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Meeting	CABINET
Time/Day/Date	5.00 pm on Tuesday, 25 February 2025
Location	Abbey Room, Stenson House, London Road, Coalville, LE67 3FN
Officer to contact	Democratic Services (01530 454512)

AGENDA

Item	Pages
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	
Under the Code of Conduct members are reminded that in declaring interests you should make clear the nature of that interest and whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest, registerable interest or other interest.	
3. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION	
4. MINUTES	
To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2025	3 - 8
5. UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND 2025/26 AWARD	
The report of the Strategic Director of Place Presented by the Business and Regeneration Portfolio Holder	9 - 16
6. PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT	
The report of the Chief Executive Presented by the Infrastructure Portfolio Holder	17 - 48

7. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The officers consider that the press and public should be excluded during consideration of the following items in accordance with Section 100(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 as publicity would be likely to result in disclosure of exempt or confidential information. Members are reminded that they must have regard to the public interest test and must consider, for each item, whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption from disclosure outweighs the public interest in making the item available.

8. AWARD OF CONTRACTS

The report of the Strategic Director of Resources
Presented by the Corporate Portfolio Holder

49 - 52

Circulation:

Councillor R Blunt (Chair)
Councillor M B Wyatt (Deputy Chair)
Councillor T Gillard
Councillor K Merrie MBE
Councillor N J Rushton
Councillor A C Saffell
Councillor A C Woodman

MINUTES of a meeting of the CABINET held in the Abbey Room, Stenson House, London Road, Coalville, LE67 3FN on TUESDAY, 28 JANUARY 2025

Present: Councillor R Blunt (Chair)

Councillors M B Wyatt, T Gillard, K Merrie MBE, N J Rushton, A C Saffell and A C Woodman

In Attendance: Councillors J Legrys and P Moulton

Officers: Mrs A Thomas, Mr J Arnold, Mr A Barton, Mr P Stone, Mrs A Crouch, Ms K Hiller, Mr T Devonshire and Ms E Lant

96. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies received.

97. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no interests declared.

98. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

There were no questions received.

99. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2025 were considered.

It was moved by Councillor T Saffell, seconded by Councillor K Merrie, and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2025 be confirmed as an accurate record of proceedings.

100. COUNCIL TAX BASE 2025/26

The Corporate Portfolio Holder thanked the Infrastructure Portfolio Holder and the Chair for assisting with his portfolio whilst he had been ill. He also advised that the Strategic Director of Resources would be presenting the reports in his portfolio for the meeting.

The Strategic Director of Resources presented the report.

It was moved by Councillor N Rushton, seconded by Councillor K Merrie, and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The calculation of the Council Tax Base for each parish and special expense area for the Financial Year 2025/2026 be approved, and it be recommended to Council for adoption at its meeting on 20 February 2025.
2. In accordance with the Local Authorities (calculation of council tax base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by North West Leicestershire District Council for the financial year 2025/26 shall be 37,532, be noted.
3. Authority be delegated to the S151 Officer to submit the calculations on non-domestic rating income and other amounts required by Government by the 31 January 2025 for the forthcoming financial year.

Reason for decision: Statutory requirement to facilitate the setting of Council Tax for the forthcoming year.

101. ROBUSTNESS OF BUDGET ESTIMATES AND ADEQUACY OF RESERVES

The Strategic Director of Resources presented the report.

Members noted the various pressures on the current budget and the medium-term risks the authority faced when trying to maintain financial sustainability, and they commended the work undertaken by the Finance Team to manage these challenges.

An error was identified in the recommendations, the Section 151 Officer's advice was set out in section 7 of the report and not the appendix.

It was moved by Councillor N Rushton, seconded by Councillor K Merrie, and, subject to the amendment discussed above,

RESOLVED THAT:

The S151 Officer's advice set out in section 7 of the report, be noted and the content of this report be carefully considered as part of proposing to Council the General Fund Budget report 2025/26, Housing Revenue Account Budget 2025/26 report and the Capital Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy 2025/26.

Reason for decision: To ensure the Council meets its statutory requirements when considering its budget.
Required as part of the budget setting process for 2025/26 to ensure compliance with the Budget Framework as set out in the Council's Constitution.

102. CAPITAL STRATEGY, TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS - 2025/26

The Strategic Director of Resources presented the report.

The Corporate Portfolio Holder noted the pressures caused by the use of agency staff and pay awards in 2024/25, and that these had been mitigated by Council's Business Rates Reserve.

It was moved by Councillor N Rushton, seconded by Councillor K Merrie, and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The attached Council report (appendix A) be endorsed and recommended to Council for approval at its meeting on 20 February 2025.
2. Authority be delegated to the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Corporate Portfolio Holder to make amendments to the Council report prior to consideration at Council on 20 February 2025.

Reason for decision: To meet the requirements of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Government

103. GENERAL FUND BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX - 2025/26

The Strategic Director of Resources presented the report.

The Chair asked about the allocated budget for changes to the food waste collection service. The Strategic Director of Resources advised that the predicted figure was as accurate as it could be, but acknowledged the risk, which was consequently accounted for in the contingency budget.

It was moved by Councillor N Rushton, seconded by Councillor K Merrie, and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The attached Council report (appendix A) be endorsed and recommended to Council for approval at its meeting on 20 February 2025.
2. The fees and charges as set out in Appendix 3 of Appendix A be approved.
3. The contribution to a contingency budget as detailed in the General Fund budget summary 2025/26 to 2029/30 (appendix A, appendix 1) be approved, and responsibility be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Director of Resources (Section 151 Officer) and the relevant Portfolio Holder to spend.
4. Authority be delegated to the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Corporate Portfolio Holder to make amendments to the Council report prior to consideration at Council on 20 February 2025.

Reason for decision: required as part of the budget setting process for 2025/26 to ensure compliance with the Budget Framework as set out in the Council's Constitution.

104. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUDGET AND RENTS 2025/26

The Housing, Property and Customer Services Portfolio Holder presented the report.

The Chair welcomed the recent adjustments to the Right to Buy Policy brought in by central Government.

It was moved by Councillor A Woodman, seconded by Councillor T Gillard, and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The attached Council report (appendix A) be endorsed and recommended to Council for approval at its meeting on 20 February 2025.
2. The fees and charges as set out in Appendix 3 of Appendix A be approved.
3. Authority be delegated to the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Corporate Portfolio Holder to make amendments to the Council report prior to consideration at Council on 20 February 2025.

Reason for decision: Required as part of the budget setting process for 2025/26.

105. DATA CENTRE, WIDE AREA NETWORK AND CLOUD INFRASTRUCTURE CONTRACT RENEWAL

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report.

Several Members welcomed the savings which would be made, and commended the officers for the work involved.

It was moved by Councillor N Rushton, seconded by Councillor K Merrie, and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The direct award of a contract for data centre, wide areas network and cloud services to 6dg for the total contract value of £2,081,772 for a term of seven years be approved.
2. Authority be delegated to the Strategic Director of Resources with responsibility for ICT, in consultation with the Corporate Portfolio Holder, to finalise and agree the final draft of the contract.

Reason for decision: The current contract for data centre, wide area network and cloud infrastructure services, comes to an end on the 31 August 2025. The award of a new contract is necessary to maintain the Council's IT infrastructure, network, backup, systems and applications. The level of expenditure on this contract exceeds the authority threshold in the scheme of delegation and hence requires Cabinet approval.

106. MOIRA FURNACE – CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Housing, Property and Customer Services Portfolio Holder presented the report.

The Chair said that the Moira Furnace was an important building and it was important that the Council did not let it deteriorate.

