being actively used to consider assets. A report was presented to Cabinet in May, seeking approval for the disposal of Bourton VIC, which has since been marketed, with offers received. In July, Asset Management Plans (AMPs) were submitted with a report to Cabinet and then to



Council, recommending the disposal of the Memorial Cottages and Old Station on Sheep Street, Cirencester. Both properties are now on the market. Additionally, an AMP is currently being prepared for properties on Dyer Street, Cirencester.

#### Responding to the climate emergency

- Cabinet approved the proposed delivery and associated costs for the Electric Vehicle Charge Point (EVCP) project, and the Council has now entered into a contract with Connected Kerb to install EVCPs at five car parks in Tetbury, Cirencester, Stow-on-the-Wold, and Moreton-in-Marsh. A detailed delivery plan from Connected Kerb is currently awaited. Additionally, the Portfolio Holder and officers met with Government representatives to request extended delivery timelines and funding into 2025/26, aiming to enable EVCP installations at sites with specific constraints that cannot be addressed within the current March 2025 deadline.
- Initial meetings have been held with representatives of all council services to inform terms of reference development for the Climate Board and identify opportunities for carbon reduction which will feed into an action plan.
- Solar PV has been installed on the Council offices at Trinity Road. The business case has been agreed and offer made to New Brewery Arts for solar PV installation. A decision from New Brewery Arts is pending with no further action required by the Council at this stage. If the power purchasing agreement proposal is accepted, the installation work will proceed promptly.
- The Cotswold Home Solar initiative continues to be actively promoted and delivered, with 17 homes already equipped with solar panels and 20 more having paid deposits. Through this scheme, residents are projected to save nearly £450,000 district-wide by installing energy-efficient measures in their homes.
- An externally funded Retrofit Engagement Officer has been appointed to engage approximately 800 households with Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) rated D or below.

#### Delivering Housing

- The Strategic Housing Manager is developing strategies and options for a more interventionist approach to housing delivery. This includes fostering collaborations



with landowners, developers, and Registered Providers to enhance housing availability and effectiveness.

- The finalisation of the Housing Strategy has been passed to the Strategic Housing Manager. It is currently being updated to reflect the emerging options review and the outcomes of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) consultation. The strategy will also be coordinated with other related strategies and policies, such as those addressing homelessness and empty properties.
- A planning application for the zero-carbon affordable housing development in Down Ampney has been submitted. Drainage and sewerage challenges need to be addressed, requiring solutions from Bromford along with proactive engagement with the Parish Council and neighbouring residents. A broader communications plan is set to be developed in collaboration with Bromford.

#### Supporting communities

- A forum event was held in July, which was recorded and shared with attendees as well as other town and parish councils.
- The Sewage Summit took place in July, featuring representatives from all three water companies, the Environment Agency, Earth Watch, and WASP, who presented to a sold-out audience of residents and community leaders. A report summarising the event, along with details of two previous internal workshops and meetings held over the past 18 months with the water companies, was presented to the full Council in September, where all recommendations were approved.
- The Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC) has appointed a Flood and Community Resilience Officer who has successfully recruited 18 Flood Wardens in the Cotswolds and is actively looking to recruit more. With the officer now in place and operational, the Council is no longer the lead in advancing the scheme; however, it will continue to be a key recipient of the information gathered by the Flood Wardens across the district.
- Agreement has been reached with Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) to fund the survey and design work for the creation of a safe crossing of the Spine Road from the remaining Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF).
- A closedown meeting was held with contractors to finalise the locations for the last eight cycle stands. Due to delays in receiving confirmation and necessary permissions from the GCC Estate Manager, two libraries were unable to have the



requested cycle stands installed. The agreed final locations for the cycle stands are Cotswold Airport, Westonbirt Arboretum, and the Neighbridge Car Park.

- The Spring Round for Crowdfund Cotswold was successful, with five out of six supported projects exceeding their funding targets. In July, the Cabinet agreed to re-contract with Spacehive to continue the Crowdfund Cotswold program, enabling an autumn round that closed on 16<sup>th</sup> October.

### Supporting the economy

- Officers continue to work with businesses from key sectors, including agritech, cyber/digital, and sustainable aviation, to promote employment opportunities. Discussions with key stakeholders about promoting apprenticeship opportunities are ongoing, and a campaign is planned once the new government's intended changes to apprenticeships have been announced.
- A legal agreement has been established between Cotswold District Council and Gloucestershire County Council to deliver a program of activities funded by the Shared Prosperity Fund, aimed at assisting those furthest from the employment market. The Employment and Skills Hub Outreach (ESHO) project will present its progress to the Cotswold Economic Advisory Group in November 2024.
- Three UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) funded projects are underway. The first project aims to identify and promote businesses as Sustainability Champions. The second project is focused on encouraging the development of new experiences. The third project aims to enhance and add new functionality to the Cotswolds tourism website ([www.cotswolds.com](http://www.cotswolds.com)).
- The outline planning application for the Royal Agricultural University's Innovation Village has been validated and will now proceed through the planning process. Concurrently, officers and the cabinet member are collaborating with the RAU on related matters, including exploring funding opportunities.

- 2.3** The only off target action of the Corporate Plan behind schedule at the end of Q2 is detailed below. Whilst this report is a retrospective account of progress in Q2, 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**



**Q2 update:** Some street signs have been replaced, and Ubico has allocated additional resources to accelerate the replacement program. The percentage of completed replacements will be reported in Q3.

**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**

Overall, the Council's performance for the quarter has been largely positive, highlighted by progress in responding to Freedom of Information requests within 20 days, conducting timely inspections of high-risk food premises and strong gym membership numbers. Customer Satisfaction and Planning Determination Times continue to be strong. However, the number of missed bins per 100,000 collections and the number of affordable homes delivered are showing a negative trend.

#### **3.1** Service performance above target:

- Percentage of Council Tax Collected (Tracking Well Toward Achieving the Year-End Target. 60% collected up to Q2)
- Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events (3 days against a target of 5 days)
- Customer Satisfaction (99% against a target of 90%)
- Percentage of FOI requests answered within 20 days (95% against a target of 90%)
- Percentage of major planning applications determined within agreed timescales (90% against a target of 70%)
- Percentage of minor planning applications determined within agreed timescales (87% against a target of 65%)
- Percentage of other planning applications determined within agreed timescales (86% against a target of 80%)
- Percentage of Planning Appeals Allowed (cumulative) (26% against a target of 30%)
- Percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days (96% 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%)



- Residual Household Waste per Household (kg) (88 against a target of 93)
- Number of gym memberships (4,247 against a target of 3,800)
- Number of visits to the leisure centres (122,523 visits against a target of 115,000)

### 3.2 Service Performance below target:

**Percentage of Non-domestic rates collected (54% collected up until Q2 against a target of 58%).** The service was performing well during Q1, with collection rates 2% above the target set for collections at the end of the quarter.

During Q2, the Council observed a decrease of approximately 14% in collections compared to the same period last year. Although this decline is significant, last year's collection figures were unusually high due to a substantial payment for previous years' arrears, which was credited to the 2023-24 collections. This was a result of pending adjustments and revaluations by the Valuation Office, which temporarily inflated last year's collection rate. Despite this anomaly, the Council's current collection rate remains 4.1% below pre-pandemic levels.

**The Resolution:** The service recently completed an intensive review, resulting in the implementation of dashboards that have streamlined operations and enhanced efficiency. This ongoing project now focuses on further improvements in collaboration with Customer Service to identify additional areas for optimisation. Committed to supporting businesses, the Council actively engages through reminders, phone calls, and emails to encourage dialogue. All in-year recovery processes are up to date.

**Processing times for Council Tax Support New Claims (20.13 days against a target of 20 days) and Housing Benefit Change of Circumstances (6.17 days against a target of 4 days).** Processing times for both Council Tax Support New Claims and Housing Benefit Change of Circumstances did not meet the target in Q1, with processing taking 22.42 and 6.25 days, respectively.

Although the Council is currently above target for processing times, there has been an improvement compared to the same period last year, with processing times decreasing by approximately 4 days for Council Tax Support New Claims and 4 days for Housing Benefit Change of Circumstances.

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

**The Resolution:** In September, CIVICA system errors related to automation caused a backlog, resulting in longer processing times for claims. The Council is actively working with partners to resolve these issues and ensure timely support for residents. The



reduction in HB Change applications means that any delay in assessing an application due to outstanding evidence has a more noticeable impact on the average processing days. Additionally, the managed migration of HB to Universal Credit commenced in April, with some minor glitches reported in the system. While the migration was planned in stages, some stages have been brought forward, which will further decrease the number of changes received and may potentially increase processing times.

**Percentage of Housing Benefit overpayment due to LA error/admin delay (0.42% against a target of 0.35%).** The Council exceeded the target set for Q1, resulting in an error rate of 0.71% for the quarter.

The Council's overpayment percentage has now fallen below the national target but remains slightly above the stricter internal service target following a significant overpayment identified by officers in Q1. The overpayment percentage continues to decrease steadily each week, and it is projected to fall below the service target by next quarter.

**The Resolution:** To address the issue of overpayments, the service is implementing several key measures. Approximately 20% of the Housing Benefit (HB) caseload is undergoing Quality Assurance checks, with a focus on areas prone to high error rates, such as earnings calculations, to identify and correct errors before they lead to overpayments. Enhanced training and ongoing support are being provided to staff to ensure accurate and efficient processing of HB claims, reducing the likelihood of errors. The service is also refining internal processes to streamline HB assessments and minimise delays, including the implementation of automated systems where possible. Additionally, the Council is actively participating in the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Housing Benefit Award Accuracy (HBAA) initiative, which aims to combat fraud and error through close collaboration with the DWP.

The service remains aware of the potential impact of increased workloads on delays in processing HB changes, which could affect HB subsidy. These combined efforts are intended to reduce overpayments due to local authority errors and help ensure that the Council meets its targets in the upcoming quarters.

**Number of affordable homes delivered (cumulative) (35 delivered against a target of 50).** During Q1, the number of affordable homes delivered exceed the quarterly target, however, a shortfall is forecasted for the end-of-year target.





During Q2, a total of six properties were delivered in Cotswold, bringing the year-to-date total to thirty-five, against a target of fifty. This includes six shared ownership properties completed in Cirencester. Completions fluctuate throughout the year, as housing developments typically take 12 months or more, with some projects phased over several years. An initial over-delivery of affordable housing at the start of the current strategy has resulted in reduced delivery in recent years. Additionally, projections from Registered Providers indicate a shortfall compared to the annual target of 100 homes.

**Missed bins per 100,000 Collections (302 against a target of 80).** The Council experienced an increase in the number of missed bins per 100,000 collections during Q1, recording 141 misses against a target of 80.

The Council experienced a notable increase in missed bins in comparison to last quarter and the same period last year.

**The Resolution:** The rise in missed bins can be attributed primarily to the recent reorganisation of collection rounds, which affected approximately 60% of households. Additionally, Ubico faced high levels of sick leave during July and August, resulting in new staff who were less familiar with the routes and locations of households. However, significant improvements have been made, with daily meetings implemented during the quarter to enhance communication and management oversight. These efforts have led to solid improvements, with the number of missed collections now reducing to more acceptable levels.

**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**

This report will be reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 9 January 2025. The draft minutes of that meeting will be circulated to all Members and any recommendations from the Committee will be reported to Cabinet.



**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 Q2 2024-2025

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	Workstream not Scheduled to Start during Quarter
Cancelled	
On Hold	

Objectives	Priorities	Actions	Commencement	Target Date	Cabinet Member, Lead officer(s)	RAG Rating	Comment for Q2
<b>Delivering good services</b>	<b>Ensure our workforce can deliver for the council and our community</b>	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	The detailed transition plan, building on the recommendations from the Local Partnerships report, was presented to and approved by Cabinet and Full Council in July. The formal consultation process for employees included in Phase 1 began in September, with those employees scheduled to transfer to Council employment effective from 1st November.
		Lease spare office space at Trinity Road	Dec-23	Jul-24	Cllr Mike Evey Claire Locke Suzanne Barton	Complete	Works completed and following a short delay first tenant has moved in. Regular meetings will now take place between S.151, Assistant Director, Estates team and Watermoor Point to monitor and manage onboarding of new tenants and income against projections.
	<b>Ensure effective oversight of our services, to ensure value for money and good standards</b>	Review the waste service, and undertake an options appraisal	Dec-23	Jun-24	Cllr Mike Evey David Stanley		
		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 Evey David Stanley	On Target	To be reviewed in February 2025.
	<b>Enhance our financial resilience and make best use of our assets</b>	Implement the Council's new asset management strategy and asset plans	Apr-24	Review April 2025	Cllr Mike Evey  David Stanley	On Target	Adopted Asset Management Strategy is now being actively used to consider assets. Report went to Cabinet in May and agreement was sought for the disposal of Bourton VIC, this property has since been actively marketed and offers received. In July Asset Management Plans (AMP) were submitted with a report to Cabinet and then Council recommending disposal of the Memorial cottages and Old Station at Sheep street, Cirencester. Both properties are now being marketed. An AMP is now being prepared for properties in Dyer street, Cirencester.
		<b>Play our part in maintaining and enhancing the public realm across the district</b>	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

Responding to the climate emergency	Reduce CO2 from Transport: We will actively encourage and support the transition to EVs and increased use of public and sustainable transport such as cycling and walking.	Develop and deliver an Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy	Jan-24	Jul-24	Cllr Mike McKeown	On Target	Cabinet agreed to proposed delivery and associated costs. The Council have now entered into a contract with Connected Kerb for EVCPs at 4 car parks in Tetbury, Cirencester, Stow on the Wold and Moreton in Marsh. A delivery plan is currently awaited from Connected Kerb. The Portfolio Holder and officers also met with Government representatives to make a case for extending delivery and funding into 2025/26 to enable more EVCPs to be delivered on sites that have constraints and cannot be delivered in the current March 2025 timeframe.
					Claire Locke		
	Work with partners to implement the Sustainable Transport Strategy	Adoption as part of the Local Plan - projected June 2025	Apr-28		Cllr Joe Harris	Not Scheduled to Start During Quarter	
					Jon Dearing Matthew Britton		
	Taxi Transition - explore the opportunity for the creation of an EV Taxi policy	Apr-24	Nov-24		Cllr Mike McKeown Jon Dearing Mandy Fathers	On Target	
Cut Council Carbon Footprint, implementing sustainable practices in all council operations, emphasising energy efficiency and renewable energy adoption, across our buildings, fleet and suppliers.	Create a Climate Board, agree governance arrangements and key outcomes.	Jan-24	Review January 2025		Cllr Mike McKeown	On Target	Initial meetings with departments held to inform terms of reference development
					Olivia McGreggor		
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 Olivia McGreggor	On Target	Retrofit engagement officer in post
	Explore the business cases for the installation of solar panels on Council owned assets.	Jan-24	Jul-24		Cllr Mike McKeown Claire Locke	On Target	Solar PV installed on CDC Council offices at Trinity Road. Business case agreed and offer made to New Brewery Arts for the provision of solar PV. Awaiting decision but no further action required from CDC. Works will proceed swiftly if NBA agree the proposal.
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	Ecology team work has continued to focus on the implementation of the new BNG legislation. Decisions have now been issued for some cases with non-significant on-site BNG; first biodiversity gain condition compliance application received. Drafting of s106 agreements underway. Additional Biodiversity Officer appointed to increase capacity to address BNG, HRA, the ecological emergency, in particular mandatory biodiversity action planning and monitoring for all Council services and work on the Local Plan review
					Adrian Harding		

