

Tuesday, 26 May 2026

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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 June 2026 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, Rachel Crouch, Sarah Evans, Liam Mackenzie, Stuart McCarroll, Paul Marsh, Hannah Massie, Michele Mead, David Melvin, Carl Rylett, Simon Watson and Alex Wilson

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 - 6)**
To approve the minutes of the Committee meeting held 20 May 2026.
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. **Supporting Community Services - Crowdfunder UK Approach (Pages 7 - 16)**
Purpose
To review the proposed application and assessment processes, criteria and eligibility of the new grants scheme which is expected to be hosted by Crowdfunder UK; and to update on the progress of commissioning Crowdfunder UK as the new host of the scheme.

Recommendation

That Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves to:

- I. Note the report and make any applicable recommendations for the Executive to consider at the meeting on 10 June.

7. **Quarterly Financial Performance Report Q4 (Pages 17 - 44)**
Purpose
To report the financial performance of the Council in 2025/26

Recommendation

That Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves to:

- I. Note the report and make any applicable recommendations for the Executive to consider at the meeting on 10 June.

8. **Quarterly Service Performance Report Q4 (Pages 45 - 106)**
Purpose:
To provide details of the Council's operational performance at the end of 2025-26 Quarter Four (Q4).

Recommendation

That Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves to:

- I. Note the report and make any applicable recommendations for the Executive to consider at the meeting on 10 June.

9. **Procurement and Contract Management Strategy** (Pages 107 - 130)

Purpose:

To present an updated draft Procurement and Contract Management Strategy

Recommendation

That Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves to:

- I. Note the report and make any applicable recommendations for the Executive to consider at the meeting on 10 June.

10. **Annual Update on Investment Property Portfolio** (Pages 131 - 136)

Purpose

To inform the Committee of the performance of the Council's investment property portfolio for 2025/26.

Recommendation

That Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves to:

- I. Note the report and make any applicable recommendations for the Executive to consider at the meeting on 10 June.

11. **Report back on recommendations** (Pages 137 - 140)

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

12. **Committee Work Programme** (Pages 141 - 148)

Purpose:

For the Committee to review and note its work programme, including any working groups it wishes to establish.

Recommendation:

That the Committee notes and comments on the work programme.

13. **Executive Work Programme** (Pages 149 - 164)

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.

14. **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

If the Committee wishes to exclude the press and the public from the meeting during consideration of any of the items on the exempt from publication part of the agenda, it will be necessary for Council to pass a resolution in accordance with the provisions of section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that their presence

could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Committee may maintain the exemption if and so long as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

15. **Exempt Annex A- Annual Update on Investment Property Portfolio (Pages 165 - 166)**

(END)

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 2.32 pm on **Wednesday, 20 May 2026**

PRESENT

Councillors: Andrew Beaney (Chair), Adam Clements, Steve Cosier, Liz Leffman, Dan Levy, Stuart McCarroll, Michele Mead, Mark Walker, Alex Wilson and Alistair Wray

121 Election of Chair

The Chair of the Council, Councillor Carl Rylett opened the meeting, presiding over the election of the Committee Chair.

Councillor Michele Mead proposed Councillor Andrew Beaney, this was seconded by Councillor Alex Wilson and put to the vote. It was agreed unanimously.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolved to:

- I. Elect Councillor Andrew Beaney Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the civic year 2026/27.

Having been elected Chair, Councillor Andrew Beaney presided over the remaining business of the meeting.

122 Appointment of Vice-Chair

Councillor Stuart McCarroll proposed Councillor Genny Early. This was seconded by Councillor Rosie Pearson, was put to a vote and agreed unanimously.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolved to:

- I. Appoint Vice-Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the civic year 2026/27.

123 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received on behalf of Paul Marsh and Genny Early.

124 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

20/May2026

I25 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 26 March 2026 were considered by the committee and upon being proposed and seconded were put to a vote. The minutes were agreed unanimously.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolved to:


- I. Approve the minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2026 as an accurate record of that meeting.

I26 Date of next Committee Meeting

The next meeting would be held on 3 June 2026, at 5:30pm.

The Meeting closed at 3:30pm

CHAIR

 <p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>	<p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>
<p>Name and date of Committee</p>	<p>EXECUTIVE – 10 JUNE 2026</p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p>SUPPORTING COMMUNITY SERVICES – CROWDFUNDER UK APPROACH</p>
<p>Wards affected</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Accountable member (Joint)</p>	<p>Tim Sumner, Executive Member for Arts, Culture and Sport Email: tim.sumner@westoxon.gov.uk Sandra Coleman, Executive Member for Stronger Healthy Communities Email: sandra.coleman@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Accountable officer</p>	<p>Phil Martin – Director of Place Email: phil.martin@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Report author</p>	<p>Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager Email: heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Summary/Purpose</p>	<p>To review the proposed application and assessment processes, criteria and eligibility of the new grants scheme which is expected to be hosted by Crowdfunder UK; and to update on the progress of commissioning Crowdfunder UK as the new host of the scheme.</p>
<p>Annexes</p>	<p>Annex A – Sustainability Impact Assessment Tool</p>
<p>Recommendation(s)</p>	<p>That the Executive resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the proposed application and assessment processes, criteria, eligibility and monitoring of the new grants scheme as set out in the report, and; 2. Delegate authority for award decisions to the Director of Place, in consultation with the Executive member for Stronger Healthier communities and Executive Member for Arts, Culture and Sport.
<p>Corporate priorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting Residents First • A Good Quality of Life for All

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Better Environment for People and Wildlife • Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency • Working Together for West Oxfordshire
Key Decision	YES
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	None.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out the proposed application and assessment processes, criteria and eligibility of the new grants scheme which is expected to be hosted by the Crowdfunder UK platform. Furthermore, it provides an update on the progress of commissioning Crowdfunder UK as the new host of the scheme.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council entered into a 3 year contract with Spacehive in 2023/24. This contract ends on 30th April 2026. The Council distributed funding from the main Westhive fund through this vehicle. The annual budget for the scheme was £120,000.
- 2.2 The Council previously operated 2 main grant schemes – the Community Facilities Grant (CFG) and the Community Revenue Grant (CRG). In the most recent grants review the CFG which was focussed on community infrastructure capital projects such as village halls and sports facilities, was found to be regularly remaining unspent. The CRG was a fully committed revenue stream. It was found to provide very limited access each year to new applicants.
- 2.3 On the 17th December 2025 Executive agreed not extend the contract with Spacehive. It was agreed to pursue entering into an agreement with Crowdfunder UK to host a funding platform for 3 years from 2026/27 onwards. Furthermore, it was agreed to make provision in budget setting for platform hosting fees.
- 2.4 The main advantages of Crowdfunder UK over Spacehive are as set out below:

Crowdfunder UK	Spacehive
0% platform fees for not-for-profit groups	7.5% platform fees for not-for-profit groups
£46,000 hosting charge to the Council over 3 years	£110,000 hosting charge to the Council over 3 years
Added exposure to other grants available on the platform	
Stripe account fees of 2.4% plus 20p per pledge	

- 2.5 Officers were asked to design the criteria and application process for the scheme and progress the procurement of Crowdfunder UK, reporting back to Executive.

3. MAIN POINTS

- 3.1 We know that sustainable change starts in communities. When locally led, innovative solutions are backed with the resources they need, they have the best chance to make the greatest impact.
- 3.2 Officers are recommending that the Council moves away from using the Westhive name to emphasise a fresh start, updated criteria and a new approach.
- 3.3 The new fund, delivered through Crowdfunder UK, will provide grants for projects that support communities across West Oxfordshire. It will continue to help bring locally led

ideas to life by combining support from residents, organisations and the Council. The fund will focus on projects that improve wellbeing, actively improve and protect the local environment, and strengthen community resilience.

3.4 The priorities for the fund will continue to align with Council priorities:

- ✓ Community Wellbeing – reducing health inequalities and creating more connected communities to enable people to enjoy a better quality of life
- ✓ Climate Resilience – achieving a reduction in carbon emissions and creating sustainable communities that are resilient to climate impacts, primarily flooding, extreme heat, and drought.
- ✓ Nature Recovery – enhancing the natural environment to increase biodiversity, alongside providing wider opportunities for people to access it and understand its value.

3.5 A budget of £120,000 per year is available. Projects will be able to apply for a pledge of up to 50% of the total project cost, or maximum of £12,000, whichever is the lower amount.

3.6 The aim is to provide two application windows in 2026.

4. CRITERIA AND ELIGIBILITY

4.1 Organisations will be deemed eligible to apply on the following basis:

Eligible	Ineligible
Charities - registered and excepted Charitable Incorporated Organisations Community Interest Companies (CICs) Constituted Voluntary Groups Community Benefit Society *	Town and parish councils Exempt charities Social Enterprises Private companies Statutory service providers Groups proposing for-profit projects Groups proposing projects with a political affiliation Schools will generally not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that the proposed project will have a demonstrable benefit to the wider community. Faith-based organisations will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that the activity will have no religious or missioning component and so long as the activity is inclusive.

4.2 Eligible organisations will be required to:

- Deliver work for the benefit of people who live in West Oxfordshire.
- Have a governing body (trustees or directors) of at least three unrelated individuals.
- Be inclusive and accessible in terms of recruitment, governance and delivery.
- Be able to provide the following documentation and evidence of their organisation’s eligibility:
 - Governing documents (such as constitution or Memorandum & Articles of association);

- Bank account in the name of the organisation, with two separate signatories
- Published accounts to demonstrate the organisation is over 12 months old; and
- Safeguarding and/or child protection policies where relevant.

4.3 Both Revenue and Capital costs will be eligible.

- Revenue costs: One-off costs associated with the direct delivery of a project. Staff costs where they are directly related to the project will be eligible. Feasibility studies will not be eligible.
- Capital costs: One-off costs associated with the refurbishment of a building or the purchase of equipment.

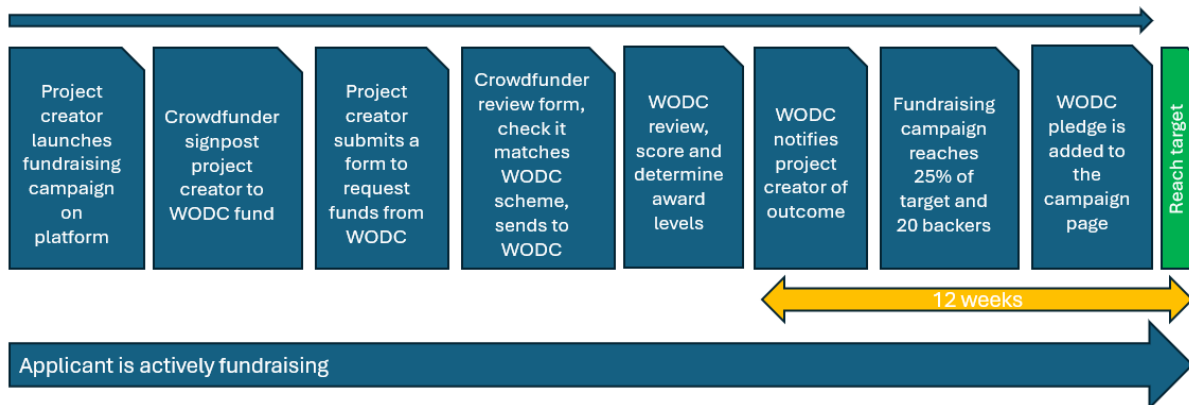
4.4 The following types of requests will not be eligible for support from the Council:

- Contributions to general appeals or circulars
- Activities where the primary benefit is the advancement of religion
- Activities where the primary benefit is to enable a public body to conduct its statutory obligations
- Activities where the primary benefit is the advancement of animal welfare
- Activities which have already taken place or costs that have already been incurred
- Grant-making or equivalent gifts in kind by other organisations (although we can fund provision of necessary goods for a service e.g. food parcels or activity packs)
- Changes to land/buildings that do not belong to the applicant
- Large-scale construction projects (including fixed structures e.g. playgrounds) with a total value over £100,000. This is due to the fact that these projects take a significant amount of time to reach their target and this can be difficult to manage in year.
- Feasibility studies
- Costs which can more appropriately be met through the precept.

4.5 All payments will be handled securely through Stripe. During project setup, each organisation connects its own Stripe account to manage transactions. Projects can run on an 'all or nothing' or 'keep what you raise' model, determining whether funds are released or refunded if targets are not met.

5. PROCESS FOR THE PROJECT CREATORS (APPLICANTS)

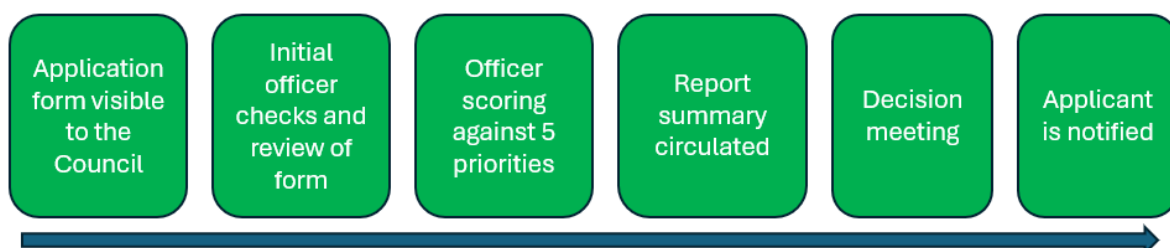
5.1 The process for project creators will be as follows:



- 5.2 Crowdfunder UK will pro-actively alert projects who are actively fundraising on the site. A very simple application form will be completed by the project creator and submitted to the Council via Crowdfunder UK who will review it against the Council criteria and eligibility.
- 5.3 Once approved the form will be visible to the Council via our Crowdfunder UK dashboard and officers will complete further checks before putting suitable bids forward for assessment and decision.
- 5.4 Once the outcome is known, project creators will be notified of the pledge. The pledge will be valid for 12 weeks after the date of the Award Agreement. If the project creator has not met the target within 12 weeks, the offer of the pledge may be withdrawn, however, project creators may request an extension to their campaign deadline. These will be considered on a case-by-case basis, recognising that there may be circumstances where a longer timeframe is needed to reach their target.
- 5.5 Project creators will need to reach 100% of their campaign fundraising target to receive the funds from the Council. At this point the pledge converts to an award.
- 5.6 If a project creator does not reach 100% of the campaign fundraising target the pledge will be cancelled.
- 5.7 Applicants should be actively crowdfunding to achieve the best results. The pledge from the council is designed to create energy in the campaign, to give the applicant a boost at a critical stage, encouraging supporters to back the project and reach the fundraising target.
- 5.8 There is no fee charged to project creators for using the platform. There are small costs associated on transactions which are levied by Stripe.

6. DETERMINING AN AWARD

6.1 Each application will be considered as follows:



6.2 If an application meets the criteria, it does not guarantee that an award will be granted. Officers will consider each application and score against a suite of 5 priorities. This will enable officers to prioritise funding to projects which align most strongly with the values of the funding scheme. The 5 priorities are as follows:

- Council priorities
- Local need
- Degree of community benefit
- Partnership arrangements
- Value for money

6.3 It is proposed that the decision making is delegated to the Director of Place in conjunction with the Executive member for Stronger, Healthier Communities. This is a change to the previous arrangement. Prior to this meeting a report will be shared with the Leader of the Council and Executive members for Finance, Environment and Climate to enable comments and representation to be made. The Decision will be made at the meeting itself where possible, unless further information is required.

7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

7.1 The Community Funding Officer will oversee the following process of evaluation and monitoring:

- A check in with the project creator 6 months after the campaign closes to review progress.
- An Impact report to be submitted by the project creator within 12 months of reaching the campaign target
- Produce an annual summary of projects supported and their impacts.

8. COMMISSIONING OF CROWDFUNDER UK

8.1 We are currently working through the process to procure Crowdfunder UK utilising the GCloud procurement framework. Procurement and Legal services teams are providing support.

8.2 We hope to commence the 3-year contract on 1st June 2026. Onboarding will be complete within 3 months of the contract start date.

8.3 The cost to the Council of Crowdfunder UK providing this service is £15,600 per annum for the duration of the contract. The costs are broken down as follows:

- Crowdfunder Connect Licence Fee (Hosted) for one fund £12,000
- Additional Fund distribution and enhanced verification service £3,600

9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

9.1 The development of the eligibility and criteria has been informed by research into similar frameworks operated by other Councils and grant-giving bodies. Developing a loose framework could lead to uncertainty and inconsistency in decision-making.

- 9.2** The decision to move to Crowdfunder UK from the previous platform provider was approved by Executive following a previous report.
- 9.3** The open and transparent nature of a ‘platform-based approach’ to the distribution of funds is a distinct advantage.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1** The Council has agreed an annual budget for the scheme of £120,000. Funds will be allocated at two rounds each year. In the event of funds not being allocated in year, these will be carried forward.
- 10.2** The Council will make a maximum pledge of £12,000 or 50% of the campaign target, whichever is the lower amount.
- 10.3** It was agreed by Executive on 17th December 2026 to consider as part of the 2026/27 budget setting process making provision for platform hosting fees. Crowdfunder UK has confirmed that these will be £15,600 per annum - fixed for the lifetime of the contract.

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1** Crowdfunder UK will be contracted via the GCloud procurement framework, overseen by the Procurement team and Legal services team.
- 11.2** Applicants for grants through the Crowdfunder platform will not enter into a formal grant agreement directly with the Council. Instead as part of the application process they will agree to Crowdfunder’s terms and conditions which will include obligations similar to those in a traditional grant agreement. These include discretion for Crowdfunder and the Council jointly to withdraw, reduce or require repayment of funding in certain circumstances.

12. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 12.1** Crowdfunder UK have experience of hosting local authority funds, and funds of national bodies such as Sport England and businesses such as Aviva and British Airways.
- 12.2** The framework for assessing applications to the Westhive fund is robust and provides suitable mitigation to reduce the risk of improper use of funds. Crowdfunder UK will undertake initial due diligence checks.
- 12.3** All organisations raising funds on the platform must comply with Crowdfunder UK terms and conditions and pass their due-diligence checks. These include:
- All project owners must provide a UK bank account as only UK accounts are accepted.
 - All project owners must provide proof of identity when required by Stripe, by uploading a copy of a UK Government issued ID such as a passport or driving licence.
 - All businesses, organisations and charities must provide registration details and a valid address.
- 12.4** Funding will only be distributed once the project has reached its fundraising target.
- 12.5** A regime for monitoring and evaluating the impact of funded projects will be in place.

13. EQUALITIES IMPACT

13.1 The award process will consider equality and inclusivity to ensure that the Council meets its duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality in relation to:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex

14. SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

14.1 The Sustainability Impact Assessment is included in Annex A.

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

15.1 None

(END)


Annex A: Sustainability Impact Assessment Tool (SIAT) for Investing into the Community – Crowdfunding

Project Brief
 To review the proposed application and assessment processes, criteria and eligibility of the new grants scheme which is expected to be hosted by Crowdfunder UK; and to update on the progress of commissioning Crowdfunder UK as the new host of the scheme.

Criteria	Score	Justification
Energy Use	2	Unsure what types of project will come through this scheme however it's not out of scope that we may have something that addresses soil
GHGs	4	While future funding availability remains uncertain, the next phase of funding will be directed towards projects focused on climate change
Air quality	2	Unclear what funding will be available in the future, but funding for this next cohort will be dedicated to projects which address climate
Land use change	2	Again it is difficult to predict what future funds will be available and which projects will be successful so have estimated 'slightly'. Criteria
Soil and waterway health	2	Unsure what types of project will come through this scheme however it's not out of scope that we may have projects come through that
Waste	2	Unsure what types of project will come through this scheme however it's not out of scope that we may have something that addresses waste
Sustainable Transport	2	The current criteria place a strong emphasis on supporting sustainable transport projects, and the council pledged funding
Biodiversity	2	While the specific types of projects that will come forward through this scheme are not yet known, it is reasonable to expect that some bids
Climate Change Adaptation	2	While the specific types of projects that will come forward through this scheme are not yet known, it is reasonable to expect that some bids
Sustainable Materials	2	Unsure what types of project will come through this scheme however it's not out of scope that we may have something that addresses
Food	2	While future funding availability remains uncertain, one of the main criteria for the next phase of funding will be directed towards projects
Health	2	While future funding availability remains uncertain, one of the main criteria for the next phase of funding will be directed towards projects
Housing	0	It is not anticipated that the scheme would have any impact in this area.
Education	2	While future funding availability remains uncertain, one of the main criteria for the next phase of funding will be directed towards projects
Built Community	2	While future funding availability remains uncertain, one of the main criteria for the next phase of funding will be directed towards projects
Cultural Community	2	While future funding availability remains uncertain, one of the main criteria for the next phase of funding will be directed towards projects
Accessibility	2	While future funding availability remains uncertain, one of the main criteria for the next phase of funding will be directed towards projects
Local Economy and Jobs	0	It is not anticipated that the scheme would have any impact in this area.
Safety	0	It is not anticipated that the scheme would have any impact in this area.
Democratic Voice	0	No obvious impact in this area
Equity	2	Positive impact on groups with protected characteristics.

NB: You can filter the justifications by colour using the filter option on the 'score' column. For example, you can choose to only print red scores so that you can review them.



 <p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>	<p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>
<p>Name and date of Committee</p>	<p>EXECUTIVE – WEDNESDAY 10 JUNE 2026</p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p>FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2025/26 YEAR END</p>
<p>Wards affected</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Accountable member</p>	<p>Cllr Alaric Smith, Executive Member for Finance Email: alaric.smith@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Accountable officer</p>	<p>Madhu Richards Director of Finance Email: madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Report author</p>	<p>Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance Email: georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Summary/Purpose</p>	<p>To report the financial performance of the Council in 2025/26</p>
<p>Annexes</p>	<p>Annex A – Revenue Outturn Annex B – Capital Outturn and Capital Slippage</p>
<p>Recommendation(s)</p>	<p>That the Executive</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the 2025/26 financial performance. 2. Recommend to Council to carry forward the capital budget of £4,395,180. (Paragraph 5.2) 3. Recommend to Council to approve the transfers to and between Earmarked Reserves as detailed in the report. (Section 4) 4. Recommend to Council to approve the necessary budget virements related to Publica Phase 2. (Paragraph 2.27)
<p>Corporate priorities</p>	<p>Working Together for West Oxfordshire</p>
<p>Key Decision</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Exempt</p>	<p>No</p>

Consultees/ Consultation	None
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 In February 2025, the Council set a balanced budget with a contribution to general fund reserves of £91,280. The in-year quarterly reporting has consistently forecast a cost of service underspend driven by Trade Waste & Development Management income and a significant overachievement of interest on Treasury Management investment activities.
- 1.2 At year end the underspend on cost of services is £208,978. This is driven by the strong performance of some fee generating services, the lower than anticipated one off costs of the Publica Review (£112,000 underspend) and the contract refunds returned to the Council by both Publica (£162,000) and Ubico (£200,000).
- 1.3 Combined with the funding elements of the revenue account i.e. Interest on external borrowing, Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) which is the charge that must be made to revenue to pay off the principal amount of borrowing taken out to fund the capital programme, similar to depreciation in the private sector, disposal of fixed assets and Government Grants, the final outturn position is a contribution to general fund reserves of £186,890.
- 1.4 The Council's Treasury Management activity generated an additional £800,768 of investment income, benefitting from higher than expected interest rates for the full financial year in both our Money Market accounts and our Pooled funds. At the beginning of 2026 our Treasury Management advisors were predicting that interest rates would begin to fall this year, but this has not materialised due to the effect of the conflict in Iran on the global economy and the Bank of England's need to curb inflation.
- 1.5 The £800,000 of additional Treasury Management income has been moved to Earmarked Reserves to help fund the cost of Local Government Re-Organisation (LGR).
- 1.6 Throughout the year it has been reported that both Trade Waste and Development Management have generated significantly higher income than budgeted in 2025/26. This additional income enables the Council to fund priority projects without the need to take out external borrowing. The additional Trade Waste income has been moved to an earmarked reserve to fund the Waste and Environmental Services Programme (WESP) and the additional Development Management income has been moved to an earmarked reserves to fund the Woodford Way project to the planning application stage.
- 1.7 Publica returned a net refund to the Council of £162,000 relating to Phase 2 of the Publica Review and early delivery against savings targets.
- 1.8 The Capital Programme for the year was approved at £16.165m and expenditure at year end is £8.24m. The first phase of the replacement of the Waste Vehicle fleet was budgeted to be funded by external borrowing with the resulting interest costs and MRP included in

the 2025/26 budget. Waste Vehicle replacement is now an integral part of the County wide WESP. This programme is a co-ordinated approach allowing for shared planning, joint procurement and the optimisation of both fleet and associated infrastructure. This approach will allow for the rationalisation of depots and transfer stations to better reflect overall County wide need.

- 1.9 The remaining capital slippage relates to investment Property repairs at Unit 1-3 Carterton Industrial Estate, The works to replace the roof, are underway and are expected to be completed in Q2 2026/27.
- 1.10 The reduced capital expenditure meant that the Council did not need to take out external borrowing in the year, saving £81,968 in budgeted interest costs and correspondingly, without additional assets, the MRP is £44,036 below budget.
- 1.11 The budget for 2026/27 assumes a lower rate of interest returns for Treasury Management investments which should reduce the variance throughout the year. However, the budget was set before the Iran conflict started and now the global economic landscape is very different. It is unlikely that interest rates will fall as anticipated during 2026/27 as the Bank of England will need to manage inflation. Capital slippage, if agreed, will increase the Capital Programme to £13.4m with a corresponding increase in MRP of £44,000.

There are a number of budget variances identified in the report across a range of service areas, commentary for the most significant of these is set out below. A full list of variances by cost centre is listed in Annex A.

These figures are still subject to External Audit review; however, no material change is expected to the figures reported here.

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL - Budget Monitoring

Revenue Budget Monitoring 2025/26 - 1st April to 31st March 2026

Service Area	Original Budget 2025/26 £	Current Budget £	Actual Exp £	Variance (under) / over spend £
Democratic and Committee Services	1,412,297	1,447,977	1,429,823	(18,154)
Environmental & Regulatory Services	784,557	698,731	729,758	31,028
Environmental Services	8,285,567	8,319,120	8,175,612	(143,508)
Finance, Human Resources & Procurement	1,062,851	1,183,180	1,202,137	18,957
ICT, Change & Customer Services	2,230,097	1,867,755	1,853,109	(14,646)
Land, Legal & Property	841,492	1,653,028	1,645,381	(7,647)
Leisure & Communities	555,410	595,786	301,192	(294,594)
Planning & Strategic Housing	1,383,153	1,280,375	1,162,599	(117,776)
Revenues & Housing Support	1,592,014	665,724	1,270,026	604,302
Investment Property and Retained Services	682,434	1,034,001	767,061	(266,940)
Total cost of services	18,829,872	18,745,676	18,536,698	(208,978)
Plus:				
Investment income receipts	(1,156,228)	(1,956,228)	(1,956,996)	(768)
Cost of services before financing:	17,673,644	16,789,448	16,579,702	(209,746)
General Government Grants	(5,183,440)	(5,851,154)	(5,839,905)	11,249
Retained Business Rates	(6,987,360)	(6,987,360)	(6,987,360)	(0)
Interest Payable	84,875	84,875	2,907	(81,968)
MRP	581,166	581,166	537,130	(44,036)
Revenue Contribution to Capital	540,000	540,000	569,624	29,624
Earmarked Reserves	1,444,735	3,265,122	3,481,160	216,038
Disposal of fixed assets	0	0	(16,770)	(16,770)
Capital Charges	(1,804,700)	(2,073,178)	(2,073,177)	1
Council Tax	(6,440,199)	(6,440,199)	(6,440,199)	0
Budgeted Contribution to General Fund	91,280	91,280	0	(91,280)
Contribution to General Fund	0	(0)	(186,890)	(186,890)

2. FINANCIAL REPORTING – REVENUE

Environmental and Regulatory Services

2.1 Building Control

Building Control has exceeded the income target for the year by £13,000 but is overspent by £11,851 in staff overtime and £6,963 in mileage that were not budgeted for in 2025/26, following the TUPE of staff from Publica back to the Council. This issue has been addressed

in the 2026/27 budget. We have also been subject to charges of £12,000 from the Health & Safety Executive for an audit of our Building Control function that is required under a new monitoring regime. The next audit is expected to take place in 2029/30.

2.2 Markets

As reported in the year, a commercial operator now manages the markets in Witney & Chipping Norton. The outsourcing is designed to revitalise the markets with income to the Council increasing over time. At the end of Q4 the overspend is £33,509, consistent with the reporting in the year. The 2026/27 budget has been adjusted to allow the operator time to deliver their improvement plans.

Land, Legal and Property

2.3 Marriotts

Marriotts was purchased by the Council in January 2023 for regeneration and to support a vibrant High Street in Witney and serve the whole District. This move away from commercial investments was a departure for the Council, with its portfolio of investment properties that had been built up over the last 15 years but demonstrated the Council's commitment to develop the local economy.

A commercial agent manages lettings and it has become apparent that retail lettings are not achieved at speed. Despite the general market conditions, during 2025/26 new tenants have begun trading at Marriotts, such as Vorwerk, Scarlett Brewery, Hotter Shoes and Opera Cafe, and existing tenants have renewed their leases. The current occupancy for the scheme is 96.89% with negotiations underway with a potential tenant for the single remaining vacant unit.

Overall Marriotts has made a net contribution to the Council's finances of £454,890 in 2025/26.

2.4 Legal

In May 2024, the Council signed up to a new Legal Shared Services agreement with Cotswold District Council and Forest of Dean District Council. The shared service offers advantages in terms of shared knowledge and resilience and the new SLA arrangement fairly apportions the cost of the service across the Councils based on the amount of resource each Council uses. For the 2025/26 financial year there is an underspend of £27,000, due to a vacant post. This post has now been recruited to and it is likely that in 2026/27 the service will be on budget.

Leisure & Communities

2.5 Leisure Contract

Overall, the leisure contract is underspent by £294,940 in 2025/26.

Of this underspend £83,000 relates to the budgeted amount for legal advice and procurement support for the negotiation of the new leisure contract for 2027-2033. This legal advice has been instructed in Q1 2026/27, with procurement support to follow.

Contract income is £176,000 above target for the year due to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) increase in the contract sum. This excess income has been moved to earmarked reserves to help offset the £1.39m reduction in leisure income expected from 2027/28 following the negotiation of the new contract

In addition, £229,000 of bad debt provision has been released back to the General Fund following the annual review of bad debt as part of the year end process, creating an additional underspend against the Leisure Contract.

Environmental Services

2.6 Ubico Contract

The Ubico contract is £200,000 underspent for the year against a budget of £8,604,053. The underspend has been split across the contract and has offset overspends for bins and boxes, recycling costs, repairs and maintenance at the Depots and trash screen clearance.

2.7 Grounds Maintenance

This is a charged for service to Parish and Town Councils to undertake grass cutting, litter clearance, hedge cutting and litter bin emptying. The service has grown over the last two years from an overspend of £30,000 in 2023/24 to an underspend of £39,000 in 2025/26. The service is provided via the Ubico contract but remits income directly to the Council. However, the budget does not include any allocation for the Council's costs in managing the service, therefore the real cost of providing this service is under represented.

2.8 Dog Warden

This is a statutory service and is not income generating, therefore 100% of the cost is borne by the Council for the collection and kennelling of stray dogs. At Q3 it was reported that there was an underspend of £24,000, a 58% reduction in demand compared to the same period last year. At year end, the underspend has increased to £36,000. By its nature, this service is subject to demand volatility.

2.9 Green Waste

Income from Green Waste licences is £68,000 behind target for the year but has achieved 96% of the £1.66m budget, a contribution to support Council services of £268,274. The cost

of a green waste licence in 2026/27 has been kept at £52.50, the lowest licence fee compared to our 14 closest neighbouring Councils.

2.10 Trade Waste

Trade Waste performance in 2025/26 has been very positive. The Publica Trade Waste team achieved additional income of £341,000 compared to budget in conjunction with an underspend on tipping charges paid to the County Council of £63,000.

The additional income (£341,000) has been moved to earmarked reserves to help fund the Waste & Environmental Services Programme (WESP).

2.11 Household Waste

After the proportionate application of the Ubico contract underspend, Household Waste is on budget for the year. However, in the year there was unbudgeted for expenditure of £65,000 on Alloy Licences which is being used in the Waste Vehicles to better understand and plan routes and to manage resources more flexibly.

2.12 Bulky Waste

Fees for Bulky Waste were increased in 2025/26 from £34 to £40 and have generated a very similar volume of collections as 2024/25, resulting in an underspend of £24,000.

