

To: Councillor Terry (Chair)
Councillors Leng, Barnett-Ward, Emberson,
Ennis, Gittings, Griffith, McEwan, Rowland,
R Singh, Thompson, White and Yeo

Direct: ☎ 0118 9372303

7 February 2025

Your contact is: **Jemma Durkan - Committee Services (jemma.durkan@reading.gov.uk)**

NOTICE OF MEETING - POLICY COMMITTEE 17 FEBRUARY 2025

A meeting of the Policy Committee will be held on Monday, 17 February 2025 at 6.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Reading, RG1 2LU. The Agenda for the meeting is set out below.

1. **CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
3. **MINUTES**
4. **DELEGATED DECISIONS**
5. **PETITIONS AND QUESTIONS**

**To
Follow
5 - 6**

To receive any petitions from the public and any questions from the public and Councillors.

- | | | | |
|----|---|-------------------------|-----------------|
| 6. | CEMETERY PROVISION BEYOND 2030 | BOROUGH
WIDE | 7 - 26 |
| | This report sets out the results of the public consultation and the preferred option of using reserve cemetery land at Henley Road to maintain burial provision in Reading beyond 2030. | | |
| 7. | BRIGHTER FUTURES FOR CHILDREN BUSINESS PLAN | BOROUGH
WIDE | 27 - 54 |
| | This report seeks approval from the Committee, in its capacity as sole member for Brighter Futures for Children Limited, (BFfC), to agree an annual Business Plan and contract sum. | | |
| 8. | 2025/26 BUDGET & MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2025/26-2027/28 | BOROUGH
WIDE | 55 - 200 |

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This report sets out the 2025/26 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Budgets, Capital Programme and Medium Term Financial Strategy for recommendation to Full Council.

9. CAPITAL STRATEGY 2025/26

BOROUGH WIDE 201 - 232

This report sets out the Capital Strategy 2025/26 for recommendation to Full Council.

10. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2025/26

BOROUGH WIDE 233 - 270

This report sets out the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy and Annual Investment Strategy for recommendation to Full Council.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION IN CLOSED SESSION

11. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The following motion will be moved by the Chair:

“That, pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) members of the press and public be excluded during consideration of the following items on the agenda, as it is likely that there would be disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of that Act”

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FOR CLOSED SESSION ITEMS

13. RTL SHAREHOLDER REPORT

BOROUGH WIDE 271 - 290

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Policy Committee

Delegated Decisions

Policy Committee	Min No.	Title	Delegated Decision
18.12.24	48	Microsoft Licence Enterprise Agreement	That the Executive Director of Resources, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Corporate Services and Resources, and the Assistant Director of Digital & IT, be authorised to make a direct award of a 36-month enterprise purchasing agreement for the Council’s Microsoft Licensing suite and any subsequent modifications or variations required during its lifetime to ensure its ongoing utility.

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Policy Committee

17 February 2025



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Title	Cemetery Provision beyond 2030
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report status	Public report
Report authors	Gavin Handford, Assistant Director for Policy, Change & Customer Services Ian Hussein, Registration & Bereavement Services Manager
Lead Councillor	Cllr Emberson, Lead councillor for Corporate Services & Resources
Corporate priority	Our Foundations
Recommendations	<p>That the Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notes the results of the public consultation on future cemetery provision and the Henley Road allotments. 2. Resolves that the use of the reserve cemetery land (currently used to provide the Henley Road allotments) remains the preferred option to continue providing a burial service in Reading until circa 2044. 3. Notes that the estimated total cost of the preferred option is £3.13m and that further budget provision has been included for approval through the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the Capital Strategy. 4. Authorises the Executive Director of Resources to undertake all necessary assessments and studies and submit a planning application for proposed burial use of the reserve ground on which the Henley Road allotment site is currently located. 5. Note that a detailed plan to manage the closure of the allotments and mitigate the reasonable concerns of allotment holders will be developed in consultation with the Lead Members. 6. Agrees that the search for additional land to meet burial provision beyond 2044 continues.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The consultation on future burial provision was completed between 2nd October and 6th December 2024 and received 330 responses from Reading residents (of which 67 identified themselves as Henley Road allotment holders).
- 1.2. The key learning points from the consultation are:
 - a) There is a strong preference for local burial options with a need for burial spaces to be available for future generations.
 - b) There is significant concern about the loss of the allotments, primarily amongst allotment holders, with a sentiment that their use for burial is a short-sighted option that does not address the long-term issue of burial space.
 - c) Concern about the loss of the allotments is coupled with recognition that the land was originally intended for cemetery use.
 - d) There is some opposition to having a cemetery outside of the Borough due to distance and additional costs with a preference for provision to remain within the Borough.
- 1.3. A third of the allotment holders who responded said that they would want to start again at a new plot which suggests that, should the land be used for burial, at least 40 allotment holders would wish to be relocated.
- 1.4. A consultation meeting was held with a representative of the Muslim community and the Area Dean of Reading. Both advised that the Council should not underestimate the strength of feeling about the importance of burial to the community and that any decision to end provision would be strongly opposed.
- 1.5. In addition to the consultation on future burial provision, officers were instructed to continue the search for and acquire purchase rights over new land outside of Reading to meet long-term demand for burial space. This search continues and a further report will be submitted if suitable land is secured. Provision to support this work is also proposed within the revised Medium Term Financial Strategy. However, at this stage and as previously reported to Policy Committee, there is no affordable, deliverable option for a new cemetery at this time.
- 1.6. This report recommends that the Council proceed with the previously agreed preferred option for future burial provision and seeks agreement to proceed with the necessary planning, studies, and assessments as part of a planning application for the closure of the Henley Road allotments by December 2028. In the absence of land that is available and affordable within or outside the borough, the use of the Henley Road allotment site offers the only viable option for the Council to continue to provide burial services for Reading residents. The closure of the allotment site will be complete in three tranches (October 2026-March 2027, October-March 2028, and October-December 2028). This will require a detailed transition plan for the transition of the allotment holders which will be done in consultation with Lead Councillors.
- 1.7. Work to consider provision beyond 2044 will continue, potentially in partnership with one or more surrounding boroughs.

2. Policy Context

- 2.1. This matter was previously considered at the September 2021 Policy Committee when Members received information on the burial options within a 20-mile radius of the Borough and the potential to acquire land for a new cemetery. Members gave a steer at that meeting that they wished to continue to provide burial space but needed more clarity on costs and land availability. Officers were, therefore, instructed to complete further research into the options available and their findings and recommendations are set out in this report.

- 2.2. At its September 2024 meeting, the Policy Committee received an update on a variety of options:
- A new cemetery within Reading (but no suitable land was available)
 - A local authority partner to jointly commission land for a new cemetery (at the time no local authority had expressed an interest but, recently, an approach has been made about the possibility of a joint new cemetery to meet long term demand).
 - Use of land at Caversham Park (but the plans for the site did not include cemetery provision)
 - Purchase of new site outside of Reading (but despite an extensive land search, no sites had been identified that were available and affordable)
- 2.3. The Committee noted that burial space will be depleted by 2030 and therefore resolved that the preferred option for future burial provision is to utilise the reserve cemetery land at Henley Road (the allotment site). Based upon current demand, this should enable the Council to continue to provide burial space in Reading until 2044.
- 2.4. The Assistant Director for Policy, Change & Customer Services was tasked to undertake formal consultation with key stakeholders on the preferred option to identify further impacts and mitigating actions and report back to this Committee for consideration and decision on using the allotment site for cemetery provision. The survey was completed with the aim of establishing the views of residents on the Council's preferred option of using the Henley Road allotments for burial. We also wanted to better understand the views of allotment holders and to get their thoughts on what could be done to mitigate the impact of losing their allotments.
- 2.5. The consultation consisted of a questionnaire with closed and open questions for completion either via the Council's online consultation portal or using paper copies available from libraries, the civic centre, and the cemetery office. Two public consultation meetings – one held mid-week at a community centre in Caversham and one held on a Saturday at the cemetery – were attended by a total of 30 residents, all of whom are Henley Road allotment holders.
- 2.6. A consultation meeting was also held for faith representatives, recognising their role in supporting bereaved families. The meeting was attended by a representative of the Muslim community and the Area Dean of Reading. Both advised that the Council should not underestimate the strength of feeling about the importance of burial to the community and that any decision to end provision would be strongly opposed.
- 2.7. The detailed results of the consultation, which was completed between October-December 2024, are shown in appendix 1A. Although the consultation received 330 responses (including one after the closing date), it is important to note that a lot of questions were either not answered or given a 'do not know' response. Sixty-seven respondents declared themselves as Henley Road allotment holders.
- 2.8. The key findings of the consultation are as follows:
- I. The largest response (46%) think the Council should continue to provide new graves, despite most not requiring burial or feeling that they would be adversely affected by provision ending.
 - II. There is an even split between those for and against using the allotments. 279 respondents answered this question with 137 not supporting use of the allotments (including 62 allotment holders) and 134 supporting using the allotments. 8 replied 'do not know'.
 - III. Of the 45 allotment holders who responded to the question on future allotment provision, 26 wish to have another allotment and most would seek support from the Council in transitioning to a new site.

- IV. Most are supportive of a new cemetery outside of the borough to meet demand from 2044 onwards, although a significant number prefer provision to stay within Reading.

- 2.9. The provision of burial space and the potential loss of allotments are sensitive and emotive subjects which generated significant comments from those who responded to the consultation. To avoid bias in the reporting, a summary of these comments provided by the analytical module of the Council's consultation portal is given in appendix 1B.
- 2.10. To mitigate the impact on existing allotment holders further work is required to produce a detailed plan for implementation if the decision is taken to proceed with the report's recommendation. The plan would address the steps required to close the allotment site and the support to be given to allotment holders seeking to start again elsewhere or who decide to discontinue being an allotment holder. Allotment holders primarily seek financial and physical support in relocating to another site.
- 2.11. Respondents to the consultation, whilst recognising the need for burial space, asked if the Council could phase the closure of the allotment site. A phased approach is not recommended as it would add significant cost to the works required and extend the period of disruption for the recently bereaved attending funerals and visiting graves. However, the cost and viability of a phased approach could be investigated further should that be the wish of the Committee. The planning implications and added complexity of a phased approach would also need further consideration, as would the two-tiered system of determining the order in which allotments would be lost.

3. The Preferred Option

- 3.1. As agreed by the Policy Committee in September 2024, the preferred option is to meet burial space demand by using the Henley Road Allotment which occupies reserve cemetery land. The main basis for this decision was:
- 3.1.1. A robust search for alternative affordable sites to meet needs beyond 2030 had been unsuccessful. Although the search for sites is recommended to continue, it is unlikely any will be found especially in the timescale required to start any development to meet the 2030 deadline when current burial capacity is expected to run out. Future searches may be possible in partnership with other local authorities also facing a shortage of burial space.
- 3.1.2. The allotment site would provide circa 2,300 graves and meet demand for an estimated additional 14 years, extending existing capacity for burial space from 2030 to 2044. The site development costs would be circa £3.13m (a cost of £1,361 per grave with each grave generating income of more than £3,800) - mostly be generated at the time of the first burial. The estimated costs including preliminary works, grounds works and site preparation, roads and pathways, fencing, services, signage, furniture, and project costs.
- 3.1.3. Although the land has been an allotment site for many decades, such use was granted on a 'temporary' basis and until such time that it was needed for burial. The site has 127 allotments leased to 115 individuals in 108 households.
- 3.1.4. It is recommended that the Policy Committee confirm this remains the preferred option as the consultation has indicated that:
- 3.1.4.1. There is a strong wish for residents and key stakeholders for the Council to continue to provide burial space. This would require the Council to have burial space started to be developed as soon as possible for which the only feasible option is the use of the Henley Road Allotment site.
- 3.1.4.2. The required mitigations put forward during the consultation to risks that may arise from the reclamation of the Henley Road site for cemetery use, can be put in place by 2026.

3.1.4.3. The proposed extension of Henley Road Cemetery is the most prudent and financially viable option available to the Council.

- 3.2. The Committee are asked to authorise officers to undertake the necessary detailed planning, assessments, and studies to support a planning application. As part of this, officers would formally advise Henley Road allotment holders of the decision and engage with them on the development of a plan to close the Henley Road allotment site by December 2028. The detailed plan requires a review of policies for the management of the Council's allotments and the options available to provide replacement allotment plots by extending some existing sites. If the recommendation is agreed, officers will develop a detailed plan to manage the closure of the allotments and mitigate the reasonable concerns of allotment holders. This will be done in consultation with Lead Councillors.

4. Contribution to Strategic Aims

- 4.1. Cemeteries and crematoria are essential community assets that are needed for the dignified care of the dead and the bereaved. The Council is the borough's primary burial and cremation authority providing local and affordable access to burial and cremation services.

5. Environmental and Climate Implications

- 5.1. Research in 2022 by the Centre for Sustainable Planning and Environment suggests that cemeteries provide many of the same benefits as green spaces [Frontiers | Planning Cemeteries: Their Potential Contribution to Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services \(frontiersin.org\)](#) and, with the right maintenance and management, can provide valuable ecosystems in urban areas.
- 5.2. Discontinuing burial will require people to travel further for cemetery space and have a negative environmental impact. Where it is religiously and / or culturally tolerable, some may opt for cremation which, whilst saving land, has an environmental toll through the use of fossil fuels and CO2 emissions.
- 5.3. If the recommendations are agreed, an environmental impact assessment and an assessment of the likely significant effects of the proposed change of use will form part of the planning application. The biodiversity of the existing site will need to be considered as part of this process and plans for any mitigation required put in place.

6. Community Engagement

- 6.1. Officers have sought to engage with the allotment holders in an open and constructive way during the site testing at Henley Road allotments. It is recognised that the uncertainty has caused distress for many allotment holders.
- 6.2. The consultation on future burial provision was completed between 2nd October and 6th December 2024 and received 330 responses from Reading residents (of which 64 identified themselves as Henley Road allotment holders).
- 6.3. Although less than a third of respondents reported that they would not be adversely affected by discontinuation of a burial service, the majority think the Council should continue to provide new graves. When asked if the Henley Road allotment site should be used for burial, respondents were almost evenly split with 134 for and 137 against the proposal (with nearly half of the opponents being allotment holders). A majority reported that they would not be adversely affected by the closure of the Henley Road allotments, whereas 95 respondents (mostly allotment holders) said that they would be.
- 6.4. A majority support the provision of a new cemetery outside the borough from 2044 onwards, although 20% objected primarily due to a preference for burial provision to remain within the borough. Some Residents advocate grave reuse and this is an option that is the subject to an ongoing Law Commission review of burial legislation which is expected to take several years to complete and before any change to current

restrictions are implemented. It would then be subject to legislative changes by the Government, for which no timetable can be confirmed.

- 6.5. Most respondents took the time and effort to give detailed comments on one or more questions. An overview of those comments and answers is given in appendix 1 using the analytical feature of the Council's consultation portal. This has the advantage of giving an unbiased analysis of the views expressed by the respondents.
- 6.6. In addition to the consultation, a range of correspondence was received from residents concerned about the impact of losing the allotments and / or the uncertainty regarding future burial provision. Officers have sought to respond to these throughout this period and ensure they were considered within the consultation. These were also incorporated into a set of 'FAQs' for anyone interested in the proposal. These are attached as appendix 1C.

7. Equality Implications

- 7.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, section 149, a public body must in the exercise of its functions have due regard to the need:
 - Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by this Act;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 7.2 An EIA has identified that not securing further burial land will adversely impact Religious and cultural groups requiring burial services. A specific EIA would be required as part of an action plan to close the allotment site with consideration being given to the impact on the allotment holders.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 The management of cemeteries is governed by the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977 (LACO). Local authorities are defined as burial authorities and given power to provide cemeteries by virtue of Local Government Act 1972 and Under section 214 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council may provide and maintain cemeteries whether inside or outside the borough's boundary. Powers and provisions for managing, regulating, and controlling cemeteries are contained in the LACO.
- 8.2 Whilst the Council must maintain existing cemeteries under its ownership, there is no legal obligation to provide a new cemetery. The council has a legal duty to provide sufficient land for allotments, but there is no clear legal definition of what sufficient means in this context or any "minimum requirements". The Henley Road allotment site is non-statutory.

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1. Bereavement Services generate annual income of £2.3m. and if the provision of new graves is discontinued, the Council will lose annual income of £600k, and that income will continue to reduce over time. Cemetery costs would be reduced through a reduction in grave digging expenditure (initially through a reduction of one post and, ultimately, two with a total annual saving in the region of £70k although this would not fully materialise for many years (until all existing graves are full).
- 9.2. The reserve cemetery land, which the Council owns, has the potential to provide an estimated 2,300 graves which would enable the cemetery related income to continue to be generated for an additional 14 years, generating a total income more than £8.7m.

- 9.3. The estimated cost of getting the reserve land into operational cemetery use is £3.13m and annual maintenance costs will increase by an estimated £60k per annum (the latter liability will be perpetual). The Capital Programme includes £1.636m for burial land acquisition in 2025/26 which would need to be supplemented by an additional £1.494m Capital Bid to provide the full £3.13m cost of developing the reserve ground, although the expenditure would be deferred until 2027/28 to allow the relocation of allotment holders. The project budget would also cover the package of care compensation described in the report (although this is to be finalised) and a project officer to support the consultation, engagement, and planning.
- 9.4. If the Committee agrees to the option to purchase additional land for future development an additional Capital Bid would be required to be considered and approved as part of the 2025/26 Budget process and officers authorised to enter into negotiations to buy land (with any purchase completion being subject to budget approval and planning consent for cemetery use).
- 9.5. The Henley Road allotment site currently provides annual income of £3,100, which would end if the site is reclaimed for cemetery use.

10. Proposed Timetable for Implementation

2025	Actions
February	Policy Committee decision taken to proceed with plans for use of allotment site.
February - December	Pre-planning application, environmental impact assessment/ biodiversity survey work completed, site development plans finalised and full planning application.
April	Tier 3 ground water testing begins
2026	
January - December	Planning application complete. Phase 1 relocation of allotment holders (October 26 – March 27)
2027/28	
January – July 2028	Procurement for cemetery development works completed. Phase 2 relocation of allotment holders (October 2027-March 2028).
2028	
August - December	Phase 3 relocation of any remaining allotment holders and commencement of works.
2029-30	
January 2029 – December 2030	Site works for cemetery use completed

11. Background Papers

There are none.

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December 2024

- **Project:** Consultation on Future Cemetery Provision and Henley Road Allotments
- **Start:** 2 October 2024
- **Project manager:** Ian Hussein

Report summary

The survey of Reading residents was completed with the aim of establishing the views of residents on the Council's preferred option of using the Henley Road allotments (reserve cemetery burial ground) to extend Henley Road Cemetery.

We also wanted to better understand the views of allotment holders and to get their thoughts on what could be done to mitigate the impact that any closure would have on them.

The two public meetings held were mostly attended by allotment holders who account for 20% (67) of the responses. 53% of respondents do not require burial and only 28% said that they would be adversely affected if burial provision ended. Despite these factors, a clear majority think the Council should continue to provide new graves.

137 respondents do not support the Council using the Henley Road Allotments, whilst 134 do. However, if Henley Road allotment holders are excluded, 194 support the Council's preferred option and the number opposed drops to just 23. Of the 277 who answered this question, 157 responded 'don't know'.

Asked what they consider to be reasonable support from the Council if the allotments are closed, 44 of the 67 allotment holders responded. 26 would want a new plot and most of these would want relocation support and help in preparing the ground for planting.

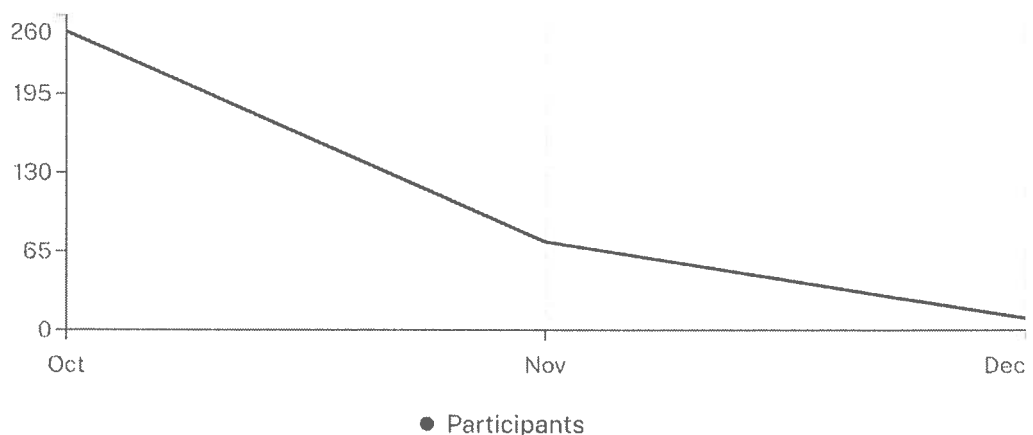
Participants timeline

Total participants

329

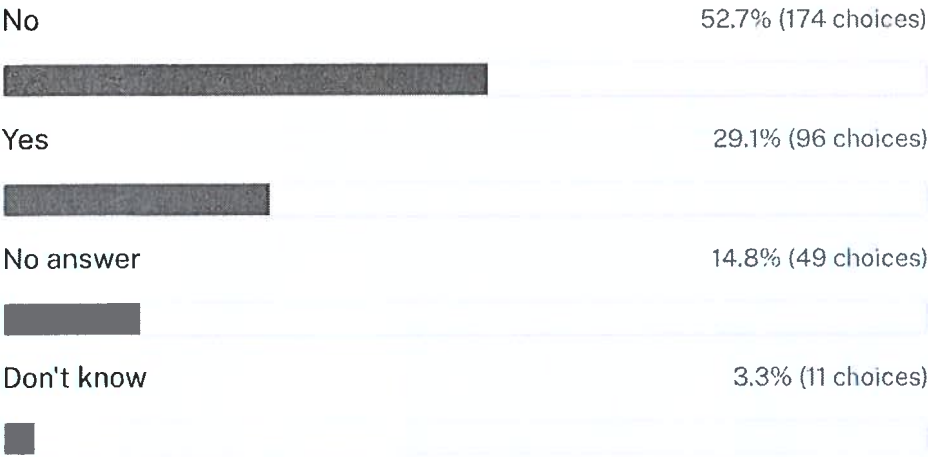
Participation rate ⓘ

0%



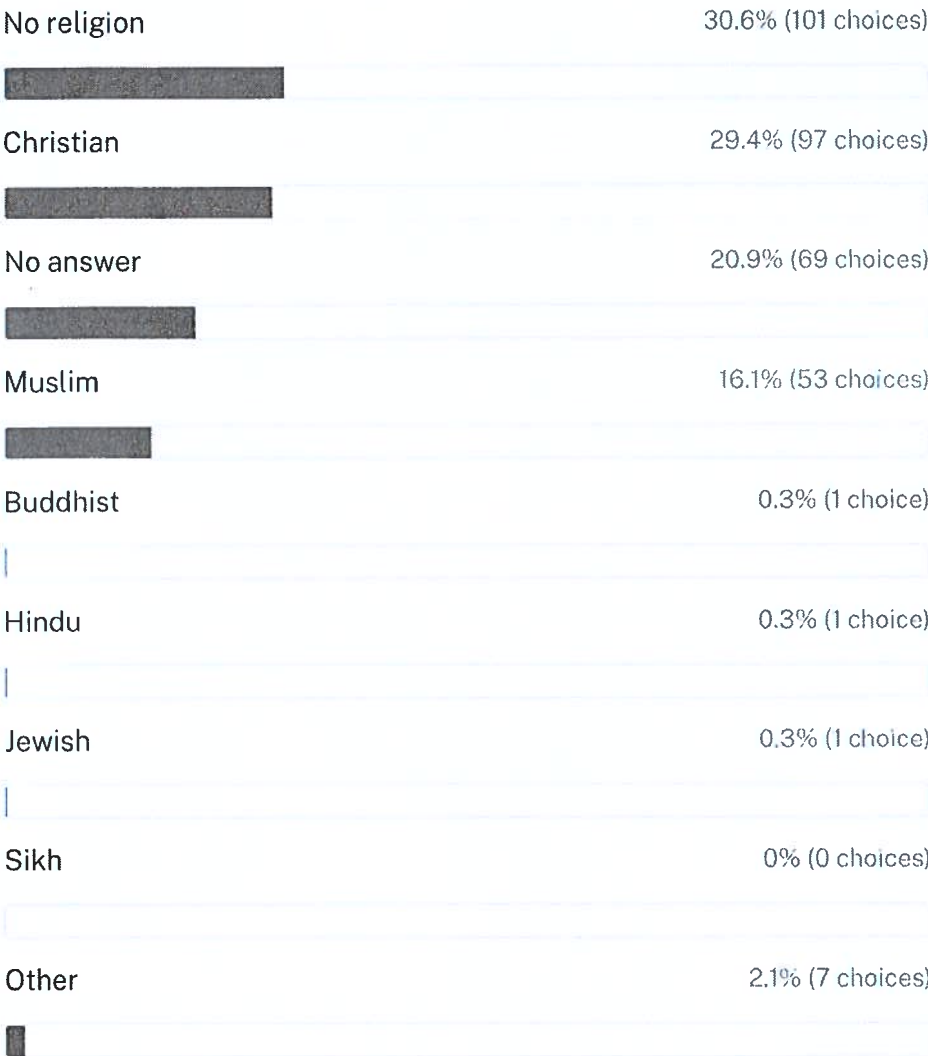
Does your faith, belief or personal preference require burial?

281/330 - Multiple choice - choose one - optional



What is your religion?

261/330 - Multiple choice - choose one - optional



Do you think the Council should continue to provide new graves?

256/330 - Multiple choice - choose one - optional

Yes 46.4% (153 choices)



No 26.4% (87 choices)



No answer 22.4% (74 choices)



Don't know 4.8% (16 choices)



If the Council stopped providing new graves for burial once the existing cemetery is full, would this have an adverse impact on you?

263/330 - Multiple choice - choose one - optional

No 45.8% (151 choices)



Yes 27.6% (91 choices)



No answer 20.3% (67 choices)



Don't know 6.4% (21 choices)



Are you an allotment holder?

279/330 - Multiple choice - choose one - optional

No 62.4% (206 choices)



Yes 20.3% (67 choices)



No answer 15.5% (51 choices)



Don't know 1.8% (6 choices)



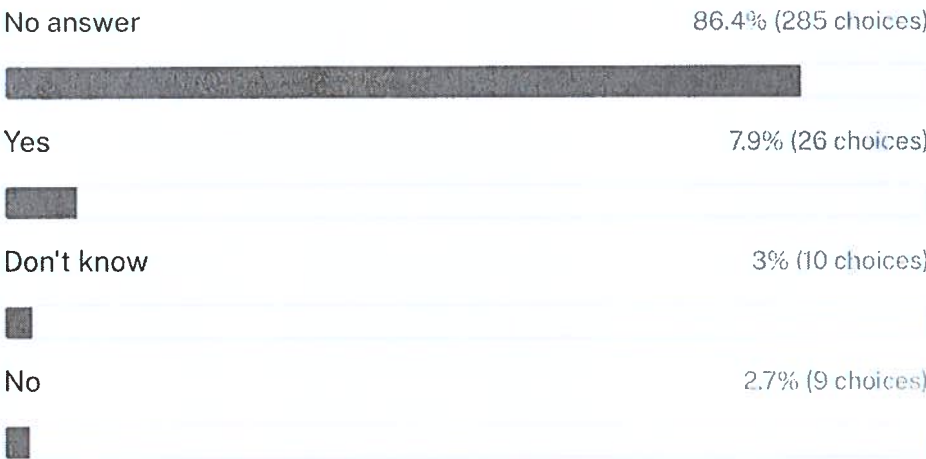
If yes, are you an allotment holder at Henley Road allotments

325/330 - Multiple choice - choose one - required



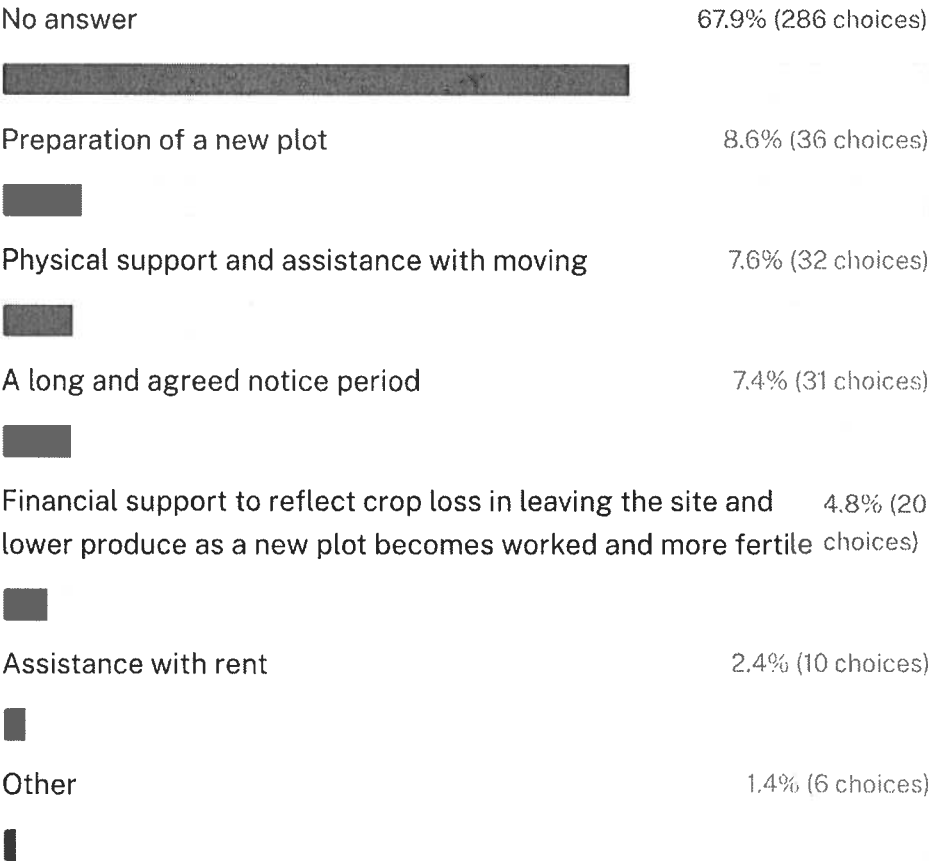
In the event that the decision is made to close the allotments, would you want to start again at a new plot?

45/330 - Multiple choice - choose one - optional



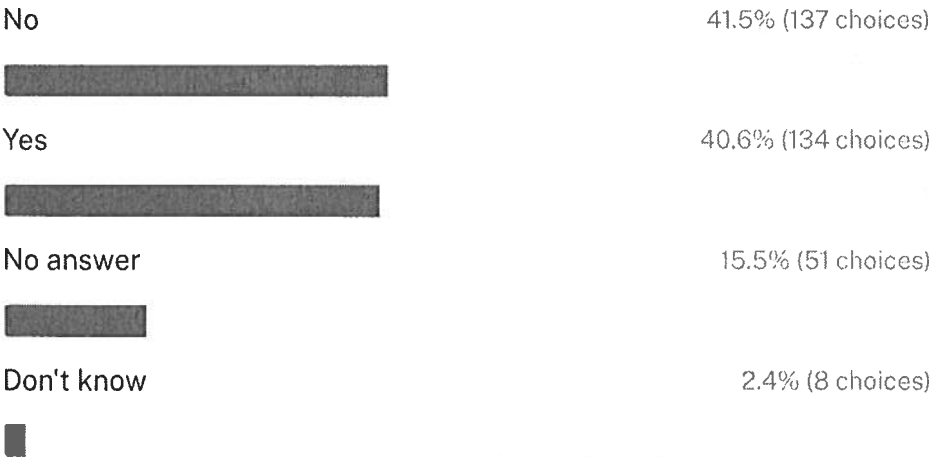
In the event that the decision is made to close the allotments, what do you consider to be reasonable support from the Council (please tick all that apply)

44/330 - Multiple choice - choose many - optional



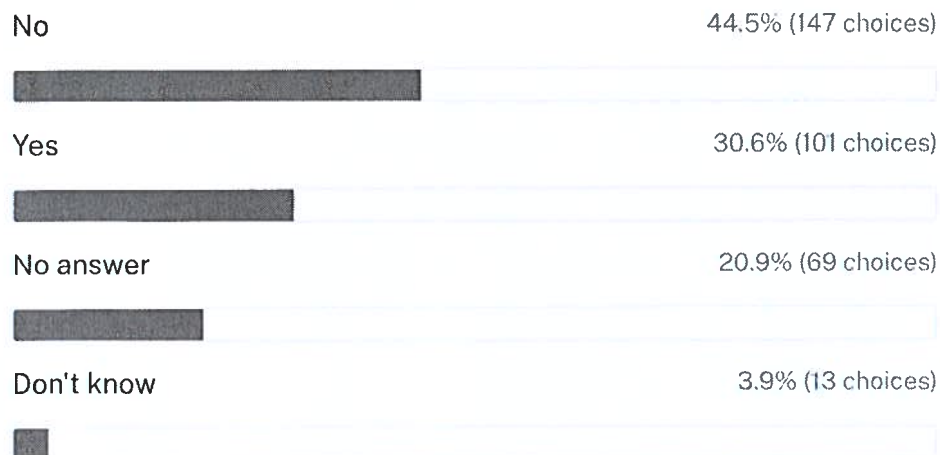
Do you support the Council using the Henley Road allotment site (reserve cemetery land) to extend the cemetery in order to provide new graves?

279/330 - Multiple choice - choose one - optional



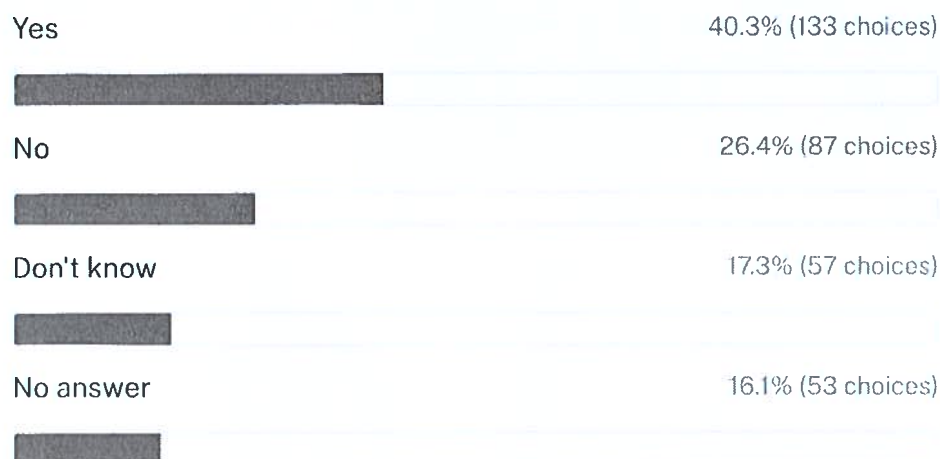
If the Council closed the Henley Road allotments would this have an adverse impact on you?

261/330 - Multiple choice - choose one - optional



Do you support the provision of a new cemetery outside of the borough boundary from 2044 onwards?

277/330 - Multiple choice - choose one - optional



APPENDIX 1B

Summary of comments from respondents to survey on future burial provision produced by the AI function of the consultation portal.

Respondents expressed concerns about the potential lack of local burial space in Reading, with many highlighting the importance of having a burial site close to home for cultural, religious, and personal reasons. A significant number of respondents mentioned religious obligations, particularly within the Muslim community, where burial is a necessity and cremation is not an option.

The proximity of burial sites was also seen as important for the grieving process and for family members to visit graves easily. Some respondents suggested alternative solutions such as reusing graves after a certain period, cremation, or natural burial grounds with trees instead of headstones. There were also comments about the need to preserve allotments and green spaces for the living, suggesting that these areas could be better used for affordable housing or as parks.

The potential impact on mental health due to not having a local burial plot was mentioned as well as the difficulty and additional costs associated with having to find burial space outside of Reading. Some respondents felt that the council should prioritize providing burial spaces for residents over other developments like expensive flats.

A few respondents were indifferent to the issue as they preferred cremation or did not require a burial plot themselves. Others suggested that the legislation regarding the reuse of burial sites should be revised to allow for more sustainable management of cemetery space. Overall, there was a strong sentiment for the need to maintain and provide local burial options in Reading, with particular emphasis on cultural and religious requirements, family connections, and the importance of having a place to mourn and remember loved ones.

Respondents have expressed a range of views on the proposed use of Henley Road Allotments for cemetery expansion. A significant number of respondents are concerned about the loss of green, productive land and the impact on mental and physical health, highlighting the importance of allotments for community, sustainability, and well-being. They argue that allotments offer a space for growing food, exercise, and a connection to nature, which is especially important for those without gardens. There is also concern about the loss of established plants and trees that cannot be easily relocated.

Some respondents are aware that the allotments were intended as temporary and believe it is reasonable to revert the land back to its original purpose for cemetery use. They argue that this would ensure local residents can bury their loved ones nearby and maintain green space in the long term. Others suggest exploring alternative solutions such as reusing old graves, promoting cremation over burial, or finding additional land for cemetery expansion.

A few respondents acknowledge that while they do not personally use the allotments, they recognize their importance to others and suggest that alternative plots should be provided if the current ones are lost.

Overall, there is a strong sentiment among respondents that allotments are a critical resource for health, community, and sustainability, and there is concern about the impact of their loss. There is also recognition that the land was originally intended for cemetery use, with some respondents accepting this as a fair outcome.

Some respondents believe that the needs of the living should take precedence over the dead, questioning the allocation of valuable land for burials.

Respondents expressed a variety of views on the future provision of cemetery space and the use of Henley Road Allotments. A common theme was the concern over the scarcity of land within the borough, with several suggesting that land should be used for housing or that burial is not a right and the council should not necessarily provide burial space.

Some respondents were against the idea of locating cemeteries outside the borough due to inconvenience and additional costs. There were also suggestions to encourage cremation over burial and to consider reusing old graves. The idea of creating a longer-term burial strategy was mentioned, as well as the concept of eco-friendly burial grounds with trees instead of headstones. Specific needs of religious communities were also highlighted, with some respondents noting the importance of providing burial space for the Muslim community within the borough and others suggesting that religious groups could purchase their own land for burial. A few responses were more neutral or did not express a clear opinion on the matter.

Respondents are primarily concerned about the potential loss of the Henley Road Allotments and its impact on the community, environment, and individual well-being. Many highlight the importance of preserving green spaces and the benefits of allotments for mental and physical health, community spirit, and sustainability. Others mention the importance of grave spaces in Reading.

There is criticism of the council's approach, suggesting it is biased and does not fully consider the impact on allotment holders. There is a strong desire to maintain the Henley Road Allotments due to their value to the community's health, well-being, and environment. Respondents urge for alternative solutions to cemetery provision that do not compromise these valued green spaces.

On 18 September 2024, the Council's Policy Committee will consider a report regarding future burial provision.

The report sets out options for the Council to continue providing a burial service for residents. The current cemetery at Henley Road is expected to run out of burial space by 2030.

The following is intended to provide additional information and address questions that residents may have in response to the options. A copy of the report is available at:

<https://democracy.reading.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=138&MId=5434>

Why can't you find alternative land?

An extensive search found some potential sites outside of the borough boundary but, in most cases, the purchase cost is prohibitive due to the owners seeking residential value. If we find land that is affordable, we will consider acquiring it for development and long-term future use.

What were the results from ground testing at the Henley Road allotment site?

The tests found that the ground water table across the site is likely to meet the requirements for permission to use the area for burial. If the Council decides to use the site for burial a final phase of ground water testing would commence over a 12-month period and prior to a planning application. The cost of the final ground testing is significant, and the funding will only be allocated if a decision is taken to use the site for burial.

How will you consult?

We will use the Council's online consultation platform to get public responses to a series of questions designed to help establish how discontinuing the provision of new graves or closure of the Henley Road allotments would affect residents. We will also consult on resident support for either of these options and hold discussions with representative groups. Public meetings will be used to gather feedback – including meetings of allotment holders and faith groups.

It looks like the decision has already been taken by the Council - are you going to listen to the consultation?

Yes, we are going to listen. Members want more information before deciding on future burial provision and have instructed officers to report back. If the Council's Policy Committee on the 18th September accepts the recommendations of its officers (that the allotment site should be the preferred option for future burial provision) the decision will remain subject to public consultation – the results of which will be reported to Members before a final decision is taken early next year.

Why not stop offering new graves once the cemetery is full?

This is an option, but the Council believes that its residents should have a choice between burial and cremation and an option within Reading to ensure access for grieving and processing the death of loved ones within our town. Burial is a requirement of certain faiths and a choice that bereaved parents tend to take when a child has died. Such choice is important.

Why spend Council taxpayer's money on more cemetery space?

The Council's bereavement service generates income and is self-funding. The loss of income from the sale of graves would mean that the upkeep of Henley Road Cemetery would have to be subsidised by Council taxpayers, which is not currently the case.

What support/compensation will be provided to allotment holders?

Although the Council has no statutory obligation to compensate the allotment holders, consideration will, where possible, be given by Members to providing reasonable financial support to assist in their relocation.

Will alternative allotments be made available?

Yes, and priority will be given by the Council to Henley Road allotment holders to be allocated alternative sites in Reading. Such offers would commence once a decision has been taken by the Council and a reasonable financial incentive may be given to those allotment holders who relinquish their plot.

If you use the allotment site, how long will it last and what happens once that is full?

Based on current demand, the site will provide enough graves to meet demand for 14 years. We currently have enough space until 2030 so that would mean we could extend provision until 2044. If more land can be found, it will be purchased by the Council and kept for use after 2044.

Why the hesitation about using reserve cemetery ground to extend the cemetery when that is why the Council bought the land originally?

Although the Council has kept the site for future cemetery use, residents were granted temporary / annual allotment leases and that has been an agreed and understood arrangement for decades. The Council understands the attachment that residents have to their allotments and the value of such a facility to them. Before taking a final decision, members want to fully understand how all allotment holders will be affected and what can be done to mitigate their loss if the allotment site is closed.

Will there be any compensation offered for outbuildings / sheds etc, physical items especially those recently purchased and for which money will be lost?

Potentially there may be and this is something that will be considered by the Council as part of the consultation process with allotment holders and their representatives.

Is there a long-term plan to do away with allotments altogether in this area, as there always seems to be a pressure on allotment sites?

No. The Council remains committed to delivering its statutory duty to provide allotments for our local residents and has a range of allotment sites across Reading. The Council is also looking to see if additional allotment spaces or sites can be created in the Borough. The Henley Road allotments occupy ground that had historically been reserved for future cemetery use, and the allotment use was only until the land was required for cemetery use and not a statutory allotment site. Henley Road has served allotment holders well for many decades and would have otherwise been left unused. However, we have now reached that point where the land is needed for its originally intended purpose as a burial site.

What will happen if there is no allotment available to move to

It is the intention of the Council to do all that it reasonably can to secure new allotment sites for all displaced allotment holders. We are hopeful that this can be the primary solution for all or the vast majority of the allotment holders. In the worst case, an allotment holder might have to be added to a waiting list on one of the other allotment sites in the borough, but it remains the hope to supply new sites for all that desire one.

When I walk around the cemetery I can see loads of spare space, why don't you use that?

Areas that may appear to be spare have been used for burial, but memorials were never placed or lost over time. We will be using all the space available without ruining the cemetery's appearance and use as a place of respect for the dead and the bereaved family and friends.

Why don't you use the old BBC land? There is a lot of land on this site, surely you can get some of that?

The site is an historically significant landscape for which planning permission would unlikely be granted for cemetery use. In any event, the Council's approaches to discuss the site as a possible cemetery extension were unsuccessful.

Why did the Council move former Cow Lane allotment holders to a temporary allotment site?

At the time of the Cow Lane allotment closure, which was roughly 15 years ago, there was still significant capacity available at Henley Road cemetery. Therefore the Henley Road reserve land offered long term allotment provision. Thus, there has been a considerable period of time since former Cow Lane allotment holders were relocated to Henley Road, and we have a new situation that as a town must be looked at. Unfortunately, Councils can seldom make promises to any type of service user in perpetuity particularly as circumstances do change over time. In a town such as Reading with a tightly constrained footprint, we are constantly up against space challenges to provide all services.

Will the former Cow Lane allotment holders who were transferred to the Henley Road allotment site be given priority in the allocation of a new allotment space?

If the Council decides to close the Henley Road allotments, we will start a process of supporting all allotments holders, giving as much notice as we can. As part of the planned consultation we want to understand what the impact will be and what support might be needed for allotment holders moving to a different site.

Policy Committee

17 February 2025



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Title	Brighter Futures for Children Business Plan
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report status	Public report
Report author	Darren Carter
Lead Councillor	Cllr Liz Terry
Corporate priority	Thriving Communities
Recommendations	1. That Policy Committee, in its' capacity as sole member for BFfC, approves the company's Business Plan as set out in Appendix 1 of this report.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. Brighter Futures for Children (BFfC) is a wholly owned company of Reading Borough Council. The company's Articles of Association set out its obligations in terms of reporting to the Council as Sole Member as well as the matters which are reserved to the Sole Member.
- 1.2. The Business Plan appended at Appendix 1 has been submitted by the Company in response to its obligation to agree an annual Business Plan and contract sum, a matter reserved to the Sole Member.
- 1.3. Following the decision made at Council on 28th January 2025 "That by 1 April 2026, services currently provided by BFfC, including all remaining support services, be brought in house to be delivered directly by the Council" it is anticipated that this will be the last business plan submitted by Brighter Futures for Children.

2. Policy Context

- 2.1. The Council has 100% ownership of BFfC, which is run by a senior management team reporting to the Company Board of directors. In turn, the Board reports to the Council (Policy Committee) as its sole member.
- 2.2. The agreement of the BFfC Business Plan is a reserved matter, requiring the approval of Policy Committee in its capacity as sole member.

3. The Proposal

- 3.1. The detailed business plan is set out in Appendix 1 of this report.

4. Contribution to Strategic Aims

- 4.1. The Council's Corporate Plan has established three themes for the years 2022/25. These themes are:
 - Healthy Environment
 - Thriving Communities
 - Inclusive Economy

- 4.2. The BFfC Business Plan, aligns with and contributes to delivery of the Thriving Communities theme.
- 4.3. The projects and Key Performance Indicators included in this business plan will be included in the new Council Corporate Plan.

5. Environmental and Climate Implications

- 5.1. There are no environmental and climate implications arising from this report.

6. Community Engagement

- 6.1. No community engagement has been carried out or is required in the creation of or as a result of this report.

7. Equality Implications

- 7.1. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is not relevant to this decision.

8. Other Relevant Considerations

- 8.1. None.

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1. The agreement to the Business Plan for BFfC is a reserved matter under the Articles of Association for the Company. This requires agreement to the Plan via Policy Committee acting as sole member for the Company.

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1. The proposed Contract Sum for BFfC for FY2025/26 as stated in this report is included in the proposed budget that is being considered by Council on 25th February 2025.

11. Timetable for Implementation

- 11.1. These are contained in Appendix 1.

12. Background Papers

- 12.1. There are none.

Appendices

1. The Brighter Futures for Children Business Plan



Business Plan 2025-2026

Our strategic vision and detailed
business plan for 2025-26



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Chair's introduction

This is the last business plan of Brighter Futures for Children and outlines how the Company will deliver on its priorities in the final year of operation.

Having undertaken a comprehensive review of the contract with BFFC, Reading Borough Council has made the decision to bring children's services back in-house to be delivered directly by the Council. The Board of Brighter Futures for Children fully supports this decision and appreciates the Council's desire for closer control at this time of nationwide increases in costs and pressures in children's services.

We are pleased that the contract review acknowledged the significant progress made by BFFC during the past six years and recognise that there is more to be done to achieve the Council's ambitions for services to children and families in Reading. Over the coming year we will collaborate closely with the Council to ensure that this period of transition builds on the progress made and delivers further improvement.

At the heart of this business plan, and central to maintaining momentum during this period of transition, will be the further embedding and delivery of our ambitious Transformation Programme. This will continue to provide a framework for continuous improvement while also addressing the key financial pressures in relation to escalating costs for children's residential placements. The focus on preventative partnership working and the establishment of family hubs, the strengthened offer to local foster carers, the development of an Edge of Care Service and the planned development of residential children's homes will place children's services in a better position for managing the national and local financial pressures over the next year and beyond.

We recognise that our most important asset is our workforce, and we are committed to ensuring the development and retention of our skilled and enthusiastic staff and to support them in partnership with the Council through this period of transition. Their contribution during the lifetime of the BFFC contract has been pivotal to improving outcomes and has often been reflected in the increasingly positive Ofsted inspections where good improvement has been identified. The current senior leadership of BFFC is at its strongest and most stable, and we are confident that these leaders will provide the necessary skill, continuity, and commitment to support the workforce in maintaining a clear focus on improving outcomes for the children, young people, and families of Reading.

The relationship between Brighter Futures for Children and Reading Borough Council has strengthened over the past few years and we have greatly appreciated the Council's financial support as we have endeavoured to shape our Transformation Programme in response to the financial challenges and pressures which have beset most children's services across the country.

It has been a great privilege to deliver children's services on behalf of Reading Borough Council for the past six and a half years and we are committed to the delivery of this business plan and to providing our full support to the Council as children's services return in-house.



Di Smith
Chair of the Board
Brighter Futures for Children



National and local context

National context

The demand for statutory children's services continues to increase and represents significant pressure and challenge on children's social care, which is a national trend mirrored in Reading.

Some of the key factors that contribute to this are well known to us and to all local authorities – parental substance misuse, domestic abuse and an increase in emotional and mental health issues – but there are other, wider contributing factors at play too.

Department of Works and Pension data for 2022-23, published in March 2024¹ estimated that **3.4 million** children (30%) in England were living in relatively low-income families and **3.6 million** (25%) in absolute low-income families, **100,000** more children than the previous year.

The number of children in care is continuing to rise each year. There were **83,840** children in the care system in England in 2023, 2% more than in 2022. Of these, **33,000** came into care during the year (up 6%)². That's one child every 15 minutes who could need a foster family³. Nearly **70,000** children live with over **53,000** foster families across the UK. Of the **83,840** children in care in England, **7,290** were unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, an increase of **29%** on the previous year (2022).

Whilst **31,680** children in England ceased to be looked after during 2023, up 5% on 2022, the higher number of children being looked after shows us that more children are staying in care for longer. This is also borne out by the reduction in adoptions, down 2% to **2,960** in 2023.

All these factors collectively put pressure into the system, with too few children's care placements available to meet children's needs in Reading and nationally. One of the primary issues, both nationally and locally, is the rising cost of homes for children.

In late 2023, the Local Government Association carried out a survey of local authorities in England about the high cost of children's social care placements⁴. Based on the responses, local authorities across England spent approximately **£4.7 billion** on children's social care homes in 2022/23, compared to a budgeted figure of **£4.1 billion** – an overspend of almost £670 million (16%).

Similarly, it was estimated that local authorities across England had a projected expenditure of **£5.4 billion** on children's social care homes for 2023/24, compared to a budgeted figure of **£4.7 billion** – an overspend of approximately **£680 million** (14%). In 2018/19, **23%** respondent councils paid for at least one home costing **£10,000** per week or more, compared to **91%** in 2022/23.

Since 2014, the number of children and young people with education, health and care plans (EHCPs) has risen by **140%**, from **240,183** in 2014/15 (which includes EHCPs and statements) to **575,973** in 2023/24.

¹ <https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/child-poverty-statistics-causes-and-the-uks-policy-response/>

² <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoptions/2023#releaseHeadlines-summary>

³ <https://www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/advice-information/all-about-fostering/fostering-statistics>

⁴ <https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/high-cost-childrens-social-care-placements-survey>

The percentage of pupils nationally with an EHC plan continues to rise to **4.8%** of the school population, from **4.3%** in 2023. Through a range of mitigations including Reading's Delivering Better Value programme Reading has seen a **2.3%** growth in overall EHCP numbers which is below national and South East averages. The most common type of need for those with an EHC plan is autistic spectrum disorder and for those with SEN support is speech, language and communication needs.

The cost of meeting these demands continues to cause financial pressures nationally.

The financial impact of this demand has been evidenced in the Local Government Association report [Towards an effective and financially sustainable approach to SEND in England](#) published in July 2024 which is calling for national reform of the SEND system.

The LGA report notes that while government funding, in the form of high needs block allocations to LAs, has risen from **£4.8 billion** in 2014-15 to **£9.2 billion** in 2024-25, high needs spending by LAs exceeded high needs block allocations by **£890 million** in 2023-24, and could rise to **£1.1 billion** and **£1.3 billion** over the next two years.

It is estimated that the cumulative high needs deficit has risen from **£300 million** in 2018-19 to **£3.16 billion** currently.

Local context


The number of contacts received at our front door decreased from **12,929 in 2023** to **12,241 in 2024** representing a **4% reduction**. Referrals to children's social care decreased from **3,181 in 2023** to **2,389 in 2024 (25% decrease)** and early help allocations went from **1,493** to **1,626 (9% increase)**. This was a result of strengthening our partnership work at the children's front door to ensure that children and families receive the right support at the right time.

In Reading we have continued to see an increase in referrals relating to parental mental health, children's mental health or neurodivergent needs, domestic abuse and families in acute crisis. All of these continue to be exacerbated by the impact of the rising cost of living, poverty and challenges in timely access to community health and mental health support. As of **December 2024**, there were **242 children on a child protection plan** compared to **239** in the **December 2023 (1% increase)**, reflecting these needs and demonstrating the importance of early intervention to prevent the escalation of need and risk.

During **2024**, **117** children came into care compared with **113** in the previous year (**3% increase**). As of **December 2024**, **198** care experienced young people were accessing Leaving Care services compared to **188** the previous year (**5% increase**).

The shift to an older age profile of children in our care has continued and we are also seeing more children needing increasingly complex care. In **December 2024**, **68%** of children in care (including kinship care) were living locally, a **5% decrease** from the previous year. This was, in main, due to a **52% increase** in the number of children placed in residential care, which went up from **31 (December 2023)** to **47** at the end of **December 2024**. This is due to a combination of complexity of need and both a national and local shortage of foster carers.

The cost of external children's homes is unsustainable long term. In the delivery of our statutory responsibilities, we must address this at the greatest pace given the significant financial impact that it continues to have on Brighter Futures for Children and Reading Borough Council. This is being addressed through the delivery of our transformation programme, which includes a focus on



initiatives to prevent children coming into care, support children to return home where it is safe to do so and increase the number of local foster carers and children's homes in Reading.

The number of children with an **EHCP** as of **December 2024** was **1,999**, an increase of only 2.3% from the previous year, compared to a **10% increase** from **2022-2023**. This is due to proactive work across Reading schools to promote inclusive practice and to meet children's needs earlier, led by our specialist advisory service, RISE. Where children do have an identified need we have increased the number of Additionally Resourced Provision places in local mainstream schools. However, there remains a shortage of local special school places, meaning that too many children are attending independent non-maintained special schools outside of Reading, often at a distance.

Overall pupil attendance at Reading schools has dropped from **92.7% (December 2023)** to **91%** at the end of **December 2024**. Work to understand the links between attendance, suspension and exclusions continues, with a particular focus on disadvantaged groups.

Children recorded with a good level of development in EYFSP has improved from **63.8% in 2023** to **66.9% in 2024**. Those reaching the expected level in reading, writing and maths at the end of KS2 has also improved from **55.5%** to **58.2%**. There has been a drop in the Attainment 8 score for those at the end of KS4 from **50.1** to **48.8**. Once again, the focus on improving attainment has and continues to be on disadvantaged groups and narrowing the gap.

Much of this reflects the national context, particularly in relation to demand and cost pressures of children's homes, the costs of independent non-maintained special schools and home to school transport. Together these represent our biggest and most urgent concern and priority.

The financial pressures to deliver a quality service that meets children's needs within our contract sum cannot be underestimated. We know we must reduce costs where we can, while maintaining a sharp focus on delivering high quality services that consistently meet children's needs and deliver sustained improved outcomes for children and families.

This business plan details how our strategic priorities for 2025-26 have been updated to address these challenges.

Our Achievements in 2024/25

To achieve our strategic objectives last year, we set key priorities based on what success would look like by putting our children and young people at the heart of what we do.

Priority 1: We will work together and across local partnerships to provide the right support and services at the right time to deliver the best possible outcomes for children and their families.

Priority 2: We will deliver effective early help services to prevent the escalation of need at a later stage while contributing to increased resilience across the partnership to meet children's need at the earliest opportunity.

Priority 3: We will deliver a sustainable Children Social Care service through practice rooted in relationship-based and timely statutory engagement with families.

Priority 4: We will influence and support education settings to offer high quality inclusive teaching and learning to support achievement for all, including those who require bespoke, specialised or SEND support.

A comprehensive review of our progress against our objectives 2023/24 can be found in our [Annual Report](#).

We are proud of the key achievements made by BFfC over the past year. Some – but not all – are listed below (a more extensive list can be found in Appendix 1):


- With the support of the Council, we invested in and embedded our ambitious **Transformation Programme**. Through the programme we have: strengthened our partnership approach at the front door; strengthened our fostering offer to local foster carers, including enhanced fees; implemented a project and identified properties to develop two children's homes and an assessment home in Reading; developed and recruited to an Edge of Care Service; strengthened our decision-making and financial oversight of placements and developed a new partnership Early Help Strategy and a plan to open Family Hubs in 2025 (Priorities 1,2,3).
- Our Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) was published in July 2024, showing significant improvement from 2019. While remaining Requires Improvement overall, the inspectors graded both experiences and progress of children in care and experience and progress of care leavers as Good. The report noted that *'the transformation plan addresses the right priorities and there is a clear vision for the delivery of services. Some progress is already evident and senior leaders have a good understanding of the improvements that have yet to be achieved.'* (Priorities 1,2,3)
- We have strengthened our **corporate parenting ambition and offer**, continuing to work jointly with Reading Borough Council to develop our corporate parenting offer so that it reflects our ambitions for children looked after and care leavers. **Council tax** relief for **care leavers** was extended up to age of 25 years from April 2024 and free prescriptions, gym membership and an improved apprenticeship offer have all been added to the Care Leavers' Offer (Priorities 1,3)
- We secured DfE funding for an 18-month project and, in February 2024, we launched our **Reading Inclusion Support in Education (RISE)** service to support all Reading schools to improve their offer of Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP), Graduated Response (GR) and to better support all children and young people (CYP), including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The service has received positive feedback from education settings and families and is making a positive difference for children with SEND in Reading (Priorities 1,4).
- We successfully secured single and regional **funding** bids including the DfE funded South East Regional Fostering Hub, Local Authority Fostering South East, and ICB funding to extend Mental Health Support Teams across all Reading schools. We also partnered with South East Local Authorities to join the DfE funded Regional Care Cooperative, working to improve how together we meet the most complex needs of our children in care (Priorities 1,2,3,4).
- We have improved the **permanency of our workforce**, with 100% permanent senior leaders and managers and 86% permanent social workers at December 2024. The recruitment of social workers in local children's services remains a national issue and the introduction of a variety of local initiatives and incentives has supported this ongoing improvement. Six new ASYEs joined BFfC in September 2024 and BFfC formed its own dedicated ASYE Academy Team in November 2024 (Priority 3).

- We developed a new **2024-2026 Sufficiency strategy** to ensure we remain fit for purpose in a changing context and landscape. This links to the development of our own children's homes, as well as the expansion of block purchased local beds, ensuring as many children as possible in residential care can live locally in stable, loving homes (Priority 3).
- We held our first annual **staff conference focused on wellbeing** recognising that our workforce is our most valuable asset (Priority 3).
- Following a retender of our **advocacy service** we created an Opt Out service, inclusive of advocacy for parents resulting in a 50% increase in the number of children accessing advocacy (Priorities 1,3).
- Over the year, covering the Easter, summer and Christmas holiday periods, we offered 17,492 spaces to children on the **Holiday Activity and Food programme** in 2024. Of these, 14,278 (81%) were booked and 10,282 (70%) were used. The HAF saw 2,294 new children attending across the holiday breaks, with more children attending more than one event (Priorities 1,2).
- We have increased the use of **Family Group Conferences** for all children, putting children and families at the heart of decision-making about their lives (Priority 3).
- A wider range of additional school places for children with SEND were created for the academic year 2024/25, ensuring all children can access an appropriate place. 140 Additionally Resourced Provision places were created in mainstream schools; and an increased number of special school places are being provided by Thames Valley School, Oak Tree School and Hamilton Special School (Priority 1,4).
- Reading remains in the 1st quintile of local authorities with the best performance for young people being in **education employment and training**, with one of the lowest combined not in education, employment and training (NEET) and not known positions (Priority 1,4).
- Mental Health Support Team was shortlisted for **'Medium Team of the Year'** at the annual LGC Awards 2024 (Priority 1,2).
- We reviewed the information and data that is produced throughout Brighter Futures for Children to shift the balance of effort from data production to managing resources, impact and performance outcomes. Our greater **use of Power BI** as a self-serving tool supports our staff to gain deeper data insight. The recent implementation of our **education management system (Synergy)** also supports our improvement work (Priorities 1,2,3,4).

Strong governance oversight allows us to pause and reflect at each stage of our journey to ensure our work remains focused and outcome driven. We have revised our priorities for the coming year to respond to evolving challenges, whilst building on the foundations laid through the past year's achievements.