It was moved by Councillor A Woodman, seconded by Councillor T Gillard, and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The decision to proceed with repair works to Moira Furnace at a contract value of £490,000 be approved.
2. An additional £160,000 be allocated from the Business Rates Reserve to meet the tendered cost of the works, which will be reflected in the Development Programme of the Capital Programme.
3. Authority be delegated to the Strategic Director for Place in consultation with the Business and Regeneration Portfolio Holder to:
 - A) Agree the terms of the construction contract within the revised budget.
 - B) Complete such other agreements as shall be necessary to implement the project, within the approved budget

Reason for decision: Decisions to award contracts of the value set out in this report are a matter for Cabinet. Decisions to allocate funding from the Business Rates Reserve at the scale requested in this report are a matter for Cabinet.

107. MINUTES OF THE COALVILLE SPECIAL EXPENSES WORKING PARTY

The Business and Regeneration Portfolio Holder presented the report.

Members welcomed the sensible proposal to address health and safety issue at the playgrounds.

It was moved by Councillor T Gillard, seconded by Councillor M Wyatt, and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The minutes of the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party at Appendix 1 be noted.
2. The recommendation of the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party, detailed at section 3.3 within the report, be approved.

Reason for decision: So that the decisions of the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party can be considered.

108. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt, seconded by Councillor T Gillard, and

RESOLVED THAT:

In pursuance of Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the business to be transacted involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act and that the public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Reason for decision: To enable the consideration of exempt information.

109. TENDER FOR THE OFFICIAL VETERINARY SERVICES CONTRACT AT EAST MIDLANDS AIRPORT

The Communities and Climate Change Portfolio Holder presented the report.

It was moved by Councillor M Wyatt, seconded by Councillor T Saffell, and

RESOLVED THAT:

The recommendations contained within the report be approved.

Reason for decision: To comply with the Council's contracts procedures, a contract that is valued at more than £250,000 in total is a financial key decision requiring Cabinet approval.

To comply with EU Contract Procedure Rules (which the UK is still subject to), the Council is required to follow these rules.

110. ACQUISITIONS AND DISPOSALS

The Housing, Property and Customer Services Portfolio Holder presented the report.

A brief discussion was had.

It was moved by Councillor A Woodman, seconded by Councillor R Blunt, and

RESOLVED THAT: The recommendations contained within the report be approved.

Reason for decision: Decisions to purchase property are a function of Cabinet. Section G Officers Scheme of Delegation paragraph 8 applies.

The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 5.32 pm

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NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – TUESDAY, 25 FEBRUARY 2025



Title of Report	UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND 2025/26 AWARD	
Presented by	Councillor Tony Gillard Business and Regeneration Portfolio Holder PH Briefed Yes	
Background Papers	UKSPF Cabinet report – July 2022	Public Report: Yes
	Scrutiny Committee report – March 2023 UKSPF Cabinet report – March 2023 Scrutiny Committee report – February 2025	Key Decision: Yes
Financial Implications	The Council has been awarded a sum of £790k, details of which are set out in section 3.0 below.	
	Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	Set out within the report	
	Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	Set out within the report	
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes	
Purpose of Report	To set out to Cabinet a deliverable 12-month programme of UKSPF funded projects that delivers against Council objectives and in accordance with requirements of the UKSPF fund.	
Reason for Decision	<p>For Cabinet to provide feedback on, and approve the proposed UKSPF 2025/26 award projects.</p> <p>For Cabinet to review and approve the recommended delegations to oversee the delivery of the UKSPF 2025/26 award.</p>	
Recommendations	THAT CABINET: 1. ACCEPTS THE £ 789,998 GRANT FROM THE UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND 2025/26. 2. REVIEWS AND APPROVES THE UKSPF FUNDED	

	<p>PROJECTS SET OUT IN THIS REPORT.</p> <p>3. DELEGATES AUTHORITY TO THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR (PLACE) IN CONSULTATION WITH THE BUSINESS AND REGENERATION PORTFOLIO HOLDER TO REVIEW AND AMEND THE PROJECT PROPOSALS SET OUT IN THIS REPORT WHERE REQUIRED TO RESPOND AND ADAPT TO THE CHANGING ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT AND/OR LOCAL NEEDS.</p> <p>4. DELEGATES AUTHORITY TO THE SECTION 151 OFFICER IN CONSULTATION WITH THE BUSINESS AND REGENERATION PORTFOLIO HOLDER TO SUBMIT THE REQUIRED FORMAL REPORTING TO THE MINISTRY OF HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT.</p> <p>5. RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL AT ITS MEETING ON 13 MAY THAT £145,859 IS ADDED TO THE COUNCIL'S CAPITAL PROGRAMME FOR DELIVERY OF THE UKSPF 2025/26 PROGRAMME.</p>
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1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Announced in April 2022, the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) was administered by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), now re-named as the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).
- 1.2 The Council was allocated £2,414,817, profiled over three years from 2022 to 2025. The final year of funding ends on 31 March 2025.
- 1.3 In November 2024, MHCLG announced that the UKSPF would be extended for a 'transition year' for the financial year 2025/26 while work continued on what would ultimately replace the funding in the longer term.
- 1.4 In December 2024, MHCLG confirmed the allocations for Lead Authorities and also set out the approach for the funding:
 - The Council has been allocated £789,998, which is split as £145,859 Capital and £644,140 Revenue.
 - NWLDC will receive this funding directly on or around April 2025.
 - Unspent funding from the 2022-2025 UKSPF cannot be carried over into the new fund. The 31 March 2025 deadline remains for those projects.
 - No announcement has been made on further funding beyond March 2026. However, the UKSPF 2025/26 cannot be carried over into what arrangements may follow, and therefore it must be spent within the 12-month timeframe.
 - The three priority areas of Community and Place, Supporting Local Business and People and Skills remain, however, there are new missions and priorities associated with each:

1.5 Communities and Place

- **Healthy Safe and Inclusive Communities**
 - Healthy: Improving health and wellbeing
 - Safe: Reducing crime
 - Inclusive: Bringing Communities together, tackling homelessness
 - **Thriving Places**
 - Development of the visitor economy
 - High street / town centre improvements
- 1.6 **Supporting Local Business**
- **Support for business**
 - Advice and support to business
 - Enterprise Culture and Start-Up support
 - Business sites and premises
- 1.7 **People and Skills**
- **Employability**
 - Support for young people at risk of being Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)
 - Support for people to progress towards and into employment
 - **Skills**
 - Essential skills, including numeracy, literacy, English as a second language (ESOL) and digital
 - Employment related skills
- 1.8 A full prospectus and list of interventions for the UKSPF 2025/26 has not been published but is expected soon.
- 1.9 In addition to the UKSPF award, the Department for Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) awarded local authorities additional funding to deliver a Rural England Prosperity Fund between April 2023 and March 2025. No announcement has yet been made in relation to further funding from DEFRA.
- 2.0 UKSPF 25/26 recommended programme**
- 2.1 Officers have considered options for the new fund against the short timeframe in which delivery is required. Recommended options for allocation of the funding are set out below.
- 2.2 These projects will:
- Meet Council priorities as set out in the Council Delivery Plan;
 - Deliver against the Council’s Regeneration Framework objectives;
 - Split the funding to provide a District-wide impact (Reflecting Member aspirations that shaped the original UKSPF programme);
 - Respond to feedback on the Districtwide Regeneration received from Members, Community Scrutiny Committee and external stakeholders; and
 - Satisfy UKSPF eligibility criteria.
- 2.3 The list of proposed projects is set out in the table below which includes an allowance for the cost of administration.