Planning & Strategic Housing

2.13 Development Management

Throughout the year Planning Application income has been reported as being well ahead of budget due to the receipt of major applications. At the end of Q4, income is £433,000 above target, partially offset by £123,000 of expenditure on agency staff. This income is an increase of 20% on last year, an indication of the volatility of application income and the difficulty in setting an accurate budget. Of this excess income, £299,000 has been moved to earmarked reserves to fund the Woodford Way project to the Planning Application stage.

2.14 Development Management Appeals

External legal spend on Planning Appeals is £87,805 underspent. It is difficult to predict when appeals will be lodged but we have seen significant underspends in the last two financial years. The budget has therefore been reduced by £50,000 for 2026/27.

Retained Services

2.15 Publica Review

On 1st July 2025 the second phase of Publica employees were TUPE transferred back to the Council. This transfer included the Waste, Leisure, Assets and Project Management teams. The 2025/26 budget included £300,000 for any one-off costs incurred by the Council relating to this Phase 2 transfer. The actual one-off costs were significantly lower than budgeted, resulting in a £111,891 underspend.

2.16 Publica Contract

Due to Phase 2 of the Publica Review, Publica has remitted a net refund to the Council against the 2025/26 contract sum of £162,570. This figure includes a return of £189,997 relating to staffing and the corresponding reduction of £27,427 charged by the Council to Publica for the use of our buildings. This figure includes the reduction in the contract sum from 1st July 2025 relating to the staff transfer back to the Council, new posts in Homelessness and HR and a saving in Car Parking enforcement.

2.17 Investment Property

The Investment Property portfolio has had a mixed year in 2025/26, with the overall outturn being an overspend of £59,000. Town Centre Properties, Talisman and Des Roches have returned a combined underspend of £191,000, whilst Between Towns Road, Elmfield and Carterton Industrial Estate have returned a combined overspend of £250,000.

2.18 Elmfield

Elmfield is now part of the Council's Investment Property portfolio, however we retain liability for landlord works. Income is £32,000 behind budget for the year, linked to the landlord works on the building insulation that have been undertaken over the course of 2025/26 which reduced the area of rentable space.

2.19 Between Towns Road

The £50,172 overspend results from additional business rates liability and costs to secure the site in advance of it being sold. The sale completed at the end of January 2026 with the capital receipt included in the MTFS to fund the Leisure Centre Improvement Programme over the next two years.

2.20 Carterton Industrial Estate

Units 1-3 are currently vacant with roof replacement work underway which is due to be completed at the end of Q2 2026/27. The overspend for the year is £162,793, the majority of which is made up of Business Rates liability (£74,000), costs to keep the site secure

(£22,000), repairs to the roller shutters to access the building and restore the electrical connection (£30,147). A mandated Asbestos survey and professional fees for the condition surveys and specialist consultancy on the technical specification were also needed before going out to tender for the roof repairs (£30,927).

2.21 Town Centre Properties

Our Town Centre Properties are made up of 5 properties in Witney that include the Woolgate, Barclays Bank, Mill Walk and 35/37 High Street. Combined they have delivered a modest underspend of £17,462 relating to professional fees and service charges related to 2024/25 invoiced in the year.

2.22 Talisman

As reported throughout the year, the rental income for one of the units was missed out of the base budget in error, resulting in a £110,000 underspend for Talisman in addition to a £30,000 underspend on professional fees. The budget has been corrected for 2026/27.

2.23 Des Roches

The commencement of a new lease in July 2025, which due to timing was not included in the base budget, has provided the Council with an additional £37,000 of rental income.

A detailed report on our Investment Property portfolio, including current valuations, yield and 2025/26 outturn is the subject of a report from the Head of Assets which will go to Overview & Scrutiny Committee in June 2026.

2.24 Non-Distributed Costs

There are two elements to the pension contributions the Council makes for employees. Firstly, there is the amount paid monthly through payroll which is balanced by a secondary cash element paid direct to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) that keeps the payroll contribution at a steady rate and funds historic pension liability. The primary contribution rate has been 17.6% for the last six years, but the secondary cash contribution this year is higher than the budget and is £18,812 overspent at year end.

The pension scheme triennial revaluation was undertaken by the pension scheme actuaries and administrators in 2025 resulting in an increase in the primary contribution rate to 20% from the 1st April 2026 and the removal of the secondary contribution. This change is solely related to the way the pension scheme is funded and there is no impact on the amount of pension an employee will receive when they reach retirement. Pension payments are calculated on the basis of career average earnings (from April 2014), length of service and age. The contribution rate fluctuates over time in line with the performance of pension scheme assets.

Revenues & Housing Support

2.25 Housing Benefits

There are currently 73 households in temporary accommodation across the district. Over the course of the year this number has averaged at 76. Capacity in Council owned properties is for 22 single people with the remaining households in Bed & Breakfast or Hotel accommodation.

The reliance on Bed & Breakfast and Hotels to house an average of 54 clients cost the Council £924,000 in lost Housing Benefit Subsidy in 2025/26, partially offset by Housing Benefit overpayment income and a reduction in the contribution to Bad Debt to bring the outturn position to an overspend of £533,795.

For temporary accommodation not owned by the Council, we are only able to claw back around 27% of the average weekly cost we pay out. The 2025/26 Capital Programme included £3m to buy more properties to provide an additional 30 beds of accommodation to relieve the unsustainable pressure on revenue.

At full occupancy, the additional Council owned emergency accommodation would prevent the loss of an estimated £361,000 of Housing Benefit subsidy per year based on the current cost of B&Bs and Hotels used by the Council and the Local Authority Housing rates in place for 2026/27.

2.26 Acquisition of Temporary Accommodation

The Council completed the acquisition of a property in Corn Street Witney in the first week of November 2025 which will provide 5 beds, the first property completion of the programme. The renovation works have now been largely completed with only some minor snagging works to be undertaken although there is a national delay with equipment needed to install the security system.

The purchase of a second property in North Leigh was completed at the beginning of January 2026 and will provide accommodation for four families. The design work and specification has been finalised with the work currently being tendered through the procurement process.

The programme is on track to deliver 29 beds in total with the completion of the transfer of 6 vacant properties from Cottsway Housing due to take place on 22nd May.

All the properties have been surveyed and roof replacement in 3 of the properties will be required. This gives the Council the opportunity to upgrade the insulation in the properties which concurs with advice provided by the Climate Change Manager and supports climate emergency goals for WODC.

The capital expenditure against the original £3m approved is £1.335m. Part of the remainder is requested as slippage into 2026/27.

2.27 Budget Virements

As a result of the Publica Review it has been necessary to post a number of budget virements between employee costs and the Publica contract sum. This has not resulted in any change to the base budget, just a re-allocation of the approved budget between budget codes to remove the variances caused by the TUPE transfer of staff.

3. FUNDING

3.1 Retained Business Rates and Pooling

The accounting arrangements for Business Rates are complex and statute requires recognition of items charged in one financial year to be resolved in the following year i.e. the deficit arising in 2025/26 (the shortfall in collectable rates versus expected due to the Government reliefs) will be repaid to the Collection Fund in 2026/27. This deficit will be funded by the Business Rates deficit earmarked reserve set up specifically for this purpose.

As the Billing Authority the Council collects 100% of the 'payable' income but distributes 50% of the 'budgeted' income (regardless of whether the actual cash collected has reduced significantly due to Government reliefs) to Central Government and 10% to the County Council on a monthly basis.

The table below shows the calculation of the budgeted Business Rate income for the Council versus the Actual.

	Budget 2025/26	Actual 2025/26	
	£m	£m	
Total BR Income	48.376	46.851	Expected vs Collectable
WODC share	19.350	19.350	Fixed at Budget Setting/NNDR 1
Less Tariff	-14.461	-14.461	This is a Govt specified adjustment to reduce our collected rates to the baseline funding level they determine.
Deficit Payable	-0.001	-0.001	Fixed at Budget Setting
S31 Grant	4.571	4.735	Grant received to compensate for lost business rates income due to Central Gov policy.
Renewables	0.302	0.339	Income retained by WODC for renewable energy schemes
BR Income	9.761	9.962	
Less Levy	-2.774	-1.517	The budgeted figure is reduced by the Gain achieved from being a member of a Business Rates Pool.
Net Business Rates	6.987	8.445	
Deficit Payable		-0.687	Actual deficit submitted via the NNDR 3 form to be repaid in 2026/27
Movement to Reserves		-0.771	Pool Gain moved to earmarked reserves to pay the 25/26 deficit
Retained Income	6.987	6.987	

4. TRANSFERS TO EARMARKED RESERVES

At the Executive meeting on 11th March 2026, delegated authority was granted to the Portfolio holder for Finance and the Director of Finance to review Earmarked Reserves and re-align them with current Council priorities. This exercise has been done and has resulted in a reduction in the number of earmarked reserves from 54 to 45.

Of these 20 are ringfenced reserves of grant and Council funding for specific projects i.e. Afghan Resettlement, Extended Producer Responsibility, Homes for Ukraine and the Local Plan.

Other reserves are the result of a timing difference between the receipt and the expenditure of funding i.e. Biodiversity Net Gain, Botley PPA, Planning Skills Delivery.

The Council also has reserves set up to ameliorate specific risks i.e. Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), Investment Property Repairs, Ubico fuel contingency, Woodford Way and repayment of the Business Rates Deficit.

Specific reserves set up in 2025/26 are shown in the table below.

Specific Reserves	To £	Purpose
WESP	900,000	WESP Project
Maintenance of Open Spaces (Council Funded)	275,000	Ad hoc costs of repairing fences, footbridges, Play Parks, Kilkenny Country Park etc
Property Repairs & Maintenance Fund (Revenue)	150,000	Funding reactive building repairs that do not qualify as capital and are charge to the revenue budget
LGR	1,000,000	LGR costs before Vesting Day
Hardship Fund	440,000	Funding for the Council Tax and Housing Benefit Hardship schemes
Ubico Fuel Contingency	250,000	To fund the additional costs of diesel caused by the Iran war
Building Maintenance Fund	500,000	To fund the planned building maintenance of Council properties
Woodford Way Social Housing Scheme	200,000	To advance the scheme to the Planning stage
Total	3,715,000	

Reserves are reviewed at least annually with authority sought from the Executive to move funding between reserves as risks change over time.

The table below shows the proposed movements to earmarked reserves. After the proposed movements the final outturn position will be a £186,890 surplus which will go to the General Fund.

	Transfers		
Reserve	To	From	
	£	£	
Budget Deficit	1,457,845		Transfer of S31 Grant to fund the Business Rates deficits in 25/26 & 26/27
Afghan Resettlement	391,891		Afghan Resettlement Grant to be spent in 2026/27
Budget Deficit	1,687,057		Funding transferred from earmarked reserves that have been closed
Biodiversity Net Gain	27,142		Grant funding to be spent in 2026/27
Botley West PPA	36,585		Ringfenced income from the Planning Performance Agreement
Hardship Fund	440,000		Funding for discretionary hardship award scheme administered by Revenues & Benefits
Renters Rights Act New Burdens	32,354		Grant funding to be spent in 2026/27
Ubico Fuel Contingency	250,000		Set up to fund increase in diesel costs due to the Iran conflict
Building Condition Surveys		99,625	Funding for building condition surveys and the Asset Management Plan
Investment Property		451,872	Dilapidations expenditure for Newman Court & Chawley Park in 2025/26
New Initiatives		109,258	Funding for Strategic Housing Delivery Manager and an Ecologist
Project Contingency		24,500	Set up costs for Lendology scheme
Maintenance of Open Spaces		72,991	Repairs & Maintenance for playgrounds and Kilkenny Country Park
Budget Deficit		196,406	One off costs for the Publica Review phase 2
Total	4,322,874	954,652	

5. CAPITAL PROGRAMME

- 5.1** The capital programme approved by Council as part of the budget for 2025/26 totalled £16,165,000. At year end £8,242,280 had been spent against this budget.
- 5.2** Of the underspend £4,395,180 is requested to be carried forward into 2026/27 as slippage as it concerns timing differences in the Waste Fleet Replacement, the acquisition of Temporary Accommodation and the re-roofing works underway at Units 1-3 Carterton Industrial Estate and Station Lane which are due to be completed at the end of Q2 2026/27.
- 5.3** A full breakdown of the schemes for the year and expenditure as at 31st March 2026 is attached at Annex B.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1** The net cost of service outturn position for 2025/26, before movements to earmarked reserves is in line with the forecast reported throughout the year. Better than anticipated interest returns from Treasury Management investments, significant over performance of Trade Waste, Development Management and the Leisure contract and the gain from the Business Rates Pool has allowed for higher than budgeted transfers to the Budget Deficit Earmarked Reserve and the setting up of reserves to combat specific and significant risks e.g. LGR, WESP, Building Maintenance and Woodford Way.
- 6.2** The Budget Deficit reserve was set up in 2023/24 using general fund surpluses and transfers from existing reserves to mitigate the impact of the Business Rates reset which is in effect from 1st April 2026, uncertainty around Government funding and the revenue impact of the end of the Leisure Contract in 2027. With a three year funding settlement, we have more certainty around government funding, but the Business Rates reset removes the benefit for anyone to be in a Business Rates Pool and our retained Business Rates will drop to £2.4m in 2026/27 from £6.987m in 2025/26 (after movements to reserves to repay the 25/26 deficit).

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1** The Council set a balanced budget for 2025/26 with a contribution to General Fund of £91,280 and the final outturn position is a contribution to General Fund of £186,890.
- 7.2** The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) identifies a revenue funding gap of £3.28m over the next three years and a gap of £10.5m over the next 5 years from the reduction in income from the Leisure Contract and an overall drop in government & Business Rates funding. The Council will therefore need to rely on the General Fund and Earmarked Reserve balances to set a balanced budget over the life of the existing MTFS.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1** None

9. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 9.1** Not applicable

10. EQUALITIES IMPACT

10.1 None

11. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 None

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

Q4 position		
Current Budget	Actual Exp	Variance (under) / over spend
£	£	£

Democratic Services

DRM001-Democratic Representation	375,968	392,813	16,845
DRM002-Support To Elected Bodies	528,350	532,136	3,786
ELE001-Registration of Electors	308,667	296,510	(12,157)
ELE002-District Elections	75,700	52,493	(23,207)
ELE004-Parliamentary Elections	0	0	0
ELE005-Parish Elections	0	(237)	(237)
ELE006-County Elections	42	0	(42)
ELE007-European Elections	0	0	0
ELE008-Police & Crime Commissioner Elections	0	0	0
ELE011-Referendum	4,631	4,631	0
SUP001-Administration	154,619	151,477	(3,142)

Total - Democratic Services

1,447,977	1,429,823	(18,154)
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DRM001 - the overspend relates to the webcasting licence for the committee rooms and Council Chamber that have not been budgeted for in 2025/26. This has been remedied in 2026/27.

Elections - Registration of Electors and District Elections have an underspend on postage costs and canvassing fees. The Referendum refers to a Neighbourhood Referendum funded through Neighbourhood Planning Grant.

	Q4 position		
	Current Budget	Actual Exp	Variance (under) / over spend
	£	£	£
Environmental & Regulatory Services			
BUC001-Building Control - Fee Earning Work	61,503	83,425	21,922
BUC002-Building Control - Non Fee Earning Work	3,336	4,459	1,123
EMP001-Emergency Planning	30,607	25,214	(5,393)
ESM001-Environment - Service Mgmt & Supp Serv	102,069	102,470	401
PSH002-Private Sector Housing-Condition of Dwellings	3,000	0	(3,000)
REG001-Environmental Health General	0	0	0
REG002-Licensing	22,508	(689)	(23,197)
REG009-Environmental Protection	209,357	214,814	5,457
REG011-Authorised Process	(11,890)	(7,669)	4,221
REG013-Pollution Control	130,137	131,070	933
REG016-Food Safety	144,039	141,029	(3,009)
REG021-Statutory Burials	5,000	4,645	(355)
STC011 - Abandoned Vehicles	0	(2,839)	(2,839)
TAC309-Other Trading Services - Markets	(1,375)	32,134	33,509
Total - Environmental & Regulatory Services	698,731	729,758	31,028

BUC001 - the overspend comprises £12,000 of overtime and £7,000 of mileage that is not budgeted for in 2025/26, following the TUPE of staff from Publica back to the Council. This budget has been reviewed for 2026/27 to ensure all employee costs are included.

REG002 - £14,000 of the underspend relates to higher than budgeted income for Taxi licences and Knowledge tests with the remaining underspend made up of small variances across the other licence types.

TAC309 - The markets in Witney and Chipping Norton are now managed by a commercial operator. As the new model develops and attracts more traders to the revitalised markets, income is expected to grow over time. Whilst income is £33,000 behind target for 2025/26, the move to the new operator provides a saving of £62,000 a year from 1st April 2026 on waste collection as Ubico are no longer employed to undertake this work.

	Q4 position		
	Current Budget	Actual Exp	Variance (under) / over spend
	£	£	£
Finance, Human Resources & Procurement			
SUP003-Human Resources	302,032	310,784	8,752
SUP009-Accountancy	367,707	367,883	176
SUP010-Internal Audit	232,873	239,218	6,345
SUP011-Creditors	45,216	44,913	(303)
SUP012-Debtors	62,354	59,494	(2,860)
SUP013-Payroll	60,408	61,412	1,004
SUP019-Health & Safety	34,135	34,219	84
SUP020-Training & Development	29,658	29,658	0
SUP033-Central Purchasing	38,836	39,494	658
SUP035-Insurances	9,961	9,961	(0)
Total - Finance, Human Resources & Procurement	1,183,180	1,202,137	18,957

	Q4 position		
	Current Budget	Actual Exp	Variance (under) / over spend
	£	£	£
ICT, Change & Customer Services			
SUP005-ICT	1,281,368	1,258,795	(22,573)
SUP008-Reception/Customer Services	603,561	603,527	(34)
SUP014-Cashiers	110	0	(110)
TMR001-Street Naming & Numbering	0	(543)	(543)
TMR002-Street Furniture & Equipment	(17,284)	(8,670)	8,614
Total - ICT, Change & Customer Services	1,867,755	1,853,109	(14,646)

SUP005 - The Council has received a £22,000 refund on 3rd party Forest ICT charges, putting the service into an underspend.

	Q4 position		
	Current Budget	Actual Exp	Variance (under) / over spend
	£	£	£
Land, Legal & Property			
ADB301-3 Welch Way (Town Centre Shop)	10,240	12,061	1,821
ADB302-Guildhall	12,537	12,243	(294)
ADB303-Woodgreen	370,721	375,234	4,513
ADB304-Elmfield	(103,028)	(70,969)	32,059
ADB305-Corporate Buildings	1,101,538	1,080,672	(20,866)
ADB306-Depot	133,950	139,080	5,130
FIE346-Marriotts	(451,372)	(454,889)	(3,517)
LLC001-Local Land Charges	(49,583)	(45,261)	4,322
SUP004-Legal	337,957	310,874	(27,083)
TAC303-Swain Court	290,068	286,335	(3,733)
Total - Land, Legal & Property	1,653,028	1,645,381	(7,647)

ADB304 - Elmfield is now part of the Council's Investment Property portfolio, but we retain the liability to undertake Landlord's works. The impact of these works in 2025/26 is represented by the overspend of £32,000.

ADB305 - this cost centre includes the Property & Assets team employee costs and repairs and maintenance of the Council's operational buildings. The underspend is a collection of small variances across reactive maintenance budget lines.

SUP004 - the shared legal service has been carrying a vacancy this financial year, resulting in the underspend shown.

	Q4 position		
	Current Budget	Actual Exp	Variance (under) / over spend
	£	£	£
Leisure & Communities			
CCR001-Community Safety (Crime Reduction)	355,323	357,265	1,942
CCR002-Building Safer Communities	(6,770)	(9,689)	(2,919)
CCR301 - Communities Revenue Grant	325,525	329,423	3,898
CCT001-CCTV	107,105	102,878	(4,227)
CSM001-Cultural Strategy	88,235	85,506	(2,729)
COV022-Lockdown Grants	0	1,301	1,301
COV023-COMF	46,938	46,938	(0)
CUL001-Arts Development	53,851	53,851	(0)
ECD001-Economic Development	155,127	157,034	1,907
ECD010 – SPF Community and Place	0	559	559
ECD012-Skills and People	37,968	37,968	0
REC001-Sports Development	175,881	174,424	(1,457)
REC002-Recreational Facilities Development	55,838	63,545	7,707
REC003-Play	63,299	64,757	1,458
REC301-Village Halls	14,883	15,196	313
REC302-Contract Management	(1,099,335)	(1,394,275)	(294,940)
SUP016-Finance - Performance Review	110,796	110,836	40
TOU001-Tourism Strategy and Promotion	111,122	103,676	(7,446)
Total - Leisure & Communities	595,786	301,192	(294,594)

REC302 - The budget includes £83,000 for external legal advice and procurement support related to the negotiation of the new leisure contract for 2027. This advice is being taken in the first part of 2026/27. Unbudgeted spend of £18,000 for repairs & maintenance includes £9,975 for the installation of energy saving showers at Carterton LC. There are also number of minor overspends for the appraisal of Carterton LC roof repairs and professional advice on the specification of Solar PV installed. Income is £229,000 more than budget for the year.

	Q4 position		
	Current Budget	Actual Exp	Variance (under) / over spend
	£	£	£
Environmental Services			
CCC001-Climate Change	186,862	191,261	4,399
COR301-Policy Initiatives - Shopmobility	16,340	16,340	(0)
CPK001-Car Parks - Off Street	511,396	505,447	(5,949)
ENI002-Grounds Maintenance	624,767	585,725	(39,042)
ENI303-Landscape Maintenance	48,499	51,961	3,462
FLD001-Flood Defence and Land Drainage	195,812	190,730	(5,082)
REG004-Dog Warden	72,567	36,200	(36,367)
REG019-Public Conveniences	259,138	264,958	5,820
REG023-Environmental Strategy	81,300	80,264	(1,036)
RYC001-Recycling	2,180,412	2,177,500	(2,912)
RYC002-Green Waste	(285,736)	(268,274)	17,462
RYC003-Food Waste	1,076,674	1,066,344	(10,330)
STC004-Environmental Cleansing	947,009	950,256	3,247
TRW001-Trade Waste	(290,971)	(351,991)	(61,020)
TRW002-Clinical Waste	(500)	0	500
WST001-Household Waste	2,242,557	2,246,119	3,562
WST004-Bulky Household Waste	17,856	(6,793)	(24,649)
WST301-Env. Services Depot, Downs Rd, Witney	376,108	380,618	4,510
WST005-WESP	59,030	58,947	(83)
Total - Environmental Services	8,319,120	8,175,612	(143,508)

CCC001- The Council has contributed £10,000 for the Better Housing Better Health (BHBH) project that is not included in the base budget. This overspend has been partially offset by other small underspends. The 2026/27 budget has been updated to include the BHBH contribution.

ENI002 - this service provides Grounds Maintenance and Grass Cutting to Parish and Town Councils in the District. Income for the year is £35,000 ahead of budget and the Ubico contract is £4,000 underspent. Whilst this is a good news story, there are no Council overheads charged to Grounds Maintenance to manage the service in the budget, therefore the real cost of providing this service is under represented.

REG004 - the Council has a responsibility to collect and kennel stray dogs until their owners can be found. The cost for 2025/26 is a 59% reduction compared to 2024/25. Clearly this statutory service is subject to volatility of demand.

RYC002 -the service has achieved 96% of the income target in 2025/26 equivalent to £68,000 behind target for the year. This has been offset by underspends of £19,000 on new bins and boxes, £22,000 for printing and postage of garden waste licences and £10,000 against the Ubico contract sum.

RYC003 - the underspend relates to the underspend against the Ubico contract sum

TRW001 - Trade Waste income was £341,000 ahead of target in 2025/26 and tipping charges, paid to the County Council are £63,000 underspent. The additional income of £341,000 has been moved to earmarked reserves to fund the Waste & Environmental Services Programme (WESP) over the next 3 years.

WST004 - Bulky Waste income has ended the 2025/26 financial year £24,000 above target.

Q4 position		
Current Budget	Actual Exp	Variance (under) / over spend
£	£	£

Planning & Strategic Housing

DEV001-Development Control - Applications	(632,258)	(636,931)	(4,673)
DEV002-Development Control - Appeals	215,241	127,436	(87,805)
DEV003-Development Control - Enforcement	770	0	(770)
ENA001-Housing Enabling	192,115	197,437	5,322
ENI301-Landscape Initiatives	57,505	57,565	60
HLD315-Growth Board Project (Planning)	39,258	28,016	(11,242)
PLP001-Planning Policy	1,073,333	1,076,519	3,186
PLP003-Implementation	0	0	0
PLP004-Conservation	191,091	194,212	3,121
PSM001-Planning Service Mgmt & Support Serv	143,320	118,345	(24,975)

Total - Planning & Strategic Housing

1,280,375	1,162,599	(117,776)
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DEV001 - Planning Application income is £433,000 above target for the year due mainly to major applications while Pre Application Advice income is £15,675 below target. This additional income is offset by £123,000 of agency staff, £13,000 to the County Council for the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre and a number of small under and overspends. £299,000 of the additional income has been transferred to Earmarked Reserves to fund getting the Woodford Way housing project through to the Planning permission stage. If it transpires that this reserve is not required, the balance will be released back into the General Fund.

DEV002 - it is difficult to predict when planning appeals will be lodged or to forecast whether the full budget will be exhausted by the end of the year. The budget for 2026/27 has been reduced by £50,000.

HLD315 - this cost centre is concerned with expenditure related to the advancement of the Salt Cross programme. The underspend is in professional fees.

PSM001 - there is an underspend of £11,000 on printing and £13,000 on professional fees.

Q4 position		
Current Budget	Actual Exp	Variance (under) / over spend
£	£	£

Retained Services

COR002-Chief Executive	510,282	523,697	13,415
COR003-Corporate Policy Making	74,844	76,894	2,050
COR004-Public Relations	436,821	438,647	1,826
COR005-Corporate Finance	727,812	718,869	(8,943)
COR006-Treasury Management	26,700	20,333	(6,367)
COR007-External Audit Fees	208,312	200,123	(8,189)
COR008-Bank Charges	78,500	59,207	(19,293)
COR012 - Publica Review	309,232	197,341	(111,891)
COR013-LGR	196,406	196,406	0
COR302-Publica Group	193,667	31,097	(162,570)
FIE341-Town Centre Properties	(407,998)	(425,460)	(17,462)
FIE342-Miscellaneous Properties	(135,512)	(85,340)	50,172
FIE343-Talisman	(1,223,324)	(1,357,343)	(134,019)
FIE344-Des Roches Square	(431,490)	(470,518)	(39,028)
FIE345-Gables at Elmfield	0	5,415	5,415
NDC001-Non Distributed Costs	816,000	834,812	18,812
TAC304-Witney Industrial Estate	(169,660)	(170,443)	(783)
TAC305-Carterton Industrial Estate	(176,425)	(13,632)	162,793
TAC306-Greystones Industrial Estate	(9,667)	(10,383)	(716)
TAC308-Other Trading Services - Fairs	9,501	(2,662)	(12,163)
Total - Retained Services	1,034,001	767,061	(266,940)

COR002 - The majority of the overspend relates to the £11,000 contribution to the Cotswold Conservation Board which was unbudgeted for in 2025/26. This has been adjusted for 2026/27.

COR008 - costs related to the processing of debit & credit card payments to the Council are lower than anticipated, combined with a £5,000 underspend on bank charges

COR012 - this cost centre represents the budgeted one off costs for the second phase of the Publica Review where staff were TUPE transferred back to the Council on 1st July 2025.

COR302 - This cost centre represents the underspend on the Publica contract that has been returned to the Council for 2025/26.

FIE341 - income is on budget for the year with underspends of £4,000 on premises costs and £12,000 on professional fees.

FIE342 - rental income is on budget but there has been £50,000 of unbudgeted expenditure relating to Between Towns Road before it was sold i.e. Business Rates and costs to secure the site.

FIE343 - Rental income for Unit 13 has been incorrectly excluded from the base budget for 2025/26, this error has been corrected for the 2026/27 budget but has caused a £110,000 underspend in the current financial year in addition to an underspend on professional fees.

FIE344 - rental income achieved in 2025/26 is £37,000 above target due to the commencement of a new lease in July 2025.

NDC001 - there is an overspend of £18,000 for the Council's secondary pension contribution. For the triennial valuation period beginning 1st April 2026 the Council will cease to make secondary pension contributions and will increase the primary contribution rate from 17.6% to 20%. This represents a change to the funding of the pension scheme, not a change to the pension benefits payable to retirees.

TAC305 - the overspend relates to business rates (£74,000) and expenditure to secure the vacant units 1 - 3 in advance of the construction of the new roof, including repairs to the rolling shutters, electricity supply works, surveys and inspections.

	Q4 position		
	Current Budget	Actual Exp	Variance (under) / over spend
	£	£	£
Revenues & Housing Support			
HBP001-Rent Allowances	626,141	1,159,936	533,795
HOM001-Homelessness	139,988	136,659	(3,329)
HOM004-Refugees	0	0	0
HOM005-Homelessness Hostel Accommodation	8,408	13,993	5,585
HOM006 - The Old Court	37,447	40,823	3,376
HOM007-Afghan Resettlement Programme	(391,891)	(391,891)	0
HOM008-Homes for Ukraine	18,190	18,190	(0)
HOM010-North Leigh Hostel	0	1,503	1,503
HOM011-108 Corn Street	0	1,789	1,789
LTC001-Council Tax Collection	277,917	275,930	(1,987)
LTC011-NNDR Collection	(46,755)	(41,387)	5,368
PSH001-Private Sector Housing Grants	51,566	51,986	420
PSH004-Home Improvement Service	(55,287)	2,609	57,896
Total - Revenues & Housing Support	665,724	1,270,026	604,302

HBP001 - The number of households in temporary emergency accommodation has remained high during 2025/26, resulting in a loss of Housing Benefit Subsidy of £924,000. This is partially offset by Housing Benefit overpayment income and a reduction in bad debt provision.

PSH004 - The Home Improvement Service carries out, through external contractors, minor adaptations to people's homes i.e. installing hand rails, ramps and key safes. The cost of external contractors is £60,000 over budget, due to inflationary increases and the volume of work increasing from 121 jobs in 2024/25 to 275 in 2025/26. The budget has been increased for 2026/27.

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ANNEX B

Capital Programme 2025/26

Scheme	Funded By	2025/26 Total Budget	Q4 Actual	Slippage	2026/27 Budget	2026/27 Budget With Slippage
Asset Repairs - Carterton Ind Est/Station Lane	Borrowing	1,500,000	17,600	1,482,400		1,482,400
Investment Property Repairs	Earmarked Reserve/Borrowing				1,000,000	1,000,000
SOHA Housing Project	Grant		1,465,500			
Ubico Fleet Replacement Programme	Borrowing	4,721,266		1,598,734	3,401,266	5,000,000
Replacement Sweepers	Borrowing	850,000		850,000		850,000
In Cab Technology	Borrowing	100,000				
Public Conveniences Refurbishmnet	Borrowing				532,000	532,000
Witney ATP Refurbishment	Revenue Contribution	200,000				
Purchase of Temporary Accommodation	Capital Receipts	3,000,000	1,335,954	464,046	1,200,000	1,664,046
CCTV - Upgrading	Capital Receipts	255,635	247,180			
Leisure Centre Improvement Programme	Capital Receipts				1,501,550	1,501,550
Improvement Grants (DFG)	Grant	880,000	1,054,780		880,000	880,000
UK Rural Prosperity Fund	Grant		204,527			
Witney Leisure Centre PSDS	Grant/Borrowing	1,584,841	1,383,087			
Carterton Leisure Centre Solar PV Installation	Grant		321,000			
Chipping Norton Leisure Centre PSDS	Grant/Borrowing	2,643,926				
IT Provision - Systems & Strategy	Revenue Contribution	100,000	55,356		100,000	100,000
Council Buildings Maintenance Programme	Revenue Contribution	250,000	469,741		300,000	300,000
IT Equipment - PCs, Copiers etc	Revenue Contribution	40,000	28,926		40,000	40,000
Shopmobility	Revenue Contribution				10,000	10,000
Guildenford Car Park Lighting	Revenue Contribution				100,000	100,000
Chipping Norton Creative	S106		21,805			
Windrust Place Public Art	S106		3,626			
Carterton Connects Creative (Swinbrook s106)	S106	39,500	984			
Developer Capital Contributions	S106		1,632,213			
		16,165,168	8,242,281	4,395,180	9,064,816	13,459,996

- a. The re-roofing works at Unit 1-3 Carterton Industrial Estate is currently underway with an expected completion at the end of Q2.
- b. A full waste vehicle strategy will be coming forward from the Waste Transformation Programme for Member consideration. This strategy will look to maximise the efficiencies attainable through partnership working across the County, that the Council could never achieve through unilateral action. With the LGR decision coming in July 2026 this partnership is particularly important.
- c. A paper will be coming forward for Member consideration on the replacement of the street sweepers in early 2026/27.
- d. The Council has completed the acquisition of two properties in 2025/26 - in Corn Street Witney, providing 5 bedrooms for single households and accommodation for four families in North Leigh. The refurbishment of the Corn Street property is mostly complete with only snagging to be resolved. The completion of the transfer of 6 vacant properties suitable for temporary emergency accommodation from Cottsway Housing is expected to be completed on 22nd May. These properties will require refurbishment but all have been surveyed and specification work is underway.
- e. The decarbonisation works at Witney Leisure Centre were completed in March 2026, funded through a combination of grant and Council contribution. We are waiting for SSEN to make live the permanent electrical supply which has a current estimated date of late June/early July.
- f. The Leisure Team were successful in bidding for Sports England grant funding to install additional Solar PV on the roof at Carterton Leisure Centre at no cost to the Council.
- g. Developer Capital Contributions are the amount of £106 monies paid out to Town/Parishes during the year.

