

**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.

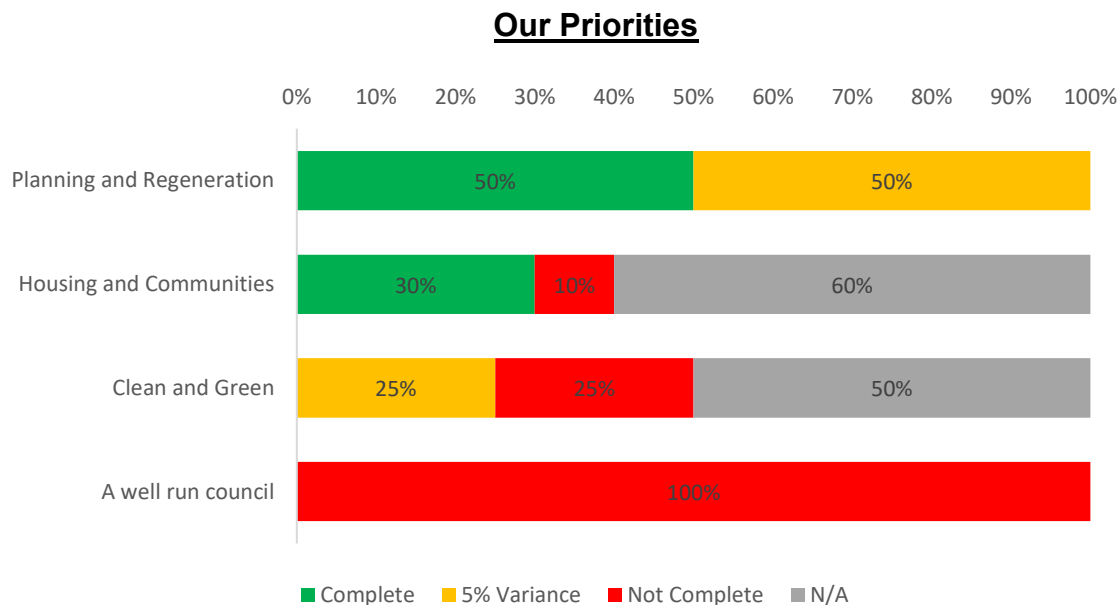
He also agreed to provide Members with the number of limited assurances as a percentage of overall assurances. The Chair thanked Members for their comments which would be presented to the Cabinet on 25 February 2025.

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.

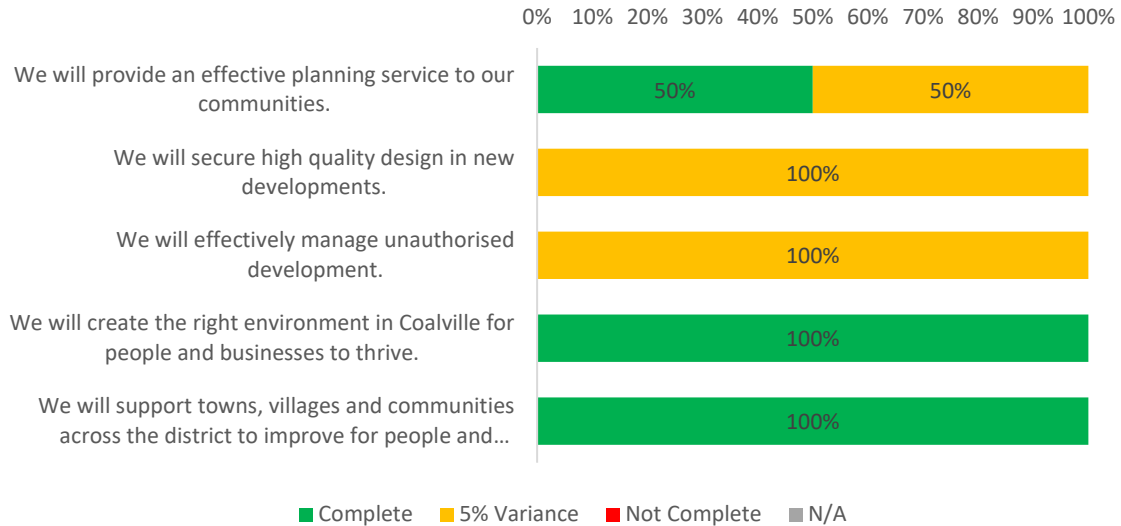
There is still a projected funding gap at the current time. The Transformation Programme will explore opportunities to reduce this. This includes a review of contracts and efficiencies to processes and procedures. A balanced budget for 2025/26 was presented to Council in February 2025.

