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## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

You are summoned to a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee which will be held in Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1NB on **Wednesday, 3 September 2025 at 5.30 pm.**



Giles Hughes  
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillors: Andrew Beaney (Chair), Genny Early (Vice-Chair), Adam Clements, Steve Cosier, Natalie King, Liz Leffman, Nick Leverton, Dan Levy, Paul Marsh, Stuart McCarroll, Michele Mead, Ruth Smith, Mark Walker, Alex Wilson and Alistair Wray

Recording of Proceedings – The law allows the public proceedings of Council, Executive, and Committee Meetings to be recorded, which includes filming as well as audio-recording. Photography is also permitted. By participating in this meeting, you are consenting to be filmed.

As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record any part of the proceedings please let the Democratic Services officers know prior to the start of the meeting.

# AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments**  
To receive any apologies for absence and temporary appointments. The quorum for the Committee is four members.
2. **Declarations of Interest**  
To receive any declarations from Members of the Committee on any items to be considered at the meeting.
3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting (Pages 5 - 14)**  
To approve the minutes of the Committee meeting held 2 July 2025.
4. **Chair's announcements**  
To receive any announcements from the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
5. **Participation of the Public**  
To receive any submissions from members of the public, in accordance with the Council's [Public Participation Rules](#).  
  
The deadline for submissions is 2.00pm, two clear working days before the meeting.
6. **Report back on recommendations (Pages 15 - 18)**  
For the Committee to note the Executive's response to any recommendations arising from the previous Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.
7. **2025/26 Quarterly Finance Review Q1 (Pages 19 - 26)**  
Purpose  
Pre-decision scrutiny of an Executive report detailing the financial performance of the Council in the first quarter of 2025/26.  
  
Recommendation  
That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves to:
  - I. Note the report and agree any recommendations it wishes to submit to the Executive.
8. **2025/26 Quarterly Service Review Q1 (Pages 27 - 84)**  
Purpose  
Pre-decision scrutiny of an Executive report detailing the service performance of the Council in the first quarter of 2025/26.  
  
Recommendation  
That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves to:
  - I. Note the report and agree any recommendations it wishes to submit to the Executive.

9. **Responding to the Youth Needs Assessment (Pages 85 - 96)**

Purpose

The purpose of the report is to share with the Committee the progress made by the Youth Development Officer to date and set out the priorities for the role moving forwards.

Recommendation

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves to:

- I. Note the report

10. **Oxfordshire Local Area Energy Planning – report to follow**

Purpose

Pre-decision scrutiny of an Executive report detailing the Oxfordshire Local Area Energy plan.

Recommendation

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves to:

- I. Note the report and agree any recommendations it wishes to submit to the Executive.

11. **Updates from Task and Finish Groups**

For the Chairs of Task and Finish Groups to provide any verbal or written progress updates.

12. **Committee Work Programme (Pages 97 - 104)**

Purpose:

For the Committee to review and note its work programme.

Recommendation:

That the Committee notes and comments on the work programme.

13. **Executive Work Programme (Pages 105 - 114)**

Purpose:

To give the Committee the opportunity to comment on the Executive Work Programme.

Recommendation:

That the Committee agrees which items on the Executive Work Programme should be subject to pre-decision scrutiny and the priority order of those items.

(END)

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## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### Minutes of the meeting of the **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Held in the Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28  
1NB at 5.30 pm on **Wednesday, 2 July 2025**

#### PRESENT

Councillors: Andrew Beaney (Chair), Genny Early (Vice-Chair), Steve Cosier, Nick Leverton, Paul Marsh, Stuart McCarroll, Michele Mead, Ruth Smith, Alex Wilson, Alistair Wray, Elizabeth Poskitt and Julian Cooper

Officers: Madhu Richards (Director of Finance), Andrew Brown (Head of Democratic and Electoral Services), Georgina Dyer (Head of Finance), Ana Prelci (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Louise Croot (Climate Change Officer), Susan Hughes (Business Manager for Support and Advice), Hannah Kenyon (Climate Change Manager), Claire Locke (Interim Executive Director), Maria Wheatley (Shared Parking Manager) and Katie Fenton (Climate Change Officer)

Other Councillors in attendance: Lidia Arciszewska, Andrew Prosser, Alaric Smith and Tim Sumner

#### **20 Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments**

Apologies were received by Councillors Liz Lefman, Dan Levy, Natalie King and Adam Clements.

Councillor Liz Leffman was substituted by Councillor Elizabeth Poskitt and Councillor Dan Levy was substituted by Councillor Julian Cooper.

#### **21 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **22 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Councillor Alex Wilson proposed accepting the minutes, and Councillor Paul Marsh seconded this.

The minutes were voted on and unanimously agreed.

#### **23 Chair's announcements**

The Chair stated that there would be two upcoming training dates for the Committee on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> July and encouraged all members of the Committee to attend.

**24 Report back on recommendations**

The Head of Democratic and Electoral Services stated that the Committee's suggestions in relation to the Local Plan had been responded to by the Executive, as set out in an annex to the minutes of the previous meeting.

**25 Participation of the Public**

There was no participation of the public.

**26 Car Parking Strategy**

Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for the Environment, introduced the item and was supported by the Business Manager for Support and Advice and the Publica Interim Executive Director. The Executive Member highlighted the following points;

- That a comprehensive review of the parking strategy had been carried out.
- The report was reflective of local parking demand, and it was clear that free parking was valued by businesses and residents.
- In terms of demand, there was a surplus of parking in areas of Witney but an unmet demand for parking in Woodstock and Charlbury.
- The strategy's aim was to provide a framework for challenges and options for increasing capacity.
- The Executive Member thanked Councillor Tim Sumner, Executive Member for Leisure and Carterton Area Strategy, who had previously held the parking portfolio, for their prior work on the area.

The Committee made a number of recommendations to the Executive, which are included as an annex to these minutes.

The Executive Member and the Officers thanked the Committee for their questions and suggestions.

Resolved: That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the report and recommend that the Executive accept the suggestions in the annex to these minutes.

**27 Climate Change Strategy**

Councillor Andrew Prosser, Executive Member for Climate Action and Nature Recovery, introduced the item and the Climate Change Team and made the following points;

- The strategy outlined actions over five years to achieve district-wide net zero by 2050.
- The new strategy built on the previous strategy (2021–2025), aligned with the Council Plan 2023–2027, and supported the Nature Recovery Plan to 2030.

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- The strategy was guided by national and Oxfordshire-level frameworks, including the Path to Zero Carbon and the Adaptation Route Map.
- West Oxfordshire had declared a climate emergency in 2019 and had committed to carbon neutrality by 2030.
- Definitions of carbon neutral, embodied carbon, and net zero were clarified.
- Achievements included: ranking as the top rural district for climate action, the launch of the Cap Zero retrofit project, the emissions reductions, EV infrastructure rollout, food strategy development, and planning tools.
- Challenges remained such as behaviour change, funding constraints, and the need for collaboration.
- Priority actions included local energy planning, expanding Cap Zero, retrofitting buildings, green skills training, enforcing energy standards for landlords, implementing the food action plan, improving waste services, enhancing active travel and EV infrastructure (including freight and taxis), progressing Salt Cross and the Local Plan and developing a carbon market, climate adaptation planning, and air quality management.
- The strategy was guided by principles of community empowerment, partnership working, support for vulnerable groups, and maximising co-benefits.

The Committee made a number of recommendations to the Executive, which are included as an annex to these minutes. In response to Members' request, the Climate Change Manger also stated that they would organise a Q&A with members.

Councillor Cooper left the room at 18:49 and came back shortly after at 18:50.

The Executive Member and the Officers thanked the Committee for their questions and suggestions.

Resolved: That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the report, and recommend that the Executive accept the suggestions in the annex to these minutes.

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#### **2024/25 Quarterly Finance Review Q4**

Councillor Alaric Smith, Executive Member for Finance, introduced the item. Councillor Smith highlighted the following key points;

- The original budget forecasted a contribution of £5,107 to the general fund.
- An overspend of £247,000 occurred, primarily due to:
  - Increased costs of temporary emergency accommodation.
  - Loss of housing benefit subsidy (approx. £490,000).

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- Treasury management investment income was higher than budgeted, due to sustained higher interest rates.
- Despite pressures, the Council ended the year with a £6,345 contribution to the general fund.
- The Council was actively acquiring property to reduce reliance on temporary accommodation, supported by a £50 million capital programme.
- Overspends also resulted from delays in refurbishing and re-letting Council-owned properties (Elmfield and Marriotts).
- Marriotts still delivered a net contribution to the Council of £465,000.
- Elmfield was expected to yield a return on investment exceeding 20%.
- A £200,000 leisure contract contingency was not required due to recovery in memberships and attendance.
- Proposed transfers to the budget deficit reserve:
  - £426,000 from a refund.
  - £852,000 from Section 31 grant, in anticipation of future business rates changes.
- Capital projects delayed due to tendering and scheduling:
  - Waste Vehicle Fleet Replacement Programme to be incorporated into a county-wide transformation.
  - Investment property repairs and Witney Leisure Centre decarbonisation scheme deferred.
- A total of £4.9 million was proposed to be carried forward to the capital programme budget for 2025–26.

In discussion, members raised the following points;

- The rising costs and demand for temporary accommodation, with 82 households currently supported. The Executive Member stated that the Council was actively acquiring properties, including family-suitable housing, to reduce reliance on temporary solutions.
- The importance of supporting families, not just individuals, through housing provision.
- The £35,000 cost for dog warden services. Officers clarified that this was an outsourced statutory service, with costs mainly for kennelling and transport.
- The transfer of funds to the budget deficit reserve. Officers confirmed £426,000 from a refund and £852,000 from the Section 31 grant were allocated to address a projected funding gap of £6–6.5 million.
- Raised concerns about the opportunity cost of internal borrowing for the Marriotts acquisition. Officers acknowledged the loss of interest income but noted the regeneration benefits and rental income outweighed the foregone interest.
- Welcomed the inclusion of CCTV within budget and confirmed it was progressing.



Resolved: That the Committee note the report.

**29 Committee Work Programme**

Councillors Michelle Mead and Nick Leverton left the meeting at this point.

The Chair invited Councillor Stuart McCarroll to introduce the Terms of Reference for the Leisure Task and Finish Group, which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Councillor McCarroll stated that the Committee may wish to receive an update on the output of the leisure work on 3 September 2025.

The Senior Democratic Services Officer explained that a number of items the Committee had requested when setting its work plan had now been scheduled.

Resolved: That the Committee accept the work plan.

**30 Executive Work Programme**

The Committee noted that the Executive Member for the Car Parking Strategy item should now be Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment, rather than Councillor Sumner, Executive Member for Leisure and Carterton Area Strategy.

The Chair thanked attendees and closed the meeting.

The Meeting closed at 8.05 pm

CHAIR

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Executive response to recommendations on from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 2 July 2025

Recommendation	Responsible Executive Member	Lead Officer
1. Reference improving public transport within the sustainable transport section of the strategy, particularly with regard to an aging population,	Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment	Claire Locke/ Susan Hughes/Maria Wheatley
2. Include reference within the strategy to the local plan and parking demand linked to areas	Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment	Claire Locke/ Susan Hughes/Maria Wheatley
3. Add an additional recommendation to the report to continue to monitor car park conditions with an emphasis on safety	Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment	Claire Locke/ Susan Hughes/Maria Wheatley
4. Include an objective on cycle infrastructure, separate from the objectives on cycle and motorcycle parking space.	Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment	Claire Locke/ Susan Hughes/Maria Wheatley
5. Explore opportunities to improve environmental standards in car parks by using more environmentally friendly materials.	Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment	Claire Locke/ Susan Hughes/Maria Wheatley
6. Consider relocating the disabled bay in the corner of Burford car park in order to improve access in and out of vehicles for wheelchair users. Also consider whether there is a need for an additional disabled bay in this car park.	Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment	Claire Locke/ Susan Hughes/Maria Wheatley
7. Evaluate the need for parent and child bays are within the Council's car parks and consider whether this need is being met.	Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive	Claire Locke/ Susan Hughes/Maria Wheatley



	Member for Environment	
8. Rephrase recommendation 6 to clarify that is a notional sum to explore whether there are any options available to the Council.	Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment	Claire Locke/ Susan Hughes/Maria Wheatley
9. Pause the proposals for Woodstock car park in order to evaluate whether the existing council-owned garages on Union Street and Brookhill could be used to better improve the local parking situation in Woodstock.	Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment	Claire Locke/ Susan Hughes/Maria Wheatley
10. Consider implementing a place-specific parking strategy.	Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment	Claire Locke/ Susan Hughes/Maria Wheatley

Recommendation	Responsible Executive Member	Lead Officer
1. Engage with large businesses in the district to encourage them reduce their carbon emissions.	Councillor Andrew Prosser, Executive Member for Climate Action and Nature Recovery.	Hannah Kenyon
2. Consider how progress against the strategy will be reported, and including Key Performance Indicators, if these are appropriate.	Councillor Andrew Prosser, Executive Member for Climate Action and Nature Recovery	Hannah Kenyon
3. Consider references to water within the strategy and emphasise the importance of water and its conservation in the context of climate adaptation	Councillor Andrew Prosser, Executive Member for Climate	Hannah Kenyon



	Action and Nature Recovery	
4. Make reference to hydrogen power within the strategy and explore the emerging opportunities that this may present	Councillor Andrew Prosser, Executive Member for Climate Action and Nature Recovery	Hannah Kenyon
5. Amend the introduction of the strategy to clarify that the strategy is for the district, and not just for the Council's direct emissions	Councillor Andrew Prosser, Executive Member for Climate Action and Nature Recovery	Hannah Kenyon
6. Amend the strategy so that it is clearer on where the Council has direct influence, and where its role is one of encouraging and enabling others.	Councillor Andrew Prosser, Executive Member for Climate Action and Nature Recovery	Hannah Kenyon

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**Executive response to recommendations on from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 2 July 2025**

<b>9. Car Parking Strategy</b>				
<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Agree (Y / N)</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responsible Executive Member</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>
1. Reference improving public transport within the sustainable transport section of the Strategy, particularly with regard to an aging population,	N	This is a County Council duty therefore not appropriate within WODC Strategy however Executive member will raise with County Colleagues.	Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment	Claire Locke/ Susan Hughes/Maria Wheatley
2. Include reference within the Strategy to the emerging local plan and parking demand linked to new housing.	N	The Strategy does reference the new Local plan already and the Live working Document (Action Plan) will be updated as this is approved.	Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment	Claire Locke/ Susan Hughes/Maria Wheatley
3. Consider adding an additional recommendation to the report to continue to monitor car park conditions with an emphasis on safety.	N	This is not a strategic aim, this is a matter of course and Business as usual task.	Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment	Claire Locke/ Susan Hughes/Maria Wheatley
4. Include an objective on cycle infrastructure, separate from the objective on sustainable transport.	N	This is included in the action plan and all modes of active and sustainable transport will be considered cohesively	Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment	Claire Locke/ Susan Hughes/Maria Wheatley
5. Explore opportunities to improve environmental standards in car parks by using more environmentally friendly materials (e.g. permeable surfaces).	N	This is already contained within the Asset Management Strategy	Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment	Claire Locke/ Susan Hughes/Maria Wheatley
6. Consider relocating the disabled bay in the corner of Burford car park in order to improve access in and out of vehicles for wheelchair users. Also consider whether	Y	This does not need to be included in the strategy although section 5.8 does already have a recommendation to continue to review specialist bays as business as usual.	Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment	Claire Locke/ Susan Hughes/Maria Wheatley



there is a need for an additional disabled bay in this car park.				
7. Evaluate the need for parent and child bays within the Council's car parks and consider whether this need is being met.	Y	This does not need to be included in the strategy although section 5.8 does already have a recommendation to continue to review specialist bays as business as usual.	Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment	Claire Locke/ Susan Hughes/Maria Wheatley
8. Rephrase recommendation 6 to clarify that the £20k sum is to be used to explore whether there are any options available to the Council to improve drainage and mitigate flooding.	Y	We will change the wording on recommendation F, from resolve to investigate	Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment	Claire Locke/ Susan Hughes/Maria Wheatley
9. Pause the proposals for Woodstock car park in order to evaluate whether there is existing council-owned land that could be used to better improve the local parking situation in Woodstock.	N	Information provided to the Portfolio holder on alternative land but this does not remove the issues, so the Parking Strategy recommendations remain unchanged.	Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment	Claire Locke/ Susan Hughes/Maria Wheatley

## II. Climate Change Strategy


Recommendation	Agree (Y / N)	Comment	Responsible Executive Member	Lead Officer
I. Engage with large businesses in the district to encourage them reduce their carbon emissions.	Y	The Council will continue to facilitate the Zero Carbon Oxfordshire Partnership (ZCOP) and encourage large businesses in the district to join the partnership to maximise carbon reduction and climate resilience. Added reference to ZCOP in the Strategy.	Councillor Andrew Prosser, Executive Member for Climate Action and Nature Recovery.	Hannah Kenyon





2. Consider how progress against the Strategy will be reported, including Key Performance Indicators.	Y	Progress against the Strategy, including the KPIs, will be reported annually, in accordance with the Council's reporting procedures. Interim targets will be established as part of the project monitoring.	Councillor Andrew Prosser, Executive Member for Climate Action and Nature Recovery	Hannah Kenyon
3. Consider emphasising in the Strategy the importance of water and its conservation in the context of climate adaptation.	Y	Reference to water efficiency have been added.	Councillor Andrew Prosser, Executive Member for Climate Action and Nature Recovery	Hannah Kenyon
4. Make reference to hydrogen power within the strategy and explore the emerging opportunities that this may present.	Y	Reference to multiple energy vectors added under Local Area Energy Planning (LAEP).	Councillor Andrew Prosser, Executive Member for Climate Action and Nature Recover	Hannah Kenyon
5. Amend the foreword of the Strategy to clarify that the 2050 net zero target is for the district, and not for the Council's direct emissions.	Y	Foreword has been amended and reordered to clarify upfront that the Strategy relates to districtwide emissions.	Councillor Andrew Prosser, Executive Member for Climate Action and Nature Recovery	Hannah Kenyon
6. Ensure the Strategy clearly distinguishes between areas where the Council has direct influence, and where its role is to support, encourage and enable action by others.	Y	Actions in the Strategy will be colour-coded to clarify which actions the Council has a direct influence over and which actions involve the Council supporting and enabling others.	Councillor Andrew Prosser, Executive Member for Climate Action and Nature Recovery	Hannah Kenyon

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 <p><b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b></p>	<p><b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b></p>
<p>Name and date of Committee</p>	<p><b>EXECUTIVE – 10 SEPTEMBER 2025</b></p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p><b>FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2025/26 QUARTER ONE</b></p>
<p>Wards affected</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Accountable member</p>	<p>Cllr Alaric Smith Executive Member for Finance Email: <a href="mailto:alaric.smith@westoxon.gov.uk">alaric.smith@westoxon.gov.uk</a></p>
<p>Accountable officer</p>	<p>Madhu Richards, Director of Finance Email: <a href="mailto:madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk">madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk</a></p>
<p>Report Author</p>	<p>Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance Email: <a href="mailto:georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk">georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk</a></p>
<p>Annexes</p>	<p>Annex A – Detailed Revenue Budget Comparison Annex B – Capital Spend against Budget</p>
<p>Purpose</p>	<p>To detail the Council's financial performance for Quarter One 2025-2026</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>That the Executive resolves to:  I. Note the Council's Financial Performance for Quarter One 2025-2026</p>
<p>Corporate Priority</p>	<p>Working Together for West Oxfordshire</p>
<p>Key Decision</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Exempt</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Consultees</p>	<p>None</p>

## **I. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the financial performance of the council's activities for the first quarter of the 2025/26 financial year from 1 April 2025 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025.
- 1.2. The report considers the significant variances in revenue income and expenditure against the approved revenue budget set by Full Council on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2025 which anticipated a contribution of £91,280 to General Fund reserves.
- 1.3. The report also includes progress in delivering the approved Capital Programme and an updated MTFS in light of the Fairer Funding Review proposals. This is just an indication at this stage, the final proposals and impact will not be published by MHCLG until the end of October.
- 1.4. At this stage of the year a year-end forecast is not included. It will be part of subsequent quarterly budget monitoring reports as data becomes easier to extrapolate.

## **2. MAIN POINTS**

### **Financial Performance Revenue Budget Monitoring - Summary**

- 2.1. At quarter 1 (Q1) there is an overall underspend **£260,745** against the profiled budget for the period. The key factors driving this revenue position are additional income from Trade Waste, the Leisure Contract, vacant posts and a better than expected performance in respect of the materials recycling contract.
- 2.2. The performance of fee earning services has been mixed in Q1, with Garden waste income showing signs of pressure at £30,000 behind target, Development Management on budget and Building Control £13,000 above target.
- 2.3. There are no significant overspends to report for Q1, an indication that a prudent revenue budget was set for 2025/26. It is however, early in the financial year and this very positive revenue position is likely to change as the year progresses.
- 2.4. The table below sets out the summary revenue monitoring position for the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025 against profiled budget by service area.

## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL - Budget Monitoring

### Revenue Budget Monitoring 2025/26 - Quarter 1, 1st April to 30th June 2025

Service Area	Quarter 1			
	Original Budget 2025/26	Current Budget	Actual Exp	Variance (under) / over spend
	£	£	£	£
Democratic and Committee Services	1,412,297	574,829	575,135	306
Environmental & Regulatory Services	784,557	177,559	162,891	(14,668)
Environmental Services	8,285,567	521,286	415,591	(105,695)
Finance, Human Resources & Procurement	1,062,851	536,828	534,236	(2,592)
ICT, Change & Customer Services	2,230,097	1,489,556	1,491,290	1,734
Land, Legal & Property	841,492	206,082	167,256	(38,825)
Leisure & Communities	555,410	222,130	188,161	(33,969)
Planning & Strategic Housing	1,383,153	266,976	200,359	(66,617)
Revenues & Housing Support	1,592,014	(372,661)	(365,313)	7,347
Investment Property and Retained Services	682,434	392,381	386,639	(5,741)
<b>Total cost of services</b>	<b>18,829,872</b>	<b>4,014,965</b>	<b>3,756,245</b>	<b>(258,720)</b>
Plus:				
Investment income receipts	(1,156,228)	(289,057)	(291,082)	(2,025)
<b>Cost of services before financing:</b>	<b>17,673,644</b>	<b>3,725,908</b>	<b>3,465,163</b>	<b>(260,745)</b>

### Significant Variances

- 2.5. A full list of variances by cost centre is included in Annex A. The most significant variances, listed by Service Area (as set out in the table above), are as follows:

#### Environmental Services

##### Recycling

- 2.6. The recycling contract that commenced in September 2024 is performing better than expected from the original business case. Between September 2024 and March 2025 the contract saved the Council an average of £60,000 per month. Budget setting for 2025/26 reduced the base budget by £300,000 and in Q1 the contract is £25,000 underspent against this budget.

##### Green Waste

- 2.7. Historically, 95% of Green Waste licences are sold in the first quarter of the financial year. At the end of Q1 Green Waste has achieved income of £1.612m which is forecast to rise to £1.655m by year end or 96% of the budget. After costs, net income is £1.2m, which directly supports the provision of the Waste Service, the cost of which for 2025/26 is £8.6m.

## Trade Waste

- 2.8. Trade Waste is invoiced in April & September with payment taken by Direct Debit. In Q1, which covers Q1 & Q2 (April to September), income is £164,000 above target. This is partially offset by expenditure of £27,000 on bins and boxes, but a realistic estimate for the year end position is £260,000 underspent. The budget for 2026/27 will be adjusted to take into account the positive performance of the Trade Waste service.

## Land, Legal & Property

### Legal

- 2.9. The Legal shared service operates over Cotswold, West Oxfordshire and the Forest of Dean. Due to there being two vacancies in the service during Q1, Legal Services is showing an underspend of £27,918. Recruitment for the vacant posts has been successful, with postholders starting in Q2.

## Planning & Strategic Housing

### Development Management Appeals

- 2.10. The appeals budget is £24,975 underspent at Q1 indicating the difficulty in forecasting this budget as it is dependent on the actions of third parties and therefore outside of the Council's control. In setting the budget for 2025/26 it was considered prudent to preserve the expenditure budget from the previous year. This assumption will be challenged in the budget setting cycle for 2026/27, based on the number of appeals lodged this year.

### Conservation

- 2.11. There were two vacant posts in this service area throughout Q1, resulting in an underspend in employee costs of £24,458. These posts have now been recruited to with the postholders commencing employment during Q2. The current underspend in employee costs will therefore be carried through to year end.

### Leisure

- 2.12. The leisure contract is £41,000 ahead of budget, due to the inflationary uplift equal to CPI (Consumer Price Index) inflation included in the contract. Unlike in previous years there is no income contingency against the contract sum, this will be reviewed as part of the budget setting process for 2026/27.

## Fairer Funding Review & Business Rates Reset

- 2.13. The Government's proposals for the reform to local government funding is out for consultation until 12 August. Following on from the results of this consultation, final proposals are expected from MHCLG by the end of October.
- 2.14. The government is proposing service-specific formulas (e.g., adult social care, children's services, highways) and a general "Foundation Formula" for other services.

- 2.15. There will be a phased approach to the formula element of the change i.e. in year one our settlement will be based on 2/3 the old formula and 1/3 the new formula. In year two it will be 1/3 the old formula and 2/3 the new formula etc.
- 2.16. There will be no phasing for the Business Rates reset which will be in effect for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026 and it has been confirmed that New Homes Bonus will not be payable after 2025/26.
- 2.17. For most Councils there will be a 0% minimum funding floor to guarantee that funding does not fall in cash terms over the Spending Review period. However, West Oxfordshire is one of the circa 40 Councils who will not receive this guarantee and instead will be subject to a cash cut of between 5% & 7% in year one i.e. 2026/27. The confirmed percentage impact is expected to be released by MHCLG in October.
- 2.18. In light of the Fairer Funding Review, the MTFs has been updated in advance of the budget setting cycle for 2026/27. We have known for years that the Business Rates reset and Fairer Funding Review were coming and over the last four years have been moving our additional retained Business Rates income (growth over baseline), the surplus remitted from the Business Rates pool and any General Fund surplus into earmarked reserves to fund any gap in the revenue budget over the life of the MTFs.
- 2.19. The modelling based on the provisional funding formula changes indicates a £943,000 loss of income over the three year period from 2026/27 to 2028/29. This is a better result than we have been planning for, but it is not confirmed and so the actual picture could be better than current modelling or a lot worse. The MTFs will be updated when MHCLG publish their final proposals.
- 2.20. The biggest identified pressure on the revenue budget is the end of the leisure contract in 2027. The impact is estimated as high as £2.4m growth in net cost of services, which combined with general inflation, increases our net budget from £18.7m to £21.4m between 2026 and 2027.
- 2.21. Clarity is needed on the preferred procurement approach for the leisure contract from 2027 onwards in order to understand the ongoing revenue impact. A comprehensive leisure building maintenance programme is being brought to Executive in September which will directly impact the amount of income that the new contract will generate for the Council.
- 2.22. Contract income is calculated by the leisure contractor based on a number of factors, a significant factor being the condition of the leisure centres and an estimated cost for the replacement or repair of any plant and equipment during the contract period. The higher the cost, the less income that is remitted to the Council. By committing to a comprehensive program of capital repairs to the District's leisure centres, the Council is, as far as it is able, de-risking the new contract, optimising income and reducing pressure on the revenue budget to reduce the £2.4m impact that is currently in the MTFs.
- 2.23. From a budgeting point of view It is more advantageous to the Council to incur capital expenditure, the cost of which is spread out over a number of years, rather than to lose a significant amount of income that will be taken out of the base budget in one year and not replaced.
- 2.24. As illustrated in the MTFs below, the Council will be relying on the use of the General Fund, which is forecast to reduce from the current level of £12.25m to £3m and the depletion of earmarked reserves in order to set a balanced budget up to 2029/30 which is after the LGR timeframe of 2028. The MTFs will be further updated during the budget setting cycle for 2026/27 which will start in September.