	<p><b>Reduce CO2 from Buildings: Foster community-led climate action, supporting residents and businesses adopting renewable heating and improving energy efficiency.</b></p>	<p>Continue to promote and deliver Cotswold Home Solar, in partnership with MakeMyHouseGreen</p>	Jan-23	Review July 2024	<p>Cllr Mike McKeown</p> <p>Olivia McGreggor</p>	On Target	<p>Cotswold Home Solar continues to be promoted and delivered. As a result of the scheme 17 homes have already installed solar panels and 20 have paid a deposit. As a result, residents are on track to save nearly £450,000 across the district by installing energy efficient measures in their homes <a href="https://news.cotswold.gov.uk/news/solar-panels-are-saving-money-and-the-planet-across-the-cotswold-district">https://news.cotswold.gov.uk/news/solar-panels-are-saving-money-and-the-planet-across-the-cotswold-district</a></p>
		<p>Consider the business case on optimising the delivery of high quality retrofit advice and support</p>	Jul-24	Jul-25	<p>Cllr Mike McKeown Cllr Juliet Layton</p> <p>Olivia McGreggor</p>	On Target	<p>A retrofit engagement officer is now in post tasked with engaging circa 800 households with EPC D or below to retrofit their homes to lower both running costs and carbon emissions.</p>
<p><b>Ensure our planning policies deliver our corporate priorities and promotes both carbon neutral development and infrastructure</b></p>	<p>Subject to proposed legislative changes, complete full review of the Local Plan</p>	Jan-24	Jun-25	<p>Cllr Joe Harris</p> <p>Adrian Harding Matt Britton</p>	On Target	<p>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 submitted to the Planning Inspectorate before June 2025 for an Independent Examination in Public led by a government appointed Inspector.</p>	
				<p>Cllr Juliet Layton</p> <p>Adrian Harding Matthew Britton</p>	On Target	<p>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.</p>	
	<p>Work with Cirencester Town Council on the coordination of the Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan and the Cirencester Neighbourhood Plan policies</p>	Jan-24	Review February 2024	<p>Cllr Juliet Layton</p> <p>Adrian Harding Matthew Britton</p>	On Target	<p>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.</p>	
				<p>Cllr Juliet Layton</p>		<p>CDC Strategic Housing Manager (Alan Hope) developing</p>	
<p><b>Delivering</b></p>							

# Housing

Working with our partners to explore innovative routes to deliver more affordable homes	Explore innovative approaches to housing delivery	Feb-24	Aug-25	Robert Weaver Alan Hope	On Target	strategies and options for a more interventionist Housing Delivery approach including collaborations with landowners, developers and Registered Providers.
	Deliver an exemplar zero carbon affordable housing development in Down Ampney	Dec-23	Apr-28	Cllr Juliet Layton	On Target	Planning application has been submitted. Drainage and Sewerage challenges need solutions to be developed by Bromford and proactive engagement is required with the Parish Council and Neighbouring Residents. A wider comms plan will be developed in conjunction with Bromford.
Robert Weaver Claire Locke						
Understanding everyone's housing needs	Support refugees to retain adequate housing	Jul-23	Review March 2025	Cllr Claire Bloomer	On Target	Work is ongoing to support all refugees whether on a resettlement scheme or dispersed asylum. In addition to working to ensure the families and individuals are adequately housed there is ongoing wraparound support being provided to assist with resettlement and community cohesion
				Jon Dearing Caroline Clissold/ Paula Massey		
	Continue to monitor housing needs, using Homeseeker Plus, to inform housing strategy and implementation	Jan-24	Mar-25	Cllr Juliet Layton	On Target	Although homelessness is rising generally across all local authorities in the country, the Housing Team continue to provide a strong and robust approach to preventing homelessness. Consequently, although numbers of households in emergency accommodation have risen slightly in the Cotswold district, these are not increasing at the same rate as other authorities. The Housing Team also consistently maintain low to zero numbers of rough sleepers. No further accommodation options have been sourced as the previously mentioned property was deemed not suitable/economically unviable.
				Jon Dearing Caroline Clissold		
Continue to build on the success of the Housing First Project with a new county wide approach	Jan-24	Mar-25	Cllr Juliet Layton	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. There are currently 6 individuals accommodated in Housing First, however external funding has been awarded to P3 to extend the offer to a further 2 clients, giving us 8 spaces in total. Referrals are currently being considered.	
			Jon Dearing Caroline Clissold			
				Cllr Juliet Layton		

Supporting communities	<b>Adopting and implementing our new housing strategy</b>	Consult and adopt the Council's new Housing strategy	Dec-23	Jun-24	Adrian Harding Matthew Britton	On Target	The finalisation of the Housing Strategy has been passed to the Strategic Housing Manager. It is being updated in light of the emerging options review, the Govt NPPF consultation outcome and will be coordinated with other related strategies/policies (e.g Homelessness/Empty Properties etc)
	<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	On Target	Forum event held on 16th July. Event recorded and shared with both attendees and other CDC town and parish councils.
					Angela Claridge		
	<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	Oct-24	Cllr Tristan Wilkinson	Complete	The Sewage Summit was held on the 8th July, where reps from all 3 Water Companies, the EA, Earth Watch and WASP gave presentations to a sold out audience of residents / community leaders. A report that summarised the event along with giving information on 2 previous internal workshops and the meetings held over the past 18 months with the Water Companies was presented to full Council on the 25th September, where the recommendation were all approved.
					Matthew Britton		
	<b>Address the challenges of flooding and water quality and sewerage discharges</b>	Identify gaps and bolster the Cotswold Flood wardens programme	Jan-24	Jun-24	Cllr Tristan Wilkinson	Complete	GRCC has now appointed an officer, who has recruited 18 Flood Wardens in the Cotswolds to date and is looking to recruit more. As the officer is in post and active, the Council is no longer the lead in progressing the scheme but will be one of the key recipients of information created by the Flood Wardens across the district.
					Robert Weaver		
<b>Address the challenges of flooding and water quality and sewerage discharges</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	On Target	Agreement has been reached to fund the survey and design work from remaining COMF which is the critical next step in working towards delivery. GCC has highlighted safety issues regarding the condition of the existing brick bridge which they need to deal with separately. On-going discussions are required to secure confirmation regarding commitment to delivery and longer-term time frames.	
				Joseph Walker			
				Cllr Juliet Layton			

	<b>Enhance connectivity, and biodiversity in the Cotswold Water park</b>	Install cycle racks, in consultation with the local community	Jan-24	Mar-25	Joseph Walker	On Target	Closedown meeting held with contractors to conclude agreement on locations for final 8 cycle stands. Issues around GCC Estate Manager not providing confirmation and necessary permissions has meant two libraries have not had requested cycle stands. Therefore final 8 agreed locations are: Cotswold Airport, Westonbirt Arberetum, Neighbridge Car park. Over the period of delivery of this project a total of 78 new cycle stands have been provided across Cotswold Lakes and wider area to provide opportunities for people to connect to key locations using sustainable and active travel.
		Work with partners to embed the Nature Recovery Plan for the Waterpark	Jan-24	Review every six months	Cllr Juliet Layton Adrian Harding Sophia Price Cllr Joe Harris		
	<b>Healthy place making through the Local Plan</b>	Embed Healthy Homes Act into the Cotswold Design Code	Jun-25	Jun-25	Adrian Harding	Not Scheduled to Start During Quarter	
		Introduce a requirement for Community Access Defibrillators in new developments	Jun-25	Jun-25	Cllr Joe Harris Adrian Harding	Not Scheduled to Start During Quarter	
		Focus on green infrastructure, to enhance biodiversity and community wellbeing	Jun-25	Jun-25	Cllr Joe Harris Adrian Harding	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	On Target	
					Joseph Walker		
					Cllr Claire Bloomer	On Target	Ongoing engagements with community groups, such as the Chesterton Community Project Group, Bromford Housing, and The Salvation Army, aiming to enhance resilience and improve residents' health. The 'Getting Connected' courses for digital inclusion have positively impacted over 60 older adults, with notable participation in Bourton on the Water, Fairford, and Tetbury, where attendees have formed social groups and increased digital inclusion.  Planning is complete for the 'DIGI DAY' project in 2024, designed to further support digital knowledge through expert guidance. Successful engagement at the St. Lawrence Church Chesterton Afternoon Tea and Chesterton Primary School Family Hub drop-ins has provided insights into resident needs and improved support for families.  Improvements to Arnes Alleyway are near completion
					Joseph Walker		



Encourage resilient, well-connected and active communities that take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing						improvements to Argos Alleyway are near completion, transforming it into a safer, brighter space. Community Fun Day events, planned with PCSO's, Bromford, Young Gloucestershire, and local schools, attracted over 300 attendees in Northleach, Stow, Moreton, and Bourton. The 'Big Dig Day' at Chesterton School fostered local family engagement and led to the formation of a gardening club.
	Celebrate success - promote the work being done by partners across the district to inspire communities	Feb-24	Review August 2024	Cllr Claire Bloomer Joseph Walker	On Target	The Unsung Hero Awards scheme, created to honour volunteers across the district who selflessly dedicate their time to helping others, was launched in July. The inaugural awards were presented to the winners at the Full Council meeting in September.
	Continue to promote community activity through Crowdfund Cotswold	Feb-24	Review August 2024	Cllr Claire Bloomer Joseph Walker	On Target	Five projects out of six projects supported hit and in fact exceeded their funding targets from the spring round, making it a particularly successful round. Cabinet agreed in July to re-contract with Spacehive to continue the Crowdfund Cotswold programme, enabling an autumn round currently underway, closing 16 October.
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 David Stanley Joseph Walker	On Target	Regular meetings have been scheduled to review performance and to identify and mitigate any risks.
	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 Angela Claridge Joseph Walker	On Target	Please see Active Cotswold Programme for updates
	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 David Stanley Joseph Walker	On Target	Through Integrated Locality Partnership (ILP) funding we have enabled Gloucestershire Young Carers and The Door to offer further support via a safe gaming platform with remote access to youth workers. Further youth clubs are also now in place for young carers.
Work with partners to ensure vital services cover the district, and offer support to our	Continue to be a proactive member of the Cotswold Food Network Steering Group and support initiatives under the network's umbrella	Jan-24	Review January 2025	Cllr Claire Bloomer Joseph Walker	On Target	The 'Cotswold Food Network' continues to thrive and grow, encompassing financial inclusion, food provision, via Food Banks, Pantries and Community Fridges, and gleaning (taking learning from Stroud's pilot) amongst it's work. 30 plus partner organisations are joining us regularly to feed into this work, share the support they can and do give already, and stay eager to increase their support in areas of need, where possible. Due to the changes at Feeding Gloucestershire, we now work independently with Lizzie Dyer, this change has had little effect on the positive work we're doing together, although there has been a slight change to our budget plans we're still on track to present the original offer of work, and small grants.

	<b>residents if crises hit</b>	Continue to work with the NHS Integrated Locality Partnership to support youth mental health	Jan-24	Review January 2025	Cllr Claire Bloomer Joseph Walker	On Target	The Intergrated Locality Partnership (ILP) grants focused on Chipping Campden youth provision - World Jungle ran a regular Youth Club throughout the summer months, and The Door partnered with Young Carers to provide a safe, online gaming resource, with staff support online. Cirencester College were also funded to produce a play regarding positive body image as this had been highlighted as a priority.
		Maintain a multi-service response to the cost of living crisis, and other challenges to community wellbeing	Jan-23	Review January 2025	Cllr Claire Bloomer Claire Locke Joseph Walker	On Target	Whilst the Cost of Living working group continues to meet periodically to consider whether there are new issues (i.e. cut to Winter fuel payments), the delivery of support is now embedded as business as usual both within Council teams and wider partnerships.
<b>Supporting the economy</b>	<b>Keep residents safe, through awareness raising around domestic abuse and fraud</b>	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	Feb-24	Review February 2025	Cllr Paul Hodgkinson Joseph Walker	On Target	The Cotswold Community Safety Partnership (CCSP) continue to work with their new Action Plan. The Police and Crime Commissioner has been re-elected with a similar list of priorities going forward including improvements to road safety, particularly older drivers.
		Deliver Rural Domestic Abuse Champions programme in partnership with other rural Gloucestershire districts and Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Services	Feb-24	Mar-25	Cllr Claire Bloomer Joseph Walker	On Target	We continue to increase the number of Rural Domestic Abuse Champions, in the district. Initial 4 hour training is continuing to be delivered regularly and refresher training is also now being offered. Champions are being supported with a newsletter too.
		Train frontline staff to identify Domestic Abuse and review internal processes to recognise and support victims of abuse	Feb-24	Jul-24	Cllr Claire Bloomer Joseph Walker	On Target	GDASS have been prolific in educating on the nuances of rural domestic abuse, as opposed to urban DA. We have steadily increased our Rural Domestic Abuse Champions to 29 across the district, although we are yet to encourage staff to access the free training.
		Coordinate activity under Home Office's safer Streets Fund to tackle Anti-Social Behaviour and violence against women and girls	Feb-24	Review February 2025	Cllr Paul Hodgkinson/Cllr Claire Bloomer Joseph Walker	On Target	Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) and reducing anti social behaviour continues to be a priority. We have added Serious Violence Duty (SVD) to our CSP plan and remain the lowest area in the county. Using information from the Gloucestershire SVD dashboard VAWG numbers in the district have dropped slightly from last year. The Safe Places scheme gives all residents a safe place to go to, in Cirencester and Bourton, with new venues being added gradually as we go through the summer months.
		Work with key sectors to create new highly skilled jobs, through promotion of apprenticeship opportunities	Feb-24	Apr-28	Cllr Tristan Wilkinson Joseph Walker Paul James	On Target	Officers continue to work with businesses from key sectors, including agritech, cyber/digital and sustainable aviation to promote employment opportunities. Discussions have taken place with key stakeholders about how to promote apprenticeship opportunities. A campaign will be launched once the detail of the new Government's intended changes to apprenticeships have been announced.
	<b>Work with partners to develop the skills of our residents</b>						

	<b>our residents</b>	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 Tristan Wilkinson Joseph Walker Paul James	On Target	Being delivered through Gloucestershire County Council's Employment and Skills Hub Outreach programme. Output and outcome targets have been agreed and a legal agreement is in place. A publicity visit is being arranged and the ESHO project will be presenting to the Cotswold Economic Advisory Group in November 2024 on progress to date.
	<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 Tristan Wilkinson Joseph Walker Paul James	On Target	Three projects funded by the REPF grant scheme for village halls have been completed and others are at various stages of delivery. The grant scheme is now closed.
	<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 Tristan Wilkinson Joseph Walker Chris Jackson	On Target	Three UKSPF funded projects are now underway; one to identify and promote businesses as Sustainability champions; one to encourage the development of new experiences; one to bring enhancements and new functionality to the tourism website ( <a href="http://www.cotswolds.com">www.cotswolds.com</a> )
		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 Tristan Wilkinson Joseph Walker Chris Jackson	On Target	Seven workstreams have been agreed by the partnership, each with an agreed action plan: these include two sustainability strands (one on transport & active travel, the other on business practices & biodiversity), business support and travel trade.
	<b>Work with local and county partners to grow a strong and sustainable economy</b>	Undertake a refresh of the Green Economic Strategy	Feb-24	Apr-24	Cllr Tristan Wilkinson Joseph Walker Paul James	On Target	A report was taken to Cabinet in October and a draft strategy approved for consultation. Consultation will begin once the call-in period has expired and new branding guidelines have been agreed.
		Continue to support the development of the Royal Agricultural University's Innovation Village	Jan-24	Jan-25	Cllr Tristan Wilkinson Joseph Walker Paul James	On Target	The outline planning application has been validated now and will work its way through the process. In parallel, officers and the cabinet member continue to work with the RAU on related issues, including funding opportunities.
		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 Tristan Wilkinson Joseph Walker Paul James	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. Outreach Navigators continue to work across the district and have held a number of events and discovery meetings at the Moreton Area Centre, which are being well-supported. The original Outreach Navigators both moved on to new opportunities but new ones have been recruited to ensure the output targets are met.

This page is intentionally left blank



# COTSWOLD

## District Council

COUNCIL PRIORITIES REPORT  
**July 2024 - September 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



## Executive Summary Highlights

- A closedown meeting was held with contractors to finalise the locations for the last eight cycle stands. The agreed final locations for the cycle stands are Cotswold Airport, Westonbirt Arboretum, and the Neighbbridge Car Park.
- Progress on delivering a safe crossing point on the Spine Road continues, with discussions and site meetings held with Gloucestershire County Council and Cotswold Lakes Trust to advance design options, alongside an agreement to fund the survey and design work using the remaining Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF).
- The Council have now entered into a contract with Connected Kerb for delivery of EVCPs in 4 Council owned car parks in Tetbury, Cirencester, Stow on the Wold and Moreton in Marsh respectively.
- The Cotswold Home Solar scheme, which helps residents understand their options, find reliable installers, and secure fair pricing, continues to be actively promoted, resulting in 17 homes already installing solar panels, 20 additional deposits placed, and anticipated savings of nearly £450,000 for residents across the district.
- The 'Cotswold Food Network' continues to thrive, bringing together over 30 partner organisations to support financial inclusion and food provision through Food Banks, Pantries, and Community Fridges.
- The Spring Round for Crowdfund Cotswold was successful, with five out of six supported projects exceeding their funding targets. In July, the Cabinet agreed to re-contract with Spacehive to continue the Crowdfund Cotswold program, enabling an autumn round that closed on 16<sup>th</sup> October.
- The Unsung Hero Awards scheme, created to honour volunteers across the district who selflessly dedicate their time to helping others, was launched in July. The inaugural awards were presented to the winners at the Full Council meeting in September.