Agenda Item 8

 <p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>	<p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>
<p>Name and Date of Committee</p>	<p>EXECUTIVE – 10 JUNE 2026</p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p>SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2025-26 QUARTER FOUR</p>
<p>Wards Affected</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p>Accountable Member</p>	<p>Councillor Andy Graham – Leader of the Council. Email: andy.graham@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Accountable Officer</p>	<p>Giles Hughes – Chief Executive Email: giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Report author</p>	<p>Yemi Olu-Opaleye – Senior Performance Analyst. Email: yemi.olu-opaleye@publicagroup.uk</p>
<p>Purpose</p>	<p>To provide details of the Council’s operational performance at the end of 2025-26 Quarter Four (Q4).</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>That the Executive Resolves to: I. Note the 2025/26 Q4 service performance report.</p>
<p>Corporate Priorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting Residents First • Enabling a Good Quality of Life for All • Creating a Better Environment for People and Wildlife • Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency • Working Together for West Oxfordshire
<p>Key Decision</p>	<p>NO</p>
<p>Exempt</p>	<p>NO</p>
<p>Consultees/ Consultation</p>	<p>Publica 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.

High-performing front-line public services are critical to the Council's role in supporting residents, businesses and communities. By ensuring our performance framework highlights variations from expected performance at the earliest opportunity, we can trigger targeted interventions that support improvement and recovery. This, in turn, strengthens our ability to provide modern, effective services for residents, businesses and communities.

Our performance framework covers the full range of public services delivered to communities through a variety of delivery models including the Council itself and the Council's Teckal companies (Publica and Ubico). The report aims to provide the necessary information for the Council to assess whether services are being delivered in line with agreed quality standards and expectations.

I.2 The Council's Chief Executive is responsible for reviewing and approving the information provided in this report prior to its publication.

2. COUNCIL PRIORITY REPORT

2.1 Progress on actions in the Corporate Plan for Q4 include:

- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was successfully implemented, going live on 31 January 2026 and now applied to all relevant planning applications.
- Salt Cross Garden Village reached a major milestone, with the Area Action Plan adopted in February 2026, agreement on outline application updates, refreshed PPA, updated Section 106 schedule, and a clear work programme aiming for outline application updates by Autumn 2026.
- Town centre and regeneration activity progressed, including Witney wayfinding, award of 14 shopfront grants and advancing public realm designs. Carterton regeneration advanced, with an Interim Regeneration Lead appointed and work beginning on the Carterton Area Strategy, including green investment opportunities linked to RAF Brize Norton.
- Woodford Way scheme progressed, the latest design for the site was presented to the Executive and Overview & Scrutiny Committee for discussion, the covering report outlined a medium density scheme that comprises of 55 dwellings (20 maisonettes and 35 apartments) and 84 public parking spaces, which will be Registered Provider-led, supported by £215k of earmarked viability funding.
- Household Support Funding totalling £60k to those facing financial barriers - through grants, vouchers to food groups and organisations supporting carers.
- The Windrush Leisure Centre decarbonisation project continues to progress and surpassed a major milestone in Q4 with the installation of the new low-carbon heating system and electric waste vehicles ordered. Nature Recovery Growth funding secured, and UKSPF/REPF delivery extended to September 2026.
- Westhive Round 6 was completed, with 14 community projects receiving Council and community pledges. In addition, Executive approved continuing the council's community crowdfunding approach for a further three years starting April 2026.

- Youth engagement strengthened, with a new West Oxfordshire Youth Partnership established and a Youth Voice programme progressing, supported by DCMS funding via OCC.

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

3.1 Overall, the Councils performance remained strong across many key services, with high customer satisfaction, excellent planning determination times and continued growth in leisure participation. Council Tax collection met target and despite pre-application advice targets not being met, there was strong overall financial performance in Planning, with total planning income reaching £1.71m against a £1.33m target for the year. Affordable housing delivery exceeded expectations, reaching 352 homes against a target of 274.

A smaller number of services experienced ongoing pressure, particularly in the processing of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support changes, where in quarter improvements have not yet offset the cumulative impact of earlier delays and increasing case complexity. FOI response times were slightly below target and Land Charges performance was impacted by both large concentrations of applications over short timescales and by staffing shortages, though early signs of recovery are evident. Recycling rates continue to reflect seasonal and national trends. Taken together, Q4 demonstrates strong and consistent delivery across priority services, with targeted improvement work in place where performance remains below expectations.

3.2 Service performance above target:

- Percentage of Council Tax Collected (98.03% against a target of 98%)
- Customer Satisfaction – Telephone (97.98% against a target of 90%)
- Percentage of major planning applications determined within agreed timescales. All 12 were determined within target - 100% against a target of 70%
- Percentage of minor planning applications determined within agreed timescales (90.32% against a target of 65%). Of the 62 applications determined, 56 were within agreed timescales.
- Percentage of other planning applications determined within agreed timescales (97.47% against a target of 80%). Of the 198 applications determined, 193 were within agreed timescales.
- Total Planning Income (£1,713,275 against a target of £1,330,173)
- Percentage of FOI requests answered within 20 days (91.2% against a target of 90%)
- Percentage of Planning Appeals Allowed (cumulative) (27.03% against a target of 30%). Thirty-seven Section 78 Appeals were determined in 2025/26, of those 37, ten were allowed
- Number of affordable homes delivered (cumulative) (352 against a target of 274)
- Percentage of high-risk food premises inspected within target timescales (100% against a target of 95%). All four notifications were inspected within timescales.
- Percentage of high-risk notifications risk assessed within 1 working day (100% against a target of 95%). Six inspections were due and all inspected within timescales.
- Missed bins per 100,000 (48.58 against a target of 110)
- (Snapshot) Number of gym memberships (5,864 against a target of 5,555)

3.3 Some Service Performance below target includes:

Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events (6.96 days against a target of 5 days) and Processing times for Housing Benefit Change of Circumstances (6.10 days against a target of 4 days)

Processing times remained above target in Q4 due to ongoing case complexity, linked to Universal Credit migration, alongside delays in customers submitting evidence. Processing was impacted by internal delays in evidencing, and manual intervention requirements particularly where Housing Benefit and CTS evidence was not clearly distinguished.

While in-quarter performance showed improvement, cumulative measures remained over target. Ongoing work is underway to better identify and triage CTS and HB evidence, alongside process reviews to further improve performance.

Percentage of Housing Benefit overpayment due to LA error/admin delay (0.42% against a target of 0.35%)

Although the error rate is higher than expected, it is less than the national threshold of 0.48% and no penalties would apply based on the final year-end figure.

In total, 2,080 Housing Benefit claims have been paid, comprising 1,842 normal claims and 238 temporary accommodation claims. Of these, 64 normal claims and 4 temporary accommodation claims were identified as having overpayments made on them.

The Council is also continuing its participation in the DWP's Housing Benefit Award Accuracy (HBAA) initiative, which provides additional assurance through joint work aimed at reducing fraud and error. The service remains mindful of the pressures created by increased workloads, including the potential for processing delays that could affect subsidy levels. Taken together, these measures are designed to reduce overpayments attributable to local authority error and support the Council in meeting expected performance levels in the final quarter of the year.

Pre-Application Planning Income (£44,495 against a target of £60,173)

In Q4, Pre-application income remained below target as applicants chose to bypass pre-application advice and submit speculative full applications directly. Also, the council decided to maintain current fees charged for local pre-application choosing to encourage uptake via initiatives such as redesigning pre-application forms, reviewing website content, and improve accessibility. The introduction of the Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) is also expected to strengthen this drive and strengthen income recovery.

Percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days (62.01% against a target of 90%)

During Q4, the Council experienced a downturn in performance against the 10 day target for processing Land Charges searches. This was primarily the result of the unexpected loss of a team member, which significantly reduced capacity at a point when demand remained steady. The reduction in resource led to a buildup of outstanding cases and a temporary fall in overall service performance. In response, the service has implemented resilience measures, including bringing in additional administrative support to increase throughput and focus on clearing the older cases in the backlog. These interventions have helped stabilise day to day operations, and early performance data indicates that processing times are beginning to improve.

Percentage of household waste recycled (54.79% against a target of 61%)

During Q4, the household recycling rate fell by around 1.6% compared with the same period last year. The current performance sits at 54.79%, 6.2% below the Council's target. Recycling tonnages remain steady, but there has been an increase in residual waste of 1.81kgs per household compared to the same period last year.

Alongside operational performance, the Council continued targeted communications, promoting correct recycling of packaging, wrapping paper, cardboard, and other food waste, helping residents understand what can and cannot be recycled. The Council also regularly shares national and sector-led campaign content from organisations such as Alupro (covering aluminium packaging recycling) and Love Food Hate Waste, amplifying consistent behavioural messages when these organisations have campaigns running. These combined efforts support residents to recycle correctly and reduce contamination levels.

Nationally, recycling rates vary significantly. In 2024/25, local authorities in England recorded household recycling rates ranging from 23.7% to 63.9%, with the provisional national average at 44.3%. This wider context highlights the substantial performance gap between leading and lower-performing authorities. Within this landscape, West Oxfordshire performed strongly, ranking 14th out of 164 waste collection authorities sampled in England for 2024–2025, achieving a household recycling rate of 57%. This places it among the top councils nationally and reflects continued commitment to high recycling performance across Oxfordshire.

Despite being below target for the quarter, the Council's current rate of 54.79% remains well above the national average and consistent with Oxfordshire's reputation as one of the leading areas in England for recycling. All Oxfordshire districts continue to outperform the wider national picture, underscoring the region's strong culture of waste reduction, reuse, and recycling, supported by ongoing engagement and public-facing campaigns.

Leisure visits (255,498 against a target of 269,003)

Recorded leisure visits were below target in Q4, however, this was attributed to data-capture issues rather than reduced demand. The annual target has been exceeded with 963,766 recorded visits against a target of 843,413.

Demand for facilities remained strong, with many activities operating at or near capacity. Cleanliness remains a key performance factor with CSAT metrics from partners, GLL showing good responses.

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 June 2026. The draft minutes of that meeting will be circulated to all Members and any recommendations from the Committee will be reported to the 10 June 2026 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. SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 A Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA) is not required because it is a quarterly review report for the Executive to note.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

(END)

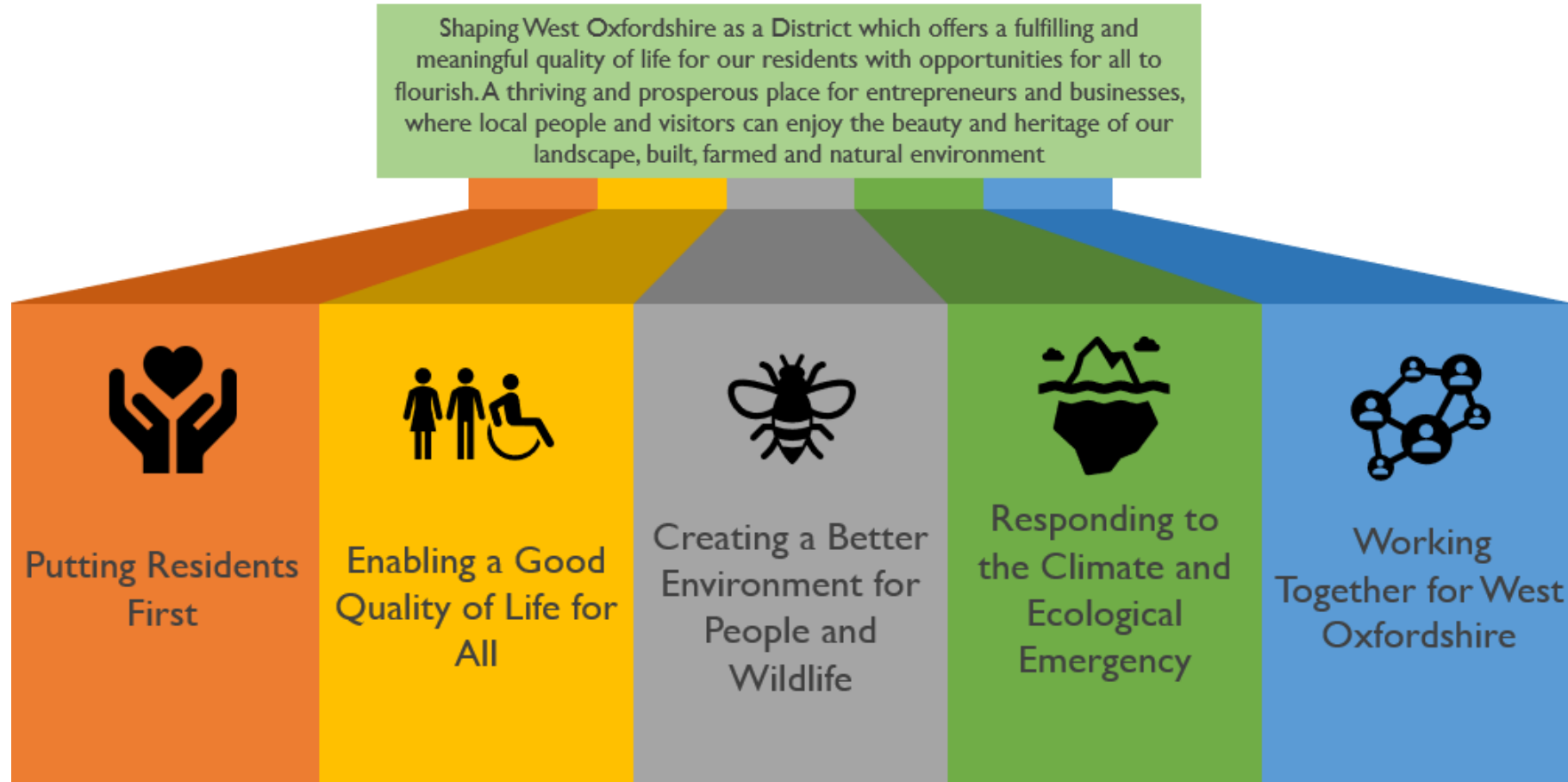


WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL PRIORITIES REPORT
January – March 2026

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, gathering structured responses from 3,908 young people attending seven secondary schools or colleges, alongside feedback from parents and youth organisations. The assessment revealed significant challenges, including limited access to activities, widespread mental health concerns, safety issues, climate anxiety, and barriers linked to education, employment, and support services. Following a review of the findings in October 2023, the Council committed to strengthening youth engagement and approved the recruitment of a full-time Youth Development Officer in February 2024. By March 2026, the officer had engaged extensively with community groups, parish and town councils, Oxfordshire County Council, Thames Valley Police, specialist youth agencies, councilors, and internal teams, reinforcing six thematic youth priorities: developing new provision, sustaining existing services, improving safety and wellbeing, supporting education and skills, promoting volunteering, and amplifying youth voice.

A key development this quarter has been the formation of the West Oxfordshire Youth Partnership, marking an important step forward in strengthening how the Council engages with young people. The partnership brings together key stakeholders and provides a coordinated approach to youth engagement across the wide range of council and partner activity. A programme of work focused on Youth Voice is now coming forward, supporting the Council's commitment to actively seek the views of seldom-heard communities and ensure that decisions reflect the needs and perspectives of younger residents. This work has been enabled through external funding secured from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) via Oxfordshire County Council, providing a strong foundation for delivery in the year ahead.

To support youth-led innovation, the Council allocated £20,000 for initiatives delivered through Westhive, its civic crowdfunding platform. By Spring 2025, 12 youth-focused projects had been successfully funded, attracting over £412,000 in total pledges. Westhive's broader programme continues to grow, with 38 projects supported and more than £1.16 million pledged across the platform by 2025. Within this total, 2025 funding rounds saw £124,000 committed to 14 new community projects (including young carers and arts-based initiatives), and a further £114,000 directed to projects improving accessibility, biodiversity and family services. The Council continues to pledge up to £12,000 per project, with at least £20,000 ring-fenced annually for youth-led ideas. Executive approval was secured to extend the Westhive programme for a further three years starting April 2026.

In response to ongoing cost-of-living pressures, approximately £60,000 of Household Support Funding was distributed during Q4. Funding was targeted at households experiencing financial barriers and delivered through local food groups, organisations supporting informal and formal carers, and voucher schemes for eligible residents identified through LIFT. This activity ensured support reached residents most in need through established community networks.

The Council's commitment to youth and housing is further reflected in the 'Our House' project, delivered in partnership with Cottsway Housing and Aspire Oxfordshire. The initiative provides shared, affordable accommodation and tailored employment, training, and wellbeing support for young adults under 35 on out-of-work benefits, enabling them to build independence and progress into education, employment, and long-term housing.

The Council remains actively engaged in shaping the future structure of local government through the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) process. In February 2026, Government launched a statutory consultation on three Local Government Reorganisation proposals for Oxfordshire, including the two-unitary model supported by West Oxfordshire, which ran until 26 March 2026. The Council's Executive approved the submission of a response to the consultation, reaffirming support for the two-unitary model.

This two-unitary model is being considered alongside two competing proposals: a single Oxfordshire-wide unitary authority put forward by Oxfordshire County Council, and a three-unitary model led by Oxford City Council, featuring Greater Oxford, Northern Oxfordshire, and Ridgeway councils. All proposals will be assessed by Government, with a final decision expected in 2026 and implementation anticipated in 2028.

Enabling a Good Quality of Life for All



Actions we are taking

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) went live in 2026, it is now being applied to all relevant planning permissions granted from 31 January 2026. While early concerns have been raised by developers and applicants regarding the balance between CIL and Section 106 obligations, the Council is considering how best to provide further clarity to support consistent application. Once embedded, CIL will play a critical role in funding both strategic infrastructure and local priorities, helping communities adapt to growth while maintaining quality of life. The Council has continued progress on the Local Plan Review, following the close of the spatial options consultation in December 2025. The Draft Regulation 19 Local Plan remains on track for formal publication in June 2026.

The Council has continued to make significant progress on Salt Cross Garden Village, one of the district's most important long term growth areas. The Area Action Plan and planning policy framework were adopted by the Council in February 2026, providing a clear basis for delivery. The Council is now reviewing the outline planning application against the adopted policy framework and is working closely with Oxfordshire County Council to agree the required updates and additional information from the developer. A Planning Performance Agreement has been reviewed and prepared for signing, supported by a detailed work programme and costed resource plan. Section 106 requirements have been reviewed by partners and are being updated by the Council, alongside the procurement of additional viability expertise. Engagement with Eynsham Parish Council remains constructive, including consideration of the draft Neighbourhood Plan, while the Oxford Growth Commission continues to support Salt Cross as part of the national Garden Communities programme.

Work on the Carterton Area Strategy is progressing in parallel, reflecting its close alignment with the Local Plan's vision for future growth. Early engagement has been positive, and the Oxford Growth Commission has endorsed the Council's approach. A new Interim Regeneration Lead has now been appointed for Carterton, who will begin work on the Carterton Area Strategy. This will include exploring and masterplanning opportunities for green investment across the Carterton area, working closely with the West Oxfordshire Business and Retail Park and RAF Brize Norton to identify sites and projects that can support low-carbon growth and future-focused infrastructure. As part of this wider programme, work with the Low Carbon Hub to support local businesses with their green infrastructure needs has now successfully concluded under UKSPF. This has helped build a stronger foundation for businesses looking to reduce emissions, improve energy efficiency and invest in sustainable technologies. Together, these strands form a key part of our emerging regeneration approach ensuring Carterton is well-positioned to attract green investment, support business innovation and deliver long-term economic and environmental benefits for the town and surrounding area.

Walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure projects continue to advance across the district, the Council has also continued to work with partners to improve sustainable transport and active travel. The Carterton Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) was adopted by Oxfordshire County Council in October 2025, and the Council continues to support its implementation. The Eynsham LCWIP has been refined following consultation, while the Charlbury LCWIP is with Oxfordshire County Council for further editing ahead of anticipated adoption in October 2026. A Walking Bus scheme, supported by the Council, has been introduced at Witney Community Primary School to encourage healthier travel choices.

Across town centres, regeneration and economic vitality remain priorities for the Council. In Witney, the Council is progressing the Wayfinding Signage Project in partnership with the Chamber of Trade, alongside shopfront improvement grants and wider UKSPF funded initiatives. Work continues at Marriotts Walk on public realm improvements and visitor experience, supported by CBRE in a challenging market. In Carterton, the Council has begun identifying regeneration priorities following completion of the Strategic Masterplan, alongside the submission of an Expression of Interest for Town of Culture 2028, signaling clear ambition to raise the town's profile and strengthen community pride.

In housing, feasibility work has been undertaken with a range of modular construction providers, including timber-frame SIP and container-based manufacturers, though suitable sites have not yet been identified. Separately, 28 bedspaces are in the acquisition pipeline to meet high demand from single applicants on the housing register, with properties progressing through surveys, legal checks and contract preparation. At Woodford Way, the Council continues to progress a delivery partner model for a 55 home scheme, integrating public parking and retaining existing EV charging infrastructure. Both Executive and Overview and Scrutiny have authorised further work to refine the business case. Separately, the Council continues to progress property acquisitions to relieve pressure on the housing register, with additional bedspaces moving through surveys, legal checks and contract preparation.

Creating a Better Environment for People and Wildlife



Actions we are taking

West Oxfordshire District Council has completed the Preferred Policy Options consultation for its emerging Local Plan 2041. Running from 26 June to 8 August 2025, this stage explored the updated vision, objectives and preferred policy approaches across housing, transport, climate, the economy, infrastructure, and the natural and historic environment. A Consultation Summary Report was published in October 2025, setting out the themes raised and how they are shaping the next stages of plan-making.

The Preferred Spatial Options consultation, undertaken between 3 November and 22 December 2025, built on this work by seeking views on the distribution of development, the settlement hierarchy, and whether the plan period should extend to 2043 to ensure a full 15-year horizon. Strategic sites including Salt Cross and West Eynsham were revisited, alongside exploration of additional locations around principal towns and larger villages. This stage formed a bridge between high-level policy development and preparation of the Draft Plan.

Preparation of the Regulation 19 Draft Local Plan is now underway, incorporating a strengthened and more integrated approach to the water environment, informed by updated technical evidence. Supporting studies underpinning this work set out updated principles for applying the Sequential and Exception Tests and align with national guidance and Oxfordshire's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. Together, these will inform decisions on growth locations and future infrastructure requirements as the Draft Plan develops.

The Oxfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), endorsed by the Council's Executive in September 2025 and published in November 2025, identifies countywide habitat priorities and opportunity areas, with approximately 41% of West Oxfordshire falling within mapped opportunity areas. A Council representative attended meetings of the newly established LNRS Delivery Advisory Group, contributing to discussions on strategic project criteria, funding, and priority projects. The next project review meeting is scheduled for April–May 2026. The LNRS is already informing local delivery, including exploration of a potential land acquisition in Eynsham to support a community group as a BNG habitat bank. Partnership working remains central to delivery. A meeting was held with the Windrush Catchment Partnership on 24 March 2026, and officers are following up with the new Chair and CEO of the Wychwood Forest Trust. Continued involvement is being maintained with both the Evenlode and Windrush Catchment Partnerships across several projects to support ongoing community-level nature initiatives.

The Coronation Community Orchard Scheme has reached its final delivery stage.

- 190 trees were planted across five orchards in the third and final application round.
- 392 trees have been planted overall, across 25 orchards district-wide.
- 2 pruning workshops were delivered, with representatives from eight orchard groups in attendance.

Remaining funds have been transferred to the Long Mead Foundation to deliver orchard meadow creation workshops between April and November 2026, including propagation of local wildflowers, plug planting and soil testing, targeted at supported community orchard groups.

Work continues to link nature recovery, land management and food systems. Engagement is ongoing with the North-East Cotswold Farm Cluster on carbon sequestration, while the Food Action Plan Delivery role continues to achieve high levels of engagement with farmers and market gardeners, supporting innovation and collaboration across the local food system. Ecology and land management activity remains active. Ecological reports are under review, with proposed changes being discussed with volunteer groups at Deer Park Wood and Deer Park South. Work will continue into the next financial year to identify management changes and enhancement opportunities. The roadside verge project will also continue into next year. Ongoing activity is underway to better match resources to activity, with communication channels to be updated once complete. The Nature Connected programme continues to enhance community access to green spaces:

- Carterton – Town Council permission has been granted for works and community events; delivery is being coordinated.
- Witney – collaboration with Witney Town Council, the Lower Windrush Valley Project and Wychwood Forest Trust to coordinate walks and green space use is progressing.
- Chipping Norton – engagement with the Town Council to approve activity is underway.

As the Local Plan advances, the Council continues to align updated technical studies, the LNRS, BNG delivery work, catchment partnership activity and community-level initiatives to ensure a robust and environmentally led Regulation 19 Draft Plan for consultation in 2026, ahead of submission for independent examination.



Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency

Actions we are taking

West Oxfordshire District Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency in 2019 and remains committed to achieving carbon-neutral operations by 2030. This ambition is guided by the Climate Change Strategy 2025–2030, the Carbon Action Plan 2024–2030 and the West Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Plan, which together set a clear framework for cutting emissions, integrating climate considerations into Council services and strengthening biodiversity and climate resilience.

Progress continues on the decarbonisation of council-owned buildings, particularly leisure facilities, through the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS). At Windrush Leisure Centre, the PSDS Phase 3c scheme is being delivered and includes the installation of Building Management System panels, buffer vessels, mechanical pipework, electrical containment and cabling, and a temporary meter. These works build on completed heat-decarbonisation planning and represent a significant step in reducing emissions from one of the Council's most energy-intensive operational buildings.

At Carterton Leisure Centre, earlier PSDS Phase 3b funding supported proposals to replace heating and hot water systems with a low-carbon alternative and increase on-site solar PV; however, further funding will now need to be identified and secured to proceed with full decarbonisation. While solar PV has already been installed at Carterton, additional upgrades will be required to deliver meaningful emissions reductions. Beyond the leisure estate, heat-decarbonisation plans have been completed for Elmfield, 3 Welch Way and the Old Court House, with budget provision identified for low-carbon heating and solar PV at 3 Welch Way in 2026–27. The Senior Leadership Team has confirmed there is no appetite for wider solar investment across council-owned properties ahead of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). The Council has also made progress in reducing emissions from waste and street-cleansing operations. A depot electrification capacity assessment is currently underway, reviewing both existing electrical infrastructure and future requirements. In Quarter 4, Four electric food-waste collection vehicles and one 3.5-tonne electric mechanical sweeper have been ordered, and a trial of a larger electric mechanical sweeper is currently in progress. In parallel, work continues to update the Waste Environmental Services Programme (WESP) business case, ensuring infrastructure requirements such as depot decarbonisation and EV charging are fully reflected. Strategic planning frameworks to support decarbonisation are now largely in place.

Updates to the Carbon Action Plan to 2030 and the Climate Change Strategy to 2050 have been completed, strengthening the Council's approach to include scope 3 emissions, district-wide carbon budgets, clear route maps to net zero and defined actions. The Climate Impact Assessment Tool (CIAT) has also been completed and is now embedded as a mandatory requirement for Council projects to ensure climate and nature considerations are systematically included in decision-making. The Sustainability Impact Assessment Tool (SIAT) is also mandatory for Council decisions.

In relation to renewable energy, a Publica-wide project to install solar PV on council-owned, tenanted buildings has been paused, with Senior Leadership Team confirming there is no appetite for direct solar investment in Council-owned properties prior to LGR. Looking ahead, the emerging West Oxfordshire Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) will include actions to support renewable energy generation across the district.

The Nature Recovery Growth bid was successful, securing new budget to deliver actions within the Nature Recovery Plan and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) during 2026–27. The statutory biodiversity duty report was published on 25 March 2026, and continued support is being provided to catchment partnerships, community groups, farmers and other stakeholders delivering climate and nature recovery actions on the ground. Work to support retrofit and decarbonisation of homes and businesses is ongoing. Discussions continue with the Low Carbon Hub on the CAPZero model and the potential for a district-wide rollout targeting the “able to pay” market. Draft retrofit actions from the LAEP have been reviewed, with a revised version awaited before incorporation into the West Oxfordshire LAEP. The Council is also strengthening its approach to enforcing Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) in the privately rented sector, with reported breaches to be investigated and enforced. Delivery of Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 (HUG2) has been completed, providing energy-efficiency and low-carbon heating upgrades for low-income, off-gas households, complementing support delivered through Better Housing Better Health.

In June 2025, West Oxfordshire was named the top-performing rural district in the national Council Climate Action Scorecards, recognising strong governance, community engagement and practical progress across areas including decarbonisation, retrofit, nature recovery and carbon-literacy training.



Working Together for West Oxfordshire

Actions we are taking

West Oxfordshire District Council is entering the final year of UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) delivery, with a clear focus on ensuring continuity for communities and businesses as national funding winds down. Final allocations for 2025/26 have been confirmed as £327,146 (UKSPF) and £214,829 (REPF), extending the district's Prosperity Fund programme into a fourth year and supporting local investment through March 2026. A celebration event is planned for June 2026 to recognise the achievements of UKSPF and REPF projects and the impact delivered across the district.

A strengthened programme of business support schemes has been launched to help local enterprises innovate, grow and future-proof their operations. This includes the new West Oxfordshire Business Boost Grant, offering up to £5,000 in capital funding for equipment, expansion and low-carbon investment, opening formally in September 2025. It complements existing schemes such as Shop Front Improvement Grants (up to £1,000), Visitor Economy Grants (£1,000–£10,000) and Rural Enterprise Growth Grants (£5,000–£20,000), all refreshed in June 2025. Six-month impact reporting for the 2025 rounds begins in October. Business and environmental sustainability support continues through the Carbon Action Fund, which has seen strong uptake, and the Tools for Tomorrow initiative, which continues to address skills shortages in the construction and retrofit sector. Wider support also includes delivery of the West Oxfordshire Business Support Programme (June 2025–January 2026), offering Business Sparks and Business Accelerator provision for start-ups and scaling businesses. The Council continues to support Town and Parish Councils to represent their communities and take action on locally important issues. The UKSPF-funded Towns and Parish Biodiversity Project has now been completed, providing practical case studies to support communities in enhancing biodiversity across a range of local habitats.

The Westhive civic crowdfunding programme continues to act as a flagship for community-led investment. By the end of Round 4 (July 2025), the platform had supported 28 projects worth £948,172. A further Round 6 has since been completed, with 10 additional projects receiving pledges. The Council has also invested an additional £60,000 in the Westhive Community Infrastructure Fund to support projects focused on youth engagement, inclusion and mental health. Executive approval has been secured to continue the Westhive programme for a further three years from April 2026. In 2024/25 alone, £273,682 in UKSPF support was channeled into VCS projects through Westhive. Recent Westhive-supported initiatives include:

- **Let's Roll!** - inclusive wheelchair dance classes, now fully funded for continued delivery and hosting a national competition in 2026.
- **Carterton Family Centre** - receiving funding to expand low-cost provision for young families.
- **Community Floodplain Restoration** - creating new meadows and wet woodland to boost biodiversity and natural flood management.

The Council's Youth Development Officer has supported emerging youth-led projects in Stonesfield, Freeland and Eynsham, while a new Youth Partnership with Witney Town Council and Thames Valley Police focuses on inclusion and safeguarding. The YouMove programme now supports more than 500 families in West Oxfordshire and has seen a significant rise in activity levels countywide, with nearly 14,000 residents registered by mid-2025.

Engagement with the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) remains strong, supported through forums in key settlements and biannual Health and Wellbeing Alliance meetings. In 2025/26, a total of 25 awards were made through Westhive, while eight programmes continue to be supported through the SLA scheme. Further Household Support Funding has also been distributed to food groups and organisations supporting informal and formal carers. Business and environmental sustainability support continues through the Carbon Action Fund, which has seen strong uptake and has been submitted for consideration in the LGC Awards. This fund, worth £10,000–£20,000 per grant, targets SMEs seeking to decarbonise buildings, install renewables, or invest in waste-reduction equipment. The Tools for Tomorrow initiative also remains active, addressing skills shortages in the local construction and retrofit sector. [news.westoxon.gov.uk] Wider economic development initiatives include the West Oxfordshire Business Support Programme (June 2025–January 2026), delivered by ALP Synergy, offering a combined cycle of Business Sparks and Business Accelerator support for start-ups and scaling firms. The Leisure Cards scheme, delivered through GLL, also continues to offer free leisure access for residents experiencing poor mental health.