2.25. As a note of caution, it is not yet clear what it will cost to bring in the new Unitary Authorities in Oxfordshire and our reserves can only be spent once. The level of reserves we hold can realistically fund the impact of the Fairer Funding Review and Business Rates reset and potentially the costs associated with LGR along with the major capital projects that are already in train. Any new major capital expenditure will require external borrowing as our internal resources will be exhausted.

2.26. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) have issued guidance for financial decisions made in advance of Local Government Reform. It states,

*“it is essential that decisions regarding ongoing service delivery and the medium term financial strategy of existing councils do not compromise the future sustainability of new councils. It is essential that all involved are cognisant that decisions taken now by existing councils could fetter the future decisions of new councils and act accordingly.*

*Examples of those decisions include but are not limited to the sale and purchase of significant assets, transfer of local assets, entering into new contracts for service delivery including IT procurement, major organisational restructures and changes to staff terms and conditions, establishing companies, undertaking job evaluation, permanent appointments to senior positions, changes to unplanned borrowing and the spending of reserves.*

*The expectation is that councils continue to operate in accordance with their agreed medium term financial plans and planned actions for the period and defer the implementation of any significant changes to service delivery other than where this would cause a gap or cessation of a key service. Decisions that are necessary to ensure service delivery should not be delayed.”*

In short, the Council remains responsible for making decisions on service delivery in the best interests of the residents of West Oxfordshire until Structural Changes Orders have been made. It is likely that these will follow the precedents previously set, namely that written consent from the successor council will be required for land disposals worth more than £100,000, entering contracts of more than £1,000,000 for capital and entering contracts of more than £100,000 for non-capital (whole life costs).



## Medium Term Financial Strategy – Revised July 2025

- 2.27. The MTFs has been revised in light of the available details regarding the Fairer Funding Review and is fully compliant with the guidance published by MHCLG on LGR as detailed in paragraph 2.26.

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
<b>Target Budget (NOE)</b>	<b>18,231,214</b>	<b>18,717,222</b>	<b>21,474,133</b>	<b>21,756,741</b>	<b>21,946,933</b>
<b>Financed by:</b>					
Revenue Support Grant	(257,281)	(6,293,000)	(5,043,000)	(3,788,000)	(3,828,000)
Business Rates Share	(6,684,384)	(2,360,000)	(2,385,024)	(2,414,024)	(2,443,024)
Renewables	(302,976)	(302,976)	(302,976)	(302,976)	(302,976)
New Homes Bonus	(506,346)	0	0	0	0
Extended Producer Responsibility (Waste)	(2,338,000)	0	0	0	0
Funding Floor/Dampening	(1,964,639)	0	0	0	0
<b>Government Grants &amp; Business Rates</b>	<b>(12,053,626)</b>	<b>(8,955,976)</b>	<b>(7,731,000)</b>	<b>(6,505,000)</b>	<b>(6,574,000)</b>
Investment Income - Pooled Funds	(1,156,227)	(1,040,604)	(936,544)	(889,717)	(845,231)
Contribution to/(from) earmarked reserves	1,327,558	(1,950,000)	(5,550,000)	(2,750,000)	(1,750,000)
Collection Fund	(133,916)	(125,000)	(120,000)	(115,000)	(110,000)
Council Tax	(6,306,283)	(6,654,794)	(6,999,039)	(7,344,368)	(7,693,693)
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>(18,322,494)</b>	<b>(18,726,375)</b>	<b>(21,336,583)</b>	<b>(17,604,085)</b>	<b>(16,972,924)</b>
<b>Use of GF reserves</b>	<b>(91,280)</b>	<b>(9,153)</b>	<b>137,550</b>	<b>4,152,657</b>	<b>4,974,009</b>
TaxBase	48,742	49,522	50,216	50,868	51,504
Band D	129.38	134.38	139.38	144.38	149.38
<b>Tax increase</b>	<b>4.02%</b>	<b>3.86%</b>	<b>3.72%</b>	<b>3.59%</b>	<b>3.46%</b>
General fund balance	12,357,907	12,365,060	12,223,900	8,068,131	3,091,519

## Capital Programme

- 2.28. At the end of Q1 capital expenditure is £643,834 against an approved Capital Programme for the year of £16.165m, which includes slippage from 2024/25 of £4.9m related to the decarbonisation of Witney Leisure Centre, Waste Vehicle replacement and repairs to our buildings.
- 2.29. The Witney PSDS project was approved to move to the construction phase by the Executive in July. Discussions are currently underway with GLL to mitigate the operational issues caused by the construction works, with contractors expected to be on site from September. The Council has received grant funding of £1.649m towards the cost of this project, with an estimated contribution from the Council of £565,549.
- 2.30. The Council contribution includes a contingency against any additional costs that may come up during the construction phase that were not anticipated as part of the Investment Grade Proposal. The project must be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 or under the terms of the funding, the grant will be forfeited and the Council will have to fund the entire £2.2m cost of the project.

- 2.31. The Waste Transformation Programme is due to report to Executive in Q3 with a full waste vehicle strategy. This strategy will look to maximise the efficiencies attainable through partnership working across the County, that the Council could never achieve through unilateral action.
- 2.32. Due diligence work is underway regarding a number of properties suitable for temporary emergency accommodation for both single people and families.

### **3. CONCLUSIONS**

- 3.1. Whilst it is early in the financial year there are some key areas of optimism at the end of Q1 and these have been highlighted in the body of this report. There are no significant overspends to report in Q1, a good indication that a prudent budget was set for 2025/26, however there is no guarantee that the revenue position will remain as positive throughout the rest of the year.
- 3.2. All areas will be closely monitored and reported on in future quarterly Financial Performance Reports.

### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

These are set out within section 2 of the paper.

### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications arising from this paper.

### **6. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 6.1. Officers will continue to monitor budgets closely throughout the year to identify mitigating actions which will enable the overall budgetary position to be brought back in line with budget where possible.

### **7. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

No direct equalities impact with regards to the content of this report.

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

None arising from this report.

 <p><b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b></p>	<p><b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b></p>
<p>Name and Date of Committee</p>	<p><b>EXECUTIVE – 10 SEPTEMBER 2025</b></p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p><b>SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2025-26 QUARTER ONE</b></p>
<p>Wards Affected</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p>Accountable Member</p>	<p>Councillor Andy Graham – Leader of the Council. Email: <a href="mailto:andy.graham@westoxon.gov.uk">andy.graham@westoxon.gov.uk</a></p>
<p>Accountable Officer</p>	<p>Giles Hughes – Chief Executive Officer. Email: <a href="mailto:giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk">giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk</a></p>
<p>Report author</p>	<p>Alison Borrett – Senior Performance Analyst. Email: <a href="mailto:alison.borrett@westoxon.gov.uk">alison.borrett@westoxon.gov.uk</a></p>
<p>Purpose</p>	<p>To provide details of the Council's operational performance at the end of 2025-26 Quarter One (Q1).</p>
<p>Annex</p>	<p>Annex A - Council Priorities report Annex B - Corporate Plan Action Tracker Annex C - Performance indicator report</p>
<p>Recommendation.</p>	<p><i>That the Executive Resolves to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Note the 2025/26 Q1 service performance report.</i></li> </ul>
<p>Corporate Priorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Putting Residents First</li> <li>• Enabling a Good Quality of Life for All</li> <li>• Creating a Better Environment for People and Wildlife</li> <li>• Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency</li> <li>• Working Together for West Oxfordshire</li> </ul>
<p>Key Decision</p>	<p>NO</p>
<p>Exempt</p>	<p>NO</p>
<p>Consultees/ Consultation</p>	<p>Publica Directors, Assistant Directors, Business Managers, Service Managers and Service Leads.</p>

## **I. BACKGROUND**

- I.1** The new Council Plan was adopted in January 2023 and the Action Plan, setting out how the priorities within the Council Plan will be delivered, then followed. Additionally, following on from the external audit report in August 2023 which included a recommendation to review performance management to match the Council Plan and measure performance, a new performance framework has been developed. This includes a Corporate Action Plan Tracker and a Priority Report alongside the service output metrics.
- I.2** A high-level Commissioning Framework was approved by the Executive in October 2020, which sets out the relationship between Publica and the Council and their respective responsibilities. Publica provides the necessary information, including a range of performance indicators, to the Council so it can assess whether the commissioned services are being delivered in accordance with the agreed quality and standard.
- I.3** The Council's Chief Executive is responsible for reviewing and approving the information provided in this report prior to its publication.

## **2. COUNCIL PRIORITY REPORT**

- 2.1** Progress on actions in the Corporate Plan for Q1 include:
- The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) examination hearing session took place on 10 June, and the examiner's report has now been received for fact-checking. The Council intends to present the charging schedule for formal adoption by the Executive and Full Council in September and October, with an effective commencement date to follow for qualifying developments.
  - A strategic meeting was held with Enterprise Oxfordshire (formerly the LEP) to explore green investment opportunities across key development areas, with a focus on aligning economic growth with sustainability goals through initiatives such as the Carterton Masterplan and the Oxford–Cambridge Growth Corridor.
  - The Local Plan Preferred Policy Options consultation launched on 26 June and ran until 8 August 2025. It included a range of proposals related to infrastructure and green infrastructure, with further consultation on development locations scheduled for October.
  - The Outline Business Case for the Woodford Way development was presented to the Executive on 9 July. The report outlines a balanced approach to delivering affordable housing and car parking, along with a proposed delivery model aligned with Council priorities.
  - A new commercial operator has been appointed to manage the Charter Markets in Witney and Chipping Norton following a revised tender process. This appointment is expected to bring renewed energy and innovation to the markets, with operations commencing on 1 August.
  - A hearing session for the Salt Cross Area Action Plan (AAP) was held on 30 June 2025. The Council is now awaiting the Inspector's post-hearing note, which will guide the next steps toward adoption of the AAP and enable determination of the outline planning application.
  - The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) continue to be actively delivered and managed. Three new grant schemes have been launched to support local business resilience and growth: the Shop Front Improvement Grant, the Rural Enterprise Growth Grant, and the Visitor Economy Grant Scheme.

- 2.2 The Council Priority highlight report is attached at Annex A with an overview of progress against all actions in the Corporate Plan is attached at Annex B.

### 3. SERVICE PERFORMANCE

Overall, the Council's performance has remained broadly positive, building on the strong foundations laid in the previous quarter. Continued improvements were seen in key areas such as Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates collection, planning determination times, and customer satisfaction. Leisure centre visits and gym memberships also remained high, reflecting sustained public engagement with health and wellbeing services. Notably, the number of affordable homes delivered in Q1 exceeded the quarterly target. However, some challenges persist. Processing times for Council Tax Support and Housing Benefit change events remained above target, largely due to operational adjustments linked to Universal Credit automation. Additionally, the percentage of household waste recycled continued to decline, impacted by seasonal factors and broader national trends.

#### 3.1 Service performance above target:

- Percentage of Council Tax Collected (33.04% against a target of 33%)
- Percentage of Non-Domestic Rates Collected (36.34% against a target of 33%)
- Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims (18.57 days against a target of 20 days)
- Percentage of Housing Benefit overpayment due to LA error/admin delay (0.08% against a target of 0.35%)
- Customer Satisfaction (98.21% against a target of 90%)
- Percentage of major planning applications determined within agreed timescales (100% against a target of 70%)
- Percentage of minor planning applications determined within agreed timescales (90% against a target of 65%)
- Percentage of other planning applications determined within agreed timescales (98.46% against a target of 80%)
- Percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days (98.87% against a target of 90%)
- Number of Affordable Homes Delivered (89 against a target of 69)
- Percentage of high-risk food premises inspected within target timescales day (100% against a target of 90%)
- Percentage of high-risk notifications risk assessed within 1 working day (100% against a target of 95%)
- Residual Household Waste per Household (kg) (90.56 against a target of 93)
- Missed bins per 100,000 (61 against a target of 110)
- (Snapshot) Number of gym memberships (5,554 memberships against a target of 4,947 memberships)
- Number of visits to the leisure centres (243,112 visits against a target of 206,370)

#### 3.2 Service Performance near target:

- Percentage of FOI requests answered within 20 days (89.1% against a target of 90%)

### 3.3 Service Performance below target:

#### **Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events (14.49 days against a target of 5 days) and Processing times for Housing Benefit Change of Circumstances (8.85 days against a target of 4 days)**

The Council experienced an increase in processing times for both Council Tax Support change of events and Housing Benefit changes of circumstances, exceeding the respective targets of 5 and 4 days. Council Tax Support changes averaged 14.49 days, while Housing Benefit changes averaged 8.85 days. This rise was primarily driven by a planned one-month pause in uploading Universal Credit (UC) applications, which allowed the team to focus on clearing a backlog of manual applications and to collaborate with partners on improving automation processes. The pause also provided an opportunity to accommodate changes introduced by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), who had updated the UC data feed to include additional items.

Prior to the pause, UC automation rates typically ranged between 60% and 70%. Since resuming uploads, batch automation rates have consistently exceeded 90% and daily processing has stabilised. Notably, processing times for CTS change of events have significantly improved, with the average for July falling to just 3.14 days. Processing times are expected to improve steadily over the coming months, but given the cumulative nature of the metric, they are unlikely to return to within target until Quarter 3.

The ongoing managed migration from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit has also introduced greater complexity into the remaining caseload, with many cases involving exceptional or nuanced circumstances. As the volume of Housing Benefit change of circumstances continues to decline, any delays now have a more pronounced impact on average processing times. The service continues to explore targeted initiatives, including the use of the Low Income Family Tracker (LIFT) tool, to help residents access unclaimed benefits and improve financial resilience.

#### **Percentage of Planning Appeals Allowed (cumulative) (50% against a target of 30%)**

Between 1 April 2025 and 30 June 2025, eight appeals were decided, with four supported, resulting in an allowance rate of 50%. Of these, four were Upland applications, with two supported, resulting in a 50% allowance rate. The remaining four were Lowlands applications, with two supported, equating to a 50% allowance rate.

Of the eight appeal decisions, one related to an application refused by the Uplands Planning Committee, which was subsequently dismissed at appeal. The other seven appeals stemmed from delegated officer decisions, with four of these resulting in allowed appeals.

As this metric is cumulative, the allowance rate may fluctuate throughout the year depending on the number and outcome of appeal decisions received.

While the general target is for no more than 30% of appeals to be allowed, the Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013 introduced a formal system for assessing the performance of local planning authorities. Under the designation criteria, an authority may be identified as underperforming if 10% or more of its total planning decisions are overturned at appeal.

This measure of decision quality is assessed over a rolling two-year period and is applied separately to major and non-major development categories. It's important to note that the 10% threshold is based on the total number of decisions made, not just those that are appealed. Authorities exceeding this threshold in either category may be designated, allowing applicants to submit certain types of applications directly to the Secretary of State.

#### **Percentage of household waste recycled (57.2% against a target of 62%)**

During Q1, the Council recorded a slight decline in its household recycling rate compared to the same quarter last year. This mirrors a broader national trend, where recycling rates have been under pressure due to seasonal and structural factors.

Despite this dip, West Oxfordshire continues to perform strongly. For the 2023/24 financial year, the district ranked among the top 20 councils in England for household waste recycling and remains within the top quartile of all English local authorities. This reflects the Council's ongoing commitment to environmental sustainability and effective waste management.

However, recycling rates across the country are facing challenges. The district experienced unusually dry weather conditions, leading to a 25% reduction in garden waste tonnages compared to the same period last year. As garden waste makes up a substantial portion of the recycling stream, this seasonal drop is expected to impact overall recycling performance.

Looking ahead, national policy changes may further influence local recycling figures. The UK-wide Deposit Return Scheme (DRS), scheduled to launch in October 2027, will introduce a refundable deposit on single-use drinks containers made from PET plastic, aluminium and steel. While this initiative is designed to reduce litter and improve material quality, it is anticipated that many of these containers will be diverted away from household kerbside collections. As a result, councils may see a measurable decline in kerbside recycling rates, even as national recycling infrastructure improves.

**3.4** A full report is attached at Annex C and should be looked at in conjunction with this report.

**3.5** As previously agreed, where possible, broader benchmarking has been included in the full performance report to gain a more robust and insightful evaluation of performance.

#### **4. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**4.1** This report will be reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 3 September 2025. The draft minutes of that meeting will be circulated to all Members and any recommendations from the Committee will be reported to the 10 September 2025 Executive meeting.

#### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**5.1** There are no direct financial implications from this report.

#### **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

#### **7. RISK ASSESSMENT**

**7.1** Contained in this report.

#### **8. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

**8.1** None

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

**9.1** Contained in this report.

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**10.1** None

(END)





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WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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COUNCIL PRIORITIES REPORT  
**April – June 2025**

# Background

The Executive Action Plan was created to outline the steps needed to carry out the vision of the Executive after the new Council Plan was adopted in February 2023. In the Council Plan, the Executive looks to the district's future and establishes a vision for West Oxfordshire. In addition to updating the public on the status of each priority at regular meetings across the plan's four-year duration, a new performance framework has been created to offer timely updates for actions taken in relation to the priorities.



# Putting Residents First



## Actions we are taking

In early 2022, West Oxfordshire District Council conducted its first Youth Needs Assessment, engaging nearly 4,000 young people aged 11 to 25 through paper surveys and focus groups, alongside feedback from 177 parents. The assessment revealed significant challenges faced by young residents, including the lasting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education, social lives, and access to essential services. Following a review of the findings at the Executive meeting on 11 October 2023, the Council committed to strengthening youth engagement and instructed officers to work with Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) to develop a proposal for a dedicated youth specialist role. This role would lead on youth-related matters and implement the assessment's recommendations. At its meeting in February 2024, the Executive approved the recruitment of a full-time Youth Development Officer for a two-year period. This senior role is designed to build local capacity, influence external partners, and address barriers such as access, affordability, isolation, and limited service availability. The officer will collaborate with local providers, engage directly with young people, support internal youth engagement—including Local Plan consultation and communications—and work closely with OCC to ensure joined-up delivery. In addition, the Council allocated £20,000 from its COMF budget to support youth-led initiatives through Westhive, enabling test-and-learn opportunities that tackle the barriers identified in the assessment.

To further empower young voices, the Council launched a community crowdfunding platform via Westhive, encouraging youth-led projects and pledging up to £12,000 toward ideas that matter most to young people. This initiative ensures that young residents are actively involved in shaping the future of their communities and are recognised in key strategic decisions, including climate action and the Council Plan.

The Council's commitment to youth and housing is also reflected in the 'Our House' Project, launched in 2018 in partnership with Cottsway Housing and Aspire Oxfordshire. This innovative initiative provides shared accommodation and tailored support for single individuals under 35 who are on out-of-work benefits and at risk of homelessness. With capacity for up to 12 young people across three shared houses, the project continues to offer stability and opportunity. In July 2024, the Executive approved funding to extend the programme until October 2026.

In parallel with these initiatives, the Council is actively engaged in shaping the future of local government through the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) process. The government plans to replace the current two-tier system of district and county councils with new unitary authorities, and has encouraged councils to collaborate on proposals that meet national criteria. In response, five councils—including West Oxfordshire—have joined forces to propose the creation of two new unitary authorities: Oxford and Shires Council and Ridgeway Council.

Under this proposal:

- Oxford and Shires Council would include Cherwell, Oxford City, and West Oxfordshire.
- Ridgeway Council would encompass West Berkshire, South Oxfordshire, and the Vale of White Horse.

The aim is to create financially stable, locally accountable councils that deliver high-quality services while maintaining strong community connections. Existing social care services from OCC and West Berkshire would continue under the new arrangements, avoiding costly disaggregation. The proposal also focuses on economic development, infrastructure improvements, environmental protection, and addressing local priorities such as housing and flooding.

A public engagement exercise ran from 4 June to 16 July 2025, inviting residents to share their views via [twocouncils.org](https://twocouncils.org) and attend local events. Council leaders have emphasised the importance of community input in shaping the final proposal, which represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to redesign local government around the needs and identities of the people it serves.

# Enabling a Good Quality of Life for All



## Actions we are taking

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), introduced by the Government in 2008, ensures that new developments contribute fairly and transparently to vital infrastructure such as schools, roads, and community facilities. In March 2023, the Council's Executive commissioned new viability evidence to support an updated CIL charging schedule. Following an eight-week public consultation in August and September 2024, the draft schedule was formally submitted for independent examination in March 2025. A public hearing was held on 10 June 2025, and the independent examiner has now approved the Council's Draft Charging Schedule, subject to one modification: a reduction in the proposed rate for larger residential developments (250+ homes) from £225 to £150 per square metre, excluding strategic development areas. CIL will apply as a fixed charge on certain types of new development, including new homes and extensions, calculated based on floor area. It will operate alongside existing Section 106 (S106) planning obligations to help fund essential infrastructure across the district. With the examiner's final report received, the Council will now move to formally adopt the schedule, with implementation to follow. Once in place, CIL will enhance the Council's ability to secure and deliver the infrastructure needed to support sustainable growth across West Oxfordshire.

The Salt Cross Garden Village continues to progress as a flagship sustainable development for West Oxfordshire. Designed to include schools, community facilities, employment opportunities, and 2,200 homes, the development is guided by the Salt Cross Area Action Plan (AAP). A key component of the AAP is the Council's Net Zero Carbon Development policy, which aims to ensure that Salt Cross is net zero in operation. The original version of this policy was rejected in 2022, but following a successful High Court challenge by Rights Community Action in 2023, the Council was permitted to resubmit a revised version. The updated policy is both ambitious and deliverable, supported by strong technical and financial evidence. A public hearing to examine the revised policy was held virtually on Monday 30 June 2025, led by Planning Inspector Helen Hockenhull, with a reserve session scheduled for 4 July. The hearing was live-streamed on the Council's website and forms part of the formal examination of the AAP. It assessed whether the revised Net Zero policy can now be formally included in the plan. A short report outlining the Inspector's findings is expected later in the summer. Depending on the outcome, the next steps may include further public consultation if changes are recommended, or the policy may be approved or rejected as submitted. The Council will provide a formal update once the Inspector's findings are received. In the meantime, the Council remains committed to delivering a truly sustainable and future-ready community at Salt Cross.

To support thriving towns and villages, the Council has prioritised market town regeneration through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). A new commercial operator has been appointed to manage the Charter Markets in Witney and Chipping Norton, with operations beginning 1 August 2025. Specialist markets will continue at Marriotts Walk, and a Christmas market and other themed events are planned for 2025. In response to earlier feedback, the tender brief was revised to better reflect local needs.

Complementing this, wayfinding improvements are underway, including the installation of new information boards in Chipping Norton town centre. The Council is also supporting Oxfordshire Art Weeks, linking cultural activity with local retailers to boost footfall and support independent businesses. These efforts are part of a broader strategy to enhance public realm spaces and promote economic vitality across the district.

The Council is actively exploring opportunities for green investment in strategic development areas, particularly through the Carterton Masterplan. In collaboration with Enterprise Oxfordshire and the Oxford–Cambridge Growth Corridor, the Council is identifying ways to align local economic growth with sustainability goals. This includes mapping nature-based solutions, engaging with the Low Carbon Hub, and seeking funding streams to support innovation and infrastructure. The Carterton Strategic Study has been completed and is now under review, with next steps to be shaped through stakeholder engagement and Executive discussion.

Improving access to sustainable transport remains a key priority. The Council is working with Oxfordshire County Council to deliver Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) across the district. In Q1 2025, public consultation for the Carterton LCWIP closed, and the plan is now being revised based on feedback, with formal approval expected in October. Drafting of the Eynsham LCWIP is also underway, with consultation planned for September. These plans aim to reduce car dependency, improve health outcomes, and support the Council's climate goals.

# Creating a Better Environment for People and Wildlife



## Actions we are taking

West Oxfordshire District Council has launched its latest public consultation on its emerging Local Plan, inviting residents, businesses, community groups and stakeholders to help shape the policies that will guide how the district grows and develops up to 2041. The Local Plan is the Council's key strategic document for managing development. It will influence how and where new homes, jobs, services, and infrastructure come forward in the years ahead, and how the district responds to major challenges including the climate emergency, housing affordability and nature recovery.

This consultation, known as the 'Preferred Policy Options' stage, sets out the Council's proposed direction, including a new vision for West Oxfordshire in 2041, updated objectives, and preferred policy approaches on housing, transport, the economy, climate, infrastructure, health and wellbeing, and more. This stage of the consultation does not include details of specific individual development sites. Instead, it focuses on the overall strategy and direction of the plan – the preferred policy options. A further consultation specifically focused on potential future development locations will follow later in the year. The consultation will run from 26 June to 8 August and can be accessed online at: <https://yourvoice.westoxon.gov.uk/en-GB/folders/your-plan-for-the-future>. The consultation platform provides a breakdown of each chapter of the Preferred Policy Options paper, with a chance to leave feedback throughout the document. Hard copies of the consultation paper will be made available at Council offices. Public drop-in events will also be held in towns and villages across the district, as well as online sessions, giving residents the chance to speak with planning officers, ask questions and share their views.

Alongside this, the Council continues to develop the evidence base for the plan. The site assessment process is underway, evaluating key factors such as flood risk and foul water capacity to inform potential site allocations. The Local Plan will also incorporate an integrated approach to water management, building on the work completed with the Environment Agency's 'Spheres of Influence' project, in which the Council participated as one of three national pilot areas. The Council has commissioned the Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and Phase 1 Water Cycle Study to support this work.

The Preferred Options paper is being discussed with Members through the Local Plan Working Group, with the intention to report to the Executive in mid-May. The evidence base is continually being developed, with draft reports from consultants now being received, and further evidence likely to be commissioned during the next stage of plan preparation leading to Regulation 19 publication. The Council has successfully secured additional central government funding to assist with the Regulation 18 stage, ensuring the timely allocation of funding for key projects. Infrastructure challenges, including transport, sewage systems, and community services, are being addressed to support sustainable growth. The Council is also actively securing developer contributions through the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) to ensure all new developments are supported by the necessary infrastructure for both current and future needs.

The Council is actively supporting the government's Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) policy, which requires developers to deliver a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity. A flagship initiative is the creation of a habitat bank at Pudlicote Farm near Chipping Norton, where low-productivity farmland is being transformed into wildflower meadows, wetlands, and native woodlands. This project will generate biodiversity units that developers can purchase to meet their BNG obligations, while also supporting local farmers and contributing to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. The Pudlicote Farm project exemplifies a successful partnership between the Council, local landowners, and environmental charities such as the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment, and aligns with the national '30-by-30' biodiversity target. The Council is also working to streamline the process for future habitat banks to expand this model across the district.