## 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

Implementation of projects highlighted in the for the Water Park have continued to focus on making it easier for people to walk and cycle around the area, dispersing visitors more widely and enabling people to be more physically active.

Some unspent funds from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) were redirected to enable delivery of more new cycle stands, working alongside businesses and organisations with a focus on the Water Park Area. A closedown meeting was held with contractors to finalise the locations for the last eight cycle stands. Due to delays in receiving confirmation and necessary permissions from the Gloucestershire County Council Estate Manager, two libraries were unable to have the requested cycle stands installed. The agreed final locations for the cycle stands are Cotswold Airport, Westonbirt Arboretum, and the Neighbridge Car Park. Throughout the delivery of this project, a total of 78 new cycle stands have been installed across Cotswold Lakes and the surrounding area, creating opportunities for people to connect to key locations using sustainable and active travel.

The delivery of a safe crossing point on the Spine Road remains a priority and discussions and site meetings have been held with GCC and Cotswolds Lakes Trust to progress options for design detailing for a new crossing. Agreement has been reached to fund the survey and design work for the creation of a safe crossing of the Spine Road from the remaining Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF), which is a critical next step towards delivery. Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) has raised safety concerns regarding the condition of the existing brick bridge, which will need to be addressed separately. Ongoing discussions are necessary to secure confirmation of the commitment to delivery and to establish longer-term timelines.



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 Development Management Improvement Plan, initiated after the PAS report, is actively progressing with a focus on streamlining enforcement. Efforts to reduce the case backlog have been supported by the introduction of a "Harm Checklist" to prioritise cases more effectively. A new interactive digital form for submitting complaints, now live on the website, allows users to upload photos, map locations, and access clearer guidance on the enforcement process and timeframes. These enhancements help manage customer expectations and free up staff to focus on investigations. The next phase of the plan will refine case management to concentrate on high-priority cases, with a tracking system in development to boost transparency and responsiveness.



## Responding to the Climate Emergency

### The Context

We are operating under a new Labour government who made some important and positive commitments on tackling climate change in its manifesto including:

- Meeting the UK's internationally agreed target to reduce carbon emissions by over two-thirds by 2030.
- Giving local authorities more powers to deliver a fairer green transition through better public transport and local nature protection.
- Stop granting new oil and gas licences.
- Seriously amp up renewables by 2030, creating jobs and cutting bills.

### Actions we are taking

The Council's Climate Emergency Strategy of September 2020 identified the Council's different spheres of influence over carbon emissions. These range from emissions under the council's control (for example emissions produced from its own operations) through to those it can have an influence over by enabling District-wide climate mitigation action.

### 'Direct Control' actions

The Council's Climate Emergency Strategy of September 2020 contained a target to make emissions from the Council's own operations net-zero carbon as soon as possible, aiming for an 80% reduction by 2030 against a 1990 baseline, and a 100% reduction by 2045. A new need to comply with the GHG Protocol standards for emissions reporting has prompted a carbon emissions accounting review, and once this has been completed an updated report of progress against the net zero target will be carried out. In tandem a number of activities to reduce council carbon emissions are being carried out. Solar PV has been installed on CDC Council offices at Trinity Road. A business case has been agreed and an offer has been made to New Brewery Arts for the provision of solar PV too. Works will proceed swiftly if they agree to the proposal. Four dual electric vehicle charge points installed in the Trinity Road car park are fully operational, providing accessible charging facilities for staff (and the wider public). UK government grant funding is being sought to enable decarbonisation works across the CDC built estate and Ubico have been instructed to produce a profile of costs associated with waste fleet decarbonisation.

## **'Indirect Control' actions**

Work is progressing with preparing the climate change policies of the partial update of the adopted Local Plan for a final stage of public consultation, ahead of submitting the updated policies to the Secretary of State for examination in public. This work has included consideration of feedback to the previous public consultation on the draft Local Plan, and taking on-board the findings of evidence base studies that inform the policy updates.

## **'Place Shaping' actions**

The Council is working to provide residents without off-street parking with EV charging facilities to enable the uptake of EVs across the District. Plans to install electric vehicle charge points in Council-owned carparks have progressed. The Council have now entered into a contract with Connected Kerb for delivery of EVCPs in 4 Council owned car parks in Tetbury, Cirencester, Stow on the Wold and Moreton in Marsh respectively. The Portfolio Holder and officers also met with Government representatives to make a case for extending EVCP delivery and funding into 2025/26 to enable more EVCPs to be delivered on sites that have constraints and cannot be delivered in the current March 2025 grant timeframe.

The Council is also working to enable residents to install solar PV by helping them to understand their options, find a reliable installer and secure a fair price through the Cotswold Home Solar scheme. The scheme continues to be promoted and delivered. As a result of the scheme 17 homes have already installed solar panels, 20 have paid a deposit and residents are on track to save nearly £450,000 across the district.

Low carbon retrofit of the District's domestic building stock is an essential component of national emissions reduction but remains a huge challenge. The Council has reached a significant milestone however having recruited a Retrofit Engagement Officer to tackle this challenge. External funding for this post has been secured for 1 year. The Officer is tasked with engaging circa 800 households with EPC D or below to retrofit their homes to lower both running costs and carbon emissions. This forms part of a Gloucestershire wide programme of work on retrofit. Cotswold District Council is contributing to the development of a Gloucestershire-wide retrofit support offer through the Climate Leadership Gloucestershire (CLG) partnership. A contractor has now been procured to carry out this work.

The Council is working in partnership with other Gloucestershire-based councils to create a Local Area Energy Plan which is vital to enabling net zero within Cotswold District since it is needed to build the case to District Network Operators for investment and expansion in electricity grid infrastructure.

Work also continues through Climate Leadership Gloucestershire on delivering the Statement of Shared Intent (SoSI) in which all seven local authorities expressed an ambition to reduce surface transport emissions by 80% by 2030 and to reach net zero by 2050. A policy workshop was held recently regarding development of an EV taxi policy.

## **'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 staff to residents and from businesses to public sector bodies. We regularly run communication engagement campaigns to encourage behaviour change amongst District stakeholders. For example in September we ran a wear-not-waste campaign to reduce clothing waste.

We continue to provide funding for a business net zero engagement support programme. We have also relaunched Crowdfund Cotswolds which supports and enables local communities to invest in carbon reduction technology and activity. Carbon literacy training continues to be rolled out to staff and councillors. We have also developed a web resource to communicate to all stakeholders on the work of the council regards climate change.

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



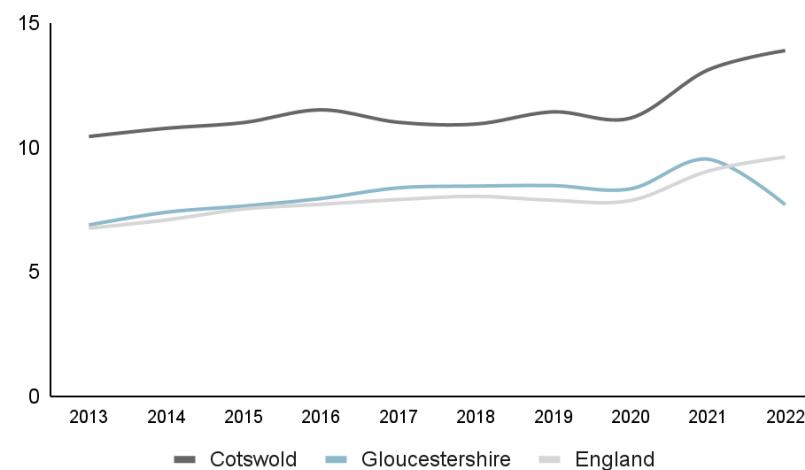
### The Context

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.

Ratio of median house price to median gross annual residence-based earnings



## 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.

The partnership with Bromford to deliver carbon zero affordable homes at a site in Down Ampney is progressing well. The proposal includes a vacant plot owned by CDC and a neighbouring site which has domestic garages on it, which is owned by Bromford. The plans for 13 homes was submitted for planning consent at the end of May and will go to Committee in October 2024. The homes will be owned by Bromford and offer social rents. The carbon efficiency of these dwelling means tenants will have low utility bills, with electricity generated by the roof mounted Solar PV.

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. In response, the Council issued a 'Call for Interest' in early March to attract a new partner capable of securing funding and development proposals. Following a review of opportunities and future options, a report was presented to Cabinet in July, which agreed to dispose of the Old Station and Memorial Cottages as separate assets in accordance with the Asset Management Strategy adopted by Cabinet in May 2024. The properties are now being marketed for sale. Meanwhile, work to rebuild the unstable rear wall to the old station is nearing completion.



## 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.

Five projects out of six supported hit and in fact exceeded their funding targets from the spring round of Crowdfund Cotswold, making it a particularly successful round. Cabinet agreed in July to re-contract with Spacehive to continue the Crowdfund Cotswold programme, enabling an autumn round currently underway, closing 16 October.

Funding for the Holiday Activity and Food programme potentially draws to an end, early next year. Therefore, we have secured £50K funding through the Strengthening Local Communities fund, to offer 12 – 14 events, throughout 2025, equally distributed between the south and the north of the district. These

events will offer activities for all children to enjoy, during each school holiday, offering information from key support organisations for all ages, and providing food during the events.

We will be offering a forum for all ages to share their thoughts on what's good and what could be better, in their communities. Using the Asset Based Community Development model, we will work with local community champions in each area to target needs of each community. 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. To date, 11 new champions have been trained with 7 existing champions fully trained while 17 are awaiting further training. GDASS continue to offer a large number of training dates, attended online, with an aim to train employees at Cotswold in the early stages of planning.

Cotswold have re launched, in conjunction with the Police, the 'Safe Places' scheme. So far, we have at least 18 venues, in Cirencester and 10 in Bourton on the Water, signed up to offer a safe place to anyone feeling vulnerable or in danger. The Police Cadets will take on visiting Tetbury, Lechlade and Fairford during the summer to sign up cafes, pubs, etc, who want to offer a safe place during daytime and evenings. Each place will be listed on the Safe Places app <https://www.safeplaces.org.uk/> which can be downloaded, and will provide your nearest safe venue wherever you are, organisations will also display a Safe Places sticker in the window.

The 'Cotswold Food Network' continues to thrive and grow (no pun intended!), encompassing financial inclusion, food provision, via Food Banks, Pantries and Community Fridges, and gleaning (taking learning from Stroud's pilot) amongst it's work. 30 plus partner organisations are joining us regularly to feed into this work, share the support they can and do give already, and stay eager to increase their support in areas of need, where possible. Due to the changes at Feeding Gloucestershire, we now work independently with Lizzie Dyer, this change has had little effect on the positive work we're doing together, although there has been a slight change to our budget plans we're still on track to present the original offer of work, and small grants.

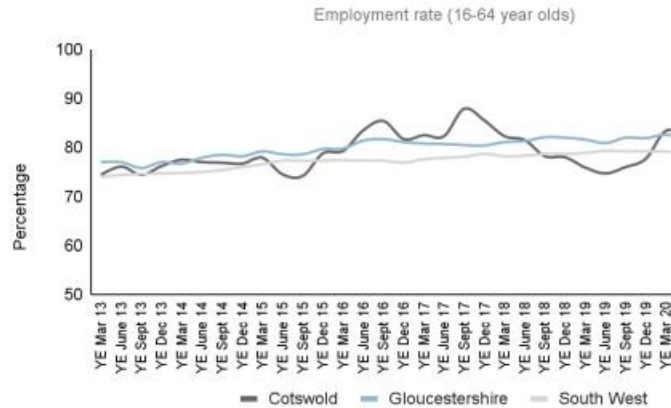


## Supporting the Economy

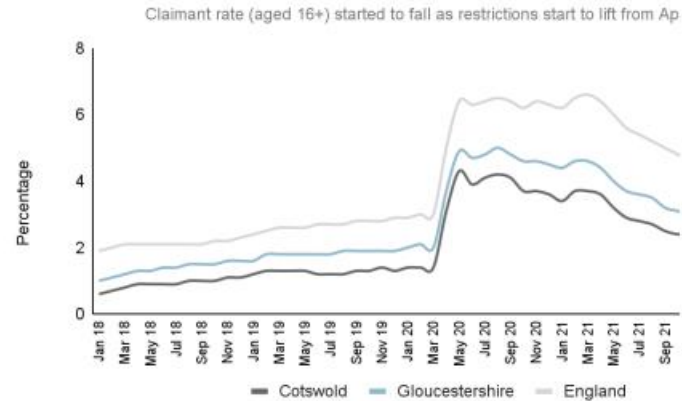


### The Context

The District supports an economically active population of an estimated 42,600 and has strengths in finance and business services, ICT including science and technology, retail, and accommodation and food services. Around 90% of businesses are micro businesses 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 2% - the lowest in the county, but still slightly above the pre-pandemic level. The national and global economies have faced further uncertainty as a result of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and sharply rising prices, particularly for energy and fuel, which continues to impact on disposable income and living standards. Although energy and fuel costs, and the overall inflation rate, have dropped back, they are still significantly higher than prior to the invasion.



Source: ONS, Annual Population Survey



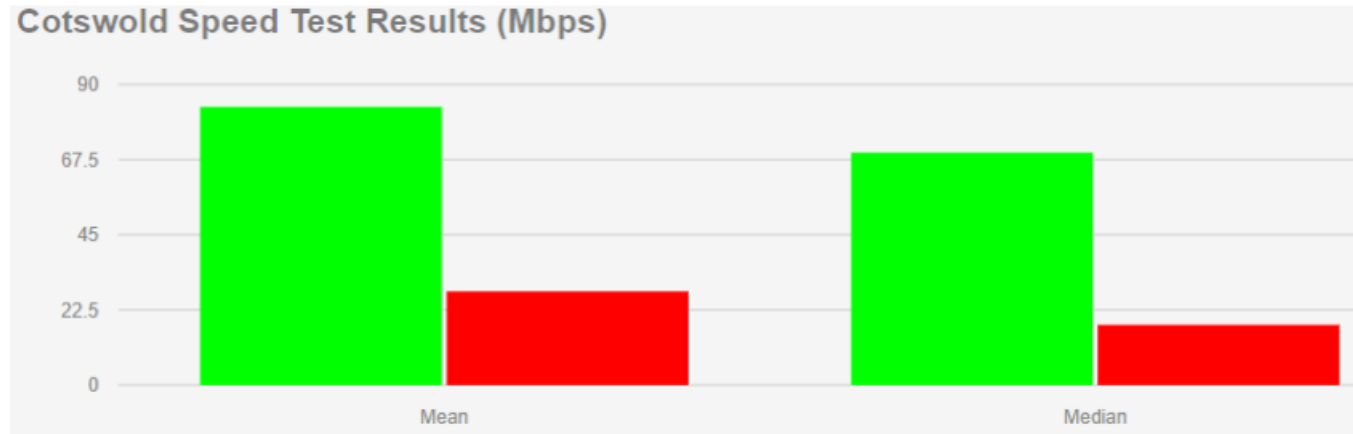
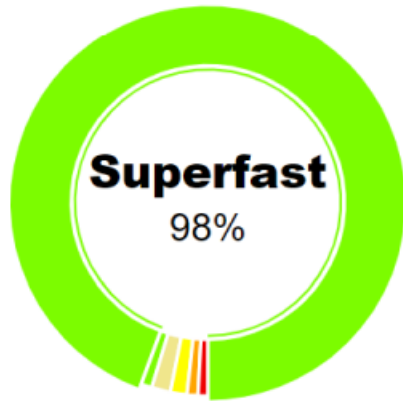
Source: ONS, Crown Copyright Reserved (Nomis)

Overall, businesses within the visitor economy report substantial progress compared to 2023 levels and express a relatively positive outlook for the key peak season, though they are eager for improved weather conditions. This optimism is mirrored on a national scale, where VisitEngland's sentiment tracker indicates generally favourable trends. Key barriers to UK holidays have decreased: the rising cost of living has decreased by 3% (from 35% to 33%), personal finances by 5% (from 28% to 23%), and the rising cost of holidays and leisure by 3% (from 25% to 22%). The only significant barrier to experience an increase is the UK weather, which rose by 1% (from 30% to 31%).

