

# Public Document Pack



**Cherwell**

DISTRICT COUNCIL  
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

**Committee: Executive**

**Date: Monday 4 November 2024**

**Time: 6.30 pm**

**Venue Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA**

## **Membership**

**Councillor David Hingley  
(Chairman)**

Councillor Tom Beckett  
Councillor Jean Conway  
Councillor Ian Middleton  
Councillor Rob Pattenden

**Councillor Lesley McLean (Vice-Chairman)**

Councillor Chris Brant  
Councillor Nick Cotter  
Councillor Rob Parkinson

## **AGENDA**

**1. Apologies for Absence**

**2. Declarations of Interest**

Members are asked to declare any interest and the nature of that interest that they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.

**3. Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting**

The Chairman to report on any requests to submit petitions or to address the meeting.

**4. Minutes (Pages 7 - 14)**

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2024.

**5. Chairman's Announcements**

To receive communications from the Chairman.

## 6. **Urgent Business**

The Chairman to advise whether they have agreed to any item of urgent business being admitted to the agenda.

## 7. **Mental Health Provision for Young People** (Pages 15 - 22)

Report of Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing

### **Purpose of report**

To provide options in response to the motion agreed at the 15 July 2024 Council meeting:

*“This council resolves to ask the Executive to increase spending on the mental health initiatives currently in place within the Chief Executive’s directorate to be funded by an allocation from the Policy Contingency budget.”*

### **Recommendations**

The Executive resolves:

- 1.1 To endorse an extension to the existing provision within current resourcing levels available through the Physical Activity and Mental Health provision the Wellbeing team currently deliver in schools and for families.
- 1.2 To agree a fund of £3500 to support research and evidence gathering to assess what the needs are for increased mental health provision for young people in Cherwell, the role of partners and consider the funding routes to secure it.

## 8. **Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing Policy** (Pages 23 - 56)

Report of Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing

### **Purpose of report**

To seek approval for the reviewed Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing Policy.

### **Recommendations**

The Executive resolves:

- 1.1 To approve the reviewed Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing Policy.

## 9. **Housing Grants and Assistance Policy** (Pages 57 - 108)

Report of Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing

### **Purpose of report**

To seek approval for the reviewed Housing Grants and Assistance Policy.

### **Recommendations**

The Executive resolves:

- 1.1 To approve the reviewed Housing Grants and Assistance Policy.

## **10. Cost of Living 2023/2024 Review and 2024/2025 Activities (Pages 109 - 126)**

Report of Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing

### **Purpose of report**

To provide an update on the additional activity described in the 2023/24 Cost of Living action plan and to note proposed future approaches and activity within the Household support grant aid.

### **Recommendations**

The Executive resolves:

- 1.1 To agree the proposed plan which was endorsed and recommended by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which noted the review of the 2023/24 cost of living plan and supported the proposed range of activities planned for 2024/25 were considered

## **11. Establishing Area Oversight Groups (Pages 127 - 138)**

Report of Corporate Director Communities

### **Purpose of report**

The purpose of this report is to seek authority from the Executive to adopt an area-based approach with the objective to strengthen community and stakeholder engagement into major growth sites across the District in support of delivering more holistic and sustainably planned developments, aligned to Council priorities.

### **Recommendations**

The Executive resolves:

- 1.3 To authorise the adoption of the establishment of Area Oversight Groups (AOGs) for Bicester, Banbury and Kidlington as non-decision-making advisory groups.

## **12. Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report Quarter 2 2024 - 2025 (Pages 139 - 264)**

## **Purpose of report**

To report to the committee the council's performance, risk, and financial positions at the end of Quarter 2 2024-25.

## **Recommendations**

The Executive resolves:

- 1.1 To consider and note the contents of the council's performance, risk and finance Quarter 2 report.
- 1.2 To approve the updated Corporate Debt Policy (section 4.1.7 and Appendix 5)
- 1.3 To approve debt write offs totalling £43,660.32 (section 4.1.6 and Exempt Appendix 6).
- 1.4 To approve the reprofiling of capital projects beyond 2024/25 (section 4.2.3 and Appendix 1) and the subsequent update to the programme budget for this financial year 2024/25.
- 1.5 To note that Cherwell will be receiving £0.064m revenue grant funding from OCC for the Household Support Fund round 6. This follows up on round 5 that was spent supporting residents through the cost-of-living crisis. This funding will support the work presented at the last Overview and Scrutiny meeting in Cherwell's Cost of Living plan.
- 1.6 To note the use of £0.050m of S106 funding approved under S151 delegated authority to deliver the remaining elements of the Outdoor Sports project at Whitelands Farm Sports Ground.
- 1.7 To note the additional information relating to capital overspends reported to Executive in the August (period 5) financial performance report (section 4.2.3 – 4.2.5)
- 1.8 To approve the removal of projects with budgets totalling £0.652m from the Capital Programme (section 4.2.8 and Appendix 7).
- 1.9 To approve the increase in the building control fees and charges for 2024/25 with immediate effect (Appendix 12).

## **13. Exclusion of the Press and Public**

The following items contain exempt information as defined in the following paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of Local Government Act 1972.

3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Members are reminded that whilst the following items have been marked as exempt, it is for the meeting to decide whether or not to consider them in private or



in public. In making the decision, Members should balance the interests of individuals or the Council itself in having access to the information. In considering their discretion members should also be mindful of the advice of Council Officers.

No representations have been received from the public requesting that these items be considered in public.

Should Members decide not to make decisions in public, they are recommended to pass the following recommendation:

“That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the ground that, if the public and press were present, it would be likely that exempt information falling under the provisions of Schedule 12A, Part 1, Paragraph 3 would be disclosed to them, and that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.”

14. **Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report Quarter 2 2024 - 2025 - Exempt Appendix** (Pages 265 - 270)
15. **Graven Hill Village Development Company (GHVDC) Dev Co – Request for S38 agreement Highways Act 1980 works bonds** (Pages 271 - 278)

Exempt Report of Assistant Director or Finance and S151 Officer

**Councillors are requested to collect any post from their pigeon hole in the Members Room at the end of the meeting.**

## **Information about this Agenda**

### **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence should be notified to [democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk) or 01295 221534 prior to the start of the meeting.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Members are asked to declare interests at item 2 on the agenda or if arriving after the start of the meeting, at the start of the relevant agenda item.

### **Local Government and Finance Act 1992 – Budget Setting, Contracts & Supplementary Estimates**

Members are reminded that any member who is two months in arrears with Council Tax must declare the fact and may speak but not vote on any decision which involves budget setting, extending or agreeing contracts or incurring expenditure not provided for in the agreed budget for a given year and could affect calculations on the level of Council Tax.

### **Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012**

This agenda constitutes the 5-day notice required by Regulation 5 of the Local Authorities

(Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 in terms of the intention to consider an item of business in private.

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### **Queries Regarding this Agenda**

Please contact Natasha Clark, Democratic and Elections [democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk), 01295 221534

**Shiraz Sheikh**  
**Monitoring Officer**

Published on Friday 25 October 2024

## **Cherwell District Council**

### **Executive**

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 7 October 2024 at 6.30 pm

#### Present:

Councillor David Hingley (Leader of the Council & Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership) (Chairman)  
Councillor Lesley McLean (Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Property & Regeneration) (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillor Tom Beckett, Portfolio Holder for Greener Communities  
Councillor Chris Brant, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services  
Councillor Jean Conway, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development Management  
Councillor Ian Middleton, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services  
Councillor Rob Parkinson, Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities  
Councillor Rob Pattenden, Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities

#### Apologies for absence:

Councillor Nick Cotter, Portfolio Holder for Housing

#### Also Present:

Councillor Amanda Watkins, Leader of the Opposition, Labour Group

#### Officers:

Gordon Stewart, Chief Executive  
Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities  
Stephen Hinds, Corporate Director Resources and Transformation  
Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance & S151 Officer  
Shiraz Sheikh, Assistant Director Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer  
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

#### Officers Attending Virtually:

Mona Walsh, Assistant Director - Property

42

### **Declarations of Interest**

10. Crown House Investment Review.

Councillor Rob Pattenden, Other Registerable Interest, as a CDC appointed Non-Executive Director on Crown House and would leave the meeting for the duration of the meeting.

43 **Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting**

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

44 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2024 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

45 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman advised that Councillor Chris Pruden had retired from Executive for personal reasons and thanked him for his hard work as Portfolio Holder for Housing, an area he would continue to be involved in.

Councillor Nick Cotter had replaced Councillor Pruden as Portfolio Holder for Housing.

46 **Finance**  
47 **Monitoring Report August 2024**

The Assistant Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer submitted a report to update Executive on the council's financial position at the end of the August 2024.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the council's financial management report as at the end of August 2024 be noted.
- (2) That the use of reserve requests, set out in the Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book, be approved.
- (3) That the reprofiling of capital projects beyond 2024/25 and the subsequent update to the programme budget for this financial year be approved.
- (4) That the reprofiling of £0.393m from future years budget into the 2024/25 capital project for Castle Quay (cost centre 40144) be approved.
- (5) That the use of £0.133m from the Digital Futures Programme capital budget (Cost Centre 40326) to progress work on the Robotic Process Automation Pilot be noted.
- (6) That the forecast overspend be noted and Council be recommended to agree an increase in the capital budget for CDC Office Relocation to Castle Quay project by £0.646m.

## **Reasons**

The terms agreed are recommended for approval by the Council's appointed consultant Montagu Evans and will provide relevant evidence to support rent increases in relation to future lease events.

The terms of the new lease to Uniform Express Limited, have been benchmarked against other similar comparable agreements and reflect the best commercial terms available in the marketplace today.

The proposed letting will secure the tenant on a 5-year lease and reduce the risk of increasing the Council's exposure to void occupancy costs.

## **Alternative options**

### Option 1: Do nothing.

This option has been rejected. If the new lease is not completed the Council would forfeit the opportunity to receive additional income.

### Option 2: Renegotiate the terms of the offer.

This option has been rejected as the terms agreed reflect current market value and are comparable with other similar lettings achieved at Tramway Industrial Estate and elsewhere.

## 47 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

## 48 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

### **Resolved**

That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the ground that, if the public and press were present, it would be likely that exempt information falling under the provision of Schedule 12A, Part 1, Paragraph 3 would be disclosed to them, and that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

## 49 **Grant of a New Lease at Unit 5, Tramway Industrial Estate, Banbury to Uniform Express Limited**

The Assistant Director Property submitted an exempt report to approve the proposed terms for the granting of a new lease to Uniform Express Limited for Unit 5, Tramway Industrial Estate, Banbury.

**Resolved**

- (1) As set out in the exempt minutes.
- (2) As set out in the exempt minutes.

**Reasons**

As set out in the exempt minutes

**Alternative options**

As set out in the exempt minutes

50 **Crown House Investment Review**

The Assistant Director Finance submitted an exempt report which proposed a restructure of the financing of the council's subsidiary Crown House Banbury Limited and proposes adjusting the interest rate of the loan to ensure that the company can continue to meet its liabilities as they fall due, minimising the likelihood of a significant financial impact to the council.

**Resolved**

- (1) As set out in the exempt Minutes.
- (2) As set out in the exempt Minutes.

**Reasons**

As set out in the exempt Minutes.

**Alternative options**

As set out in the exempt Minutes.

The meeting ended at 6.57 pm

Chairman:

Date:

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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<b>This report is public</b>	
<b>Mental Health Provision for Young People</b>	
<b>Committee</b>	Executive
<b>Date of Committee</b>	4 November 2024
<b>Portfolio Holder presenting the report</b>	Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities Councillor Rob Pattenden
<b>Date Portfolio Holder agreed report</b>	24 October 2024
<b>Report of</b>	Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing, Nicola Riley

## Purpose of report

To provide options in response to the motion agreed at the July Council 2024:

*“This council resolves to ask the Executive to increase spending on the mental health initiatives currently in place within the Chief Executive’s directorate to be funded by an allocation from the Policy Contingency budget.”*

## 1. Recommendations

The Executive resolves:

- 1.1 To endorse an extension to the existing provision within current resourcing levels available through the Physical Activity and Mental Health provision the Wellbeing team currently deliver in schools and for families.
- 1.2 To agree a fund of £3500 to support research and evidence gathering to assess what the needs are for increased mental health provision for young people in Cherwell, the role of partners and consider the funding routes to secure it.

## 2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 A range of options have been framed to respond to the agreed motion from Full Council in July 2024 identified in the report as Options 1-4
- 2.2 Beginning to deliver increased provision in this academic year within current budgets and resources would be a proactive and positive step. There is no base budget to deliver options 1-3 in this financial year
- 2.3 Additional consultation will need to be funded, with the aim of identifying needs, methods and partners to improve outcomes for children in Cherwell.
- 2.4 Consultation with partners in Education, PCAMHS, Public Health and the integrated Care Board will be essential to quantify needs and sustainable solutions.

## Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications	Commentary			
<b>Finance</b>	<p>There is no base budget to deliver the enhanced mental health provision</p> <p>There would not be an option to stop or reduce provision within the Youth Activator service due to the need to deliver programmes that have service level and external funding agreements in place.</p> <p>If members feel Option 1, 2 or 3 is required £22, 809 or £45,618 would need to be approved from the Policy Contingency Budget</p> <p>If the recommended Option 4 is approved £3,500 would need to be approved from Policy Contingency Budget</p> <p>Michael Furness, S151 Officer 15<sup>th</sup> October 2024</p>			
<b>Legal</b>	<p>Any service provision delivered through a charity needs to comply with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.</p> <p>Shiraz Sheikh Assistant Director Law and Governance 15<sup>th</sup> October 2024</p>			
<b>Risk Management</b>	<p>Risks related to any potential Mental Health programme from the options outlined will be managed through the service operational risk register.</p> <p>Celia Prado–Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 15<sup>th</sup> October 2024</p>			
<b>Impact Assessments</b>	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
<b>Equality Impact</b>	X			<p>All potential options are in line with our Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion framework, seeking to ensure that young people who are experiencing difficulties because of mental health pressures can be enabled to help manage their mental health</p> <p>Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 15 October 2024</p>
<b>A</b> Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		

<b>B</b> Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		
<b>Climate &amp; Environmental Impact</b>				N/A
<b>ICT &amp; Digital Impact</b>				N/A N/A
<b>Data Impact</b>				N/A
<b>Procurement &amp; subsidy</b>				N/A
<b>Council Priorities</b>	<p>Healthy, resilient and engaged communities.</p> <p>The provision for young people to help manage their mental health and causes of health inequalities.</p>			
Human Resources	N/A			
<b>Property</b>	N/A			
<b>Consultation &amp; Engagement</b>	Will engage with young people, schools and Oxfordshire Mind to continue to review impact of the Mental Health programme for young people.			

## Supporting Information

### 3. Background

- 3.1 In Oxfordshire, mental health issues among young people have been rising, mirroring national trends. Recent data highlights a significant increase in school pupils requiring support for social, emotional, and mental health needs. There has also been a notable rise in the number of persistent absentees from secondary schools, which can be linked to mental health concerns.
- 3.2 Nationally, the prevalence of mental health concerns among young people is increasing. In 2023 in Oxfordshire, around 1 in 5 children and young people aged 8 to 25 years had a probable mental disorder. This was 20.3% of 8- to 16-year-olds, 23.3% of 17- to 19-year-olds and 21.7% of 20 to 25 year olds. (JSNA)

- 3.3 In the Academic year 2022/23 there was a total of 3,830 school pupils in Oxfordshire supported with a primary need of social, emotional and mental health (JSNA)
- 3.4 University of Oxford conducted research for Year 7 – Year 13 where there were over 30,000 respondents. Of these respondents 18% often feel lonely, 1 in 3 have problems with sleep and 1 in 4 often/ always feel sad or empty (Oxwell Survey)
- 3.5 Currently as part of the successful Youth Activator programme in Schools the team deliver a Physical Activity and Mental Wellbeing programme in primary schools. The aim of the programme is to introduce young people to the importance of understanding and dealing with their emotions and physical activity activities.
- 3.6 The programme focuses on primary school transition years 5 & 6 focusing on different elements of Mental Health such as Stress, Anxiety, Goal Setting, Self Esteem, Anger and Resilience. In 2023 / 24 academic year the programme was in 28 schools which combining physical activity and elements of mental health, offering strategies and ways to manage mental wellbeing.
- 3.7 Below are some statistics highlighting the impact that the programme has had along with feedback from students and teachers
- 79% commented that their wellbeing had improved after being on the course (combination of a little better and a lot better)
  - 79% would recommend course to peers
  - 92% had a good or amazing experience on course
- “So many of the children have said how great it has been to talk about their feelings and to know that others feel the same as them” Teacher*
- “The children enjoyed the Youth Activator sessions – they enjoyed the challenge of the circuit training. The mental health sessions were well paced and engaging, with a good mixture of talking and listening” Teacher*
- “I enjoyed it because it taught me how to be more kind and it taught me how to be more fit” Student*
- 3.8 You Move is a programme focused on delivering physical activity provision with a focus on families who access free school meals and may need extra support which the Wellbeing also deliver.
- 3.9 The programme captures data at baseline when families join and then throughout the programme to demonstrate impact and need. Out of the 1870 school aged children on You Move in Cherwell 27% of these young people reported a Mental Health concern which again showcases the need.
- 3.10 Between registration on You Move and six month 42% of children reported an improvement in their happiness and wellbeing highlighting the impact of an intervention linked to young people, physical activity and mental wellbeing.

## 4. Details

4.1 The current Mental Health and Physical Activity programme is delivered by the Youth Activator programme in schools as detailed above which is combining physical activity with mental health themes.

All the options below would follow a tender process and be open to organisations that deliver mental health provision to apply.

4.2 All options would enhance provision being offered with the recommended Option 4 increasing physical activity and mental health provision offered by the Wellbeing team through existing programmes along with also conducting research to really determine what the need is locally in Cherwell for mental health provision in young people through partner and resident engagement.

Options 1 – 3 include the below elements.

Six Supported Self-help sessions with children in small groups covering Anxiety / Stress, Anger, Assertiveness, 5 ways to Wellbeing, Low Mood, Sleeping Issues, Mindfulness, Worrying Thoughts and Bereavement.

### Whole school assemblies

Assembly explores what mental health, emotional wellbeing and resilience is and provides a brief focus on coping mechanisms.

### Resilience workshops

Children and young people might then be part of our workshop which is delivered to individual classes. The workshops are open and friendly and equip young people with the skills to help them talk about and deal with their emotions, as well as giving them an understanding of what resilience means and how they can build their own resilience.

### One-to-one support sessions (Supported Self Help)

If a young person meets the criteria for the service, they will be offered a session to talk to a trained professional to explore what is available and what might be helpful. Will also be agreed together when and how frequently further sessions need to be and work up a plan of what is covered. The one-to-one sessions are designed to support young people's understanding of their own mental health and to give them the tools to stay well. There will also be support schools by signposting them to other appropriate services if necessary.

4.2 **Option 1** Children young people Supported Self-Help pilot for 7–11-year-olds attending Primary School Clusters for agreed terms in Banbury, Bicester or Kidlington

1 x Children and Young People Wellbeing Worker

18.5hrs term time only

1-year fixed term contract from September 2025 - July 2026

Cost £22, 809. includes central costs HR, Finance, Safeguarding and Line Management

Potential Benefits – This option would be increase specialist support for primary School children on a small scale.

Potential Disbenefits - We currently do not understand fully what the need is for additional specialist support for young people in Cherwell and this option would only cater for a very small number of children aged 7 – 11 years old Option 4 would provide this initial research information

#### 4.2 **Option 2** Children Young People offer for Secondary Schools Banbury, Bicester or Kidlington

1 x Children and Young People Wellbeing Worker

18.5 hrs term time only

1-year fixed term contract from September 2025 - July 2026

Cost £22,809. includes central costs, HR, Finance, Safeguarding and Line Management

Potential Benefits - This option would increase specialist support for Secondary School children on a small scale.

Potential Disbenefits – We currently do not understand fully what the need is for additional specialist support for young people in Cherwell and this option would only cater for a very small number of children aged 11 – 16 years old. Option 4 would provide this initial research information

#### 4.3 **Option 3** Combination of Primary School Cluster and Secondary School offer in Banbury, Bicester or Kidlington

2 x Children and Young People Wellbeing Workers

2 x 18.5 hrs term time only

2 x 1-year fixed term contract from September 2025 - July 2026

Cost £45,618 includes central costs, HR, Finance, Safeguarding and Line Management

Potential benefits – This option would be to increase specialist support for both Primary School and Secondary School children on a small scale.

Potential Disbenefits – We currently do not understand fully what the need is for additional specialist support for young people in Cherwell and this option would only cater for a very small number of children aged 7 – 16 years old. Option 4 would provide this initial research information

**4.4 Option 4 Recommended Option.** Increase the Physical Activity and Mental Health provision that the Youth Activators within the Wellbeing team currently deliver. Visit an additional eight schools and deliver an additional forty-eight sessions between December 2024 and April 2025. In addition, deliver five blocks and thirty family sessions as part of the You Move programme to families who are part of You Move programme.

Conduct research project including partner engagement with Public Health, PCAHMS, Education, residents and other stakeholders to assess what the needs are for increased mental health provision for young people in Cherwell and the investment required going forward.

Cost

- Additional eight Schools access six week sessions (additional 48 sessions) £2,661 (Found within Wellbeing Budget )
- Additional five lots of six-week blocks delivered for families on the You Move programme £1,663 (Found within Wellbeing Budget )
- Research & Stakeholder Engagement £3,500 Would need to be found from Policy Contingency

## **5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

5.1 Commissioning specialist support in options 1 – 3 was rejected due to currently not fully understanding what the needs and requirements are for young people around mental health in Cherwell and the investment required.

If the recommended Option 4 is approved, this would allow for an evidence base to be developed that looked at the needs of children ascertain what would be required and be sustainable in the longer term around Mental Health support, partner involvement and the scale of investment required. Option 4 would also provide increased provision for children and families while the research was being conducted

## **6 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

6.1 The recommended option would be for Option 4 As detailed above if agreed there would need to be £3500 funding for the research to be conducted from Policy Contingency budget.

6.2 Option 4 would enable the council to conduct research through stakeholders and residents to better understand the needs around what mental health provision for young people in Cherwell is needed and investment required going forward.

6.3 Option 4 Would also provide increased provision for young people and families through the Wellbeing team while the research was being conducted

## Decision Information

<b>Key Decision</b>	Yes
<b>Subject to Call in</b>	Yes
<b>If not, why not subject to call in</b>	
<b>Ward(s) Affected</b>	All wards

## Document Information

<b>Appendices</b>	
<b>Appendix 1</b>	
<b>Appendix 2</b>	
<b>Background Papers</b>	
<b>Reference Papers</b>	
<b>Report Author</b>	Tom Gubbins
<b>Report Author contact details</b>	<a href="mailto:Tom.gubbins@cherwell-dc.gov.uk">Tom.gubbins@cherwell-dc.gov.uk</a>



<b>This report is public</b>	
<b>Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing Policy</b>	
<b>Committee</b>	Executive
<b>Date of Committee</b>	4 November 2024
<b>Portfolio Holder presenting the report</b>	Portfolio Holder for Housing, Councillor Nick Cotter
<b>Date Portfolio Holder agreed report</b>	15 October 2024
<b>Report of</b>	Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing, Nicola Riley

## Purpose of report

To seek approval for the reviewed Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing Policy.

## 1. Recommendations

The Executive resolves:

- 1.1 To approve the reviewed Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing Policy.

## 2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 A House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) is any rented property occupied by three or more people from different households who share basic facilities. By law, any such HMO that is occupied by five or more individuals must have a licence to operate. Such properties tend to be larger and higher-risk and therefore warrant a greater level of regulatory oversight.
- 2.2 As part of its statutory duties regarding private sector housing and enforcement, the Council must ensure that this type of housing is safe for those in occupation and is appropriately regulated. The Council has a statutory duty to make such arrangements as are necessary to secure the effective implementation of HMO licensing in their district.
- 2.3 This is a review of an existing policy and function. One of the main changes outlined within the policy is for the Council to charge for access to the Register of HMO licences, which it does not do charge for currently. The other main change is the proposed introduction of a schedule of instances when the Council will offer refunds of HMO licence fees, to provide clarity on this matter.

## Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications	Commentary			
<b>Finance</b>	<p>There are no financial implications arising from this report which is to approve the reviewed HMO licensing policy. The fees and charges applicable to the issuing of HMO licences is within existing budget.</p> <p>Kelly Wheeler, Finance Business Partner, 30 September 2024</p>			
<b>Legal</b>	<p>The proposed changes to the Policy are legally compliant.</p> <p>Shahin Ismail, Interim head of Legal Services, 2 October 2024</p>			
<b>Risk Management</b>	<p>There are no risk implications arising directly from this report. This policy review mitigates the risks of not meeting customer needs and keep the service legislative sound.</p> <p>Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 02 October 2024</p>			
<b>Impact Assessments</b>	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
<b>Equality Impact</b>		x		<p>The policy has a neutral impact on group within the protected characteristics and has been developed in line with the council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion framework, ensuring compliance with the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 2 October 2024</p>
<b>A</b> Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		x		
<b>B</b> Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		x		
<b>Climate &amp; Environmental Impact</b>		x		<p>An Equalities and Climate Impact Assessment is attached at Appendix 2</p>
<b>ICT &amp; Digital Impact</b>		x		<p>Not applicable</p>

<b>Data Impact</b>		x		Not applicable
<b>Procurement &amp; subsidy</b>		x		Not applicable
<b>Council Priorities</b>	Housing that meets your needs			
<b>Human Resources</b>	Not applicable			
<b>Property</b>	Not applicable			
<b>Consultation &amp; Engagement</b>	Not applicable			

## Supporting Information

### 3. Background

- 3.1 The Council currently licences 230 HMOs across Cherwell and keeps a statutory register of these properties.
- 3.2 A landlord that has an HMO must apply to the Council for a licence. A fee is charged for the Council to consider and assess the issuing of a licence as well as for issuing the licence itself. In its assessment, the Council must ensure that the landlord/applicant is an appropriate person to hold a licence as well as assessing the safety and security of the accommodation.
- 3.3 The Council also must ensure that the property is going to be managed appropriately and thus the landlord/applicant has adequate arrangements in place to support tenants when repairs are required, for instance.
- 3.4 If a landlord does not comply with the terms of the licence, licences can be revoked and other enforcement actions can be considered in conjunction, depending on the circumstances.
- 3.5 The Council issues licences for 5 years in most circumstances. At the end of the 5 year period, there is a renewals process to reissue a licence.
- 3.6 The Council must keep a register of the licences, temporary exemptions from licensing, and management orders in force at any given time. People can make requests to view the register that the Council holds.
- 3.7 The Council does not operate Additional Licensing of other types of HMO, nor licensing of other types of rented accommodation through Selective Licensing.

## **4. Details**

- 4.1 The reviewed policy outlines the Council's statutory duties and responsibilities regarding the licensing of HMOs and the actions that it takes to ensure that this type of accommodation is safe for tenants to live within and to ensure that landlords operate responsibly.
- 4.2 The reviewed policy includes a clause to charge for supplying a copy of the Register of HMO Licences. As part of the Council's responsibilities within legislation, the Council must ensure that the HMO register is available for inspection by members of the public at its head office. However, almost all requests are for copies of the register. When a request is received, officer time is required to check the system, return the information and ready it for release.
- 4.3 Legislation allows for the Council to charge a reasonable fee for providing this service and this fee is determined locally. The Council does not currently exercise its legal ability to do this. The policy now outlines that the Council proposes to charge for supplying copies of the full register. Any proposed charge will be linked to the Officer time taken to complete the request made and will be set out within the Council's fees and charges report.
- 4.4 As part of its duties within legislation, the Council must process and determine applications within a reasonable timeframe. This timeframe has been adjusted from 12 weeks to 8 weeks.
- 4.5 The revised policy proposes that incomplete applications will be automatically closed after 28 days in cases where the licence is unable to progress due to the landlord/applicant, for example failing to supply all requisite information, not providing access for Officers to inspect, or fees are unpaid.

## **5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

- 5.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: Not bring forward a reviewed and amended policy. As there has not been any recent changes to legislation in this area, there is no imperative for the current policy to be changed or reviewed. However, it is important the Council policies are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are able to meet customer needs, service needs and are legislatively sound. This option is therefore rejected.

## **6 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

- 6.1 It is important that the Council has up to date policies and procedures for its statutory and key service areas and it is important that they are legislatively and operationally sound. A periodic review of policies is therefore appropriate.

## Decision Information

<b>Key Decision</b>	Yes
<b>Subject to Call in</b>	Yes
<b>If not, why not subject to call in</b>	N/A
<b>Ward(s) Affected</b>	All wards

## Document Information

<b>Appendices</b>	
<b>Appendix 1</b>	Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing Policy
<b>Appendix 2</b>	ECIA – HMO Licensing Policy
<b>Background Papers</b>	None
<b>Reference Papers</b>	None
<b>Report Author</b>	Richard Smith – Head of Housing
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***Cherwell***  
DISTRICT COUNCIL  
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

# Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing Policy

2024

Version	Date	Author	Change
1.0	November 2024	David North	New

## Contents

1. Policy overview .....	3
1.1 Introduction.....	3
1.2 Strategic aims of this policy .....	3
1.3 Legal framework.....	3
2. Applications for licences.....	4
3. Deciding whether to grant the licence .....	4
3.1 Reasonably suitable for occupation .....	5
3.2 Fit and proper persons.....	5
3.3 Satisfactory management arrangements .....	6
3.4 Suitability of the property .....	7
4. Licence conditions .....	7
5. Licence fees.....	8
6. Issuing of licences.....	8
7. Variation of licences .....	9
8. Revocation of licences .....	9
9. Appeals of licence decisions .....	9
10. Temporary Exemption Notices (TENs) .....	9
11. Enforcement .....	10
12. The HMO Licence Register .....	11
13. Compliance with other legislation.....	11
13.1 Planning permission .....	11
14. Policy review.....	11
<b>Appendix 1</b> .....	12
Discretionary Conditions (General) .....	12



## **1. Policy overview**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Cherwell District Council as Local Housing Authority has a statutory duty to effectively implement mandatory licensing of certain types of shared residential properties known as Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).

This policy sets out how the Council will administer and determine HMO licence applications and carry out its associated HMO licensing functions.

### **1.2 Strategic aims of this policy**

The Council recognises that effective regulation of the private rented sector is vital for helping to improve standards, combating poor performing landlords, and improving the health and wellbeing of Cherwell's residents. HMO licensing is an important part of housing standards enforcement, and the overarching aim of this policy is to ensure we can undertake our statutory duties efficiently, effectively and lawfully.

Through our HMO licensing activities under this policy, we also seek to:

- Ensure that HMO accommodation is safe and operated appropriately and responsibly
- Enhance the safety, health, and wellbeing of residents and contribute to reducing inequalities through improved housing conditions.
- Contribute to tackling fuel poverty and climate change by improving the energy efficiency of HMOs in the District through licensing.

### **1.3 Legal framework**

Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004 ("the Act") provides for local housing authorities to license HMOs in their areas if they meet the definition of an HMO set out under section 55 of the Act. The Prescribed Description Order 2018<sup>1</sup> sets out the types of buildings that are subject to mandatory licensing. Certain buildings which are exempt from HMO Licensing are prescribed in Schedule 14 of The Act, and associated regulations<sup>2</sup>.

An HMO is subject to Mandatory Licensing if:

- a. It is occupied by five (5) or more people; and
- b. The occupants are from two (2) or more separate households; and

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<sup>1</sup> The Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Prescribed Description) (England) Order 2018 (No. 221)

<sup>2</sup> The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006 (No. 373) as amended by the Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Additional Provisions) (England) Regulations 2007 (No. 1903)

- c. It meets either:
- i. The “standard test” under section 254(2) of the Act; or
  - ii. The “self-contained flat test” under section 254(3) of the Act but is not a purpose-built flat situated in a block comprising three or more self-contained flats; or
  - iii. the converted building test under section 254(4) of the Act.

## **2. Applications for licences**

Landlords of HMOs meeting the Mandatory Licensable definition must apply to the Council for a licence. To be considered a valid application, the following must be provided to the Council in an acceptable format:

- The Council’s HMO licence application form completed in full, including all information specified by Regulations<sup>3</sup>, plus any further information and documentation required by the Council,
- A declaration signed by the applicant (and also the proposed licence holder where different); and
- The specified “Stage-1” fee paid in full.

Where an HMO already has a licence in force, and a valid application is submitted before expiry and the same Licence Holder is proposed, a renewal application will be accepted, and a reduced fee applied. In all other cases, a new application form must be completed. Licences may only relate to a single HMO and are non-transferrable.

Incomplete applications will be closed after 28 days if missing information is not provided when requested, the correct fees are not paid, or arrangements to inspect the property cannot be made. A new application will need to be submitted in such cases.

## **3. Deciding whether to grant the licence**

When the Council receives a valid application, it must decide whether to grant or refuse to grant an HMO Licence by reference to the following matters:

- The house or flat in question is reasonably suitable for occupation by the intended number of occupants and households.
- The proposed licence holder and manager are fit and proper persons.
- The proposed licence holder is the most appropriate person to hold the licence.
- The manager is either the person having control or an agent or employee of the person having control.

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

- The proposed management arrangements are satisfactory.

The following sections explain how the Council will reach its decisions on these matters.

### **3.1 Reasonably suitable for occupation**

Before granting an HMO licence, the Council must be satisfied that the house or flat in question is reasonably suitable for occupation by the proposed number of occupants and households. If the Council judges the property is not currently suitable, we may decide the property can be made suitable by requiring works as licence conditions, and/or we may specify a different maximum number of occupants or households. If the Council judges that the property cannot be made suitable for occupancy, we will refuse to grant the HMO Licence.

In reaching this decision, we will principally refer to the standards set by the HMO Regulations<sup>4</sup> and our adopted HMO Standards Policy. We will also give due regard to such other legislation and standards as we judge relevant to the case, such as the Building Regulations, Planning, and British Standards.

### **3.2 Fit and proper persons**

In order to issue a licence, the Council must be satisfied that the proposed licence holder is a “fit and proper person” and the most appropriate person to hold the licence. The most appropriate person to hold the licence will generally be the owner or manager of the property. Where another person is proposed, this must be justified to our satisfaction.

The Council must also be satisfied that the proposed manager of the house is the person having control (as defined in section 263 of the Act), or is an agent or employee of the person having control of the house, and is a fit and proper person.

The Council will generally consider a person to be fit and proper unless evidence to the contrary is found.

The Council must have regard to any of the following relating to the proposed Licence Holder or proposed Manager:

- Any unspent convictions that may be relevant to their role as either licence holder or manager and, in particular, any conviction involving fraud or other dishonesty, or violence or drugs or any offence listed in Schedule 3 to the Sexual Offences Act 2003.
- They have been found by a court or tribunal to have practised unlawful discrimination on grounds of sex, colour, race, ethnic or national origins or disability in, or in connection with, the carrying on of any business.
- They have contravened any provision of any enactment relating to housing, public health, environmental health or landlord and tenant law (including Part

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

3 of the Immigration Act 2014) which led to civil or criminal proceedings resulting in a judgement being made against them.

- They have ever had a licence refused, been convicted of breaching the conditions of a licence under Parts 2 or 3 of the Act; or have acted otherwise than in accordance with a Code of Practice approved under section 233 of the Act that concerns a property in their ownership (whether or not in the Council's district).
- They own or have previously owned or managed property that has been the subject of an interim or final management order or a special interim management order under the Housing Act 2004.
- They require leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom but do not have it.
- They are insolvent or an undischarged bankrupt.

We must also be satisfied that no banning order under section 16 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 is in force against any person who has an interest in the house or part of it.

In addition, the Council may also take into account whether any other person proposed to be involved in the management of the house, plus any person associated or formerly associated with the applicant or manager has done any of these things, if we consider this information relevant.

Where any evidence of the above is subsequently found, the Council will review the person's fit and proper status and may revoke their licence.

### **3.3 Satisfactory management arrangements**

In order to issue a licence, the Council must be satisfied that the proposed management arrangements for the house are satisfactory. In particular, the Council will expect the licence holder to have in place the following arrangements:

- A person to whom the tenants can report defects at the HMO, including an emergency contact, and for this information to be displayed in written form in the premises.
- An established system for periodically inspecting the HMO to identify any repairs or maintenance.
- The ability to finance and to undertake repairs and maintenance in an appropriately timely fashion.
- Where the manager is not the owner of the property, the manager must be able to fund and implement urgent repairs in those situations where it is not possible to obtain the owner's approval without undue delay.
- A system to deal with any anti-social behaviour caused by tenants or their visitors, which causes nuisance or annoyance to people living in the vicinity.

The Council may also consider whether any person proposed to be involved in the management of the house has a sufficient level of competence. In this regard the Council may take into account matters such as the frequency and nature of any validated complaints we receive in connection with the property or its management, and the adequacy of any required response.

### **3.4 Suitability of the property**

The Council will seek to inspect all HMOs following receipt of a valid application and before issuing any new or renewed licence. The purpose of inspections will be to assess the suitability of the property for the proposed number of occupants and households, having regard to the standards prescribed in regulation, and the Council's HMO Standards Policy.

HMOs will also be prioritised for assessment under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) to identify whether the Council needs to exercise any functions under Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004. The Council will seek to ensure that all properties are inspected at least once every five years to ensure properties are free from significant hazards and complying with the HMO Regulations.

Further inspections may be undertaken throughout the lifetime of the licence. Inspections may include (but are not restricted to) visits to check compliance with licence conditions, to assess ongoing confidence in management, or to investigate complaints.

## **4. Licence conditions**

HMO licences must include certain conditions and may also include such conditions that the Council considers appropriate for regulating any aspect of the HMO's management, use, occupation, conditions or contents.

Licences issued by the Council will include the following categories of conditions:

### **Mandatory conditions**

The Housing Act 2004 Schedule 4 (as amended) prescribes Mandatory Licence Conditions which must be included in all HMO licences.

### **Discretionary conditions (general)**

The Council has determined that a set of standard conditions will be included in all HMO licences issued in Cherwell. The purpose of these general conditions is to secure the effective management of the licensed HMOs across the district. These standard conditions are attached as **Appendix 1** to this policy.

### **Discretionary conditions (specific)**

HMO licences issued by the Council may include bespoke conditions designed to regulate specific matters relating to the management, use, occupation, conditions or contents of the licensed HMO in question.

## **5. Licence fees**

The Council will charge a fee for each licence. Fees will be payable in two stages. Stage-1 fees must accompany the submission of the application form. Stage-2 fees are payable within 14 days of service of the draft licence (the “Intention Notice”). Both fees must be paid in full before a final licence will be issued.

The fees will periodically be reviewed and will be set in accordance with available best-practice guidance. The Council may determine that different fees will apply in different situations and may, for example, set a lower rate for licence renewals, or a higher fee for new HMOs found operating without a licence or for late payment of the Stage-2 fee. Fees will be reviewed and revised as necessary through the Council’s fees and charges setting procedures and as required by any legislative changes.

The Assistant Director for Wellbeing and Housing, in consultation with the Lead Member for Housing may determine the circumstances when fees may or may not be refunded and determine the proportion to be refunded or retained by the Council.

The Council will publish on its website details of the fees payable and the circumstances and amounts when the Council will issue refunds.

## **6. Issuing of licences**

Applications for licences must be determined within a reasonable period of time. Our aim is to issue the final licence within 8 weeks of receiving an application.

The applicant will be given 14 days after the date of service of the Intention Notice to make any representations regarding the proposed licence and to pay the specified Stage-2 fee. Any representations received will be reviewed by a senior officer and a written response provided before the Council proceeds to issue the final licence (the “Decision Notice”).

If changes are to be made to the licence following the representations (beyond minor administrative corrections), a further draft licence (known as a “Modification Notice”) will be issued, and a further representations period of 7 days will be given.

No final licence will be issued until the full specified fee (stage-1 and stage-2) have been paid in full.

Licences will generally be issued for 5 years. For new applications, this will be from the date of issue. For licence renewals, the 5-year period will run from the expiration date of the current licence.

However, licences may be issued for shorter durations in cases where we have concerns relating to the management of the property, including non-compliance with licence conditions, breaches of the HMO Management Regulations or contraventions of other relevant legislation. In such cases, licences will generally be issued annually and the length of licence reviewed upon renewal.

Licences and notices will be served by email wherever possible.

## **7. Variation of licences**

The Council may vary a licence either with the agreement of the licence holder or without agreement if it considers there has been a change of circumstances since the licence was granted. Change of circumstances will be taken to include the discovery of new information.

## **8. Revocation of licences**

The Council may revoke a licence either with the agreement of the licence holder or in any of the following circumstances:

- Where the Council considers that the licence holder or any other relevant person has committed a serious breach of a licence condition or repeated breaches of a condition.
- Where the Council no longer considers that the licence holder is a fit and proper person to hold the licence.
- Where the Council considers that the management of the premises is no longer being carried out by fit and proper persons.
- Where the premises has ceased to be an HMO requiring a licence.
- Where the Council considers that, were the licence to expire at that time, it would not grant a further licence because of the structure of the premises.

The Council will seek to revoke licences at the point at which it considers it has sufficient evidence of the relevant offences or contraventions.

## **9. Appeals of licence decisions**

The licence applicant, licence holder, anyone with an estate or interest in the premises, a person managing the premises or anyone on whom the licence would place any restriction or obligation, may appeal to the First-tier Tribunal against the Council's decision to either grant or refuse to grant a licence, or in connection with decisions in relation to revocation or variation. The appeal period is set at 28 days.

## **10. Temporary Exemption Notices (TENs)**

Where a landlord or manager makes an application in writing, the Council may issue a Temporary Exemption Notice (TEN) for three months if we are satisfied that particular steps are genuinely being taken to ensure either that the building will cease to be an HMO, or that it will become an HMO that is no longer subject to Mandatory HMO Licensing.

A suitable step could include entering into a contract for the sale of the building with vacant possession for use other than as an HMO. However, simply putting, or proposing to put an HMO on the market for sale will not normally be sufficient for the Council to agree to issue a TEN.

TENs will be refused in cases where it appears the application has only been sought with the aim of avoiding or evading licensing, since that would be contrary to the purpose of the Act.

The Council will confirm its decision in writing by serving a Notice giving the reasons for its decision whether or not to grant the exemption. Applicants may appeal the decision to the First-tier Tribunal within 28 days.

Temporary exemption can only be granted for a maximum of three months, although in exceptional circumstances it can be renewed for a further three months on further application to the Council.

If the licence holder dies while the licence is in force the licence ceases and for three months from the death the building will be treated as having a temporary exemption notice granted. During that period the licence holder's personal representatives may apply to the Council for an extension to the exemption for a further three months whilst affairs are being sorted out. Whilst the Council does not have to grant a further extension, consent is unlikely to be unreasonably withheld in such cases.

## **11. Enforcement**

Under the provisions of the Housing Act 2004, it is an offence to:

- Have control of or manage an HMO which is required to be licensed but is not so licensed.
- Have control of or manage an HMO which is licensed and to knowingly permit another to occupy the house with the result that the other person's occupation results in the house being occupied by more households or persons than is authorised by the licence.
- Be a licence holder or a person on whom restrictions or obligations are imposed under a license and fail to comply with any condition of the licence.
- Fail to comply with the HMO Management Regulations.

These offences carry a range of punitive actions which the Council may wish to pursue depending on the circumstances of the case. Any decision to pursue enforcement action will be taken in line with the relevant Enforcement Policies.

Whenever a property is unlicensed, we will seek to get the property licensed in parallel with pursuing any punitive actions such as financial penalties or prosecution. Where no licence application is made, or the proposed licence holder is not a fit and proper person, the Council may take over the management of the property via an Interim Management Order. Such action may follow the Council discovering an unlicensed HMO, following the revocation of a licence for non-compliance, or the imposition of a Banning Order under the Housing and Planning Act 2016.



## **12. The HMO Licence Register**

The Council must maintain a register of all HMO licences, temporary exemption notices, and management orders, which are in force.

Anyone wishing to view the register can do so as follows:

- A simplified register excluding certain personal information will be available free of charge on our website.
- The full register can be made available to view at our head offices by appointment, free of charge.
- A copy of the full register can be provided on request. There is a charge for this service. This fee will be set in accordance with section 5 of this Policy.

## **13. Compliance with other legislation**

We expect HMO landlords to comply with all their legal duties. Where we discover that a relevant person involved in the licensing or management of the property has failed to comply with any other relevant legislation, we will review the facts of the case and may vary or revoke the licence or take such other action as we judge necessary.

There is currently no legal requirement for HMO landlords to produce an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) for each dwelling. Where a property does not have a current EPC, the Council will place conditions on the HMO landlord to obtain one. Where the EPC is below the level of a “C” rating, the Council will seek to affect improvements at the property to achieve a C rating or above, or the greatest improvement that the property can achieve.

### **13.1 Planning permission**

Some HMO properties will require planning permission to lawfully operate as an HMO, for example *sui generis* use as a large HMO (7+ occupants in planning law). Where such permission is not in place, we will generally in the first instance grant an HMO licence with conditions requiring that either the relevant permission is sought retrospectively, or the occupancy is reduced below the relevant threshold. Such action, and any subsequent steps, will be taken in consultation with the Council’s Planning Department.

## **14. Policy review**

This Policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if there is a significant legislative change.

# Appendix 1

## Discretionary Conditions (General)

The following conditions are included in all HMO licences issued by Cherwell District Council to ensure the effective management of all licensed HMOs across the district.

### 1. FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

The Licence Holder must ensure a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment which meets all requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 is in place for the HMO. A copy of the fire risk assessment must be provided to the Council on demand.

#### COMPLETION:

This must be complied with from the date of the Licence.

#### AUTHORITY:

Section 67(1)(a) of the Housing Act 2004; the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

### 2. EMERGENCY LIGHTING

If emergency lighting has been installed at the house, the Licence Holder must:

1. Ensure that the emergency lighting system is kept in good working order in accordance with the relevant provisions of BS 5266; and
2. At least annually, obtain and submit a certificate or declaration stating the condition and positioning of all emergency lighting units and confirming that these have been tested and maintained regularly.

#### COMPLETION:

This must be complied with from the date of the Licence.

#### AUTHORITY:

Section 67(1)(a) of the Housing Act 2004; the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

### 3. INVENTORY OF HOUSE CONTENTS AND STATEMENT OF CONDITION

Supply the occupiers of the house, on the commencement of their occupancy, with:

- a) A written inventory of the contents of the house or letting, and
- b) A written statement of the condition of each room, and its fittings.

The Licence Holder must, on demand, provide the Council with a copy of these documents.

#### COMPLETION:

This must be complied with from the date of the Licence.

#### AUTHORITY:

Section 67(1)(b) of the Housing Act 2004

#### **4. MANAGER'S DETAILS**

The Licence Holder must display, in a prominent position within the house, a notice containing the name, address and telephone contact number of the person who manages the house.

**COMPLETION:**

This must be complied with from the date of the licence.

**AUTHORITY:**

The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006 Regulation 3

#### **5. DISPLAY A COPY OF THE LICENCE**

The Licence Holder must prominently display a copy of the HMO Licence in the house. It shall be located adjacent to the Notice containing the name, address and telephone contact number of the person who manages the house.

**COMPLETION:**

This must be complied with from the date of the licence.

**AUTHORITY:**

Section 67(1)(a) of the Housing Act 2004

#### **6. FIRE NOTICES**

Provide a notice informing occupants about what to do in the event of a fire. The notice shall be prominently displayed and located adjacent to the Notice containing the name, address and telephone contact number of the person who manages the house.

**COMPLETION:**

This must be complied with from the date of the licence.