Together, these programmes and investments reflect the Council's commitment to sustaining the impact of the Prosperity Funds beyond their national end date, strengthening community resilience, supporting business growth, and ensuring that local priorities continue to be delivered through 2026 and beyond.

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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 4 Update	Start Date	Date Due	Status	Executive Member	Link Officer	Updates Provided by
1.1	Putting Residents First	<p>The Council will listen and act in the best interests of residents by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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. 	<p>Explore how the Council leads Youth Engagement, ensuring youth are engaged across the wide range of activity it undertakes.</p>	<p>New West Oxfordshire Youth Partnership is formed and a programme of work looking at Youth Voice is coming forward - this is being enabled with funding secured from DCMS via OCC</p>			On Target	Rachel Crouch	Heather McCulloch	Heather McCulloch
			<p>Customer Experience Improvement Programme</p>	<p>Completed</p>	01/07/2020	01/01/2024	Complete	Andy Graham	Giles Hughes	Michelle Clifford

1.2	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.	<p>Proposal to implement a robust system and process for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 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
1.3		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.				In Progress	Alaric Smith	Ciaran O'Kane / Claire Locke	Ciaran O'Kane
		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.	Adopt and implement CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy).	CIL has now gone live with effect from 31 January 2026 and is being applied to all relevant planning applications with effect from this date on. Some concerns have been raised by developers/applicants in terms of the balance of S106 planning obligations alongside CIL and Officers are considering how to provide additional clarity in this respect.	01/11/2019	31/08/2024	Off Target but Mitigation in Place	Hugo Ashton	Giles Hughes / Chris Hargraves	Chris Hargraves
			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
2.1	Enabling a Good Quality of Life for All		Explore opportunities for green investment for strategic development areas eg through the Carterton Masterplan and also through the Pan-Regional Partnership.	<p>A new Interim Regeneration Lead has now been appointed for Carterton, who will begin work on the Carterton Area Strategy. This will include exploring and masterplanning opportunities for green investment across the Carterton area, working closely with the West Oxfordshire Business and Retail Park and RAF Brize Norton to identify sites and projects that can support low-carbon growth and future-focused infrastructure.</p> <p>As part of this wider programme, work with the Low Carbon Hub to support local businesses with their green infrastructure needs has now successfully concluded under UKSPF. This has helped build a stronger foundation for businesses looking to reduce emissions, improve energy efficiency and invest in sustainable technologies.</p>	01/01/2023	31/08/2025	On Target	Tim Sumner, Andrew Prosser	Sam Stronach	Sam Stronach

Explore how the Local Plan can address the issue of securing long term maintenance of green infrastructure on large SDAs.	As per the previous update, the draft Regulation 19 Local Plan remains in progress with a view to formal publication in June 2026. Policies will address the issue of maintenance and stewardship of community assets including green infrastructure.	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?	As per the previous update, the draft Regulation 19 Local Plan remains in progress with a view to formal publication in June 2026. Policies will address the issue of maintenance and stewardship of community assets including green infrastructure.	31/08/2022	31/08/2025	On Target	Andrew Prosser	Chris Hargraves	Chris Hargraves
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.	The Eynsham LCWIP has been adopted by OCC. West Oxfordshire's final LCWIP, Charlbury, is currently with OCC for further editing and is scheduled for adoption in October 2026. Once the Charlbury LCWIP has been adopted, attention will shift to updating existing LCWIPs, starting with the earliest adopted plan, the Witney LCWIP. Walking Bus scheme introduced at Witney Community Primary School to enable schoolchildren to walk to school.	10/09/2021		In Progress	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
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.	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.		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

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

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).	Partnership working with RP's and delivery partners has proved to be the most effective way to achieve the desired outcomes (i.e. - increasing delivery of social rented homes and genuinely affordable homes to residents of West Ox in need). This delivery route has optimised outputs as demonstrated by GOV statistics showing a 60% increase in Social rented homes in the last 24months (the highest proportion of social rented homes in over a decade). This has been achieved through strategic intervention with key RP's, negotiation on specific applications and 'additionality' leveraged through increased Homes England funding. (source: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-affordable-housing-supply). Other routes are available but they are more dependent on land transactions, availability of capital, viability and a longer timeframes to enable lesser outcomes.	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 approach at Woodford Way is to work with a delivery partner to appraise and assess the land opportunity, which will then feed into pre-app and planning application discussions. The model is to transfer the land to a delivery partner / RP so that they take on the planning and construction risk. The RP delivery partner will also take on the financial liability and make the necessary applications to Homes England for grant funding. The Council's role is to facilitate that process but not be financially or legally liable for it. The executive have earmarked £215,000 to assist the viability of the scheme which may assist in supporting the scheme if required. The current business case has been put to the Executive on the 14th Jan and Overview and Scrutiny committee on the 26th March. The scheme comprises of 55 dwellings (maisonettes & flats) which enables 84 public parking spaces on-site (retaining existing EVCP's in situ) and makes use of additional capacity at	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.		01/04/2023		On Target	Geoff Saul	Giles Hughes	Michael David
Emergency accommodation – Acquisition of - consider the balance – single/couple and family accommodation).	2 buildings have been acquired and improvement works due to commence in April. Acquisition of other buildings progressing			In Progress	Geoff Saul	Claire Locke	Michael David
Completion of housing development at Walterbush Road, Chipping Norton.	Project goal amended to working with Community Land Trust and/or Registered Provider to progress a land transfer for use as social rented/affordable housing	01/10/2021	31/07/2023	In Progress	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	Complete	Geoff Saul	Claire Locke	

2.4	that meet people's needs, excellent health and wellbeing and ensuring equal access to opportunity for all.	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.	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.	Dedicated officer appointed in Feb 2026 and has begun meeting with key stakeholders for the area. Early proposals for the strategy are under development based on previous engagement and analysis. Alignment is underway with the development of the new Local Plan, in particular to ensure improved coordination of planned growth and how it can provide the facilities and infrastructure that current and future communities need. An Expression of Interest was submitted for Carterton as part of the government's UK Town of Culture (2028) programme, one part of starting to raise the profile and aspirations for the area.			In Progress	Tim Sumner	Michael Rich	Michael Rich
			Strategy and plan for reinvigorating the District's Charter Markets	Completed			Complete	Duncan Enright	Sam Stronach	Sam Stronach
			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.	The wayfinding signage Project is progressing well, with plans to secure Section 106 funding to deliver a robust, future-proofed signage package for Witney. This work will be further enhanced through Oxfordshire County Council's Witney High Street Improvement Project, ensuring a coordinated and high-quality approach to movement and visitor experience in the town centre. The Shop Front Improvement Grant, supported through UKSPF, is also nearing completion, with 14 grants awarded to help local high-street businesses improve their frontages and enhance the overall look and feel of the town centre. Public realm improvements remain on track, with designs now being finalised and additional Section 106 funding expected to support delivery. To strengthen our understanding of how the town centre is performing, we are also in the process of securing a new footfall counter, which will provide valuable data to inform future investment and decision-making.	01/12/2022	31/05/2025	Off Target but Mitigation in Place	Duncan Enright	Sam Stronach	Sam Stronach
			Oxfordshire County Council improvements to Witney Town Centre linked to Marriots Walk redevelopment where appropriate.	Following a meeting with WODC and OCC Leaders. Work due to commence May 2026 with completion due October 2026.			Off Target but Mitigation in Place	Duncan Enright	Sam Stronach	Sam Stronach
			Guide the future delivery of Salt Cross new garden village and associated infrastructure to enable delivery of Salt Cross Science Park.	Salt Cross Area Action Plan - Planning policy and framework plan adopted by WODC February 2026. Milestone complete. Outline Planning application submitted (2020) now reviewed against the 31 policy Area Action Plan. WODC and OCC (co-ordinated by WODC) have agreed the required updates/ additional information required from the applicant GDL. A PPA has been reviewed, updated and prepared for signing. A work plan and costed resources have been set out / defined for WODC / OCC. Ambition to complete OPA updates by Autumn 2026 ready for WODC to consult / review ready for committee report. Sec 106 list reviewed by OCC and EPC and updated. WODC currently updating Sec 106. WODC to procure viability expertise following on from AAP viability expertise.	01/01/2018	31/12/2034	On Target	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. All units occupied except Unit 10. Public Realm designs agreed by Executive and procurement now progressing.			On Target	Duncan Enright	Jasmine McWilliams	Jasmine McWilliams

<p>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.</p>	<p>An Interim Carterton Area Regeneration Lead has now been appointed. A dedicated Working Group has been established to drive this forward, bringing together key partners to shape priorities, identify opportunities and coordinate activity across the town.</p> <p>An Expression of Interest has been submitted for Carterton to become a Town of Culture, signalling our ambition to celebrate local identity, strengthen community pride and attract new cultural investment. This forms an important first step in positioning Carterton as a place with creativity, energy and potential at its core.</p>	01/02/2022	31/05/2025	Off Target but Mitigation in Place	Alaric Smith, Hugo Ashton, Geoff Saul, Tim Sumner	Sam Stronach	Sam Stronach	
<p>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.</p>	<p>Ubico Grounds Maintenance Contract – review contract with aim of securing both biodiversity enhancements and budgetary savings.</p>	Ongoing activity in matching resource to activity, Communication channels will be updated once complete	01/04/2025	01/03/2026	On Target	Lidia Arciszewska	Si Pocock-Cluley	Si Pocock-Cluley
	<p>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.</p>	<p>Ecological reports are still under review and proposed changes are being discussed with the local volunteer group at Deer Park Wood and Deer Park South. Work will continue to identify management changes and enhancement opportunities into the next financial year. The roadside verge project will also continue into next year.</p>	01/02/2022	01/03/2026	On Target	Lidia Arciszewska	Si Pocock-Cluley / Hannah Kenyon / Mel Dodd	Mel Dodd
	<p>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.</p>				In Progress	Lidia Arciszewska		

			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.	The project review meeting is scheduled for April-May 2026. In the meantime, a meeting was held with Windrush Catchment Partnership on 24th March 2026 to review other ongoing projects. WODC officers are following up with the CEO and new Chair of Trustees of Wychwood Forest Trust.	01/05/2022	01/03/2025	Off Target but Mitigation in Place	Andrew Prosser	Mel Dodd	Mel Dodd	
			Coronation Community Orchard Scheme	190 trees were planted in the third and final round of orchard applications across 5 orchards. 392 trees were planted across the scheme, totalling in 25 orchards across the district. 2 pruning workshops were run, each with 15 attendees representing 8 orchard groups. One session targeted at formative pruning and the other on maintaining an older orchard. The remaining funds have been transferred to the Long Mead Foundation to deliver orchard meadow creation workshops from April to November 2026. Activities will include propagation of local wildflowers, plug planting, and soil testing, targeted at community groups that received funding through the Coronation Community Orchard Scheme.	01/11/2023	21/03/2025	Complete	Andrew Prosser/Lidia Arciszewska	Mel Dodd / Hannah Kenyon	Mel Dodd	
	3.2	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.	Ongoing engagement will continue with the North East Cotswold Farm Cluster on carbon sequestration and related liaison activities. Through the Food Action Plan Delivery role achieving high levels of engagement with agribusinesses - farmers & market gardeners - seeing lots of innovation and with lots of positivity about building alliances across the food system locally			In Progress	Lidia Arciszewska, Andrew Prosser	Chris Jackson / Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon	
	3.3	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	Nature Connected Carterton - Town Council have granted permission for works to be carried out and for community events to be hosted. Events are being coordinated. Witney - collaboration with Witney Town Council, Lower Windrush Valley Project and Wychwood Forest Trust to coordinate walks and use of green spaces is progressing. Chipping Norton - connecting with the Town Council to approve work is progressing.			On Target	Andrew Prosser	Heather McCulloch / Melanie Dodd	Mel Dodd / Heather McCulloch	
		The Council will be a progressive custodian of our environmental resources	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	Officer group to convene with Local Nature Partnership - maintain relationship with LNP and work with partners to develop workstreams.	A WODC representative attended meetings of the newly established LNRS Delivery Advisory Group, providing input on strategic project criteria, funding, and the list of strategic projects.	01/07/2022	01/07/2025	On Target	Lidia Arciszewska, Duncan Enright	Hannah Kenyon / Mel Dodd	Mel Dodd

3.4	Resources, supporting a healthy natural landscape and functioning ecosystem which is rich in wildlife and habitats that are enjoyed by and benefit all.	Oxfordshire.	Explore the potential for the Council to acquire land for Biodiversity Net Gain and nature-based carbon sequestration.	An opportunity to acquire land in Eynsham to support a local community group, as a potential BNG habitat bank, is currently being investigated.	8/12/2024	31/03/2026	On Target	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon / Mel Dodd	Mel Dodd
3.5		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).	Continued involvement is being maintained with the Evenlode and Windrush Catchment Partnerships. The Evenlode Catchment Partnership and Wild Oxfordshire were invited to attend the Executive on Tour meeting in Charlbury on 11th March 2026. Collaborative work with both the Evenlode and Windrush Catchment Partnership continues, across several projects.			On Target	Lidia Arciszewska, Andy Graham	Hannah Kenyon / Melanie Dodd	Mel Dodd
			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.	Draft water environment policy reviewed by Environment Agency and comments provided.	01/06/2022	31/12/2024	On Target	Hugo Ashton	Chris Hargraves / Hannah Kenyon	Chris Hargraves
		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.	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 - Installation of BMS panels, buffer vessels, mechanical pipework electrical containment and cables, and temporary meter.			On Target	Andrew Prosser, Dan Levy, Alaric Smith	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon

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.	These projects will be explored as part of a post LGR decarbonisation programme, subject to political and financial support.			Off Target	Andrew Prosser, Dan Levy, Alaric Smith	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
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.	A Government funded scheme to maximise the amount of Solar PV on the Carterton Leisure Centre was completed earlier in the financial year and further decarbonisation of Carterton Leisure Centre is intended to form part of the post LGR decarbonisation programme, subject to funding and political support.			Off Target	Andrew Prosser, Tim Sumner	Hannah Kenyon	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.	A depot electrification capacity assessment is currently underway, evaluating both existing infrastructure and future potential. Second-generation electric vehicles are not yet in production, so their long-term reliability remains unproven. Four electric food waste collection vehicles and one 3.5-tonne mechanical sweeper have been ordered. In addition, a trial of a larger electric mechanical sweeper is currently in progress.			On Target	Lidia Arciszewska	Si Pocock-Clulely / Hannah Kenyon	Si Pocock-Clulely / 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.	Completed	01/07/23	30/6/2024	Complete	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.	Completed	01/02/2023	01/04/2024	Complete	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
Solar PV project for tenanted buildings - A Publica-wide long-term project to install rooftop solar panels on council owned buildings, increasing the amount of renewable energy generated in the District.	SLT has confirmed there is no appetite for solar investment in council-owned properties pre-LGR.	01/08/2022	01/12/2023	Off Target	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon

4.2	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.	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.	The Nature Recovery Growth bid was successful, and a new budget will be available for implementing actions in the Nature Recovery Plan and the LNRS in 2026–27. The biodiversity duty report was published on 25th March 2026, in line with statutory requirements. Continued support is being provided to catchment partnerships, community groups, farmers, and other stakeholders to deliver nature recovery and climate-related actions on the ground.	01/03/2023		On Target		Hannah Kenyon / Mel Dodd	Mel Dodd
4.3		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.	Discussions are ongoing with the Low Carbon Hub regarding the CAPZero model and a potential district-wide rollout. Draft LAEP actions on retrofit have been reviewed, and the revised version is awaited. These actions will subsequently be incorporated into the West Oxfordshire LAEP.			In Progress	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
			Greenlight – nature and online hub to facilitate community action for a greener future.	Continue to engage with a range of stakeholders on climate mitigation and adaptation.			In Progress	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
			Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) project for tenanted buildings - A Publica-wide review of tenanted buildings to determine what measures are needed to bring the EPC rating up to a B or above by 2030.	Reported breaches of MEES for privately rented homes will be investigated and enforced.	01/07/2023		On Target	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
			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
4.4	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.	The West Oxfordshire LAEP will include actions on renewable energy generation. The draft core climate policy already incorporates renewables, and a draft community policy has also been prepared, which sits outside of planning.			On Target	Andrew Prosser	Giles Hughes / Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon	
4.5	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.	The Council is in contract with EZ-Charge, the chargepoint operator, and a kick-off meeting has been scheduled for early April 2026.	26/05/2023	01/01/2025	Off Target but Mitigation in Place	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon	

5.1	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.	<p>An extension has now been granted for all UKSPF and REPF funding, with the programme running until 30 September 2026. Several projects are taking the opportunity to utilise remaining underspend and extend their delivery, which reflects the Government's intention to support programmes that started later due to delays in allocations.</p> <p>Delegated Authority for Cllr Duncan Enright has also been extended to 30 September 2026, ensuring decisions can continue to be made efficiently during the final phase of delivery.</p> <p>With the programme now moving into its closing period, both the Delivery Group and Partnership Board have concluded their work. To mark the achievements across the district, a UKSPF/REPF Celebration Event is planned for June 2026, bringing together partners, businesses and community organisations to recognise the impact of the programme.</p>			Off Target but Mitigation in Place	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.	<p>a) Round 6 of Westhive is complete.</p> <p>b) Hosted a meeting with all SLA recipients to review progress and build connections and alliances. Monitoring is ongoing. End of year reviews will be held in May/June.</p> <p>c) The DCMS OCC Youth pilot is providing resources to develop capacity and build resilience of youth sector organisations</p> <p>d) In this quarter distributed around £60k of Household Support Funding to those facing financial barriers - through grants to food groups and organisations supporting carers and vouchers to those eligible for certain benefits and identified on LIFT.</p>	01/12/2022	31/05/2025	On Target	Alaric Smith with Rachel Crouch, Andrew Prosser and Lidia Arciszewsk	Heather McCulloch	Heather McCulloch	
		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
5.4		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	Support continues to be provided to the Voluntary sector through a range of grant schemes and forums. In 2025/26 a total of 25 awards were made by the Council to projects on Westhive. In addition 8 programmes are supported through the SLA scheme. Latest round of Household Support funding has distributed further support to food groups and organisations supporting informal and formal carers.	01/12/2022	31/05/2025	On Target	Rachel Crouch	Heather McCulloch	Heather McCulloch

		<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Youth Dev officer is leading the DCMS funded OCC Youth Transformation pilot in West and this is leading to a range of programmes - including the new Youth Partnership, organisational development for Youth providers, a Youth voice programme and a Digital programme</p>			<p>On Target</p>	<p>Rachel Crouch, Tim Sumner</p>	<p>Heather McCulloch</p>	<p>Heather McCulloch</p>
			<p>Have Your Say Events – focussed topic event for young people.</p>	<p>No plans for Have Your Say Events at this stage. Other types of engagement activities are underway.</p>			<p>In Progress</p>	<p>Rachel Crouch</p>	<p>Heather McCulloch</p>	<p>Heather McCulloch</p>



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Delivering great services locally

PERFORMANCE REPORT:
January – March 2026

Summary Index

Area	KPI Name	RAG	Page
Revenues, Benefits and Housing	Percentage of Council Tax Collected	Green	6
	Percentage of Non Domestic Rates collected	Orange	7
	Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims	Orange	8
	Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events	Red	9
	Processing times for Housing Benefit Change of Circumstances	Red	10
	Percentage of Housing Benefit overpayment due to LA error/admin delay	Red	11
	(Snapshot) Long Term Empty Properties	Green	12
	(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	Orange	13
Customer Experience	Customer Satisfaction - Telephone	Green	14
	Customer Satisfaction - Email	Green	15
	Customer Satisfaction - Face to Face	Green	16

Summary Index

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

Summary Index

Area	KPI Name	RAG	Page
Waste and Environment	Number of fly tips collected and percentage that result in an enforcement action		29
	Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales		30
	Percentage of high risk notifications risk assessed within 1 working day		31
	Percentage of household waste recycled		32
	Residual Household Waste per Household (kg)		33
	Missed bins per 100,000		34
Leisure	Number of visits to the leisure centres & (Snapshot) Number of gym memberships		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.

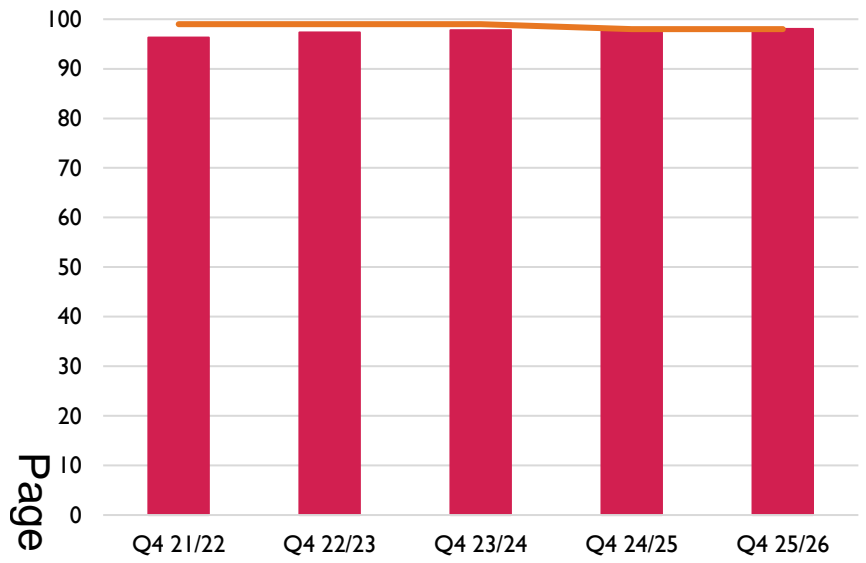
A RAG (red, amber, green) status has been applied to each KPI to provide a quick visual summary of the status of that KPI for the quarter. Additionally, RAG status has been added to the direction of travel for each metric to show how the performance against last quarter and the same quarter compared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

Overall Performance

Overall, the Councils performance remained strong across many key services with good customer satisfaction, excellent planning determination times, robust business rates collection and continued growth in leisure participation. Council Tax collection remained on target alongside strong financial performance with total planning income of £1.71m against a £1.33m target. Affordable housing delivery exceeded expectations, reaching 352 homes against a target of 274. A smaller number of services experienced ongoing pressure, particularly in the processing of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support changes, where in-quarter improvements have not yet offset the cumulative impact of earlier delays and increasing case complexity. FOI response times dipped below target and Land Charges performance was temporarily affected by staffing shortages, though early signs of recovery are evident. Recycling rates continue to reflect seasonal and national trends. Taken together, Quarter 4 demonstrates strong and consistent delivery across priority services, with targeted improvement work in place where performance remains below expectations.

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



— Target

Direction of Travel

Against last Year 
Increased since last year

Higher is Good

Target	98%
Actual	98.03%

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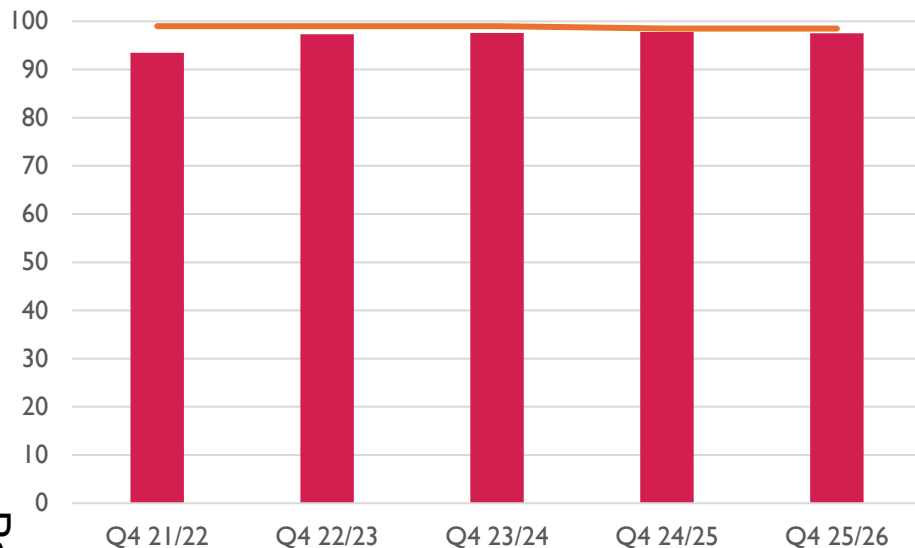
How do we compare?

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
West Oxfordshire	98.02	2/5	Top
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 Q4, the Council achieved its collection target. This was slightly higher than the percentage collected vs last year end. The service have indicated that they believe a refreshed Direct Debit campaign is planned to help strengthen collection in future years.

Percentage of Non-domestic rates collected



— Target

Higher is Good

Direction of Travel

Against last
Year



Slight decline since last
year

Target

98.5%

Actual

97.53%

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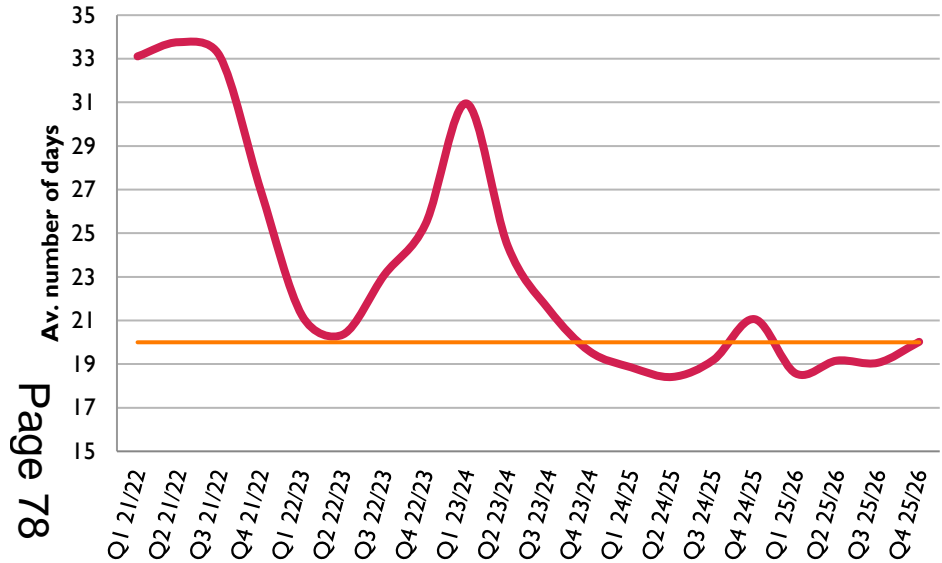
How do we compare?

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
West Oxfordshire	97.66	2/5	Top
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 Q4, the Council collected 97.53%, narrowly missing its 98.5% target, but kept its performance at par with last year. Up-to-date billing and account maintenance have supported year-on-year improvement in 2025/2026.


Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims



— Target

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Increased since last quarter and slight decrease compared to last year

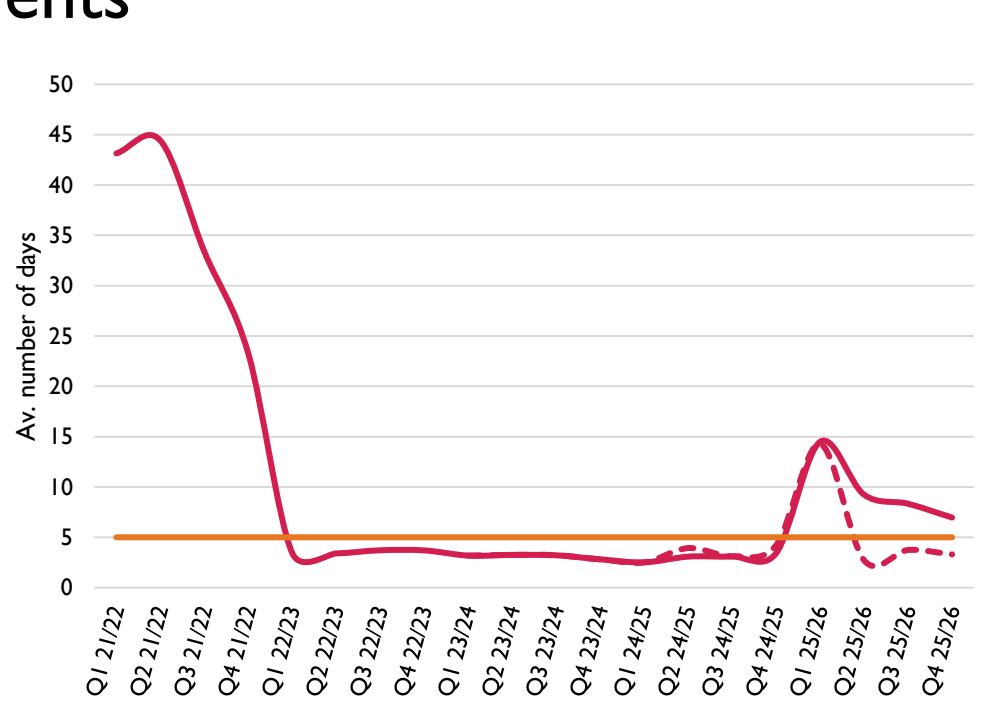
Lower is Good

Target	20
Q4 Actual	20.02

The Council achieved its Q4 target for processing times for Council Tax new claims.

Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events

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- Cumulative Processing Times
- - - Specific Processing Times
- Target

Lower is Good

Direction of Travel

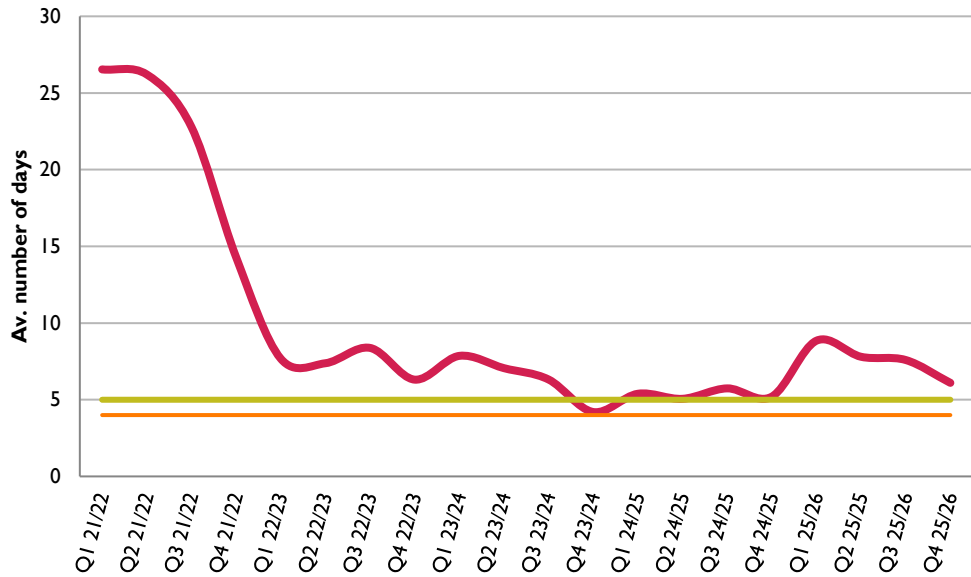
- Against last Quarter ↓
- Against last Year ↑

Decreased since last quarter but increased since last year

Target	5
Actual	6.96


The cumulative processing time for Council Tax Support Change of Events remains over target, though it continued to trend downward through Q4. The in-quarter average from January to March was 3.3 days with the trend showing ongoing progress.


Processing times for Housing Benefit Change of Circumstances



— Target
— Shire Districts Mean

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Decreased slightly since last quarter but increased since last year

Lower is Good

Target	4
Actual	6.10

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How do we compare?