Project	Indicative Budget
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4% Admin Allowance	£31,600
Renew Business Support contract	£60,000
Renew Skills for work contract	£35,000
New Community Grant scheme	£150,000
Investment in key settlements (Vital and Viable study projects)	£300,000
Improving Our Visitor Economy - Moira Furnace Phase 2	£145,859 Capital and £30,000 Revenue
Regeneration Framework project feasibility studies	£37,500

- 2.4 **4% Admin Allowance** - This is a deductible amount from the total award to be used toward supporting the resourcing of the project(s). The figure of 4% is suggested by MHCLG.
- 2.5 **Extension of existing Business Support contract** - Through the 2022-2025 UKSPF programme, two different business support programmes were launched in North West Leicestershire.
- 2.6 The first was the Leicestershire Business Advisory Service, known as LBAS. This project was delivered in collaboration with Leicestershire Local Authorities of Blaby, Harborough, Hinckley and Bosworth, Melton, and Oadby and Wigston and ran a free to access business advice and support service for small and medium sized business across Leicestershire.
- 2.7 The second was a 'Women in Business' support programme commissioned exclusively in North West Leicestershire that was designed to support local women to start up in business and/or support women back into employment.
- 2.8 Officers are currently working with neighbouring authorities to define what the extension of these business support programmes could look like to maximise the impact of the 2025/26 UKSPF transition funding.
- 2.9 **Extension of existing Skills work contract** - Through the 2022-2025 UKSPF programme, the Council commissioned and launched a series of different skills support programmes.
- 2.10 As with the business support programmes referred to earlier, Officers are currently evaluating the impact of these skills programmes to determine how to best use the 2025/26 UKSPF transition funding to shape the extension of some of the UKSPF funded skills programmes.
- 2.11 **New Community Grant scheme** - Over 2023 and 2024, the Council allocated £300,000 towards Community led projects in each parish (or area where unparished) of the district. Over £258,000 was distributed to a range of projects, however, it was noted that several parishes did not apply for funding at all and that larger areas, such as Coalville and Ashby-de-la-Zouch, met their funding caps very quickly. It was also fed back from applicants that the small amounts of funding in some places (<£3,500) made it difficult to find a project without using external funding.
- 2.12 Officers propose that this scheme is kept as a larger, central grant fund from which the Council seeks to support a smaller number of higher value projects that can come from anywhere in the District.

- 2.13 **Investment in local centres (Vital and Viable study) projects** - By March 2025, each of the six centres identified in the Council's Local Plan (Coalville, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Castle Donington, Kegworth, Ibstock and Measham) will have a 'Vital and Viable' study completed which will also include suggested projects. These studies are being completed in collaboration with town and parish councils, local businesses, community groups and other stakeholders.
- 2.14 These studies, shaped by local stakeholders, will identify a series of projects and interventions that can make smaller but impactful improvements to towns and local centres in the District.
- 2.15 It is proposed that an allocation of £300,000 be made from the Council's UKSPF 2025/26 award to enable town and parish councils to work with their communities with the six centres to deliver some of their priority projects they identify through preparing their local vital and viable study.
- 2.16 Nominally the £300,000 allocation gives each centre £50,000, though this may need to be tiered to take into account the size and needs of each area.
- 2.17 **Improve The Visitor Economy Moira Furnace – Phase 2**
Through the original UKSPF award and the Council's own Capital programme, the historic monument has been subject to recent investment to restore and conserve the Furnace, undertake essential repair works and to enhance the existing presentation of the furnace setting.
- 2.18 Using the capital allocation of UKSPF transitional funding, Officers propose to continue to deliver improvements to the offer at Moira Furnace and commence a new second phase of capital investment to support the visitor economy and enhance the tourism offer. The use of the UKSPF complements the Council's planned investment into Moira Furnace and contributes to the ongoing investment to the National Forest and delivery of the Heart of the National Forest plan.
- 2.19 These projects include:
- Study work to support efforts to restore the Ashby Canal as set out in the Council's District-wide Regeneration Framework,
 - Ongoing collaborative work with Visit Leicester to promote North West Leicestershire as a visitor destination
 - Delivery of a green accreditation that supports local visitor attractions, tourism businesses and accommodation providers to improve their green credentials, benefit the environment and create competitive advantage for our visitor economy.
- 2.20 **Regeneration Framework project feasibility studies** - This funding can be utilised towards exploring feasibility, design or options studies for projects set out within the North West Leicestershire Districtwide Regeneration Framework and the Coalville Regeneration Framework.
- 2.21 The proposed projects set out above were presented to Community Scrutiny Committee on 7 February 2025. The Committee discussed the proposals set out within this paper and concluded to support the proposals as presented without change.

3.0 Financial implications

- 3.1 All projects listed above in section 2 above are proposed to be delivered using UKSPF 2025/26 funding awarded in accordance with any conditions attached to those funding awards.
- 3.2 Any UKSPF 2025/26 funding unspent by 31 March 2026 will need to be returned to MHCLG.
- 3.3 This report sets out proposals to allocate the new funding to projects which officers are confident of delivering within the 12-month timescale, as well as meeting the priorities of the Council Delivery Plan and Regeneration Frameworks.
- 3.4 It is proposed that the projects recommended within this report will be delivered using existing capacity with the Economic Regeneration team.

4.0 Legal Implications

- 4.1 Projects delivered through the UKSPF will need to be delivered within the subsidy control regime (formerly State Aid).
- 4.2 Additionally, UKSPF spend should be compliant with the Public Procurement Act 2023, where relevant and follow local constitution, processes and procedures as and where relevant.

5.0 Staffing and Corporate Implications

- 5.1 It is proposed that the UKSPF 2025/26 programme will be delivered with a similar programme framework as the original UKSPF.
- 5.2 The UKSPF 2025/26 will be delivered by a 'Project Team' consisting of the Council's Economic Development Manager and a Senior Economic Development Officer. This Project Team will be supported by the wider Economic Development team, the Head of Regeneration and Director of Place.
- 5.3 Each of the listed projects will be delivered by at least one senior 'Lead' Officer. The Lead Officer(s) will regularly (weekly in most cases) meet with the 'Project Team' to monitor the progress of each project.
- 5.4 The Economic Development Manager will be providing regular updates through monthly briefings with the Business and Regeneration Portfolio Holder and through briefings with the Shadow Business and Regeneration Portfolio Holder.
- 5.5 On a bi-monthly basis the 'Project Team' will provide a progress report and notify any delivery risks to a 'UKSPF Programme Group'. It is proposed that 'Programme Group' will be made up of officers from the following service areas: Audit, Communications, Finance, Legal and, where necessary, ICT and Transformation.
- 5.6 As a minimum, on a quarterly basis, the 'Programme Group' will provide an oversight update on the UKSPF programme to Capital Strategy Group.
- 5.7 Once concluded, officers will bring an evaluation report back to the Scrutiny Committee and to Cabinet to reflect on the UKPSF 2025/26, its outputs and outcomes and lessons learnt.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate

Council Priorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning and regeneration - Communities and housing - Clean, green and Zero Carbon <p>A well-run council</p>
Policy Considerations:	North West Leicestershire Council Delivery Plan North West Leicestershire Districtwide Regeneration Framework
Safeguarding:	No safeguarding considerations have been identified.
Equalities/Diversity:	No equalities/diversity considerations have been identified at this stage. However, Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken for specific projects as they are developed to ensure they meet the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion objectives of the Council
Customer Impact:	The proposed UKSPF 2025/26 projects set out a series of interventions that will benefit residents and businesses.
Economic and Social Impact:	The proposed UKSPF 2025/26 projects set out a series of interventions that will benefit residents and businesses.
Environment, Climate Change and Zero Carbon:	Through the delivery of the Community Grants and investment in local centres may enable communities and partner organisation to implement initiatives that contribute to achieving the North West Leicestershire zero carbon roadmap.
Consultation/Community/Tenant Engagement:	The programme of work identified within this report contribute to the delivery of the adopted Council's Regeneration Frameworks which have been subject to scrutiny prior to their adoption. In addition, the investment in local centres: Vital and Viable study projects will have been identified following consultation within the districts six local centres.
Risks:	As part of its Corporate Governance arrangements, the Council must ensure that risk management is considered and satisfactorily covered in any report put before elected Members for a decision or action.
Officer Contact	Paul Wheatley Head of Property and Economic Regeneration paul.wheatley@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

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**NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
CABINET – TUESDAY, 25 FEBRUARY 2025**

Title of Report	COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN– PERFORMANCE REPORT – QUARTER 3 2024/25	
Presented by	Councillor Keith Merrie MBE Infrastructure Portfolio Holder	
Background Papers	Council Delivery Plan Council meeting held on 14 November 2023	Public Report: Yes
		Key Decision: Yes
Financial Implications	No direct financial implications.	
	Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	No direct legal implications arising from this report	
	Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	The Council Delivery plan sets out the priorities for the Council for a five-year period so has significant corporate and staffing implications.	
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes	
Purpose of Report	To report the performance of the Council during the quarter 3 of 2024/25 of the Council Delivery Plan.	
Reason for Decision	To update members on the progress of the plan. It is the Cabinet’s responsibility to monitor the performance of the Council Delivery Plan.	
Recommendations	THAT CABINET CONSIDERS THE MONITORING REPORT AND HIGHLIGHTS THE ELEMENTS MAKING POSITIVE PROGRESS AND THOSE WHERE THERE IS A NEED FOR EARLY INTERVENTION.	

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Council prepared a new Council Delivery Plan during late 2023, and the Plan is scheduled to cover the lifetime of the Council administration for the period 2023/24 until a year beyond the next election in May 2027 (to ensure continuity in the aftermath of that election and to allow time for a new plan to be developed). The Plan was developed with inputs from the Corporate Scrutiny Committee and the opposition groups and was agreed by Council at its meeting on the 14 November 2023.
- 1.2 The plan will be monitored in relation to the targets and a suite of performance indicators on a quarterly basis in line with the performance management framework. This will involve quarterly reports to Cabinet, the outcomes of the reports will then be shared with the Corporate Scrutiny Committee. Further information on the progress of the set of plans that sit below the Council Delivery Plan, the directorate plans, are monitored at officer level by the Corporate Leadership Team. The plans at directorate and service plan level are currently being updated for the new financial year.
- 1.3 The reporting period for this report runs from 1 October 2024 to 31 December 2024, in line with Quarter 3.
- 1.4 The performance report for the previous quarter was presented to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 5 December 2024. The following is an extract from the draft minutes of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee when the item was presented.

QUARTER 2 2024/25 COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development presented the report.

Members asked several questions about the audit backlog. The Strategic Director of Resources set out plans to resolve the issues for the Statement of Accounts in respect of the financial years 2021/22 and 2022/23 to be considered at the 9 December meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee, in line with Government deadlines and stressed that the authority was now in the process of rebuilding assurances.

He regularly updated the Audit and Governance Committee on the situation. He also clarified for the Chair that the authority had been charged the standard fees by the Council's external auditors for the 2021/22 and 2022/23 accounts, but discussions were ongoing nationally to challenge this. Members also asked the Strategic Director of Resources about recent limited assurances in internal audits. He advised that there was an action plan in place to respond to the limited assurances received, and he was confident they would be resolved when the next annual internal audit opinion was produced in 2025.

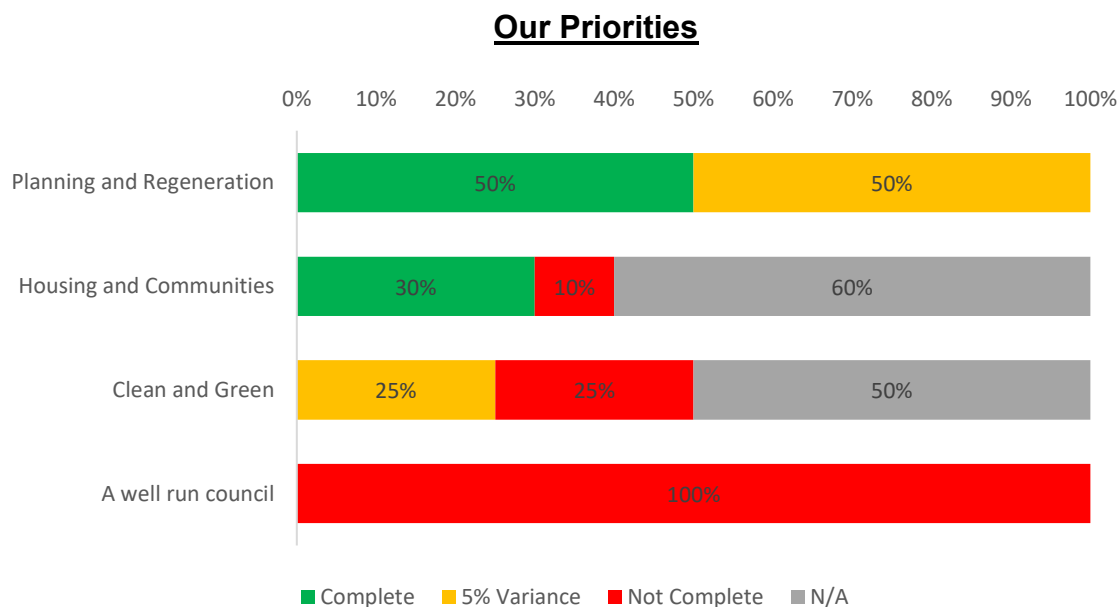
He also agreed to provide Members with the number of limited assurances as a percentage of overall assurances. The Chair thanked Members for their comments which would be presented to the Cabinet on 25 February 2025.

These comments from the Corporate Scrutiny Committee have been included for Cabinet members' consideration, as this is the agreed process as set out in the Council's Performance Management Framework document as presented to full Council in November 2023 in conjunction with the Council Delivery Plan.

2.0 PERFORMANCE REPORT

- 2.1 The Council Delivery Plan contains four key priority areas – notably “A well run Council, Clean and Green, Housing and Communities and Planning and Regeneration”.
- 2.2 There are 18 key performance indicators (KPI's) in the Plan. Six relate to Planning and Regeneration, five to Housing and Community Services, four relate to Clean and Green and three relate to a well-run Council.

The chart below shows the performance in quarter 3 overall against each of the four priority areas. The table shows the priorities that have been completed, those that were within a 5% variance of being completed, those that were not completed at all and those that were not applicable (usually due to no data being available, because they are scheduled for completion at a later stage of the plan.)



2.3 Of the 18 key performance indicators (KPI's) in the Council Delivery Plan.

Six relate to Planning and Regeneration. Three have been completed and three are within a 5% variance of completion.

Five relate to Housing and Communities. One is complete, one is split between complete and not completed and three will be completed at a later stage of the Council Delivery Plan.

Four KPI's relate to the clean and green objective, one is within a 5% variance, one is not completed and two will be completed at a later stage of the Council Delivery Plan.

Three relate to a Well-run Council. Three are not completed.