**AUTHORITY:**

The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006, Paragraph 5 of Schedule 3

#### **7. KEEP FIRE ESCAPE ROUTE CLEAR**

Ensure that all fire escape routes are maintained clear of obstructions, storage and potential sources of ignition.

**COMPLETION:**

This must be complied with from the date of the Licence.

**AUTHORITY:**

The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006, Regulation 4(1)(a)

## **8. CHANGES TO ADDRESS DETAILS**

The Licence Holder must advise the Council in writing of any permanent change to the address or contact details of each person (except any mortgage provider) named on the licence application form.

### **COMPLETION:**

This must be done within one (1) month of a permanent change occurring.

### **AUTHORITY:**

Section 67(1)(a) of the Housing Act 2004

## **9. CHANGES WITHIN THE HOUSE**

The Licence Holder must advise the Council in writing of any change in the house (apart from the change of occupants) that is likely to affect the operation or management of the HMO.

### **COMPLETION:**

This must be done within one (1) month of the change occurring.

### **AUTHORITY:**

Section 67(1)(a) of the Housing Act 2004

## **10. CHANGES TO PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

The Licence Holder must advise the Council in writing of any change to the circumstances of each person (except any mortgage provider) named on the licence application form if the new circumstances are likely to affect the ability of such a person to carry out any function concerning the operation or management of the HMO.

### **COMPLETION:**

This must be done within one (1) month of a permanent change occurring.

### **AUTHORITY:**

Section 67(1)(a) of the Housing Act 2004

## **11. PREVENTION OF ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

The Licence Holder must take all reasonable and practical steps to prevent or minimise any nuisance or antisocial behaviour arising in connection with the HMO.

### **COMPLETION:**

This must be complied with from the date of the Licence.

### **AUTHORITY:**

Section 67(1)(a) of the Housing Act 2004

**Cherwell District Council**  
**Equality and Climate Impact Assessment**

**Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing Policy**

Appendix 2

Contents

Section 1: Summary details..... 3

Section 2: Detail of proposal..... 4

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics..... 8

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts ..... 9

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Wider Impacts ..... 10

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Climate Change Impacts ..... 11

Section 4: Review ..... 13

## Section 1: Summary details

<b>Directorate and Service Area</b>	Wellbeing and Housing – Housing Services
<b>What is being assessed</b> (e.g. name of policy, procedure, project, service or proposed service change).	Cherwell District Council HMO Licensing Policy 2024
<b>Is this a new or existing function or policy?</b>	Revised policy to cover existing service function
<b>Summary of assessment</b> Briefly summarise the policy or proposed service change. Summarise possible impacts. Does the proposal bias, discriminate or unfairly disadvantage individuals or groups within the community?  (following completion of the assessment).	<p>The Council recognises that effective regulation of the private rented sector is vital for helping to improve standards, combating poor performing landlords, and improving the health and wellbeing of Cherwell’s residents. HMO licensing is an important part of housing standards enforcement, and the overarching aim of this policy is to ensure we can undertake our statutory duties efficiently, effectively and lawfully.</p> <p>Through our HMO licensing activities under this policy, we also seek to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that HMO accommodation is safe and operated appropriately and responsibly</li> <li>• Enhance the safety, health, and wellbeing of residents and contribute to reducing inequalities through improved housing conditions.</li> <li>• Contribute to tackling fuel poverty and climate change by improving the energy efficiency of HMOs in the District through licensing.</li> </ul>
<b>Completed By</b>	David North
<b>Authorised By</b>	Richard Smith

<b>Date of Assessment</b>	September 2024
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## Section 2: Detail of proposal

<p><b>Context / Background</b></p> <p>Briefly summarise the background to the policy or proposed service change, including reasons for any changes from previous versions.</p>	<p>The Council has a statutory duty to process and grant licences for larger houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) within its District. The HMO Licensing Policy sets out the Council’s approach to undertaking its HMO licensing duties and responsibilities.</p> <p>CDC’s HMO Licensing Policy was last reviewed and updated in 2018 due to a change in the legislation at that time. That policy was approved by the Executive. This new version of the policy follows a routine review and update to ensure the policy remains legislatively and operationally sound.</p> <p>The process of HMO Licensing is largely prescribed in legislation, and the previous policy satisfactorily reflected the statute. Consequently, the overall approach and procedures remain largely unchanged in this revised policy.</p> <p>The Council must maintain a register of all the HMO Licences currently in force. The Council publishes most of this information freely on its website, but to protect privacy, we redact certain personal information. Several times a year the Council receives requests for copies of the register, specifically asking for the names and addresses of the Licence Holders and Agents. We believe this information is then used for direct marketing. The legislation permits the Council to charge a reasonable fee for providing copies of the register, and this reviewed policy proposes we do so. The redacted register will remain freely available on the Council’s website, and members of the public will be able to arrange to view (but not copy) the register for free by appointment at our offices.</p> <p>At present, the Council does not have a defined framework setting out when and how it will offer refunds in connection with incomplete or withdrawn HMO licence applications. To provide clarity on this matter, this revised policy proposes that a refunds framework be implemented and published on the Council’s website.</p> <p>As part of its duties within legislation, the Council must process and determine applications within a reasonable timeframe. This revised policy proposes that our target timeframe be adjusted from 12 weeks to 8 weeks</p>
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	<p>To provide clarity and ensure applications are determined in a timely manner, the revised policy proposes that incomplete applications will be automatically closed after 28 days in cases where the licence is unable to progress due to the actions or inactions of the landlord or licence applicant.</p> <p>The legislation permits the Council to attach conditions to licences to ensure that each HMO is being properly managed. The Council has a standard set of conditions which it applies to all HMO licences that it issues. For the purposes of transparency, it is proposed that the discretionary licence conditions which the Council attaches to every HMO licence are included as an Appendix to the Policy.</p> <p>The policy has been rewritten and reformatted with the aim of making it as accessible and user-friendly as possible, within the constraints of it being a highly complex, specialised and legislatively prescriptive subject matter.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Proposals</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Explain the detail of the proposals, including why this has been decided as the best course of action.</p>	<p>The reviewed policy outlines the Council's statutory duties and responsibilities regarding the licensing of HMOs and the actions that it takes to ensure that this type of accommodation is safe for tenants to live within and to ensure that landlords operate responsibly.</p> <p>The reviewed policy includes a clause to charge for supplying a copy of the Register of HMO Licences. As part of the Council's responsibilities within legislation, the Council must ensure that the HMO register is available for inspection by members of the public at its head office. However, almost all requests are for copies of the register. When a request is received, officer time is required to check the system, return the information and ready it for release.</p> <p>Legislation allows for the Council to charge a reasonable fee for providing this service and this fee is determined locally. The Council does not currently exercise its legal ability to do this. The policy now outlines that the Council proposes to charge for supplying copies of the full register. Any proposed charge will be linked to the Officer time taken to complete the request made and will be set out within the Council's fees and charges report.</p> <p>At present, the Council does not have a defined framework setting out when and how it will offer refunds in connection with incomplete or withdrawn HMO licence applications. To provide clarity on this matter, this revised policy proposes that the Assistant Director for Wellbeing and Housing, in consultation with the</p>

	<p>Portfolio Holder for Housing may determine the circumstances when fees may or may not be refunded and determine the proportion to be refunded or retained by the Council. The retained amount will be calculated based on the average Officer time taken up to that point in the licensing process. The Council will publish on its website details of the fees payable and the circumstances and amounts when the Council will issue refunds.</p> <p>As part of its duties within legislation, the Council must process and determine applications within a reasonable timeframe. This timeframe has been adjusted from 12 weeks to 8 weeks.</p> <p>The revised policy proposes that incomplete applications will be automatically closed after 28 days in cases where the licence is unable to progress due to the landlord/applicant, for example failing to supply all requisite information, not providing access for Officers to inspect, or fees are unpaid.</p>
<p><b>Evidence / Intelligence</b></p> <p>List and explain any data, consultation outcomes, research findings, feedback from service users and stakeholders etc, that supports your proposals and can help to inform the judgements you make about potential impact on different individuals, communities or groups and our ability to deliver our climate commitments.</p>	<p>These adjustments to the policy are based on operational experience/observations from licensing the 230 or so HMOs. Each licence is generally issued for 5 years, so almost all licences will have been renewed since the last policy was implemented (some will have ceased being HMOs and others will have been created new).</p>

<p><b>Alternatives considered / rejected</b></p> <p>Summarise any other approaches that have been considered in developing the policy or proposed service change, and the reasons why these were not adopted. This could include reasons why doing nothing is not an option.</p>	<p>The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.</p> <p>Option 1: Not bring forward a reviewed and amended policy. As there has not been any recent changes to legislation in this area, there is no imperative for the current policy to be changed or reviewed. However, it is important the Council policies are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are able to meet customer needs, service needs and are legislatively sound. This option is therefore rejected</p>
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### Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics

Protected Characteristic	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Gender Reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pregnancy & Maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sexual Orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Religion or Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

### Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Rural communities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Armed Forces	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Carers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Areas of deprivation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	HMOs are often concentrated in deprived urban areas. Improved regulation of HMOs through this policy should have a positive impact.	N/A	N/A	N/A

### Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Wider Impacts

<b>Additional Wider Impacts</b>	<b>No Impact</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Description of Impact</b>	<b>Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts</b>	<b>Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)</b>	<b>Timescale and monitoring arrangements</b>
<b>Other Council Services</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Customer Services help to deliver HMO licensing by providing administrative support for the Housing Standards Team. The amendments in this policy will help to provide clarity and enable cases to be determined more quickly.	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Providers</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Social Value <sup>1</sup></b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

<sup>1</sup> If the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 applies to this proposal, please summarise here how you have considered how the contract might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the relevant area

### Section 3: Impact Assessment - Climate Change Impacts

OCC and CDC aim to be carbon neutral by 2030. How will your proposal affect our ability to reduce carbon emissions related to

Climate change impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Energy use in our buildings or highways	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Our fleet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Staff travel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Purchased services and products (including construction)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Maintained schools	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

We are also committed to enable Cherwell to become carbon neutral by 2030 and Oxfordshire by 2050. How will your proposal affect our ability to:

Climate change impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Enable carbon emissions reduction at district/county level?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Through HMO Licensing the Council can require energy efficiency improvement works be undertaken to HMO properties.	N/A	N/A	N/A



### Section 4: Review

Where bias, negative impact or disadvantage is identified, the proposal and/or implementation can be adapted or changed; meaning there is a need for regular review. This review may also be needed to reflect additional data and evidence for a fuller assessment (proportionate to the decision in question). Please state the agreed review timescale for the identified impacts of the policy implementation or service change.

<b>Review Date</b>	2026
<b>Person Responsible for Review</b>	Housing Grants and Standards Team Leader
<b>Authorised By</b>	<b>Head of Housing</b>

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<b>This report is public</b>	
<b>Housing Grants and Assistance Policy</b>	
<b>Committee</b>	Executive
<b>Date of Committee</b>	4 November 2024
<b>Portfolio Holder presenting the report</b>	Portfolio Holder for Housing - Councillor Nick Cotter
<b>Date Portfolio Holder agreed report</b>	15 October 2024
<b>Report of</b>	Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing, Nicola Riley

## Purpose of report

To seek approval for the reviewed Housing Grants and Assistance Policy.

### 1. Recommendations

The Executive resolves:

- 1.1 To approve the reviewed Housing Grants and Assistance Policy.

### 2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 As part of its statutory duties, the Council provides financial assistance and other forms of help to improve and adapt homes within Cherwell. Whilst property owners have responsibilities for maintaining, improving or repairing their homes, the Council has legal obligations to ensure that they provide for and assist vulnerable members of the community.
- 2.2 Additionally, the Council offers a suite of discretionary grants that it uses to help households in the district that are experiencing certain challenges within their circumstances, based on which the grant can be offered. In order to offer discretionary grants, the Council must have a policy. The grants that can be offered and their terms is set by the Council and the current and proposed offer is outlined with the Policy.
- 2.3 The Policy combines two existing policies into a single document. The Private Sector Housing Grants and Assistance Policy and the Disabled Adaptations Policy have been combined to create one Housing Grants and Assistance Policy.

## Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications	Commentary			
<b>Finance</b>	There are no financial implications arising from this report which is to approve the combining of two existing policies to a single document. The issuing of DFGs and Discretionary grants are within existing budget. Kelly Wheeler, Finance Business Partner, 30 September 2024			
<b>Legal</b>	The policy changes proposed are compliant with legislation. Shahin Ismail, Interim Head of Legal Services, 2 October 2024			
<b>Risk Management</b>	There are no risk implications arising directly from this report. This policy review mitigates the risks of not meeting customer needs and keep the service legislative sound. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 2 October 2024			
<b>Impact Assessments</b>	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
<b>Equality Impact</b>	x			The policy has a positive impact on groups within the protected characteristics and has been developed in line with the council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion framework, ensuring compliance with the Equality Act 2010. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 02 October 2024
<b>A</b> Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?	x			The Policy enables vulnerable groups to access grants that would enhance their quality of life.
<b>B</b> Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?	x			The policy covers statutory grants, such as the Disabled Facilities Grant, which is targeted at those with disabilities and thus a protected characteristic.
<b>Climate &amp; Environmental Impact</b>		x		An Equalities and Climate Impact Assessment is attached at Appendix 2
<b>ICT &amp; Digital Impact</b>		x		Not applicable

<b>Data Impact</b>		x		Not applicable
<b>Procurement &amp; subsidy</b>		x		Not applicable
<b>Council Priorities</b>	Housing that meets your needs			
<b>Human Resources</b>	Not applicable			
<b>Property</b>	Not applicable			
<b>Consultation &amp; Engagement</b>	Not applicable			

## Supporting Information

### 3. Background

- 3.1 The Council has a statutory duty to provide Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) and discretionary powers to provide other forms of grants and assistance to improve housing conditions. Funding for DFGs comes from Oxfordshire County Council and the Better Care Fund in the form of an annual Capital grant. Discretionary grants are funded through CDC capital grant funding.
- 3.2 The Council delivers the DFG services through operating a Home Improvement Agency. This similarly is grant funded by the County Council. The Agency helps householders with the adaptations and assistance required through providing an end-to-end service to them, which includes helping them apply for, design, appoint contractors and project manage the grant funded improvements.
- 3.3 The DFG is a means tested grant. Therefore, it applies to those of more modest or limited means who would otherwise find difficulty in funding adaptations to their home. There are other eligibility criteria that are outlined within legislation that apply to the grants to ensure correct application. These checks are carried out by the Council upon application. Means tests are not applied to households where the adaptation is for a child.
- 3.4 A disabled person's adaptation needs are assessed by specialist Occupational Therapists at Oxfordshire County Council. The Council must carry out the assessment of means and determine whether the suggested adaptations are reasonable to achieve and resolve whether to approve the grant.
- 3.5 In addition to DFGs, the Council may offer discretionary grants and, any other form of assistance for improving housing conditions within its area, provided it first has a policy setting out how it intends to do so. This policy fulfils this requirement. Similarly, to DFGs, these grants are primarily for privately owned properties but how they are applied operates more flexibly and can be adapted by the Council to meet strategic objectives and operational needs.

## **4. Details**

- 4.1 The reviewed policy outlines the Council's statutory duties and responsibilities regarding the provision and administration of Disabled Facilities Grants. It provides an overview of the process that the Council follows with regard to DFGs and how decisions made are informed following tests and assessments that are applied.
- 4.2 This policy sets out a proposal to include Council Tax Reduction as a locally agreed passporting benefit for the DFG means test. This will enable the Council to help more disabled people to more quickly receive the adaptations they need, and also save Council resources by not having to undertake as many time-consuming means tests.
- 4.3 The policy outlines when the Council may place grants as a Local Land Charge against the property so that the grant may be recovered when the property is sold.
- 4.4 The policy also proposes a revised discretionary grants offering, outlines how discretionary grants are administered.
- 4.5 The general criteria and conditions for the grants offered by the Council are contained in the appendices of the policy.

## **5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

- 5.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: Not bring forward a reviewed and amended policy. As there has not been any recent changes to legislation in this area, there is no imperative for the current policy to be changed or reviewed. However, it is important the Council policies are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are able to meet customer needs, service needs and are legislatively sound. This option is therefore rejected.

Option 2: To keep two separate policies, one for mandatory grants and one for discretionary grants. As the policy areas are closely linked and intertwine, particularly when offering grants to disabled households, having a single policy provides simplification and clarity. This option is therefore rejected.

## **6 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

- 6.1 It is important that the Council has up to date policies and procedures for its statutory and key service areas and it is important that they are legislatively and operationally sound. A periodic review of policies is therefore appropriate.

## Decision Information

<b>Key Decision</b>	Yes
<b>Subject to Call in</b>	Yes
<b>If not, why not subject to call in</b>	N/A
<b>Ward(s) Affected</b>	All wards

## Document Information

<b>Appendices</b>	
<b>Appendix 1</b>	Housing Grants and Assistance Policy
<b>Appendix 2</b>	ECIA – Housing Grants and Assistance Policy
<b>Background Papers</b>	None
<b>Reference Papers</b>	None
<b>Report Author</b>	Richard Smith – Head of Housing
<b>Report Author contact details</b>	richard.smith@cherwell-dc.gov.uk 01295 221640

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***Cherwell***  
DISTRICT COUNCIL  
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

# **Housing Grants and Assistance Policy 2024**

Version	Date	Author	Change
1.0		David North	New

# Contents

1. Policy overview .....	4
1.1 Introduction .....	4
1.2 Housing and health .....	4
1.3 Strategic aims of this policy.....	5
1.4 Legal framework .....	5
1.5 Types of grants and assistance available .....	5
2. Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) .....	7
2.1 The Disabled Facilities Grant.....	7
2.2 Eligibility .....	7
2.3 Assessment and referral .....	7
2.4 Home Improvement Agency.....	8
2.5 Applications and financial contributions .....	8
2.6 Decisions, notifications and changes .....	9
2.7 DFG conditions .....	10
2.8 Prioritisation .....	10
2.9 HIA fees .....	10
3. Discretionary grants and assistance .....	11
3.1 Setting and amending types of discretionary assistance .....	11
3.2 Applications.....	11
3.3 Approvals .....	12
3.4 Conditions and restrictions.....	12
3.5 Payment of grants and loans .....	12
3.6 Recovery of grants and loans .....	12
4. Summary of available forms of grants and assistance.....	14
4.1 Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) .....	14
4.2 Discretionary disabled adaptations assistance .....	15
4.2.1 Accelerated DFG .....	15
4.2.2 Accessible Homes Grant .....	15
4.2.3 Disabled Home Relocation Grant .....	16
4.2.4 DFG Top-up Grant .....	17
4.3 Other Discretionary Grants and Assistance .....	18
4.3.1 Essential Home Repairs Grant .....	18
4.3.2 Clear and Clean Grant.....	19

4.3.3	Empty Homes Improvement Grant .....	19
4.3.4	Dementia Assistance Grant .....	20
4.3.5	Small Repairs Service.....	21
5.	Monitoring and review.....	23
6.	Equality and diversity.....	23
7.	Appeals and complaints.....	23
	Appendix 1 – General restrictions and conditions .....	24
	Appendix 2 – Eligibility criteria and conditions for discretionary assistance .....	26

## 1. Policy overview

### 1.1 Introduction

This Housing Grants and Assistance Policy sets out how Cherwell District Council will provide financial and other forms of help to the residents of Cherwell to improve and adapt their homes so they can live healthy lives in homes that meet their needs. The policy explains our approach to setting eligibility criteria, conditions, and procedures that apply to each type of scheme. The policy is designed to be sufficiently flexible to allow consideration of any future changes to local strategic needs, government policy or legislation.

The Council acknowledges that property owners are primarily responsible for maintaining and repairing their homes. However, the Council is also committed to protect and assist vulnerable members of the community. We aim to provide guidance and advice to older, disabled and vulnerable clients to help them take care of their homes and access government funding when needed, regardless of whether they are eligible for financial assistance under this policy.

This policy does not work in isolation and should be considered together with other related documents to form a comprehensive approach to improving homes in Cherwell.

### 1.2 Housing and health

Poor quality housing directly harms physical and mental health and continues to widen health inequalities and worsened outcomes.<sup>1</sup> Injuries, illnesses, and mental health issues arise because of hazards in homes, and poorly designed homes can trap disabled and older people and make daily tasks dangerous or prohibitive, placing burdens on family or health and social care services.

Adaptations improve health outcomes for disabled people and their caregivers and produce a wide range of lasting positive effects. Disabled people benefit from improved dignity, privacy, independence, social inclusion and opportunities for education and employment. This leads to greater personal resilience and improved overall wellbeing. Caregivers and family members can benefit from reduced physical and mental strain and improved social and educational opportunities.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Marmot *et al.* (2020) *The Marmot Review 10 Years On*. Available from: <https://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/resources-reports/marmot-review-10-years-on>

<sup>2</sup> Heywood F. (2001) *The effectiveness of housing adaptations*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Available from: <https://www.jrf.org.uk/care/the-effectiveness-of-housing-adaptations>

### **1.3 Strategic aims of this policy**

The Council recognises that having good quality housing is crucial for the health and wellbeing of Cherwell's residents, and the overarching aim of this policy is to support our most vulnerable residents to live healthy lives in homes that meet their needs.

We also seek to:

- Enhance the safety, health, and wellbeing of residents and contribute to reducing inequalities through improved housing conditions.
- Support vulnerable and disabled residents to live with independence and dignity in their own homes.
- Provide information, advice, and support to help residents make informed decisions and ultimately to achieve the best outcomes for their needs.
- Contribute to reducing hospital admissions and facilitating faster hospital discharge, thereby helping to improve patient outcomes and reduce burdens on the NHS.
- Contribute to tackling fuel poverty and climate change by improving energy efficiency of homes in the District.
- Contribute to reducing homelessness by helping to bring empty homes back into use.

### **1.4 Legal framework**

The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 and regulations<sup>3</sup> made under it set out how and when the Council must administer and approve mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs). This policy sets out the Council's approach to the delivery of mandatory DFGs and other disabled adaptations.

The Regulatory Reform Order (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002<sup>4</sup> provides the Council with flexible discretionary powers to offer grants and assistance to improve living conditions in its area. This policy sets out how the Council intends to use those discretionary powers.

### **1.5 Types of grants and assistance available**

The Council has a legal duty to provide Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) to eligible residents in Cherwell. DFGs are funded from the Better Care Fund (BCF) and delivered via the Council's Housing Grants Team and Home Improvement Agency.

The Council also intends to make full use of the flexible discretionary powers afforded to it by the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 to offer grants, loans and other forms of assistance to help its residents.

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<sup>3</sup> The 1996 Act and various DFG regulations are listed here:

<https://wwwFOUNDATIONS.UK.COM/library/dfg-regulations/>

<sup>4</sup> The Regulatory Reform Order (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002. Available from: <https://www.LEGISLATION.GOV.UK/UKSI/2002/1860/made>

This policy covers the general processes and procedural rules and types of eligibility criteria and conditions that we apply when making decisions in relation to the delivery of the grants, loans and other forms of assistance that we offer at any given time. The specific products and services offered by the Council are implemented under this policy as delegated decisions. This approach enables us to respond quickly to changing circumstances.

The forms of grants and assistance currently available are summarised in Section 4 of this policy, with full details available on our website [www.cherwell.gov.uk/housing](http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/housing) or on request.

## **2. Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)**

### **2.1 The Disabled Facilities Grant**

A suitable home can help disabled people of all ages to build and sustain their independence and maintain connections in their community. Unfortunately, many older and disabled people live in homes that make it difficult for them to do everyday tasks like washing and using the bathroom, cooking or getting out and about easily. Adaptations can reduce the amount of formal care and support an individual may require, as well as often making the difference between being able to continue living in their current home or not.

The Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) is a statutory grant which provides funding for home adaptations to enable disabled adults and children to lead safer, healthier, and more independent lives. We administer DFGs via our in-house Home Improvement Agency (HIA) which supports disabled people and their families with the DFG process from application to completion of the adaptations. Grant applications for adults are subject to a statutory means test.

### **2.2 Eligibility**

DFGs are only available to pay for adaptations to a disabled person's main residence. The disabled person must be intending to live in the property for at least five years, or for such a shorter period as their health and other relevant circumstances permit. The DFG is open to homeowners, private tenants, and social tenants, subject to proof of ownership or the landlord's permission. A landlord may also apply on behalf of a tenant.

The eligibility requirements, scope of adaptations funded, and other criteria relating to DFGs are prescribed by legislation. For more information on the DFG process and eligibility criteria, visit: <https://www.gov.uk/disabled-facilities-grants>

### **2.3 Assessment and referral**

The starting point for disabled adaptations grant work is usually an assessment of the disabled client's needs by the Welfare Authority. In Cherwell this assessment is generally undertaken by an Occupational Therapist (OT) at Oxfordshire County Council. If a referral is made from a different source, we will consult with the Welfare Authority before proceeding. Anyone considering applying for a DFG will be signposted for an OT assessment in the first instance.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Further information on requesting an OT assessment can be found on the Oxfordshire County Council website: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/social-and-health-care/adult-social-care/adult-social-care-services/adult-social-care-assessments/home-assessment>

If the social care Occupational Therapist determines that an adaptation is necessary and appropriate to meet the client's needs, the OT will send a referral to Cherwell District Council's Housing Grants Team and Home Improvement Agency.

## **2.4 Home Improvement Agency**

The Council's Housing Grants Team includes a Home Improvement Agency (HIA) which offers a range of services to help older, disabled and vulnerable people to live a good life for longer in their homes. This service is an invaluable adjunct to our statutory functions to administer and determine DFGs.

For disabled clients needing home adaptations our HIA provides an end-to-end project management service from when we receive the OT referral through to completion of building work. As part of this service, we can help clients with any aspects of the DFG process as needed. Assistance typically includes help with application forms, providing technical drawings and surveys, obtaining quotes from contractors, and inspections of the building works on-site.

Most disabled clients choose to use our Home Improvement Agency to design and manage the works, but customers have the option to self-manage some or all of their adaptation project and appoint their own contractors. In these cases, the Council must be satisfied that the works fulfil (and are limited to) the requirements set out in the OT referral and that a tender process has been undertaken to demonstrate best value for money.

The contract for works funded by Disabled Facilities Grants, along with associated assistance, will be between the applicant and the contractor, as specified in the legislation. While the Council's Standing Orders regarding Procurement do not directly apply since the Council is not entering into a contract, Cherwell District Council's Home Improvement Agency will still follow the same principles when obtaining quotes on behalf of supported applicants to ensure appropriate services are provided.

## **2.5 Applications and financial contributions**

Upon receipt of an OT referral, we will help the client to explore and apply for the most appropriate forms of grant or assistance available that will meet the client's needs. This may include consideration of discretionary grants to replace or supplement the mandatory DFG, alternative accommodation or other options if adapting the client's existing home may be impractical, excessively expensive or inappropriate for other reasons, for example a landlord not consenting to the works, overcrowding, or the property being unable to meet expected future changes in the client's health.

DFGs are means-tested which means an applicant's income and savings are assessed according to Government regulations. Depending upon their level of income, savings and capital, the applicant may have to pay a contribution towards the cost of the work. The mandatory means test considers the income, capital and



savings of the disabled person and their spouse or partner – collectively called the “relevant person”. If the relevant person’s resources are below the contribution threshold, they will not normally need to contribute towards the cost of the works (up to the DFG limit). Prospective applicants can calculate their likely means test contributions online at <https://adaptmyhome.org.uk/meanstest>

Where the application is for a disabled child or a young person for whom child benefit is payable, or if the relevant person is receiving certain passporting benefits<sup>6</sup>, the means test is not applied.

In addition to the prescribed passporting benefits, the Council has decided it will accept Council Tax Reduction/Support (CTR/S) as a qualifying benefit for residents applying for Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants. Single occupancy reduction is not included. This means applicants in Cherwell who receive CTR/S will be able to apply for a DFG without having to undergo the means test. The effectiveness of this process, which outside the statutory means test criteria, will be monitored and reviewed for its effectiveness. Further information on local Council Tax Reduction/Support is available on the Council’s website at <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/ctr>

If an applicant is required to make a financial contribution to the cost of the works, they will be informed of this and will be required to agree to this in writing before work can proceed. If the applicant’s means tested contribution exceeds the cost of the works, we may award a nil-grant and the contributions paid on this occasion will be taken into account on future DFG applications.

## **2.6 Decisions, notifications and changes**

Once we have gathered the necessary information and conducted the relevant tests of resources and subject to the eligibility criteria being met, the Council must determine whether the proposed works are reasonable and practicable, and either approve or refuse the application for a DFG. We must make this decision within six months of receiving a complete and valid application. In all cases we will inform the applicant in writing about the decision and whether it is approved or refused as soon as practically possible.

If the application is approved, the notification will specify the eligible works, the amount of assistance provided, and the builder/contractor assigned to carry out the works. In some cases, the Council may defer payment for up to 12 months due to financial or operational reasons. This will be clearly stated in the approval notice.

If the application for assistance is declined, the Council will provide reasons for the refusal and explain the process for appealing the decision. In such cases the applicant still has the option to self-fund works.

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<sup>6</sup> Passporting benefits are prescribed in DFG legislation. They are means-tested income-related benefits, for example, Universal Credit.

In certain situations where circumstances beyond the applicant's control cause the cost of the works to increase or decrease unexpectedly, the Council may review the financial assistance given. If deemed appropriate, we will issue a re-approval notice reflecting the changes.

## **2.7 DFG conditions**

All forms of housing assistance from the Council are subject to the general terms set out in **Appendix 1 – General restrictions and conditions**. DFGs are also subject to mandatory conditions intended to prevent misuse of grant funds. They apply for 5 years and allow the Council to recover the whole grant if conditions are breached. All applicants will be provided with details of any terms and conditions as part of the application process.

The Council will use its powers to place a local land charge against the property where the mandatory DFG exceeds £5,000. The charge may be up to a maximum of £10,000 and repayment will be required where the property is sold, transferred or otherwise disposed of within 10 years of the certified date of grant completion. Before requiring repayment, we will consider whether it is reasonable in all the circumstances to require the repayment.

In the event of an applicant's death before works are complete, the Council has the discretion to pay grant towards any fees incurred, works already carried out or other relevant works.

## **2.8 Prioritisation**

As part of their assessment, the OT assigns a priority level to the application. The priority bands are urgent, high, medium, and low. The Council works through cases using this priority level and in order of referral date.

The Council recognises that, while every effort is made to assess applications and deliver adaptations as quickly as possible, there may be circumstances where this is not achievable, particularly in complex cases or when external factors, such as awaiting planning permission, affect timelines and priority order. The Council is committed to providing all clients with a realistic appraisal of the expected time frame for their case at the outset and will ensure that they are kept updated throughout the process.

## **2.9 HIA fees**

The Council will top-slice a fee from the budget to cover the costs of delivering the HIA service in addition to the external funding received from the County Council. Taking this approach, rather than charging a fee on each individual grant approved, means the Council has a predictable income for service planning, and benefits applicants as it means we can offer the full £30,000 DFG grant allocation.

### **3. Discretionary grants and assistance**

#### **3.1 Setting and amending types of discretionary assistance**

To help the Council to most effectively meet its strategic housing and climate objectives, this policy authorises the relevant Authorised Officer<sup>7</sup> and the relevant Portfolio Holder<sup>8</sup> to amend the criteria and conditions of discretionary forms of grants and assistance. The criteria and conditions for each form of discretionary assistance will be set out in specific sub-policies as delegated decisions in accordance with this policy. This approach enables the housing service to respond flexibly and promptly to changing circumstances and emerging issues.

If the Council is allocated funding for discretionary grants or loans through a government department, agency or other source and is required to give formal acceptance, or if approval of an additional capital budget is required, the proposal will be placed in the capital programme for members to agree.

A summary of the discretionary grants and assistance offered by the Council is provided in section 4 of this Policy. Full details of how to apply for each scheme, including the relevant criteria and conditions will be kept updated on the Council's website: [www.cherwell.gov.uk/housing](http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/housing)

#### **3.2 Applications**

Applications for financial assistance must be made using a form approved by the Council and accompanied by such evidence as the Council determines is necessary to demonstrate eligibility. Such requirements will be communicated to applicants by the Council. Applications will not be deemed complete until all requested documents and information have been supplied to the Council's satisfaction.

For most types of grants and loans we will inspect the premises to determine what works are required and eligible as part of the approval process. We will either produce or agree a schedule setting out the approved works and will usually require estimates to be made using this schedule.

We will generally require at least two comparable estimates so that we can be sure the costs are reasonable. Contractor estimates should be on a headed/branded form and must include the contractor's name, address, telephone and/or email contact details and VAT number (if VAT has been included). The relevant Authorised Officer may confirm in writing that grants below a specified threshold or of a specified type may proceed following receipt of a single estimate.

Where an applicant or a member of their household or immediate family is proposing to carry out some or all of the work themselves, the Council will contribute funds towards material costs but will not contribute towards time.

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<sup>7</sup> Currently the Assistant Director, Wellbeing and Housing Services

<sup>8</sup> Currently the Portfolio Holder for Housing

We may refuse incomplete applications, estimates that are not provided in the correct form, or prices we judge to be unreasonably high.

### **3.3 Approvals**

The decision to award any discretionary grants or assistance is completely at the discretion of the Council and subject to available funding. The Council is not committed to providing any funding until we have issued written approval.

The relevant Authorised Officer may, in exceptional circumstances, approve applications for assistance which fall outside the published criteria or waive or vary conditions. For example, in cases where it is judged that the applicant may be likely to suffer significant harm, injury or hardship that outweighs their ineligibility under the standard criteria.

### **3.4 Conditions and restrictions**

The general conditions and restrictions for all types of housing assistance are set out in **Appendix 1 – General restrictions and conditions**. Each form of discretionary housing assistance will also be subject to specific eligibility criteria and conditions of the types set out in **Appendix 2 – Eligibility criteria and conditions for discretionary assistance**. Applicants will be provided with full details of any pertinent criteria and conditions as part of the application process.

### **3.5 Payment of grants and loans**

For most types of financial assistance, we will re-inspect premises to ensure satisfactory completion of all relevant works prior to release of funds. In routine cases (e.g. like-for-like replacement of a boiler) we may rely upon completion certificates issued by the accredited installer or relevant certifying organisation to confirm satisfactory completion on our behalf.

The Council will not make interim payments unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Grants and loans will be paid to the applicant unless direct payment to contractors has been agreed in advance with the applicant.

Where a grant or loan only covers part of the full cost of works, the obligation to pay the difference sits with the applicant.

### **3.6 Recovery of grants and loans**

The Council will seek to recover all grant monies paid when it discovers there has been a breach of any grant condition.

Loans will remain as a charge against the relevant property until repaid in full.

When specified within the criteria of the grant, grants may be recorded as a local land charge against the relevant property and be repayable upon sale or transfer of the property.

The Council may reduce, vary or waive the above general recovery conditions if to require repayment would result in undue hardship to the grant applicant.

The Council may share information with other appropriate bodies for the purposes of the prevention and detection of fraud.

## **4. Summary of available forms of grants and assistance**

This section provides a summary of the forms of assistance currently available under this policy. This section will be reviewed and updated following any changes to the grants and assistance products offered. Full details of each form of assistance and how to apply will be available on our website and supplied on request.

### **4.1 Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)**

This summary includes the main requirements set out in legislation plus the local variations that Cherwell District Council have adopted regarding the inclusion of warranty costs and Local Council Tax Reduction/Support as a passporting benefit.

#### **Eligible applicants**

- The owner, tenant or occupier of a dwelling where a disabled person intends to live for the next 5 years.

#### **Qualifying criteria**

- The property (which may include houses/flats, qualifying houseboats and caravans) must be in Cherwell and must be the disabled person's only or main residence.
- The application must be supported by a referral from an Occupational Therapist recommending necessary and appropriate works.
- Works are subject to the statutory means test, with a local amendment to include Local Council Tax Reduction/Support as a passporting benefit (not including single occupant discount). The means test does not apply to disabled children and young people.
- The landlord or owner's consent to the works is required where applicable.

#### **Eligible works**

- Works must be of the types set out in legislation to enable the disabled person to have access to and around their home, to use essential facilities and enable them to live independently.
- Works must be necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled person and be reasonable and practicable to carry out given the age and condition of the dwelling.
- Works must be the most cost-effective option and achieve best value.

#### **Key conditions**

- The disabled person must (generally) intend to live in the property for at least five years.
- Where the applicant is an owner-occupier and the grant value exceeds £5,000, the subsequent £10,000 of grant will attract a local land charge that will apply for 10 years.
- A 5-year warranty is included in the cost of all lifts and wash/dry toilets.

### **Maximum value**

- Up to £30,000 as per the current statutory limit.

## **4.2 Discretionary disabled adaptations assistance**

Any applications and awards of the following forms of assistance must be supported by an Occupational Therapist referral and either linked to, or instead of, an ongoing DFG application. No stand-alone applications for these grants will be considered.

### **4.2.1 Accelerated DFG**

A non-means-tested alternative to a Mandatory DFG to facilitate rapid adaptations for urgent priority referrals.

#### **Eligible applicants**

- Applicants who meet the criteria for a Mandatory DFG.
- Available to applicants from all property tenures.

#### **Qualifying criteria**

- An OT (or other appropriate medical professional) has assessed the case as urgent priority
- The use of a full mandatory DFG would result in an inappropriate delay.

#### **Eligible works**

- Reasonable and practicable DFG-eligible adaptation works.

#### **Key conditions**

- Due to nature of the grant, these are not repayable unless a grant condition is breached

### **Maximum value**

- Up to £10,000

### **4.2.2 Accessible Homes Grant**

A non-means-tested alternative to a Mandatory DFG to facilitate quicker delivery of lower-cost and straightforward disabled adaptations so residents can safely access and move around their homes.

#### **Eligible applicants**

- Applicants who meet the criteria for a Mandatory DFG
- Available to applicants from all property tenures.

#### **Qualifying criteria**

- Applications for this assistance must be supported by an OT referral.

### **Eligible works**

- Available towards the cost of lower-cost and straightforward DFG eligible adaptation works only.

### **Key conditions**

- Level access showers are specifically excluded from this grant
- No more than one grant per property/household in a 1-year period.
- Not repayable unless a grant condition is breached.

### **Maximum value**

- Up to £5,000

## **4.2.3 Disabled Home Relocation Grant**

A means-tested alternative or adjunct to a Mandatory DFG to assist applicants to relocate to an appropriate property when adaptation of the applicant's existing property is not judged by the Council to be reasonable and/or practicable.

### **Eligible applicants**

- Applicants who meet the criteria for a Mandatory DFG
- Available to applicants from all property tenures.

### **Qualifying criteria**

- Adaptation works have been identified as necessary and appropriate by an OT but Cherwell District Council has judged that adaptation of the applicant's existing property is not reasonable and/or practicable to meet the applicant's needs.
- Relocation must demonstrably improve the outcome for the client and/or reduce the cost and/or complexity of adaptation works.
- Nil-contribution under the DFG test of resources.

### **Eligible works**

- Reasonable and appropriate costs associated with moving from their current accommodation to accommodation which is already adapted or can be readily adapted.
- Necessary and appropriate adaptations to the new property.

### **Key conditions**

- No more than one grant per property/household in a 5-year period.
- Not repayable unless a grant condition is breached.

### **Maximum value**

- Up to £10,000



#### **4.2.4 DFG Top-up Grant**

A discretionary grant to top-up a DFG to enable complex adaptation works costing above the current mandatory DFG limit to proceed.

##### **Eligible applicants**

- Applicants who meet the criteria for a Mandatory DFG

##### **Qualifying criteria**

- Complex works have been identified as necessary and appropriate by an OT.
- A full Mandatory DFG has already been awarded but the additional works required exceed the statutory DFG maximum grant level.

##### **Eligible works**

- Complex DFG-eligible adaptation works.

##### **Key conditions**

- The full value of this grant awarded would be placed as a land charge for up to 10-years from the date of completion of works for owner-occupiers only. This is in addition to any Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant land charge.
- No more than one top-up grant per property/household.
- In cases where the adaptations are for a child, the parents/guardian are subject to a financial assessment for the Top Up element of the grant.
- The top-up grant is at the discretion of the Council and subject to available funding and prior consideration and exclusion of lower-cost options.

##### **Maximum value**

- Up to an additional £30,000 (bringing total grant award to £60,000 including the Mandatory DFG).

## **4.3 Other Discretionary Grants and Assistance**

The following forms of discretionary assistance have been made available to help the Council achieve its wider strategic housing aims. These are all subject to availability of funding and may be withdrawn or replaced at any time.

### **4.3.1 Essential Home Repairs Grant**

A grant to assist low-income and vulnerable owner-occupiers and their household to carry out essential repairs that might otherwise adversely impact their health.

#### **Eligible applicants**

- Applicants who are owner occupiers or members of their resident household.

#### **Qualifying criteria**

- The applicant must be in receipt of a means-tested benefit, or be eligible for a means-tested benefit, or have a zero-contribution as calculated using the current DFG resource test, or be receiving Council Tax Reduction.(not including single occupancy discount)
- The applicant or a member of their resident household must meet one or more of the following:
  - Aged 60 or over
  - A child under 16 (or over 16 and eligible for child benefit)
  - Be vulnerable due to a disability or long-term health condition

#### **Eligible works**

- This grant is restricted to “essential repairs”, meaning repairs that if they were not undertaken would likely result in serious hazards to health and/or contribute to worsening existing health conditions.
- Routine maintenance and desirable improvements are specifically excluded.

#### **Key conditions**

- Up to the full value of this grant awarded would be placed as a land charge for 10-years from the date of completion of works.
- Owner must have had a legal interest in the property for at least 3 years.
- Applicant must intend to remain in the property as only or main residence for 5 years.
- No more than the maximum total eligible grant will be paid in respect of any one property or household in any ten-year period.

#### **Maximum value**

- Up to £10,000 in cases where the applicant has a long-term health condition or disability that is likely to be worsened by the disrepair.
- Up to £5,000 in all other cases.

### **4.3.2 Clear and Clean Grant**

A grant to help vulnerable residents who are living in cluttered homes and who require support.

#### **Eligible applicants**

- Owner occupiers or tenants living in significantly cluttered (5+ on the clutter image rating) properties and they, or members of their resident household are vulnerable due to a disability or long-term health condition.

#### **Qualifying criteria**

- No means test, but grant is limited to properties within Council Tax bands A, B, C or D.

#### **Eligible works**

- This grant will cover internal or external clearance and professional cleaning.
- Funds may be put towards fees for referral to and engagement with relevant support services.

#### **Key conditions**

- Not repayable unless a grant condition is breached.
- No more than the maximum total grant will be paid in respect of any one property or household in any 5-year period.
- This grant may be used in conjunction with an Essential Home Repair Grant (subject to eligibility).

#### **Maximum value**

- Up to £2,500

### **4.3.3 Empty Homes Improvement Grant**

A grant to help owners of uninhabitable long-term empty properties to carry out improvements and bring the property back into use. Applicants may also benefit from reduced VAT rates on materials, maximising the value of this grant.

#### **Eligible applicants**

- Owners of uninhabitable residential properties that have been long-term vacant.

#### **Qualifying criteria**

- No means test, but grant is limited to empty properties within Council Tax bands A, B, C or D and classified as uninhabitable.

#### **Eligible works**

- This grant can be put towards repairs and renovations to bring the property up to a decent lettable standard.

## **Key conditions**

- On completion of the works, the property must meet the Decent Homes Standard and have an EPC rating of C or higher.
- On completion of the works, the property must be let to a Council-nominated tenant at an affordable rent.
- The full value of this grant awarded would be placed as a land charge from the date of completion of works for the duration of any nomination period.
- No more than one grant will be paid in respect of any one property or applicant.

## **Maximum value**

- 75% of the cost of works up to £10,000

## **4.3.4 Dementia Friendly Homes**

This grant funds equipment for persons living with dementia to help them to live at home safely and for longer.

### **Eligible applicants**

- Any person with a medical diagnosis of dementia.
- Available to applicants from all property tenures.

### **Qualifying criteria**

- No means test
- Applications must be supported by a referral from Dementia Oxfordshire or a letter confirming the diagnosis from a GP, qualified medical professional or other specialist.

### **Eligible works**

The grant can cover dementia-friendly equipment for the home such as:

- Motion sensor lights, fridge alarms, and socket covers
- Smart plugs and similar smart/assisted technology
- Signage for doors to cupboards and rooms
- Blue dementia-friendly equipment
- Safety equipment e.g. smoke alarms, anti-slip mats, and keysafes

### **Key conditions**

- The works must be reasonable and practical and relate to the applicant's dementia needs.
- Only one application per applicant will be considered per year.
- The works can be facilitated by the Council's Home Improvement Agency or an alternative contractor.
- The grant excludes contributions towards care packages or Assistive Technology already funded by Adult Social Care teams.

### **Maximum value**

- Up to £300 per applicant per year

### **4.3.5 Target Hardening Grant**

This grant funds security equipment for persons experiencing or at risk of antisocial behaviour and domestic abuse to help them to live safely in their home.

#### **Eligible applicants**

- Persons at risk of or experiencing domestic abuse and/or persistent antisocial behaviour in connection with their home.

#### **Qualifying criteria**

- No means test.
- Applications must be supported by a referral from a relevant support agency or made in connection with a homeless application.

#### **Eligible works**

The grant can cover security equipment, such as:

- Video doorbell
- New locks on main external doors
- Letterbox cover, door chain and spyhole
- Smoke alarms

#### **Key conditions**

- The works must be reasonable and practical and relate to the applicant's assessed needs.
- Only one application per applicant will be considered per year.
- The works can be facilitated by the Council's Home Improvement Agency or an alternative contractor.
- The grant excludes works that are the responsibility of the landlord.

### **Maximum value**

- Up to £600 per applicant

### **4.3.6 Small Repairs Service**

A handyman service to help older, vulnerable, and disabled people to maintain independent living in safe and comfortable homes.

#### **Eligible applicants**

- Disabled people over 18 years old.
- Older vulnerable people (over 60 years of age).

- Priority will be given to those households and individuals who are disabled or in receipt of income support or other means tested benefits.
- Available to applicants from all property tenures.

### **Qualifying criteria**

- Service is free to people in receipt of passported means-tested benefits.
- Otherwise, service incurs a small hourly charge plus materials.

### **Eligible works**

Small repairs work that can be completed in less than 2 hours, such as:

- Small building repairs
- Minor adaptations such as fitting handrails
- Odd jobs such as putting up curtains, shelves, replacing light bulbs.
- Security checks – installing locks, chains, door viewers, and keysafes
- Installing smoke and carbon dioxide alarms

### **Key conditions**

- Payment must be via card or cheque (no cash accepted).
- The Council reserves the right to restrict repeat applications.
- Works that are the responsibility of the landlord are excluded.

### **Maximum value**

- The costs are based on an hourly charge (this is currently £20 per hour) up to a maximum of 2-hours' work, plus the cost of materials.

## **5. Monitoring and review**

To ensure this policy remains effective and up to date, this policy will be reviewed within three years of its adoption or as needed based on available funding or assistance and any relevant changes in legislation, Council policies or identified best practices. The relevant Authorised Officer in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder will have delegated authority to make minor administrative amendments to this policy. Where discretionary grants and assistance are updated, or withdrawn, section 4 of this Policy will be amended to reflect these changes.

The provision of mandatory grants and discretionary financial assistance will be subject to internal and external auditing to ensure proper procedures are in place and followed, and that public funds are appropriately utilised.

## **6. Equality and diversity**

We believe in treating everyone fairly and promoting equality while preventing discrimination on any basis. This policy will be applied consistently to all residents, taking into account the unique needs of individuals and communities and seeking to ensure that all the “protected characteristics” outlined in the Equalities Act 2010 are protected. We will not discriminate against anyone, and we will take proactive measures to reduce discrimination and harassment. Our aim is to ensure equal opportunities and fair treatment for everyone in our community.