Our strategic objectives for 2025-26

Our 2025/26 business plan is the final delivery year of our 2023-26 strategy and the final business plan for the Company. The original contract to deliver children's services ends in March 2026 and a comprehensive contract review process has now concluded.



In January 2025, full Council endorsed RBC's recommendation that children services move back into the Council, with a transition planned for Autumn 2025. We fully support the Council's decision to bring children's services back in house and remain committed to continuing to improve our services throughout 2025/26 and beyond.

Both the Council's and Company's budgets are under significant pressure, while costs are rising and the demand for services grows. Last year we said we knew we had to adopt a system-wide approach to transform how we – and our delivery partners - work. If we are to grasp these challenges locally. Our service delivery is based on the fundamental belief that children are best cared for in their families, and when that is not possible, we want them to be able to live in a loving stable home, locally. In 2024 we established our **transformation programme** to:

- reduce escalation of children's need by developing family hubs and focus on delivering good practice interventions across preventative and statutory services to improve outcomes for children.
- ensure that children are supported to remain living with their families, wherever possible and that when they do need to come into care it is for the shortest time possible, with the aim to keep them connected with their birth family, by developing an edge of care offer.
- address the lack of local children's residential care homes and foster carers by growing the number of internal foster carers and planning to develop in-house residential care homes.

This focus continues into 2025-26. We will also continue to address areas of our business plan where we know we need to do more to deliver high quality consistent services, and are firmly committed to:


- Earlier prevention, less intervention
- Our practice framework, which focuses on relationship-based, strength-based, trauma-informed, systemic, child-centred and focusing on the whole family
- Evidenced-based focus and evaluation of impact and outcomes for children and their families
- Access to good quality education for all children and young people in the borough.

In establishing our strategic objectives, we have continued to listen to children and work in partnership with families and partner organisations to prevent children's needs escalating through the ONE Reading Children's and Young People's Partnership, Berkshire West Safeguarding Children's Partnership, the ICB Children's Board, Reading Families Forum, the SEND Strategic Board and the Reading Education Partnership Board.

Our key priorities and enablers for 2025-26

Pivotal to our priorities and workstreams for 2025-26 remains the delivery of our five-year transformation programme, initiated in 2024-25. Our Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) in April 2024 endorsed our transformation plan noting that it focused on the right areas and was already having impact.

The publication of the government's *Stable Homes Built on Love* presented us with an opportunity to improve our recruitment and retention of foster carers through pathfinder funding, while also providing clarity on how we can develop our emerging model of family help to be responsive to local need.



Our aim is to embed an effective, efficient, and consistent approach, where we provide support and services in line with our enhanced practice framework and agreed thresholds and our partners do the same, so *'early prevention, less intervention'* becomes just that for children, young people and their families in Reading.

We also know that great practice, a tenacious focus on continuous improvement and a skilled and happy workforce is at the heart of delivering impactful outcomes for children and families. We will drive this through our transformation programme, which provides a framework for our continuous improvement priorities while ensuring that resources are deployed in the areas of greatest need and impact.

Our priorities for 2025-26:

Priority 1: Building on our successful workforce strategy to grow our own and retain a skilled and happy workforce, including building an alternatively qualified workforce.

Our staff are our most valuable asset. This priority entails shifting the focus of our workforce strategy to the development and retention of our precious workforce, which includes a focus on manageable caseloads. We will do this by:

- delivering the activities within our workforce development strategy that focuses on three key components: attract, develop; and retain
- ensuring we are attracting the right people with the right skills at the right time
- focusing on strengthening our learning and development offer, empowering our aspiring managers and leaders by giving better guidance, support and professional development opportunities, and creating career pathways for progression
- developing an agile and diverse workforce with a wide range of talent and a broad range of knowledge and skills to better support us to deliver our services and secure the best outcomes for our children, young people, and their families
- creating an environment that develops and promotes a real commitment to equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging, which is reflected in not only our policies but also our everyday working practices.

Priority 2: Embedding our approach to practice improvement, aligned to our practice framework to ensure sustained and consistent delivery of quality outcomes for children and families, creating an environment where good social work flourishes and where staff feel supported to do a great job for children and their families.

- We will deliver against our inspection action plans following our Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services in April 2024; our Ofsted Inspection of our Independent Fostering Agency in July 2024 and our HMIP Inspection of our Youth Justice Service in September 2024.
- We will achieve reduced caseload targets to ensure that workers have the time to develop relationship-based practice with children and families.
- In response to Working Together 2023, we will develop a practice model that supports highly skilled alternatively qualified workers to work as the lead practitioner with children in need.

- We will support and develop our managers to provide high support and high challenge to ensure that children and families receive timely and high-quality services.


Priority 3: Developing and delivering our partnership Early Help Strategy, and our family help/family hub offer.

- We will embed, with the ONE Reading Children & Young People's Partnership, our refreshed Early Help Strategy so we have a shared understanding of Reading's universal early help offer and the impact it is having for Reading's children and families, strengthened by a shared overarching strategy to tackle child poverty.
- Working with the ONE Reading Children & Young People's Partnership, we will develop and define our combined early help offer, delivered through family hubs in Reading. Targeting the areas of greatest need, family hubs will meet need at the right time in the right place and prevent escalation and the need for statutory services, including children's social care.
- We will focus on reducing demand at the front door through a strengthened focus on partnerships and the Children's Single Point of Access (CSPoA), providing the right resources and support needed for children to fulfil their potential. We will manage new contacts and referrals at the 'front door', so children and families receive a timely and proportionate response, ensuring resources are expertly deployed where support or services are required. This will be achieved through targeted deployment of our Partnership Hub, increased multi-agency information sharing and enhanced partnership working.
- We will develop our response to safeguarding adolescents at risk of harm outside the home, ensuring they belong and feel safe in school, at home and the community.
- We will develop effective preventative approaches, identify and respond to risk in a timely way and reduce the number of children entering and re-entering the youth justice system.

Priority 4: Developing a clearly defined and responsive edge of care and local placement offer.

We will reduce placement demand and the cost of care by:

- Developing and embedding an edge of care offer to prevent children entering care; ensuring that when children do enter care it is for the shortest possible time; stepping children down to family-based care; preventing placement breakdowns and returning children home where it is right for the child. This will reduce the number of children in care and the number of children in residential care.
- Increasing the number of internal foster carers through embedding the implementation of the regional fostering recruitment hub, Local Authority Fostering South East, (LAFSE) to increase applications and approvals of foster carers and developing a Mockingbird carer support hub to improve retention of foster carers. We will also increase our commissioning of local foster placements. This will increase the number of children who can remain living in family-based care in their local communities and reduce our reliance on residential and out of borough care.
- Developing our own in-house residential care homes in Reading, comprising two residential children's homes and one assessment home, reducing our reliance on external care providers. We will also enhance our commissioning so that, where we do need to secure



care externally, it is in Reading and better able to meet our children's needs. This will support our ambition to ensure that when children enter care it is for the shortest possible time and that children remain living in Reading wherever possible.

Priority 5: We will support education settings to develop inclusive practice, so children receive high quality education, and achieve their potential.

- Ensure a sustainable education system through a strategic approach to school organisation, the delivery of action plans for schools facing financial difficulty, and rigorous management of the High Needs Block Deficit Management Plan.
- Deliver our SEND partnership strategy priorities: identifying and responding to additional educational needs early; improving our range of placement options by increasing the number of additionally resourced and special school places; and through RISE (Reading Inclusion Services in Education), our new inclusion support service, developing inclusive practice across all Reading schools.
- Improve attendance and prevent suspensions and exclusions through targeted work with priority schools and communities, combined with developing an improved alternative provision (AP) local offer, through our AP school and strengthened commissioning arrangements.
- Embed research informed pedagogy and graduated approaches in settings, through effective school to school support, to improve outcomes of children in underperforming groups, reduce education inequality and reduce variation between schools.
- Continue to support our school system leaders' mental health and well-being to provide resilience and sustainability across the education landscape.

Priority 6: Working in partnership with Reading Borough Council to ensure a smooth transition of children's services back to the Council.

- We will engage fully in the change management programme and project work strands to minimise disruption to staff, partners and children and families.
- We will ensure continuity of services to children and families throughout the transition period and beyond.
- We will facilitate the smooth and timely transition of functions from the Board to both the Improvement Board and the Council.

Enablers

Our enablers are essential to achieve our strategic aims and deliver our priorities. They strengthen our infrastructure and support our people by:

Enabler 1: *Improved quality and ways of working*

- Ensure focus and proportionality in all we do to make best use of our limited capacity and resources.
- Embed a performance culture by routinely focusing on key metrics to ensure we consistently improve our practice.
- Ensure our work is centred on engagement and participation of our children and families by being able to 'tell the story', which evidences quality, impact and improved outcomes.

- Ensure improvement work, strategies, action plans and activity are continuously reviewed to remain fit for purpose and can meet changing need.

Enabler 2: *Resources aligned to priorities and delivering value for money*

- Enhance how we use performance and financial data to better understand how the needs of children with SEND drive activity and spend and to evidence what drives improved outcomes for children with SEND, so as to reduce the current deficit and pressures on the Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block through our High Needs Block Deficit Management Plan (high needs funding supports provision for children with SEND).
- Deliver sustainable efficient school transport, through promoting independent and active travel, maximising use of public transport routes and reviewing high-cost travel plans.
- Enhance how we evidence an understanding of the profile of our children looked after in our monthly reporting, and, in conjunction with weekly reporting on placement changes, use this to better understand the relationship between needs and spend.
- Embed weekly panels to ensure timely and consistent decision-making and allocation of resources for children who may need to come into care.

Evidencing better outcomes

We will deliver our priorities for 2025-26 and will clearly evidence how improvements are being achieved through qualitative and numerical KPI's. We routinely track our progress and performance, capturing outcomes for children and their families through:

- Monthly data dashboard from family help through to statutory services KPIs.
- Audit activity which provides assurance and learning in relation to the quality and impact of our services for children and families.
- Monthly monitoring and reporting of our Transformation Programme activity and targets.
- Reporting on what children and families have told us so that we can measure and learn from the impact of our involvement.
- Contract key performance indicator monitoring to ensure the Company is delivering against our service delivery contract and the Council Plan.
- Weekly and monthly finance reporting with enhanced scrutiny on the cost of children's residential and foster care and the High Needs Block.
- Completion of our Children's Services Self Evaluation Framework shared annually with Ofsted.
- Completion, with partners, of our Reading Area Self Evaluation Framework for children with SEND shared with Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC).
- Service level annual reports.
- Our annual accounts.

Governance of all the above is through individual service area management teams, Senior Leadership Team (SLT), BFFC Board and committees and Berkshire West Safeguarding Partnership (BWSCP).

BFFC also reports into Reading Borough Council's Corporate Management Team and to the Council's leader and lead members and committees, including Policy Committee, Adults, Children's and Education (ACE) Committee and the Health & Wellbeing Board.

Our financial plan

Although Brighter Futures for Children is an independent company, we are acutely aware of our financial responsibilities to Reading Borough Council. The Company has faced significant financial challenges in three key areas – placements for children in care, school transport costs and the deficit on the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant, which is forecast to increase significantly in the coming years due to an increase in children with SEND and a lack of local special school places.

Managing service delivery within each annual budget agreed by Reading Borough Council as part of the contract sum has become acutely more difficult and this has continued in 2024/25.

Costs for children looked after have increased significantly due to inflation, lack of residential and foster care provision nationally and locally that can meet children's needs, an increase in the complexity of children's needs, an increase in the age profile of children becoming looked after and an over reliance on the use of external residential care for children. This reliance on external residential placements has resulted in a disproportionate impact on our placement spend, with an increase in the unit cost of placements driving the budget pressure alongside an increase in the number of children in our care (17% more than in 2023/24).

It became necessary in 2023/24 for Reading Borough Council to increase the contract sum by £9,139,385 at year end, reflecting the need to fund demand pressures which had arisen during that year. The Council also provided additional funding for placement demand in 2024/25 of £5,941,000 through the MTFS budget process.

At the start of the 2024/25 financial year, our finance team transferred back into RBC, to enable us to work more closely with the Council as we develop the plans required to move towards a more stable financial footing.

BFFC has an obligation to mitigate costs and to deliver efficiency savings. Implementation of our transformation programme is key to addressing these pressures, which is why we have focused on this as our key priority this year. The Transformation Programme will have delivered over £1.4m savings by the end of 2024/25, alongside significant cost avoidance of an estimated mid-point of at least £4m. Further savings are already planned into the MTFS and will be built upon.

In addition to the Transformation Plan an in-year savings Recovery Plan is set to deliver £2.480m in 2024/25 to mitigate the forecasted budget pressures.

The deficit on the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant is forecast to increase significantly in the coming years due to supply and demand pressures. The un-mitigated pressure would be a deficit of £98m by 2029/30. After mitigations the pressure reduces to £52m by 2029/30, though remains a considerable risk. Without concerted effort, the scale of the deficit would put at risk the future financial viability of Reading Borough Council. The Council is currently protected by the statutory override, which is in place generally for all councils with High Needs deficits, though this is scheduled to expire on 31st March 2026. If no alternative to the override is put in place, or additional funding provided, this could put Reading Borough Council and many other councils at significant financial risk.

The work we are doing through the DfE's Delivering Better Value programme, implemented through our RISE Service, is forecast to deliver significant financial mitigations but on its own that is not enough. A deficit recovery plan for the High Needs Block has been developed in partnership with RBC, to target a balanced in-year budget and seek to repay the cumulative deficit.

We are using a partnership approach to the development and implementation of the plan, informed by the Reading Partnership SEND strategy, where working closely with our partners, including families, is critical to our success and outcomes.

Funding from Reading Borough Council is for the delivery of statutory and non-statutory services for children's services. This covers family help, youth justice, children's social care, adoption and fostering and education services. The funding also provides for costs relating to service level agreements (SLAs) that is recharged to us and property costs.

	2025/26*	2026/27*	2027/28*
RBC Funding Streams	£m	£m	£m
Core contract sum	57.710	57.159	57.781
SLAs and property costs	6.716	6.716	6.716
Transformation grant	0.051		
TOTAL	64.477	63.875	64.497

* The contract amount is being finalised with Reading Borough Council as part of the MTFS Budget process 2025-26 to 2027-28.

The decision to bring children's services back into the Council will change the basis on which services are funded going forward.

Government grants

Government grants are administered by Brighter Futures for Children on behalf of Reading Borough Council, and include the following key grants:

Dedicated Schools Grant: including Schools (administered by Reading Borough Council), High Needs, Early Years and Central Blocks (administered by Brighter Futures for Children).

Supporting Families: a national programme to help vulnerable families.

Pupil Premium Grant: allocated by the Virtual Head for children looked after.

Youth Justice Grant: source of funding for the Youth Justice Service.

Holiday Activity Fund: for food and activities for children and young people in receipt of pupil premium free school meals.

Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children: for accommodation, social work, and administrative support for this cohort.

Other income sources

Other income sources include service level agreements with schools for education services, partnership contributions, health funding, selling of placements to other local authorities, fees and charges and other miscellaneous income.

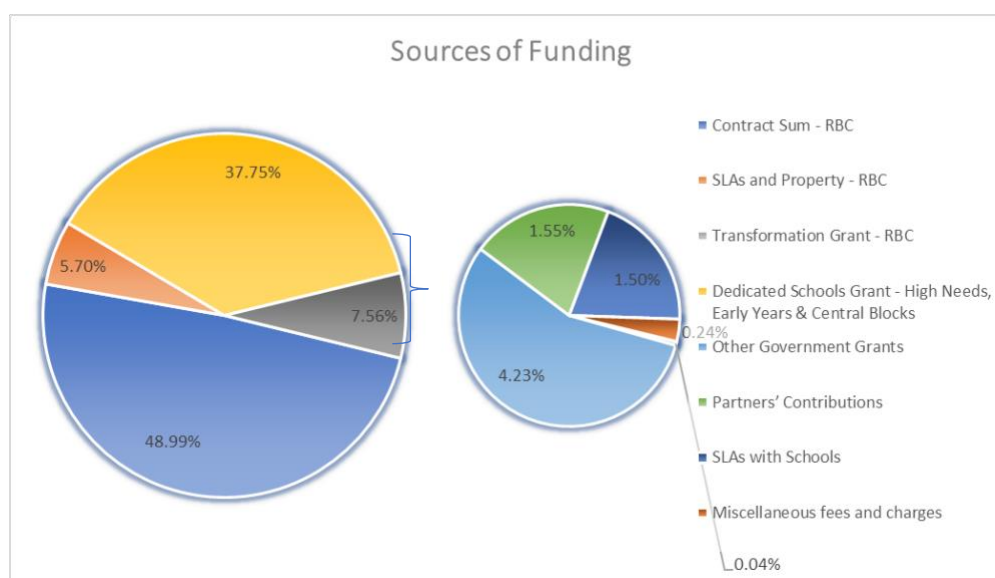


Summary income and expenditure for 2025-26

A summary of the income and expenditure are set out below:

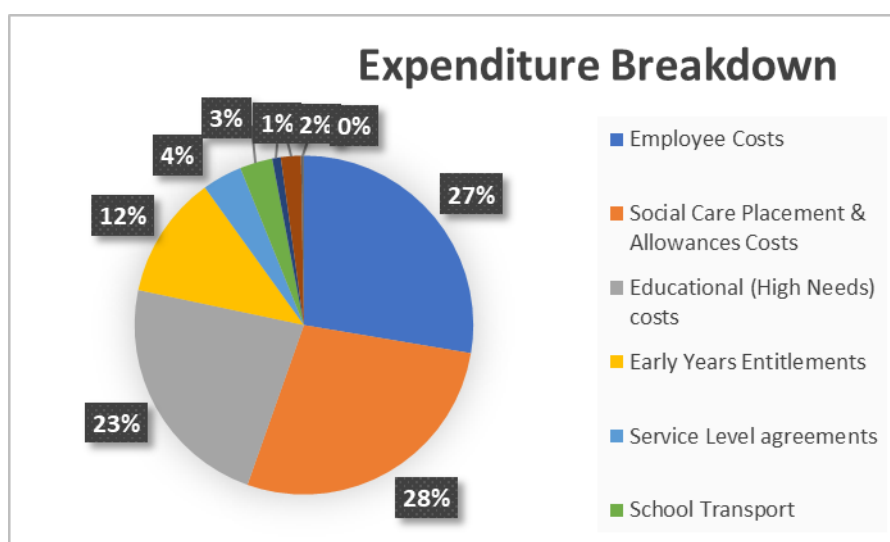
Summary of income:

	£m	%
Contract Sum from RBC	57.710	48.99
SLAs and Property from RBC	6.716	5.70
Transformation Grant from RBC	0.051	0.04
Dedicated Schools Grant - High Needs, Early Years & Central Blocks	44.471	37.75
Other Government Grants (incl. Pupil Premium and Youth Offending Service)	4.978	4.23
SLAs with Schools	1.830	1.55
Partners' Contributions	1.764	1.50
Miscellaneous fees and charges	0.289	0.24
TOTAL	117.808	100.0



Summary of expenditure:

	£m	%
Employee costs	32.590	27.70
Social care placement and allowance costs	32.699	27.80
Educational (High needs) costs	26.976	22.90
Early year entitlements	13.826	11.70
School Transport	3.676	3.10
Other commissioned services	0.967	0.80
Other running costs	0.316	0.30
SLAs	4.497	3.80
Property	2.261	1.90
Gross Expenditure	117.808	100.0



The expenditure breakdown shows the budget allocation for social care residential placements and school transport. Combined, these budgets total £36.375m (30.90%) of the overall expenditure budget, which also represent the areas of highest volatility and risk. The delivery of the transformation programme is critical to what we have planned to achieve within the overall contract sum provided by Reading Borough Council.

The High Needs budget, which is funded by the DSG, totals £26.976m (22.90%) of the overall expenditure budget and is the most volatile and high risk area of the DSG budget.

Medium-Term Financial Strategy

Budget setting

The contract sum is in the process of being finalised with Reading Borough Council with a budget submission of £57.710m for 2025-26 being proposed (excluding any amounts approved for transformation work or changes to service level agreements):

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£m	£m	£m
Net operating budget			
Previous contract sum (excluding RBC SLAs)	52.123	57.710	57.159
Pay inflation and increments	0.844	0.678	0.585
Contract inflation	0.434	0.442	0.452
Placement Pressures	6.639	0.000	0.000
Demography	0.304	0.099	0.000
New Transformation savings (Note 1)	(1.500)	(0.693)	(0.415)
Prior Year Transformation savings (Note 2)	(1.134)	(1.077)	(0.000)
Contract Sum excluding RBC SLAs and property costs	57.710	57.159	57.781

Note 1 – New Transformation Savings

Business Case	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£m	£m	£m
Children's Homes	(0.084)	(0.413)	
Primary Mental Health	(0.300)		
School Travel Assistance	(0.214)		
Family Help Reductions	(0.285)		
Disabled Children's Homes			(0.415)
Business Support	(0.416)	(0.080)	
Re-integration	(0.100)	(0.200)	
Consolidation of Nurseries	(0.101)		
Total	(1.500)	(0.693)	(0.415)

Note 2 – Prior Year Transformation Savings

Business Case	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£m	£m	£m
Increase in In-house Foster Carers	(0.064)	(0.107)	
Edge of Care	(0.970)	(0.970)	
Prior year contract adjustment	(0.100)		
Total	(1.134)	(1.077)	(0.000)

The income and expenditure by service directorates for 2024-25 as shown below:

Budget by service directorate	Payroll	Running costs and contracts	Other income	DSG Funded	Grant income	Total	Change from 24/25
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	%
Education	9.328	44.214	-2.111	-44.103	-1.383	5.945	-1.98%
Family Help & Safeguarding	19.990	31.692	-0.254	-0.127	-3.982	47.320	14.52%
Resources	2.606	0.416	-0.409	-0.100	-0.010	2.503	-12.34%
Corporate Services	0.666	8.897	-0.711	-0.141	0.000	8.710	20.20%
Total	32.590	85.218	-3.485	-44.471	-5.374	64.477	9.64%

Funded by:

Contract sum

SLA and property

Transformation funding

RBC contract funding**£m**

57.710

6.716

0.051

64.477

Budget assumptions and risks

The net operating budget includes funding to support pay inflation, contract inflation and placement pressures from Reading Borough Council. The Company is responsible for delivering agreed savings to support other pressures not funded by Reading Borough Council such as pay increments, agency staff and school transport.

The key financial risks underpinning the budget plan relate to demand pressures and our ability to meet demand locally. Specifically, in Reading, these are:

- Placement pressures for children looked after due to rising numbers, an increase in the cost of care, changes in the mix of placement provision and a lack of local provision
- Pressures on the High Needs Block due to increasing EHCPs and a lack of local specialist school placements
- Increased demand for school transport, particularly around special educational needs.

Children Looked After


Placements represent the single largest pressure in terms of funding and are underpinned by the following numbers of children looked after.

The table below the number of children looked after in 2023/24 and the targets for the current year and the next three years.

Measure	Result 23/24	Targets			
		24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28
No of Children looked After	266	280	275	270	263

The Transformation programme outlined above will seek to mitigate the increase in placements and cost through a reduction in the target number of children looked after and a reduction of children living in external residential placements.

Our targeted and budgeted numbers of children looked after are for Reading children and Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC). The DfE and Home Office National Transfer Scheme Guidance have set a target of 0.1% for the number of unaccompanied children that LAs will care for, making the Reading target 36 young people.



Our placement spend will be **mitigated** through the implementation of the transformation programme outlined above, specifically:

- Embedding an edge of care offer
- Improved recruitment and retention of local foster carers
- Use of capital funding to develop residential children's care homes within Reading, including two medium to long-term children's care homes and an assessment home. This will ensure that more children in care live locally and maintain their local connections, whilst protecting the Council from the spiralling cost of residential care in the private market.

High Needs Block

A High Needs Block (HNB) deficit management plan was created owing to a significant current and projected deficit of £12.9m at the end of 2023/24. At the start of 2024-25 the forecast cumulative deficit increased to £20.9m, though the latest forecast is for an expected cumulative deficit by the end of 2024/25 of £24.6m. The key pressures on the HNB have been identified as growth in pupil numbers (12% more education, health and care plans (EHCPs) than January 2024) and a significant increase in the number of children being placed in expensive Independent Non-Maintained Schools.

This will be **mitigated** through:

- 1.1 The creation of additional SEND provision within Reading mainstream schools (known as 'Additionally Resourced Provision' (ARP) and the creation of new special school places in Reading: reducing the number of children with EHCPs placed in the independent non-maintained sector (INMSS) and decreasing the amount of top-up funding paid on EHCPs
- 1.2 Mainstreaming of DfE Delivering Better Value funded RISE service to increase the capacity of ordinarily available provision in local mainstream schools, avoiding more expensive special school places.
- 1.3 Review and reduction in use of alternative provision (AP)

School Transport

The growth in EHCPs and number of children attending specialist provision outside of Reading has also resulted in a growth in pressure on school transport which sits outside of the High Needs Block.

This will be **mitigated** through:

- The mitigations identified above for the High Needs Block.
- Implementation of the post 16 school transport policy.
- Revised transport arrangements for pupils to Chiltern Edge School from September 2024.
- Review of transport provision as part of children's annual EHCP review.
- Provision of independent travel training to promote independence.

Appendices


Appendix 1: Our achievements in 2024-25

In 2024-25, we reframed our priorities to respond to the changing landscape, recognising that the reality of children's lives is continually shifting as are the difficulties they face.

Our work over the last year consolidated what has been achieved to date and built on delivering more services and support with greater impact by increasing our momentum and pace, responding on a timely basis to those most in need, ensuring quality is firmly rooted into our practice and culture, and greater collaboration, co-production and partnership working.

The highlights of 2024-25 were as follows:

- **2024-25** We have grown the involvement of Reading children in participation and democracy activities. All Reading schools are now engaged with Reading Youth Council, with a doubling of the number of members. **Reading Youth Council** has successfully championed campaigns on behalf of Reading children and young people, including attending Reading Borough Council committees to influence policy decisions, active involvement in Reading's Climate Action Network and Climate Action festival, and attending the Houses of Parliament representing Reading as UK Youth Parliament members (**priority 4**)
- **2024-25:** A wider range of additional school places for children with SEND were created for the academic year 2024/25, ensuring all children can access an appropriate place. 140 Additionally Resourced Provision places were created in mainstream schools; and an increased number of special school places are being provided by Thames Valley School, Oak Tree School and Hamilton Special School (**priority 4**)
- **2024-25:** Our children's centres continue to provide a range of group and individual activities to support the community needs: Our parenting programmes reached 92 parents; family workers supported more than 700 children (**priority 2**)
- **2024-25:** Midwifery services delivering from our children's centres, provided 4,522 appointments (both to universal and higher needs mothers) (**priority 2**)
- **2024-25:** Children's centre staff engagement with children aged 0-5 with 2,365 attendances at different sessions (individual children may have attended more than once) (**priority 2**)
- **2024-25:** Our speech and language course supported 44 children with 100% showing improvements (**priority 1**)
- **2024-25** We continued to develop and enhance BFFC's intranet and website, including new web areas for professionals and for parent carers, as well as improving the content of the young people's zone. The website continues to increase in popularity with almost **428,000 visits** in 2024. Social media followers increased to **6,900** from 5,000 the year before. Both have seen an **increase in parent carer and young people engagement (enabler 2)**
- **2024-25:** We continued to develop the Company's culture where staff feel **connected with the leadership team and with each other**. This is evidenced by effective work with our Staff Involvement Group (SIG), continuing to actively 'listen' to our staff via staff roadshows and holding our **first whole staff wellbeing conference** in November 2024 and our second whole staff celebration event in January 2025 (**enabler 1**)
- **Oct 2024:** We reworked our SLAs with RBC to make them fit for purpose for the future (**enabler 3**)

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- **Oct 2024:** We reworked and republished the Ordinarily Available Provision and Graduated Response document for parents and education settings, co-working with partners, parents and young people on documents and visuals to make the offer clear for all (**priority 4**)
 - **Sept 2024:** Our IFA was rated Good for the second time by Ofsted (**priority 3**)
 - **Sept 2024:** Our Mental Health Support Team launched a third team, to extend and expand the ICB funded offer to all schools in Reading (**priority 1**)
 - **July/Aug 2024:** We partnered with Reading BID (Business Improvement District) during the summer HAF events, with local businesses donating staple food items and good quality second hand clothing, plus extras like sun hats and sun cream for the children. In 2025-26 we plan to extend the partnership to look at other ways local businesses' corporate social responsibility programmes can further help our vulnerable children and families in Reading (**enabler 3**)
 - **May 2024:** Ofsted published its [inspection report](#) on Pinecroft children's home, which provides shared-care support for children and young people with additional needs, following a full inspection in March 2024. The home was given a 'Good' rating overall, with the effectiveness of leaders and managers graded as 'Outstanding' (**priority 2**)
 - **April 2024:** We strengthened our connectivity and collaborative working arrangements with Reading Borough Council by moving our finance and HR teams back into the Council, with effect from 1 April 2024 (**enabler 3**)
 - **April 2024 -** We strengthened our compliance, with a new **compliance dashboard** and datasets for compliance with timeliness of customer engagement and of mandatory training completion. We work closely with RBC on information governance and joint promotion of measures to **reduce breaches** of GDPR and cyber security threats (**enabler 2**)



Appendix 2: Governance

Brighter Futures for Children (BFfC) became operational on 3 December 2018. It is a Company limited by guarantee. The Company is wholly owned by, but independent of, Reading Borough Council and is governed by an independent Board, executive committee and senior leadership team, to ensure operational autonomy.

1.1 The Board of Directors

The Board Chair and Non-Executive Directors (NEDs) bring professional skills and expertise from different sectors. A representative of Reading Borough Council sits on the Board as a Non-Executive Director and the Executive Directors, responsible for the day-to-day operation of the company, are Board Members and, with the Board Chair, are registered as the Company's directors at Companies House.

The Board is responsible for setting the strategy for Brighter Futures for Children; driving high performance and quality; ensuring that the contract objectives are met and promoting the interests of children and young people throughout Reading.

Members of the senior leadership team and specialist areas such as health & safety and staffing & personnel report to the Board and attend parts of the Board meetings as required. They present updates to the Board and ensure there is connectivity across the Company in terms of operational delivery and appropriate challenge against set targets.

1.2 Board Committees


The Board operates through committees to monitor progress in detail and report back to the full Board:

Audit and Risk (ARC) provides oversight and independent assurance over the adequacy of, and compliance with the Company's financial and other internal control frameworks, risk management arrangements, audits in relation to external audits, internal audits and other assurance audits, and overall governance framework.

Finance committee established to provide Board assurance on the robustness of financial processes and financial management across the Company. This committee is now conducted as an extended item of the full Board's agenda each month.

Quality Assurance & Improvement committee which scrutinises and challenges quality, performance, improvement and outcomes across all operational services for children, young people and families. There are two sub-committees providing additional focus on education and on SEND.

Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) committee which provides oversight, governance and support to the work of the Brighter Futures for Children Fostering Service, in its role as an Independent Fostering Agency and



operating as a management committee as referenced in Fostering National Minimum Standards

Voluntary Adoption Agency committee which provides oversight, governance and support to the work of the Brighter Futures for Children Voluntary Adoption Service, in its role in conjunction with the Regional Adoption Agency.

1.3 Internal Controls Assurance

The Board acknowledges its overall responsibility for establishing and maintaining the whole system of internal controls and for reviewing its effectiveness.

The system of internal controls is designed to manage, rather than eliminate, the risk of failure to achieve business objectives, and to provide reasonable, and absolute, assurance against material misstatement or loss.

1.4 The Executive Director Finance Meetings (EDM) and Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

The Executive Director Meeting (EDM) takes place monthly to oversee financial risks and to make any decisions required in the financial scheme of delegation. This meeting is between the Executive Director of Children's Services, the Chair of BFfC Board and the RBC Director of Finance.

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) meets fortnightly to provide cross company leadership with a focus on shaping and delivering the strategic priorities of the Company. It is chaired by the Executive Director of Children's Services, and includes all senior operational and corporate leads, to discuss and report on the performance of the day-to-day operations of the Company.

The remit of SLT is:

- Strategic and operational planning
- Shaping the culture and behaviour of the organisation
- Identifying and managing risk
- Organisational delivery and performance and financial management
- Compliance.

In addition, the operational and corporate leaders meet (separately) for fortnightly management meetings.



Appendix 3: Brighter Futures for Children Contractual KPIs

KPI Category

Category 1: KPIs are the most important in the portfolio. They are the most closely managed, where potential risk of failure must be escalated immediately to the BFFC board for formal resolution.

Category 2: KPIs are important to achieve and must be actively managed. Potential risk of failure must be escalated promptly to the SLT for resolution. The Council may request formal resolution at board level if they feel risk of failure is sufficiently urgent or important that informal resolution is inappropriate.

RBC: KPIs that appear on RBC Corporate Plan.

T: KPIs to track the success of BFFC's transformation programme

KPI ref	Description	KPI category *	Reporting period (frequency)	25-26
1	Timeliness of contact decision making (Children's Single Point of Access).	1	Monthly	>=85%
5	% children in care (CLA) who have been looked after for 2+ years in the same placement	1	Monthly	>=71%
8A	% care leavers who are not in education employment or training (NEET - 17-18 year olds)	1	Monthly	<=30%
8B	% care leavers who are not in education employment or training (NEET - 19-21 year olds)	1	Monthly	<=39%
16	% Education, health care plans completed within 20 weeks	1	Annual	>=70%
3	% of children who become subject of child protection plan for second or subsequent time within the last two (2) years	2	Monthly	<=8%
4	% of referrals which are rereferrals within 12 months	2	Monthly	<=21%
6	CLA who have experienced 3+ placements in last 12 months	2	Monthly	<=11%
7	% of CLA placements more than 20 miles from Reading (i.e. from home address of child)	2 (T)	Monthly	<=25%
9	Child Participation (measured as CLA aged over 4 who attend or contribute to their own reviews)	2	Monthly	>=90%
14	% Pupils provided with a school place on offer day (primary)	2	Annual	>=95%

KPI ref	Description	KPI category *	Reporting period (frequency)	25-26
15	% Pupils provided with a school place on offer day (secondary)	2	Annual	>=95%
	No of Children Looked After	RBC	Qtly	<=275
	Key stage 2 gap in % of advantaged and disadvantaged pupils who achieve the expected level of attainment in reading, writing, and maths	RBC	Qtly	<=22%
	Key Stage 4 reducing the gap in overall Attainment 8 score between advantaged and disadvantaged pupils	RBC	Qtly	<=18
	Suspension Rate for primary and secondary school pupils at maintained schools, per school pop	RBC	Qtly	<=9.83
	No of Specialist SEND School places available	RBC	Qtly	>=1065
	Family Help Enquiries	RBC(T)	Qtly	>=4400
	Family Help Assessments	RBC(T)	Qtly	>=1300
	Children Placed in External Children's Homes	RBC(T)	Qtly	<=30
	Reduction in referrals to Children's Social Care	T	Monthly	<=2000
	Children coming into care	T	Monthly	<=104
	Reunification with Family	T	Monthly	>=15%
	Foster Carer Enquiries	T	Monthly	269
	Foster Carer Approvals	T	Monthly	32
	Case holding Social Worker Agency Staffing rate	T	Monthly	<=18%
	Voluntary Staff Turnover	T	Monthly	<=12%
	Fewer children requiring home to school transport	T	Monthly	600

Policy Committee

17 February 2025



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Title	2025/26 Budget & Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 - 2027/28
Purpose of the report	To make a recommendation to Council
Report status	Public report
Report author	Darren Carter, Director of Finance
Lead Councillor	Councillor Terry, Leader of the Council
Corporate priority	Our Foundations
Recommendations	<p>That Council having due regard of the results of the budget engagement exercise and Resident's Survey (as outlined in Appendices 11 and 12), approve the 2025/26 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account budgets, Capital Programme and Medium Term Financial Strategy as set out in Appendices 1-10, noting the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council's General Fund Budget Requirement of £178.109m for 2025/26 and an increase in the band D Council Tax for the Council of 2.99% plus an additional 2.00% Adult Social Care Precept, representing a band D Council Tax of £2,117.52 per annum, an increase of £100.64 per annum excluding precepts from Police and Fire, as set out in paragraph 2.4 below; 2. The proposed efficiency and invest to save savings of £7.065m together with additional income of £7.277m in 2025/26 required to achieve a balanced budget for that year as set out in Appendices 2 and 3; 3. The overall savings proposed within the MTFS of £16.135m (£11.559m savings and efficiencies and £4.576m additional income) and three-year growth changes to service budgets of £50.190m as set out in Appendices 3 and 4; 4. The budgeted net drawdown from earmarked reserves in 2025/26 totalling £3.945m, as set out in paragraph 10.2; 5. The Housing Revenue Account budget for 2025/26 of £57.304m as set out in Appendix 5 and the average increase of 2.7% in social dwelling rents from April 2025; 6. The allocation of £117.432m Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) as set out in Appendix 6; 7. The General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Capital Programmes totalling £155.487m and £178.261m respectively over the next five years, as set out in Appendices 7a and 7b; 8. The Strategy for the use of flexible capital receipts to deliver future transformation and ongoing savings as set out in Appendix 8; 9. The Fees and Charges set out in Appendix 9 of the report; and 10. The Equalities Impact Assessment as set out in Appendix 10.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. Policy Committee at its meeting on 18th December 2024 reviewed the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Update for the three years 2025/26 – 2027/28. This report updates Members on the results of the subsequent budget engagement exercise, changes arising from the publication of the Final Local Government Finance Settlement 2025/26 as well as other changes that have arisen since the report to Policy Committee in December.
- 1.2. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) published the Final Local Government Financial Settlement 2025/26 on 3rd February 2025. Most of the figures remained the same as the Provisional Settlement (18th December 2024), however there was one change that impacted on the Council's net budget: the Employer National Insurance Contribution Grant was announced as £1.572m, which was an increase of £0.035m from what had been estimated.
- 1.3. Allocations in respect of the Public Health Grant for 2025/26 were announced on 7th February 2025. In 2025/26 the Council's allocation is £11.604m. As the grant is ringfenced any increase/decrease to the Council's grant allocation is offset by a corresponding increase/decrease in expenditure. Therefore, the MTFS assumes a nil impact on the bottom line.
- 1.4. The underpinning rationale of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy is to deliver a balanced and affordable 2025/26 budget, to ensure that the Council's finances are robust and sustainable over the medium term and that, in the longer term, the Council's finances are not reliant on the unsustainable use of one-off reserves or funding. The Strategy is informed by the Council's Vision: "to help Reading realise its potential and to ensure that everyone who lives and works here can share the benefits of its success", as well as its Corporate Plan priorities.
- 1.5. Reading Borough Council is not immune to national issues. The 2025/26 Budget and MTFS 2025/26-2027/28 reflects the changing landscape in which Councils are now operating and is based on another one-year Local Government funding settlement from Central Government. The most significant impacts on the Budget and the MTFS include demand pressures, exacerbated by the impact of the cost of living crisis, in particular, increased placement costs in adult and children's social care services arising from increased demand, complexity and market challenges; the cost of temporary accommodation arising from increased homelessness presentations due to landlords moving out of the private rented sector and pressures on Housing Benefit resulting from the significantly increased demand in temporary accommodation and supported accommodation for which Housing Benefit subsidy is not 100% recoverable.
- 1.6. The budget and MTFS assumptions include:
 - a) Council Tax increases of 2.99% plus an Adult Social Care precept of 2.0% for each year 2025/26-2027/28;
 - b) Delivery of £16.135m of efficiencies and increased income across 2025/26-2027/28;
 - c) A net draw from earmarked reserves totalling £3.945m in 2025/26, as set out in paragraph 10.2;
 - d) A housing rent increase for 2025/26 of 2.7% in line with approved government policy of CPI + 1%;
 - e) General Fund capital investment of £155.487m and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital investment of £178.261m over the 5 year period 2025/26 to 2029/30;
 - f) An initial allocation of £1.500m of transformation funding for each year from 2025/26 to 2029/30 to support delivery of efficiency savings assumed within the

MTFS, taking the total transformation funding to £29.229m across the whole life of the Delivery Fund.

- 1.7. The Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block is anticipated to be £26.503m in deficit by 31st March 2025. Further details are set out in paragraphs 2.8 to 2.11 below and in Appendix 6.
- 1.8. This report has been prepared with reference to the following documents:
 - Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26-2027/28 Update Report agreed by Policy Committee (18th December 2024)
 - Autumn Budget 2024 – HM Treasury (30th October 2024)
 - Final Local Government Finance Settlement 2025/26 – MHCLG (3rd February 2025)

2. Policy Context

- 2.1. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy provides the financial framework to support the delivery of the Council's vision and Corporate Plan priorities.

Overview

- 2.2. Attached to this summary report are a series of appendices which together provide a comprehensive overview of the Council's financial position in the short to medium term given the constraints outlined in paragraph 1.5.

General Fund

- 2.3. Appendix 1 sets out the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and is supported in respect of the General Fund (GF) by Appendices 2, 3 and 4 which set out the financial figures for the 2025/26 Budget and the indicative budgets for 2026/27 and 2027/28. As illustrated in Appendix 2, this provides for a balanced budget in 2025/26 and a Net Budget Requirement of £178.109m, which after allowing for other funding streams leaves a Council Tax Requirement of £126.134m. The indicative budgets for 2026/27 and 2027/28 are not currently balanced with a budget gap of £10.943m currently forecast for 2026/27, increasing to a gap of £11.633m for 2027/28.
- 2.4. The 2025/26 budget proposals assume a Council Tax increase of 2.99% and an Adult Social Care Precept of 2.00%. This results in a Band D Council Tax of £2,117.52 for 2025/26, an increase of £100.64 per annum or £1.93 per week. The same percentage uplift is assumed for both 2025/26 and 2026/27.

Housing Revenue Account

- 2.5. Appendix 5 sets out the Housing Revenue Account budget proposals. The proposed expenditure budget for 2025/26 is £57.304m. A balanced budget is delivered across all three years with a drawdown from reserves of £4.466m in 2025/26, £3.491m in 2026/27 and £2.656m in 2027/28.
- 2.6. The proposal is to increase rents by 2.7% for 2025/26 in line with the maximum rent increase of CPI (as of September 2024) + 1%. The average weekly rent increase is between £2.77 and £4.28 depending upon the type of property.
- 2.7. Appendix 5 also sets out the full 30 Year Plan, which includes details of planned investments, how these are funded and the impact on the HRA balance. Within the 30 year HRA Business Plan the housing service is investing an additional £17.747m between 2025/26 and 2027/28 in existing housing stock in line with the Council's Climate Change ambitions. Further requirements for Net zero investment in the Housing stock are in development.

Dedicated Schools Budget

- 2.8. Appendix 6 sets out the Dedicated Schools Grant Budget proposals for 2025/26. Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is split into four blocks, for which the allocations for 2025/26 were published by the Government on 18th December 2024. Overall, the gross DSG for schools will increase by £19.415m (10.8%) from £180.066m to £199.480m. Details of the allocations are provided at Appendix 6.
- 2.9. High needs funding supports provision for pupils and students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) who require additional resources to participate in education and learning, from their early years to age 25 in schools and colleges (excluding students aged 19 to 25 who do not have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or students who are over the age of 25) and pre-16 pupils in Alternative Provision (AP) who, because of exclusion, illness, or other reasons, cannot receive their education in mainstream schools. High needs funding is provided to local authorities through the high needs block of the DSG.
- 2.10. High needs block funding has been increasing significantly in recent years, but those increases have not kept pace with increasing costs. As a result, a significant number of local authorities are accumulating deficits on the high needs block. In some cases, those deficits are so significant that they would potentially trigger a s114 notice. As a temporary measure, the Government has issued a statutory override for the Dedicated Schools Grant that excludes DSG deficits from the calculation of General Fund reserves. This override will continue until 31st March 2026. The Government have not announced whether the override will be extended beyond this point.
- 2.11. In Reading, the Council is forecasting a cumulative deficit of £26.503m on the high needs block by 31st March 2025. The deficit is forecast to reach £40.373m by the time the statutory override is currently due to end in March 2026 and is forecast to reach £53.165m by 31st March 2027. Council reserves will not be sufficient to fund this deficit, potentially triggering the need to issue a s114 notice. It is therefore critical that action is taken to address the deficit.

Capital

- 2.12. The Council's overarching Capital Strategy is set out in a separate report elsewhere on this agenda and has been extended to provide a five year projection in accordance with best practice. The specific projects laid out in the Capital Programme, attached at Appendix 7a for the General Fund and Appendix 7b for the HRA are also set out over a five year period to align with the Capital Strategy. The General Fund Capital Programme totals £155.487m and the HRA Capital Programme totals £178.261m; which will require the support of £83.199m and £163.860m respectively of council resources including capital receipts and external borrowing over the five year period.
- 2.13. The Council's transformation programme supported by the extension to the flexible use of capital receipts permitted by regulation is set out in Appendix 8.

Fees & Charges

- 2.14. The 2025/26 schedule of Fees and Charges assumed within the budget proposals and effective from 1st April 2025 is set out in Appendix 9.

Engagement

- 2.15. The Council is required by legislation to consider the impact of its budget proposals upon all groups within the local community. This is demonstrated by the Equalities Impact Assessment of the Budget Proposals set out in Appendix 10.

- 2.16. A summary of the results of the budget engagement held from 19th December 2024 to 16th January 2025 and the Residents Survey carried out in the summer of 2024 are provided within Appendices 11 and 12 respectively.
- 2.17. The engagement analysis highlights that the top service areas where respondents would be least comfortable with the Council reducing spend on or increasing income from were Street Cleaning, Homelessness Prevention and Facilities in Parks and Open Spaces. The proposed Revenue Budget and Capital Programme responds to this feedback by protecting these services, such as in Homelessness Prevention, where the council is investing an additional £0.884m in 2025/26. In terms of identifying savings, the areas where respondents were most comfortable reducing spending on or increasing income on were Home to School Transport, Fees and Charges and Voluntary Sector Funding. Savings against these areas have all been proposed as part of the MTFS.
- 2.18. The Council consulted with local business rates payers on 5th February 2025 as part of its statutory requirements.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. Local Government finance is in crisis. Since 2018, local authorities have issued thirteen 'section 114s' notices, which notifies of severe financial distress, compared to two in the preceding 18 years. Moreover, local authorities are increasingly reporting concerns about their financial positions and their ability to maintain delivery of their services.
- 3.2. The financial crisis that local authorities are encountering comes after significant reductions in local authorities' spending power which has itself coincided with increasing demand for their services and inflationary pressures driving up costs. Ultimately, the levels of funding available to local authorities, through council tax, retained business rates, and government grants have not kept pace with these pressures, leading to a funding gap which the Local Government Association (LGA) has estimated at £6.2 billion over the next two years.
- 3.3. The proposed 2025/26 budget has been based on current information available, but it is important that the Council is aware of the significant risks it faces in a number of key areas:

Funding Reform

- 3.4. As part of the Local Government Finance Policy Statement, the Government announced its intention to reform the local government finance system from 2026/27, creating a new funding system based on an up-to-date assessment of need and local resources. These reforms are set to be built on the proposals set out in the review of Relative Needs and Resources (also referred to as the 'Fair Funding Review'), using the best available evidence to inform local authority funding allocations.
- 3.5. The Government also announced its intention to 'reset' the business rates retention system, starting in 2026/27. The reset is planned to further allow the Government to match funding to where it is needed most. The reset will apply nationally, but business rates growth generated within designated areas such as Freeports, Enterprise Zones and Investment Zones will be exempt in line with current policy.
- 3.6. It has also been announced that 2026/27 will mark the first multi-year funding Settlement for local government in 10 years – aiming to provide improved planning certainty for local authorities.

Adult Social Care

- 3.7. There are significant pressures in the social care system. These pressures include an increase in the number of service users, in addition to the number of complex care

packages and increasing contract inflation. This updated MTFS includes a net increase of £5.094m for Adult Social Care services in 2025/26 to address these pressures.

Children's Social Care

- 3.8. There is widespread recognition of the need to reform Children's Social Care, with increasing demand on services, increasing complexity of need, reducing numbers of foster carers, an insufficient supply of adequate residential placements, and an over-reliance on private sector providers driving up costs. This budget invests significant additional funds in Children's Social Care placements, but the upward trend is unsustainable.

Special Education Needs and Disabilities

- 3.9. The Council is forecasting a cumulative deficit of £26.503m on the high needs block by 31st March 2025. The deficit is forecast to reach £40.373m by the time the statutory override is currently due to end in March 2026 and is forecast to reach £53.165m by 31st March 2027. Council reserves will not be sufficient to fund this deficit, potentially triggering the need to issue a s114 notice. It is therefore critical that action is taken to address the deficit.

Homelessness

- 3.10. Homelessness has been increasing both locally and nationally due to the "cost of living crisis" and national legislative changes. Subsequently the use of temporary and paid nightly accommodation has been increasing across the board primarily due to evictions from the private rented sector as landlords become increasingly concerned about their financial position. In Reading the numbers of households in Emergency Accommodation at the end of December was 182: the budget assumed a figure of around 70 households. The MTFS update includes a net increase of £0.884m in the budget in respect of funding homelessness pressures but this scale of increase is unsustainable.

Housing Benefit

- 3.11. Demands on Homelessness and Adult Social Care have caused further pressures on Housing Benefit. During 2024/25 there have been significant additional temporary accommodation pressures, as set out in the previous paragraph, and supported accommodation costs that are not 100% recoverable through the Housing Benefit Subsidy e.g. the Council pays out more Housing Benefit than it can recover in Housing Benefit Subsidy from Central Government. As a result, a budget increase of £3.134m has been calculated as a requirement for 2025/26.

Inflation and Demand Risk

- 3.12. Whilst the budget proposals include consideration for risk, primarily in relation to the non-achievement of income targets and efficiency savings, risk remains that demographic, inflationary or other demand pressures may exceed budget and place pressures on available provisions.

Savings

- 3.13. The MTFS assumes £16.135m of additional savings and income, if these are not delivered or there is any delay to their delivery, it would pose a potential threat to the sustainability of the Council's budget. Based on the 2024/25 Quarter 2 Performance and Monitoring Report that was presented to Policy Committee in December 2024, £3.280m of savings are currently at risk of non-delivery. As part of the 2025/26 budget setting process, a review of all existing savings proposals was carried out and where appropriate, non-deliverable savings were reprofiled, reduced or even removed.

3.14. There are also the following considerations in respect of the Council's wholly owned companies:

- Reading Transport Limited (RTL) – Customer numbers have continued to rise in 2024/25. Patronage recovery has grown to 91.7% of pre-pandemic levels since September 2024, with patronage 10.4% up on the same time last year, including new routes. Financial performance has also been improving, driven by strong revenues from higher customer numbers, partly underpinned by the £2 fare cap. The most recent published accounts for the year ended 31st March 2024 show that profit before tax increased from £0.526m to £4.498m, with income increasing from £55.668m to £61.047m.
- Homes for Reading (HfR) – the housing stock is in the process of being transferred to the HRA following the decision in 2024/25 to close the company.
- Brighter Futures for Children (BFfC) - the Council's children's company has requested a contract sum of £64.426m which is an increase of £5.587m compared to the 2024/25 contract sum. This covers increased inflationary pressures relating to pay and contractual inflation, and particularly the increasing costs of children's social care placements. The demand pressures on social care placements present an on-going risk in terms of numbers and complexity.

3.15. The current global and national economic position has the potential to impact the Council in a variety of ways, particularly in the current cost of living environment, these include increases in demand for social care and the levels of income and funding available to be distributed through central government. As upper tier authorities across the country are finding, changes in social care demand creates significant cost pressures within adults and children's social care budgets.

3.16. The Council's Chief Finance (Section 151) Officer is required under Section 25 of the Local Government Act to report to Council on the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations of the budget and the adequacy of the proposed level of financial reserves. This report will be presented to Council on 25th February 2025.

4. Contribution to Strategic Aims

4.1. Full details of the Council's current Corporate Plan and the projects which will deliver these priorities are published on the Council's website. These priorities and the Corporate Plan demonstrate how the Council meets its legal obligation to be efficient, effective, and economical. An updated Corporate Plan will be presented to Council in March 2025.

4.2. Delivery of the Council's budget is essential to ensuring the Council meets its strategic aims and remains financially sustainable going forward.

5. Environmental and Climate Implications

5.1. The Council declared a Climate Emergency in February 2019, with the intention of achieving a carbon neutral Reading by 2030, which will require further financial commitment to achieve. Reading has cut its carbon emissions by 54% since 2005 and the Council has cut its own carbon footprint by 73% in since 2008. The Council's Corporate Plan monitors progress in reducing the carbon footprint of both the Borough and the Council.

5.2. The Council's 2030 climate target was already very challenging, even before taking account of the more recent financial pressures facing the Council, and local authorities in general, in addition to the government's recent scaling back of its net zero strategy commitments. Whilst the long term benefits of taking action will likely exceed the cost of inaction on climate change, this does not ease the challenge of finding resources for climate action in the immediate future.

- 5.3. Reading is one of only 120 towns and cities in the world to make the most recently published CDP A List (2023) – recognised as the gold standard of environmental reporting. It is the third successive year Reading has achieved the status which is currently shared with only 25 other UK local authorities. The Council has worked with local partners to make the A List and is calling on all Reading residents, businesses and organisations to work together to help us reach its ambitious target of a net zero Reading by 2030.
- 5.4. The Council's proposed Capital Programme for the next five years includes investment of £2.506m in 2025/26 in energy saving measures in buildings and renewable energy infrastructure which contribute towards the Council's net zero carbon ambitions. This covers the Salix Decarbonisation Fund and the Corporate Solar Programme schemes as detailed below:
- The Salix Decarbonisation Fund is designed to enable more ambitious carbon reduction projects such as the installation of High Voltage EV charging infrastructure at the Bennet Road depot to support the growing fleet of EVs. This scheme has a budget of £0.603m for 2025/26;
 - The Corporate Solar Programme scheme has a budget of £1.903m in 2025/26 for solar installations.
- 5.5. Additionally, both the New Performance space at the Hexagon Theatre and New Reading Library at the Civic Centre Levelling Up schemes include further investment in energy saving and decarbonisation infrastructure.
- 5.6. Other capital investments, in offices, housing, transport and waste, will also contribute to the Council's carbon reduction ambitions by improving the efficiency of our buildings and operations as well as in the wider community.
- 5.7. As part of the budget setting process, 'Environment' is one of the weighting criteria applied to bids for capital funding. Going forward, major capital projects which will contribute directly to greenhouse gas emissions reduction include:
- £1.903m for the Corporate Solar Programme (2025/26);
 - £0.603m for energy saving measures via the Salix Decarbonisation Fund (2025/26);
 - £0.250m for tree planting programmes (2025/26-2029/30);
 - £7.449m for Replacement Vehicles (2025/26-2029/30) – where part of the budget is allocated to the purchase of electric vehicle such as waste collection vehicles;
 - £16.637m for Levelling Up Delivery Plan – New Performance Space at the Hexagon Theatre;
 - £7.183m for Levelling Up Delivery Plan – New Reading Library at the Civic Theatre.

6. Community Engagement

- 6.1. The public was consulted as part of the 'Budget Engagement', which ran from 19th December 2024 until 16th January 2025. The feedback from this engagement, alongside the feedback from the Residents' Survey 2024 is set out in Appendices 11 and 12.
- 6.2. The Council consulted with local business rates payers on 5th February 2025 as part of its statutory requirements.

7. Equality Implications

- 7.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 7.2. An initial assessment of the proposals as set out in the MTFS has been undertaken and Appendix 10 sets out the individual savings proposals where specific equality impact assessments will need to be undertaken prior to implementation.
- 7.3. Additionally, when considering changes to service provision, local authorities are under a duty to consult representatives of a wide range of local stakeholders. Authorities must consult representatives of council tax payers, those who use or are likely to use services provided by the authority and those appearing to the authority to have an interest in any area within which the authority carries out functions. The budget engagement exercise on the budget proposals assists with this requirement.
- 7.4. As well as the Council's current Council Tax Reduction Scheme there are statutory discounts and exemptions available to residents who may otherwise struggle to pay their Council Tax, details are available on the Council's website.

8. Other Relevant Considerations

- 8.1. There are none.

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1. The Council must set its budget in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. Approval of a balanced budget each year is a statutory responsibility of the Council.
- 9.2. The provisions of section 25, of the Local Government Act 2003 require that, when the Council is making the calculation of its budget requirement, it must have regard to the report of the Chief Finance Officer as to the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves. The report will be formally made to Full Council at its budget setting meeting in February.

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1. The financial implications are set out in the body of this report and associated appendices.
- 10.2. The 2025/26 Budget is balanced by an overall £3.945m assumed draw on (contribution from) earmarked reserves, consisting of:
- £1.179m to fund service specific expenditure from specific earmarked reserves. This was already assumed in the December 2024 MTFS Update;
 - £2.766m from the Financial Resilience Reserve to balance the 2025/26 budget.
- 10.3. Further savings to close the budget gap in 2026/27 and beyond will need to be identified as part of the future budget setting process.
- 10.4. The Council's General Fund balance is set at 5% of the net budget requirement for 2025/26.

11. Timetable for Implementation

11.1. Not applicable.

12. Background Papers

12.1. There are none.

Appendices

- 1. The Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 - 2027/28**
- 2. Summary of the Proposed General Fund Budget 2025/26 - 2027/28**
- 3. General Fund Revenue Budget by Service 2025/26 - 2027/28**
- 4. Detailed General Fund Budget Changes 2025/26 - 2027/28**
- 5. The Housing Revenue Account Proposed Budget 2025/26 - 2027/28**
- 6. The Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Proposals 2025/26**
- 7. The General Fund and HRA Capital Programmes 2025/26 - 2027/28**
- 8. The Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy 2025/26**
- 9. Fees and Charges Proposals from April 2025**
- 10. Equality Impact Assessment of the Budget Proposals**
- 11. Summary of the Response to the Budget Engagement**
- 12. Summary of the Residents' Survey 2024**

Appendix 1 - The Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 – 2027/28

1. Background

- 1.1. This Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) pulls together in one place all known factors affecting the financial position and financial sustainability of Reading Borough Council over the medium term. The MTFS balances the financial implications of objectives and policies against constraints in resources and provides the basis for decision making.
- 1.2. The MTFS is central to the delivery of our priorities in an affordable and sustainable way over a 3-year period. It aids robust and methodical planning as it forecasts the Council's financial position, taking into account known pressures and major issues affecting the Council's finances. The MTFS recognises the key role that financial resources play in the future delivery of outcomes and in enabling the effective planning, management and delivery of services.
- 1.3. The key overriding aim of the MTFS is to provide a financial framework within which financial stability can be achieved and sustained in the medium term to deliver the Council's key strategic priorities.
- 1.4. This updated MTFS has been developed to reflect the changing landscape in which Councils are now operating. The UK economy, as with many others around the world, is now heavily impacted by the cost of living crisis. This has had a knock-on impact on Council budgets, due to increased unit costs, service demand increasing and reduced levels of income.

2. The Current Economic and Financial Environment

- 2.1 The Council's future financial position, the demand for services and ability to recover previous and/or generate new income streams is significantly affected by the wider economic, political and financial environment. The following paragraphs set out some of the more significant factors:

Coronavirus (Covid-19) Pandemic

- 2.2 In May 2023, the World Health Organisation declared an end to the Global Health Emergency issued ahead of the Covid-19 Pandemic more than three years prior. The social and economic consequences of the pandemic continue to impact on local government income. Changes to the public's shopping, lifestyle and working behaviours have led to reductions in income in services such as parking and planning, with continued uncertainty around the potential for full recovery. Additionally, services such as Adult Social Care have experienced increases in demand for services e.g. due to people waiting longer for health interventions due to waiting lists etc.

Cost of Living Crisis

- 2.3 Since late 2021, the UK has been experiencing what is referred to as a "cost of living crisis", whereby the cost of everyday essentials like energy and food are rising much faster than average household incomes.
- 2.4 The increase in inflation underpinning the crisis was caused by the combined impact of multiple national and global events:
 - Brexit - Slowed economic growth and caused delays at the borders for traded goods due to new import and export rules;

- The Covid-19 Pandemic - Led to disruption of working practices and global supply chains, whilst surging demands for goods were experienced post-lockdown which also contributed to rising prices;
- The Russia-Ukraine Conflict - Led to energy price rises and global food shortages.

2.5 In addition, in an attempt to control inflation, the Bank of England gradually increased bank rate up to 5.25%. This has now reduced to 4.50%, however, these increases have impacted on borrowers and mortgage holders by reducing their levels of disposable income.

2.6 The resulting pressures are impacting on the Council directly through increased costs but also through increased service demand. For example, pressures on the rental and private housing markets are putting more individuals at risk of homelessness, with the number of households living in temporary accommodation in England at an all-time high.