The Council continues to support grassroots environmental action through initiatives such as the Coronation Community Orchard Scheme, which commemorates the coronation of King Charles III. With £50,000 secured from DEFRA's Coronation Living Heritage Fund, the Council has funded 17 community orchards to date, with grants covering both planting and long-term maintenance. The scheme has been extended to March 2026, and applications remain open to encourage further community participation.

Another successful project is the Deer Park South Access Project, which has delivered significant improvements to public access and environmental education. Enhancements include new bridges, upgraded footpaths, and a nature trail co-designed with local schoolchildren and a local artist. Interpretation panels and brass rubbing posts have been installed to enrich the visitor experience, while a habitat survey and land management review are underway to guide future stewardship of the site.

The Council is also collaborating with the Wychwood Forest Trust, Oxfordshire County Council, and Witney Town Council on the Windrush in Witney project. This landscape-scale initiative aims to restore the Witney floodplains through grazing, floral enhancement, willow pollarding, and community engagement. A funding bid is being prepared for submission in August 2025, with plans to establish a new volunteer group and deliver rural skills training events.



# Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency

## Actions we are taking

West Oxfordshire District Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency in June 2019, committing to become a carbon-neutral council by 2030. This was followed by the publication of the Climate Action for West Oxfordshire report in January 2020, which laid the foundation for the Council's Carbon Action Plan and Climate Change Strategy. Since then, the Council has made significant progress in reducing emissions from its operations and supporting district-wide decarbonisation.

A major focus has been the decarbonisation of Council-owned buildings, with several projects now underway or completed. Funding from the Local Carbon Skills Fund supported the development of heat decarbonisation plans for Elmfield Council Offices, Welch Way, and the Old Court House, all of which were finalised in March 2024. The installation of solar PV panels at Elmfield has been successfully completed, enabling tenants to benefit from renewable energy while allowing the Council to recover its investment through recharges or power purchase agreements.

The Windrush Leisure Centre has received £1.6 million from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Phase 3c (PSDS 3c). Council approval was granted in March 2024, and work began on 1 April. A detailed decarbonisation scheme, including cost analysis, has been completed, with a formal request to progress to the construction phase presented at the June Executive meeting. In parallel, PSDS 4 funding has been secured for the Chipping Norton Leisure Centre, with procurement of a design and build contract now underway. Additional funding from the Swimming Pool Support Fund will enable the installation of solar PV panels and shower flow restrictors at Windrush Leisure Centre, and solar PV and heat recovery systems at Chipping Norton Lido.

To support the transition to low-carbon transport, the Council has expanded its electric vehicle charging infrastructure. The Woolgate car park now features 12 charging bays, including 7.4kW Type 2 and 75kW rapid chargers. Across the district, Council-owned car parks now host 42 charging units across 74 bays, helping to reduce emissions and support residents without access to off-street parking.

The Council is also a key partner in the Community Action Plan for Zero-Carbon Energy (CAPZero), developed by Low Carbon Hub and GreenTEA (Transition Eynsham Area). CAPZero is the first plan of its kind in the UK, focusing on the Eynsham Primary Substation Area, which includes eight parishes. It translates county-wide net zero targets into local actions, including energy efficiency, renewable energy, zero-carbon housing, electric transport, and environmental restoration. To support CAPZero's implementation, the Council has entered into a three-year Service Level Agreement and continues to work closely with the project team. Consultants have been appointed to conduct preliminary retrofit research, and work is now underway to accelerate both domestic and commercial retrofitting.

To embed climate considerations into everyday decision-making, the Council has introduced a Sustainability Impact Assessment Tool (SIAT), which became mandatory for all Executive reports from June 2025. Staff and members have received training, and the tool is now being used to ensure that climate and nature impacts are considered across all projects and policies.

The Council's Greenlight online hub continues to support community-led climate action and nature recovery. Recent updates include a retrofit competition, new funding information, and a library of community resources. The platform is helping to build local capacity and awareness around sustainability.

In the private housing sector, the Council is preparing to enforce Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) for privately rented homes, once government requirements are confirmed. A report was submitted to the Executive in April 2025 to secure funding for an Asset Management Strategy that will include carbon efficiency assessments of tenanted buildings.

The Council also continues to support low-income households through the Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 (HUG2). In Year 1, 15 homes in West Oxfordshire received funding to improve energy efficiency and reduce bills. The Council supported targeted outreach through Council Tax data and communications, helping ensure that support reached those most in need.

In recognition of its leadership on climate action, West Oxfordshire has been named the top-performing rural district in the UK in the 2025 national Council Climate Action Scorecards. This independent assessment, conducted between July 2024 and March 2025, evaluated councils across seven key areas, including buildings and heating, planning and land use, and waste reduction and food. Developed in consultation with over 90 organisations and individuals, the scorecard featured up to 93 questions showcasing best practice and local authority influence on emissions reduction. West Oxfordshire's success reflects not only strong strategic planning but also deep community involvement. Key initiatives contributing to this achievement include the Better Housing Better Health programme, retrofitting council-owned buildings, and the Coronation Community Orchard Scheme. The Council also continues to deliver carbon literacy training for staff and members and has introduced a Sustainability Impact Assessment Tool to embed climate considerations into decision-making. This national recognition underscores the district's commitment to building a greener, more resilient future.



# Working Together for West Oxfordshire

## Actions we are taking

As West Oxfordshire District Council enters the final year of UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) funding, its priority is to ensure a seamless transition and avoid a sudden drop-off in support for local communities and businesses. To sustain momentum, the Council is working to extend key projects into the 2025/26 funding year. New grant agreements are being carefully tailored to the specific needs of each intervention, aligning with long-term strategic goals. At the same time, final project reports are being completed to confirm delivery of agreed outcomes and outputs, reinforcing transparency and accountability.

A flagship initiative in this effort is the Westhive programme, which launched Round 4 with a 31 March deadline and will allocate an additional £48,000 in unspent UKSPF funding by March 2025. A recent review presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was well received, reaffirming the programme's value. Westhive continues to support local businesses, entrepreneurs, and communities, with the introduction of a Youth Development role already inspiring more youth-led projects. Complementing this, a new small grants fund will launch in summer 2025 to support grassroots initiatives and smaller-scale community projects that may not meet traditional funding criteria.

The Council has committed £114,388 to community-driven projects through Westhive, which has now distributed over £423,000 since its launch in 2023—reflecting the district's strong culture of public participation and local pride. Recent supported initiatives include Let's Roll! Wheelchair Dancing for All, Carterton Family Centre, and Community Floodplain Restoration West Oxfordshire.

To further strengthen community development, the Council has established three-year Service Level Agreements (SLAs) for 2024–2027. These grants, totalling £188,500 for 2024/25, are structured around three thematic priorities: improving access to nature and wellbeing, addressing the climate and ecological emergency, and enhancing community resilience. Funded organisations submit biannual progress reports, and the Council continues to work closely with delivery partners to ensure projects are inclusive, impactful, and strategically aligned.

In addition to Westhive and SLAs, the Council has launched three new business support grants using capital funding from UKSPF and REPF. Developed in partnership with Cotswold Tourism, these schemes aim to boost local enterprise, enhance the visitor economy, and support rural innovation:

- Shop Front Improvement Grants – up to £1,000 to revitalise town centres and improve accessibility.
- Visitor Economy Grants – up to £10,000 for tourism-related sustainability improvements.
- Rural Enterprise Growth Grants – up to £20,000 to help rural and agricultural businesses diversify and grow.

Applications opened on 20 June and closed on 18 July 2025.

An additional £60,000 has been invested in the Westhive Community Infrastructure Fund, supporting community-led initiatives focused on inclusion, mental health, and youth engagement. Applicants are encouraged to prepare early to ensure deliverability by February 2026 and meet any match funding requirements.

The Council has also introduced the Carbon Action Fund to support local SMEs in reducing their carbon footprint. Despite tight deadlines, the fund has performed strongly and has been submitted for consideration for an LGC Award. Meanwhile, the Tools for Tomorrow initiative has been launched to support councillor priorities and address gaps in local construction trade provision.

Engagement with the voluntary and community sector (VCS) remains a priority, with ongoing collaboration through forums and the West Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Alliance. In 2024/25, £273,682 in UKSPF funding has been distributed to VCS groups via Westhive. The Council is also supporting cultural programmes in Carterton and Chipping Norton and delivering mental health support through COMF and OCC funding.

Looking ahead, a Community Insight report due in January 2025 will help shape future investment in local projects. Additionally, a Local Area Coordination pilot has been launched in Chipping Norton, funded by OCC, to support residents with complex needs and improve access to local services.

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## Corporate Strategy Action Tracker

Green	On target
Amber	Off target but action being taken to ensure delivery (where this results in a reviewed target date, this is made clear in the table)
Red	Off target and no action has yet been agreed to resolve the situation
In Progress	Work on the action is underway, though a fixed timeline has not yet been set.
Complete	Action completed
Not Scheduled to Start	The action/project has either a future start date or is still in its early stages, with no start date established yet.

		Our Focus	Actions	Quarter 1 Update	Start Date	Date Due	Status	Executive Member	Link Officer	Updates Provided by
11	Putting Residents First	The Council will listen and act in the best interests of residents by: -Being an outward facing, accessible, inclusive and open Council, improving our use of technology to increase understanding and access to what we do, how we work and the decisions we take -Providing easy to use platforms for public consultations that are effective, accessible and timely so that the voice of residents can be heard in planning and other Council decisions -Positively engaging with and listening to locally elected representatives on Town and Parish Councils -Actively seeking the voice of the seldom heard, including those of young people, to understand their particular needs and ensure that the Council is taking decisions that meet these needs.	Explore how the Council leads Youth Engagement, ensuring youth are engaged across the wide range of activity it undertakes.				On Target	Rachel Crouch	Enmy-Lou Bossard / Heather McCulloch	Heather McCulloch
			Customer Experience Improvement Programme	Completed	01/07/2020	01/01/2024	Complete	Andy Graham	Giles Hughes	Michelle Clifford
12	Putting Residents, Young and Old, at the Heart of What We Do	The Council will act with outstanding levels of transparency and accountability, with high standards of governance and trustworthiness.	Proposal to implement a robust system and process for: > the allocation of matters to the councils' forward plans > report preparation, consultation and approval > transparency and publication of decision making; and > decision tracking.	Completed	01/05/2021	31/12/2023	Complete	Andy Graham	Giles Hughes	Andrew Brown
13		The Council will actively manage Council budgets, delivering good levels of service through the wise and efficient use of funds available as well as enabling those budgets to grow so that the Council can take action towards the priorities of this Council Plan.	Procurement: Publica-wide project to embed climate, ecological and social value considerations in procurement processes to maximise the use of sustainable suppliers and support local businesses.	Officers continue to implement the changes introduced by the Procurement Act 2023, with a strong focus on transparency and statutory compliance. Alongside this, the Cabinet Office released the new National Procurement Policy Statement on 14 February, which took effect with the Act on 24 February. The Procurement Team has finalised updates to the Contract Procedure Rules, embedding climate, ecological, and social value considerations to support sustainable suppliers and local businesses. Toolkits to support procurement across all spend thresholds are in development, with training planned for Autumn 2025.			In Progress	Alicia Smith	Ciaran O'Kane / Paul Moran	Ciaran O'Kane
			Adopt and implement CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy).	The CIL examination hearing session took place on 10 June. Examiners report now received for fact-checking. The intention is to report the charging schedule for formal adoption through the Executive and Full Council in September and October respectively. The charging schedule will set an effective date of commencement (i.e. the date upon which qualifying developments in West Oxfordshire will become CIL liable).	01/11/2019	31/08/2024	Off Target but Mitigation in Place	Hugo Ashton	Giles Hughes / Chris Hargreaves	Chris Hargreaves

## Enabling a Good Quality of Life for All

21	Ensure the timely provision of built and green infrastructure which meets the needs of existing and incoming residents and that supports health and care to enable physical and mental well-being, community cohesion and delivers a high quality of life.	Commission (Sport England) Strategic Outcomes Planning Model (SOPM) through Max Associates to inform a West Oxfordshire Leisure, Health and Wellbeing Strategy which will define a more holistic leisure provision offer (inc. arts, culture, entertainment and sport). The SOPM will also inform the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (and Local Plan Review) and Town Centre regeneration plans.	Completed	01/09/2023	20/11/2024	Complete	Tim Sumner	Rachel Biles	Rachel Biles
		Explore opportunities for green investment for strategic development areas eg through the Carterton Masterplan and also through the Pan-Regional Partnership.	Met with Nigel Tipple from Enterprise Oxfordshire (formerly the LEP) to discuss potential avenues for green investment across key strategic development areas. The conversation focused on aligning local economic growth with sustainability goals, particularly through initiatives such as the Carterton Masterplan and the new Oxford - Cambridge Growth Corridor. Regional collaboration could be leveraged to attract larger-scale investment and innovation funding. Next steps include identifying further green initiatives via Low Carbon Hub, exploring funding streams and mapping nature-based solutions once work commences on the Carterton Masterplan.	01/01/2023	31/08/2025	On Target	Tim Sumner, Andrew Prosser	Sam Seronach	Sam Seronach
		Explore how the Local Plan can address the issue of securing long term maintenance of green infrastructure on large SDAs.	Local Plan Preferred Policy Options consultation taking place from 26 June - 8 August 2025. Includes a number of relevant policy options including in relation to infrastructure provision in general as well as more specifically in relation to green infrastructure. Further focused consultation on potential development locations to follow in October 2025 with a view to the final draft plan being published in spring 2026.	31/08/2022	31/08/2025	On Target	Andrew Prosser	Chris Hargraves	Chris Hargraves
		Consideration of community stewardship and maintenance of Strategic Development Areas – how do we enable this?	Local Plan Preferred Policy Options consultation taking place from 26 June - 8 August 2025. Includes a number of relevant policy options including in relation to infrastructure provision including maintenance arrangements. Further focused consultation on potential development locations to follow in October 2025 with a view to the final draft plan being published in spring 2026.	31/08/2022	31/08/2025	On Target	Andrew Prosser	Chris Hargraves	Chris Hargraves
22	Work with Oxfordshire County Council and others to increase the opportunity for residents to travel around and beyond the District on foot or by bike, or on public transport, to reduce car dependence and benefit from the health and economic benefits of doing so.	Carterton and the surrounding area LCWIP - public consultation of the draft closed at the end of June. The document is currently be revised based on feedback. Formal approval of the LCWIP will be sought at OCC's Cabinet Member Decision (CMD) meeting in October 25. Eynsham and the surrounding area LCWIP - we are currently drafting the LCWIP. There will be a public consultation of the draft in late September with a view to have the LCWIP formally approved in December 25. Woodstock LCWIP and Chipping Norton LCWIP were approved at OCC's CMD meeting in april	Carterton Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure (LCWIP) is underway.	10/09/2021		In Progress	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
		Strategic Housing Project: Internal management and modelling – proposals to be presented to Executive in paper compiled by Publica Assistant Director Planning and Sustainability to November Executive.	Completed	01/04/2023	15/11/2023	Complete	Geoff Saul	Giles Hughes	
		Strategic Housing Project: Assessing scope for investment and modelling.	Initial assessment shows that partnership working with an RP offers the potential to leverage funding and Homes England grant, whilst de-risking financial exposure for the Council. Live example at Woodford Way currently being progressed.	01/04/2023		On Target	Alaric Smith, Geoff Saul	Giles Hughes	Michael David
		Strategic Housing Project: Overview of modelling options and delivery. Proposed approach to the November Executive.	Completed	01/04/2023	15/11/2023	Complete	Tim Sumner, Geoff Saul	Giles Hughes	

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Explore the scope for alternative means of delivering the range of homes in the District that meet the diverse needs of our communities, such as investment in tenures and sizes of homes that the market does not currently deliver enough of.

The Council will be a hive of activity to help build and support thriving towns and villages that provide residents with a high quality of life by supporting a vibrant local economy, homes and infrastructure that meet people's needs, excellent health and wellbeing and ensuring equal access to opportunity for all.

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Work with partners to support a vibrant local economy which gives residents the opportunity to prosper and fulfil their ambitions through secure jobs and exciting careers, entrepreneurship and developing new skills to participate in and contribute to the local economy.

Further exploration of the best route to be more interventionist in housing delivery via direct provision – clarity needed over the desired objectives of establishing the council owned housing company or pursue an alternative route eg via a Joint Venture (OxPlace/Oxfordshire wide).	Routes to direct Council Intervention have been explored and a Council Owned company has been discounted. Alternative routes such as Joint Venture, Land trading, Profit share and commissioning models are more favourable. These options give the Council the desired control to achieve objectives with less exposure to resource and financial risk.	01/04/2023		On Target	Geoff Saul	Giles Hughes	Michael David
Development of business cases for existing Council owned sites – initial focus should be on Woodford Way – a housing scheme which integrates carparking (what is needed/tie in with EVPC). Key landowners/development partners.	The Outline Business Case for Woodford Way has been set out in the 9th July Executive Report. This report demonstrates an initial view of Project Viability, the balance between delivering affordable housing and car parking as well as a proposed model to achieve Council priorities.	01/04/2023		On Target	Geoff Saul	Michael David	Michael David
Further exploration of modular building – how, where and with whom including visits manufacturers. To understand options for delivery.	Modular Building companies have been researched (including Timber frame SIPs and container homes) however appropriate sites have not yet been identified.	01/04/2023		On Target	Geoff Saul	Giles Hughes	Michael David
Emergency accommodation – Acquisition of - consider the balance – single/couple and family accommodation).	8 bedspaces currently being acquired, Valuations of 15 further bedspaces being sought via Cottsway housing association. This demonstrates 23 bedspaces in the pipeline against a target of 30. Focussed on Single People as this is the overarching need.			On Target	Geoff Saul	Jon Dearing	Michael David
Completion of housing development at Walterbush Road, Chipping Norton.	Longstop date for development partner to complete land transfer extended to 1st December 2025, due to funding issues in a changing difficult market. Officers to look at other options, including disposal, in case the new deadline is not met.	01/10/2021	31/07/2023	Off Target but Migration in Place	Geoff Saul	Jasmine McWilliams	Jasmine McWilliams
Deliver the Local Authority Housing Fund as a means to relieve pressures on short term accommodation and bridging hotels with a longer term of objective to see the housing being used for more general affordable purposes.		01/04/2023	31/09/2024	On Target	Geoff Saul	Jon Dearing	Jon Dearing
Work with Carterton Town Council and other relevant stakeholders to identify economic regeneration priorities for the town and immediate area following completion of the UKSPF funded Carterton Strategic/Master Plan.	Further consideration being given as to how this is most appropriately taken forward by the Director of Place in discussion with Members. Further discussion to take place as part of the Executive Meeting to be held on 10 September 2025.			In Progress	Duncan Enright	Chris Hargreaves	
Strategy and plan for reinvigorating the District's Charter Markets	Following productive engagement and constructive dialogue with potential commercial operators, we collaborated to develop a revised market tender brief that better reflects the needs and expectations of all parties involved. As a result of this improved approach, we have successfully appointed a new commercial operator to manage the Charter Markets in both Witney and Chipping Norton. The new operator is set to commence operations from 1st August, bringing fresh energy and a renewed focus to the delivery and development of these important local markets. Specialist Markets will continue at Marriotts Walk this year. The Market Operators to feed into the design of the Public Realm improvements to ensure markets can work with new improvements.			On Target	Duncan Enright	Sam Stronach	Sam Stronach
Take an active role as member of Cotswolds Plus Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) and engagement with neighbouring LVEP's.				On Target	Duncan Enright	Chris Jackson	Chris Jackson

			Set future project priorities for Council and Stakeholders to secure the long term viability of our Market Towns via enhancements inc wayfinding & signage, public realm and support for independent retailers and appropriate market promotions/attractions.	Continue to prioritise the long-term viability of our Market Towns through improvements such as a potential wayfinding, signage project for Wintey, supporting public realm enhancements at Marriotts Walk, and continued ongoing support for independent retailers. Through UKSPF, we are also delivering a Shop Front Improvement Grant, a Rural Enterprise Growth Grant, and working with the Tourism Team on a Visitor Economy Grant Scheme. In parallel, we maintain strong engagement with town partnerships, the Witney Chamber of Commerce, and independent retailers across our market towns. This ongoing dialogue helps us respond to local needs whether related to business support, premises, or operational queries and ensures our initiatives are aligned with the challenges and opportunities facing our high streets.	01/12/2022	31/05/2025	On Target	Duncan Enright	Sam Seronach	Sam Seronach
			Oxfordshire County Council improvements to Witney Town Centre linked to Marriotts Walk redevelopment where appropriate.	Construction was initially scheduled for summer 2025; however, this timeline may be subject to delay. A follow-up meeting with Oxfordshire County Council has been arranged for the end of July 2025 to review progress and next steps.			Off Target but Mitigation in Place	Duncan Enright	Sam Seronach	Sam Seronach
			Guide the future delivery of Salt Cross new garden village and associated infrastructure to enable delivery of Salt Cross Science Park.	AAP hearing session held on 30 June 2025. Inspector's post-hearing note now awaited. This will dictate how the Council then proceeds towards adoption of the AAP. Adoption of the AAP will enable the Council to then determine an outline planning application for the scheme.	01/01/2018	31/12/2034	Off Target but Mitigation in Place	Duncan Enright	Andrea Clenton	Andrea Clenton
			Marriotts Walk – implementation of CBRE recommendations inc. securing new tenants, public realm improvements & making enhanced use of the square.	Work ongoing with CBRE to manage void units in a challenging market. Unit 4 lease completed and fitout in progress. Unit 6 Agreement for Lease completed and planning application being submitted. Terms agreed with prospective tenant for Unit 12. Public Realm designs and costings in train.			On Target	Duncan Enright	Jasmine McWilliams	Jasmine McWilliams
			Development of the Carterton Strategic Master Plan to regeneration the town and in doing so redressing balance between housing development with investment in the town centre, leisure and culture facilities, community space and business opportunities. Will seek to determine the best way to maximise the economic benefit of the RAF's largest airbase for the town and immediate area.	Following a recent meeting with Nigel Tipple, CEO of Enterprise Oxfordshire, there was a productive discussion around the regeneration of Carterton and the need to engage strategic partners such as Homes England, to help drive this forward. As part of this renewed focus, an Executive Member for Carterton has now been appointed, and a dedicated role is being created to support the town's regeneration efforts.	01/02/2022	31/05/2025	Off Target but Mitigation in Place	Albion Smith, Hugo Ashon, Geoff Saul, Tim Sumner	Sam Seronach	Sam Seronach
31	Creating a Better Environment for People and Wildlife	Work with others, and fulfil our statutory obligations, to ensure that land, air and water support biodiverse habitats, reduce pollution and bring about nature recovery to the District, putting it at the forefront of local decision making.	Ubico Grounds Maintenance Contract – review contract with aim of securing both biodiversity enhancements and budgetary savings.		01/04/2025	01/03/2026		Lidia Arciszewska	Si Pococke-Clidey	
			Biodiversity Land Management Plans - Working with Ubico to change land management processes across key WODC sites, for example reduced mowing frequency, creation of urban meadows, changes to floodplain meadow management, invasive species action, subsidence works, to improve them for both wildlife and people.	Habitat surveys have been completed and reports produced in early autumn. The land management plans will be reviewed over the winter. New road verge nature reserves have been proposed. The Waste Environmental Services Programme businesscase is progressing. Areas that are currently being managed for wildflowers have also been added onto the Grass Cutting and Maintenance webpage.	01/02/2022	01/03/2026	On Target	Lidia Arciszewska	Si Pococke-Clidey / Hannah Kanyon	Hannah Kanyon
			Support DEFRA funded Landscape Recovery Project (contiguous with the Evenlode and Windrush Catchments) in partnership with the North East Cotswolds Farmer Cluster and the Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership.	The Local Plan preferred policy options consultation paper currently out for consultation includes a number of geographically specific 'place-based' policies including in relation to the Windrush Valley. Further consideration to be given to the Evenlode catchment as the plan moves through its next stages of preparation.			In Progress	Lidia Arciszewska	Chris Hargreaves	
			Windrush in Witney funding bid, in partnership with Wychwood Forest Trust - Landscape-scale enhancements across the Witney Floodplains, working with OCC, WTC and Wychwood Forest Trust to introduce grazing, improve floral diversity, pollard willow trees, establishment of a new volunteer group and delivery of a series of community engagement/rural skills training events. Linked to 3.5.	Wychwood Forest Trust intend to submit the bid in August 2025.	01/05/2022	01/03/2025	Off Target but Mitigation in Place	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kanyon	Hannah Kanyon

			Coronation Community Orchard Scheme	The comms officers have been asked to prepare a communications plan to accelerate grant awards. 2 further orchards have been approved and are due to plant their orchard in the autumn.	01/11/2023	21/03/2025	On Target	Andrew Prosser/Lidia Ariszewska	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
32		Recognise and support the vital role of farming in natural ecosystem conservation, local food production and economic resilience, and the role that environmentally sustainable farming can play in achieving this.	Engaging with farmers as part of a wider consideration of the District's rural economy. How can WODC work to support (within its powers) a strong local rural economy, including diversification and the visitor economy.	Continued to explore potential investment in farmer-led woodland planting schemes for carbon sequestration.			In Progress	Lidia Ariszewska, Andrew Prosser	Chris Jackson / Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
33		Help people to connect with nature by improving understanding of and public access to green spaces and the countryside.	Deer Park South Access Project – Infrastructure improvements to enhance public access to woodland adjacent to strategic development area.	Completed	01/12/2022	31/05/2025	Complete	Duncan Enright	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
			Tackling inequalities in nature	The project has continued to develop with Chipping Norton, Carterton and Witney being identified as areas of focus. The Nature Recovery and Community Wellbeing team are continuing to work with local individuals, charities and councils and have drafted proposals aiming to meet varied needs of each community.			On Target	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon / Heather McCulloch	Hannah Kenyon / Heather McCulloch
34	The Council will be a progressive custodian of our environmental resources, supporting a healthy natural landscape and functioning ecosystem which is rich in wildlife and habitats that are enjoyed by and benefit all.	Be an active participant in the Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership and contribute to the production of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy to establish priorities and map proposals for action to drive nature's recovery, achieve Biodiversity Net Gain and provide wider environmental benefits specific to West Oxfordshire.	Officer group to convene with Local Nature Partnership - maintain relationship with LNP and work with partners to develop workstreams.		01/07/2022	01/07/2025	On Target	Lidia Ariszewska, Duncan Enright	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
			Explore the potential for the Council to acquire land for Biodiversity Net Gain and nature-based carbon sequestration.		8/12/2024	31/03/2026	On Target	Andrew Prosser	Frank Wilson / Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
35		Work with others to facilitate environmentally sensitive flood management of our river catchments.	Support of the Catchment Partnerships including the promotion (where appropriate) of other water quality campaigning groups. Sewerage and Water Agency Group continue to facilitate (Links with the Pan Regional Partnership – Scoping and Modelling Work).	The Nature Recovery officer continues to attend both the Evenlode Catchment Partnership and Windrush Catchment Partnership quarterly and steering group meetings.			On Target	Lidia Ariszewska, Andy Graham	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
			Delivery of the Local Plan – overview including how can the site allocations process through the Local Plan review play a positive role in water management? Coordination of policy. Linked to 4.2.	Local Plan preferred policy options consultation paper out for consultation until 8 August 2025 includes a new core strategic policy on the water environment. Further focused consultation on potential development locations to follow in October 2025 with a view to full draft plan being published in spring 2026.	01/06/2022	31/12/2024	On Target	Hugo Ashton	Chris Hargraves / Hannah Kenyon	Chris Hargraves
			Decarbonisation of council owned buildings, including leisure centres and sports pavilions – secure external PSDS funding and extend the MEEs project to include the full decarbonisation of tenanted buildings.	PSDS 3c Windrush Leisure Centre (off target with mitigation) - Approval to progress to construction has been delayed due to further cost analysis related to the building condition and maintenance, and will be sought at Executive on 9 July. The design and build contractor can start on-site in July. The planning application is being considered at Lowlands Planning Committee on 14 July. PSDS 4 Chipping Norton Leisure Centre (off target) - Accepted the Salix grant funding for the decarbonisation scheme. Project paused until SLT have decided how to proceed with the project. Further delays risk project viability.			Off Target but Mitigation in Place	Andrew Prosser, Dan Levy, Alaric Smith	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon