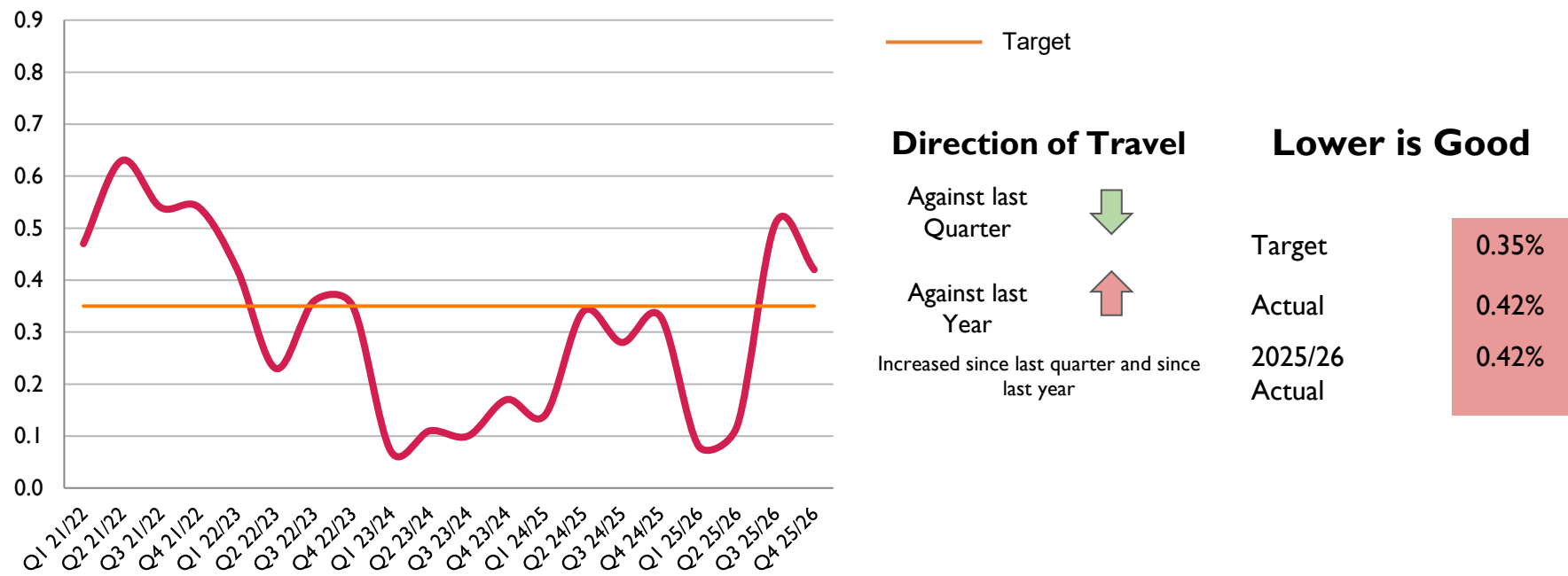
Gov.uk produces tables showing statistics on the average number of days to process a change in circumstance of an existing Housing Benefit claim. Latest Release – April – June 2025 (Q2 25-26)

Q1 25-26 Benchmark	Days	County Rank	Quartile
Cherwell	5.38	1/5	Top
South Oxfordshire	7.23	2/5	Top
Vale of White Horse	7.23	3/5	Second
West Oxfordshire	8.73	4/5	Third
Oxford	25.86	5/5	Bottom

Housing Benefit processing times remained over the cumulative target in Q4, affected by seasonal workload pressures and delays in receiving evidence for Change Events and Full Claim Reviews. Back-office process changes to better identify HB related evidence contributed to improved processing times of 4.24 specifically in Q4. UC automation is now active, going forward, this should keep UC related processing low and deliver gains in the new year.

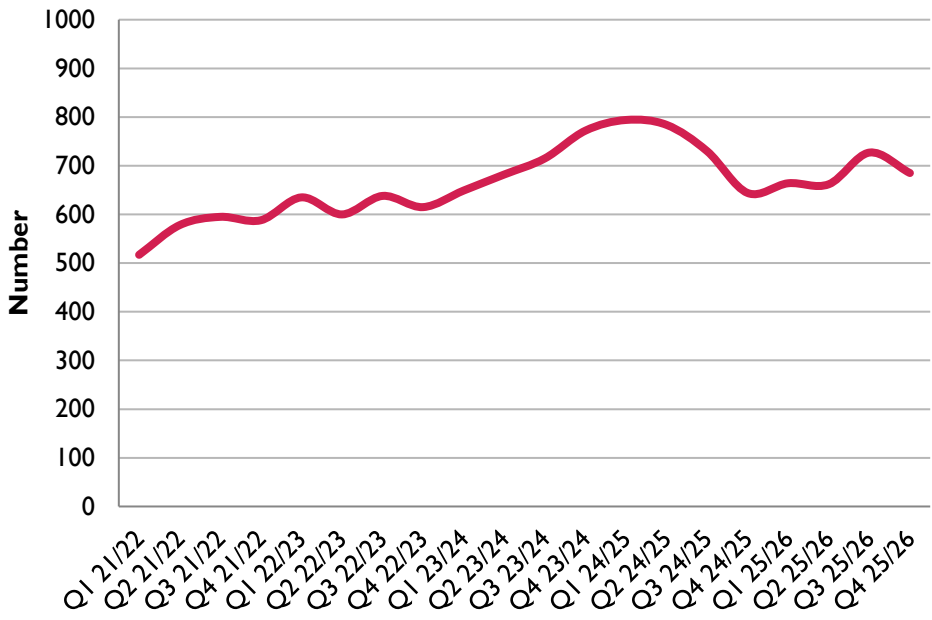
Percentage of Housing Benefit overpayment due to LA error/admin delay

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The Council was below 0.48% national threshold target by the end of the year. Full subsidy can be claimed and no penalties would apply.

(Snapshot) Long Term Empty Properties



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Increased since last quarter and decreased since last year

Lower is Good

685

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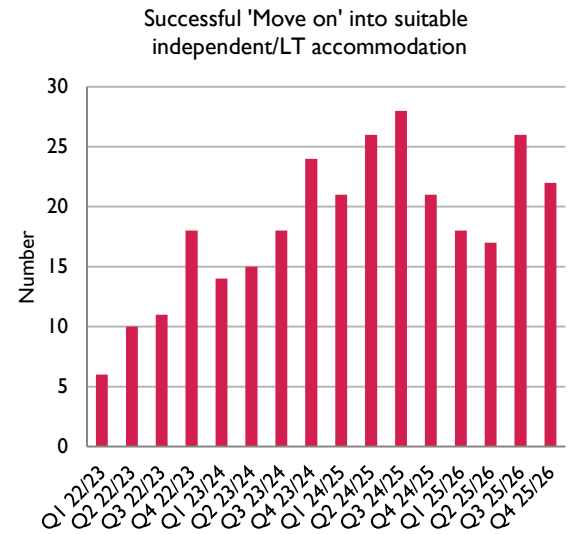
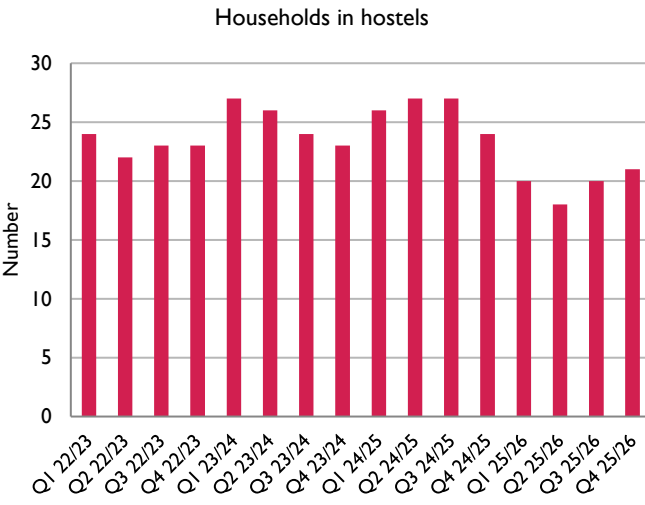
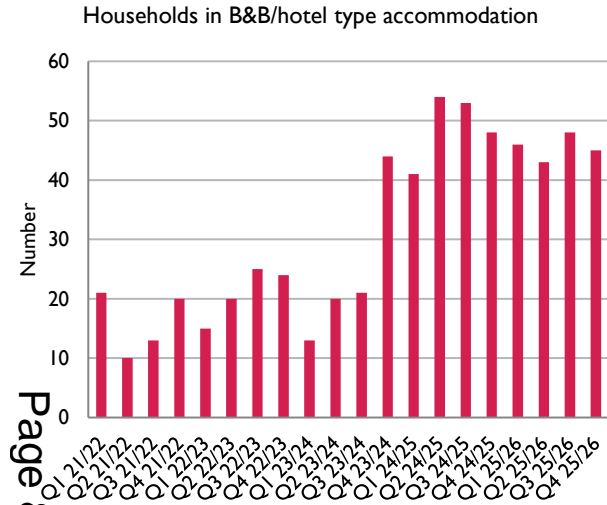
How do we compare?

Long Term Vacant Properties within districts - Benchmarking via Gov.uk

2024 Benchmark	Days	County Rank	Quartile
South Oxfordshire	430	1/5	Top
Vale of White Horse	433	2/5	Top
Cherwell	456	3/5	Second
Oxford	712	4/5	Third
West Oxfordshire	767	5/5	Bottom

The previous quarter had seen an increase in long-term empty properties, driven primarily by improved reporting processes. The Lendology empty home loan scheme was introduced in Q4.

(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

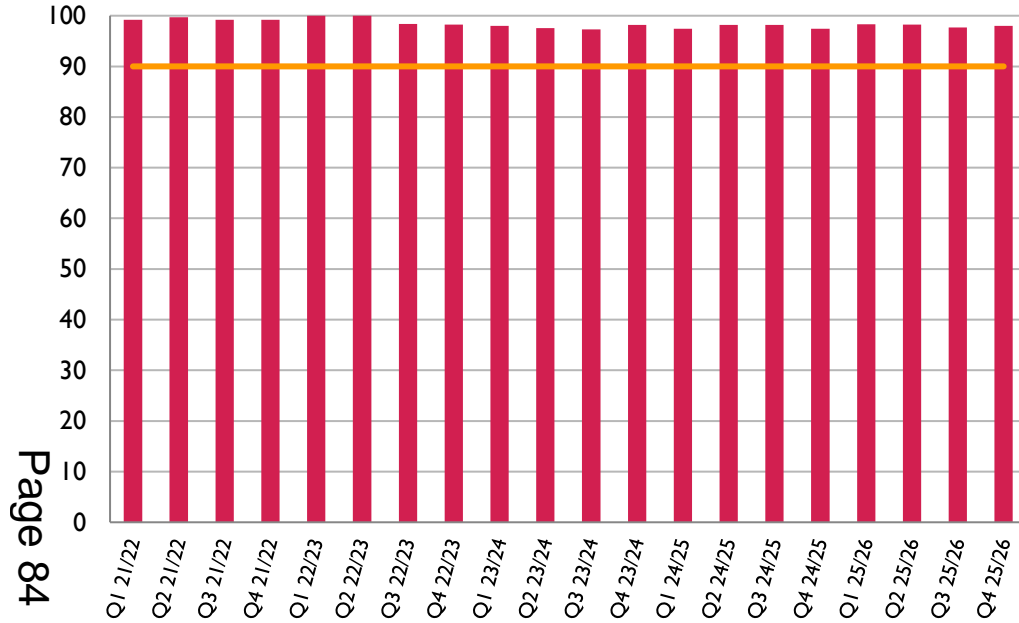
Against last Quarter	B&B/Hotels	↓
Against last Year	B&B/Hotels	↓
Against last Quarter	Hostels	↑
Against last Year	Hostels	↓
Against last Quarter	Move Ons	↓
Against last Year	Move Ons	↑

The number in temporary accommodation is gradually declining reflecting strong prevention activity and effective partnership working with local housing providers. Programmes such as the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) are increasing the supply of self-contained temporary accommodation. Two hostel purchases have been completed, and work is underway with the Assets Team to bring them into use, four additional acquisitions progressing.

How do we compare?


The Institute for Government has published the Homelessness Performance Tracker, which evaluates the effectiveness of local homelessness services in England by analysing data on demand, funding, and outcomes over time. The full report is available [here](#).


Customer Satisfaction - Telephone



— Target

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Slight increase since last quarter and last year

Higher is Good

Target	90%
Q4 Actual	97.98%
2025/26 Actual	98.06%

Page 84

How do we compare?

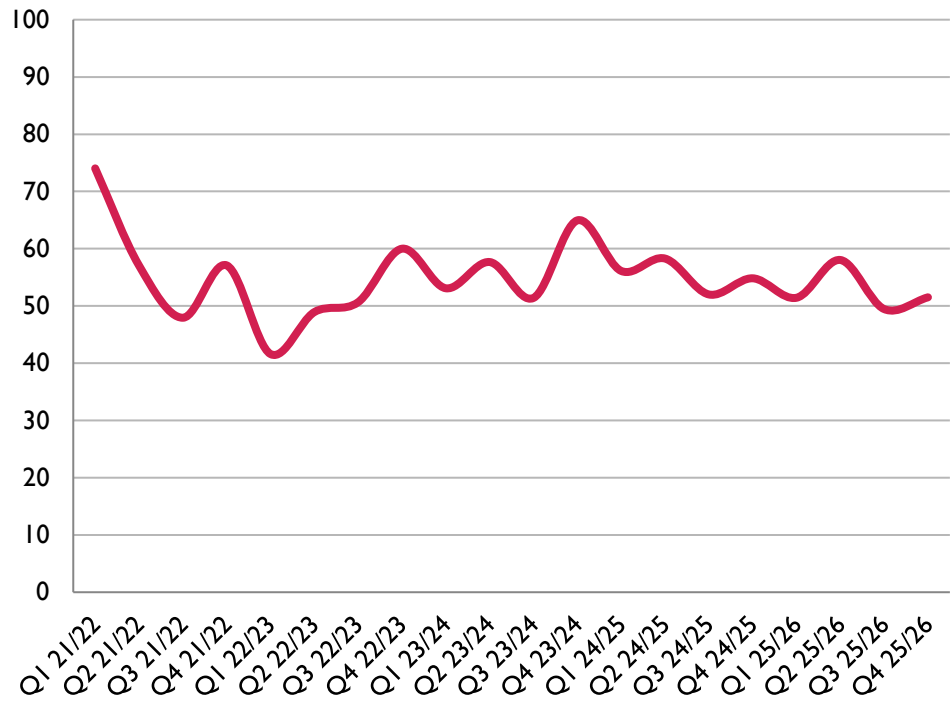
The Govmetric Channel Satisfaction Index is a monthly publication of the top performing councils across the core customer access channels. At least 100 customers need to be transferred to the survey to be included in the league table so even if satisfaction is high, it may not be included.

A total of 729 residents participated in the survey, of these, 744 customers reported being satisfied with the service, reflecting a high level of satisfaction overall.


	Oct. Rank	Oct. Net Sat.	Nov. Rank	Nov. Net Sat.	Dec. Rank	Dec. Net Sat.
West Oxfordshire	4	92%	1	100%	4	94%


Customer Satisfaction - Email

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Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

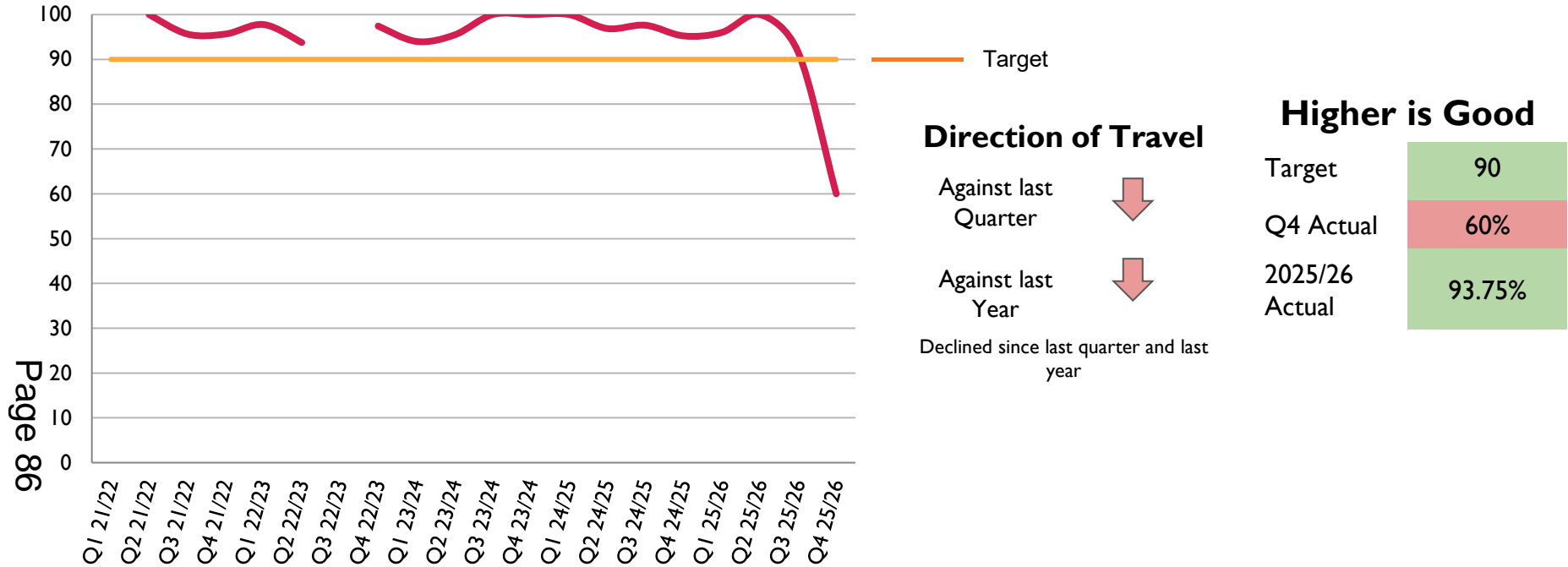
Slight increase compared to last quarter and declined since last year

2025/26 Higher is Good

Q4 Actual	51.51%
2025/26 Actual	52.65%

631 residents responded to the survey, with 325 expressing satisfaction (51.51%), up from 49.46% in Q3, 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.

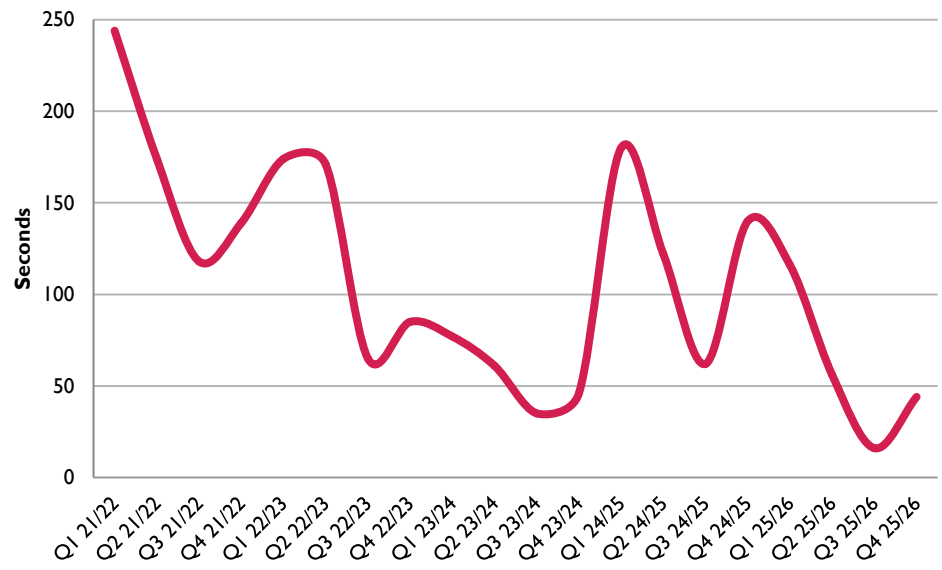
Customer Satisfaction - Face to Face




Page 86


Customer satisfaction with face-to-face interactions dipped significantly, due to only 5 completed surveys with 3 of 5 customers satisfied. Q4 figures are distorted by very low survey volumes, however, customer satisfaction has remained high across the year, with 60 of 64 customers participating in the surveys report being satisfied.

Customer Call Handling - Average Waiting Time



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

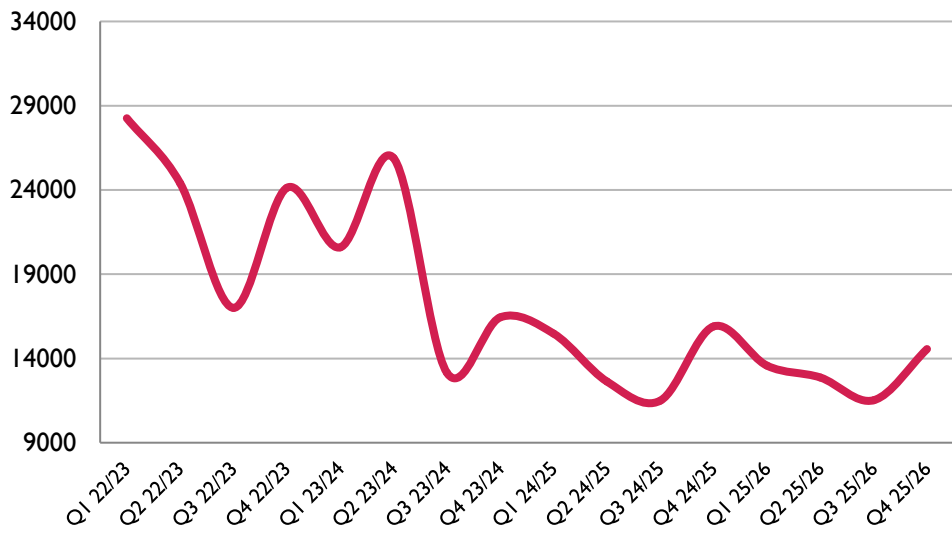
Increased since last quarter and decreased vs last year

Lower is Good

Q4 Actual	44 seconds
2025/26 Actual	57 seconds

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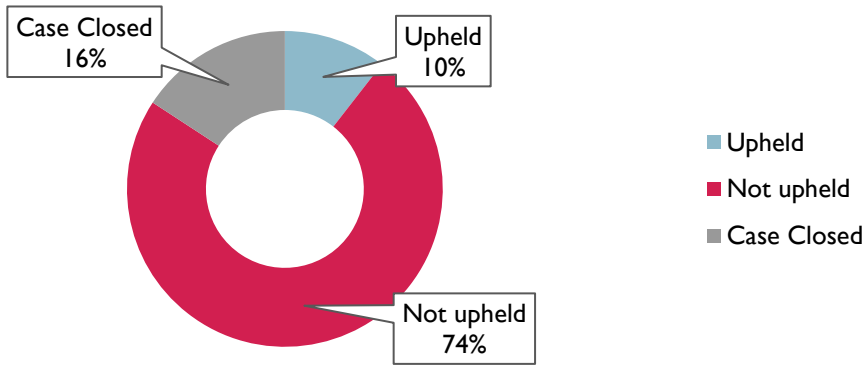
Call Volume over Time



Average call waiting times improved by around 96 seconds compared with the same period last year. West delivered a strong Q4 performance despite staff turnovers, the team maintained strong performance, supported by ongoing training and refresher sessions that helped ensure consistent service delivery.


Number of complaints upheld


Complaints by Status



Direction of Travel

Complaints upheld or partly upheld at Stage 1

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Declined since last quarter but slightly increased last year

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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.

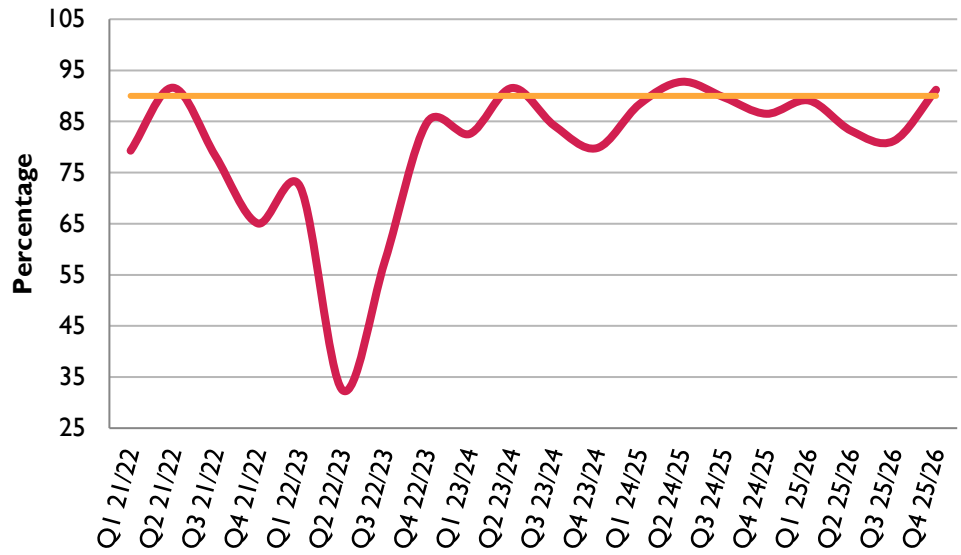
How do we compare?

There is some benchmarking available on the number of complaints received by the Ombudsman. These figures reflect cases where customers, having completed the Council’s internal complaints process, feel that the matter has not been satisfactorily resolved. However, due to the very small number of Ombudsman complaints received, the data does not provide meaningful trends or insights for this period. Figures can be found [here](#).

Complaints Upheld or Partially Upheld Breakdown


Service area	Description	Outcome/learning	Decision	Response time (days)
Revenues & Benefits	Council tax	The on-line Council Tax portal displayed conflicting information between a banner stating payments were up to date while account balance was still outstanding. An apology was given, and recovery notices threatening legal action removed from the account.	Upheld	7
Waste & Recycling	Waste Collection	Ubico confirmed that the incident stemmed from a failure within their operational processes. The specific point of failure has now been identified and corrected within their systems with additional control measures in place, to forestall recurrence.	Upheld	8


Percentage of FOI requests answered within 20 days



— Target

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

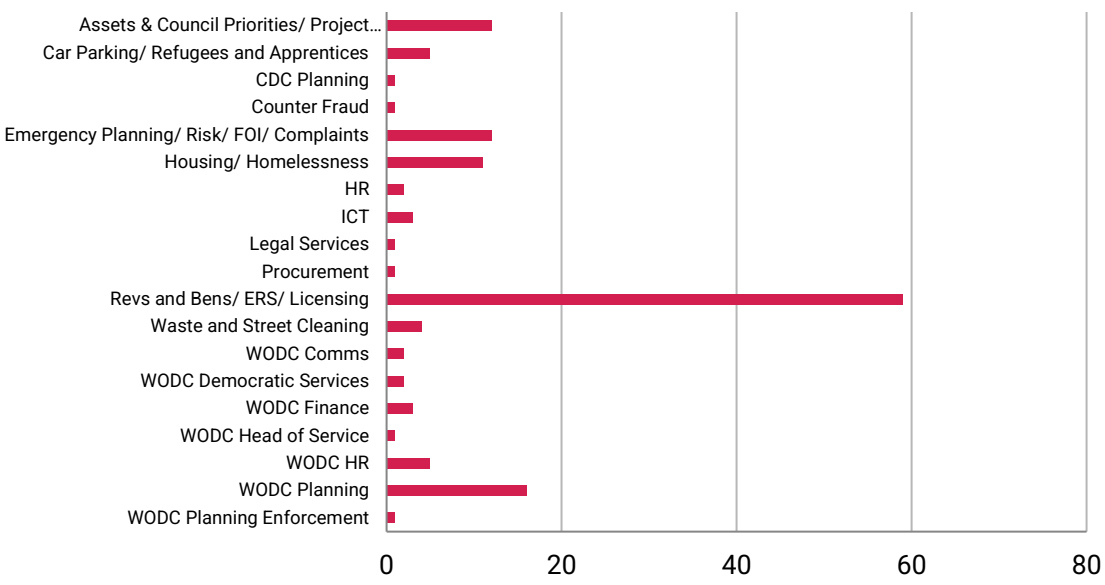
Increased since last quarter and last year

Higher is Good

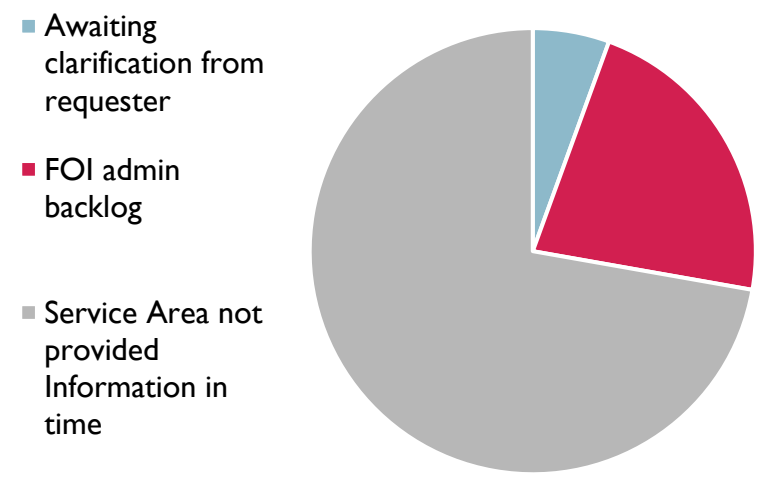
Target	90%
Actual	91.2%

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Requests by Service Area

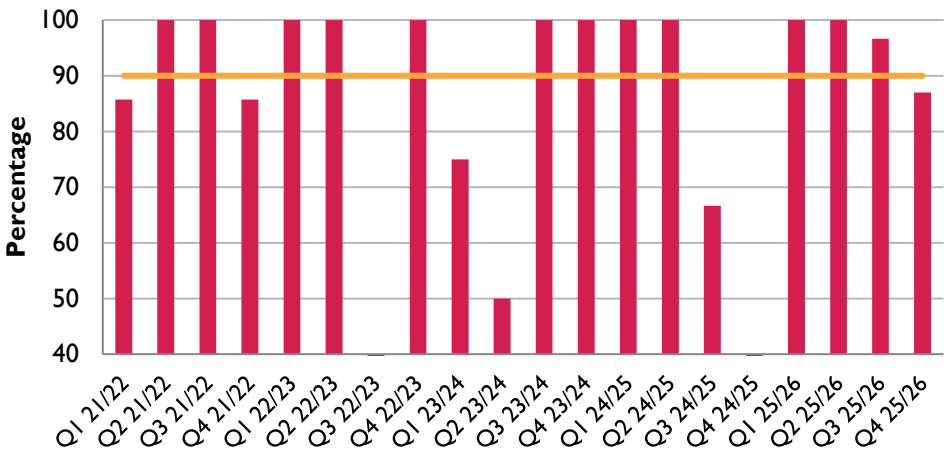


Reason FOI request was not Answered within 20 Days




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


Building Control Satisfaction



— Target

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Slightly decreased since last quarter and last year

Higher is Good

Target	90%
Actual	87%

Page 91

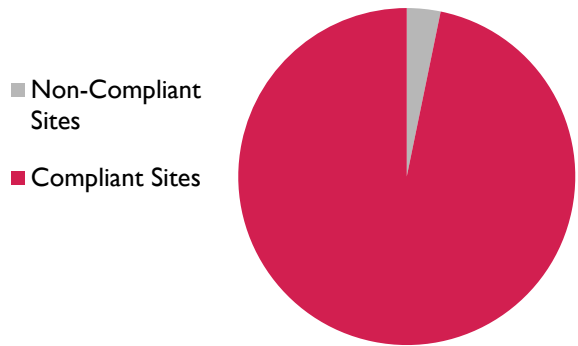
A new customer-feedback webform was introduced in October and issued with completion certificates. Early responses have been very positive, with customers praising the team’s helpful, pragmatic support and swift turnaround. Of the eight responses, only one was less than 100%, noting that the requirement for a signed Declaration of Completion wasn’t made clear at the outset.

How do we compare?