The number of job postings remains high, reflecting continuing challenges in recruitment, but has fallen back from its 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 first phase of the scheme started in the Forest of Dean but is likely to be extended to the qualifying households in the Cotswold district towards the end of the year. 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 1.5% 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 was taken to Cabinet on 3rd October and approved for consultation. A final version will come back to Cabinet in the New Year for adoption. The draft strategy has been informed by the new Gloucestershire Economic Strategy, which was approved by the County Council's Cabinet in May and was noted by the new City Region Board in September 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 Core to Cloud, a cyber security business in

Cirencester, and received a presentation about the company's operations and plans for the future, as well looking in detail at the draft of the refreshed Green Economic Growth Strategy.

In 2022, the Council was awarded £1 million over three years from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) for the period 2022-23 to 2024-25. The Council's Local Investment Plan, which sets out how the Council proposes to use the money, was approved by the government in early December 2022. The fund has three themes – Community and Place, Supporting Local Business and, in year three, People and Skills. Year one projects have been 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 Navigators for the outreach programme have been using 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 and a second event in June covered the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in marketing. 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. An open application process for the remaining funding closed on 17th May and the Assessment Panel met in June, making recommendations to the Chief Executive and Cabinet Member. Projects to be funded include a walking app for Chipping Campden, improvements to the sheds for Men in Sheds and the Youtopia youth project by World Jungle.

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. Six grants for village halls have been approved and a further round of applications closed on 12th July and were taken to the panel in September. A decision notice for the successful applications has been published and can now move to the delivery stage. A number of active travel and community and heritage buildings applications have been approved.

Town centres are crucial, both economically and for civic pride. The number of vacant retail units in town centres serves as an indicator of their health and reflects the Council's efforts to support their recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. A survey conducted in August 2021 revealed that Cirencester had a

town centre vacancy rate of 11%, which was three percentage points below the national average. This rate improved to just under 6% in April 2022 and to just under 5% in October 2022. At the end of September 2024, the vacancy rate stood at 4.8%, with several of the remaining units either under offer or undergoing refurbishment. Notably, the former House of Fraser in the Market Place, which was the longest-standing vacant building, has now been leased to the Grace Network. Renovations are underway, and the building is expected to be occupied later this year. In the smaller towns within the District, vacancy rates are generally low, though even a few vacancies can significantly impact percentages. Currently, there are no concerns, but we remain vigilant about the pace of high street changes and the potential effects of the cost of living crisis. We will continue to monitor these developments closely. Additionally, the conversion of retail spaces to residential use in smaller towns is a concern as it may impact the town's 'critical mass' and its ability to attract visitors.

The Cotswolds.com website run the tourism team is firmly established as the leading site for the Cotswolds, no1 on Google with 1.6 million users and 3.8 million views in the last 12 months. However constant updating and improvements are needed to maintain and improve on this position. To this end, Cotswolds Tourism has successfully bid for two separate funding pots: UKSPF funding for website enhancements and via the Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) a Visit England grant for asset creation.

The Asset Creation Grant has allowed us to commission new imagery for the website and the UKSPF funding has allowed us to invest in a visual refresh for the website and additional functionality. The new functionality will include a microsite builder allowing better promotion of key strategic priorities, such as sustainability and accessibility, and give us the ability to better highlight niche and specialist interests and activities. Behind the scenes work has started and the improvements will go live at the end of the summer.

Other UKSPF funding has been secured to create Sustainability Champions and for Help to Thrive. The Sustainability Champions have been chosen to represent all areas of the visitor economy and businesses at very different stages on their sustainability journey. They will act as exemplars for other similar businesses as part of our efforts to encourage more sustainable business practices with the visitor economy. The Help to Thrive project is two pronged, helping businesses – and not necessarily businesses that would traditionally be thought of visitor economy businesses - to create new experiences that will appeal to visitors; the second prong is looking at helping businesses understand the best ways to get these new (or any existing experiences) to a wider audience via digital marketing and working with the group and trade market.:

Cotswolds Tourism operates as a membership organisation with all marketing paid for by the income generated. Membership currently stands at 418 businesses and income generated in the last year at £100k. The main marketing tools are the Cotswolds.com website and the Cotswolds Tourism social media channels that now have over 160k followers. With the new membership manager in post we have also restarted networking events and were delighted to see a total over 150 businesses signed up to the first two events.

The Cotswolds Plus LVEP, working across the wider area and led by Cotswolds Tourism, is now firmly established with a seven workstreams and associated action plans agreed: these include two covering Sustainability (public transport & active travel; business practices & bio-diversity), Business Support, Data & Research, Travel Trade, Accessibility & Inclusion, Skills & Training.

As part of the national promotion of the new tourism structure, Visit England organised a parliamentary drop-in session for Local Visitor Economy Partnerships at the Houses of Parliament, which Cotswolds Tourism attended. Unfortunately, this session coincided with the announcement of the recent general election.

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 Innovation Village project. The Council's Chief Executive, the Cabinet Member for the Economy and Transformation, the Business Manager for Economic Growth and Prosperity and the Economic Development Lead held a number of meetings with the then new Vice Chancellor, Chief Operating Officer and Director of External Relations at the RAU, encouraging them to be ambitious with their plans for the Triangle/University Gate site. The RAU came 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 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 a two-year period. 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 and has now been validated. (Ref: 24/01143/OUT).
- 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 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.
- The Fire Service College/Capita regarding the potential for a wider Centre for National Resilience at Moreton-in-Marsh.

The Applied Digital Skills Centre at Cirencester College was officially launched at an event held in May 2022. The centre gives 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 advancing with the more visible phases of activity. Recently a site visit took place for councillors, officers, relevant parish councils and members of the Cotswold Economic Advisory Group to visit the site and receive a presentation on progress.

This page is intentionally left blank





# COTSWOLD

District Council

Delivering great services locally

PERFORMANCE REPORT:

**July 2024 - September 2024**

# Summary Index

Area	KPI Name	RAG	Page
Revenues, Benefits and Housing	<a href="#">Percentage of Council Tax Collected</a>	Green	6
	<a href="#">Percentage of Non Domestic Rates collected</a>	Orange	7
	<a href="#">Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims</a>	Orange	8
	<a href="#">Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events</a>	Green	9
	<a href="#">Processing times for Housing Benefit Change of Circumstances</a>	Orange	10
	<a href="#">Percentage of Housing Benefit overpayment due to LA error/admin delay</a>	Orange	11
	<a href="#">(Snapshot) Long Term Empty Properties</a>	Grey	12
	<a href="#">(Snapshot) Number of households in B&amp;B/hotel-type accommodation &amp; Hostels (LA owned or managed); and Number of successful 'Move On' into suitable independent/long-term accommodation from B&amp;Bs/hotels/hostels</a>	Grey	13
Customer Experience	<a href="#">Customer Satisfaction - Telephone</a>	Green	14
	<a href="#">Customer Satisfaction - Email</a>	Grey	15
	<a href="#">Customer Satisfaction - Face to Face</a>	Green	16

# Summary Index

Area	KPI Name	RAG	Page
Customer Experience	<a href="#">Customer Call Handling - Average Waiting Time</a>	Grey	17
	<a href="#">Complaints</a>	Grey	18
	<a href="#">Percentage of FOI requests answered within 20 days</a>	Green	20
Development Management and Land Charges	<a href="#">Building Control Satisfaction</a>	Green	21
	<a href="#">Percentage of major planning applications determined within agreed timescales (including AEOT)</a>	Green	22
	<a href="#">Percentage of minor planning applications determined within agreed timescales (including AEOT)</a>	Green	23
	<a href="#">Percentage of other planning applications determined within agreed timescales (including AEOT)</a>	Green	24
	<a href="#">Total Income achieved in Planning &amp; Income from Pre-application advice</a>	Green	25
	<a href="#">Percentage of Planning Appeals Allowed</a>	Green	26
	<a href="#">(Snapshot) Planning Enforcement Cases</a>	Grey	27
	<a href="#">Percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days</a>	Green	28
	<a href="#">Number of affordable homes delivered</a>	Red	29

# 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>		30
	<a href="#">Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales</a>		31
	<a href="#">% High risk notifications risk assessed within 1 working day</a>		32
	<a href="#">Percentage of household waste recycled</a>		33
	<a href="#">Residual Household Waste per Household (kg)</a>		34
	<a href="#">Missed bins per 100,000</a>		35
Leisure	<a href="#">Number of visits to the leisure centres &amp; (Snapshot) Number of gym memberships</a>		36

## 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.

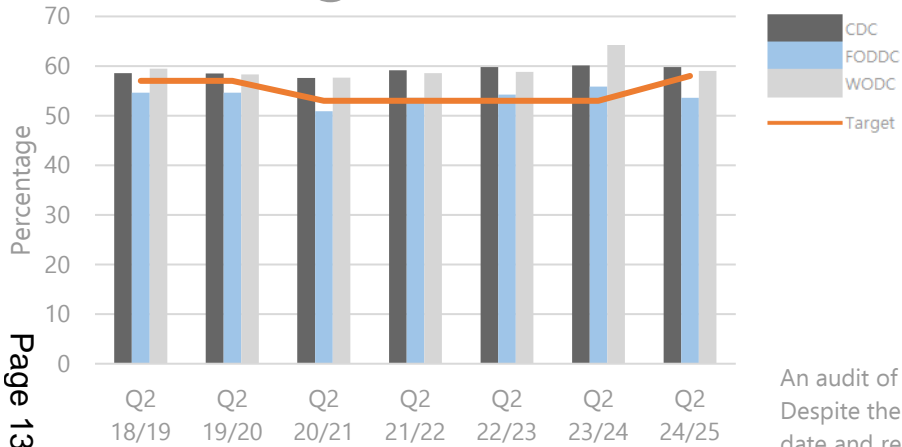
A RAG (red, amber, green) status has been applied to each KPI to provide a quick visual summary of the status of that KPI for the quarter. Additionally, RAG status has been added to the direction of travel for each metric to show how the performance against last quarter and the same quarter compared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

# Overall Performance


Overall, the Council's performance for the quarter has been largely positive, highlighted by progress in responding to Freedom of Information requests within 20 days, conducting timely inspections of high-risk food premises and strong gym membership numbers. Customer Satisfaction and Planning Determination Times continue to be strong. However, the number of missed bins per 100,000 collections and the number of affordable homes delivered are showing a negative trend.

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 Year   
Slightly decreased since last year

## Q2 – Higher is Good

Target **58%**  
Actual **59.81%**

Page 134

### 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 Council Tax Services found a significant accumulation of arrears during the pandemic. Despite the temporary suspension of recovery efforts, they have resumed, bringing the cycle up to date and reporting progress on the previous year's debt collection. The table below shows the percentage of aged debt collected and the total outstanding:

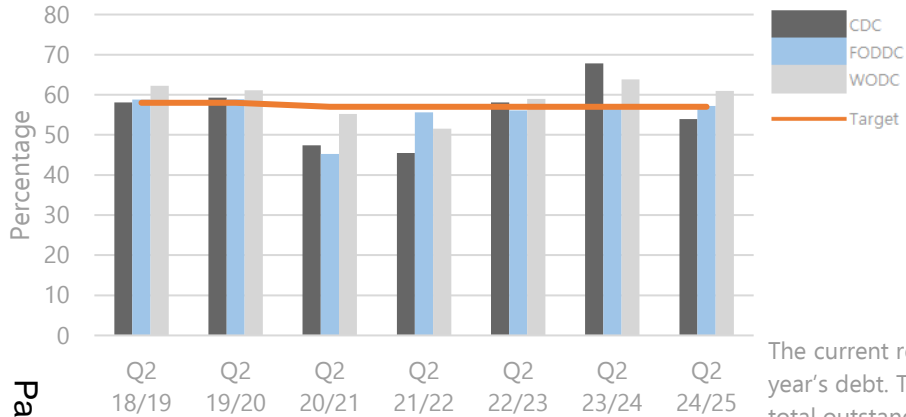
	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	Total Outstanding
<b>Balance at Quarter End</b>	£515,066.77	£740,439.73	£831,229.20	£1,298,767.08	£3,385,502.78
<b>% collected</b>	11.08%	14.82%	16.50%	26.29%	

By March 2024, authorities in England had collected £38.5 billion in council tax for 2023-24, along with an additional £907 million in aged debt. They achieved an average in-year collection rate of 95.9%, marking a 0.1 percentage point decrease from 2022-23 (source: [gov.uk](https://gov.uk)).


By the end of Q2, the Council observed a slight decrease of 0.32% in the amount collected compared to the same period last year. Despite this, the collection rates have surpassed pre-pandemic levels for the same period by around 1.3%.

The service recently conducted an intensive review, leading to the implementation of dashboards that have streamlined operations and improved efficiency. This project is ongoing, with the current focus on further enhancing the service through collaboration with Customer Service to identify additional areas for improvement.

# Percentage of Non-domestic rates collected



## Direction of Travel

Against last Year   
Decreased since last year

**Q2 – Higher is Good**

Target **57%**  
Actual **53.96%**

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	2023-2024	Total Outstanding
Balance at Quarter End	£124,942.44	£247,215.25	£311,107.25	£433,157.72	£1,116,422.66
% collected	8.76%	15.50%	12.98%	56.94%	

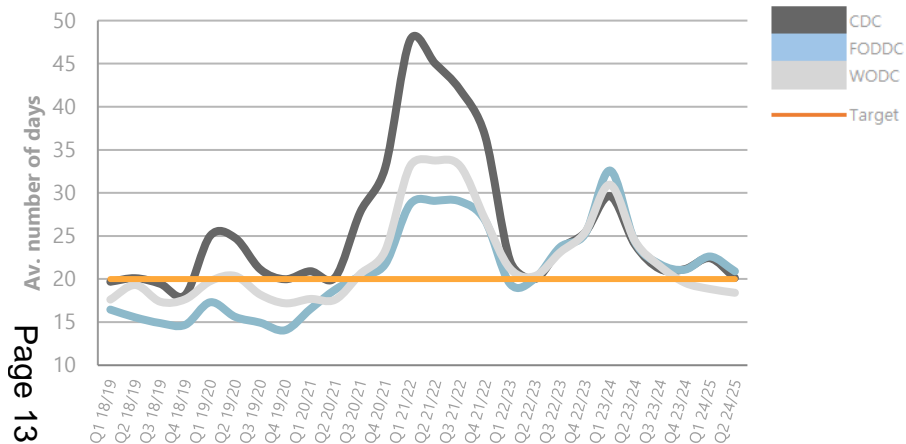
Page 35  
How do we compare?  
Benchmarking via Gov.uk Tables and Individual Council Websites using CIPFA Nearest Neighbours - Latest dataset is 2023-24 Collection Rates

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


During Q2, the Council observed a decrease of approximately 14% in collections compared to the same period last year. Although this decline is significant, last year's collection figures were unusually high due to a substantial payment for previous years' arrears, which was credited to the 2023-24 collections. This was a result of pending adjustments and revaluations by the Valuation Office, which temporarily inflated last year's collection rate. Despite this anomaly, the Council's current collection rate remains 4.1% below pre-pandemic levels. However, all in-year recovery processes are on schedule and up to date.

# Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims



## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Improved since last quarter and last year

Q2 – Lower is Good

Target

20

Actual

20.13

## 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%	1/12
Lichfield	5,191	6.09%	9/12
Wychavon	6,733	1.52%	12/12

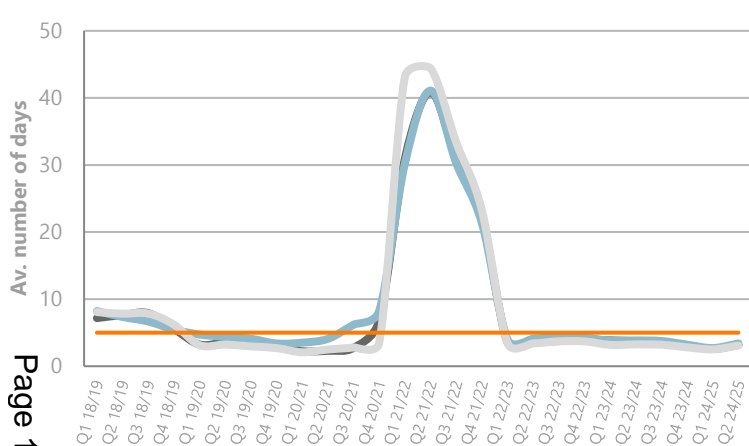
During Q2, the cumulative average processing time for new Council Tax Support (CTS) claims was 17.61 days, well within the 20-day target and a decrease of around 4 days compared to the same period last year.

In September, system errors related to automation caused a backlog, resulting in longer processing times for new claims. The Council is actively working with partners to resolve these issues and ensure timely support for residents.