41	Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency	Drive down carbon emissions from Council operations including leisure, waste and street cleansing and running of the Council's estate, and in so doing lead by example to inspire others to take action to collectively reduce the overall carbon emissions of the District.	PSDS 3b funded Carterton Leisure Centre decarbonisation - Carbon reduction through the replacement of the heating and hot water system of the building with a low-carbon alternative and increasing the amount of solar PV on site.	(CL) Solar PV installation funded by SPSF is now complete with roof repairs due for completion by the end of July. Awaiting connection date from the DNO but overall progress is good. Agreement to extend completion beyond the 31st May. (HK) Following the government Spending Review, there will be no additional funding for the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme.	31/10/22	31/03/25	Off Target but Mitigation in Place	Andrew Prosser, Tim Sumner	Claire Locke	Hannah Kenyon
			Waste Vehicle Strategy - Supporting the Waste team on the development of the strategy to reduce emissions from the Council's waste vehicle fleet.	Waste Environmental Services Programme underway and will consider electric fleet and charging points.			On Target	Lidia Arciszewska	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
			Carbon Action Plan to 2030 and Climate Change Strategy to 2050 - Update of the Carbon Action Plan and Climate Change strategy to include scope 3 emissions, district carbon budgets, route maps to net zero, and actions.	Seeking approval for the new Climate Change Strategy at July Executive.	01/07/23	30/6/2024	On Target	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
			Climate Impact Assessment Tool (CIAT) – Develop the tool as a mandatory requirement on projects so as to embed climate and nature considerations in council decision making.	SIAT workshop held for report writers held. WODC SIAT portal page updated with training videos and guidance. Sustainability assessments to be mandatory for Council decisions from September.	01/02/2023	01/04/2024	On Target	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
			Solar PV project for tenanted buildings - A Public-wide long-term project to install rooftop solar panels on council owned buildings, increasing the amount of renewable energy generated in the District.	Approval to install energy efficiency measures at 3 Welch Way in parallel with repair works. Funding for low carbon heating and solar PV to be included in the 26/27 budget.	01/08/2022	01/12/2023	On Target	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
42		Encourage the use of nature based solutions to sequester carbon and combat the risks arising from climate change at a river catchment scale, such as restoration of meadows and trees to reduce flooding and improve water quality.	Biodiversity Action Plan – Develop and deliver workstreams to restore nature and enhanced biodiversity in the District.	Nature recovery actions with the highest impact are being prioritised.	01/03/2023		In Progress	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
43	The Council will be a community leader in responding to the challenges of climate change, including rapidly reducing greenhouse gas emissions and preparing the District and its communities for the impacts of climate change to ensure a fair transition for all to a future that will be defined by climate change.	Work with partner organisations and residents to facilitate the retrofit of carbon reduction measures in homes and businesses and pursue a drive to net zero carbon buildings in new developments through planning policy	Consider how proactive should WODC be in facilitating retrofit for the 'able to pay' market.	Continued to work with the CAPZero project team on accelerating domestic and commercial retrofit. Arup have produced a preliminary retrofit report.			In Progress	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
			Greenlight – nature and online hub to facilitate community action for a greener future.	Social media and climate bulletin considered more effective. Engagement being considered as part of the Climate Change Strategy.			In Progress	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
			Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) project for tenanted buildings - A Public-wide review of tenanted buildings to determine what measures are needed to bring the EPC rating up to a B or above by 2030.	MEES requirements not yet confirmed by Government. (HK) Reported breaches of MEES for privately rented homes will be investigated and enforced.	01/07/2023		On Target	Andrew Prosser	Jasmine McWilliams	Jasmine McWilliams
			Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 (HUG2) - A countywide scheme to upgrade energy efficiency and low carbon heating for low-income householders in the worst performing off-gas grid homes.	Completed	01/06/2023	01/03/2025	Complete	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
44		Encourage renewable energy generation at appropriate sites in the District, improving local energy and economic resilience and supporting the community benefits that this resilience will bring.	Explore opportunities with partners to encourage renewable energy within the District.	Countywide energy baseline and modelling progressing. Decision gateway to move to district Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) in September Executive.			In Progress	Andrew Prosser	Giles Hughes / Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon

45		Work with Oxfordshire County Council to deliver on our joint commitment to active travel and public transport, including through improved walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure and better public transport services.	Install EV charging points across the District.		26/05/2023	01/01/2025	Off Target but Mitigation in Place	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
51	Working Together for West Oxfordshire	Target available Council grant budgets to proposals by other organisations that will deliver on Council priorities.	Enable delivery of agreed project interventions on Government approved Investment Plan under UKSPF and REPF.	The UKSPF and REPF continue to be actively delivered and managed, providing vital support to local enterprises. In addition, three new grant opportunities have been developed to further strengthen business resilience and growth: the Shop Front Improvement Grant, the Rural Enterprise Growth Grant, and the Visitor Economy Grant Scheme. These programmes are being managed in-house to ensure close and ongoing dialogue with local businesses. We have also continued to support Westhive through the Communities Team and have renewed and strengthened partnerships with key providers, including FarmAbility, Enterprise Oxfordshire, and the North North East Cotswolds Farming Cluster. Furthermore, a new initiative—Tools for Tomorrow—has been launched to support councillor priorities and address gaps in local construction trade provision.			On Target	Duncan Enright	Sam Stronach	Sam Stronach
			Successful implementation of new Grant Scheme: a) Crowdfunding, b) Community and Voluntary Sector Service Level Agreements and c) Youth initiatives.	We have also continued to support Westhive through the Communities Team and have renewed and strengthened partnerships with key providers, including FarmAbility, Enterprise Oxfordshire, and the North North East Cotswolds Farming Cluster. Furthermore, a new initiative—Tools for Tomorrow—has been launched to support councillor priorities and address gaps in local construction trade provision.	01/12/2022	31/05/2025	On Target	Alaric Smith with Rachel Crouch, Andrew Prosser and Lidia Arciszewsk	Heather McCulloch	Heather McCulloch
53		Support Town and Parish Councils to represent their communities energetically and take action on issues important to their locality.	Towns and Parish Biodiversity project— UKSPF funded project to provide case studies for communities on how to enhance biodiversity in different habitats.	Completed	01/12/2022	31/05/2025	Complete	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
54		Support the Voluntary and Community Sector to continue to undertake activity which serves the needs of residents including established organisations and more informal groups working to address particular needs such as access to food, youth support and cultural provision.	Community Grants		01/12/2022	31/05/2025	On Target	Rachel Crouch	Heather McCulloch	Heather McCulloch
55		Make a dedicated effort to further understand and meet the needs of our young people and support their mental health, including children, teenagers and young adults leaving school, entering the world of work and/or seeking to set up home in the District.	Focussed programme of engagement with young people, and other groups, on mental and physical health, local facilities and spaces for young people, to ensure future leisure, sport, culture and arts provision in the District best provides for these.				In Progress	Rachel Crouch, Tim Sumner	Heather McCulloch	Heather McCulloch
			Have Your Say Events – focussed topic event for young people.				In Progress	Rachel Crouch	Heather McCulloch	Heather McCulloch

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WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Delivering great services locally

PERFORMANCE REPORT:

**April - June 2025**

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# Summary Index

Area	KPI Name	RAG	Page
Waste and Environment	<a href="#">Number of fly tips collected and percentage that result in an enforcement action</a>		29
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Leisure	<a href="#">Number of visits to the leisure centres &amp; (Snapshot) Number of gym memberships</a>		35

## A note on performance benchmarking

Benchmarking can be a useful tool for driving improvement; by comparing our performance with other similar organisations, we can start a discussion about what good performance might look like, and why there might be variations, as well as learning from other organisations about how they operate (process benchmarking).

When we embark on performance benchmarking, it is important to understand that we are often looking at one aspect of performance i.e. the level of performance achieved. It does not take into account how services are resourced or compare in terms of quality or level of service delivered, for example, how satisfied are residents and customers? Furthermore, each council is unique with its own vision, aim and priorities, and services operate within this context.

Benchmarking has been included wherever possible ranking against other Local Authorities within Oxfordshire County Council. The Councils included are Cherwell, Oxford City, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse.

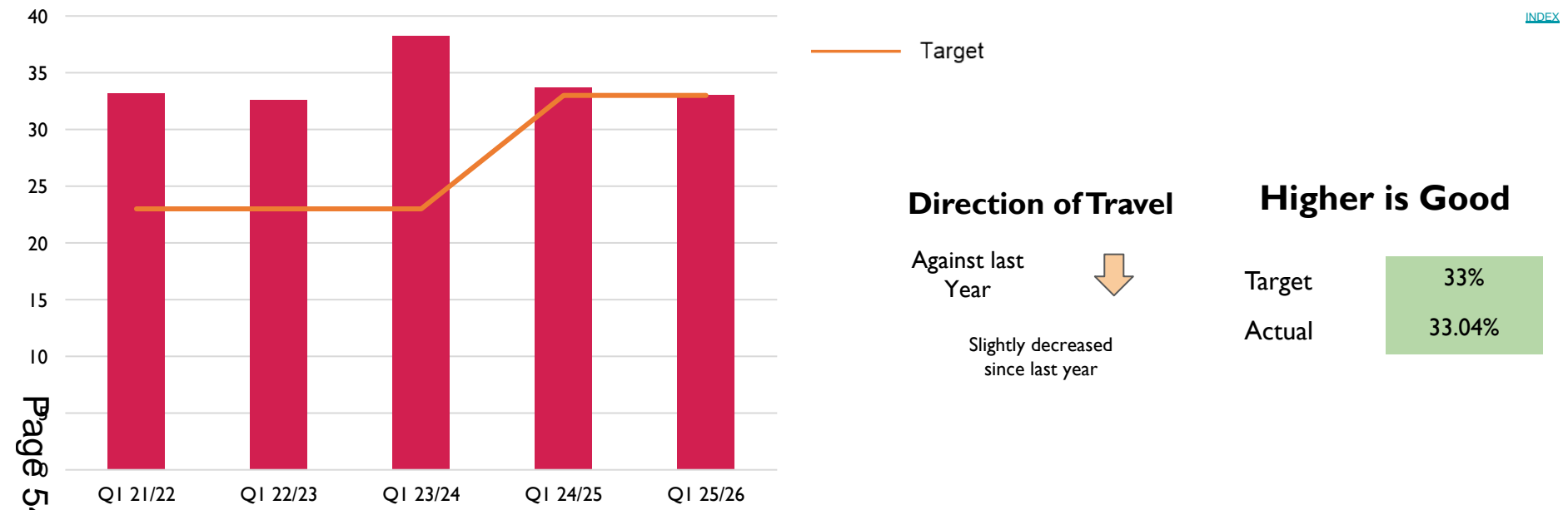
A RAG (red, amber, green) status has been applied to each KPI to provide a quick visual summary of the status of that KPI for the quarter. Additionally, RAG status has been added to the direction of travel for each metric to show how the performance against last quarter and the same quarter compared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

# Overall Performance

Overall, the Council's performance has remained broadly positive, building on the strong foundations laid in the previous quarter. Continued improvements were seen in key areas such as Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates collection, planning determination times, and customer satisfaction. Leisure centre visits and gym memberships also remained high, reflecting sustained public engagement with health and wellbeing services. Notably, the number of affordable homes delivered in Q1 exceeded the quarterly target. However, some challenges persist. Processing times for Council Tax Support and Housing Benefit change events remained above target, largely due to operational adjustments linked to Universal Credit automation. Additionally, the percentage of household waste recycled continued to decline, impacted by seasonal factors and broader national trends.

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Moving forward, the Council remains committed to further enhancing its performance and service delivery. A key focus is on the development and implementation of automation and self-service options, aimed at providing customers with accessible and efficient self-help tools. By enabling customers to independently address their queries and concerns, the Council anticipates a reduction in the need for repeated interactions, streamlining services and improving overall efficiency. The Council will continue to monitor the impact of these improvement programs, assessing their effectiveness in reducing customer contact and enhancing operational processes to ensure the delivery of high-quality services to the community.

# Percentage of Council Tax Collected



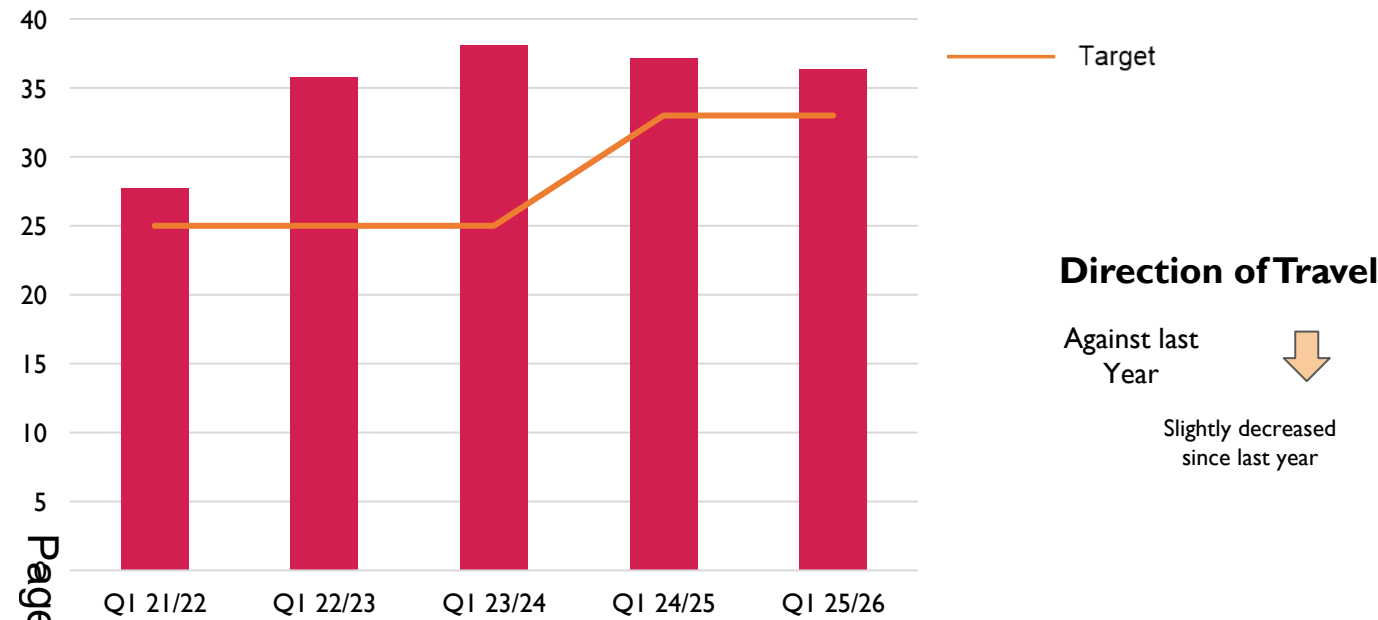
## How do we compare?

Benchmarking via Gov.uk Tables and Individual Council Websites using other Local Authorities within Oxfordshire - Current Dataset is up to March '25 (2024-2025)

2024-2025 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
Cherwell	98.06	1/5	Top
<b>West Oxfordshire</b>	<b>98.02</b>	<b>2/5</b>	<b>Top</b>
South Oxfordshire	97.94	3/5	Second
Vale of White Horse	97.91	4/5	Third
Oxford	96.49	5/5	Bottom

By the end of Q1, the Council met its 33% collection target and exceeded pre-pandemic performance levels with a 2.6% increase, although the growing shift toward 12-month payment plans is contributing to a gradual decline in early-year collection rates.

# Percentage of Non-domestic rates collected



## Direction of Travel

Against last Year

↓

Slightly decreased since last year

## Higher is Good

Target	33%
Actual	36.34%

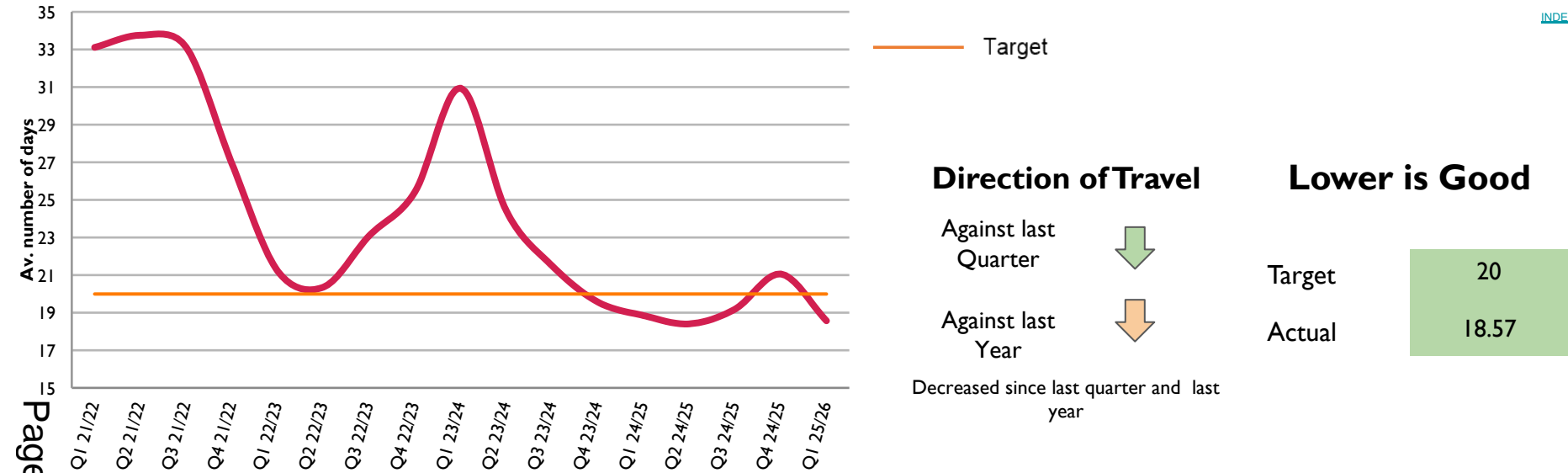
## How do we compare?

Benchmarking via Gov.uk Tables and Individual Council Websites using other Local Authorities within Oxfordshire - Current Dataset is up to March '25 (2024-2025)

2024-2025 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
Cherwell	98.83	1/5	Top
<b>West Oxfordshire</b>	<b>97.66</b>	<b>2/5</b>	<b>Top</b>
Oxford	97.21	3/5	Second
Vale of White Horse	97.08	4/5	Third
South Oxfordshire	96.64	5/5	Bottom

By the end of Q1, West collected 36.34%, surpassing its 33% target, though this was largely driven by a small number of businesses paying in full early, as overall Rates collection has seen a modest decline compared to last year.

# Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims



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## How do we compare?

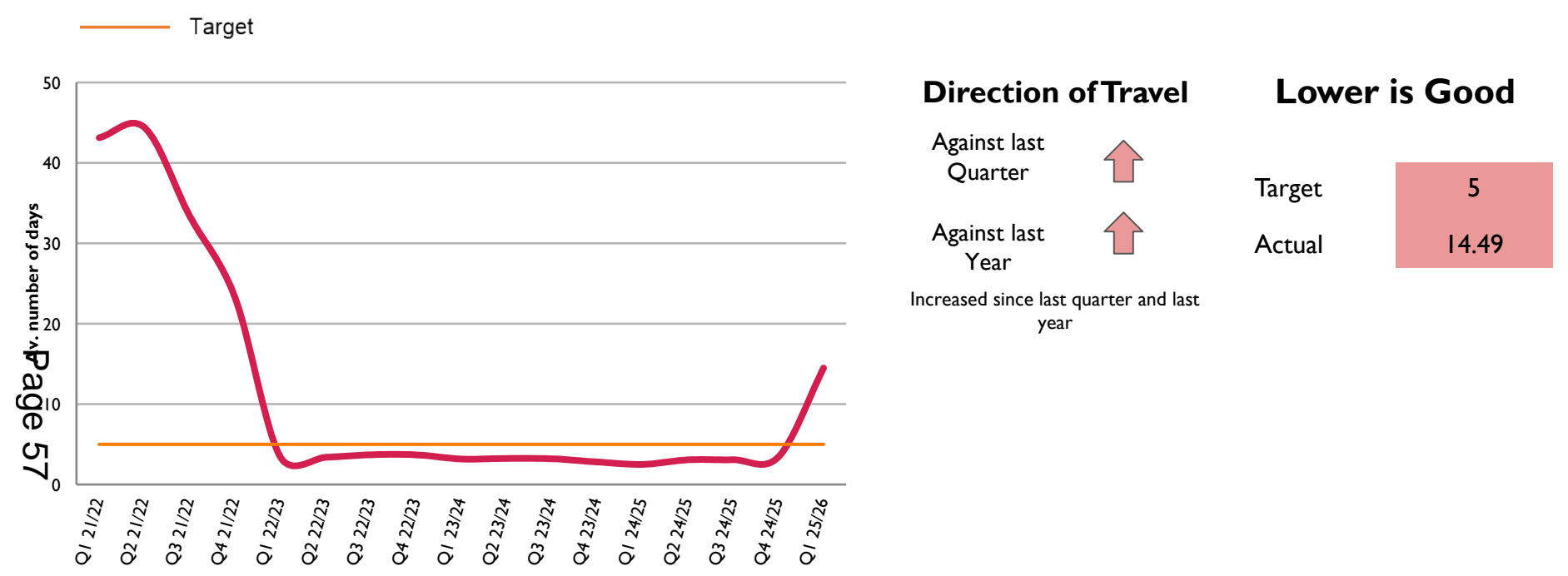
Gov.uk produces tables to show a snapshot of the number of CTS claimants at the end of each financial year. The below table shows number of claimants at the end of March 2025 and the percentage change from March 2024 for each authority.

	Number of Claimants at end of Sept 2024	Percentage Change since Sept 2023	County Rank (Higher = less claimants)
Oxford	9,105	-6.87%	1/5
South Oxfordshire	4,884	-1.65%	2/5
Cherwell	5,941	-1.51%	3/5
<b>West Oxfordshire</b>	<b>4,449</b>	<b>1.97%</b>	<b>4/5</b>
Vale of White Horse	5,094	6.68%	5/5

Processing times fell to 18.57 days, around 2.5 days lower than last quarter, with a slight year-on-year decrease, reflecting continued service improvement.

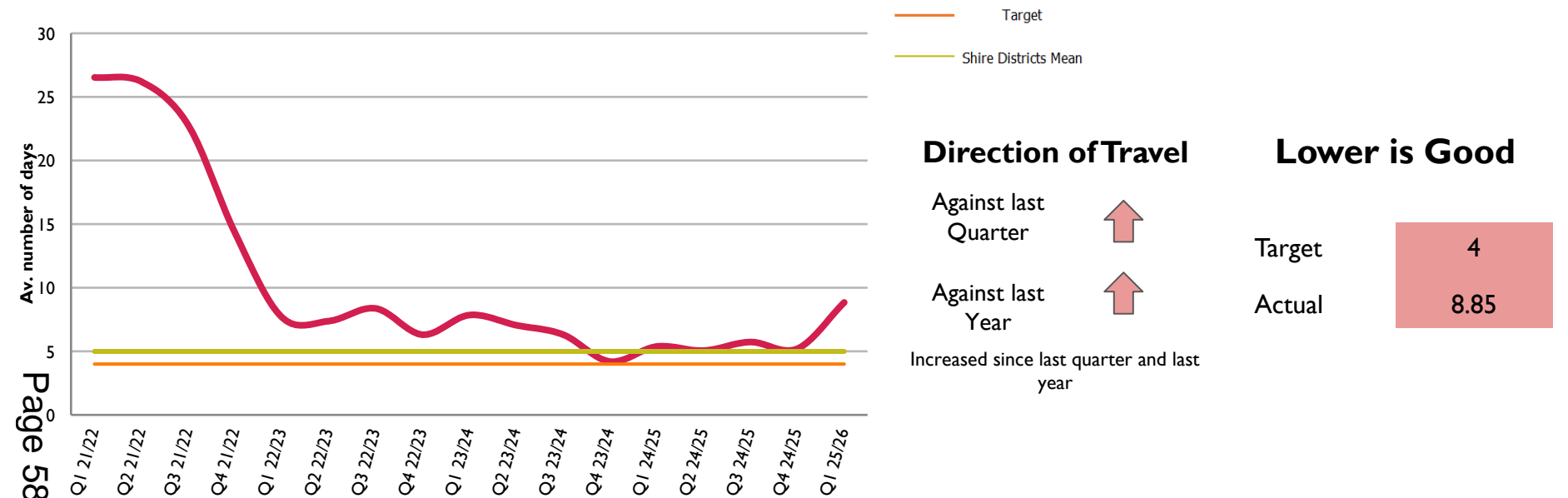


# Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events



Processing times rose sharply in Q1, reaching 14.49 days due to a planned one-month pause in Universal Credit uploads, which allowed the team to reduce the manual application backlog and enhance automation. Since resuming, automation has consistently exceeded 90%, and while processing times are improving, they may not return under target until Q3 due to the cumulative nature of the metric.

# Processing times for Housing Benefit Change of Circumstances



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## How do we compare?