- 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

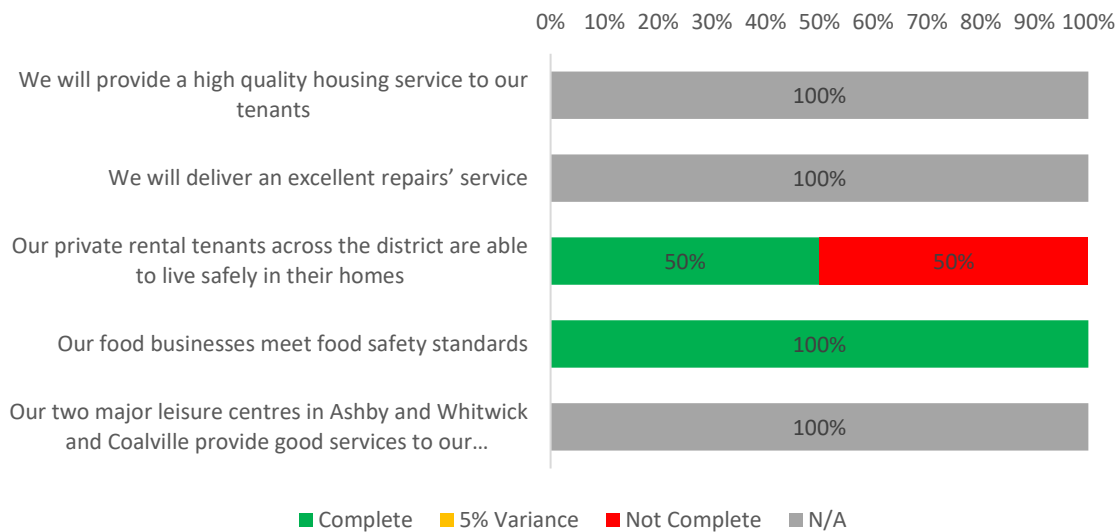
As a percentage of applicable KPIs	Complete	5% Variance	Not Complete	N/A
We will provide an effective planning service to our communities. (Split into two sections)	50%	50%		
We will secure high quality design in new developments.		100%		
We will effectively manage unauthorised development.		100%		
We 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%	

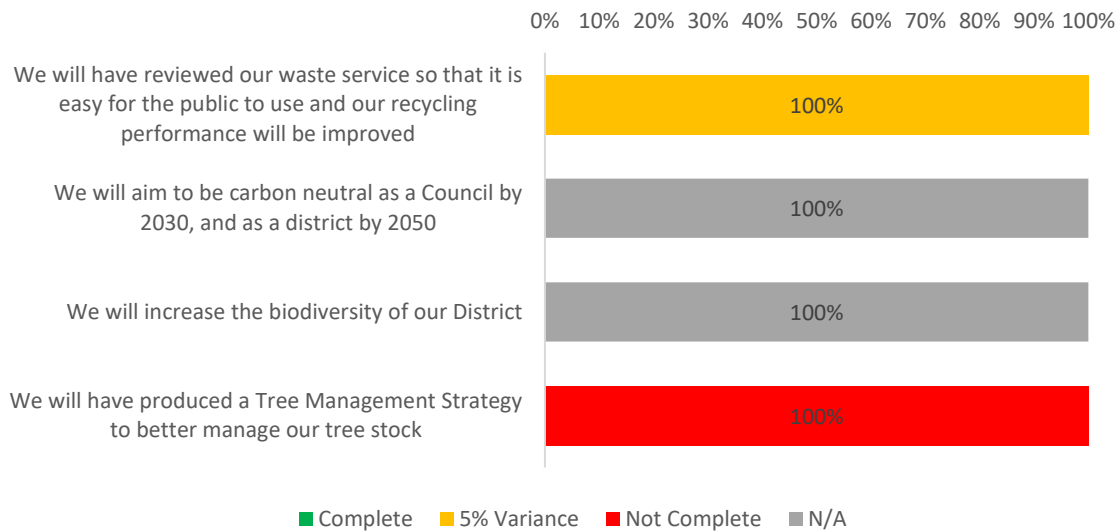
Our food businesses meet food safety standards 100%

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%	

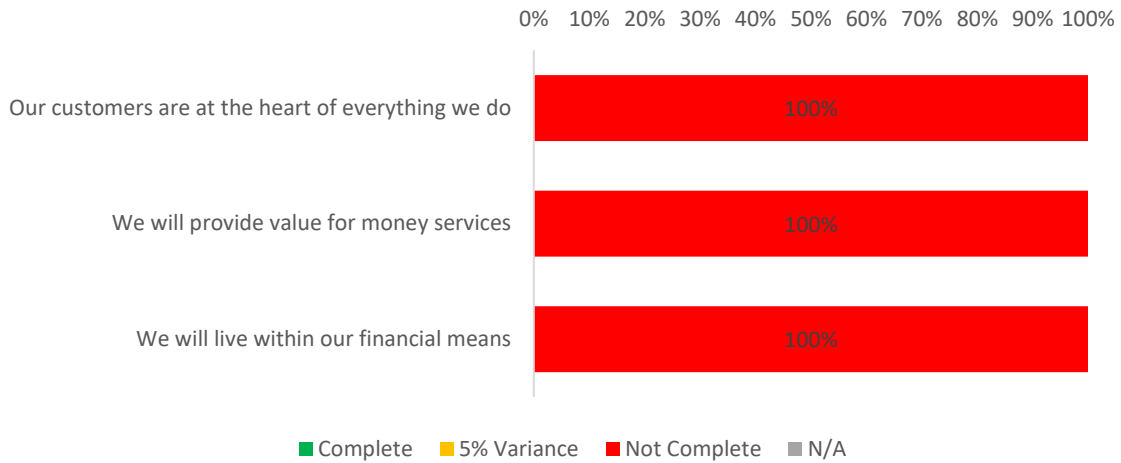
Clean and Green- overview of Performance in number of KPIs

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	<p>Our two major leisure centres in Ashby and Whitwick and Coalville provide good services to our communities.</p>		<p>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>	<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	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>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.