Percentage of share in the market

Jan	Feb	Mar	Number of Apps for Quarter
80%	80.37%	63.38%	175

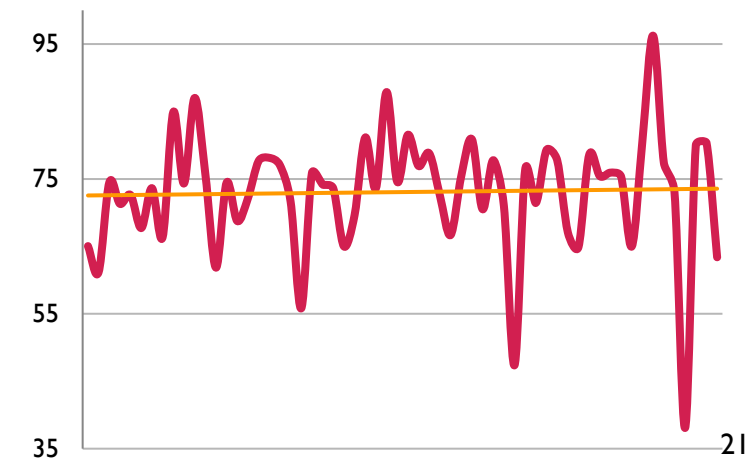
% of Sites that are Affected by Non-Compliance



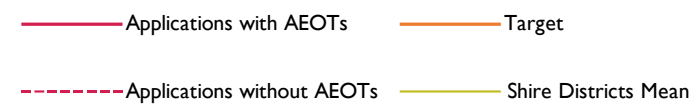
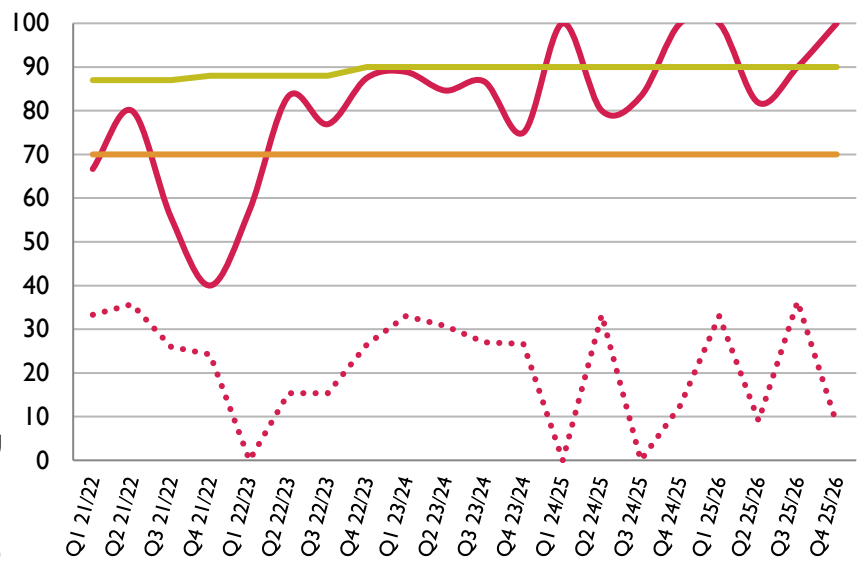
Interventions by Building Control

In Q4, the team carried out 836 site inspections, with non-compliances identified during 27 of them — 3.2% of all inspections. Across those 27 visits, a total of 268 non-compliances were recorded, including 67 structural issues, 67 related to fire safety, and 25 thermal issues (covering Conservation of Fuel & Power and Overheating). The Building Control service aims to guide builders and customers toward achieving compliance, but when guidance is not followed or sought, the team steps in to ensure that minimum regulatory standards are met.

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

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Increased since last quarter and last year

Higher is Good

Target 70%

Actual 100%

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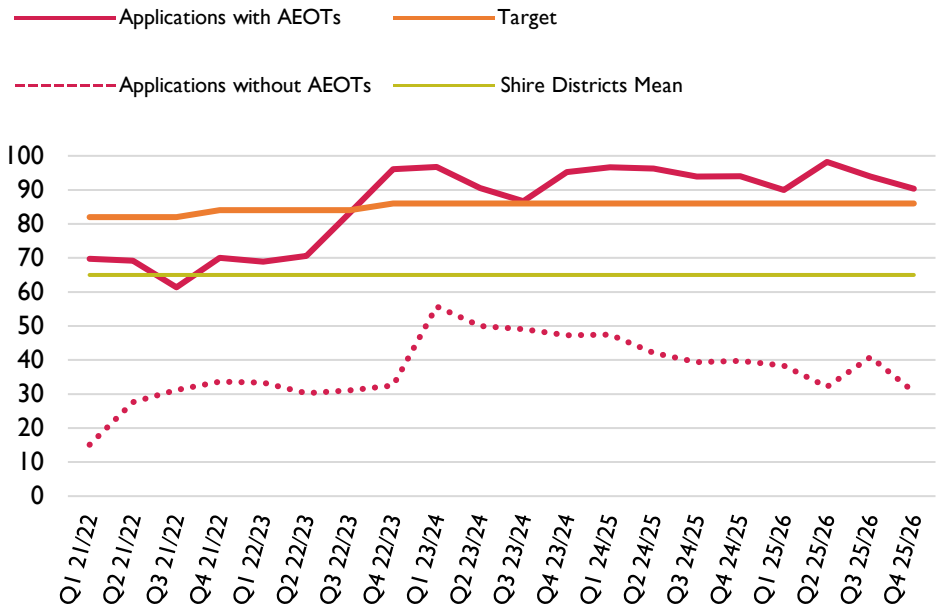
How do we compare?

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


Q3 25-26 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
Oxford	100	1/5	Top
South Oxfordshire	100	1/5	Top
Vale of White Horse	95	3/5	Second
West Oxfordshire	91	4/5	Third
Cherwell	78	5/5	Bottom


The service demonstrated consistently strong performance in Q4, with all twelve received 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

Actual

Target	65%
Actual	90.32%

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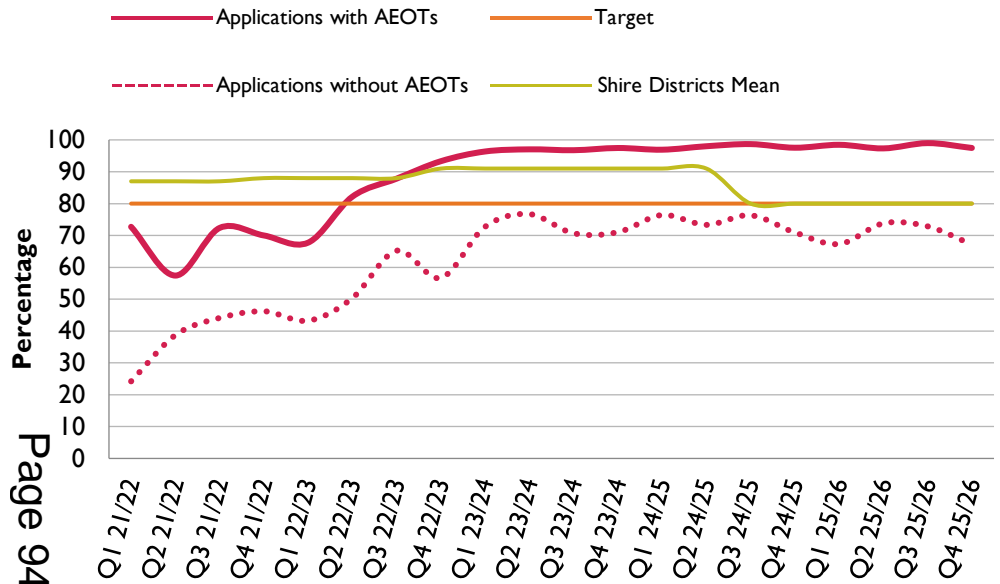
How do we compare?

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



Q3 25-26 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
West Oxfordshire	94	1/5	Top
Oxford	93	2/5	Top
Vale of White Horse	89	3/5	Second
Cherwell	79	4/5	Third
South Oxfordshire	77	5/5	Bottom

In Q4, performance was well above target although delays persist due to the absence of a dedicated Landscape Officer. Recruitment has now been successful with 2 new joiners in the team, this is expected to improve processing timelines going forward.

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



Direction of Travel

- Against last Quarter 
- Against last Year 
- Increase last quarter and since last year

Higher is Good

Target	80%
Actual	97.47%

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How do we compare?

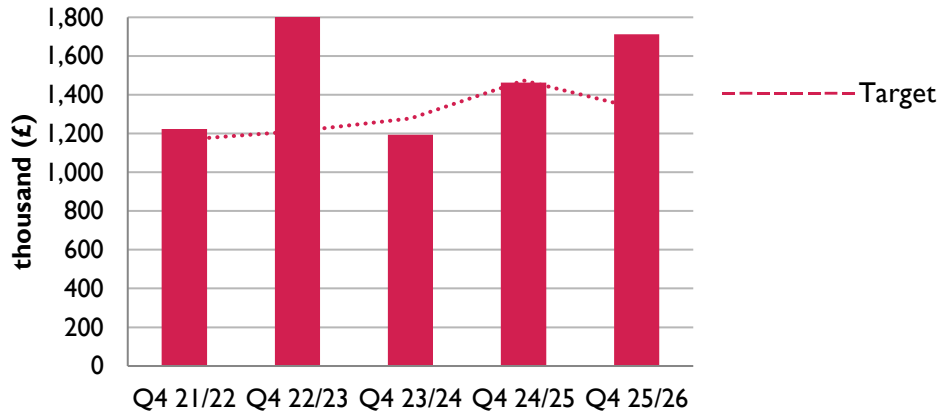
Other Developments - % within 8 weeks or agreed time – LG Inform

Q3 25-26 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
West Oxfordshire	99	1/5	Top
Vale of White Horse	97	2/5	Second
South Oxfordshire	93	3/5	Second
Oxford	89	4/5	Third
Cherwell	78	5/5	Bottom

Determination times remain high, with 198 applications processed in Q4, including 193 within agreed timescales.

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

Total planning income



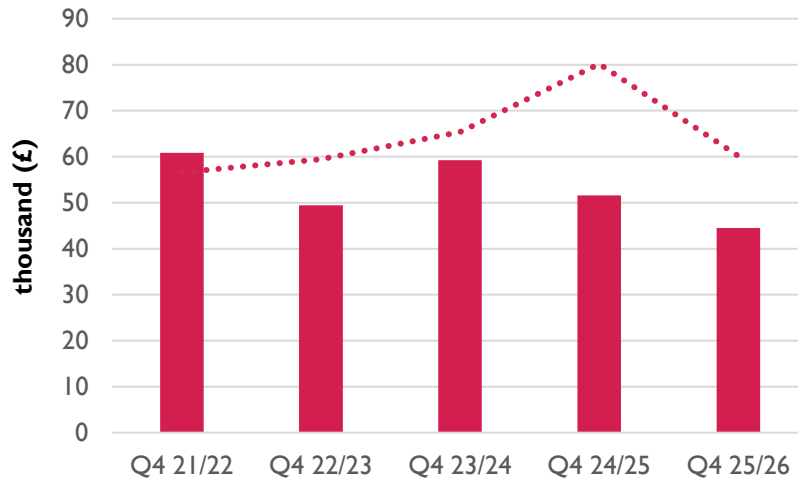
Direction of Travel

Category	Direction
Total Planning Income	↑
Against last Quarter	↑
Against last Year	↑
Pre-Application Income	↑
Against last Quarter	↑
Against last Year	↓

Higher is Good

Category	Value (£)
Total Planning Income (Target)	1,330,173
Total Planning Income (Actual)	1,713,275
Pre-Application Income (Target)	60,173
Pre-Application Income (Actual)	44,495

Pre-application income

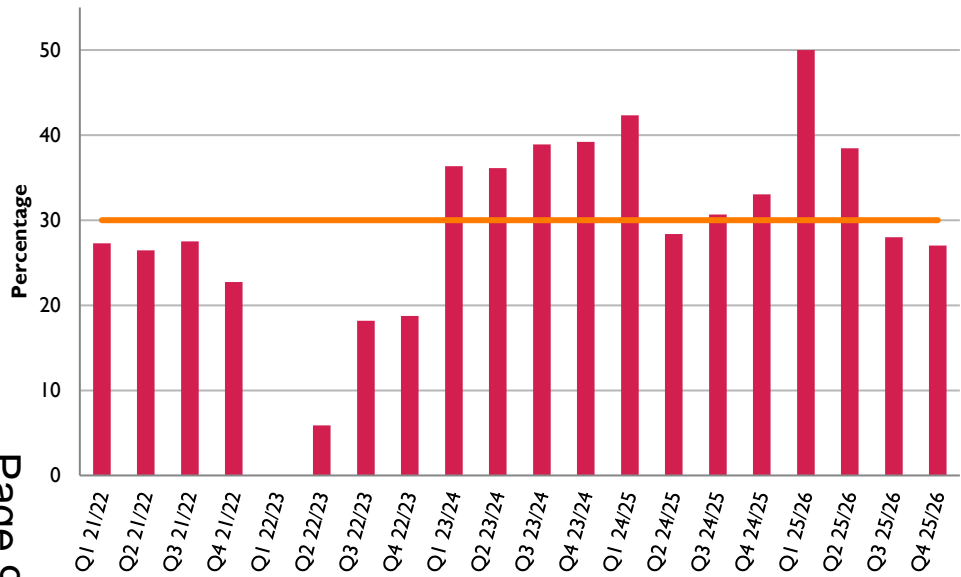


Total Income increased last quarter and increased compared to last year
Pre-App Income increased since last quarter but decreased since last year

In Q4, the council recorded high financial performance, with strong income received during the quarter contributing positively towards the annual target. However, pre-application uptake remains low, and the team is currently exploring pricing adjustments alongside a renewed focus on Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs).


Percentage of Planning Appeals Allowed (cumulative)


Page 96



— Target

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Declined since last quarter and last year

Lower is Good

Target

30%

Actual

27.03%

How do we compare?

Percentage of planning appeals allowed (Specifically Q3 2025-26)

Q3 25-26 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
Vale of White Horse	0	1/5	Top
Oxford	0	2/5	Top
West Oxfordshire	17	3/5	Second
South Oxfordshire	42	4/5	Third
Cherwell	50	5/5	Bottom

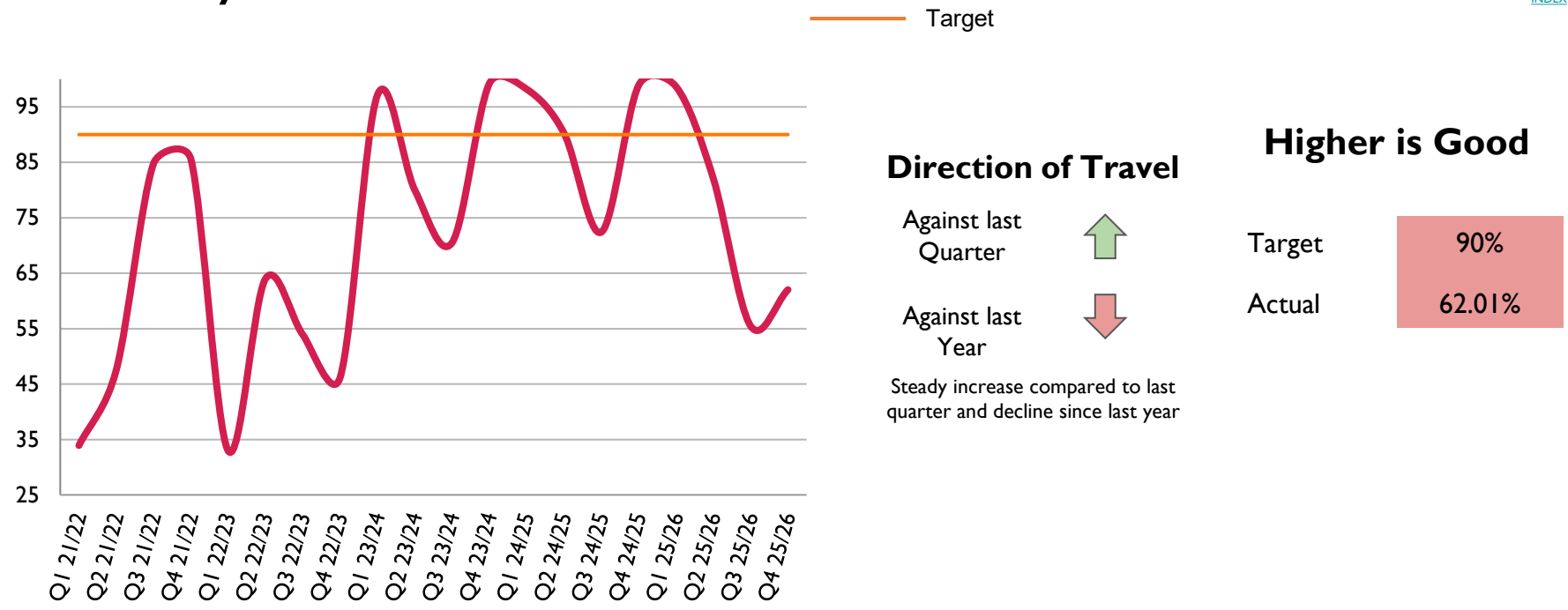
This indicator aims to ensure that no more than 30% of planning appeals are allowed in favor of the applicant, with a lower percentage being more favorable. According to the latest statistics from the Planning Inspectorate, the national average for Section 78 planning appeals granted is 28% (source: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

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

	Decided	Allowed	% Allowed
Uplands	17	5	29.41%
Lowlands	20	5	25.00%

Of the ten appeals allowed, none related to officer recommendations that have been overturned by planning sub-committees.

Percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days

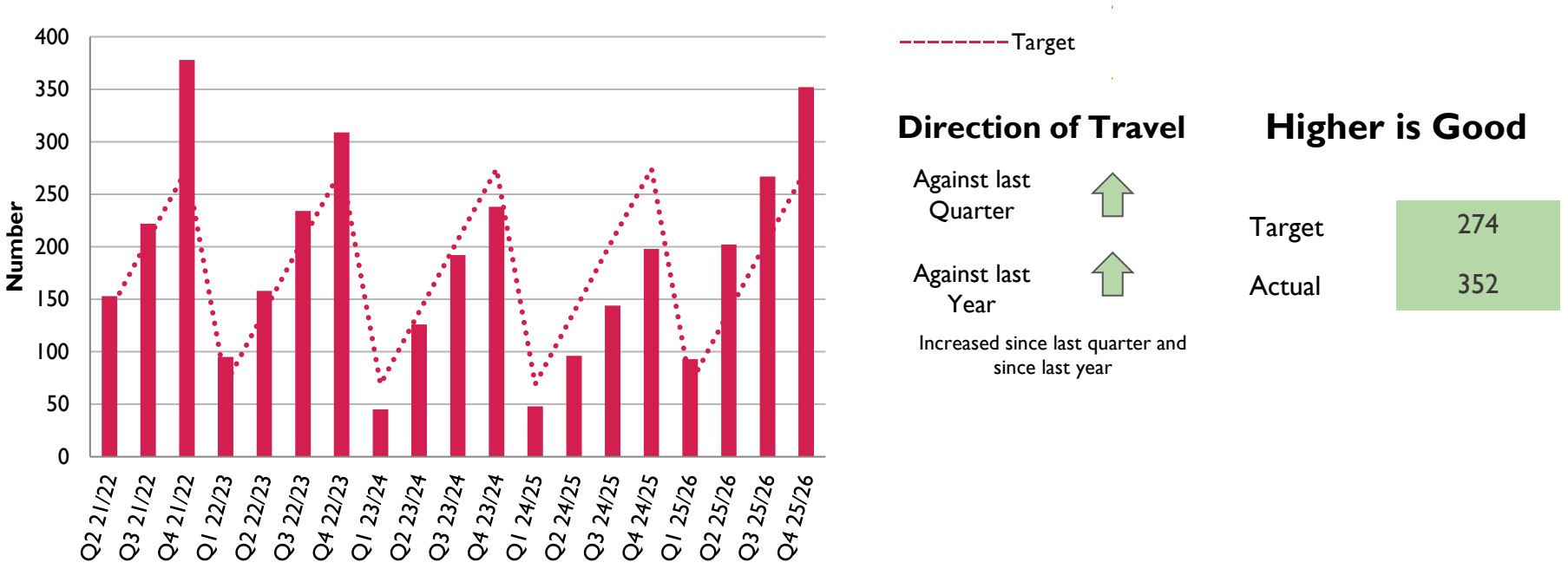


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During Q4, the Council recovered slightly in performance against the 10-day target for Land Charges searches. Staffing disruptions after the loss of a team member last September, coupled with unusually high inbox queries from tree preservation orders, fee changes, created a huge backlog. Q4 Priority was to clear backlogs and stabilise the service. Early signs show the approach is working and performance is beginning to recover.

Number of affordable homes delivered (cumulative)

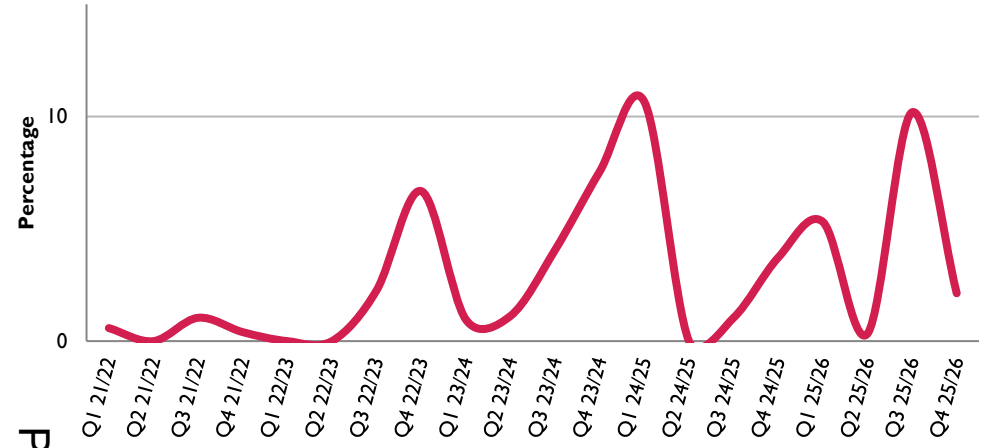
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The Council delivered strong delivery numbers in Q4 with 87 affordable homes in Q4, bringing the year-to-date total to 352, reflecting continued strong progress across the district. Affordable housing delivery in the quarter through 106 sites, RP regeneration schemes and TA acquisition by WODC. This figure includes 66 social rent dwellings delivered at Ryegrass Woodstock and Windrush Place Witney, boosting local capacity for households in urgent need.

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)



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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 FPNs	% FPNs per Fly Tip	County Rank	Quartile
Vale of White Horse	445	18	4.04%	1/5	Top
South Oxfordshire	873	21	2.41%	2/5	Top
Cherwell	1101	26	2.36%	3/5	Second
West Oxfordshire	1135	13	1.15%	4/5	Third
Oxford	4959	7	0.14%	5/5	Bottom

Direction of Travel

Number of Fly Tips

- Against last Quarter  Number of Fly Tips Collected **249**
- Against last Year  Percentage Enforcement Action **2.13%**

Percentage Enforcement Action

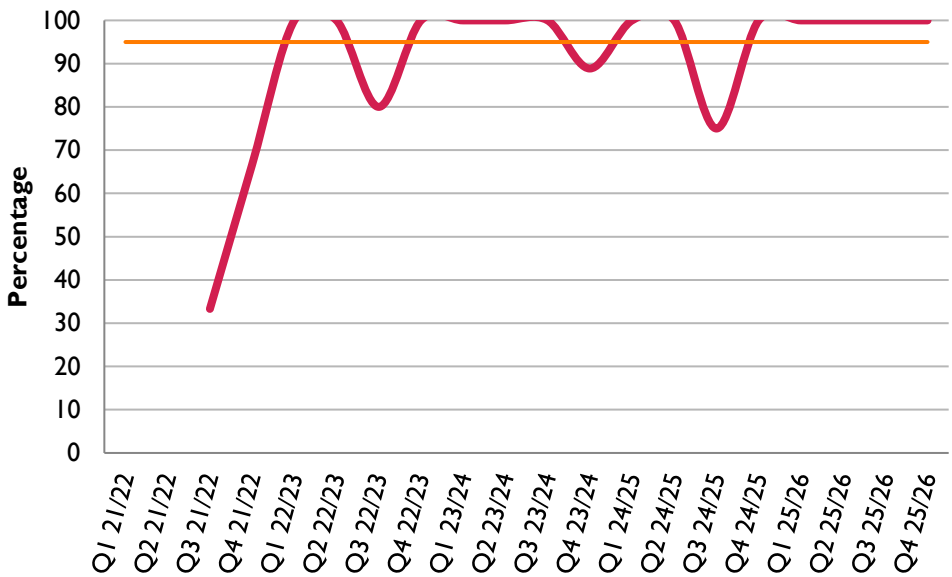
- Against last Quarter 
- Against last Year 

Fly Tips – Increased since last quarter and since last year
 Enforcement Action – Decreased since last quarter and last year

In Q4, 2 FPNS were issued, one of which was captured by CCTV. The team continued its stop-and-search as a joint effort with Thames Valley Police and HMRC to combat illegal waste carriers. Public awareness campaigns have increased, focusing on fly-tipping, Duty of Care and business waste compliance. Interviews for an additional officer will be start in May, which will further strengthen capacity and boost fly-tipping enforcement actions.


Percentage of high-risk food premises inspected within target timescales


Page 100



— Target

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Steady since last quarter and last year

Higher is Good

Target

95%

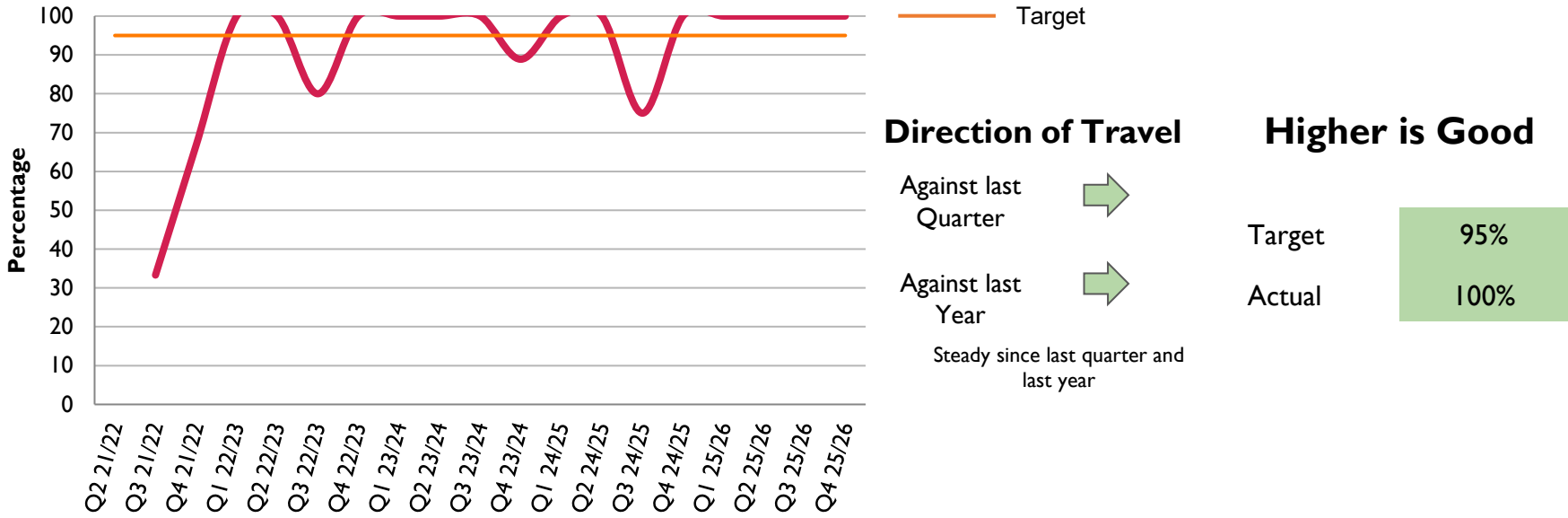
Actual

100%

Six High-Risk food inspection was undertaken during Q4, which were completed within the target timeframes.

% High-risk notifications risk assessed within 1 working day

(including food poisoning outbreaks, anti-social behaviour, contaminated private water supplies, workplace fatalities or multiple serious injuries)

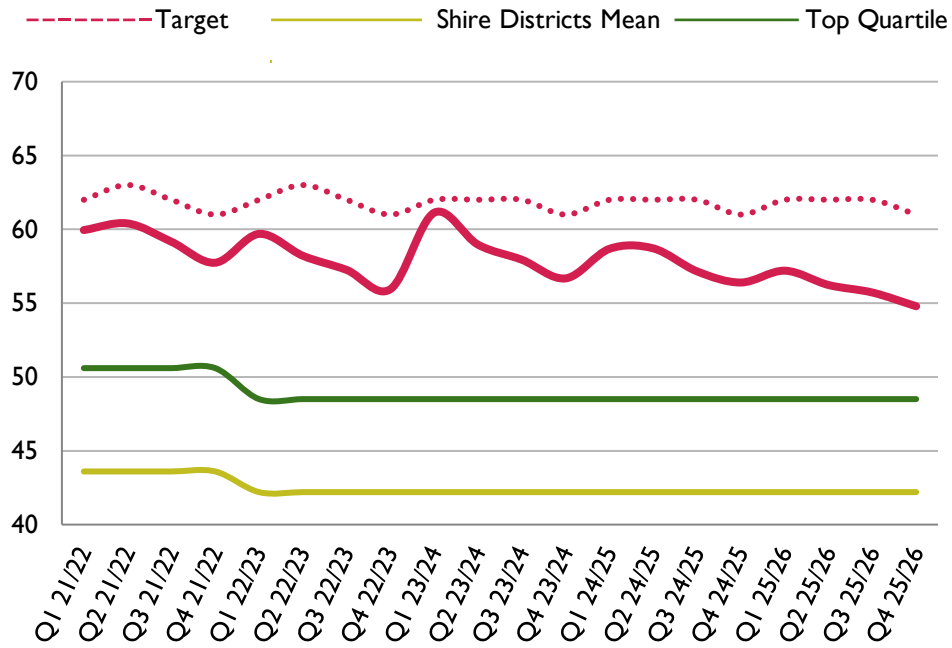


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Four notifications were received during Q4, all four were assessed within one working day.

Percentage of household waste recycled

Page 102



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 
 Against last Year 
 Declined since last quarter and last year

Higher is Good

Target **61%**
 Actual **54.79%**

Breakdown of Recycling

Dry Recycling 24.16%
 Garden Waste 21.09%
 Food 9.54%

How do we compare?

Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting – Gov.uk. The latest dataset available is from 2024-2025.

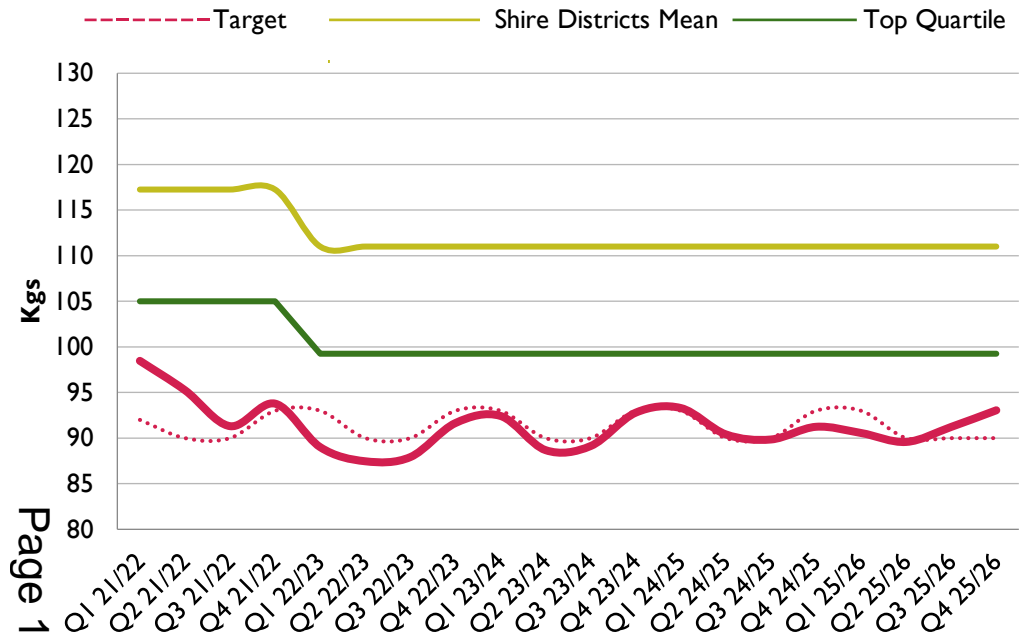
2023-24 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
South Oxfordshire	61.30%	1/5	Top
Vale of White Horse	58.9%	2/5	Top
West Oxfordshire	57%	3/5	Second
Cherwell	51.5%	4/5	Third
Oxford	48.2%	5/5	Bottom

During Q4, the household recycling rate fell by around 1.6% compared with the same period last year. The current performance sits at 54.79%, 6.2% below the Council’s target.



Nationally, recycling rates vary significantly. In 2024/25, local authorities in England recorded household recycling rates ranging from 23.7% to 63.9%, with the provisional national average at 44.3%. This wider context highlights the substantial performance gap between leading and lower-performing authorities. Within this landscape, West Oxfordshire performed strongly, ranking 14th out of 164 waste collection authorities sampled in England for 2024–2025, achieving a household recycling rate of 57%. This places it among the top councils nationally and reflects continued commitment to high recycling performance across Oxfordshire.

Despite being below target, the Council’s current rate of 54.79% remains significantly higher than the national average and consistent with the strong regional performance across Oxfordshire, where all district councils continue to perform well above national levels.

Residual Household Waste per Household (kg)



Direction of Travel

- Against last Quarter 
- Against last Year 

Increased since last quarter and last year

Lower is Good

Target	93
Actual	93.05

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How do we compare?