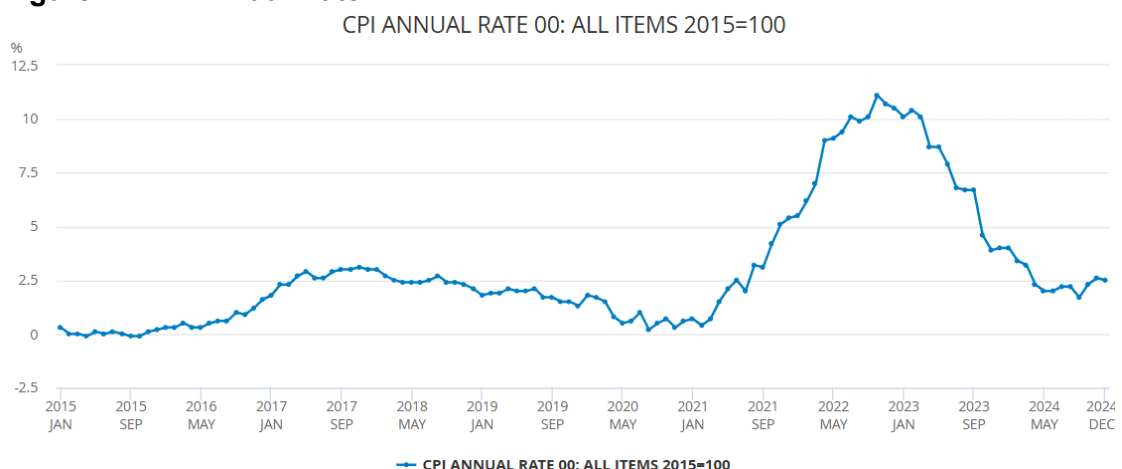
Inflation Expectations

2.7 Inflationary pressures on the Council's employee and contractor costs represent a significant annual pressure that needs to be funded. Equally, inflation rates impact on fees and charges, Council Tax capping levels and business rates income through the nationally set Non-Domestic Rates Multiplier.

2.8 The annual inflation rate in the United Kingdom as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) stands at 2.5% as at December 2024, down from 4.0% in December 2023. The Consumer Price Index including owner occupiers' housing cost (CPIH) stands at 3.5% as at December 2024, down from 4.2% in December 2023.

2.9 Inflation climbed steadily from February 2021 until its peak of 11.1% in October 2022, due to increased demand and limited supply on various products, including gas, oil, and food supplies, following the pandemic restrictions easing and the Ukrainian invasion. The Bank of England gradually increased interest rates to help achieve its target rate of inflation of 2.0%, and so inflation has fallen significantly to 2.5% as at December 2024. The Bank of England expects inflation to increase to about 2.8% in the second half of 2025 before falling again.

Figure 1. CPI Annual Rate



Environmental Challenges

- 2.10 The Summer of 2024 has been confirmed by scientists at the Copernicus Climate Change Service as the hottest season the world has experienced since records began in 1880. Exceptional temperatures were felt across much of the world, exacerbating extreme weather events such as heatwaves, droughts, floods and wildfires.
- 2.11 The Council declared a Climate Emergency in February 2019, with the intention of achieving a carbon neutral Reading by 2030, which will require further financial commitment to achieve.
- 2.12 Reading has cut its carbon emissions by 54% since 2005 and the Council has cut its own carbon footprint by 73% since 2008.
- 2.13 Reading is one of only 120 towns and cities in the world to make the most recently published CDP A List (2023) – recognised as the gold standard of environmental reporting. It is the third successive year Reading has achieved the status which is currently shared with only 25 other UK local authorities. The Council has worked with local partners to make the A List and is calling on all Reading residents, businesses and organisations to work together to help us reach its ambitious target of a net zero Reading by 2030.

Demographic Forecasts

- 2.14 Demographic growth is one of the key drivers of demand for Council services and consequently cost pressures. Whilst general central government funding has seen real terms decreases over the last decade, service demand and demographic pressures have risen.
- 2.15 According to the Office of National Statistics' latest census in 2021, since 2011 Reading's total population has risen by 11.9% to 174,200, one of the highest percentage increases in the South East. However, its demographic composition has changed, shifting towards an older population, with increases of 17.2% of residents aged 65+, 11.7% aged 15-64, and 8.6% aged under 15, which includes a decrease of 14.2% in the 0-4 age category. These changes in demographics are reflected in the increase in demand for Adult and Children's Social Care services set out above.

Unemployment

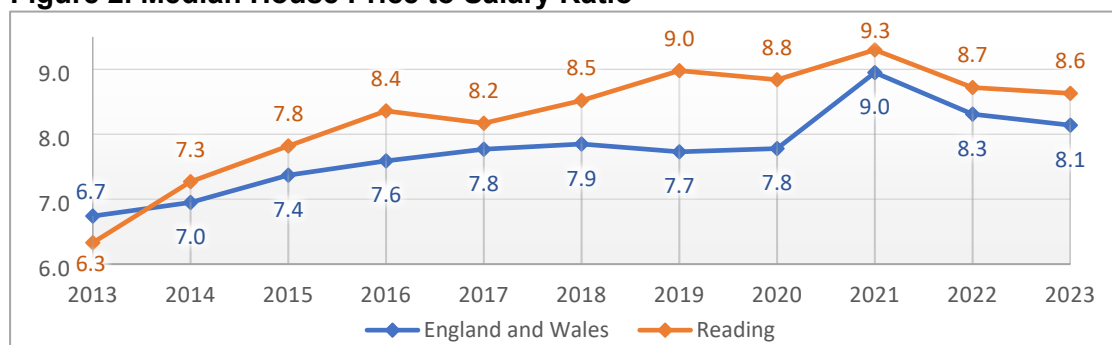
- 2.16 Around 3,800 people aged 16 and over in Reading were unemployed in the year ending June 2023. This is a rate of 3.9%. This was an increase compared to the year ending June 2022 when the unemployment rate was 3.5%. Across the South East, from the year ending June 2022 to the year ending June 2023, there was also a slight increase in the unemployment rate from 3.3% to 3.4%.
- 2.17 It is hoped that the relatively low levels of unemployment will keep the number of Local Council Tax Support Scheme claimants low, thereby maximising the tax base and thus the amount of Council Tax income collectable.

Affordability of Homes

- 2.18 The affordability of homes in Reading is a major challenge. The latest available data (2023) puts the average house in Reading at a cost of 8.6 times the average salary in Reading, compared to a cost of around 8.1 times the average salary in England and Wales. This is significantly higher than the median house price to salary ratio in 2013, where an average house in Reading cost 6.3 times the average salary, compared to

6.7 for the rest of England and Wales. This increase is predominantly due to house prices in Reading increasing at a higher rate than salaries.

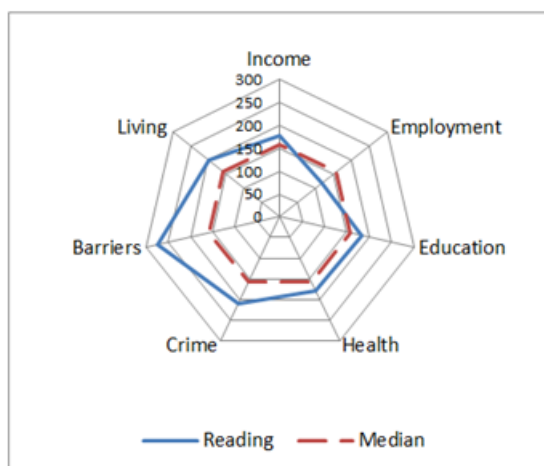
Figure 2. Median House Price to Salary Ratio



Deprivation

- 2.19 One of the key outcomes for the Council is to improve the well-being of its residents and to address the needs of those most in need. From 2025/26 the Government has started to directly factor in deprivation scores into how councils' core funding is allocated. The degree to which assessed need and inequality might be measured is by reference to the national Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).
- 2.20 IMD scores and weightings are based on seven domains of deprivation and are weighted individually to provide an overall IMD score. There are also two additional indices as set out below:
- Income Deprivation (22.5%)
 - Employment Deprivation (22.5%)
 - Education, Skills, and Training Deprivation (13.5%)
 - Health Deprivation and Disability (13.5%)
 - Crime (9.3%)
 - Barriers to Housing and Services (9.3%)
 - Living Environment Deprivation (9.3%)
 - Index of income deprivation affecting children
 - Index of income deprivation affecting older people
- 2.21 Key Headlines, based on the latest 2019 data, are:
- Reading as a whole is ranked the 141st most deprived out of 317 local authorities in the country;
 - Reading now has 5 LSOAs (Lower Super Output Areas) within the most deprived 10% nationally, compared with only 2 in 2015 (indicating increased disparity across the borough);
 - Reading has 4 LSOAs in the most deprived 5% in the country on the Education, Skills, and Training domain (3 according to IMD 2015).
- 2.22 The chart below illustrates the 2019 IMD statistics for each of the above seven indicators relative to the (median) average across all 317 local authority areas, showing that Reading has a higher deprivation score than the median on 6 of the 7 indicators, but has a better level of employment than the median:

Figure 3. Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019 – latest available)



Interest Rates

- 2.23 When the 2024/25 Budget and 2024/25-2026/27 MTFS was approved in February 2024, the Bank of England Bank Rate stood at 5.25%. It has subsequently decreased in August 2024 to 5.00%; in November 2024 to 4.75% and again in February 2025 to 4.50%. It is expected that interest rates will continue to gradually decrease, although at a slower rate than had been previously anticipated.

Table 1. Interest Rate Forecasts

	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25	Mar-26	Jun-26	Sep-26	Dec-26	Mar-27	Jun-27	Sep-27	Dec-27
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Bank Rate	4.50	4.25	4.00	4.00	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50
5-year PWLB	4.90	4.80	4.60	4.50	4.50	4.40	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.00	4.00	3.90
10-year PWLB	5.10	5.00	4.80	4.80	4.70	4.50	4.50	4.40	4.30	4.20	4.20	4.10
25-year PWLB	5.50	5.40	5.30	5.20	5.10	5.00	4.90	4.80	4.70	4.60	4.50	4.50

- 2.24 Interest rates impact on both the amount of interest that the Council forecasts it will need to pay in respect of current and forecast future borrowing, as well as the amount of interest income receivable in respect of the levels of forecast investments. As set out in the Council's Borrowing Strategy, the Council is currently attempting to avoid taking any long-term borrowing whilst interest rates remain high ahead of forecast decreases in future years. As a consequence, the Council is currently utilising existing cash balances to cashflow Capital Programme expenditure and therefore has less cash available to invest in longer term investments that generate higher levels of interest receivable income. The costs avoided by deferring longer term borrowing whilst borrowing rates remain high are greater than the lost investment opportunities. The Borrowing Strategy will be reviewed as part of the 2025/26 Treasury Management Strategy Statement that will be brought forward for consideration and approval in February 2025.
- 2.25 For planning purposes, the Council has assumed that the Bank of England will gradually decrease interest rates to 3.50% by December 2026. The MTFS assumes an average borrowing rate of 4.30% for 2025/26, decreasing to 3.94% and 3.73% in 2026/27 and 2027/28 respectively.

- 2.26 Current UK interest rate forecasts (including the 20-basis point certainty rate reduction) are outlined in the following table:

Future Changes to the Local Government Finance System

- 2.27 As part of the Local Government Finance Policy Statement, the Government announced its intention to reform the local government finance system from 2026/27, creating a new funding system based on an up-to-date assessment of need and local resources. These reforms are set to be built on the proposals set out in the review of Relative Needs and Resources (also referred to as the 'Fair Funding Review'), using the best available evidence to inform local authority funding allocations.
- 2.28 The Government also announced its intention to 'reset' the business rates retention system, starting in 2026/27. The reset is planned to further allow the Government to match funding to where it is needed most. The reset will apply nationally, but business rates growth generated within designated areas such as Freeports, Enterprise Zones and Investment Zones will be exempt in line with current policy.
- 2.29 It has also been announced that 2026/27 will mark the first multi-year funding Settlement for local government in 10 years – aiming to provide improved planning certainty for local authorities.

3. Expenditure Assumptions

Pay Award

- 3.1 3.0% has been allowed for pay inflation in 2025/26 with 2.3% for 2026/27 and 1.9% for 2027/28.

National Living Wage

- 3.2 In the Autumn Statement the Chancellor announced that the National Living Wage for individuals aged 21 and over will increase by 6.7% to £12.21 an hour from 1st April 2025.

General Inflation

- 3.3 Where services are experiencing specific inflationary pressures, these are included as proposed budgetary changes supported by a corresponding business case.

Pension Fund

- 3.4 The triennial valuation of the Pension Fund took place on 31st March 2022. The primary rate is set as 16.2% for the first year of the MTFS period, and is currently forecast to remain at that rate for the following two years.

Capital Financing

- 3.5 Capital Financing costs include Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), notionally the repayment of debt, as set out in the Council's MRP Policy within the Treasury Management Strategy included elsewhere on this agenda. Additionally, these costs include any interest on external borrowing.

4. Significant Impacts on the Council's 2025/26 Budget

Adult Social Care

- 4.1 Across the country, the adult social care sector is facing serious challenges in relation to ever increasing demand, rising costs and workforce challenges. The increases in employer's national insurance contributions and the national living wage due to be implemented in 2025/26 have added a significant financial burden to local authorities and care providers. As a result, a third of providers surveyed by Care England are considering leaving the market altogether, which would cause huge disruption and challenges in an already pressurised sector.
- 4.2 In Reading, the Council has seen an increase in the numbers of people presenting to the service and those people have increased complexity, intensity and acuity of need. Consequently, there are higher numbers of people needing Adult Social Care support, with higher needs on average than those previously approaching the service. As a result, the services delivered are more costly and a net increase of £5.094m for Adult Social Care services is proposed for 2025/26 to address these pressures.

Children Social Care

- 4.3 There are even greater financial pressures in Children's Social Care, with increasing demand on services, increasing complexity of need, reducing numbers of foster carers, and an insufficient supply of adequate residential placements driving up costs.
- 4.4 On 31st March 2014 there were 68,790 children looked after in England. On 31st March 2024, the number stood at 83,630, an increase of more than 22%. According to analysis by the Local Government Association, there are now over 1,500 children in placements each costing the equivalent of over £0.500m every year, while the largest 15 private providers make an average of 23 per cent profit.
- 4.5 Reading is experiencing similar cost pressures. The 2025/26 Budget includes a proposed increase of £5.587m increase in the Brighter Futures for Children (BFfC) contract sum. This includes inflationary increases and a significant growth pressure in respect of placements for Children Looked After.

Dedicated Schools Grant - High Needs Block

- 4.6 High needs funding supports provision for pupils and students with SEND who require additional resources to participate in education and learning, from their early years to age 25 in schools and colleges (excluding students aged 19 to 25 who do not have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or students who are over the age of 25) and pre-16 pupils in Alternative Provision (AP) who, because of exclusion, illness, or other reasons, cannot receive their education in mainstream schools. High needs funding is provided to local authorities through the high needs block of the DSG.
- 4.7 High needs block funding has been increasing significantly in recent years, but those increases have not kept pace with increasing costs. As a result, a significant number of local authorities are accumulating deficits on the high needs block. In some cases, those deficits are so significant that they would potentially trigger a s114 notice. As a temporary measure, the Government has issued a statutory override for the Dedicated Schools Grant that excludes DSG deficits from the calculation of General Fund reserves. This override will continue until 31st March 2026.
- 4.8 In Reading, the Council is forecasting a cumulative deficit of £26.503m on the high needs block by 31st March 2025. The deficit is forecast to reach £40.373m by the time

the statutory override is currently due to end in March 2026 and is forecast to reach £53.165m by 31st March 2027. Council reserves will not be sufficient to fund this deficit, potentially triggering the need to issue a s114 notice. It is therefore critical that action is taken to address the deficit.

Homelessness

- 4.9 Homelessness has been increasing both locally and nationally due to the “cost of living crisis” and national legislative changes. Subsequently the use of temporary and paid nightly accommodation has been increasing across the board primarily due to evictions from the private rented sector as landlords become increasingly concerned about their financial position. In Reading the numbers of households in Emergency Accommodation as at the end of December 2024 was 182: the budget assumed a figure of around 70 households. The MTFS update includes a net increase of £0.884m in the budget in respect of funding Homelessness pressures.

2024/25 Financial Position

- 4.10 The Quarter 2 Performance and Monitoring Report, presented to Policy Committee in December 2024, is forecasting a net adverse variance of £9.620m. This is despite additional in year savings of £8.580m having been identified in response to pressures identified at Quarter 1. The Quarter 2 forecast predominantly consists of adverse variances in four main areas: £5.941m on Children’s placement demand, £3.054m on Housing Benefit, £1.380m on Adult Social Care packages and £1.067m on Emergency Accommodation. These adverse variances are partially offset by smaller net positive variances across services and Capital Financing totalling £1.822m.
- 4.11 Should an adverse variance crystallise then the balance of the variance will need to be funded by a draw from earmarked reserves as part of 2024/25 outturn processes and the 2024/25 Performance Report to Policy Committee in July 2025.

5. Local Government Finance Settlement 2025/26 & Other Changes from the December 2024 MTFS Update

- 5.1 A one-year Final Local Government Finance Settlement was published on 3rd February 2025. The settlement provides more detail for 2025/26, which for Reading is as follows:

New Homes Bonus

- 5.2 The Council’s 2025/26 allocation for the New Homes Bonus was announced as £0.812m, which is unchanged from what was assumed in the December 2024 MTFS update. For 2026/27 and 2027/28, it has been assumed that the grant will cease but that the total amount of grant in the national system will remain and be re-distributed using the Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) methodology, resulting in a reduced funding allocation of £0.635m; £0.002m lower than assumed in the December 2024 MTFS update to Policy Committee..

Social Care Grant

- 5.3 The settlement announced that the Council’s 2025/26 allocation for the Social Care Grant was announced as £11.467m; £0.142m higher than the £11.325m assumed in the December 2024 MTFS update.

Revenue Support Grant

- 5.4 Revenue Support Grant (RSG) has been the core general purpose grant from central government for some years now. For 2025/26 RSG has been increased by the September 2023 to September 2024 change in CPI. There is a net increase in RSG for 2025/26 of £0.011m over the level assumed in the December 2024 MTFS update. This net increase is comprised of an increase of £0.073m, offset by a reduction of £0.062 relating to the impact of grants that has been budgeted for elsewhere being rolled into the Revenue Support Grant from 2025/26 onwards. It has been assumed that this level of funding will increase in line with inflation, by £0.026m in 2026/27 and a further £0.016m in 2027/28.

Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Grant

- 5.5 For 2025/26 it was announced that the Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Grant would be rolled into the Core Spending Power settlement. The Council's 2025/26 allocation for the grant was announced as £0.444m; £0.088m higher than the £0.356m assumed in the December 2024 MTFS update.

National Insurance Estimate

- 5.6 The rate of employer National Insurance contributions is increasing from 13.8% to 15.0% and reducing the per-employee threshold at which employers become liable to pay National Insurance to £5,000 from 6th April 2025. In the December 2024 MTFS update it had been assumed that the impact of these increases would be fully covered by the Government. The settlement announced that the Council's funding allocation for 2025/26 would be £1.572m, which falls short of the Council's £1.663m estimated cost of the changes, resulting in the net pressure being £0.091m greater than assumed in the December 2024 MTFS update.

Public Health Grant

- 5.7 Allocations in respect of the Public Health Grant for 2025/26 were announced on 7th February 2025. In 2025/26 the Council's allocation is £11.604m, which is an increase of £0.745m from 2024/25. As the grant is ringfenced any increase/decrease to the Council's grant allocation is offset by a corresponding increase/decrease in expenditure. Therefore, the MTFS assumes a nil impact on the bottom line.

Other Changes from the December 2024 MTFS Update

Council Tax

- 5.8 The Government announced as part of the Local Government Finance Policy Statement 2025/26 on 28th November 2024, that the level of increase in Council Tax requiring a local referendum will remain at 3.00% and the Adult Social Care precept will remain at 2.00% for 2025/26. A general Council Tax increase of 2.99% and an additional Adult Social Care precept of 2.00% is proposed across all years of the MTFS period 2025/26-2027/28, subject to confirmation of the referendum limit in subsequent years.
- 5.9 At its meeting on 28th January 2025, Council approved a revised Council Tax Base of 59,566.99 (band D equivalent) properties for 2025/26 – an increase of 1.06% on the 2024/25 Tax Base of 58,944.73.
- 5.10 The Tax Base of 59,566.99 band D equivalents has been updated from the Tax Base of 59,534.11 used in the December 2024 MTFS update in order to reflect updated

figures in respect of the number of chargeable dwellings, discounts, exemptions, eligible Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme claimants and revised estimates of new build and collection performance. The effect of this is an increase in Council Tax income of £0.069m for 2025/26.

Business Rates

- 5.11 The budget has been updated to reflect the latest available information and assumptions included in the NNDR1 return made to central government in January 2025. This is a complex area exacerbated by the previous Government having deferred the business rates reset. In terms of the local share of business rates retained by the Council this is now estimated to be lower than forecast in the December 2024 MTFS update by £0.753m for 2025/26.
- 5.12 The new Government announced its intention to 'reset' the business rates retention system, starting in 2026/27. The reset is planned to further allow the Government to match funding to where it is needed most. Consequently, this MTFS update assumes that the business rates reset will be implemented for 2026/27.

Council Tax & Business Rates Collection Fund Surplus/Deficit

- 5.13 The Council Tax Base report, approved by Council on 28th January 2025, declared the estimated balance on the Council Tax Collection Fund as at 31st March 2025. The Council's share of the estimated surplus balance is £0.408m.
- 5.14 The NNDR1 return to central government in January 2025 projected an estimated surplus balance on the Business Rates Collection Fund as at 31st March 2025. The Council's share of this surplus is £0.140m.

Additional/Revised Service/Corporate Budgets

- 5.15 Since December, a number of new and revised business cases and technical budget adjustments have been submitted, reviewed and amended e.g. for revised inflation forecasts. This has resulted in a £5.324m net reduction to the 2025/26 budget, but adds net pressures of £1.240m in 2026/27 and net pressures of £0.290m in 2027/28.

Capital Financing

- 5.16 The revenue impact of the proposed Capital Programme has been updated to reflect changes to existing schemes (including re-profiling) and the addition of new schemes. The cumulative effect of these changes on capital financing costs is a reduction of £1.605m across the MTFS period.

Contingency

- 5.17 A Contingency provision of £3.238m has been added across all years of this MTFS period to mitigate against potential increases in demand pressures over and above the increases factored into individual service budgets. This figure includes £0.497m of the Utilities Contingency, which has now been transferred into the corporate contingency. If these pressures do not materialise then the contingency will be transferred to earmarked reserves.

Contribution to/(from) Reserves

- 5.18 The 2025/26 Budget is balanced by an overall £3.945m assumed draw on (contribution from) earmarked reserves, consisting of:

- £1.179m to fund service specific expenditure from specific earmarked reserves. This was already assumed in the December 2024 MTFS Update;
- £2.766m from the Financial Resilience Reserve to balance the 2025/26 budget.

5.19 The projected net draw on earmarked reserves in 2026/27 and 2027/28 relate solely to funding service specific expenditure from specific earmarked reserves.

Summary of Changes

5.20 The changes outlined in paragraphs 5.2-5.19 are summarised in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Summary of Changes from December 2024

	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000
Net Budget (Surplus)/Deficit as at December 2024 Policy Committee	6,414	15,067	15,560
<i>Changes Arising from the Final Local Government Finance Settlement:</i>			
New Homes Bonus	0	2	0
Social Care Grant	(142)	0	0
Revenue Support Grant	(73)	(28)	(16)
Grants Rolled in to Revenue Support Grant	62	0	0
Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Grant	(88)	0	0
National Insurance Estimated Increased Costs	1,663	0	0
National Insurance Funding	(1,572)	0	0
Public Health Grant Expenditure	745	287	249
Public Health Grant Income	(745)	(287)	(249)
<i>Other Changes since the December 2024 MTFS Update:</i>			
Changes to Council Tax Base	(69)	(5)	(4)
Changes to Business Rate Base (including S31 Grant)	753	(2,114)	362
Council Tax Collection Fund (Surplus)/Deficit	(408)	408	0
Business Rates Collection Fund (Surplus)/Deficit	(140)	140	0
Additional/Revised Service/Corporate Budgets	(5,324)	1,240	290
Adjustment to Capital Financing Costs	(1,051)	(119)	(435)
Transfer Utilities Contingency to Corporate Contingency	(497)	0	0
Increase/(Decrease) to Corporate Contingency	3,238	0	0
Additional Contribution to/(from) Reserves	(2,766)	2,766	0
Sum of Changes	(6,414)	2,290	197
Cumulative Impact of Changes	(6,414)	(4,124)	(3,927)
Net Budget (Surplus)/Deficit after Changes	0	10,943	11,633

6. Risks

6.1 The main risks to delivering the proposals set out within this MTFS include:

- The ability to contain demand pressures;
- Adverse interest rate movements;
- Increased inflationary pressures;
- Delivery of capital receipts to fund the flexible use for transformation purposes and avoid prudential borrowing charges;

- Future local government finance settlements from central government;
- The capacity of Officers to deliver the savings and income projections in line with assumptions;

6.2 Additionally, the Council's 2023/24 accounts are still subject to audit which may mean there could be some movement in the assumed baseline level of reserves.

7. Reserve Levels

7.1 CIPFA have stated that there should be no imposed limit on the level or nature of balances required to be held by an individual Council. Many authorities are currently struggling to manage their pressures with an increasing number of local authorities issuing s114 notices or requesting exceptional financial support over recent years. In light of previous high-profile failures and funding concerns raised by authorities, CIPFA launched a financial resilience index which uses a basket of indicators to measure individual Local Authorities' financial resilience compared to their comparators.

7.2 This index, which is based on the latest published data from Central Government (2023/24), shows that the level of reserves held by Reading Borough Council equated to 36.30% of net revenue expenditure. This placed Reading as the 30th highest among 62 Unitary Authorities.

7.3 The Council has shifted towards the "higher risk" end of the scale in terms of the "Change to Reserves" measure as a result of decreasing levels of reserves over the last three years. However, as set out in the main body of the report, this MTFS update is forecasting a combined cumulative budget gap of £22.576m over the next three years. This compares to the forecast level of the combined General Fund balance and Budget Stabilisation earmarked reserves of £19.904m as of 31st March 2025. Without urgent action these reserves will be gone within two years. Other earmarked reserves are set aside to fund specific risks, should they materialise, and expenditure funded by ringfenced grants.

8. Savings

8.1 Savings required to balance the 2025/26 budget and assumed within the MTFS Update include efficiency savings, invest-to-save initiatives and increased income from fees and charges. They are summarised in Tables 3 and 4 below. Further detail is provided in Appendices 3 and 4:

Table 3. General Fund Savings Summary 2025/26 to 2027/28 by Directorate

	2025/26 (£000)	2026/27 (£000)	2027/28 (£000)	Total (£000)
Communities and Adult Social Care	(717)	(604)	(592)	(1,913)
Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services	(3,168)	(692)	(66)	(3,926)
Resources	(1,629)	(383)	(32)	(2,044)
Chief Executive Services	(40)	(2)	0	(42)
Corporate	(6,154)	2,763	0	(3,391)
Total Council Services	(11,708)	1,082	(690)	(11,316)
Children's Services (BFfC)	(2,634)	(1,770)	(415)	(4,819)
Total	(14,342)	(688)	(1,105)	(16,135)

Table 4. General Fund Savings Summary 2025/26 to 2027/28 by Type

	Efficiency Savings (£000)	Invest to Save Schemes (£000)	Income, Fees & Charges (£000)	Total (£000)
Council Services	(5,936)	(904)	(4,476)	(11,316)
Children's Services (BFfC)	(3,807)	(912)	(100)	(4,819)
Total Savings	(9,743)	(1,816)	(4,576)	(16,135)

- 8.2 In order to balance the MTFS in future years on a sustainable basis, further savings need to be found for 2026/27 and 2027/28.

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Appendix 2 - Summary of the Proposed General Fund Budget 2025/26 to 2027/28

Directorate/Service	Approved Budget 2024/25 £'000	Proposed Budget 2025/26 £'000	Proposed Budget 2026/27 £'000	Proposed Budget 2027/28 £'000
Communities & Adult Social Care				
Commissioning, Transformation & Performance	(3,289)	(3,334)	(3,286)	(3,231)
Adult Social Care Operations	50,207	55,437	60,999	66,129
Safeguarding, Quality & Practice	7,160	7,103	7,096	7,092
Community & Adult Social Care Management	1,704	1,670	1,669	1,669
Housing & Communities	2,725	3,682	3,625	3,623
Public Health	0	0	0	0
Communities & Adult Social Care	58,507	64,558	70,103	75,282
Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services				
Planning, Transport & Public Protection	125	(547)	57	155
Culture	3,379	2,648	2,266	1,873
Environmental & Commercial Services	20,538	20,877	21,355	21,901
Property & Asset Management	(2,559)	(2,447)	(3,052)	(2,539)
Management & Sustainability	1,234	446	552	732
Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services	22,717	20,977	21,178	22,122
Resources				
Policy, Change & Customer Services	3,921	3,256	3,127	3,123
Human Resources & Organisational Development	2,196	1,969	1,965	1,943
Procurement & Contracts	517	512	511	511
Finance	5,234	4,739	4,733	4,730
Legal & Democratic Services	3,387	3,276	3,272	3,270
Digital & IT	6,142	6,430	6,315	6,314
Resources	21,397	20,182	19,923	19,891
Chief Executive Services				
Executive Management Team	911	911	911	911
Communications	637	597	595	595
Chief Executive Services	1,548	1,508	1,506	1,506
Children's Services				
Retained by Council	843	855	855	855
Brighter Futures for Children	58,839	64,426	63,878	64,500
Children's Services	59,682	65,281	64,733	65,355
Total Service Expenditure	163,851	172,506	177,443	184,156
Corporate Budgets				
Capital Financing Costs	18,355	17,296	18,448	19,356
Corporate Contingency	0	3,238	3,238	3,238
Movement to/(from) Reserves	(3,084)	(3,945)	(401)	(340)
Other Corporate Budgets	(11,236)	(10,986)	(5,991)	(4,469)
Corporate Budgets	4,035	5,603	15,294	17,785
Net Budget Requirement	167,886	178,109	192,737	201,941
Financed By:				
Council Tax Income	(118,884)	(126,134)	(133,753)	(141,831)
Business Rates Local Share	(32,045)	(34,330)	(44,564)	(44,937)
Section 31 Grant (Business Rates Retention Scheme)	(16,031)	(13,514)	0	0
New Homes Bonus	(1,255)	(812)	(635)	(635)
Revenue Support Grant	(2,652)	(2,771)	(2,842)	(2,905)
Other Government Grants	(1,193)	0	0	0
One-off Collection Fund (Surplus)/Deficit - Council Tax	1,701	(408)	0	0
One-off Collection Fund (Surplus)/Deficit - Business Rates	2,473	(140)	0	0
Total Funding	(167,886)	(178,109)	(181,794)	(190,308)
Over/(Under) Budget	0	0	10,943	11,633

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Appendix 3 - Summary of General Fund Revenue Budget by Service 2025/26 - 2027/28

2025/26	Original Budget 2024/25 £'000	Hierarchy Movements £'000	Virements £'000	Approved Budget 2024/25 £'000	Contractual Inflation £'000	Budget Pressures £'000	Efficiency Savings £'000	Invest to Save £'000	Income, Fees & Charges £'000	Proposed Budget 2025/26 £'000
Communities & Adult Social Care										
Commissioning, Transformation & Performance	2,690	0	(5,979)	(3,289)	59	0	(28)	0	(76)	(3,334)
Adult Social Care Operations	46,110	0	4,097	50,207	1,370	4,190	(330)	0	0	55,437
Safeguarding, Quality & Practice	3,567	0	3,593	7,160	0	0	(57)	0	0	7,103
Community & Adult Social Care Management	1,650	0	54	1,704	0	0	(34)	0	0	1,670
Housing & Communities	2,870	0	(145)	2,725	0	1,149	(104)	0	(88)	3,682
Public Health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Communities & Adult Social Care	56,887	0	1,620	58,507	1,429	5,339	(553)	0	(164)	64,558
Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services										
Planning, Transport & Public Protection	(444)	0	569	125	64	193	(560)	(245)	(124)	(547)
Culture	2,914	0	465	3,379	0	91	(772)	0	(50)	2,648
Environmental & Commercial Services	18,950	0	1,588	20,538	752	207	(348)	(252)	(20)	20,877
Property & Asset Management	(3,190)	0	631	(2,559)	0	764	(84)	0	(568)	(2,447)
Management & Sustainability	1,174	0	60	1,234	0	(643)	(11)	0	(134)	446
Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services	19,404	0	3,313	22,717	816	612	(1,775)	(497)	(896)	20,977
Resources										
Policy, Change & Customer Services	2,509	0	1,412	3,921	0	0	(650)	(15)	0	3,256
Human Resources & Organisational Development	1,929	0	267	2,196	0	3	(117)	0	(113)	1,969
Procurement & Contracts	369	0	148	517	0	0	(5)	0	0	512
Financial Services	4,745	0	489	5,234	50	0	(395)	0	(150)	4,739
Legal & Democratic Services	2,930	0	457	3,387	0	0	(31)	(80)	0	3,276
Digital & IT	6,653	0	(511)	6,142	196	165	(22)	(51)	0	6,430
Resources	19,135	0	2,262	21,397	246	168	(1,220)	(146)	(263)	20,182
Chief Executive Services										
Executive Management Team	897	0	14	911	0	0	0	0	0	911
Communications	734	0	(97)	637	0	0	(40)	0	0	597
Chief Executive Services	1,631	0	(83)	1,548	0	0	(40)	0	0	1,508
Children's Services										
Retained by Council	843	0	0	843	12	0	0	0	0	855
Brighter Futures for Children	58,839	0	0	58,839	1,278	6,943	(2,450)	(84)	(100)	64,426
Children's Services	59,682	0	0	59,682	1,290	6,943	(2,450)	(84)	(100)	65,281
Total Budget at Service Level	156,739	0	7,112	163,851	3,781	13,062	(6,038)	(727)	(1,423)	172,506
Corporate Budgets										
Capital Financing Costs	18,426	0	(71)	18,355	0	(1,059)	0	0	0	17,296
Corporate Contingency	0	0	0	0	0	3,238	0	0	0	3,238
Movement to/(from) Reserves	(3,084)	0	0	(3,084)	0	(861)	0	0	0	(3,945)
Other Corporate Budgets	(4,195)	0	(7,041)	(11,236)	3,185	3,219	(300)	0	(5,854)	(10,986)
Corporate Budgets	11,147	0	(7,112)	4,035	3,185	4,537	(300)	0	(5,854)	5,603
Total	167,886	0	0	167,886	6,966	17,599	(6,338)	(727)	(7,277)	178,109

2026/27	Proposed Budget 2025/26	Hierarchy Movements	Virements	Proposed Budget 2025/26	Contractual Inflation	Budget Pressures	Efficiency Savings	Invest to Save	Income, Fees & Charges	Proposed Budget 2026/27
Communities & Adult Social Care										
Commissioning, Transformation & Performance	(3,334)	0	0	(3,334)	61	0	(3)	0	(10)	(3,286)
Adult Social Care Operations	55,437	0	0	55,437	3,369	2,773	(580)	0	0	60,999
Safeguarding, Quality & Practice	7,103	0	0	7,103	0	0	(7)	0	0	7,096
Community & Adult Social Care Management	1,670	0	0	1,670	0	0	(1)	0	0	1,669
Housing and Communities	3,682	0	0	3,682	0	(54)	(3)	0	0	3,625
Public Health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Communities & Adult Social Care	64,558	0	0	64,558	3,430	2,719	(594)	0	(10)	70,103
Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services										
Planning, Transport & Public Protection	(547)	0	0	(547)	0	724	(110)	(10)	0	57
Culture	2,648	0	0	2,648	0	(2)	(380)	0	0	2,266
Environmental and Commercial Services	20,877	0	0	20,877	543	100	(8)	(90)	(67)	21,355
Property and Asset Management	(2,447)	0	0	(2,447)	0	(600)	(5)	0	0	(3,052)
Management & Sustainability	446	0	0	446	0	128	(1)	0	(21)	552
Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services	20,977	0	0	20,977	543	350	(504)	(100)	(88)	21,178
Resources										
Policy, Change & Customer Services	3,256	0	0	3,256	0	48	(177)	0	0	3,127
Human Resources & Organisational Development	1,969	0	0	1,969	0	0	26	0	(30)	1,965
Procurement & Contracts	512	0	0	512	0	0	(1)	0	0	511
Finance	4,739	0	0	4,739	0	0	(6)	0	0	4,733
Legal & Democratic Services	3,276	0	0	3,276	0	0	(4)	0	0	3,272
Digital & IT	6,430	0	0	6,430	76	0	(2)	(189)	0	6,315
Resources	20,182	0	0	20,182	76	48	(164)	(189)	(30)	19,923
Chief Executive Services										
Executive Management Team	911	0	0	911	0	0	0	0	0	911
Communications	597	0	0	597	0	0	(2)	0	0	595
Chief Executive	1,508	0	0	1,508	0	0	(2)	0	0	1,506
Children's Services										
Retained by Council	855	0	0	855	0	0	0	0	0	855
Brighter Futures for Children	64,426	0	0	64,426	1,123	99	(1,357)	(413)	0	63,878
Children's Services	65,281	0	0	65,281	1,123	99	(1,357)	(413)	0	64,733
Total Budget at Service Level	172,506	0	0	172,506	5,172	3,216	(2,621)	(702)	(128)	177,443
Corporate Budgets										
Capital Financing Costs	17,296	0	0	17,296	0	1,152	0	0	0	18,448
Corporate Contingency	3,238	0	0	3,238	0	0	0	0	0	3,238
Movement to/(from) Reserves	(3,945)	0	0	(3,945)	0	3,544	0	0	0	(401)
Other Corporate Budgets	(10,986)	0	0	(10,986)	2,232	0	0	0	2,763	(5,991)
Corporate Budgets	5,603	0	0	5,603	2,232	4,696	0	0	2,763	15,294
Total	178,109	0	0	178,109	7,404	7,912	(2,621)	(702)	2,635	192,737

2027/28	Proposed Budget 2026/27	Hierarchy Movements	Virements	Proposed Budget 2026/27	Contractual Inflation	Budget Pressures	Efficiency Savings	Invest to Save	Income, Fees & Charges	Proposed Budget 2027/28
Communities & Adult Social Care										
Commissioning, Transformation & Performance	(3,286)	0	0	(3,286)	62	0	(2)	0	(5)	(3,231)
Adult Social Care Operations	60,999	0	0	60,999	3,554	2,155	(579)	0	0	66,129
Safeguarding, Quality & Practice	7,096	0	0	7,096	0	0	(4)	0	0	7,092
Community & Adult Social Care Management	1,669	0	0	1,669	0	0	0	0	0	1,669
Housing and Communities	3,625	0	0	3,625	0	0	(2)	0	0	3,623
Public Health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Communities & Adult Social Care	70,103	0	0	70,103	3,616	2,155	(587)	0	(5)	75,282
Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services										
Planning, Transport & Public Protection	57	0	0	57	0	0	2	(4)	100	155
Culture	2,266	0	0	2,266	0	(213)	(180)	0	0	1,873
Environmental and Commercial Services	21,355	0	0	21,355	543	(25)	(4)	32	0	21,901
Property and Asset Management	(3,052)	0	0	(3,052)	0	515	(2)	0	0	(2,539)
Management & Sustainability	552	0	0	552	0	190	(1)	0	(9)	732
Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services	21,178	0	0	21,178	543	467	(185)	28	91	22,122
Resources										
Policy, Change & Customer Services	3,127	0	0	3,127	0	0	(4)	0	0	3,123
Human Resources & Organisational Development	1,965	0	0	1,965	0	0	(2)	0	(20)	1,943
Procurement & Contracts	511	0	0	511	0	0	0	0	0	511
Financial Services	4,733	0	0	4,733	0	0	(3)	0	0	4,730
Legal & Democratic Services	3,272	0	0	3,272	0	0	(2)	0	0	3,270
Digital & IT	6,315	0	0	6,315	0	0	(1)	0	0	6,314
Resources	19,923	0	0	19,923	0	0	(12)	0	(20)	19,891
Chief Executive Services										
Executive Management Team	911	0	0	911	0	0	0	0	0	911
Communications	595	0	0	595	0	0	0	0	0	595
Chief Executive Services	1,506	0	0	1,506	0	0	0	0	0	1,506
Children's Services										
Retained by Council	855	0	0	855	0	0	0	0	0	855
Brighter Futures for Children	63,878	0	0	63,878	1,037	0	0	(415)	0	64,500
Children's Services	64,733	0	0	64,733	1,037	0	0	(415)	0	65,355
Total Budget at Service Level	177,443	0	0	177,443	5,196	2,622	(784)	(387)	66	184,156
Corporate Budgets										
Capital Financing Costs	18,448	0	0	18,448	0	908	0	0	0	19,356
Corporate Contingency	3,238	0	0	3,238	0	0	0	0	0	3,238
Movement to/(from) Reserves	(401)	0	0	(401)	0	61	0	0	0	(340)
Other Corporate Budgets	(5,991)	0	0	(5,991)	1,522	0	0	0	0	(4,469)
Corporate Budgets	15,294	0	0	15,294	1,522	969	0	0	0	17,785
Total	192,737	0	0	192,737	6,718	3,591	(784)	(387)	66	201,941

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Appendix 4 - Detailed General Fund Budget Changes 2025/26 - 2027/28

Directorate/Service	Contractual Inflation	Budget Pressures	Efficiency Savings	Invest to Save	Income, Fees & Charges	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Communities & Adult Social Care						
Commissioning, Transformation & Performance	182	0	(33)	0	(91)	58
Adult Social Care Operations	8,293	9,118	(1,489)	0	0	15,922
Safeguarding, Quality & Practice	0	0	(68)	0	0	(68)
Community & Adult Social Care Management	0	0	(35)	0	0	(35)
Housing & Communities	0	1,095	(109)	0	(88)	898
Public Health	0	0	0	0	0	0
Communities & Adult Social Care	8,475	10,213	(1,734)	0	(179)	16,775
Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services						
Planning, Transport & Public Protection	64	917	(668)	(259)	(24)	30
Culture	0	(124)	(1,332)	0	(50)	(1,506)
Environmental & Commercial Services	1,838	282	(360)	(310)	(87)	1,363
Property & Asset Management	0	679	(91)	0	(568)	20
Management & Sustainability	0	(325)	(13)	0	(164)	(502)
Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services	1,902	1,429	(2,464)	(569)	(893)	(595)
Resources						
Policy, Change & Customer Services	0	48	(831)	(15)	0	(798)
Human Resources & Organisational Development	0	3	(93)	0	(163)	(253)
Procurement & Contracts	0	0	(6)	0	0	(6)
Finance	50	0	(404)	0	(150)	(504)
Legal & Democratic Services	0	0	(37)	(80)	0	(117)
Digital & IT	272	165	(25)	(240)	0	172
Resources	322	216	(1,396)	(335)	(313)	(1,506)
Chief Executive Services						
Executive Management Team	0	0	0	0	0	0
Communications	0	0	(42)	0	0	(42)
Chief Executive Services	0	0	(42)	0	0	(42)
Children's Services						
Retained by Council	12	0	0	0	0	12
Brighter Futures for Children	3,438	7,042	(3,807)	(912)	(100)	5,661
Children's Services	3,450	7,042	(3,807)	(912)	(100)	5,673
Service Total	14,149	18,900	(9,443)	(1,816)	(1,485)	20,305
Corporate Budgets						
Capital Financing Costs	0	1,001	0	0	0	1,001
Corporate Contingency	0	3,238	0	0	0	3,238
Movement to/(from) Reserves	0	2,744	0	0	0	2,744
Other Corporate Budgets	6,939	3,219	(300)	0	(3,091)	6,767
Corporate Budgets Total	6,939	10,202	(300)	0	(3,091)	13,750
Total	21,088	29,102	(9,743)	(1,816)	(4,576)	34,055

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Appendix 4a - Detailed General Fund Budget Changes 2025/26-2027/28 - Directorate of Communities & Adult Social Care

Overall Summary						Contract Inflation	Budget Pressures	Efficiency Savings	Invest to Save	Income, Fees and Charges	Total
<u>Service</u>						£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Commissioning, Transformation & Performance						182	-	(33)	-	(91)	58
Adult Social Care Operations						8,293	9,118	(1,489)	-	-	15,922
Safeguarding, Quality & Practice						-	-	(68)	-	-	(68)
Community & Adult Social Care Management						-	-	(35)	-	-	(35)
Housing & Communities						-	1,095	(109)	-	(88)	898
Public Health						-	-	-	-	-	-
Directorate Total						8,475	10,213	(1,734)	-	(179)	16,775

Summary of MTFS Position				February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total
				2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	All Years
				£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Service Pressures</u>													
Commissioning, Transformation & Performance				88	91		(29)	(30)	62	59	61	62	182
Adult Social Care Operations				4,196	2,753		1,364	3,389	5,709	5,560	6,142	5,709	17,411
Safeguarding, Quality & Practice				-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Community & Adult Social Care Management				-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Housing & Communities				-	-		1,149	(54)	-	1,149	(54)	-	1,095
Public Health				-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Directorate Total				4,284	2,844		2,484	3,305	5,771	6,768	6,149	5,771	18,688

				February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total
				2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	All Years
				£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Service Savings</u>													
Commissioning, Transformation & Performance				(1)	(1)		(103)	(12)	(7)	(104)	(13)	(7)	(124)
Adult Social Care Operations				598	(2)		(928)	(578)	(579)	(330)	(580)	(579)	(1,489)
Safeguarding, Quality & Practice				(2)	(3)		(55)	(4)	(4)	(57)	(7)	(4)	(68)
Community & Adult Social Care Management				-	-		(34)	(1)	-	(34)	(1)	-	(35)
Housing & Communities				(1)	(1)		(191)	(2)	(2)	(192)	(3)	(2)	(197)
Public Health				-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Directorate Total				594	(7)		(1,311)	(597)	(592)	(717)	(604)	(592)	(1,913)

Directorate Total				4,878	2,837		1,173	2,708	5,179	6,051	5,545	5,179	16,775
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Schedule of Detailed Budget Change Proposals

Line	Bid Reference	Bid Type	Previous Bid Ref	Service	February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total All Years £'000
					2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	
23	DCASC-2526-02	Amendment	DCASC-2425-02	<u>Commissioning, Transformation & Performance</u> Adult Social Care Contract Inflation	88	91		(29)	(30)	62	59	61	62	182
24					88	91		(29)	(30)	62	59	61	62	182
25					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
26				<u>Total Budget Pressures</u> Vacancy Factor	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
27	CORP-2526-02	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj		(1)	(1)		(27)	(2)	(2)	(28)	(3)	(2)	(33)
28					(1)	(1)		(27)	(2)	(2)	(28)	(3)	(2)	(33)
29				<u>Total Efficiency Savings</u>	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
30					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
31	DCASC-2526-07	New			-	-		(76)	(10)	(5)	(76)	(10)	(5)	(91)
32				<u>Total Income, Fees & Charges</u>	-	-		(76)	(10)	(5)	(76)	(10)	(5)	(91)
33					87	90		(132)	(42)	55	(45)	48	55	58
					87	90		(132)	(42)	55	(45)	48	55	58

Schedule of Detailed Budget Change Proposals

Line	Bid Reference	Bid Type	Previous Bid Ref	Service	February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total
					2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	All Years
					£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adult Social Care Operations														
34	DCASC-2526-01	Amendment	DCASC-2425-01	Adult Social Care Placements Inflation	1,889	1,907		(519)	1,462	3,554	1,370	3,369	3,554	8,293
35				Total Contractual Inflation	1,889	1,907		(519)	1,462	3,554	1,370	3,369	3,554	8,293
36	DCASC-2526-04	Amendment	DACHS-2021-02	Adult Social Care Demography	199	-		359	488	529	558	488	529	1,575
37	DCASC-2526-11	New		Adult Social Care Increased Dependency and Demand	-	-		1,847	-	-	1,847	-	-	1,847
38	DCASC-2526-03	Amendment	DCASC-2425-03	ASC Pressure for Children Transitioning to Adults from BFIC	2,108	846		(323)	687	851	1,785	1,533	851	4,169
39	DCASC-2526-05	New		Supported Care Cost of Care Pressure	-	-		-	752	775	-	752	775	1,527
40			N/A - Technical Adj	Adult Social Care Discharge Fund Expenditure	(629)	-		-	-	-	(629)	-	-	(629)
41			N/A - Technical Adj	Adult Social Care Discharge Fund Grant	629	-		-	-	-	629	-	-	629
42				Total Budget Pressures	2,307	846		1,883	1,927	2,155	4,190	2,773	2,155	9,118
43			DCASC-2425-10	Adult Social Care Provider Payment Efficiency	600	-		-	-	-	600	-	-	600
44	DCASC-2526-13	New		Adult Social Care Placement Budget - Efficiency Opportunities	-	-		(509)	-	-	(509)	-	-	(509)
45	DCASC-2526-06	New		Supported Living Efficiency	-	-		(376)	(575)	(576)	(376)	(575)	(576)	(1,527)
46	CORP-2526-02	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	Vacancy Factor	(2)	(2)		(43)	(3)	(3)	(45)	(5)	(3)	(53)
47				Total Efficiency Savings	598	(2)		(928)	(578)	(579)	(330)	(580)	(579)	(1,489)
48					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
49				Total Invest to Save	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
50					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
51				Total Income, Fees & Charges	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
52				Total	4,794	2,751		436	2,811	5,130	5,230	5,562	5,130	15,922

Schedule of Detailed Budget Change Proposals

Line	Bid Reference	Bid Type	Previous Bid Ref	Service	February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total
					2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	All Years £'000
				<u>Safeguarding, Quality & Practice</u>										
53								-	-	-	-	-	-	-
54				Total Contractual Inflation	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
55								-	-	-	-	-	-	-
56				Total Budget Pressures										
57	CORP-2526-02	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	Vacancy Factor	(2)	(3)		(55)	(4)	(4)	(57)	(7)	(4)	(68)
58				Total Efficiency Savings	(2)	(3)		(55)	(4)	(4)	(57)	(7)	(4)	(68)
59					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
60				Total Invest to Save	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
61					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
62				Total Income, Fees & Charges	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
63				Total	(2)	(3)		(55)	(4)	(4)	(57)	(7)	(4)	(68)

Schedule of Detailed Budget Change Proposals

Line	Bid Reference	Bid Type	Previous Bid Ref	Service	February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total
					2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	All Years £'000
				<u>Community & Adult Social Care Management</u>										
64					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
65				Total Contractual Inflation	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
66					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
67				Total Budget Pressures	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
68	CORP-2526-02	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	Vacancy Factor	-	-		(34)	(1)	-	(34)	(1)	-	(35)
69				Total Efficiency Savings	-	-		(34)	(1)	-	(34)	(1)	-	(35)
70					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
71				Total Invest to Save	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
72					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
73				Total Income, Fees & Charges	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
74				Total	-	-		(34)	(1)	-	(34)	(1)	-	(35)

Schedule of Detailed Budget Change Proposals

Line	Bid Reference	Bid Type	Previous Bid Ref	Service	February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total All Years £'000
					2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	
					£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
<u>Housing & Communities</u>														
75					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
76					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
77	DCASC-2526-08	Amendment	DCASC-2425-08	Total Contractual Inflation	-	-		884	(54)	-	884	(54)	-	830
78	DCASC-2526-10	New		Cost of Emergency Accommodation	-	-		265	-	-	265	-	-	265
79				Rent Guarantee Scheme Incentives	-	-		1,149	(54)	-	1,149	(54)	-	1,095
80	CORP-2526-02	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	Total Budget Pressures	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
81	DCASC-2526-16	New		Vacancy Factor	(1)	(1)		(27)	(2)	(2)	(28)	(3)	(2)	(33)
82				Homelessness Support Services	-	-		(76)	-	-	(76)	-	-	(76)
83				Total Efficiency Savings	(1)	(1)		(103)	(2)	(2)	(104)	(3)	(2)	(109)
84					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
85	New	Technical Adj		Total Invest to Save	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
86				Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Grant	-	-		(88)	-	-	(88)	-	-	(88)
				Total Income, Fees and Charges	-	-		(88)	-	-	(88)	-	-	(88)
87				Total	(1)	(1)		958	(56)	(2)	957	(57)	(2)	898

Schedule of Detailed Budget Change Proposals

Line	Bid Reference	Bid Type	Previous Bid Ref	Service	February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total
					2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	All Years
					£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
88				<u>Public Health</u>										
89				Total Contractual Inflation	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
90	N/A - Technical Adj	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	Public Health Grant - Expenditure	-	-		745	287	249	745	287	249	1,281
91	N/A - Technical Adj	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	Public Health Grant - income	-	-		(745)	(287)	(249)	(745)	(287)	(249)	(1,281)
92				Total Budget Pressures	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
93					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
94				Total Efficiency Savings	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
95					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
96				Total Invest to Save	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
97					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
98				Total Income, Fees & Charges	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
99				Total	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
100				Directorate Total	4,878	2,837		1,173	2,708	5,179	6,051	5,545	5,179	16,775

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Appendix 4b - Detailed General Fund Budget Changes 2025/26-2027/28 - Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

					Contract Inflation	Budget Pressures	Efficiency Savings	Invest to Save	Income, Fees and Charges	Total	
					£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
1	<u>Service</u>					64	917	(668)	(259)	(24)	30
2	Planning, Transport & Public Protection					-	(124)	(1,332)	-	(50)	(1,506)
3	Culture					1,838	282	(360)	(310)	(87)	1,363
4	Environmental & Commercial Services					-	679	(91)	-	(568)	20
5	Property & Asset Management					-	(325)	(13)	-	(164)	(502)
6	Management & Sustainability										
Directorate Total					1,902	1,429	(2,464)	(569)	(893)	(595)	

Summary of MTFS Position					February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total	
					2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	All Years	
					£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
7	<u>Service Pressures</u>					107	-		150	724	-	257	724	-	981
8	Planning, Transport & Public Protection					406	(518)		(315)	516	(213)	91	(2)	(213)	(124)
9	Culture					408	408		551	235	518	959	643	518	2,120
10	Environmental & Commercial Services					(75)	(83)		839	(517)	515	764	(600)	515	679
11	Property & Asset Management					392	422		(1,035)	(294)	190	(643)	128	190	(325)
12	Management & Sustainability														
Directorate Total					1,238	229		190	664	1,010	1,428	893	1,010	3,331	

Summary of MTFS Position					February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total	
					2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	All Years	
					£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
13	<u>Service Savings</u>					(270)	(3)		(659)	(117)	98	(929)	(120)	98	(951)
14	Planning, Transport & Public Protection					(541)	(310)		(281)	(70)	(180)	(822)	(380)	(180)	(1,382)
15	Culture					(7)	(3)		(613)	(162)	28	(620)	(165)	28	(757)
16	Environmental & Commercial Services					(45)	(2)		(607)	(3)	(2)	(652)	(5)	(2)	(659)
17	Property & Asset Management					(309)	-		164	(22)	(10)	(145)	(22)	(10)	(177)
18	Management & Sustainability														
19	Directorate Total					(1,172)	(318)		(1,996)	(374)	(66)	(3,168)	(692)	(66)	(3,926)

Summary of MTFS Position					February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total	
					2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	All Years	
					£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
13	<u>Service Savings</u>					(270)	(3)		(659)	(117)	98	(929)	(120)	98	(951)
14	Planning, Transport & Public Protection					(541)	(310)		(281)	(70)	(180)	(822)	(380)	(180)	(1,382)
15	Culture					(7)	(3)		(613)	(162)	28	(620)	(165)	28	(757)
16	Environmental & Commercial Services					(45)	(2)		(607)	(3)	(2)	(652)	(5)	(2)	(659)
17	Property & Asset Management					(309)	-		164	(22)	(10)	(145)	(22)	(10)	(177)
18	Management & Sustainability														
19	Directorate Total					66	(89)		(1,806)	290	944	(1,740)	201	944	(595)

Schedule of Detailed Budget Change Proposals

Line	Bid Reference	Bid Type	Previous Bid Ref	Service	February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total All Years £'000
					2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	
Planning, Transport & Public Protection														
20			DEGNS-2324-03	Community Transport - Inflationary Increase	10	-		-	-	-	10	-	-	10
21			DEGNS-2324-04	Concessionary Travel Scheme - Inflationary Increase	97	-		-	-	-	97	-	-	97
22			DEGNS-2324-09	Local Plan Review and Update	(43)	-		-	-	-	(43)	-	-	(43)
23				Total Contractual Inflation	64	-		-	-	-	64	-	-	64
24	DEGNS-2526-01	New		Broad Street Mall	-	-		150	724	-	150	724	-	874
25			DEGNS-2425-04	Reading Festival Income	43	-		-	-	-	43	-	-	43
26				Total Budget Pressures	43	-		150	724	-	193	724	-	917
27			DEGNS-2425-31	Concessionary Travel	(97)	-		-	-	-	(97)	-	-	(97)
28	DEGNS-2526-03	New		Coroner Apportionment moving to Pop Base and Contract inflation	-	-		(107)	(11)	6	(107)	(11)	6	(112)
29	DEGNS-2526-06	New		Rationalisation of Pay & Display Assets, Tariff Changes and Emissions Based Parking	-	-		(274)	(91)	-	(274)	(91)	-	(365)
30	N/A - Technical Adj	Recovery Plan		Cease planning postage to neighbouring consultees	-	-		(7)	-	-	(7)	-	-	(7)
31	CORP-2526-02	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	Vacancy Factor	(3)	(3)		(72)	(5)	(4)	(75)	(8)	(4)	(87)
32				Total Efficiency Savings	(100)	(3)		(460)	(107)	2	(560)	(110)	2	(668)
33			DEGNS-2324-05	Introduction of Moving Traffic Enforcement under TMA Powers	(250)	-		-	-	-	(250)	-	-	(250)
34	DEGNS-2526-04	New		PSH Discretionary Licensing Risks	-	-		5	(10)	(4)	5	(10)	(4)	(9)
35				Total Invest to Save	(250)	-		5	(10)	(4)	(245)	(10)	(4)	(259)
36			DEGNS-2425-02	HMO Licensing - Income re-base	80	-		-	-	-	80	-	-	80
37	N/A - Technical Adj	Recovery Plan		Fees & Charges - Street Trading Pitches	-	-		(12)	-	-	(12)	-	-	(12)
38	N/A - Technical Adj	Recovery Plan		Fees & Charges - S106 Monitoring Fees	-	-		(19)	-	-	(19)	-	-	(19)
39	N/A - Technical Adj	Recovery Plan		Fees & Charges - Bio Diversity Net Gain Monitoring Fees	-	-		(12)	-	-	(12)	-	-	(12)
40	N/A - Technical Adj	Recovery Plan		Fees & Charges - Pavement Café Licenses	-	-		(19)	-	-	(19)	-	-	(19)
41	N/A - Technical Adj	Recovery Plan		Bus Lane Enforcement	-	-		(10)	-	-	(10)	-	-	(10)
42	DEGNS-2526-05	New		Removal of School Transport Licensing	-	-		(58)	-	-	(58)	-	-	(58)
43	DEGNS-2526-31	New		BSIP Bus Services - Ticket Income	-	-		(74)	-	100	(74)	-	100	26
44				Total Income, Fees and Charges	80	-		(204)	-	100	(124)	-	100	(24)
Total					(163)	(3)		(509)	607	98	(672)	604	98	30

Schedule of Detailed Budget Change Proposals

Line	Bid Reference	Bid Type	Previous Bid Ref	Service	February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total
					2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	All Years
					£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
46				Culture	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
47				Total Contractual Inflation	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
48	DEGNS-2526-08	Amendment	DEGNS-2425-05	Hexagon and Studio Theatre	271	(518)		(315)	516	(213)	(44)	(2)	(213)	(259)
49			DEGNS-2425-07	Cessation of Visa Contract with Reading Libraries	135	-		-	-	-	135	-	-	135
50				Total Budget Pressures	406	(518)		(315)	516	(213)	91	(2)	(213)	(124)
51	DEGNS-2526-09	Amendment	DEGNS-2425-06	Leisure Contract Costs Utilities and Inflation	(452)	(308)		19	-	(134)	(433)	(308)	(134)	(875)
52			DEGNS-2324-18	New Directions College	(36)	-		-	-	-	(36)	-	-	(36)
53	CORP-2526-02	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	Vacancy Factor	(3)	(2)		(63)	(4)	(4)	(66)	(6)	(4)	(76)
54	N/A - Technical Adj	Recovery Plan		Efficiency savings within Archaeology & Archives	-	-		(35)	-	-	(35)	-	-	(35)
55	DEGNS-2526-24	New		Improved Commercialisation of South Street Theatre	-	-		(16)	(25)	-	(16)	(25)	-	(41)
56	DEGNS-2526-25	New		Reducing the Subsidy to the Hexagon	-	-		(75)	(25)	(40)	(75)	(25)	(40)	(140)
57	DEGNS-2526-26	New		Town Hall Operations	-	-		(56)	-	-	(56)	-	-	(56)
58	DEGNS-2526-30	New		Reading Museum	-	-		(55)	(16)	(2)	(55)	(16)	(2)	(73)
59				Total Efficiency Savings	(491)	(310)		(281)	(70)	(180)	(772)	(380)	(180)	(1,332)
60					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
61				Total Invest to Save	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
62			DEGNS-2122-08a	Covid19 income pressure on the Town Hall and recovery plan*	(50)	-		-	-	-	(50)	-	-	(50)
63				Total Income, Fees and Charges	(50)	-		-	-	-	(50)	-	-	(50)
64				Total	(135)	(828)		(596)	446	(393)	(731)	(382)	(393)	(1,506)
				* Phased recovery of temporary income reduction due to Covid-19										