2.4 Summary of progress in Quarter 3.

The areas of key progress in the quarter (drawn from the detailed information in the tables below) are:

- The number of Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) non-compliant properties following intervention in Q3 is 12. The baseline number in September 2018 was a 118 non-compliant properties.
- The Planning team has comfortably exceeded the set targets in terms of timescales for Planning determinations for the third quarter running.
- 80.5% (658 of 817) of food establishments in the district achieved a 5 rating in respect of Food Hygiene.
- There has been a new website established for visitors to the district, showcasing attractions and places of interest and additionally, there has been good progress made on regeneration projects - of particular note is the completion of the Kegworth projects within the quarter.

The areas where targets have not been met at this stage of the plan and the remedial actions being taking to address these are: -

- Achieving timely responses to customer complaints (with only 58% overall being responded to within the target timeframe).
 - Efforts to improve complaint handling are ongoing, with root cause analysis training being implemented. This training is being rolled out to some teams to enable them to look beyond the surface level of complaints and help prevent future occurrences.
 - Complaint investigation training has been developed for team leaders and managers and will be introduced this month.
 - Weekly reports are being produced and sent to Directors of services who fail to respond on time.

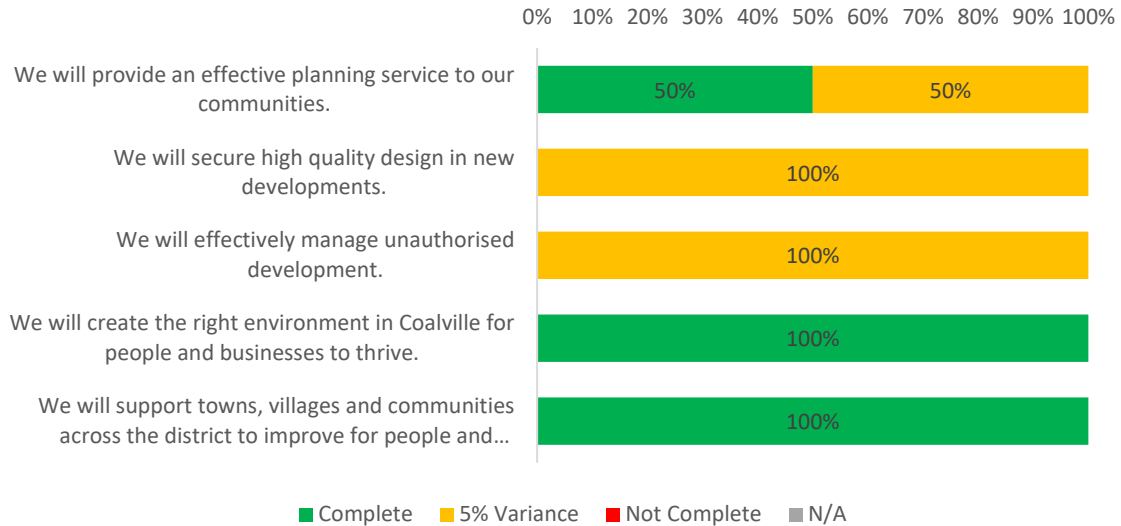
There is still a projected funding gap at the current time. The Transformation Programme will explore opportunities to reduce this. This includes a review of contracts and efficiencies to processes and procedures. A balanced budget for 2025/26 was presented to Council in February 2025.

- The Statement of Accounts 2021/22 and 2022/23 were signed off by Audit Committee on 9 December with a disclaimed opinion (as opposed to the target of an unqualified opinion) issued ahead of the backstop date.
- In terms of the Tree Management strategy, work to catalogue the portfolio of the Housing tree estate is ongoing. With regards to the Tree Management Strategy, following consultation with key stakeholders, further engagement has taken place which has led to additional refinements to the strategy. Consequently, this will now be presented to Community Scrutiny for consideration in February 2025 prior to being presented to Cabinet for corporate adoption in March 2025.
- The creation of a Private Landlord's Housing charter is still outstanding, however, the first step towards achieving this, the establishment of a forum, has been attained.

2.5 Detailed information about progress on the Transformation Programme is provided below at Appendix 2.

The following four tables show the more detailed breakdown of the indicators as they relate to each of the priority areas using the same assessment scale in relation to percentage completed etc. For each of the priority areas more information is provided in the later stages of the report together with detailed commentary on the progress.

Planning and regeneration



Planning and regeneration_ Overview of Performance in Percentage of KPI

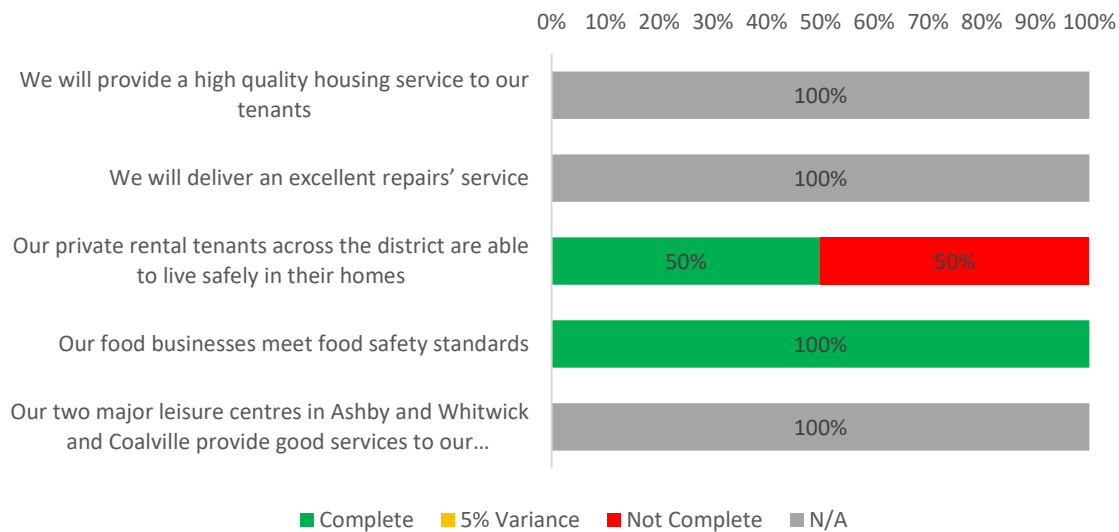
As a percentage of applicable KPIs	Complete	5% Variance	Not Complete	N/A
We will provide an effective planning service to our communities. (Split into two sections)	50%	50%		
We will secure high quality design in new developments.		100%		
We will effectively manage unauthorised development.		100%		
We will create the right environment in Coalville for people and businesses to thrive.	100%			
We will support towns, villages and communities across the district to improve for people and businesses.	100%			

Planning and regeneration_ Overview of Performance in KPI numbers

As a number of applicable KPIs/KPI sections	Complete	5% Variance	Not Complete	N/A
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We will provide an effective planning service to our communities. (Split Across 2 KPIs 1. Adoption of a local plan by 2026 and 2. Timely determination of planning applications- Major, Minor and other)	0.5	0.5
We will secure high quality design in new developments.		1
We will effectively manage unauthorised development.		1
We will create the right environment in Coalville for people and businesses to thrive.	1	
We will support towns, villages and communities across the district to improve for people and businesses.	1	

Housing and Communities



Housing and Communities- overview of Performance in Percentages of KPIs

As a percentage of applicable KPIs	Complete	5% Variance	Not Complete	N/A
We will provide a high-quality housing service to our tenants				100%
We will deliver an excellent repairs' service				100%
Our private rental tenants across the district are able to live safely in their homes	50%		50%	