## **7. Appeals and complaints**

If you have applied for assistance and your application was not considered or was refused, you have the right to request a review of the decision. To do this, you must submit a written request to the Council’s Housing Service within 28 days of receiving the decision letter. We will then conduct a review and inform you of the outcome in writing. If you remain dissatisfied, you may raise a complaint via the Council’s complaints procedure (details at <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/complaints>) and/or to the Ombudsman.

## **Appendix 1 – General restrictions and conditions**

There are certain cases where we may not be able to provide assistance or where the funding may be reduced or reclaimed. These situations, which apply to both mandatory and discretionary forms of assistance, are outlined below:

1. Assistance cannot be provided when there is a dispute over property ownership.
2. If the property owner(s) have a legal obligation to carry out the necessary works and it is reasonable for them to do so, we may not offer assistance.
3. Assistance is not typically provided for temporary residences.
4. Normally, we cannot give assistance for works that were started before formal approval of the application. However, in exceptional circumstances, we may exempt an application from this condition, such as when a defect poses serious risks to health and safety.
5. We do not provide grant assistance for works covered by insurance. If an applicant can make an insurance claim, the assistance amount will be reduced by the insurance company's liability. We will require the applicant to pursue relevant insurance claims and repay the assistance provided if applicable.
6. We will only offer assistance if the property's age, condition, and structural layout make it feasible to achieve the required scope of works.
7. The Council will assess the prices provided by contractors to ensure value for money, comparing them with similar jobs priced within the last year.
8. If we find that the price quoted by contractors is too high, we may advise the client that the total eligible assistance will be a lower amount.
9. If the client chooses a different or enhanced scheme of works, we will only provide financial assistance for the primary requirements identified by the Occupational Therapy Service or a similar service.
10. We may refuse an application lacking required information or documentation.
11. Deviating from the approved scheme of works without prior agreement may lead to the approval being rescinded or further payments of assistance being refused.
12. If the applicant ceases to be the owner of the property before the works are completed, they must repay the total amount of assistance received.
13. A grant condition imposing a liability to repay assistance may be registered as a Local Land Charge, payable upon the property's sale.
14. Works must be completed within 12 months of approval, with a possible extension of up to 6 months if agreed by the Council.
15. For common parts of a dwelling, assistance will only cover the applicant's reasonable share of the liability.
16. In exceptional cases, the Council may defer payment of a grant for up to 12 months.



17. Assistance may be provided for caravans and houseboats used as main residences, subject to eligibility requirements. Holiday residences, caravans on holiday sites, second homes, and sheds or outbuildings do not qualify for assistance.
18. If there are unique situations where individuals genuinely need urgent support but are precluded from accessing assistance due to specific aspects, the Council may consider offering assistance in exceptional circumstances, especially if it helps meet strategic objectives. Such decisions will be made by the relevant officer.
19. All works must be completed in accordance with the agreed specification and to the standard of workmanship required by the Council. Full payment will not be made until the work has been properly completed to the Council's satisfaction.
20. Works must be undertaken by the contractor(s) on whose estimate(s) the grant has been assessed and approved. In exceptional circumstances the Council may agree to a different contractor doing the work, but this must be agreed in advance of the work being done and will be confirmed by the Council in writing.
21. All grants will be repayable in full in the event that a specified condition is breached.
22. All works must relate to properties within the District of Cherwell.

## **Appendix 2 – Eligibility criteria and conditions for discretionary assistance**

Policies for discretionary assistance policies will be developed using the criteria and conditions set out below. Examples are illustrative and not exhaustive.

1. Eligibility may be restricted by property tenure or ownership.  
e.g. private sector landlords, empty properties, social tenants
2. Eligibility may be restricted to applicants with particular vulnerabilities, financial means, disabilities, or specified ages.  
e.g. persons under 16 or over 60, persons threatened with homelessness, disabled or infirm persons, persons in receipt of means-tested benefits
3. Conditions may impose future use criteria.  
e.g. rights to make the property available for letting to Council-nominated tenants, at a specified rent level, for a specified nomination period
4. Conditions may require full or partial repayment of funds.  
e.g. upon sale or transfer of the property, change of occupancy, breach of conditions
5. Conditions may prohibit or limit eligibility for further assistance.  
e.g. household or property is ineligible for similar grant assistance for 5 years.
6. Conditions may limit the amount of assistance payable.  
e.g. the maximum single grant is £5,000 and the maximum amount of grant payable to an individual or household is £10,000 over a 10-year period.
7. Conditions may require that a grant or loan be registered as a Local Land Charge, for the full amount or a proportion of the assistance and registered indefinitely or for a specified period of time.  
e.g. the full amount of the grant will be a charge against the property for 10-years from completion of the works.
8. In the case of loans and equity release, conditions may specify that interest will be charged at a specified percent, and that capital and any interest must be repaid in certain circumstances, at certain intervals or by certain dates.  
e.g. interest payable at Bank of England base rate plus 3%.
9. Conditions may require that specified standards are achieved.  
e.g. resolution of hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), a minimum improved Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Rating
10. Conditions may specify that fees to cover administrative or other costs are added to, or deducted from, the assistance awarded.  
e.g. £50 annual loan maintenance fee, surveying costs
11. Conditions may specify the scope of eligible works or services.
12. Conditions may specify a maximum or minimum service delivery charge.  
e.g. a minimum call-out fee

**Cherwell District Council**  
**Equality and Climate Impact Assessment**  
**Housing Grants and Assistance Policy**

Appendix 2

Contents

Section 1: Summary details..... 3

Section 2: Detail of proposal..... 4

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics..... 8

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts ..... 15

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Wider Impacts ..... 17

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Climate Change Impacts ..... 18

Section 4: Review ..... 20

## Section 1: Summary details

<b>Directorate and Service Area</b>	Wellbeing and Housing – Housing Services
<b>What is being assessed</b> (e.g. name of policy, procedure, project, service or proposed service change).	Cherwell District Council Housing Grants and Assistance Policy 2024
<b>Is this a new or existing function or policy?</b>	Combination and revision of two existing policies covering existing service functions
<b>Summary of assessment</b>  Briefly summarise the policy or proposed service change. Summarise possible impacts. Does the proposal bias, discriminate or unfairly disadvantage individuals or groups within the community?  (following completion of the assessment).	The Council recognises that having good quality housing is crucial for the health and wellbeing of Cherwell’s residents, and the overarching aim of this policy is to support our most vulnerable residents to live healthy lives in homes that meet their needs.  We also seek to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance the safety, health, and wellbeing of residents and contribute to reducing inequalities through improved housing conditions.</li> <li>• Support vulnerable and disabled residents to live with independence and dignity in their own homes.</li> <li>• Provide information, advice, and support to help residents make informed decisions and ultimately to achieve the best outcomes for their needs.</li> <li>• Contribute to reducing hospital admissions and facilitating faster hospital discharge, thereby helping to improve patient outcomes and reduce burdens on the NHS.</li> <li>• Contribute to tackling fuel poverty and climate change by improving energy efficiency of homes in the District.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribute to reducing homelessness by helping to bring empty homes back into use.</li> </ul>
<b>Completed By</b>	David North
<b>Authorised By</b>	Richard Smith
<b>Date of Assessment</b>	September 2024

## Section 2: Detail of proposal

<p><b>Context / Background</b></p> <p>Briefly summarise the background to the policy or proposed service change, including reasons for any changes from previous versions.</p>	<p>Cherwell District Council has a statutory duty to administer mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs). Currently the Council’s approach to delivering DFGs is set out in its “Disabled Adaptations Policy” which was last updated in 2021.</p> <p>Legislation also permits the Council to offer discretionary grants, loans and other forms of assistance to help improve housing conditions for the residents of its District, provided the Council has a policy setting out how it intends to use those discretionary powers. Currently the Council’s approach to offering discretionary grants is set out in its “Private Sector Housing Grant and Assistance Policy” which was last updated in 2012. The individual discretionary grants that we offer are implemented as delegated decisions under this overarching policy.</p> <p>Upon review it became apparent that there was duplication and overlap between the two policies owing to the high degree of similarity between mandatory and discretionary grants; for example, discretionary grants are often offered instead of, or in conjunction with, mandatory DFGs. Therefore, it is proposed these two policies are combined into a single, streamlined policy. Having a single policy to refer to rather than two overlapping policies should make things easier and clearer for officers and service users.</p> <p>The Council must carry out tests of financial resources (“means tests”) as part of the DFG process. However, applicants in receipt of certain benefits are automatically eligible (known as “passporting benefits”). The new policy</p>
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sets out a proposal to include Council Tax Reduction/Support (“CTR/S”) as a locally agreed passporting benefit. Undertaking fewer means tests has advantages for applicants and the Council. The means test is complex, requires applicants to provide a lot of financial information, and can delay the delivery of the adaptations they need. If the applicant is found to be over the income threshold they will need to make a contribution, which could be substantial even if their income is only in the form of other benefits that are not specifically excluded as passporting benefits. Applicants in receipt of CTR/S have already been means-tested by the Council, thereby reducing duplication of work. Doing fewer means tests means the Grants Team Caseworkers can focus on supporting applicants through the process and generally speeds up the delivery of grants and adaptations.

This revised policy outlines when the Council may place grants as a Local Land Charge against the property so that the grant may be recovered when the property is sold. For mandatory DFGs, the circumstances are prescribed in the relevant legislation. This policy reflects those statutory provisions, and also sets out the circumstances when the Council may place and recover discretionary grants via Local Land Charges.

The Private Sector Housing Grant and Assistance Policy (which this new policy replaces) was strictly an enabling policy and did not include details of any specific grants within the policy document. Instead, the individual discretionary grants that the Council offered at any given time were written as sub-policies and implemented as delegated decisions under this overarching policy. The Council’s current grant offering was considered in the course of this wider policy review, and it is proposed that the current grants all be withdrawn and be replaced with the suite of new grants outlined in this new Grants and Assistance Policy.

For purposes of transparency, this new policy proposes to include a summary of each of the discretionary grants and other forms of assistance that the Council intends to offer. This will also make it easier for customers and Council Officers to know and understand the grants on offer. The specific details of how each grant will operate will still be contained within grant-specific sub-policies, and these details will be available on the Council’s website, provided as part of the application process, or on request.

The types of conditions and criteria that the Council may apply when developing discretionary grants and assistance services have been simplified and examples added to make them easier for officers and customers to read and understand.

	<p>The revised policy has been rewritten and reformatted to be as clear and accessible as possible.</p>
<p><b>Proposals</b></p> <p>Explain the detail of the proposals, including why this has been decided as the best course of action.</p>	<p>The reviewed policy outlines the Council's statutory duties and responsibilities regarding the provision and administration of Disabled Facilities Grants. It provides an overview of the process that the Council follows with regard to DFGs and how decisions made are informed following tests and assessments that are applied.</p> <p>This policy sets out a proposal to include Council Tax Reduction as a locally agreed passporting benefit for the DFG means test. This will enable the Council to help more disabled people to more quickly receive the adaptations they need, and also save Council resources by not having to undertake as many time-consuming means tests.</p> <p>The policy outlines when the Council may place grants as a Local Land Charge against the property so that the grant may be recovered when the property is sold.</p> <p>The policy also proposes a reviewed discretionary grants offering, outlines how discretionary grants are administered and how they could be varied in the future.</p> <p>The general criteria and conditions for the grants offered by the Council are contained in the appendices of the policy.</p>
<p><b>Evidence / Intelligence</b></p> <p>List and explain any data, consultation outcomes, research findings, feedback from service users and stakeholders etc, that supports your proposals and can help to inform the judgements you make about potential impact on different individuals, communities</p>	<p>Foundations, the Government-funded national body for Home Improvement Agencies, recommend that councils introduce CTR as a passporting benefit to help more people access DFG funding.</p> <p>Last year, 27 DFG applications were ineligible for DFG funding as their assessed contributions under the statutory means test exceeded the DFG limit (£30k). The statutory DFG means test is prescribed in regulations which were last updated in 2008 meaning it is a very low benchmark by current standards, whereas CTR is updated annually. Using CTR as a passporting benefit would have enabled 4 more people to receive grants. We believe that more than this may have been eligible but have not applied for CTR, and so we may be able to encourage uptake.</p>



<p>or groups and our ability to deliver our climate commitments.</p>	<p>Uptake of several of our longstanding discretionary grants has declined in recent years, and other emerging issues have arisen. For example uptake of landlord grants has declined, particularly since 2020, whereas referrals relating to hoarding have increased year-on-year. The proposed discretionary grants have been developed following discussions with the other Oxfordshire councils to try and address areas of unmet need.</p> <p>Since 2019 the Council has received 4,522 applications for disabled adaptations. These applications include data which can be used to inform service delivery.</p>
<p><b>Alternatives considered / rejected</b></p> <p>Summarise any other approaches that have been considered in developing the policy or proposed service change, and the reasons why these were not adopted. This could include reasons why doing nothing is not an option.</p>	<p>The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.</p> <p>Option 1: Not bring forward a reviewed and amended policy. As there has not been any recent changes to legislation in this area, there is no imperative for the current policy to be changed or reviewed. However, it is important the Council policies are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are able to meet customer needs, service needs and are legislatively sound. This option is therefore rejected.</p> <p>Option 2: To keep two separate policies, one for mandatory grants and one for discretionary grants. As the policy areas are closely linked and intertwine, particularly when offering grants to disabled households, having a single policy provides simplification and clarity. This option is therefore rejected.</p>

**Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics**

Appendix 2

Protected Characteristic	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
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<p><b>Age</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>The proposed policy includes discretionary grants and services designed to help older and vulnerable applicants and members of their households to live safely and independently at home. These are largely grants and services which the Council already offers, but with minor proposed adjustments, such as increasing the grant limit for essential repairs where there are long-term health conditions.</p> <p>New discretionary 'Dementia Support Grant' and 'Clear and Clean Grant' in particular should positively impact older people.</p> <p>Increasing the use of local land charges for grants may have an adverse impact on owner-occupying older people and their households.</p>	<p>Increasing the use of local land charges for grants may have an adverse impact on owner-occupying older people and their households. As mitigation, only certain larger grants relating to older households will only be repayable if the property is sold, transferred or disposed of within 10 years, and the Council retains discretion not to recover if doing so would cause undue hardship.</p>	<p>Housing Grants and Standards Team Leader</p>	<p>Annual monitoring</p>
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<p><b>Disability</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>The proposed policy includes mandatory and discretionary grants and services designed to help disabled people to live safely and independently in their own homes.</p> <p>The disabled adaptations grants are largely grants and services which the Council already offers, but with minor proposed adjustments that should generally have no impact or a positive impact on service users.</p> <p>The Council already applies land charges for mandatory DFGs. This policy proposes to also apply land charges for certain discretionary grants. Increasing the use of local land charges for grants may have an adverse impact on owner-occupying disabled people and their households.</p>	<p>Increasing the use of local land charges for grants may have an adverse impact on owner-occupying disabled people and their households. As mitigation, only certain larger grants relating to disabled households will be repayable if the property is sold, transferred or disposed of within 10 years, and the Council retains discretion not to recover if doing so would cause undue hardship.</p>	<p>Housing Grants and Standards Team Leader</p>	<p>Annual monitoring</p>
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<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There is nothing to suggest that the Grants and Assistance Policy will have any impact on Gender Reassignment.	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Marriage &amp; Civil Partnership</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There is nothing to suggest that the Grants and Assistance Policy will have any impact on Marriage and Civil Partnership.	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Pregnancy &amp; Maternity</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There is nothing to suggest that the Grants and Assistance Policy will have any impact on Pregnancy and Maternity.	N/A	N/A	N/A

<p><b>Race</b></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>The data on applicant ethnicity for disabled adaptations appears to show a slightly higher proportion of white applicants compared to the overall Cherwell population. The proportion of other races were under-represented compared to Census data.</p> <p>No equivalent data is collected for other types of discretionary grants as the volume of applications is much lower than for disabled adaptations.</p> <p>Any changes to the Grants and Assistance Policy may therefore affect those in ethnic minority groups, both positively and negatively, more so than a change affecting the whole of the population of Cherwell.</p>	<p>Annual monitoring and comparisons of housing grants ethnicity data to monitor potential impacts.</p> <p>Work with Oxfordshire County Council to try and increase DFG uptake from under-represented groups.</p>	<p>Housing Grants and Standards Team Leader</p>	<p>Annual monitoring</p>
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<b>Sex</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The policy includes an existing discretionary Target Hardening grant which is predominantly focused on survivors and victims of domestic abuse, who tend to be women.	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There is nothing to suggest that the Grants and Assistance Policy will have any impact on Sexual Orientation.	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Religion or Belief</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There is nothing to suggest that the Grants and Assistance Policy will have any impact on Religion or Belief.	N/A	N/A	N/A



### Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Rural communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The revised policy proposes a discretionary grant to help bring empty properties back into use which is likely to have greatest impact in rural areas.	N/A	N/A	N/A
Armed Forces	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Members or former members of the armed forces with disabilities are likely to be affected by this policy, but the impact compared with their experiences under the previous policies should be neutral or positive.	N/A	N/A	N/A
Carers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed policy includes mandatory and discretionary grants and services designed to help disabled people and their carers. The disabled adaptations grants are largely grants and services which the	Increasing the use of local land charges for grants may have an adverse impact on owner-occupying disabled people and their households. As mitigation, only certain larger grants relating to	Housing Grants and Standards Team Leader	Annual monitoring

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
				<p>Council already offers, but with minor proposed adjustments that should generally have no impact or a positive impact on service users and carers.</p> <p>The Council already applies land charges for mandatory DFGs. This policy proposes to also apply land charges for certain discretionary grants. Increasing the use of local land charges for grants may have an adverse impact on owner-occupying disabled people and their households.</p>	Disabled households will be repayable if the property is sold, transferred or disposed of within 10 years, and the Council retains discretion not to recover if doing so would cause undue hardship.		
<b>Areas of deprivation</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The revised policy proposes a discretionary grant to help bring empty properties back into use which is likely to have greatest impact in deprived areas.	N/A	Housing Grants and Standards Team Leader	N/A

### Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Wider Impacts

<b>Additional Wider Impacts</b>	<b>No Impact</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Description of Impact</b>	<b>Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts</b>	<b>Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)</b>	<b>Timescale and monitoring arrangements</b>
<b>Other Council Services</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There is nothing to suggest that the Grants and Assistance Policy will have any impact on other council services	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Providers</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There is nothing to suggest that the Grants and Assistance Policy will have any impact on Providers.	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Social Value <sup>1</sup></b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

<sup>1</sup> If the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 applies to this proposal, please summarise here how you have considered how the contract might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the relevant area

### Section 3: Impact Assessment - Climate Change Impacts

OCC and CDC aim to be carbon neutral by 2030. How will your proposal affect our ability to reduce carbon emissions related to

Climate change impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Energy use in our buildings or highways	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Our fleet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Staff travel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Purchased services and products (including construction)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Maintained schools	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

We are also committed to enable Cherwell to become carbon neutral by 2030 and Oxfordshire by 2050. How will your proposal affect our ability to:

Climate change impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Enable carbon emissions reduction at district/county level?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>This policy proposes a discretionary empty homes grant that would require energy efficiency improvements before letting or sale.</p> <p>Where grants require works to be undertaken, regard is had to commissioning energy efficient and repairable equipment and adaptations.</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A

### Section 4: Review

Where bias, negative impact or disadvantage is identified, the proposal and/or implementation can be adapted or changed; meaning there is a need for regular review. This review may also be needed to reflect additional data and evidence for a fuller assessment (proportionate to the decision in question). Please state the agreed review timescale for the identified impacts of the policy implementation or service change.

<b>Review Date</b>	Annual
<b>Person Responsible for Review</b>	Housing Grants and Standards Team Leader
<b>Authorised By</b>	<b>Head of Housing</b>

<b>This report is public</b>	
<b>Cost of Living 23/24 review and 24/25 activities</b>	
<b>Committee</b>	Executive
<b>Date of Committee</b>	4 November 2024
<b>Portfolio Holder presenting the report</b>	Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities, Councillor Rob Pattenden
<b>Date Portfolio Holder agreed report</b>	21 August 2024
<b>Report of</b>	Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing, Nicola Riley

## Purpose of report

To provide an update on the additional activity described in the 2023/24 Cost of Living action plan and to note proposed future approaches and activity within the Household support grant aid.

## 1. Recommendations

The Executive resolves:

- 1.1 To agree the proposed plan which was endorsed and recommended by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which noted the review of the 2023/24 cost of living plan and supported the proposed range of activities planned for 2024/25 were considered.

## 2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report provides a review (Appendix 1) of the activities Cherwell District Council facilitated and delivered as part of the Cost-of-Living plan for 2023/24 to support residents experiencing difficulties due to ongoing cost-of- living pressures.
- 2.2 Attached to the report at Appendix 2 slides for the Executive to note the proposed range of activities planned for 2024/25.

## Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications	Commentary
<b>Finance</b>	The 2023/24 Cost of Living programme was delivered within the proposed budget and within Appendix 1 the review details the cost allocation for each project. Kelly Wheeler, Finance Business Partner, 28 August 2024

<b>Legal</b>	There are no legal implications arising as the programme is within the council's remit to deliver and all grant aid will be subject to a robust process with appropriate monitoring and this report is just for information. Alison Coles Legal Services Operations Manager, 28 August 2024			
<b>Risk Management</b>	Risks related to the Cost-of-Living programme are managed through the service operational risk register. The Review and appendix 1 highlights there were no areas of non-delivery against funding, which could be one of the main risks. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 28 August 2024			
<b>Impact Assessments</b>	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
<b>Equality Impact</b>				The 2023/24 Cost of Living plan was delivered in line with our Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion framework, seeking to ensure that all residents who are experiencing difficulties because of cost-of-living pressures will be enabled to take action to minimise that impact.
<b>A</b> Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		
<b>B</b> Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		
<b>Climate &amp; Environmental Impact</b>				Draught Busters initiatives help mitigate climate change by cutting energy use, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and promoting a more sustainable approach to home energy management.
<b>ICT &amp; Digital Impact</b>				N/A
<b>Data Impact</b>				N/A
<b>Procurement &amp; subsidy</b>				N/A
<b>Council Priorities</b>	Healthy, resilient and engaged communities			



	The Cost-of-Living plan 2023/24 supported our most vulnerable residents while working with partners to address the causes of health inequality and deprivation.
<b>Human Resources</b>	N/A
<b>Property</b>	N/A
<b>Consultation &amp; Engagement</b>	Will engage with local community to continue to review impact of the cost of living programme and adapt services for the future.  This report was considered and endorsed at the at the 10 September 2024 Overview & Scrutiny Committee (OSC) meeting. OSC agreed to continue the Food Insecurity working group in 2024/25.

## Supporting Information

### 3. Background

- 3.1 Following Covid and the subsequent Cost of Living crisis Cherwell District Council has provided additional support to low-income households, initially in 2022/23 with additional payments or food vouchers to those in receipt of housing benefit and last winter 2023/24 ran a programme of support and grant schemes to offer support to grass roots community groups and individuals.
- 3.2 Appended to this report is Appendix 1 that demonstrates the range of activities undertaken and where possible the impact that they had on residents who accessed them in 2023/24.
- 3.3 A succession of Household Support Grants have been available to Cherwell DC to support this work, with HSF 5 being the last of those. The government has not made any additional funding available from central government for this purpose.

### 4. Details

- 4.1 The 2023/24 Cost of Living programme and impact that this has had on residents is captured at Appendix 1. Cross team working across the council has also taken place through regular officer and Partner meetings. The Food Insecurity Working Group of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has helped guide the development of the delivery of elements of the programme related to food access.
- 4.2 The proposed 2024/25 cost of living activity plan is attached at Appendix 2. Consultation across different services at Cherwell has been undertaken to provide the activity plan to ensure that this encompasses a range of activities that suit the needs of the local community. This has also been shared with community and charitable organisations who have assisted in distributing grant aid in the last round of Household support funds.

- 4.3 The 2023/24 Cost of Living plan was successful and provided additional support for local communities and residents delivered by Cherwell DC and facilitated through voluntary / community organisations.
- 4.4 Appendix 1 details what the different activities and projects delivered were along with the impact that these projects had, key delivery partners and cost allocation of projects.

## 5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 5.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

### Option1

To not respond additionally to cost-of-living burdens felt by residents most impacted by economic pressures as there isn't a base budget for the additional spend. This has been rejected because of the availability of further allocations of Household support grant aid, which allow the Council to support residents without budgetary impact.

### Option2

To concentrate on fewer activities than set out in the plan at Appendix 2 This has been rejected because the spread of grant allows a greater number of issues to be relieved.

## 6 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 6.1 To note the Cost-of-Living 2023/24 Programme and note proposed future approaches and activity for 2024/25
- 6.2 Going forward the Wellbeing service wants to continue to work in partnership across the district with statutory and voluntary sector organisations, both strategically and on a hyperlocal basis, to ensure that Cherwell residents can access support through additional targeted interventions and secure help when needed.
- 6.3 The council recognises that the response to the cost-of-living crisis is changing and will need to continue to be flexible and adapt to best meet the changing needs of residents and the proposed activities will seek to continue to address this.

## Decision Information

<b>Key Decision</b>	Yes
<b>Subject to Call in</b>	Yes

<b>If not, why not subject to call in</b>	N/A
<b>Ward(s) Affected</b>	All wards but with a greater impact in areas with higher levels of deprivation

## Document Information

<b>Appendices</b>	
<b>Appendix 1</b>	Cost of Living Review 2023/24
<b>Appendix 2</b>	Cost of Living Plan Power point Slides 2024/25
<b>Background Papers</b>	None
<b>Reference Papers</b>	None
<b>Report Author</b>	Nicola Riley, Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing
<b>Report Author contact details</b>	<a href="mailto:Nicola.Riley@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk">Nicola.Riley@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk</a>

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**Cost of Living Action Plan – Review 2023/24**

Throughout the winter of 2023/24, there were a variety of initiatives that were run by the wellbeing team throughout the winter of 2023/24 in response to the Cost of Living Crisis.

These have been categorised into six areas, with each areas providing vital support for residents.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date initiated</b>	<b>Key Delivery Partners</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Cost Allocation</b>
<b>Advice and Support, Health and Wellbeing:</b>					
International Older Peoples Day stalls in Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington and promoting the community pop up at Castle Quay:	October 2023	Age UK Oxfordshire, Trading Standards, Citizen Advice	Communication with older people at day stalls in Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington  This included electric blanket testing.	Electric Blanket Testing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kidlington - 120 attended, 74 blankets tested (28% failure rate)</li> <li>- Bicester –70 attend, tested 81 blankets (32% failure rate)</li> <li>- Banbury - 108 attended, tested 80 blankets (with a 34% failure rate)</li> </ul> 298 people attended these meetings.  When the electric blanket fails, and as it is unsafe they are disposed of.	£2,000
<b>Advice and Support:</b>					
Who can help?' booklet – refresh and promotion	November 2023	All Voluntary Sector Partners and statutory provision	Leaflets refreshed and distributed across the district and within CDC services.	Distributed to community partners, parish councils and warm welcome spaces.  Engaged and worked internally with housing, customer services etc that engage with vulnerable services.	Officer Time.
<b>Food Insecurity:</b>					

Food Grants for Community Food Provision	October 2023	Community food Network Partners	<p>Food Grant community scheme awarded up to £3,000 in grants to community groups for community projects relating to food.</p> <p>These grant schemes can cover support to cover cooking sessions, cooking equipment, cookery or edible garden project as well as foodbank support.</p>	<p>25 groups have benefitted from this grant scheme, which concluded in March 2024, at the end of the financial year throughout Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington.</p> <p>It is estimated that 4234 Households were supported through a variety of projects, with many ongoing, increasing the potential reach.</p> <p>Feedback:</p> <p>The RVS Community Cornhill Centre have been able to continue the funding of the Friday club which provides subsidised, nutritious meals whilst reducing isolation and strengthening community bonds.</p> <p>In the grant evaluation form, the Cornhill Centre noted that 'The Cornhill Centre wishes to express its gratitude to Cherwell District Council for awarding us this grant. Your support has been instrumental in sustaining a service that goes far beyond a meal; it fosters connection, combats isolation, and nurtures well-being among our members'.</p>	£66,000
Activate and Eat Club Half term provision.	Half terms (summer, October, February and Easter)	Schools in Cherwell	<p>Activate and eat half term sessions were held over half terms throughout Cherwell</p>	<p>There were 1,838 attendances at these sessions which were held in the summer, October and Easter half term.</p> <p>In the easter half term, over the 2 week period, there were 234 attendees at these sessions over the period.</p>	£13,654.50 - HSF4 allocation

Additional support to distribute surplus festive food.	December 2023 and January 2024	Cherwell Community food network,	Additional support and festive lunches held over the festive period.	5 Christmas lunch events across Cherwell District in partnership with community partners to support.  Information was distributed to the Cherwell Food Network on Christmas food provision/surplus food distribution.	No budget
<b>Food Insecurity and Health and Wellbeing:</b>					
Healthy Eating recipe swap	March-March 2024	Cherwell Community food network	Recipes shared through partners and internally at CDC.	Work completed with Sunrise Multicultural Project and Sunshine children centre creating diverse recipes. Groups also encouraged to think about reducing food waste by submitting recipes to be shared as part of food waste action week.  New recipe book planned using community food grant funding for launch July 2024	Officer Time but no budget
Expanded winter warmers programmes (provides a warm meal to residents to eat in a warm space and another to take away)	November 2023	The Hill, Cherwell Collective, BYCE	Expansion to the winter warmers was launched in Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington.	<b>Banbury</b> – winter warmers program expanded to deliver and make hot soups (using surplus food) for residents within a 3.5-mile radius of Banbury Cross. Working with The Hill and the Royal Voluntary Service. The senior lunch is also run by the Hill and offers a social space and food for elderly residents.  <b>Bicester</b> – Bicester open doors lunch was included, and residents were supported by volunteer’s driver’s scheme if they wished to attend.  <b>Kidlington</b> – Cherwell collective lunch scheme and transport provision.	£12,000 – HSF4 Allocation

				Throughout this program approximately 135 households have been supported.	
<b>Food Insecurity and Maximizing Income:</b>					
Food Vouchers	October 2023 – March 2024	Food Banks, Community Fridges and key partners e.g. Sunrise MCP	Food Vouchers given to residents through community partners.	Two rounds of applications (before and after Christmas). After Christmas vouchers increased from £50 to £75. Increase number of groups who can distribute vouchers across Cherwell.  742 vouchers distributed through community partners.	£32,075 total spent on food vouchers from October 2023 - March 2024
<b>Fuel Poverty</b>					
Relaunch the Cherwell Warm Welcome Network, encouraging more partners	October 2023	Various community partners	Warm Welcome network relaunched in October 2023, and aimed at including more partners	48 warm spaces were held this year – and increase on 30 the year before.  Gaps were filled on the previous years, with more rural areas signing up – 18 villages had signed up, and engagement with new groups had continued.  A Warm Welcome pack containing information was circulated at these groups. These included who can help booklets. Positive feedback from groups involved.  Feedback: The Banbury Community Fridge was also provided with funding to support the construction of consultation and warm space room which provides a supportive environment for residents of Banbury.	£250



				It provided warm welcome space for residents to provide a warm space.	
Expand Fuel support programme. Extra Warmth	November 2023	Citizens Advice	Project launched in November 2023 and helped support residents across CDC and in particular our rural areas and BF wards.	58 Households are members of the scheme in the Cherwell District	£13,770.00 - HSF4 Allocation
Reduced membership fees for Oil Co-op for rural residents with oil heating	November 2023	Community First Oxfordshire	Project launched and full subsidies available.  Scheme offers a discount for oil prices and individuals as part of it know in advance of paying for it. Offers the best price for residents, and saves individuals from having to shop around for the best price.	58 Households Supported throughout the district.	£7,000.00 - HSF4 Allocation

Household Support Equipment Grant	December 2023 and January 2024	Food banks, Community centres	Grant scheme has been set up for community groups to apply for up to £5000. Equipment (air fryers, slow cookers, LED lightbulbs energy efficient equipment) will then be handed out to residents.	<p>There have been 6 groups that have received support from this for up to £5000 across Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington</p> <p>It is estimated that 720 Households supported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 300 with children</li> <li>- 100 with pensioners</li> <li>- 320 others</li> </ul> <p>Feedback:</p> <p>The Sunrise Multicultural Centre wrote in their evaluation report that 'This grant was amazing! and made a big difference to the people who received the larger electrical items. It's also something they were not expecting as we usually are not able to support in this way, and I feel like it really gave people a boost when we have them to them.'</p>	£23,524.45 -HSF4
Draught Busters Pilot Scheme	December 2023 and January 2024	Heat Upper Heyford	Scheme which provided equipment for residents to draught-proof their homes. The equipment provided included draught excluders. It reviewed homes to see where they can reduce heat loss.	The scheme started with a pilot in Upper Heyford, however due to warm weather it was held over until the 2024/25.	£3,000 - Household Support 5
<b><u>Health and Wellbeing, Food Insecurity and Food Poverty</u></b>					

Cookery skills and shared cooking programme	January to March 2024	Good Food Oxfordshire Cook together, eat together Cherwell Collective	Creation of a share cooking programme that was created through holding shared cooking sessions at community partners.	There are a variety of sessions that have been held at local community partners including, Cook together, eat together sessions. GFO have a shared map of cookery spaces and activities – this is shared with residents at events and in partner venues.	Officer Time and Resources
<b>Money Maximisation</b>					
Debt and money advice;	December 2023 and January 2024	Trading Standards, Citizens Advice, CDC (Cherwell District Council) Revenues and Benefits team,	Supporting residents with the debt and money advice.  Linking with partners on scam awareness and Loan sharks, domestic abuse.	Who can help leaflets and Support Service Leaflets updated distributed across the district, online and in GPs.  Money advice support offered through in person events and online.  Internal teams at the council aware of necessary routes and signpost residents– these include waste, revenue and benefits and housing.  Energy Matters – Citizens Advice 327 Household's supported (1299 Individuals)	Officer Time and Resources
<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>					

Period Poverty Grant Scheme	April 2024	Cherwell District Council, Community Partners	Grant offered for up to £150 to help community groups/warm welcome spaces/food support surfaces to purchase period products for residents of Cherwell to support period poverty.	<p>Delivery of period products to support residents in need.</p> <p>Good News Stories:          Thanks for sending this across. This will be hugely beneficial in supporting some of the girls at the Primary School. I know the Head Teacher has been buying sanitary products and I have taken donations up to the School as well. Thank you to everyone at Cherwell who work so hard to support those in need. – <b>Hooky Neighbours Pantry</b></p> <p>We'd like to provide these in our parish centre, which is used by a range of vulnerable groups. Thank you for taking this initiative! – <b>Banbury St Mary</b></p>	£12,000
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# Cost of living support

Nicola Riley – Wellbeing

Page 123



*Cherwell*

DISTRICT COUNCIL  
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

# Cost of living support 24/25

## Proposed projects with funding secured

- Electric Blanket replacements at older people's events
- Household support equipment grants
- Fuel support program
- Draught busters
- Period poverty grant
- Update of the warm welcome network and who can help booklet
- Food vouchers
- Seven recipes in seven days

Total £81,550 (Household Support Fund 5 & CDC Core)

# Cost of living Support 24/25

## Potential projects with funding secured through HSF6

- Food vouchers – Opportunity to top up the funding pot to last through the winter (£23,000 to match last years amount)
- Food grants - Opportunity to reopen the grant for this year (£28,000)
- Activate and Eat half term and Easter provision with the youth activators (£2040)
- Enabling funding to use LIFT (low-income family tracker) (£10,000)
- Total £63,040

Page 125

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This report is public	
<b>Establishing Area Oversight Groups</b>	
<b>Committee</b>	Executive
<b>Date of Committee</b>	4 November 2024
<b>Portfolio Holder presenting the report</b>	Portfolio Holder for Finance, Regeneration and Property Councillor Lesley McLean
<b>Date Portfolio Holder agreed report</b>	22 October 2024
<b>Report of</b>	Corporate Director – Communities, Ian Boll

## Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to seek authority from the Executive to adopt an area-based approach with the objective to strengthen community and stakeholder engagement into major growth sites across the District in support of delivering more holistic and sustainably planned developments, aligned to Council priorities.

## 1. Recommendations

The Executive resolves:

- 1.1 To authorise the adoption of the establishment of Area Oversight Groups (AOGs) for Bicester, Banbury and Kidlington as non-decision-making advisory groups.

## 2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 A key objective of an area-based approach is to focus on a ‘bottom-up’ system to strengthen partnership working alongside creating strong links to community leadership, provide opportunity for improved two-way communication and engagement (especially in areas experiencing significant housing growth) and provide for greater accessibility and accountability.
- 2.2 A well-established area-based approach has been operating in Bicester since the inception of the Garden Town Programme and has been predominantly funded by capacity funding via the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Garden Town programme. The opportunity is to develop Area Oversight Groups in other areas that builds upon the strengths of the Bicester model. We intend to establish these in both Banbury, in the context of both the remaining strategic allocations and the regeneration of the town centre, and 2020 local plan partial review sites across the four parishes of Kidlington, Water Eaton, Begbroke and Yarnton, referred from hereon as the Four Parishes area. At the same time, the Bicester model can also be improved and developed as part of a continuous and iterative process – which will also apply to the other two areas as they become established.

2.3 Establishing Area Oversight Groups will allow us to both identify and leverage future funding opportunities for these areas and optimise delivery

## Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications	Commentary			
<b>Finance</b>	The Area Oversight Groups will be set up within the current budget available.  Michael Furness, Assistant Director of Finance (S151 Officer) 17 October 2024			
<b>Legal</b>	There are no legal issues associated with establishing this approach to engagement. Shiraz Sheikh 24/10/2024			
<b>Risk Management</b>	There are no major risks associated with establishing this framework. Any risks for identified for the individual boards will be captured in operational/project risk registers. [Shona Ware, AD Customer Focus 25 October 2024			
Impact Assessments	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
<b>Equality Impact</b>				
<b>A</b> Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?				Not applicable
<b>B</b> Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?				Not applicable
<b>Climate &amp; Environmental Impact</b>				Not applicable
<b>ICT &amp; Digital Impact</b>				Not applicable
<b>Data Impact</b>				Not applicable
<b>Procurement &amp; subsidy</b>				Not applicable
<b>Council Priorities</b>	Supporting Environmental Sustainability			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the green economy</li> <li>• Work with partners to improve air quality</li> </ul> <p>An Enterprising Economy with Strong and Vibrant Local Centres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement area frameworks to support a coordinated approach to development and engagement</li> <li>• Work with partners to understand and unlock complex infrastructure issues that are preventing planned and support growth from successful delivery</li> </ul> <p>Healthy, Resilient and Engaged Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify community needs and produce shared solutions</li> <li>• Work with partners to identify community assets to strengthen safe and resilient communities</li> <li>• Working with partners to bring investment into the district to sustain communities</li> </ul> <p>Housing That Meets Your Needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete and deliver our Local Plan to provide sustainable development which improves the local environment for residents, providing necessary infrastructure</li> <li>• Provide for affordable housing to meet the districts needs</li> <li>• Encourage a higher standard of design in new developments</li> </ul>
<b>Human Resources</b>	Not applicable
<b>Property</b>	Not applicable
<b>Consultation &amp; Engagement</b>	Not applicable

## Supporting Information

### 3. Background

- 3.1 The Council wants to continue to be positive about planned growth and wishes to increase the engagement across stakeholders and with existing communities to ensure they are an engaged part of the process.
- 3.2 Having a flexible, externally-oriented and accessible approach that can promote Cherwell’s vision and objectives, and seek delivery against these in preliminary stages of business and development growth has proven to be invaluable but more can be done and this report sets out what this might be and how it can be achieved.

- 3.3 Furthermore, having more flexibility than the statutory roles of the Local Planning Authority (LPA) allow the council to be more manoeuvrable vocalising what it expects, wants, and does not want - without the encumbrance of pre-determination or prejudice to due process.

This benefit can be further enhanced with the greater involvement of, and greater engagement with, communities. However, to be more successful this approach needs to be in the areas of major growth, visible to all players to ensure their contribution is not missed or an after-thought. It is also through this group that deeper partnership delivery can be formed with other major delivery partners like the County Council, Homes England, major infrastructure providers and statutory bodies including the Environment Agency, Network Rail etc.

## 4. Details

### Area-Based Proposal

- 4.1 **Establish three areas:** For effectiveness and efficiency, that the district be split into three distinct “areas” as the geographic basis for the area-based approach focussing upon the areas of significant growth and development; specifically, Banbury, Bicester and South Cherwell (consisting of the four parishes of Begbroke, Kidlington, Water Eaton and Yarnton). The three areas will be:
- Banbury
  - Bicester
  - Four Parishes (consisting of Kidlington, Water Eaton, Yarnton and Begbroke)
- 4.2 A lot of work has already been done in the recent past working towards these new arrangements, particularly in Bicester which has a well-established governance and work programme relating to its status as a Garden Town; many of the lessons learnt and structures adopted in Bicester will be considered for the other two areas – although empathetic to the differing needs and character of each area.

In recent years, the Bicester programme has comprised:

- Engaging with developers on alternative delivery solutions to the North West Relief Road, also know as the A4095 Howes Lane diversion.
- Commencing engagement and design of a proposal for Market Square.
- Delivering minor improvements to Bure Place using UK SPF funding
- Developing a new public realm framework for Bicester
- Working with the Town Council on new cemetery provision
- Commissioning energy studies to develop a strategy to unlock electricity supply capacity issues
- Supporting the delivery of Growth Deal Fund infrastructure
- Supporting Bicester Vision, a CIC supporting businesses across Bicester

For Banbury, a significant community engagement exercise has been undertaken which has paved the way for these new arrangements through the Banbury Vision work. In addition, the council has supported the delivery of Tramway through the Growth Deal funding and worked closely with the Banbury Improvement District (Banbury BID). A new public realm framework for Banbury has been developed and due to be published shortly.

Furthermore, a lot of work at the parish level has also taken place within the four parishes in the South of the district (Begbroke, Kidlington, Water Eaton and Yarnton) where a considerable amount of development is due to take place.

There will be a number of key infrastructure challenges that each area (to a greater or lesser extent) will need to grapple with which might include roads, water, energy and other matters that will emerge. This will require close co-operation and co-ordination with outside agencies such as the County Council, water and energy providers and others.

- 4.3 **Area Framework:** The report recommends that to facilitate consistent service provision throughout Cherwell which sets clear ambitions for each area (and reflects differing needs and circumstances) that an **Area Framework** is established across each of the three areas. Subject to resourcing, the Area Framework will be developed over time to consist of (but this may grow further as required and appropriate):
- 4.3.1 Develop a medium to long term vision for the area in the form of an **Area Plan** which sets out the ambition for the area, the areas of planned growth, critical infrastructure to be delivered and needed as well as an investment framework – to engage with local businesses and attract inward investment.
  - 4.3.2 Supporting the Area Plan, an **Infrastructure & Investment Plan** should be developed so there is complete visibility on future provision, gaps, who is delivering and what is needed to deliver the Area Plan (including funding gap and assessment of how such gap may be filled).
  - 4.3.3 **Movement and Mobility Strategy**, developed by the County Council but informed by the district and the community in terms of planned transport infrastructure specifically.
  - 4.3.4 A “**pen pic**” of the area will be produced which includes key demographic data (e.g. population size, age profile, in and out migration), business sectors, size and growth, travel to work data, etc. kept up to date and publicly accessible to provide clear evidence of what makes up the area rather than perception or historical reference.
  - 4.3.5 Develop an **Engagement and Communications Plan** as part of The Area Framework. To assist with this a communication protocol, referred to here as an **Area Engagement and Communications Plan**, should be developed which sets out clearly the purpose and objectives of this area-based approach, how this approach will work (including terms of reference, meeting protocols, etc.) as well as how communities will be engaged.
  - 4.3.6 Establish robust and appropriate internal and external **governance arrangements** broadly based upon the Bicester model
- 4.4 **Area Oversight Groups (AOGs)** Although not part of any formal decision-making process, setting up an **Area Oversight Group** (AOG) for each area would provide the Council with a significant conduit to and from the local communities.
- 4.4.1 This will include Chairs of relevant parish or town councils, selected business leaders, chairs of relevant community groups as well as the county council and any external agency which may have a significant role to play in that community (eg. Homes England, Network Rail, Environment Agency). Each Area Oversight Group will be chaired by the Council Leader, or delegated

Portfolio Holder responsible regeneration and economy who will be supported by the relevant officers.

4.4.2 These groups should meet quarterly with a regular agenda including programme updates, status of current major developments/ Infrastructure being considered and built. The Council may wish to consider setting up or re-energising existing business forums and developer networks. Regular and active members of each of these forums could be invited by AOG to discuss relevant growth plans or initiatives in the area. It is suggested these are invitation only meetings with public inclusion as and when a topic or issue warrants this. Suggested Terms of Reference are included as Appendix 1, for information.

4.8 **Developer Liaison Groups for each of the three areas** Establish groups which will enable more community engagement on early project development and to seek to positively influence current and future growth proposals (a developer forum has already been established in North West Bicester). For this to be effective and open in its proactive relationship with growth, it needs to regularly engage with development promoters. One of the significant benefits of having this is it can have “what-if” discussions as it seeks to gain clear understanding of how promoted development does or could fit with the Council’s objectives and bring the most benefit for the community.

To help with this and to avoid informal ad hoc arrangements which can lead to misunderstandings of the Council’s interaction with development proponents, developer and business forums should be established or re-energised for the district, meeting on a regular (quarterly) basis. Selected representatives of this group who are regular and committed developers and business leaders in an area could be invited to attend the relevant AOG to share proposals or for community engagement as part of developing proposals.

4.9 Once a year in each area a Community Engagement Forum could be held in each of the three areas enabling each AOG to share updates, feed back to their communities and receive comments and views.

## **5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

5.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: Do nothing (keep current arrangements in place) – this was rejected because there is a lack of consistency in each of the three areas and only Bicester has suitable arrangements in place and it is important that the other two urban centres, subjected to growth and development also benefit for local area based arrangements, aligned to local needs and aspirations.

## **6 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

6.1 It is recommended that we establish Area Oversight Groups. The reason for this is set out in the report and will help to manage increasing development and housing

growth within some urban centres in Cherwell and help deliver an enabling and co-ordinated approach towards achieving Council priorities.

## Decision Information

<b>Key Decision</b>	Yes
<b>Subject to Call in</b>	Yes
<b>If not, why not subject to call in</b>	N/A
<b>Ward(s) Affected</b>	Banbury Calthorpe and Easington, Banbury Cross and Neithrop, Banbury Grimsbury and Hightown, Banbury Hardwick, Banbury Ruscote, Kidlington East, Kidlington West, Bicester East, Bicester North and Caversfield, Bicester South and Ambrosden, Bicester West

## Document Information

<b>Appendices</b>	
<b>Appendix 1</b>	Area Oversight Groups (Draft) Terms of Reference
<b>Background Papers</b>	None
<b>Reference Papers</b>	None
<b>Report Author</b>	Ian Boll, Corporate Director – Communities
<b>Report Author contact details</b>	<a href="mailto:ian.boll@cherwell-dc.gov.uk">ian.boll@cherwell-dc.gov.uk</a>

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# Appendix 1 – Area Oversight Groups (AOG)

## Draft Terms of Reference

### 1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Following a commitment to focus the Growth & Economy service upon area-based for service delivery, new community programme oversight arrangements are being put in place. These will be referred to as Area Oversight Groups (AOG). This arrangement will build and improve on the format used for Bicester (BSOP) replacing it with the Central Area Oversight Group. New AOGs will be established for the South and North Areas. These groups will bring together community, business, and local council leaders to oversee the new Area Frameworks for each area.
- 1.2 Area Frameworks will comprise masterplans, infrastructure, and investment plans as well as clear communication protocols to guide local input and awareness of local planned growth and its delivery. This will enable local thought leadership and regular engagement to be part of developing and delivering long term plans for growth.
- 1.3 The Group will encourage effective linked working between local partner organisations with members of the development and business communities and other regional/national delivery partners such as Homes England to oversee delivery The Area Framework.
- 1.4 The AOG is not a decision-making body. Responsibility for decisions relating to programme delivery fall to the Cherwell District Council or in some cases Oxfordshire County Council or other delivery organisations. The AOG affords the opportunity for improved engagement, increased awareness, and direct influence over programme development.
- 1.5 The AOG may request, receive, and consider reports and advice from other stakeholders as it sees fit, as well as make recommendations to and ask questions of the Councils and to make representations/recommendations to the relevant democratic decision-making bodies of the local authorities.