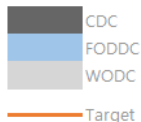
A consultation on proposed changes to the Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme is planned for the upcoming quarter.




# Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events



Page 137



## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Increased since last quarter but improved since last year

Q2 – Lower is Good

Target

5

Actual

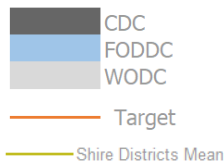
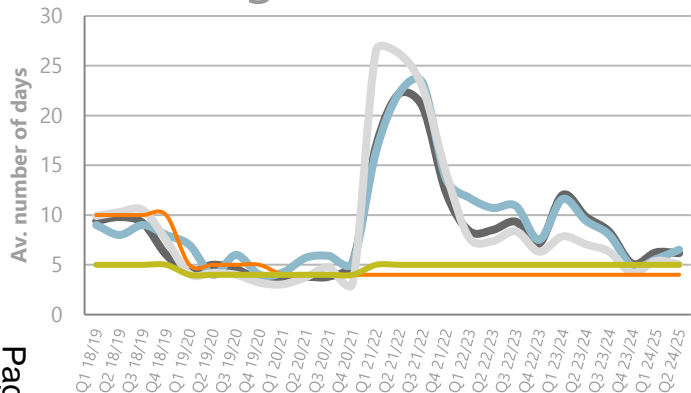
3.16

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

## Q2 – Lower is Good

Target

4

Actual

6.17

Page 138

How do we compare?

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

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

During Q2, processing times for Housing Benefit (HB) changes continued to decrease. Although the Council is currently above the target, there has been an improvement compared to the same period last year, with processing times reducing by approximately 4 days.

It should be noted that the number of expected changes affecting Housing Benefit (HB) is reducing significantly, as can be seen by comparing the number of HB changes assessed to the number of Council Tax Support (CTS) changes assessed. The decrease in HB changes received amplifies the impact of delays in assessing an application due to outstanding evidence required for average processing days.

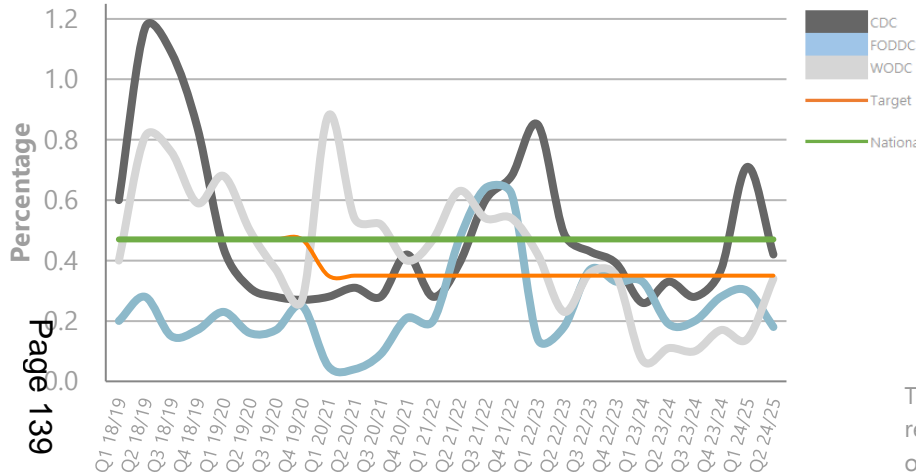
HB Changes – 640  
CTS Changes – 2,969

The managed migration of HB to Universal Credit commenced in April, with some minor glitches reported in the system. While the migration was planned in stages, some phases have been accelerated, which may further decrease the number of changes received but could potentially increase processing times.


### Q3 2023-24 Benchmark


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

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



## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Improved since last quarter and last year

## Q2 – Lower is Good

Target 0.35%

Actual 0.42%

The Council's overpayment percentage has now fallen below the national target but remains slightly above the stricter internal service target following a significant overpayment identified by officers in Q1. The overpayment percentage continues to decrease steadily each week and is projected to fall below the service target by next quarter.

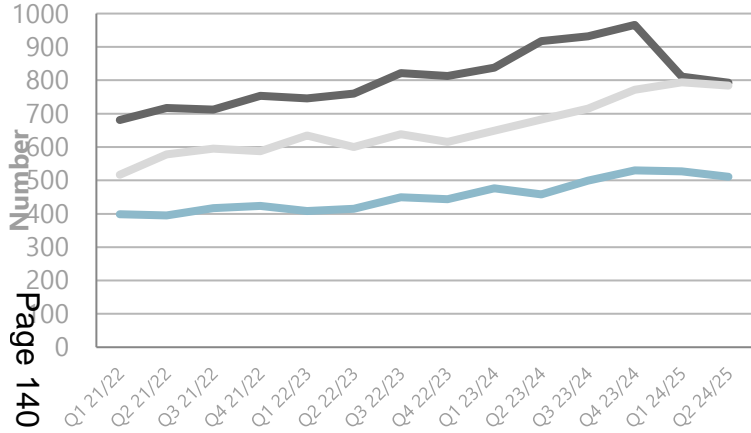
The service is mindful of the impact of increased workloads on delays to processing HB changes which could impact on HB subsidy.

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

Against last Quarter 

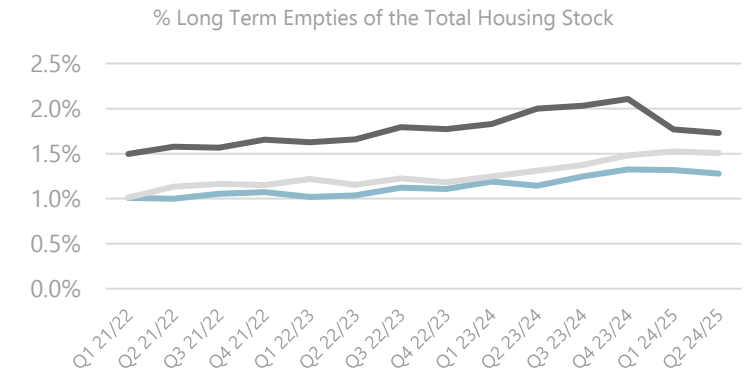
Against last Year 

Decreased since last quarter and last year

**Q2 – Lower is Good**

*No Target*

793



Properties continue to be added and removed from the list, and while the graph indicates an upward trend in properties over the past few years, the Council has observed a decrease in long-term empty properties on their lists during the past quarter.

The service reports that properties remain on the long-term empty (LTE) list for extended periods. To address this, a range of initiatives is being implemented to understand the reasons properties are entering the list, which will facilitate better management and reduction of these cases. Additionally, efforts are being made to ensure that data is up to date, allowing for the correct levy to be applied and charged for these properties. Furthermore, the service has appointed a dedicated, experienced Long Term Empties Officer to proactively accelerate the reintegration of these properties into the housing stock.

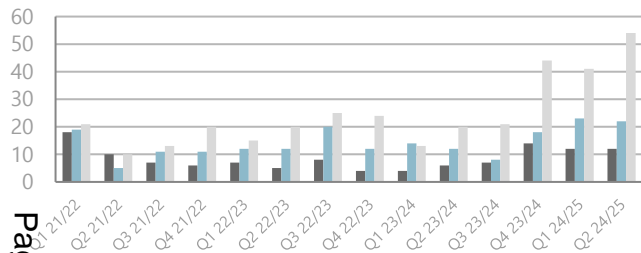
### How do we compare?

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

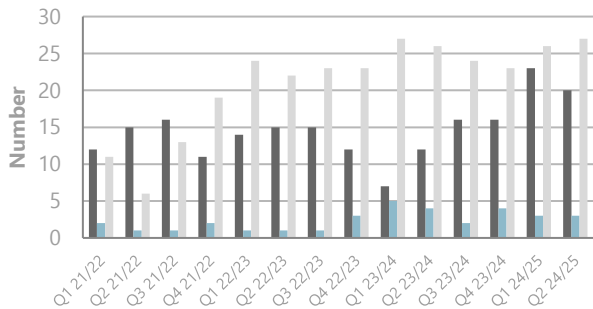
# (Snapshot) Number of households in B&B/hotel-type accommodation & Hostels (LA owned or managed); and Number of successful 'Move On' into suitable independent/long-term accommodation from B&Bs/hotels/hostels



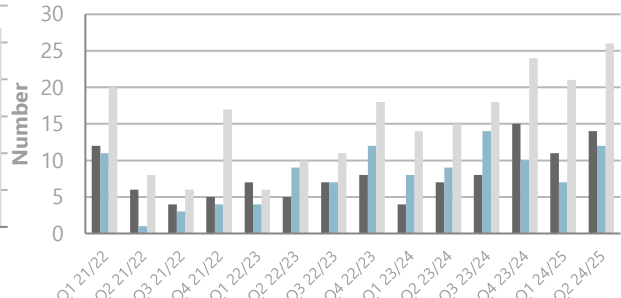
### Households in B&B/hotel type accommodation



### Households in hostels



### Successful 'Move on' into suitable independent/LT accommodation



## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter	B&B/Hotels	➔
Against last Year	B&B/Hotels	⬆
Against last Quarter	Hostels	⬇
Against last Year	Hostels	⬆
Against last Quarter	Move Ons	⬆
Against last Year	Move Ons	⬆

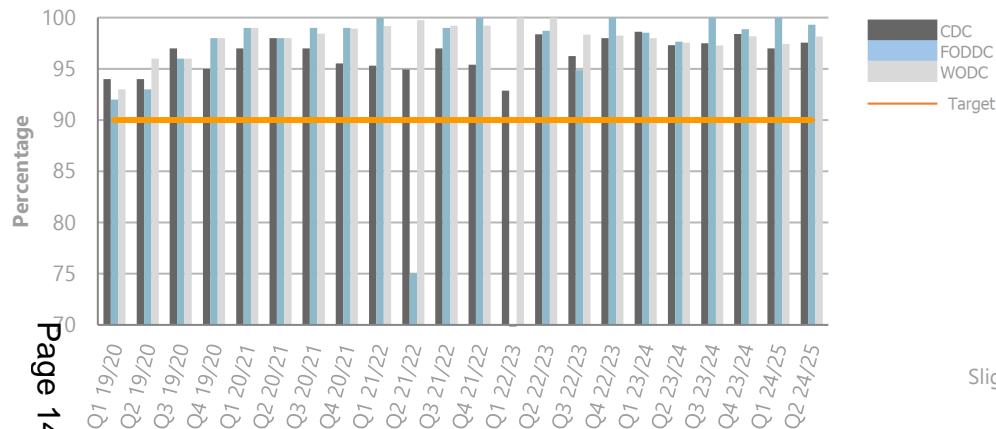
Homelessness remains a significant issue in Cotswold. Although the number of individuals in temporary accommodation has stabilised, it remains higher than at this time last year. The situation is complicated by several factors, including full hostels, reduced availability in adult homelessness pathways, and a shortage of affordable housing options outside the social rented sector.

The team remains dedicated to preventing homelessness and has successfully averted homelessness for 102 households over Q1 and Q2. This includes 69 cases within the statutory 56-day period and 33 cases addressed before statutory duties were triggered. It's important to note that these figures are approximations and have not yet been officially confirmed through the government reporting system.

How do we compare?


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

# Customer Satisfaction - Telephone



## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Slightly improved since last quarter and last year

**Q2 - Higher is Good**

Target

90%

Actual

97.55%

## How do we compare?

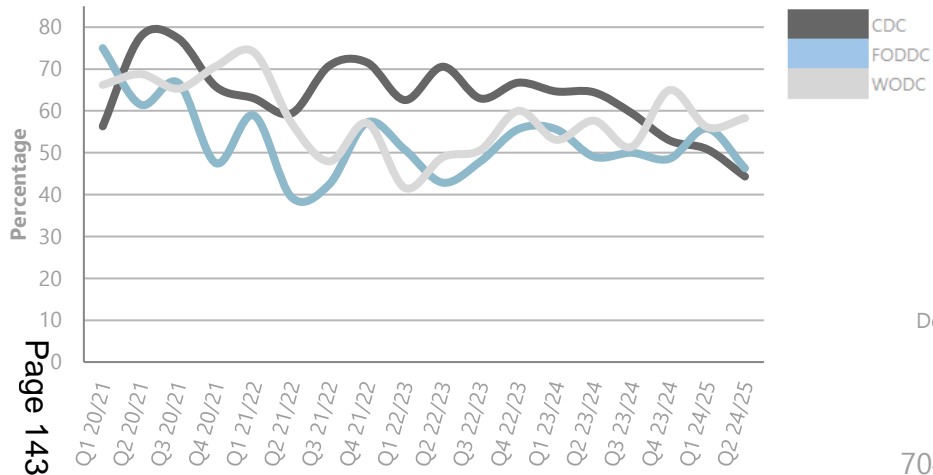
The Govmetric Channel Satisfaction Index is a monthly publication of the top performing councils across the core customer access channels. At least 100 customers need to be transferred to the survey to be included in the league table so even if satisfaction is high, it may not be included i.e. Forest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

	July Rank	July Net Sat.	Aug Rank	Aug Net Sat.	Sept Rank	Sept Net Sat.
Cotswold	4	94%	2	97%	TBC	TBC
Forest	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	TBC	TBC
West	1	96%	1	99%	TBC	TBC

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




Page 143



## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Declined since last quarter and last year

**Q2 - Higher is Good**

*No Target*

**44.32%**

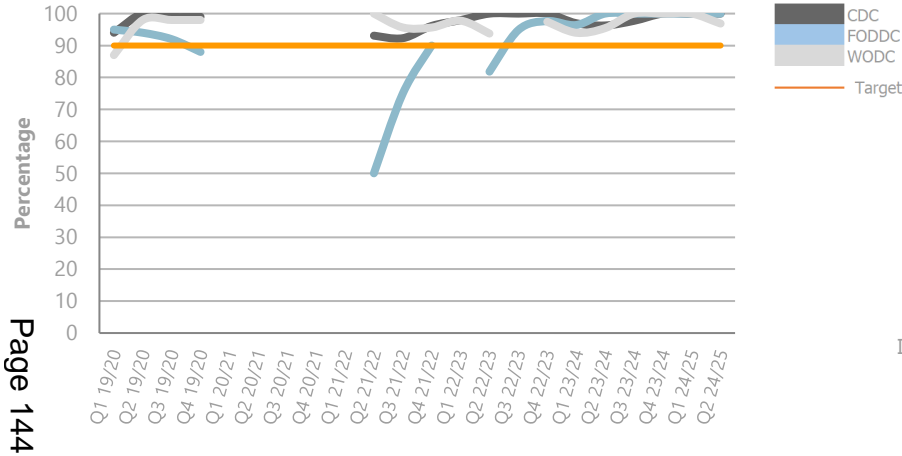
704 residents responded to the survey, of which 312 were satisfied. This equates to a rate of 44.32% satisfaction for the quarter, down from 50.83% during Q1.

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


A piece of work was undertaken to review the responses from the email surveys due to the more negative responses. Upon review, it appears to be dissatisfaction surrounding service failure such as missed bins, container deliveries, responses from Planning or Housing etc. System and process improvements by the individual services are being implemented, which may affect these figures in the future.


How do we compare?  
*Benchmarking currently not available. The Data & Performance Team will investigate options.*

# Customer Satisfaction - Face to Face



## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Increased since last year and stayed the same since last quarter

**Q2 - Higher is Good**

Target	90%
Actual	100%

Customer Satisfaction from face to face interactions continues to be high, with a 100% satisfaction rate for the quarter, with all 15 individuals surveyed satisfied with the service.

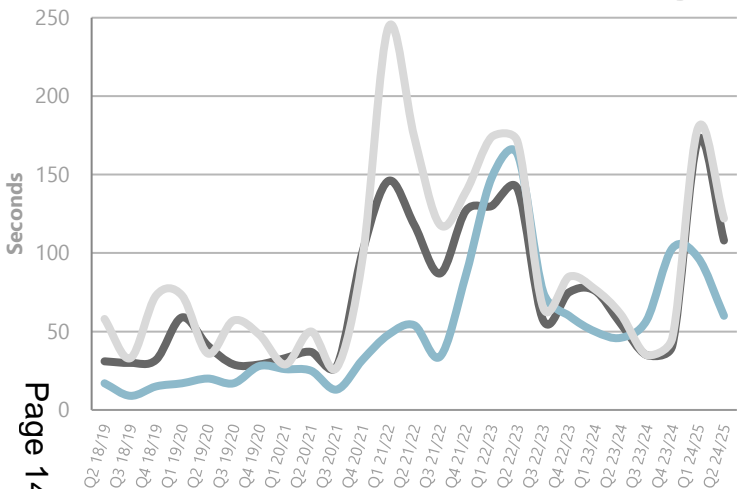
How do we compare?