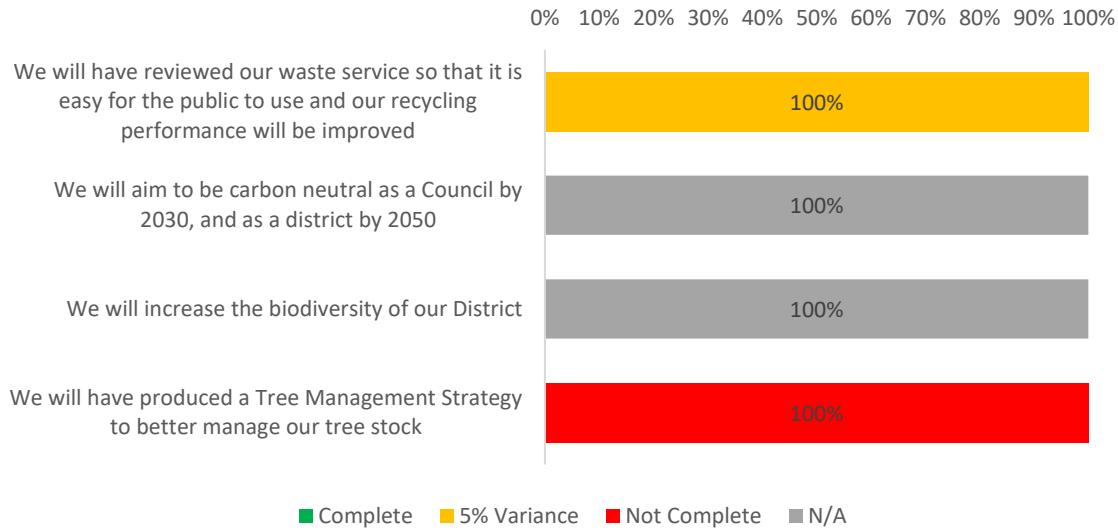
Our food businesses meet food safety standards 100%

Our two major leisure centres in Ashby and Whitwick and Coalville provide good services to our communities 100%

Housing and Communities- overview of Performance in KPI numbers

As a number of applicable KPIs/KPI sections	Complete	5% Variance	Not Complete	N/A
We will provide a high-quality housing service to our tenants				1
We will deliver an excellent repairs' service				1
Our private rental tenants across the district are able to live safely in their homes (This KPI is split across two distinct Services- Private Landlord compliance with MEES standards and Private Landlord's charter.	0.5		0.5	
Our food businesses meet food safety standards	1			
Our two major leisure centres in Ashby and Whitwick and Coalville provide good services to our communities				1

Clean and Green



Clean and Green- overview of Performance in Percentages of KPIs

As a percentage of applicable KPIs	Complete	5% Variance	Not Complete	N/A
We will have reviewed our waste service so that it is easy for the public to use, and our recycling performance will be improved		100%		
We will aim to be carbon neutral as a Council by 2030, and as a district by 2050				100%
We will increase the biodiversity of our District				100%
We will have produced a Tree Management Strategy to better manage our tree stock			100%	

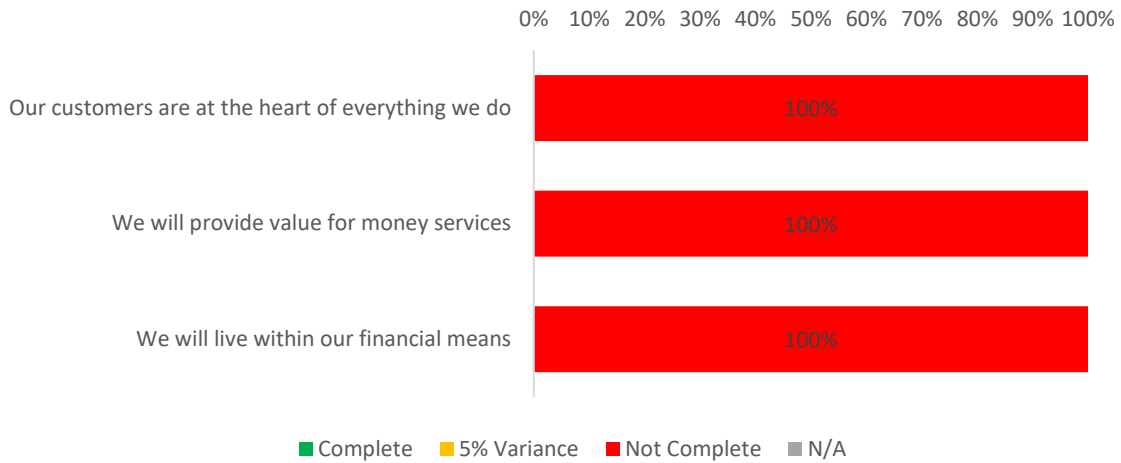
Clean and Green- overview of Performance in number of KPIs

As a number of applicable KPIs/KPI sections	Complete	5% Variance	Not Complete	N/A
We will have reviewed our waste service so that it is easy for the public to use, and our recycling performance will be improved		1		
We will aim to be carbon neutral as a Council by 2030, and as a district by 2050				1
We will increase the biodiversity of our District				1

We will have produced a Tree Management Strategy to better manage our tree stock

1

A well run Council.




Well, Run Council- overview of Performance in Percentages of KPIs

As a percentage of applicable KPIs	Complete	5% Variance	Not Complete	N/A
Our customers are at the heart of everything we do			100%	
We will provide value for money services			100%	
We will live within our financial means			100%	

Well Run Council- overview of Performance in numbers of KPIs


As a number of applicable KPIs/KPI sections	Complete	5% Variance	Not Complete	N/A
Our customers are at the heart of everything we do			1	
We will provide value for money services			1	
We will live within our financial means			1	

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	<p>This report measures progress against all of the Council's priorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning and regeneration - Communities and housing - Clean, green and Zero Carbon - A well-run council
Policy Considerations:	Council Delivery Plan
Safeguarding:	No direct considerations.
Equalities/Diversity:	No direct considerations, the plan impacts across all of the Council's communities.
Customer Impact:	No direct considerations.
Economic and Social Impact:	As detailed in the report.
Environment, Climate Change and zero carbon:	As detailed in the report.
Consultation/Community Engagement:	No direct considerations.
Risks:	Detailed in the Corporate risk register
Officer Contact	<p>Mike Murphy Head of Human Resources and Organisation Development.</p> <p>Mike.murphy@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</p> <p>Allison Thomas</p> <p>Chief Executive</p> <p>Allison.thomas@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</p>

Priority	KPI reference	Key Aim	Q3 Progress	Target	Commentary	Head of Service	RAG rating
 Planning and regeneration	1	We will adopt a local plan by 2026	Reports to Local Plan Committee on 13 November 2024 and 16 December 2024 agreed plan period and amount of development to be provided for, together with housing allocations in Coalville and new settlement and employment allocations.	2023-4 Submit local plan (Reg 18 consultation). 2024/5 Pre-submission consultation (Reg 19) Submission of local plan and examination.	New Local Development Scheme setting out the timetable for the Local Plan to be agreed by the end of Q4.	Head of Planning and Infrastructure	
	2	We will deal with your planning applications for major, minor and other developments by consistently meeting and exceeding the government's targets of 60%,	100% 89.66%	Major- At least 60% of applications determined within 13 weeks. Minor- At least 65% of applications determined within 8 weeks.	The team has comfortably exceeded all three of the set targets for this period for the third quarter running.	Head of Planning and Infrastructure	