### 2. Membership

2.1 Membership will include:

- Cherwell District Council
- Oxfordshire County Council
- Chair of the Town or Parish Council
- OxLEP
- Chamber of Commerce or other local business organisations

- Major local business leaders
- Developers
- Other organisations that are delivering or involved in elements of the Area Framework programme delivery

2.2 Membership will first be determined by the Council and annually reviewed by the AOG to consider membership renewal or new members as appropriate.

## 3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The AOG will:

- Meet four times a year, typically on a quarterly cycle
- Support and oversee the development of an initial Area Framework
- Check, challenge and oversee delivery of the Area Framework
- Seek that the Area Framework Delivery Programme is being delivered against targets and that any risks, issues and blockages are identified and, wherever possible, addressed
- Use its knowledge and experience to input to discussion and advise and make recommendations to the relevant decision-making bodies
- Receive regular reports and updates from the Area Programme Delivery Manager
- Act as advocate of the Area, the Area Framework by promoting its benefits with wider audiences, boards and groups of which Partnership members have membership
- Where appropriate, liaise with other areas of the district to ensure cross-boundary working to maximise benefit and funding efficiency
- Support programme delivery where it can through its collective abilities and networks.

3.2 The Chair will be the Leader of Cherwell District Council or as decided by the AOG board membership to allow rotation from time to time and is responsible for reviewing the agenda, facilitating discussion, and ensuring that recommendations are in accordance with the Terms of Reference.

3.3 The Area Programme Delivery Manager is responsible for ensuring arrangements and agendas for each meeting are in place and in accordance with these Terms of Reference.

3.4 The Area Programme Delivery Manager will be responsible for programme delivery and for updating the AOG on progress and risks at each of its meetings. An annual report of progress for the Area Framework will be reported which will include a performance review and review of active risk register.

## 4. Working methods

- 4.1 Meeting attendance will be by invitation only and organised by Cherwell District Council.
- 4.2 Meetings are to be held quarterly or as otherwise agreed and will not generally be open to the public.
- 4.3 Dedicated support for the AOG will aim to provide the finalised agenda and papers at least 5 working days in advance of each meeting. The meeting record, notes and actions log will be produced no later than 5 working days after the meeting.
- 4.4 Partnership membership and frequency of meetings may evolve to reflect changes and to ensure that they remain appropriate for the requirements of the programme. AOG terms of reference will be reviewed and agreed annually.
- 4.5 Meetings may be held virtually if necessary but will typically be in person and held at a convenient venue in the area being represented.

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<b>This report is public</b>	
Appendix 3 is exempt from publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of Local Government Act 1972	
<b>Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report Quarter 2 2024 - 2025</b>	
<b>Committee</b>	Executive
<b>Date of Committee</b>	04 November 2024
<b>Portfolio Holder presenting the report</b>	Cllr Lesley McLean - Portfolio holder for Finance / Cllr Chris Brant - Portfolio Holder Corporate Services
<b>Date Portfolio Holder agreed report</b>	23 October 2024
<b>Report of</b>	Assistant Director of Finance / Assistant Director – Customer Focus

## Purpose of report

To report to the committee the council's performance, risk, and financial positions at the end of Quarter 2 2024-25.

### 1. Recommendations

The Executive resolves:

- 1.1 To consider and note the contents of the council's performance, risk and finance Quarter 2 report.
- 1.2 To approve the updated Corporate Debt Policy (section 4.1.7 and Appendix 5)
- 1.3 To approve debt write offs totalling £43,660.32 (section 4.1.6 and Exempt Appendix 6).
- 1.4 To approve the reprofiling of capital projects beyond 2024/25 (section 4.2.3 and Appendix 1) and the subsequent update to the programme budget for this financial year 2024/25.
- 1.5 To note that Cherwell will be receiving £0.064m revenue grant funding from OCC for the Household Support Fund round 6. This follows up on round 5 that was spent supporting residents through the cost-of-living crisis. This funding will support the work presented at the last Overview and Scrutiny meeting in Cherwell's Cost of Living plan.
- 1.6 To note the use of £0.050m of S106 funding approved under S151 delegated authority to deliver the remaining elements of the Outdoor Sports project at Whitelands Farm Sports Ground.
- 1.7 To note the additional information relating to capital overspends reported to Executive in the August (period 5) financial performance report (section 4.2.3 – 4.2.5)

- 1.8 To approve the removal of projects with budgets totalling £0.652m from the Capital Programme (section 4.2.8 and Appendix 7).
- 1.9 To approve the increase in the building control fees and charges for 2024/25 with immediate effect (Appendix 12).

## 2. Executive Summary

2.1 This report is split into three sections:

- Finance
- Performance
- Risk

2.2 The Finance section presents the financial position as of the end of Quarter 2 2024-25.

2.3 The Performance section sets out how the council has performed against its priorities for 2024-25, which are set out in its Outcomes Framework.

2.4 The Risk section highlights the current risks within the council's Leadership Risk Register, reflecting the final position for Quarter 2 2024-25.

Implications	Commentary			
<b>Finance</b>	Financial and Resource implications are detailed within sections 4.1 and 4.2 of this report. The reserves policy requires Executive to agree transfers to and from earmarked reserves and general balances during the financial year.  Joanne Kaye, Head of Finance, 14 October 2024			
<b>Legal</b>	There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.  Shiraz Sheikh, Assistant Director Law and Governance and Democratic Services, 21 October 2024			
<b>Risk Management</b>	This report contains a full update with regards to the council's risk position at the end of Quarter 2 2024-25.  Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 16 October 2024			
<b>Impact Assessments</b>	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary

<b>Equality Impact</b>		X		There are no direct equalities and inclusion implications as a consequence of this report. The report includes a summary on our performance against the Equalities, Diversity, and Inclusion Action plans during Quarter 2 2024-25.  Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 16 October 2024
<b>A</b> Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		
<b>B</b> Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		
<b>Climate &amp; Environmental Impact</b>		x		N/A
<b>ICT &amp; Digital Impact</b>		x		N/A
<b>Data Impact</b>		x		N/A
<b>Procurement &amp; subsidy</b>		x		N/A
<b>Council Priorities</b>	This report links to all council's priorities, as it summarises our progress against them during Quarter 2 2024-25			

## Supporting Information

### 3. Background

- 3.1 The council actively and regularly monitors its performance, risk, and financial positions to ensure it can deliver its corporate priorities and respond effectively to emerging issues.
- 3.2 This monitoring takes place monthly for finance, so the council can identify potential issues at the earliest opportunity and put measures in place to mitigate them.

3.3 These updates are consolidated into a single report given the implications and interdependencies between them, and this is the summary for the end of Quarter 2 2024-25.

## 4. Details

### 4.1 Finance Update

4.1.1 The council's forecast outturn position for 2024/2025 is an overspend of £0.145m which is an improvement of (£0.063m) when comparing to the forecast as at the end of August. The forecast overspend is due to various factors across services and is summarised in Table 1 below. Further details can be found in Appendix 2. Several pressures have begun to be forecast but swift action has been taken to reduce these or identify mitigations. The Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) has agreed that a Budget Oversight Group will meet with service managers each month where overspends are identified to agree in-year mitigation plans AND TO FURTHER STRENGTHEN BUDGET MANAGEMENT AND FORECASTING.

**Table 1:** Forecast Year End Position

Service	Original Budget £m	Current Budget £m	September Forecast Outturn £m	September Variance (Under) / Over £m	% Variance to current budget %	August Variance (Under) / Over £m	Change since Previous (better) / worse £m	
Finance	3.039	3.031	3.031	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	
Legal, Democratic, Elections & Procurement	2.265	2.305	2.414	0.109	4.7%	0.079	0.030	
ICT	1.510	1.510	1.510	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	
Property	(2.432)	(2.432)	(2.357)	0.075	-3.1%	0.075	0.000	
HR & OD	0.779	0.789	0.819	0.030	3.8%	0.030	0.000	
Customer Focus	2.518	2.518	2.428	(0.090)	-3.6%	(0.120)	0.030	
<b>Resources &amp; Transformation</b>	<b>9.719</b>	<b>9.801</b>	<b>7.845</b>	<b>0.124</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>0.064</b>	<b>0.060</b>	
Planning & Development	1.738	1.738	1.818	0.080	4.6%	0.151	(0.071)	
Growth & Economy	0.477	0.466	0.479	0.013	2.8%	0.000	0.013	
Environmental	5.665	5.676	5.819	0.143	2.5%	0.143	0.000	
Regulatory	1.116	1.116	1.116	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	
Wellbeing & Housing	2.040	2.150	2.050	(0.100)	-4.7%	(0.035)	(0.065)	
<b>Communities</b>	<b>11.036</b>	<b>11.146</b>	<b>11.282</b>	<b>0.136</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>0.259</b>	<b>(0.123)</b>	
<b>Subtotal for Directorates</b>	<b>18.715</b>	<b>18.797</b>	<b>19.127</b>	<b>0.260</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>0.323</b>	<b>-0.063</b>	
Executive Matters	4.293	4.293	4.178	(0.115)	-2.7%	(0.115)	0.000	
Policy Contingency	3.979	3.827	3.827	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	
<b>Total</b>	<b>26.987</b>	<b>26.987</b>	<b>27.132</b>	<b>0.145</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>0.208</b>	<b>(0.063)</b>	



FUNDING	(26.987)	(26.987)	(26.987)	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000
(Surplus)/Deficit	0.000	0.000	0.145	0.145		0.208	(0.063)

**Note:** A positive variance is an overspend or a reduction in forecast income and a (negative) is an underspend or extra income received. Green represents an underspend and red represents an overspend for the outturn position.

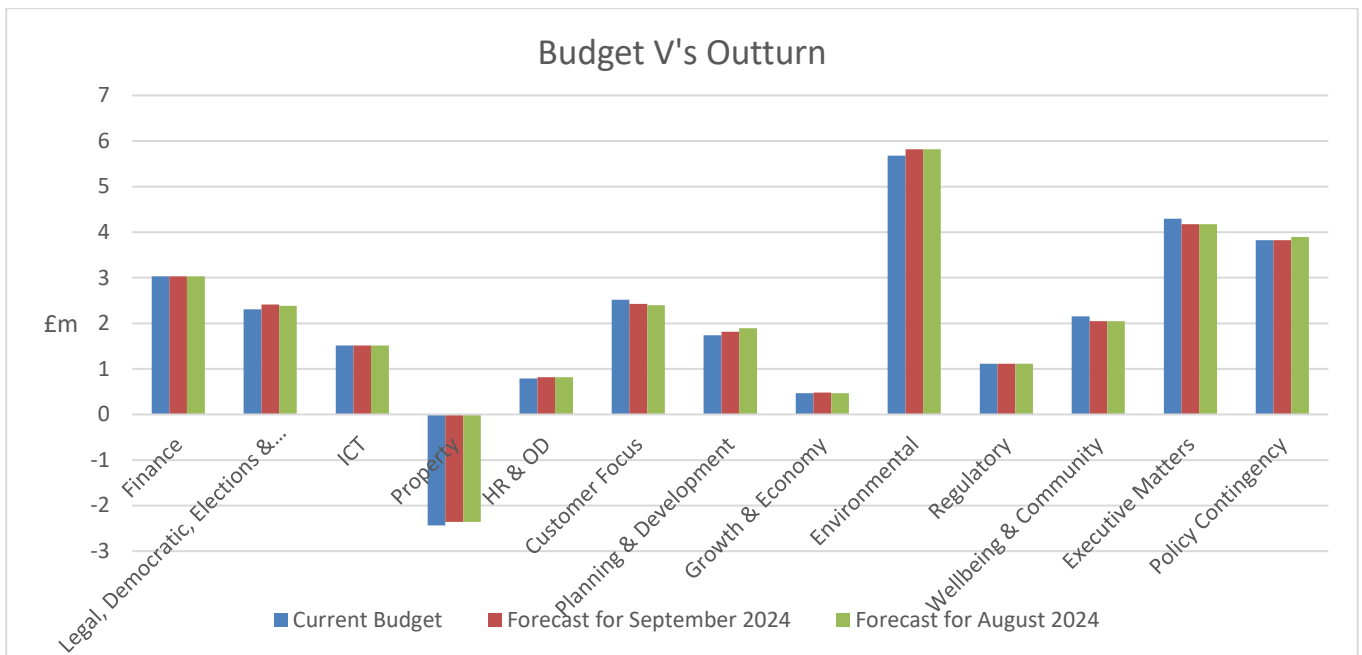
4.1.2 Table 2 below analyses the variances to distinguish between base budget variances and variances resulting from the non-delivery of previously approved savings. The non-delivery of savings has a knock-on impact on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy as failure to deliver on an ongoing basis adds to future pressures.

**Table 2:** Analysis of Variance – September 2024

Breakdown of current month forecast	September 2024 Forecast £m	Base Budget Over/ (Under) £m	Savings Non-Delivery £m
Resources	0.124	0.066	0.058
Communities	0.136	(0.260)	0.396
<b>Subtotal Directorates</b>	<b>0.260</b>	<b>(0.194)</b>	<b>0.454</b>
Executive Matters	(0.115)	(0.115)	0.000
Policy Contingency	0.000	0.000	0.000
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.145</b>	<b>(0.309)</b>	<b>0.454</b>
<b>FUNDING</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>(Surplus)/Deficit</b>	<b>0.145</b>	<b>(0.309)</b>	<b>0.454</b>

4.1.3 The graph below shows the Budget compared with the forecast to the end of the financial year.

**Graph 1:** Budget compared with Forecast



4.1.4 Table 3 below summarises the major forecast variances for the reporting period. Further details can be found in Appendix 2.

**Table 3: Top Major Variances**

Service	Current Budget	Variance	% Variance
Environmental	5.676	0.143	2.5%
Legal, Democratic, Elections & Procurement	2.305	0.109	4.7%
Planning & Development	1.738	0.080	4.6%
Property	(2.432)	0.075	-3.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7.287</b>	<b>0.407</b>	

### Aged Debt Write Off

4.1.5 The financial regulations make provision for writing off debts that are bad, uneconomical to collect or deemed irrecoverable. The council maintains a number of bad debt provisions in the anticipation that some debts will become bad and these, once agreed, are charged to the relevant provision or cost centre. There are provisions within the council for bad debt and writing off the amount of debt mentioned in this report will not cause the provisions to be exceeded. The provisions are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that we have sufficient coverage.

4.1.6 The table below summarises the write offs made to date as at the end of September. Exempt Appendix 6 provides further detail of the requested write-offs while further analysis and a profile of the age of the council's debt can be found in Appendix 3.

**Table 4: Summary Write Offs**

Category of Debt	Total Previously Written off £m	Requiring Exec Approval £m	Due to be written off in November 2024 under S151 Delegation	Total £m
Sundry Debt	0.305	0.000	0.000	0.305
Housing Benefit	0.016	0.006	0.012	0.034
Council Tax	0.067	0.025	0.103	0.195
Non-Domestic Rates	0.119	0.012	0.015	0.146
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.507</b>	<b>0.043</b>	<b>0.130</b>	<b>0.680</b>

4.1.7 It is good practice to review council policies periodically and officers have recently reviewed and updated the Corporate Debt Policy which sets out the general principles of debt management across all services provided by the Council. The council continues in its commitment to identify and assist at an early stage those who face difficulties in paying, and to actively encourage them to contact us, to help to reduce the effect of debt on our customers. The council further commits to ensuring that, where customers can't pay their debt, we consider their individual circumstances and take action on a case-by-case basis by negotiating repayment plans that do not cause unnecessary financial hardship. There are no material changes to the updated policy which can be found at Appendix 5.

## Reserves

4.1.8 Allocations to and from reserves are made according to the Reserves Policy. Table 5 below summarises the movements approved to date this financial year (please note there are no new requests for September 2024).

**Table 5: Earmarked Reserves:**

Reserves	Balance 1 April 2024 £m	Original Budgeted use/ (contribution) £m	Changes agreed since budget setting £m	Changes proposed September 2024 £m	Balance 31 March 2025 £m
General Balance	(6.153)	0.000	0.000	0.000	(6.153)
Earmarked	(28.325)	(0.776)	0.476	0.000	(28.625)
Ringfenced Grant	(2.552)	0.898	0.422	0.000	(1.232)
<b>Subtotal Revenue</b>	<b>(37.030)</b>	<b>0.122</b>	<b>0.898</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>(36.010)</b>
Capital	(6.293)	3.250	0.000	0.000	(3.043)
<b>Total</b>	<b>(43.323)</b>	<b>3.372</b>	<b>0.898</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>(39.053)</b>

\*According to the Reserves Policy Executive are only required to approve uses of Capital Reserves, not contributions.

## 4.2 Capital

4.2.1 Table 6 below summarises the projected year end forecast for profiled spend in 2024/25 and Table 7 summarises the financing. There is a projected in-year

underspend of (£0.672m), of which £0.481m is recommended to be reprofiled into future years. Projects that are recommended to have budget reprofiled from 2024/25 are detailed in Table 9.

**Table 6:** Capital Projection

Directorate	Revised Budget £m	Forecast Spend 24/25 £m	Re-profiled beyond 2024/25 £m	Variance to Budget £m	Prior Month Variance to Budget £m
Resources & Transformation	8.640	9.227	0.000	0.587	(0.038)
Communities	9.950	8.691	(0.481)	(0.778)	(0.794)
<b>Total</b>	<b>18.590</b>	<b>17.918</b>	<b>(0.481)</b>	<b>(0.191)</b>	<b>(0.832)</b>

For further detail please view Appendix 1.

**Table 7:** How the Capital Programme is financed

Financing	Budget £m	Future Years £m	Total £m
Borrowing	14.092	11.645	25.737
Capital Grants	2.096	9.011	11.107
Capital Receipts	0.425	5.250	5.675
S106 Receipts	1.977	3.082	5.059
	<b>18.590</b>	<b>28.988</b>	<b>47.578</b>

4.2.2 Table 8 below summarises the projected spend against the full capital programme (i.e. all years' spend). Since August's report there has been a reduction in the forecast underspend on the programme of £0.641m. The overspend for Bicester East Community Centre improved by (£0.070m), an overspend of £0.036m has been identified at the new Bicester Depot which should be covered by reprofiled budget, an overspend on the Office Move budget of £0.646m, an increase in the forecast spend for Whitelands Farm Sportsground of £0.016m and a reduced underspend on the forecast for the Castle Quay project of £0.012m. The S151 Officer, using delegated authority, has approved the addition of £0.050m of S106 funds to increase the budget of the Whitelands Farm project in order to deliver elements of the programme that haven't been met by the profile of expenditure, requiring a draw-down of additional s106 funds held for the purpose. This will be reflected in the next report.

**Table 8:** Total Capital Project Outturn

Directorate	Budget £m	Total Forecast 2024/25 £m	Variance to Budget £m	Prior Month Variance to Budget £m
Resources & Transformation	14.761	15.348	0.587	(0.038)
Communities	32.817	32.039	(0.778)	(0.794)
<b>Total</b>	<b>47.578</b>	<b>47.387</b>	<b>(0.191)</b>	<b>(0.832)</b>

4.2.3 In the August (pd5) financial performance report, the Executive were made aware of two capital schemes which were reporting overspends greater than 5% or £0.050m. The report committed to providing the Executive with additional information on the overspends as required by the Financial Procedure Rules.

4.2.4 With regards to Bicester East Community Centre, with an overspend of £0.062m or 9% (£0.132m reported in August but now reduced as noted in section 4.2.2), the overspend is due to additional works required to resolve public sewer diversion - requirements of Thames Water - and inaccurate information provided by them in the design stages. These works delayed works on site thus incurring further costs from the main contractor.

4.2.5 With regards to the Sunshine Centre, with an overspend of £0.075m or 41%, the additional costs have resulted from inflationary increases since the original budget was set and the works procured and awarded.

4.2.6 With regards to the CDC Office Relocation to Castle Quay, with an overspend of £0.646m 14%, the cost of the project will exceed the budget by £0.646m primarily due to the value of tendered works being higher than budgeted. A report is due to go to Council and Executive regarding the additional budget requirement.

4.2.7 Table 9 below details the capital schemes for which it is recommended that Executive approve budgets be reprofiled from 2024/25 to 2025/26 or beyond. The reprofiling of capital budgets can be for a number of reasons and is common on multi-year projects. The reasons for the recommendations are summarised in section 4.2.4.

**Table 9: Requested capital budget reprofiling**

Code	Top In-Year Variances	Budget Total £m	Reprofile to 25/26 £m	% of in year Budget Variance £m
40305	S106 - Horley Cricket Club Pavilion Project	0.110	0.110	100.00%
40308	S106 - Milton Road Community Facility and Sports Pitch Project	0.471	0.371	78.77%
		<b>0.581</b>	<b>0.481</b>	

#### 4.2.8 Capital schemes recommended to be reprofiled:

- S106 Horley Cricket Club Pavilion Project (40305)  
The project is for improvements and enhancements to the Horley Cricket Club Pavilion. There have been contractors on site to price up the works, however nothing will happen until after September because of cricket season.
- S106 Milton Road Community Facility and Sports Pitch Project (40308)  
Cherwell District Council hold the £0.471m of s106 for the Parish Council who are seeking additional grant funding from other sources to increase what they are aiming to deliver on.

4.2.9 Following an extensive review of the capital programme in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Property, several capital schemes are recommended for removal from the programme. The schemes recommended for removal are detailed in Appendix 7. They mainly consist of older projects which, upon review, are either not of a capital nature and will be removed and funded from revenue sources where they are still required or are no longer required.

### 4.3 Performance Summary

4.3.1 The council is performing well against its Quarter 2 objectives, which consist of 28 Business Plan Measures 15 Annual Delivery Plan actions, and 25 Equalities Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan activities.

4.3.2 Of the 57 measures with targets for Quarter 2, the majority were on track or within the agreed tolerance, three were slightly behind target and four behind target.

### 4.5 Business Plan Measures

4.5.1 Of the 17 business plan measures with set targets, 14 were either achieved or within the agreed tolerance, one was slightly behind target, and two behind target:

#### 4.5.2 “Number of Homeless Households living in Temporary Accommodation”

There were 77 households living in temporary accommodation against the maximum target of 45. This is an average of 147 people, over half were under 18. The measure is reporting behind for year to date (average 73 against a maximum of 45)

We continue to see a growing proportion of single people with complex needs and households that have been evicted from Home Office accommodation. The percentage of singles in temporary accommodation was 30% of the overall households, the percentage of resettlement related households was 16%. The total average number of people in temporary accommodation was 147, 79 (53%) children of them 63% were under the age of 10 and 37% were over 10.

Reducing the need for temporary accommodation is dependent on many national factors. We continue to prevent around 60% of homeless presentations.

#### 4.5.3 “Net Additional Housing Completions to meet Cherwell needs”

There were 307 housing completions (provisional) against a target of at least 571 for the first half of the year. This measure is reported biannually.

The provisional half year housing completions are 307, this suggests that the Local Plan housing requirement for Cherwell (1,142 per annum) will be difficult to meet this monitoring year; a new Local Plan is being prepared.

There are permissions and appeal decisions that provide for new housing but there is dependency on developers to deliver. There is also a lag time involved i.e. further planning permissions now would not lead to additional delivery now / in the next 6 months.

The overall cause of lower completions is the slow rate of delivery on strategic sites at Bicester, the delays in sites coming forward in the Kidlington/Begbroke/Yarnton area and national housing market circumstances. More broadly (and longer term), officers are presently working in the interest of supporting delivery at Bicester and in helping to coordinate delivery in the south of Cherwell

#### 4.5.4 “Percentage of Major Applications overturned at appeal”

14.3% of Major Applications overturned at appeal against a target of no more than 10% for Quarter 2. The measure is also reporting slightly behind for year to date 16.5%

Two Major Planning Application decision were overturned at Appeal by the Planning Inspectorate during Q2 2024/25. This amounts to 14.3% of the total of 14 Major applications determined by the Council during Q2 of 2024/25. These applications were: 23/00853/OUT – Warwick Road, Banbury- Outline planning permission for up to 170 dwellings etc, and 22/02866/OUT – Ploughley Road, Ambroseden - Outline planning application for 120 dwellings etc.

Officers are cognisant of the situation regarding appeals and major developments and are working to reduce the percentage of overturns at appeal by ensuring decision making is as robust as possible. Officers are liaising with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development Management on this matter.

4.5.5 There are also 11 measures that the council monitors to be able to identify any emerging trends that might require early intervention from us or partners There are no targets for these measures as they are dependent on external factors.

4.5.6 During Quarter 2 we observed the following trends:

Homes improved through enforcement action – Although the numbers are higher than last year’s, there is a similar decrease between Q1 and Q2 in both years which could indicate a seasonality element in the number of requests received, in 2024-25 the decrease is slightly bigger, we will continue to monitor and review national trends.

Tonnes residual household waste collected – This year so far is presenting an opposite trend in comparison with the same time last year, between Q1 and Q2 of 2024-25 there has been a decrease of 5% in tonnes of residual household waste collected, in comparison with a 3% increase for the same period last year. This seems to be a national trend; we will continue to monitor and bring further data during Q3.

Percentage of recycling contamination rate – This year so far there has been a slight increase of 0.20%, the same period last year saw a decrease of 0.30%, however the result for Q2 is almost the same in both years (12.60% 2024-25 and 12.50% 2023-24). Contamination rates had seen an increase nationally during the last five years reporting an average of 17% for England and Wales, we continue to provide guidance to our residents to keep the number down for the district.

Number of Visits/Usage of all Leisure Facilities within the District – Even when the number of visits saw a slight decrease from Q1 to Q2, the number of visitors to our leisure facilities remains higher than the same period last year by 5%.

Residents who have taken part in programmes contributing to improving health inequalities – There was a 20% increase in participation between Q1 and Q2, at this stage is difficult to determine if this is seasonality or an incremental trend, we will closely monitor and provide further details during Q3.

Number of Illegal Fly Tips - This year we are starting to register a slight decrease (5%) in the number of illegal fly tips, opposite to the upward trend registered across 2023-24, benchmarkable national information is not available at the moment of doing this report, this will be provided as soon as possible.

Please note some of the graphs included with these measures would not include previous year comparison due to the metrics being new.

See Appendix 8 for the full list of targeted and monitoring measures.

## 4.6 Annual Delivery Plan Priorities

4.6.1 Of the 15 Annual Delivery plan milestones set for Quarter 2, 13 were achieved, one reported slightly behind and one behind scheduled, all priorities but one are delivering to plan for the year to date.

The milestones reporting behind are:

4.6.2 **“EEV2 To continue the development of the Banbury Vision 2050, which will identify short and long terms measures to regenerate the town centre”  
Quarter 2 Milestone - Masterplan engagement complete**

Town centre engagement has been ongoing with partners to develop an action plan for short term and long term town centre priorities; however, the development of a masterplan approach is being reviewed.



Overall priority “To continue the development of the Banbury Vision 2050, which will identify short and long terms measures to regenerate the town centre” is reporting behind schedule for Quarter 2, work continues to develop Banbury Vision 2050, reflecting the changes to the approach in line with administration priorities.

#### 4.6.3 **“EEV4 Developing a Kidlington Vision”**

##### **Quarter 2 Milestone – Commence engagement with communities and stakeholders**

A programme of stakeholder events has been scheduled for Quarter 3.

4.6.4 Please note the appendix shows the priority outdented and underneath the quarterly milestones from Quarter 1 to Quarter 4, the status for each milestone will be RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rated to show the status per quarter. If activity starts ahead of time, this will also be RAG rated and will have commentary.

See Appendix 9 for Quarter 2 updates on the Annual delivery plan.

## **4.7 Equalities, Diversity, and Inclusion Action plans**

4.7.1 Of the 25 actions for Quarter 2, 23 were achieved or within the agreed tolerance, one slightly behind scheduled and one reported behind schedule.

#### 4.7.2 **“Work with partners to promote an ethnically diverse representation at our voluntary sector forum”**

Reported slightly behind schedule during Quarter 2.

Forum was held on the 4th of September and despite increasing the circulation list and invitations, there was little take up from the expanded group. More work needs to be done to improve diversity of attendance at next years’ forum.

#### 4.7.3 **“Collaborate with partner organisations to involve young people in volunteering activities and engage with them to undertake active participation in their local communities”**

Reported behind schedule during Quarter 2.

Initial discussions with some partners have highlighted the costs and challenges associated with young people undertaking volunteer activity. The next step is to explore how this can be best supported with input from schools.

See Appendix 10 for Quarter 2 updates on Equalities, Diversity, and Inclusion Action plans.

## 4.8 Risk Update

- 4.8.1 The Council maintains a Leadership Risk Register, which contains Strategic risks that could be significant in size and duration and could potentially impact on the reputation and performance of the Council as a whole, and in particular, on its ability to deliver on its corporate priorities. The Leadership Risk Register is reviewed quarterly by the Corporate Leadership Team; however, this is a live document that gets updated as and when required.
- 4.8.2 Please note risks deemed as high (L01) and medium (L03, L07, L08, L11 and L14) present higher scores, mostly due to the magnitude of the impact these events could have for the organisation, mitigating actions are in place across all of them to reduce the potential severity of the impact, and controls are established to prevent the probability of the risk event happening. The full Leadership Risk Register, including controls and mitigating actions, is attached in Appendix 11.
- 4.8.3 There was one score change to the Leadership Risk Register during Quarter 2, L13 Monitoring and management of Major Infrastructure Projects and Programmes residual risk level (score after controls are implemented) decreased from 12 (Medium Risk) to 9 (Low Risk).

The overall position as of the end of Quarter 2 of all Leadership risks is as follows:

Impact	Probability				
	1 - Remote	2 - Unlikely	3 - Possible	4 - Probable	5 - Highly Probable
5 - Catastrophic			L08		
4 - Major		L09-L06	L03- L07 - L11-L14	L01	
3 - Moderate		L04-L05-L1	L02-L12-L13		
2 - Minor					
1 - Insignificant					

## 5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 5.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: This report summarises the council's financial position up to the end of Quarter 2 2024, therefore there are no alternative options to consider.

## 6. Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

6.1 To note the contents of the report and approve the recommendations found in section 1.

## Decision Information

<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Subject to Call in</b>	Yes
<b>If not, why not subject to call in</b>	
<b>Ward(s) Affected</b>	All

## Document Information

<b>Appendices</b>	<p>Appendix 1 – Capital September 2024</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Detailed Revenue Narrative on Forecast September 2024</p> <p>Appendix 3 – Virements and Aged Debt September 2024</p> <p>Appendix 4 – Funding September 2024</p> <p>Appendix 5 – Corporate Debt Policy (revised Sept 2024)</p> <p>Appendix 6 – EXEMPT Proposed Write Offs</p> <p>Appendix 7 – Items to be removed from the Capital Programme</p> <p>Appendix 8 – Business Plan &amp; Monitoring measures Quarter 2 2024-25</p> <p>Appendix 9 – Annual Delivery Plan Quarter 2 2024-25</p> <p>Appendix 10 – EDI Action Plans Quarter 2 2024-25</p> <p>Appendix 11 – Leadership Risk Register Quarter 2 2024-25</p> <p>Appendix 12 – Revised Building Control Fees &amp; Charges 2024/25</p>
<b>Background Papers</b>	N/A
<b>Reference Papers</b>	N/A
<b>Report Author</b>	<p>Celia Prado-Teeling - Performance &amp; Insight Team Leader</p> <p>Leanne Lock, Strategic Business Partner – Business Partnering &amp; Controls</p>
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CHERWELL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

Cost Centre	DESCRIPTION	BUDGET 2024/25	YTD ACTUAL	PO COMMITMENTS	Forecast	RE-PROFILED BEYOND 2024/25	RE-PROFILED BEYOND 2025/26	Current month Variances £000	Prior month Variances £000	Forecast Narrative (Public)
40139	Banbury Health Centre - Refurbishment of roof covering and removal of redundant ventilation plant from roof	84	0	80	84			0	0	Work is scheduled for delivery in Q2 2024/25.
40141	Castle Quay Waterfront	0	(631)	0	0			0	0	Retention payment to be paid
40144	Castle Quay	940	42	666	707			(233)	(245)	As part of the Castle Quay Development and the regeneration of Banbury, the Council is working closely and in partnership with a number of public and private organisations to repurpose parts of Castle Quay Shopping Centre to deliver a number of complimentary uses enabling the regeneration of Banbury. The underspend results from a cash flow and technical accounting adjustment per the requirements of the CIPFA code on Local Authority Accounting. These costs will instead be recognised as Revenue costs, spread over the life of the project
40162	Housing & IT Asset System joint CDC/OCC	26	0	0	26			0	0	Part of wider transformation work currently being carried out
40167	Horsefair, Banbury	20	(2)	0	20			0	0	Works complete
40191	Bodicote House Fire Compliance Works	60	0	0	56			(4)	(4)	Assessment completed, with works being developed and scoped from the assessment.
40219	Community Centre - Works	94	27	47	94			0	0	Design works complete and contractor appointed. Condition report on Museum to be considered and funding sought to rectify a number of elements.
40224	Fairway Flats Refurbishment	200	3	10	200			0	0	Planning approval has been achieved. Designers are completing the detail design and specification for the solar panels and roof works. We will then need to tender these works as they are over £0.100m. We therefore anticipate works commencing in the new year and the works to continue through to the new financial year, partly due to the need to avoid the worst of the winter / spring weather, whilst carrying out works on a residential building roof space. We have adjusted the spend profile for these works.
40227	Banbury Museum - Decarbonisation Works	0	(20)	0	0			0	0	Retention payment to be paid
40232	Kidlington Leisure Centre - Decarbonisation Works	0	0	4	4			4	4	Small overspend for retention payment (offset elsewhere)
40239	Bicester East Community Centre	685	670	77	747			62	132	Small overspend due to additional works on resolving public sewers diversion requirement of Thames Water and inaccurate information provided by them in the design stages. These works delayed works on site thus incurring further costs from the main contract works.
40241	Thorpe Place Roof Works	29	1	6	29			0	0	Carrying out drone survey of roof to identify condition ready for scoping and design.
40242	H&S Works to Banbury Shopping Arcade	122	14	3	122			0	0	Works currently in design
40252	Expiring Energy Performance Certificates plus Associated works	96	0	0	96			0	0	Working on the recommendations for improvement works to maintain a compliant EPC
40253	Energy Performance Certificates Gov't Implementation of target B - Strategic Plan	60	0	5	60			0	0	EPC property surveys have been completed - needs reviewing in order to consider phasing and delivery programme.

40254	Thorpe Lane Depot - Renewal of Electrical Incoming Main	169	0	0	169			0	0	Works are currently designed pending tender of the Electrical supply infrastructure. Works to be coordinated with the District Network Operator to install the new sub station, who are engaged. Waiting for dates from the District Network Operator.
40255	Installation of Photovoltaic at CDC Property	79	7	0	79			0	0	Preparing scope so that feasibilities can be carried out to maximise potential PV to the site. Planned delivery Q4 the financial year 2024/25.
40263	Kidlington Leisure New Electrical Main	20	0	0	20			0	0	Works are currently designed pending tender of the Electrical supply infrastructure. Works to be coordinated with the District Network Operator (DNO) to install the new sub station, who are engaged. Waiting for dates from the DNO. Planned delivery expected to be Q4 2024/25. There are 3 leases and sub leases to be amended before this can proceed.
40264	Sunshine Centre	182	145	113	257			75	75	Pressure occurred as result of previously unknown but essential works identified during the course of the works.
40279	Spiceball Sports Centre - Solar PV Car Ports	173	0	0	173			0	0	Preparing scope so that feasibilities can be carried out to maximise potential PV to the site. Planned delivery Q2/Q3 of the financial year 2024/25
40280	Kidlington Sports Centre - Solar PV Car Ports	137	0	0	137			0	0	Preparing scope so that feasibilities can be carried out to maximise potential PV to the site. Work cannot start until electrical mains installed (dependant on DNO). Planned delivery Q4 2024/25
40281	North Oxfordshire Academy - Solar Panels	18	0	0	18			0	0	Preparing scope so that feasibilities can be carried out to maximise potential PV to the site.
40282	Community Centre Solar Panels	108	0	0	108			0	0	Preparing scope so that feasibilities can be carried out to maximise potential PV to the site. Planned delivery in Q3/Q4 of 24/25. Part of EPC work, community centres will need to agree.
40283	Thorpe Lane - Solar Panels	34	0	0	34			0	0	Preparing scope so that feasibilities can be carried out to maximise potential PV to the site.
40284	Thorpe Lane - Heater Replacement (Gas to Electric)	24	0	0	24			0	0	Preparing scope so that feasibilities can be carried out to maximise potential PV to the site. Planned delivery is Q4 2024/25.
40015	Car Park Refurbishments	46	0	0	46			0	0	This to continue the projects of pay on exit sites across the district and upgrading of pay machines from 3G to 4G. Requirement to carry this work out in 24/25 because 3G will become obsolete.
40217	Car Parking Action Plan Delivery	18	0	0	18			0	0	Project is part of ongoing review of Car Park Action Plan
40278	Development of New Land Bicester Depot	85	61	320	121			36	0	The designers are appointed and Consultation on proposed layouts for the new depot are taking place with user groups. A Planning application is being prepared, however an ecological survey and protected species survey will be required to be submitted with this application and we have been unable to obtain these services, due to high demand for Ecologists, until October. This has resulted in a delay of 4 months to our original programme and consequent re-profiling of the capital budget as the anticipated completion is impacted by the delay to Planning approval.
40317	Cope Road, Banbury	29	0	32	29			0	0	Design work completed pending tendering. Contractor now appointed and starts in 4 weeks on site.
40316	CDC Office Relocation to Castle Quay	4,500	0	24	5,146			646	0	It has been estimated that the cost of the project will exceed the budget by £0.646m primarily due to the value of engineered works being higher than budgeted. A report is due to go to Council and Executive regarding the additional budget requirement

40327	Thorpe Place Roofing Works	80	0	0	80			0	0	Carrying out drone survey of roof to identify condition ready for scoping and design.
<b>Property</b>		<b>8,118</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>1,385</b>	<b>8,705</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>(38)</b>	
40256	Processing Card Payments & Direct Debits	20	0	0	20			0	0	This Project will not be completed this year
<b>Finance</b>	<b>Finance</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
40237	Council Website & Digital Service	122	0	1	122			0	0	Work underway to select a product to form basis of Unified Customer Relationship Management Platform.
	Robotic Process Automation Pilot	133	0	0	133			0		On target to be delivered in 24/25
40326	Digital Futures Programme (Business Cases Required)	217	0	0	217			0	0	New digital futures budget
<b>ICT</b>		<b>472</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
40292	iTrent HR System Upgrades	30	0	0	30			0	0	There are plans for future enhancements of the system
	<b>HR &amp; OD</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Resources &amp; Transformation</b>		<b>8,640</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>1,386</b>	<b>9,227</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>(38)</b>	
40062	East West Railways	30	0	30	30			0	0	The capital fund has been set up to enable the Council's costs to be recharged when responding to enquiries and regulatory applications, involving for example environmental and land drainage matters, made in connection with the East West Railways project. This is in partnership with England's Economic Heartland. The Digital Enhancement Project is a small element of CDC's commitment, involving the transfer of funds in four stages to reflect Network Rail's delivery of the digital infrastructure. Final invoice expected to be received by the end of Q3 once work is completed
40286	Transforming Market Square Bicester	180	(3)	0	180			0	0	Market Square study to be completed in 2024/25, with approvals and procurement of contractor completed by early Q1 2025/26 with works implemented over Financial year's 2025/26 and 2026/27.
40287	UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UK SPF) Year Three Investment Plan Programme	162	17	0	162			0	0	UKSPF capital grant will be fully spent in 2024/25 on the following: £90k Improvements to town centres & high streets £70k Community & neighbourhood infrastructure £2k improvements to local green spaces £50k contribution to floodlights at Whitelands Sport ground which is shown in cost centre Whiteland Farm Sports ground.
40288	UKSPF Rural Fund	408	(34)	44	408			(0)	(0)	UKSPF Rural Fund (REPF capital grant) will be fully spent in 2024/25: £20k - creation and improvements to local rural green spaces £67k - active travel enhancements to the local rural area £321k - capital grants for micro and small enterprises in rural areas.
	<b>Growth &amp; Economy</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>(20)</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(0)</b>	
40028	Vehicle Replacement Programme	1,073	(3)	1,073	1,073			0	0	Anticipating full spend in 2024/25.
40187	On Street Recycling Bins	18	0	0	18			0	0	Anticipating full spend in 2024/25.
40216	Street Scene Furniture and Fencing project	15	0	0	15			0	0	Anticipating full spend in 2024/25.
40222	Burnehyll- Bicester Country Park	60	6	14	60			0	0	Anticipating full spend in quarter 4 of 2024/25.
40257	Additional Commercial Waste Containers	29	0	0	29			0	0	Anticipating full spend in quarter 4 of 2024/25.
40259	Market Equipment Replacement	15	0	5	15			0	0	Anticipating full spend in quarter 2 of 2024/25.
40291	New Commercial Waste IT System	25	18	0	25			0	0	Anticipating full spend in 2024/25.

40320	Net Zero	125	0	0	125			0	0	Anticipating full spend in quarter 4 of 2024/25.
40321	Landscape Software Upgrade	25	0	0	25			0	0	Anticipating full spend in 2024/25.
40322	Street Cleansing IT System	25	0	0	25			0	0	Anticipating full spend in 2024/25.
	<b>Environmental Services</b>	<b>1,410</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>1,092</b>	<b>1,410</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
40083	Disabled Facilities Grants	1,384	400	28	1,384			0	0	Full spend anticipated
40084	Discretionary Grants Domestic Properties	150	54	0	150			0	0	Full spend anticipated
40160	Housing Services - capital	168	8	0	168			0	0	Forecasting in line with budget
40251	Longford Park Art	45	0	0	45			0	0	Artist will complete their commissions once the parkland has been handed over. This is dependent on the development reaching the required standard.
40262	Town Centre House Purchase and Repair	2,880	1,332	665	2,524			(356)	(356)	Project on track and due to complete in 2024/25
40294	S106 - Ambrosden Community Facility Project	20	0	0	20			0	0	Parish Council has a variety of projects they are looking to increase capacity at the village hall.
40295	S106 - Ambrosden Indoor Sport Project	65	0	0	65			0	0	Awaiting new project details.
40297	S106 - Ardley & Fewcott Play Area Project	15	0	0	15			0	0	Awaiting direction from the parish council regarding further play area investment.
40298	S106 - Ardley & Fewcott Village Hall Project	3	0	0	3			0	0	Project details for replacement windows received. S106 spend approved.
40301	S106 - Graven Hill Outdoor Sport Project	52	0	0	52			0	0	Expected to commence works on the Graven Hill Project during 2024/25. Intention to secure services of project consultants to support on initial phases of the programme through to delivery
40302	S106 - Grimsbury Community Centre Projects	20	0	0	20			0	0	This S106 forms part of the Playzone Projects
40303	S106 - Hanwell Fields Community Centre Projects	180	0	14	180			0	0	S106 funding is allocated to Hanwell Fields Community Centre to enhance the existing facility with the intention of increasing opportunities for residents to take part in activities. This project is centred around the options for putting in a mezzanine floor in the current main hall area to give a split level facility. Currently working with Property Team around whether this is feasible and affordable with some cost estimates.
40305	S106 - Horley Cricket Club Pavilion Project	110	0	0	0	110		0	0	The project is for improvements and enhancements to the Horley Cricket Club Pavilion. There have been contractors on site to price up the works, however nothing will happen until post September because of cricket season.
40308	S106 - Milton Road Community Facility and Sports Pitch Project	471	0	0	100	371		0	0	CDC hold the £471k of s106 for the Parish Council who are seeking additional grant funding from other sources to increase what they are aiming to deliver on
40310	S106 - Spiceball Leisure Centre Improvements	14	0	0	14			0	0	Options are being considered, project to be delivered 2024/25
40312	S106 - Whitelands Farm Sports Ground (Pedestrian crossing and various works)	82	98	0	98			16	0	Awaiting confirmation of how the pedestrian crossing is to be delivered. Project to be delivered upon in 2024/25
40313	S106 - Woodgreen Leisure Centre Improvements	47	8	8	47			0	0	Improvements planned to the Swimming Pool Changing Rooms. Expected to complete on works during February/March 2025



40314	S106 - Deddington Parish Council Projects	8	0	0	8			0	0	Awaiting project details for the remaining S106 spend.
40315	S106 - Longford Park Sport Pitches	10	0	0	10			0	0	Maintenance cost for the pitches and pavilion
40318	S106 - Steeple Aston Parish Council Village Hall Sports and Recreation Centre	0	(3)	0	0			0	0	Parish Council led projects towards improvements at the village hall, sports & recreation centre and playing fields.
40319	Local Authority Housing Fund R2	335	179	0	335			0	0	Grant agreements have been concluded with two registered providers of social housing, Sanctuary Housing and South Oxfordshire Housing Association (SOHA) to bring homes forward for clients within resettlement scheme. <b>Second and final payment of £100k to Sanctuary Housing due October 2024 subject to satisfactory progress being made against the grant agreement. £56k remaining for floor coverings which Sanctuary will also deliver, some funds may remain at then of the project.</b>
40324	Development of Activity Play Zones	600	0	0	162			(438)	(438)	Application process for Football Foundation Funding has been completed and working with Football Foundation and Town Council on project delivery. Grant application has been accepted by the Football Foundation. Subject to Planning Permission works likely to commence late 2024/early 2025. <b>Projects identified in Princess Diana Park and Chandos Close</b>
40325	Graven Hill Community and Infrastructure Projects	80	0	0	80			0	0	Expected to commence works on the Graven Hill Project during 2024/25. Intention to secure services of project consultants to support on initial phases of the programme through to delivery
40328	S106 – Windmill Community and Sports Centre Tennis Courts	51	0	42	51			0	0	Mini tennis court project underway and full spend anticipated in 2024/25
40329	Spiceball Leisure Centre Structural Beams	100	0	0	100			0	0	<b>Options to be considered for moving proposed works to April 2025 to coincide with planned leisure operator works or delay to December 2025</b>
40330	Replacement of the Sports Hall Roof at Bicester Leisure Centre	45	0	20	45			0	0	Agreed at SPSPB that after receiving condition survey report into the roof that there were options to extend the lifespan by 5 to 10 years. The cost would fall within the budget allocation, however a new complete roof would fall outside of this requiring a request for additional funding. Tender documents due out within the next couple of week. <b>No responses to tender so this has been re-tendered for. Works now anticipated November 2024</b>
40332	S106 - grant funded Affordable Accommodation	560	0	0	560			0	0	To provide grant funding to South Oxfordshire Housing Association (SOHA) (a registered provider of social housing), providing 40% contribution towards the cost of securing 4 homes in the Cherwell District to be converted to social housing. Initially, these homes will provide temporary accommodation for homeless households in Cherwell to whom CDC have a legal duty to temporarily accommodate. Longer term they will revert to affordable rented housing let through CDC's housing register should they no longer be required to be used as temporary accommodation. The size/type of the homes agreed in principle for SOHA to purchase are 3 x 2-bedroom houses and 1 x 3-bedroom house. <b>Grant agreement to be put in place with SOHA Autumn 2024. Payment of grant to be made to SOHA Winter/Spring 2024/25</b>
	<b>Wellbeing &amp; Housing</b>	<b>7,495</b>	<b>2,075</b>	<b>777</b>	<b>6,236</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(778)</b>	<b>(794)</b>	
40245	Enable Agile Working	15	0	0	15			0	0	This funding is still intended to be used to purchase the IT hardware required to enable the teams in Regulatory Services to use the case management system whilst 'on-site' carrying out inspection work, etc. The release of the app that will support mobile working continues to be delayed but is progressing. we expect the app to be released <b>before the end of 2024.</b>

40333	CCTV Thames Valley Project	250	0	0	250			0	0	Upgrade the public open space CCTV network and cameras to meet the necessary threshold to be included in the OPCC Thames Valley CCTV project
	<b>Regulatory Services</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
	<b>Communities</b>	<b>9,950</b>	<b>2,076</b>	<b>1,944</b>	<b>8,691</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(778)</b>	<b>(794)</b>	
	<b>Capital</b>	<b>18,590</b>	<b>2,393</b>	<b>3,330</b>	<b>17,918</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(191)</b>	<b>(832)</b>	

CHERWELL TOTAL CAPITAL PROJECT EXPENDITURE

CODE	DESCRIPTION	Total 24/25 Project Budget	Forecast	RE-PROFILED BEYOND 2024/25	24/25 Variance	Future Years Budget	Project Total Budget	Project Total forecast	Project Total Variance	Narrative
40139	Banbury Health Centre - Refurbishment of Ventilation, Heating & Cooling Systems	84	84	0	0	0	84	84	0	Work is scheduled for delivery in Q2 2024/25.
40144	Castle Quay	940	707	0	(233)	1,793	2,733	2,500	(233)	As part of the Castle Quay Development and the regeneration of Banbury, the Council is working closely and in partnership with a number of public and private organisations to repurpose parts of Castle Quay Shopping Centre to deliver a number of complimentary uses enabling the regeneration of Banbury. The underspend results from a cash flow and technical accounting adjustment per the requirements of the CIPFA code on Local Authority Accounting. These costs will instead be recognised as Revenue costs, spread over the life of the project
40162	Housing & IT Asset System joint CDC/OCC	26	26	0	0	0	26	26	0	Part of wider transformation work currently being carried out
40167	Horsefair, Banbury	20	20	0	0	0	20	20	0	Works complete
40191	Bodicote House Fire Compliance Works	60	56	0	(4)	0	60	56	(4)	Assessment completed, with works being developed and scoped from the assessment.
40219	Community Centre - Works	94	94	0	0	0	94	94	0	Design works complete and contractor appointed. Condition report on Museum to be considered and funding sought to rectify a number of elements.
40224	Fairway Flats Refurbishment	200	200	0	0	138	338	338	0	Planning approval has been achieved. Designers are completing the detail design and specification for the solar panels and roof works. We will then need to tender these works as they are over £0.100m. We therefore anticipate works commencing
40227	Banbury Museum - Decarbonisation Works	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Retention payment to be paid
40232	Kidlington Leisure Centre - Decarbonisation Works	0	4	0	4	0	0	4	4	Small overspend for retention payment (offset elsewhere)
40239	Bicester East Community Centre	685	747	0	62	0	685	747	62	Small overspend due to additional works on resolving public sewers diversion requirement of Thames Water and inaccurate information provided by them in the design stages. These works delayed works on site thus incurring further costs from the main contract works.
40241	Thorpe Place Roof Works	29	29	0	0	0	29	29	0	Carrying out drone survey of roof to identify condition ready for scoping and design.
40242	H&S Works to Banbury Shopping Arcade	122	122	0	0	0	122	122	0	Works currently in design
40249	Retained Land	0	0	0	0	256	256	256	0	Surveys are complete and works have been prioritised, but works have been delayed due to our shortage of resource/staff to prepare works specification and obtain quotations. Capital spend has been re-profiled.
40252	Expiring Energy Performance Certificates plus Associated works	96	96	0	0	0	96	96	0	Working on the recommendations for improvement works to maintain a compliant EPC
40253	Energy Performance Certificates Gov't Implementation of target B - Strategic Plan	60	60	0	0	0	60	60	0	EPC property surveys have been completed - needs reviewing in order to consider phasing and delivery programme.
40254	Thorpe Lane Depot - Renewal of Electrical Incoming Main	169	169	0	0	0	169	169	0	Works are currently designed pending tender of the Electrical supply infrastructure. Works to be coordinated with the District Network Operator to install the new sub station, who are engaged. Waiting for dates from the District Network Operator.
40255	Installation of Photovoltaic at CDC Property	79	79	0	0	0	79	79	0	Preparing scope so that feasibilities can be carried out to maximise potential PV to the site. Planned delivery Q4 the financial year 2024/25.

