



Council name	<b>COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
Name and date of Committee	<b>CABINET - 10 MARCH 2025</b>
Subject	<b>UBICO BUSINESS PLAN 2025-26</b>
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Tristan Wilkinson, Cabinet Member for Economy and Environment Email: <a href="mailto:tristan.wilkinson@cotswold.gov.uk">tristan.wilkinson@cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Bill Oddy, Assistant Director Email: <a href="mailto:bill.oddy@publicagroup.uk">bill.oddy@publicagroup.uk</a>
Report author	Simon Anthony, Business Manager – Environmental Services Email: <a href="mailto:simon.anthony@publicagroup.uk">simon.anthony@publicagroup.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	To consider the draft Ubico Business Plan 2025-26, which has been produced by Ubico in consultation with the Directors and Shareholders, and to recommend that the Leader (as Shareholder Representative) approves the plan.
Annexes	Annex A – Ubico Business Plan 2025-26
Recommendation(s)	That Cabinet resolves to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Note the draft Ubico Business Plan 2025-26; and</li><li>2. Note that the Leader of the Council, as shareholder representative, will sign the written resolution to approve the draft Ubico Business Plan 2025-26 in due course.</li></ol>
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Delivering Good Services</li><li>• Responding to the Climate Emergency</li></ul>
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	The following people have been consulted on this report and the detail contained within:



**COTSWOLD**

District Council

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cllr Tristan Wilkinson,</li><li>• Senior Council Officers</li><li>• Senior Ubico Officers</li></ul> |
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## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1** Ubico is a Teckal company wholly owned by local authorities including Cotswold District Council (CDC). The company delivers environmental services on behalf of its shareholders, including CDC, and is required to submit an annual business plan for approval by its shareholders.
- 1.2** The Leader of the Council, as the Shareholder Representative, has authority to approve the Business Plan.
- 1.3** The draft Business Plan in ANNEX A will remain as a draft version until 28 February as other Shareholders and Board may make comments. Any changes are likely to be minor amendments.
- 1.4** Whilst the Leader of the Council has authority, as shareholder representative, to approve the business plan, it is being brought to Cabinet for members to note and consider.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1** Cotswold District Council (CDC) is a shareholder of Ubico limited, a teckal company designed to deliver environmental services, offering better value for money than commercial contracts.
- 2.2** The teckal model enables councils to commission services without the costs associated with an EU procurement process. Ubico delivers environmental services on behalf of the council at a price which reflects the actual cost of service provision, but in doing so holds no assets, and so the depots it operates from, the vehicles it uses to perform the services and the waste and recycling containers which are provided to residents, are all owned or leased by the authority. This ensures that the shareholders have full control over high value expenditure.
- 2.3** As part of the establishment of Ubico, a number of items were identified as reserved matters for council (Shareholder) approval to ensure that shareholder councils retained an element of control over their company.
- 2.4** The reserved matters decisions fall to the shareholder representatives to determine, this is Leader of the Council.
- 2.5** The Managing Director of Ubico gave a presentation on the Draft Business Plan 2025-26 at an all-Member briefing session on 4 February 2025. The points relating to the draft Business Plan raised by members, alongside comments from other



Shareholder Councils as part of the consultation, are being considered as part of the development of the business plan.

### **3. MAIN POINTS**

**3.1** The draft Business Plan provides the vehicle to carry forward and address the issues identified by the Ubico Shareholder Councils. The 5-year vision developed by the Ubico Board of Directors in 2021 identifies the following priorities:

- Leveraging Synergies and economies of scale
- Harnessing opportunities to deliver value back to our partners
- Using technology to drive operational efficiency
- Understanding our communities needs
- Inspiring our workforce to be committed to providing value for money and carbon neutral services.

**3.2** Ubico's 2025-26 draft Business Plan and 5-year vision are built around four key pillars:

#### **People**

We will have a well-trained, supported and engaged workforce who live our values and are proud to work for Ubico.

#### **Operations**

We will deliver high quality services, which remain safe and compliant, seeking continuous improvement in productivity, value and service excellence. We will harness innovation where appropriate and will explore synergies and opportunities for partnership and cross boundary working.

#### **Climate**

We will minimise our environmental impact and support our shareholders to meet their carbon neutral targets, integrating carbon reduction opportunities wherever reasonably possible in both our fleet and non-fleet activities.

#### **Business Development**

We will build business development capability which enhances our partnerships and allows for effective identification, analysis and presentation to shareholders of potential new business opportunities. We will explore opportunities that aren't simply about profit, including those that would deliver greater value, help our communities or improve services.



In support of the council's service related and financial priorities, Ubico is continuing to work in partnership with Publica and the Council as part of the Environmental Services Innovation Program (ESIP) which is bringing forward opportunities to deliver better services to residents, reduce the effect services have on the climate and environment, and capture efficiency and financial savings for all partners. This will therefore further support the Business Plan. During the last year ESIP has delivered the following:

- A Waste collection round reorganisation project that was delivered on time and on budget and is forecast to achieve full year savings of £500,000 for CDC.
- Implemented a Customer Journey project to review customer interactions with the waste service to make reporting of missed bins easier and communication between the service and customers more responsive.
- Zero Based Budgeting Exercise
- Implementation of the green waste service, delivering 24,203 licences to residents, and undertaking 605,075 bin lifts

#### **4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

**4.1** The Leader of the Council, as shareholder representative, has delegated authority to approve the Ubico business plan (which forms part of the 5-year vision), and there is no need, other than to support transparency for a report to be considered and noted by Cabinet.

#### **5. CONCLUSIONS**

**5.1** It is recommended that The Ubico Business Plan 2025-26 is accepted to meet the company's members agreement, which is to approve the Business Plan.

#### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**6.1** There are no additional financial implications associated with the Ubico Business Plan as the Council 2025-26 approved budget includes the agreed Ubico contract of £8.863m. Ubico has committed to supporting the council deliver savings through the Environmental Services Innovation Program (ESIP) including £0.3m of savings



from a review of Street Services to support its medium-term financial strategy (MTFS).

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**7.1** The Business Plan has to be adopted in accordance with the Shareholder Agreement for Ubico.

## **8. RISK ASSESSMENT**

**8.1** There are no specific risks in adopting the Ubico Business Plan. The council is a shareholder of the company in the middle of the existing environmental services contract.

**8.2** If the council does not approve the plan there is a risk that the company will not be able to support some of the activities necessary to deliver the savings set out in the council's MTFS or its corporate priorities.

## **9. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

**9.1** Not Applicable

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

**10.1** Climate implications feature heavily in the Business Plan with climate being a strategic pillar and emissions benchmarking and carbon reduction goals clearly detailed throughout the plan. If the council does not approve this plan it could risk delivery of these targets and progress towards the Council's own net zero goal by 2030.

## **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**11.1** None

(END)