Schedule of Detailed Budget Change Proposals

Line	Bid Reference	Bid Type	Previous Bid Ref	Service	February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total All Years £'000
					2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	
					£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
65	DEGNS-2526-23	Amendment	DEGNS-2425-13	Environmental & Commercial Services										
66				Re3 Waste Disposal Contract Inflation	408	408		344	135	543	752	543	543	1,838
67				Total Contractual Inflation	408	408		344	135	543	752	543	543	1,838
68	DEGNS-2526-15	New		Re3 Contract Transition	-	-		52	100	(25)	52	100	(25)	127
69	N/A - Technical Adj	New		Extended Producer Responsibility Expenditure	-	-		155	-		155	-		155
70				Total Budget Pressures	-	-		207	100	(25)	207	100	(25)	282
71	N/A - Technical Adj	Recovery Plan	DEGNS-2324-Cap06	Purchase of Electric Road Marking Machine	(4)	-		-	-		(4)	-		(4)
72	DEGNS-2526-16	New		Streetlighting Efficiency Saving	-	-		(139)	-		(139)	-		(139)
73	N/A - Technical Adj	Recovery Plan		Streetlighting Energy Power Reduction	-	-		(22)	-		(22)	-		(22)
74	N/A - Technical Adj	Recovery Plan		General Fund-HRA Recharge Realignment (Streetscene)	-	-		(100)	-		(100)	-		(100)
75	CORP-2526-02	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	Highways Weedkiller Application Efficiencies	-	-		(13)	-		(13)	-		(13)
76				Vacancy Factor	(3)	(3)		(67)	(5)	(4)	(70)	(8)	(4)	(82)
77	DEGNS-2526-11	New		Total Efficiency Savings	(7)	(3)		(341)	(5)	(4)	(348)	(8)	(4)	(360)
78	DEGNS-2526-14	New		Behaviour, comms and interventions on waste	-	-		14	(90)	32	14	(90)	32	(44)
79				Operational resilience - Recycling & Waste Service	-	-		(266)	-		(266)	-		(266)
80	N/A - Technical Adj	Recovery Plan		Total Invest to Save	-	-		(252)	(90)	32	(252)	(90)	32	(310)
81	DEGNS-2526-34	New		Fees & Charges - Highways Road Marking	-	-		(10)	-		(10)	-		(10)
82	DEGNS-2526-36	New		Allotments Full Cost Recovery	-	-		-	(67)		-	(67)		(67)
83				Container Charges	-	-		(10)	-		(10)	-		(10)
				Total Income Fees and Charges	-	-		(20)	(67)	-	(20)	(67)	-	(87)
84				Total	401	405		(62)	73	546	339	478	546	1,363

Schedule of Detailed Budget Change Proposals

Line	Bid Reference	Bid Type	Previous Bid Ref	Service
Property & Asset Management				
85				
86				Total Contractual Inflation
87			DEGNS-2425-23	Asset Management Additional Resource
88	DEGNS-2526-17	New		160-163 Friar Street
89	DEGNS-2526-18	New		Kennet Wharf
90				Total Budget Pressures
91	CORP-2526-02	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	Vacancy Factor
92	N/A - Technical Adj	Recovery Plan		Facilities Management Efficiency Savings
93	N/A - Technical Adj	Recovery Plan		DfE Funding - Capital Review
94				Total Efficiency Savings
95				
96				Total Invest to Save
97			DEGNS-2324-Cap17	Acre Business Park
98	N/A - Technical Adj	New		RTL Depot Lease Adjustment
99	N/A - Technical Adj	Recovery Plan		Fees & Charges - Property & Asset Management
100				Total Income, Fees and Charges
101				Total

February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total
2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	All Years
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
(75)	(83)		-	-	-	(75)	(83)	-	(158)
-	-		61	-	515	61	-	515	576
-	-		778	(517)	-	778	(517)	-	261
(75)	(83)		839	(517)	515	764	(600)	515	679
(1)	(2)		(43)	(3)	(2)	(44)	(5)	(2)	(51)
-	-		(20)	-	-	(20)	-	-	(20)
-	-		(20)	-	-	(20)	-	-	(20)
(1)	(2)		(83)	(3)	(2)	(84)	(5)	(2)	(91)
-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
(44)	-		-	-	-	(44)	-	-	(44)
-	-		(500)	-	-	(500)	-	-	(500)
-	-		(24)	-	-	(24)	-	-	(24)
(44)	-		(524)	-	-	(568)	-	-	(568)
(120)	(85)		232	(520)	513	112	(605)	513	20

Schedule of Detailed Budget Change Proposals

Line	Bid Reference	Bid Type	Previous Bid Ref	Service
Management & Sustainability				
102				
103				Total Contractual Inflation
104			DEGNS-2324-28	Increase in energy contract management capacity to manage increased risk
105	DEGNS-2526-22	Amendment	DEGNS-2425-15	Utility price inflation
106	DEGNS-2526-21	Amendment	DEGNS-2425-18	Minor Contract Inflation and Business Rates
107				Total Budget Pressures
108	CORP-2526-02	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	Vacancy Factor
109				Total Efficiency Savings
110				
111				Total Invest to Save
112	DEGNS-2526-20	Amendment	DEGNS-2425-16	Reprofiling of income associated with Advertising Development
113			DEGNS-2324-Cap15	Corporate Solar Programme
114				Total Income, Fees and Charges
115				Total
116				Directorate Total

February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total
2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	All Years
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
(30)	-		-	-	-	(30)	-	-	(30)
-	-		(737)	(126)	(74)	(737)	(126)	(74)	(937)
422	422		(298)	(168)	264	124	254	264	642
392	422		(1,035)	(294)	190	(643)	128	190	(325)
(1)	-		(10)	(1)	(1)	(11)	(1)	(1)	(13)
(1)	-		(10)	(1)	(1)	(11)	(1)	(1)	(13)
-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
(167)	-		174	(21)	(9)	7	(21)	(9)	(23)
(141)	-		-	-	-	(141)	-	-	(141)
(308)	-		174	(21)	(9)	(134)	(21)	(9)	(164)
83	422		(871)	(316)	180	(788)	106	180	(502)
66	(89)		(1,806)	290	944	(1,740)	201	944	(595)

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Appendix 4c - Detailed General Fund Budget Changes 2025/26-2027/28 - Directorate of Resources & Chief Executive Services

Overall Summary						Contract Inflation	Budget Pressures	Efficiency Savings	Invest to Save	Income, Fees and Charges	Total
Service						£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
1	Policy, Change & Customer Services					-	48	(831)	(15)	-	(798)
2	Human Resources & Organisational Development					-	3	(93)	-	(163)	(253)
3	Procurement & Contracts					-	-	(6)	-	-	(6)
4	Finance					50	-	(404)	-	(150)	(504)
5	Legal & Democratic Services					-	-	(37)	(80)	-	(117)
6	Digital & IT					272	165	(25)	(240)	-	172
7	Executive Management Team					-	-	-	-	-	-
8	Communications					-	-	(42)	-	-	(42)
9	Directorate Total					322	216	(1,438)	(335)	(313)	(1,548)

Summary of MTFS Position						February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total
						2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	All Years
Service Pressures						£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
10	Policy, Change & Customer Services					-	-	-	-	48	-	-	48	-	48
11	Human Resources & Organisational Development					3	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	3
12	Procurement & Contracts					-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
13	Finance					50	-	-	-	-	-	50	-	-	50
14	Legal & Democratic Services					-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15	Digital & IT					196	76	-	165	-	-	361	76	-	437
16	Executive Management Team					-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
17	Communications					-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
18	Directorate Total					249	76	-	165	48	-	414	124	-	538

						February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total
						2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	All Years
Service Savings						£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
19	Policy, Change & Customer Services					(213)	(172)	-	(452)	(5)	(4)	(665)	(177)	(4)	(846)
20	Human Resources & Organisational Development					-	(2)	-	(230)	(2)	(22)	(230)	(4)	(22)	(256)
21	Procurement & Contracts					-	(1)	-	(5)	-	-	(5)	(1)	-	(6)
22	Finance					(214)	(2)	-	(331)	(4)	(3)	(545)	(6)	(3)	(554)
23	Legal & Democratic Services					(101)	(2)	-	(10)	(2)	(2)	(111)	(4)	(2)	(117)
24	Digital & IT					(1)	(1)	-	(72)	(190)	(1)	(73)	(191)	(1)	(265)
25	Executive Management Team					-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
26	Communications					-	(1)	-	(40)	(1)	-	(40)	(2)	-	(42)
27	Directorate Total					(529)	(181)	-	(1,140)	(204)	(32)	(1,669)	(385)	(32)	(2,086)
28	Directorate Total					(280)	(105)	-	(975)	(156)	(32)	(1,255)	(261)	(32)	(1,548)

Directorate of Resources

Schedule of Detailed Budget Change Proposals

Line	Bid Reference	Bid Type	Previous Bid Ref	Service	February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total All Years £'000
					2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	
Policy, Change & Customer Services														
29					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
30				Total Contractual Inflation	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
31	DOR-2526-CAP01	New		Cemetery Land	-	-		-	48	-	-	48	-	48
32				Total Budget Pressures	-	-		-	48	-	-	48	-	48
33			DOR-2425-01	Customer Experience and Digital Programmes - Savings reprofiling	(196)	(170)		-	-	-	(196)	(170)	-	(366)
34	N/A - Technical Adj	Recovery Plan		Corporate Subscriptions Review	-	-		(9)	-	-	(9)	-	-	(9)
35	CORP-2526-02	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	Vacancy Factor	(2)	(2)		(74)	(5)	(4)	(76)	(7)	(4)	(87)
36	DCASC-2526-12	New		VCS Spend	-	-		-	-	-	(50)	-	-	(50)
37	DOR-2526-08	New		Tackling Inequality Strategy (Place Based Pilots)	-	-		(230)	-	-	(230)	-	-	(230)
38	DOR-2526-09	New		Executive Assistants Review	-	-		(89)	-	-	(89)	-	-	(89)
39				Total Efficiency Savings	(198)	(172)		(452)	(5)	(4)	(650)	(177)	(4)	(831)
40			DOR-2425-06	Implementation of QGIS	(15)	-		-	-	-	(15)	-	-	(15)
41				Total Invest to Save	(15)	-		-	-	-	(15)	-	-	(15)
42					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
43				Total Income, Fees and Charges	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
44				Total	(213)	(172)		(452)	43	(4)	(665)	(129)	(4)	(798)

Schedule of Detailed Budget Change Proposals

Line	Bid Reference	Bid Type	Previous Bid Ref	Service	February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total All Years £'000
					2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	
Human Resources & Organisational Development														
45					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
46				Total Contractual Inflation	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
47			DOR-2324-07	Kennet Day Nursery Budget Pressure:	3	-		-	-	-	3	-	-	3
48				Total Budget Pressures	3	-		-	-	-	3	-	-	3
49	CORP-2526-02	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	Vacancy Factor	(1)	(2)		(36)	(2)	(2)	(37)	(4)	(2)	(43)
50	DOR-2526-12	New		HR & OD Restructure	-	-		(50)	-	-	(50)	-	-	(50)
51	N/A - Technical Adj	Recovery Plan		Defer Leadership & Development Programme for 12 months	-	-		(30)	30	-	(30)	30	-	-
52				Total Efficiency Savings	(1)	(2)		(116)	28	(2)	(117)	26	(2)	(93)
53					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
54				Total Invest to Save	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
55			DOR-2324-06	Traded Services with HR&OD	1	-		-	-	-	1	-	-	1
56	N/A - Technical Adj	Recovery Plan		Kennet Day Nursery	-	-		(104)	-	-	(104)	-	-	(104)
57	DOR-2526-02	New		Kennet Day Nursery	-	-		(10)	(30)	(20)	(10)	(30)	(20)	(60)
58				Total Income, Fees and Charges	1	-		(114)	(30)	(20)	(113)	(30)	(20)	(163)
59				Total	3	(2)		(230)	(2)	(22)	(227)	(4)	(22)	(253)

Schedule of Detailed Budget Change Proposals

Line	Bid Reference	Bid Type	Previous Bid Ref	Service	February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total
					2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	All Years
					£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Procurement & Contracts														
60					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
61				Total Contractual Inflation										
62					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
63				Total Budget Pressures	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
64	CORP-2526-02	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	Vacancy Factor	-	(1)		(5)	-	-	(5)	(1)	-	(6)
65				Total Efficiency Savings	-	(1)		(5)	-	-	(5)	(1)	-	(6)
66					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
67				Total Invest to Save	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
68					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
69				Total Income, Fees and Charges	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
70				Total	-	(1)		(5)	-	-	(5)	(1)	-	(6)

Schedule of Detailed Budget Change Proposals

Line	Bid Reference	Bid Type	Previous Bid Ref	Service	February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total
					2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	All Years
					£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
				<u>Finance</u>										
71			Technical Adj	Insurance Premium Inflation	50	-		-	-	-	50	-	-	50
72				Total Contractual Inflation	50	-		-	-	-	50	-	-	50
73					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
74				Total Budget Pressures	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
75	DOR-2526-03	Amendment	DOR-2425-13	Finance Service Review	(212)	-		(106)	-	-	(318)	-	-	(318)
76	N/A - Technical Adj	Recovery Plan		Council Tax Leaffie	-	-		(8)	-	-	(8)	-	-	(8)
77	CORP-2526-02	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	Vacancy Factor	(2)	(2)		(67)	(4)	(3)	(69)	(6)	(3)	(78)
78				Total Efficiency Savings	(214)	(2)		(181)	(4)	(3)	(395)	(6)	(3)	(404)
79					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
80				Total Invest to Save	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
81	N/A - Technical Adj	Recovery Plan		Court Summons Costs	-	-		(150)	-	-	(150)	-	-	(150)
82				Total Income, Fees and Charges	-	-		(150)	-	-	(150)	-	-	(150)
83				Total	(164)	(2)		(331)	(4)	(3)	(495)	(6)	(3)	(504)

Schedule of Detailed Budget Change Proposals

Line	Bid Reference	Bid Type	Previous Bid Ref	Service	February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total All Years £'000
					2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	
					£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
				<u>Legal & Democratic Services</u>										
84					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
85				Total Contractual Inflation	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
86					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
87				Total Budget Pressures	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
88	CORP-2526-02	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	Vacancy Factor	(1)	(2)		(30)	(2)	(2)	(31)	(4)	(2)	(37)
89				Total Efficiency Savings	(1)	(2)		(30)	(2)	(2)	(31)	(4)	(2)	(37)
90	DOR-2526-05	Amendment	DOR-2324-10	Legal Support for Enforcement Work	(100)	-		20	-	-	(80)	-	-	(80)
91				Total Invest to Save	(100)	-		20	-	-	(80)	-	-	(80)
92					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
93				Total Income, Fees and Charges	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
94				Total	(101)	(2)		(10)	(2)	(2)	(111)	(4)	(2)	(117)

Schedule of Detailed Budget Change Proposals

Line	Bid Reference	Bid Type	Previous Bid Ref	Service	February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total All Years £'000
					2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	
					£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
				Digital & IT										
95			DOR-2425-11	Revenue Increase - Inflation	196	76		-	-	-	196	76	-	272
96				Total Contractual Inflation	196	76		-	-	-	196	76	-	272
97	DOR-2526-06	New		DTAC Increase to MS agreement for Security enhancements	-	-		120	-	-	120	-	-	120
98	DOR-2526-06a	New		SIEM (Security Enhancements – Security Information and Event Management)	-	-		45	-	-	45	-	-	45
99				Total Budget Pressures	-	-		165	-	-	165	-	-	165
100	CORP-2526-02	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	Vacancy Factor	(1)	(1)		(21)	(1)	(1)	(22)	(2)	(1)	(25)
101				Total Efficiency Savings	(1)	(1)		(21)	(1)	(1)	(22)	(2)	(1)	(25)
102	DOR-2526-07	New		DTAC Next Generation Operating Mode	-	-		(51)	(189)	-	(51)	(189)	-	(240)
103				Total Invest to Save	-	-		(51)	(189)	-	(51)	(189)	-	(240)
104					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
105				Total Income, Fees and Charges	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
106				Total	195	75		93	(190)	(1)	288	(115)	(1)	172
107				Directorate Total (Directorate of Resources)	(280)	(104)		(935)	(155)	(32)	(1,215)	(259)	(32)	(1,506)

Chief Executive Services

Schedule of Detailed Budget Change Proposals

Line	Bid Reference	Bid Type	Previous Bid Ref	Service	February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total All Years £'000
					2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	
					£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
108				Executive Management Team	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
109				Total Contractual Inflation	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
110					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
111				Total Budget Pressures	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
112					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
113				Total Efficiency Savings	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
114					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
115				Total Invest to Save	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
116					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
117				Total Income, Fees and Charges	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
118				Total	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Schedule of Detailed Budget Change Proposals

Line	Bid Reference	Bid Type	Previous Bid Ref	Service	February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total All Years £'000
					2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	
					£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
119				Communications	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
120				Total Contractual Inflation	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
121					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
122				Total Budget Pressures	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
123	CORP-2526-02	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	Vacancy Factor	-	(1)		(12)	(1)	-	(12)	(2)	-	(14)
124	DOR-2526-13	New		Events & Mayoralty Suppor	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
125	N/A - Technical Adj	Recovery Plan		Your Reading Newsletter	-	-		(28)	-	-	(28)	-	-	(28)
126				Total Efficiency Savings	-	(1)		(40)	(1)	-	(40)	(2)	-	(42)
127					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
128				Total Invest to Save	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
129					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
130				Total Income, Fees and Charges	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
131				Total	-	(1)	-	(40)	(1)	-	(40)	(2)	-	(42)
132				Directorate Total (Chief Executive Services)	-	(1)	-	(40)	(1)	-	(40)	(2)	-	(42)

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Appendix 4d - Detailed General Fund Budget Changes 2025/26-2027/28 - Children's Services Retained by Council

Overall Summary						Contract Inflation	Budget Pressures	Efficiency Savings	Invest to Save	Income, Fees and Charges	Total
						£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
1	Children's Services Retained by Council					12	-	-	-	-	12
2	Children's Services Retained by Council Tota					12	-	-	-	-	12

Summary of MTFS Position						February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total
						2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	All Years
						£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
3	Children's Services Retained by Council					(10)	-	-	22	-	-	12	-	-	12
4	Children's Services Retained by Council Tota					(10)	-	-	22	-	-	12	-	-	12

Summary of MTFS Position						February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total
						2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	All Years
						£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
5	Children's Services Retained by Council					-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	Children's Services Retained by Council Total					-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	Children's Services Retained by Council Tota					(10)	-	-	22	-	-	12	-	-	12

Schedule of Detailed Budget Change Proposals

Line	Bid Reference	Bid Type	Previous Bid Ref	Service	February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total
					2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	All Years
					£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
				Children's Services Retained by Council Total										
8	N/A - Technical Adj		N/A - Technical Adj	Adoption Thames Valley Contractual Inflation	(10)	-		22	-	-	12	-	-	12
9				Total Contractual Inflation	(10)	-		22	-	-	12	-	-	12
10					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
11				Total Budget Pressures	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
12					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
13				Total Efficiency Savings	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
14					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15				Total Invest to Save	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
16					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
17				Total Income, Fees and Charges	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
18				Total	(10)	-		22	-	-	12	-	-	12
19				Children's Services Retained by Council Tota	(10)	-		22	-	-	12	-	-	12

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Appendix 4e - Detailed General Fund Budget Changes 2025/26-2027/28 - Brighter Futures for Children

	Overall Summary					Contract Inflation	Budget Pressures	Efficiency Savings	Invest to Save	Income, Fees and Charges	Total
	<u>Service</u>					£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
1	Brighter Futures for Children					3,438	7,042	(3,807)	(912)	(100)	5,661
2	Brighter Futures for Children Total					3,438	7,042	(3,807)	(912)	(100)	5,661

	Summary of MTFS Position			February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total
		2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	All Years		
	<u>Service Pressures</u>	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
3	Brighter Futures for Children	1,343	1,157		6,878	65	1,037	8,221	1,222	1,037	10,480		
4	Directorate Total	1,343	1,157		6,878	65	1,037	8,221	1,222	1,037	10,480		

	February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	All Years
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
5	<u>Service Savings</u>									
	Brighter Futures for Children	(1,134)	(1,077)		(1,500)	(693)	(415)	(2,634)	(1,770)	(415)
6	Brighter Futures for Children Total	(1,134)	(1,077)		(1,500)	(693)	(415)	(2,634)	(1,770)	(415)

7	Brighter Futures for Children Total			209	80		5,378	(628)	622	5,587	(548)	622	5,661
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Schedule of Detailed Budget Change Proposals

Line	Bid Reference	Bid Type	Previous Bid Ref	Service	February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total
					2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	All Years £'000
Brighter Futures for Children														
8	N/A - Technical Adj	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	Pay & Inflation	605	616		239	65	585	844	681	585	2,110
9	N/A - Technical Adj	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	Contract Inflation	434	442		-	-	452	434	442	452	1,328
10				Total Contractual Inflation	1,039	1,058		239	65	1,037	1,278	1,123	1,037	3,438
11	BFFC-2526-01	Amendment	BFFC-2425-01	Children in Care - Placement Demanc	-	-		6,639	-	-	6,639	-	-	6,639
12			BFFC-2425-02	Demography	304	99		-	-	-	304	99	-	403
13				Total Budget Pressures	304	99		6,639	-	-	6,943	99	-	7,042
14			BFFC-2425-03	Increase in in-house foster care:	(64)	(107)		-	-	-	(64)	(107)	-	(171)
15			BFFC-2425-05	Development of Edge of Care	(970)	(970)		-	-	-	(970)	(970)	-	(1,940)
16	BFFC-2526-03	New		Primary Mental Health Team Service Reduction	-	-		(300)	-	-	(300)	-	-	(300)
17	BFFC-2526-04	New		School Travel Assistance	-	-		(214)	-	-	(214)	-	-	(214)
18	BFFC-2526-05	New		Family (Early) Help Reductions	-	-		(285)	-	-	(285)	-	-	(285)
19	BFFC-2526-08	New		Service Reductions Business Support /Admini	-	-		(416)	(80)	-	(416)	(80)	-	(496)
20	BFFC-2526-09	New		Consolidation of Nurseries	-	-		(101)	-	-	(101)	-	-	(101)
21	N/A - Technical Adj	New		Closure of BFC and re-integrating into the Council	-	-		(100)	(200)	-	(100)	(200)	-	(300)
22				Total Efficiency Savings	(1,034)	(1,077)		(1,416)	(280)	-	(2,450)	(1,357)	-	(3,807)
23	BFFC-2526-02	New		BFFC Children's Home	-	-		(84)	(413)	-	(84)	(413)	-	(497)
24	BFFC-2526-CAP02	New		BFC Children with Disabilities Business Cas	-	-		-	-	(415)	-	-	(415)	(415)
25				Total Invest to Save	-	-		(84)	(413)	(415)	(84)	(413)	(415)	(912)
26				Cressingham Children's Home	(100)	-		-	-	-	(100)	-	-	(100)
27				Total Income, Fees and Charges	(100)	-		-	-	-	(100)	-	-	(100)
28				Total	209	80		5,378	(628)	622	5,587	(548)	622	5,661
29				Brighter Futures for Children Total	209	80		5,378	(628)	622	5,587	(548)	622	5,661

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Appendix 4f - Detailed General Fund Budget Changes 2025/65-2027/28 - Corporate Budgets

Overall Summary						Contract Inflation	Budget Pressures	Efficiency Savings	Invest to Save	Income, Fees and Charges	Total
Service						£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
1					Corporate	6,939	10,202	(300)	-	(3,091)	13,750
2					Corporate Total	6,939	10,202	(300)	-	(3,091)	13,750

Summary of MTFS Position						February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total
Service Pressures						2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	All Years £'000
3					Corporate Budgets	7,686	3,273		36	3,655	2,491	7,722	6,928	2,491	17,141
4					Directorate Total	7,686	3,273		36	3,655	2,491	7,722	6,928	2,491	17,141

Service Savings						February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total
Corporate Budgets						2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	All Years £'000
5					Corporate Budgets	-	-		(6,154)	2,763	-	(6,154)	2,763	-	(3,391)
6					Corporate Budgets Total	-	-		(6,154)	2,763	-	(6,154)	2,763	-	(3,391)
7					Corporate Budgets Total	7,686	3,273		(6,118)	6,418	2,491	1,568	9,691	2,491	13,750

Schedule of Detailed Budget Change Proposals

Line	Bid Reference	Bid Type	Previous Bid Ref	Service	February 2024 MTFS Agreed Movements			New Changes to MTFS to be agreed			Total Movement per Year			Total
					2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	All Years £'000

Corporate Budgets														
8	N/A - Technical Adj	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	Pay & Inflation	1,536	2,241		2,099	(9)	1,522	3,635	2,232	1,522	7,389
9			N/A - Technical Adj	Additional LCTRS Support	(450)	-		-	-	-	(450)	-	-	(450)
10				Total Contractual Inflation	1,086	2,241		2,099	(9)	1,522	3,185	2,232	1,522	6,939
11	N/A - Technical Adj	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	Capital Financing Costs	655	1,032		(1,714)	120	908	(1,059)	1,152	908	1,001
12	N/A - Technical Adj	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	Movement to / (from) Reserves	2,864	-		(3,725)	3,544	61	(861)	3,544	61	2,744
13	N/A - Technical Adj	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	ASC Funding Reform Contingency	2,381	-		(2,381)	-	-	-	-	-	-
14			N/A - Technical Adj	Release Utilities Contingency	497	-		(497)	-	-	-	-	-	-
			N/A - Technical Adj	Corporate Contingency	-	-		3,238	-	-	3,238	-	-	3,238
15	N/A - Technical Adj	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	Housing Benefit Subsidy	203	-		2,931	-	-	3,134	-	-	3,134
			N/A - Technical Adj	Transfers of Grants Rolled into Revenue Support Grant	-	-		62	-	-	62	-	-	62
16	CORP-2526-01	Amendment	DOR-2425-22	External Audit Fees	-	-		23	-	-	23	-	-	23
17				Total Budget Pressures	6,600	1,032		(2,063)	3,664	969	4,537	4,696	969	10,202
18	N/A - Technical Adj	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	General Fund-HRA Recharge Realignment	-	-		(300)	-	-	(300)	-	-	(300)
19				Total Efficiency Savings	-	-		(300)	-	-	(300)	-	-	(300)
20					-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
21				Total Invest to Save	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
22	N/A - Technical Adj	Amendment	N/A - Technical Adj	Social Care Grant	-	-		(1,519)	-	-	(1,519)	-	-	(1,519)
		New	N/A - Technical Adj	National Insurance Estimated Fundin	-	-		(1,572)	-	-	(1,572)	-	-	(1,572)
23	N/A - Technical Adj	New	N/A - Technical Adj	Extended Producer Responsibility Fundin	-	-		(2,763)	2,763	-	(2,763)	2,763	-	-
24				Total Income, Fees and Charges	-	-		(5,854)	2,763	-	(5,854)	2,763	-	(3,091)
25				Total	7,686	3,273		(6,118)	6,418	2,491	1,568	9,691	2,491	13,750
26				Corporate Budgets Total	7,686	3,273		(6,118)	6,418	2,491	1,568	9,691	2,491	13,750

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Appendix 5 - The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Proposed Budget 2025/26 - 2027/28

1. Background

- 1.1. The HRA is a ring-fenced account which deals with the finances of the Council's social housing stock. Budgets have been prepared in accordance with the budget guidelines and planned programmes of works to housing stock have been updated to take account of progress during 2024/25. The HRA budget must avoid a deficit on reserves over the 30-year HRA Business Plan.
- 1.2. Following the abolition of the statutory limit on HRA borrowing known as the debt cap in October 2019, the HRA is able to undertake prudential borrowing to support the creation and acquisition of long-term assets, as long as it is prudent, affordable, and sustainable within the context of its overall Business Plan.
- 1.3. The Current 30-year Business Plan allows for £70.830m of new borrowing under the prudential code in 2025/26-2027/28. The Plan shows that the HRA is able to fund the proposed capital investment which will raise the peak debt in the HRA from £215.701m to £286.531m in 2027/28. However, the Plan demonstrates that the proposed borrowing is prudent, affordable, and sustainable as the HRA has the capacity to repay £160.000m of this in later years and that the projected outstanding debt level at year 30 is forecast to be £126.531m. The updated 30-Year Business Plan includes the impacts of delivering the current Local Authority New Build Programme and the transfer of housing stock into the HRA from Homes for Reading.

2. HRA 2024/25 Revenue Budget & Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

- 2.1. The HRA revenue budget for 2025/26 & MTFS for 2026/27 and 2027/28 is shown in Table 1 below and in more detail in Appendix 5 – Annex A.

Table 1. HRA Proposed Budget 2023/24 - 2025/26

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£000	£000	£000
Total Income	(52,838)	(55,571)	(57,671)
Total Expenditure	57,304	59,062	60,327
Net (Surplus)/Deficit	4,466	3,491	2,552
Opening HRA Balances	(24,756)	(20,290)	(16,799)
Net (Surplus)/Deficit	4,466	3,491	2,656
Closing HRA Balances	(20,290)	(16,799)	(14,143)

Planning Assumptions

Rents

- 2.2. In 2025/26 the proposal is to increase rents by 2.7% in line with the CPI figure taken from the nationally published CPI figure each September for the year preceding the rent increase. The CPI rate for September 2024 was 1.7%, therefore the baseline assumption for 2025/26 rent income is a 2.7% increase.
- 2.3. For future years, the rate has been estimated at 3.0% (CPI + 1%), in line with the Bank of England's long term inflation forecast of 2.0%.
- 2.4. Void Rates & Bad Debts are assumed at 2.0%.

- 2.5. The Council needs to consider its rent policy each financial year in the context of the HRA's financial viability. The anticipated effect of the 2025/26 rent proposals is therefore expected to be as follows:

Table 2. Average Weekly HRA Rents

	Bedrooms	Forecast 2023/24	Proposed 2024/25	Change	Change
		£	£	£	%
Average Rent per Week	1 Bed	102.51	105.28	2.77	2.7
Average Rent per Week	2 Bed	123.77	127.11	3.34	2.7
Average Rent per Week	3 Bed	137.96	141.68	3.72	2.7
Average Rent per Week	4 Bed	158.53	162.81	4.28	2.7

- 2.6. For historic reasons current rents are, on average across the stock 7.9% below the social housing formula rent set by Government, known as 'Target Rent'. As previously agreed by the Council, rent levels will be set in line with Target Rent whenever a property is re-let.
- 2.7. Historically, rent collection performance have been in the top quartile compared with the Council's comparator group.
- 2.8. Temporary accommodation is included in the General Fund. Rents are set at 90% of the Local Housing Allowance rate for the relevant unit size.

Right to Buy

- 2.9. 17 property sales assumed in 2025/26. For future years, 2 property sales are assumed per annum, reflecting that discounts available for RTB have been significantly reduced.

Service Charges

- 2.10. Service charges are assumed to increase by 2.7% in 2025/26, in line with the proposed rent increase, and by CPI +1% from 2026/27, but charges cannot exceed full cost recovery.

PFI Credit

- 2.11. Income from Central Government of £3.997m annually relating to the 1,248 properties in North Whitley and managed by Affinity Housing within the PFI Contract until 2034 has been included.

Interest on Balances

- 2.12. Interest on balances is assumed at 3.50% in 2025/26 and it is expected to slowly drop to 1% by 2035/36.

Expenditure

- 2.13. The business plan includes the latest updated 2024/25 forecast outturn. Costs are then increased by RPI in future years in line with the base assumptions outlined in 2.12. The business plan also anticipates any additional costs above the 2024/25 base forecast position where relevant.
- 2.14. The 2025/26 budget includes the following revenue bids:

Bid	Capital	Revenue (On Going)	Revenue (One Off)
	£000	£000	£000
Stock Condition Survey	0	0	450
HRA Additional Staffing	0	464	0
Total	0	464	450

3. Risk Implications

3.1. Many of the risks identified in respect of the General Fund revenue budget also have relevance for the Housing Revenue Account. Particular risks that pertain additionally to the HRA include:

- Rent collection levels that may be affected by any downturn in the local economy;
- Changes to benefits which may impact on rent collection levels;
- Increases in debt financing costs arising from inflationary and interest cost increases in relation to the new build programme;
- Actual property surveys requiring a level of repair and maintenance above that assumed within the budget; and
- Maintenance cost increases due to higher levels of inflation.

4. Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme

4.1. The currently proposed HRA Capital Programme is contained within Annex A.

New Build & Acquisitions

4.2. The local authority new build programme for the 2025/26 Budget and MTFS covering 2026/27 and 2027/28 is outlined in table 3 below. This includes investment to develop adult social care assets that are being appropriated into the HRA to deliver joint adults and housing needs:

Table 3. Local Authority New Build Programme (LANB)

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28		
	£000	£000	£000	Units	Location
Homes for Reading	15,750	9,450	6,615	101	
LANB Phase 3	9,936	1,300	150	60	Wensley Road and Southcote Library
LANB Phase 4	22,926	2,341	337	74	Amethyst Lane & Dwyer Road + Others
LANB Assets Review ASC/Housing	16,782	500	0	42	Battle Street & Hexham Road
LAHF	3,019	0	0	5	
Total	67,064	13,591	7,102	282	

4.3. The HRA business plan assumes an additional 282 properties are delivered during the 3 years from 2025/26 to 2027/28.

- 4.4. The business plan benefits from the additional rental income derived from the new properties, at either social rent (target) for properties part funded by grant and adjusted social rent for all other properties, in line with the 2018 policy decision.

Major Repairs - Existing Homes Renewal

- 4.5. The Council also plans to invest £55.989m in its existing housing stock over the next three years. This includes £36.064m on Major Repairs - Existing Homes Renewal (including Fire Safety Works), £17.747m on Major Repairs – Zero Carbon Retrofit Works and £2.179m on Disabled Adaptations. The major repairs and disabled facility programme (DFG) for the 2025/26 Budget and MTFS covering 2026/27 and 2027/28 are outlined in table 2 below:

Table 4. Major Repairs - Existing Homes Renewal & DFG Programme

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£000	£000	£000
Major Repairs - Existing Homes Renewal	11,186	11,853	13,025
Major Repairs – Zero Carbon Retrofit Works	9,713	5,553	2,481
Disabled Facility Grant	712	726	741
Total	21,611	18,132	16,247

- 4.6. The building sector is currently experiencing increases in material costs and labour shortages following the recent market impact on inflation and interest rates. This might be a short-term issue, but it will put pressure on the major works and new build programme, as capital programmes may need to be restricted around available funding. It is important therefore that we maximise rental income and available funding to support the capital programmes.

Zero Carbon Retrofit Works

- 4.7. The housing service is investing £17.747m between 2025/26 and 2027/28 in moving towards zero carbon options in terms of retrofitting existing housing stock in line with the Council's Climate Change ambitions. The existing housing stock benefits from past initiatives which have ensured that most properties are above EPC level C. As such the Council is currently not benefitting from any extra Government funding towards zero carbon initiatives which are predominantly targeted at EPC level D and below. The Council is therefore reliant on the Housing Revenue Account to continue to pursue zero carbon options and therefore any reduction in income will limit the impact on what can be achieved.
- 4.8. The major repairs zero carbon retrofit programme includes the following works over the 30-year HRA business Plan:

- **Crosswalls Flats/Houses £14.9m.**
- **Woodley Crosswalls £0.1m.**
- **Kentwood Refurbishments £6.2m.**

5. Risk Implications

- 5.1. The main risks to the Council's Capital Programme are summarised below:
- Cost overruns would impose additional borrowing costs (and associated financing charges to revenue) if unable to be met from scheme contingencies or other mitigating actions;
 - Slippage in realisation of capital receipts impacts on available financing sources, with the potential to lead to additional capital borrowing. In particular, significant slippage could leave

insufficient receipts to fully finance the transformation costs – which impacts pound for pound on the revenue account;

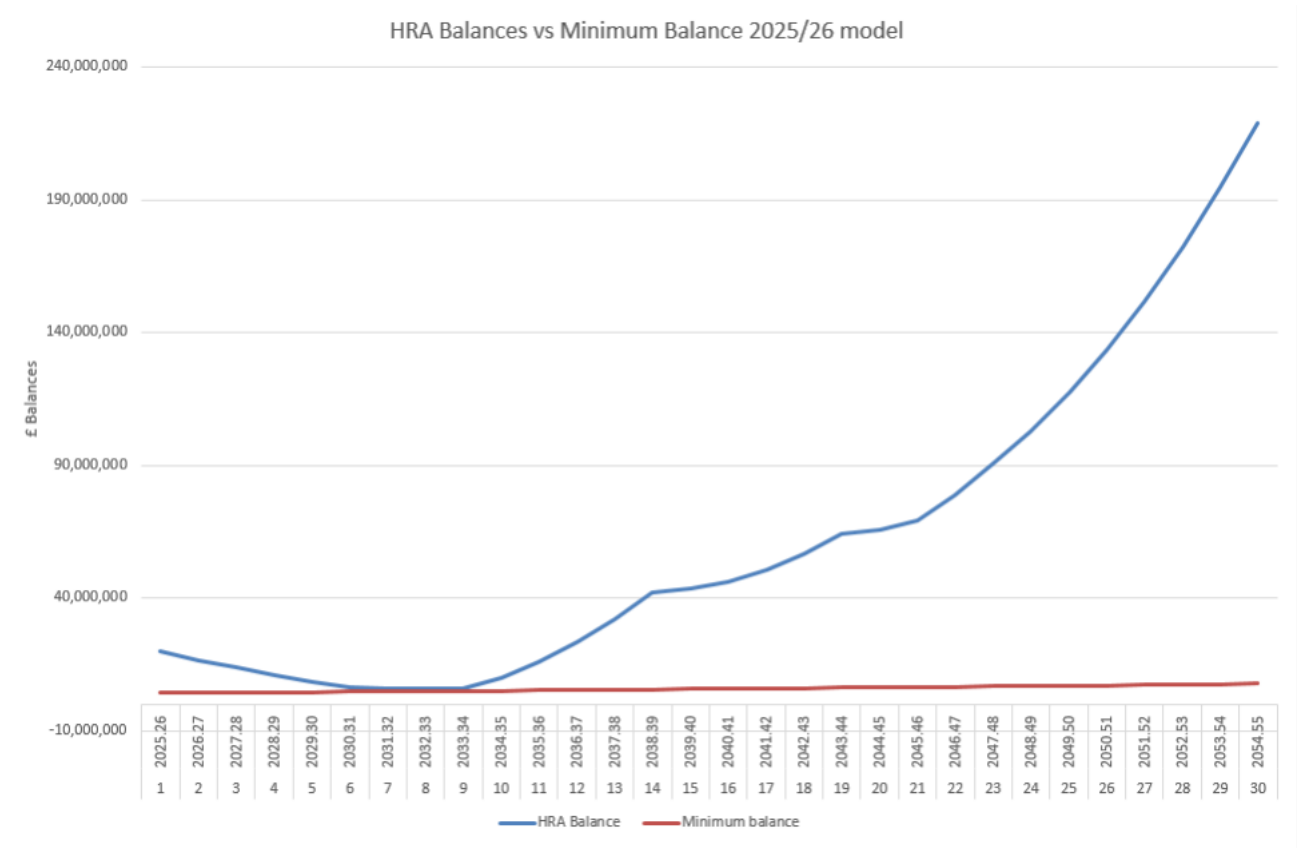
- Slippage in delivery of spend to save initiatives results in associated revenue savings not being delivered as anticipated; and
- The cost of delivering the capital projects increases due to inflationary pressures.

6. HRA 30 Year Business Plan

- 6.1. The HRA Business plan assumes major repair investment in the existing housing stock, covering planned component replacements (e.g. Kitchens & Bathrooms) and zero carbon initiatives.
- 6.2. The plan assumes investment of £21.182m in zero carbon initiatives up to 2029, based on currently available funding within the HRA.
- 6.3. As mentioned in 4.7 above, as the majority of our homes are rated above EPC level C, Houses within the HRA are not eligible for available government funding at the present time. If funding does become available this would enable more zero carbon initiatives to be carried out.
- 6.4. The current HRA balance is assumed to be £24.731m at the beginning of 2025/26. The base plan assumes that annual deficits will continue to arise whilst the PFI scheme is in place.
- 6.5. The PFI scheme is due to end in 2034/35, at which point the properties return to Reading Borough Council. The business plan assumes that the operating costs of the PFI fall away at this point resulting in a return to annual surpluses for the remainder of the 30 year Business plan.
- 6.6. Additional borrowing is required to part fund the capital programmes. At the beginning of the plan the capital finance requirement is forecast to be £215.701m, additional borrowing of £70.830m is required (all during the MTFS period of 2025/26 to 2027/28), taking peak borrowing to £286.531m.
- 6.7. The plan assumes a loans repayment from 2039/40 once there is a sufficient build-up of the HRA balance. Total repayments in the plan are £160.000m, which reduces the loan balance to £126.531m at the end of the plan.
- 6.8. The local authority new build (LANB) programme continues in the 30 year Business Plan until 2027/28, after which the current plan assumes there is no further investment in new build. Right to Buy sales are projected to continue at the level of 17 for 2025/26. From 2026/27, they are forecast to reduce to 2 per annum.
- 6.9. The business plan long term assumptions for CPI & RPI follow the latest OBR (Office for Budget Responsibility) forecasts.
- 6.10. Repair and build costs are assumed to increase by BCIS (Building cost information service forecast rates).
- 6.11. Rent & Service charges increases in the plan are assumed to increase by 2.7% in 2025/26, in line with the nationally published CPI figure in September 2024 and by CPI + 1% from 2026/27 for the duration of the plan.
- 6.12. The long-term Bank of England prediction on CPI & RPI is 2% and 3% respectively. As the long-term assumption of CPI + 1% is used on Rent & Service charges income, the overall long-term impact in the plan is 3% for both CPI & RPI.

6.13. The HRA balance, as shown below, is maintained above the minimum level throughout the duration of the plan. The minimum balance is adjusted in line with CPI annually.

Figure 1. Projected HRA Balance in 30 Year Business Plan



Appendix 5 Annex A - Summary of the Proposed Housing Revenue Account Budget 2025/26 to 2027/28

	Approved Budget 2024/25 £'000	Proposed Budget 2025/26 £'000	Proposed Budget 2026/27 £'000	Proposed Budget 2027/28 £'000
Dwelling Rents	(44,019)	(45,112)	(47,802)	(49,667)
Service Charges	(1,004)	(1,023)	(1,187)	(1,314)
PFI Credit	(4,452)	(4,924)	(4,988)	(5,053)
Other Income	(192)	(196)	(281)	(366)
Interest on Balances	(2,030)	(1,583)	(1,313)	(1,271)
Total Income	(51,697)	(52,838)	(55,571)	(57,671)
Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services				
Management & Supervision	9,479	10,764	10,570	10,517
Special Services	4,534	4,955	5,055	5,156
Provision of Bad Debt	891	922	977	1,013
Responsive Repairs	4,603	5,332	5,542	5,700
Planned Maintenance	4,391	3,241	3,300	3,512
Major Repairs/Depreciation	15,192	15,621	16,003	16,367
Debt Costs	6,985	8,059	8,952	9,139
PFI Costs	8,254	8,410	8,663	8,923
Total Expenditure	54,329	57,304	59,062	60,327
Net (Surplus)/Deficit	2,632	4,466	3,491	2,656
Forecast Opening HRA Balances	(27,388)	(24,756)	(20,290)	(16,799)
Net (Surplus)/Deficit	2,632	4,466	3,491	2,656
Forecast Closing HRA Balances	(24,756)	(20,290)	(16,799)	(14,143)

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Appendix 6 – The Dedicated Schools Grant Budget Proposals 2025/26

1. Background

- 1.1 School Funding is received through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), and is split into four blocks, each with its own formula to calculate the funding to be distributed to each local authority:
- Schools Block – funds mainstream primary and secondary schools through the school formula, and growth funding for new growing schools/bulge classes.
 - High Needs Block – funds places in special schools, resource units and alternative provision, and top up funding for pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) in all settings including non-maintained, independent, and further education colleges.
 - Early Years Block – funds nursery schools, nursery classes in mainstream schools, and early year's settings in the Private, Voluntary, and Independent (PVI) sector through the free entitlement from 9 months to 4-year-olds.
 - Central Schools Services Block – funds services provided by the local authority/Brighter Futures for Children centrally for all schools, such as the admissions service.
 - The allocations for 2025/26 were published by the Government on 18th December 2024. Most are now fixed for the year; part of the high needs block will be confirmed later in the year (July 2025), and the early years block will be based on data from future census', although the funding rates are now confirmed.
- 1.2 The DSG must be deployed in accordance with the conditions of grant and the latest School and Early Years Finance and Childcare (England) Regulations. Detailed guidance is contained within various operational guidance documents issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).
- 1.3 The DSG is a ring-fenced grant, though some funding can be transferred between blocks. Up to 0.5% of the school's block allocation can be transferred to other funding blocks, but only with the agreement of Schools' Forum.
- 1.4 Schools' Forum is consulted on all aspects of the DSG and has five planned meetings a year with officers. All reports and minutes can be found on the following web page: [Schools Forum meeting papers - Reading Borough Council](#)

2. Overall DSG Allocation for 2025/26

- 2.1 Table 1 sets out the DSG funding allocations for 2025/26 as published by the Government on 18th December 2024 and compares to 2024/25 allocations. A more detailed breakdown is in Annex 1. The Council receives its allocation gross and determines how the gross amount is allocated to schools and services. The Government then recoup the amounts for academy schools to pay them direct, leaving the Council with a net allocation for maintained schools and central services.

- 2.2 There is no change to the High Needs funding formula. Funding has increased by £2.194m from 2024/25 (7.0%). Funding for the High Needs Block is not static and is subject to variation within the year; import/exports will be confirmed in July 2025. Any changes to place funding will be confirmed in March 2025.

Table 1. DSG allocations per block

Block	2024/25 Actual (£'000)	2025/26 Initial (£'000)	Change (£'000)	Change (%)
Schools Block	126,102	135,104	9,768	7.7%
Central Schools Services Block	1,152	1,151	(1)	(0.1%)
Early Years Block	21,621	29,074	8,137	38.9%
High Needs Block	31,191	33,385	2,194	7.0%
Total (Gross)	180,066	199,480	19,415	10.8%
Less Recoupment - Schools	(71,171)	(77,572)	(6,401)	
Less Recoupment – High Needs	(4,524)	(4,476)	48	
Total (Net)	104,371	117,432	13,061	

- 2.3 Overall, the gross DSG will increase by £19.415m (10.8%) from £180.066m to £199.480m. This compares to an increase from 2023/24 to 2024/25 of 7.0%. Increases in the schools' block are due to a one-off 2024/25 grant being merged into the base formula budget. Supplementary grants such as the Core Schools Budget Grant (CSBG) and the Teachers Pay Additional Grant (TPAG) together total £8.6m.
- 2.4 October 2024 saw an overall decrease of Reading pupil numbers (78) of which Primary numbers reduced by 135 pupils and partially offset by an increase in Secondary numbers (57).

3. Schools Block Budget for 2025/26

- 3.1 The School's Block has increased by £9.768m to £135.104m (gross), an increase of 7.7%. The increase also includes the inclusion of £8.6m from supplementary grants provided in 2024/25. The rest of the increase is additional funding on a per pupil level (0.9%), allocated through an increase to the funding values.
- 3.2 The schools block allocation is based on Primary Units of Funding (PUFs) and Secondary Units of Funding (SUFs). These units are calculated for each local authority by adding together the total formula allocations for each school in each phase using the National Funding Formula (NFF) but using the previous year's data and dividing by the previous year's pupil numbers for each phase. These units are then fixed and are multiplied by the October 2024 census pupil numbers to give the final funding allocation for the following year.
- 3.3 The schools block budget has been set based on the recommendations and decisions made at the January 2025 meetings of the Schools' Forum.
- 3.4 At the January meeting it was agreed to transfer funding from the schools' block allocation to the high needs block, to continue to financially support the RISE Service for all Reading schools. The service supports all Reading schools relating to all Special

Educational Needs. For 2024/25 it was approved by the forum to transfer £0.564m equating to 0.42%.

- 3.5 The overall allocation includes £0.765m is for growth funding. Due to the opening of River Academy (Secondary) in September 2024, the entire growth is being allocated towards the annual growth of the school. Falling rolls in 2025/26 will be allocated from growth fund reserves to help primary schools with temporary low numbers.
- 3.6 The bulk of the funding is allocated to primary and secondary schools using the locally agreed school funding formula. The actual DSG funding received and available may not enable the NFF to be replicated in full due to there being a mismatch between the funding received and what would have been allocated to schools through a hard NFF:
- Differences in the pupil characteristics data from the previous year which is driving the DSG funding compared to the October 2024 census on which the formula funding allocations to schools is based (which may result in funding which is higher or lower than the actual requirement).
 - Increases in business rates bills and other premises costs compared to the historical figures on which the DSG funding is based.
 - Growth funding requirements not met by the allocation, and so a top slice is required.
 - Funding transfers to other blocks (namely high needs).
 - Overspends in the previous financial year which are a first call on resources in the following year. This will only happen for business rates and growth funding.
- 3.7 The National Funding Formula (NFF) continues to get closer with every factor having a lower and upper limit to be used. Reading is proud of its achievement to have moved within less than 1% of the national formula since 2019 and continue to achieve this every year. All factors are set to the NFF rate including area cost adjustments for 2025/26 except for the basic entitlements where we have reduced them by 0.47% for Primary and 0.77% for Secondary to fund the formula with the agreement transfer to the High Needs Block.
- 3.8 Annex 2 shows all the formula factors and their final values compared to the previous year.
- 3.9 Annex 3 shows the formula allocations for each individual school and compares this to the 2024/25. On average, primary schools have gained by 8.42% per pupil and secondary by 8.44% per pupil, though there is a large range with some schools receiving between 4% and 12% due to pupil characteristics changes and minimum funding guarantees.
- 3.10 The Pupil Premium Grant for schools will continue in 2025/26, As of writing this report the funding rates have not been released by the department for Education.

4. Central Schools Services Block Budget for 2025/26

- 4.1 The central school services block has decreased by £0.001m to £1.151m from £1.152m (gross). This includes a reduction of 20% from the Historic element due to the phasing out of funding for historical commitments.
- 4.1 In order to balance the budget in this block, some of the historical commitment budgets have been reduced in order to reflect this funding reduction; these budgets are contributions towards service costs, so will result in these services either having to fund the reduction from elsewhere or reduce the level of service.

5. Early Years Block Budget for 2025/26

- 5.1 The formula used for calculating Early Years Entitlements rates in 2025 to 2026 remains the same as used for 2024 to 2025. following changes were made to the Early Years Block for 2025 to 2026:
- For the 3 and 4-year-old formula, the Minimum Funding Floor (MFF) has been increased to £5.71.
 - Additional funding to reflect increases to teachers' pay from September 2024 has been rolled into 3 and 4-year-old and MNS supplementary funding rates.
 - The Maintained Nursery Schools (MNS) supplementary funding MFF has been increased to £5.27 and the cap remains at £10.
 - The Disability Access Fund (DAF) national rate has been uplifted in line with an age-weighted cost pressure, reflecting the full age range of children taking up the entitlements, that is from 9-months to 4-years-old, instead of the previous approach of uplifting in line with 3 and 4-year-old cost pressures only.
 - The Early Years Pupil Premium national rate has been uplifted to reflect additional investment in the early years budget in 2025 to 2026 to support the most disadvantaged children.
- 5.2 The Department for Education (DfE) are continuing to introduce free entitlement for children aged 9 months up to (and including) 2-year-olds. From September 2025, this will supply entitlement funding for 30 hours for all working parents.
- 5.3 The budgets for the early years block cannot be determined until the draft January 2025 census data is available. Details on the proposed early years budget will therefore be brought to the Schools' Forum in March 2025.
- 5.4 In the summer of 2023, the previous government consulted on the minimum pass-through requirement and outlined their intention to increase this from 95% to 97% once the new entitlements were sufficiently embedded. This change to the minimum pass-through requirement will be introduced, and the government are taking an initial step in introducing that change in 2025/26 by increasing the minimum pass-through requirement for local authorities from 95% to 96%. This means that Local Authorities (LAs) are only allowed to retain 4% off the overall entitlement funding to pay for central services.

- 5.5 Central budgets funded by this block has increased due to national pay inflation and national insurance changes, but the services covered are the same as in 2024/25 and will only equate to 3.7% (below the 4% threshold).
- 5.6 The decision on these budgets was taken to January 2025 Schools' Forum and approved.

6. High Needs Block Budget for 2025/26

- 6.1 The additional high needs funding will be £2.194m (gross). The deficit is currently forecast at around £26.503m. There is the expectation from the ESFA that local authorities whose high needs block is in deficit will continue to work towards reducing the deficit. However, as the number of pupils with EHCPs and costs of their placements continue to increase, most of the additional funding will go towards these increases in costs.
- 6.2 Top up funding makes up the greatest proportion of expenditure in this block that includes Additional Resourced Provision (ARP). This equates to around 90.5% of the expenditure budget. The budget will be based on the current actual average cost of each type of placement (as at January census 2025) with an average inflation rate added and an annual increase in number of placements according to current trends.
- 6.3 The numbers of places in local specialist provision are increasing, with new resource provision places being established and additional places in special schools.
- 6.4 Note that the DSG regulations changed in 2020 and the deficit is now totally separate from local authority funding and reserves via a statutory override in place until March 2026. This means that the deficit must not be funded by the local authority's general reserves and that DSG deficits will over time be recovered from DSG income or potential government reform.
- 6.5 Nationally the High Needs Block is LAs biggest challenge in regard to the Dedicated Schools Grant as the majority of LAs are also in deficit positions. The DfE are reviewing the challenge and has limited any new LAs going into the safety value and the Delivering Better Value programmes. The LAs are waiting for updates from the government on the future of the High Needs Block and Special Educational Needs (SEN) Strategy.

7 Deficit Recovery Plan

- 7.1 The high needs block has been in deficit for several years. Approximately 90% of the high needs block is payments for statutory top up fees for pupils/students with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). This is the area of highest risk due to the unpredictability of the number and level (cost) of plans. It is the continued growth (see Table 2) in both the number and cost of these plans and the fact that the annual high needs block allocation hasn't increased at the same levels has led to the DSG deficit.

Table 2: Numbers of EHCPs

Date	Actual Total Number	Annual Year on Year Increase
15/16: January 2016	1,002	43
16/17: January 2017	1,066	64
17/18: January 2018	1,175	109
18/19: January 2019	1,276	101
19/20: January 2020	1,391	115
20/21: December 2020	1,462	71
21/22: December 2021	1,572	110
22/23: December 2022	1,756	184
23/24: December 2023	1,967	211
24/25: December 2024	1,999	32

- 7.2 As part of the SEN Strategy and Delivering Better Value programme, Reading is seeing a drop of NET growth in EHCPs. The increase from December 2023 to December 2024 was 32 that is way lower than the average (112) between 2016 and 2023. These numbers do not show the continue need of children increasing.
- 7.3 The DSG deficit is now ring-fenced and totally separate from local authority funding and reserves. This means that the deficit must not be funded by the local authority's general reserves. The carry forward of a deficit no longer requires the consent of Schools' Forum. This provides certainty to local authority finances.
- 7.4 The DSG conditions of grant for 2024/25 has not changed from previously and the Council will continue to produce a recovery plan that is reviewed and challenged by the DfE. The plan should be shown to the local Schools' Forum and should verbally kept updated throughout the year.
- 7.5 Due to the additional growth in EHCPs numbers and additional investment of Resource units, the current 2024/25 forecast is showing an expenditure pressure of £14.1m above the income allocation within the High Needs budgets.

Table 3: Current DSG High Needs Block Management Plan (at December 2024)

	2023/24 Outturn £m	2024/25 Jan-25 Forecast £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m
High Needs Expenditure	33.428	40.776	42.778	43.725
High Needs Income	(26.340)	(26.667)	(28.909)	(30.933)
High Needs In-Year	7.088	14.109	13.869	12.792
Add High Needs B/F Deficit	5.306	12.394	26.503	40.373
Year End Position	12.394	26.503	40.373	53.165

- 7.6 The forecasts are showing considerable pressure within this block and continuous work and strategies have been created and are in early implementation to produce savings and cost avoidance for future years. The Needs of the children and schools will always be critical on any changes and the work will improve the quality of Education and the support educational settings will receive.

- 7.7 The Council has created a SEN governance group that includes senior Childrens and Finance staff to review the monthly finances and implemented strategies. This will also be evaluated alongside the DfE.