*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



Page 145

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 and last year

**Q2 - Lower is Good**

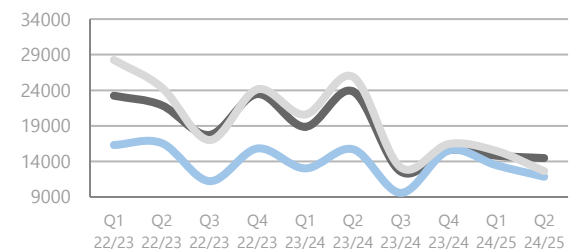
*No Target*

108 Seconds

Average wait times at the Council have reduced during Q2 by around a minute, though they remain higher than this time last year, with an increase of roughly one minute. The service faced several challenges this quarter, including a rise in calls related to the reorganisation of waste collection rounds and issues arising from the general election and the annual canvass. While vacancies persist within the team, recent recruitment efforts have filled some positions, including two temporary hires to support the waste collection reorganisation. Despite these challenges, the team remains active in improvement projects to enhance efficiency and service delivery.

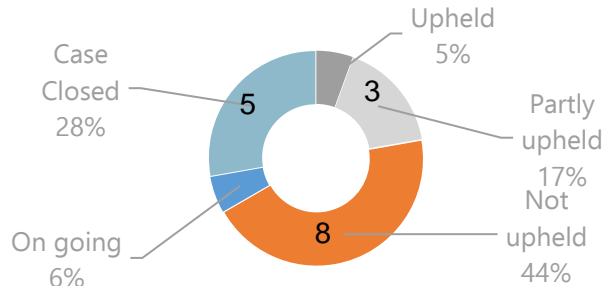
The Council saw a decline of around 9,000 calls compared to the same period the previous year, as depicted in the chart to the right. This data reflects an overarching trend of lower call numbers over time, a trajectory expected to persist owing to sustained initiatives in Channel Choice, aimed at fostering 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 1

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

*No Target*

Steady since last quarter and last year

Page 146

How do we compare?

The table outlines the complaints received by the Ombudsman over the period, the decisions made on these cases, and the Council's compliance with any recommendations issued by the Ombudsman during this time.

Complaints received by the Ombudsman reflect cases where customers, having completed the Council's complaint process (see to the right), feel that the Council has not satisfactorily resolved the matter.

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 Q1, the Council experienced a slight decrease in the 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.

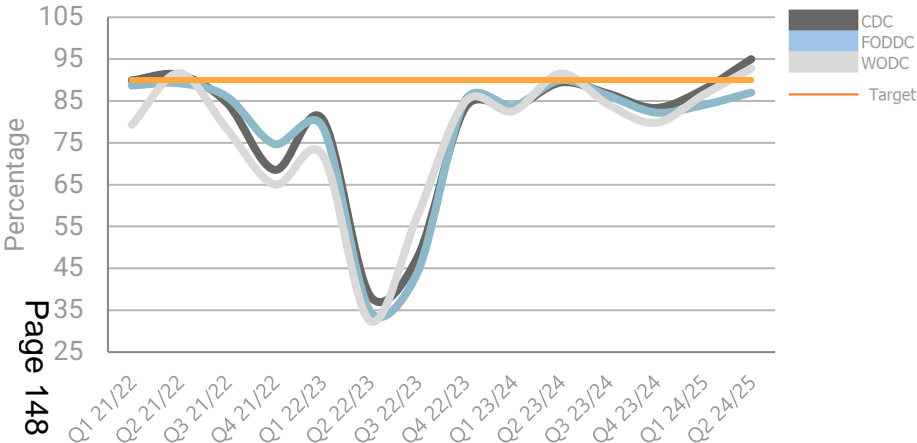
The new process has the following stages:

- 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)
Housing	Despite documentation being provided there was a delay in processing claim.	Retraining provided to ensure all Officers understand the necessary processes.	Upheld	10
Housing	Upset by length of time to process a claim and also lack of acknowledgement from officers.	The Housing Team have been reminded of the complaints process and been given additional training on when and how to correctly log a complaint.	Partly Upheld	9
Housing	Upset that he was not offered travelodge accommodation whilst waiting for a potential house. Repeated aggressive interactions with officers.	The staff member had also apologised and undertaken retraining on how to deal with difficult conversations.	Partly Upheld	10
Revenues and Benefits	Customer was upset at potential breach in GDPR and also that their CTSR was cancelled.	Apology given to customer.	Partly Upheld	7

# Percentage of FOI requests answered within 20 days



## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

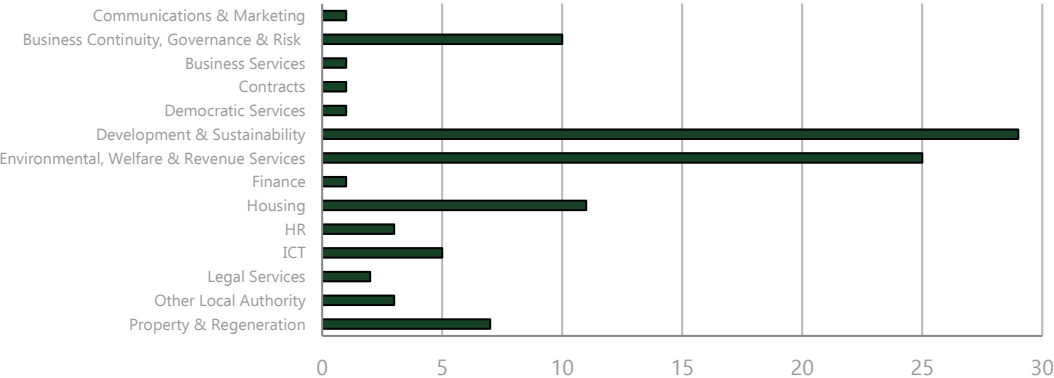
Against last Year

Improved since last quarter and last year

## Q2 - Higher is Good

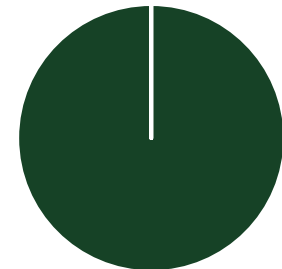
Target	90%
Actual	95%

## Requests by Service Area



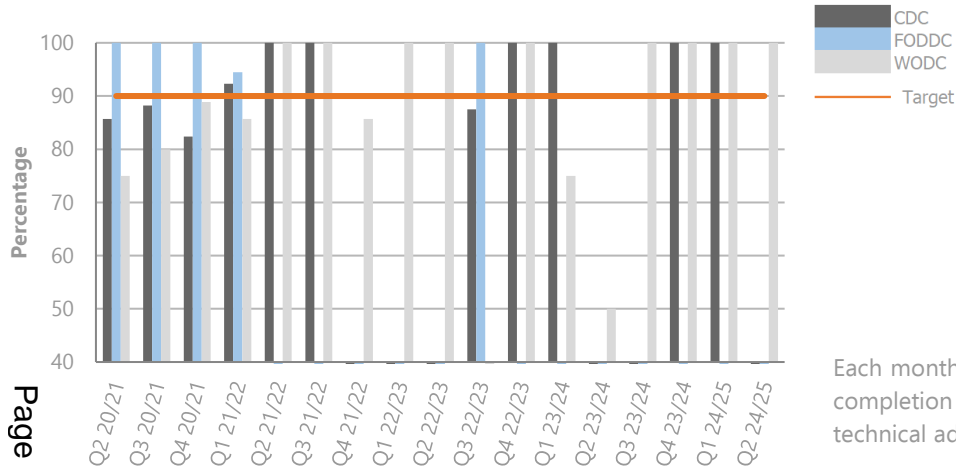
## Reasons for Delays in Responding to FOI Requests Beyond the 20-Day Deadline

■ Service Area not provided Information in time



100%

# Building Control Satisfaction



## Direction of Travel

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

## Q2 – Higher is Good

Target: 90%  
 Actual: No Data

Page 149

Each month, the service conducts telephone interviews with customers who have received a completion certificate, asking them to rate the service based on staff helpfulness, quality of technical advice and information, responsiveness, value for money, and overall satisfaction.

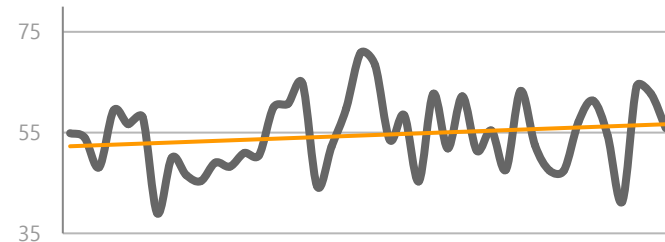
However, the satisfaction survey data continues to face challenges due to a low response rate, with no surveys returned in Q2.

## How do we compare?

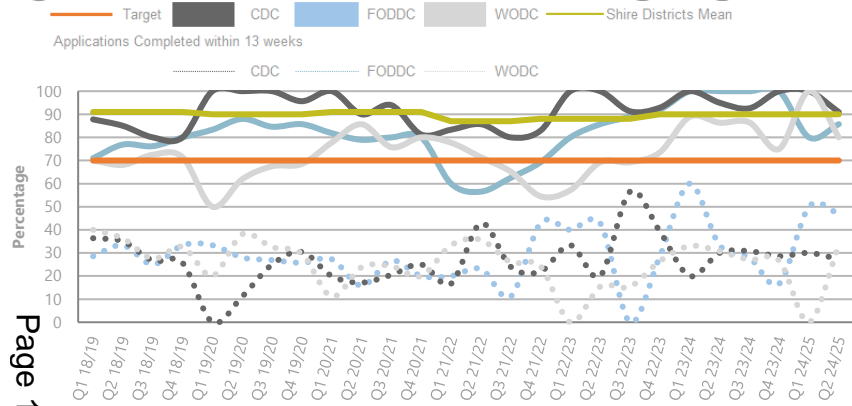
Percentage of share in the market

	July	Aug,	Sept.	Number of Apps for Quarter
Cotswold	64%	63%	56%	151
Forest	73%	49%	31%	81
West	71%	47%	76%	160

## The below chart shows market share over time from April 2021



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





Page 150

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 
- Declined since last quarter and last year

## Q2 - Higher is Good

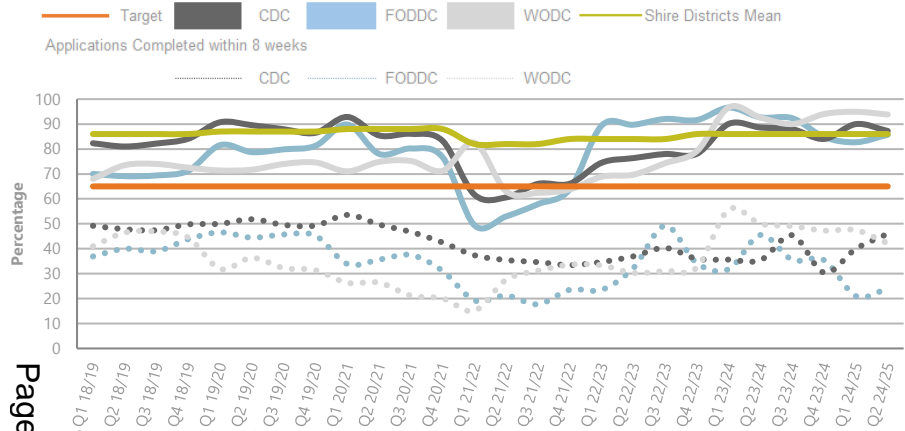
Target	70%
Q2 Actual	90.91%
Year to Date (Cumulative)	95%

The service has maintained strong performance in processing Major applications within the agreed timeframes. However, there was a decrease of around 9% compared to the previous quarter, with the in-time determinations dropping from 100% in Q1 to 90.91% in Q2.

Eleven major applications were determined during Q2, compared to fifteen 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)




Page 151


## 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 and last year

## Q2 - Higher is Good

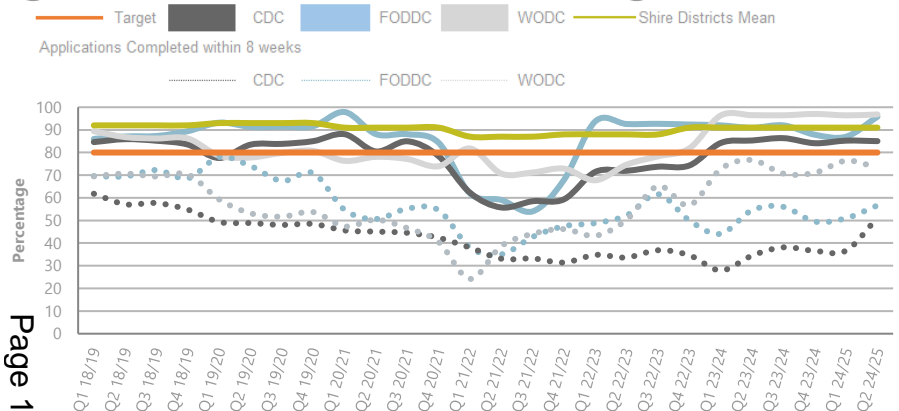
Target	65%
Q2 Actual	87.23%
Year to Date (Cumulative)	88.51%

This quarter, the Council has continued to perform well in processing minor applications within required timeframes. The Development Management Improvement Plan, launched following the PAS report, is actively progressing with a focus on streamlining enforcement. Efforts to reduce the case backlog have been aided by the introduction of a "Harm Checklist" to prioritise cases more effectively. Additionally, a new interactive digital form for submitting complaints, now live on the website, allows users to upload photos, map locations, and access clear guidance on the enforcement process and timelines. These enhancements help manage customer expectations and free up staff to focus on investigations.

The next phase of the improvement plan will refine case management to concentrate on high-priority cases, with a tracking system in development to enhance transparency and responsiveness. Cotswold District Council is also preparing to host an Agents' Forum in Q3 to further engage with the planning community and promote constructive feedback on planning processes.


94 minor applications were determined in Q2.

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



Page 152

## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Slightly declined since last quarter and last year

## Q2 - Higher is Good

Target	80%
Q2 Actual	85.71%
Year to Date (Cumulative)	85.13%

### 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

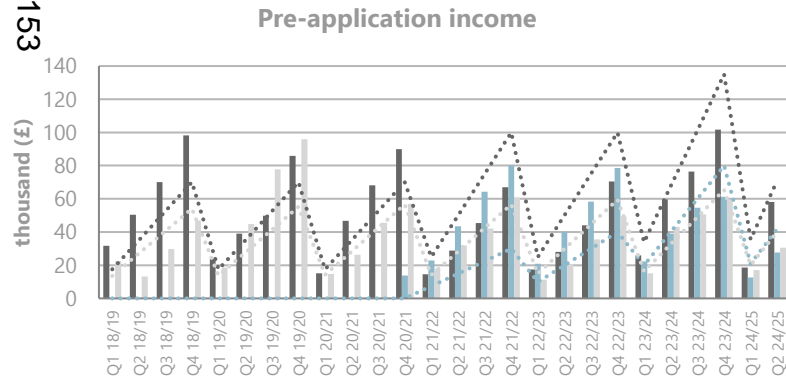
Determination times for Other applications have slightly improved by around 0.2% since last quarter and this time last year.

287 Other applications were determined in Q2.

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




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




## Direction of Travel

### Total Planning Income

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

### Pre-Application Income

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Total Income increased since last quarter and last year  
Pre-App Income increased since last quarter and but slightly decreased since last year

At the end of Q2, total planning income for the Council surpassed its target. Compared to Q2 of 2023-24, total planning income has increased, although pre-application income saw a slight decline of approximately £1,000.