		65% and 80% respectively.	84.54	Other- At least 80% of applications determined within 8 weeks.			
	3	We will have developed a new local design guide, and new developments will comply with it.		<p>2023-4 Develop a new Design Guide for North West Leicestershire adopting current best practice in accordance with the Governments National design guide.</p> <p>Undertake public consultation on the new Design Guide for North West Leicestershire.</p> <p>2024/5 Adopt the new design guide for North West Leicestershire.</p> <p>New development complies with the</p>	Public Consultation is now anticipated in Q4. Proposing to take report the good design guide to Community Scrutiny in April and then Cabinet for adoption in Q1 25/26	Head of Planning and Infrastructure	


				requirements of the adopted design guide.			
	4	We will effectively manage unauthorised development.		<p>Work begins in 2024/5. Adopt a new local enforcement plan by the end of Q2 24/25</p> <p>Monitor and measure response times against the targets set out in the adopted Local Enforcement Plan and report biannually to Planning Committee in Q3 and 4 24/25</p>	<p>New Local Enforcement Plan adopted at Cabinet on 22 October 2024</p> <p>The first available Planning Committee following adoption of the plan was 3 December 2024, but this was cancelled as there were no other items to take. In addition there was a very limited time period following adoption of the Plan for any meaningful monitoring in Q3 to report to Planning Committee. Therefore, it is anticipated that monitoring will now be reported to Committee in Q1 25/26 and then once every six months after that.</p>	Head of Planning and Infrastructure	

	5	We will have delivered our ambitious Coalville Regeneration Framework.		Quarterly progress statement plus an additional Annual Framework review in Q4	Refreshed document to be finalised by the end of the Q4. A number of regeneration projects which are making progress and are reported monthly to the portfolio holder.	Head Of Property and Regeneration	
	6	We will have developed a regeneration framework and will be on the way to supporting thriving towns, villages and communities across the district.		Work begins in Q4 with the production of the NWL Regeneration Framework	The framework has been published, and review has commenced which is due to be complete by the end of Q4 (March 2025). Progress is being made on projects within the framework in particular the Kegworth projects have been completed. The leisure prevision research has started. The new visitor economy website has been completed.	Head Of Property and Regeneration	
	7	We will provide a high-quality housing service to our tenants.	64% (awaiting out of 5 Scoring from regulator)	2023/4 First data publication 2024/5 Awaiting year 2 data and five -star rating to be published by regulator.	The data provided is the annual survey figure for 2023/4 which is the most up to date available.	Head of Housing	
	8	We will deliver an excellent repairs' service.	62% (awaiting out of 5 Scoring from regulator)	2023/4 First data publication 2024/5 Awaiting year 2 data and five -star rating to be published by regulator	The data provided is the annual survey figure for 2023/4 which is the most up to date available.	Head of Housing	


	9	Our private rental tenants across the district are able to live safely in their homes.		100% of Landlords contacted within the specified time-period within the MEES policy for non-compliance.	100% of landlords were contacted within the specified time period. The number of non-compliant properties following intervention in Q3 is 12. The baseline number in Sept 2018 was a 118 non-compliant properties	Head of Communities	
				Creation of a Private Sector Housing Charter.	Landlord forum has been reinstated.		
	10	Our food businesses meet food safety standards.		2023/24 80% of food businesses having a hygiene rating of 5 (very good)	80.5% (658 of 817) of food establishments in the district achieved a 5 rating.	Head of Communities	

	11	Our two major leisure centres in Ashby and Whitwick and Coalville provide good services to our communities.		The leisure centres will be assessed independently against a national standard and achieve a 'good' or higher rating. (This will be provided annually in Q3	<p>Quest is the national independent benchmarking service for leisure centres that is used to assess Whitwick and Coalville Leisure Centre (WCLC) and Ashby Leisure Centre and Lido (ALCL). The assessment is undertaken every two years and includes a mystery customer visit and a two-day site assessment. The outcome of the assessment is a ranking which can be Unsatisfactory, Satisfactory, Good, Very Good, or Excellent. In June 2023, WCLC was assessed as being Excellent. ALCL was assessed in June 2024 and upgraded its ranking from Very Good to Excellent. Key areas of excellence highlighted included.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A diverse, fully inclusive programme and associated pricing structure aimed at juniors, seniors, inclusive need users, and health and wellbeing targeted agendas. • Maintenance throughout the centre was to a very 	Head of Communities	
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					<p>high standard, with a comprehensive Planned Preventative Maintenance programme in place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consultation with users and the local community is extensive, helping to shape programming and day to day delivery.• The standard of cleaning and hygiene was exemplary, with standards within the changing rooms particularly impressive.• Information throughout the centre was to a very high standard.• The management team furnish themselves with comprehensive performance and delivery information, ensuring that they continually have their finger on the pulse.• Social media delivery was planned, with the level of material posted to a strong, diverse, and engaging standard.		
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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses to written communications were timely, personal, and informative. • The corporate procedure and policy framework was comprehensive, being used and managed to a very high standard by the team. <p>Lifeguarding compliances and due diligence were to a particularly high standard.</p>		
 <p>Clean and Green</p>	12	<p>We will have reviewed our waste service so that it is easy for the public to use, and our recycling performance will be improved.</p>	<p>The options appraisal and financial review of the revenue and capital implications has been completed for more formal decision making to be made in Quarter 4 with onward scrutiny from Community</p>	47% Recycling rate 2023/4	<p>Work on assessing the final options has now been completed and review of the affordability has also been done so that more formal decisions can be taken in Quarter 4. The Council has now received confirmation from the Government regarding the requirements for Simpler Recycling which caused a delay.</p>	Head of Communities	

			Scrutiny and Cabinet				
	13	We will aim to be carbon neutral as a Council by 2030, and as a district by 2050.	Work progresses in line with the programme	2023/4 Development of assessment work and target setting	<p>Estimating the cost of net zero is dependent on Asset Management Plans for both Housing and Property Services which are being developed and will inform the budget process for 2026/27. Fleet replacement plans will be refreshed linked to the Waste Services Review – non-electric fleet continues to run on Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil (HVO).</p> <p>The Council is working collectively via the Green Living Leicestershire partnership providing grant funding and support schemes to help residents improve the energy efficiency of their homes. With HUG2 scheme ending in March Warmer Homes grant funding is being explored to continue to help residents improve the energy efficiency of their homes. The current Solar Together scheme ends in March and a future offer is being considered. A new solar PV electric vehicle charging hub</p>	Head of Communities	

					is being procured for Moneyhill car park. Energy Switch scheme ran in November.		
	14	We will increase the biodiversity of our District.		10% Biodiversity Net Gain on large developments with planning permission	This is a mandatory requirement for major planning applications and some smaller planning applications after February and April 2024, so will be achieved on all relevant planning permissions issued after these dates.	Head of Planning and Infrastructure	
	15	We will have produced a Tree Management Strategy to better manage our tree stock.	Community Scrutiny will consider the draft Tree Strategy at its February meeting prior to Cabinet's consideration in April	2023/24 Cataloguing of Housing tree estate complete.	Work to catalogue the portfolio of the Housing tree estate is ongoing. With regards to the Tree Management Strategy, following consultation with key stakeholders, further engagement has taken place which has led to additional refinements to the strategy. Consequently, this will now be presented to Community Scrutiny for consideration in February prior to being presented to Cabinet for corporate adoption in March	Head of Communities	
	16	Our customers are at the heart of everything we do.	58% overall Stage 1=53% Stage 2= 74%	2023-4 70% of Complaints responded to on time by end of year	Efforts to improve complaint handling are ongoing, with root cause analysis training	Customer Services Team Manager	

					<p>being implemented. This training is being rolled out to some teams to enable them to look beyond the surface level of complaints and help prevent future occurrences.</p> <p>Complaint investigation training has been developed for team leaders and managers and will be introduced this month.</p> <p>Weekly reports are being produced and sent to Directors of services who fail to respond on time, allowing them to follow up accordingly.</p>		
	17	We will provide value for money services.		Unqualified Opinion to be provided	The Statement of Accounts 2021/22 and 2022/23 was signed off by Audit Committee on 9 December with a disclaimed opinion issued ahead of the backstop date.	Head of Finance	
	18	We live within our means		Zero funding gap	The Council's Transformation Programme explores opportunities to support the closing of the funding gap. This includes a review of	Head of Finance	

					contracts and efficiencies to processes and procedures. A balanced budget for 2025/26 was presented to Council in February 2025.		
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APPENDIX 2.