8 Annexes

Annex 1 - DSG Allocations 2024/25 and 2025/26

Annex 2 - Final Formula Factors and Values 2024/25 to 2025/26

Annex 3 - Final 2025/26 School Formula Allocations for Primary and Secondary
Schools

Annex 1 – DSG Allocations 2024/25 and 2025/26

	2024/25 Actual		2025/26 Estimate		Year on Year Change		
	Units / Rate	Funding £'000	Units / Rate	Funding £'000	£'000	%	Notes
Schools Block (SB):							
Primary Unit of Funding (PUF)	£5,155.75		£5,568.74		£412.99		Confirmed
<i>Primary Pupil numbers & funding</i>	13,236.50	68,244	13,102.00	72,962	4,718	6.9%	Confirmed
Secondary Unit of Funding (SUF)	£6,794.86		£7,382.34		£587.48		Confirmed
<i>Secondary Pupil numbers & funding</i>	8,135.00	55,276	8,192.00	60,476	5,200	9.4%	Confirmed
Premises		1,576		1,666	90	5.7%	Confirmed
TOTAL SB excl. Growth		125,097		135,104	10,007	8%	
Growth Funding Factor		1,005		765	(240)	(23.9%)	Confirmed
TOTAL SB		126,102		135,870	9,768	7.7%	

Central School Services Block (CSSB):							
Unit of Funding	£43.48		£45.70		£2.22		Confirmed
<i>Pupil Numbers</i>	21,371.50	929	21,294.00	973	44	4.7%	Confirmed
Historic Commitments		223		178	(45)	(20.0%)	Confirmed (Planned reduction by ESFA)
TOTAL CSSB		1,152		1,151	(1)	(0.1%)	

High Needs Block (HNB):							
Formula		31,267		33,169	1,902	6.1%	Confirmed
Hospital & AP pay grants		315		332	17	5.5%	Confirmed
Place Funding Unit of Funding	£4,913.17		£4,913.23		£0.06		Confirmed
<i>Place Numbers</i>	440.5	2,164	495.5	2,439	275	12.7%	Confirmed
Import/Export Adjustment		(2,700)		(2,700)	0	0.0%	Based on Oct 24 census & Jan 25 ILR
Additional HN Funding		144		144	0	0.0%	
Total HNB		31,191		33,385	2,194	7.0%	

Early Years Block (EYB):							
3- & 4-Year-Old Funding Rate	£6.70		£6.86		£0.16		Confirmed
<i>3- & 4-year-olds numbers & funding</i>	3,512	13,416	3,512	13,734	318	2.4%	To be based on future Census data
2-Year-Old Funding Rate	£9.72		£10.02		£0.30		Confirmed
<i>2-Year-old numbers & funding</i>	827	4,583	1,138	11,484	6,901	150%	To be based on future Census data
Under 2-Year-Old Funding Rate	£13.24		£13.76	14,917	£0.52		Confirmed
<i>Under 2-Year-old numbers & funding</i>	325.8	2,459	951	14,917	12,458	506%	To be based on future Census data
Pupil Premium		153		223	70		To be based on future Census data
Disabled Access Fund		95		120	25		Confirmed
Maintained Nursery Grant		917		1,041	124		To be based on future Census data
Total EYB		21,621		29,074	8,137	38.9%	
Total All Blocks		180,065		199,480	19,415	10.8%	

Annex 2 - Proposed Formula Factors and Values 2023/24 to 2025/26

Formula Values	2023/24			2024/25			2025/26			
	NFF	Reading NFF with ACA	Reading Final	NFF	Reading NFF with ACA	Reading PROPOSED	NFF	Reading NFF with ACA	Reading Final	Note for 2025/26 Actual Values (Reading ACA is 1.03622)
Basic Entitlement										
Primary	£3,394.00	£3,512.11	£3,499.00	£3,562.00	£3,690.45	£3,653.48	£3,847.00	£3,986.34	£3,966.03	NFF with ACA - reduced by 0.5%
Secondary - KS3	£4,785.00	£4,951.52	£4,934.00	£5,022.00	£5,203.09	£5,150.97	£5,422.00	£5,618.38	£5,573.08	NFF with ACA - reduced by 0.8%
Secondary - KS4	£5,393.00	£5,580.68	£5,561.00	£5,661.00	£5,865.14	£5,806.39	£6,113.00	£6,334.41	£6,283.33	NFF with ACA - reduced by 0.8%
Deprivation										
Free School Meals - Primary	£480.00	£496.70	£496.00	£490.00	£507.67	£507.67	£495.00	£512.93	£512.93	As per NFF with ACA
Free School Meals - Secondary	£480.00	£496.70	£497.00	£490.00	£507.67	£507.67	£495.00	£512.93	£512.93	As per NFF with ACA
Free School Meals Ever 6 - Primary	£705.00	£729.53	£730.00	£820.00	£849.57	£849.57	£1,060.00	£1,098.39	£1,098.39	As per NFF with ACA
Free School Meals Ever 6 - Secondary	£1,030.00	£1,065.84	£1,066.00	£1,200.00	£1,243.27	£1,243.27	£1,555.00	£1,611.32	£1,611.32	As per NFF with ACA
IDACI Band A (over 0.6) - Primary	£670.00	£693.31	£693.00	£680.00	£704.52	£704.52	£685.00	£709.81	£709.81	As per NFF with ACA
IDACI Band A (over 0.6) - Secondary	£930.00	£962.36	£962.00	£945.00	£979.08	£979.08	£950.00	£984.41	£984.41	As per NFF with ACA
IDACI Band B (0.5 - 0.6) - Primary	£510.00	£527.74	£528.00	£515.00	£533.57	£533.57	£520.00	£538.83	£538.83	As per NFF with ACA
IDACI Band B (0.5 - 0.6) - Secondary	£730.00	£755.40	£755.00	£740.00	£766.68	£766.68	£745.00	£771.98	£771.98	As per NFF with ACA
IDACI Band C (0.4 - 0.5) - Primary	£480.00	£496.70	£497.00	£485.00	£502.49	£502.49	£490.00	£507.75	£507.75	As per NFF with ACA
IDACI Band C (0.4 - 0.5) - Secondary	£680.00	£703.66	£704.00	£690.00	£714.88	£714.88	£695.00	£720.17	£720.17	As per NFF with ACA
IDACI Band D (0.3 - 0.4) - Primary	£440.00	£455.31	£455.00	£445.00	£461.05	£461.05	£445.00	£461.12	£461.12	As per NFF with ACA
IDACI Band D (0.3 - 0.4) - Secondary	£620.00	£641.57	£642.00	£630.00	£652.72	£652.72	£635.00	£658.00	£658.00	As per NFF with ACA
IDACI Band E (0.25 - 0.3) - Primary	£280.00	£289.74	£290.00	£285.00	£295.28	£295.28	£285.00	£295.32	£295.32	As per NFF with ACA
IDACI Band E (0.25 - 0.3) - Secondary	£445.00	£460.48	£460.00	£450.00	£466.23	£466.23	£450.00	£466.30	£466.30	As per NFF with ACA
IDACI Band F (0.2 - 0.25) - Primary	£230.00	£238.00	£238.00	£235.00	£243.47	£243.47	£235.00	£243.51	£243.51	As per NFF with ACA
IDACI Band F (0.2 - 0.25) - Secondary	£335.00	£346.66	£347.00	£340.00	£352.26	£352.26	£340.00	£352.31	£352.31	As per NFF with ACA
Prior Attainment										
Primary	£1,155.00	£1,195.18	£1,195.00	£1,170.00	£1,212.19	£1,212.19	£1,175.00	£1,217.56	£1,217.56	As per NFF with ACA
Secondary	£1,750.00	£1,810.89	£1,811.00	£1,775.00	£1,839.01	£1,839.01	£1,785.00	£1,849.65	£1,849.65	As per NFF with ACA
English as an Additional Language										
Primary	£580.00	£600.18	£600.00	£590.00	£611.28	£611.28	£595.00	£616.55	£616.55	As per NFF with ACA
Secondary	£1,565.00	£1,619.45	£1,619.00	£1,585.00	£1,642.16	£1,642.16	£1,595.00	£1,652.77	£1,652.77	As per NFF with ACA
Mobility										
Primary	£945.00	£977.88	£978.00	£960.00	£994.62	£994.62	£965.00	£999.95	£999.95	As per NFF with ACA
Secondary	£1,360.00	£1,407.32	£1,407.00	£1,380.00	£1,429.76	£1,429.76	£1,385.00	£1,435.16	£1,435.16	As per NFF with ACA
Lump Sum	£128,000.00	£132,453.33	£114,300.00	£134,400.00	£139,246.46	£139,246.46	£145,100.00	£150,355.52	£150,355.52	As per NFF with ACA
Business Rates (Actual - locally set)	£1,283,350.00		£1,283,350.00	£1,497,409.00		£1,497,409.00	£1,587,253.10		£1,587,253.10	
Split sites basic eligibility funding	£17,149.00		£17,149.00	£53,672.00	£55,636.42	£55,636.42	£54,000.00	£55,955.88	£55,955.88	As per NFF with ACA
Split sites distance funding				£26,886.00	£27,870.01	£27,870.01	£27,000.00	£27,977.94	£27,977.94	As per NFF with ACA
Minimum Per Pupil Level										
Primary	£4,405.00		£4,405.00	£4,610.00		£4,610.00	£4,955.00		£4,955.00	As per NFF
Secondary	£5,715.00		£5,715.00	£5,771.00		£5,771.00	£6,465.00		£6,465.00	As per NFF
(KS3 Only School)	£5,503.00		£5,503.00	£6,331.00		£6,331.00	£6,221.00		£6,221.00	As per NFF
(KS4 Only School)	£6,033.00		£6,033.00	£5,995.00		£5,995.00	£6,831.00		£6,831.00	As per NFF
Max. Minimum Funding Guarantee	0.50%		0.50%	0.50%		0.50%	0.00%		0.00%	Local Decision between -.5% & 0%

Annex 3 - School Formula allocations for Primary and Secondary Schools 2025/26

		2024/25 ACTUAL ALLOCATION					2025/26 INDICATIVE ALLOCATION - before deduction of NNDR and Delegation			Overall Chabge between 2024/25 and 2025/26			
		Formula Allocation	Pupil No's (Oct 2023)	Per Pupil Funding	TPEGC, TPAG & CSBG	Adjusted Allocation	Formula Allocation	Pupil No's (Oct 2024)	Per Pupil Funding	Total	%	Per Pupil	%
LAESTAB	School Name												
8702000	Alfred Sutton Primary School	2,917,321.49	618	4,720.58	168,437.00	3,085,758.49	3,175,438.51	624	5,088.84	258,117.02	8.85%	368.26	7.80%
8702003	Caversham Primary School	1,925,916.40	411	4,685.93	102,695.00	2,028,611.40	2,043,084.00	405	5,044.65	117,167.60	6.08%	358.72	7.66%
8702005	Coley Primary School	1,191,818.23	211	5,648.43	64,597.00	1,256,415.23	1,247,036.57	205	6,083.11	55,218.34	4.63%	434.68	7.70%
8702006	E P Collier Primary School	2,044,537.22	379	5,394.56	108,877.00	2,153,414.22	2,190,002.61	379	5,778.37	145,465.39	7.11%	383.81	7.11%
8702007	Geoffrey Field Junior School	1,892,211.97	353	5,360.37	112,099.00	2,004,310.97	2,078,018.20	352	5,903.46	185,806.23	9.82%	543.09	10.13%
8702008	Geoffrey Field Infant School	1,508,874.55	261	5,781.13	80,695.00	1,589,569.55	1,603,509.36	257	6,239.34	94,634.81	6.27%	458.21	7.93%
8702016	Oxford Road Community School	1,152,610.32	204	5,650.05	65,000.00	1,217,610.32	1,246,504.46	202	6,170.81	93,894.13	8.15%	520.76	9.22%
8702018	Redlands Primary School	1,089,643.53	200	5,448.22	58,469.00	1,148,112.53	1,148,622.89	193	5,951.41	58,979.36	5.41%	503.20	9.24%
8702019	The Hill Primary School	1,872,958.40	396	4,729.69	99,386.00	1,972,344.40	1,998,639.00	393	5,085.60	125,680.60	6.71%	355.90	7.52%
8702020	The Ridgeway Primary School	2,258,143.84	396	5,702.38	122,368.00	2,380,511.84	2,389,899.74	385	6,207.53	131,755.89	5.83%	505.15	8.86%
8702021	Park Lane Primary School	1,981,607.61	397	4,991.45	111,096.00	2,092,703.61	2,078,343.91	385	5,398.30	96,736.29	4.88%	406.84	8.15%
8702024	Wilson Primary School	2,081,959.54	412	5,053.30	111,680.00	2,193,639.54	2,202,463.46	409	5,385.00	120,503.92	5.79%	331.70	6.56%
8702026	Emmer Green Primary School	1,945,239.60	415	4,687.32	103,383.00	2,048,622.60	2,101,452.00	417	5,039.45	156,212.40	8.03%	352.13	7.51%
8702027	Southcote Primary School	2,727,266.04	551	4,949.67	148,393.00	2,875,659.04	2,939,198.19	551	5,334.30	211,932.15	7.77%	384.63	7.77%
8702029	St Michael's Primary School	2,147,376.70	404	5,315.29	121,407.00	2,268,783.70	2,259,237.61	391	5,778.10	111,860.91	5.21%	462.81	8.71%
8702034	Moorlands Primary School	1,706,255.94	308	5,539.79	103,143.00	1,809,398.94	1,721,290.86	284	6,060.88	15,034.92	0.88%	521.09	9.41%
8702036	Thameside Primary School	1,883,815.44	373	5,050.44	105,217.00	1,989,032.44	1,899,974.39	344	5,523.18	16,158.94	0.86%	472.74	9.36%
8702226	Katesgrove Primary School	3,045,419.61	608	5,008.91	160,582.00	3,206,001.61	3,272,618.46	605	5,409.29	227,198.85	7.46%	400.37	7.99%
8702233	Caversham Park Primary School	714,340.10	125	5,714.72	38,996.00	753,336.10	716,678.28	115	6,231.99	2,338.18	0.33%	517.26	9.05%
8702234	Micklands Primary School	1,734,875.65	341	5,087.61	99,519.00	1,834,394.65	1,790,457.65	319	5,612.72	55,581.99	3.20%	525.11	10.32%
8702253	Manor Primary School	1,515,003.05	269	5,631.98	88,887.00	1,603,890.05	1,738,572.46	287	6,057.74	223,569.41	14.76%	425.76	7.56%
8703000	All Saints Church of England Aided Infant School	411,694.96	60	6,861.58	22,314.00	434,008.96	448,885.69	60	7,481.43	37,190.72	9.03%	619.85	9.03%
8703302	St Anne's Catholic Primary School	891,150.01	159	5,604.72	50,589.00	941,739.01	890,387.32	146	6,098.54	-762.69	-0.09%	493.83	8.81%
8703304	English Martyrs' Catholic Primary School	2,030,645.86	405	5,013.94	111,109.00	2,141,754.86	2,094,833.41	389	5,385.18	64,187.55	3.16%	371.24	7.40%
8703305	Christ The King Catholic Primary School	1,683,400.75	301	5,592.69	98,871.00	1,782,271.75	1,756,585.21	285	6,163.46	73,184.46	4.35%	570.76	10.21%
8703360	St Martin's Catholic Primary School	674,502.49	123	5,483.76	37,386.00	711,888.49	801,333.75	136	5,892.16	126,831.25	18.80%	408.40	7.45%
8703361	Whitley Park Primary and Nursery School	2,830,993.19	500	5,661.99	157,004.00	2,987,997.19	2,898,148.58	476	6,088.55	67,155.38	2.37%	426.56	7.53%
8705411	Blessed Hugh Faringdon Catholic School	6,236,283.56	925	6,741.93	361,670.00	6,597,953.56	6,813,799.71	929	7,334.55	577,516.16	9.26%	592.62	8.79%
8702002	All Saints Junior School	555,712.26	98	5,670.53	31,285.00	586,997.26	585,369.30	94	6,227.33	29,657.04	5.34%	556.80	9.82%
8702004	Meadow Park Academy	1,943,181.31	356	5,458.37	116,462.00	2,059,643.31	1,958,722.47	330	5,935.52	15,541.16	0.80%	477.15	8.74%
8702011	Battle Primary Academy	2,123,383.39	417	5,092.05	120,185.00	2,243,568.39	2,229,399.28	402	5,545.77	106,015.89	4.99%	453.72	8.91%
8702012	The Palmer Primary Academy	2,068,382.75	390	5,303.55	116,369.00	2,184,751.75	2,193,994.56	386	5,683.92	125,611.81	6.07%	380.38	7.17%
8702015	Civitas Academy	2,084,381.37	400	5,210.95	109,616.00	2,193,997.37	2,186,083.37	390	5,605.34	101,702.00	4.88%	394.39	7.57%
8702017	The Heights Primary School	1,641,152.00	352	4,662.36	87,338.00	1,728,490.00	1,818,321.00	363	5,009.15	177,169.00	10.80%	346.79	7.44%
8702025	Ranikhet Academy	1,239,003.58	213	5,816.92	74,971.00	1,313,974.58	1,273,957.98	201	6,338.10	34,954.40	2.82%	521.18	8.96%
8702028	New Town Primary School	1,938,972.06	368	5,268.95	104,696.00	2,043,668.06	2,159,291.72	385	5,608.55	220,319.66	11.36%	339.60	6.45%
8702031	Churchend Primary Academy	2,039,236.58	418	4,878.56	115,341.00	2,154,577.58	2,186,985.50	409	5,347.15	147,748.92	7.25%	468.60	9.61%
8702035	St Mary & All Saints Church of England Primary School	1,614,706.07	288	5,606.62	89,964.00	1,704,670.07	1,991,239.58	326	6,108.10	376,533.52	23.32%	501.48	8.94%
8702039	Green Park Village Primary Academy	1,131,750.02	204	5,547.79	0.00	1,131,750.02	1,439,195.06	247	5,826.70	307,445.04	27.17%	278.91	5.03%
8702254	New Christ Church Church of England Primary School	1,054,577.39	195	5,408.09	58,340.00	1,112,917.39	1,155,294.49	199	5,805.50	100,717.09	9.55%	397.41	7.35%
8703300	St John's Church of England Primary School	2,095,484.35	408	5,135.99	113,316.00	2,208,800.35	2,290,349.59	411	5,572.63	194,865.24	9.30%	436.64	8.50%
8704000	UTC Reading	1,499,015.14	194	7,726.88	90,429.00	1,589,444.14	1,212,013.43	140	8,657.24	-287,001.70	-19.15%	930.36	12.04%
8704001	Maiden Erlegh School in Reading	6,173,818.05	892	6,921.32	366,248.00	6,540,066.05	6,668,906.79	885	7,535.49	495,088.74	8.02%	614.17	8.87%
8704002	The WREN School	5,914,899.31	848	6,975.12	346,063.00	6,260,962.31	6,364,418.16	834	7,631.20	449,518.86	7.60%	656.08	9.41%
8704003	Reading Girls' School	6,094,011.19	865	7,045.10	358,749.00	6,452,760.19	6,873,302.29	906	7,586.43	779,291.11	12.79%	541.33	7.68%
8704020	Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre	7,863,163.09	1,264	6,220.86	462,223.00	8,325,386.09	8,128,669.62	1212	6,706.82	265,506.53	3.38%	485.97	7.81%
8705401	Reading School	4,561,864.60	755	6,042.20	272,013.00	4,833,877.60	4,905,672.20	753	6,514.84	343,807.60	7.54%	472.63	7.82%
8705410	King's Academy Prospect	7,846,148.13	1,053	7,451.23	470,576.00	8,316,724.13	8,631,167.95	1058	8,158.00	785,019.83	10.01%	706.77	9.49%
8705413	Kendrick School	3,688,438.00	610	6,046.62	219,650.00	3,908,088.00	4,177,644.00	641	6,517.39	489,206.00	13.26%	470.77	7.79%
8706905	John Madejski Academy	5,694,651.10	733	7,768.96	335,001.00	6,029,652.10	5,472,077.94	651	8,405.65	-222,573.16	-3.91%	636.69	8.20%
8704004	River Academy	738,969.38	105	7,037.80	0.00	738,969.38	2,122,569.48	289	7,344.53	1,383,600.10	187.23%	306.73	4.36%
Primary Total		68,650,536.23	13,182.00	206,393.45	3,790,082.00	72,440,618.23	72,076,850.94	12,848.00	223,762.61	3,426,314.71	4.99%	17,369.17	8.42%
Secondary Total		56,311,261.53	8,244.00	75,978.03	3,282,622.00	59,593,883.53	61,370,241.58	8,298.00	82,392.13	5,058,980.05	8.98%	6,414.10	8.44%
Total ALL Schools		124,961,797.76	21,426.00	282,371.48	7,072,704.00	132,034,501.76	133,447,092.52	21,146.00	306,154.75	8,485,294.76	6.79%	23,783.27	8.42%

Appendix 7a - General Fund Capital Programme 2025/26 - 2029/30

Scheme Name	2024/25 Forecast			2025/26 Forecast			2026/27 Forecast			2027/28 Forecast			2028/29 Forecast			2029/30 Forecast		
	Spend (£,000's)	Funding (£,000's)	Net (£,000's)	Spend (£,000's)	Funding (£,000's)	Net (£,000's)	Spend (£,000's)	Funding (£,000's)	Net (£,000's)	Spend (£,000's)	Funding (£,000's)	Net (£,000's)	Spend (£,000's)	Funding (£,000's)	Net (£,000's)	Spend (£,000's)	Funding (£,000's)	Net (£,000's)
Community & Adult Social Care																		
Adult Social Care																		
ASC Digital Transformation	251	(93)	158	131	-	131	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Co-located profound and multiple learning disabilities day opportunities and respite facility and sheltered housing flats	941	-	941	6,998	(6)	6,992	1,264	-	1,264	701	-	701	-	-	-	-	-	-
Adult Social Care - Sub Total	1,192	(93)	1,099	7,129	(6)	7,123	1,264	-	1,264	701	-	701	-	-	-	-	-	-
Housing & Communities																		
Provision of Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,455	-	3,455	-	-	-
Harden Public Open Spaces to Prevent Illegal Encampments	35	-	35	25	-	25	25	-	25	25	-	25	25	-	25	25	-	25
Green Homes Scheme - GF element	40	(40)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disabled Facilities Grants (Private Sector)	1,197	(1,197)	-	1,197	(1,197)	-	1,197	(1,197)	-	1,197	(1,197)	-	1,197	(1,197)	-	1,197	(1,197)	-
Foster Carer Extensions	325	-	325	275	-	275	200	-	200	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Private Sector Renewals	250	-	250	250	-	250	300	-	300	300	-	300	300	-	300	300	-	300
Housing & Communities - Sub Total	1,847	(1,237)	610	1,747	(1,197)	550	1,722	(1,197)	525	1,522	(1,197)	325	4,977	(1,197)	3,780	1,522	(1,197)	325
Community & Adult Social Care - Total	3,039	(1,330)	1,709	8,876	(1,203)	7,673	2,986	(1,197)	1,789	2,223	(1,197)	1,026	4,977	(1,197)	3,780	1,522	(1,197)	325
Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services																		
Planning, Transportation & Public Protection																		
Air Quality Monitoring	7	(7)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Active Travel Tranche 2	20	(20)	-	1,180	(1,180)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Active Travel Tranche 3	250	(250)	-	1,900	(1,900)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Active Travel Tranche 4	74	(74)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Active Travel Tranche 4 extension	-	-	-	-	-	-	508	(508)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Berkshire Coroner's Removals	110	(81)	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bus Service Improvement	11,184	(11,184)	-	4,834	(4,834)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Local Transport Plan Development	472	(472)	-	1,900	(1,900)	-	900	(900)	-	989	(989)	-	400	(400)	-	400	(400)	-
National Cycle Network Route 422	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reading West Station	340	(340)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
South Reading MRT (Phases 1 & 2)	17	(17)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Town Centre Street Trading Infrastructure	-	-	-	70	-	70	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Construction of Green Park Station	10	(10)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Car Park Investment Programme (inc P&D, Red Routes & Equipment)	331	(331)	-	326	(326)	-	326	(326)	-	326	(326)	-	326	(326)	-	326	(326)	-
CIL Local Funds - Community	159	(159)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CIL Local Funds - Transport	806	(806)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CIL Local Funds -Neighbourhood Allocation	1,498	(1,498)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
S106 individual schemes list	988	(988)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Defra Air Quality Grant - Go Electric Reading	18	(18)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Electric Vehicle Charging Points	866	(866)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) grant to RTL	4,736	(4,736)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Clean Bus Technology	98	(98)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Air Quality Grant - AQ sensors awareness & behaviour change	36	(36)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transport Demand Management Scheme	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	600	(600)	-	-	-	-
Planning, Transportation & Public Protection - Sub Total	22,020	(21,991)	29	10,210	(10,140)	70	1,734	(1,734)	-	1,315	(1,315)	-	1,326	(1,326)	-	726	(726)	-

Scheme Name	2024/25 Forecast			2025/26 Forecast			2026/27 Forecast			2027/28 Forecast			2028/29 Forecast			2029/30 Forecast		
	Spend (£,000's)	Funding (£,000's)	Net (£,000's)	Spend (£,000's)	Funding (£,000's)	Net (£,000's)	Spend (£,000's)	Funding (£,000's)	Net (£,000's)	Spend (£,000's)	Funding (£,000's)	Net (£,000's)	Spend (£,000's)	Funding (£,000's)	Net (£,000's)	Spend (£,000's)	Funding (£,000's)	Net (£,000's)
Culture																		
Leisure Centre Enhancement	1,934	(39)	1,895	661	-	661	976	-	976	308	-	308	217	-	217	581	-	581
Development of facilities at Prospect Park/Play	19	-	19	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reading Football Club Social Inclusion Unit to SRLC	-	-	-	1,534	(1,534)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Small Leisure Schemes	153	-	153	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Levelling Up Delivery Plan - New performance space at the Hexagon Theatre	1,496	(1,496)	-	6,786	(6,596)	190	9,851	-	9,851	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Levelling Up Delivery Plan - New Reading Library at the Civic Centre	6,231	(6,231)	-	7,183	(4,380)	2,803	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Abbey Quarter restoration works	25	(25)	-	140	(140)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
High Street Heritage Action Zone	150	-	150	67	(67)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Berkshire Record Office - extension of storage space	30	-	30	362	-	362	10	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hexagon lighting & emergency lighting replacement	114	-	114	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hexagon replacement of PA System	360	-	360	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
New Directions Ways into work	59	(59)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Shared Prosperity Fund	385	(385)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Library Improvement Works	200	(200)	-	295	(295)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tilthurst Library Works	2	(2)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Culture - Sub Total	11,158	(8,437)	2,721	17,028	(13,012)	4,016	10,837	-	10,837	308	-	308	217	-	217	581	-	581
Environmental & Commercial Services																		
Playground equipment and Refreshment: Boroughwide	318	(50)	268	300	(300)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
New Capital Bid - S106 Kenavon Drive Landscape	-	-	-	31	(31)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Victoria Rec	423	(423)	-	50	(50)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Restoration of historic Wall at Caversham Court Gardens	40	(40)	-	388	(168)	220	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ecological Works	-	-	-	21	(21)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
John Rabson skatepark	10	(10)	-	342	(62)	280	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tree Planting	50	-	50	50	(4)	46	50	-	50	50	-	50	50	-	50	50	-	50
Highways Infrastructure Programme	5,791	(1,562)	4,229	6,900	(1,838)	5,062	3,000	(1,838)	1,162	1,838	(1,838)	-	1,838	(1,838)	-	1,838	(1,838)	-
Chestnut Walk Improvements	29	(15)	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CIL Local Funds - Heritage and Culture	117	(117)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CIL Local Funds - Leisure and Play	395	(395)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Highway Signals_Capital Bid	1,003	(949)	54	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Invest to save energy savings - Street lighting	760	(746)	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pedestrian Defined Urban Pocket Gardens	75	-	75	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pedestrian dropped kerb facilities with tactile pavers	205	-	205	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pedestrian handrails	111	-	111	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pumping Station Upgrade Scheme (new)	38	-	38	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reading Station Subway	450	(389)	61	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Town Centre Improvements	117	-	117	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cattle Market Car Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Digitised TRO's	150	-	150	150	-	150	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eastern Area Access Works	-	-	-	199	(199)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Local Traffic Management and Road Safety Schemes	50	(50)	-	654	(654)	-	150	(150)	-	150	(150)	-	150	(150)	-	150	(150)	-
Oxford Road Corridor Works	-	-	-	299	(299)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Traffic Management Schools	-	-	-	431	(431)	-	100	(100)	-	100	(100)	-	100	(100)	-	100	(100)	-
Western Area Access Works	-	-	-	128	(128)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Vehicle Maintenance Workshop	1,306	-	1,306	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Replacement Vehicles	1,349	(125)	1,224	100	-	100	-	-	-	2,991	-	2,991	3,681	-	3,681	677	-	677
Environmental & Commercial Services - Sub Total	12,787	(4,871)	7,916	10,043	(4,185)	5,858	3,300	(2,088)	1,212	5,129	(2,088)	3,041	5,819	(2,088)	3,731	2,815	(2,088)	727

Scheme Name	2024/25 Forecast			2025/26 Forecast			2026/27 Forecast			2027/28 Forecast			2028/29 Forecast			2029/30 Forecast		
	Spend (£,000's)	Funding (£,000's)	Net (£,000's)	Spend (£,000's)	Funding (£,000's)	Net (£,000's)	Spend (£,000's)	Funding (£,000's)	Net (£,000's)	Spend (£,000's)	Funding (£,000's)	Net (£,000's)	Spend (£,000's)	Funding (£,000's)	Net (£,000's)	Spend (£,000's)	Funding (£,000's)	Net (£,000's)
Property & Asset Management																		
The Heights Permanent Site Mitigation	50	-	50	375	(297)	78	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Corporate and Community Buildings	700	-	700	1,000	-	1,000	1,000	-	1,000	1,000	-	1,000	1,000	-	1,000	1,000	-	1,000
1 Dunsfold Fitout for BFIC Family Contact Centre - Development for Community Use	22	(19)	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Katesgrove Community and YOS Refurbishment - Development for Community Use	5	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Maintenance & Enhancement of Council Properties	75	-	75	-	-	-	-	-	-	8,725	-	8,725	-	-	-	-	-	-
Acre Business Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	596	-	596	-	-	-
Property & Asset Management - Sub Total	852	(19)	833	1,375	(297)	1,078	1,000	-	1,000	9,725	-	9,725	1,596	-	1,596	1,000	-	1,000
Management & Sustainability																		
Salix Decarbonisation Fund	150	-	150	603	-	603	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Salix Re-Circulation Fund	250	(40)	210	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Corporate Solar Programme	50	(12)	38	1,903	-	1,903	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Management and Sustainability - Sub Total	450	(52)	398	2,506	-	2,506	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services Total	47,267	(35,370)	11,897	41,162	(27,634)	13,528	16,871	(3,822)	13,049	16,477	(3,403)	13,074	8,958	(3,414)	5,544	5,122	(2,814)	2,308
Resources																		
IT Future Operating Model	2,431	-	2,431	1,289	-	1,289	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ICT Tech Refresh	-	-	-	436	-	436	689	-	689	680	-	680	555	-	555	640	-	640
Democratic Hybrid AV	146	-	146	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Education Management System	77	-	77	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cremator Procurement	100	-	100	707	-	707	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Burial Chambers	80	-	80	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Additional Burial Space	-	-	-	166	-	166	166	-	166	1,416	-	1,416	1,382	-	1,382	-	-	-
Cemetery Land Acquisition	-	-	-	430	-	430	2,070	-	2,070	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Resources Total	2,834	-	2,834	3,028	-	3,028	2,925	-	2,925	2,096	-	2,096	1,937	-	1,937	640	-	640
Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services (Education Schemes)																		
Additional School Places - Contingency	50	(50)	-	900	(900)	-	350	(350)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DFC	222	(222)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SEN Provision - Avenue Centre	100	(100)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Asset Management	414	(414)	-	312	(312)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Civitas- Synthetic Sports Pitch	24	(24)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Crescent Road Playing Field Improvements	121	(121)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Critical Reactive Contingency: Health and safety (Schools)	495	(495)	-	300	(300)	-	560	(560)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fabric Condition Programme	980	(980)	-	3,100	(3,100)	-	919	(919)	-	1,612	(1,612)	-	1,612	(1,612)	-	-	-	-
Green Park Primary School	60	(60)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Heating and Electrical Renewal Programme	350	(350)	-	2,262	(2,262)	-	100	(100)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Initial Viability work for the Free School at Richfield Avenue	4	(4)	-	-	-	-	28	(28)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Katesgrove Primary Trooper Potts Building	56	(56)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Modular Buildings Review	500	(500)	-	250	(250)	-	900	(900)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pinecroft-Children who have complex health, physical,sensory,disabilities & challenging behaviour	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cressingham- Community Short Breaks Provision	260	-	260	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Provision of additional Children's Homes	685	-	685	816	-	816	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Children's Home for Children with Disabilities	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,138	-	1,138	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Early Years increase to 30 hours provision	270	(270)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dee Park Regeneration - Housing Infrastructure Fund (school)	5,263	(5,263)	-	-	-	-	6,153	(6,153)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Public Sector Decarbonisation Funds - School Estate Double Glazing Programme	786	(786)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SCD Units	25	(25)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Schools - Fire Risk Assessed remedial Works	310	(310)	-	-	-	-	163	(163)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SEN High Needs provision capital allocations	1,500	(1,500)	-	2,199	(2,199)	-	1,990	(1,990)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
The Heights Temporary School	351	(351)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Park Lane Primary School Annexe Replacement	2,270	(2,270)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services (Education Schemes) Total	15,098	(14,151)	947	10,139	(9,323)	816	12,301	(11,163)	1,138	1,612	(1,612)	-	1,612	(1,612)	-	-	-	-
Corporate																		
Delivery Fund (Pump priming for Transformation projects)	3,144	-	3,144	1,500	-	1,500	1,500	-	1,500	1,500	-	1,500	1,500	-	1,500	1,500	-	1,500
Oracle Shopping Centre capital works	100	-	100	100	-	100	100	-	100	100	-	100	100	-	100	100	-	100
Minster Quarter - Brownfield Land Grant Element	500	(500)	-	1,500	(1,500)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Minster Quarter	155	-	155	523	-	523	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Corporate Total	3,899	(500)	3,399	3,623	(1,500)	2,123	1,600	-	1,600	1,600	-	1,600	1,600	-	1,600	1,600	-	1,600
General Fund Total	72,137	(51,351)	20,786	66,828	(39,660)	27,168	36,683	(16,182)	20,501	24,008	(6,212)	17,796	19,084	(6,223)	12,861	8,884	(4,011)	4,873

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Appendix 7b - HRA Capital Programme 2025/26 - 2029/30

Scheme Name	2024/25 Forecast			2025/26 Forecast			2026/27 Forecast			2027/28 Forecast			2028/29 Forecast			2029/30 Forecast		
	Spend (£,000's)	Funding (£,000's)	Net (£,000's)	Spend (£,000's)	Funding (£,000's)	Net (£,000's)	Spend (£,000's)	Funding (£,000's)	Net (£,000's)	Spend (£,000's)	Funding (£,000's)	Net (£,000's)	Spend (£,000's)	Funding (£,000's)	Net (£,000's)	Spend (£,000's)	Funding (£,000's)	Net (£,000's)
Disabled Facilities Grants	595	-	595	812	-	812	600	-	600	600	-	600	600	-	600	600	-	600
Housing Management System	148	-	148	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Major Repairs - Existing Homes Renewal	8,528	-	8,528	14,041	-	14,041	12,087	-	12,087	7,894	-	7,894	9,025	-	9,025	9,025	-	9,025
Major Repairs - Zero Carbon Retrofit works	4,429	-	4,429	6,877	-	6,877	3,500	-	3,500	3,400	-	3,400	875	-	875	875	-	875
Acquisitions from Homes for Reading	-	-	-	15,750	-	15,750	9,450	-	9,450	6,615	-	6,615	-	-	-	-	-	-
Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme (SHAP)	1,186	(540)	646	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Homes Provided under Local Authority Housing Fund	1,002	(843)	159	3,019	(846)	2,173	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Local authority new build programme for Older people and vulnerable adults	2,572	(2,049)	523	16,782	(8,386)	8,396	500	-	500	-	-	-	18,344	-	18,344	-	-	-
New Build & Acquisitions - Phase 2 - 4	8,875	(4,133)	4,742	32,862	(5,169)	27,693	3,641	-	3,641	487	-	487	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	27,335	(7,565)	19,770	90,143	(14,401)	75,742	29,778	-	29,778	18,996	-	18,996	28,844	-	28,844	10,500	-	10,500

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Appendix 8 - Flexible Capital Receipts Strategy

1. Background

- 1.1 Local authorities are limited in their ability to utilise capital receipts (the disposal proceeds from the sale of fixed assets or repayment of loans for capital purposes). Statutory guidance issued under s15(1) of the Local Government Act 2003 by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (as amended) generally precludes capital receipts being used to fund revenue expenditure and requires them to be applied to either fund capital expenditure or repay debt. The Act also requires local authorities to have regard to other guidance as directed by the Secretary of State – this currently includes the following guidance issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).
- The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities; and
 - The Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting.
- 1.2 The Spending Review 2015 included a relaxation to the above regulations allowing the use of capital receipts for a limited period; between 2016/17 and 2018/19, to fund revenue expenditure “that is designed to generate ongoing revenue savings in the delivery of public services and/or transform service delivery to reduce costs or improve the quality of service delivery in future years”. This announcement was implemented by the issuing of regulations in March 2016. The period over which these amended regulations applied was extended to 2021/22 in the 2018/19 Local Government Finance Settlement and further extended by 3 years to 2024/25 in 2021. The Local Government Finance Policy Statement 2025 to 2026 confirmed that the flexible use of capital receipts directive would be extended to 2030 and would also remove the restriction with respect to redundancy costs, that previously limited the use of the flexibility to statutory redundancy costs only, to support authorities in taking forward transformation and invest-to-save projects.
- 1.3 In order for revenue expenditure to be funded from the flexible use of capital receipts, a strategy is required for each financial year that:
- Lists each project that plans to make use of the capital receipts flexibility, listing any element of funding towards the project that is funded from other sources;
 - Contains details on projects approved in previous years, including commentary on whether the planned savings or service transformation have been /are being realised in line with the initial cost-benefit analysis;
 - Be approved by Full Council prior to the start of the relevant financial year; and
 - Identify any subsequent changes during the year subject to approval by Full Council.
- 1.4 This document sets out the Council’s Flexible Capital Receipts Strategy, updating the plan since last considered by Council in February 2024 and details the individual projects which have and are planned to be funded from the flexible use of capital receipts in accordance with the above requirements.

2. Savings

- 2.1. The Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26-2027/28 contains £11.559m of savings and £4.541m of additional income proposed to be delivered over the forthcoming three years.
- 2.2. This strategy and investment proposals support the delivery of those savings or mitigate future additional spending pressures that would otherwise materialise. The cost of investing in making these savings is included within the General Fund Capital Programme and is, under regulations, funded from the use of capital receipts.

3. Delivery Fund

- 3.1 A report to Council on 26th June 2018 established the Delivery Fund and set out in detail how the £13.576m then allocated for the Delivery Fund would be invested. It included:
- Capacity to set up and deliver the Council's programme of change and transformation; and
 - Resources to deliver specific savings.
- 3.2 Further reports to Council in February of each subsequent year have described how the Delivery Fund had been invested to date and provided a summary of Delivery Fund allocation from its inception in 2017/18 until the end of the planning period covered at the time.
- 3.3 The table below summarises the forecast budgets and historic actual spend by the Delivery Fund from positions previously presented to Members.

Table 1. Current Delivery Fund to 31st March 2025

	Prior Years (£000)	2023/24 (£000)	2024/25 (£000)	Total (£000)
February 2024				
Capital Receipts Strategy (Allocated)	15,352	4,790	650	20,792
Contingency (Unallocated)	0	0	937	937
Total	15,352	4,790	1,587	21,729
February 2025				
Capital Receipts Strategy (Allocated)	15,352	3,234	3,097	21,682
Contingency (Unallocated)	0	0	46	46
Total	15,352	3,234	3,143	21,729

- 3.4 The change in forecast spend between February 2024 and February 2025 includes the roll forward of underspends from 2023/24, and further re-phasing of 2024/25 budgets together with new spend proposals being approved and others being identified as no longer required.
- 3.5 There is currently £0.046m of unallocated contingency available to fund future delivery fund bids in 2025/26. Any additional bids approved in 2024/25 will reduce the amount of unallocated contingency to roll forward into 2025/26.
- 3.6 The Flexible Capital Receipts Strategy for 2025/26 has been updated to include an expectation that any investment from the Delivery Fund should be recovered by at least an equivalent resulting saving over the current Medium Term Financial Strategy period (2025/26-2027/28).
- 3.7 The Director of Finance has reviewed the current forecast for usable capital receipts and has allocated an initial £1.500m each year for 2025/26-2029/30 to be made available for the Delivery

Fund. These allocations will be reviewed in line with updated capital receipt forecasts and other financing requirements, and any changes will be reported to Policy Committee as part of the quarterly Performance & Monitoring Reports.

- 3.8 The following table sets out the future year Delivery Fund allocations, excluding any amounts to be rolled forward from 2024/25 (which will be confirmed as part of the Quarter 4 Performance Report when the 2024/25 actual position will crystallise):

Table 2. Proposed Delivery Fund 2025/26-2029/30

	2025/26 (£000)	2026/27 (£000)	2027/28 (£000)	2028/29 (£000)	2029/30 (£000)
Capital Receipts Strategy (Allocated)	0	0	0	0	0
Contingency (Unallocated)	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
Total	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500

- 3.9 Annex A to this Strategy contains a list of all individual Delivery Fund allocations.

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Annex A to Flexible Capital Receipts Strategy - Delivery Fund Allocations

Description	Resource Required	Prior Year Actuals (£000)	2024/25 Budget (£000)	2025/26 Proposed Budget (£000)	2026/27 Proposed Budget (£000)	2027/28 Proposed Budget (£000)	2028/29 Proposed Budget (£000)	2029/30 Proposed Budget (£000)	2017-2030 Total (£000)
Resources used for the facilitation of the delivery of the Programme wide savings	Strategic Lead for Transformation	261	-	-	-	-	-	-	261
	Project Support	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	16
	Programme Officer	103	-	-	-	-	-	-	103
Changes to Adult Social Care Front Door; Group Home Rental Increase. Also supports delivery of CCG	Transformation Project Manager 1	197	-	-	-	-	-	-	197
Transformation of wellbeing; ASC Restructure	Transformation Project Manager 2	112	-	-	-	-	-	-	112
Effective Utilisation of Extra Care; Learning Disabilities (Operations Team); Development of Home Care; VCS Development and Commissioning. Also supports wider digitisation & efficiency and Changes to the Adult Social Care Front Door	Transformation Project Manager 3	144	-	-	-	-	-	-	144
Deputies - Review the charging policy; FAB Team Fees & Charges & Stretch Target; Increased usage of Assistive Technology and Equipment; Increased usage of Direct Payments	Transformation Project Manager 4	102	-	-	-	-	-	-	102
Review and Right Sizing Care Packages & Stretch Targets	Social Workers X6 (S117, LDX2, MH, OP, PD)	676	-	-	-	-	-	-	676
Investment to secure ongoing savings	Social Workers X6 (S117, LDX2, MH, OP, PD) extension	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	20
Reducing Adult Social Care contracts spend	Commissioning Capacity at Senior Level	191	-	-	-	-	-	-	191
Delivery Models for Commissioning, Prevention & Quality Services	Consultancy advice - accommodation pathway	79	-	-	-	-	-	-	79
	Consultancy advice for service shaping	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	30
	Senior Transformation Manager	177	-	-	-	-	-	-	177
Workforce consultancy & Training Programmes (Partners for change)	Workforce consultancy & Training Programmes (Partners for change)	123	-	-	-	-	-	-	123
Transitions - operational consultant	Transitions - operational consultant	21	-	-	-	-	-	-	21
Direct Payments - 2x PA Officers	Direct Payments - 2x PA Officers	94	-	-	-	-	-	-	94
Locum Social Workers x4 Reviewing Team Project	Locum Social Workers x4 Reviewing Team Project	252	-	-	-	-	-	-	252
Investment in Technology Enabled Care at home	Funding for TECH Team	139	-	-	-	-	-	-	139
Enhanced reablement for mental health and learning disability service users	Transformation Partner MH/LD	64	-	-	-	-	-	-	64
Transitions Top Up - Transitions Practitioner	Transitions Top Up - Transitions Practitioner	31	-	-	-	-	-	-	31
Outcome based Service Delivery - Locum Worker and OT	Outcome based Service Delivery - Locum Worker and OT	109	24	-	-	-	-	-	133
PM for outcomes, decision making and outreach.	PM for outcomes, decision making and outreach.	130	-	-	-	-	-	-	130
PM for Front Door, Reading Services Guide and Digital Front Door.	PM for Front Door, Reading Services Guide and Digital Front Door.	64	-	-	-	-	-	-	64
Reducing the number of overdue reviews	Reducing the number of overdue reviews	143	-	-	-	-	-	-	143
Reduce people waiting for Mental Capacity Assessments to move from Appointee to Court Appointed Deputy	Reduce people waiting for Mental Capacity Assessments to move from Appointee to Court Appointed Deputy	49	-	-	-	-	-	-	49
Physiotherapist for community rehabilitation post rapid hospital discharge	Physiotherapist for community rehabilitation post rapid hospital discharge	57	-	-	-	-	-	-	57
Relaunch & expand NHS Health Checks Programme	Relaunch & expand NHS Health Checks Programme	56	-	-	-	-	-	-	56
CHC Resource	CHC Resource	87	-	-	-	-	-	-	87
Increase in Reviews completed in DACHS	Increase in Reviews Completed in DACHS (6x Experienced Social Workers, 3x Social Workers, 1 Commissioning Officer, 1 Business Support)	376	-	-	-	-	-	-	376
Increase in number of CHC Joint Funded cases	Increasing the number of Continuing Healthcare and Joint Funding cases processed for submission to the CCG.	73	-	-	-	-	-	-	73
Social Care Reform	Prog Man, Proj Man & Fin Analyst	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CQC Assurance	Sen. Commissioning Officer, Care Gov. Officer, Senior Performance Analyst, Business Analyst, Guidance Tool	267	323	-	-	-	-	-	590
DACHS VCS Front Door and Online Signposting/Self-Serve Tool & Mosaic Development		37	755	-	-	-	-	-	792

Annex A to Flexible Capital Receipts Strategy - Delivery Fund Allocations

Description	Resource Required	Prior Year Actuals (£000)	2024/25 Budget (£000)	2025/26 Proposed Budget (£000)	2026/27 Proposed Budget (£000)	2027/28 Proposed Budget (£000)	2028/29 Proposed Budget (£000)	2029/30 Proposed Budget (£000)	2017-2030 Total (£000)
Maximising DACHS Income	Additional Debt Recovery staff in ASC, Finance and Legal.	141	198	-	-	-	-	-	339
Adult LD/MH Reablement		42	44	-	-	-	-	-	86
Preparing for Adulthood Enablement Project		-	80						80
Total: Directorate of Communities & Adult Social Care (DCASC)		4,463	1,424	-	-	-	-	-	5,887

Annex A to Flexible Capital Receipts Strategy - Delivery Fund Allocations

Description	Resource Required	Prior Year Actuals (£000)	2024/25 Budget (£000)	2025/26 Proposed Budget (£000)	2026/27 Proposed Budget (£000)	2027/28 Proposed Budget (£000)	2028/29 Proposed Budget (£000)	2029/30 Proposed Budget (£000)	2017-2030 Total (£000)
Working across workstream of Corporate Change Programme to deliver savings and transformation	Project Officer 1	51	-	-	-	-	-	-	51
Review of waste collection delivery models. Also connected to Waste Operations-optimising collection routes; Increase Trade Waste Collection and Disposal service turn over by 100% (£650,000pa to £1.3m)	Specialist advice and support, administration resource, Contract manager costs, Procurement of IT systems, Introduction of revised collection schedule	189	-	-	-	-	-	-	189
Review option of trust model for Arts	Consultancy costs	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	29
Maximising Income from the Town Hall & Museum	Consultancy support to provide commercial advice on business plan and associated staffing structures	26	-	-	-	-	-	-	26
Review existing Parking Permit Charges	Comms Support, IT Support	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
Extend residents parking permit areas	Consultant support	89	-	-	-	-	-	-	89
Introduce Bus Lane Enforcement on Kings Road and Forbury Road bus lanes	DLO support to introduce new parking schemes	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Close half of public conveniences - costs related to carrying out a review of the provision	Consultancy costs and costs to improve remaining facilities	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
Develop and implement a new borough-wide Car Parking Strategy and associated action plan	Project Manager	53	-	-	-	-	-	-	53
	Communications Officer	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
	Consultant Support	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
	Consultant Support (Car park surveys / database set-up)	107	-	-	-	-	-	-	107
	Project Delivery	273	-	-	-	-	-	-	273
Make theatres break even through working with other operators	Independent consultants to market test (establish feasibility / business case)	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	23
Project management (consultant) of procurement process (if it goes ahead based on 1st stage)	Project management (consultant) of procurement process (if it goes ahead based on 1st stage)	42	9	-	-	-	-	-	51
Alternative delivery models - identify and prioritise those services that are most likely to yield a significant saving with the 3-year MTFS period	General resource	216	-	-	-	-	-	-	216
Project Manager	Project Manager	37	-	-	-	-	-	-	37
Consultancy - report writing	Consultancy - report writing	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	20
The project will focus on delivery of the former Civic Site and other key sites achieving capital receipts	Strategic Project Manager	148	-	-	-	-	-	-	148
Car Park management processes through IT improvements and staff reductions	Car parking equipment and capital	409	-	-	-	-	-	-	409
Food Waste	Project Manager	83	-	-	-	-	-	-	83
	Consultants to carry out modelling	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
	Stickers and Leaflets (Phases 1 & 2)	36	-	-	-	-	-	-	36
	Mailout to all residents	32	-	-	-	-	-	-	32
	Communications time and production	47	-	-	-	-	-	-	47
	Marketing	104	-	-	-	-	-	-	104
Maximising Income from the Town Hall & Museum	One-off investment - equipment, marketing, consultancy	41	-	-	-	-	-	-	41
Transport and Parking Review	Consultant Support	157	-	-	-	-	-	-	157
Parking Asset Review		77	53	-	-	-	-	-	130
Culture Fundraising Campaign	Consultant	-	20	-	-	-	-	-	20
Whitespace system for Streetscene	Hardware, software licences and implementation costs.	148	24	-	-	-	-	-	172
Streetworks Permit Scheme	Streetworks Permit Scheme	-	100	-	-	-	-	-	100
Total: Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhoods (DEGNS)		2,490	206	-	-	-	-	-	2,696
Housing Benefit Overpayment Recovery	Housing Benefit Overpayment Recovery Officer	72	-	-	-	-	-	-	72
Service restructure and reconfiguration	Recruitment Costs	61	-	-	-	-	-	-	61
Supporting delivery of directorate savings and improving Accounts Payable processes	Accounts Payable Assistant. Improving efficiency of AP process to deliver ongoing efficiency and savings	54	-	-	-	-	-	-	54
Process improvements and more efficient accounts production	CIPFA Big Red Button	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	16
Digitisation - cross cutting savings and redesign of Council-wide services	Firmstep Developer x2	178	-	-	-	-	-	-	178

Annex A to Flexible Capital Receipts Strategy - Delivery Fund Allocations

Description	Resource Required	Prior Year Actuals (£000)	2024/25 Budget (£000)	2025/26 Proposed Budget (£000)	2026/27 Proposed Budget (£000)	2027/28 Proposed Budget (£000)	2028/29 Proposed Budget (£000)	2029/30 Proposed Budget (£000)	2017-2030 Total (£000)
Service restructure and reconfiguration	SOLACE Recruitment Fees For Future Finance Function	45	-	-	-	-	-	-	45
Engagement of transformation partner to drive process efficiency and cost reduction in parallel with market testing of service	External Support to undertake Market Testing (outsourcing) of the Revenue and Benefits Services	102	-	-	-	-	-	-	102
	Additional legal and TUPE advice	119	-	-	-	-	-	-	119
Revenues and Benefits market testing	Associated project costs, supplies and services	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Charging Financial Analysts to transformation pot to support commercialisation work	One Finance Analyst (plus one interim for 4 months in 18/19)	63	-	-	-	-	-	-	63
Corporate Approach to Reducing Fraud	IT Costs	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
Management and Staffing Review	Change Management	22	-	-	-	-	-	-	22
Management and Staffing Review	Organisational Development (OD) Consultant	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	23
Single Person Discount Council Tax Recovery	Specialist Officer and provision for data matching	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	14
NNDR RV Maximisation	Engage external consultants	19	-	-	-	-	-	-	19
New Customer Experience Model	Pilot Thoughtonomy - Robotic Process Automation.	74	-	-	-	-	-	-	74
	Pilot Thoughtonomy - Virtual workers	70	-	-	-	-	-	-	70
	Pilot Thoughtonomy - Develop role	37	-	-	-	-	-	-	37
Capacity and leadership to deliver change and savings across programme	Corporate Programme Manager	269	-	-	-	-	-	-	269
Working across Corporate Programme. Capacity and leadership to deliver change and savings across programme	NMT - Corporate Support	86	-	-	-	-	-	-	86
HR support to deliver Corporate Programme and associated savings. Supporting recruitment and retention of social workers as part of improvement and to deliver savings	HR Support 1	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	14
Contract Management Savings	V4S Procurement Consultancy Support. Payments due as percentage of savings delivered	288	-	-	-	-	-	-	288
Improvements to Electronic Social Care Record and Reporting (MOSAIC) and provision for improvement of other IT systems over term of Programme	Reporting and Performance	76	-	-	-	-	-	-	76
	Senior Consultant to act as System Owner	91	-	-	-	-	-	-	91
	Process review and MOSAIC improvement for Children's Services	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	23
	Interim reporting post in Children's Services	43	-	-	-	-	-	-	43
	Corporate Systems Owner	128	-	-	-	-	-	-	128
	Finance Specialist	161	-	-	-	-	-	-	161
	Project Manager on Business Objects Implementation	31	-	-	-	-	-	-	31
	Business Objects Developer	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	30
	Provision for application management improvements in other systems (includes. 18/19 i-trent review)	260	-	-	-	-	-	-	260
Capacity to support delivery of change and savings across programme	Programme Officer x2	76	-	-	-	-	-	-	76
	Senior Project Manager x 2	217	-	-	-	-	-	-	217
	Business Analyst	112	-	-	-	-	-	-	112
	Project Officer	86	-	-	-	-	-	-	86
Management and Staffing Review	Contribution to Team Reading costs	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
	OD upskilling	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
	Business Analysts x 2	138	-	-	-	-	-	-	138
Executive Recruitment Search Fees	Psychometric Assessment Training	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	17
ICT Accelerator	ICT Accelerator	174	-	-	-	-	-	-	174
Modern Workplace Project	Modern Workplace Project	72	-	-	-	-	-	-	72
Finance Transformation	Finance Transformation	187	-	-	-	-	-	-	187
PMO Training	PMO Training	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
<i>*Making the Customer Service and Corporate Improvement more efficient</i>	<i>Staff and implementation costs</i>	500	-	-	-	-	-	-	500
Digitisation - cross cutting savings and redesign of Council-wide services	Digital Services Developer x2	32	-	-	-	-	-	-	32
Staffing costs for Interim Chief Accountant	Staffing costs for Interim Chief Accountant	338	10	-	-	-	-	-	348
Staffing costs for Finance Transformation Consultant	Staffing costs for Finance Transformation Consultant	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	30
Finance system implementation lead and support	Finance system implementation lead and support	261	-	-	-	-	-	-	261

Annex A to Flexible Capital Receipts Strategy - Delivery Fund Allocations

Description	Resource Required	Prior Year Actuals (£000)	2024/25 Budget (£000)	2025/26 Proposed Budget (£000)	2026/27 Proposed Budget (£000)	2027/28 Proposed Budget (£000)	2028/29 Proposed Budget (£000)	2029/30 Proposed Budget (£000)	2017-2030 Total (£000)
Customer Service and Corporate Improvement Service	Senior Project Manager, Business Analyst x3	346	-	-	-	-	-	-	346
Procurement Training & Support	Support for current and future savings delivery related to Procurement & Contracts	153	164	-	-	-	-	-	317
Strengthen Financial Support	Strategic Finance Business Partner for 2 Years fixed term	105	134	-	-	-	-	-	239
Traded Services within HR&OD	BACS Bureau set up costs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PMO Team		300	300	-	-	-	-	-	600
Events & Engagement Income generation	Events Assistant	16	14	-	-	-	-	-	30
Finance Transformation	Change Manager	119	130	-	-	-	-	-	249
Finance Transformation - AP Prepayments		82	-	-	-	-	-	-	82
Finance Transformation - Procurement		130	-	-	-	-	-	-	130
EDI Strategy		22	-	-	-	-	-	-	22
Debt Recovery		-	173	-	-	-	-	-	173
Total: Director of Resources (DOR)		6,027	925	-	-	-	-	-	6,952

Annex A to Flexible Capital Receipts Strategy - Delivery Fund Allocations

Description	Resource Required	Prior Year Actuals (£000)	2024/25 Budget (£000)	2025/26 Proposed Budget (£000)	2026/27 Proposed Budget (£000)	2027/28 Proposed Budget (£000)	2028/29 Proposed Budget (£000)	2029/30 Proposed Budget (£000)	2017-2030 Total (£000)
Working across workstream of Corporate Programme to deliver savings and transformation	Programme Manager	318	-	-	-	-	-	-	318
Workstream A: Improving Practice Standards	Practice Improvement leadership. 18/19 start up	127	-	-	-	-	-	-	127
	Practice Improvement Principle Social Worker	81	-	-	-	-	-	-	81
Family Group Conferencing	Family Group Conferencing	51	-	-	-	-	-	-	51
Work stream B: Developing Workforce Excellence	Achieve a stable workforce by recruiting more permanent staff in Social Care	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
	Training for Safety Standards Model. 18/9 project start up training	105	-	-	-	-	-	-	105
Work stream C: Building Community Capacity	Pre Birth Support Team. 18/19 start up	37	-	-	-	-	-	-	37
	Family Reunification Team. 18/19 start up	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	16
	Edge of Care Team, Adolescents. 18/19 start up	175	-	-	-	-	-	-	175
	Revised under 5 offer to make best use of Early Years and Children's Centre provision	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
Work stream D: Stronger Stability for Children	Re-imaging Foster Care. 18/19 start up	77	-	-	-	-	-	-	77
	Placement Solutions Team	757	-	-	-	-	-	-	757
Work stream E: Consolidating Corporate Resilience	Strengthen Commissioning Function (provide senior Commissioning and Contract Management capacity) 18/19 start up. Savings linked to Improved Contract Management	268	-	-	-	-	-	-	268
	Design & implementation of supported lodgings for 16+	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
	Modernising CIPSC's	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
	Review of Continued Health Contribution (CHC). 18/19 start up	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	29
	Enhanced utilisation of capacity at Pinecroft & Cressingham Children's Homes. 18/19 capital equipment	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	50
	Potential use of RBC property for additional childrens home or respite care. Funding for feasibility study if required	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
	SEND Commissioner. 18/19 start up	206	-	-	-	-	-	-	206
	Business Improvement	103	-	-	-	-	-	-	103
	Digitalisation	204	-	-	-	-	-	-	204
	Development of traded services	418	-	-	-	-	-	-	418
	Transformation Programme Team	1,129	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,129
	Short Breaks	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	20
Children in Need Team		352	-	-	-	-	-	-	352
End to end mapping and demand management		240	-	-	-	-	-	-	240
SEND Transport Review		100	-	-	-	-	-	-	100
Transformation of SEND System		330	-	-	-	-	-	-	330
School Travel Training		34	241	-	-	-	-	-	275
Finance Transformation		147	-	-	-	-	-	-	147
Transformation Lead		55	162	-	-	-	-	-	217
Children's Social Care Consultant Practitioners		138	139	-	-	-	-	-	277
Total: Childrens (BFFC)		5,606	542	-	-	-	-	-	6,148
Capacity to manage and support Corporate Programme of Change	Managing Change - unallocated funding	-	46	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	7,546
Total: Unallocated / Contingency		-	46	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	7,546
Total: All Projects		18,586	3,143	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	29,229

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Communities and Adult Social Care

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/ (decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/ (decrease) %
SOCIAL CARE SERVICES								
Respite Rates - Non-Reading Residents (Other Local Authority)	Weekday - 1:1 Bed	Night	£630.80		£662.30		£31.50	4.99%
Respite Rates - Reading Residents	Weekday - 1:1 Bed	Night	£517.70		£543.60		£25.90	5.00%
LD Day Services (Strathly Close) - Non-Reading Residents (Other Local Authority)	1:1 People who need continuous high level of support & personal care	Day	£252.50		£265.10		£12.60	4.99%
	1:2 People who need high level of support & personal care	Day	£146.10		£153.40		£7.30	5.00%
	1:4 People who need additional specific support or supervision with behaviour and/or personal care	Day	£93.10		£97.80		£4.70	5.05%
LD Day Services (Strathly Close) - Reading Residents	1:1 People who need continuous high level of support & personal care	Day	£197.40		£207.30		£9.90	5.02%
	1:2 People who need high level of support & personal care	Day	£110.60		£116.20		£5.60	5.06%
	1:4 People who need additional specific support or supervision with behaviour and/or personal care	Day	£67.30		£70.70		£3.40	5.05%
The Maples (Older Peoples Day Service)	Day Rate	Day	£52.10		£54.70		£2.60	4.99%
	Day Centre Meals	Meal	£5.50	£6.60	£5.75	£6.90	£0.25	4.55%
	Refreshments Only	Refreshments	£1.20		£1.30		£0.10	8.33%
	Outreach Service - Half Day Rate	Hour	£8.67		£10.00		£1.33	15.34%
Home Care Services - CRT	Use of Reading Borough Council services after reablement period Rate 1	Hour	£21.90		£23.00		£1.10	5.02%
	Use of Reading Borough Council services after reablement period Rate 2	Hour	£44.70		£47.00		£2.30	5.15%
OTHER CHARGES								
Self Funder	Set up charge	Once	£352.70		£370.30		£17.60	4.99%
	Annual Fee	Year	£290.10		£304.60		£14.50	5.00%
Deferred Payment Agreement (DPA)	Set-up Fees (excluding Land Registry fees, property valuation fees if required, cost of specialist legal/financial advice if required, which are recharged at actual cost to the Council on a case by case basis).	Once		Please refer to DoR Legal Services item 'Deferred Payment Agreement Flat Fee'	Please refer to DoR Legal Services item 'Deferred Payment Agreement Flat Fee'			
	Admin set up Fee (Other administrative set-up costs)	Once	£176.10		£184.90		£8.80	5.00%
Deferred Payment Agreement (DPA) & Interim Funding Arrangement	Annual Fee (excluding property valuation fees, Land Registry fees, cost of specialist legal/financial advice which are recharged at actual cost to the Council on a case by case basis if required).	Year	£281.90		£296.00		£14.10	5.00%
Deputies Fees - Statue Law	Category 1 - Work up until the date the Court makes an order		£944.00		£944.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Category 2 - Applications under the Trustee Act		£633.00		£633.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Category 3 - Applications made by an existing Deputy		£633.00		£633.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Category 4 - First year		£982.00		£982.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Category 4 - Second and subsequent years		£824.00		£824.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Category 4 - Where the clients net assets are below £20,300, fee to not exceed 3.5%		Variable		Variable		£0.00	0.00%
	Category 5 - Annual property management		£380.00		£380.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Category 6 - OPG annual report		£274.00		£274.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Category 7 - Basic tax return		£89.00		£89.00		£0.00	0.00%
Deputies Fees	Travel rates - Per hour		£51.00		£51.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Appointeeship fees - Set up fee		£80.00		£84.00		£4.00	5.00%
	Appointeeship fees - Monthly Charge		£60.00		£63.00		£3.00	5.00%
	Deceased work		N/A		£400.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Banking charges		£5.00		£5.30		£0.30	6.00%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Communities and Adult Social Care