40263	Kidlington Leisure New Electrical Main	20	20	0	0	0	20	20	0	Works are currently designed pending tender of the Electrical supply infrastructure. Works to be coordinated with the District Network Operator (DNO) to install the new sub station, who are engaged. Waiting for dates from the DNO. Planned delivery expected to be Q4 2024/25. There are 3 leases and sub leases to be amended before this can proceed.
40264	Sunshine Centre	182	257	0	75	0	182	257	75	Pressure occurred as result of previously unknown but essential works identified during the course of the works.
40279	Spiceball Sports Centre - Solar PV Car Ports	173	173	0	0	0	173	173	0	Preparing scope so that feasibilities can be carried out to maximise potential PV to the site. Planned delivery Q2/Q3 of the financial year 2024/25
40280	Kidlington Sports Centre - Solar PV Car Ports	137	137	0	0	0	137	137	0	Preparing scope so that feasibilities can be carried out to maximise potential PV to the site. Work cannot start until electrical mains installed (dependant on DNO). Planned delivery Q4 2024/25
40281	North Oxfordshire Academy - Solar Panels	18	18	0	0	0	18	18	0	Preparing scope so that feasibilities can be carried out to maximise potential PV to the site.
40282	Community Centre Solar Panels	108	108	0	0	0	108	108	0	Preparing scope so that feasibilities can be carried out to maximise potential PV to the site. Planned delivery in Q3/Q4 of 24/25. Part of EPC work, community centres will need to agree.
40283	Thorpe Lane - Solar Panels	34	34	0	0	0	34	34	0	Preparing scope so that feasibilities can be carried out to maximise potential PV to the site.
40284	Thorpe Lane - Heater Replacement (Gas to Electric)	24	24	0	0	0	24	24	0	Preparing scope so that feasibilities can be carried out to maximise potential PV to the site. Planned delivery is Q4 2024/25.
40015	Car Park Refurbishments	46	46	0	0	0	46	46	0	This to continue the projects of pay on exit sites across the district and upgrading of pay machines from 3G to 4G. Requirement to carry this work out in 24/25 because 3G will become obsolete.
40217	Car Parking Action Plan Delivery	18	18	0	0	0	18	18	0	Project is part of ongoing review of Car Park Action Plan
40278	Development of New Land Bicester Depot	85	121	0	36	3,874	3,959	3,995	36	The designers are appointed and Consultation on proposed layouts for the new depot are taking place with user groups. A Planning application is being prepared, however an ecological survey and protected species survey will be required to be submitted with this application and we have been unable to obtain these services, due to high demand for Ecologists, until October. This has resulted in a delay of 4 months to our original programme and consequent re-profiling of the capital budget as the anticipated completion is impacted by the delay to Planning approval.
40316	CDC Office Relocation to Castle Quay	4,500	5,146	0	646	0	4,500	5,146	646	It has been estimated that the cost of the project will exceed the budget by £0.646m primarily due to the value of engineered works being higher than budgeted. A report is due to go to Council and Executive regarding the additional budget requirement
40317	Cope Road, Banbury	29	29	0	0	0	29	29	0	Design work completed pending tendering. Contractor now appointed and starts in 4 weeks on site.
40327	Thorpe Place Roofing Works	80	80	0	0	0	80	80	0	Carrying out drone survey of roof to identify condition ready for scoping and design.
<b>Property</b>		<b>8,118</b>	<b>8,705</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>6,061</b>	<b>14,179</b>	<b>14,766</b>	<b>587</b>	
40256	Processing Card Payments & Direct Debits	20	20	0	0	0	20	20	0	This Project will not be completed this year
<b>Finance Total</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>	
40237	Council Website & Digital Service	122	122	0	0	0	122	122	0	Work underway to select a product to form basis of Unified CRM Platform.
	Robotic Process Automation Pilot	133	133	0	0	0	133	133	0	
40326	Digital Futures Programme (Business Cases Required)	217	217	0	0	0	217	217	0	New digital futures budget
<b>ICT</b>		<b>472</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>0</b>	
40292	iTrent HR System Upgrades	30	30	0	0	60	90	90	0	There are plans for future enhancements of the system
<b>HR &amp; OD</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Resources &amp; Transformation</b>		<b>8,640</b>	<b>9,227</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>6,121</b>	<b>14,761</b>	<b>15,348</b>	<b>587</b>	

40062	East West Railways	30	30	0	0	4,248	4,278	4,278	0	The capital fund has been set up to enable the Council's costs to be recharged when responding to enquiries and regulatory applications, involving for example environmental and land drainage matters, made in connection with the East West Railways project. This is in partnership with England's Economic Heartland. The Digital Enhancement Project is a small element of CDC's commitment, involving the transfer of funds in four stages to reflect Network Rail's delivery of the digital infrastructure. Final invoice expected to be received by the end of Q3 once work is completed
40286	Transforming Market Square Bicester	180	180	0	0	4,055	4,235	4,235	0	Market Square study to be completed in 2024/25, with approvals and procurement of contractor completed by early Q1 2025/26 with works implemented over Financial year's 2025/26 and 2026/27.
40287	UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UK SPF) Year Two Investment Plan Programme	162	162	0	0	0	162	162	0	UKSPF capital grant will be fully spent in 2024/25 on the following; £90k Improvements to town centres & high streets £70k Community & neighbourhood infrastructure £2k improvements to local green spaces £50k contribution to floodlights at Whitelands Sport ground which is shown in cost centre Whiteland Farm Sports ground.
40288	UKSPF Rural Fund	408	408	0	(0)	0	408	408	(0)	UKSPF Rural Fund (REPF capital grant) will be fully spent in 2024/25: £20k - creation and improvements to local rural green spaces £67k - active travel enhancements to the local rural area £321k - capital grants for micro and small enterprises in rural areas.
<b>Growth &amp; Economy</b>		<b>780</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8,303</b>	<b>9,083</b>	<b>9,083</b>	<b>0</b>	
40028	Vehicle Replacement Programme	1,073	1,073	0	0	5,331	6,404	6,404	0	Anticipating full spend in 2024/25.
40187	On Street Recycling Bins	18	18	0	0	0	18	18	0	Anticipating full spend in 2024/25.
40216	Street Scene Furniture and Fencing project	15	15	0	0	0	15	15	0	Anticipating full spend in 2024/25.
40218	Depot Fuel System Renewal	0	0	0	0	35	35	35	0	Budget reprofiled in to 2025/26.
40222	Burnehyll- Bicester Country Park	60	60	0	0	64	124	124	0	Anticipating full spend in quarter 4 of 2024/25.
40257	Additional Commercial Waste Containers	29	29	0	0	0	29	29	0	Anticipating full spend in quarter 4 of 2024/25.
40258	Kidlington Public Convenience Refurbishment	0	0	0	0	90	90	90	0	Budget reprofiled in to 2025/26.
40259	Market Equipment Replacement	15	15	0	0	0	15	15	0	Anticipating full spend in quarter 2 of 2024/25.
40291	New Commercial Waste IT System	25	25	0	0	0	25	25	0	Anticipating full spend in 2024/25.
40320	Net Zero	125	125	0	0	500	625	625	0	Anticipating full spend in quarter 4 of 2024/25.
40321	Landscape Software Upgrade	25	25	0	0	0	25	25	0	Anticipating full spend in 2024/25.
40322	Street Cleansing IT System	25	25	0	0	0	25	25	0	Anticipating full spend in 2024/25.
40331	Investigating in additional Waste Containers	0	0	0	0	25	25	25	0	
<b>Environmental</b>		<b>1,410</b>	<b>1,410</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6,045</b>	<b>7,455</b>	<b>7,455</b>	<b>0</b>	
40019	Bicester Leisure Centre Extension	0	0	0	0	79	79	79	0	The current budget is for preparatory works to identify the business case for operation ahead of S106 monies coming in from developments. Budget requires reprofiling as scheme is outlined for build in 2027-28
40083	Disabled Facilities Grants	1,384	1,384	0	0	4,956	6,340	6,340	0	Full spend anticipated
40084	Discretionary Grants Domestic Properties	150	150	0	0	450	600	600	0	Full spend anticipated
40160	Housing Services - capital	168	168	0	0	0	168	168	0	Forecasting in line with budget
40251	Longford Park Art	45	45	0	0	0	45	45	0	Artist will complete their commissions once the parkland has been handed over. This is dependent on the development reaching the required standard.
40262	Town Centre House Purchase and Repair	2,880	2,524	0	(356)	0	2,880	2,524	(356)	Project on track and due to complete in 2024/25
40294	S106 - Ambrosden Community Facility Project	20	20	0	0	0	20	20	0	Parish Council has a variety of projects they are looking to increase capacity at the village hall.
40295	S106 - Ambrosden Indoor Sport Project	65	65	0	0	0	65	65	0	Awaiting new project details.
40296	S106 - Ambrosden Outdoor Sports	0	0	0	0	130	130	130	0	Site to be confirmed before project can move forward therefore reprofiled beyond 2024/25
40297	S106 - Ardley & Fewcott Play Area Project	15	15	0	0	0	15	15	0	Awaiting direction from the parish council regarding further play area investment.
40298	S106 - Ardley & Fewcott Village Hall Project	3	3	0	0	0	3	3	0	Project details for replacement windows received. S106 spend approved.

40300	S106 - Bicester Leisure Centre Extension	0	0	0	0	1,154	1,154	1,154	0	Initial stages of feasibility have been completed with high level costings received to deliver the project. Further stages required including detailed business case. Re-profiled beyond 2024-25 to when S106 funding is received and fully available.
40301	S106 - Graven Hill Outdoor Sport Project	52	52	0	0	0	52	52	0	Expected to commence works on the Graven Hill Project during 2024/25. Intention to secure services of project consultants to support on initial phases of the programme through to delivery
40302	S106 - Grimsbury Community Centre Projects	20	20	0	0	0	20	20	0	This S106 forms part of the Playzone Projects
40303	S106 - Hanwell Fields Community Centre Projects	180	180	0	0	0	180	180	0	S106 funding is allocated to Hanwell Fields Community Centre to enhance the existing facility with the intention of increasing opportunities for residents to take part in activities. This project is centred around the options for putting in a mezzanine floor in the current main hall area to give a split level facility. Currently working with Property Team around whether this is feasible and affordable with some cost estimates.
40304	S106 - Hook Norton Sport And Social Club Project	0	0	0	0	80	80	80	0	The scale and scope of the project is yet to be confirmed and therefore reprofiled to 2025/26
40305	S106 - Horley Cricket Club Pavilion Project	110	0	110	0	0	110	110	0	The project is for improvements and enhancements to the Horley Cricket Club Pavilion. There have been contractors on site to price up the works, however nothing will happen until post September because of cricket season.
40307	S106 - Kidlington & Gosford Leisure Centre	0	0	0	0	20	20	20	0	No detailed projects as yet therefore S106 funding to be reprofiled beyond 2024-25
40308	S106 - Milton Road Community Facility and Sports Pitch Project	471	100	371	0	0	471	471	0	CDC hold the £471k of s106 for the Parish Council who are seeking additional grant funding from other sources to increase what they are aiming to deliver on
40310	S106 - Spiceball Leisure Centre Improvements	14	14	0	0	0	14	14	0	Options are being considered, project to be delivered 2024/25
40311	S106 - The Hill Improvements Project	0	0	0	0	50	50	50	0	Awaiting details of projects funded by S106 funding already received, therefore budget request to reprofile beyond 2024-25
40312	S106 - Whitelands Farm Sports Ground (Pedestrian crossing and various works)	82	98	0	16	0	82	98	16	Awaiting confirmation of how the pedestrian crossing is to be delivered. Project to be delivered upon in 2024/25
40313	S106 - Woodgreen Leisure Centre Improvements	47	47	0	0	0	47	47	0	Improvements planned to the Swimming Pool Changing Rooms. Expected to complete on works during February/March 2025
40314	S106 - Deddington Parish Council Projects	8	8	0	0	0	8	8	0	Awaiting project details for the remaining S106 spend.
40315	S106 - Longford Park Sport Pitches	10	10	0	0	0	10	10	0	Maintenance cost for the pitches and pavilion
40319	Local Authority Housing Fund R2	335	335	0	0	0	335	335	0	Grant agreements have been concluded with two registered providers of social housing, Sanctuary Housing and South Oxfordshire Housing Association (SOHA) to bring homes forward for clients within resettlement scheme. Second and final payment of £100k to Sanctuary Housing due October 2024 subject to satisfactory progress being made against the grant agreement. £56k remaining for floor coverings which Sanctuary will also deliver, some funds may remain at then of the project.
40323	NOA 3G Pitch Development	0	0	0	0	1,600	1,600	1,600	0	Due to proposed alternative location of 3G Pitch, the progression to delivery will be dependent on a number of factors. Whilst unlikely there will be any spend in 2024/25 there may be some set up costs should delivery stage be achieved before year end
40324	Development of Activity Play Zones	600	162	0	(438)	0	600	162	(438)	Application process for Football Foundation Funding has been completed and working with Football Foundation and Town Council on project delivery. Grant application has been accepted by the Football Foundation. Subject to Planning Permission works likely to commence late 2024/early 2025. Projects identified in Princess Diana Park and Chandos Close
40325	Graven Hill Community and Infrastructure Projects	80	80	0	0	0	80	80	0	Expected to commence works on the Graven Hill Project during 2024/25. Intention to secure services of project consultants to support on initial phases of the programme through to delivery
40328	S106 - Windmill Community and Sports Centre Tennis Courts	51	51	0	0	0	51	51	0	Mini tennis court project underway and full spend anticipated in 2024/25
40329	Spiceball Leisure Centre Structural Beams	100	100	0	0	0	100	100	0	Options to be considered for moving proposed works to April 2025 to coincide with planned leisure operator works or delay to December 2025
40330	Replacement of the Sports Hall Roof at Bicester Leisure Centre	45	45	0	0	0	45	45	0	Agreed at SPSPB that after receiving condition survey report into the roof that there were options to extend the lifespan by 5 to 10 years. The cost would fall within the budget allocation, however a new complete roof would fall outside of this requiring a request for additional funding. Tender documents due out within the next couple of week. No responses to tender so this has been re-tendered for. Works now anticipated November 2024

40332	S106 - grant funded Affordable Accommodation	560	560	0	0	0	560	560	0	To provide grant funding to South Oxfordshire Housing Association (SOHA) (a registered provider of social housing), providing 40% contribution towards the cost of securing 4 homes in the Cherwell District to be converted to social housing. Initially, these homes will provide temporary accommodation for homeless households in Cherwell to whom CDC have a legal duty to temporarily accommodate. Longer term they will revert to affordable rented housing let through CDC's housing register should they no longer be required to be used as temporary accommodation. The size/type of the homes agreed in principle for SOHA to purchase are 3 x 2-bedroom houses and 1 x 3-bedroom house. Grant agreement to be put in place with SOHA Autumn 2024. Payment of grant to be made to SOHA Winter/Spring 2024/25
<b>Wellbeing &amp; Housing</b>		<b>7,495</b>	<b>6,236</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>(778)</b>	<b>8,519</b>	<b>16,014</b>	<b>15,236</b>	<b>(778)</b>	
40245	Enable Agile Working	15	15	0	0	0	15	15	0	This funding is still intended to be used to purchase the IT hardware required to enable the teams in Regulatory Services to use the case management system whilst 'on-site' carrying out inspection work, etc. The release of the app that will support mobile working continues to be delayed but is progressing, we expect the app to be released before the end of 2024.
40333	CCTV Thames Valley Project	250	250	0	0	0	250	250	0	Upgrade the public open space CCTV network and cameras to meet the necessary threshold to be included in the OPCC Thames Valley CCTV project
<b>Regulatory Services</b>		<b>265</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Communities</b>		<b>9,950</b>	<b>8,691</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>(778)</b>	<b>22,867</b>	<b>32,817</b>	<b>32,039</b>	<b>(778)</b>	
<b>Capital Total</b>		<b>18,590</b>	<b>17,918</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>(191)</b>	<b>28,988</b>	<b>47,578</b>	<b>47,387</b>	<b>(191)</b>	

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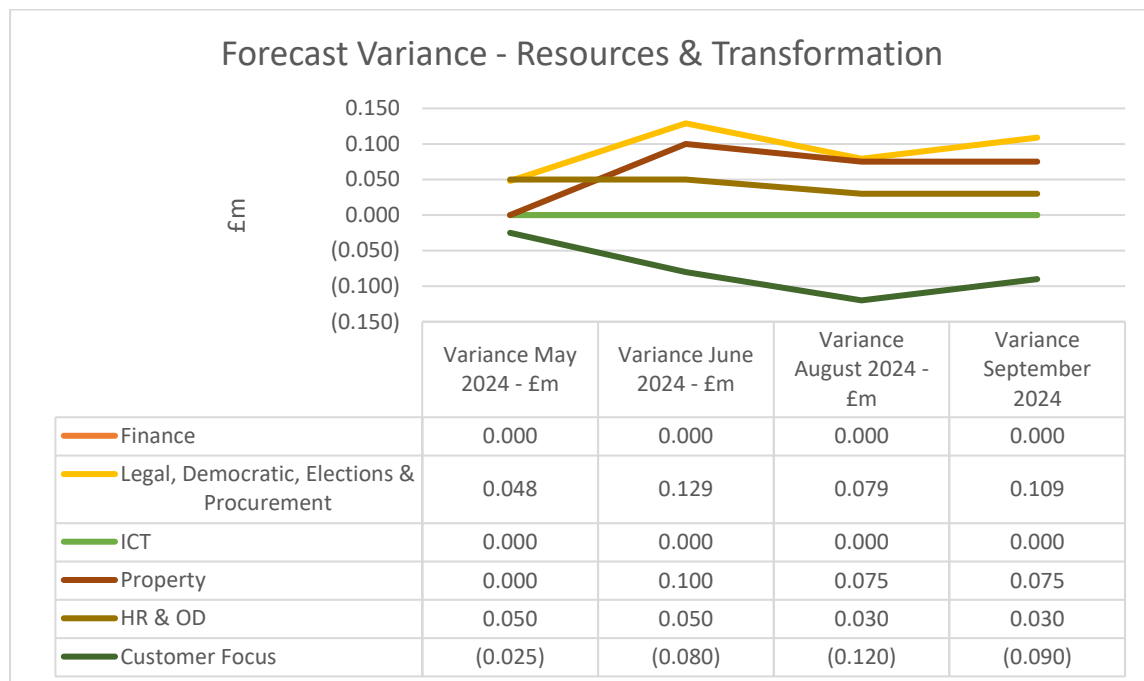
## Appendix 2 - Report Details – Additional Revenue narrative

### Resources & Transformation

#### Revenue:

Resources are forecasting £0.124m overspend against a budget of £9.801m (2.0%).

There are tight managerial controls within the resources directorate that have enabled a small forecast overspend. An understanding on the election costs is underway, and the team will work towards mitigating this further.




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#### Finance

Variation  
£0.000m

Finance is forecasting in line with budget.

Variation to August's  
Forecast  
£0.000m

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Legal, Democratic,  
Elections &  
Procurement

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Variation  
£0.109m  
Overspend

Professional support obtained through use of locum lawyers, maternity cover and other professional staff makes up the bulk of the overspend. The Monitoring Officer is responsible for securing appropriate and suitable legal advice, investigating and reporting on anything the Council does that has the potential to be an illegal action or investigating and reporting on any action that might count as maladministration. However, the service recognises that it needs to operate within its budget and will look to recruit to permanent positions as swiftly as possible. An additional point of note in regards to the legal budget is that there is a high element of unpredictability to costs which arise in dealing with legal instructions in regard to unforeseen matters arising, for which no 'ongoing' forecast and provision can be made. Whilst our risk management can seek to reduce this, it is unrealistic to assume this unplanned element can be completely eliminated.

Variation to August's  
Forecast  
£0.030m

£0.030m increase in staff costs, however, a permanent recruitment campaign has been implemented and legal fees are being increased in line with the law society suggested rates.

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#### ICT

Variation  
£0.000m overspend

IT are forecasting to be within budget with small overspends in supplies and services being offset by an underspend in salaries to be adjusted now that budgets are realigned for Digital and Innovation.

Variation to August's  
Forecast  
£0.000m

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#### Property

Variation  
£0.075m

1) £0.100m overspend at CQ remains unchanged and is due to void costs of holding vacant units and unscheduled necessary expenditure for car park lighting and other maintenance costs. Work to review contracts and market void units is continuing with the impact of reducing the overspend as the year progresses.

2) (£0.065m) in Property because of an underspend due to vacancies that will not be filled until October, admin charges generating an income, improved income from rent

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reviews and lease renewals and reduced repair and maintenance costs.

3) £0.040m overspend in car parks has been reduced since last month due to lower contracts payments and because of an improvement in receipts. It is hoped this improvement in receipts will continue as the year progresses.

Variation to August's Forecast  
£0.000m

Some units are under offer and lettings are expected to complete soon, thus the overspend is expected to reduce.

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#### Customer Focus

Variation (£0.090m) underspend

Customer Focus is forecasting an underspend of (£0.090m) at year end. The bulk of this underspend is from holding on to vacancies.

Variation to August's Forecast  
£0.030m

Main variation from last month is due to a drop in land charges income.

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#### HR & OD

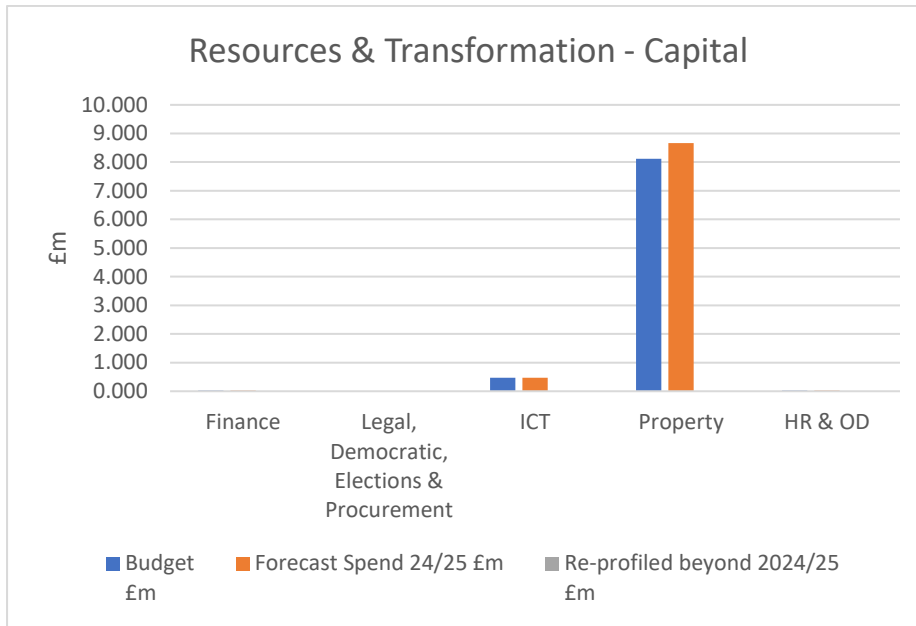
Variations Overspend £0.030m

Implementation of the managed payroll system has proven more economical and offered more resilience than the in-house service, however there is an anticipated overspend of £0.050m as a result of the implementation which the service is looking to mitigate with efficiencies within the HR budget. The current forecast is £0.030m overspend.

Variation to August's Forecast  
£0.000m

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**Capital:**



Service	Budget £m	Forecast Spend 24/25 £m	Re-profiled beyond 2024/25 £m	Variance to Budget £m	Prior Month Variance to Budget £m
Finance	0.020	0.020	0.000	0.000	0.000
Legal, Democratic, Elections & Procurement	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
ICT	0.472	0.472	0.000	0.000	0.000
Property	8.118	8.669	0.000	0.551	(0.038)
HR & OD	0.030	0.030	0.000	0.000	0.000
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.640</b>	<b>9.191</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.551</b>	<b>(0.038)</b>

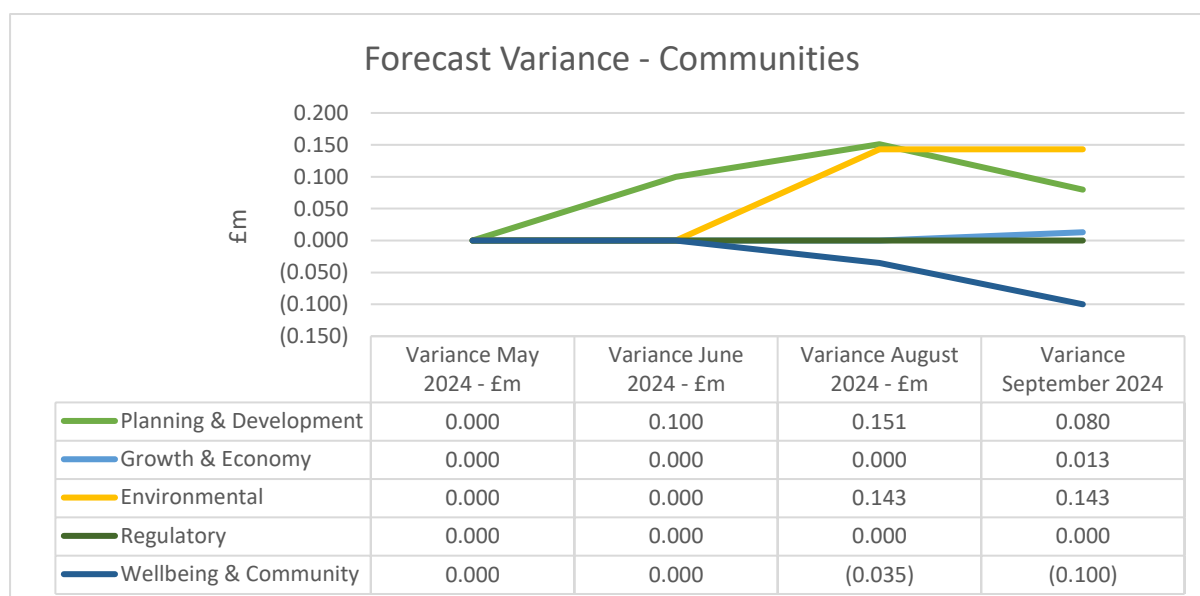
For detailed explanation and variances please see appendix 1.

## Communities

### Revenue:

Communities are forecasting a £0.262m overspend against a budget of £11.146m, (2.4%).

With a number of pressures emerging in the forecast to year end, the directorate leadership team has carried out a review of pressures and mitigations to contain across the Communities directorate in so far as possible. This has substantially reduced the forecast pressures to year end and will be closely monitored month by month to track progress and for any further changes.



### **Planning & Development**

**Variation**  
£0.080m overspend

Planning and Development is forecasting an overspend of £0.080m.

Development management has a forecast variance from budget of £0.075m. This includes a lower forecast for planning application fees for the year but higher expected income than forecast from Planning Performance Agreements.

Planning Policy, Conservation & Design and Building Control are close to budget (£0.001m and £0.002m over respectively).

**Variation to August's Forecast**

The main change since last month is the forecast that income from Planning Performance Agreements will be

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(£0.071m)	circa (£0.076m) higher at year end than previously forecast. There is active monitoring of costs relative to income to continue to put downward pressure on the forecast overspend.
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#### Growth & Economy

Variation £0.013m Overspend	Growth and Economy are predicting a £0.013m overspend. Delivery continues in relation to the Shared Prosperity Funding commitments, alongside the Bicester Garden Town programme and work in Banbury. Additional temporary resource has been secured for the development of a programme for Kidlington and to interim provide project management capacity.
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Variation to August's Forecast £0.013m	
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#### Environmental

Variation £0.143m overspend	The forecasted pressure of £0.143m within Environmental Services is primarily due to continued staffing pressures and agency costs within Waste and Recycling, this is being closely monitored and managed. These costs are being partly offset by additional income received through the garden waste subscriptions. The service is looking at all options to mitigate the overspend.
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Variation to August's Forecast £0.000m	The service is looking at all options to mitigate the overspend including all non-recruitment to vacant posts within the service and closer joint working and contracts with other Oxfordshire councils.
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Regulatory

Variation  
£0.000m

Regulatory Services and Community Safety are forecasting a balanced outturn.

Variation to August's  
Forecast  
£0.000m

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Wellbeing & Housing

Variation  
(£0.100m)  
underspend

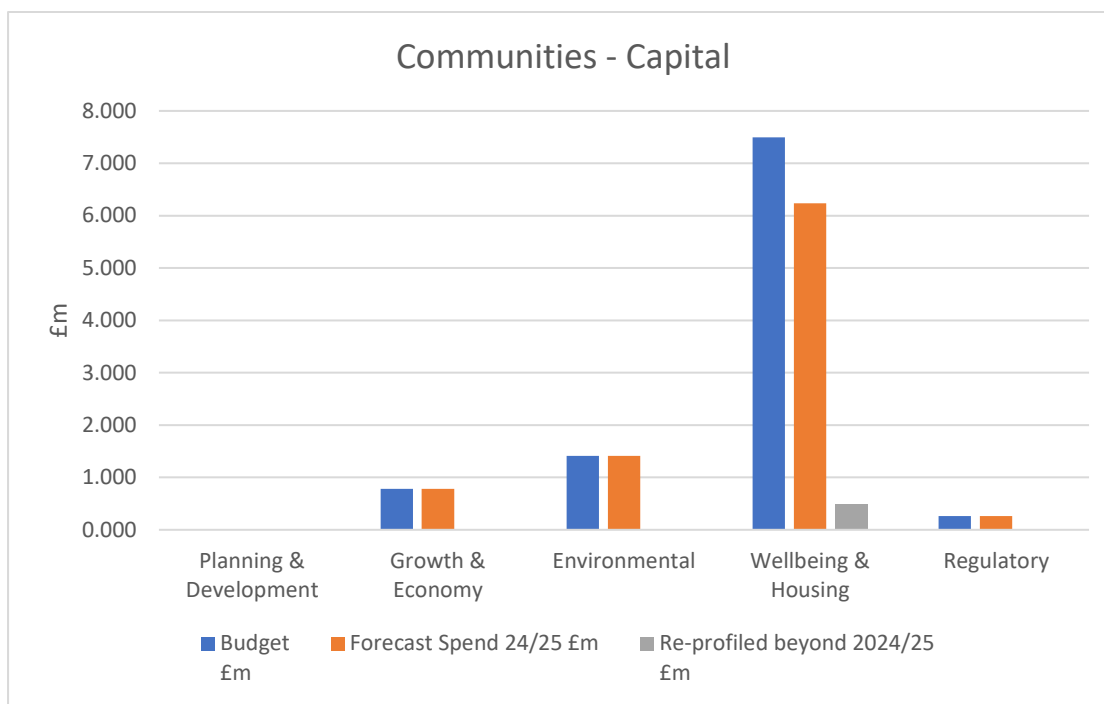
Services continue to actively manage pressures arising from inflation and unexpected service demands typical of operating front line services. The improved position is due to improved grant receipts and management of external funds to support provision continuing at agreed levels.

Variation to August's  
Forecast  
(£0.065m)

Pressures have been defrayed through operational efficiency and effective use of grants. Previous mitigations have been successful in containing the previous forecasted overspend.

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## Capital:



Service	Budget £m	Forecast Spend 24/25 £m	Re- profiled beyond 2024/25 £m	Variance to Budget £m	Prior Month Variance to Budget £m
Planning & Development	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Growth & Economy	0.780	0.780	0.000	0.000	0.000
Environmental	1.410	1.410	0.000	0.000	0.000
Wellbeing & Housing	7.495	6.236	0.481	(0.778)	(0.794)
Regulatory	0.265	0.265	0.000	0.000	0.000
<b>Total</b>	<b>9.950</b>	<b>8.691</b>	<b>0.481</b>	<b>(0.778)</b>	<b>(0.794)</b>

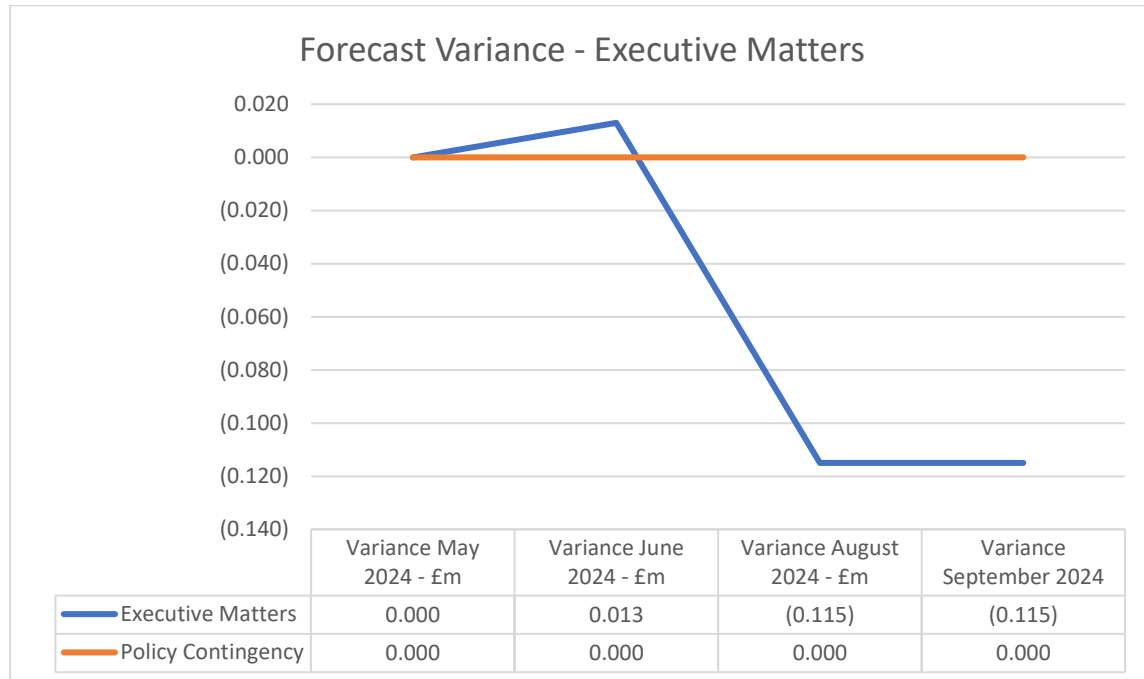
For detailed explanation and variances please see appendix 1.



## Executive Matters

### Revenue:

Executive Matters is reporting a (£0.115m) underspend against the budget of £4.293m (-2.7%).




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### Executive Matters

Variation  
(£0.115m) underspend

Executive Matters are currently forecasting an over recovery of interest of (£0.115m).

Variation to August's  
Forecast  
(£0.000m)

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## **Policy Contingency**

Policy Contingency is forecasting on target with a budget of £3.827m, (0.00%)

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Policy Contingency

Variation  
(£0.000m)

Policy Contingency are currently forecasting on budget.

Variation to August's  
Forecast  
£0.000m

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## Virement Summary

### Virement Movement

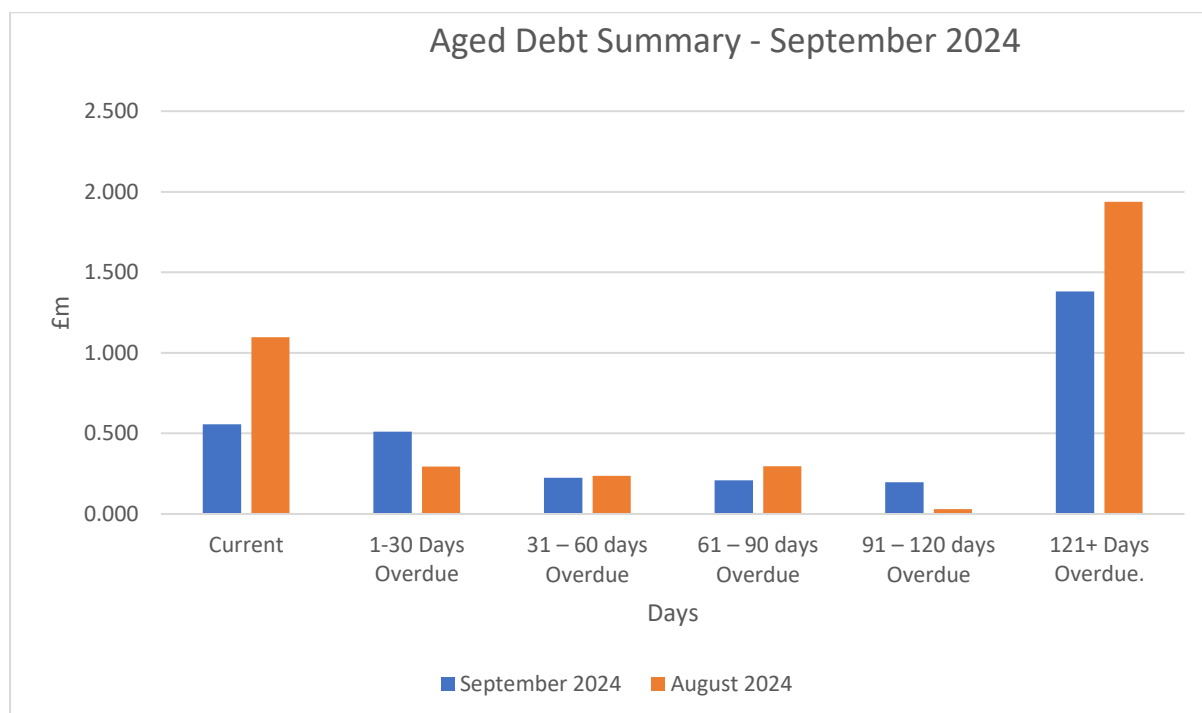
This table shows the movement in Net Budget from August 2024 to September 2024.

Virements - Movement in Net Budget	£m
Directorate Net Budget - August 2024	18.797
Directorate Net Budget - September 2024	18.867
<b>Movement</b>	<b>0.070</b>

Breakdown of Movements	£m
<b>Policy Contingency Allocations</b>	
Town Centre House under-recovery of rent	£0.070
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.070</b>

### Aged Debt Summary

The below graph shows the movement in sundry aged debt as at the end of September 2024.



The financial regulations make provision for writing off debts that are bad, uneconomical to collect or irrecoverable. The Council maintains a number of bad debt provisions in the anticipation that debts will become bad and these once agreed are charged to the relevant provision or cost centre.

There is a provision within the council for sundry bad debt totally £1.547m that is sufficient and by writing off the amount of debt mentioned in this report will not cause the provision to be exceeded. This provision is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that we have sufficient within it.

**Aged Debt Write Off Summary:**

	£m
Sundry Debts previously written off	0.300
Sundry Debts written off in September under S151 delegation	0.005
Sundry Debts over £0.005m to be written off via committee details in Appendix 6	0.000
<b>Total write offs in financial year 2024/25</b>	<b>0.305</b>

**Housing Benefit Write off Summary:**

	£m
Housing Benefit previously written off	0.010
Housing Benefit Overpayments written off in September 2024 under S151 Delegation	0.006
Housing Benefit Overpayments to be written off via committee approval, details in Appendix 6	0.006
Housing Benefit Overpayments due to written off in November 2024 under S151 Delegation	0.012
<b>Total write offs in financial year 2024/2025</b>	<b>0.034</b>

**Council Tax Write off Summary:**

	£m
Council Tax previously written off	0.032
Council Tax written off in September 2024 under S151 Delegation	0.035
Council Tax to be written off via Committee Approval details in Appendix 6	0.025
Council Tax due to written off in November 2024 under S151 Delegation	0.103
<b>Total write offs in financial year 2024/2025</b>	<b>0.195</b>

**Non-Domestic Rates Write off Summary:**

	£m
Non-Domestic Rates previously written off	0.057
Non-Domestic Rates written off in September 2024 under S151 Delegation	0.062
Non-Domestic Rates written off via Committee Approval, details in Appendix 6	0.012
Non-Domestic Rates due to written off in November 2024 under S151 Delegation	0.015
<b>Total write offs in financial year 2024/2025</b>	<b>0.146</b>

## Funding for 2024/25

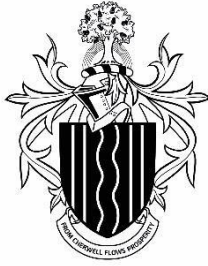
### Specific Funding received since budget was set:

Dept.	Grant Name	Funding
		£
DLUHC	UK Shared Prosperity Fund	(£0.658)
DLUHC	Homelessness Prevention Grant	(£0.763)
DLUHC	Electoral Integrity Programme New Burdens Funding	(£0.050)
DLUHC	Rough Sleeping Initiative	(£0.020)
DLUHC	Domestic Abuse Grant	(£0.037)
DLUHC	Redmond Review Implementation	(£0.024)
DLUHC	Tenant Satisfaction Measures New Burdens	(£0.005)
Home Office	Syrian Resettlement Scheme	(£0.005)
Home Office	Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy	(£0.863)
Home Office	Young Women and Girls Funding	(£0.010)
		<b>(£2.435)</b>

### Grants included as part of Budget setting:

Grant Name	£m
Homeless Prevention Grant	(0.517)
Afghan Resettlement Scheme	(0.244)
Syrian Refugee Initiative	(0.183)
Ukrainian Refugees Resettling in the UK	(0.417)
Asylum Seeker Dispersal Grant	(0.029)
<b>Chief Executive Total</b>	<b>(1.391)</b>
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	(0.829)
<b>Communities Total</b>	<b>(0.829)</b>
NNDR Cost of Collection Allowance	(0.231)
Rent Allowances	(25.004)
<b>Resources Total</b>	<b>(25.235)</b>
	<b>(27.455)</b>
Funding Guarantee Grant	(2.839)
Services Grant	(0.154)
<b>Corporate Total</b>	<b>(2.993)</b>
	<b>(30.448)</b>
Business Rates Retained Scheme	(9.647)
New Homes Bonus	(1.375)
Revenue Support Grant	(0.328)

<b>Funding Total</b>	<b>(11.350)</b>
<b>Government Grants Grand Total</b>	<b>(41.798)</b>



# *Cherwell*

DISTRICT COUNCIL  
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

## Corporate Debt Policy

### Contents

1. Introduction
2. Scope
3. Purpose and Objectives of the policy
4. Assessing the Customer's Ability to Pay
5. Arrangements for Repayment of Arrear
6. Supporting Vulnerable Customers
7. Breathing Space
8. Write Off Policy
9. Monitoring Collection Performance
10. Evasion and Fraud
11. Equality Duty
12. Use of data
13. Complaints
14. Rights of Appeal
15. Review

### Appendices:

Appendix A - Business Rates Recovery including flow chart

Appendix B - Council Tax Recovery including flowchart

Appendix C - Sundry Debts Recovery including flowchart

Appendix D - Housing Benefits Overpayment Recovery

Appendix E – Write Off Policy

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1** It is good practice to have a Corporate Debt Policy and ensures that all the people involved in the collection of money owed to the Council have a consistent approach and an understanding what that approach is. This promotes efficiency, effectiveness and consistency in the collection of debt. An understanding of an individual's or a commercial organisation's problems will enable them to access the appropriate help, assistance and benefits to allow them to pay their bills.