Performance of Transformation Delivery Plan

Scheme Name and Description	Approved Budget £	Key Deliverables	Latest Update
Strategic Communication Support – increased working hours for the Communications Team Manager	13,603	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear focus on internal communications, together with staff and member engagement to ensure all stakeholders feel part of the transformation process. • Development of a clear communications strategy, clarifying roles and responsibilities • Foster open dialogue between teams • Communicate the reasons behind the transformation and its benefits to employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace stress survey • Staff Roadshows • Transformation Communications Strategy - additional colleague engagement opportunities implemented including knowledge exchange, “in conversation with” and a formalised Team Leaders forum.
Additional HR Support - To provide additional HR support of 3 days per week, for a two-year period,	64,038	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced sickness absence rates in Waste Services • Reduced budget overspends – reduced agency costs. • Achieve vacancy savings 	Project is currently on hold while the deliverables and benefits are re-assessed. Wider root cause analysis on agency spends across the whole organisation to be carried out. There

with focus on sickness management.			has been no spend against budget as yet.
Waste Services Review - The Council is currently conducting a waste services review, which aims to bring about significant changes to its waste collection system. The review focuses on improving waste collections by exploring different recycling container options to replace the existing boxes and bags.	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved recycling rates by introducing containers and systems that are more user-friendly and efficient. • Ensuring that the new waste collection system is cost effective balancing the initial investment with long-term savings and benefits. • Aligning with new DEFRA guidelines and government requirements. • Enhancing overall satisfactions of residents by making the system more convenient and reliable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny and Members workshop on schedule for end of March • Take to Cabinet in April.
Parking Review – to ensure that the Council has a clear strategy for parking rates across the district.	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplified and aligned charging structure across the district. • Enhance electric vehicle charging points across council car parks. • Promote sustainable transport options 	Project is on hold
Council Tax Discounts and Exemptions -	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional revenue from increasing council tax premiums 	Consultation process began on 28 October for three weeks.

<p>Review of discounts and exemptions to confirm their relevance and fairness in the current economic climate.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentivise behaviours i.e. reducing the number of long-term empty properties. • To bring council tax premiums and exemptions in line with neighbouring authorities 	<p>Precepting authorities and Parish Councils have been informed about the consultation, which is actively available on the Council's website.</p> <p>Additionally, an equality impact assessment has been completed to ensure that all potential impacts are considered.</p>
<p>Unit 4 (finance system) enhancements - The Council implemented its new financial system (Unit4) in April 2023. However, it is apparent that the full functionality is not being utilised. There is a focus on improving budget monitoring for all stakeholders across the Council. The Council is working with Vision ERP to deliver enhancements not just on budget</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automation of routine tasks and reconciliations particularly the bank reconciliation process • Reduced errors on data entry • Real time reporting • One version of the truth • Forecasting future budget need based on various scenarios. • Software helps ensure compliance with financial regulations i.e. the Council's Constitution • Timely completion of statutory returns 	<p>Completed work packages include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WP1 (budgeting) - Complete – live and being monitored but will not know more until the budget is set. • Budget Virements – Complete • WP4 (Purchase Order Data Bulk Housing) -Complete • WP6 (Knowledge Transfer for Account and Cost Centre Relations) - Completed and now revised all relations to cost centres so it has been reported accurately.

<p>monitoring but in other financial management areas as well such as exchequer and financial reporting.</p>			
<p>Customer Contact Improvement - A project that will examine how customers contact and interact with the Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of customer contact • Website content and content management review • Wholesale customer contact review (including written – letters, emails – and verbal – phone, in person) 	<p>45,984</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved website content • Reduced avoidable calls. • Enhanced customer complaint handling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement of Website Management services in progress – specification is complete • Recruited Project Support

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing complaint analysis (already underway) • Staff training (customer contact, complaint handling, tone of voice – some already underway) • Topic-specific customer focus groups • Central 'knowledge hub' for customer contact 			
<p>Capital Asset Facilities Management System - The Council's General Fund (GF) property assets represent one of the Council's</p>	<p>170,000 (to be met from Business Rates Reserve as approved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That legislative requirement (such as Electrical inspections, Legionella testing and Fire Risk Assessments) are being complied with for all council's Properties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project management team established. • Kick off meeting with Supplier (Concerto) • Core Data Session with Concerto

<p>largest financial investments. In total there are in excess of 100 properties within the GF Property Portfolio meeting a range of functions. The sufficiency and suitability of the properties held is of vital importance to the operation of the Council. These properties are used to; accommodate meetings of the Council as a body, provide a base from which staff can deliver service and interact with customers, and for the provision of certain services (e.g. recreation grounds are used to provide leisure services to the community).</p>	<p>by Cabinet on 23 July 2024)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• That where reports, testing and inspections recommend remedial actions, these are being undertaken within timescales set out in policy.• That greater use can be made of corporate contracts for property related services (FRA, EICR, Legionella Testing etc) (potential cost savings).	
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Council Wide Document Management / Intranet	n/a/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An improved and efficient intranet that is significantly more efficient and easier to navigate in comparison to the current, and soon to be legacy site. • A cleansed intranet site with the most up to date information and documents available, leading to one version of the truth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project approved and will be pressing ahead in the New Year. • Engaging with supplier so the new intranet site can start to be created.
Microsoft CoPilot Proof of Concept	£7500 (licences)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathering of baseline information that can be used to inform an organisation wide rollout of Microsoft Co-Pilot Artificial Intelligence Assistant • Governance and usage policies • A forum where staff can come for CoPilot support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of 25 trial users has begun.

In addition to the costs outlined above (excluding the CAFM system as this will be funded from the Business Rates Reserve), the Council has employed a Local Government Association Graduate Programme to support the Transformation Programme. The Graduate Programme is a fast-track development programme for bright and passionate graduates who want to make a difference in local government. It is a two-year programme where graduates are employed by councils.

The Council has recruited a Transformation Programme Officer. The costs of this will be met from reserves previously set aside to fund this post for the first two years and funded from savings identified thereafter.

The committed budget to date is summarised in the table below along with comments.

Expenditure	£	
Additional communications support	13,603	Actual forecasts spend is £13,844 due to pay increase
HR support	64,038	Project is under review
Customer contact	45,984	Originally committed £75,984 but £30k for survey work no longer in scope
LGA Graduate	86,647	
Microsoft CoPilot proof of concept	7,500	Training costs to be confirmed and added
Gov.delivery upgrade	1,248	Upgrade to add additional topics for increased reach and engagement
Total allocated	219,020	

The Council identified and delivered £271k of savings in 2024/25 with a further £573k of savings proposed for 2025/26. Without the identification of these savings, the budget gap over the medium term would be much larger.

Likely to contain exempt information under paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Agenda Item 8.

Document is Restricted

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