## Q2 – Higher is Good

Total Planning Income (£)

Target 500,939

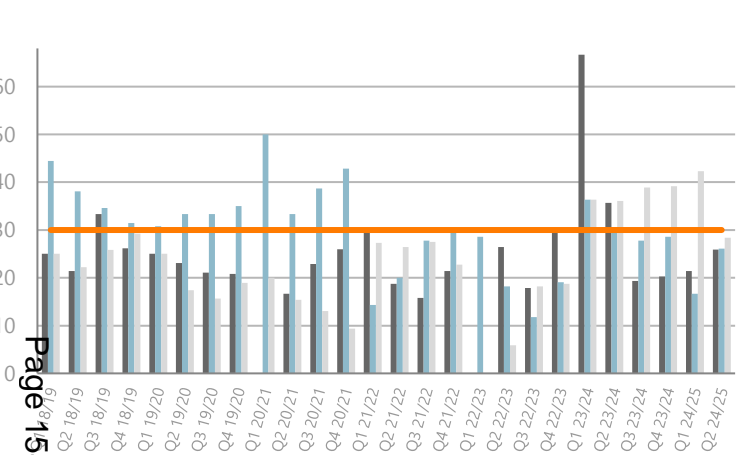
Actual 614,471

Pre-Application Income (£)

Target 71,000

Actual 58,168

# Percentage of Planning Appeals Allowed (cumulative)



CDC  
 FODDC  
 WODC  
 Target

**Direction of Travel**

Against last Quarter ↑

Against last Year ↓

**Q2 – Lower is Good**

Target 30%

Actual 25.93%

## 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

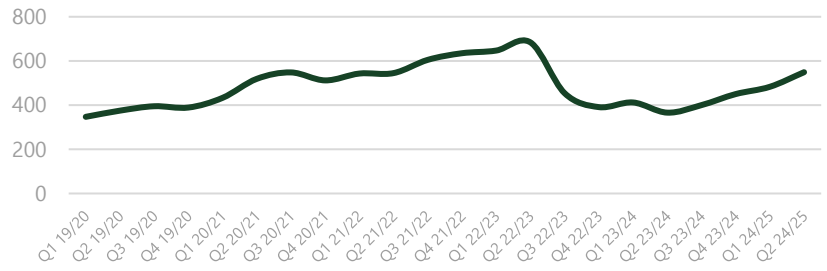
This indicator aims to ensure that no more than 30% of planning appeals are allowed in favor of the applicant, with a lower percentage being more favorable. According to the latest statistics from the Planning Inspectorate, the national average for Section 78 planning appeals granted is 28% (source: [gov.uk](http://gov.uk)).

Between 1 July 2024 and 30 September 2024, thirteen appeals were decided, with four allowed in favour of the applicant, resulting in a 30.77% allowance rate. As this metric is cumulative, the year-to-date total stands at 27 appeals, with 7 allowed.

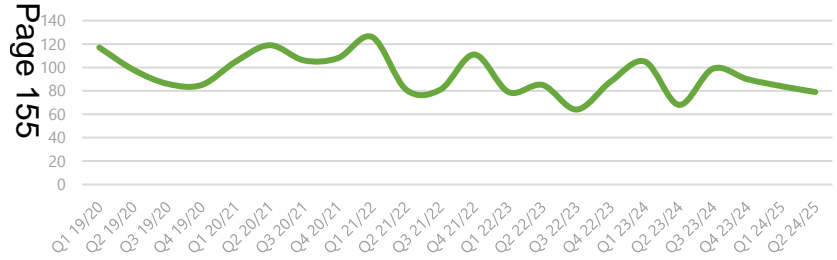
Page 154

# (Snapshot) Planning Enforcement Cases

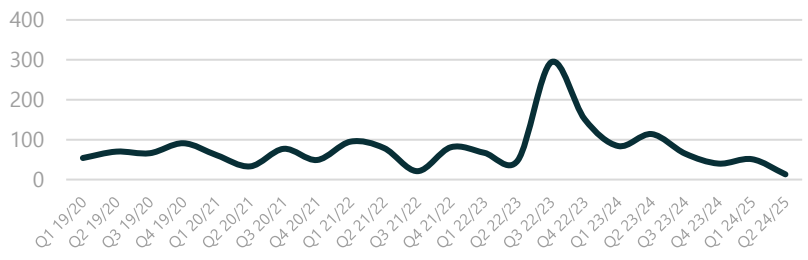
Open Cases at end of Quarter over Time



Number of Cases Opened During the Quarter over Time



Number of Cases Closed During the Quarter over Time



## Direction of Travel for Open Cases at end of Quarter




- Against last Quarter 
- Against last Year 

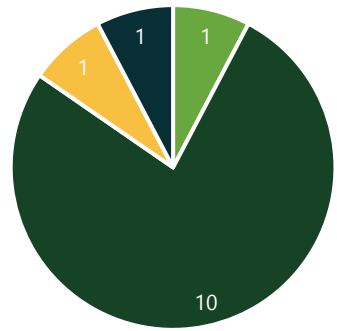
## Q2 – Lower is Good

*No Target*

Open Cases at End of Quarter **549**

## Reasons Cases Closed this Quarter

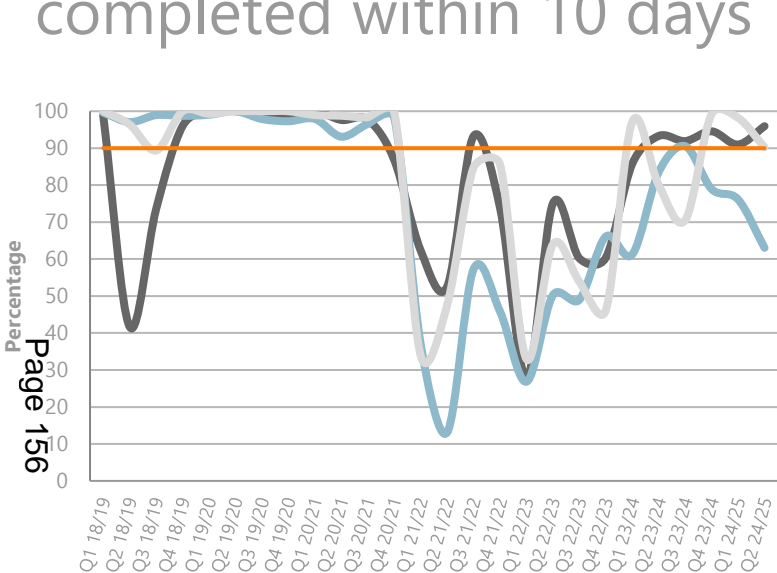
-  Breach resolved through negotiation
-  No breach occurring
-  Breach identified but no harm



The enforcement team has experienced prolonged staff shortages, resulting in a backlog of cases. The team is currently addressing these cases on a priority basis. In the future, as staffing levels return to full capacity, the team will work on updating and reviewing the enforcement plan to improve service efficiency and effectiveness.

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


# Percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days



CDC  
FODDC  
WODC

Target

## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Improved since last quarter and last year

## Q2 - Higher is Good

Target	90%
Actual	95.95%

During Q2, the Council continued to exceed its target for completing land charge searches within 10 days.

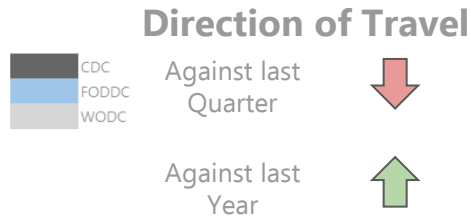
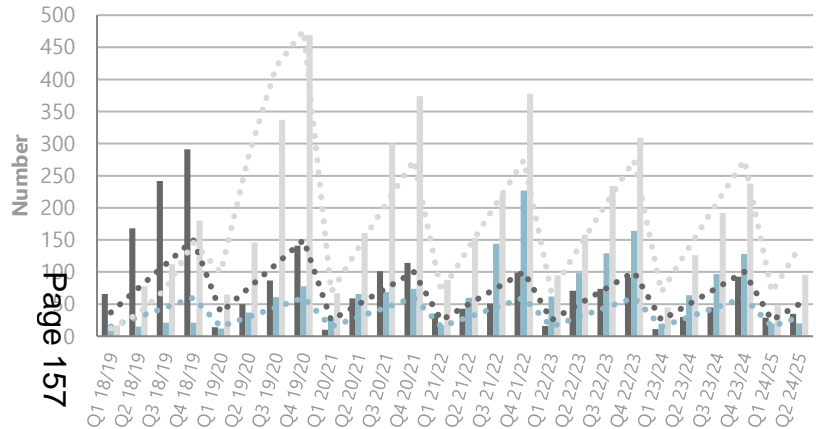
Efforts to strengthen relationships with the answering teams have improved communication and workload management, allowing team members to address tasks more efficiently and ultimately boosting overall productivity.

The HMLR project, aimed at creating a national local land charges service to speed up searches, has commenced and is currently in the early stages.

### How do we compare?

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

# Number of affordable homes delivered (cumulative)



Number of completions improved since last year but declined since last quarter

**Q2 – Higher is Good**

Target	25
Actual	35

During Q2, a total of six properties were delivered in Cotswold, bringing the year-to-date total to thirty-five, against a target of fifty. This includes six shared ownership properties completed in Cirencester. Completions fluctuate throughout the year, as housing developments typically take 12 months or more, with some projects phased over several years. An initial overdelivery of affordable housing at the start of the current strategy has resulted in reduced delivery in recent years. Additionally, projections from Registered Providers indicate a shortfall compared to the annual target of 100 homes.

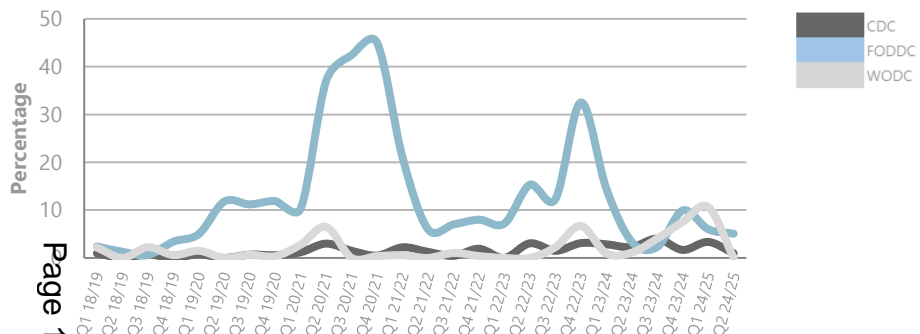
## How do we compare?

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

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

# Number of fly tips collected and percentage that result in an enforcement action

(defined as a warning letter, fixed penalty notice, simple caution or prosecution)



## Direction of Travel

### Number of Fly Tips

Against last Quarter



Against last Year



### Percentage Enforcement Action

Against last Quarter



Against last Year



*No Target*

Number of Fly Tips Collected

172

Percentage Enforcement Action

0.97%

Fly Tips – Decreased since last quarter but increased since last year

Enforcement Action – Declined since last quarter and last year

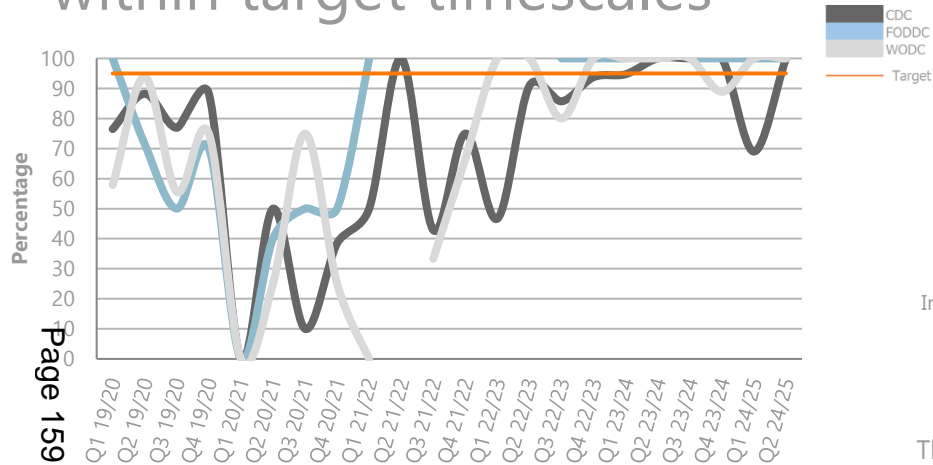
## How do we compare?

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

2022-23 Benchmark	Total Fly Tips	Total Enforcement Actions	Total FPNs	% FPNs per Fly Tip	CIPFA Nearest Neighbours Rank	Quartile
<b>Cotswold</b>	<b>1092</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>2.01</b>	<b>2/12</b>	<b>Top</b>
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

During Q2, fly-tipping incidents in Cotswold decreased by approximately 30%, reflecting the success of recent initiatives to curb illegal waste disposal. Earlier this year, the Council received over £38,000 from the Government's Fly-tipping Intervention Grant Scheme to bolster enforcement efforts. This funding has supported new initiatives, particularly the S.C.R.A.P. fly-tipping campaign, aimed at cracking down on environmental offences. Additionally, the Council successfully recruited 20 "Fly-tipping Guardians" to help protect the district from illegal waste dumping.

# Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales



## Direction of Travel

- Against last Quarter
- Against last Year

Increased since last quarter and steady since last year

## Q2 - Higher is Good

Target	95%
Actual	100%

The Council conducted seven inspections during Q2, all of which were completed within the timescale.

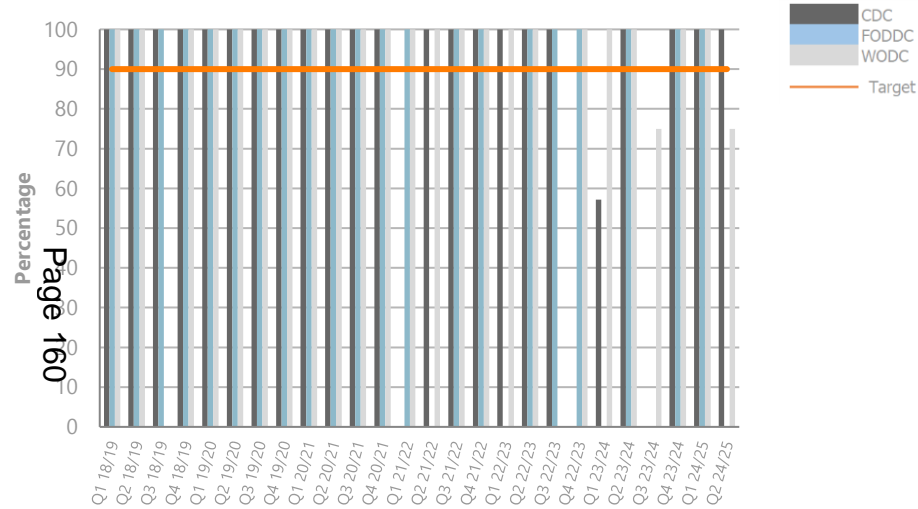
High-risk food inspections are prioritised due to their greater potential impact on public health and safety enabling issues to be addressed swiftly. However, this focus can occasionally delay scheduled inspections for lower-risk food businesses. To mitigate this, the service uses a dashboard to track both high- and lower-risk inspections, ensuring that, despite the emphasis on high-risk establishments, lower-risk inspections are still completed promptly to maintain overall compliance and safety standards.

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 

Against last Year 

Steady since last quarter and last year

## Q2 - Higher is Good

Target

90%

Actual

100%

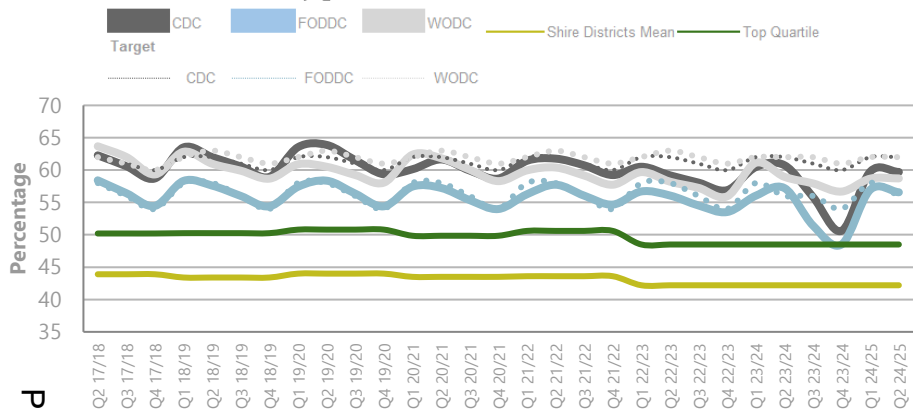
One notification was received during Q1 which was assessed within one working day.