The Council recognises that the minimisation of and effective management of debt is crucial in terms of maximising resources available and providing cost effective services. A high percentage of the Council's revenue expenditure is for local services and is funded from the council tax, business rates, fees and charges and sundry debt income collected. Therefore, it is vital that the Council collects taxes, along with other debts and income, in order to support the local services offered. The full range of collection and recovery methods will be used as appropriate where debts are not paid (see appendices A-D).

- 1.2** We will treat individuals consistently and fairly, ensuring that individual's rights under Data Protection, Equality and Human Rights legislation are protected

## **2. Scope**

- 2.1** The Policy covers all debts owed to the Council including:

- A. Business Rates
- B. Council Tax
- C. Sundry Debts
- D. Housing Benefit Overpayments

**Please refer to Appendices A-D for the detailed billing and recovery process**

## **3. Purpose and Objectives of the policy**

- 3.1** To set out the general principles of debt management across all services provided by the Council.
- 3.2** To seek payment in advance for a service being provided where possible and make it easy for customers to pay.
- 3.3** To raise debt/invoices and collect those due to us as soon as reasonably possible.
- 3.4** To identify and assist those who face difficulties in paying at an early stage, and to actively encourage them to contact us, to help to reduce the effect of debt on our customers.



- 3.5 To ensure that where customers can't pay their debt that we consider their individual circumstances and take action on a case-by-case basis by negotiating repayment plans that do not cause unnecessary financial hardship.
- 3.6 To signpost potentially struggling debtors to advice agencies and other sources of support and do everything possible to encourage them to use them.
- 3.7 To have clarity in the enforcement action process and ensure that customers know their obligations and potential consequences of not paying.
- 3.8 To recover and enforce debts in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance and in a proportionate, consistent and fair manner.
- 3.9 To undertake a proactive stance on recovery by promoting awareness of discount, exemptions, reliefs and council tax reduction to reduce outstanding liabilities where applicable.

#### **4. Assessing the Customer's Ability to Pay**

- 4.1 During the process of recovery, the Council will act in accordance with statutory regulations and advice issued by professional bodies e.g., Citizens Advice, Money Advice Service, and Money & Pensions Service.
- 4.2 When recovering multiple debts, the Council will endeavour to break the cycle of debt more specifically towards Council Tax and Business Rates by encouraging payment of the current year's debt, and then by working with the customer to achieve an acceptable payment arrangement for previous year(s)' debts whilst ensuring a satisfactory level of repayment for the Council.
- 4.3 The Council will review payment arrangements to offer flexible options, including different payment dates and amounts to assist those on irregular incomes.
- 4.4 The Council will endeavour to make payment arrangements with customers who are unable to settle their debt(s) in full. However, this may involve legal action being taken against the customer where appropriate.
- 4.5 Debts will only be written off in line with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.

#### **5. Arrangements for Repayments of Arrears**

- 5.1 More detailed information is likely to be required where the debtor claims to be unable to pay the debt over a short space of time and where the debt will not be repaid in full by the end of the financial year.

**5.2** Where a debtor refuses to divulge any information that is considered essential to assessing their ability to pay then no payment agreement will be entered into.

## **6. Supporting Vulnerable Customers**

**6.1** We will ensure that arrears are pursued in a timely manner with a firm but fair approach. It is Council policy to try to balance customer care with the responsibility of collecting all debts efficiently. We endeavour to be responsive to individual circumstances wherever possible.

**6.2** We recognise that everyone will need to be treated in a sensitive way and a more considered approach will need to be taken with our individual customers; the Council recognises that customers do not pay their debts for a variety of reasons. This may include poverty or other financial hardship, and we will endeavour to balance their circumstance against our duty to collect.

**6.3** Vulnerability does not mean that a customer will not be required to pay amounts they are legally obliged to pay. The cause of vulnerability may be temporary or permanent in nature and the degree of vulnerability will vary widely.

**6.4** Whilst there are several characteristics which may cause an individual to be judged as vulnerable, we will consider each case on an individual basis, and take all relevant factors into account.

**6.5** Whilst there is no legal definition of a vulnerable person. Generally, persons considered vulnerable are likely to be those who:

- Are elderly;
- Appear to be physically or mentally ill, severely disabled or suffering mental confusion;
- Have young children and severe social deprivation is evident;
- Are heavily pregnant;
- Are in mourning due to recent bereavement (of immediate family);
- Have difficulty communicating e.g., due to profound deafness, blindness, or language difficulties;
- Are in receipt of state benefits and/or on a low income and severe social deprivation is evident;
- Are suffering from long term sickness or serious illness including the terminally ill;
- Are in a refuge.

## **7. Breathing Space**

- 7.1** The Debt Respite Scheme (Breathing Space Moratorium and Mental Health Crisis Moratorium) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, effective from 4 May 2021, introduce a scheme known as 'breathing space' for people in problem debt who receive professional debt advice.
- 7.2** Upon seeking professional debt advice from an accredited debt advisor, a person in problem debt may be entered into a 60-day period which pauses enforcement action from creditors and freezes charges, fees and certain interest on qualifying debts for up to 60 days.
- 7.3** For people receiving mental health crisis treatment, this scheme creates an alternate route where the protections of a moratorium may be accessed and remain in place for the duration of their crisis treatment, plus 30 days. An approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP) will need to certify that an individual is in receipt of mental health crisis care. The AMHP must be satisfied that in their professional judgement, the person meets one of the three criteria as follows:
- has been detained in hospital under the Mental Health Act for assessment or treatment (including under Part 3 of the Mental Health Act 1983) or has been removed to a place of safety by a Police Constable.
  - is receiving a specialist mental health crisis service such as Home Treatment Team. In addition, the AMHP also needs to ask for consent to share personal information and identify a nominated point of contact as specified in the guidance.
  - Submit the evidence form at [www.maps.org/mhcbs](http://www.maps.org/mhcbs). On receipt of the evidence form, a debt advisor will decide if the individual is eligible for a mental health crisis breathing space, linking in with the nominated point of contact.
- 7.4** This scheme is administered by the Insolvency Service who will send notifications to the council and upon receipt we will search for all qualifying debts owed to the council and suspend all recovery action for the duration of the breathing space period. The intention of the breathing space is to give the professional debt advisor time to review the individual's financial situation and propose a solution which might include a payment plan to cover the debts owed to the council. It is a matter between the professional debt advisor and the individual as to whether or not a solution is found.
- 7.5** The council is not involved in and has no say in this process

## **8. Write-off Policy**

- 8.1** The Council recognises that a small proportion of its overall debt may not be collectable due to matters beyond its control and where a debt is assessed to be irrecoverable it will be considered for write-off. However, the Council will seek to minimise the cost of write-offs by taking all appropriate action to

recover what is due.

- 8.2** Furthermore, if a debt is written off but an individual or business' circumstances change such debts will be considered for write-on and pursued to the full extent of the law. An example of when this may occur is if a debtor absconds with no forwarding address but is subsequently traced. A further example would be in insolvency cases where an individual/company goes bankrupt or is made insolvent, partial/full dividend(s) can be received many years later.
- 8.3** All officers, members and contractors will ensure that they have no work-related involvement with any account involving any relatives, friends, close associates, organisations of which they or their relatives are members or previous employees of. This includes making any decisions on how money owed to the Council is collected and recovered.
- 8.4** Please refer to write off policy in Appendix E

## **9. Monitoring Collection Performance**

- 9.1** The collection of Council Tax, Non-Domestic Rates and Sundry Debts are all under public scrutiny as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The efficiency of this policy and associated procedures will be monitored through the following KPIs:-
- % of Council Tax debt recovered
  - % of Non-domestic Rate debt recovered
  - % of Sundry debt recovered
  - % of Housing Benefit overpayment recovered
  - % of previous year's Council Tax Recovered
  - % of previous year's Business Rates Recovered

## **10. Evasion and Fraud**

- 10.1** The evasion of payments owed to the Council reduces the financial resources available to the Council which has a direct impact on all our residents, businesses and other organisations that rely on Council services.
- 10.2** Evasion or fraud to avoid payment will not be tolerated and where this is identified then, in addition to enforce payment, the Council will seek to impose such further penalties or sanctions as the law allows. The council currently buys in counter fraud support and referrals are made to contracted provider for the investigation and detection of fraud.

## **11. Equality Duty**

- 11.1** Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council, in exercising any of its functions, must have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
  - Advance equality of opportunity; and

- Foster good relations between people of different backgrounds

## **12 Use of Data**

- 12.1** The Council will collect and store personal data for the purposes of the effective billing, collection, and recovery of sums due. Data retained for this purpose will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and will be always stored securely.
- 12.2** Data will be shared with agents or contractors appointed by the Council for the purposes of the billing, collection, and recovery of sums due. Data may also be shared within the Council or with external organisations where the law allows and where it is in the interests of the debtor or where it will prevent fraud or the unlawful evasion of payment of sums due.

## **13. Complaints**

- 13.1** Should any customer feel dissatisfied with how they have been treated the Council has a complaints procedure which can be accessed and a complaints form completed online at: <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/complaints>; by writing to: Customer Complaints Cherwell District Council Bodicote House Whitepost Road Bodicote OX15 4AA; by emailing: [complaints@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@cherwell-dc.gov.uk); or by calling 01295 227001.

## **14. Rights of Appeal**

- 14.1** There are a number of ways in which customers can appeal decisions the Council may have taken with regards to debt:
- Valuation Tribunal: for people who believe the Council has acted incorrectly on a Council Tax billing matter.
  - Magistrates Court: for people who are aggrieved by the recovery process for Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates and for Non-Domestic Rates payers who believe the Council acted incorrectly on a billing matter.
  - Appeal Tribunal: for decisions made on Housing Benefit claims.
  - County Court: for action taken to recover Housing Benefit overpayments and for Sundry Invoices.

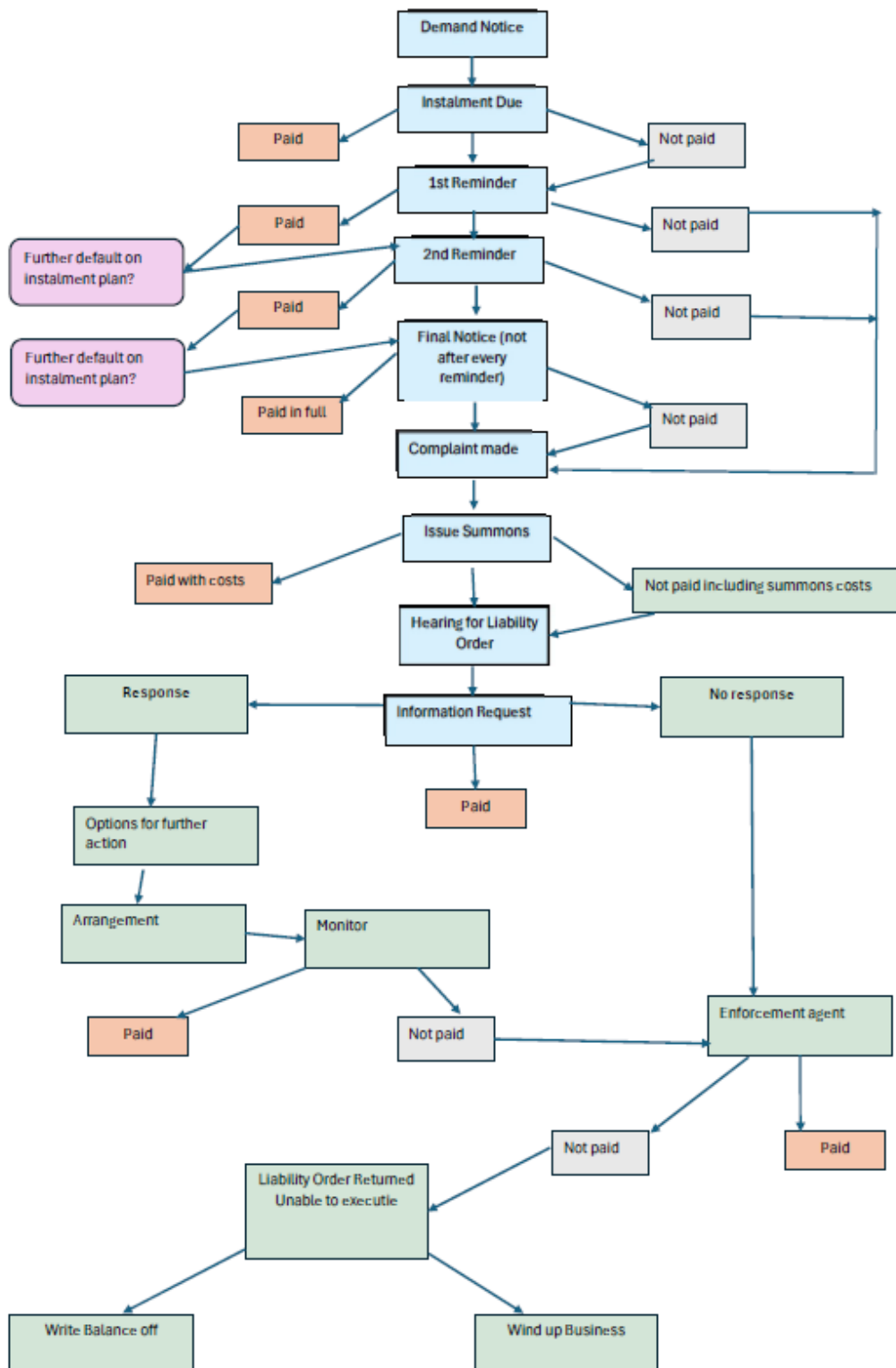
## **15. Review**

- 15.1** This Policy will be monitored and regularly reviewed and updated where necessary to take account of changes in legislation and best practice. A full review of the Policy will be scheduled for September 2025; however, until any review is undertaken, this policy will remain in force.

## **Appendix A - Business Rates Recovery**

- A1 The bills for Business rates and for any Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) operating within the district are issued on an annual basis and the responsibility for issuing bills and the collection and recovery of debt is held by the Chief Finance Officer. Business rates and BID levy payments are payable in line with legislative requirements.
- A2 The business rates bill will detail when instalments are due to be paid and the methods which can be used to pay, whereas the BID levy payment is payable in one instalment. If an instalment for either business rates or BID are not paid on time, then a reminder will be issued following non-payment.
- A3 Only one reminder notice will be issued for BID whereas a maximum of two reminders will be issued for business rate bills if payment is received in accordance with the first reminder notice but a second default occurs; any further default will result in a final notice being issued. A final notice withdraws from the customer the right to pay by instalments for business rates and requires full payment of the outstanding amount to be made within seven days. The enforcement action to be taken for the BID mirrors that of business rates. If the business rate account or the BID levy payment remains unsettled, the Council will make a complaint to the Magistrates Court by the issue of a summons notice for an application to apply for a liability order to be granted.
- A4 The Liability Order enables the Council to consider other enforcement remedies for example: instructing enforcement agents to collect the balance of debt that is outstanding.
- A5 If an appeal is made against the rateable value to the independent Valuation Officer, payment must still be made against both the business rates and the BID account until the appeal is settled.
- A6 Enforcement agents will be appointed based on the contracts which have been procured in line with contract procedure rules. Enforcement/agent's performance and contract management will be in place to ensure compliance with codes of conduct and good practice. Enforcement/agent's services will comply with the Taking Control of Goods: National Standards, issued by the Ministry of Justice.

**Diagram A1: Business Rates Recovery Process**

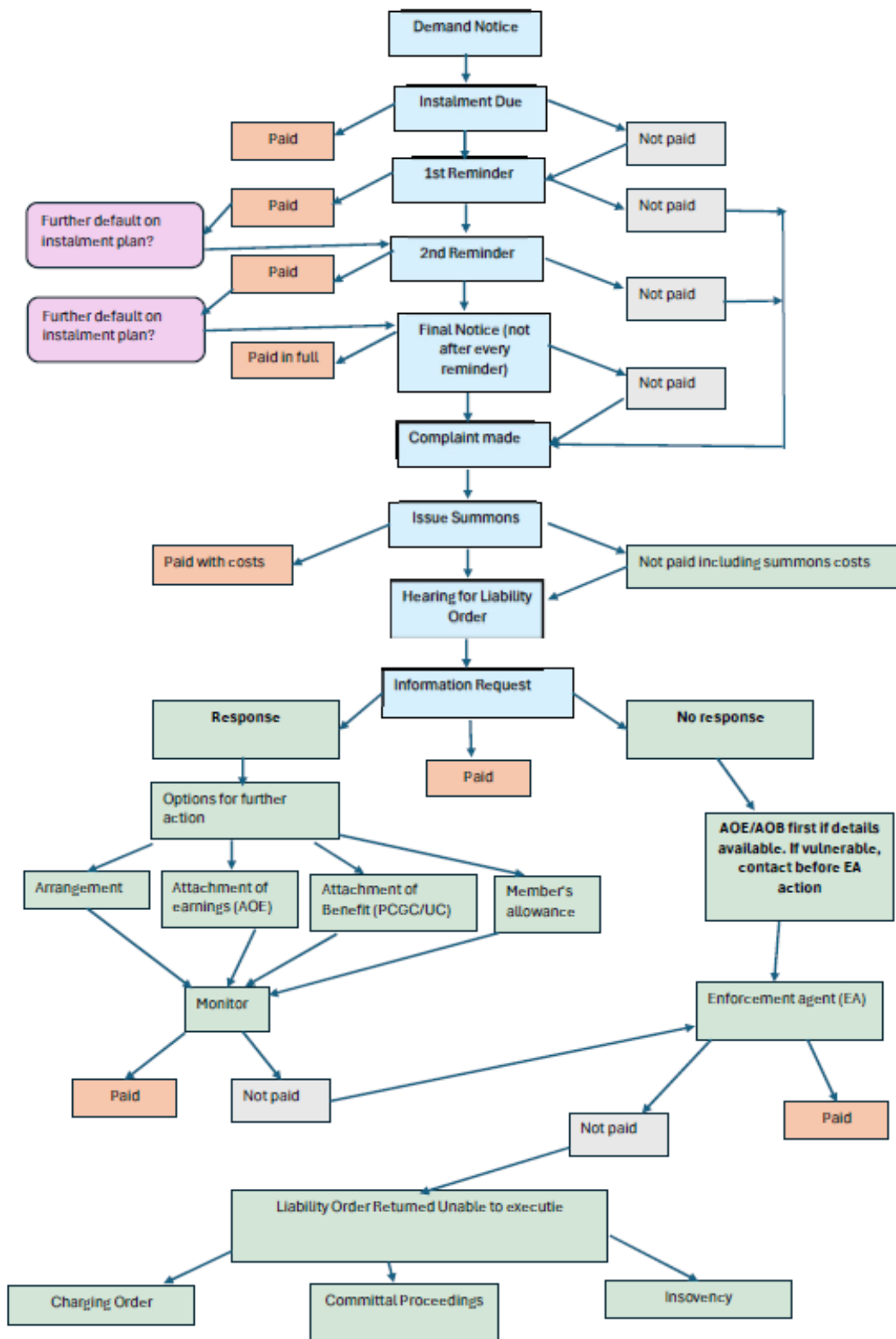


## Appendix B - Council Tax Recovery

- B1 The responsibility for issuing council tax demand notices, its collection, and recovery of debt is held by the Council's Chief Finance Officer.
- B2 The Council will issue a council tax demand notice, which will give instructions on when the instalments are due to be paid. The preferred method of payment for council tax is direct debit and flexibility is available on the date on which the direct debit is collected. Unless paid by Direct Debit the first instalment is due by the first of the month.
- B3 A reminder notice will be issued if an overdue instalment is not paid within seven days of the instalment due date. If the instalment is paid as requested, then no further action will be taken. If the instalment is not paid or only partly paid, recovery action will proceed to the summons stage. Within a council tax year (April – March) only two reminders will be issued for late payment of instalments.
- B4 A final notice will be issued on the third occasion that an instalment is paid late as long as the previous reminders have been paid or a final notice will be issued for a closed account or previous financial year where payment is not received as per the latest bill. The final notice will be a request for the full balance to be paid. The balance must be paid within seven days of a final notice being issued.
- B5 If payment is not received within 14 days after the first or second reminder notice or within seven days of a final notice, the Council will take legal action and a summons will be issued against the customer. All costs incurred are recoverable by the Council and will be added to the amount due when the summons is issued.
- B6 The Council reserves the right to take recovery action where a customer does not pay and does not indicate that they are having trouble paying. Customers are informed of:
- Entitlement to housing and council tax support and other income related benefits
  - Discounts, reliefs, and exemptions
- B7 The ability to refer debt to an enforcement agent is an important tool in the recovery process. The Council appreciates the sensitivity attached to the use of enforcement agents and will only use them if it is deemed necessary. The Council will seek to use enforcement agents only where it has been determined that this is the most effective collection method for the debt in question. Enforcement agents will be appointed based on the contracts which have been procured in line with contract procedure rules. Enforcement agent's performance and contract management will be in place to ensure compliance with codes of conduct and good practice. Enforcement agent's services will comply with the Taking Control of Goods: National Standards, issued by the Ministry of Justice.



Diagram B1: Council Tax Recovery Process



## **Appendix C - Sundry Debt Recovery**

- C1 Sundry Debt refers to domestic & commercial charges and domestic & commercial rents excepting those commercial rents where a third party is contracted to manage and collect on the council's behalf. In such cases debt will be collected according to the policy of the third party but still subject to the council's write off policy. The responsibility for raising sundry debts against a debtor account is devolved across the authority and subject to authorisation via the financial information system's approvals hierarchy. This process is completed entirely within the Council's finance system.
- C2 The overall responsibility for the collection and recovery of sundry debt is shared by the Extended Leadership Team. Finance will ensure that senior managers for each service have the necessary information required to ensure debt is recovered where appropriate.
- C3 Wherever possible, Cherwell District Council should endeavor to obtain payment in advance or at the time when a product or service is delivered to reduce the risk of non-payment.
- C4 The council will only raise a debtor's invoice where payment in advance for a service is inappropriate. This is at the discretion of the service and the risk of non-payment must be assessed before a decision is made to provide a product or service before payment is requested. All sundry debtor invoices must be raised using the council's financial information system.

### **Settlement Terms & Notices**

- C5 The general settlement terms for sundry debtors are 30 days from the date of the invoice. There are some services that the council provides for which payment is required earlier.
- C6 A reminder notice will be issued to the debtor 31 days after the invoice date, which requires the account to be brought up to date within 14 days (day 45 of the invoice being raised). On day 46 after the invoice date a final notice letter will be issued which requires the account to be brought up to date within 7 days.
- C7 If, after 53 days, the account remains outstanding, where possible, the service will be suspended, and the account holder will be notified. The service will only be reinstated once the account has been settled and advance payment will be requested where appropriate.
- C8 Some service areas do fall within vulnerable groups. Where this applies, consideration on the best way to proceed will be taken in line with the Council's policy on debt collection for vulnerable people.

### **Internal Reporting & Responsibilities**

- C9 On a monthly basis an arrears analysis report is run for all outstanding debts. This report is sent to the Extended Leadership Team and Service

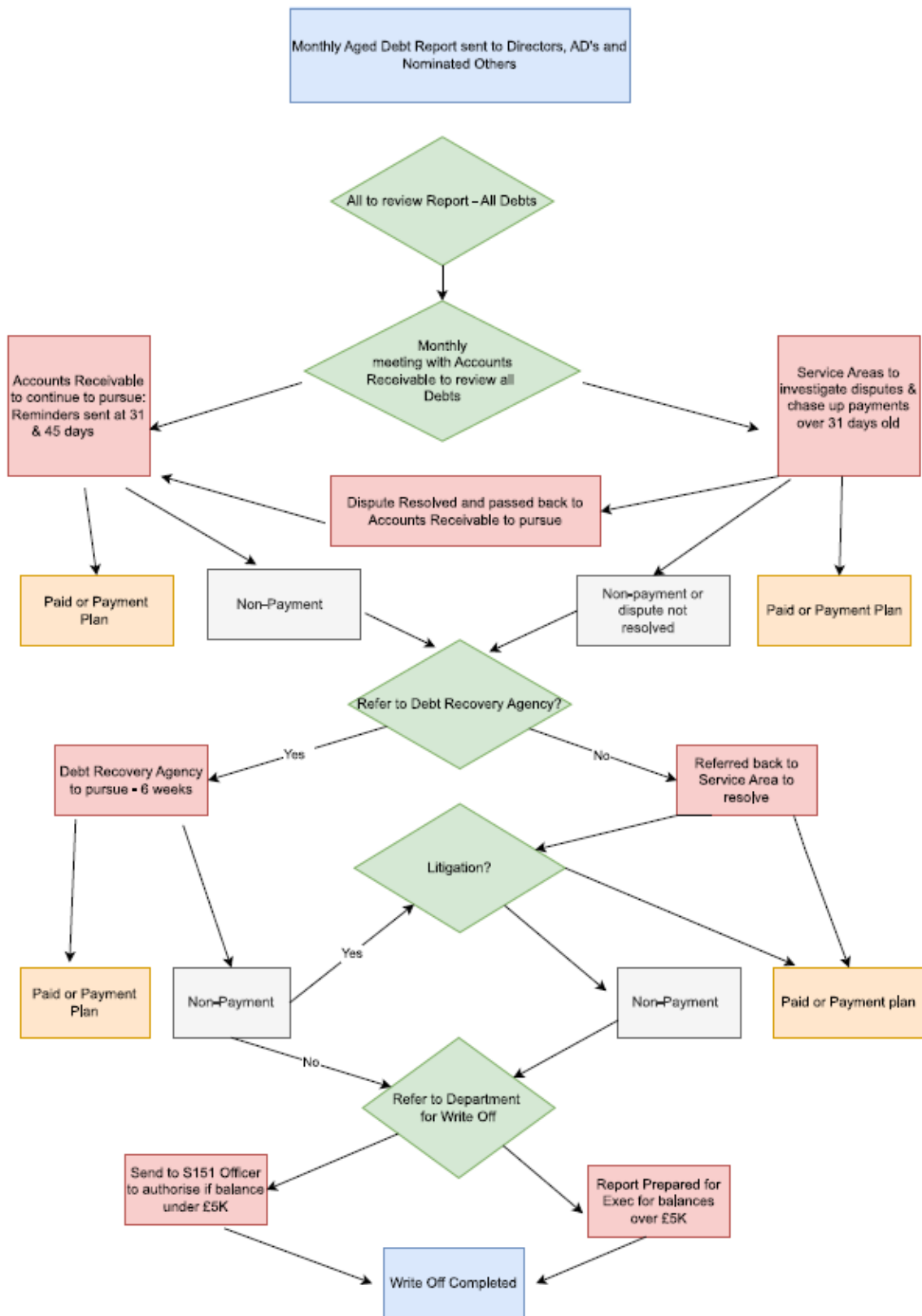
Leads for their review.

C10 The Council's Corporate Leadership Team will receive regular aged debtor reports in order to monitor performance.

C11 The following details the roles and responsibilities for collection of sundry debt:

Timeline of debt	Accounts Receivable	Responsibilities Service
Day 0		Invoice raised
Day 30	Issue Aged Debt Report	Review Aged Debt Report
Day 31	Reminder sent	Service to investigate why invoice remains unpaid after 30 days and resolve any disputes.
Day 45	Reminder sent	Service to continue to engage with debtor to resolve and recover.
Day 59	Issue Aged Debt Report	Review Aged Debt Report
Day 60	Notify Service if debt still outstanding and offer to refer to Debt Collection Agency	Service to decide if appropriate to: * refer debt to <b>Debt Recovery Agency</b> OR * take responsibility for <b>recovering the debt themselves</b> OR * request that the debt is <b>written off</b> .
Day 90	Issue Aged Debt Report	Review Aged Debt Report
Day 102	Notify Service if Debt Recovery Agency has referred debt back to the Council	Service to decide whether it is appropriate to: * <b>issue Letter Ahead of Action</b> OR * take <b>responsibility for recovering the debt themselves</b> OR * request debt be <b>written off</b> .
Day 120 and every 30 days thereafter	Issue Aged Debt Report	Review Aged Debt Report

# Diagram C1: Sundry Debt Recovery Process



## Appendix D - Housing Benefits Overpayment Recovery & Council Tax Reduction Schemes

- D1 Overpayments of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit/Support arise through a change in benefit entitlement. They are described as an amount of benefit that has been awarded but to which there is no or reduced entitlement under the regulations.
- D2 The Council believes that the prevention of overpayment debt is better than having to collect it after an overpayment has been made; therefore, measures are to be employed to prevent overpayments occurring. These will include:
- D2.1 Using a well laid out application form to collate accurate information which contains an unambiguous statement that failure to provide correct information could lead to overpayments of benefit and to prosecution.
- D2.2 Ensuring all benefit notification letters and relevant correspondence informs the claimant affected of their responsibility to tell the Council of any change of circumstances that may affect their claim.
- D2.3 Making use of reasonable evidence in support of claims and changes or circumstances for example, using checks for:
- identity
  - residency and
  - National Insurance numbers
- D2.4 Targeted interventions that are risk profiled where possible and appropriate.
- D2.5 Ensuring all staff involved with overpayments receive suitable training with comprehensive access to overpayment recovery procedures and an awareness of problems relating to debt.
- D2.6 Providing regular fraud awareness training for staff.
- D2.7 Using and developing information technology to automate the identification and recovery of overpayments and to reduce error.
- D2.8 Including publicity material and information on responsibilities for reporting changes of circumstances.
- D2.9 Ensuring that benefit awards are suspended and terminated in line with current regulations and case law.
- D2.10 Dealing as quickly as possible with reported changes of circumstances.
- D2.11 Participating in various data matching exercises with external agencies and cross matching against internal databases whilst adhering to principles laid down by the Data Protection Regulations 2018, Data Protection and Human Rights Act 1998.
- D3 The Council aims to calculate overpayments quickly and accurately and to provide quality information to the claimants affected, ensuring it recovers the correct amount. To achieve this, the Council will:

- Invite claimants to apply for underlying entitlement.
  - Calculate the overpayment, on average, within 14 days of receiving all necessary information.
  - Use the proper effective date of change to fix the correct overpayment period.
- D4 The Council aims to ensure the correct classification of overpayments for subsidy purposes is always used to prevent loss of subsidy.
- D5 All necessary invoices, reminders and pre-debt collector stage letters/Financial Enquiry will be raised according to recovery stage, using the Housing Benefits and Debt Management system.
- D6 Invoices will be issued when the overpayment has occurred to notify the claimant of the balance.
- D7 The Council has a responsibility to act in accordance with all relevant legislation and regulations, when recovering overpayments.
- Social Security Administration Act 1992.
  - Social Security Administration Act 1992 (Housing Benefit).
  - Social Security Administration Act 1992 (Council Tax Benefit).
  - Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992.
  - The Housing Benefit (General) Regulations 1987 - and subsequent varying regulations.
  - The Council Tax Benefit (General) Regulations 1992 - and subsequent varying regulations.
  - Housing Benefit (Recovery of Overpayments) Regulations 1997.
  - Social Security (Overpayment and Recovery) Regulations 2013.
  - The Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit (Decisions and Appeals and Discretionary Financial Assistance) (Consequential Amendments and Revocations) Regulations 2001.
  - Welfare Reform Act 2012.
  - Housing Benefit Overpayment Guide 2015.
- D8 Where the Council decides an overpayment is recoverable the most appropriate method of recovery will be considered in all cases and arrangements will follow the general hierarchy below:
- From arrears of Housing Benefit.
  - On-going deductions from further payments of continuing Housing Benefit. This will include payments that are sent directly to the Landlord on the claimant's behalf. The Council will base recovery rates as laid down by regulation and will initially seek to recover the standard weekly deduction rate, unless the health or financial circumstances of the claimant suggests, a more appropriate rate

should be used. In all cases, however, a minimum amount of fifty pence per week Housing Benefit must remain in payment. The debtor has the right of appeal against the rate of recovery chosen by the Council.

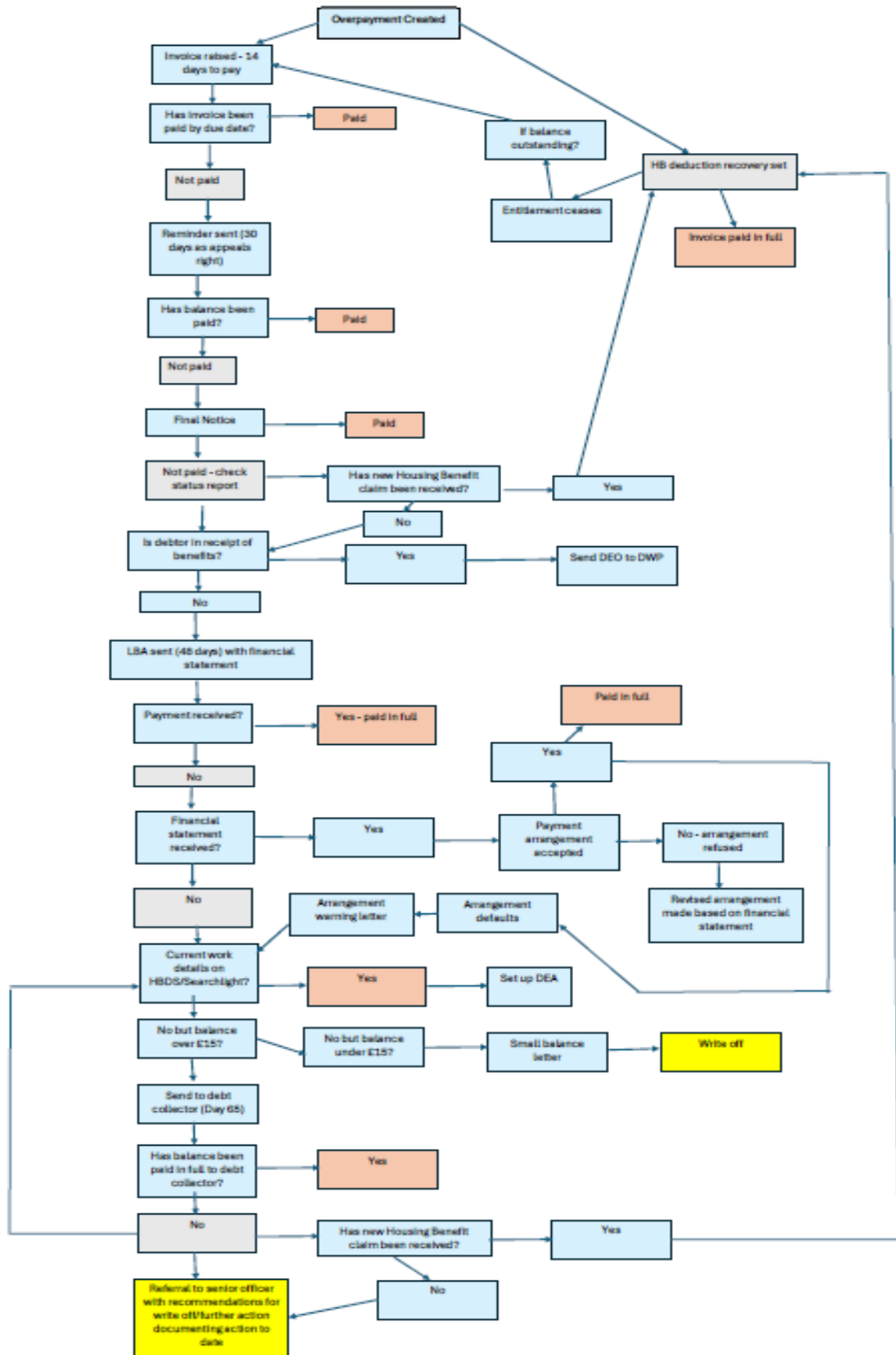
- An amended Council Tax bill will be issued relating to overpaid Council Tax Benefit/Reduction, and any unpaid monies will be subject to recovery action under the Council Tax regulations.
- By deductions from certain Department of Work and Pensions benefits. Section 75(1) of the Social Security Administration Act 1992 allows recovery of overpaid Housing Benefit by deduction from prescribed benefits which are defined in Regulation 105 of the Housing Benefit Regulations 2006.
- As of 8 April 2013, Sections 105 and 106 of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 amends the Social Security Administration Act 1992 allows the Council to recover by attachment of earnings without court authority. Known as Direct Earnings Attachments (DEA), their primary purpose is to enforce recovery where a liable person is in Pay as You Earn (PAYE) employment.
- Referral to an external debt collection agency (after all the above avenues of recovery are considered and/or exhausted).
- In extreme circumstances Civil Proceedings Application to the County Court for a County Court Judgement (after all avenues of recovery are considered and/or exhausted). With a County Court Judgement (CCJ) further recovery actions can be taken, e.g., application to the High Court to instruct High Court enforcement agents.
- The Housing Benefit (Recovery of Overpayments) Regulations 1997 provide for the opportunity, if deemed appropriate, for the Council to recover overpayments from landlords when the landlord has been classed as responsible from their current tenants' entitlement. The Council will, in appropriate circumstances, reduce payments to landlords for their current tenants to recover overpayments that arose for former tenants, known as 'blameless tenant,' recovery. It will take this action when the original tenant has no continuing Housing Benefit entitlement.

D16 We will ensure recovery is applied in a fair and equitable way. We will also set up payment plans wherever possible to encourage payment of debts considering the claimant's financial circumstances to try to prevent financial hardship but considering the need to clear any outstanding debt.

D17 Only if after all attempts at recovering the overpayment have become exhausted and there is no hope of recovery, or there are qualifying circumstances, shall the debt be recommended for write-off.



Diagram D1: Overpayments Recovery Process



## **Appendix E - Write Off Policy**

- E1 This policy sets out the procedure to be followed when writing off irrecoverable amounts (including credit balances) of Council Tax (CTax), Non-Domestic Rate (NDR), Housing Benefit Overpayments (HB), the local Council Tax Support scheme (CTS) and Sundry debtors.
- E2 Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 (as amended by the 2006 and 2009 Regulations), bad debts should not be written off without approval of the Chief Finance Officer (subject to limits of delegation), or such member of staff as are nominated by them for this purpose. There are no equivalent rules for credit balances although it is prudent to have these written off on a regular basis.
- E3 A debt should only ever be written off in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules; proposed write offs should be reported to Members for approval periodically.
- E4 The Council sets rigorous performance targets for the collection of CTax, NDR and sundry debt. In addition, the council strives to minimise HB / CTS overpayment. The Council is committed to accurate collection and timely recovery and will ensure that sums outstanding are correctly recorded and recovery is taken where a debtor is in arrears.
- E5 Officers are required to take robust action to collect all debts; however, in some cases recovery might not be possible, and debts do become irrecoverable. Where a debt is deemed to be non-recoverable (or a credit non-refundable), it will be identified at the earliest possible opportunity and properly dealt with. Irrecoverable debts must also be identified and written off promptly.
- E6 Writing off irrecoverable items represents good financial management. It allows officers to concentrate on recoverable debts and ensures that the level of debtors / arrears within the statement accounts is accurate and represents a true and fair reflection of the council's financial position.

### **Reasons for Write-Off**

- E7 Every effort will be made to recover a debt to the council before it is considered for write off. This includes using tracing agents, contacting the occupants/owners. Appendices A and B set out the CTax and NDR billing / reminder processes and the actions to be followed if a debt is not paid. Only where all recovery action has failed, is a debt regarded as irrecoverable.

E8 The circumstances where a debt may be written off have been categorised as follows:

<b>Reason</b>	<b>Description</b>
Insolvency	Debtor is the subject of bankruptcy, individual voluntary arrangement, liquidation, company voluntary arrangement & administration order, or administrative receivership proceedings, or has ceased to trade, or is subject to a Debt Relief Order.
Unenforceable	Debtor is overseas or outside of jurisdiction, or the debt is over 6 years old.
Absconded	Tracing agents have been unable to find the debtor.
Uneconomical to Collect	Balance is too small to cover the cost of further action.
Uncollectable	Custodial sentences, remitted debts, vulnerable people, hardship, local authority error, system roundings.
Deceased	No funds in an estate.

E9 Should a debtor be subsequently traced, a debt will be re-instated if considered economically viable to recover and it is within the statute of limitations.

E10 In cases where the debtor is jointly and severally liable for the debt with another party, recovery action will continue against all liable individuals and only if this action fails will monies be recommended for write off.

E11 There will be instances where the Council will need to write off a credit that remains on a closed account. Not knowing the whereabouts of a creditor who hasn't paid by direct debit (or not having sufficient information to determine how or when a credit is to be refunded) will be the reasons for writing off a credit.

### **Procedures to be undertaken prior to obtaining write-off approval**

#### **General**

E12 The procedures to be followed prior to the writing off of a debt / credit are analysed below. Once the actions have been undertaken, only then will a debt / credit be included on a list of cases submitted for write off.

## **Insolvency**

- E13 The Council will seek to establish the status of the company and, if an insolvency practitioner has been appointed, discuss with them the outstanding debt.

## **Bankruptcy**

- E14 Upon notification of a bankruptcy, a proof of debt will be completed for the outstanding debt that is due at the date of the bankruptcy order and submitted as a claim to the trustee in bankruptcy. In the event of payment being received in full or in part from the bankrupt's estate, this money will be credited back to the relevant account.

## **Individual voluntary arrangement**

- E15 An individual voluntary arrangement (IVA) is an alternative route available to an individual wishing to avoid the restrictions placed upon them by a bankruptcy order. It involves the debtor making an offer to all creditors which is less than the full amount of the debt outstanding and agreeing that it be repaid over a period of time in full and final settlement. If 75% (in value) of creditors agree to the offer as an alternative to proceedings for bankruptcy, an insolvency practitioner will be appointed to administer the voluntary arrangement. In the event of payment being received in full or part, this money will be credited back to the relevant account. In the case of part-payment the remaining balance will be considered for write off once an IVA has been completed.

## **Liquidation**

- E16 Liquidation may either be compulsory (a company cannot pay its debts and it applies to the courts to liquidate it) or creditors voluntary (a company cannot pay its debts and it involves its creditors to liquidate it) or members voluntary (sometimes referred to as a shareholders' liquidation, a company can pay its debts, but the members want to close it). Upon notification of liquidation, a proof of debt will be completed for the outstanding debt that is due at the date of the winding-up order and submitted as a claim to the liquidator. In the event of payment being received in full or part, this money will be credited back to the relevant account. In the case of part payment, the remaining balance will be considered for write off.

## **Company voluntary arrangement / administration order**

- E17 A company voluntary arrangement (CVA) is an alternative route available to a company wishing to avoid the making of a winding up order. It involves the directors making an offer to all creditors, which is less than the full amount of the debt outstanding and agreeing that it be repaid over a period of time in full and final settlement. If 75% (in value) of creditors agree to the offer as an alternative to liquidation, an insolvency practitioner will be appointed to administer the voluntary arrangement. In the event of payment being received in full or part, this money will be credited back to the relevant account. In the case of part payment, the remaining balance will be considered for write off once the CVA has been completed.

## **Administrative receivership**

- E18 This involves an individual being appointed by a lender, usually a bank, which holds a debenture as security over a floating charge on assets of the company, and usually takes effect when the company is in default of agreed lending terms. An insolvency practitioner will assume immediate control of the company in an attempt to sell it as a going concern.

However, although remaining in occupation, no action can be taken against the receivers appointed to enforce payment of previous or on-going rate charges. In the event of payment being received in full or part, this money will be credited back to the relevant account. In the case of part payment, the remaining balance will be considered for write off.

### **Company has ceased to trade leaving no assets**

- E19 On occasions, limited companies will cease to trade on the grounds of having no assets to pay an outstanding and / or on-going debt. They do not go through the formal process of winding-up proceedings, which carry a cost and have legal implications.
- E20 In these circumstances, if it is proven that an enforcement agent has failed to recover monies due, or identify assets on which to levy distress, a recommendation for write-off will be made.

### **Debt Relief Order**

- E21 A Debt Relief Order (DRO) is a way of dealing with debts if the individual cannot afford to pay them. It means debtors don't have to pay for debts for a specified period, usually 12 months. The criteria for a DRO is when the customer:
- owes less than £50,000
  - does not have enough money at the end of each month to make your debt repayments
  - has less than £2,000 worth of assets
  - does not own a vehicle worth £4,000 or more
  - has lived or worked in England and Wales within the last 3 years
  - has not applied for a DRO within the last 6 years
  - Is not currently bankrupt, have an interim order or an individual voluntary arrangement
- E22 An application for a DRO is made through an authorised debt advisor such as Citizens Advice, Christians Against Poverty, Step Change etc. At the end of the specified period, the debts included will be written off.
- E23 If any of the debts have been obtained through fraud, these can be listed in the DRO; however, recovery of the debt should stop during the DRO period. Fraudulent debts will not be discharged at the end of the DRO. The individual will still have to pay them back when the DRO period ends.
- E24 The debt will be recommended for write off but will be monitored periodically, as the debtor's circumstances must remain the same for a period of usually 12 months in order for the DRO to remain in place.

### **Unenforceable**

- E25 Certain debts will fall outside of legal jurisdiction either because the debtor is overseas, or six years may have passed since recovery action had been instigated against a debtor and the debt was last acknowledged.
- E26 If a debtor is overseas and contact in writing has failed to result in payment or an arrangement to pay, a recommendation for write off will be made. Evidence supplied from

external sources would be used to determine this.

E27 In cases where six years may have passed since recovery action had been instigated against a debtor and the debt was last acknowledged, the whole debt will be submitted for write off. Evidence on what action, if any, has been taken will be used to determine this.

### **Absconded**

E28 A debt will be written off when a closed accounts has no known forwarding address, there has been no contact for 4 years and the debt is under £500.

E29 For any finalised account with a balance of under £50.00, staff will make basic checks of the authority systems and known third parties, (i.e. solicitors and letting agents). If, after a three-month period, a new address is not established, the debt will be submitted for write off.

E30 Before the debt can be recommended for write off, the following enquiries will be undertaken by staff:-

- Check CTax or NDR database to identify if the person has re-registered at another address within the Council's area.
- Check electoral register.
- Contact landlord or letting / estate agent.
- Contact other local authorities where appropriate.
- Undertake visits to property if required.
- Conduct third party searches (i.e. through 'Experian' or similar companies).

E31 If, after all enquiries have been completed, a forwarding address has not been established, the amount will be submitted for write-off.

### **Uneconomical to Collect**

E32 Prior to annual billing, every debt of up to £1, on each financial year, on both live and finalised accounts will be submitted for write off to prevent bills being issued for small sums. These will automatically be written off prior to printing production. The Council Tax system automatically adjusts penny roundings. No adjustment notice or demand is issued if the balance outstanding is less than a £1. Any small balances will be written off to allow the demand / adjustment notice to be produced.

### **Uncollectable**

E33 If a debtor is the subject of a means enquiry and has been imprisoned for non-payment of CTax or NDR, whilst a debt is not legally remitted on imprisonment, an authority cannot enforce the debt again in the event of continued non-payment. Therefore, an authority has no option but to write off the debt. Debts are also uncollectable if they are remitted by the court on the grounds of inability to pay.

### **Debts that have arisen because of local authority error / system roundings**

E34 If a debt has arisen as a result of a local authority error or system rounding, the possibility of recovering the debt would be considered in the first instance. If that proves impossible (i.e. legislation prevents recovery where the fault is not of a debtor's doing) the debt will be written off. Details of the events that gave rise to the debt being incurred

will be taken to evidence this.

### **Deceased**

E35 Where a debtor has died and the estate is insolvent, the debt will need to be written-off. A letter from the executor confirming there are no assets from which to discharge any outstanding liability will be taken to determine this.