Residual household waste per household (kg/household) – Gov.uk. The latest dataset available is from 2024-2025

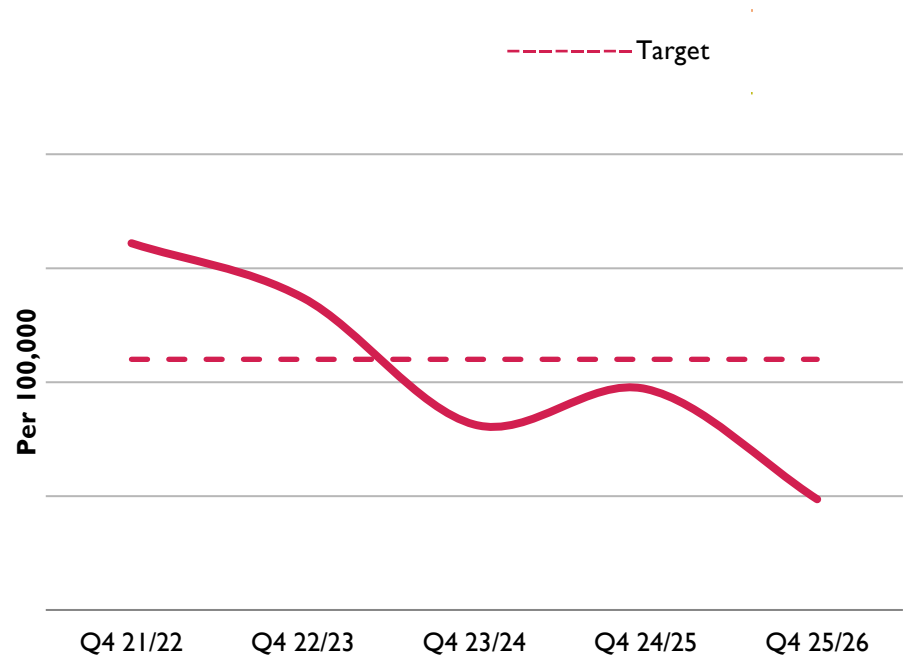
2023-24 Benchmark	Kg	County Rank	Quartile
Vale of White Horse	317.1	1/5	Top
South Oxfordshire	310.1	2/5	Top
Oxford	327.3	3/5	Second
West Oxfordshire	342.0	4/5	Third
Cherwell	399.4	5/5	Bottom

Residual household waste per household is currently 93.05kg, sitting just above the 93kg target.


Overall Q4 performance remains close to target. Nationally, West Oxfordshire performed strongly, ranking 16th out of 164 waste collection authorities published dataset available in England for 2024–2025.


Missed bins per 100,000

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Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

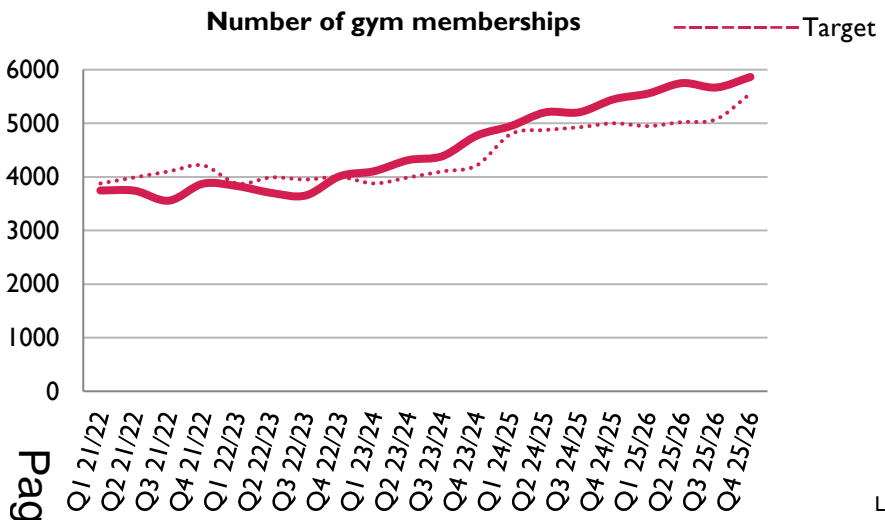
Decreased since last quarter and last year

Lower is Good

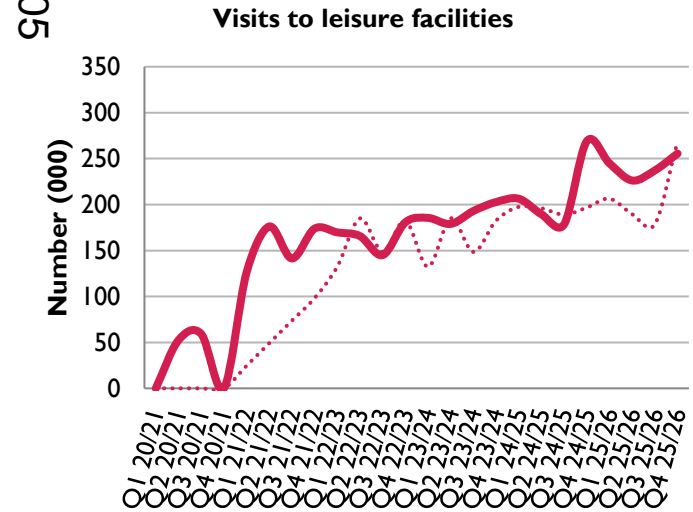
Target	110
Actual	48.58

Missed bins fell to 48.58 per 100,000, remaining comfortably within target, and overall service performance has improved following recent measures. While Q4 saw more service failures due to icy weather-related cancellations and some road closures. Ageing fleet issues remains a concern, with procurement of new vehicles still underway. Despite these pressures, communication remains excellent, misses have continued to fall, service failures are at their lowest level in years, and recovery times have improved, with 90% of failures resolved within 24 hours.

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





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Direction of Travel


Gym Memberships

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Leisure Visits

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Gym Memberships – Increased since last quarter and last year
Leisure Visits- Increased since last quarter, slight decline compared to last year

Higher is Good

Gym Memberships

Target	5,555
Actual	5,864

Leisure Visits

Target	269,003
Actual	255,498
2025/26 Actual	963,766

The Council performed well in its leisure targets in Q4, achieving 6% above target for memberships and 5% decrease for leisure visits.


Overall Actual for 25/26 shows 14% increase compared to 2024/2025 figures demonstrating strong public engagement with its facilities.

Breakdown of Leisure Visits per facility (last updated Q3 25/25):

Facility	Q1 24-25	Q2 24-25	Q3 24-25	Q4 24-25	Q1 25-26	Q2 25-26	Q3 25-26
Bartholomew Sports Centre	9,681	9,747	5,506	16,712	20,268	17,195	23,301
Carterton Artificial Turf Pitch	6,840	6,840	6,840	9,252	2796	1810	2796
Carterton Leisure Centre	70,220	62,866	57,100	64,139	57,346	63,254	62,869
Carterton Pavilion	600	600	600	600	400	320	600
Chipping Norton Leisure Centre	22,907	21,717	18,804	54,713	47,750	40,080	52,563
Windrush Leisure Centre	76,286	65,250	73,237	103,947	95,596	81,676	69,235
Witney Artificial Turf Pitch	19,320	19,320	16,487	19,640	19,557	15,724	25,852
Woodstock Open Air Pool	516	3,126	0	0	1,137	6,143	0

Where no access controls are in place, such as at Carterton Pavilion, usage is estimated by multiplying the number of pitch bookings for the quarter by the typical number of players per booking.

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 <p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>	<p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>
<p>Name and date of Committee</p>	<p>EXECUTIVE WEDNESDAY 10 JUNE 2026</p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p>UPDATED PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY</p>
<p>Wards affected</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Accountable member</p>	<p>Councillor Alaric Smith Executive Member for Finance Email: alaric.smith@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Accountable officer</p>	<p>Claire Locke - Executive Director Corporate Services, Publica Email: democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Report author</p>	<p>Ciaran O’Kane – Senior Procurement Business Partner, Publica Email: democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Summary/Purpose</p>	<p>To present an updated draft Procurement and Contract Management Strategy</p>
<p>Annexes</p>	<p>Annex A – DRAFT PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY</p>
<p>Recommendation(s)</p>	<p>That the Executive resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Approve the updated Procurement and Contract Management Strategy
<p>Corporate priorities</p>	<p>Procurement supports all key Council Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting Residents First • A Good Quality of Life for All • A Better Environment for People and Wildlife • Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency • Working Together for West Oxfordshire

Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Publica Executive Team• WODC Climate Change Team• Publica Data Protection Team

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The draft WODC Procurement and Contract Management Strategy sets out a structured, approach to commissioning, procurement supplier management, and contract management. Its primary objective is to ensure that procurement activity delivers value for money, supports organisational priorities, and mitigates commercial, operational, and reputational risk.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The revision of the current Procurement and Contract Management Strategy was partly in response to an External Audit recommendation.
- 2.2 Furthermore, the landscape of Public Procurement changed with the rolling out of the Procurement Act 2023 (PA23). The team recognised the importance of the Council having a strategy that incorporated changes and best practice as result of the legislation change.
- 2.3 Finally, the Strategy sets out the responsibility Procurement will have to support WODC in preparation for Local Government Reorganisation.

3. MAIN POINTS

- 3.1 The strategy recognises procurement as a strategic enabler rather than a transactional function. It focuses on strengthening governance, improving commercial capability, and enhancing supplier relationships to achieve sustainable, high-quality outcomes.
- 3.2 The Strategy is designed to ensure that all procurement and contract activities are conducted in a consistent, controlled, and value-driven manner that supports the Council's strategic objectives. At its core, the strategy seeks to maximise value for money across the full commercial lifecycle, while maintaining robust governance, ensuring regulatory compliance, and effectively managing risk.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 Not Applicable

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The updated Procurement and Contract Management Strategy will ensure that all Procurement activity will be carried out in line with best practice.
- 5.2 The revised strategy also reinforces the Councils vision – 'Shaping West Oxfordshire as a District which offers a fulfilling and meaningful quality of life for our residents with opportunities for all to flourish, a thriving and prosperous place for entrepreneurs and businesses, where local people and visitors can enjoy the beauty and heritage of our landscape, built, farmed and natural environment'

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no financial implications for this report. However, compliance with the Councils Contract Procedure rules will support the best use of taxpayers' money.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no specific legal implications from the report or the strategy, however the Council continues to have a legal duty to comply with the Public Procurement Regulations

8. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 There is a potential risk that the Procurement and Contract Management Strategy may need to be updated as and when the Cabinet Office release further guidance. This has been quite regular since PA23 went live.

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 9.1 There are no equality implications from this report.

10. SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 This Executive report is exempt from a SIA. The Climate team have worked closely with Procurement and whilst the implications of implementing the Strategy will have sustainability implications the strategy itself does not.
- 10.2 Sustainable Procurement, Supporting Local SMEs and Social Value have been identified as Strategic Objectives within the Procurement and Contract Management Strategy.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 No Applicable

(END)

Procurement and Contract Management Strategy



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Approved by

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Background

West Oxfordshire District Council manages gross expenditure of approximately £62 million per annum (2025/26). The Council uses a range of commissioning,

procurement and contracting approaches to deliver services in a way that is open, fair, transparent and cost effective. These approaches include the use of simple standard terms and conditions for low risk and low value contracts, framework agreements, recognised industry standard contracts and bespoke contractual arrangements where appropriate.

Effective commissioning, procurement and contract management is fundamental to contributing to the delivery of the Council's priorities:

1. Putting Residents First
2. Enabling a Good Quality of Life for All
3. Creating a Better Environment for People and Wildlife
4. Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency
5. Working Together for West Oxfordshire

By applying proportionate commercial approaches and robust contract management, the Council will ensure that public money is spent responsibly and that services deliver the outcomes residents expect.

1. Introduction

The West Oxfordshire Procurement and Contract Management Strategy 2026–2028 supersedes the 2023 Strategy and has been developed in response to significant legislative change, most notably the introduction of the Procurement Act 2023. This legislation establishes a new statutory framework for public sector procurement, promoting greater transparency, enhanced flexibility, and improved access for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

The overarching purpose of this Strategy is to ensure that all commissioning and procurement activity is undertaken in a consistent, transparent and proportionate manner, aligned with best practice and fully compliant with all legislative and policy requirements. The Strategy supports the achievement of value for money while ensuring that procurement outcomes contribute directly to the Council's wider strategic objectives.

In addition, the Strategy provides a clear framework to support organisational readiness and resilience in advance of Local Government Reorganisation, ensuring continuity, compliance and commercial discipline through a period of structural change.

West Oxfordshire District Council's procurement function is delivered through Publica Limited, its shared services company. This Strategy applies equally to all procurements undertaken by Publica on behalf of the Council, ensuring a consistent, compliant and value for money approach across all arrangements.

2. Setting the Scene for Procurement

2.1 Our Vision

West Oxfordshire District Council will use commissioning, procurement and contract management as a strategic tool to deliver value for money, high-quality services and lasting benefits for residents and communities.

Through intelligent commissioning, whole life commercial decision making and strong contract management, the Council will secure outcomes that:

- Support local priorities and place based delivery.
- Enable housing and regeneration ambitions.
- Strengthen the local and regional economy.
- Reduce carbon emissions and minimise environmental impact.

The Council will operate openly, proportionately and in full compliance with public procurement legislation, ensuring that public funds are used responsibly and that suppliers are treated fairly and consistently.

2.2 Legal Context

West Oxfordshire District Council will carry out all procurement activity in full compliance with the Procurement Act 2023 and its associated regulations, which came into force on 24 February 2025. The Act introduces clearer statutory objectives, enhanced transparency requirements, increased procedural flexibility and measures to improve access to public contracts, particularly for SMEs and local suppliers.

This Strategy also aligns with, and supports compliance with, the following key policies and frameworks:

- National Procurement Policy Statement
- West Oxfordshire District Council Contract Procedure Rules
- West Oxfordshire District Council Carbon Action Plan 2024–2030
- West Oxfordshire District Council Local Code of Corporate Governance
- Counter Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy
- Sustainable Procurement Policy (subject to approval)

2.3 Commissioning and Procurement

Commissioning is deciding what is needed, why it is needed and how best to deliver it whereas Procurement is the process of contracting with an organisation to deliver the need.

Commissioning and Procurement are intrinsically linked. The procurement function is designed to deliver and support commissioners' intentions in a legal and compliant manner, delivering best value for money. Whilst the procurement function sits centrally within Publica and Commissioning can sit in either Publica or the Council, it is key that we continue to develop and maintain strategic links to all commissioners to ensure procurement activities are undertaken in line with best practice.

To ensure that commissioning and procurement activity is planned, coordinated and aligned to strategic priorities, Publica will maintain a forward procurement plan covering all relevant procurements with a value exceeding £50,000. The forward plan will provide visibility of upcoming activity, support early engagement with stakeholders and the market, and enable appropriate resourcing and governance.

The forward procurement plan will be a standing agenda item at the Commissioning and Procurement Board, which meets monthly. The Board comprises of Senior Managers from both Publica and West Oxfordshire District Council, Procurement and relevant stakeholders and provides oversight, challenge and assurance to ensure that commissioning and procurement activity is aligned with Council priorities, compliant with statutory requirements, and delivers value for money.

2.4 The Role of the Commissioning and Procurement Board and Local Government Reorganisation

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) represents a period of significant structural, financial and operational change. It brings increased pressure to maintain service continuity, manage risk, and ensure that public money continues to be spent lawfully, transparently and effectively while new governance and delivery arrangements are developed.

In this context, the Commissioning and Procurement Board plays a critical assurance and coordination role, ensuring that commissioning and procurement activity remains strategic, compliant and aligned with both current organisational priorities and future successor authority arrangements.

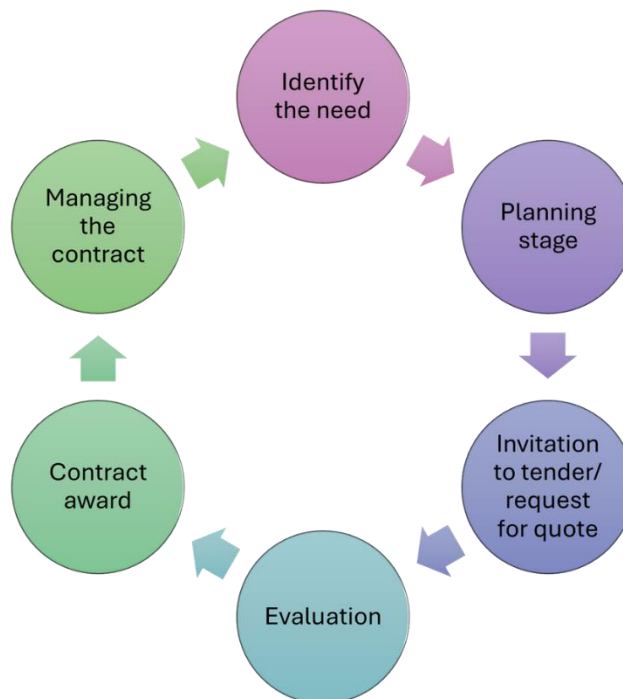
To support WODC with LGR the procurement team will

- Identify contracts that could be ended early, extended, or renegotiated so that no new procurement exercises start in the six months before (November 2027) or twelve months after (March 2029) vesting day (1st April 2028). This will provide capacity for contract novation, developing new governance and identifying opportunities for joint procurement.

- Support a consolidated contract pipeline showing which contracts can be extended, which must be reprocured, and which could shift to future joint procurement.
- Ensure any contract extensions are compliant, justified, and follow consistent principles, aiming to align expiry dates to support future coordinated procurement.
- Avoid short contract extensions unless unavoidable to maintain operational continuity.

3. Strategic Context – Aims and Objectives.

3.1 The Procurement Lifecycle



3.2 The Contract Procedure Rules

The West Oxfordshire District Council Contract Procedure Rules provide a basis for fair competition by providing clear and auditable procedures, which, if followed will give confidence that the Council has a procurement process that are fully accountable and compliant with legislation and the procurement lifecycle.

The Procurement team will ensure that the Contract Procedure Rules are updated in line with the most up to date legislation and best practice.

Furthermore, the Contract Procedure Rules ensure compliance other aspects of the Constitution including schemes of delegation and budgetary control mechanisms.

3.3 The Procurement Toolkit

The Procurement team have developed a Procurement Toolkit to support Officers in their understanding of the Procurement lifecycle.

The procurement toolkit details the 'how to' - providing a step-by-step guide with the templates Officers will need including minimum legal and policy obligations involved in each stage of the process. There are different processes to follow depending on contract value (threshold).

The toolkit will be regularly reviewed and developed and will always have the most up to date guidance and templates.

The Procurement have delivered mandatory procurement training on both process and toolkits to officers who undertake Procurement activity as part of the job role. Further training will be provided as and when required.

3.4 Sustainable Procurement

The Procurement team will aim to ensure that all activities will deliver economic, social and environmental value for residents, in alignment with the Council Plan and the Council's sustainability strategies, including the Carbon Action Plan, which seeks to minimise carbon emissions arising from procurement.

Sustainability will be embedded throughout the entire procurement lifecycle, from commissioning and procurement to contract management and is a vital mechanism to respond and contribute to these challenges. Early engagement with suppliers at the pre-procurement stage is essential to maximise sustainability outcomes.

The Council's Sustainability Procurement Policy sets out the guiding principles for achieving sustainable procurement across all activities.

3.5 Supporting Local SMEs

Following changes introduced by new legislation, the Procurement Team may reserve below-threshold contracts for suppliers based within the local area.

For this purpose, the local area is defined as:

- a. The area in which the authority is situated (e.g. West Oxfordshire or Oxfordshire).
- b. The authority's area and any neighbouring local authority areas.

The Procurement Team will support Officers to make use of this provision where appropriate.

To further maximise this opportunity, the Contract Procedure Rules have been updated to require Officers to obtain at least one quotation from a local supplier for all requirements valued below £30,000, where suitable local suppliers are available.

3.6 Modern Slavery

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 defines modern slavery as encompassing human trafficking and all forms of exploitation involving slavery and forced or compulsory labour.

The means: coercive behaviour

The purpose: exploitation.

In the context of UK Public Procurement, the type of modern slavery in the UK that requires attention is labour exploitation where victims are forced to work for offenders, often under paid or not all.

We are committed to ensuring the suppliers with whom we do business understand the risks of modern slavery in supply chain and take appropriate action to identify and address those risks, with particular focus on supporting victims of modern slavery.

Modern slavery risks will be addressed during the procurement process: -

- When identifying the need, approach to be taken and the market – commissioning/pre procurement stage
- When deciding the requirement – specification stage
- When selecting suppliers to invite to tender - selection stage
- When awarding contract -award stage. As part of the award stage, the Procurement team will consult with the Debarment Review Service (DRS) which was established following the passing of the Procurement Act 2023. The DRS' purpose is to protect public procurement from suppliers that pose risk, by carrying out an investigatory process to consider whether suppliers should be entered onto a centralised debarment list under the powers of the Procurement Act 2023.
- In the performance of the contract – contract conditions and contract management.

3.7 Social Value

The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 places an obligation on the Council to consider economic, social and environmental wellbeing within any procurement for public service contracts above the relevant Public Contract Regulation threshold. The Council endeavours to not only meet the legal requirements, but exceed them, through consideration of Social Value within all procurement activity.

Delivery of Social Value is intrinsically linked to commissioning which assists with innovation, creating savings and social outcomes. There has never been a more influential time to bring Social Value to the front and centre focus of project delivery; commissioning, procurement and contract management all have an intrinsic part to play in ensuring support and development of the local communities and environment the Council serves.

The Procurement Team will

- Continue to build its confidence to explore the social, economic and environmental impacts that can deliver and support the Councils aspirations for carbon neutrality and a sustainable future.
- Work to upskill SMEs, VCSEs and local suppliers to turn their social, economic, and environmental ambitions into practical actions.
- Contribute to the Councils Modern Slavery statement and ensure procurement and contracting activity monitors this area.

3.8 Fraud and Corruption

Publica are committed to supporting its partners countering fraud and corruption and officers who procure goods, services and works must be fully aware of the rules and support this aim.

Successful counter fraud and anti-corruption arrangements should be a consequence of effective business systems, governance practices and controls, specifically the:

- Contract Procedure Rules
- Financial Rules
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Employee's Code of Conduct or Business Conduct Policy, and
- Counter Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy and Fraud Response Plan.

To support and create further awareness the Procurement team will ensure that the Counter Fraud and Enforcement team are involved in all Officer Procurement Training.

Please see Appendix 1.

3.9 Data Protection

The Data Protection Legislation consists of the UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) (and regulations made thereunder) and the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003 (SI 2003/2426).

Article 28 of the Data Protection Legislation adds a requirement upon controllers (the organisation who determines the purposes and manner in which personal data is processed) to ensure that certain provisions are included in contracts where there is personal data being passed from one party as the controller, to another acting as a processor, of that personal data.

The aim of the Article is to ensure that a controller of data who passes personal data to the processor controls how that processor can use that data. To achieve this, the Article stipulates that any processing of personal data by a processor shall be governed by a contract containing certain Information to ensure compliance, security and accountability.

Procurement will therefore ensure that Data Protection Legislation is addressed where required at each stage of a regulated procurement and recorded appropriately on the Contract register by:

- Ensuring that the processor provides sufficient guarantees to implement technical and organisational measures to protect personal data and comply with UK GDPR
- Mandatory Contract Terms: Processing must be governed by a Data Processing Agreement (DPA) or other legal act specifying: to include:
 - Subject matter and duration of processing
 - Nature and purpose of processing
 - Types of personal data and categories of data subjects
 - Obligations and rights of the controller
 - Processor duties including security measures, confidentiality, and compliance with instructions
 - Sub-processor arrangements
 - Data deletion or return procedures at the end of the contract
 - Audit and inspection rights for the controller

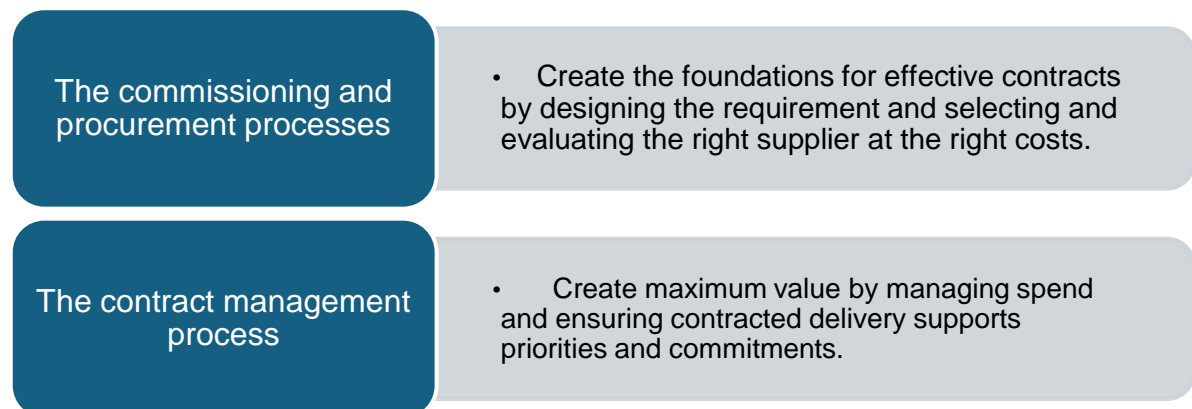
4. Contract Management

Contract Management is the process of systematically and efficiently managing contract development, contract entry, contract delivery and contract exit.

Good contract management:

- Ensures the contract is delivered for the purpose it was intended, at agreed levels, timescales and costs.
- Effectively measures contract compliance and performance in a continuous way.
- Supports an effective working relationship between all parties to the contract.
- Reduces the risk of disputes and litigation, which can be costly and cause reputational damage.
- Provides clear mechanisms for managing change.
- Ensures accurate and relevant reporting and monitoring.
- Fulfils all parties' contractual obligations.

Contract management sits within a wider commercial lifecycle that includes commissioning and procurement. All three are really important functions to ensure the council is compliant with legislation and achieving value for money in spending decisions.



Our aim is to deliver efficiencies, savings and service quality improvements through an assertive, proactive, consistent approach to supplier relationship and contract management.

This will include the management of risks such as contract management capability, supplier performance, changes in requirements, and stakeholder relationships. Where appropriate contract management plans will be utilised to ensure that value is created throughout life of the contract.

Contract management responsibilities include:

- Maintaining comprehensive contracts register
- Ensuring contracts align with the objectives of the Council and offer value
 - Ensuring contractual obligations are met by both parties
 - Managing contracts throughout their lifecycle, including variations and extensions.

Contracts will be managed by individual services within the Council or Publica who need the contract to support their service delivery. For the avoidance of doubt, the Procurement team are not responsible for managing contracts.

The Procurement Team will:

- Provide targeted, short-term support to Contract Managers across the Council who may need some advice, guidance, or short-term practical support to manage a contract.
- Contribute towards creating and embedding best practice whilst maintaining a culture of high standards in the performance of contract management functions across the Council.
- Segment contracts in relation to spend and criticality to the Council and work with service-based contract managers to assess and baseline contract management activities against best practice for strategic contracts.
- Work with internal audit to identify shortfalls and create improvement plans to close contract management gaps.
- To support the Council, the Procurement team will design targeted training and support for contract managers, ensuring they have the knowledge, skills and tools to manage their contracts.
- Complete the Contract Management Foundation training on the Government Commercial College and, where appropriate, the Contract Management Practitioners training to upskill staff.
- Continue to work with the Government Commercial Function, Contract Management Pioneer Programme to review our practices and embed an improved contract management culture.

5. What is next

Since adoption of the previous Procurement and Contract Management Strategy, the Procurement team has delivered significant change to align with the most substantial reform to public sector procurement since 2015. This has been achieved while continuing to maintain effective delivery of business-as-usual procurement and contract management services across the organisation.

Over the lifetime of this strategy, the primary focus will shift towards supporting Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). This will ensure that West Oxfordshire District Council is well positioned to transition into the new Unitary Authority model and to fully leverage the opportunities presented by reorganisation. Throughout this period, the Procurement team will continue to ensure that statutory, operational, and commercial business as usual requirements are maintained.

Appendix I - Fraud Awareness



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

The Council has a duty to prevent fraud and corruption, whether it is attempted by someone outside or within the Council such as another organisation, a resident, an employee or Member. Fraud can occur at all stages of the procurement cycle and can be internal, external or both where there is collusion. Officers must be aware of the risks and the fact that they apply not just to large, high value contracts but also to low level spend. Officers engaged in all stages of the process need to be alert to the possibility of abuse when raising or approving requisitions, when writing or evaluating specifications, as well as further on in the process once the contract has been awarded.

ECONOMIC CRIME AND CORPORATE TRANSPARENCY ACT 2023 (ECCTA)

ECCTA created a failure to prevent fraud offence. Guidance makes clear that under the offence, an organisation may be “criminally liable where an employee, agent, subsidiary, or other ‘associated person’, commits a fraud intending to benefit the organisation and the organisation did not have reasonable fraud prevention procedures in place.”

If liable, penalties could include unlimited fines and other severe commercial and operational consequences. The Council falls within the definition of an organisation impacted by the new offence. The Council will be able to avoid criminal liability for failing to prevent fraud where it can prove that it had “reasonable” fraud prevention procedures in place at the time of the alleged fraud (or that it was reasonable not to have such procedures in place). It is therefore everyone’s responsibility to ensure probity and transparency in any of the Council’s areas of work, but procurement is a high-risk area where fraud and an offence under ECCTA is more probable.

To manage the risk of bribery and corruption, procedures for declaring gifts and hospitality and conflicts of interest are also mandatory and the organisation encourages a culture of transparency that is supportive of whistleblowing.

Fraud awareness and training for all staff involved in the procurement process is mandatory and includes training on the fraud indicators officers must be alert to.

The table below gives examples of common indicators of fraud in the procurement cycle and how to mitigate the risks. For more information on procurement fraud risks and how to prevent and mitigate please see the Procurement fraud risk register and Procurement fraud toolkit.

Procurement cycle	Red Flags	Controls
Pre Tender - Collusion among contractors	Evidence or suggestion of a close relationship between bidding organisations	Joined up working across the organisation/different teams.
	Limited competition in the sector – Increases the chances that suppliers can manipulate contract value	Training on procurement processes and potential fraud.
	Same contractors bid for each job – may indicate price fixing	Centralised contracts register that is regularly reviewed.
	Certain contractors don't bid (unexpected) – may be a pre-agreement between contractors	Strong controls around sub-contracting
	Suspiciously high bids or bids from fake companies to give the appearance of competition	Due diligence to establish legitimacy of suppliers/bids
	Pattern to winning/losing contracts	
Collusion amongst bidders distorts true competition and reduces public confidence in the procurement process achieving value for money.		
Pre Tender - Collusion between procurer and bidder	Officer overseeing the award of contract has a relationship with successful contractor – conflict of interest	Maintaining and monitoring Register of Interests and Gifts & Hospitality register.
	Contractor provides gifts or rewards – Bribery	Improving the culture of compliance with financial regulations/OJEU requirements/procurement processes
	Contract specification changes after award of contract – could indicate collusion and malpractice against losing bidders	Training on procurement fraud and the Bribery Act

	<p>One officer specifically deals with a particular supplier - collusion</p> <p>Supplier wins multiple bids – insider information</p> <p>Contract awarded to unknown/surprising contractor – bid manipulation</p> <p>Favouring getting procurement done quickly over following due process – bid manipulation/corruption</p>	<p>Segregation of duties/rotation of employees</p> <p>Due diligence to establish legitimacy of suppliers/bids</p>
Procurement - pre-tender	<p>Lack of needs assessment and lack of evidence around decision making process – could be collusion</p> <p>Altering timing or need – to suit one specific supplier</p> <p>Multiple procurement for same goods/services – splitting contracts to circumvent approval and tender thresholds</p> <p>Narrow or vague tenders – to suit one supplier</p> <p>Abuse of waivers – to circumvent approval process</p> <p>Lack of due diligence on suppliers – financial risk</p>	<p>Training on procurement processes</p> <p>Regular audit and reviews of paperwork</p> <p>Spend analysis to identify large/above approval threshold spends when aggregated.</p> <p>Tender evaluation framework agreed at planning stage</p>
Tendering/Bid evaluation - Bid manipulation	<p>Limiting the reach/scope or duration of adverts for tenders – procurer may have a bidder in mind and wants to restrict the number of bidders; Altering bids/timetables; Accepting late bids; Limited bids; Fictitious companies; Sharing</p>	<p>Training on fraud awareness and the procurement process</p> <p>Audit on bid security and sensitive tender documentation</p> <p>Audit on patterns of contract award</p>

	<p>info; Manipulating scoring; Falsified documents; High/ similar prices; Same suppliers and patterns; Prices close to estimates</p>	
	Altering bids or timetables- to favour one bidder	
	Limited number of bids/contractors do not bid – collusion between bidders	
	Providing different information to different bidders – unfair advantage to one	
	Manipulation of bid scoring and evaluation – procurement fraud	
	Contractor providing false documentation – fraud	
	Collusion between bidders to 'share' the awards on a rota.	
Post-Tender - Contract Management	No assessments of work prior to invoice payment – inadequate valuation & inspection of work/deliverables	Effective contract management & monitoring Internal audit review of contracts including checking goods/services received.
	Contract variations, sub- standard delivery	Proactive monitoring of spend.
	Duplicate invoicing or vague and non-specific invoicing – fraudulent charging	Appropriate authorisation limits Segregation of duties
	Contractor performing below expectations - underperformance not acted on	Effective budget monitoring Contract variations approved at an appropriate level
Inferior product substitution/services not delivered to standard results in poor value money and risk to the Council.		