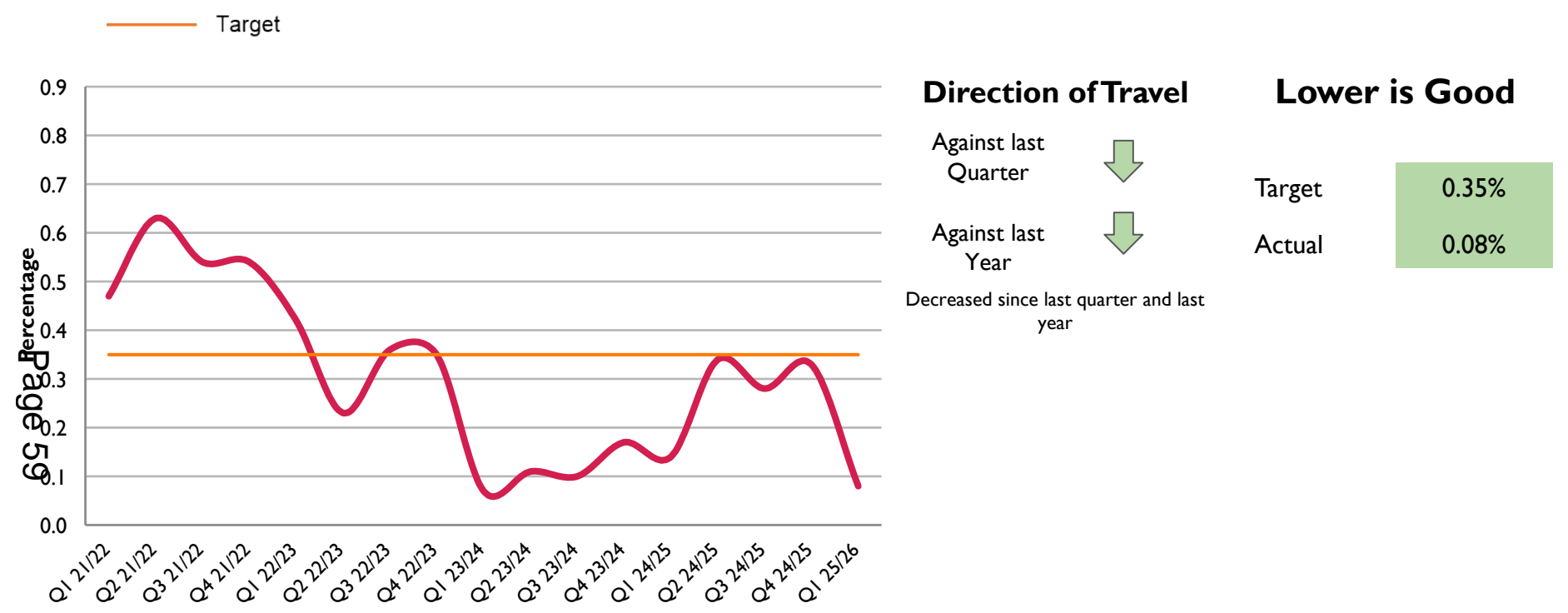
Gov.uk produces tables showing statistics on the average number of days to process a change in circumstance of an existing Housing Benefit claim. Latest Release – October – December 2024 (Q3 24-25)

Q3 24-25 Benchmark	Days	County Rank	Quartile
Cherwell	3.62	1/5	Top
Vale of White Horse	5.88	2/5	Top
South Oxfordshire	6.28	3/5	Second
<b>West Oxfordshire</b>	<b>7.38</b>	<b>4/5</b>	<b>Third</b>
Oxford	18.9	5/5	Bottom

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

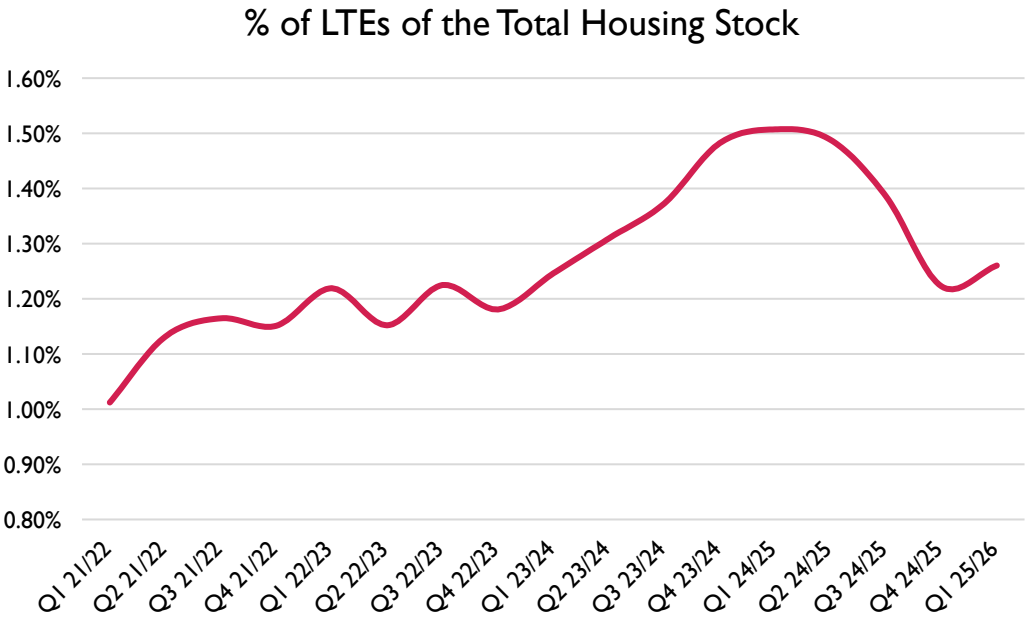
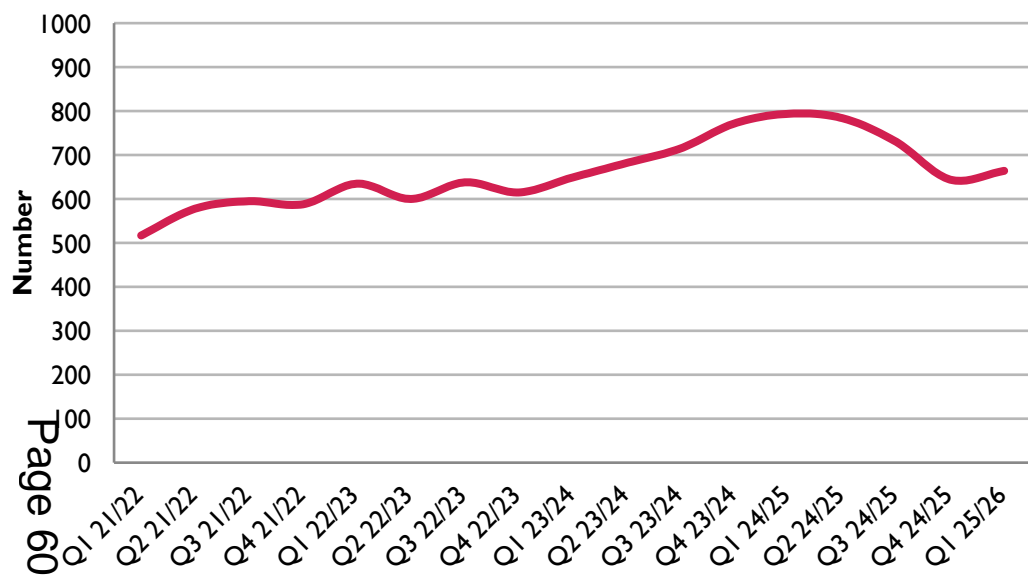
Processing times rose to 8.85 days, moving above the 4-day target and marking a notable increase from previous quarters. This was driven by the added complexity of managed migration to Universal Credit and a planned pause in UC uploads, which temporarily impacted workflows while supporting long-term automation improvements.

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





The Council remains below the national target of 0.48% and the stricter service target of 0.35%.

# (Snapshot) Long Term Empty Properties



## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

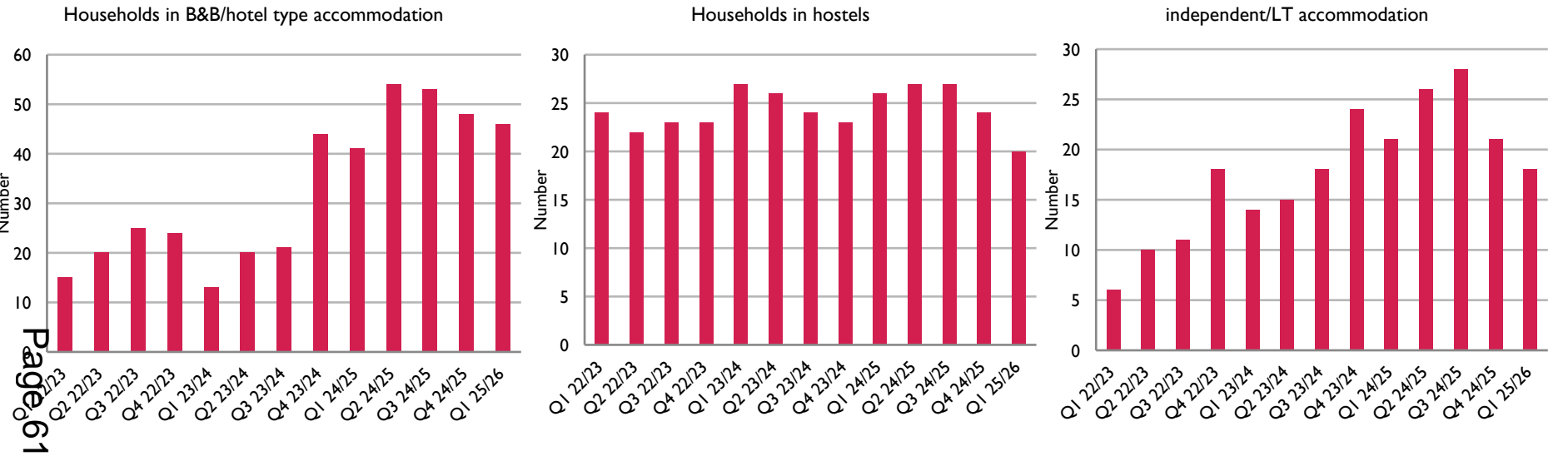
Increased since last quarter but decreased since last year

## Lower is Good

664

The Council recorded a modest increase of 20 long-term empty properties since last quarter, attributed to improved reporting systems. These enhancements have enabled more accurate tracking and will support more targeted interventions going forward.

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



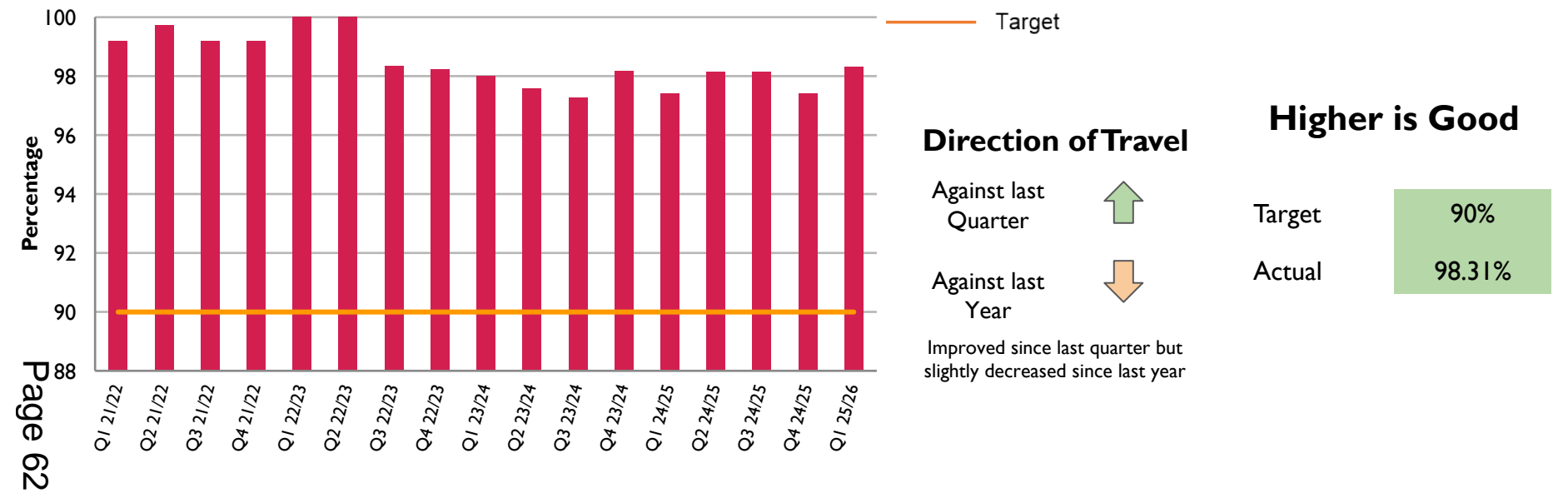
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## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter	B&B/Hotels	↓
Against last Year	B&B/Hotels	↑
Against last Quarter	Hostels	↓
Against last Year	Hostels	↓
Against last Quarter	Move Ons	↓
Against last Year	Move Ons	↓

At West, there's been a steady month-on-month decline in the use of insecure B&B-type accommodation. This reflects strong homelessness prevention work and effective partnerships with local providers, including initiatives like the Local Authority Housing Fund to boost self-contained temporary housing.

# Customer Satisfaction - Telephone



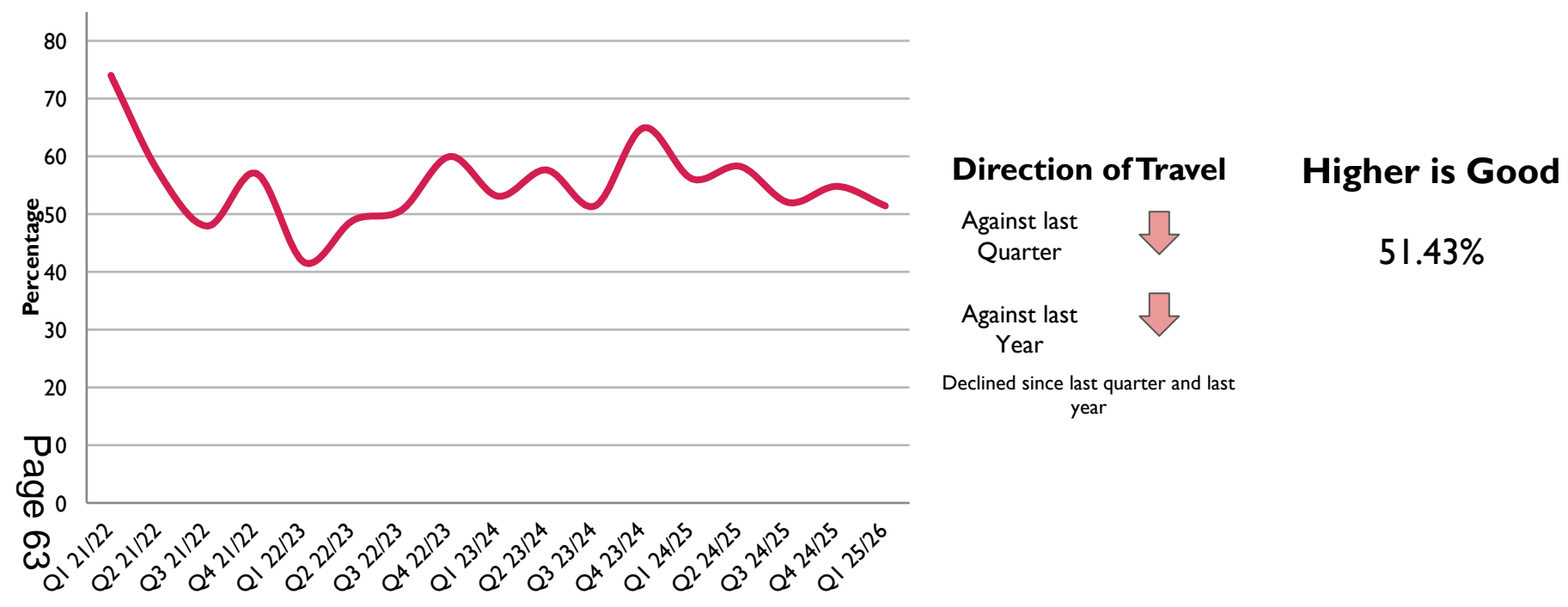
## How do we compare?

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

A total of 532 residents participated in the survey, of these, 523 customers reported being satisfied with the service, reflecting a high level of overall satisfaction.

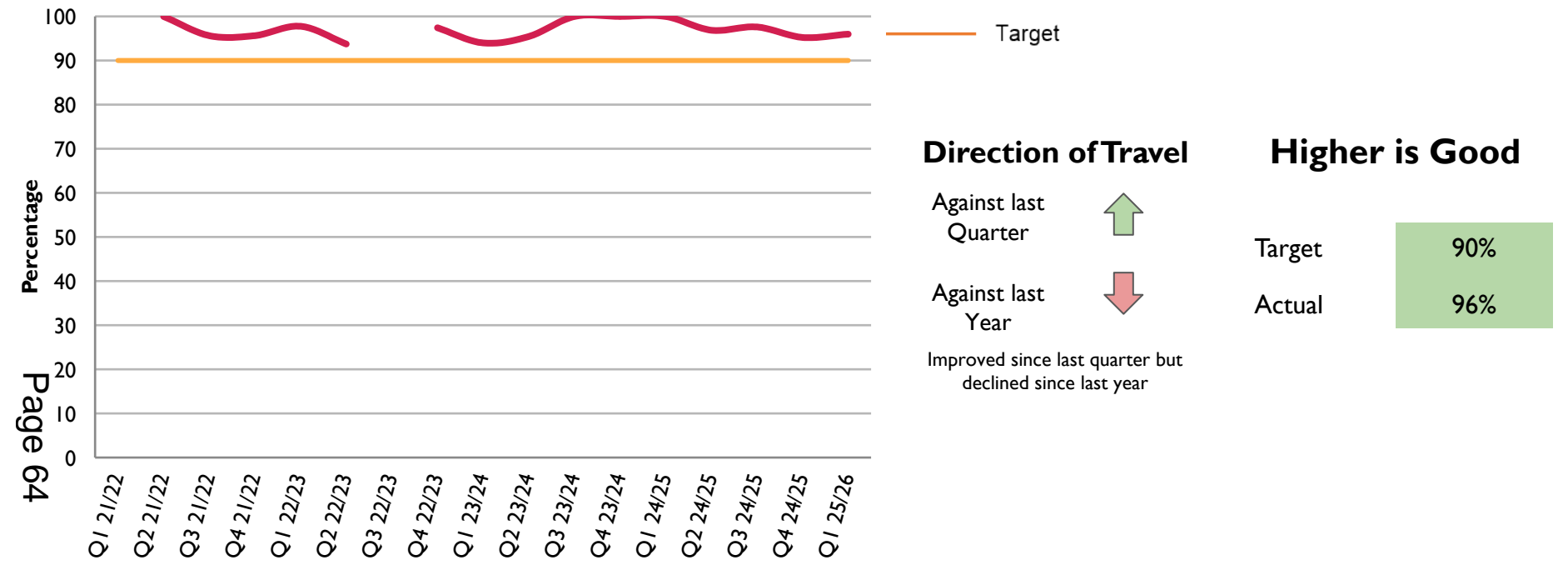
	April Rank	April Net Sat.	May Rank	May Net Sat.	June Rank	June Net Sat.
West Oxfordshire	1	96%	3	96%	2	97%

# Customer Satisfaction - Email



630 residents responded to the survey, with 324 expressing satisfaction (51.43%), down from 54.83% in Q4, with all outbound customer service emails including a survey link. The team continually monitors feedback closely and proactively seeks opportunities to enhance the overall customer experience.

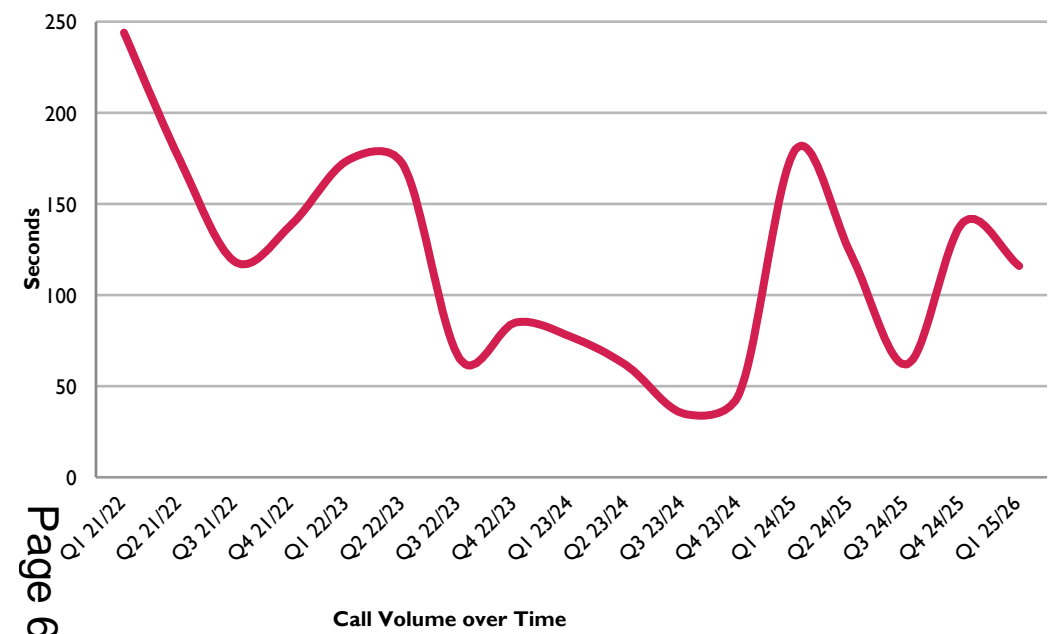
# Customer Satisfaction - Face to Face



Customer satisfaction with face-to-face interactions remains consistently strong.





# Customer Call Handling - Average Waiting Time



## Direction of Travel

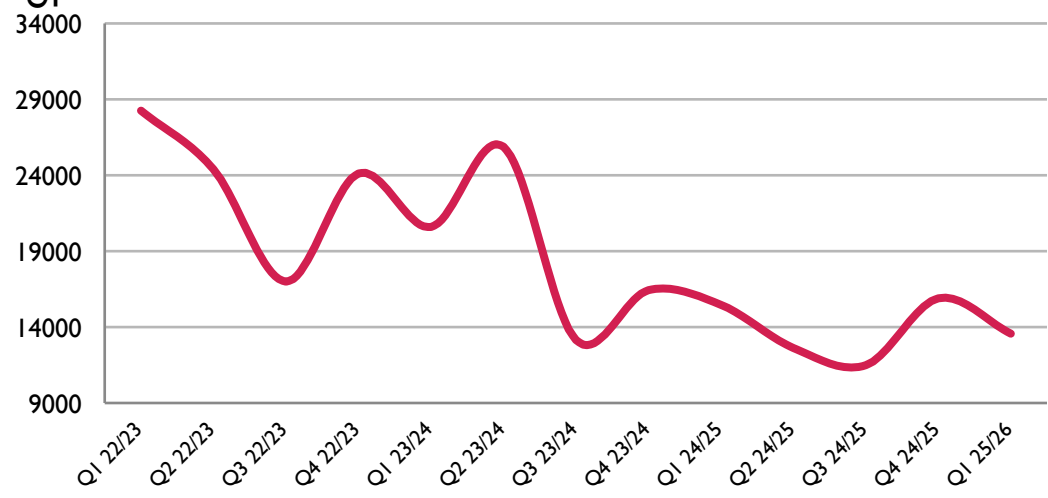
**Lower is Good**

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

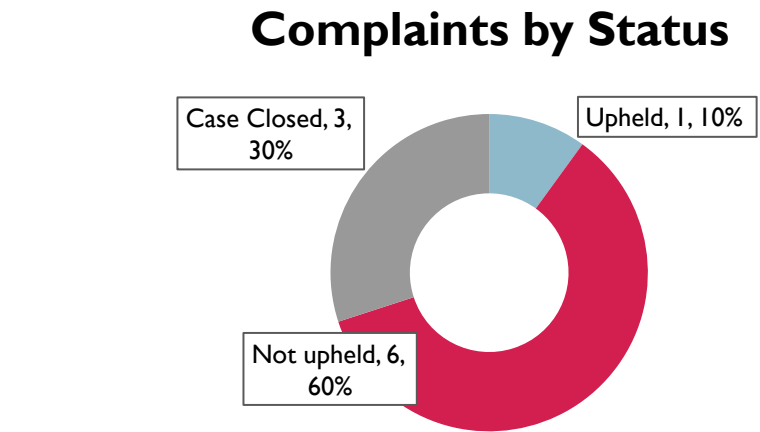
Decreased since last quarter and since last year

116 Seconds



In Q1, the Council achieved a one-minute reduction in average call waiting times compared to the same period last year. This improvement was delivered while maintaining operational consistency and high levels of customer satisfaction, despite the added demands of onboarding and training during peak periods.

# Number of complaints upheld



### Direction of Travel

Complaints upheld or partly upheld at Stage 1

Against last Quarter

↑

Against last Year

↓

Increased since last quarter but declined since last year

## How do we compare?

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

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

2024-25	Complaints Investigated	Percentage Upheld	Upheld decisions per 100,000 residents	Percentage Satisfactory Remedy	Percentage Compliance with Recommendations
Cherwell	3	33	0.6	100	N/A
Oxford	2	50	0.6	0	100
South Oxfordshire	1	0	0	N/A	N/A
Vale of White Horse	1	100	0.7	100	N/A
<b>West Oxfordshire</b>	1	100	0.8	0	100

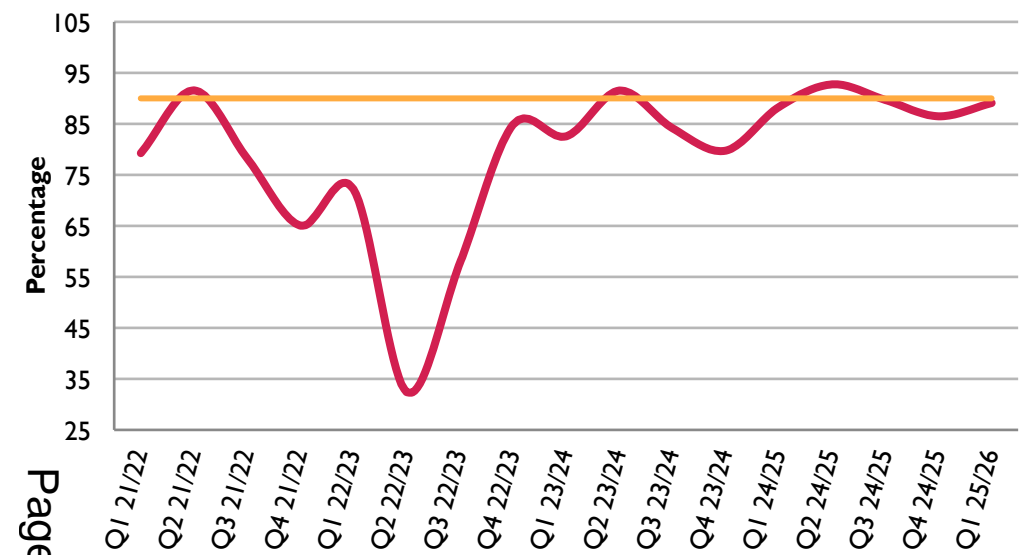
See the table on the following page for a breakdown of those upheld and partially upheld.