### **Credits**

E36 There will be instances where an account is closed and a credit balance remains on an account. If it has not been possible to refund the money, for whatever reason (i.e. forwarding address unknown and debit/credit card expired or paid by a method other than direct debit), the credit will be written off after a period of one year. Credits will be used to reduced other balances the debtor owes to the Council if the credit remains unclaimed.

### **HB and CTB/CTS Overpayments**

E37 Factors that should influence the decision whether an overpayment is economical to pursue are:-

- The size and age of a debt in relation to where it is in the recovery process and the cost of action at the next stage of the recovery process,
- Any previous action taken on the case and the results,
- Whether the council knows the current address of the debtor,
- When the last action was taken to try and recover the overpayment,
- Whether all documents are in sufficient order to support the recovery of the overpayment.

E38 From here, council officers will calculate how much it would cost the authority to proceed with the next stage of the recovery process and whether it is economically viable to do so.

### **Exceptional Circumstances**

E39 Whilst rare, it may be necessary to recommend an overpayment for write-off, whether it is claimed in error or fraudulently, due to:-

- A person's age, health or personal circumstances which would make any prosecution or penalty unsuitable,
- The claimant's diligence in reporting a change of circumstances (if applicable),
- The standard of advice and notification given to the claimant in respect of the overpaid amount,
- Whether it is reasonable to expect the claimant, or any other person affected, to repay the overpayment,
- Whether recovery will cause unacceptable hardship to the claimant or any other person affected.

E40 The authority (and procedure) for writing off debits and credits will follow the practice adopted for Ctax , NDR and sundry debtors referred to earlier in the document.

### **Authority for Write off up to £5,000 (£10,000 NDR)**

E41 The Assistant Director of Finance (S151 Officer) (or their nominated representatives) has the delegated authority to write off a debt.

E42 All debts will be reported to the Assistant Director of Finance as follows:-

- Listed on a spread sheet showing the reference number, amount and year the debt was raised and supported by documentary evidence for each case which demonstrate the steps that have been taken to recover the debt and, if appropriate, the steps that have been made to trace the debtor.
- Sorted into the debt type and reason for the write off, (e.g. insolvency, unenforceable etc.).
- Summarised on a front sheet detailing the number of cases and amount of debt.

E43 Reports will be submitted on a quarterly basis for consideration by the Assistant Director of Finance (S151 Officer).

### **Debts of over £5,000 (including aggregated debts for one debtor) (over £10,000 NDR)**

E44 For the write off of debts of over £5,000 (over £10,000 NDR), it will require a full report to be submitted to the Executive requesting its approval to write the debt off. In this instance, the debts will be accompanied by an individual write off application stating the reason for the request. A write off report will be submitted to the Executive on a quarterly basis.



**Appendix 7 - Capital Projects to be removed from the Programme**

<b><u>Service</u></b>	<b><u>Cost Centre Description</u></b>	<b><u>24/25 Budget £'000</u></b>	<b><u>Future Years Budget £'000</u></b>	<b><u>Portfolio Holder Finance &amp; Resources Recommendation</u></b>
HR & OD	40292 iTrent HR System Upgrades	30	60	Remove - not spent in several years.
Property	40162 Housing & IT Asset System	26	0	Remove - not spent in several years.
Property	40191 Bodicote House Fire Compliance Works	60	0	Remove; not capital
Property	40249 Retained Land	0	256	Remove; not capital
Property	40252 Expiring Energy Performance Certificates plus Associated works	96	0	Remove; not capital
Property	40253 Energy Performance Certificates Gov't Implementation of target B - Strategic Plan	60	0	Remove; not capital
Property	40015 Car Park Refurbishments	46	0	Remove; not capital
Property	40217 Car Parking Action Plan Delivery	18	0	Remove; not capital
		<b>336</b>	<b>316</b>	

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## Housing that meets your needs - KPI's 2024-2025

Measure	Portfolio Holder	Director/Lead Officer	Good is	Qtr Actual	Qtr Target	R.A.G	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YTD R.A.G
BP1.2.01 Number of Homeless Households living in Temporary Accommodation (TA)	Cllr N Cotter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Nicola Riley</li> </ul>	Smaller Is Better	77	45	▲	73	45	▲
<p><b>Commentary</b>                      There were 77 households living in temporary accommodation against the maximum target of 45. This is an average of 147 people, over half were under 18. The measure is reporting behind for year to date (average 73 against a maximum of 45). We continue to see a growing proportion of single people with complex needs and households that have been evicted from Home Office accommodation. The percentage of singles in temporary accommodation was 30% of the overall households, the percentage of resettlement related households was 16%. The total average number of people in temporary accommodation was 147, 79 (53%) children of them 63% were under the age of 10 and 37% were over 10. Reducing the need for temporary accommodation is dependent on many national factors. We continue to prevent around 60% of homeless presentations.</p>									
BP1.2.04 No of affordable homes delivered	Cllr N Cotter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Nicola Riley</li> </ul>	Bigger Is Better	83	50	★	154	100	★
<p><b>Commentary</b>                      83 affordable housing completions were reported by registered providers this quarter, comprising 33 shared ownership, 34 affordable rent and 16 social rent</p>									
BP1.2.05 % of Homelessness cases successfully prevented rather than relief/main duty being applied	Cllr N Cotter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Richard Smith</li> </ul>	Bigger Is Better	64.00%	60.00%	★	71.00%	60.00%	★
<p><b>Commentary</b>                      At the end of quarter 2 we had successfully prevented homelessness in 67 cases. An increase of approximately 57% on the previous quarter. 21 of these cases were made final offers to the private rented sector</p>									

Measure	Portfolio Holder	Director/Lead Officer	Good is	Qtr Actual	Qtr Target	R.A.G	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YTD R.A.G
BP1.2.06 Average time taken to process Housing Benefit New Claims and council tax reduction (Days)	Cllr L McLean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Michael Furness</li> <li>■ Stephen Hinds</li> </ul>	Smaller Is Better	9	18	★	12	18	★
<b>Commentary</b> We are continuing to monitor the work in this area									
BP1.2.07 Average time taken to process Housing Benefit Change Events & council tax reduction (Days)	Cllr L McLean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Michael Furness</li> <li>■ Stephen Hinds</li> </ul>	Smaller Is Better	3	8	★	3	8	★
<b>Commentary</b> We are continuing to monitor the work in this area									
BP1.2.08 % of Major Planning Applications determined to National Indicator	Cllr J Conway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ David Peckford</li> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> </ul>	Bigger Is Better	64.3%	60.0%	★	79.0%	60.0%	★
<b>Commentary</b> 64.3% of Major Planning Applications determined during Q2 2024/25, were determined within the National Indicator target or agreed timeframe.									
BP1.2.09 % of Non-Major Planning Applications determined to National Indicator	Cllr J Conway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ David Peckford</li> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> </ul>	Bigger Is Better	84.0%	70.0%	★	85.2%	70.0%	★
<b>Commentary</b> 84% of Non-Major Planning Applications determined during Q2 2024/25, were determined within National Indicator target or agreed timeframe									

Measure	Portfolio Holder	Director/Lead Officer	Good is	Qtr Actual	Qtr Target	R.A.G	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YTD R.A.G
BP1.2.10 % of Major Applications overturned at appeal	Cllr J Conway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ David Peckford</li> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> </ul>	Smaller Is Better	14.3%	10.0%	●	16.5%	10.0%	●
<p><b>Commentary</b>  2 Major Planning Application decision were overturned at Appeal by the Planning Inspectorate during Q2 2024/25. This amounts to 14.29% of the total of 14 Major applications determined by the Council during Q2 of 2024/25. These application were: 23/00853/OUT – Warwick Road, Banbury- Outline planning permission for up to 170 dwellings etc, and 22/02866/OUT – Ploughley Road, Ambroseden - Outline planning application for 120 dwellings etc. Officers are cognisant of the situation regarding appeals and major developments and are working to reduce the percentage of overturns at appeal by ensuring decision making is as robust as possible. Officers are liaising with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development Management on this matter.</p>									
BP1.2.11 % of Non-Major Applications overturned at appeal	Cllr J Conway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ David Peckford</li> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> </ul>	Smaller Is Better	1.1%	10.0%	★	1.0%	10.0%	★
<p><b>Commentary</b>  3 Non-Major Planning Application decision were overturned at Appeal by the Planning Inspectorate during Q2 2024/25</p>									
BP1.2.12 Average time taken for new applications to be responded to within 15 working days	Cllr N Cotter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Richard Smith</li> </ul>	Smaller Is Better	9	15	★	11	15	★
<p><b>Commentary</b>  Continual progress has been made during Q2 to keep this measure well within target.</p>									
BP1.2.13 Net Additional Housing Completions to meet Cherwell needs	Cllr J Conway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ David Peckford</li> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> </ul>	Bigger Is Better	307	571	▲	307	571	▲
<p><b>Commentary</b>  Provisional half year housing completions are 307. This suggests that the Local Plan housing requirement for Cherwell (1,142 per annum) will be difficult to meet this monitoring year; a new Local Plan is being prepared. There are permissions and appeal decisions that provide for new housing but there is dependency on developers to deliver. There is also a lag time involved i.e. further planning permissions now would not lead to additional delivery now / in the next 6 months. The overall cause of lower completions is the slow rate of delivery on strategic sites at Bicester, the delays in sites coming forward in the Kidlington/Begbroke/Yarnton area and national housing market circumstances. More broadly (and longer term), officers are presently working in the interest of supporting delivery at Bicester and in helping to coordinate delivery in the south of Cherwell.</p>									

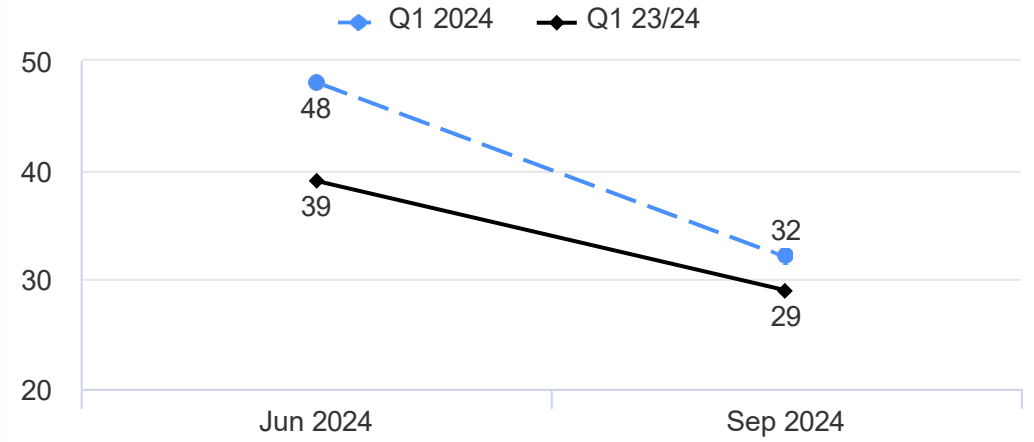
Measure	Portfolio Holder	Director/Lead Officer	Good is	Qtr Actual	Qtr Target	R.A.G	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YTD R.A.G
BP1.2.14 % of BC full plans assessed within 5 weeks (or longer with applicant's agreement)	Cllr J Conway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Tony Brummell</li> </ul>	Bigger Is Better	100.00%	95.00%	★	96.15%	95.00%	★
<p><b>Commentary</b>  We received 51 Full Plans applications of which all were determined within the 25 day statutory period or extensions of time agreed with the client.</p>									

Please note in all the charts below the blue line represents the current performance and the black line the previous financial year 2023-24

BP1.2.03 Homes improved through enforcement action

Commentary

32 properties improved following formal and substantive informal enforcement interventions by the Housing Standards Team in Quarter 2. A similar number of properties (29) were improved in the same period last year.



Supporting environmental sustainability - KPIs 2024-2025

Measure	Portfolio Holder	Director/Lead Officer	Good is	Qtr Actual	Qtr Target	R.A.G	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YTD R.A.G
BP2.2.01 % Waste Recycled & Composted	Cllr I Middleton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ed Potter</li> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> </ul>	Bigger Is Better	54.76%	54.00%	★	55.25%	54.00%	★
<p><b>Commentary</b> Recycling % is currently on track to be at the same level as the previous year.</p>									
BP2.2.03 % of Climate Action Plan delivering to target	Cllr D Hingley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Jo Miskin</li> </ul>	Bigger Is Better	61.48%	66.00%	★	61.48%	66.00%	★
<p><b>Commentary</b> In the Q1, out of total 122 Climate Actions, 87 actions were On-going, 20 actions were On-hold, 7 actions were got Completed, and 8 actions were Not applicable anymore. The actions were further marked as per their RAG ratings for Q1, and out of total 122 Climate Actions, 75 actions were in Green, 26 were in Amber and 21 actions were in Red. In this Quarter we've manage to complete the light touch revision of the Climate Action Plan (CAP) and will publish in the early next quarter which will have total 126 Actions compared to 122 in the previous CAP. The Climate Action Team is improving the rate of working and achieving Climate Targets further for the Council and Cherwell overall. In terms of Natural Capital, we are aligning with and progressively working on the Oxfordshire Climate Adaptation Route Map, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), and projects such as Enabling Nature-Based Carbon Sequestration in Oxfordshire. We continue to look for opportunities to build our team as well as strengthening relationships with internal and external stakeholders and networks, to accelerate climate action.</p>									

Page 214

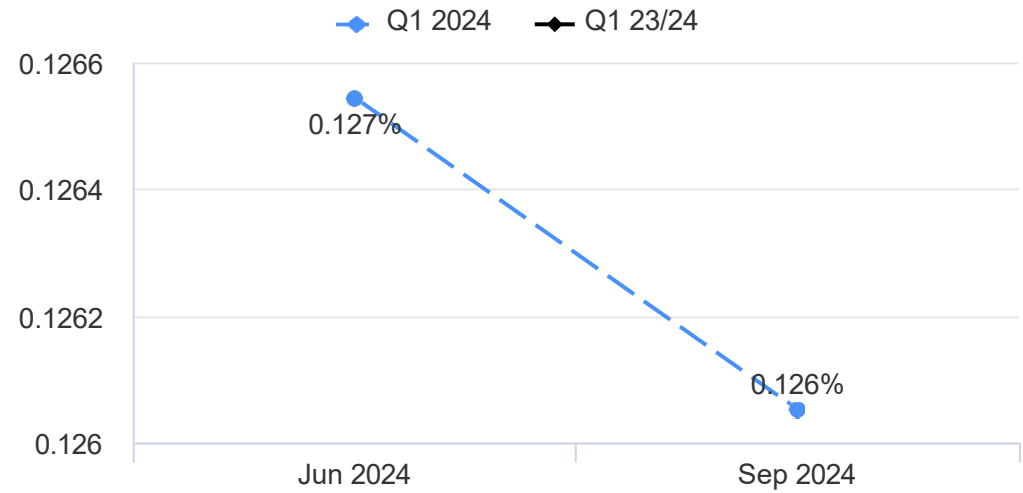


Please note in all the charts below the blue line represents the current performance and the black line the previous financial year 2023-24

BP2.2.04 % of missed waste containers

Commentary

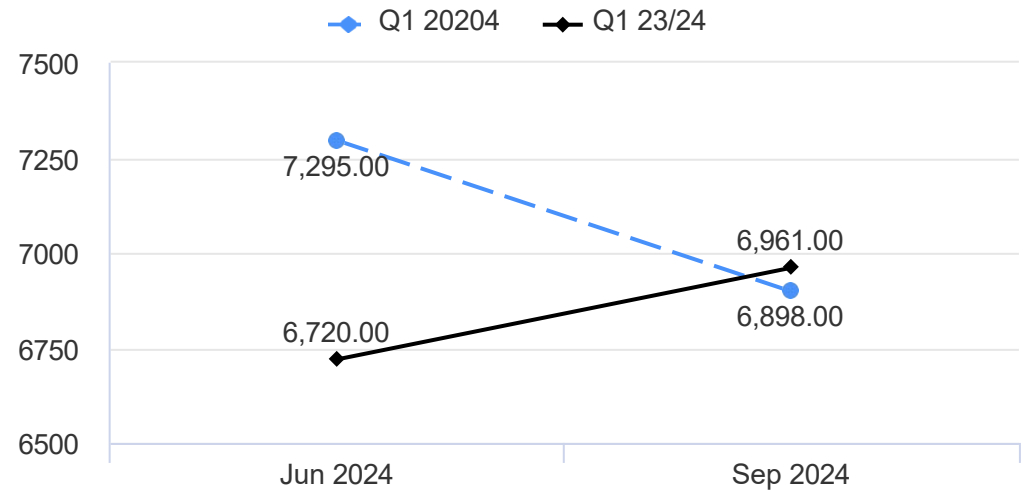
0.001% of missed bins has reduced in the second quarter compared to the first quarter.



BP2.2.01d Tonnes residual household waste collected

Commentary

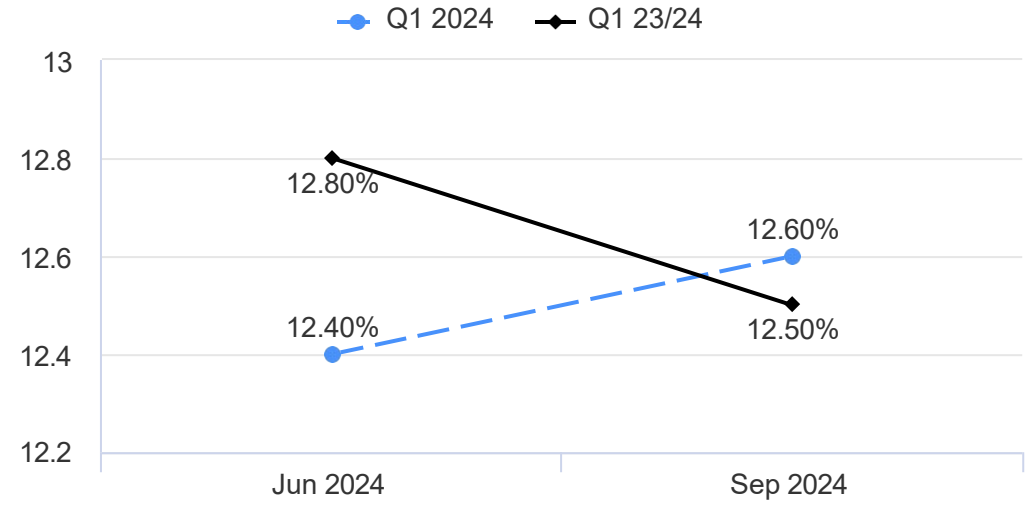
Residual waste is at the same level as last year.



BP2.2.07 % of Recycling Contamination rate

Contamination rate is at the same levels as the previous year.

Commentary



An enterprising economy with strong and vibrant local centres - KPIs 2024-2025

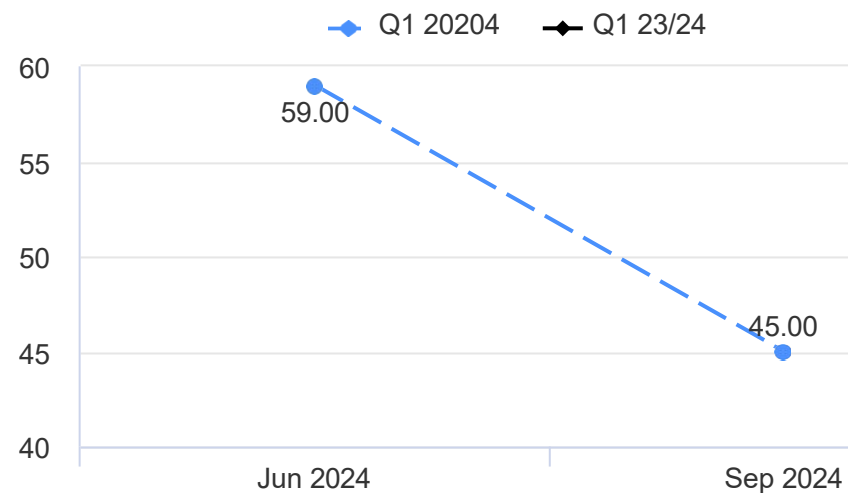
Measure	Portfolio Holder	Director/Lead Officer	Good is	Qtr Actual	Qtr Target	R.A.G
BP3.2.01 % of Council Tax collected, increase Council Tax Base	Cllr L McLean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Michael Furness</li> <li>■ Stephen Hinds</li> </ul>	Bigger Is Better	56.43%	56.30%	★
BP3.2.02 % of Business Rates collected, increasing NNDR Base	Cllr L McLean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Michael Furness</li> <li>■ Stephen Hinds</li> </ul>	Bigger Is Better	60.41%	58.50%	★

Please note in all the charts below the blue line represents the current performance and the black line the previous financial year 2023-24

BP3.2.04 No. of businesses engaged through UKSPF and REPF funded programmes

45 businesses were engaged, benefitting from \* Free Green Skills courses \*Support to the Cherwell Business Awards, to recognise and showcase the achievements of Cherwell businesses.

Commentary

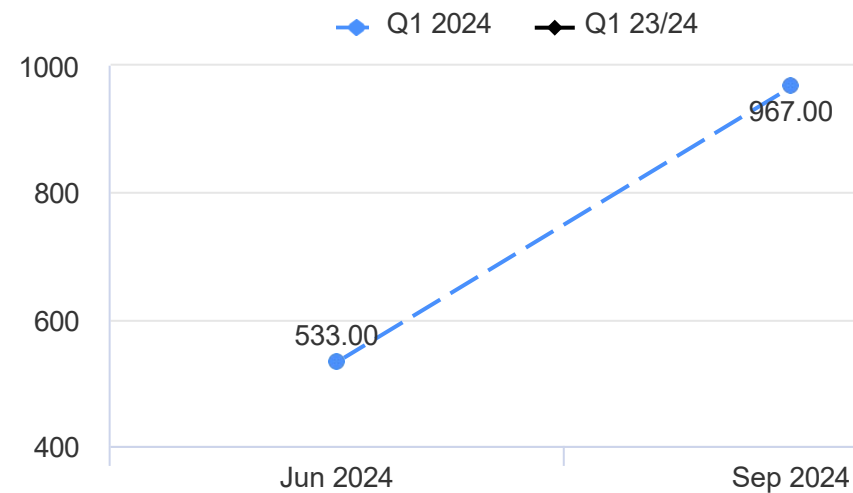


Page 218

BP3.2.05 No. of residents engaged through UKSPF and REPF funded programmes

967 residents were engaged, benefitting from \* Free Green Skills courses \* Employability support sessions \* A community music workshop programme \* Widened participation in cultural activities and attendance at performances at a theatre and arts centre \* Widened access to an existing community garden through new events to bring communities together.

Commentary



Healthy, resilient and engaged communities - KPIs 2024-2025

Measure	Portfolio Holder	Director/Lead Officer	Good is	Qtr Actual	Qtr Target	R.A.G	YTD Actual	YTD Target	YTD R.A.G
BP4.2.04 % of due food hygiene inspections of premises rated A-D completed	Cllr R Parkinson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Tim Hughes</li> </ul>	Bigger Is Better	97.14%	95.00%	★	97.89%	95.00%	★

**Commentary**

Statutory inspection plan still on target to meet the Council's food hygiene inspection obligations, as set out and reported to the Food Standards Agency.

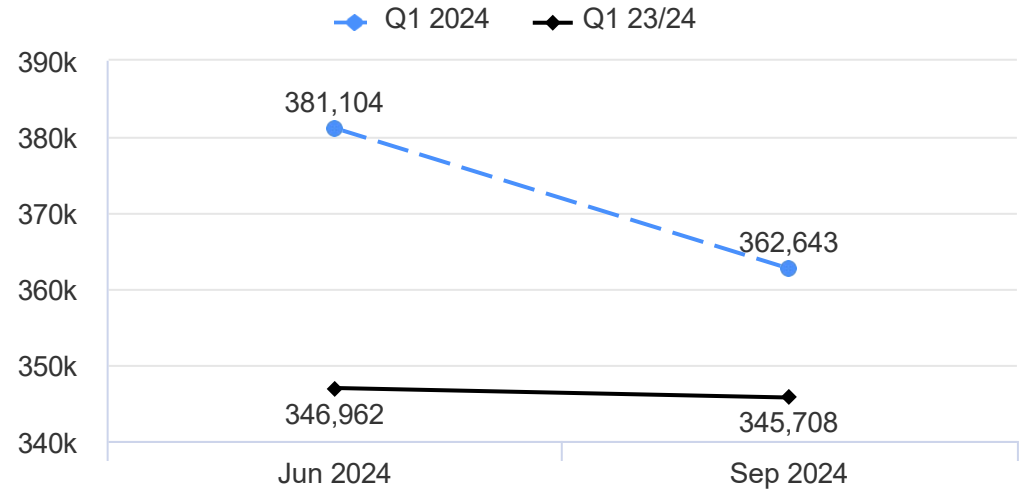
Please note in all the charts below the blue line represents the current performance and the black line the previous financial year 2023-24

BP4.2.01 Number of Visits/Usage of all Leisure Facilities within the District

Commentary

Usage figures for the leisure centres continue to increase against the same quarter from last year. Bicester Leisure Centre increased from 102,347 users to 111,465, Kidlington Leisure Centre increased from 63,244 to 67,789 and Spiceball Leisure Centre increased the most from 125,713 unique visits to 140,065. There was an overall decrease of circa 4,500 users at Woodgreen Leisure Centre, however this related to reduced swimming numbers for the Outdoor Pool in September 2024 against 2023 due to the wet weather in September 24

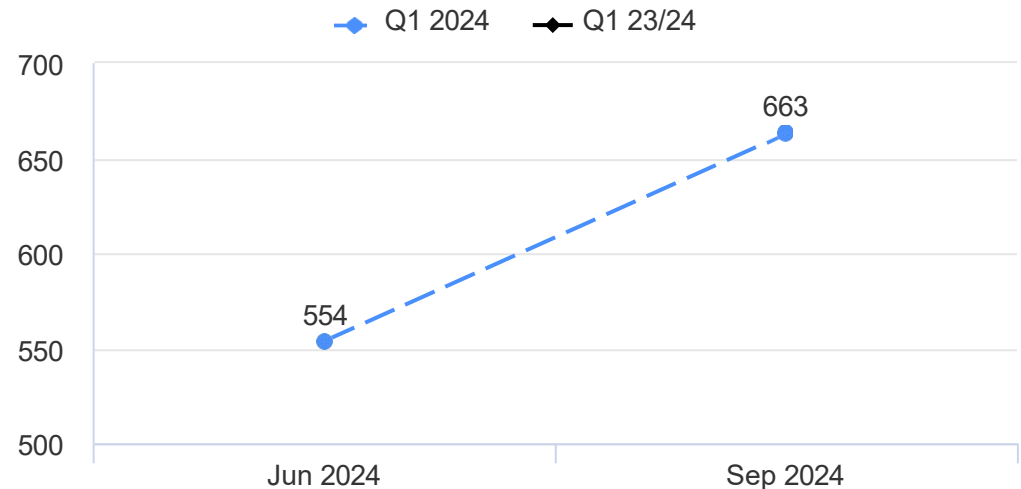
Page 220



BP4.2.02 Residents who have taken part in programmes contributing to improving health inequalities

Commentary

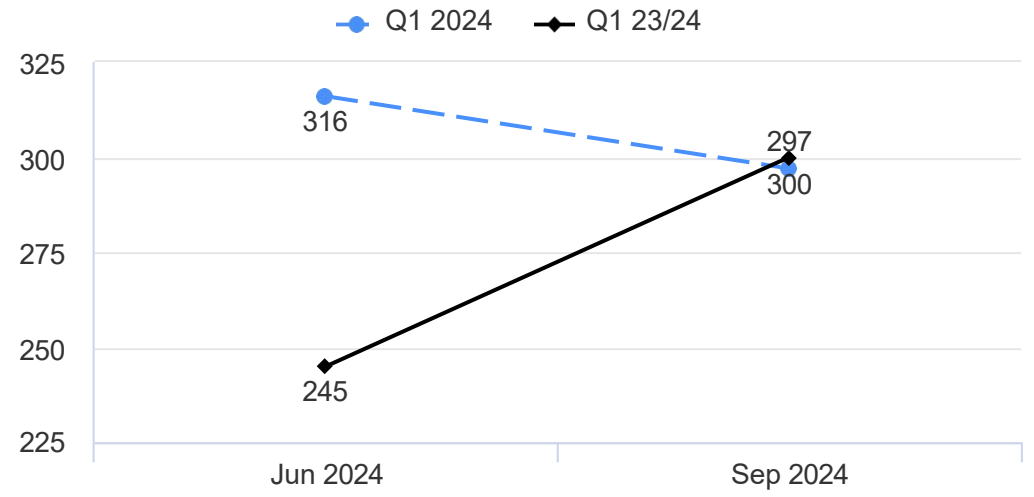
Highly successful quarter with a large number of participants joining Move Together and You Move health prevention programmes. You Move have had 394 participants register in the quarter with 1026 attendances at sessions. Move Together saw 269 adults sign up with 426 people with Long Term Conditions currently working with the team before their 3 month review with 2,972 having benefitted and been through the Move Together programme. During this quarter new funded elements (Public Health and ICB) to the programme started with Early Years and Maternity opportunities being signposted towards.



### BP4.2.05 Number of Illegal Fly Tips

This is a decrease of 3 on the same period in 2023. Of the 297 reports received 231 were investigated.

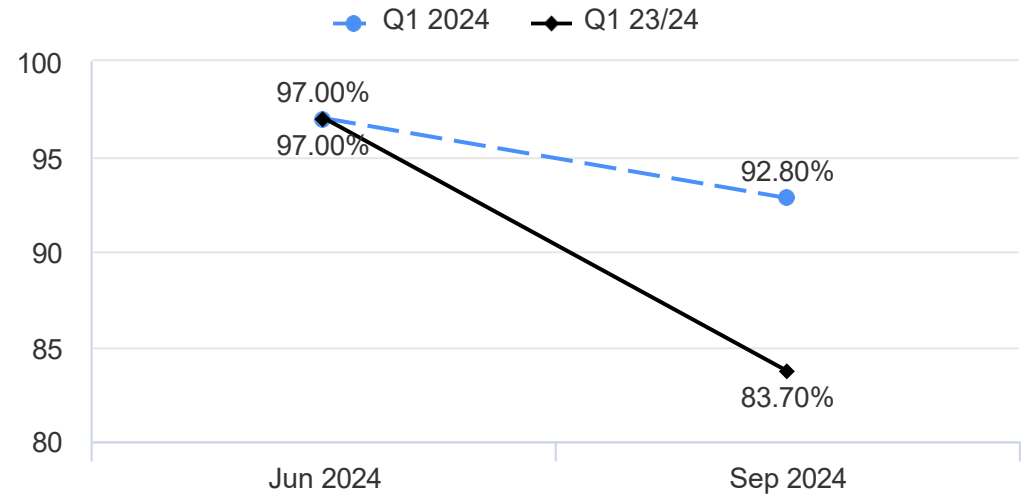
Commentary



Please note in all the charts below the blue line represents the current performance and the black line the previous financial year 2023-24

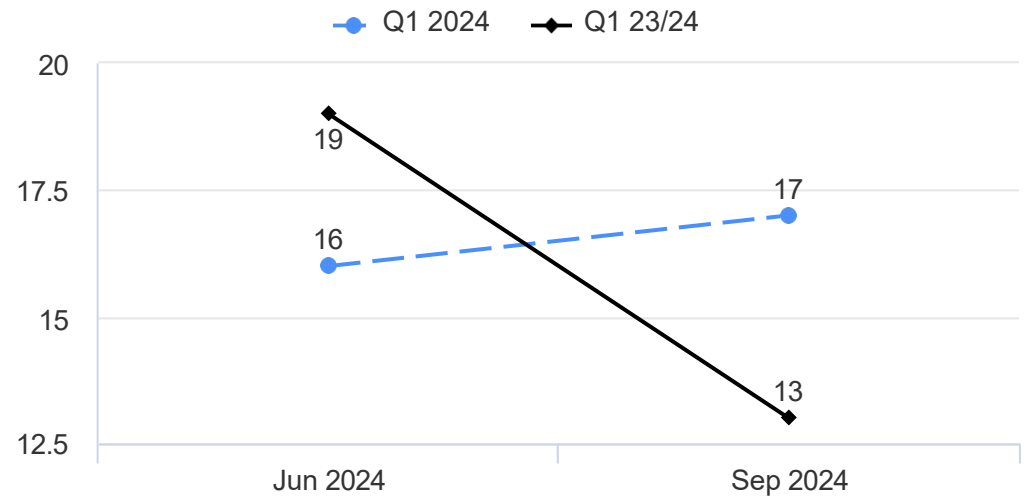
BP5.1.02 Non-ringfenced reserves as percentage of service spend

92.8% is a reduction of 4.2% compared to Q1, which is due to ~450k of reserves usage approved in Q2, and an increase of £1m in forecast Revenue Expenditure Funded by Capital Under Statute which is included in service spend. This relates primarily to £250k for the Thames Valley CCTV partnership and £560k of S106 funding towards temporary accommodation units with South Oxfordshire Housing Association. Note that this measure is defined by the Office for Local Government, and takes service spend from the quarterly revenue update (for Q1-3) and revenue outturn (for Q4) government returns. Due to the timing of this report this measure is provided before the government returns are finalised and so may be subject to change. If there is any change the measure for this quarter will be updated in the following quarter. The Q1 figure has been updated from 100.1% to 97.0% for this reason.



BP5.1.07 Number of upheld complaints

There were 17 upheld complaints, one more than last quarter.





Annual Delivery Plan - Housing that meets your needs

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
<p>✓ HMN1 Work with partners and landlords to settle refugees into suitable accommodation in Cherwell through a Migration Moving Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Nicola Riley</li> </ul>	Cllr N Cotter	01 Apr 2024	<b>31 Mar</b> 2025	Delivering to plan	This priority overall is delivering to schedule
<p>HMN1 Q1 - Q4 Deliver properties identified through LAHF 2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Nicola Riley</li> </ul>	Cllr N Cotter	01 Apr 2024	<b>31 Mar</b> 2025	Delivering to plan	3 further homes were delivered by Soha with LAHF Round 2 funding this Quarter. 7 of 20 homes have now been delivered which is in line with the delivery plan. We expect Sanctuary to deliver the first of their 11 homes which are being brought back into use with LAHF Round 2 funding in Quarter 3.
<p>Page 223 HMN1 Q2 Extend community liaison and settlement support provided for new residents to capture newly settled families from Afghanistan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Nicola Riley</li> </ul>	Cllr N Cotter	01 Jul 2024	<b>30 Sep</b> 2024	Delivering to plan	<p>Regular ESOL classes have been arranged. A recent job fair event was successful and attracted both local residents and local refugees seeking work. Work continues to help refugee families settle well.</p> <p>A community event was held at the beginning of September where various organisations and partners were invited from the community. Through this event networking was a priority and ideas that were brought forward are being explored. Further events will be planned early next year.</p>
<p>HMN1 Q3 Continue to identify hosts and work across Oxfordshire system to identify suitable properties and protocols for dealing with PRS Landlords.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Nicola Riley</li> </ul>	Cllr N Cotter	01 Oct 2024	<b>31 Dec</b> 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3.

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
HMN1 Q4 Re-let accommodation in Town Centre House following successful completion of restoration work funded through LAHF1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Nicola Riley</li> </ul>	Cllr N Cotter	01 Jan 2025	<b>31 Mar</b> 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4.

## Annual Delivery Plan - Housing that meets your needs

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ HMN2 To continue delivering on our Housing that meets our needs priority through the development of a new housing strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Richard Smith</li> </ul>	Cllr N Cotter	01 Apr 2024	<b>31 Mar</b> 2025	Delivering to plan	This priority overall is delivering to schedule
HMN2 Q1 Review existing strategy and develop evidence base for new strategy and its goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Richard Smith</li> </ul>	Cllr N Cotter	01 Apr 2024	<b>30 Jun</b> 2024	Completed	Activity in this milestone has completed.
HMN2 Q2 Identify key themes and objectives, feeding into Local Plan consultations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Richard Smith</li> </ul>	Cllr N Cotter	01 Jul 2024	<b>30 Sep</b> 2024	Delivering to plan	Key themes identified and draft strategy presented to Executive in September. Agreed by Executive to commence consultation on themes and draft strategy
HMN2 Q3 Deliver draft strategy for consultation with stakeholders and residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Richard Smith</li> </ul>	Cllr N Cotter	01 Oct 2024	<b>31 Dec</b> 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3.
HMN2 Q4 Launch new strategy and communicate with widest stakeholder group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Richard Smith</li> </ul>	Cllr N Cotter	01 Jan 2025	<b>31 Mar</b> 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4.

## Annual Delivery Plan - Housing that meets your needs

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ HMN3 Identify the Housing and Infrastructure our communities need in the future to create a healthy, thriving and sustainable Cherwell through developing our new Local Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ David Peckford</li> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> </ul>	Cllr J Conway	01 Apr 2024	<b>31 Mar</b> 2025	Delivering to plan	This priority overall is delivering to schedule
HMN3 Q1 Evidence gathering and preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ David Peckford</li> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> </ul>	Cllr J Conway	01 Apr 2024	<b>30 Jun</b> 2024	Completed	Activity in this milestone has completed.
Page 226 HMN3 Q2 Evidence gathering and preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ David Peckford</li> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> </ul>	Cllr J Conway	01 Jul 2024	<b>30 Sep</b> 2024	Delivering to plan	A regulation 19 proposed plan is in preparation supported by evidence. It is scheduled to be presented to the Council's Executive in December.
HMN3 Q3 Present the Proposed Plan (Reg. 19) to the Council's Executive for approval and then consult on the Proposed Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ David Peckford</li> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> </ul>	Cllr J Conway	01 Oct 2024	<b>31 Dec</b> 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3.
HMN3 Q4 Consider response to consultation and present Submission Plan to Council for approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ David Peckford</li> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> </ul>	Cllr J Conway	01 Jan 2025	<b>31 Mar</b> 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4.

## Annual Delivery Plan - Supporting environmental sustainability

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ SES1 As part of our climate action commitments, we will review and update our Air Quality Management Action plan to ensure its effectiveness and suitability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Tim Hughes</li> </ul>	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Apr 2024	<b>31 Mar</b> 2025	Delivering to plan	This priority overall is delivering to schedule.
SES1 Q1 to produce report for Exec to provide update on air quality monitoring for 2023. To approve the draft revised existing air quality action plan. To consider revocation of a number of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Tim Hughes</li> </ul>	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Apr 2024	<b>30 Jun</b> 2024	Completed	Activity in this milestone has completed.
SES1 Q2 Follow up actions from Executive decisions i.e. revoke the Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Tim Hughes</li> </ul>	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Jul 2024	<b>30 Sep</b> 2024	Delivering to plan	The updated Air Quality Action Plan has been submitted to Defra (Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs) for comment and approval.
SES1 Q3 Review and produce new Air Quality Management Action Plan and submit to DEFRA		Cllr R Parkinson	01 Oct 2024	<b>31 Dec</b> 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
SES1 Q4 Engage with partners on the revised actions arising as a result of the new plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Tim Hughes</li> </ul>	Cllr R Parkinson	02 Jan 2025	<b>31 Mar</b> 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4.

Annual Delivery Plan - Supporting environmental sustainability

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ SES2 To progress activity within Climate Action Plan to support communities to develop and implement plans to make all of the district a more sustainable place to live and work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Jo Miskin</li> </ul>	Cllr D Hingley	01 Apr 2024	<b>31 Mar 2025</b>	Delivering to plan	This priority overall is delivering to schedule.
SES2 Q1 Implement, review and report on progress of project in Q1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Jo Miskin</li> </ul>	Cllr D Hingley	01 Apr 2024	<b>30 Jun 2024</b>	Completed	Activity in this milestone has completed.
Page 229 SES2 Q2 Implement, review and report on progress of projects in Q2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Jo Miskin</li> </ul>	Cllr D Hingley	01 Jul 2024	<b>30 Sep 2024</b>	Delivering to plan	In the Q1, out of total 122 Climate Actions, 87 actions were On-going, 20 actions were On-hold, 7 actions were got Completed, and 8 actions were Not applicable anymore. The actions were further marked as per their RAG ratings for Q1, and out of total 122 Climate Actions, 75 actions were in Green, 26 were in Amber and 21 actions were in Red. In this quarter we have commissioned the Solar Strategy, Scope 3 Emission, and Fleet Decarbonizing study. We have supported and will continue to support on Pre-deployment work of Local Area Energy Planning (LAEP). We are in the process of commissioning two studies on Carbon Baseline for the District and decarbonizing Council's Estate.
SES2 Q3 Implement, review and report on progress of projects in Q3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Jo Miskin</li> </ul>	Cllr D Hingley	01 Oct 2024	<b>31 Dec 2024</b>	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3.

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
SES2 Q4 Implement, review and report on progress of projects in Q4 and report on conclusion of the three-year programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Jo Miskin</li> </ul>	Cllr D Hingley	01 Jan 2025	<b>31 Mar</b> 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4.



Annual Delivery Plan - Supporting environmental sustainability

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ SES3 Move to a smaller, greener HQ with better public transport, walking and cycling opportunities to reduce costs and reliance on cars.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Mona Walsh</li> <li>■ Stephen Hinds</li> </ul>	Cllr L McLean	01 Apr 2024	<b>31 Mar</b> 2025	Delivering to plan	This priority overall is delivering to schedule.
SES3 Q1 Appoint contractor to undertake Castle Quay fit-out refurbishment works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Mona Walsh</li> <li>■ Stephen Hinds</li> </ul>	Cllr L McLean	01 Apr 2024	<b>30 Jun</b> 2024	Completed	Activity in this milestone has completed.
Page 231 SES3 Q2 Carry out Castle Quay fit out refurbishment works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Mona Walsh</li> <li>■ Stephen Hinds</li> </ul>	Cllr L McLean	01 Jul 2024	<b>30 Sep</b> 2024	Delivering to plan	Works almost complete
SES3 Q3 Office preparation and relocation works to enable transfer of staff to new accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Mona Walsh</li> <li>■ Stephen Hinds</li> </ul>	Cllr L McLean	01 Oct 2024	<b>31 Dec</b> 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3.
SES3 Q4 Bodicote House cleared	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Mona Walsh</li> <li>■ Stephen Hinds</li> </ul>	Cllr L McLean	01 Jan 2025	<b>31 Mar</b> 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4.

Annual Delivery Plan - An enterprising economy with strong and vibrant local centres

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ EEV1 To deliver key projects within the third year of the UK Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Robert Jolley</li> </ul>	Cllr L McLean	01 Apr 2024	<b>31 Mar</b> 2025	Delivering to Plan	This priority overall is delivering to schedule
EEV1 Q1 Implement, review and report on progress of projects in Q1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Robert Jolley</li> </ul>	Cllr L McLean	01 Apr 2024	<b>30 Jun</b> 2024	Completed	Activity in this milestone is completed
EEV1 Q2 13 Projects from Q1 continue. Four projects start in Q2 • Support for Economically Inactive residents • Green Construction Skills courses • Business Support scheme • Rural Business grants scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Robert Jolley</li> </ul>	Cllr L McLean	01 Jul 2024	<b>30 Sep</b> 2024	Delivering to Plan	During Q2 thirteen projects delivering in Q1 continued, with one project completing (flood lighting at Whitelands sports ground) and four new projects were launched: (i) Support for Economically Inactive Residents (ii) Free Green Construction Skills courses (iii) Business Support programme for start-up and growing businesses (iv) Rural Business Grants scheme.
EEV1 Q3 Flood lighting at Whitelands sports ground, Bicester completed 16 Projects from Q1 and Q2 continue Three projects start in Q3 • Active Travel scheme in rural areas • Creation of village growing spaces • Decarbonisation support for businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Robert Jolley</li> </ul>	Cllr L McLean	01 Oct 2024	<b>31 Dec</b> 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
EEV1 Q4 All projects are scheduled to be complete in Q4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Robert Jolley</li> </ul>	Cllr L McLean	01 Jan 2025	<b>31 Mar</b> 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4

## Annual Delivery Plan - An enterprising economy with strong and vibrant local centres

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ EEV2 To continue the development of the Banbury Vision 2050, which will identify short and long terms measures to regenerate the town centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Robert Jolley</li> </ul>	Cllr L McLean	01 Apr 2024	<b>31 Mar 2025</b>	Slightly behind schedule	Work continues to develop Banbury Vision 2050 reflective of changes to the approach in line with administration priorities.
EEV2 Q1 Master planners appointed to prepare non-statutory Banbury 2050 masterplan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Robert Jolley</li> </ul>	Cllr L McLean	01 Apr 2024	<b>30 Jun 2024</b>	Completed	Activity in this milestone is completed
EEV2 Q2 Masterplan engagement complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Robert Jolley</li> </ul>	Cllr L McLean	01 Jul 2024	<b>30 Sep 2024</b>	Behind schedule	Town centre engagement has been ongoing with partners to develop an action plan for short term and long term town centre priorities; however, the development of a masterplan approach is being reviewed.
EEV2 Q3 Draft masterplan prepared and consultation completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Robert Jolley</li> </ul>	Cllr L McLean	01 Oct 2024	<b>31 Dec 2024</b>	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3
EEV2 Q4 Banbury 2050 masterplan approved and endorsed by partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Robert Jolley</li> </ul>	Cllr L McLean	01 Jan 2025	<b>31 Mar 2025</b>	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4

Annual Delivery Plan - An enterprising economy with strong and vibrant local centres

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ EEV3 To develop a plan for reimagining Bicester and ensure existing and new communities benefit from short and long-term measures of the Garden Town principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Robert Jolley</li> </ul>	Cllr L McLean	01 Apr 2024	<b>31 Mar 2025</b>	Delivering to Plan	This priority overall is delivering to schedule
EEV3 Q1 Procurement of design consultants to Market Square Project. Programme of stakeholder consultation events/surveys. Master planners appointed to prepare non-statutory Bicester masterplan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Robert Jolley</li> </ul>	Cllr L McLean	01 Apr 2024	<b>30 Jun 2024</b>	Completed	Activity in this milestone is completed
EEV3 Q2 Market square consultation continues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Robert Jolley</li> </ul>	Cllr L McLean	01 Jul 2024	<b>30 Sep 2024</b>	Delivering to Plan	An engagement event for the business sector was held in July and prompted clarification of the project's objectives. Further engagement events to gather input from both the business sector and local community groups are scheduled for October.
EEV3 Q3 Market Square final scheme design fix. Draft masterplan prepared	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Robert Jolley</li> </ul>	Cllr L McLean	01 Oct 2024	<b>31 Dec 2024</b>	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
EEV3 Q4 Market Square approval of plans and Planning App/construction phase. Bicester masterplan approved and endorsed by partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Robert Jolley</li> </ul>	Cllr L McLean	01 Jan 2025	<b>31 Mar</b> 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4

Annual Delivery Plan - An enterprising economy with strong and vibrant local centres

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ EEV4 Developing a Kidlington Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ian Boll</li> <li>Robert Jolley</li> </ul>	Cllr L McLean	01 Apr 2024	31 Mar 2025	Delivering to Plan	This priority overall is delivering to schedule
EEV4 Q1 Establish oversight board for Kidlington Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ian Boll</li> <li>Robert Jolley</li> </ul>	Cllr L McLean	01 Apr 2024	30 Jun 2024	Completed	Activity in this milestone is completed
EEV4 Q2 Commence engagement with communities and stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ian Boll</li> <li>Robert Jolley</li> </ul>	Cllr L McLean	01 Jul 2024	30 Sep 2024	Slightly behind schedule	A programme of stakeholder events has been scheduled to take place during Q3 and Q4.
EEV4 Q3 Develop draft Kidlington Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ian Boll</li> <li>Robert Jolley</li> </ul>	Cllr L McLean	01 Oct 2024	31 Dec 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3
EEV4 Q4 Consult on draft Kidlington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ian Boll</li> <li>Robert Jolley</li> </ul>	Cllr L McLean	01 Jan 2025	31 Mar 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4

Annual Delivery Plan - Healthy, Resilient and engaged communities

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ HRE1 To develop a framework that determines the effectiveness and positive impact of the wellbeing strategy on our communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Nicola Riley</li> </ul>	Cllr R Pattenden	01 Apr 2024	<b>31 Mar</b> 2025	Delivering to plan	This priority overall is delivering to schedule.
HRE1 Q1 Draft impact framework based on current data capture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Nicola Riley</li> </ul>	Cllr R Pattenden	01 Apr 2024	<b>30 Jun</b> 2024	Completed	Activity in this milestone has completed.
Page 238 HRE1 Q2 Consult stakeholders on their contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Nicola Riley</li> </ul>	Cllr R Pattenden	01 Jul 2024	<b>30 Sep</b> 2024	Delivering to plan	We collected information from partners, stakeholders and residents through Workshops as part of Strategy Workshop follow up. We also collected information from through surveys to ensure we were capturing stakeholders information and views. Six month impact report to be produced.
HRE1 Q3 Present for sign off and disseminate		Cllr R Pattenden	01 Oct 2024	<b>31 Dec</b> 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3.
HRE1 Q4 Capture impact of the actions delivered from the strategy action plan, including annual surveys and partner contributions. Report on it.		Cllr R Pattenden	01 Jan 2025	<b>31 Mar</b> 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4.





