WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL	**WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**
Name and Date of Committee	**EXECUTIVE – 9 SEPTEMBER 2026**
Subject	**SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2026-27 QUARTER ONE**
Wards Affected	ALL
Accountable Member	Councillor Alaric Smith – Executive Member for Finance. Email: alaric.smith@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable Officer	Phil Martin – Chief Executive Officer. Email: phil.martin@westoxon.gov.uk
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Purpose	To provide details of the Council's operational performance at the end of 2026-27 Quarter One (Q1).
Annex	Annex A – Corporate Plan Action Tracker Annex B – Performance Indicator Report
Recommendation	That the Executive resolves to: 1. Note the 2026/27 Q1 service performance report.
Corporate Priorities	• 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
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Publica Directors, Business Managers, Service Managers and Service Leads.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 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.

1.2 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.

1.3 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.

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

2. COUNCIL PRIORITY REPORT

2.1 Progress on actions in the Corporate Plan for Q1 includes:

- Salt Cross Garden Village continued to progress, with an updated Planning Performance Agreement, refreshed Section 106 programme and updated outline planning application documents scheduled for Autumn 2026. West Eynsham developers remain on track to submit a Phase 1 outline planning application in late 2026 or early 2027.
- Carterton regeneration advanced, with draft strategic priorities developed and proposals for a new Place Board to coordinate future investment, town centre regeneration, green growth opportunities and skills development.
- Town centre improvements continued across the district, including progression of Witney wayfinding proposals, enhancements to Charter Markets, public realm improvements and the commencement of the Witney High Street Improvement Scheme in May 2026.
- Marriotts Walk maintained strong occupancy levels, with only one remaining vacant unit and public realm improvement works progressing to procurement stage.
- The Windrush Leisure Centre decarbonisation project neared completion, awaiting permanent power connection and final commissioning. Wider work continued across renewable energy, electric vehicle infrastructure, fleet decarbonisation and climate action priorities.
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund programmes continued to deliver community and economic benefits, with funding extended to September 2026.

- The new Local Plan reached a significant milestone, with the Regulation 19 Draft Local Plan published ahead of public consultation.
- Delivery of the Nature Recovery Plan 2024–2030 progressed, with new nature recovery funding supporting ecological land management improvements and biodiversity enhancement projects across the district.

2.2 An overview of progress against all actions in the Corporate Plan is attached at Annex A.

3. SERVICE PERFORMANCE

3.1 The Council performed strongly across many key services in Q1 2026/27. Non-Domestic Rates collection exceeded target, Council Tax remained close to target, customer satisfaction stayed high across telephone and face-to-face channels, and Planning income performed well above target.

3.2 Total Planning income reached £605,021 against a quarterly target of £332,543, while pre-application income reached £25,798 against a target of £15,043. Revenues and Benefits performance also improved, with Council Tax Support new claims, Council Tax Support change events and Housing Benefit change of circumstances all within target. Housing Benefit overpayment due to local authority error or administrative delay reduced to 0.17%, below the 0.35% target.

3.3 Leisure performance was also positive, with visits exceeding target at 214,820 against 205,000 and gym memberships meeting target at 5,654 against 5,650.

3.4 A small number of services remained below target. Customer call waiting times were slightly above target at 123 seconds against 120 seconds, Land Charges performance was significantly below target at 10.47% against 90%, and affordable housing delivery was below the quarterly target.

3.5 Overall, Q1 shows continued strong delivery across priority services, with targeted improvement activity in place where performance remains below expectations.

3.6 Service performance above target:

- Percentage of Non-Domestic Rates collected (37.08% against a target of 33%)
- Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims (13 days against a target of 20 days)
- Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events (4 days against a target of 9 days)
- Processing times for Housing Benefit Change of Circumstances (4 days against a target of 9 days)
- Percentage of Housing Benefit overpayment due to LA error/admin delay (0.17% against a target of 0.35%)
- Customer Satisfaction (100% against a target of 90%)
- Percentage of FOI requests answered within 20 days (94% against a target of 90%)
- Building Control Satisfaction (92% against a target of 90%)
- Percentage of major planning applications determined within agreed timescales (100% against a target of 70%). All 7 were determined within target.