- A new Customer Feedback Procedure went live on the 1st April 2025.
- The new process has the following stages:
- Stage 1: A review of the complaint will be undertaken by an Operational Manager within the Service Area to which the complaint relates. A response needs to provide within 10 working days from the date that we advised that the complaint was valid.
  - Stage 2: Requests for Stage 2 will be acknowledged and logged within five working days of the escalation request being received. Upon receipt of a Stage 2 request, an investigation into the complaint will be undertaken by the Complaint Officer or a member of the Complaints Team. A response will be provided to the customer within 20 working days from receipt of the request to escalate the complaint to Stage 2. Stage 2 is the organisation's final response; the complainant can then refer their complaint to the LGO.

# Complaints Upheld or Partially Upheld Breakdown

Service area	Description	Outcome/learning	Decision	Response time (days)
West Oxfordshire				
Service Support	Customer upset organisation not recognised and invoice provided was incorrect.	Apology issued.	Upheld	9

# Percentage of FOI requests answered within 20 days



Target

## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter



Against last Year



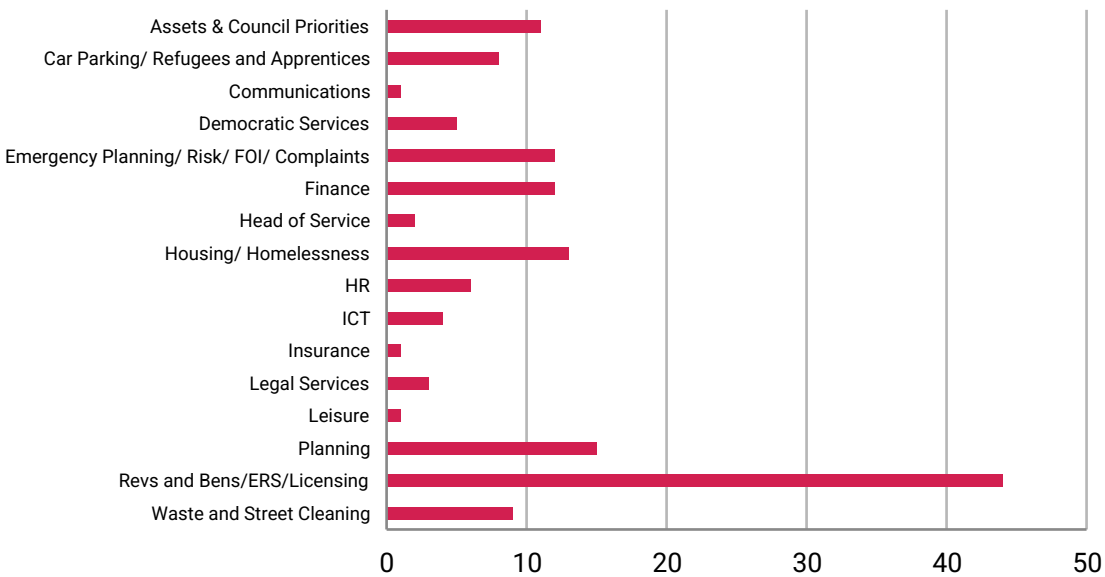
Improved since last quarter and last year

## Higher is Good

Target	90%
Q4 Actual	89.1%

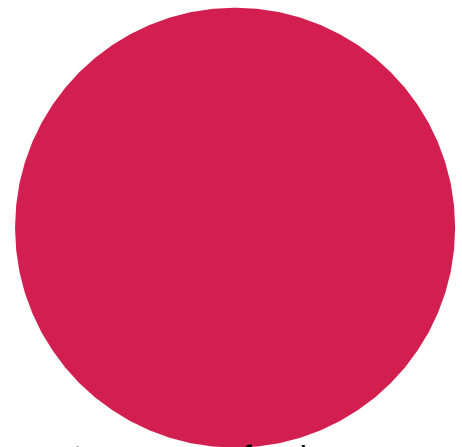
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Requests by Service Area



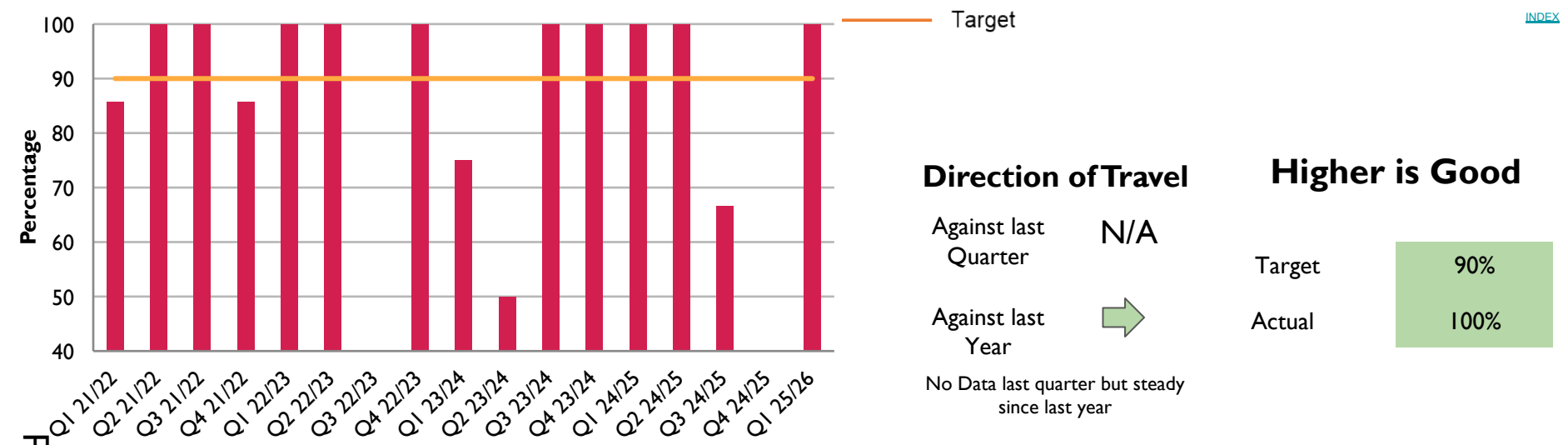
## Reason FOI request was not Answered within 20 Days

Service Area not provided Information in time



All Freedom of Information requests for the quarter have been addressed.

# Building Control Satisfaction



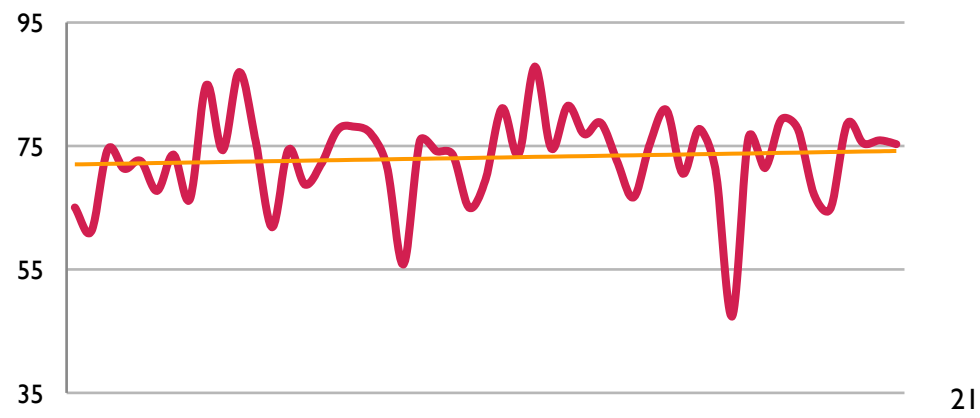
The satisfaction survey data continues to present challenges due to a low number of responses with only two received this quarter. In light of this, the team is exploring ways to improve the process. One option being considered is working with the Data Team to develop a webform, which would be emailed to customers who have received a completion certificate.

## How do we compare?

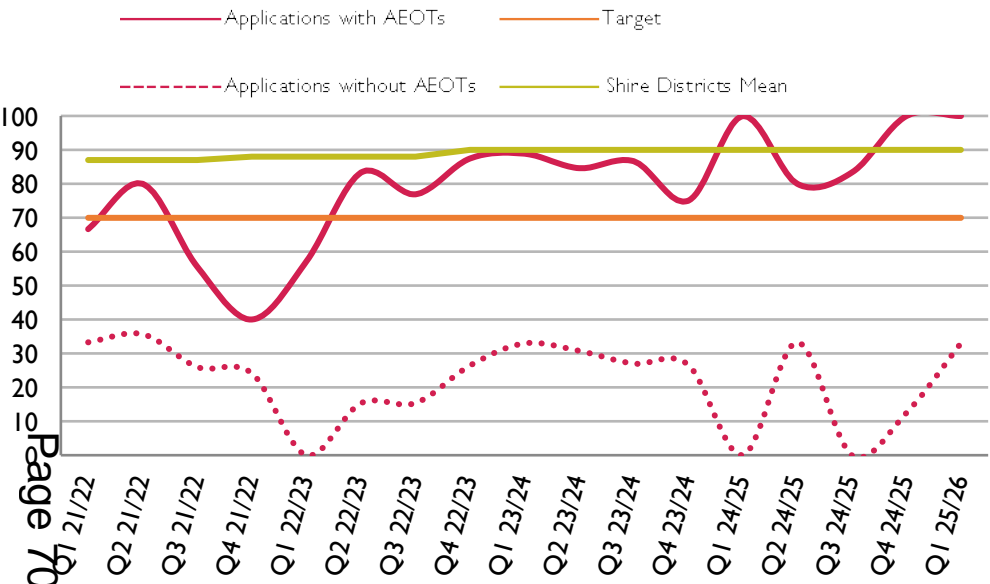
Percentage of share in the market

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Number of Apps for Quarter
West	75%	76%	75%	152

The below chart shows market share over time from April 2021



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



## Direction of Travel Higher is Good

Against last Quarter

➡

Against last Year

➡

Target

70%

Actual

100%

Same since last quarter and last year

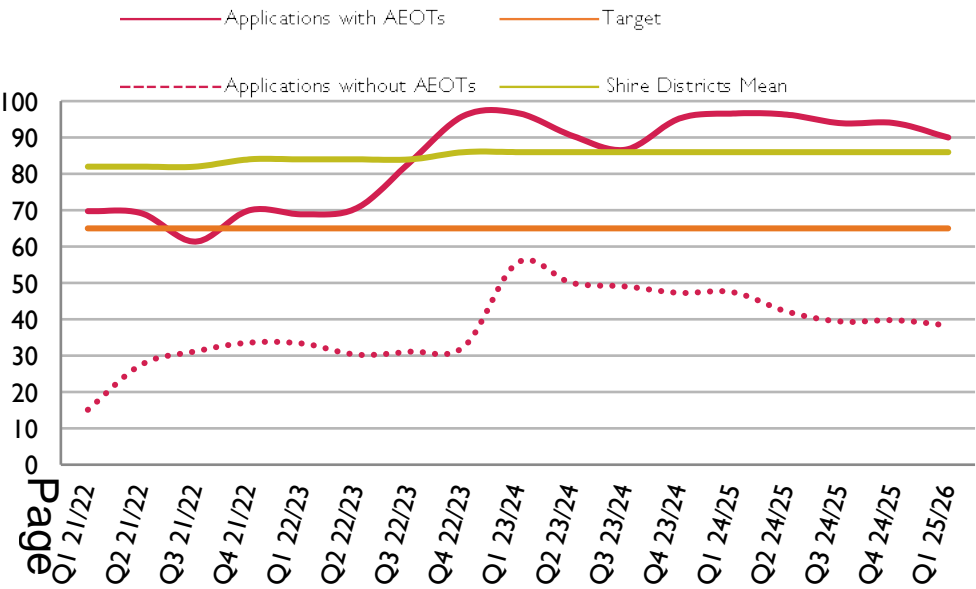
### How do we compare?

Major Developments - % within 13 weeks or agreed time – LG Inform


Q4 24-25 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
Oxford	100	1/5	Top
Vale of White Horse	100	1/5	Top
<b>West Oxfordshire</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1/5</b>	<b>Top</b>
South Oxfordshire	83	4/5	Third
Cherwell	78	5/5	Bottom


The service demonstrated consistently strong performance in Q1, with all three Major applications processed within the agreed timescales.

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



### Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Decreased since last quarter and last year

### Higher is Good

Target	65%
Actual	90%

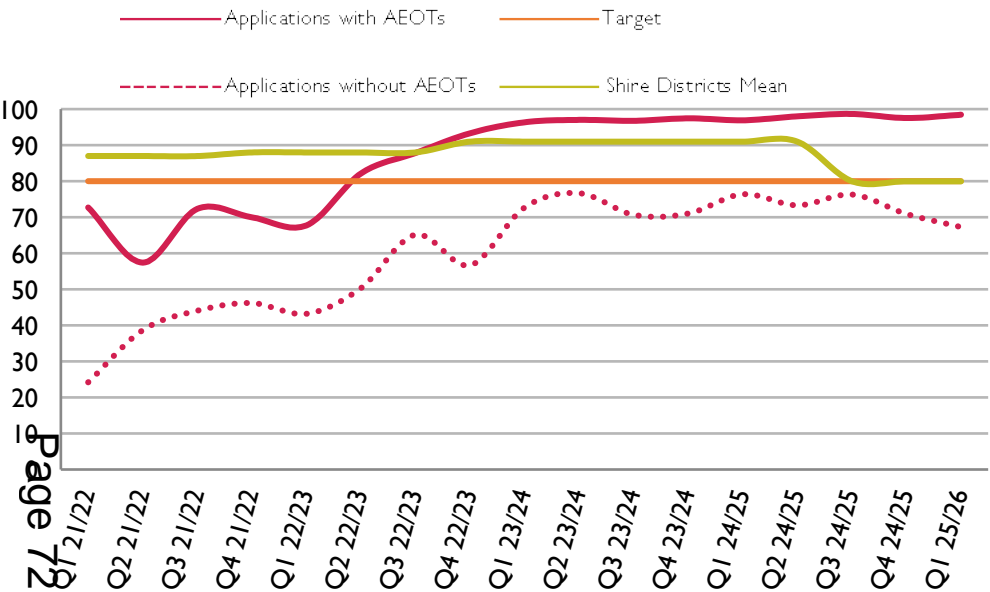
## How do we compare?

Minor Developments - % within 8 weeks or agreed time – LG Inform


Q4 24-25 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
<b>West Oxfordshire</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>1/5</b>	<b>Top</b>
South Oxfordshire	91	2/5	Top
Vale of White Horse	87	3/5	Second
Oxford	85	4/5	Third
Cherwell	78	5/5	Bottom


This quarter, the planning team remains fully staffed, but the absence of a dedicated Landscape Officer is contributing to delays in some areas. Despite this, the team continues to manage workloads effectively while seeking solutions to address the gap.

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



## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Slightly increased since last quarter and last year

## Higher is Good

Target

80%

Actual

98.46%

## How do we compare?

Other Developments - % within 8 weeks or agreed time – LG Inform

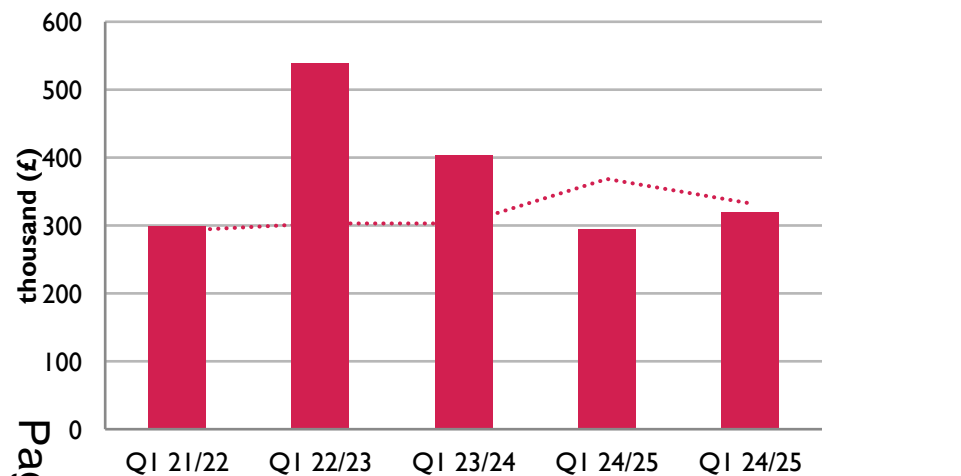
Q4 24-25 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
Vale of White Horse	98	1/5	Top
<b>West Oxfordshire</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>2/5</b>	<b>Top</b>
South Oxfordshire	95	3/5	Second
Cherwell	89	4/5	Third
Oxford	89	5/5	Bottom

Determination times remain high, with 260 applications processed in Q4, including 256 within agreed timescales.

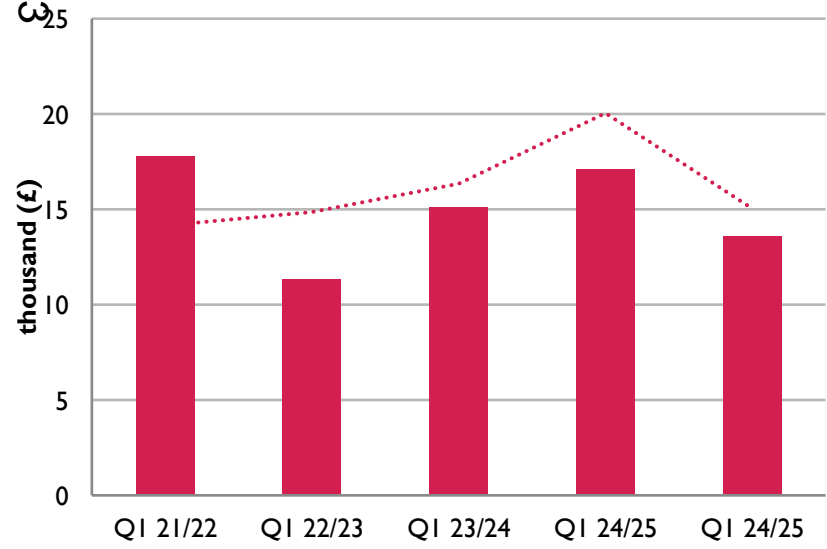


# Total Income achieved in Planning & Income from Pre-application advice

Total planning income



Pre-application income

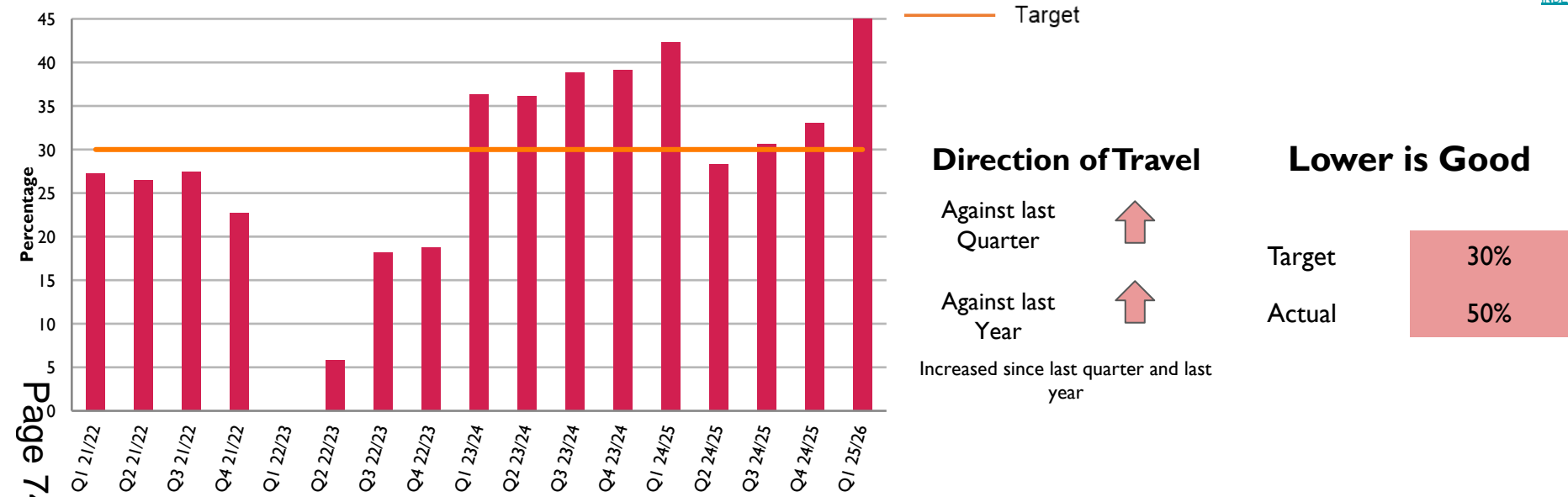


Direction of Travel

Total Planning Income		Higher is Good	
Against last Quarter	↓	Total Planning Income (£)	
Against last Year	↑	Target	332,543
		Actual	318,925
Pre-Application Income		Pre-Application Income (£)	
Against last Quarter	↑	Target	15,043
Against last Year	↓	Actual	13,594
Total Income declined since last quarter but increased since last year			
Pre-App Income increased since last quarter but declined since last year			

In Q1, the Council experienced a slower start in planning income, falling slightly short of its targets. While pre-application fees increased, speculative activity has yet to pick up, suggesting a delay rather than a decline in interest.

# Percentage of Planning Appeals Allowed (cumulative)



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## How do we compare?

Percentage of planning appeals allowed – LG Inform

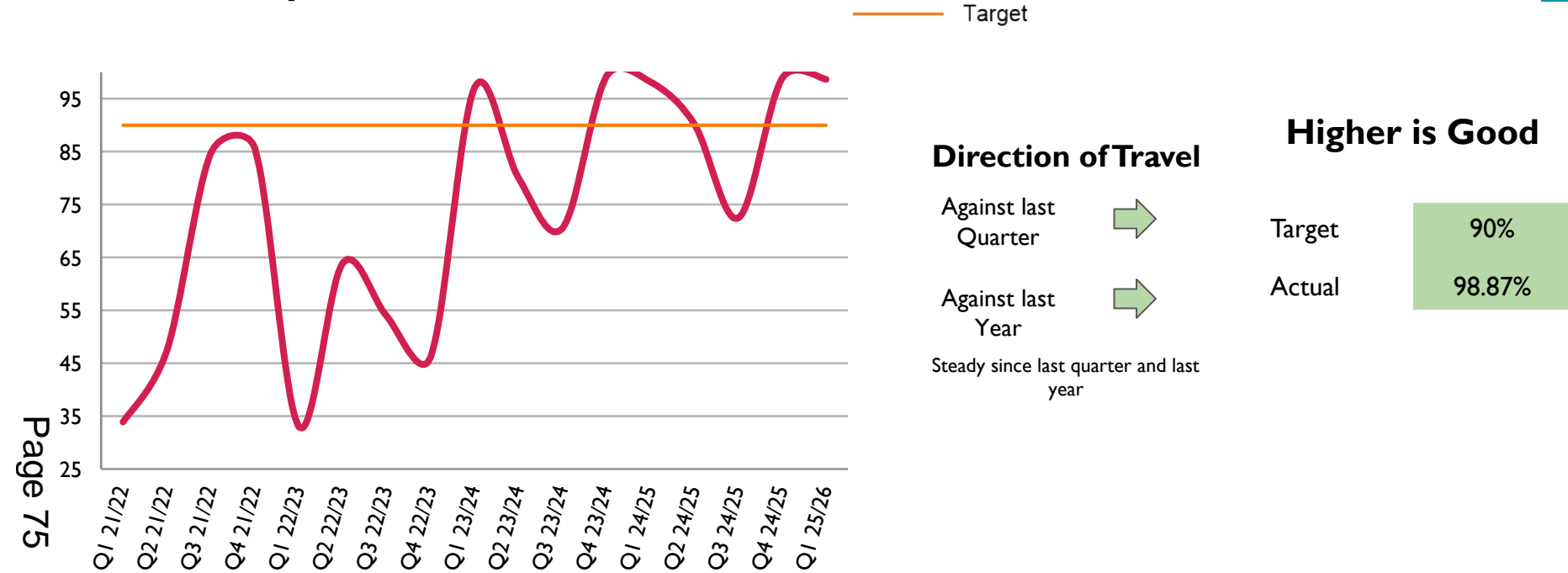
Q4 24-25 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
<b>West Oxfordshire</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1/5</b>	<b>Top</b>
Oxford	38	2/5	Top
Vale of White Horse	42	3/5	Second
Cherwell	50	4/5	Third
South Oxfordshire	83	5/5	Bottom

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

The below shows the appeal split between Uplands and Lowlands for the year;

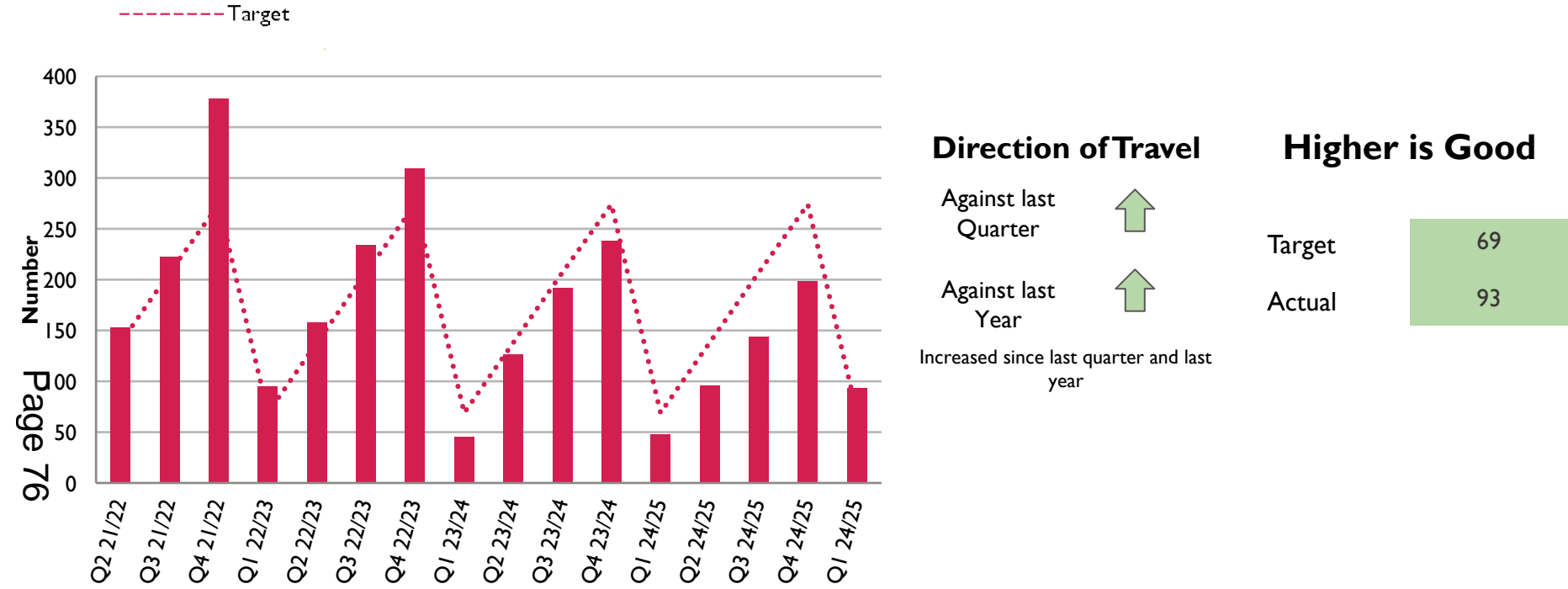
	Decided	Allowed	% Allowed
Uplands	4	2	50.00%
Lowlands	4	2	50.00%

# Percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days



In Q1, the Council maintained strong performance in completing official Land Charges searches, achieving 98.67% within the 10-day target - well above the 90% benchmark.