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/ (decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/ (decrease) %
SMALL GROUP HOMES - SUPPPORTED LIVING								
Stanshawe Rd	All rooms	Week	£148.00		£152.00		£4.00	2.70%
Parkhurst Dr	Room 1,2,5 & 6	Week	£154.30		£158.50		£4.20	2.72%
	Room 3	Week	£148.00		£152.00		£4.00	2.70%
York Rd	All rooms	Week	£148.00		£152.00		£4.00	2.70%
Wensley Rd	All rooms	Week	£148.00		£152.00		£4.00	2.70%
Alexandra Road	All rooms	Week	£154.30		£158.50		£4.20	2.72%
Northumberland Ave	All rooms	Week	£148.00		£152.00		£4.00	2.70%
Liebenrood Rd	All rooms	Week	£225.70		£231.80		£6.10	2.70%
Argyle Rd	All rooms	Week	£148.00		£152.00		£4.00	2.70%
Corwen Rd	All rooms	Week	£154.30		£158.50		£4.20	2.72%
Appleford Rd	All rooms	Week	£148.00		£152.00		£4.00	2.70%
Great Knollys St	All rooms	Week	£148.00		£152.00		£4.00	2.70%
Bob Green Court	All rooms	Week	£148.00		£152.00		£4.00	2.70%
Focus House	All rooms	Week	£148.00		£152.00		£4.00	2.70%
HOUSING								
Temporary Accommodation Charges - B&B	One Room	Each	Rent + variable service charge per property is charged		Rent + variable service charge per property is charged			
	Two Room	Each						
Temporary Accommodation charges Base Rent - non B&B	One Room/One Bedroom	Each						
	Two Bedrooms	Each						
	Three Bedrooms	Each						
Temporary Accommodation charges Service Charge - non B&B	One Room/One Bedroom	Each						
	Two Bedrooms	Each						
	Three Bedrooms	Each						
Garage Rental (Weekly)								
Category A	Council Tenant	Each	£17.00		£17.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Disabled Council Tenant	Each	£15.80		£15.80		£0.00	0.00%
	Other Borough Resident	Each	£16.92	£20.30	£16.92	£20.30	£0.00	0.00%
	Disabled Borough Resident	Each	£15.83	£19.00	£15.83	£19.00	£0.00	0.00%
Category B	Council Tenant	Each	£12.60		£12.60		£0.00	0.00%
	Disabled Council Tenant	Each	£11.50		£11.50		£0.00	0.00%
	Other Borough Resident	Each	£12.42	£14.90	£12.42	£14.90	£0.00	0.00%
	Disabled Borough Resident	Each	£11.33	£13.60	£11.33	£13.60	£0.00	0.00%
COMMUNITY SAFETY								
Town Safe Radio Membership daytime		Annual membership	£450.00	£540.00	£450.00	£540.00	£0.00	0.00%
Town Safe Associate member		Annual membership	£225.00	£270.00	£225.00	£270.00	£0.00	0.00%
Town Safe External member		Annual membership	£250.00	£300.00	£250.00	£300.00	£0.00	0.00%
Town Safe Night-time full membership		Annual membership	£400.00	£480.00	£400.00	£480.00	£0.00	0.00%
Internal partners		Annual membership	£250.00		£250.00		£0.00	0.00%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/(decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/(decrease) %
STRATEGIC TRANSPORT								
Concessionary Fares Replacement Pass	Market Rate	Each	£11.25	£13.50	£11.25	£13.50	£0.00	0.00%
Car Park Charge at Mere oak Park & Ride Site	Concession Rate	Each	£0.83	£1.00	£0.83	£1.00	£0.00	0.00%
Access Fee for the Reading Transport Model	Market Rate	Each	£469.17	£563.00	£541.67	£650.00	£72.50	15.50%
Buzz 42 Bus Ticket	Single Ticket	Each	£0.92	£1.10	£1.67	£2.00	£0.75	81.50%
PARKING PERMITS								
Parking Permits	Business	Each	£331.00		£348.00		£17.00	5.10%
	Carer Permit	Each	£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Carer Permit (Offline)	Each	£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Charity Discretionary FOC	Each	£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Charity Discretionary	Each	£145.00		£152.00		£7.00	4.80%
	Charity Visitor (Discretionary)	Each	£26.00		£27.00		£1.00	3.80%
	Charity/Community Agency FOC	Each	£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Charity/Community Agency	Each	£145.00		£152.00		£7.00	4.80%
	Chester Street Car Park	Each	£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Disc. Business Visitor Permit	Each	£26.00		£27.00		£1.00	3.80%
	Disc. Resident Visitor Permit FOC	Each	£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Disc. Resident Visitor Permit	Each	£26.00		£27.00		£1.00	3.80%
	Discretionary (Business)	Each	£398.00		£418.00		£20.00	5.00%
	Discretionary (Nannies)	Each	£398.00		£418.00		£20.00	5.00%
	Discretionary (Resident) 1st	Each	£48.00		£50.00		£2.00	4.20%
	Discretionary (Resident) 2nd	Each	£178.00		£187.00		£9.00	5.10%
	Discretionary (Resident) 3rd	Each	£362.00		£380.00		£18.00	5.00%
	Discretionary (Residents) 1st	Each	£48.00		£50.00		£2.00	4.20%
	Discretionary (Residents) 2nd	Each	£180.00		£189.00		£9.00	5.00%
	Discretionary (Residents) 3rd	Each	£362.00		£380.00		£18.00	5.00%
	Discretionary (Teachers)	Each	£48.00		£50.00		£2.00	4.20%
	Discretionary (Visitor) FOC	Each	£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Discretionary (Visitor)	Each	£26.00		£27.00		£1.00	3.80%
	Discretionary (Visitors) FOC	Each	£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Discretionary (Visitors)	Each	£26.00		£27.00		£1.00	3.80%
	Discretionary Business Permit	Each	£398.00		£418.00		£20.00	5.00%
	Discretionary Business Visitor	Each	£26.00		£27.00		£1.00	3.80%
	Emergency cover	Each	£36.00		£38.00		£2.00	5.60%
	Foreign Vehicle	Each	£398.00		£418.00		£20.00	5.00%
	HealthCare Professional Permit	Each	£48.00		£50.00		£2.00	4.20%
	Landlord (Annual Permit)	Each	£398.00		£418.00		£20.00	5.00%
	Landlord (daily)	Each	£8.00		£9.00		£1.00	12.50%
	Medical Practitioner Permit	Each	£48.00		£50.00		£2.00	4.20%
	Resident Permit 1st Permit	Each	£48.00		£50.00		£2.00	4.20%
	Resident Permit 2nd Permit	Each	£180.00		£189.00		£9.00	5.00%
	Resident Permit (Offline) 1st Permit	Each	£48.00		£50.00		£2.00	4.20%
	Resident Permit (Offline) 2nd Permit	Each	£180.00		£189.00		£9.00	5.00%
	Special Vehicle Access	Each	£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Special Vehicle Permit - Daily	Each	£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.00%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/(decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/(decrease) %
Parking Permits	Temporary - All Zones	Each	£19.00		£20.00		£1.00	5.30%
	Temporary - Resident	Each	£19.00		£20.00		£1.00	5.30%
	Temporary - Resident (Offline)	Each	£19.00		£20.00		£1.00	5.30%
	Temporary - scratchcard	Each	£19.00		£20.00		£1.00	5.30%
	Tradesperson (Annual Permit)	Each	£398.00		£418.00		£20.00	5.00%
	Tradesperson (Daily)	Each	£8.00		£9.00		£1.00	12.50%
	Tradesperson (scratchcard)	Each	£13.00		£14.00		£1.00	7.70%
	Visitor (Business)	Each	£26.00		£27.00		£1.00	3.80%
	Visitor (Charity/Community)	Each	£26.00		£27.00		£1.00	3.80%
	Visitor Resident (Offline) FOC	Each	£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Visitor Resident (Offline)	Each	£26.00		£27.00		£1.00	3.80%
	Visitor Resident Permit FOC	Each	£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Visitor Resident Permit	Each	£26.00		£27.00		£1.00	3.80%
NEIGHBOURHOODS - STREET SCENE								
Mooring	Standard	24 hrs.	£8.33	£10.00	£8.33	£10.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Standard	Up to 4hrs	£3.75	£4.50	£3.75	£4.50	£0.00	0.00%
Allotments	Site Category A Standard	Per year Per 25 sqm	£9.00		£10.80		£1.80	20.00%
	Site Category A YRP discount	Per year Per 25 sqm	£8.10		N/A		N/A	N/A
	Site Category A Concession	Per year Per 25 sqm	£1.50		£6.50		£5.00	333.30%
	Site Category B Standard	Per year Per 25 sqm	£6.50		£7.80		£1.30	20.00%
	Site Category B YRP discount	Per year Per 25 sqm	£5.85		N/A		N/A	N/A
	Site Category B Concession	Per year Per 25 sqm	£1.10		£4.70		£3.60	327.30%
	Site Category C Standard	Per year Per 25 sqm	£4.50		£5.40		£0.90	20.00%
	Site Category C YRP discount	Per year Per 25 sqm	£4.05		N/A		N/A	N/A
	Site Category C Concession	Per year Per 25 sqm	£0.75		£3.30		£2.55	340.00%
	Start Up Fees Standard	Each	£49.00		£51.00		£2.00	4.10%
	Shed Rental	Each	£16.50		£17.50		£1.00	6.10%
	Chickens	Per year Per 25 sqm	£16.50		£17.50		£1.00	6.10%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/(decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/(decrease) %
HIGHWAYS								
Drainage Works	Rodding - Daytime	Each	£85.00		£87.00		£2.00	2.40%
	Rodding - Out of Hours	Each	£94.00		£96.00		£2.00	2.10%
	Jetting - Daytime	Each	£113.50		£116.00		£2.50	2.20%
	Jetting - Out of Hours	Each	£127.00		£130.00		£3.00	2.40%
	Cesspools & Septic Tanks	Per 1000 Gallons	£239.00		£250.00		£11.00	4.60%
	CCTV Surveys	Each	£282.00		£290.00		£8.00	2.80%
	Recovery of property from gullies	Each	£61.00		£65.00		£4.00	6.60%
Out of Hours Call Out	Fixed fee for standby and vehicle costs	Per call out	Price on Application		Price on Application			
Accident Reclaims	Administration Fee	Each	£81.00		£150.00		£69.00	85.20%
	Inspectors Visit	Each	£81.00		£150.00		£69.00	85.20%
Administration Charges	Reproduction of Agreements	Each	£81.00		£150.00		£69.00	85.20%
	Reproduction of plan	Each	£81.00		£150.00		£69.00	85.20%
Footway Crossings	Application Fee - inc 1 visit (Council contractor)	Each	£81.00		£150.00		£69.00	85.20%
	Supervision fee if RBC constructing	Each	£143.50		£150.00		£6.50	4.50%
	Admin fee is RBC constructing	Each	£81.00		£150.00		£69.00	85.20%
	Cost of construction	Cost of Works	Price on Application		Price on Application			
	Using own contractor fee (following 1st site visit) contractor licence	Each	£442.00		£475.00		£33.00	7.50%
	Admin & Site supervision for using own contractor	Each	£143.50		£150.00		£6.50	4.50%
	Cost of construction	Cost of Works	Price on Application		Price on Application			
	Supervision Of Works (Project <£250k)	Cost of Works						
	Design Check & Admin (Project <£250k)	Cost of Works						
	Supervision Of Works (Project >£250k)	Cost of Works						
	Design Check & Admin (Project >£250k)	Cost of Works						
Solicitor Enquiries	Search written response with 1 map	Each	£68.00		£71.50		£3.50	5.10%
	Search additional map request	Each	£31.50		£33.00		£1.50	4.80%
Administration Charges	Reproduction of Agreements	Each	£68.00		£71.50		£3.50	5.10%
	Reproduction of plan	Each	£68.00		£71.50		£3.50	5.10%
Skip Licences	Skip permit application and first 2 weeks	Each	£90.90		£95.50		£4.60	5.10%
	Skip permit fee for each additional week	Each	£41.10		£43.25		£2.15	5.20%
	Labour cost (clean up team) per hour	Each	Price on Application		Price on Application			
	Tipping waste (transportation and disposal cost) per tonne	Each						
A-Boards	Application fee	Each	£119.00		£125.00		£6.00	5.00%
	Annual Licence fee	Each	£86.00		£90.00		£4.00	4.70%
	Recovery of A board from store	Each	£66.00		£75.00		£9.00	13.60%
	Application and licence fee	Each	£75.00		£75.00		£0.00	0.00%
EV Charging Footway Channel	Installation costs	Cost of Works	Price on Application		Price on Application			
Miscellaneous Income	Scaffold / Hoarding Licence Fee - Resident	Up to 4 weeks	£199.00		£210.00		£11.00	5.50%
	Scaffold / Hoarding Licence Fee - Commercial	Up to 4 weeks	£330.00		£347.00		£17.00	5.20%
	Scaffold / Hoarding Licence Fee - Renewal	Further period of up to 4 weeks.	£152.00		£160.00		£8.00	5.30%
	Stopping up of the public highway applications	Each	£931.00		£980.00		£49.00	5.30%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/(decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/(decrease) %
Miscellaneous Income	S171 Licence (e.g. works on highway or store building material on the highway)	Up to 4 weeks	£473.00		£500.00		£27.00	5.70%
		Each additional week or part week	£31.00		£33.00		£2.00	6.50%
	S142 Licence to plant on highway	Each	£229.00		£240.00		£11.00	4.80%
	S177 Projection over highway	Each	£473.00		£500.00		£27.00	5.70%
	Consenting on ordinary watercourse	Each	£50.00		£50.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Swapouts	Each	£452.00		£500.00		£48.00	10.60%
	Application fee for access protection markings to existing footway crossings	Each	£58.00		£75.00		£17.00	29.30%
	Provision of new access protection marking up to 5m long	Each	£30.00		£35.00		£5.00	16.70%
	Provision of new access protection marking each additional metre over 5m	Metre	£6.50		£10.00		£3.50	53.80%
	Refreshing access protection marking up to 5m long	Each	£30.00		£35.00		£5.00	16.70%
	Refreshing access protection marking each additional metre	Metre	£6.50		£10.00		£3.50	53.80%
	Access control/Key for lockable bollard fee	Each	£60.00		£75.00		£15.00	25.00%
	Disabled Box application	Each	£58.00		£75.00		£17.00	29.30%
NEIGHBOURHOODS - WASTE								
Special Collections	Collection of 3 Items	Each	£54.60		£58.00		£3.40	6.20%
	Collection of 3 Items - Concession	Each	£41.00		£43.50		£2.50	6.10%
	Each additional item	Each	£8.70		£9.00		£0.30	3.40%
	Fridge freezers - Domestic fridge/freezer (tall)	Each	£52.40		£55.00		£2.60	5.00%
	Fridge freezers - Concession	Each	£39.30		£41.25		£1.95	5.00%
	Cancellation charge (less than 3 days before collection)	Each	£12.30		£12.50		£0.20	1.60%
	- Half load	1/2 load	Price on Application		Price on Application			
	- Full load	1 Load						
Trade Waste	Trade General sack in multiples of 50	Per 50	£165.00		£174.00		£9.00	5.50%
	Trade recycling sack in multiples of 50	Per 50	£115.00		£121.00		£6.00	5.20%
Bins (Wheeled/other)	Residual 140 Litre - New Development & Replacement	Each	£30.00		£32.00		£2.00	6.70%
	Residual 240 Litre - New Development & Replacement	Each	£65.00		£68.00		£3.00	4.60%
	Residual 360 Litre - New Development & Replacement	Each	£86.50		£90.00		£3.50	4.00%
	Recycling 240 Litre - New Development	Each	£65.00		£68.00		£3.00	4.60%
	Recycling 240 Litre - Replacement	Each	£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Recycling 360 Litre - New Development & Replacement	Each	£86.50		£90.00		£3.50	4.00%
	Food 180 Litre - New Development & Replacement	Each	£39.00		£41.00		£2.00	5.10%
	Food 240 Litre - New Development & Replacement	Each	£65.00		£68.00		£3.00	4.60%
	Food 23 Litre - New Development	Each	New		£12.00		N/a	0.00%
	Food 23 Litre - Replacement	Each	£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Food 5 Litre - New Development & Replacement	Each	£0.00		£7.00		£7.00	0.00%
	1100 litre (steel) - Trade Waste	Each	Price on Application		Price on Application			
	1100 litre (Plastic) - Trade Waste	Each						
	Delivery of 1100ltr Bin	Each	£9.00		£9.50		£0.50	5.60%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/(decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/(decrease) %
Green Waste	Green Waste Service Bin	Per annum	£75.00		£75.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Green Waste Service Bin (Concession)	Per annum	£56.25		£56.25		£0.00	0.00%
	Additional Green Waste Service Bin - presented alongside an existing bin.	Per annum	£75.00		£75.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Additional Green Waste Service Bin - presented alongside an existing bin. (Concession)	Per annum	£56.25		£56.25		£0.00	0.00%
	Green Waste Service Bag	Per annum	£30.00		£30.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Green Waste Service Bag (Concession)	Per annum	£22.50		£22.50		£0.00	0.00%
	Additional Green Waste Service Bag - presented alongside an existing bag.	Per annum	£30.00		£30.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Additional Green Waste Service Bag - presented alongside an existing bag (concession)	Per annum	£22.50		£22.50		£0.00	0.00%
	New/Replacement Green Waste Bin	Each	£65.00		£65.00		£0.00	0.00%
	New/Replacement Green Waste Bag	Each	£15.50		£15.50		£0.00	0.00%
Fixed Penalty Rates	Hazardous Clinical Waste Collections - per property per collection	Each	Price on Application		Price on Application			
	Depositing of litter - S.87/88 EPA 1990	Each	£80.00		£500.00		£420.00	525.00%
	Depositing of litter - S.87/88 EPA 1990 (early payment)	Each	N/A		£100.00		N/A	N/A
	Unauthorised disposal of controlled waste (Fly-Tipping) - S.33 EPA 1990	Each	£400.00		£1,000.00		£600.00	150.00%
	Unauthorised disposal of controlled waste (Fly-Tipping) - S.33 EPA 1990 (early Payment)	Each	£200.00		£500.00		£300.00	150.00%
	Failure to comply with duty relating to the transfer of household waste - S.34 (2A) & S.34ZA EPA 1990	Each	£400.00		£600.00		£200.00	50.00%
	Failure to comply with duty relating to the transfer of household waste - S.34 (2A) & S.34ZA EPA 1990 (early payment)	Each	£200.00		£300.00		£100.00	50.00%
	Failure to produce waste documents (waste transfer notes) S.34 (5 & 6) & S.34ZA Environmental Protection Act 1990	Each	£300.00		£300.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Failure to produce authority to transport waste (waste carriers license) S.5/5B Control of Pollution (Amendment) Act 1989	Each	£300.00		£300.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Failure to comply with a commercial waste receptacle notice S.47/47ZA EPA 1990	Each	£110.00		£110.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Failure to comply with a Community Protection Notice S.43 Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014	Each	£100.00		£100.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Exposing vehicles for sale on a road S.3 Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005	Each	£100.00		£100.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Repairing vehicles on a road S.4 Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005	Each	£100.00		£100.00		£0.00	0.00%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/(decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/(decrease) %
Exterior Cleansing and Graffiti Removal	Graffiti removal - call out and first hour	Each	Price on Application				Price on Application	
	Each additional hour of graffiti removal	Each						
	Emergency biohazard clearance	Minimum per job						
	Machine sweeping	Minimum per job + tipping						
	Fly tip removal	Minimum per job + tipping						
	+ additional labour	Minimum per job						
LIBRARIES								
Children's activity Sessions	Cost recovery fee	Per child	£1.00		£1.00		£0.00	0.00%
Reservations	Selms requests	Item	£3.00		£4.00		£1.00	33.30%
	In stock	Item	£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.00%
	From the British Library	Item	£18.00		£25.00		£7.00	38.90%
	Periodical Articles	Item	£18.00		£25.00		£7.00	38.90%
Photocopies	A4	Per sheet	£0.20		£0.20		£0.00	0.00%
	A3	Per sheet	£0.30		£0.30		£0.00	0.00%
Printing from Public Computers	A4 - Black & White	Per sheet	£0.20		£0.30		£0.10	50.00%
	A4 - Colour	Per sheet	£0.30		£0.60		£0.30	100.00%
Replacement Cards	Library Card Replacement	Item	£3.50		£3.70		£0.20	5.70%
Local Studies Camera Licence		Per day	£5.50		N/A		N/A	N/A
Local Studies High Res Scanning		Per image	£2.50		£2.70		£0.20	8.00%
Fee for postal item lost notice		Per letter	£1.50		N/A		N/A	N/A
Admin fee for lost/damaged stock		Per item	£6.00		£6.30		£0.30	5.00%
Vocal Sets Service (RBC Residents)	Borrowing from Reading stock	Set	£6.50		£6.50		£0.00	0.00%
	Overdue charges	Set	£6.50		£6.50		£0.00	0.00%
Vocal Sets Service (Non-RBC Residents)	Borrowing from Reading stock	Set	£12.00		£12.00		£0.00	0.00%
Drama Sets Service	Borrowing from Reading stock	Set	£6.50		£6.50		£0.00	0.00%
	Overdue charges	Set	As per Adult Book		As per Adult Book			
Book Club Service (RBC Residents)	Annual subscription for group	Group	£22.00		£25.00		£3.00	13.60%
	Overdue charges	Set	As per Adult Book		As per Adult Book			
Book Club Service (Non-RBC Residents)	Annual subscription for group	Group	£35.00		£35.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Overdue charges	Set	As per Adult Book		As per Adult Book			
Lost (in print items)	Full cost of replacement + £5.20 admin fee	Item	Varies by item		Varies by item			
Lost (out of print items) Adult books	£15 + £6.30 Admin fee	Item	£15.00		£16.00		£1.00	6.70%
Lost (out of print items) Children books	£7.50 + £6.30 Admin fee	Item	£7.50		£8.00		£0.50	6.70%
Lost (out of print items) Spoken word	£25 + £6.30 Admin fee	Item	£25.00		£26.50		£1.50	6.00%
Lost (out of print items) other	£27 + £6.30 Admin fee	Item	£27.00		£28.50		£1.50	5.60%
Damaged Items	Varies by item	Item	Varies by item		Varies by item			
Withdrawn Stock	Varies by item	Item	Varies by item		Varies by item			
Charge to post photocopies or prints made	Varies by item, standard postage charge	Item	Varies by item		Varies by item			
Research fee for local history or genealogy enquiries	Research, initial 15 minutes at no charge as part of library offer	Per Hour	£10.00		£10.50		£0.50	5.00%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/(decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/(decrease) %
Charge for serviced photocopying or serviced microform printing	All per self service price + service charge of 6.50	Transaction	£6.20		£6.50		£0.30	4.80%
Printing from microform	A4 print	Sheet	£1.00		£1.00		£0.00	0.00%
	A3 print	Sheet	£1.00		£1.00		£0.00	0.00%
Copies of Local Studies Images	Email	Image	£3.50		£3.70		£0.20	5.70%
	Printed - glossy paper	Image	£5.50		£5.80		£0.30	5.50%
Copies of Local Studies Images	High Resolution re scanning	Image	£2.70		£2.70		£0.00	0.00%
Library Display Panels	Charity	Booking	£7.50		£7.50		£0.00	0.00%
Library Display Panels	Non-Charity	Booking	£15.00		£15.00		£0.00	0.00%
Hire Charges	Toy Small item	Item	£0.50		£0.50		£0.00	0.00%
	Toy Large item	Item	£1.00		£1.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Toy Large/Very large item	Item	£1.00		£1.00		£0.00	0.00%
Libraries - room hire	Hire of a library space - Charity	Per Hour	£21.00		£21.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Hire of a library space - Non-Charity	Per Hour	£40.00		£42.00		£2.00	5.00%
PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING								
Licence for house in multiple occupancy	Licence Fee (Accredited Landlord - proof required)	Per application	£800.00		£1,000.00		£200.00	25.00%
	Licence Fee (Non accredited landlords)	Per application	£950.00		£1,250.00		£300.00	31.60%
	Charge per additional sleeping room over 5	Per application	£27.00		£28.00		£1.00	3.70%
	Missed Appointment charge	Per missed appointment	£52.00		£52.00		£0.00	0.00%
Late Application Fee	If needed a licence 12 weeks before the application was made.	Per licence	New		£1,500.00		New	New
Non Statutory Charge	Assistance with completing the on line HMO Licence application	Hourly	£90.00	£108.00	£90.00	£108.00	£0.00	0.00%
Non Statutory Inspection Charge	Fee HMO inspection, report, drawing up plans and assisting with the completion of the licence application form	Up to 6 hours	£540.00	£648.00	£540.00	£648.00	£0.00	0.00%
Non Statutory Inspection Charge	Fee for non-statutory inspection to provide advice and a report. Charge for up to 2 hours and does not include drawing up plans or completing HMO licence application	Up to 2 hours	£180.00	£216.00	£180.00	£216.00	£0.00	0.00%
Administration Charges	Fee for bounced cheque, copy of notices, copy of HMO licence, landlord information pack, HMO licence register	Per transaction	£41.67	£50.00	£41.67	£50.00	£0.00	0.00%
Provision of Factual Statement	Factual Statement	Per statement	£364.17	£437.00	£379.17	£455.00	£15.00	4.10%
Non Statutory Inspection Charge	Inspection and schedule of works for empty homes	Up to 4 hours	£353.33	£424.00	£367.50	£441.00	£14.17	4.00%
Incomplete Application Fee	Fee for applicants that have not provided complete application incl certificates of compliance	Per application	New		£50.00		New	New
Empty Home	Fee for research into and provision of supporting letter for Empty Homes	Per application	New		£150.00	£180.00	New	New

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/(decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/(decrease) %
LICENSING								
PREMISES LICENCES								
Gambling - Adult Gaming Centre Premises Licence	New application - 1st time of licencing	Per licence	£1,545.00		£1,545.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Annual fee	Per licence	£1,000.00		£1,000.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Variation	Per licence	£1,000.00		£1,000.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Transfer	Per licence	£1,200.00		£1,200.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Re-instatement	Per licence	£1,100.00		£1,100.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Provisional statement	Per statement	£1,460.00		£1,460.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Provisional statement - holder	Per licence	£1,082.00		£1,082.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Copy of licence	Per licence	£25.00		£25.00		£0.00	0.00%
Gambling - Betting (Other) Premises licence	Notification of change	Per licence	£25.00		£25.00		£0.00	0.00%
	New	Per licence	£1,375.00		£1,375.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Annual fee	Per licence	£550.00		£550.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Variation	Per licence	£910.00		£910.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Transfer	Per licence	£950.00		£950.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Re-instatement	Per licence	£950.00		£950.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Provisional statement	Per statement	£1,336.00		£1,336.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Provisional statement - holder	Per licence	£891.00		£891.00		£0.00	0.00%
Gambling - Bingo Premises licence	Copy of licence	Per licence	£25.00		£25.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Notification of change	Per licence	£25.00		£25.00		£0.00	0.00%
	New	Per licence	£2,500.00		£2,500.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Annual fee	Per licence	£960.00		£960.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Variation	Per licence	£1,225.00		£1,225.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Transfer	Per licence	£1,200.00		£1,200.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Re-instatement	Per licence	£1,200.00		£1,200.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Provisional statement	Per statement	£2,571.00		£2,571.00		£0.00	0.00%
Gambling - Casino Premises licence	Provisional statement - holder	Per licence	£1,200.00		£1,200.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Copy of licence	Per licence	£25.00		£25.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Notification of change	Per licence	£25.00		£25.00		£0.00	0.00%
	New - 1st time licence	Per licence	£1,343.00		£1,343.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Annual fee	Per licence	£1,637.00		£1,637.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Variation	Per licence	£1,753.00		£1,753.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Transfer	Per licence	£1,350.00		£1,350.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Re-instatement	Per licence	£1,350.00		£1,350.00		£0.00	0.00%
Gambling - Family Entertainment Centre Premises Licence	Copy of licence	Per licence	£25.00		£25.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Notification of change	Per licence	£25.00		£25.00		£0.00	0.00%
	New	Per licence	£2,040.00		£2,040.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Annual fee	Per licence	£750.00		£750.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Variation	Per licence	£1,000.00		£1,000.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Transfer	Per licence	£950.00		£950.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Re-instatement	Per licence	£950.00		£950.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Provisional statement	Per statement	£2,000.00		£2,000.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Provisional statement - holder	Per licence	£935.00		£935.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Copy of licence	Per statement	£25.00		£25.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Notification of change	Per statement	£25.00		£25.00		£0.00	0.00%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/(decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/(decrease) %
Gambling - Track premises licence	New	Per statement	£1,987.00		£1,987.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Annual fee	Per statement	£1,000.00		£1,000.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Variation	Per statement	£994.00		£994.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Transfer	Per licence	£950.00		£950.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Re-instatement	Per licence	£950.00		£950.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Provisional statement	Per statement	£2,104.00		£2,104.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Provisional statement - holder	Per licence	£935.00		£935.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Copy of licence	Per licence	£25.00		£25.00		£0.00	0.00%
Unlicensed Family Entertainment Centre	Notification of change	Per licence	£25.00		£25.00		£0.00	0.00%
	New	Per Permit	£300.00		£300.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Renewal	Per Permit	£300.00		£300.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Change of Name	Per Permit	£25.00		£25.00		£0.00	0.00%
Prize Gaming Permit	Copy of Permit	Per Permit	£15.00		£15.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Permit	Per Permit	£300.00		£300.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Renewal	Per Permit	£300.00		£300.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Change of Name	Per Permit	£25.00		£25.00		£0.00	0.00%
Sex Shop Licence	Copy of Permit	Per Permit	£15.00		£15.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Grant/Renewal of Licence	Per licence	£1,276.00		£1,276.00		£0.00	0.00%
Sex Entertainment Licence (SEV)	Grant of Licence	Per licence	£3,038.00		£3,038.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Renewal of Licence	Per licence	£2,297.00		£2,297.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Variation	Per licence	£1,193.00		£1,193.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Transfer	Per licence	£146.00		£146.00		£0.00	0.00%
Film Classification	Film Classification (local film festivals)	Per 15 mins or part thereof (of the film)	£18.00		£18.00		£0.00	0.00%
Street Trading Outside Town Centre	OUT OF TOWN - Grant/ Renewal (Fast Food)	Per stall/Per application	£2,521.00		£2,521.00		£0.00	0.00%
	OUT OF TOWN - Grant/Renewal (sandwich/Ice-cream/retail food)	Per stall/Per application	£937.00		£937.00		£0.00	0.00%
	OUT OF TOWN - Grant/Renewal (Non Food)	Per stall/Per application	£483.00		£483.00		£0.00	0.00%
	OUT OF TOWN - Occasional (1-8 days per year) with alcohol/food trader up 3m (Trading dates listed on licence)	Up to 3 x3 m single trader stall per day	£134.00		£134.00		£0.00	0.00%
	OUT OF TOWN - Occasional (1-8 days per year) no alcohol/food trader up 3m (Trading dates listed on licence)	Up to 3 x3 m single trader stall per day	£102.00		£102.00		£0.00	0.00%
	OUT OF TOWN - Occasional (1-8 days per year) with alcohol/food trader up to 6 m (Trading dates listed on licence)	Up to 6 x6 m single trader stall per day	£214.00		£214.00		£0.00	0.00%
	OUT OF TOWN - Occasional (1-8 days per year) no alcohol/food trader up to 6 m (Trading dates listed on licence)	Up to 6 x6 m single trader stall per day	£150.00		£150.00		£0.00	0.00%
	OUT OF TOWN - Occasional (9-14 days per year) (Trading dates listed on licence)	Single trader	£27.00		£27.00		£0.00	0.00%
	OUT OF TOWN - Occasional (15-45 days per year) (Trading dates listed on licence)	Single trader	£16.00		£16.00		£0.00	0.00%
	OUT OF TOWN - Occasional (46-60 days per year) (Trading dates listed on licence)	Single trader	£8.00		£8.00		£0.00	0.00%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/(decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/(decrease) %
Street Trading Town Centre	Town Centre - Grant/ Renewal (Broad Street)	Per stall	£6,129.00		£6,374.00		£245.00	4.00%
	Town Centre - Grant/ Renewal (Bridge Street)	Per stall	£6,129.00		£6,374.00		£245.00	4.00%
	Town Centre - Grant/ Renewal (Reading Station)	Per stall	£6,129.00		£6,374.00		£245.00	4.00%
Town Centre Ad-Hoc	Town Centre - Market not under charter 1-14 days per yr.	Up to 3 x3 m single trader stall per day	£15.00		£15.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Town Centre - Market not under charter 15-60 days per yr.	Up to 3 x3 m single trader stall per day	£4.00		£4.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Town Centre - Market not under charter 1-14 days per yr.	>Over 3x3m single trader stall per day	£18.00		£18.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Town Centre - Market not under charter 15-60 days per yr.	>Over 3x3m single trader stall per day	£6.00		£6.00		£0.00	0.00%
	All Street Traders - Variation	Per stall	£278.00		£278.00		£0.00	0.00%
	All Street Traders - Additional Street Trading Assistant	Per assistant	£17.00		£17.00		£0.00	0.00%
	All Street Traders - fee for paying by direct debit - no other instalment system allowed	Per application	£56.00		£56.00		£0.00	0.00%
Scrap Metal	Site Licence - new/renewal	Per 3 year licence	£1,014.00		£1,014.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Collectors Licence -new/renewal	Per 3 year licence	£666.00		£666.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Variation of Site Licence /Collectors Licence	Per licence	£302.00		£302.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Simple Variation (i.e. admin changes) for site Licence or Collector	Per licence	£88.00		£88.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Replacement Licence or badge for collector	Per licence	£18.00		£18.00		£0.00	0.00%
Pavement Café	New licence 2 tables and or 6 chairs	per annum	£300.00		£300.00		£0.00	0.00%
	New licence up to 10 chairs	per annum	£350.00		£350.00		£0.00	0.00%
	New licence over 10 chairs	per annum	£100.00		£500.00		£400.00	400.00%
	Renewal 2 tables 6 chairs	per annum	£100.00		£100.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Renewal up to 10 chairs	per annum	£200.00		£200.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Renewal over 10 chairs	per annum	£350.00		£350.00		£0.00	0.00%
Caravan Site Licence	Grant	Per site	£827.00		£827.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Transfer	Per site	£380.00		£380.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Variation	Per site	£567.00		£567.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Annual Fee (less than 10 units)	Per site	£290.00		£290.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Annual fee (less than 30 units)	Per site	£324.00		£324.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Annual fee (more than 30 Units)	Per site	£358.00		£358.00		£0.00	0.00%
	copies of site licence	Per site	£18.00		£18.00		£0.00	0.00%
Other Fees	Application to be included on the Fit & Proper Person Register	Per site every 5 years	£188.00		£188.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Check & Submit Service	Each	£120.00		£120.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Pre-application advice and site visit	Each	£192.00		£192.00		£0.00	0.00%
	DBS Standard	Per Person	£37.00		£37.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Door Safe log Book	Per book	£18.00		£18.00		£0.00	0.00%
TRANSPORT LICENCES								
Hackney Carriage	Hackney carriage Vehicle grant or renewal	Per operator	£400.00		£400.00		£0.00	0.00%
	3 Year Hackney carriage driver new/ renewal (not including disclosure fee)	Per operator	£328.00		£328.00		£0.00	0.00%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/(decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/(decrease) %
Private Hire Operators - 1 Year Grant	Each additional applicant	Per operator	£245.00		£245.00		£0.00	0.00%
	1 -3 Vehicles	Per operator	£806.00		£806.00		£0.00	0.00%
	4-10 Vehicles	Per operator	£1,292.00		£1,292.00		£0.00	0.00%
	11-40 Vehicles	Per operator	£2,572.00		£2,572.00		£0.00	0.00%
	41-100 Vehicles	Per operator	£4,314.00		£4,314.00		£0.00	0.00%
	101+ Vehicles	Per operator	£5,181.00		£5,181.00		£0.00	0.00%
Private Hire Operators - 1 Year Renewal	Each additional applicant	Per operator	£185.00		£185.00		£0.00	0.00%
	1 -3 Vehicles	Per operator	£561.00		£561.00		£0.00	0.00%
	4-10 Vehicles	Per operator	£892.00		£892.00		£0.00	0.00%
	11-40 Vehicles	Per operator	£1,977.00		£1,977.00		£0.00	0.00%
	41-100 Vehicles	Per operator	£3,583.00		£3,583.00		£0.00	0.00%
	101+ Vehicles	Per operator	£4,333.00		£4,333.00		£0.00	0.00%
Private Hire Operators - 5 Year Grant	Each additional applicant	Per operator	£245.00		£245.00		£0.00	0.00%
	1 -3 Vehicles	Per operator	£2,125.00		£2,125.00		£0.00	0.00%
	4-10 Vehicles	Per operator	£3,150.00		£3,150.00		£0.00	0.00%
	11-40 Vehicles	Per operator	£8,020.00		£8,020.00		£0.00	0.00%
	41-100 Vehicles	Per operator	£15,241.00		£15,241.00		£0.00	0.00%
	101+ Vehicles	Per operator	£18,851.00		£18,851.00		£0.00	0.00%
Private Hire Operators - 5 Year Renewal	Each additional applicant	Per operator	£185.00		£185.00		£0.00	0.00%
	1 -3 Vehicles	Per operator	£2,065.00		£2,065.00		£0.00	0.00%
	4-10 Vehicles	Per operator	£3,092.00		£3,092.00		£0.00	0.00%
	11-40 Vehicles	Per operator	£7,917.00		£7,917.00		£0.00	0.00%
	41-100 Vehicles	Per operator	£15,191.00		£15,191.00		£0.00	0.00%
	101+ Vehicles	Per operator	£18,730.00		£18,730.00		£0.00	0.00%
Private Hire Vehicle and Driver	Private Hire Vehicle grant or renewal	Per application	£315.00		£315.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Executive vehicle grant or renewal	Per application	£352.00		£352.00		£0.00	0.00%
	3 Year driver new/renewal (not including disclosure fee)	Per application	£319.00		£319.00		£0.00	0.00%
School Transport	School Transport vehicle (Class IV) vehicle	Per application	£100.00		£100.00		£0.00	0.00%
	3 year ST driver grant/renewal (not incl disclosure fee)	Per application	£240.00		£240.00		£0.00	0.00%
School Transport - 1 Year Grant	Each additional applicant	Per operator	£245.00		£245.00		£0.00	0.00%
	1 -3 Vehicles	Per operator	£445.00		£445.00		£0.00	0.00%
	4-10 Vehicles	Per operator	£836.00		£836.00		£0.00	0.00%
	11-40 Vehicles	Per operator	£1,727.00		£1,727.00		£0.00	0.00%
	41-100 Vehicles	Per operator	£2,251.00		£2,251.00		£0.00	0.00%
	101+ Vehicles	Per operator	£3,141.00		£3,141.00		£0.00	0.00%
School Transport - 1 Year Renewal	Each additional applicant	Per operator	£145.00		£145.00		£0.00	0.00%
	1 -3 Vehicles	Per operator	£345.00		£345.00		£0.00	0.00%
	4-10 Vehicles	Per operator	£570.00		£570.00		£0.00	0.00%
	11-40 Vehicles	Per operator	£1,132.00		£1,132.00		£0.00	0.00%
	41-100 Vehicles	Per operator	£1,513.00		£1,513.00		£0.00	0.00%
	101+ Vehicles	Per operator	£2,290.00		£2,290.00		£0.00	0.00%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/(decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/(decrease) %
School Transport - 5 Year Grant	Each additional applicant	Per operator	£245.00		£245.00		£0.00	0.00%
	1 -3 Vehicles	Per operator	£1,245.00		£1,245.00		£0.00	0.00%
	4-10 Vehicles	Per operator	£2,324.00		£2,324.00		£0.00	0.00%
	11-40 Vehicles	Per operator	£4,955.00		£4,955.00		£0.00	0.00%
	41-100 Vehicles	Per operator	£6,763.00		£6,763.00		£0.00	0.00%
	101+ Vehicles	Per operator	£10,351.00		£10,351.00		£0.00	0.00%
School Transport - 5 Year Renewal	Each additional applicant	Per operator	£145.00		£145.00		£0.00	0.00%
	1 -3 Vehicles	Per operator	£1,145.00		£1,145.00		£0.00	0.00%
	4-10 Vehicles	Per operator	£2,058.00		£2,058.00		£0.00	0.00%
	11-40 Vehicles	Per operator	£4,620.00		£4,620.00		£0.00	0.00%
	41-100 Vehicles	Per operator	£6,333.00		£6,333.00		£0.00	0.00%
	101+ Vehicles	Per operator	£9,890.00		£9,890.00		£0.00	0.00%
Other Charges - Vehicle	Vehicle Transfer of ownership -(admin only + issue licence)	Per application	£52.00		£52.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Replace vehicle plate (4 new tags+plate+30 mins)	Per vehicle	£62.00		£62.00		£0.00	0.00%
	temporary replacement Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicle Plate	Per application	£51.00		£51.00		£0.00	0.00%
	HC Taxi livery design + 1 vehicle	Per application	£147.00		£147.00		£0.00	0.00%
	HC Livery - Additional vehicle check	Per vehicle	£42.00		£42.00		£0.00	0.00%
	HC Taxi livery renewal +1 vehicle	Per application	£97.00		£97.00		£0.00	0.00%
	<3 year compliance test - PH, EXEC, HC OR ST	Per application	£37.00		£37.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Aged vehicle check - PH, ST or Executive Vehicles over age 10 years +	Per vehicle	£37.00		£37.00		£0.00	0.00%
	ULEV vehicle	Per vehicle	25% of Standard fee for a		25% of Standard fee for a HC, PH, EXEC, ST vehicle as			
	100% electric vehicle	Per vehicle	50% of Standard fee for a		50% of Standard fee for a HC, PH, EXEC, ST vehicle as			
Other Charges - Driver	Driver knowledge test	Per driver	£47.00		£47.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Rescheduled new driver interview/ (no shows)	Per driver	£17.00		£17.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Change of Application HC to PH or PH to HC	Per application	£35.00		£35.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Replacement badge or licence (incl change of address)	Per driver	£17.00		£17.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Basic DBS (PHO, STO)	Per applicant	£37.00		£37.00		£0.00	0.00%
	DBS Enhanced (HC, PH, ST driver)	Per driver	£56.00		£56.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Driver - Visa Expiry (2 Badges, 1 cert+admin fee)	Per driver	£83.00		£83.00		£0.00	0.00%
Other Charges - Operator	Operator logbook	Per logbook	£4.00		£4.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Admin charge + copy of the licence	Per operator	£52.00		£52.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Copy of the licence	Per Operator	£17.00		£17.00		£0.00	0.00%
Other Charges - General	Bounced Cheque	Each	£35.00		£35.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Admin Charge	Each	£35.00		£35.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Factual Statement	Each	£152.00		£152.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Check and submit taxi application form	Each	£106.00		£106.00		£0.00	0.00%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/(decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/(decrease) %
LICENSING Premises & Clubs								
LICENSING Premises Licences Applications (STATUTORY FEES) New Application	Band A (£0 -£4,300)		£100.00		£100.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Band B (£4,301- £33,000)		£190.00		£190.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Band C (£33,001 -£87,000)		£315.00		£315.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Band D (£87,001-£125,00)		£450.00		£450.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Band D (£87,001-£125,00) x2 multiplier for vertical drinking i.e.. nightclub)		£900.00		£900.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Band E (£125,000 +)		£635.00		£635.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Band E (£125,000 +) x3 multiplier for vertical drinking)		£1,905.00		£1,905.00		£0.00	0.00%
LICENSING Premises Licences Applications (STATUTORY FEES) Annual Fee	Band A (£0 -£4,300)		£70.00		£70.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Band B (£4,301- £33,000)		£180.00		£180.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Band C (£33,001 -£87,000)		£295.00		£295.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Band D (£87,001-£125,00)		£320.00		£320.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Band D (£87,001-£125,00) x2 multiplier for vertical drinking i.e.. nightclub)		£640.00		£640.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Band E (£125,000 +)		£350.00		£350.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Band E (£125,000 +) x3 multiplier for vertical drinking)		£1,050.00		£1,050.00		£0.00	0.00%
LICENSING Additional fee based on number of attendees (STATUTORY FEES) New Application	up to 4999		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.00%
	5,000 - 9999		£1,000.00		£1,000.00		£0.00	0.00%
	10,000 - 14,000		£2,000.00		£2,000.00		£0.00	0.00%
	15,000 - 19,999		£4,000.00		£4,000.00		£0.00	0.00%
	20,000 - 29,999		£8,000.00		£8,000.00		£0.00	0.00%
	30,000 - 39,999		£16,000.00		£16,000.00		£0.00	0.00%
	40,000 - 49,999		£24,000.00		£24,000.00		£0.00	0.00%
	50,000 - 59,999		£32,000.00		£32,000.00		£0.00	0.00%
	60,000 - 69,999		£40,000.00		£40,000.00		£0.00	0.00%
	70,000 - 79,999		£48,000.00		£48,000.00		£0.00	0.00%
	80,000 - 89,999		£56,000.00		£56,000.00		£0.00	0.00%
	90,000+		£64,000.00		£64,000.00		£0.00	0.00%
LICENSING Additional fee based on number of attendees (STATUTORY FEES) Annual fee	up to 499		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.00%
	5,000 - 9999		£500.00		£500.00		£0.00	0.00%
	10,000 - 14,999		£1,000.00		£1,000.00		£0.00	0.00%
	15,000 - 19,999		£2,000.00		£2,000.00		£0.00	0.00%
	20,000 - 29,999		£4,000.00		£4,000.00		£0.00	0.00%
	30,000 - 39,999		£8,000.00		£8,000.00		£0.00	0.00%
	40,000 - 49,999		£12,000.00		£12,000.00		£0.00	0.00%
	50,000 - 59,999		£16,000.00		£16,000.00		£0.00	0.00%
	60,000 - 69,999		£20,000.00		£20,000.00		£0.00	0.00%
	70,000 - 79,999		£24,000.00		£24,000.00		£0.00	0.00%
	80,000 - 89,999		£28,000.00		£28,000.00		£0.00	0.00%
	90,000+		£32,000.00		£32,000.00		£0.00	0.00%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/(decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/(decrease) %
LICENSING Misc Premises Licences (STATUTORY FEES)	Theft, loss, etc. of premises licence or summary		£10.50		£10.50		£0.00	0.00%
	Application for a provisional statement where premises being built etc.		£315.00		£315.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Notification of change of name or address		£10.50		£10.50		£0.00	0.00%
	Application to vary licence to specify individual as premises supervisor		£23.00		£23.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Application for transfer of premises licence		£23.00		£23.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Interim authority notice following death etc.of licence holder		£23.00		£23.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Right of freeholder etc.to be notified of licensing matters		£21.00		£21.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Application to vary premises licence at community premises to include alternative licence condition		£23.00		£23.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Application for minor variation		£89.00		£89.00		£0.00	0.00%
LICENSING Club Premises - New Application (STATUTORY FEES)	Band A (£0 -£4300)		£100.00		£100.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Band B (£4,301 -£33,000)		£190.00		£190.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Band C (£33,001 -£87,000)		£315.00		£315.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Band D (£87,001 -£125,000)		£450.00		£450.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Band E (£125,000 +)		£635.00		£635.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Copy		£10.50		£10.50		£0.00	0.00%
	Notification of change of name or alteration of rules of club		£10.50		£10.50		£0.00	0.00%
LICENSING Club Premises - Annual Fee (STATUTORY FEES)	Change of relevant registered address of club		£10.50		£10.50		£0.00	0.00%
	Band A (£0 -£4300)		£70.00		£70.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Band B (£4,301 -£33,000)		£180.00		£180.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Band C (£33,001 -£87,000)		£295.00		£295.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Band D (£87,001 -£125,000)		£320.00		£320.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Band E (£125,000 +)		£350.00		£350.00		£0.00	0.00%
LICENSING Personal Licences (STATUTORY FEES)	Grant or renewal of personal licence		£37.00		£37.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Duty to notify change of name or address		£10.50		£10.50		£0.00	0.00%
	Copy		£10.50		£10.50		£0.00	0.00%
LICENSING TEMPORARY EVENT NOTICES (STATUTORY FEES)	Temporary event notice -New		£21.00		£21.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Copy		£10.50		£10.50		£0.00	0.00%
FOOD & SAFETY								
Courses	Level 2 Food Safety & Hygiene Course (One day)	Per candidate	£87.00		£87.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Level 2 Food Safety in Catering Exam- re-sit fee	Per candidate	£50.00		£50.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Level 2 Food Safety - replacement certificate	Each	£102.00		£102.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Level 2 Food Safety & Hygiene Course - on clients premises	Each	£973.00		£973.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Level 2 Food Safety & Hygiene Course - on clients premises	Each	£1,262.00		£1,262.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Additional candidates for level 2 Course on clients premises	Each	£97.00		£97.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Level 3 Supervising food hygiene & safety (min 6 candidates)	Each	£391.00		£391.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Level 3 Supervising food hygiene & safety (2 or more candidates)	Each	£354.00		£354.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Level 3 Supervising food hygiene & safety (up to 10 candidates)	Each	£3,114.00		£3,114.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Preparation & delivery of bespoke Training	Each	£179.00		£179.00		£0.00	0.00%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/(decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/(decrease) %
Food Hygiene Visits	Fee for missed Food Hygiene premises inspection visit where appointment made	Each	£45.00	£54.00	£45.00	£54.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Food Hygiene Rating Scheme re-inspection	Each	£236.00		£236.00		£0.00	0.00%
Food Hygiene Miscellaneous	Fishery Product Inspections per tonne (set by statute) – 1 Euro/ £0.90	Each	£0.90		£0.90		£0.00	0.00%
	Approved Cold Store inspection per hour per Officer	Each	£92.00		£92.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Export Health Certificate/Endorsement + additional fee based on hourly rate for food inspection	Each	£194.00		£194.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Condemned Food Certificate	Each	£167.00		£167.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Administration Fee/Cancellation Fee	Each	£39.00		£39.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Factual Statement to solicitors & others	Each	£190.00		£190.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Additional documents	Each	£125.00		£125.00		£0.00	0.00%
Special treatments	Single treatment Premises (premises +1 operator) One Off payment. (Fee for each treatment - cosmetic piercing, tattooist, acupuncture, electrolysis, cosmetic micro pigmentation)	Per premises +1 operator	£316.00		£316.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Single treatment Operator (Fee for each treatment - cosmetic piercing, tattooist, acupuncture, electrolysis, cosmetic micro pigmentation)	Per operator - One Off payment	£55.00		£55.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Special Treatment Operator/premises Replacement Certificate (no changes)	Per certificate	£37.50		£37.50		£0.00	0.00%
Safety at Sports Ground	Issue of Safety of Sports Grounds Safety Certificate/amendment to safety certificate/issue of Special Safety Certificate + newspaper advert cost + additional fee for risk based system checks. Fee invoiced quarterly.	Certificate	£250.00	£300.00	£250.00	£300.00	£0.00	0.00%
PRIMARY AUTHORITY AND BUSINESS ADVICE								
Primary Authority Business Advice	Commercial property search		£84.00		£84.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Mini Primary Authority fee / minimum annual PA fee	Less than 7 hours advice per year	£652.00		£678.00		£26.00	4.00%
	Medi Primary Authority Fee	Less than 25 hours advice per year	£2,213.00		£2,301.00		£88.00	4.00%
	Pay as You Go standing charge (PAYG)	Per profession	£1,815.00		£1,887.00		£72.00	4.00%
	Primary Authority Advice (Admin Officer)	Per hour	£73.00		£76.00		£3.00	4.10%
	Primary Authority Partnership advice (EHO, TSO, Lice Officer)	Per hour	£88.00		£92.00		£4.00	4.50%
	Primary Authority Set up fee	Per business	£306.00		£318.00		£12.00	3.90%
Business Advice - Regulation Services	Start Up advisory /Reg Services Health Check (Option 2)	Per premises	£178.33	£214.00	£186.00	£223.20	£7.67	4.30%
	Bespoke Service (Option 3) then hourly rate	Per business	£930.00	£1,116.00	£967.00	£1,160.40	£37.00	4.00%
Business Advice	Outside a Primary Authority Partnership	Per hour	£88.33	£106.00	£92.00	£110.40	£3.67	4.20%
TRADING STANDARDS & Coroners								

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/(decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/(decrease) %
Petroleum Spirits (set by statute)	Up to 2500 litres	Per licence	£46.00		£48.00		£2.00	4.30%
	2500-50,000 litres	Per licence	£62.00		£65.00		£3.00	4.80%
	Over 50,000 litres	Per licence	£131.00		£137.00		£6.00	4.60%
	Transfer of Licence	Per licence	£8.00		£8.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Petroleum Search	Per search	£80.00		£80.00		£0.00	0.00%
Weights and Measures Verification Fees	Technical Officer Hourly Rate	Per Hour	£48.00		£48.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Weights and Measures Inspector Hourly Rate	Per Hour	£80.00		£80.00		£0.00	0.00%
Explosives (Set by statute)	Licence to store explosives no min separation							
	1 year	Per Licence	£113.00		£113.00		£0.00	0.00%
	2 year	Per Licence	£147.00		£147.00		£0.00	0.00%
	3 Year	Per Licence	£181.00		£181.00		£0.00	0.00%
	4 Year	Per Licence	£215.00		£215.00		£0.00	0.00%
	5 Year	Per Licence	£248.00		£248.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Renewal to store explosives no minimum separation							
	1 Year	Per Licence	£56.00		£56.00		£0.00	0.00%
	2 Year	Per Licence	£90.00		£90.00		£0.00	0.00%
	3 Year	Per Licence	£125.00		£125.00		£0.00	0.00%
	4 Year	Per Licence	£158.00		£158.00		£0.00	0.00%
	5 Year	Per Licence	£193.00		£193.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Variation/Transfer/Replacement	Per Licence	£38.00		£38.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Year round to sell fireworks	Per Licence	£500.00		£500.00		£0.00	0.00%
Courses British Institute of Inn keeping Awarding Body Courses		Per Person	£79.00		£79.00		£0.00	0.00%
Coroner (Set by Statute)	Paper copy of document under 10 pages	First 10	£5.00		£5.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Additional pages	Each	£0.50		£0.50		£0.00	0.00%
	Document other than email or paper	Each	£5.00		£5.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Inquest transcript of not more than 360 words	Each	£6.20		£6.20		£0.00	0.00%
	for a copy of 361 to 1440 words	Each	£13.10		£13.10		£0.00	0.00%
	for a of the first 1440 of a document exceeding 1440 words	Each	£13.10		£13.10		£0.00	0.00%
	for each 72 words after the first 1440 words or part thereof	Each	£0.70		£0.70		£0.00	0.00%
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION								
Environmental Protection & Nuisance Team	Contaminated Land/Environmental Information Request (Residents)	Per hour	£50.00	£60.00	£50.00	£60.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Contaminated Land/Environmental Information Request (Commercial)	Per hour	£71.67	£86.00	£71.67	£86.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Sound check consultancy	Per hour	£71.67	£86.00	£71.67	£86.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Officer charge	Per hour	£71.67	£86.00	£71.67	£86.00	£0.00	0.00%
Dog Warden	Statutory Stray Fee	Each	£25.00		£25.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Dog picked up but not kennelled	Each	£106.67	£128.00	£106.67	£128.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Dog picked up taken to kennels and returned to owner (new fee)	Each	£182.50	£219.00	£182.50	£219.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Daily Kennel charge	Each	At cost		At cost			
	Animal Warden Initial Response fee	Per call out	£120.00		£144.00		£24.00	20.00%
	Animal Warden Hourly rate	hourly	£72.00		£72.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Veterinary fees will be charged on a cost basis	Fee	At cost		At cost			

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/(decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/(decrease) %
Animal Establishments	Kennels & Catteries (exclusive of vets' fees) - New	Per Licence	£705.00		£751.00		£46.00	6.50%
	Kennels & Catteries (exclusive of vets' fees) - Renewal	Per Licence	£622.00		£662.00		£40.00	6.40%
	Pet Shop small annual licence (exclusive of vets' fees) New	Per Licence	£516.00		£550.00		£34.00	6.60%
	Pet Shop small annual licence (exclusive of vets' fees) Renewal	Per Licence	£400.00		£426.00		£26.00	6.50%
	Pet Shop large (exclusive of vets' fees) – more than 75m2 New	Per Licence	£705.00		£751.00		£46.00	6.50%
	Pet Shop large (exclusive of vets' fees) – more than 75m3 Renewal	Per Licence	£622.00		£662.00		£40.00	6.40%
	Pet shop/boarding/breeding licence amendment	Per Licence	£108.00		£115.00		£7.00	6.50%
	small home boarder 1-6 dogs (annual fee) New	Per Licence	£476.00		£507.00		£31.00	6.50%
	small home boarder 1-6 dogs (annual fee) Renewal	Per Licence	£347.00		£370.00		£23.00	6.60%
	larger home boarder 7 + Dogs (annual fee) New	Per Licence	£516.00		£550.00		£34.00	6.60%
	larger home boarder 7 + Dogs (annual fee) Renewal	Per Licence	£400.00		£426.00		£26.00	6.50%
	Animal Breeding Establishments (exclusive of vets' fees) New	Per Licence	£516.00		£550.00		£34.00	6.60%
	Animal Breeding Establishments (exclusive of vets' fees) Renewal	Per Licence	£400.00		£426.00		£26.00	6.50%
	Horse Riding Establishment Licence - New	Per Licence	£705.00		£751.00		£46.00	6.50%
	Horse Riding Establishment Licence - Renewal	Per Licence	£622.00		£662.00		£40.00	6.40%
Keeping or training animals for exhibition (3 year Licence)	Per Licence	£705.00		£751.00		£46.00	6.50%	
Dangerous Wild Animals Licence or Zoo Licence	Per Licence		Price on Application		Price on Application			
LOCAL AIR POLLUTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL (LAPPC)								
Annual Subsistence Charge	Standard process Low	Per Licence	£772.00		£772.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Standard process Medium	Per Licence	£1,161.00		£1,161.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Standard process High	Per Licence	£1,747.00		£1,747.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Permit for Vapour Recovery Part I and Dry Cleaners L	Per Licence	£79.00		£79.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Permit for Vapour Recovery Part I and Dry Cleaners M	Per Licence	£158.00		£158.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Permit for Vapour Recovery Part I and Dry Cleaners H	Per Licence	£237.00		£237.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Permit for Vapour Recovery Part I & II combined L	Per Licence	£113.00		£113.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Permit for Vapour Recovery Part I & II combined M	Per Licence	£226.00		£226.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Permit for Vapour Recovery Part I & II combined H	Per Licence	£341.00		£341.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Vapour Recovery and other Reduced Fees L	Per Licence	£228.00		£228.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Vapour Recovery and other Reduced Fees M	Per Licence	£365.00		£365.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Vapour Recovery and other Reduced Fees H	Per Licence	£548.00		£548.00		£0.00	0.00%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/(decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/(decrease) %
PLANNING								
PLANNING - PRE APPLICATION FEES								
Level 1	Householders advice on house extensions	Each	£180.00	£216.00	£180.00	£216.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Follow up Meetings	Each	£104.60	£125.52	£104.60	£125.52	£0.00	0.00%
	Small business and developers: advice on building works and change of use where the floor area involved is up to 200sqm.	Each	£180.00	£216.00	£180.00	£216.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Follow up Meetings	Each	£104.60	£125.52	£104.60	£125.52	£0.00	0.00%
	Proposals for local community uses - (Free of charge for up to 200sqm)	Each	£166.00	£199.20	£166.00	£199.20	£0.00	0.00%
	Follow up Meetings	Each	£104.60	£125.52	£104.60	£125.52	£0.00	0.00%
	Advertisements	Each	£280.00	£336.00	£280.00	£336.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Follow up Meetings	Each	£104.60	£125.52	£104.60	£125.52	£0.00	0.00%
	Telecommunication installations	Each	£280.00	£336.00	£280.00	£336.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Follow up Meetings	Each	£104.60	£125.52	£104.60	£125.52	£0.00	0.00%
	Listed Building consent /conservation area consent.	Each	£166.00	£199.20	£166.00	£199.20	£0.00	0.00%
	Follow up Meetings	Each	£104.60	£125.52	£104.60	£125.52	£0.00	0.00%
	Trees and Landscaping	Each	£166.00	£199.20	£166.00	£199.20	£0.00	0.00%
	Follow up Meetings	Each	£104.60	£125.52	£104.60	£125.52	£0.00	0.00%
	Works to trees covered by tree preservation orders.	Each	£166.00	£199.20	£166.00	£199.20	£0.00	0.00%
Level 2	Follow up Meetings	Each	£104.60	£125.52	£104.60	£125.52	£0.00	0.00%
	201 - 499sqm	Each	£462.50	£555.00	£462.50	£555.00	£0.00	0.00%
	500 - 1000sqm	Each	£862.50	£1,035.00	£862.50	£1,035.00	£0.00	0.00%
	1 - 3 dwellings	Each	£462.50	£555.00	£462.50	£555.00	£0.00	0.00%
	4 - 9 dwellings	Each	£862.50	£1,035.00	£862.50	£1,035.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Business, commercial or other development of 201 sqm to 1000 or up to 19 dwellings.	Each	N/A - now Level 3		N/A - now Level 3		N/A - now Level 3	
Level 3 for Small Major Development > 1,001 sqm or 10+ dwellings or other proposals	15 - 19 dwellings	Each	N/A - now Level 3		N/A - now Level 3		N/A - now Level 3	
	One Meeting included in above fee, additional Meetings charged by hour.	Each	£130.00	£156.00	£130.00	£156.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Pre-application fee minimum. Includes introductory meeting and written advice provided. Additional meetings, team and advice thereafter by hourly rate.	Each	£3,750.00	£4,500.00	£3,750.00	£4,500.00	£0.00	0.00%
Level 3 for Large Major Development > 5,001 sqm or 20+ dwellings or other proposals	Includes negotiation meeting. Fee for additional advice by negotiation. Officers will advise if PPA appropriate.	Each	£3,750.00	£4,500.00	£3,750.00	£4,500.00	£0.00	0.00%
Planning Performance Agreements - PPA	Introduction scoping meeting plus drafting and negotiation on PPA if sought from the start. PPA will confirm fee schedule to cover stages of application/	Each	£3,750.00	£4,500.00	£3,750.00	£4,500.00	£0.00	0.00%
Deed of Variation to S106 Requests	Introduction scoping meeting plus drafting and negotiation on PPA if sought from the start. PPA will confirm fee schedule to cover stages of application/	Each	£700.00	£840.00	£700.00	£840.00	£0.00	0.00%
Development > 1,001 sqm or 20+ dwellings or other proposals	Minimum fee to consider - hourly rate added for complex cases	Each	By Negotiation		By Negotiation			
Responses to Enquiries Involving Research	e.g. enquiries about legal status of land or property, enforcement notices, planning history, etc., by negotiation based on an estimate of the time needed.	Each	By Negotiation		By Negotiation			