- Percentage of minor planning applications determined within agreed timescales (99% against a target of 65%). Of the 81 applications determined, 80 were within agreed timescales.
- Percentage of other planning applications determined within agreed timescales (97% against a target of 80%). Of the 227 applications determined, 220 were within agreed timescales.
- Total Planning Income (£605,021 against a target of £332,543)
- Pre-Application Planning Income (£25,798 against a target of £15,043)
- Percentage of Planning Appeals Allowed (0% against a target of 30%)
- Percentage of high-risk food premises inspected within target timescales (100% against a target of 95%)
- Percentage of high-risk notifications risk assessed within one working day (100% against target of 90%)
- Leisure visits (214,820 against a target of 205,000)
- Snapshot number of gym memberships (5,654 against a target of 5,650)

3.7 Some Service Performance below target includes:

Percentage of Council Tax Collected (32.81% against a target of 33%)

The Council recorded a slight variance of 0.23% compared to the same period last year.

A refreshed Direct Debit campaign is planned to boost uptake, aimed at strengthening collection in future years. Operationally, recovery work is fully up to date, and processing backlogs remain manageable at around five working days for Council Tax.

Customer Call Handling – Average Waiting Time (123 seconds against a target of 120 seconds)

Average call waiting times increased in Q1, with sickness, leavers and new starters contributing to higher wait times. Three additional starters are expected in August, which should support recovery once training is completed.

Percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days (10.47% against a target of 90%)

Land Charges performance remained below target, reflecting a combination of resource-intensive processes, products and staffing challenges. An increase in workload increased average turnaround time from 10 days in Q4 to 16 days this quarter. Increased average processing times and record-high numbers of partial searches particularly affected performance at West.

The service has developed a strategic recovery plan focused on initial access, triage and processing, products, and fees and charges, with new ways of working being developed over the summer and implementation planned for autumn. This plan is being monitored by the Publica Operational Forum.

Number of affordable homes delivered (6 against a target of 69)

Affordable housing delivery was below the Q1 target, with six affordable rent homes completed at Park View Woodstock. The lower figure reflects several sites completing in the previous quarter, resulting in a downturn at the start of the new year. Further completions are anticipated at Hill Rise Woodstock, Banbury Road Chipping Norton, Woodstock Road Charlbury, Park View Woodstock and East Carterton.

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

3.8 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. DELTA DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS SCORECARD

4.1 The DELTA Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) Scorecard provides an annual overview of the Council's performance in delivering Disabled Facilities Grants. It summarises key measures such as the number of completed adaptations, who receives support and the time taken to progress cases from application through to completion. Developed by Foundations using statutory DELTA returns submitted by each local authority, the scorecard offers a balanced and accessible assessment of service performance, highlighting areas of strong delivery as well as emerging pressures. DELTA is the primary online platform used by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) for collecting statistical data and grant information, providing a single, centralised system for submissions.

4.2 In 2024–25, West Oxfordshire performed strongly against national comparators, ranking within the top 7.6% of local authorities for delivery times. This reflects effective case-flow management and a sustained focus on timely outcomes for residents with mobility or independence needs.

4.3 For full context, the current and previous years' DELTA DFG Scorecards should be reviewed together, as they provide a clear picture of performance trends and the impact of improvement activity over time.

5. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5.1 This report will be reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 2 September 2026. The draft minutes of that meeting will be circulated to all Members and any recommendations from the Committee will be reported to the 9 September 2026 Executive meeting.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct financial implications from this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 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.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT

8.1 Contained in this report.

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT

9.1 None

10. SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

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

11 BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 None

(END)