Annual Delivery Plan - Healthy, Resilient and engaged communities

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ HRE2 To respond to the Food Insecurity Emergency and improve outcomes for our residents through delivery of the Cherwell Food Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Nicola Riley</li> </ul>	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Apr 2024	<b>31 Mar 2025</b>	Delivering to Plan	This priority overall is delivering to schedule.
HRE2 Q1 Develop an annual delivery plan and report to Overview and Scrutiny	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Nicola Riley</li> </ul>	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Apr 2024	<b>30 Jun 2024</b>	Completed	Activity in this milestone has completed.
Page 240 HRE2 Q2 Hold stakeholder event to generate interest and encourage new delivery partners involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Nicola Riley</li> </ul>	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Jul 2024	<b>30 Sep 2024</b>	Delivering to Plan	We have engaged across CDC at existing events with food groups. These include the Cherwell Food Network, Brighter Futures, Schools meeting and other community meetings. We are working with partners to deliver the food action plan.
HRE2 Q3 Consider future budget and funding need beyond our own resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Nicola Riley</li> </ul>	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Oct 2024	<b>31 Dec 2024</b>	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3.
HRE2 Q4 Reset Year 2 targets and report on achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Nicola Riley</li> </ul>	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Jan 2025	<b>31 Mar 2025</b>	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4.

## Annual Delivery Plan - Healthy, Resilient and engaged communities

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ HRE3 To work with partners on delivering against agreed actions to protect women and girls from violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Tim Hughes</li> </ul>	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Apr 2024	<b>31 Mar</b> 2025	Delivering to Plan	This priority overall is delivering to plan.
HRE3 Q1 To Review and report on partner activity as agreed in the delivery plan for Q1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Tim Hughes</li> </ul>	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Apr 2024	<b>30 Jun</b> 2024	Completed	Activity in this milestone has completed.
HRE3 Q2 To review and report on partner activity as agreed in delivery plan for Q	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Tim Hughes</li> </ul>	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Jul 2024	<b>30 Sep</b> 2024	Delivering to Plan	A regulation 19 proposed plan is in preparation supported by evidence. It is scheduled to be presented to the Council's Executive in December.
HRE3 Q3 Review and report on Q3 milestones as set out in delivery plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Tim Hughes</li> </ul>	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Oct 2024	<b>31 Dec</b> 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3.
HRE3 Q4 Review success and outcomes and explore opportunities to sustainably continue the work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Tim Hughes</li> </ul>	Cllr R Parkinson	01 Jan 2025	<b>31 Mar</b> 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4.

## Annual Delivery Plan - Healthy, Resilient and engaged communities

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ HRE4 To consider and deliver actions that will improve the experience of residents in relation to the cost of living by enabling voluntary and community groups to deliver services through the redistribution of central government grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Nicola Riley</li> </ul>	Cllr R Pattenden	01 Apr 2024	<b>31 Mar</b> 2025	Delivering to Plan	This priority overall is delivering to plan.
HRE4 Q1 Refresh the Cost of Living action plan based on the delivery of the 23/24 plan. Search for and secure external funding for this area of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Nicola Riley</li> </ul>	Cllr R Pattenden	01 Apr 2024	<b>30 Jun</b> 2024	Completed	Activity in this milestone has completed.
HRE4 Q2 Undertake stakeholder engagement to help reflect on good practice and degrees of success and replicability in current programme. Search for and secure external funding for this area or work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Nicola Riley</li> </ul>	Cllr R Pattenden	01 Jul 2024	<b>30 Sep</b> 2024	Delivering to Plan	We have meet with networks and partners to discuss the projects to date and evaluate how they have gone. We plan to continue projects into the winter making changes where they were identified. We had multiple deprivation meetings at CDC to help shape the cost of living plan for 2024/25
HRE4 Q3 Develop a winter impact strategy and deliver. Search for and secure external funding for this area of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Nicola Riley</li> </ul>	Cllr R Pattenden	01 Oct 2024	<b>31 Dec</b> 2024	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3.

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
HRE4 Q4 Monitor and evaluation to coincide with the work of the FIWG. Search for and secure external funding for this area of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ian Boll</li> <li>■ Nicola Riley</li> </ul>	Cllr R Pattenden	01 Jan 2025	<b>31 Mar</b> 2025	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q4.

## Annual Delivery Plan - Organisational Health

Priorities & Milestones	Lead/Director	Portfolio Holder	Start Date	Due Date	R.A.G.	Milestones update
✓ COR1 Identifying future services delivery options, to ensure efficiency, best use of resources and continuous improvement through Transformation Programme and Balanced MTFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Shona Ware</li> <li>■ Stephen Hinds</li> </ul>	Cllr D Hingley	01 Apr 2024	<b>31 Mar 2025</b>	Delivering to Plan	This priority overall is delivering to plan.
COR1 Q1 Agree transformation and budget process/complete current transformation reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Shona Ware</li> <li>■ Stephen Hinds</li> </ul>	Cllr D Hingley	01 Apr 2024	<b>30 Jun 2024</b>	Completed	Activity in this milestone has completed.
COR1 Q2 Develop draft transformation and saving proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Shona Ware</li> <li>■ Stephen Hinds</li> </ul>	Cllr D Hingley	01 Jul 2024	<b>30 Sep 2024</b>	Delivering to Plan	The Transformation budget process is progressing to plan. Phase 2 is scheduled to conclude w/c 07/10/2024 and Phase 3 (final phase) is on track to conclude mid November. Outputs from these 2 phases will provide savings opportunities.
COR1 Q3 Consultation on savings and Transformation Proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Shona Ware</li> <li>■ Stephen Hinds</li> </ul>	Cllr D Hingley	01 Oct 2024	<b>31 Dec 2024</b>	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3.
COR1 Q4 Agree Budget and MTFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Shona Ware</li> <li>■ Stephen Hinds</li> </ul>	Cllr D Hingley	01 Jan 2025	<b>31 Mar 2025</b>	N/A	Activity not yet started – due to commence in Q3.

## Inclusive Communities

### ED11.01 Engage with, and support local community groups and organisations

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
ED11.01.01 Evaluate the quality of council's existing relationships with community groups and organisations which further the Council's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion	Jon Wild	Delivering to plan	Proactively working with all community groups to engage them with opportunities and support from CDC, promoting opportunities to all to join forums and networks the council deliver. Opportunities are also promoted on the website and through all our communication channels.
ED11.01.02 Establish new relationships with community groups focused on ethnicity or national identity with priority given to those with the largest number of members in need in the district	Jon Wild	Delivering to plan	Proactively working with all community groups and partners, using networks and partnerships to engage new groups and promote opportunities and support the council offers. Information held on the website on how new groups can get involved in forums and access support services and grants.
ED11.01.03 Establish a Language Bank where Cherwell staff proficient in community languages can opt-in to assist with outreach efforts to further the Council's EDI objectives	Claire Cox	Delivering to plan	We are continue to work on pulling together a plan to launch this request to staff. In addition to this, we have liaised with Communities who are looking to pull together information from trusted partners in the community and voluntary sector that could assist our staff if required.

### ED11.02 Promote inclusive behaviour with residents and service users

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
ED11.02.01 Promote externally the Council's work to promote inclusivity	Julian Cotton	Delivering to plan	This is ongoing. An example is our promotion of Black History Month with an opinion piece from the Council Chair and a display at Castle Quay
ED11.02.02 Add additional pro-forma text on accessibility to the committee meetings pages of the council's website and agenda reports pack	Natasha Clark	Delivering to plan	No change to previous quarter as completed in Q1

EDI1.03 Work directly with communities to identify inequality and tackle disadvantage

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
EDI1.03.01 Work with partners to promote an ethnically diverse representation at our voluntary sector forum	Nicola Riley	Slightly behind schedule	Forum was held on the 4th of September and despite increasing the circulation list and invitations, there was little take up from the expanded group. More work needs to be done to improve diversity of attendance at next years forum.

EDI1.04 Promote equality, diversity & inclusion through our supply chain and strategic partnerships

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
EDI1.4.01 Make sure EDI implications and clauses are included in all our procurement processes as stated in our contracts and evaluation process guidelines	Shiraz Sheikh	Delivering to plan	Procurement and Contract procedures take into account the Equality Act 2010

EDI1.05 Promote and encourage inclusive behaviour for future generations

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
EDI1.05.01 Collaborate with partner organisations to involve young people in volunteering activities and engage with them to undertake active participation in their local communities	Nicola Riley	Very behind schedule	Initial discussions with some partners has highlighted the costs and challenges associated with young people undertaking volunteer activity. The next step is to explore how this can be best supported with input from schools.
EDI1.05.02 Raise awareness of the role of a councillor from an EDI perspective within political leaders	Shiraz Sheikh	Delivering to plan	We delivered EDI training less than a year ago and also plan to deliver a refresher.
EDI1.05.03 Raise awareness of the role of councillors and routes to be becoming a councillor targeted at underrepresented group	Natasha Clark Nicola Riley	Delivering to plan	This is a work in progress, to be discussed by the EDI working group



ED11.06 Work with all partner organisations to understand diverse needs & create incl. communities

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
ED11.06.01 Implement the recommendations proposed by the strategic review of partnerships	Nicola Riley	Delivering to plan	The review recommended that EDI actions be incorporated into Terms of reference and service level agreements where CDC was the lead organisation has been achieved.

## Inclusive Services

### ED12.01 Ensure information, website and digital services are accessible to all incl. digitally excl

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
ED12.01.01 Agree, implement, and publicise the new translations and alternative formats policy	Celia Prado-Teeling	Delivering to plan	This will be picked up as part of the new policy which is currently under review
ED12.01.02 Complete an Equalities Impact Assessment on the website (including the terms and conditions)	Celia Prado-Teeling	Delivering to plan	As this was handed over to communications recently (during Q2 and the summer), we have a first draft that needs some additional input from other areas, such as IT and the performance team. We will continue to work on this assessment to complete it.

### ED12.02 Take action to make our buildings accessible to all residents

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
ED12.02.01 Conduct an access audit on Castle Quay and other major council buildings, unless up to date audits are already available	Mona Walsh	Delivering to plan	Work underway but not yet complete. Will be complete within overall timeline.
ED12.02.02 Consider and if appropriate, implement the recommendations of the access audit	Mona Walsh	Delivering to plan	Review in ED12.02.01 will determine recommendations and implementation needed.

### ED12.03 Better understand those using services & their needs by collecting information & feedback

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
ED12.03.01 Implement the recommendations of the review of data from customer contact	Celia Prado-Teeling	Delivering to plan	Recommendations are being gather and will be implemented during this and the next financial year.

ED12.04 Engage residents, those using services and community groups when planning services

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
ED12.04.01 When officer review is completed, bring the draft consultation and engagement framework to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion working group for consideration	Celia Prado-Teeling	Delivering to plan	The draft is under review and will be included in the EDI work forward plan, when calendar of meetings is established

ED12.05 Plan and deliver services that promote inclusion

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
ED12.05.01 Complete an Equalities Impact Assessments on all services and contracts	Celia Prado-Teeling	Delivering to plan	Work is progressing well, making sure all new policies, activities and proposals have the correspondent Equalities Impact Assessment.

## Inclusive Workplaces

### EDI3.01 Improve diversity of our organisation at all levels to be representative of our communities

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
EDI3.01.01 Introduce a yearly report to Personnel Committee, which splits the demographic information on the Council's workforce by grade and department	Claire Cox	Delivering to plan	Quarterly workforce statistics are provided to Personnel Committee on a quarterly basis, which includes annual comparisons at year end. The report provides EDI data on our workforce by grade. We do not break this down by department as some departments are small and we do not want to breach GDPR.

### EDI3.02 Celebrate and promote diversity in our workforce

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
EDI 3.02.01 Within the annual report referenced in EDI3.01, include a short update on networks & virtual social groups for employees interested in particular causes	Julian Cotton	Delivering to plan	This is on our radar for the 24/25 annual report, and we will liaise with the Performance and Insight team at the relevant point to help include an appropriate update.

### EDI3.03 Provide a supportive environment so all staff can reach their potential

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
EDI3.03.01 Deliver new communication plan which promotes development opportunities for the Council's workforce	Julian Cotton	Delivering to plan	This is ongoing as we highlight training, events and opportunities for staff development using our internal comms channels.
EDI 3.03.02 Conduct an access audit on Castle Quay and other major council buildings (internal)	Mona Walsh	Delivering to plan	Activity scheduled to start later in 24/25

EDI3.04 Identify and tackle discrimination in all its forms

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
EDI3.04.01 Complete the review and approval by Personnel Committee of the remaining HR policies	Claire Cox	Delivering to plan	We are continuing with our refresh of all HR Policies, and where required, devising new ones. Our policies are now all on a 3-year rolling refresh programme.

EDI3.05 Provide managers with the skills to support employees with different needs

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
EDI3.05.01 Integrate additional inclusion training for manager into the mandatory e-learning suite	Teresa Reed	Delivering to plan	All staff are required to complete EDI e-learning, we are exploring other options for managers on inclusion training, in a wider piece of work around management training requirements.

EDI3.06 Train our staff to identify and avoid unconscious bias and deliver inclusive services.

Action	Owner	Actual	Comments
EDI3.06.01 Provide an update on the roll out of unconscious bias training & to what extent the Council has been able to gauge its effectiveness	Teresa Reed	Delivering to plan	We have rolled out management recruitment training which includes a section on unconscious bias. We are running these session in a regular basis to ensure all managers are trained. All staff are required to complete EDI e-learning, we are exploring other options for managers on inclusion training.

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Appendix 11 – Leadership Risk Register as at 14/10/2024

Level of risk	How the risk should be managed
<b>High Risk</b> (16-25)	<b>Requires active management</b> to manage down and maintain the exposure at an acceptable level. Escalate upwards.
<b>Medium Risk</b> (10 -15)	<b>Contingency Plans</b> - a robust contingency plan may suffice together with early warning mechanisms to detect any deviation from the profile.
<b>Low Risk</b> (1 – 9)	<b>Good Housekeeping</b> - may require some risk mitigation to reduce the likelihood if this can be done cost effectively, but good housekeeping to ensure that the impact remains low should be adequate. Re-assess frequently to ensure conditions remain the same.

Risk Scorecard – Residual Risks						
		Probability				
		1 - Remote	2 - Unlikely	3 - Possible	4 - Probable	5 - Highly Probable
Page 23 of 31	5 - Catastrophic			L08		
	4 - Major		L09 - L06	L03-L07-L11-L14	L01	
	3 - Moderate		L04-L05-L10	L02-L12-L13		
	2 - Minor					
	1 - Insignificant					

Risk Definition	
<b>Leadership</b>	Strategic risks that are significant in size and duration, and will impact on the reputation and performance of the Council as a whole, and in particular, on its ability to deliver on its corporate priorities
<b>Operational</b>	Risks to systems or processes that underpin the organisation’s governance, operation and ability to deliver services

Name and Description of risk	Potential impact	Inherent (gross) risk level (before Controls)		Controls	Control assessment	Lead Member	Risk owner	Risk manager	Residual risk level (after existing controls)			Direction of travel	Mitigating actions (to address control issues)	Comments	Last updated	
		Probability	Impact						Rating	Probability	Impact					Rating
<b>L01 - Financial resilience</b> – Failure to plan for and/or react to external financial impacts, new policy and increased service demand. Poor investment and asset management decisions.	Reduced medium and long term financial viability	4	4	16	Medium Term Revenue Plan updated and reported regularly to members.	Fully effective	Councillor L.McLean	Michael Furness	Joanne Kaye	4	4	16	↔	This continuous process will include reviewing budget monitoring, active budget management, and reflection of economic and Local Government sector trends in the MTFS. Wherever possible, policy decisions impacting on the MTFS will be taken as soon as possible, rather than waiting until the February Council meeting which sets the annual budget. This will allow officers to be ready to implement, or have implemented, policy decisions which will maximise positive impacts on the budget.	Full risk review carried out, controls and mitigating actions updated	Risk reviewed on 07/10/2024
	Reduction in services to customers				Planning for balanced medium term and dynamic ability to prioritise resources.	Fully								The budget for 2024/25 was agreed with savings proposals identified to contribute to addressing forecast reductions in funding. Close monitoring of the delivery of the savings programme will take place throughout 2024/25 with mitigations required if slippage is identified. The budget and transformation process for 2024/25 was begun in May 2024 and will involve a robust review of current budgets, how those link to activity supporting the corporate priorities, and services level options to allow for prioritisation of resources.		
	Increased volatility and inability to manage and respond to changes in funding levels				Finance team made up of highly professional, competent, qualified staff.	Partially								Integration and continued development of Performance, Finance and Risk reporting.		
	Reduced financial returns (or losses) on investments/assets such as in subsidiaries.				Good networks established locally, regionally and nationally to ensure officer are aware of developments across the sector which could impact on the council.	Fully								Internal Audits being undertaken for core financial activity and capital as well as service activity.		
	Inability to deliver financial efficiencies.				Strong shareholder function and relationships with subsidiaries to manage investment risk.	Fully								Introduction and implementation of an Asset Management Strategy.		
	Exposure to commercial pressures in relation to regeneration projects.				To be prudent, financial returns from the subsidiaries are not included in the MTFS until they are reasonably assured to materialise.	Partially								Capital & Investment Strategy agreed annually.		
	Poor customer service and satisfaction.				National guidance interpreting legislation available and used regularly.	Fully								Posts are filled by appropriately qualified individuals.		
	Increased complexity in governance arrangements.				Progress regeneration plans in a coordinated manner. Participate in Oxfordshire Treasurers' Association's work streams.	Fully								Regular involvement and engagement with colleagues across the county.		
	Lack of officer capacity to meet service demand.				Review of best practice guidance from bodies such as CIPFA, LGA, Ofog and NAO.	Fully								Regular member training and support.		
	Lack of financial awareness and understanding throughout the council.				Treasury management and capital & Investment strategies in place and updated at least annually. Regular financial and performance monitoring in place.	Fully								Regular utilisation of advisors as appropriate.		
	Increased inflation in the costs of capital schemes.				Independent third party advisers in place. Regular bulletins and advice received from advisers. Property portfolio income monitored through financial management arrangements on a regular basis.	Fully								Summarise and distribute announcements to CLT and members.		
	Increased inflation in revenue costs.				Asset Management Strategy in place and embedded.	Fully								Timely and good quality budget management reports, particularly property income and capital.		
<b>L02 - Statutory functions</b> – Failure to meet statutory obligations and policy and legislative changes are anticipated for.	Legal challenge	3	4	12	Embedded system of legislation and policy tracking in place, with clear accountabilities, reviewed regularly by Directors.	Partially	Councillor Brant	Stephen Hinds	Shiraz Sheikh	3	3	9	↔	Ensure Committee forward plans are reviewed regularly by senior officers.	Full risk reviewed carried out, no changes necessary for Q2	Risk reviewed on 09/10/2024
	Loss of opportunity to influence national policy / legislation				Clear accountability for responding to consultations with defined process to ensure Member engagement	Fully								Ensure Internal Audit plan focusses on key leadership risks.		
	Financial penalties				National guidance interpreting legislation available and used regularly	Fully								Senior Officers are aware of key policy/legislative changes taking into consideration all of the Council's functions and duties arising as a result.		
	Reduced service to customers				Risks and issues associated with Statutory functions incorporated into Directorate Risk Registers and regularly reviewed.	Fully								External support secured for key corporate projects including Growth Deal and IT Transformation Programme.		
	Inability to deliver council's plans				Clear accountability for horizon scanning, risk identification / categorisation / escalation and policy interpretation in place	Partially								Learning and development opportunities identified and promoted by the Chief Executive and Directors. Staff briefings on rules and procedures by MO		
	Exposure to commercial pressures				Robust Committee forward plans to allow member oversight of policy issues and risk management, including Scrutiny and Audit	Fully								Review Directorate/Service risk registers.		
	Reduced resilience and business continuity				Internal Audit Plan risk based to provide necessary assurances	Fully								Ensure Committee forward plans are reviewed regularly by senior officers.		
	Reduced staff morale, increased workload and uncertainty may lead to loss of good people				Strong networks established locally, regionally and nationally to ensure influence on policy issues. In addition two Directors hold leading national roles	Fully								Ensure Internal Audit plan focusses on key leadership risks.		
					Senior Members aware and briefed regularly in 1:1s by Directors	Fully								Establish corporate repository and accountability for policy/legislative changes taking into consideration all of the Council's functions.		
					Arrangements in place to source appropriate interim resource if needed	Partially								Project Management Methodology to be established with appropriate oversight. Programme Office with the appropriate capabilities to monitor deliver projects.		
					Ongoing programme of internal communication	Fully								Review Directorate/Service risk registers.		
					Programme Boards in place to oversee key corporate projects and ensure resources are allocated as required.	Partially										
				Extended Leadership Team (ELT) Meetings established to oversee and provide assurance on key organisational matters including resourcing.	Fully											



Name and Description of risk	Potential impact	Inherent (gross) risk level (before Controls)		Controls	Control assessment	Lead Member	Risk owner	Risk manager	Residual risk level (after existing controls)			Direction of travel	Mitigating actions (to address control issues)	Comments	Last updated	
		Probability	Impact						Rating	Probability	Impact					Rating
<b>L03 - CDC Local Plan</b> - Failure to have an up to date Local Plan could result in poor planning decisions such as development in inappropriate locations. It could also make it more difficult to demonstrate an adequate supply of land for housing which could lead to more planning by appeal and decisions that are contrary to the Council's wishes. The Plan requires approval by Council to be submitted for Examination.	Poor planning decisions leading to inappropriate growth in inappropriate place.	4	4	16	The statutory Local Development Scheme (LDS) is actively managed and reviewed, built into Service Plan, and integral to staff appraisals of all those significantly involved in Plan preparation and review	Partially effective	Councillor J. Conway	Ian Bol	David Peckford	3	4	12	↔	Annual (Authority) Monitoring Reports presented to the Executive on plan making and policy effectiveness.	Work is continuing to prepare a proposed Local Plan (Reg.19). The plan is scheduled to be presented to the Council's Executive in December 2024.	Risk reviewed on 02/10/24
	Failure to have up to date policies that meet the District's requirements.				Team capacity and capability kept under continual review with gaps and pressures identified and managed at the earliest opportunity.	Partially effective							An updated LDS presented to the Executive when there is a significant change in the circumstances for the Local Plan timetable.			
	Negative impact on the council's ability to deliver its strategic objectives, including for minimising carbon emissions.				On-going review of planning appeal decisions to assess robustness and relevance of Local Plan policies	Partially effective							Programme built into Directorate level objectives (e.g. via Service Plans) and staff appraisals, on-going preparation of the Local Plan is a service priority.			
	A higher number of planning appeals with associated increased costs				Regular Councillor briefings to ensure all timescale requirements are understood. Ensuring that staff and consultancy resourcing is maintained	Partially effective							Project management of the Local Plan process continues.			
	Reputational damage with our local communities through not having up to date policies to meet needs and protect the environment				Political consensus - building	Partially effective							Regular Corporate Director, Portfolio Holder and Members Advisory Group briefings			
	Reputational damage with investor community of Cherwell as a good place to do business created by uncertainty/lack of policy clarity.												Continuance of internal Members' Advisory Group meetings.			
Failure to submit Plan for Examination by June 2025 would mean that the Council would need to prepare a Local Plan under a new plan-making system on which further Gov't guidance is awaited. This would significantly delay having a new, up-to-date Plan.													Political consensus building through Chief Executive briefings and the Local Plan's Members Advisory Group.			
<b>L04 - Business Continuity</b> - Failure to ensure that critical services can be maintained in the event of a short or long term incident impacting on the delivery of the Council's operations	Inability to deliver critical services to customers/residents	4	4	16	Business continuity strategy, statement of intent and framework in place and all arrangements overseen by a Business Continuity Steering Group	Fully effective	Councillor R. Parkinson	Ian Bol	Tim Hughes	2	3	6	↔	BC actions post-audit in 2023 implemented.	Full risk review carried out. Mitigating actions updated.	Risk reviewed on 30/09/2024
	Financial loss/ increased costs				Services prioritised and ICT recovery plans reflect those priorities and the requirements of critical services	Fully effective							BCSG meeting routinely and corporate refresh across all areas completed. BC programme is in place and timescales for review/update/test are being followed.			
	Loss of important data				ICT disaster recovery arrangements in place with data centre and cloud services reducing likelihood of ICT loss and data loss	Fully effective							BC Impact Assessments and BCPs being updated and reviewed by Emergency Planning Team with supporting document management system being implemented.			
	Inability to recover sufficiently to restore non-critical services before they become critical				Incident management team identified in Business Continuity Framework	Fully effective							Business Continuity Statement of Intent and Framework reviewed and updated to align with new incident management framework			
	Loss of reputation				All services undertake annual business impact assessments and updates of business continuity plans	Partially effective							Cross-council BC Steering Group meets regularly to identify BC improvements needed. BC Steering Group engagement is being achieved across all service areas.			
	Reduced service delivery capacity in medium term due to recovery activity				Cross-council Business Continuity Steering Group meets regularly to identify Business Continuity improvements needed	Partially effective							Plans tested and annual cycle clearly sets out the test/review/improve process and expectations			
<b>L05 - Emergency Planning (EP)</b> - Failure to ensure that the local authority has plans in place to respond appropriately to a civil emergency fulfilling its duty as a category one responder	Inability of council to respond effectively to an emergency	4	4	16	Incident Management Framework in place and key contact lists updated monthly.	Fully effective	Councillor R. Parkinson	Ian Bol	Tim Hughes	2	3	6	↔	IMF reviewed and updated. Training schedule in place and being delivered including training for new ADs/CEs and refresh for existing duty directors. Emergency plan contacts list updated monthly and reissued to all duty directors periodically. Available on ELT Teams channel.	Debrief/lessons learnt exercise to be carried out following Sept. flooding event. Duty Directors, customer services, Gold and OCC EP Officer to be included.	Risk reviewed on 30/9/2024
	Unnecessary hardship to residents and/or communities				Emergency Planning Lead Officer defined with responsibility to review, test and exercise plan and to establish, monitor and ensure all elements are covered	Fully effective							Supporting officers for incident response reviewed and identified across some areas, to ensure they are reviewed and updated across all service areas.			
	Risk to human welfare and the environment				Expert advice and support provided by Oxfordshire County Council's Emergency Planning Team under partnership arrangements.	Fully effective										
	Legal challenge				Council Duty Directors attend training relating to role prior to joining duty director rota and have refresh training annually	Fully effective										
	Potential financial loss through compensation claims				CEs and Corporate Directors have received Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG) Training.	Partially effective										
	Ineffective Cat 1 partnership relationships				Multi agency emergency exercises conducted to ensure readiness	Fully effective										
	Reputational damage				Active participation in Local Resilience Forum (LRF) activities											
				On-call rota being maintained and updated to reflect recent staffing changes	Fully effective											

Name and Description of risk	Potential impact	Inherent (gross) risk level (before Controls)		Controls	Control assessment	Lead Member	Risk owner	Risk manager	Residual risk level (after existing controls)		Direction of travel	Mitigating actions (to address control issues)	Comments	Last updated		
		Probability	Impact						Probability	Impact						
<b>L06 - Safeguarding the Vulnerable – Operational and partnership actions-</b> Failure to work effectively with partners to identify and protect vulnerable people in the district and disrupt exploitation leaving vulnerable people at risk or subject to exploitation.	Increased harm and distress caused to vulnerable individuals and their families.	4	16	Continue in linking in with Oxfordshire partnerships protocol review to ensure outcomes relevant to CDC are understood and implemented as necessary	Partially effective	Councillor R. Parkinson	Ian Bol	Tim Hughes	2	4	8	↔	Continue in linking in with Safer Oxfordshire partnership and contributing towards partnership activity to ensure safeguarding responsibilities are met.	Full risk review carried out. Risk controls updated	Risk reviewed on 30/09/2024	
	Council subject to external reviews			Exploitation concerns and actions discussed routinely at Joint Agency Tasking and Co-ordination meetings on a monthly basis	Fully effective								Exploitation concerns and actions discussed routinely at Joint Agency Tasking and Co-ordination meetings on a monthly basis			
	Criminal investigations potentially compromised															
	Potential financial liability if council deemed to be negligent. Reputational damage to the council.															
<b>L07 - Health and safety</b> Failure to ensure effective arrangements are in place for Health and Safety.	Unsafe services leading to fatality, serious injury & ill health to employees, service users or members of the public	5	20	Corporate H&S governance arrangements and policies are regularly reviewed and updated by the Corporate H&S Team and monitored by the H&S Assurance Board.	Fully effective	Councillor C. Brant	Claire Cox	Ruth Woodridge	3	4	12	↔	Corporate H&S Auditing and inspection programme on track. Reports issued to managers and actions tracked for completion. Work ongoing with 2 audits per calendar month.	Full risk reviewd carried out. Risk reviewed and mitigation actions updated.  These are ongoing risks which cannot be removed only reduce the likelihood of these happening.	Risk reviewed on 30/09/2024	
	Criminal prosecution for failings Breach of legislation and potential for enforcement action.			Directors and service leads are responsible for ensuring H&S arrangements are in place within their areas or responsibility. Managers are responsible for ensuring operational health and safety risks are assessed and effective control measures implemented.	Fully effective								Work still in progress with service areas around the corporate H&S register, which will be managed and monitored with a focus on the depots as our highest risk areas.			
	Financial impact (compensation or improvement actions)			Consultation with employee representatives via employer and union consultative committees (Unison)	Fully effective								Relevant and required policies and procedures are regularly reviewed.			
	Reputational Impact			Corporate H&S Training provided via corporate learning and development programme. Training for operational risks may be organised by services.	Fully effective								Working with service areas to ensure that suitable risk assessments are in place.			
				H&S performance monitored by accident and incident reports and corporate H&S auditing and inspection programme.	Fully effective								Working with service areas and providing training to staff where necessary.			
				H&S information is disseminated via internal communications and updates to ELT and other relevant meetings.	Fully effective											
<b>L08 - Cyber Security</b> -If there is insufficient security with regards to the data held and IT systems used by the councils and insufficient protection against malicious attacks on council's systems then there is a risk of: a data breach, or a loss of service.	Financial loss / fine	4	20	Intrusion prevention and detection monitoring and regular actions are implemented from the resulting reports	Fully effective	Councillor C.Brant	Stephen Hinds	David Spilsbury	3	5	15	↔	All staff reminded to be vigilant to unexpected emails due to the heightened risk of cyber-attack due to escalating worldwide tensions and at critical periods such as the run up to Elections.	Full risk review carried out. Impacts, controls and mitigating actions updated	Risk reviewed on 08/10/2024	
	Prosecution – penalties imposed			Additional 3rd party monitoring in place using a SIEM tool and 24/7 monitoring via a SOC	Fully effective											
	Individuals could be placed at risk of harm			A zero trust VPN model.	Fully effective								Cyber Security advice and guidance regularly highlighted to all staff.			
	Reduced capability to deliver services			Schedule of regular security patching	Fully effective											
	Unlawful disclosure of sensitive information			Vulnerability scanning	Fully effective								Cyber Security is mandatory e-learning for all staff to be completed annually and is part of new starters induction training. Additionally regular Mimecast videos sent to all users for bitesize regular training			
	Inability to share services or work with partners			Malware protection and detection	Fully effective											
	Loss of reputation			File and data encryption on computer devices	Fully effective								External Health Check undertaken each year and Cabinet Office PSN compliance reviewed and certified each year to ensure the infrastructure is secure to connect to the PSN.			
				Managing access permissions and privileged users controls.	Fully effective											
				Effective information management and security training and awareness programme for staff	Fully effective								Internal Audits complete regular cyber audits.			
				Password and Multi Factor Authentication security controls in place	Fully effective								Cyber Security lead has specific responsibility for Cyber Security, and we have engaged a specialist partner to advise on industry best practices and standards.			
				Robust information and data related incident management procedures in place	Fully effective											
				Appropriate robust contractual arrangements in place with all third parties that supply systems or data processing services	Fully effective											
				Appropriate plans in place to ensure ongoing PSN compliance	Fully effective											
				Preventative measures in place to mitigate insider threat, including physical and system security	Fully effective											
			Advice received from NCSC on specific activity alerts, the increased threat of globalised ransomware and malware attacks	Fully effective												
			Mimecast awareness training and comprehensive defence system deployed to improve email security	Fully effective												

Name and Description of risk	Potential impact	Inherent (gross) risk level (before Controls)		Controls	Control assessment	Lead Member	Risk owner	Risk manager	Residual risk level (after existing controls)		Direction of travel	Mitigating actions (to address control issues)	Comments	Last updated		
		Probability	Impact						Probability	Impact						
<b>L09 - Safeguarding the vulnerable - Internal procedures</b>  Failure to work effectively with partners to identify and protect vulnerable people in the district and disrupt exploitation leaving vulnerable people at risk or subject to exploitation.	Increased harm and distress caused to vulnerable individuals and their families	4	4	16	Safeguarding lead in place and clear lines of responsibility established	Fully	Councillor R. Pattenden	Ian Boll	Nicola Riley	2	4	8	↔	Action plan acted upon and shared with Overview and scrutiny committee once a year	No changes required in Q2	Risk reviewed on 10/10/2024
	Council subject to external reviews				Safeguarding Policy and procedures in place	Fully							↔	Annual refresher and new training programmes including training for new members		
	Criminal investigations potentially compromised				Information on the intranet on how to escalate a concern	Fully							↔	Continue to attend safeguarding board sub groups as necessary to maintain high levels of awareness within the system and compliance with latest practice		
	Potential financial liability if council deemed to be negligent				Mandatory training and awareness raising sessions are now in place for all staff.	Fully							↔	Corporate monitoring of all referrals		
	Reputational damage to the council				Safer recruitment practices and DBS checks for staff with direct contact	Fully							↔	Ensure web pages remain up to date		
					Data sharing agreement with other partners	Fully							↔	Monitoring of implementation of corporate policies and procedures to ensure fully embedded		
					Attendance at Safeguarding Boards	Fully							↔	Regular internal cross departmental meetings to discuss safeguarding practice		
					Annual Section 11 return compiled and submitted as required by legislation.	Fully							↔	SAR's and Lessons Learned reports circulated to improve practice and knowledge.		
<b>L10 - Sustainability of Council owned companies and delivery of planned financial and other objectives</b> - Failure of council owned companies to achieve their intended outcomes or fail to meet financial objectives	Unclear governance leading to lack of clarity and oversight in terms of financial and business outcomes	3	5	15	Annual business planning in place for all companies to include understanding of the link between the Council's strategic objectives being delivered and financial impact for the council. A regular Shareholder Representative meeting takes place, a Shareholder Liaison Meeting including the S.151 Officer and Monitoring Officer takes place on a quarterly basis and a Shareholder Committee meeting on a quarterly basis. A governance review is being undertaken and initial recommendations have been approved by the Shareholder Committee.	Fully	Councillor D. Hingley	Gordon Stewart	Stephen Hinds	2	3	6	↔	A Shareholder Representative was appointed and regular governance arrangements are in place.	No changes	Risk reviewed on 09/10/24
	Failure of council owned companies to achieve their intended outcomes or fail to meet financial objectives				Regular meetings are in place between the Council's S.151 Officer and the relevant company Finance Directors. Financial planning for the companies undertaken that will then be included within our own Medium Term Financial Strategy. Financial risks are routinely reported by the Shareholder Representative to the Shareholder Committee.	Fully						↔	Resilience and support being developed across business to support and enhance knowledge around council companies.			
	Lack of understanding at officer and member level about the different roles of responsibilities required when managing council owned companies				Clear governance arrangements are in place.	Partially							↔	Skills and experience being enhanced to deliver and support development, challenge and oversight.		
					Sound monitoring in place of both business and financial aspects of the companies and the impact on overall council performance through the Shareholder Representative meetings and through the reporting to the Corporate Leadership Team monthly.	Fully							↔	Work with one company to ensure long term support arrangements are put in place.		
					Training in place for those undertaking Director roles relating to the companies.	Partially							↔			

Name and Description of risk	Potential impact	Inherent (gross) risk level (before Controls)		Controls	Control assessment	Lead Member	Risk owner	Risk manager	Residual risk level (after existing controls)		Direction of travel	Mitigating actions (to address control issues)	Comments	Last updated
		Probability	Impact						Probability	Impact				
		3	4		Fully effective Partially effective Not effective				3	4				
L11 - Financial sustainability of third-party suppliers and contractors	The financial failure of a third party supplier and contractors results in the inability or reduced ability to deliver a service to customers or provide goods needed. A reduced supply market could also result in increased costs due to the council's loss of competitive advantage.	3	4	Ensure contract management in place review and anticipate problems within key service suppliers and partners	Partially	Councillor C Brant	Shiraz Sheikh	TBC	3	4	↔	Creditsafe UK tool purchased to allow Procurement to carry out supplier credit checks when required.	No changes	Risk reviewed on 09/10/24
				Business continuity planning arrangements in place in regards to key suppliers	Partially							Service areas to ensure supplier suitability checks have been carried out prior to award of contract and hold meetings as required with suppliers to review higher risk areas and ensure risks are being managed. Reminders to be sent to all who have Procurement/Contract Management responsibility to regularly meet with key suppliers and partners to gain early understanding of any issues arising.		
				Ensuring that proactive review and monitoring is in place for key suppliers to ensure we are able to anticipate any potential service failures	Partially							Services areas to keep the key suppliers under regular check including running financial checks.		
				Intelligence unit set up procurement Hub to monitor supplier and contractor market	Fully									
Increased complaints and/or customer dissatisfaction														
	Reduced resilience and business continuity			Analysis of third party spend undertaken to identify and risk assess key suppliers/contractors	Fully									
	Increased costs and/or financial exposure to the Council due to having to cover costs or provide service due to failure of third party supplier of contractor													

Name and Description of risk	Potential impact	Inherent (gross) risk level (before Controls)		Controls	Control assessment	Lead Member	Risk owner	Risk manager	Residual risk level (after existing controls)		Direction of travel	Mitigating actions (to address control issues)	Comments	Last updated		
		Probability	Impact						Probability	Impact						
<b>L12 - Corporate Governance</b> - Failure of corporate governance leads to negative impact on service delivery or the implementation of major projects providing value to customers.	Threat to service delivery and performance if good management practices and controls are not adhered to.	4	4	16	Clear and robust control framework including: constitution, scheme of delegation, ethical walls policy etc.	Fully effective	Councillor C. Brant	Stephen Hinds	Shiraz Sheikh	3	4	12	↔	External Audit - external audit issue an opinion on the accounts and the Council's arrangements for securing Value for Money. The Council's Annual Governance Statement and Code of Corporate Governance. At least annually, a review of effectiveness of governance framework including the system of internal control and AGS is published. The work is informed by the Corporate Governance and Oversight Group. CLT & ELT has responsibility of maintenance of the governance environment.	Full risk review carried out - potential impacts updated	Risk reviewed on 9/10/2024
				Member Scrutiny - OSC function, Council Executive, AARC and Standards Committees	Fully											
	Risk of ultra vires activity or lack of legal compliance				Clear accountability and resource for corporate governance (including the shareholder role).	Fully										
	Risk of fraud or corruption				Integrated budget, performance and risk reporting framework.	Fully										
	Risk to financial sustainability if lack of governance results in poor investment decisions or budgetary control.				Corporate programme office and project management framework. Includes project and programme governance.	Partially										
	Failure of corporate governance in terms of major projects, budgets or council owned companies impacts upon financial sustainability of the council.				Internal audit programme aligned to leadership risk register.	Fully										
	Inability to support Council's democratic functions / obligations (e.g. return to physical public meetings and public access to meetings).				Training and development resource targeted to address priority issues; examples include GDPR, safeguarding etc.	Partially										
					HR policy framework.	Partially										
<b>L13 - Monitoring and management of Major Infrastructure Projects and Programmes</b> - Failure to properly manage and monitor the various residual Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal infrastructure projects.	Failure to actively manage the various Infrastructure Projects and Programmes, particularly in relation to those being delivered by Oxfordshire County Council, could lead to delays or failure to deliver timely obligations, which could lead to HM Government holding back some or all of its funding, or requiring repayment.	4	5	20	Need to establish appropriate officer and stakeholder governance structures to support effective programme delivery.	Partially	Councillor L. McLean	Ian Boll	Robert Jolley	3	3	9	↓	Monthly infrastructure project meetings are held between officers at Oxfordshire County and Cherwell District Councils in order to monitor progress. Institute regular and effective dialogue with developers	Additional capital funding approved for the Banbury Tramway; and Banbury Road Junction, Bicester projects at Oxfordshire County Council Cabinet meeting 17/09/2024.	Risk reviewed, score changed and comments updated 01/10/2024.
	Delivery of infrastructure projects fail to accelerate housing delivery as commercial pressures impact house builders				Need to institute regular and effective dialogue with developers.	Partially										
<b>L14 - Workforce Strategy</b> The lack of effective workforce strategies could impact on our ability to deliver Council priorities and services.	Limit our ability to recruit, retain and develop staff	3	4	12	Analysis of workforce data and on-going monitoring of issues.	Partially	Councillor C. Brant	Stephen Hinds	Claire Cox	3	4	12	↔	There are indications that specific service areas continue to experience recruitment difficulties for professional roles. HR is working with the relevant directors to consider alternative resourcing methods. Development of a people strategy to include succession planning, and to underpin the organisation strategy. Development of relevant workforce plans. Development of specific recruitment and retention strategies. It is planned for CDC to develop a framework that suits the needs of all services ensuring that the Council has access to a much wider pool of staffing agencies at competitive rates. The new IT system has been implemented to improve our workforce data and continues to be develop to improve our ability to interrogate and access key data (ongoing) in order to inform workforce strategies.	Full risk review carried out. Mitigating actions updated. Strategy is in development.	Risk reviewed and updated 10/10/2024
	Impact on our ability to deliver high quality services				Key staff in post to address risks (e.g. strategic HR business partners)	Fully										
	Overreliance on temporary staff				Weekly Vacancy Management process in place	Fully										
	Additional training and development costs				Ongoing service redesign will set out long term service requirements	Partially										

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Appendix 12 - Proposed Increase to Building Control Fees & Charges

<b>Building control</b>						
<b>Fees and Charges</b>	<b>Fee 24-25 Approved by Council in February 2024 (Excl. VAT)</b>	<b>Proposed In Year Lift Fees 24-25 (Excl. VAT)</b>	<b>Proposed In Year Lift Fees 24-25 (Inc VAT)</b>	<b>Actual Increase Col D-C</b>	<b>% Increase</b>	<b>Statutory/ Discretionary ?</b>
<b>New Dwellings</b>						
1 Dwelling	£925.00	£925.00	£1,110.00	£0.00	0.00%	Discretionary
2 Dwellings	£1,225.00	£1,225.00	£1,470.00	£0.00	0.00%	Discretionary
3 Dwellings	£1,550.00	£1,550.00	£1,860.00	£0.00	0.00%	Discretionary
4 Dwellings	£1,725.00	£1,725.00	£2,070.00	£0.00	0.00%	Discretionary
5 Dwellings	£1,950.00	£1,950.00	£2,340.00	£0.00	0.00%	Discretionary
6 Dwellings or more	£0.00	<b>Quotation</b>				Discretionary
<b>Other New Builds</b>						
New Garage <40m2	£375.00	£375.00	£450.00	£0.00	0.00%	Discretionary
New Garage 40m2 - 60m2	£475.00	£475.00	£570.00	£0.00	0.00%	Discretionary

New Garage >60m2	£0.00	<b>Quotation</b>				Discretionary
<b>Extensions</b>						
Extn<10m2	£375.00	£450.00	£540.00	£75.00	20.00%	Discretionary
Extn 10m2-40m2	£643.50	£675.00	£810.00	£31.50	4.90%	Discretionary
Extn 40m2-80m2	£764.50	£800.00	£960.00	£35.50	4.64%	Discretionary
Extn >80m2	£0.00	<b>Quotation</b>				Discretionary
<b>Conversions</b>						
Garage Conversion	£375.00	£375.00	£450.00	£0.00	0.00%	Discretionary



Loft conversion <80m2	£625.00	£625.00	£750.00	£0.00	0.00%	Discretionary
Loft Conversion 80m2-100m2	£675.00	£675.00	£810.00	£0.00	0.00%	Discretionary
Loft Conversion >100m2	£0.00	<b>Quotation</b>				Discretionary
<b>Miscellaneous Works</b>						
Underpinning	£425.00	£425.00	£510.00	£0.00	0.00%	Discretionary
Up to 6 doors/windows	£160.00	£160.00	£192.00	£0.00	0.00%	Discretionary
Each additional door/window	£30.00	£25.00	£30.00	-£5.00	-16.67%	Discretionary
Heating Appliance	£625.00	<b>Quotation</b>				Discretionary
Electrical Appliance	£625.00	<b>Quotation</b>				Discretionary
Thermal upgrade	£250.00	£250.00	£300.00	£0.00	0.00%	Discretionary
Up tp 6 Solar Panels	£625.00	£625.00	£750.00	£0.00	0.00%	Discretionary
<b>Based on Construction Value</b>						
0 -£5K	£0.00	<b>Quotation</b>				Discretionary
0-£10K (change to 5k-10k)	£375.00	£375.00	£450.00	£0.00	0.00%	Discretionary
£10K-£40K	£600.00	£600.00	£720.00	£0.00	0.00%	Discretionary
£40K-£100K	£900.00	£900.00	£1,080.00	£0.00	0.00%	Discretionary
Over £100k	£0.00	<b>Quotation</b>				Discretionary
Building notice supplement	10%	-	-	-	-	Discretionary
<b>Supplementary Fees</b>						
Additional Visits per hour	£75.00	£75.00	£90.00	£0.00	0.00%	Discretionary
Copies of Certificates	£45.00	£45.00	£54.00	£0.00	0.00%	Discretionary
Reopening applications after less than 3 years	£60.00	£60.00	£72.00	£0.00	0.00%	Discretionary
Reopening applications after more than 3 years	£120.00	£120.00	£144.00	£0.00	0.00%	Discretionary

**NOTE:** Items highlighted in yellow are the proposed changes.

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