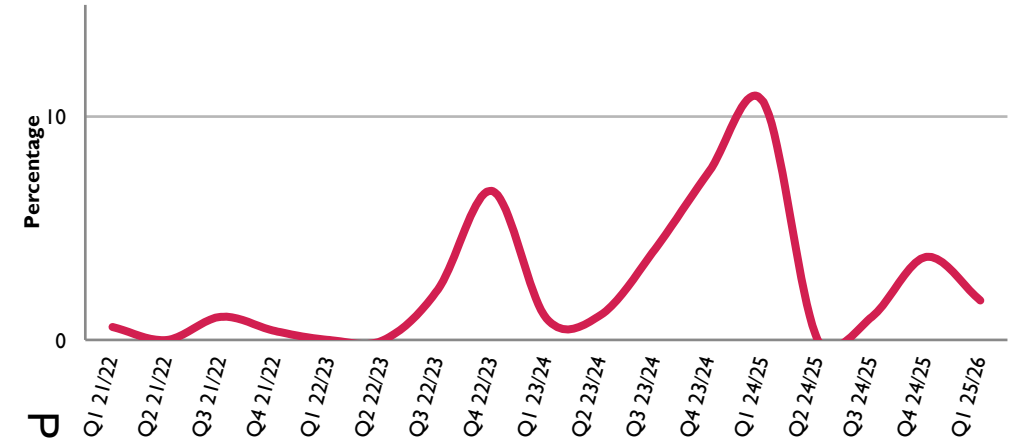
# Number of affordable homes delivered (cumulative)



had a strong Q1, delivering 93 affordable homes, including 57 for social rent. Although 40 homes originally expected this quarter have slipped into Q2, the district remains on track for another strong year in delivery. In addition to progressing new housing delivery, the Council is actively addressing the growing need for temporary accommodation. A dedicated working group has been established, and a proposal is now in place to acquire residential properties to support this provision.

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

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



Page 7

## How do we compare?

Number of Fly Tips reported for year 2023-24 for Local Authorities in England – Gov.uk. The latest dataset available is 2023-24.

	Total Fly Tips	Total Enforcement Actions	Total FPNs	% FPNs per Fly Tip	County Rank	Quartile
Vale of White Horse	445	580	18	4.04%	1/5	Top
South Oxfordshire	873	467	21	2.41%	2/5	Top
Cherwell	1101	1136	26	2.36%	3/5	Second
<b>West Oxfordshire</b>	<b>1135</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1.15%</b>	<b>4/5</b>	<b>Third</b>
Oxford	4959	297	7	0.14%	5/5	Bottom

## Direction of Travel

Number of Fly Tips

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Percentage Enforcement Action

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Fly Tips – Declined since last quarter but slightly increased since last year

Enforcement Action – Declined since last quarter and last year

↓

↑

↓

↓

Number of Fly Tips Collected

148

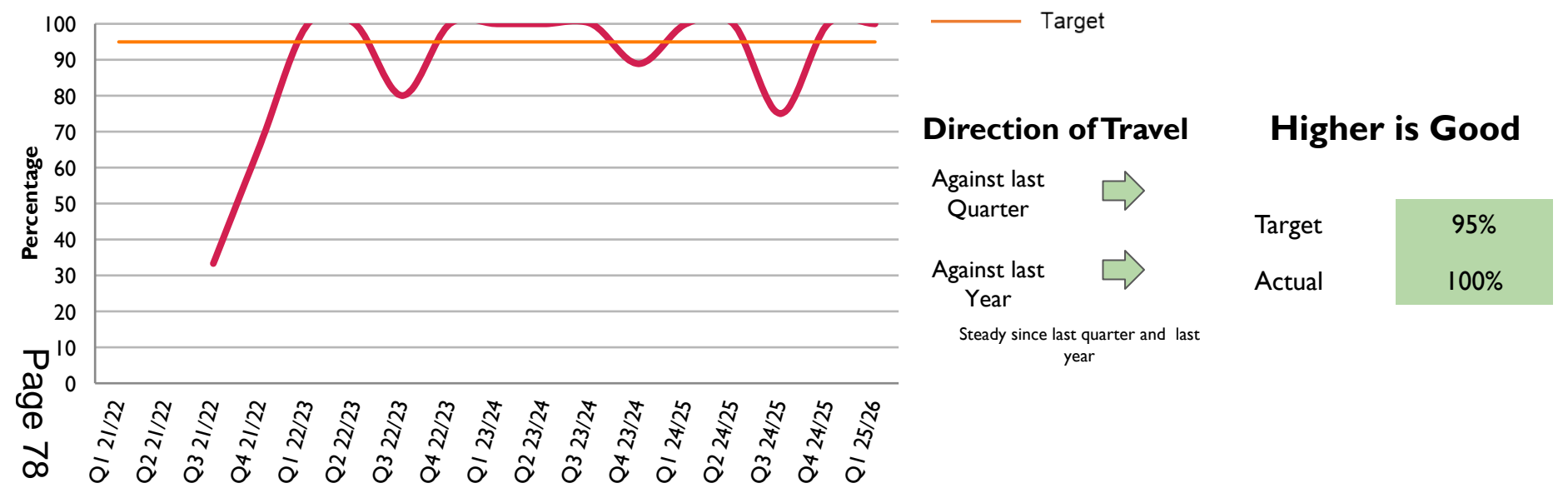
Percentage Enforcement Action

1.77%

In Q1, the Councils enforcement activity targeted commercial waste offences, particularly among short-term lets, with a focus on illegal burning and missing documentation. The team also supported RAF Brize Norton on abandoned vehicles and is preparing for upcoming Stop & Search operations, public engagement campaigns, and a proposed district-wide PSPO to address dog fouling.

Discrepancies in the number of reported fly-tips has been identified due to incorrect case inclusion, leading to over-reporting. Corrected figures are being recalculated and will be submitted to Waste Data Flow. Additionally, future reporting will further improve with Alloy's Streets module In-Cab technology integration.

# Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales

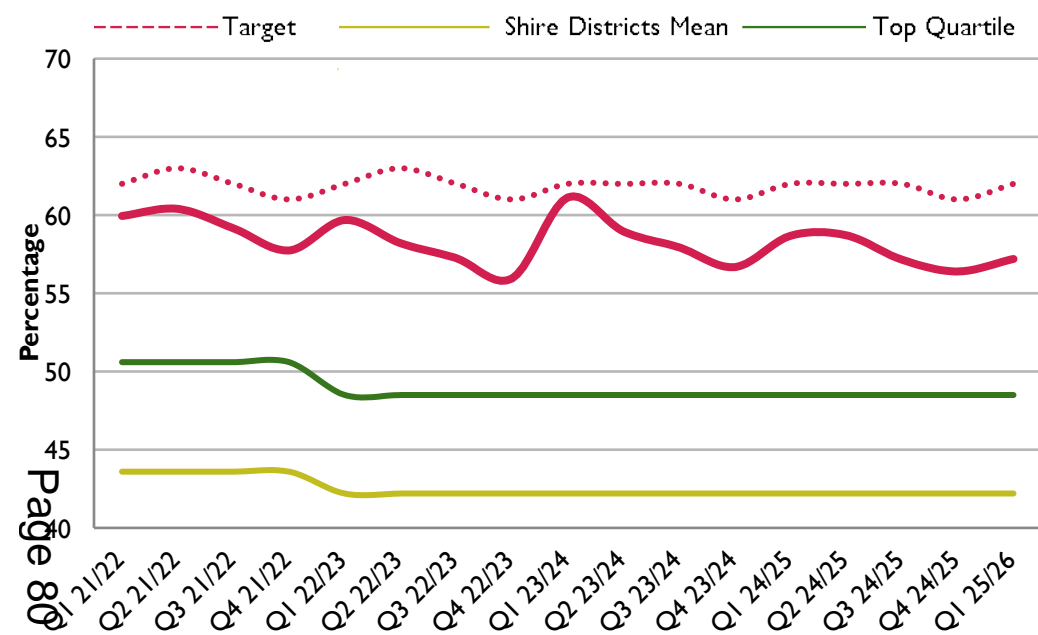


Seven High-Risk food inspection was undertaken during Q1, which was completed within the target timeframes.





31

# Percentage of household waste recycled



## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Increased since last quarter but declined since last year

## Higher is Good

Target	62%
Actual	57.2%

## How do we compare?

Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting – Gov.uk. The latest dataset available is from 2023-2024.

2023-24 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
South Oxfordshire	62.9%	1/5	Top
Vale of White Horse	60.7%	2/5	Top
<b>West Oxfordshire</b>	<b>57.2%</b>	<b>3/5</b>	<b>Second</b>
Cherwell	53.2%	4/5	Third
Oxford	48.3%	5/5	Bottom

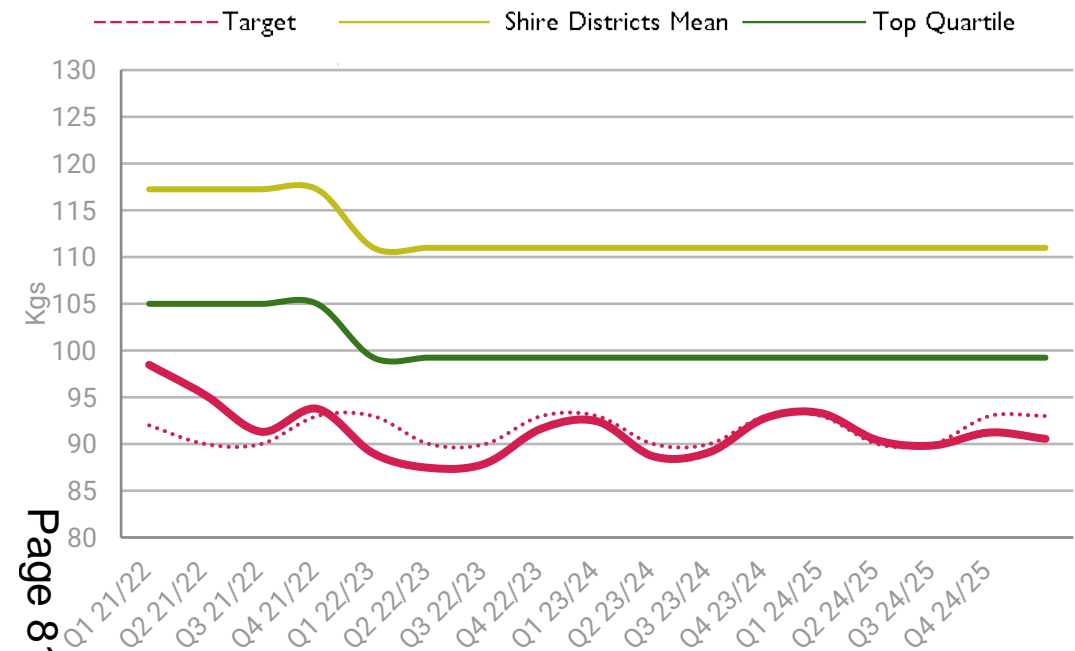
During Q1, there was a slight decline in the household recycling rate compared to the same period last year.

In 2023/24, household recycling rates across England varied widely, ranging from 15.8% to 62.9% among local authorities. The national average recycling rate rose slightly to 42.3%, marking a 0.6 percentage point increase from the previous year.

Amid this national landscape, West Oxfordshire ranked among the top 20 councils in England for household waste recycling for the financial year 2023-2024, highlighting its strong performance and commitment to environmental sustainability.



# Residual Household Waste per Household (kg)



## Direction of Travel

Against last  
Quarter



Against last  
Year



Improved since last quarter  
and last year

## Lower is Good

Target

93

Actual

90.56

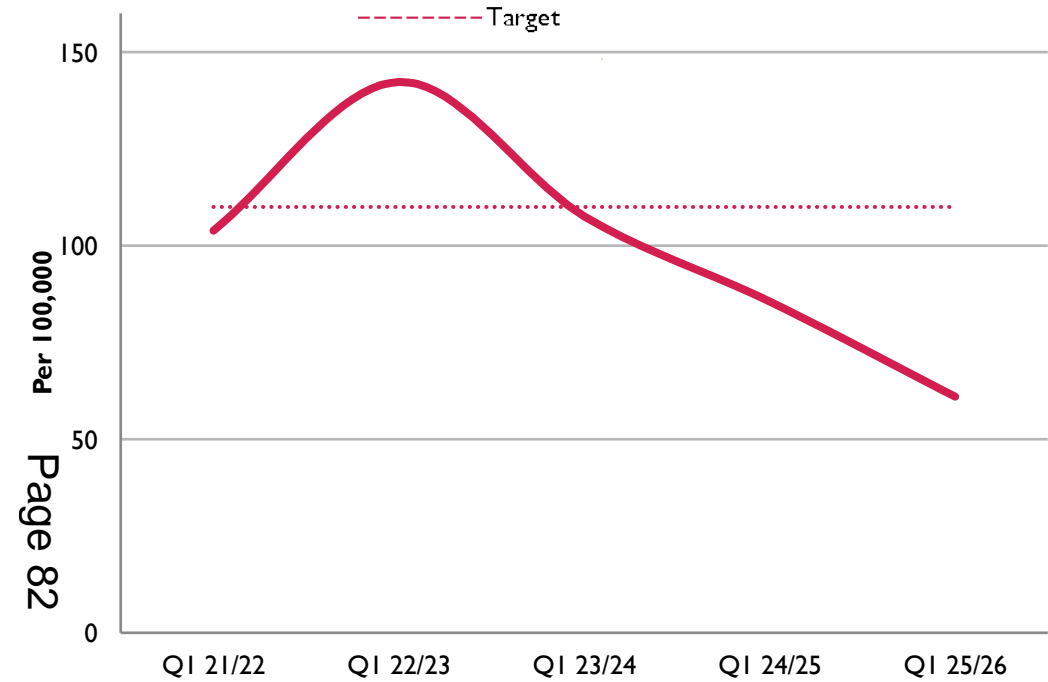
## How do we compare?

Residual household waste per household (kg/household) – Gov.uk. The latest dataset available is from 2023-2024.

2023-24 Benchmark	Kg	County Rank	Quartile
Vale of White Horse	303.2	1/5	Top
South Oxfordshire	304.8	2/5	Top
Oxford	335.7	3/5	Second
<b>West Oxfordshire</b>	<b>344.7</b>	<b>4/5</b>	<b>Third</b>
Cherwell	396.9	5/5	Bottom

During Q1, the Council remained below its residual waste target and ranked within the top quartile of English district councils, with levels under 99.25 kg per household—reflecting continued strong performance in waste reduction.

# Missed bins per 100,000



## Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter



Against last Year



Decreased since last quarter and last year

## Lower is Good

Target

110

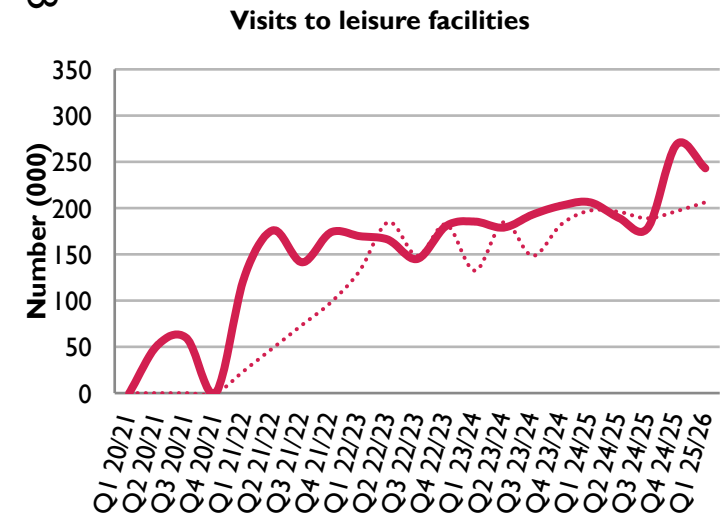
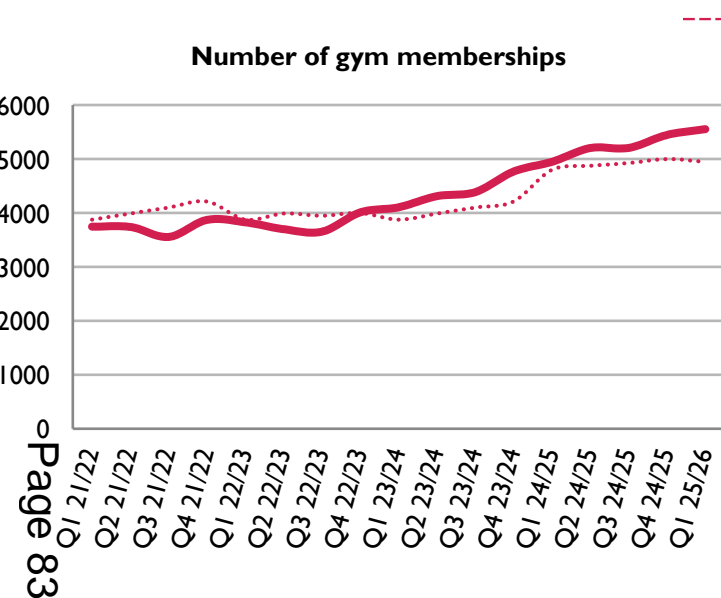
Actual

61

The Council recorded 61 missed bins per 100,000 collections during Q1, well within the target of 110. While overall performance remains strong, work is ongoing with Ubico to address persistent issues with missed assisted collections through better use of available technology.


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


## Number of gym memberships




### Direction of Travel


**Gym Memberships**

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

**Leisure Visits**

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Gym Memberships – Improved since last quarter and last year

Leisure Visits- Improved since last quarter and last year

### Higher is Good

Gym Memberships	
Target	4,947
Actual	5,554


Leisure Visits	
Target	206,370
Q4 Actual	243,112

In Q1, the Council exceeded targets with 5,554 gym memberships and over 243,000 leisure centre visits, reflecting strong and sustained community engagement.

### Breakdown of Leisure Visits per facility:

Facility	Q1 24-25	Q2 24-25	Q3 24-25	Q4 24-25	Q1 25-26
Bartholomew Sports Centre	9,681	9,747	5,506	16,712	20,268
Carterton Artificial Turf Pitch	6,840	6,840	6,840	9,252	858
Carterton Leisure Centre	70,220	62,866	57,100	64,139	57,346
Carterton Pavilion	600	600	600	600	600
Chipping Norton Leisure Centre	22,907	21,717	18,804	54,713	47,750
Windrush Leisure Centre	76,286	65,250	73,237	103,947	95,596
Witney Artificial Turf Pitch	19,320	19,320	16,487	19,640	19,557
Woodstock Open Air Pool	516	3,126	0	0	1137

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 <b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>	<b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
Name and date of Committee	<b>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 3<sup>RD</sup> SEPTEMBER 2025</b>
Subject	<b>YOUTH DEVELOPMENT OFFICER UPDATE</b>
Wards affected	ALL
Accountable member	Rachel Crouch - Executive Member for Stronger and Healthy Communities Email: <a href="mailto:rachel.crouch@westoxon.gov.uk">rachel.crouch@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Phil Martin – Director of Place Email: <a href="mailto:Phil.martin@westoxon.gov.uk">Phil.martin@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Report author	Heather McCulloch – Community Wellbeing Manager Email: <a href="mailto:heather.mcculloch@publicagroup.co.uk">heather.mcculloch@publicagroup.co.uk</a> James Edney – Youth Development Officer Email: <a href="mailto:james.edney@westoxon.gov.uk">james.edney@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	The purpose of the report is to share with the Committee the progress made by the Youth Development Officer to date and set out the priorities for the role moving forwards.
Annexes	None
Recommendation(s)	That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves to: I. Note the report
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Putting Residents First</li> <li>• A Good Quality of Life for All</li> <li>• Working Together for West Oxfordshire</li> </ul>
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO

<p>Consultees/ Consultation</p>	<p>The following groups have been engaged :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community groups providing activities for young people</li> <li>• Parish and Town Councils</li> <li>• System partners – eg Oxfordshire County Council and Thames Valley Police</li> <li>• Specialist youth agencies working countywide</li> <li>• Internal officers</li> <li>• Councillors</li> </ul>
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## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1** This report sets out the work undertaken by the Youth Development Officer in the first phase of the role since February 2025 and goes on to set out the priorities moving forward which have been informed by this initial research and the findings of the Youth Needs Assessment 2022 (YNA).

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1** The role of the Youth Development Officer was created following the publication of the YNA. The report captured responses from 3,908 young people attending 7 secondary schools or colleges in West Oxfordshire. It provided a wide range of insights into the experiences of young people growing up in West Oxfordshire, and their priorities for action. The Council determined that it would prioritise funding for a dedicated role to enable some of these priorities to be taken forward. The findings of the YNA were summarised in a report to the Executive on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2023
- 2.2** In the YNA young people identified the following priorities:
- Activities – were too far away, too expensive and they didn't have someone to go with
  - Mental Health - was identified by young people as the biggest area of need
  - Climate crisis – young people identified that they were concerned about the Climate emergency
  - Safety – many young people reported that they had experienced feeling unsafe in their community.
  - Safety - Violence Against Women and Girls, followed by Crime and Drugs were identified as particular concerns
  - Employment & Education and Advice/Support/Help – were also areas of concern for young people

## **3. PHASE I – RESEARCH AND ENGAGEMENT**

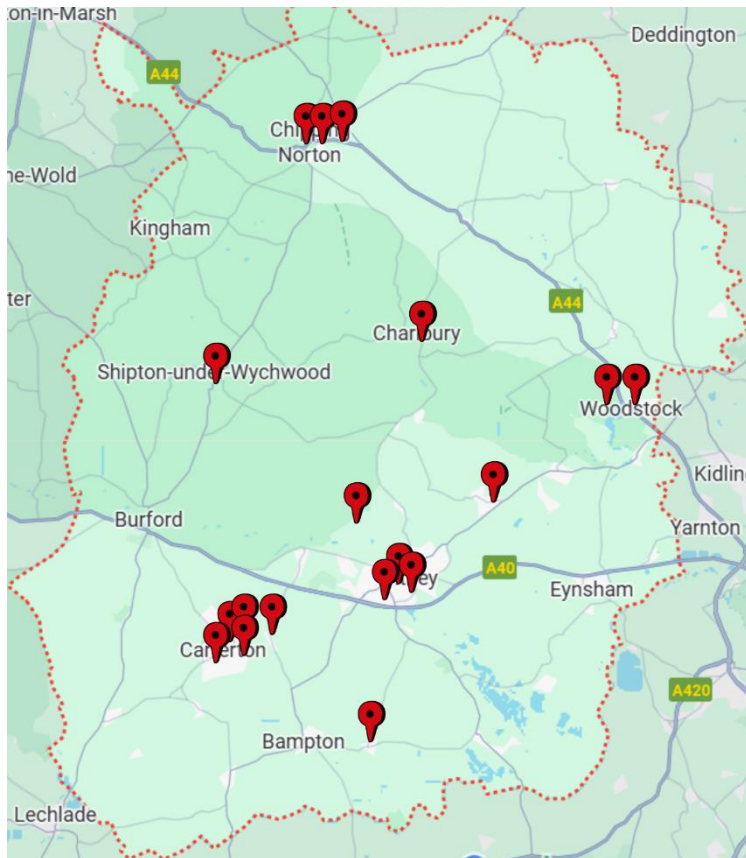
- 3.1** In the first phase of the role the Youth Development Officer has undertaken research into the current provisions available to young people in the district. This research was in the main engagement with providers and partners. The engagement was directed as follows:
- Existing youth providers in the voluntary sector – e.g. youth clubs
  - Existing providers in the professional sector and youth infrastructure organisations – e.g. youth organisations/activity providers
  - Town and Parish Councils where provision appears limited or non-existent
  - System partners and statutory services – Oxfordshire County Council Targeted Youth Support and Serious Violence leads and Thames Valley Police Neighbourhood team and Schools Officer
  - Community leaders in areas with little or no provision
- 3.2** This approach enabled the Youth Development Officer to build relationships and visibility, gain an understanding of the current landscape relating to young people, hear about any historical work that may have taken place and discern what level of interest there was in exploring new possibilities.

- 3.3** This exploratory phase identified several key themes, localities where there appears to be potential for exploring new provisions, opportunities for partnerships working and creative solutions to some of the more complicated issues.
- 3.4** During this period the Youth Development Officer has met 29 community groups who offer services to young people in West Oxfordshire - 18 of these are local to West (listed below):

<b>Organisations local to the district</b>	<b>Organisations not local to the district</b>
Transition Chipping Norton	Oxfordshire Youth
Charlbury Youth Club	Cranstoun
Airplay Carterton	TOPAZ
Carterton Family Centre	Survivor Space
Chipping Norton Theatre	Hope After Harm
Aspire	Sport in MIND
Ngage Youth Club Wychwood	OCVA
The Station Witney	OPA
Ascot & Cote Youth Club	Reducing the Risk
North Leigh Youth Club	Be Free Young Carers
Carterton Community Centre	Youth Challenge Oxfordshire
The Branch Trust Chipping Norton	
Woodstock Youth Club	
Witney Junior Young Farmers	
Courtside Witney	
Against the Grain Alternative Provision	
APCAM	
West Oxon Boxing and Fitness - WOBC (Community Loft)	

- 3.5** The map below is of groups local to the district to give a sense of spread. For purposes of clarity the pins show an approximate location for the group. A small number of groups will operate across a wider geographic area and some have been found to attract young people from a wider area – eg young people travelling from Kingham to activities in Charlbury.





- 3.6** The Youth Development Officer mapped provision across the parishes of West Oxfordshire and identified 8 wards where there was little evidence found of positive activities being available for young people. These were Burford, The Bartons, Eynsham & Cassington, Standlake, Aston & Stanton Harcourt, Bampton & Clanfield, Freeland & Hanborough, and Stonesfield & Tackley. Representatives from The Bartons, Freeland, Hanborough, Tackley & Stonesfield, and Eynsham have all been proactive in responding and engaging. Meetings have also taken place with Witney Town Council and Chipping Norton Town Council.
- 3.6.1** **The Bartons** expressed some positive engagement through uniformed and sports groups as well as a local charity work via Destiny's Fund. An introduction to Oxfordshire Youth was made as a support network for reestablishing a youth club that closed over COVID and ways to engage some young people who have been less open to taking part in existing provisions.
- 3.6.2** **Freeland, Hanborough and Stonesfield** have been eager to explore new ways of engaging with young people. With the YouMove Team, 'Have a Go Days' are being planned with activities and local community groups involved specifically designed to promote a positive experience and engaging the community and its young people in what might be sustainable in the long-term.
- 3.6.3** When initially met with, **Eynsham** were in the early stages of exploring the idea of a youth council. Cllr Rylett had held informal conversations with the school. Since then, a group of local residents have formed a community group to revive the youth centre and clubs in the

village. The Youth Development Officer has introduced them to Oxfordshire Youth who have been helping them in their preparations and formation. They have been engaging with the school and have received positive traction from the wider community. Their goal is to open in September.