Contract Management - Payments	Same person raises and approves payments – conflict of interest	Promoting an open culture and an effective Whistleblowing policy
	Increasing amounts paid in expenses/large payments to an individual – abuse of system	Segregation of duties and duplicate payment controls
	Transactions at odd times/odd frequencies/unusual amounts/unexpected recipients. Discrepancies in accounting records/unexplained items	Maintaining and monitoring Register of Interests and Gifts & Hospitality register. Internal review of controls and processes A message of zero tolerance of fraud
	Internal controls that are not enforced/or are bypassed	
	VAT paid on invoices without VAT number	
	Missing documents/records not complete	
	Employees unwilling to share duties/take leave or who work long hours on their own	
	Large number of small payments to one supplier	
Some areas of public sector business are at risk of penetration by Serious and Organised Crime Groups – risk of money laundering and fraud.		
Contract management - Processes	One employee controls process – no segregation of duties	Effective audits Effective Reconciliation processes
	Little or no supervision	Segregation of duties
	Deliberate manipulation of accounting records/missing files	Due diligence by the procurement team

	Lack of verification or validation checks within the process	
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 <p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>	<p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>
<p>Name and date of Committee</p>	<p>OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE- 3 JUNE 2026</p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p>INVESTMENT PROPERTY REVIEW AND OUTTURN 2025/26</p>
<p>Wards affected</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Accountable member</p>	<p>Alaric Smith, Executive Member for Finance Email: alaric.smith@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Accountable officer</p>	<p>Madhu Richards, Director of Finance Email: democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Report author</p>	<p>Jasmine McWilliams, Head of Assets Email: democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Summary/Purpose</p>	<p>To inform the Committee of the performance of the Council's investment property portfolio for 2025/26.</p>
<p>Annexes</p>	<p>Exempt Annex A – Outturn Report 2025/2026</p>
<p>Recommendation(s)</p>	<p>That the report be noted</p>
<p>Corporate priorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Together for West Oxfordshire
<p>Key Decision</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Exempt</p>	<p>Exempt Annex A only</p>
<p>Consultees/ Consultation</p>	<p>Executive Member for Finance, Director of Finance, Head of Finance</p>

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report provides details of the Council's investment property portfolio and its performance for the year 2025/2026.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. As a result of a strategic decision taken a number of years ago, the Council holds a portfolio of property assets to help support the revenue budget via investment income. This decision was taken by the Council, having identified an over reliance on cash-based investments in its reserves. These cash-based investments are susceptible to the movements of interest rates and therefore a major risk at times of falling interest rates.
- 2.2. In addition, it was identified that the approach of maintaining cash-based investments risked the value of the capital deposited being diminished over time due to the effects of inflation.
- 2.3. Therefore, a strategy was adopted and annually reviewed to allow the Council to take advantage of strategic and opportunistic investments in property that met the broad principles of improving the balance of the investment portfolio. This report seeks to update the Committee on the performance of this portfolio.

3. GENERAL PROPERTY UPDATE

- 3.1. In September 2011, the Committee took a strategic view that the investment strategy, with continuing record low levels of interest rates, should adopt a target ratio of commercial property to finance assets of 65% property and 35% cash.
- 3.2. The total investment property portfolio (excluding strategic/regeneration freehold sites Woolgate, Mill Walk and Marriotts Walk etc) now stands at £42.44m (£53.49m 1 April 25). The sale of a large investment property (Knights Court) was completed in 2025/26 which has contributed to the reduced portfolio valuation.

The long-term cash portfolio at 31/3/26 stood at £21.33m (excluding short term cashflow funds of £11.9m) and therefore the ratio of long-term property assets to overall long-term assets stood at 67%, slightly above the target set. The details are shown below:-

Asset Class	Amount (£m)
Property	42.44
Pooled Funds	11.45
REIT (Housing)	0.68
Third Party Loans (Housing and Solar)	9.2
Total	63.77

- 3.3. In addition to setting out the running yield on the properties (rent v total cost of acquisition), this report also tries to give a view on the overall return on property by taking

account of any appreciation or diminution in asset values. This also has the effect of accounting for losses incurred as acquisition costs are deleted from valuations.

- 3.4. The table at Annex A shows that the property values are, in some cases, lower than the purchase price. The principal reasons for this are the acquisition costs associated with such investments and the natural diminishing length of lease term that has an impact on asset values for investment purposes. Typical acquisition costs are 5% to cover stamp duty, fees and survey costs. On the portfolio overall, this has now been offset by capital appreciation.
- 3.5. It must be stressed that these gains (and losses) remain unrealised and are based on RICS Red Book valuations calculated to comply with CIPFA requirements for asset valuation. Annex A identifies the overall return on property assets taking account of the issues set out in 3.4 above.
- 3.6. As mentioned above, the principal reason for the move into commercial property was to protect the Councils income stream from the volatility of interest rates rather than capital appreciation, although appreciation remains a longer-term possibility. The financial implications section gives a commentary on the success in respect of the income stream relative to cash
- 3.7. The investment properties are subject to differing lengths of lease terms. The industrial estate at Swain Court has been excluded as it is not a capital asset of the Council (it is held under a head leases). Also excluded is Greystones Industrial Estate which is currently being reviewed and other buildings which are in part leased by Ubico for operational purposes, and garages which are viewed as de-minimus. Marriotts Walk being held primarily for regeneration purposes is also excluded.
- 3.8. Given the high proportion of long-term ground rents within the portfolio (Carterton, Woolgate and Mill Walk) the average unexpired lease term is longer when compared to many portfolios, at around 20 years, and this provides further assurance to the Council of a relatively stable long-term return. Of course, this can mask a range of leases expiring in a short time period and the table below shows the rental income attributable to leases by reference to expiry dates and consequent risk to revenue streams.

Lease Expiry @ 31/03/2026	Rental Income @ 31/03/2026
Within a year /vacant	£650,305
1 year – 2 years	£482,579
2 year – 5 years	£462,063
5 years – 10 years	£830,224
10+ years	£264,225

NB above figures do not include Marriotts Walk leases

3.9. A major focus over the coming year is to continue to make progress on leases in the within 1 year category and 1-2 year category. Given the potential risk of voids in this scenario the council has made provision within its reserves for such risk. Attached at Annex A is the outturn report including the council's investment properties

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 This report is seeking to give the committee additional information by detailing yield not just compared to purchase price (running yield), but also the overall return on property by taking into account unrealised capital gains and losses (overall yield).

4.2 The running yield on the commercial property portfolio (excluding Marriotts Walk being a regeneration property and Woolgate and Mill Walk which were not purchased as part of the property strategy and are ground rents only) is currently around 6.79%. (8.5% on original cost).

4.3 The uplift in running yield being achieved on the commercial property compared to cash is around 3.31% being the difference in the running yield (6.79%) and the return in long dated cash in pooled funds, housing associations and third parties (3.48%). UK 10 year gilts currently attract a return of 4.68% and are a useful benchmark when comparing to long term cash.

4.4 In financial terms this 3.31% uplift in performance from property is worth around £1.53m per annum (£42.44m @ 3.31%). To date, the revised strategy has saved the Council more than £20m on a cumulative basis compared to cash.

4.5 Calculation of the overall return is quite a complex exercise which is summarised at Annex A. From this summary it can be noted that the annual overall return on property since acquisition, taking account of losses due to transaction (acquisition) fees and notional unrealised valuation losses and gains, is around 8.5% - some 1.71% over the running yield.

4.6 Some individual properties remain underperforming on an overall return basis - this is in the main part because the acquisition costs have been amortised (written down) over a shorter period of time than the older properties.

4.7 The overall return on property can be summarised as:-

(A)Overall Acquisition Price (incl costs)	£37.43m
(B)Latest Valuation	£42.44m
(C)Unrealised valuation gain (B-A)	£ 5.01m
(D)Overall Rental Stream (multi-year)	£ 41.28m
(E) Total Return (D+C)	£ 46.29m
(F) Rental Yield (D/A)	110%
(G)Unrealised Capital Gain (C/A)	13.3%
(H)Overall Yield (E/A)	124%
(I)Annualised Time Weighted Yield*	14.6%

* This takes account of both the relative size of the property and the length of time held in addition to the yield on the property.

The above analysis shows that despite acquisition costs the portfolio has now achieved an unrealised valuation gain and this, together with the rental performance of the portfolio, has led to, in overall terms, an extremely positive performance.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications as a result of this report.

6. RISK ASSESSMENT

6.1 Holding any asset has an element of risk associated with that holding. Whilst property has the security of 'bricks and mortar' compared to financial assets, it does come with risks if that asset is not occupied or if the occupation market suffers due to difficult market conditions.

6.2 The purpose of this annual report is to enable a regular review of the asset holding to enable a view to be taken on the current risks associated with the holding.

6.3 The council has mitigated the risk of its property holding by having a broad portfolio of assets covering a range of sectors including Industrial, Office, Retail and Leisure. It also has a mix of ground rents and full occupational leases which underpin the returns by providing longer term stability.

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT

7.1 There are no equalities impacts as a result of this report.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 None

(END)

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee comments on the on the National Planning Policy Framework: Proposed reforms and other changes to the planning system.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Comment	Head of Planning response
1. Need to make representations about Cotswold Railway in the context of heritage and conservation.	Heritage policies – default would in future be the NPPF rather than the Local Plan. Local Plan policies on heritage will need to be more locally nuanced. The proposed approach towards high density development near railway stations are considered too permissive, and we are making representations about sensitivities.
2. Need to make a strong case on housing affordability.	Concern shared, covered in Annex with particular reference to social rented housing.
3. Additional chapters on energy, water and flood risk welcome. No need to put weight on consulting with statutory consultees beyond statutory deadlines is a concern.	Concern shared, covered in Annex.
4. Renewable energy – large solar farms, weaker controls and lack of strategic oversight.	Concern that a more permissive approach could override new Local Plan policies, covered in Annex.
5. Mineral development and waste – lots of worry about mineral development and associated traffic on inadequate road networks.	Concerns noted but this is primarily a matter for the Mineral Planning Authority – Oxfordshire County Council.
6. Concerned about loss of local voice. Need ability locally to object to infrastructure failures. Do we need to comment about this?	Principles around making representations won't change. Reduced supporting information is a concern and this is covered in the draft response.
7. Effect of proposals on the Council's statutory duties?	Some things will be elevated to higher (Thames Valley) level of plan making. Doesn't take away the need to produce a local plan but will make it more locally specific.
8. What does the Ministerial Statement being torn up mean for Salt Cross?	Statement will be rescinded. Other than for water and accessibility councils won't be able to set local standards e.g. for energy efficiency. Developers will push back if the Council is out

	of alignment with the NPPF. Agreed that the response to Question 194a on this issue should be clarified with reference to the previous Court of Appeal decision on the Ministerial Statement.
9. Covering letter bullet pointing main concerns?	We will try to do this on an Oxfordshire-wide basis.
10. The Government's standard method for calculating housing growth needs to be looked at due to the scale of building being huge. Can we say that?	This consultation is not specifically on that theme although the suggested draft response to Question 48a does express concern about the further upward pressure on housing targets. This can be further strengthened and augmented.
11. Could the buffer be 20% rather than 10%?	The 20% buffer mentioned relates to the issue of 5 year housing land supply as opposed to overall 10% buffer to the housing requirement which has been suggested through consultation on the emerging local plan to date.
12. Need to ensure that affordable housing will be delivered e.g. rural exception sites, with reference to registered providers.	Good point and can further emphasise this point in the suggested draft response.
13. Viability standards and profit margin of 20% - too high?	The consultation refers to a 20% profit on market housing but a blended average of 17.5% including affordable housing. This is a fairly standard industry assumption. Hard pushed to make the case that that's unreasonable.
14. Active travel - can cycle infrastructure be included in the NPPF, specifically with reference to LTNI/20 for cycle path infrastructure?	Will include suggestion that this is included as a standard requirement of development.
15. Should CIL and S106 be streamlined?	There is no suggestion of combining, replacing or streamlining S106/CIL in this current consultation.
16. Do you believe that this will be read by government, or will they just tell us what's happening?	It is important for the Council to respond to the consultation, not least because of the potential concerns around the delivery of net zero carbon homes. A large number of organisations are submitting strong objections and volume and consistency of responses may influence outcomes.

17. How do we encourage infrastructure first?	Sub-regional plan (Spatial Development Strategy) will have to address infrastructure issues at a strategic, sub-regional level including where funding will come from. Local Plan will cover more local needs, phasing and how it will be delivered for specific sites/locations. Infrastructure first is very challenging, need to have it phased as early as possible or forward-funded. Viability and cashflow issues don't support infrastructure-first. The Council is working hard on ensuring adequate sewage treatment capacity e.g. Grampian conditions.
18. Social housing 50% on large sites and half of that social rent? Why don't we build what we need?	Social rent is the only truly affordable tenure and this is reflected in the consultation response which suggests that where on-site affordable housing is provided, 50% of provision should take the form of social rented housing.
19. CNL having the highest status of protection? Add something about CNL in the context of railways.	There is no direct weakening of the protection currently afforded to the CNL but it is agreed that the sensitivity of the CNL could be more strongly highlighted in the context of the proposed approach towards new development near railway stations.
20. Need to list more than just social housing from developer contributions. Can we strengthen and list categories e.g. transport, education, health, nature recovery.	Agreed that it would be sensible for Policy PM12 to refer to other forms of infrastructure provision. The draft response can be amended to suggest this with specific examples given e.g. nature recovery, waste water etc.
21. Produce a covering letter to be submitted with the Council's response to the consultation and share the letter with public and parishes to show the work the Council is doing on their behalf.	The Council's communications team are working on a media release so that all stakeholders including Town and Parish Councils are aware of the position being taken by the District Council on these key matters.

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WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME
1 JUNE 2026 – 30 SEPTEMBER 2026

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
Mental Health Working Group	Tbd.	Tbd.	Tbd.	Tbd.
Tbd.	Tbd.	Tbd.	Tbd.	Tbd.
Tbd.	Tbd.	Tbd.	Tbd.	Tbd.

Item	Executive Member	Lead Officer	Report commissioned by
3 June 2026			
New crowdfunding platform programme	Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities - Cllr Sandra Coleman	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk	Executive
Procurement and Contract Management Strategy	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Ciaran Okane, Senior Business Partner – Procurement Ciaran.Okane@publicagroup.uk	Executive
2025/26 Quarterly Finance Review Q4	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk	Executive
2025/26 Quarterly Service Review Q4	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Gemma Moreing, Business Information and Performance Lead gemma.moreing@publicagroup.uk	Executive
Investment Property Portfolio Annual Report 2025/26	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Madhu Richards, Director of Finance madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
8 July 2026			
Leisure Update	Executive Member for Arts,	Rachel Biles, Leisure Strategy	Overview and Scrutiny

	Culture and Sports - Cllr Tim Sumner	Manager rachel.biles@westoxon.gov.uk	Committee
Approval of Regulation 19 Draft Submission Local Plan for Public Consultation	Executive Member for Planning and Infrastructure - Cllr Liz Leffman	Andrew Thomson, Planning Policy Manager Andrew.Thomson@westoxon.gov.uk	Executive Council
2 September 2026			
2026/27 Quarterly Finance Review Q1	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk	Executive
2026/27 Quarterly Service Review Q1	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Gemma Moreing, Business Information and Performance Lead gemma.moreing@publicagroup.uk	Executive
Youth Development Work	Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities - Cllr Sandra Coleman	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Woodford Way Update	Councillor Geoff Saul, Executive Member for Housing and Community Safety	Phil Martin, Director of Place phil.martin@westoxon.gov.uk	Executive
14 October 2026			

Local Government Reorganisation Update	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Phil Martin, Director of Place phil.martin@westoxon.gov.uk	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
4 November 2026			
Community Grants - determination of 3 year SLA final awards	Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities - Cllr Sandra Coleman	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk	Executive
2 December 2026			
2026/27 Quarterly Finance Review Q2	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk	Executive
2026/27 Quarterly Service Review Q2	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Gemma Moreing, Business Information and Performance Lead gemma.moreing@publicagroup.uk	Executive
Local Plan Annual Monitoring 2025/26	Executive Member for Planning and Infrastructure - Cllr Liz Leffman	Andrew Thomson, Planning Policy Manager Andrew.Thomson@westoxon.gov.uk	Executive
6 January 2027			
Council Tax Support 2027/28	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Mandy Fathers, Business Manager - Environmental, Welfare &	Executive

		Revenue Service mandy.fathers@publicagroup.uk	Council
3 February 2027			
Nature Recovery Plan Progress Update	Executive Member for Climate Action and Nature Recovery - Cllr Andrew Prosser	Melanie Dodd, Senior Biodiversity Officer melanie.dodd@westoxon.gov.uk	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Budget 2027/28 and Medium Term Financial Strategy	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk	Executive Council
3 March 2027			
2026/27 Quarterly Service Review Q3	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Gemma Moreing, Business Information and Performance Lead gemma.moreing@publicagroup.uk	Executive
2026/27 Quarterly Finance Review Q3	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk	Executive
Community Safety Partnership Annual Update	Councillor Rachel Crouch, Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities; Mental Health Champion	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk	Overview and Scrutiny Committee

14 April 2027

To be Scheduled

Private Estate Management in New Developments	Executive Member for Planning and Infrastructure - Cllr Liz Leffman	Chris Hargraves, Head of Planning chris.hargraves@westoxon.gov.uk	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Recycling	Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment.	Si Pocock-Cluley, Environmental Services and Waste Transformation Lead si.pocock-cluley@westoxon.gov.uk	Overview and Scrutiny Committee



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 JUNE 2026 – 30 SEPTEMBER 2026

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 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 Tel: 01993 861000.

West Oxfordshire District Council: Executive Members 2026/27

Name of Councillor	Title and Areas of Responsibility
Andy Graham (Leader)	Leader of the Council: Overview of all Executive Portfolio; Policy Framework; Council Plan; Governance; Legal and Communications; Local Government Reorganisation (Strategy, Governance, Transition Planning, Partnership Working, Service delivery, Locality Model); Devolution; Strategic Partnerships; Oxfordshire Joint Leaders; Thames Valley; Publica & Ubico; LGA, LCN & SE Councils; Emergency Planning
Duncan Enright Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Economic Development	Economic Development: Economic and Business Development, including visitor economy, farming and town centres; Inward investment for growth in emerging industries; Business grants – strategic overview; Training skills and apprenticeships, delivery partnerships; Witney High Street; Mullin Museum
Alaric Smith Executive Member for Finance	Finance: Budget setting; Council Tax and Benefits; Asset and Investment Management; Performance and Financial Management; Counter Fraud; Internal and External Audit; Health and Safety
Liz Leffman Executive Member for Planning and Infrastructure	Planning and Infrastructure: Local Plan; Strategic Planning; Development Management – strategic overview; Landscape Management; Infrastructure requirements and delivery – planning overview; Section 106 & CIL requirements and overview; Carterton Area Strategy; Salt Cross Garden Village Delivery.
Tim Sumner Executive Member for Arts, Culture and Sports	Arts, Culture and Sports: Leisure provision including swimming pools, including maintenance and investment plans; Leisure contract renewal; Sports hub provision in strategic areas of the district for developed and emerging sports; Playing Pitch Strategy & Provision; Developing in partnership – play areas (indoor and outdoor), parks, open spaces & footpaths, walking & fitness initiatives; Arts & cultural provision and development in theatre, music, arts, dance and arts/crafts; Conservation and Historical Environment; Promotion of investment grants support through platform partnership funding
Sandra Coleman Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities	Stronger, Healthy Communities: Community and public health; Community provision of community space/hubs with town & parish partnerships; Promotion of investment grants support through platform partnership funding; Assets of community value – strategic overview; Refugee Resettlement Programme; Young people; Equality and diversity; Voluntary sector engagement; Safeguarding
Geoff Saul Executive Member for Housing and Community Safety	Housing and Community Safety: Housing (Homelessness, Housing allocations – strategic overview, Provision of affordable/social rented homes, Sheltered housing and emergency accommodation, Woodford Way, Weavers Fold); Community Safety (Community Safety Partnership, Crime and Disorder, Neighbourhood Policing, Scrutiny of Police and Crime Commissioner)
Alistair Wray Executive Member for Environment	Environment: Waste & recycling collection; Flood alleviation/natural flood management and sewage management; Food production and farming; Environmental Partnerships (WASP, Evenlode CP, North-East Cotswold Cluster); Street Cleaning & Grounds Maintenance; Environmental Protection and Food Safety; Air Quality; Car Parking and Toilets

Andrew Prosser
**Executive Member for
Climate Action and
Nature Recovery**

*Climate Action and Nature Recovery: Climate Action; Energy advice, Renewable Energy, EV Charging
Nature Recovery Partnerships & Plans; Landscape & Biodiversity Project Management; Partnership liaison & promotion
(local, county & regional)*

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Open or Exempt	Decision – Maker	Date of Decision	Executive Member	Lead Officer
Council 20 May 2026						
Appointment of Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer	No	Open	Council	20 May 2026	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Andrew Brown, Head of Democratic and Electoral Services andrew.brown@westoxon.gov.uk
Appointment of Members to the Council's Committees, including Substitute Members	No	Open	Council	20 May 2026	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Ana Prelici, Senior Democratic Services Officer Ana.Prelici@westoxon.gov.uk
Director of Place appointment	No	Open	Council	20 May 2026	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Cheryl Sloan, Assistant Director cheryl.sloan@publicagroup.uk
Audit and Governance Committee Annual Council Report	No	Open	Audit and Governance Committee Council	19 Mar 2026 20 May 2026	Councillor Carl Rylett, Chair of West Oxfordshire District Council	Mathew Taylor, Democratic Services Officer Mathew.Taylor@Westoxon.gov.uk
Finance Procedure Rules	No	Open	Audit and Governance Committee Council	19 Mar 2026 20 May 2026	Councillor Carl Rylett, Chair of West Oxfordshire District Council Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Madhu Richards, Director of Finance madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk Director of Finance - Madhu Richards

Strategic Partnerships Update	No	Open	Council	20 May 2026	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Mark Pritchard, Head of Communications and Corporate Strategy mark.pritchard@westoxon.gov.uk
Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel	No	Open	Council	20 May 2026	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Ana Prelici, Senior Democratic Services Officer Ana.Prelici@westoxon.gov.uk
Executive 10 June 2026						
Publica Business Plan 2026-28	No	Open	Executive	10 Jun 2026	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Frank Wilson, Group Finance Director - Publica frank.wilson@publicagroup.uk
Procurement and Contract Management Strategy	No	Open	Executive	10 Jun 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Ciaran Okane, Senior Business Partner – Procurement Ciaran.Okane@publicagroup.uk
New crowdfunding platform programme	Yes	Open	Executive	10 Jun 2026	Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities - Cllr Sandra Coleman	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk
2025/26 Quarterly Service Review Q4	No	Open	Executive	10 Jun 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Gemma Moreing, Business Information and Performance Lead gemma.moreing@publicagroup.uk
2025/26 Quarterly Finance Review Q4	No	Open	Executive	10 Jun 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk

Discretionary Rate Relief Policy	No	Open	Executive	10 Jun 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Mandy Fathers, Business Manager - Environmental, Welfare & Revenue Service mandy.fathers@publicagroup.uk
Appointments to Outside Bodies 2026-28	No	Open	Executive Council	10 Jun 2026 22 Jul 2026	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Ana Prelici, Senior Democratic Services Officer Ana.Prelici@westoxon.gov.uk
Ubico Business Plan	No	Open	Executive	10 Jun 2026	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Si Pocock-Cluley, Environmental Services and Waste Transformation Lead si.pocock-cluley@westoxon.gov.u
Executive 15 July 2026						
Approval of Regulation 19 Draft Submission Local Plan for Public Consultation	Yes	Open	Executive Council	15 Jul 2026 22 Jul 2026	Executive Member for Planning and Infrastructure - Cllr Liz Leffman	Andrew Thomson, Planning Policy Manager Andrew.Thomson@westoxon.gov.uk
Thames Valley Spatial Development Strategy (SDS)	Yes	Open	Executive	15 Jul 2026	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Phil Martin, Director of Place phil.martin@westoxon.gov.uk
Public Spaces Protection Order for Dog Fouling	Yes	Open	Executive	15 Jul 2026	Executive Member for Environment - Cllr Alistair Wray	Philip Measures, Service Leader philip.measures@publicagroup.uk
Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS)	Yes	Open	Executive	15 Jul 2026	Executive Member for Planning and Infrastructure - Cllr Liz Leffman	Kim Hudson, Principal Policy Officer kim.hudson@westoxon.gov.uk

Our House Project Funding Extension 2026-2028	Yes	Open	Executive	15 Jul 2026	Councillor Geoff Saul, Executive Member for Housing and Community Safety	Caroline Clissold, Business Manager - Housing Allocations, Homelessness and Hostels Grants caroline.clissold@publicagroup.uk
Review and approval of updated Counter Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy	No	Open	Executive	15 Jul 2026	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Emma Cathcart, Head of Service, Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit emma.cathcart@cotswold.gov.uk
Review and approval of Grant Management Policy	No	Open	Executive	15 Jul 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Emma Cathcart, Head of Service, Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit emma.cathcart@cotswold.gov.uk
Review and approval of updated Proceeds of Crime and Anti Money Laundering Policy	No	Open	Executive	15 Jul 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Emma Cathcart, Head of Service, Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit emma.cathcart@cotswold.gov.uk
Allocation of Capital Funding for Lift Replacement at Marriotts Walk	Yes	Open	Executive	15 Jul 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Jasmine McWilliams, Assets Manager jasmine.mcwilliams@publicagroup.uk
Proposal for sale of land in Witney	No	Fully exempt	Executive	15 Jul 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Jasmine McWilliams, Assets Manager jasmine.mcwilliams@publicagroup.uk
Council 22 July 2026						

Executive 9 September 2026						
Woodford Way Update	No	Open	Executive	9 Sep 2026	Councillor Geoff Saul, Executive Member for Housing and Community Safety	Phil Martin, Director of Place phil.martin@westoxon.gov.uk
2026/27 Quarterly Service Review Q1	No	Open	Executive	9 Sep 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Gemma Moreing, Business Information and Performance Lead gemma.moreing@publicagroup.uk
2026/27 Quarterly Finance Review Q1	No	Open	Executive	9 Sep 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk
Community Governance Review proposal	No	Open	Executive Council	9 Sep 2026 16 Sep 2026	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Andrew Brown, Head of Democratic and Electoral Services andrew.brown@westoxon.gov.uk
Allocation of Capital Funding for Roof Works on Investment Properties in Witney	Yes	Open	Executive	9 Sep 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Jasmine McWilliams, Assets Manager jasmine.mcwilliams@publicagroup.uk
Council 16 September 2026						
Executive 21 October 2026						
Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy for	No	Open	Executive	21 Oct 2026	Executive Member for Environment - Cllr Alistair Wray	David Rudland, Senior Environmental Protection

West Oxfordshire District						Officer David.Rudland@publicagroup.uk
Options for Property in Chipping Norton	Yes	Fully exempt	Executive	21 Oct 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Jasmine McWilliams, Assets Manager jasmine.mcwilliams@publicagroup.uk
Options for Investment Property in Carterton	Yes	Fully exempt	Executive	21 Oct 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Jasmine McWilliams, Assets Manager jasmine.mcwilliams@publicagroup.uk
Executive 11 November 2026						
Council Tax Support 2027/28	Yes	Open	Executive Council	11 Nov 2026 18 Nov 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Mandy Fathers, Business Manager - Environmental, Welfare & Revenue Service mandy.fathers@publicagroup.uk
Community Grants - determination of 3 year SLA final awards	Yes	Open	Executive	11 Nov 2026	Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities - Cllr Sandra Coleman	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk
Council 18 November 2026						
Executive 9 December 2026						
2026/27 Quarterly Service Review Q2	No	Open	Executive	9 Dec 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Gemma Moreing, Business Information and Performance Lead gemma.moreing@publicagroup.uk

2026/27 Quarterly Finance Review Q2	No	Open	Executive	9 Dec 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk
Draft Budget 2027/28 Version 1	No	Open	Executive	9 Dec 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk
Local Plan Annual Monitoring 2025/26	No	Open	Executive	9 Dec 2026	Executive Member for Planning and Infrastructure - Cllr Liz Leffman	Andrew Thomson, Planning Policy Manager Andrew.Thomson@westoxon.gov.uk
Executive 13 January 2027						
Draft Budget 2027/28 Version 2	Yes	Open	Executive	13 Jan 2027	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk
Council 20 January 2027						
Executive 10 February 2027						
Budget 2027/28 and Medium Term Financial Strategy	Yes	Open	Executive Council	10 Feb 2027 24 Feb 2027	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk
Council 24 February 2027						
Executive 10 March 2027						

2026/27 Quarterly Finance Review Q3	No	Open	Executive	10 Mar 2027	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk
2026/27 Quarterly Service Review Q3	No	Open	Executive	10 Mar 2027	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Gemma Moreing, Business Information and Performance Lead gemma.moreing@publicagroup.uk
Council 24 March 2027						
Executive 21 April 2027						
Council 19 May 2027						
Key Decision Delegated to Executive Member						
UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund	No	Open	Executive Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Economic Development - Cllr Duncan Enright	15 Nov 2023 Before 30 Sep 2026	Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Economic Development - Cllr Duncan Enright	Emma Phillips, Market Town Officer Emma.phillips@westoxon.gov.uk
Key Decisions Delegated to Officers						
Delegation on Purchase of Emergency	Yes	Fully exempt	Director of Finance -	31 Mar 2027	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Madhu Richards, Director of Finance

Accommodation			Madhu Richards			madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk
Standing Delegation: Settlement of Legal Claims	Yes	Open	Head of Legal Services - Leonie Woodward	Before 31 Mar 2027	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith, Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	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 2027	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 Mar 2027	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 Mar 2027	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Madhu Richards, Director of Finance madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk
Leisure Planned Investment Programme	Yes	Open	Executive Director of Place - Phil Martin	10 Sep 2025 Before 31 Mar 2028	Executive Member for Arts, Culture and Sports - Cllr Tim Sumner	Stuart Wilson, Leisure Contracts Lead stuart.wilson@publicagroup.uk
Public Toilet Review	Yes	Part exempt	Executive	10 Sep 2025	Executive Member for Environment - Cllr Alistair Wray	Fiona Woodhouse, Parking Projects & Contracts Officer

			Director of Finance - Madhu Richards	Before 31 Mar 2027		Fiona.Woodhouse@publicagroup.uk
Street Cleansing Vehicle Procurement	Yes	Open	Executive Director of Place - Phil Martin	11 Feb 2026 Before 31 Mar 2027	Executive Member for Environment - Cllr Alistair Wray	Si Pocock-Cluley, Environmental Services and Waste Transformation Lead si.pocock-cluley@westoxon.gov.u
Investment in Public Conveniences	Yes	Open	Executive Executive, Executive Director - Corporate Services - Claire Locke	11 Feb 2026 Before 31 Mar 2027	Executive Member for Environment - Cllr Alistair Wray, Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Claire Locke, Executive Director claire.locke@publicagroup.uk
Approach to commissioning 3 year SLA 2027 onwards	Yes	Open	Executive Director of Place - Phil Martin	11 Mar 2026 Before 31 Mar 2027	Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities - Cllr Sandra Coleman	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk
HomeseekerPlus Policy Review	Yes	Part exempt	Executive Business Manager Housing - Caroline Clissold	11 Mar 2026 Before 31 Mar 2027	Executive Member for Housing and Community Safety - Cllr Geoff Saul	Caroline Clissold, Business Manager - Housing Allocations, Homelessness and Hostels Grants caroline.clissold@publicagroup.uk Business Manager Housing - Caroline Clissold

Review of Public Members Agreement and Service Specifications	Yes	Open	Executive Chief Executive & Head of Paid Service - Giles Hughes	11 Mar 2026 Before 31 Mar 2027	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Giles Hughes, Chief Executive Officer giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk Managing Director - Frank Wilson
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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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