### How do we compare?


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




# Percentage of household waste recycled



## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Slightly declined since last quarter and last year

## Q2 - Higher is Good

Target

62%

Actual

59.63%

Page 101

## 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**

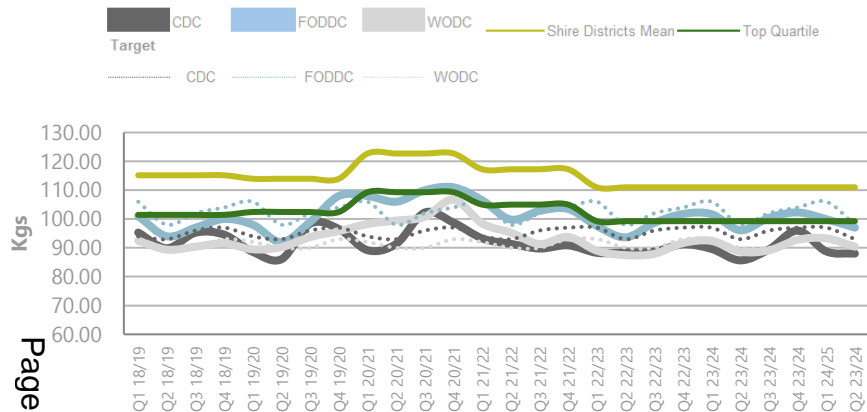
Q1 23-24 Benchmark	%	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
<b>Cotswold</b>	<b>60.2</b>	<b>2/6</b>	<b>Top</b>
Stratford-on-Avon	70	1/6	Top
West Oxfordshire	60.13	3/6	Second
Derbyshire Dales	49	4/6	Third
Litchfield	50.3	5/6	Bottom
Malvern Hills	47.01	6/6	Bottom

The recycling rates for Q2 stand at 59.63%, which is approximately 1% lower than the same period last year.


During Q2, the Council supported Second Hand September, a national campaign encouraging the public to shop for second-hand clothing and donate items they no longer wear. This initiative highlights the environmental impact of textile production and aims to reduce waste by promoting the recycling and reuse of textiles. Resources are available for residents on sustainable shopping and clothing repair.


Notes: The quarterly recycling targets are profiled to account for seasonal differences. The combined recycling data is also presented cumulatively which will flatten out some of these differences.

# Residual Household Waste per Household (kg)



## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Decreased since last quarter but steady since last year

## Q2 - Lower is Good

Target	93
Actual	85.44

## How do we compare?

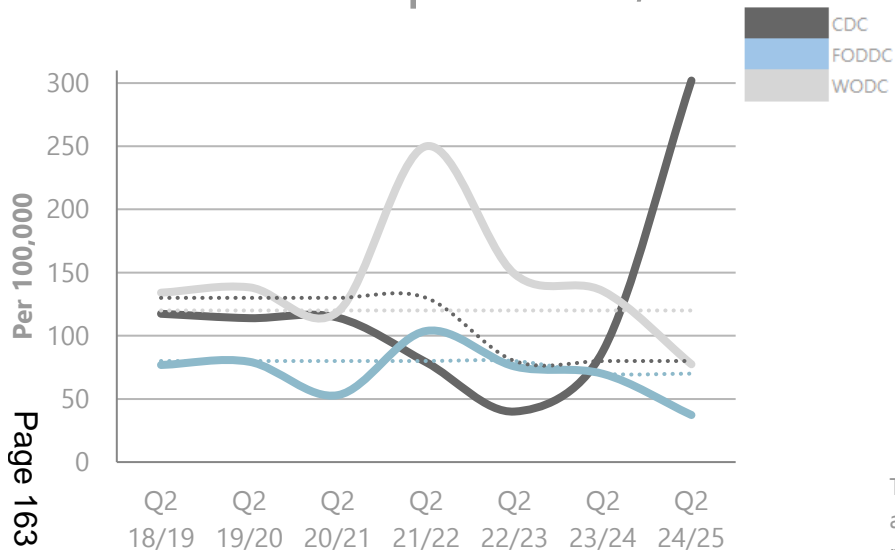
Residual household waste per household (kg/household) – LG Inform. The latest dataset available in April – June '23 (Q1 2023-24) – **Within this Dataset 6 authorities are missing data**

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

The pattern of residual waste throughout the year is cyclical and targets are profiled according. We typically see an increase in Q3 due to the Christmas period.

During Q2, the Council saw a slight decline in the tonnage of household waste in comparison to last quarter, decreasing by 3.32kg to 85.44kg. In comparison to Q2 2023-2024, the tonnage has slightly decreased by 0.22kg.

# Missed bins per 100,000



Page 163

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

## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Increased since last quarter and last year

## Q2 - Lower is Good

Target 80

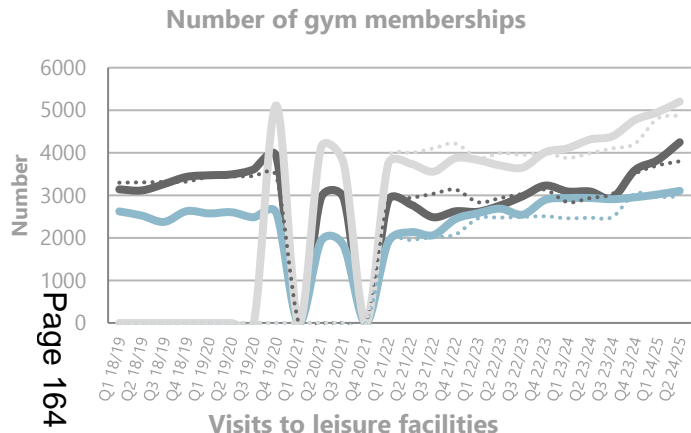
Actual 302

The Council experienced a notable increase in missed bins in comparison to last quarter and the same period last year. The rise in missed bins can be attributed primarily to the recent reorganization of collection rounds, which affected approximately 60% of households. Additionally, Ubico faced high levels of sick leave during July and August, resulting in new staff who were less familiar with the routes and locations of households. However, significant improvements have been made, with daily huddles implemented during the quarter to enhance communication and management oversight. These efforts have led to solid improvements, with the number of missed collections now reducing to more manageable levels.

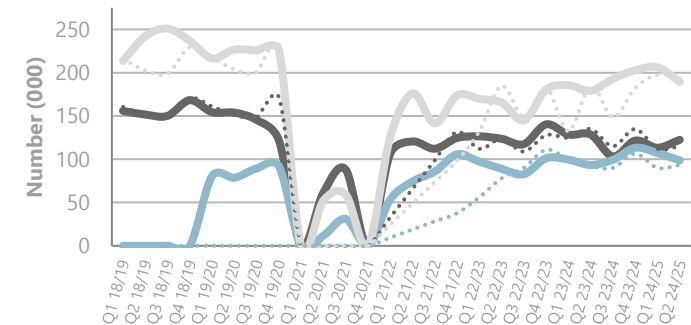
Note: since the implementation of In-Cab technology, the data source for missed collections is Alloy, In-Cab's back office system. This data source is more accurate than the previous data source.

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

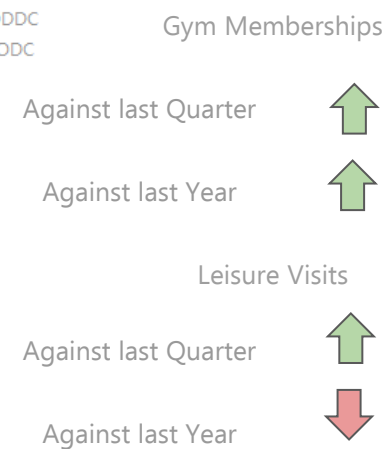
# Number of visits to the leisure centres & (Snapshot) Number of gym memberships



Number  
Page 164



## Direction of Travel



## Higher is Good

Gym Memberships	
Target	3,800
Actual	4,247
Leisure Visits	
Target	115,000
Actual	122,523

Gym Memberships – Improved since last quarter and last year  
 Leisure Visits – Improved since last quarter but declined since last year

Leisure visits experienced an increase in visits compared to the last quarter; however, the numbers were down by approximately 5,000 compared to the same period last year, largely due to improvement works at Cirencester Leisure Centre during the summer. The recent opening of a new cycle studio and an assisted gym area in September underscores the Council’s commitment to enhancing community facilities.

Further investment in equipment has been made, including the provision of new bikes for the indoor cycling studio at Cirencester and the renewal of the jacuzzi at the Bourton on the Water Leisure Centre. The Council was awarded £208k from the Swimming Pool Support Fund which will provide energy efficiency improvements at Cirencester Leisure centre including additional Solar PV panels and improved triple glazing around the swimming pool area.

Learn to Swim participation figures have remained steady. This trend is attributed to the national shortage of swim instructors and the backlog reduction resulting from the COVID-19 facility closures.

### 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.



### **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 6 January 2025</b>		
Climate Programme Update	Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Sustainability - Cllr Mike McKeown	Olivia McGregor, Climate Change & Carbon Reduction Lead olivia.mcgregor@cotswold.gov.uk
Review of Publica Transition Phase 1	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive robert.weaver@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 and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation - Cllr Mike Evely	Michelle Burge, Chief Accountant michelle.burge@publicagroup.uk
<b>Monday 3 February 2025</b>		
Ubico Business Plan 2025-26	Cabinet Member for Economy and Environment - Cllr Tristan Wilkinson	Simon Anthony, Business Manager for Environmental Services Simon.Anthony@publicagroup.uk
Focussed public consultation (regulation 18) on additional new Local Plan policies	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Matthew Britton, Interim Forward Planning Lead matthew.britton@cotswold.gov.uk
Update on Strategic Plan for North Cotswolds	Juliet Layton, Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning	Matthew Britton, Interim Forward Planning Lead matthew.britton@cotswold.gov.uk

Budget 2025/26 and Medium Term Financial Strategy	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation - Cllr Mike Evely	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
<b>Update to HR Policies (potential Cabinet report tbc)</b>		
<b>Monday 3 March 2025</b>		
Public Conveniences Update on Changes	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evely	Maria Wheatley, Shared Parking Manager maria.wheatley@cotswold.gov.uk
Publica Transition Plan - Phase 2	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk
<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 and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation - Cllr Mike Evely	Michelle Burge, Chief Accountant michelle.burge@publicagroup.uk
<b>Tuesday 6 May 2025</b>		
Asset Management Strategy	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evely	Claire Locke, Interim Executive Director Claire.Locke@publicagroup.uk

This page is intentionally left blank





**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**

**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**

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)

**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	Communications; Democratic Services; Executive functions and Corporate Plan delivery; Forward Planning and the Local Plan; Publica; Town and Parish Council liaison.
Mike Evely (Deputy Leader)	Finance	Council transformation; Financial strategy and management; Grant funding and Crowdfund Cotswold; Property and Assets; Revenues and Benefits.
Mike McKeown	Climate Change and Sustainability	Climate and biodiversity emergency response; Community energy; Council sustainability; Energy efficiency programme; Sustainable transport.
Juliet Layton	Housing and Planning	Cotswold Lakes (formerly known as Cotswold Water Park); Development Management, Heritage and Conservation; Homelessness; Neighbourhood Planning; Regulatory Services – planning and building control; Strategic Housing.
Paul Hodgkinson	Health, Leisure and Visitor Experience	Community Safety Partnership; Culture; Leisure Centres; Museums; Parking Strategy and Operations; Public Health; Tourism.
Claire Bloomer	Communities	Cost of living support; Diversity, inclusion and young people; Domestic Abuse; Liaison with 3 <sup>rd</sup> sector; Refugee and Asylum Response; Safeguarding.
Tristan Wilkinson	Economy and Environment	Economic Development; Flooding; Sewage; Street Cleaning; UBICO; Waste and Recycling.

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
<b>9 January 2025 - Cabinet</b>						
Business Rates Relief 2025/2026, retail, hospitality and leisure scheme	Yes	Open	Cabinet Council	9 Jan 2025 22 Jan 2025	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation - Cllr Mike Evey	Mandy Fathers, Business Manager for Environmental, Welfare and Revenue Service Mandy.Fathers@publicagroup.uk
Disabled Facilities Grants Policy Update	No	Open	Cabinet	9 Jan 2025	Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning - Cllr Juliet Layton	Paula Massey, Customer Enabling Manager Paula.Massey@publicagroup.uk
Review of Parking Charges and Season Tickets	No	Open	Cabinet	9 Jan 2025	Cabinet Member for Health, Culture and Visitor Experience - Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	Maria Wheatley, Shared Parking Manager maria.wheatley@cotswold.gov.uk
Financial Performance Report - Q2 2024/25 (Update)	No	Open	Cabinet	9 Jan 2025	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation - Cllr Mike Evey	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit Collaboration Agreement	No	Open	Cabinet Council	9 Jan 2025 22 Jan 2025	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation - Cllr Mike Evey	Emma Cathcart, Head of Service, Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit emma.cathcart@cotswold.gov.uk
Corinium Museum Collections Development and Human Remains policies	No	Open	Cabinet	9 Jan 2025	Cabinet Member for Health, Culture and Visitor Experience - Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	Joseph Walker, Head of Economic Development and Communities joseph.walker@cotswold.gov.uk
Contract Award for the Parking ICT system	No	Fully exempt	Cabinet	9 Jan 2025	Cabinet Member for Health, Culture and Visitor Experience - Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	Maria Wheatley, Shared Parking Manager maria.wheatley@cotswold.gov.uk
<b>22 January 2025 - Full Council</b>						
Community Governance Review - Upper Rissington	No	Open	Council	22 Jan 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Sarah Dalby, Elections Manager sarah.dalby@cotswold.gov.uk
Moreton-in-Marsh	Yes	Open	Council	22 Jan 2025	Leader of the Council -	Matthew Britton, Interim

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
Working Group Membership					Cllr Joe Harris	Forward Planning Lead matthew.britton@cotswold.gov.uk
Programme of Meetings	No	Open	Council	22 Jan 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Andrew Brown, Head of Democratic and Electoral Services andrew.brown@cotswold.gov.uk
Amendments to the Constitution - Report of the Constitution Working Group	No	Open	Council	22 Jan 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Andrew Brown, Head of Democratic and Electoral Services andrew.brown@cotswold.gov.uk
<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 and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation - Cllr Mike Evely	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural	Yes	Open	Cabinet	6 Feb 2025	Cabinet Member for Economy and	Paul James, Economic Development Lead

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
England Prosperity Fund update					Environment - Cllr Tristan Wilkinson	paul.james@cotswold.gov.uk
Focussed public consultation (regulation 18) on additional new Local Plan policies	Yes	Open	Cabinet Council	6 Feb 2025 26 Feb 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Matthew Britton, Interim Forward Planning Lead matthew.britton@cotswold.gov.uk
<b>26 February 2025 - Full Council</b>						
<b>6 March 2025 - Cabinet</b>						
Publica Transition Plan - Phase 2	Yes	Open	Cabinet Council	6 Mar 2025 19 Mar 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk
Ubico Business Plan 2025-26	No	Open	Cabinet	6 Mar 2025	Cabinet Member for Economy and Environment - Cllr	Simon Anthony, Business Manager for Environmental Services



Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
					Tristan Wilkinson	Simon.Anthony@publicagroup.uk
<b>19 March 2025 - Full Council</b>						
<b>3 April 2025 - Cabinet</b>						
Financial Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter Three	No	Open	Cabinet	3 Apr 2025	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation - 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 – no items currently scheduled</b>						
<b>21 May 2025 - Full Council</b>						
Record of Attendance 2024/25	No	Open	Council	21 May 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Andrew Brown, Head of Democratic and

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
						Electoral Services andrew.brown@cotswold.gov.uk
Outside Body Appointments 2025/26	No	Open	Council	21 May 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Andrew Brown, Head of Democratic and Electoral Services andrew.brown@cotswold.gov.uk
Appointment of Committees 2025/26	No	Open	Council	21 May 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Andrew Brown, Head of Democratic and Electoral Services andrew.brown@cotswold.gov.uk
<b>Key decisions delegated to officers</b>						
Decision on future regeneration of The Old Station and Memorial Cottages, Cirencester	Yes	Fully exempt Likely to contain commercially sensitive information	Deputy Chief Executive (Chief Finance Officer)	Before 31 Dec 2025	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evemy	Claire Locke, Interim Executive Director Claire.Locke@publicagroup.uk
UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural	Yes	Open	Chief Executive Officer	Before 31 Dec 2025	Cabinet Member for Economy and Council	Paul James, Economic Development Lead

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
England Prosperity Fund update					Transformation - Cllr Tony Dale	paul.james@cotswold.gov.uk
Rural England Prosperity Fund	Yes	Open	Chief Executive Officer	Before 31 Dec 2025	Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation - Cllr Tony Dale	Paul James, Economic Development Lead paul.james@cotswold.gov.uk
Disposal of Property in Bourton on the Water	Yes	Open	Deputy Chief Executive (Chief Finance Officer)	Before 31 Dec 2025	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evely	Jasmine McWilliams, Estates Manager jasmine.mcwilliams@publicagroup.uk

This page is intentionally left blank