**3.6.4 Tackley** asked for help around consultation and to how to reach young people and get their views regarding the development of a pump track. The officer has met with the Parish Council. They are currently finalising how much they will be able to invest in the project before taking this conversation forward.

**3.6.5** Following an introduction with the Clerk at **Chipping Norton Town Council**, a meeting with their Events Manager was arranged to discuss their concern over the loss of the LGBTQI+ group for young people which had been being run by Got2B before their closure. This demographic does not feel any of the existing provisions in the town are 'their space'. The Youth Development Officer is working on creating a partnership between the town council and TOPAZ – to develop a solution to this. TOPAZ do not currently have a presence in West Oxfordshire and this would be a very positive development.

**3.7** The Youth Development Officer has also met with 4 of the secondary schools in the district - Henry Box in Witney, Woodgreen School in Witney, Burford School, and Bartholomew School in Eynsham. These meetings were predominantly to introduce the role, discuss the YNA and hear about any challenges and opportunities faced by the schools.

- **Bartholomew School's** enrichment programme has grown since 2022 when the YNA research was undertaken. Bartholomew also provide late after school transport for students living in villages making after-school provision more available to students.
- **Henry Box School** expressed a need for more help in supporting pupils with poor mental health. They said that the OCC Targeted Youth Support Service had been very helpful and do as much as they can but felt there was still more that was required. They are interested to develop a male mentorship programme that could help support those displaying and vocalising misogynistic mindsets.
- **Woodgreen School** shared the view of Henry Box, that more could be done to support those with more complex Mental Health difficulties.
- **Burford School** did not take part in the original YNA in 2022. At this meeting it was clear that the school is keen to engage and asked if it would be helpful to conduct a survey at this stage just with their school. As there is the potential for another assessment to be done during the YDO tenure, it is our preference to encourage the school to delay and take part in the wider piece of work rather than undertake something in isolation.

**3.8** Regular communications with now in place with larger stakeholders including Thames Valley Police Neighbourhood team, Oxfordshire County Council Targeted Youth Support Service and Serious Violence Coordinator and Oxfordshire Youth.

### 3.9 Work has begun to establish internal working relationships as follows:

- Economic Development - discussing plans for working together on youth employment and business volunteering.
- Communications - positive coworking already in terms of distributing information and have begun discussions on utilising various communication platforms and strategies to raise the profile of young people.
- Climate - ongoing communications on the concept of a Youth Assembly
- Leisure – developing a broader understanding of the resources and activities available via Leisure centres for young people and those working with them.
- Partnering with YouMove to support engagement in communities and extend the reach of YouMove to teenagers.
- Community Funding – Keeping informed about funding available, signposting and making introductions where necessary.

## 4. PRIORITIES

### 4.1 Through these interactions, discussions and based on the results of the YNA, 6 thematic areas have been identified as priorities for the role:

- **Develop & Grow** – the Youth Development Officer will encourage and develop new youth provisions and activities in places where there is a shortfall and demand.
- **Sustain** – the Youth Development Officer will ensure existing provision is recognised, supported and strengthened.
- **Safety & Wellbeing** – the Youth Development Officer will encourage and develop approaches which tackle challenges around Mental Health, Anti-social behaviour and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).
- **Work and skills** – the Youth Development Officer will seek to highlight youth positive employers and encourage innovation and youth friendly policies to enable young people to access work.
- **Volunteering** – the Youth Development Officer will promote volunteering
- **Youth Voice** – the Youth Development Officer will engage with young people directly and develop opportunities for young people to be heard and to influence service delivery.

### 4.2 **Develop & Grow: New youth provisions in places where there is a shortfall.**

#### 4.2.1 The work to support those in the wards identified above to develop their ideas further, will continue.

#### 4.2.2 In Eynsham support will be available to the organising group as they continue to develop their governance and navigate the process of creating a new group with the support by Oxfordshire Youth. This could lead to a potential case study on how a drive for more youth provisions in a locality can be community-led and successful.

#### 4.2.3 The Have a Go Days in Stonesfield and Hanborough developed in partnership with the YouMove team will provide a launch activity from which to build more ongoing provision. The Youth Development Officer will continue to provide support and guidance to local residents who are seeking to build on these events with ongoing activities for young

people in these communities including offering support around how to engage with young people prior to the event.

- 4.2.4** In Tackley where the community is keen to hear the honest opinions of young people around the development of a pump track, the Youth Development Officer will continue to support around how to do that well.

**4.3 Sustain: Supporting existing work that is already taking place.**

- 4.3.1** A Youth Partnership is being established in Witney working alongside Witney Town Council and building on their summer provision coordination initiative. Facilitated by the Youth Development Officer, organisations engaged and committed to this emerging network include The Station, OCC Thames Valley Police and Witney Town Council. This partnership evolved out of the Community Safety Partnership as a response to ASB data presented showing spikes of ASB in the after-school period. Terms of Reference have been agreed for the Partnership and members are currently reviewing the local organisations they would like to invite into the group. The group is considering the possibility of expanding to those operating beyond Witney in the future once they have some experience of working together.

- 4.3.2** The Youth Development Officer will act as a conduit for existing youth service providers in the district as well as those wishing to develop provision. Some groups are operating in isolation and might benefit from access to links with others – some groups need support around training and strengthening their offer and could benefit from links to training providers or expert professional youth organisations. For some organisations the need could be financial, and the Youth Development Officer will continue to share details of funding opportunities including Westhive and the Community Activity Grants.

- 4.3.3** Overall, the Youth Development Officer will seek out any opportunities to build relationships across the sector. This will happen through informal meetings, visits to settings, potential networking events and electronic and face to face communications.

**4.4 Safety & Wellbeing: Incorporating Mental Health, Anti-Social Behaviour(ASB) and Violence Against Women and Girls.**

- 4.4.1** Mental Health is a key topic for young people. Since the YNA was carried out in 2022, Response have received funding to compliment the Mental Health Support Teams in schools, but this funding was short term and came to an end in March 2025. Response is seeking ways of resuming this offer but it's a challenging landscape.

- 4.4.2** A broader concept of supporting young people's mental health is being adopted that recognises the positive impact activities such as sports, the arts, being outdoors, engaging in culture, healthy eating, learning and community engagement has on an individual's mental wellbeing. With this understanding, the Youth Development Officer is seeking out existing groups demonstrating good practise of how engaging with young people, through these mediums, impacts their mental health. Examples of such groups include The Community Loft at WOBC, Transition Chipping Norton, Charlbury Youth Club and Witney Junior Young Farmers Club. The YDO will learn how they evolved and what support they need

including any ambitions they have to expand – and use the learning to inspire new developments.

**4.4.3** TVP recently formed a task and finish problem-solving group to address ASB in 2 hotspots (The Leys, Witney and The Dell, Carterton). The Youth Development Officer has been actively involved in these sessions along with The Station, OCC Targeted Youth Support Service, Witney and Carterton Town Councils, the RAF and local educational establishments. This is 12-month process where the objective is not only to reduce ASB incidents, but to also consider how to support and respond to the root causes of ASB.

**4.4.4** VAWG was a major theme identified by young people in the Youth Needs Assessment, and there were a significant number of responses relating to unwanted sexual attention in public settings. This terminology covers, but is not limited to, girls experiencing catcalling, inappropriate comments and unwanted physical contact. A Girlguiding report from 2021 states that 51% of 13-18 girls experience unwanted sexual comments in public, and a 1 in 3 girls have their first experience of unwanted attention between the ages of 11 and 13. The report summary is available [here](#). As a response to this the Youth Development Officer is developing a project proposal for a VAWG campaign.

#### **4.5 Work and skills: Youth positive employers and policies**

**4.5.1** Work is included as a theme in the YNA with a notable number of young people saying they do not see themselves living in the West as they believe there are a lack of viable employment opportunities that appeal to them. The Youth Development Officer has begun conversations with the Economic Development team. They have heard from businesses that they struggle to recruit young people.

**4.5.2** A potential response to this is working alongside these businesses to create opportunities that do attract young people, which may include a review of organisational culture, the level of educational attainment required for roles and their approach to recruitment and employee wellbeing. The Youth Development Officer is actively seeking out employers where this is working well.

**4.5.3** The Youth Development Officer is seeking out and promoting emerging training and development opportunities such as Drone City, a new social enterprise lead by a local youth leader, that promotes opportunities and training paths into new technologies such as AI, drones and STEM. Also exploring how WODC can support successful existing programmes, such as Aspires Employability programme in partnership with Midcounties Coop.

#### **4.6 Volunteering: Promoting taking part**

**4.6.1** Volunteering has been a common barrier being faced by many who currently deliver activities as well as those wishing to start. In recent years, the number of volunteers has dropped (although there are no exact figures available across the VCS) and recruitment and retainment of new volunteers is proving problematic for all. Some countywide provisions such as TOPAZ cannot deploy in West Oxfordshire unless volunteers can be found.

- 4.6.2** The Youth Development Worker will work with OCVA to explore responses to this. In Witney a volunteer fair is already being considered via the Witney Forum and a similar event was recently discussed at a meeting with the Chippy Creative networking group. Volunteer fairs are only one approach being considered.
- 4.6.3** The Youth Development Officer is also working with Economic Development to understand how businesses implement their Social Responsibility and look at creating a plan to engage with them further.
- 4.7 Youth Voice: Amplifying the voice of young people**
- 4.7.1** The YNA highlighted that young people wish to be heard more and for their words to lead to noticeable actions. The importance of youth voice is paramount in youth work theory and practice.
- 4.7.2** In conversations with those communities looking to develop new engagement, the Youth Development Officer is actively encouraging and offering methods of youth voice they can implement in their planning.
- 4.7.3** Young people are concerned about the Climate Emergency. Discussions with the Climate Team have begun. The proposal for a Youth Assembly originally brought forward by Cllr Pearson in 2023 is being further explored.
- 4.7.4** Youth councils have been formed in Witney and Charlbury through their local councils. The development of youth councils is being explored in North Leigh and Eynsham. The Youth Development Officer will continue to communicate regularly with councils at various stages of development to ensure a good understanding of progress and in order that support can be offered if required.

## **5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 5.1** The proposals set out above are based on research and insights. As new insights emerge these will be considered carefully in the context of the current plan and new actions introduced where this is appropriate and manageable.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1** There are no financial implication arising from this report.

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1** There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## **8. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 8.1** This report is for information only.

## **9. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 9.1** This report is for information only.

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

- 10.1** This report is for information only and young people are concerned about the Climate emergency and wish to see action taken. The hope is that further ways to engage young people in being active around tackling the Climate emergency can be explored with the help and guidance of the Climate team.

## **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 11.1** None.  
(END)

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WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 1 AUGUST 2025 – 30 NOVEMBER 2025

### Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Council currently operates the Strong Leader and Executive form of governance. The Council has appointed one Overview and Scrutiny Committee which has the power to investigate Executive decisions and any other matters relevant to the district and its people, making recommendations to the Council, Executive or any other Committee or Sub-Committee of the Council.

### Overview and Scrutiny Activities

The Committee may undertake its functions through the following types of activities:

- Holding the Executive to account as a critical friend
- Pre-decision scrutiny of Executive decisions before they are taken
- Considering any “call-in” of an Executive decision that has been made but not yet implemented
- Contributing to policy development
- Undertaking task and finish reviews to explore particular issues in depth
- Scrutiny of the Council’s annual budget proposals
- Performance review and monitoring
- Being a convener and engaging with external organisations
- Scrutiny of the Council’s crime and disorder functions

### Work Plan

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee operates a work plan which is agreed annually but provides for flexibility to enable the Committee to respond to emerging issues or priorities. The work plan will include a mix of Executive reports that have been selected for pre-decision scrutiny, and reports on other Council services, topics or issues which have been specifically requested by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In setting and reviewing its work plan, the Committee will be mindful of the constraints of the organisation and may prioritise based on the following considerations (TOPIC criteria):

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

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

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

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

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

### **Principles of good scrutiny**

The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny has developed four principles of good scrutiny which are reflected in statutory guidance:

- Provide constructive “critical friend” challenge
- Amplify the voices and concerns of the public
- Be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role
- Drive improvement in public services

### Current and planned working groups

Title	Purpose	Membership	Status	Target completion date
Leisure	To consider the leisure management options appraisal before it is presented to the Executive, with particular focus on the evaluation criteria.	1.Cllr Stuart McCarroll (Chair) 2.Cllr Joy Aitman 3.Cllr Mike Baggaley 4.Cllr Jane Doughty 5.Cllr Andy Goodwin 6.Cllr Sandra Simpson	Ongoing	September 2025
Public Conveniences	To consider any emerging proposals for the future of the Council's public conveniences facilities.	1.Cllr Genny Early (Lead Member) 2.Cllr Andrew Coles 3.Cllr Ed James 4.Cllr David Melvin 5.Cllr Elizabeth Poskitt	Ongoing	TBC
Waste transformation	To consider any proposals for transforming waste services within the district following phase two of the Publica transition.	1. Cllr Ruth Smith (Chair) 2. Cllr Thomas Ashby 3.Cllr Sandra Cosier 4.Cllr Sandra Simpson 5.Cllr Alistair Wray	Planned	March 2026

Item	Executive Member	Lead Officer	Report commissioned by
<b>3 September 2025</b>			
2025/26 Quarterly Finance Review Q1	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk	Executive
2025/26 Quarterly Service Review Q1	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk	Executive
Responding to the Youth Needs Assessment	Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities - Cllr Rachel Crouch	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Oxfordshire Local Area Energy Planning	Executive Member for Climate Action and Nature Recovery - Cllr Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon, Climate Change Manager hannah.kenyon@westoxon.gov.uk	Executive
<b>8 October 2025</b>			
Local Government Reorganisation	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Giles Hughes, Chief Executive Officer giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk	Council  Executive
Local Plan Spatial Options	Executive Member for Planning - Cllr Hugo Ashton	Andrew Thomson, Planning Policy Manager Andrew.Thomson@westoxon.gov.uk	Executive

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<b>5 November 2025</b>			
Supporting mental health initiatives	Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities - Cllr Rachel Crouch	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<b>10 December 2025</b>			
2025/26 Quarterly Finance Review Q2	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk	Executive
2025/26 Quarterly Service Review Q2	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk	Executive
Local Plan Annual Monitoring 2024/25	Executive Member for Planning - Cllr Hugo Ashton	Andrew Thomson, Planning Policy Manager Andrew.Thomson@westoxon.gov.uk	Executive
<b>7 January 2026</b>			
Draft Budget 2026/27 version 2	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk	Executive
<b>4 February 2026</b>			

Community Grants Update	Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities - Cllr Rachel Crouch	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
West Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Plan	Executive Member for Climate Action and Nature Recovery - Cllr Andrew Prosser	Melanie Dodd, Senior Biodiversity Officer Melanie.Dodd@publicagroup.uk	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<b>4 March 2026</b>			
Community Safety Partnership	Executive Member for Housing and Social Care - Cllr Geoff Saul	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Procurement and Contract Management Strategy	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Ciaran Okane, Business Partner - BP Insurance Ciaran.Okane@publicagroup.uk	Executive
2025/26 Quarterly Finance Review Q3	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk	Executive
2025/26 Quarterly Service Review Q3	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk	Executive
<b>20 May 2026 - Annual Council day</b>			

Additional topics, to be scheduled			
Promoting Rural Exception Sites	Executive Member for Planning - Cllr Hugo Ashton	Chris Hargraves, Head of Planning chris.hargraves@westoxon.gov.uk	Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE WORK PROGRAMME  
INCORPORATING NOTICE OF DECISIONS PROPOSED TO BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE  
SESSION AND NOTICE OF INTENTION TO MAKE A KEY DECISION  
1 AUGUST 2025 – 30 NOVEMBER 2025

By virtue of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, local authorities are required to publish a notice setting out the key executive decisions that will be taken at least 28 days before such decisions are to be taken. The Regulations also require notice to be given of the intention to exclude the press and public for part of a meeting.

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

It is possible that matters may be rescheduled to a date which is different from that given on the Forward Plan. This may be the case for key decisions and the intention to hold a private meeting. In this regard, please note that agendas and reports for meetings of the Executive are made available on the Council's website at [www.westoxon.gov.uk/meetings](http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/meetings) five working days in advance of the meeting in question. Please also note that the agendas for meetings of the Executive will also incorporate a necessary further notice which is required to be given in relation to matters likely to be considered with the public excluded. There are circumstances where a key decision can be taken, or parts of the meeting may be held in private, even though the 28 clear days' notice has not been given. If that happens, notice of the matter and the reasons will be published on the council's website, and available from the Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1NB.

### Key Decisions

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

- (a) to result in the relevant local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the relevant local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or*
- (b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the authority".*

The Council has decided that a cost or saving of an amount greater than £150,000 is necessary to constitute expenditure or savings which are significant for the purposes of this definition.

Please note that if a matter is approved by the Council following a recommendation from the Executive, that decision will not be a key decision.

**Matters To Be Considered in Private**

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

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

**Documents and Queries**

Copies of, or extracts from, documents listed in the programme and any which subsequently become available are (subject to any prohibition or restriction on their disclosure), obtainable from the following, and this contact information may also be used for any queries.

Democratic Services – Email: [democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk) Tel: 01993 861000.

## West Oxfordshire District Council: Executive Members 2025/26

Name of Councillor	Title and Areas of Responsibility
Andy Graham (Leader)	<b>Leader of the Council:</b> Overview of all Executive Portfolios; Policy Framework; Town and Parish Council Engagement; Council Plan; Strategic Partnerships (including Oxford to Cambridge, Oxfordshire Joint Leaders and South East Councils); Oxfordshire Leaders; Publica and Partnerships Authorities and Ubico; Democratic Services; Communications; Legal Services; Emergency Planning; Assets of Community Value.
Duncan Enright (Deputy Leader)	<b>Economic Development:</b> Economic Development; Business Development; Visitor Economy; Town and Village Regeneration; Customer Services.
Alaric Smith	<b>Finance:</b> Finance & Management; Council Tax and Benefits; Asset Management; South West Audit Partnership; Performance Management; Capital Investment Strategy; Strategic Housing Investment; Financial Aspects of Major Projects; Customer Services; Counter Fraud.
Hugo Ashton	<b>Planning:</b> Local Plan; Government Planning Policies and Guidance; Development Management; Ensuring Planning Policies meet 2030 Requirements; Customer Services.
Tim Sumner	<b>Leisure and Carterton Area Strategy:</b> ; Leisure Provision (including Swimming Pools); Carterton Area Strategy.
Rachel Crouch	<b>Stronger, Healthy Communities:</b> Voluntary Sector Engagement; Health and Safety; Community and Public Health; Refugee Resettlement Programme; Young People; Equality and Diversity; Customer Services; Culture, Arts and Heritage.
Geoff Saul	<b>Housing and Social Care:</b> Housing Allocations; Homelessness; Provision of Affordable/social Homes; Sheltered Housing Accommodation; Safeguarding – Community Safety Partnership; Crime and Disorder; Neighbourhood Policing; Scrutiny of Police and Crime Commissioner.
Lidia Arciszewska	<b>Environment:</b> •Flood Alleviation/Natural Flood Management and Sewage; Environmental Partnerships – WASP and Evenlode CP, Windrush CP; North East Cotswold Cluster; Waste Collection and Recycling; Landscape and Biodiversity; Air Quality; Land Use, Food Production and Farming; Street Scene (Cleansing, Litter and Grounds Maintenance); Food safety; licensing; Housing (private landlords); Environment safety; Car Parking.
Andrew Prosser	<b>Climate Action and Nature Recovery:</b> Energy Advice; Renewable Energy and RetroFit Investment; Biodiversity (Across the District); Carbon Neutral by 2030; Fossil Fuel Dependence Reduction; Local, National and County Liaison on Climate Change; Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Rollout, Conservation and Historical Environment.

For further information about the above and all members of the Council please see [www.westoxon.gov.uk/councillors](http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/councillors)

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Open or Exempt	Decision – Maker	Date of Decision	Executive Member	Lead Officer
<b>Executive 10 September 2025</b>						
Oxfordshire Local Area Energy Planning	Yes	Open	Executive	10 Sep 2025	Executive Member for Climate Action and Nature Recovery - Cllr Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon, Climate Change Manager hannah.kenyon@westoxon.gov.uk
Private Sector Housing and Caravan Sites policy review and update.	No	Open	Executive	10 Sep 2025	Executive Member for Environment - Cllr Lidia Arciszewska	Philip Measures, Service Leader philip.measures@publicagroup.uk
Review of the Ubico Shareholder Agreement & Ubico Board Member Appointments	No	Open	Executive	10 Sep 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Si Pocock-Cluley, Environmental Services and Waste Transformation Lead si.pocock-cluley@westoxon.gov.uk
Public Toilet Review	Yes	Open	Executive	10 Sep 2025	Executive Member for Environment - Cllr Lidia Arciszewska	Fiona Woodhouse, Parking Projects & Contracts Officer Fiona.Woodhouse@publicagroup.uk
Oxfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)	No	Open	Executive	10 Sep 2025	Executive Member for Climate Action and Nature Recovery - Cllr Andrew Prosser	Melanie Dodd, Senior Biodiversity Officer Melanie.Dodd@publicagroup.uk
2025/26 Quarterly Finance Review Q1	No	Open	Executive	10 Sep 2025	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk

2025/26 Quarterly Service Review Q1	No	Open	Executive	10 Sep 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk
Waste Project Update	No	Open	Executive	10 Sep 2025	Executive Member for Environment - Cllr Lidia Arciszewska	Si Pocock-Cluley, Environmental Services and Waste Transformation Lead si.pocock-cluley@westoxon.gov.u
3 year Service Level Agreements - Year 1 reporting and future funding options	Yes	Open	Executive	10 Sep 2025	Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities - Cllr Rachel Crouch	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk
Decision Taken Under Urgency Powers: Ubico Growth Opportunity	No	Open	Executive	10 Sep 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Si Pocock-Cluley, Environmental Services and Waste Transformation Lead si.pocock-cluley@westoxon.gov.u
Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule	Yes	Open	Executive	10 Sep 2025	Executive Member for Planning - Cllr Hugo Ashton	Kim Langford-Tejrar, Infrastructure Delivery Lead Kim.Langford-Tejrar@westoxon.gov.uk
Leisure Planned Investment Programme	Yes	Fully exempt	Executive	10 Sep 2025	Executive Member for Leisure and Carterton Area Strategy - Tim Sumner	Stuart Wilson, Leisure Contracts Lead stuart.wilson@publicagroup.uk
<b>Council 1 October 2025</b>						
Recommendations from the Constitution Working Group	No	Open	Council	1 Oct 2025	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Ana Prelici, Senior Democratic Services Officer Ana.Prelici@westoxon.gov.uk

<b>Executive 15 October 2025</b>						
Westhive update and consideration of future options	Yes	Open	Executive	15 Oct 2025	Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities - Cllr Rachel Crouch	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk
Local Plan Spatial Options	Yes	Open	Executive	15 Oct 2025	Executive Member for Planning - Cllr Hugo Ashton	Andrew Thomson, Planning Policy Manager Andrew.Thomson@westoxon.gov.uk
Leisure Management Options Appraisal	Yes	Part exempt	Executive	15 Oct 2025	Executive Member for Leisure and Carterton Area Strategy - Tim Sumner	Rachel Biles, Leisure Strategy Manager rachel.biles@westoxon.gov.uk
<b>Council 22 October 2025 - Local Government Reorganisation</b>						
<b>Executive 5 November 2025 - Local Government Reorganisation</b>						
Local Government Reorganisation	Yes	Open	Council Executive	22 Oct 2025 5 Nov 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Giles Hughes, Chief Executive Officer giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk
<b>Executive 12 November 2025</b>						
Council tax support 2026/27	Yes	Open	Executive Council	12 Nov 2025 3 Dec 2025	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Mandy Fathers, Business Manager - Environmental, Welfare & Revenue Service mandy.fathers@publicagroup.uk

Proposals for devolution to a Mayoral Strategic Authority	Yes	Open	Executive	12 Nov 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Giles Hughes, Chief Executive Officer giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk
<b>Council 3 December 2025</b>						
<b>Executive 17 December 2025</b>						
2025/26 Quarterly Finance Review Q2	No	Open	Executive	17 Dec 2025	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk
2025/26 Quarterly Service Review Q2	No	Open	Executive	17 Dec 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk
Draft Budget 2026/27 version 1	Yes	Open	Executive	17 Dec 2025	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk
Local Plan Annual Monitoring 2024/25	No	Open	Executive	17 Dec 2025	Executive Member for Planning - Cllr Hugo Ashton	Andrew Thomson, Planning Policy Manager Andrew.Thomson@westoxon.gov.uk
<b>Executive 14 January 2026</b>						
Draft Budget 2026/27 version 2	Yes	Open	Executive	14 Jan 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk

<b>Council 28 January 2026</b>						
<b>Executive 11 February 2026</b>						
Budget 2026/27 & medium term financial strategy	Yes	Open	Executive Council	11 Feb 2026 25 Feb 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk
<b>Council 25 February 2026</b>						
Council tax 2026/27	No	Open	Council	25 Feb 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk
<b>Executive 11 March 2026</b>						
Procurement and Contract Management Strategy	No	Open	Executive	11 Mar 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Ciaran Okane, Senior Business Partner - Procurement Ciaran.Okane@publicagroup.uk
2025/26 Quarterly Finance Review Q3	No	Open	Executive	11 Mar 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk
2025/26 Quarterly Service Review Q3	No	Open	Executive	11 Mar 2026	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk
<b>Key Decision Delegated to Executive Member</b>						
UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England	No	Open	Deputy Leader of the Council	Before 31 Mar 2026	Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for	Emma Phillips, Market Town Officer



Prosperity Fund			and Executive Member for Economic Development - Cllr Duncan Enright		Economic Development - Cllr Duncan Enright	Emma.phillips@westoxon.gov.uk
<b>Key Decisions Delegated to Officers</b>						
Delegation on Purchase of Emergency Accommodation	Yes	Fully exempt	Director of Finance - Madhu Richards	31 Mar 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	
Standing Delegation: Settlement of Legal Claims	Yes	Open	Head of Legal Services - Leonie Woodward	Before 31 Mar 2026	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham, Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Leonie Woodward, Head of Legal Leonie.Woodward@cotswold.gov.uk
Allocation of New Initiatives Funding	Yes	Open	Chief Executive & Head of Paid Service - Giles Hughes	Before 31 Mar 2026	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Giles Hughes, Chief Executive Officer giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk
Review and Repurpose Earmarked Reserves to Mitigate against Four Main Financial Risks	Yes	Open	Director of Finance - Madhu Richards	Before 31 May 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Madhu Richards, Director of Finance madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk
Allocate Funding from the Project Contingency Earmarked Reserve	Yes	Open	Director of Finance - Madhu Richards	Before 31 May 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Madhu Richards, Director of Finance madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk