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/(decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/(decrease) %
PLANNING ADMINISTRATION CHARGES								
Planning History Search	Where more complicated or several addresses	Per application	£50.00		£50.00		£0.00	0.00%
Copies of Section 106 Agreements	per agreement	Per application	£50.00		£50.00		£0.00	0.00%
Copies of Planning Decision Notices	A list given of decision notices required	Per application	£50.00		£50.00		£0.00	0.00%
	One decision notice from Microfiche slide	Per application	£50.00		£50.00		£0.00	0.00%
	One decision notice from Microfiche slide plus plans (all on One slide)	Per application	£50.00		£50.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Scanning more than One slide	Per application	£50.00		£50.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Plans and documents for an application that need redacting	Per application	£50.00		£50.00		£0.00	0.00%
Enquiries for evidence that conditions have been discharged (statutory Fee)	Householders	Per application	£43.00		£43.00		£0.00	0.00%
	All others	Per application	£145.00		£145.00		£0.00	0.00%
S106 and Community Infrastructure Levy obligation enquiries		Per application	£160.00		£160.00		£0.00	0.00%
Returning Invalid	Refunds processed and advice given	Per application	10%-20%		10% - 20%		£0.00	0.00%
Tree Preservation Order Documents		Per application	£50.00		£50.00		£0.00	0.00%
LEISURE								
Tennis Prospect Park (Artificial-turf)	Adult Standard	Session	£9.17	£11.00	£9.17	£11.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Junior Standard	Session	£5.00	£6.00	£5.00	£6.00	£0.00	0.00%
Football	Adult One Off Game Standard	Match	£114.17	£137.00	£114.17	£137.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Adult Block 10+ Games Standard	Match	£98.33	£118.00	£98.33	£118.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Adult Block 5+ Teams Standard	Match	£87.50	£105.00	£87.50	£105.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Junior One Off Game Standard	Match	£62.50	£75.00	£62.50	£75.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Junior Block 10+ Games Standard	Match	£45.00	£54.00	£45.00	£54.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Junior Block 5+ Teams standard	Match	£40.00	£48.00	£40.00	£48.00	£0.00	0.00%
Australian Rules & Gaelic	One Off	Match	£110.00	£132.00	£116.00	£139.20	£6.00	5.50%
5-a-side football	Adult Peak - single	Per Hour	£51.67	£62.00	£51.67	£62.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Adult Peak - Block	Per Hour	£42.50	£51.00	£42.50	£51.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Junior Peak - single	Per Hour	£30.00	£36.00	£30.00	£36.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Junior Peak - Block	Per Hour	£25.00	£30.00	£25.00	£30.00	£0.00	0.00%
MUSEUM								
School Sessions	(Session, loan, membership, talk etc.)	Per event	£165.00		£169.00		£4.00	2.40%
School session (virtual)		Per event	£83.00		£85.00		£2.00	2.40%
Welcome and wow talks (schools)	(Session, loan, membership, talk etc.)	Per event	£45.00		£45.00		£0.00	0.00%
Membership 1 box per half term		Membership	£110.00		£110.00		£0.00	0.00%
Membership 5 boxes RBC non academy		Membership	£325.00		£335.00		£10.00	3.10%
Membership 3 boxes RBC non academy		Membership	£249.00		£257.00		£8.00	3.20%
Membership 5 boxes academy schools		Membership	£325.00		£335.00		£10.00	3.10%
Membership 3 boxes RBC academy		Membership	£249.00		£257.00		£8.00	3.20%
Membership 5 boxes non RBC schools		Membership	£325.00		£335.00		£10.00	3.10%
Membership 3 boxes non RBC schools		Membership	£249.00		£257.00		£8.00	3.20%
Individual box loan		Per box	£50.00		£50.00		£0.00	0.00%
Reminiscence		Membership	£105.00		£110.00		£5.00	4.80%
Museum introduction (adult) (Welcome and Wow)		Per occasion	£60.00		£70.00		£10.00	16.70%
Talks - Booked privately		Per talk	£85.00		£95.00		£10.00	11.80%
Long talks - booked privately		Per talk	£155.00		£160.00		£5.00	3.20%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/(decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/(decrease) %
Photography/filming		Per image/hour	From £18.50		From £19.00		£0.50	2.70%
Archaeology		Per deposit	From £135	From £162	From £138	From £166	£3.00	2.20%
Corporate loans		Per loan	£1,000.00	£1,200.00	£1000	£1,200.00	£0.00	0.00%
Family activities		Per event	From £2.50		From £2.50		£0.00	0.00%
Talks - Public		Per event	From £5.50		From £6		£0.50	9.10%
BERKSHIRE ARCHEOLOGY								
Charges for provision of Historic Environment Record data to commercial users	Berkshire Archaeology, DENS	Per Hour	£55.00	£66.00	£60.00	£72.00	£5.00	9.10%
ARTS VENUES								
Reading Arts - Membership scheme for The Hexagon - Silver Membership	Charged at the discretion of customers, and along the booking pathway.	Per Transaction	£33.33	£40.00	£33.33	£40.00	£0.00	0.00%
Reading Arts - Membership scheme for The Hexagon - Gold Membership	Charged at the discretion of customers, and along the booking pathway. Price corrected to current rate charged	Per Transaction	£41.67	£50.00	£41.67	£50.00	£0.00	0.00%
Reading Arts per ticket fee	Charged on all bookings (excl community use)	Per ticket	£2.08	£2.50	£2.92	£3.50	£0.84	40.40%
Reading Arts - per transaction postage fee for ticket bookings	Across all price points for tickets available from Reading Arts and Venues	Per Transaction	£2.08	£2.50	£2.29	£2.75	£0.21	10.10%
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT								
Lamp Column Banner Advertising (Broad Street West)	Single (3 months)	Each	£750.00	£900.00	£750.00	£900.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Renewal (additional 3 months)	Each	£650.00	£780.00	£650.00	£780.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Pair (3 Months)	Each	£1,300.00	£1,560.00	£1,300.00	£1,560.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Renewal (additional 3 months)	Each	£1,000.00	£1,200.00	£1,000.00	£1,200.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Single (6 months)	Each	£1,300.00	£1,560.00	£1,300.00	£1,560.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Renewal (additional 6 months)	Each	£1,000.00	£1,200.00	£1,000.00	£1,200.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Pair (6 months)	Each	£2,300.00	£2,760.00	£2,300.00	£2,760.00	£0.00	0.00%
Roundabout Advertising	Renewal (additional 6 months)	Each	£2,000.00	£2,400.00	£2,000.00	£2,400.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Imperial Way - A33	Each	£6,000.00	£7,200.00	£6,000.00	£7,200.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Castle Street - IDR	Each	£6,000.00	£7,200.00	£6,000.00	£7,200.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Caversham Road - Richfield Ave	Each	£5,200.00	£6,240.00	£5,200.00	£6,240.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Chatham Street - IDR	Each	£8,000.00	£9,600.00	£8,000.00	£9,600.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Forbury Reservation	Each	£2,000.00	£2,400.00	£2,000.00	£2,400.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Forbury / Kenavon Drive	Each	£4,500.00	£5,400.00	£4,500.00	£5,400.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Hartland / Northumberland	Each	£4,000.00	£4,800.00	£4,000.00	£4,800.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Honiton / Northumberland	Each	£2,000.00	£2,400.00	£2,000.00	£2,400.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Norcot / Oxford Road	Each	£8,000.00	£9,600.00	£8,000.00	£9,600.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Liebenrood / Tilehurst Rd	Each	£3,600.00	£4,320.00	£3,600.00	£4,320.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Queens Road reservation	Each	£2,000.00	£2,400.00	£2,000.00	£2,400.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Vastern / Caversham road	Each	£3,600.00	£4,320.00	£3,600.00	£4,320.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Vastern / Forbury Road	Each	£4,500.00	£5,400.00	£4,500.00	£5,400.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Vastern / George Street	Each	£8,000.00	£9,600.00	£8,000.00	£9,600.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Whitley / Christchurch	Each	£4,000.00	£4,800.00	£4,000.00	£4,800.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Whitley Wood Lane/Road	Each	£4,000.00	£4,800.00	£4,000.00	£4,800.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Circuit / Southcote Lane	Each	£2,000.00	£2,400.00	£2,000.00	£2,400.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Southcote Lane / Virginia Way	Each	£3,000.00	£3,600.00	£3,000.00	£3,600.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Gillette Way / Rosekilm	Each	£4,000.00	£4,800.00	£4,000.00	£4,800.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Discretionary discount <25%	Each	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	0.00%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/(decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/(decrease) %
Welcome to Reading Signage	Single 12 months	Each	£1,200.00	£1,440.00	£1,200.00	£1,440.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Single 6 months	Each	£800.00	£960.00	£800.00	£960.00	£0.00	0.00%
	All 6 months	Each	£3,600.00	£4,320.00	£3,600.00	£4,320.00	£0.00	0.00%
	All 12 months	Each	£6,000.00	£7,200.00	£6,000.00	£7,200.00	£0.00	0.00%
TOWN HALL								
Concert Hall Room Hire	Room Hire	Day From	£3685.00	£4,422.00	£3870.00	£4,644.00	£185.00	5.00%
Concert Hall plus Tech package	Room Hire & Equipment	Day From	£4235.00	£5,082.00	£4450.00	£5,340.00	£215.00	5.10%
Victoria Hall Room Hire	Room Hire	Half Day/Day From	£800.00	£960.00	£840.00	£1,008.00	£40.00	5.00%
Waterhouse Chamber Hire	Room Hire	Half Day/Day From	£342.50	£411.00	£360.00	£432.00	£17.50	5.10%
Soane Space	Room Hire	Half Day/Day From	£275.00	£330.00	£290.00	£348.00	£15.00	5.50%
Jane Austen/Oscar Wilde	Room Hire	Half Day/Day From	£122.50	£147.00	£130.00	£156.00	£7.50	6.10%
Marcus Adams	Room Hire	Day From	£105.00	£126.00	£110.00	£132.00	£5.00	4.80%
Concert Hall Daily Delegate Rate	Catering & room Hire	Day From	£57.50	£69.00	£60.00	£72.00	£2.50	4.30%
Victoria Hall Daily Delegate Rate	Catering & room Hire	Half Day/Day	£33.50	£40.20	£35.00	£42.00	£1.50	4.50%
Waterhouse Daily Delegate Rate	Catering & room Hire	Half Day/Day	£38.00	£45.60	£40.00	£48.00	£2.00	5.30%
Jane Austen/Oscar Wilde Daily Delegate Rate	Catering & room Hire	Half Day/Day	£38.00	£45.60	£40.00	£48.00	£2.00	5.30%
Soane Space Daily Delegate Rate	Catering & room Hire	Half Day/Day	£32.50	£39.00	£34.00	£40.80	£1.50	4.60%
Lectern PA Hire	Equipment	Day	£108.33	£130.00	£115.00	£138.00	£6.67	6.20%
PA Hire	Equipment	Day	£90.00	£108.00	£95.00	£114.00	£5.00	5.60%
Microphone Hire	Equipment	Day	£80.83	£97.00	£85.00	£102.00	£4.17	5.20%
Tech time	Equipment	Per hour	£39.17	£47.00	£40.00	£48.00	£0.83	2.10%
Monitor Hire	Equipment	Day	£54.17	£65.00	£55.00	£66.00	£0.83	1.50%
Additional Projector Screen	Equipment	Day	£24.17	£29.00	£25.00	£30.00	£0.83	3.40%
LCD Projector	Equipment	Day	£75.00	£90.00	£80.00	£96.00	£5.00	6.70%
Laptop Hire	Equipment	Day	£75.00	£90.00	£80.00	£96.00	£5.00	6.70%
Piano Hire	Equipment	Day	£120.00	£144.00	£150.00	£180.00	£30.00	25.00%
Piano Tuned	Equipment	Day	£132.50	£159.00	£135.00	£180.00	£2.50	1.90%
Lectern Hire	Equipment	Day	£20.83	£25.00	£25.00	£30.00	£4.17	20.00%
Flip Chart	Equipment	Each	£20.83	£25.00	£22.00	£26.40	£1.17	5.60%
Display Board	Equipment	Day	£42.50	£51.00	£45.00	£54.00	£2.50	5.90%
Dance Floor	Equipment	Day	£120.00	£144.00	£150.00	£180.00	£30.00	25.00%
Pads & Pens	Equipment	Per Person	£4.33	£5.20	£4.50	£5.40	£0.17	3.90%
Photocopies	Equipment	Each	£0.17	£0.20	£0.20	£0.24	£0.03	17.60%
Late Bar	Equipment	Event	£180.00	£216.00	£200.00	£240.00	£20.00	11.10%
Serving Staff	Equipment	Per hour	£25.00	£30.00	£27.50	£33.00	£2.50	10.00%
Security Staff	Equipment	Per hour	£26.67	£32.00	£30.00	£36.00	£3.33	12.50%
DJ	Equipment	Per event	£541.67	£650.00	£550.00	£660.00	£8.33	1.50%
Stage - Victoria Hall	Equipment	Day	£105.00	£126.00	£115.00	£138.00	£10.00	9.50%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/(decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/(decrease) %
ROYAL BERKSHIRE ARCHIVES								
Copy certificates (baptism, burial, pre 1837 marriage)		Each	£18.00		£19.00		£1.00	5.60%
Copy certificates (post 1837 marriage)		Each	£12.50		£12.50		£0.00	0.00%
Reprographics		Each	£2.50	£3.00	£2.50	£3.00	£0.00	0.00%
Digital Photos		Each	£10.83	£13.00	£10.83	£13.00	£0.00	0.00%
Restoration Service		Half Hour	£17.08	£20.50	£17.08	£20.50	£0.00	0.00%
Research		Half Hour	£17.08	£20.50	£17.08	£20.50	£0.00	0.00%
MODERN RECORDS								
Records Storage	Storage of records by box	Per Box	£9.00	£10.80	£9.00	£10.80	£0.00	0.00%
PLAY SERVICES								
School Support	1:1 Support Session	Per hour	£37.00		£37.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Lunchtime Support Session play focused	Per hour	£28.00		£30.00		£2.00	7.10%
	STEPS - Travel Project	Per hour	£61.00		£61.00		£0.00	0.00%
Staff Support	0-5 Staff Support	Per hour	£21.00		£22.00		£1.00	4.80%
	Play in the Park	Per Session	£5.00		£5.50		£0.50	10.00%
Events	Mini Kickers	Per hour	£3.00		£5.00		£2.00	66.70%
	Walking Football	Per hour	£6.00		£6.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Holiday Events	Per Session	£9.00		£10.00		£1.00	11.10%
Discretionary	Archery for over 50's	Per Session	£10.00		£10.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Bespoke support, Play education attainment sessions	Per session	£70.00		£75.00		£5.00	7.10%
	Team building up to 15	Hourly rate	£85.00		£90.00		£5.00	5.90%
Holiday Clubs Age range 4- 12	8:30am to 1pm	Per Session	£14.17	£17.00	£15.00	£18.00	£0.83	5.90%
	1pm to 5:30pm	Per Session	£14.17	£17.00	£15.00	£18.00	£0.83	5.90%
	9am to 3:30pm	Per Session	£20.83	£25.00	£21.67	£26.00	£0.84	4.00%
Prospect Activity	8:30am to 5:30pm	Per Session	£27.50	£33.00	£28.33	£34.00	£0.83	3.00%
	Low Ropes	Per Person	£4.17	£5.00	£4.58	£5.50	£0.41	9.80%
Prospect Activity	Golf Course	Per Person	£4.17	£5.00	£4.58	£5.50	£0.41	9.80%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Resources

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/ (decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/ (decrease) %
BEREAVEMENT SERVICES								
Reading Crematorium								
Cremation Fee	Adult (over 18) - full service	Each	£995.00		£1,065.00		£70.00	7.00%
	Adult (over 18) - direct witness	Each	£495.00		£495.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Adult (over 18) - early morning	Each	£710.00		£745.00		£35.00	4.90%
	Adult (over 18) - without service (Direct)	Each	£330.00		£330.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Double length service in addition to usual cremation or interment fee	Each	£565.00		£565.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Child (under 18) or stillborn	Each	£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Sunday/ Bank Holiday Surcharge	Each	Price on Application		Price on Application			
	Body parts		Price on Application		Price on Application			
	Public Health Fee	Each	£685.00		£710.00		£25.00	3.60%
Certified extract from register	Duplicate Cremated remains certificate	Each	£20.00		£21.00		£1.00	5.00%
	Out of England Certificate	Each	£40.00		£42.00		£2.00	5.00%
Book of remembrance	Two-line entry	Each	£73.33	£88.00	£73.33	£88.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Five-line entry	Each	£116.67	£140.00	£116.67	£140.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Five-line entry with illuminated capital	Each	£174.17	£209.00	£174.17	£209.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Five-line entry with floral motif, service badge etc.	Each	£195.83	£235.00	£195.83	£235.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Eight-line entry	Each	£155.83	£187.00	£155.83	£187.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Eight-line entry with illuminated capital	Each	£218.33	£262.00	£218.33	£262.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Eight-line entry with floral motif, service badge etc.	Each	£281.67	£338.00	£281.67	£338.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Full coat of arms 5-8 lines	Each	£359.17	£431.00	£359.17	£431.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Extra Lines up to a maximum of 11	Each	£27.50	£33.00	£27.50	£33.00	£0.00	0.00%
Remembrance card	Copy of a two-line entry	Each	£42.50	£51.00	£42.50	£51.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Copy of a five-line entry	Each	£71.67	£86.00	£71.67	£86.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Copy of a five-line entry with any type of motif	Each	£139.17	£167.00	£139.17	£167.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Copy of an eight-line entry	Each	£100.00	£120.00	£100.00	£120.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Copy of an eight-line entry with any type of motif	Each	£155.00	£186.00	£155.00	£186.00	£0.00	0.00%
Memorial vase and tablet	Purchase of vase and tablet	Each	£244.00	£292.80	£244.17	£293.00	£0.17	0.10%
	Renewal for period of 10 years	Each	£305.00		£320.00		£15.00	4.90%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Resources

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/ (decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/ (decrease) %
Memorial plaques	Replacement single plaque *Fees are doubled in the case of a 12" x 4" double plaque	Each	£100.00	£120.00	£100.00	£120.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Replacement single plaque with motif *Fees are doubled in the case of a 12" x 4" double plaque	Each	£120.00	£144.00	£120.00	£144.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Lease of single plaque space for 10 years	Each	£210.00		£210.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Lease of double plaque space for 10 years	Each	£420.00		£380.00		(£40.00)	(9.50%)
	Renewal of lease for baby plaque	Each	£30.00		£30.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Photo Cameo on Plaque additional cost (added to normal plaque cost)	Each	£100.00	£120.00	£100.00	£120.00	£0.00	0.00%
Hall of Memory Tree Leaf	Lease for 5 years renewal	Each	£76.00		£80.00		£4.00	5.30%
	Replacement leaf	Each	£65.00	£78.00	£65.00	£78.00	£0.00	0.00%
Memorial Tree	Provision of Tree, Surround and stem plaque	Each	£445.00	£534.00	£445.00	£534.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Lease for 10 years	Each	£635.00		£660.00		£25.00	3.90%
Memorial bench	Replacement Bench	Each	£805.00	£966.00	£805.00	£966.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Lease for a 10 years	Each	£714.00		£750.00		£36.00	5.00%
	Replacement plaque for tree or bench	Each	£155.00	£186.00	£155.00	£186.00	£0.00	0.00%
Wall Plaque	Purchase of memorial granite wall plaque	Each	£165.00	£198.00	£165.00	£198.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Lease of space for memorial granite wall plaque	Each	£305.00		£320.00		£15.00	4.90%
Relocating plaque	Moving of Memorial Plaque to new location	Each	£58.00	£69.60	£58.33	£70.00	£0.33	0.60%
Administrative	Administration Fee	Each	£58.00	£69.60	£58.33	£70.00	£0.33	0.60%
Memorial Bed Garden	Replacement plaque and surround	Each	£445.00	£534.00	£445.00	£534.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Lease fee for 10 years	Each	£635.00		£660.00		£25.00	3.90%
Birdbath Memorial Plaques	Replacement Plaque (row 1)	Each	£105.00	£126.00	£105.00	£126.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Replacement Plaque (row 2)	Each	£153.00	£183.60	£153.33	£184.00	£0.33	0.20%
	Replacement Plaque (row 3)	Each	£210.00	£252.00	£210.00	£252.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Replacement Plaque (row 4)	Each	£285.00	£342.00	£285.00	£342.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Replacement Plaque (row 5)	Each	£355.00	£426.00	£355.00	£426.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Renewal of Lease (10 years)	Each	£305.00		£320.00		£15.00	4.90%
Sanctums	Granite Tablet (no motif)	Each	£410.00	£492.00	£410.00	£492.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Lease for further 25 years	Each	£705.00		£750.00		£45.00	6.40%
Baby Grave Galvanised Sculpture	Plaque for baby grave	Each	£125.00	£150.00	£125.00	£150.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Replacement plaque	Each	£70.00	£84.00	£70.00	£84.00	£0.00	0.00%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Resources

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/ (decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/ (decrease) %
Reading Cemetery								
Henley Road, Reading Cemetery, Caversham Cemetery - Exclusive rights of burial in earth graves (including certificates of grant) New graves and interment fees for persons under the age of 18 are charged directly to the CFF (Children's Funeral Fund for England) and not to residents.	For the exclusive right of burial for 75 years in an earth grave 9 feet by 4 feet:							
	Traditional / mounded concrete lined resident	Each	New		£3,438.00		New	New
	Traditional / mounded concrete lined non-resident	Each	New		£7,040.00		New	New
	Traditional / mounded non-resident	Each	£4,980.00		£4,980.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Traditional / mounded Grave - all sections	Each	£1,660.00		£1,660.00		£0.00	0.00%
	b) The lawn or park Cemetery in an earth grave 9 feet by 4 feet	Each	£1,215.00		£1,306.00		£91.00	7.50%
	Lawn non-resident	Each	£3,645.00		£4,023.00		£378.00	10.40%
	Baby grave - private resident	Each			£650.00		New	New
	Baby grave - private non-resident	Each			£1,950.00		New	New
	d) Desk Vase Tablet cremated remains plot for 2 set of ashes	Each	£645.00		£710.00		£65.00	10.10%
	Desk bar non resident cremated remains	Each	£1,935.00		£1,935.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Please note the following charges payable for exclusive right of burial in any grave or vault will be trebled in the case of any person who was not an inhabitant of the Borough at the time of their death:							
	Extension to lease for exclusive rights of burial for 10yrs period on lawn graves	Each	£250.00		£260.00		£10.00	4.00%
	Extension to lease for exclusive rights of burial for 15 yrs period on lawn graves	Each	£375.00		£390.00		£15.00	4.00%
	Extension to lease for exclusive rights of burial for 25yrs period on lawn graves	Each	£625.00		£650.00		£25.00	4.00%
	Extension to lease for exclusive rights of burial for 10 yrs period on traditional graves	Each	£335.00		£335.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Extension to lease for exclusive rights of burial for 15 yrs period on traditional graves	Each	£500.00		£500.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Extension to lease for exclusive rights of burial for 25yrs period on traditional graves	Each	£840.00		£840.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Extension to lease for exclusive rights of burial for 10 yrs period on Ashes plot for 2 (fee doubled for a plot for 4)	Each			£142.00		New	New
	Extension to lease for exclusive rights of burial for 15 yrs period on ashes plot for 2 (fee doubled for a plot for 4)	Each			£213.00		New	New

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Resources

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/ (decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/ (decrease) %
	Extension to lease for exclusive rights of burial for 25 yrs period on ashes plot for 2 (fee doubled for a plot for 4)	Each			£355.00		New	New
Vaulted or walled graves	Charges to be individually agreed with the Cemeteries Manager according to size and depth of graves where an exclusive right of burial has been purchased for 50 years							
Burials New graves and interment fees for persons aged under 18 years are charged directly to the CFF (Children's Funeral Fund for England) and not to residents/customers.	Dig Fee (including CFF claims) for interment of a Body parts, NVF, Stillborn and child (under 18yrs old)	Each	£305.00		£335.00		£30.00	9.80%
	c) If the body is that of a person aged 18 years or over	Each	£945.00		£1,039.00		£94.00	9.90%
	Traditional interment	Each	£945.00		£1,417.00		£472.00	49.90%
	d) Cremated remains in an existing grave or a cremated remains plot	Each	£160.00		£200.00		£40.00	25.00%
	Dig Fee to be claimed from CFF for interment of cremated remains stillborn to <5 years old	Each	£25.00		£30.00		£5.00	20.00%
	Dig Fee to be claimed from CFF for interment of cremated remains of a child aged 5-17yrs old	Each	£40.00		£45.00		£5.00	12.50%
	f) Cremated Remains returned from elsewhere for Burial	Each	£60.00		£65.00		£5.00	8.30%
	g) For any burial below 6 feet in depth an additional charge will be made per burial	Each	£325.00		£350.00		£25.00	7.70%
	Additional service time where overrun affects next service or requires overtime working.	Each			£200.00		New	New
	Additional depth for child under 18	Each	£195.00		£210.00		£15.00	7.70%
Common grave	In a grave where an exclusive right of burial has not been granted: (Please note the charge payable will be doubled in the case of any person who was not an inhabitant of the Borough)							
	a) If the body is that of a stillborn child or NVF	Each	£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	0.00%
	b) If the body is that of a person under 18 years of age.	Each	£165.00		£335.00		£170.00	103.00%
	c) If the body is that of a person aged 18 years or over (Public Health)	Each	£945.00		£1,039.00		£94.00	9.90%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Resources

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/ (decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/ (decrease) %
Monuments, Gravestones, Tablets and Stone kerbs	For the right to erect any gravestone or monument on a grave space:							
	a) Traditional	Each	£335.00		£335.00		£0.00	0.00%
	b) Lawn, Park and Mayfield Cemetery	Each	£230.00		£230.00		£0.00	0.00%
	c) Park cremated remains section flat stone, baby graves & DVT's	Each	£90.00		£90.00		£0.00	0.00%
	f) Cremated Remains Headstone Section	Each	£90.00		£90.00		£0.00	0.00%
	f) Additional works/inscription	Each	£78.00		£78.00		£0.00	0.00%
Other fees and charges	Transfer of grant of exclusive right of burial	Each	£100.00	£120.00	£100.00	£120.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Search Fee - up to 4 records per enquiry	Each	£18.00	£21.60	£18.00	£21.60	£0.00	0.00%
	Search Fee - for 1 record	Each	£5.50	£6.60	£5.50	£6.60	£0.00	0.00%
	Exhumation of Cremated Remains	Each	£300.00		£300.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Use of chapel prior to burial for stillborn child or a child under 18 years old	Each	£100.00		£100.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Chapel Fee Prior to a Burial for person over 18 years old (including overrun	Each	£565.00		£565.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Administration Fee for Public Health Funeral	Each	£300.00	£360.00	£300.00	£360.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Charge for provision of a Quran grave	Each	Price on Application		Price on Application			
	Bench Maintenance (Powerwash and treatment with teak oil)	Each	£75.00	£90.00	£80.00	£96.00	£5.00	6.70%
	Grave Maintenance	Each	Price on Application		Price on Application			
Webcast Services	Live Webcast (up to 20 viewers)	Each	£35.00	£42.00	£35.00	£42.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Live+On-Demand Webcast for up to 28 days and downloadable	Each	£50.00	£60.00	£50.00	£60.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Physical copy of Webcast recording on DVD, Blu-ray or USB memory stick and audio cd	Each	£50.00	£60.00	£50.00	£60.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Additional Physical copy CD, DVD, Blu-ray or USB	Each	£26.67	£32.00	£26.67	£32.00	£0.00	0.00%
Visual Tributes	Single Photo	Each	£12.50	£15.00	£12.50	£15.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Slideshow (up to 25)	Each	£43.33	£52.00	£43.33	£52.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Photo Tribute (up to 25)	Each	£65.00	£78.00	£65.00	£78.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Additional 25 photos	Each	£23.33	£28.00	£23.33	£28.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Self Build Checking	Each	£20.00	£24.00	£20.00	£24.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Additional Time for tributes etc:							
	Downloadable copy of Pro Photo tribute	Each	£11.67	£14.00	£11.67	£14.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Extra Work required on tributes	Each	£23.33	£28.00	£23.33	£28.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Themed Tribute	Each	£82.50	£99.00	£82.50	£99.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Video Book	Each	£79.17	£95.00	£79.17	£95.00	£0.00	0.00%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Resources

Appendix C - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Resources								
Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/ (decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/ (decrease) %
	Memory Box	Each	£108.33	£130.00	£108.33	£130.00	£0.00	0.00%
Other fees and charges	Retention of Ashes after 2 month	Each	£73.33	£88.00	£73.33	£88.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Bronze Plaque refurbish single (in situ)	Each	£25.00	£30.00	£25.00	£30.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Bronze Plaque refurbish double (in situ)	Each	£41.67	£50.00	£41.67	£50.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Memorial Service Only in chapel	Each	£565.00		£565.00		£0.00	0.00%
	Service over run charge (if affects next service or incurs overtime)	Each	£565.00		£565.00		£0.00	0.00%
Reading Cemetery	NO NEW GRAVE SPACES AVAILABLE. Charges for burials into existing graves and all other fees and charges are the same as for Henley							
Caversham Cemetery	NO NEW GRAVE SPACES AVAILABLE. Charges for burials into existing graves and all other fees and charges are the same as for Henley							
REGISTRATION SERVICE								
Registration Service	Notice of marriage or partnership	Per Person	Statutory		Statutory			
Registration Service (First Tuesday of the month)	Registrar's attendance at Register Office marriage or civil partnership	Per couple	Statutory		Statutory			
Registration Service	Registrar's attendance at outside church	Per couple	Statutory		Statutory			
	Attendance at place of detention or house for notice of marriage or partnership	Per couple	Statutory		Statutory			
	Attendance at place of detention or house for notice of marriage or partnership (higher fee if referral to Home Office Immigration is required)	Per couple	Statutory		Statutory			
	Notice of No Impediment (Marriage)	Per couple	Statutory		Statutory			
	Notice of No Impediment (Civil Partnership)	Per couple	Statutory		Statutory			
	Out of Hours pre-arranged appointment fee	Per booking	Statutory		Statutory			
	Civil Partnership Conversion to Marriage - Standard Procedure (Reading Register Office)	Per booking	Statutory		Statutory			
Certificates	Registration Certificate	Per Certificate	Statutory		Statutory			
	Express Service Certificate	Per Certificate	Statutory		Statutory			
	Presentation Wallet	Per Wallet			£3.33	£4.00	New	New
	Celebratory Certificate	Per Certificate			£6.67	£8.00	New	New
Statutory Correction Application Fee	Correction completed by Register office	Per correction	Statutory		Statutory			
	Correction referred to General Register Office	Per correction	Statutory		Statutory			
	Amendment to birth record with 12 months of registration (space 17 amendment)	Per correction	Statutory		Statutory			

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Resources

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/ (decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/ (decrease) %
Foreign Divorce Checking fee	The administration of foreign divorces when giving notice of marriage or CP.	Per Person	Statutory		Statutory			
Citizenship Ceremonies	Individual Citizenship Ceremony at The Town Hall (up to max of 10 people)	Per Person	£125.00	£150.00	£131.67	£158.00	£6.67	5.30%
	Friday & Saturday Individual Citizenship Ceremony at the Town Hall (up to max of 10 people)	Per Person	£148.33	£178.00	£155.83	£187.00	£7.50	5.10%
Approved Premises Marriages - (9am to 5pm)	Monday to Thursday (9am to 5pm)	Per Couple	£350.00	£420.00	£367.50	£441.00	£17.50	5.00%
	Friday & Saturday (9am to 5pm)	Per Couple	£402.50	£483.00	£422.50	£507.00	£20.00	5.00%
	Sunday & Bank Hols (9am to 5pm)	Per Couple	£433.33	£520.00	£455.00	£546.00	£21.67	5.00%
Approved Premises Marriages - After 5pm	Venue: Monday to Thursday	Per Couple	£345.83	£415.00	£394.17	£473.00	£48.34	14.00%
	Venue: Friday & Saturday	Per Couple	£407.50	£489.00	£428.33	£514.00	£20.83	5.10%
	Venue: Sunday & Bank Hols	Per couple	£436.67	£524.00	£458.33	£550.00	£21.66	5.00%
New Ceremony Room: Reading Museum & Town Hall (Marriages / Civil Partnerships)	Monday to Thursday	Per Couple	£187.50	£225.00	£197.50	£237.00	£10.00	5.30%
	Friday & Saturday	Per Couple	£254.17	£305.00	£266.67	£320.00	£12.50	4.90%
	Sunday & Bank Hols	Per Couple	£433.33	£520.00	£455.00	£546.00	£21.67	5.00%
Renewal of Vows & Baby Naming (1 member of staff required)	Monday to Thursday	Per Ceremony	£145.00	£174.00	£156.67	£188.00	£11.67	8.00%
	Friday & Saturday	Per Ceremony	£175.00	£210.00	£183.33	£220.00	£8.33	4.80%
	Sunday & Bank Hols	Per Ceremony	£201.67	£242.00	£211.67	£254.00	£10.00	5.00%
Approval of venues for marriages or Civil Partnerships (up to 2 rooms)	Renewal of marriage or Civil Partnership licence	Per Venue	£1,666.67	£2,000.00	£1,666.67	£2,000.00	£0.00	0.00%
Administrative fee	For services offered on a Saturday such as Notices of Marriage	Per Person	£21.67	£26.00	£22.50	£27.00	£0.83	3.80%
	Changes to booking	Per Person	£41.67	£50.00	£44.17	£53.00	£2.50	6.00%
	Booking Deposit Fee	Per Venue			£46.67	£56.00	New	New
GIS - MAPPING								
Street Naming & Numbering	New addresses	Each	£51.25	£61.50	£54.17	£65.00	£2.92	5.70%
	New streets	Each	£295.50	£354.60	£310.83	£373.00	£15.33	5.20%
LEGAL SERVICES								
Right to Buy	Engrossment Fee (Freehold)	Per Transfer	£77.00	£92.40	£81.67	£98.00	£4.67	6.10%
	Engrossment Fee (Leasehold)	Per Lease	£88.00	£105.60	£93.33	£112.00	£5.33	6.10%
Requisition (LLC1) Postal	Search using LLC1 form only	Per search	£34.70	£41.64	£36.67	£44.00	£1.97	5.70%
Standard Enquiries (CON29) Postal	Search using CON29 form only	Per search	£90.30	£108.36	£95.00	£114.00	£4.70	5.20%
Full Search LLC1 and CON29	Search using LLC1 and CON29 form	Per search	£119.22	£143.06	£125.83	£151.00	£6.61	5.50%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Resources

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/ (decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/ (decrease) %
Copy documents	Copy document	Per request	£26.30		£28.33	£34.00	£2.03	7.70%
Deferred Payment Agreement	Flat fee and hourly rate (pay rate)	Per Agreement	£567.00	£680.40	£595.83	£715.00	£28.83	5.10%
Legal Fees (Commercial)	Legal Services Manager	Per Hour	£315.00	£378.00	£330.83	£397.00	£15.83	5.00%
	Principal Lawyer / Team Leader	Per Hour	£290.00	£348.00	£305.00	£366.00	£15.00	5.20%
	Senior Lawyer	Per Hour	£265.00	£318.00	£278.33	£334.00	£13.33	5.00%
	Lawyer	Per Hour	£210.00	£252.00	£220.83	£265.00	£10.83	5.20%
	Trainees and Paralegals (Grade 6+)	Per Hour	£135.00	£162.00	£141.67	£170.00	£6.67	4.90%
	Trainees and Paralegals (Grade 4- 5)	Per Hour	£100.00	£120.00	£105.00	£126.00	£5.00	5.00%
Legal Fees (Community - voluntary organisations, charities providing services to residents in Reading)	Legal Services Manager	Per Hour	£185.00	£222.00	£185.00	£222.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Principal Lawyer / Team Leader	Per Hour	£160.00	£192.00	£160.00	£192.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Senior Lawyer	Per Hour	£130.00	£156.00	£139.17	£167.00	£9.16	7.10%
	Lawyer	Per Hour	£100.00	£120.00	£110.84	£133.00	£10.84	10.80%
	Trainees and Paralegals (Grade 6+)	Per Hour	£75.00	£90.00	£75.00	£90.00	£0.00	0.00%
	Trainees and Paralegals (Grade 4- 5)	Per Hour	£55.00	£66.00	£55.00	£66.00	£0.00	0.00%
INCOME & RECOVERY								
Council Tax Summons Cost		Per Summons issued	£99.50		£100.00		£0.50	0.50%
Council Tax Liability Order Cost		Per Liability Order issued	£43.00		£43.00		£0.00	0.00%
Business Rates Summons Cost		Per Summons issued	£106.50		£107.00		£0.50	0.50%
Business Rates Liability Order Cost		Per Liability Order issued	£70.00		£70.00		£0.00	0.00%
Civil Penalties Housing Benefits		Per case identified	Statutory		Statutory			
Civil Penalties Council Tax		Per case identified	Statutory		Statutory			
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES								
Admission Appeals - Charge per appeal		Per admission appeal heard	£240.00	£288.00	£250.00	£300.00	£10.00	4.20%
School Exclusion Review Hearing		Per review heard	£1,000.00	£1,200.00	£1,083.33	£1,300.00	£83.33	8.30%

Appendix 9 - Proposed Fees and Charges from 1st April 2025 - Directorate of Resources

Service	Category	Charge Unit	Current Fee	Current Fee including VAT	New Fee from April 2025	New Fee including VAT	Increase/ (decrease) Excl. VAT	Increase/ (decrease) %
Admission Appeals - Admin Charge	Withdrawn/Settled (W/S) Appeals	Per admission appeal W/S after papers circulated	£64.00	£76.80	£67.50	£81.00	£3.50	5.50%
CUSTOMER SERVICES								
Blue Badges (New & Renewals)	Disabled Parking Badge	Each	£10.00		£10.00		£0.00	0.00%
COMMUNICATIONS								
Event pitch fee	Charity	Per event	£33.58	£40.30	£35.00	£42.00	£1.42	4.20%
Event pitch fee	Charity with 10% early bird discount	Per event	£30.25	£36.30	£31.67	£38.00	£1.42	4.70%
Event pitch fee	RBC affiliated charity	Per event	£11.17	£13.40	£11.67	£14.00	£0.50	4.50%
Event pitch fee	RBC affiliated charity with 10% early bird discount	Per event	£10.08	£12.10	£10.83	£13.00	£0.75	7.40%
Event pitch fee	Community	Per event	£44.83	£53.80	£46.67	£56.00	£1.84	4.10%
Event pitch fee	Community with 10% early bird discount	Per event	£40.33	£48.40	£42.50	£51.00	£2.17	5.40%
Event pitch fee	Commercial	Per event	£112.00	£134.40	£117.50	£141.00	£5.50	4.90%
Event pitch fee	Commercial with 10% early bird discount	Per event	£100.83	£121.00	£105.83	£127.00	£5.00	5.00%
Event pitch fee	Food trader	Per event	£168.08	£201.70	£176.67	£212.00	£8.59	5.10%
KENNET DAY NURSERY								
3 yrs and over - RBC	AM or PM Sessions are charged at half the daily rate. Siblings are entitled to a £2 per day reduction.	Daily rate (2 sessions)	£63.20		£63.20		£0.00	0.00%
Under 3 yrs - RBC		Daily rate (2 sessions)	£65.20		£65.20		£0.00	0.00%
3 yrs and over - Non RBC		Daily rate (2 sessions)	£69.30		£69.30		£0.00	0.00%
Under 3 yrs - RBC		Daily rate (2 sessions)	£71.30		£71.30		£0.00	0.00%
LEARNING AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT								
Training	Places on training for school staff (1 day)	Per place	£70.00		£74.00		£4.00	5.70%

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Appendix 10 - Equality Impact Assessment of the Budget Proposals

Name of proposal/activity/policy to be assessed: 2025/26 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2025/26 – 2027/28

Directorate: All

Service: Council-wide

Name and job title of person doing the assessment

Name: Clare Muir

Job Title: Senior Policy Officer

Date of assessment: 23/01/2025

What is the aim of your policy or new service?

The Council still has a significant budget gap across the three years of the MTFS. The Council needs to consider implementing additional savings in a range of areas.

Who will benefit from this proposal and how?

Residents and service users will benefit from the Council setting a balanced and affordable budget that ensures the Council's finances are sustainable.

Who are the main stakeholders and what do they want?

Residents, businesses, councillors and council staff in Reading. A public consultation on the MTFS Update took place between 17th December 2024 to 16th January 2025. It asked for views on:

Council Tax

Should the Council look to increase Council Tax by 2.99% plus 2.00% Adult Social Care precept to reduce the financial gap for 2025/26? 60% supported this.

Budget savings

Which areas, shown in a list would they be MOST/LEAST comfortable with the Council reducing spending on, or increasing income from?

Top 3 MOST comfortable were Home to school transport, Income from fees and charges, Voluntary sector funding.

Top 3 LEAST comfortable were Street cleaning, Homelessness prevention, Facilities in parks and open spaces.

Capital programme

Of a list of capital projects the Top 3 for stopping or scaling back were New performance space at the Hexagon Theatre; John Rabson skatepark, Digitised Traffic Regulation Orders.

Social housing rents

79% supported the Council implementing a 2.7% increase in social housing rents.

Assessment of Relevance and Impact

The Equality duty has been considered for each proposed budget business case.

For the majority of these the Equality Duty is not relevant.

Appendix A sets out the budget business cases where the Equality Duty is identified as relevant and summarises the Equality Impact Assessment.

Appendix 10 - Annex A – Budget Business Cases where budget business cases where the Equality Duty is identified as relevant and impact assessment			
Bid Reference	Business Case Title	Proposal	Equality Impact
Revenue			
DCASC-2526-12	VCS Spend	<p>Annual Small Grants Fund (SGF) process reduced from £0.200m p.a. to £0.150m p.a. on an ongoing basis from 2025/26.</p> <p>This approach was trialled for the SGF in 2024/25, along with a number of alterations to the SGF criteria to ensure it is focused on smaller grassroots community groups supporting Reading residents. This trial has proved successful in providing financial support to a broader range of local organisations.</p>	<p>No negative impact identified under the Equality Duty. The range of bids for funding from the SGF clearly shows that organisations that focus on supporting residents protected characteristics are aware and able to put forward proposals for their activities. The ability to fund a greater proportion of bids is a further indicator of the positive impact of the SGF process.</p> <p>The updated criteria for the SGF were developed following feedback from local VCS organisations and we have not received any complaints about the process for this year. We have however improved the information available to potential bidders to ensure that they have the best chance of success in their bids.</p>
DCASC-2526-16	Homelessness Support Services	10% Housing General Fund contribution reduction of £0.076m per annum taken from core funded Homelessness Support Services in scope for MTFS savings.	An Equality impact assessment has been carried out. (Policy Report 17 th March 2025). The provision of the services in Reading will be open to all individuals needing relief from or prevention of rough sleeping. No negative impact identified under the Equality Duty. (EIA available - sensitive).
DEGNS-2526-06	Rationalisation of Pay & Display Assets, Tariff Changes and Emissions Based Parking	Replace or upgrade P&D machines; Implement tariff zone changes; Implement emissions-based parking for Residents Parking and On Street P&D.	An Equality impact assessment has been carried out. (Policy Committee 20 th January 2025) No negative impact identified under the Equality Duty.

Appendix 10 - Annex A – Budget Business Cases where budget business cases where the Equality Duty is identified as relevant and impact assessment			
Bid Reference	Business Case Title	Proposal	Equality Impact
DEGNS-2526-14	Operational Resilience - Recycling & Waste Service	Cease provision of free bulky waste collections. Introduce fee for the collection of a second green waste bin at a single property. Increase green waste collection fee. Reinvest £0.155m of the resulting income in the provision of a late shift, waste collection round, Net benefit of £0.111m.	No negative impact identified under the Equality Duty. Concession discounts will continue to be provided to those customers in receipt of benefits.
DEGNS-2526-34	Allotments Full Cost Recovery	Double the annual fee. Improvement of £0.067m in revenue from 2026/27.	No negative impact identified under the Equality Duty. Concession discounts will continue to be provided.
DOR-2526-08	Tackling Inequality Strategy	To remove the project funding but maintain staffing resources to secure external funding and ensure other funds are targeted to the place based pilots. Future project opportunities will only be possible if supported with external grant funding or through redirecting other existing budgets. There will not be a dedicated place based pilots project budget.	<p>An Equality impact assessment has been carried out. No negative impact identified under the Equality Duty. There are a range of projects that have been or are currently being delivered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Activity Fund – providing a grant based scheme for organisations to bid for • School support programme at JMA • New Directions College <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Berkshire Youth Project ◦ Careers Information, Advice and Guidance • Cowsey community engagement and improvement <p>Whilst some of the projects supported groups that share a protected characteristic (Age, in relation to youth based projects) there are a range of projects and therefore they are not being treated differently. In addition, these projects will be completed in</p>

Appendix 10 - Annex A – Budget Business Cases where budget business cases where the Equality Duty is identified as relevant and impact assessment			
Bid Reference	Business Case Title	Proposal	Equality Impact
			accordance with the funding commitments. (EIA available).
DOR-2526-09	Executive Assistants Review	Maintain service offer for Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Director of Public Health. Self-serve or utilise tools such as CoPilot for Directorate meetings. Diary management only for Directors / Deputy / Assistant Directors.	An Equality impact assessment has been carried out. The proposal has a direct impact on the Executive Assistant team members (currently ten individuals all of whom are female). The proposed change will be implemented in line with the Council's Employment Stability Agreement, November 2022. (EIA available - sensitive).
DOR-2526-12	HR&OD Restructure	Restructure HR&OD	An Equality impact assessment has been carried out. No negative impact identified under the Equality Duty. There are staffing changes proposed but no evidence or reason to believe that some groups may be affected differently than others. There is a change in a reporting line for some roles but with no indications that this has any impact on protected characteristic groups. The proposed change will be implemented in line with the Council's Employment Stability Agreement, November 2022. (EIA available - sensitive).
BFFC-2526-03	Primary Mental Health Team Service Reduction	To revise PMHT duties and the revised MHST offer, utilising the Public Health (PH) and ICB funding to mitigate any pressures on delivery, to ensure that mental health support is funded through NHS and PH routes, rather than core BFfC funds.	The proposed change will be implemented in line with the Council's Employment Stability Agreement, November 2022. Equality impact assessment will be finalised as part of the staff consultation required to assess possible impact on emotional health support in a context of growing demand and to identify mitigating action require e.g. more targeted support (March 2025).

Appendix 10 - Annex A – Budget Business Cases where budget business cases where the Equality Duty is identified as relevant and impact assessment			
Bid Reference	Business Case Title	Proposal	Equality Impact
BFFC-2526-04	School Travel Assistance	Further reduction in transport use by rigorously applying new Travel Assistance policy and procedures and promoting wherever possible independent and sustainable travel options.	An Equality impact assessment was carried out as part of the consultation process on the new School Transport policy for September 2024, and adjustments made to policy changes as considered and agreed by July 2024 ACE Committee.
BFFC-2526-05	Family (Early) Help Reductions	Government has secured grant funding ringfenced for family help/hubs, but a review of services is required which may lead to staff reductions.	Equality impact assessment may be required is required. The proposed change will be implemented in line with the Council's Employment Stability Agreement, November 2022.
BFFC-2526-08	Service Reductions Business Support /Admin	Consolidate the work of Business Support/Admin roles in children's services and education to achieve a staff reduction and cost savings.	An Equality impact assessment has been carried out. This proposal has a direct impact on the Business Support team members. 93% of whom are Female. The proposed change will be implemented in line with the Council's Employment Stability Agreement, November 2022. (EIA available - sensitive).
BFFC-2526-09	Consolidation of Nurseries	To bring together management of the BFfC nurseries, The Lodge, and Surestart Whitley (SSWDN) with RBC Kennet Day Nursery.	Equality impact assessment may be required for individual proposals.
Capital			
BFFC-2526-CAP02	BFfC Children with Disabilities Business Case	Develop the site at Strathy Close into a nine bed property, creating five children with disability beds and four adult beds.	No negative impact identified under the Equality Duty.

Appendix 11 – Summary of Response to the Budget Engagement

Report summary

The engagement ran from 17th December 2024 to 16th January 2025.

178 responses were received.

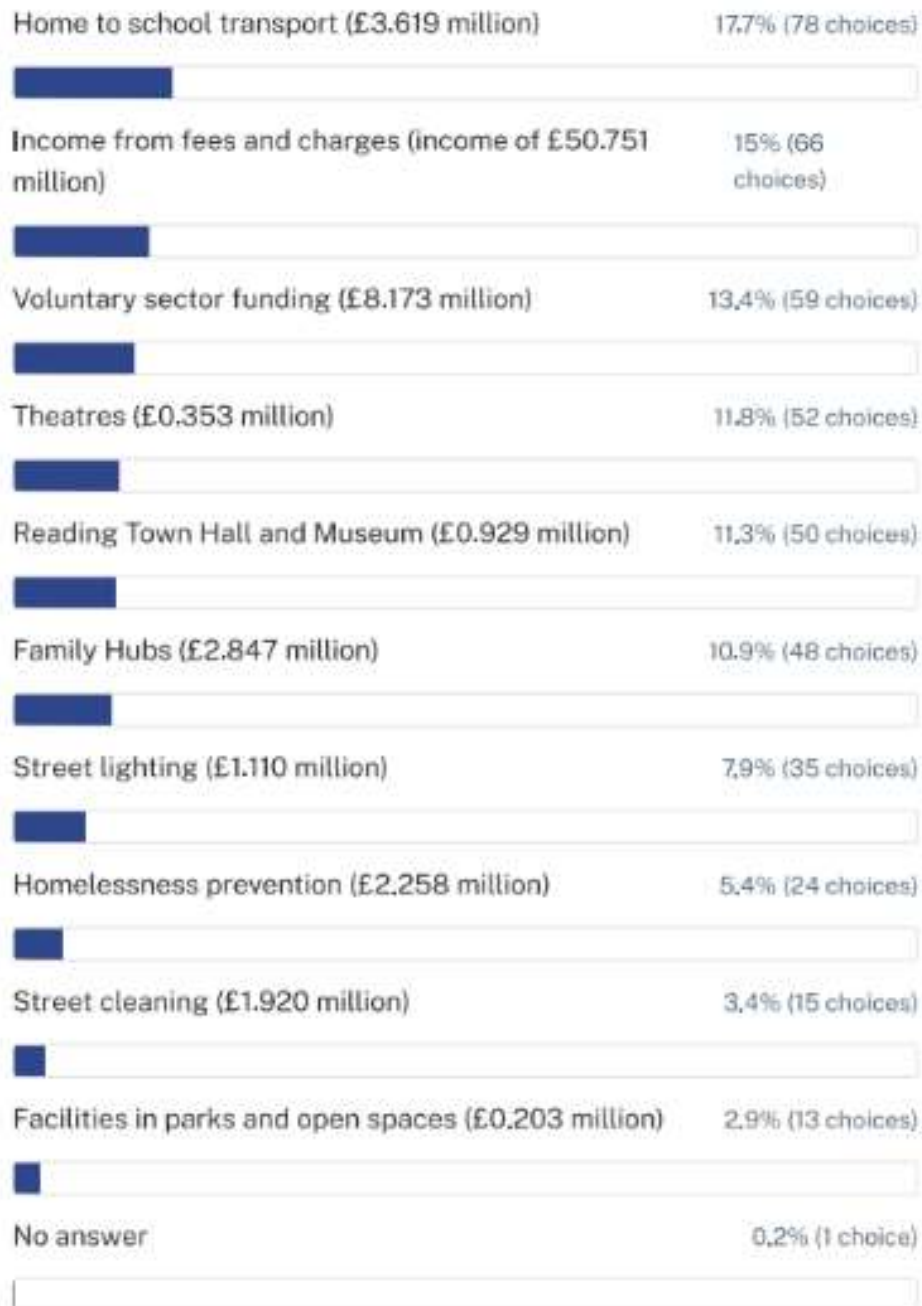
The engagement was promoted via the residents' weekly email, sent to the online citizens' panel and promoted via a number of the Council's working groups and forums.

Results

Should the Council look to increase Council Tax by 2.99% plus 2.00% Adult Social Care precept (an increase of £1.94 per week for a Band D property) to reduce the financial gap for 2025/26?

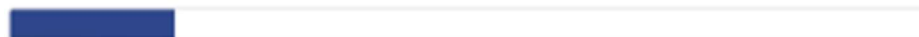


Which areas, shown in the list below, would you be MOST comfortable with the Council reducing spending on, or increasing income from? (Current budget for 2025/26 shown in brackets)



Which areas, shown in the list below, would you be LEAST comfortable with the Council reducing spending on, or increasing income from? (Current budget for 2025/26 shown in brackets)

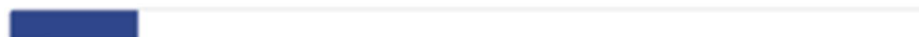
Street cleaning (£1.920 million) 18% (107 choices)



Homelessness prevention (£2.258 million) 15.2% (90 choices)



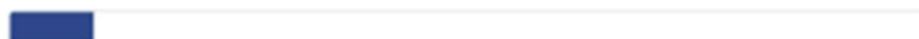
Facilities in parks and open spaces (£0.203 million) 14% (83 choices)



Street lighting (£1.110 million) 13.8% (82 choices)



Family Hubs (£2.847 million) 9.3% (55 choices)



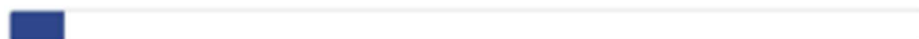
Reading Town Hall and Museum (£0.929 million) 6.9% (41 choices)



Home to school transport (£3.619 million) 6.6% (39 choices)



Voluntary sector funding (£8.173 million) 5.9% (35 choices)



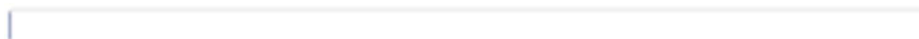
Theatres (£0.353 million) 5.2% (31 choices)



Income from fees and charges (income of £50.751 million) 4.9% (29 choices)



No answer 0.2% (1 choice)

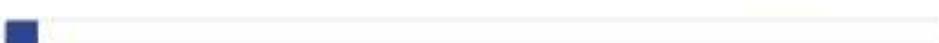
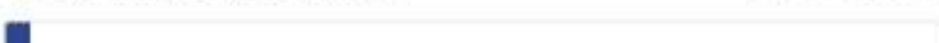


'Other' Areas Suggested Where the Council Could Consider Reducing Spending Include:

Topic	No of responses
Management/pay	5
Benefits	3
Spend on unnecessary services	2
Areas outside of core delivery - such as equality officers/ back-office functions	2
Road maintenance	2
Consultancy fees	2
Housing illegal immigrants/asylum seekers	2
Sending multiple bin collections to one road/ bin collections generally	2
Expenses on outsourced children's services	1
Net zero team	1
Town centre pedestrian area resurfacing	1
Catering/travel costs	1
Supporting those with substance abuse problem	1
Car park charges	1
Special educational needs and disabilities spaces	1
Verge mowing	1
Religious groups	1
Adult Social Care	1
Pensions	1
Monarchy	1
Events and festivals	1
Public Relations	1
Office costs	1
Translation charges	1
Traffic wardens	1
New buses	1
Trimming trees	1
Bus/cycle lanes	1
Home to school transport – could be sponsored by businesses	1

Listed below are a selection of the capital projects in 2025/26 that are not fully funded by grants from central government. Of the projects in this list, are there any that you would stop or scale back? (2025/26 net funding requirement shown in brackets)



Minster Quarter development (£0.523 million)	4.7% (36 choices)
	
Corporate solar energy programme (1.903 million)	4.3% (33 choices)
	
Highways infrastructure programme (£5.062 million)	3.5% (27 choices)
	
Private sector renewals - Adult Social Care home improvements (£0.250 million)	3.4% (26 choices)
	
IT future operating model (£1.289 million)	3.4% (26 choices)
	
Foster carer home extensions (£0.275 million)	3.3% (25 choices)
	
Tree planting (£0.046 million)	2.7% (21 choices)
	
ICT technology refresh (£0.436 million)	2.7% (21 choices)
	
Education management system (£0.707 million)	1.6% (12 choices)
	
None of the above	1% (8 choices)
	
No answer	0.1% (1 choice)
	

The Government has announced a maximum increase of 2.7% on social housing rents, equivalent to £3.45 per week on the average social housing property. Do you support the Council opting for a 2.7% increase in social housing rents?

Yes 79.8% (142 choices)



No 19.7% (35 choices)



No answer 0.6% (1 choice)



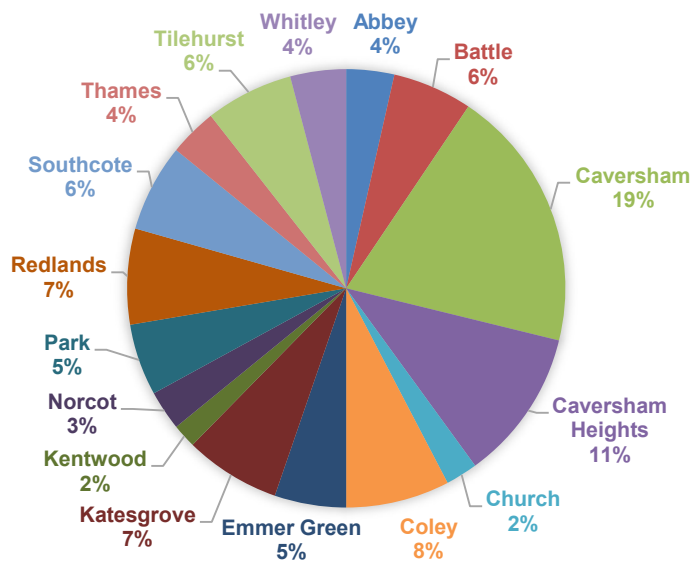
'Further Comments':

Topic	No of responses
Stop increasing/reduce Council Tax	12
Questions hard to understand/ badly worded/not enough info	11
Fix potholes/improve roads & infrastructure	6
Introduce congestion charging	3
Reduce rubbish on streets/fly-tipping	3
Reduce spend in general	2
Invest more in green transport/ public transport	2
Reduce funding/charge for school transport	2
Improve High Street/ Oxford Road environment	2
Lobby Government	2
Focus on most vulnerable	2
Invest in culture to increase tourism	2
Reduce spend on street lighting	2
Spend on services to reduce drug use	2
Tackle homelessness	2
Address root cause of crime/ anti-social behaviour	2
Decrease wages/bonuses/non-important roles (e.g. diversity)	2
Spend on climate measures	2
Amersham Road social housing left to ruin	1
Reduce spend on illegal migrants	1
Spend on school transport	1
Improve town centre safety	1
Reduce private rents	1
Reduce social housing rents	1
Work with business more	1
Open libraries later	1
Decrease social housing support	1
Invest to generate new income streams	1
Reduce outsourcing	1
Reduce IT costs by standardising on one of the major platforms	1
Use the voluntary and community sector better	1
More facilities in town centre for public/young people	1
National planning needs strengthening to mitigate developers avoiding their social obligations	1
Reduce reliance on state provision	1
Merge with other councils	1
Raise income from the wealthy and business	1
Theatre should be self-funding	1
Reduce housing benefit and spend on initiatives to get people into work	1

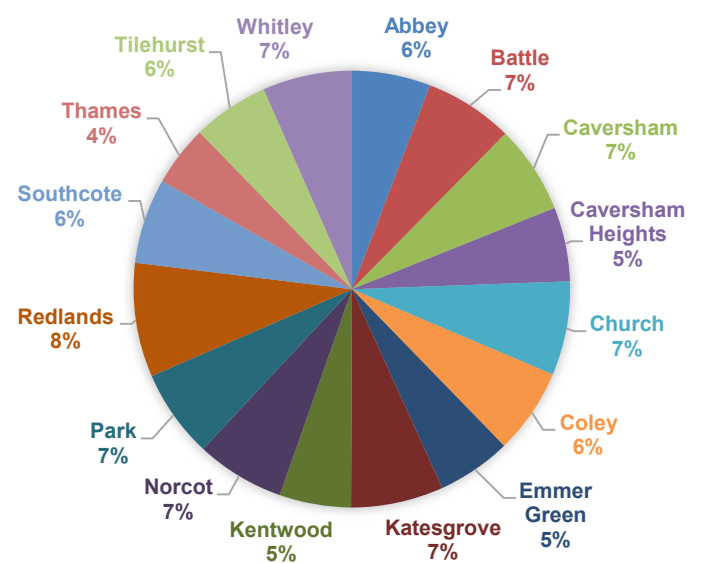
Topic	No of responses
More effective spend on cycle lanes	1
Solar farm at Island Road	1
Reduce need for social care spend	1
Stop subsidies to businesses	1
Asset reallocations	1
Don't spend on Heights playing field	1
Use community volunteering	1
Don't cut cycle lanes	1
Reduce spend on consultants	1
Improve air quality	1
Improve pavements	1
Reduce Adult Social Care	1
Support small businesses	1
Reduce cycle schemes	1
Reduce LGBTQ+ schemes	1
Listen to the voters	1
Review voluntary and community sector spend	1
Reduce spend on Hexagon	1
Increase Council Tax for wealthier residents	1
Stop new house building	1
Build council housing	1
Spend on green spaces	1
Look for partnership opportunities	1
Look for additional funding	1
Close bus/cycle lanes at night	1

Profile of Respondents

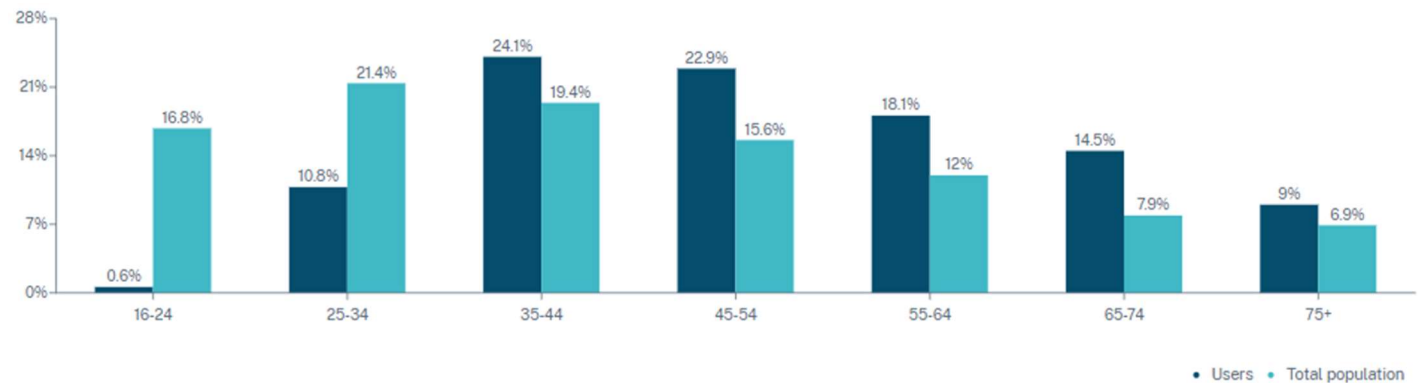
Place of Residence of Respondents



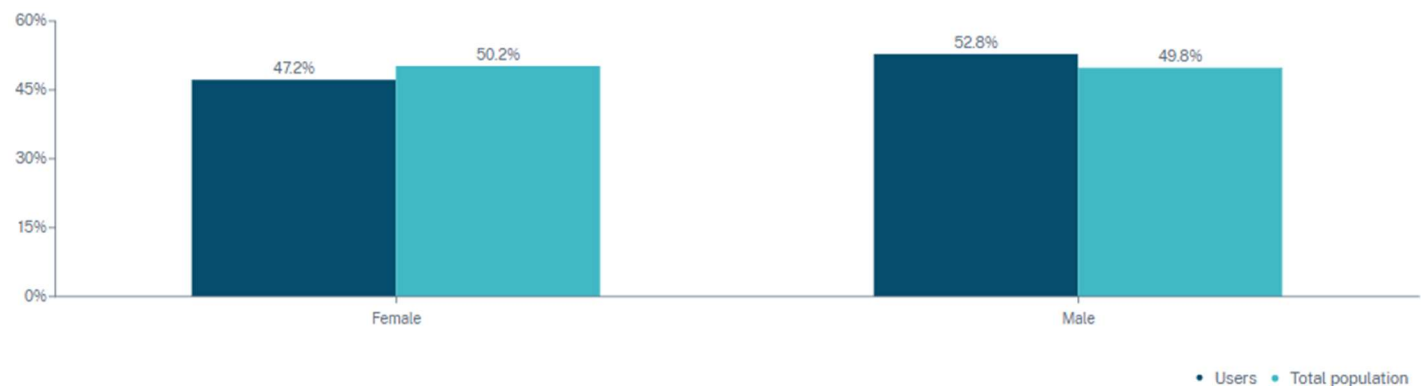
Population of Reading by Ward



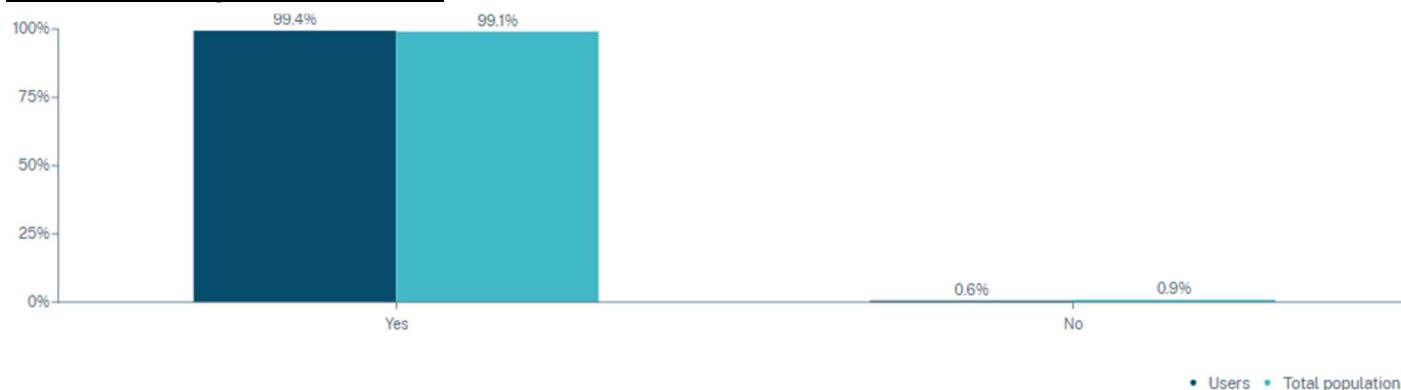
Age of Respondents



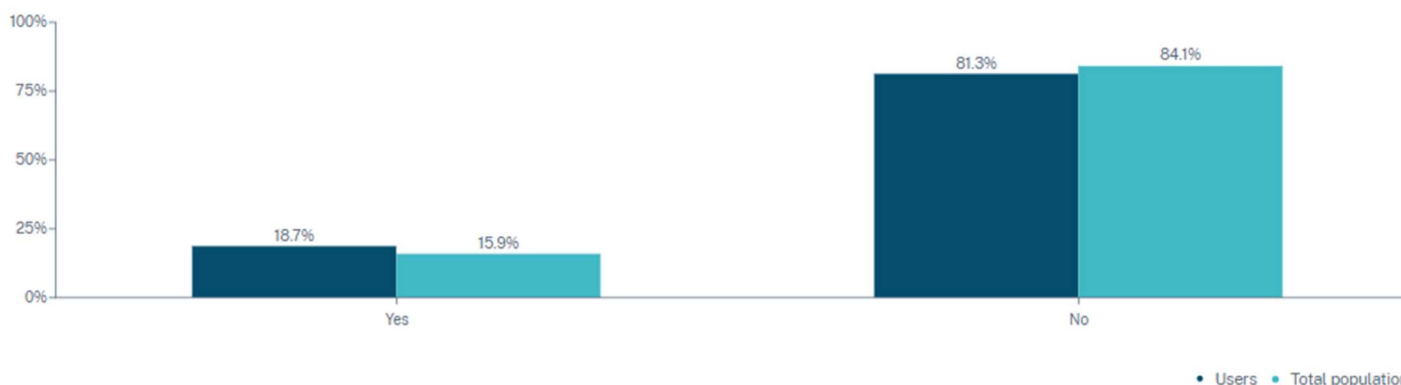
Sex of Respondents



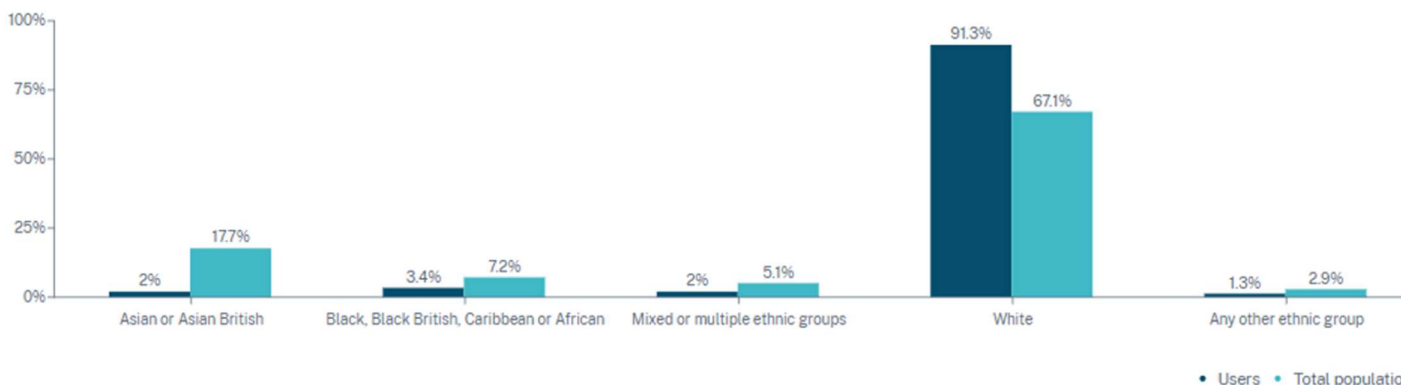
Percentage of Respondents that Answered “Yes” When Asked “Is the Gender You Identify With the Same as Your Sex Registered at Birth?”



Percentage of Respondents that Answered “Yes” When Asked “Do You Have a Disability?”



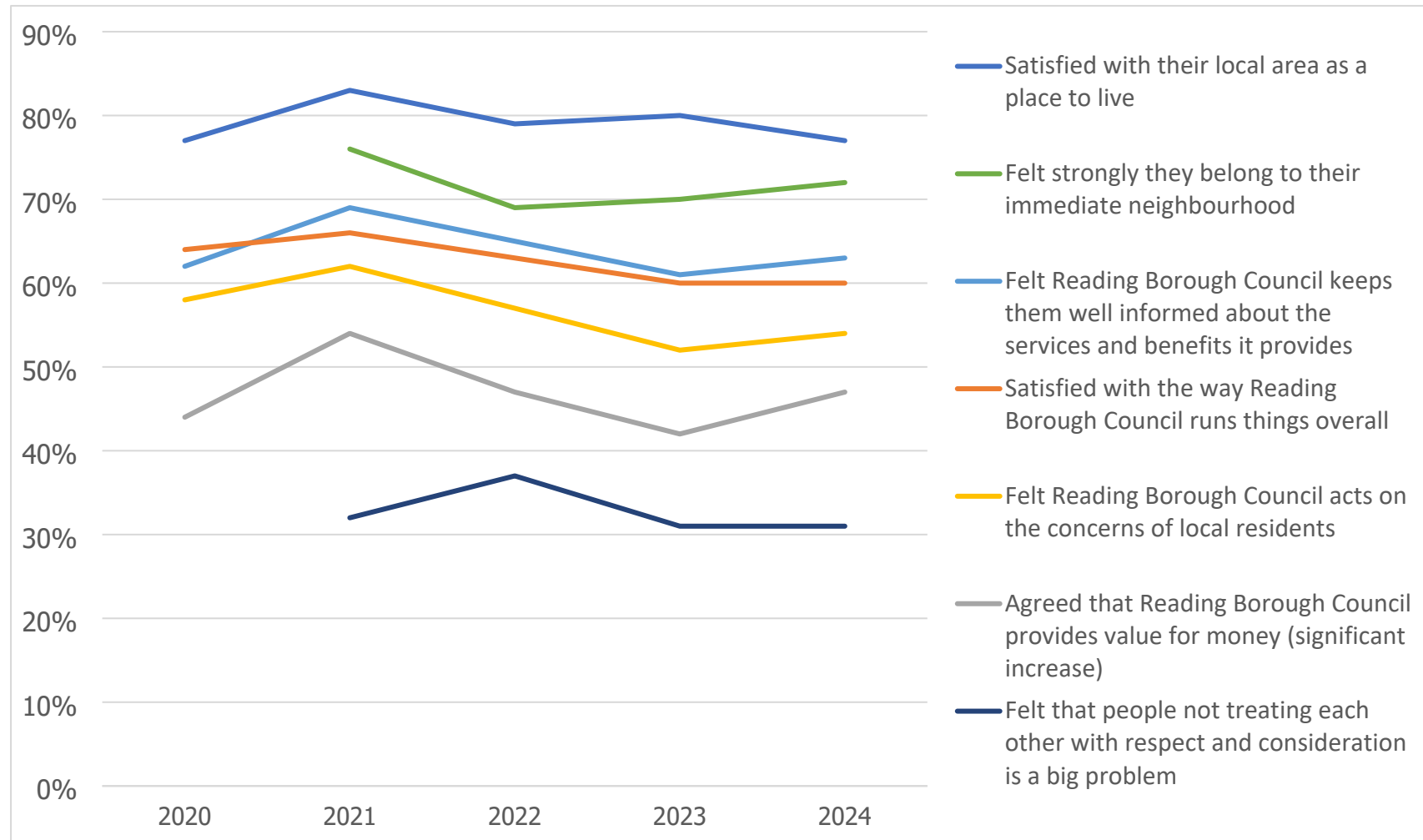
Ethnic Group of Respondents



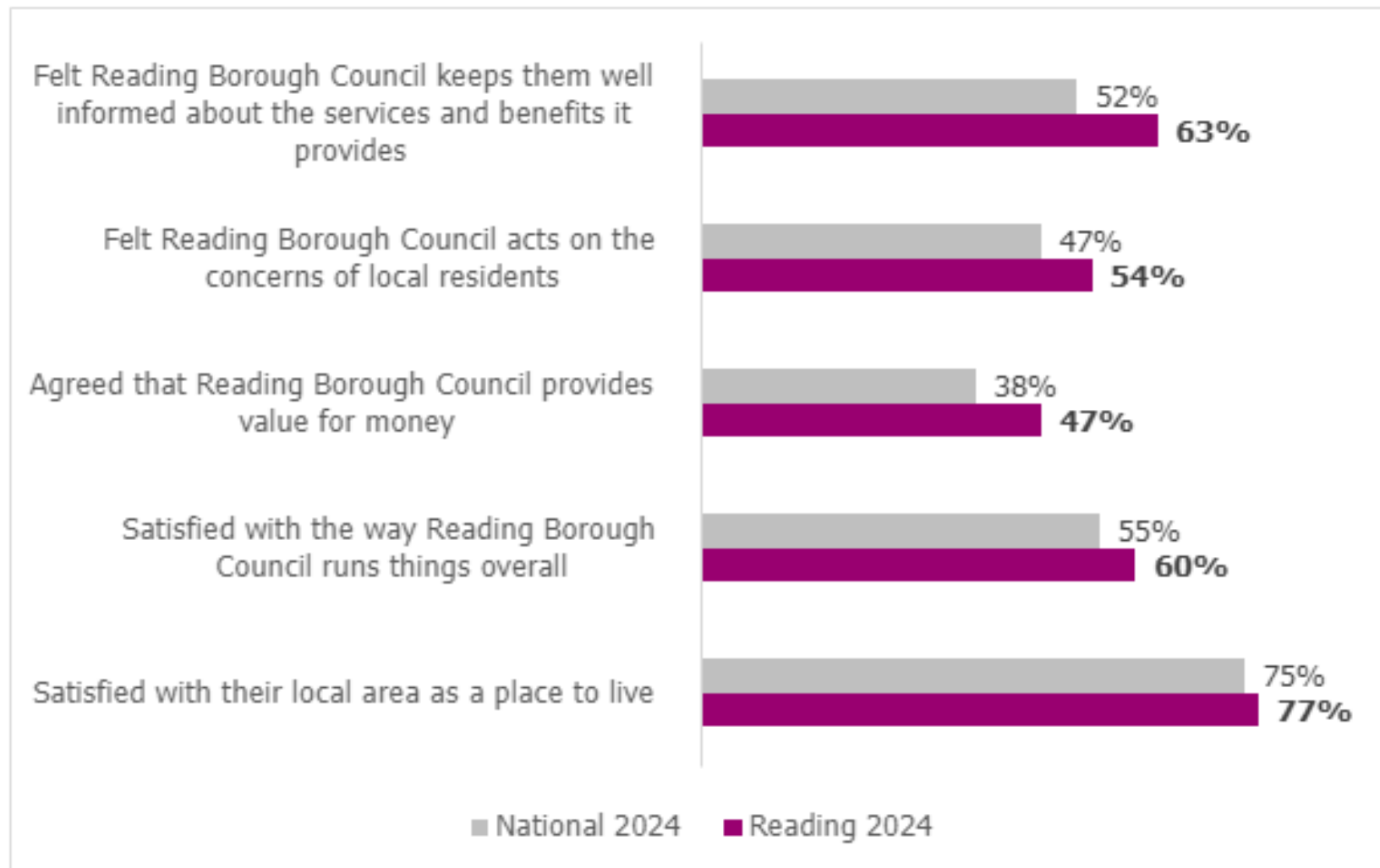
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Appendix 12 – Summary of the Residents Survey 2024

Comparison with previous results



Comparison with LGA national results



Question	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	LGA June 24¹
RBC						
Percentage satisfied with the way Reading Borough Council runs things overall	64%	66%	63%	60%	60%	55%
Percentage who agreed that Reading Borough Council provides value for money	44%	54%	47%	42%	47%	38%
Percentage who felt Reading Borough Council acts on the concerns of local residents	58%	62%	57%	52%	54%	47%
Percentage who felt Reading Borough Council keeps them well informed about the services and benefits it provides	62%	69%	65%	61%	63%	52%
Local area						
Percentage satisfied with their local area as a place to live	77%	83%	79%	80%	77%	75%
Percentage who felt the Council keeps them well informed about the services and benefits it provides	62%	69%	65%	61%	63%	52%
Percentage who felt strongly they belong to their immediate neighbourhood	n/a	76%	69%	70%	72%	n/a
Percentage who felt that people not treating each other with respect and consideration is a big problem	n/a	32%	37%	31%	31%	n/a

¹ Local Government Association satisfaction survey of a random sample of 1000 respondents, carried out every 4 months

Question	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024		Net change from 2024 ²		LGA June 2024		Net difference with LGA	
Percentage satisfaction with Council Services	Satisfied	Dis-satisfied	Satisfied	Satisfied	Satisfied	Dis-satisfied	Satisfied	Dis-satisfied	Satisfied	Dis-satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Public transport	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	77%	11%	-	-	n/a	n/a	-	-
Parks and green spaces	81%	11%	75%	10%	79%	13%	78%	15%	76%	12%	-2%	-3%	74%	12%	2%	0%
Waste collection service	79%	16%	73%	17%	75%	17%	67%	22%	69%	20%	2%	-2%	77%	15%	-8%	5%
Street cleaning service	67%	22%	66%	19%	61%	24%	59%	29%	55%	30%	-4%	1%	57%	26%	-2%	4%
Schools	61%	9%	55%	7%	58%	12%	55%	11%	59%	10%	4%	-1%	n/a	n/a	-	-
Customer service	54%	16%	53%	14%	50%	18%	47%	17%	48%	18%	1%	1%	n/a	n/a	-	-
Cultural services	56%	15%	52%	14%	60%	14%	62%	13%	58%	14%	-4%	1%	n/a	n/a	-	-
Library services	45%	19%	46%	12%	53%	15%	51%	13%	55%	16%	4%	3%	55%	11%	0%	5%
Sport and leisure services	49%	30%	41%	25%	51%	23%	62%	15%	63%	15%	1%	0%	56%	14%	7%	1%
Road maintenance	34%	56%	39%	45%	40%	42%	36%	51%	38%	45%	2%	-6%	27%	59%	11%	-14%
Services and support for children and young people	40%	21%	37%	20%	41%	23%	41%	22%	38%	20%	-3%	-2%	33%	23%	5%	-3%
Services and support for older people	29%	19%	33%	13%	25%	18%	27%	16%	33%	16%	6%	0%	37%	20%	-4%	-4%
Action on climate change	33%	23%	27%	24%	30%	27%	33%	19%	37%	15%	4%	-4%	n/a	n/a	-	-

² This is the net difference in % satisfied between 2023 and 2024.

Policy Committee

17 February 2025



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Title	Capital Strategy 2025/26
Purpose of the report	To make a recommendation to Council
Report status	Public report
Report author	Stuart Donnelly, Financial Planning & Strategy Manager
Lead Councillor	Councillor Terry, Leader of the Council
Corporate priority	Our Foundations
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That Policy Committee recommend to Council the adoption of the Capital Strategy attached as Appendix 1; 2. That Policy Committee note the updated Action Plan that forms Annex D of the Capital Strategy (Appendix 1) together with the associated financial implications.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy' (CIPFA) revised Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities 2021 requires local authorities to produce a Capital Strategy on an annual basis which must be approved by Council.
- 1.2. The Capital Strategy 2025/26 attached at Appendix 1 meets the statutory requirements and has been updated where required. However, there are no material changes from the Capital Strategy 2024/25.

2. Policy Context

- 2.1. The aim of the Capital Strategy is to support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan, which includes the Council's agreed priorities.

3. The Proposal

- 3.1. The CIPFA 2021 Prudential and Treasury Management Codes require the Council to prepare a Capital Strategy report which sets out the Council's capital requirements arising from policy objectives, as well as the associated governance procedures and risk appetite of the Council.
- 3.2. The Capital Strategy provides a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of services; along with an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability. It shows how revenue, capital and balance sheet planning are integrated.
- 3.3. The Strategy is informed by the Council's priorities and links to other key strategy documents notably the Corporate Plan, Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), Treasury Management Strategy, Asset Management Strategy, Corporate Investment Strategy and Carbon Reduction Strategy.

- 3.4. The Capital Strategy sets out among other things, the Council's approach to asset management planning, development, and monitoring of the Capital Programme's delivery.
- 3.5. The figures in the various tables within the Capital Strategy, most particularly the Capital Programme itself, have been updated to reflect the latest position consistent with the MTFS report elsewhere on this agenda. Also, the Action Plan at Appendix 1 Annex D has been refreshed. The Director of Finance will keep this under review during the year and will bring forward any changes that may be required.
- 3.6. The Capital Programme Board, chaired by the Director of Finance, was introduced in December 2022 to increase oversight of the Capital Programme and its delivery. Terms of Reference for the Board are included at Appendix 1 Annex B.
- 3.7. The proposed Action Plan at Appendix 1 Annex D of the Strategy identifies three areas of ongoing work required for the Council to remain compliant with the CIPFA code requirements. These are:
- Developing our knowledge of the Council's existing asset base;
 - Identifying what assets we need in the future;
 - Developing and implementing new systems and processes to enable the transition;
- 3.8. Progress against actions still outstanding are reported on the face of the Action Plan along with revised target completion dates. Work to understand the existing General Fund property asset base has been completed and a three-year rolling programme of review has been implemented to keep the knowledge up to date. In addition, to meet the Consumer Standards requirements regarding the accurate, up to date and evidenced understanding of the condition of the housing assets, work is being undertaken to secure a provider to undertake stock condition surveys and refresh the data set on all the council's residential housing assets within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The Capital Programme Board under the leadership of the Director of Finance has met regularly throughout the year to progress the programme of work identified in the Action Plan.

4. Contribution to Strategic Aims

- 4.1. Full details of the Council's Corporate Plan and the projects which will deliver these priorities are published on the Council's website. These priorities and the Corporate Plan demonstrate how the Council meets its legal obligation to be efficient, effective, and economical. An updated Corporate Plan will be presented to Council in March 2025.
- 4.2. The Capital Strategy provides a link between the Corporate Plan and the development of the Capital Programme as well as setting out the approach taken to asset management to ensure that these fit with the corporate priorities.

5. Environmental and Climate Implications

- 5.1. There are no environmental or climate implications arising directly from the report; these are set out in the 2025/26 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 – 2027/28 Report which appears elsewhere on the agenda.

6. Community Engagement

- 6.1. The public was consulted as part of the 'Budget Engagement', which ran from 19th December 2024 until 16th January 2025. The feedback from this engagement, alongside the feedback from the Residents' Survey 2024 is set out in the main body and appendices

of the 2025/26 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 – 2027/28 Report which appears elsewhere on the agenda.

7. Equality Implications

- 7.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 7.2. An initial Assessment of the proposals as set out in the MTFS (including the Capital Programme) has been undertaken and Appendix 10 to the 2025/26 Budget & Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26-2027/28 Report, which appears elsewhere on the agenda, sets out the individual budget proposals where specific equality impact assessments will need to be undertaken prior to implementation.
- 7.3. Additionally, when considering changes to service provision, local authorities are under a duty to consult representatives of a wide range of local stakeholders. Authorities must consult representatives of council tax payers, those who use or are likely to use services provided by the authority and those appearing to the authority to have an interest in any area within which the authority carries out functions. The consultation on the MTFS Update proposals assists with this requirement.

8. Other Relevant Considerations

- 8.1. There are none.

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1. This report assists the Council in fulfilling its statutory obligation to prepare a Capital Strategy report which sets out the Council's capital requirements arising from policy objectives along with associated governance procedures and the Council's risk appetite.

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1. The Council's capital expenditure requirements are set out within the Strategy attached at Appendix 1. The financial implications of the Council's Capital expenditure plans are set out in the 2025/26 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 – 2027/28 Report and Treasury Management Strategy Statement which appear elsewhere on the agenda.
- 10.2. All schemes included in the approved Capital Programme over £2.5m, including those planned to start in 2025/26, require spend approval from the responsible Committee or Council, with the exception of expenditure on rolling programmes of routine capital expenditure.

11. Timetable for Implementation

- 11.1. Not applicable.

12. Background Papers

- 12.1. There are none.

Appendices

1. Capital Strategy 2025/26

Appendix 1 – Capital Strategy 2025/26

February 2025

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Context
3. Approach to Capital Investments
4. Asset Management Planning
5. Capital Programme (2025/26 – 2029/30)
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Annex A - Schedule of Properties Available for Disposal

Annex B - Capital Programme Board Terms of Reference (ToR)

Annex C – Prioritisation Matrix

Annex D - Action Plan

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (2021), published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), requires each Local Authority to produce a Capital Strategy on an annual basis. This Capital Strategy document is aimed at meeting those requirements.
- 1.2. As well as meeting the requirements of the Prudential Code, this Strategy also has regard to the statutory guidance on Local Government Investments issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in February 2018, and the statutory guidance on the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). The purpose of the statutory guidance and the Prudential Code is to ensure that capital investments made by Local Authorities are affordable, prudent and sustainable.
- 1.3. Under the legislative framework the Capital Strategy is one of a suite of four linked strategies, the others being: The Annual Investment Strategy (treasury management), the Treasury Management Strategy and the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy.
- 1.4. In practice the main purpose of the Capital Strategy is to define how Reading Borough Council will maximise the impact of its limited capital resources to support the delivery of its key aims and objectives.

2. Context

- 2.1. The Council's Capital Strategy provides an overview of where and how the Council intends to deploy its capital resources to support delivery of its strategic aims as set out in the Corporate Plan.
- 2.2. The Capital Strategy also needs to be read in conjunction with other strategic documents such as the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, the Council's Asset Management Plans, Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) and the Commercial Investment Strategy.

Legislative Changes

- 2.3. The Government has been concerned about local authorities investing in the property market purely for financial return for some time and have steadily tightened the rules to restrict such actions. In 2020 the Government announced that it would prevent any local authority which has such investments in its Capital Programme from borrowing from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLb). In response to this the Council's Policy Committee at its meeting on 14th December 2020 removed this activity from its Capital Programme from 2020/21 onwards.

Demographic Changes

- 2.4. Demographic growth is one of the key drivers of demand for Council services and consequently cost pressures. Whilst general central government funding has seen real terms decreases over the last decade, service demand and demographic pressures have risen.
- 2.5. According to the Office of National Statistics' latest census in 2021, since 2011 Reading's total population has risen by 11.9% to 174,200, one of the highest percentage increases in the South East. However, its demographic composition has changed, shifting towards an older population, with increases of 17.2% of residents aged 65+, 11.7% aged 15-64, and 8.6% aged under 15, which includes a decrease of 14.2% in the 0-4 age category.

- 2.6. The Government's Plan for Change, published in December 2024, included a target to increase home building in England by 1.5 million homes during the course of this Parliament. Indicative targets also published in December 2024, as part of the outcome of a consultation on proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system, included a target for Reading of an additional 1028 homes to be built per annum, which the Council will need to monitor against. However the Council's own published Draft Local Plan includes a target for 825 additional homes to be built per annum between 2023 to 2041, based on analysis of the capacity to deliver.
- 2.7. The consultation outcome also announced a change to place even stronger emphasis on the value of brownfield redevelopment. This may have an impact on the centre of Reading which has a large office footprint, particularly post Covid depending on people's ability and preference to work from home.

Technological Changes

- 2.8. The pace of change in technological advancement gets ever faster. The Council has changed the way it uses its office space as a consequence of staff continuing to work flexibly post Covid. We have also invested in technology to change the way in which we engage with the public and deliver services. Examples include the new library app enabling residents to reserve or renew books remotely as well as conveniently manage multiple library accounts and family library 'cards' in one place and the new 'My Reading Account' single sign on solution, allowing residents to access multiple services in one place with one set of credentials. In the future the Council will also explore the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Robotics to enhance service delivery.
- 2.9. The Council also has a role in facilitating change in the wider community. Examples of this might be in providing charging points for electric vehicles, or even providing street furniture which facilitates the use of self-driving vehicles.

Environmental and Climate Change

- 2.10. The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and has set a policy objective of making Reading a carbon neutral town by 2030. This ambition will require further investment in 'green technologies' not only for the Council's own operational sites and housing stock, but to facilitate a step change across the Borough.
- 2.11. Improvements made to date and underway include enhancements to encourage the use of sustainable transport, walking and cycling as attractive alternatives to the private car and reduce resulting congestion, carbon emissions and other air quality issues. Examples include the implementation of the Bus Service Improvement Plan, including a bus rapid transit scheme, new bus lanes, improvements to park and ride facilities and a package of town centre public transport enhancements, bus signal priority measures and improvements for passengers at bus stops. Further examples include working with National Rail and Great Western Railways to construct and improve train stations and multi-modal interchanges, working with Reading Transport Ltd to purchase vehicles and related infrastructure to enable the operation of electric bus services, and Active Travel initiatives to improve walking and cycling networks.
- 2.12. Further carbon neutral initiatives include the generation of solar energy, the use of air source heat pumps to provide leisure centre heating, the use of ground source heat pumps for heating/cooling the new theatre development, electrification of the Council's in-house vehicle fleet, provision of Electric Vehicle (EV charging points) and improved home insulation, etc.

- 2.13. There may also be a need for investment to mitigate the impacts of climate change such as flood defence or increased planting to either absorb water or provide a cooling effect in highly urban areas. The Council is committed to a tree planting programme to increase canopy cover, improve biodiversity and reduce localised flooding.
- 2.14. On 15th October 2019 the Council formally adopted the 'Unite Construction Charter' where the Authority supports the 'Get Britain Building' campaign, which is aimed at supporting and sustaining the British construction industry. As a result, all relevant construction contracts will be required to comply with the Authority's Sustainable Buying Standard for Highways and Construction Materials, which requires structural steel and other relevant materials to be covered by BES 6001 Responsible Sourcing of Construction Product certification, or equivalent.

3. Approach to Capital Investments

- 3.1. The key objectives of capital investment are to:

- Support service delivery in line with the Council's strategic objectives and any statutory requirements;
- Maintain existing assets to appropriately fulfil their intended function, or maximise their value if they are surplus to requirements and intended for disposal;
- Facilitate the generation of income from Council Services;
- Enhance value for money through reducing or avoiding costs;
- Support regeneration and economic development.

- 3.2. Capital investments will also have regard to the following:

- Be affordable and financially sustainable;
- Seek to maximise the use of Government grants to support the Capital Programme;
- Improve environmental impact wherever possible;
- Maximise community benefits, working in partnership with other agencies if appropriate;
- Be forward looking in terms of technological developments and social trends;
- Seek to minimise the risk profile of the investment within the limitations imposed by meeting other criteria.

- 3.3. Any capital bids that do not meet the above objectives will not be supported.

- 3.4. Existing capital assets that do not contribute towards the above objectives will be considered for disposal. However, the Council will aim to maximise the capital receipt from any such disposal and as a consequence, may continue to hold assets awaiting favourable market conditions. Where this is the case the reason for retaining the asset will be made explicit and an action plan/criteria for disposal agreed.

- 3.5. To ensure that capital investment is conducted in line with this Strategy the Council has put in place governance arrangements set out in more detail in Section 7 of this document.

4. Asset Management Planning

- 4.1. The Council has a typical local authority asset portfolio. This consists of operational assets, investment assets and assets held for specific community or regeneration purposes as set out below:

- Operational Assets – supporting core business and service delivery;

- Investment Assets – to provide a financial return to the Council;
- Community Assets – to support specific local community projects;
- Regeneration Assets – enabling strategic place shaping and economic growth.

Operational Assets

- 4.2. The Council holds a wide range of operational assets such as land and buildings, highways infrastructure, vehicles and ICT Hardware and Software.

Land and Buildings

- 4.3. The purchase, on-going management and disposal of General Fund land and buildings is governed by the Asset Management Strategy 2024-2034, which includes the Asset Management Action Plan and the Asset Management Policy.
- 4.4. The Council has historical data on its property portfolio to assess building condition and backlog maintenance which is updated through a rolling programme of condition surveys. The Council retains an annual building maintenance programme funded from revenue. This is primarily a responsive repairs and specific statutory compliance budget.
- 4.5. There is a specific budget within the Capital Programme that relates to the maintenance and improvement of corporate and community buildings. In the period 2025/26-2029/30, this budget is £1.000m per annum. It is primarily directed at operational buildings (non-Housing) and excludes ring fenced funding. This is in addition to specific projects detailed in the Capital Programme.
- 4.6. Under the Council's Asset Management Strategy 2024-2034, any surplus properties are prioritised to be used to maximise revenue or capital resources which can be done in a number of ways on a case by case basis. For example, the Council may choose to seek offers on a freehold, or commercial leasehold basis. Alternatively, surplus land may be suitable to be transferred to the HRA to facilitate the development of affordable housing.
- 4.7. The Council's housing stock, within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), is subject to a programme of major repairs, planned at £20.918m in 2025/26, in order to ensure the stock is maintained at a suitable standard. The HRA Capital Programme also contains New Build & Acquisition schemes to provide more affordable housing within Reading and a scheme to purchase homes currently owned by the Council's wholly owned housing company, Homes for Reading Ltd. The Council also has plans to build new sheltered homes alongside adult day care services to meet the needs of older people and vulnerable adults. Work is being undertaken to secure a provider to undertake stock conditions surveys on all the councils residential housing assets within the HRA.

Highways Infrastructure

- 4.8. Highways infrastructure is maintained and developed in line with the [Highway Asset Management Policy](#). This aims to secure highways assets in a manner which allows the delivery of services to an agreed standard. The Policy is underpinned by the Highways Asset Management Plan and Strategy (HAMPS) which defines the management strategies to be adopted throughout the life cycle of assets in order for them to facilitate the delivery of those service standards.
- 4.9. In support of the HAMPS the highways network is regularly surveyed to determine the condition of assets and thus identify the need to repair or replace those assets. This is

summarised and updated in the Annual Status Options Report (ASOR) produced for the highways network.

- 4.10. Delivery of the HAMPS is overseen by the Highways Asset Management Board which meets regularly throughout the year.

Transport

- 4.11. Since 2001, all local transport authorities have been required to produce a Local Transport Plan (LTP) and to keep this under review. The LTP contains the objectives, policies and schemes intended to improve transport in an area, contributing to wider social economic and environmental benefits. The LTP also contains a Strategy Plan and Implementation Plan.
- 4.12. Reading's third Strategy Plan (LTP3) [Local Transport Plan 2011-26.pdf](#) sets out the long term policy approach from 2011 to 2026 and has been subject to review every three years.
- 4.13. Reading's LTP3 Implementation Plan (published separately) sets out an annual budget and delivery programme with reserve schemes for subsequent years. This document is reviewed annually through the committee reporting process and includes an update of the current delivery position of the Strategy Plan in terms of monitoring against objectives.

Vehicles

- 4.14. Since 2016/17 the Council has adopted a multi-year Vehicle Replacement Programme to ensure the best value in procuring new vehicles and to minimise service risk from vehicle failure. In addition, the Vehicle Replacement Programme allows a clear path to be plotted for the electrification of the fleet in order to contribute towards the Council's ambition of a carbon neutral Reading by 2030. As an early adopter of such technology the Council is likely to incur some additional financial cost in the short term, even if reducing the environmental cost. These higher costs are reflected in the Capital Programme and associated revenue budgets.

ICT Assets

- 4.15. The Council's approach to Information & Communication Technology (ICT) is set out in the [ICT Future Operating Model](#) agreed by Policy Committee in June 2020 and its broader Digital Transformation Strategy was agreed by Policy Committee in July 2021.
- 4.16. Both for financial reasons and in order to provide more responsive services in line with customer expectations the Council has adopted a large-scale transformation programme. Much of this transformation is underpinned by new digital infrastructure in order to facilitate new ways of working. The Covid-19 pandemic has both illustrated the importance of this approach and accelerated the pace of change.
- 4.17. ICT needs to be agile, responsive and reliable, but at the same time secure. The rapidly evolving ICT market provides a range of options which will need careful consideration to strike the right balance in meeting these requirements. However, there is a clear trend towards solutions being provided on an as used basis which may mean that the Council will require a smaller asset base in this area of activity in the future. This may require some funding adjustments from capital to revenue to support this changed environment. However, given the capitalisable costs associated with the acquisition and implementation of the solutions satisfying the transformation strategy, the effect of this trend is likely to be a medium-long term rather than short term one.

- 4.18. The Digital Transformation Strategy is due to be updated. Whilst the direction of travel will remain largely the same it will aim to uplift technology to the next level by introducing Artificial Intelligence and Robotics as an example.
- 4.19. As part of the Capital Programme 2025/26 to 2029/30 a new ICT Technology Refresh scheme is included to refresh the Council's computer estate and equip staff with technology to maximize performance and efficiency.

Investment Assets

- 4.20. Investment assets can be broken down into two main categories: financial investment assets e.g. bank deposits, and non-financial investment assets, e.g. property.
- 4.21. Financial investments can fall into three categories, as defined by the Statutory Guidance issued under section 15(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 2003: Specified Investments; Non-Specified Investments and Loans. Specified and Non-Specified investments are only likely to be undertaken as part of managing the Council's cash flows and are therefore covered by the Treasury Management Strategy.
- 4.22. Loans may also be used as part of cash flow management processes but may also be used in support of specific service objectives. Loans provided by the Council are subject to the Council's Loans Policy and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy. Where loans are provided to support service objectives there may be other social, economic, or environmental issues involved which impact on the nature of the loan provided. These will need to be considered on a case by case basis but may mean that loans are provided on terms that are not fully commercial, although anti-competitive legislation will always need to be taken into account. Even if not established on a fully commercial basis such loans may yield a financial return to the Council.
- 4.23. Reading Borough Council has provided a number of loans to its wholly owned companies as set out in Table 1 below. The portfolio includes £16.900m of loans made to Homes for Reading Ltd where principal repayments due in September 2022 and March 2023 were not made. These loans, including the additional £7.000m due in March 2029, are now scheduled to be repaid over the next few years following the planned sale of properties to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) prior to the closure of the company. The £5.000m loan to Brighter Futures for Children Ltd (BFFC) is expected to be repaid in autumn 2025.

Table 1. Service Investments - Loans to Wholly Owned Companies

	Principal due to be outstanding at 31/03/2025 (£m)	2025/26 Interest due (£m)	Interest rate (%)
Brighter Futures for Children Ltd	5.000	0.045	1.81
Reading Transport Ltd*	5.587	0.434	5.00
Homes for Reading Ltd	7.000	0.263	3.75
Homes for Reading Ltd	16.900	0.073	6.35

* Values above do not include lease agreements with Reading Transport Ltd.

- 4.24. The Council also holds an equity stake in some of these wholly owned companies and other bodies which support the service objectives of the Council. These are set out in table 2 below.

Table 2. Service Investments - Equity Investments

	Fair Value as at 31/03/2024 (£m)
Homes for Reading Ltd	5.151
Reading Transport Ltd	3.974
Municipal Bonds Agency (MBA)*	0.000
Reading Community Energy Society Ltd	0.060

*The Council's £0.064m investment in the MBA has been valued on a Fair Value basis at £nil in the Council's 2023/24 Financial accounts due to the companies reported negative net worth as at November 2023.

- 4.25. Non-financial investments are non-financial assets held by the Council partly or primarily to generate a financial return. This might be through an appreciation in the capital value of the asset or by delivering a regular income stream in excess of the costs of owning the asset, or both. Although other opportunities might be considered it is likely that such investments will involve the holding of property assets.
- 4.26. In line with many other councils, Reading Borough Council has historically established a small portfolio of investment properties primarily to generate a regular income stream to off-set significant reductions in funding from Government. The approach to developing this portfolio is governed by the Commercial Investment Strategy. In the light of recent developments, e.g. Covid-19 and the reform of PWLB lending terms, the Commercial Investment Strategy relating to the Council's existing commercial assets is being reviewed.
- 4.27. Traditionally property as an investment class has offered relatively high yield and less volatility than financial investments. However, it is an illiquid asset and as such carries the risk of being unable to respond quickly to changes in market conditions.
- 4.28. Central Government have never been entirely comfortable with local authorities entering into the property market for yield and have steadily increased regulation on these activities. In November 2020 HM Treasury announced changes to the rules in respect of borrowing from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB). Councils purchasing investment assets primarily for yield (PIAPY) no longer have access to borrowing from the PWLB, either for those specific assets, or the rest of their Capital Programme. In addition, updated statutory guidance on the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) was issued in April 2024. This guidance confirms the duty to make MRP when the acquisition of an investment property results in an increase to the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR).
- 4.29. The Council last purchased an investment property asset in 2019/20, prior to the November 2020 rule changes on borrowing set out above and has no plans to purchase further property for investment purposes at this time. This does not preclude investment in regeneration schemes the primary purpose of which is to improve the economic, environmental, or social welfare of the borough. In such cases some income may be derived from the regeneration, but it will not be the primary reason for investment. The review of the existing investment property portfolio will need to determine the best course of action for the future, with interim lease events or asset opportunities being assessed on as case by case basis to retain/increase value and reduce cost/risk.
- 4.30. The commercial investment portfolio held by the Council is set out in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Commercial Investment Portfolio

	Annual Rental Yield 2024/25	Capital Value as at 31st March 2024 (as per draft accounts)	Purchase Price including costs	Net Annual Income after Financing Cost
	(£m)	(£m)	(£m)	(£m)
Kennet Wharf, Queens Road	1.295	10.900	21.276	0.702
Adelphi House, Friar Street	0.688	9.310	12.116	0.350
160 - 163 Friar Street Office	0.730	9.200	11.884	0.399
Four 10 TVP	2.276	32.200	39.968	1.162
Acre Business Park	0.253	2.090	N/A	0.253
Albury Close	0.048	0.730	N/A	0.048
16 Bennett Road	0.052	0.960	N/A	0.052
Total	5.342	65.390	85.244	2.966

- 4.31. It is still possible that the Council will make a financial return from its ownership of property or other assets where yield is not the main purpose for holding them. An example of this would be the land on which the Oracle Shopping Centre is located; the Council earns a financial return from its ownership of the land however the primary purpose of owning this land was to facilitate re-generation of Reading town centre.

Community and Regeneration Assets

- 4.32. Assets held for community or regeneration purposes will tend to be land and property held by the Council for wider community benefit beyond services delivered directly by the Council, but where the main purpose is not to make a return.

Asset Types Defined by the Prudential Code

- 4.33. The 2021 Prudential Code requires investments to be analysed between investments for treasury management, service and commercial purposes. These three categories are defined as:
- Investments for treasury management purposes, or treasury management investments, are those investments that arise from the organisation's cash flows or treasury risk management activity and ultimately represent balances that need to be invested until the cash is required for use in the course of business;
 - Investments for service purposes, or service investments are held primarily and directly for the delivery of public services (including housing, regeneration and local infrastructure), or in support of joint working with others to deliver such services;
 - Investments for commercial purposes, or commercial investments, are taken or held primarily for financial return and are not linked to treasury management activity or directly part of delivering services.
- 4.34. The 2021 Prudential Code states that assets should be clearly separated into these categories as each type of investment has very different objectives, criteria and risk characteristics.

- 4.35. In Reading treasury management investments are addressed in the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) and therefore not dealt with in any detail in this Capital Strategy, although are recognised as part of the wider Capital Strategy environment.
- 4.36. Reading's investment in commercial property falls within the remit of the Commercial Investment Strategy.
- 4.37. The focus of this Capital Strategy is on service assets as defined by the Prudential Code 2021. However, as the umbrella strategy document it is important that the Capital Strategy recognises the importance of other capital investments and the governance arrangements that apply to them.

5. Capital Programme (2025/26 – 2029/30)

- 5.1. The Capital Programme sets out the Council's proposed capital expenditure. It facilitates the delivery of corporate priorities by:
- Providing investment to improve access to decent housing to meet local needs and help combat homelessness, as well as maintaining existing council dwellings;
 - Supporting delivery of sustainable, local social care services through investment to enable independent and supported living in the local community for both children and adults;
 - Working in partnership with Reading Transport, Network Rail, the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and others in seeking funding and delivering an improved transport network, whilst being mindful of environmental factors;
 - Building schools to meet the future needs of the population and ensuring access to education;
 - Providing investment to deliver low carbon living, reduce pollution and increase recycling;
 - Providing investment in community and leisure provision to meet Reading's needs;
 - Addressing inequality, for example by investing in community safety;
 - Facilitating transformation schemes, ensuring that the Council is fit for the future.
- 5.2. The General Fund and HRA Capital Programmes set out the Council's plan of capital expenditure for future years, including details on the funding of the schemes. The Capital Programme 2025/26 – 2029/30 is set out as part of the 2025/26 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2025/26-2027/28 Report for Member approval. It identifies £334m to improve the infrastructure, asset base and effectiveness of service provision for the residents of Reading. The Programme has a borrowing requirement of £154m after external contributions such as grants, section 106 contributions and Community Infrastructure Levy funding have been applied.
- 5.3. The financing of the Capital Programme is set out in section 6.

Table 4. Capital Expenditure (2024/25 – 2029/30)

	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m	2027/28 Estimate £m	2028/29 Estimate £m	2029/30 Estimate £m
Communities & Adult Social Care	3.039	8.876	2.986	2.223	4.977	1.522
Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services	47.267	41.162	16.871	16.477	8.958	5.122
Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services – Education Schemes	15.098	10.139	12.301	1.612	1.612	0.000
Resources	2.834	3.028	2.925	2.096	1.937	0.640
Corporate	3.899	3.623	1.600	1.600	1.600	1.600
General Fund	72.137	66.828	36.683	24.008	19.084	8.884
HRA	27.335	90.143	29.778	18.996	28.844	10.500
Total	99.472	156.971	66.461	43.004	47.928	19.384

5.4. Highlights of the Capital Programme 2025/26 to 2029/30 include:

- £17m on remodelling provision at the Hexagon Theatre;
- £7m to relocate the Reading Library to the Civic Offices;
- £5m on a Bus Service Improvement Programme;
- £9m on the re-provisioning of social care facilities;
- £15m Investment in the Council's local highways infrastructure (including Bridges) addressing feedback from the residents' survey;
- £3m on schemes to help reduce Reading's carbon footprint;
- £2m on the provision of additional children's homes.
- £16m on retro-fitting carbon reduction measures to Council dwellings (HRA);
- £32m to purchase properties from Homes for Reading Ltd (HRA);
- £76m on the provision of more affordable housing and sheltered homes to meet the needs of older people and vulnerable adults (HRA).

5.5. As set out above, appropriate due diligence will be undertaken prior to the acquisition of any asset with the extent and depth reflecting the level of additional risk being considered. Due diligence processes and procedures will include:

- Effective scrutiny of proposed acquisitions;
- Identification of the risk to both the capital sums invested and any returns;
- Understanding the extent and nature of any external underwriting of those risks;
- The potential impact on the financial sustainability of the Council if those risks come to fruition;
- Identification of the revenue liabilities/costs of holding the asset;
- Identification of the assets being held for security against debt and any prior charges on those assets; and
- Where necessary independent and expert advice will be sought.

6. Financing the Capital Programme

6.1. Financing for the Capital Programme comes from the following main sources:

- External Sources (Government/Non-Governmental/Private Sector)
 - Capital Grants
 - Developer Contributions
 - Section 106 Contribution
 - Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
- Internal Sources (Council Resources)
 - Capital Receipts
 - Revenue Contributions
- Prudential Borrowing
 - Borrowing from the Public Work Loans Board (PWLB)
 - Borrowing from Private Sector

6.2. **Capital Grants** – Grant funding is one of the largest sources of financing for the Capital Programme. The majority of grants are awarded by Central Government departments, but some are received from other external bodies. Grants can be specific to a scheme and have conditions attached (such as time and criteria restrictions), or for general use.

6.3. Developer Contributions

- **(Section 106)** – A mechanism which mitigates the impact of the development on the locality and is used to improve existing or build new infrastructure in the local area.
- **(CIL)** – is a levy on new developments the proceeds of which are used to support development in the local area by funding infrastructure or refurbishment of existing provision to alleviate the additional burden a new development places on both local and strategic infrastructure. The Council has agreed a protocol for using CIL as follows:
 - 80% of CIL receipts will be used to support the Capital Programme;
 - 15% will be allocated to areas in which CIL liable development is taking place; and
 - 5% will be allocated to cover administrative costs.

6.4. **Capital Receipts** – money exceeding £10,000, which is received from the sale of an asset. The Council's general policy is that capital receipts are pooled and used to finance future capital expenditure and investment according to priorities, although they may be used to repay outstanding debt on assets financed from loans, as permitted by regulations.

6.5. Although, capital receipts would not usually be spent on revenue, under the current [Flexible use of Capital Receipts](#) direction, it is permissible to treat certain costs as capital expenditure provided these costs are funded from capital receipts received by the Council during the period (2016/17 – 2024/25) specified within the direction. These costs must also meet the definition as laid out in the direction i.e. costs must relate to a scheme to deliver service efficiencies and transformation and have been agreed by Council in advance. The Local Government Finance Policy Statement, announced on 28th November 2024 confirmed that the direction will now be extended until 31st March 2030 and that the restriction with respect to redundancy costs would be removed, but further guidance has yet to be issued.

6.6. The Council's use of Flexible Capital Receipts has been refreshed as part of the proposed 2025/26 – 2027/28 MTFS. The MTFS includes an allocation of capital receipts to support transformation and savings delivery (the Delivery Fund). Regular

monitoring and administration of the Delivery Fund takes place through the Council's Corporate Programme governance arrangements.

- 6.7. Table 5 sets out the latest projection on capital receipts:

Table 5. Capital Receipts Projection (General Fund)

	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m	2027/28 Estimate £m	2028/29 Estimate £m	2029/30 Estimate £m
Prior Year Brought Forward	7.832	2.830	1.402	1.877	3.051	16.921
Receipts in Year:						
GF Property Disposals	3.707	1.493	3.168	2.424	15.120	0.000
Other Disposals	0.494	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.250
Balance Available to be Applied	12.033	4.572	4.820	4.551	18.421	17.171
Applied to Fund Delivery Fund	(3.144)	(1.500)	(1.500)	(1.500)	(1.500)	(1.500)
Applied to other GF schemes	(6.059)	(1.670)	(1.443)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Total	2.830	1.402	1.877	3.051	16.921	15.671

- 6.8. A schedule of properties anticipated to be available for disposal during the MTFS period is included at Annex A.
- 6.9. **Revenue Contributions** – The Council can choose to use revenue, from the approved revenue budget or use of earmarked reserves to fund capital expenditure. Given significant decreases in government revenue funding and continuing pressures on the provision of critical demand led services, this type of funding is anticipated to be minimal relative to other capital funding sources in the short to medium term. Members will continue to weigh the relative priorities of capital and revenue projects in allocating revenue resources.
- 6.10. **Prudential Borrowing** – relates to borrowing from either the PWLB or private sector lenders or internal borrowing to fund capital expenditure. This has historically been the main source of financing capital expenditure. The Council is guided by the CIPFA Prudential Code when determining the level of borrowing that is sustainable.
- 6.11. Prudential borrowing to fund capital projects brings with it the need to make a charge to revenue to reflect the cost of borrowing. The basis for this charge, known as Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) is set out within the Council's Treasury Management Strategy and MRP Policy Statement.
- 6.12. A summary of how the Capital Programme is to be financed is detailed below.

Table 6 - Summary of Capital Programme Funding

General Fund & HRA	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m	2027/28 Estimate £m	2028/29 Estimate £m	2029/30 Estimate £m
Capital Expenditure	99.472	156.971	66.461	43.004	47.928	19.384
Capital Receipts (GF & HRA)	(9.605)	(6.542)	(4.298)	(1.629)	(1.500)	(1.500)
Capital Grants & Other Contributions	(64.264)	(59.477)	(17.391)	(6.212)	(6.223)	(4.011)
Capital Reserves (HRA)	(13.552)	(21.730)	(16.187)	(11.894)	(10.500)	(10.500)
Revenue Contributions	(0.148)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Net Borrowing Requirement	11.903	69.222	28.585	23.269	29.705	3.373

7. Governance

Capital Scheme Approval

- 7.1. During 2022/23, a Capital Programme Board chaired by the Director of Finance was introduced to increase oversight of the Capital Programme and its delivery. Terms of Reference for the Board are included at Annex B.
- 7.2. All schemes included in the approved Capital Programme over £2.5m, including those planned to start in 2025/26, require spend approval from the responsible Committee or Council, with the exception of expenditure on rolling programmes of routine capital expenditure.
- 7.3. Any additional schemes that arise during the year will be added to the agreed Capital Programme once the relevant approvals have been obtained.
- 7.4. The Corporate Management Team considers and recommends service bids for capital resources as part of the annual budget setting process and provides strategic direction as to the development and use of property assets. The Capital bids are then considered and formally approved by Policy Committee and ultimately Council.
- 7.5. The Land, Property & Development Board (LPDB) provides oversight and direction in relation to the management of the Council's property assets. The LPD Steering Group, which sits below the LPDB, is an operational group responsible for managing property asset and estate strategy work streams and reporting on the gateway and monitoring position to the LPDB.

Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

- 7.6. Monitoring of the Capital Programme sits alongside the Council's revenue monitoring process with the submission of monthly reports to the Corporate Management Team for review. Detailed project oversight is provided by the Capital Programme Board as set out in Annex B.
- 7.7. Member oversight is achieved through lead Councillor briefings and quarterly reporting to Policy Committee.

- 7.8. All schemes within the Programme have a named project manager. It is the responsibility of individual project managers with support from their finance business partner to review and update expenditure and project delivery forecasts each month.
- 7.9. A gateway process has been developed through the Capital Programme Board to be used for all major capital schemes to allow stakeholders to assess the on-going case for the scheme prior to progress to further stages in the cycle. The gateway review process will allow early identification of areas that may require corrective action and provide validation that a project is ready to progress to the next stage. The Gateway stages are as follows:
- Initial proposal
 - Feasibility
 - Business Case
 - Project initiation
 - Final design/Procurement
 - Contract Award
 - Project Review

Prioritisation & Affordability

- 7.10. Due to competing demands for limited resources, the Council prioritises capital investment based on its overall objectives and a number of different factors including:
- Essential Health and Safety works;
 - Availability of external funding, full or match funding;
 - Invest to save opportunities;
 - Maintenance of the essential infrastructure of the organisation, such as buildings and IT; and
 - The outcome of feasibility studies.
- 7.11. Capital bids for new or amended schemes are submitted as part of the Council's annual budget review process. Business cases are quality assured by the Capital Programme Board and subsequently Corporate Management Team (CMT) prior to being recommended to Members for inclusion in the Capital Programme.
- 7.12. The overall affordability of the Capital Programme is reported on by the Council's Section 151 officer as part of the Council's budget setting process.
- 7.13. The Council has limited capital resources. Therefore, to help in determining how they are utilised, capital bids are assessed against a prioritisation matrix (see Annex C). This process helps to highlight risks and opportunities on a case by case basis and is used to rank projects against a set of agreed criteria.

Treasury Management Governance

- 7.14. The Council follows the requirements of The Local Government Act 2003 (the Act) and supporting regulations in managing its Treasury Management activities.
- 7.15. Audit & Governance Committee is the body responsible for overseeing the governance of the treasury management function within the Council. The Act requires that an annual Treasury Management Strategy be presented to Council for approval. Members also receive quarterly reports, to include an outturn report, in line with the revised Treasury Management Code.

- 7.16. The Council employ MUFG Corporate Markets (formerly known as Link Group) as its treasury management advisors. Other specialist advice is taken on an ad/hoc basis dependant on the nature of the particular project and issue under review. Treasury Management is also subject to regular internal audit.

8. Risk Management

- 8.1. The Council needs to ensure that it has clear ways of mitigating the risks that are inherent in acquiring, managing and disposing of its assets.
- 8.2. In general, the Council seeks to minimise its exposure to risks that are unwanted and unrewarded. The Council's cash position is managed centrally to ensure that there is enough liquidity in the short and medium term to meet cashflow requirements including the Council's running costs, as well as meeting long-term solvency and funding requirements.
- 8.3. The Council is exposed to a range of risks when undertaking capital investment:
- **Financial risks** relate to risk arising from the investment in the Council's assets, cash flow, market volatility, currency etc.
 - **Macroeconomic risks** relate to risk around the growth or decline of the local economy, interest rates, inflation and to a lesser degree, the wider national and global economy amongst others.
 - **Credit and counterparty risks** relate to risk arising from investments, loans to institutions and individuals and counterparties in business transactions.
 - **Operational risks** relate to operational exposures within the organisation, its counterparties, partners and commercial interests.
 - **Strategic risks** relate to key initiatives undertaken by the Council such as significant purchases, new ventures, commercial interests and other areas of organisational change deemed necessary to help the Council meet its goals.
 - **Reputational risks** relate to risks around the Council's dealings and interests, and the impact of adverse outcomes on the Council's reputation and public perception.
 - **Environmental and social risks** relate to the environmental and social impact of the Council's strategy and interests.
 - **Governance risks** relate to ensuring that prudence and careful consideration sit at the heart of the Council's decision-making, augmented by quality independent advice and appropriate checks and balances that balance oversight and efficiency.
- 8.4. The Council aims to minimise and balance its exposure to risk through a range of mitigation strategies to the extent that it is cost-effective to do so. Specifically, the Council has no appetite for reputational risk, governance risk and currency risk and where possible would avoid these risks.
- 8.5. The Council's appetite for these risks is set out below.

Table 6. Council's Risk Appetite

Risk	Appetite
Financial	<p>Moderate appetite for a range of asset classes, property and longer-term investments, subject to careful due diligence and an emphasis on security as well as matching with the Council's required liquidity profile. Low appetite for capital growth oriented investments versus income generating investments.</p> <p>No appetite for currency risk, emerging markets and high volatility investments.</p>
Macroeconomic	<p>Moderate appetite for exposure to national and global growth.</p> <p>High appetite for exposure to local economic growth.</p> <p>Low appetite for interest rate risk, and inflation risk.</p>
Credit and Counterparty	<p>High appetite for investment grade or secured credit risk, as well as exposure to highly rated counterparties and financial institutions with strong balance sheets.</p> <p>Low appetite for unsecured non-investment grade debt. All subject to careful due diligence and an assessment of the transaction versus the Council's resources, capacity, funding needs, broader goals and cash flow requirements.</p>
Operational	<p>Low appetite for 'business as usual' operational risks such as pricing errors, errors in administration, IT, cybersecurity etc. No appetite for fraud, regulatory breaches and exceeding risk tolerances.</p>
Strategic	<p>High appetite for strategic initiatives, where there is a direct gain to the Council's revenues; deliver strategic objectives in its corporate plan; or the ability to deliver its statutory duties more effectively and efficiently.</p>
Environmental and Social	<p>No appetite for environmentally negative risks. Low appetite for social risks, especially in the local region and always subject to full due diligence</p>

Relationship with Other Processes

- 8.6. Risk management is not a stand-alone discipline. In order to maximise risk management benefits and opportunities, it is integrated with existing business processes.
- 8.7. Some of the key business processes with which risk alignment exists are:
- Capital Strategy
 - Corporate Plan
 - Medium Term Financial Strategy
 - Internal Audit Plan
 - Business Planning
 - Performance Management
 - Treasury Management
 - External Audit Review
- 8.8. From a risk management perspective, and in order to ensure the Council's investments are as safe as possible, officers employ a range of due diligence techniques, including: evaluation of tenants by external property advisers; modelling the impact of tenant failure and where necessary securing guarantees.

- 8.9. The Commercial Investment Strategy itself has yet to be reviewed and amended. However, following the decision of Policy Committee to cease further property investments an agent has been appointed to proactively manage and review the current portfolio and to make recommendation on retention or disposal in order to maximise income.
- 8.10. Under the Council's Constitution, risk management is overseen by the Audit and Governance Committee, which reviews the Strategic Risk Register at its meetings. Risk management is an integral aspect of the Council's project management methodology, with projects required pre-initiation to identify risks and how they will mitigate them. The approach to risk management includes planning and identification, monitoring and review for all risks and projects throughout their lifecycle. Risk will always exist in some measure and cannot be removed in its entirety. Therefore, risks need to be considered both in terms of threats to the Council as well as opportunities.
- 8.11. The Public Accounts Committee supports well-managed risk taking across government, recognising that innovation and opportunities to improve public services requires risk taking, providing that the ability, skills, knowledge and training to manage those risks well exist within the organisation or can be brought to bear. As well as having the requisite skills and knowledge to manage its Capital Programme, the Council can access any shortfall in expertise from partners and external advisers when required.

Knowledge and Skills

- 8.12. The Council employs professionally qualified and experienced staff in senior positions with responsibility for making capital expenditure and investment decisions (including treasury management decisions).
- 8.13. The Capital Programme and Treasury Management Strategy are managed by a team of professionally qualified accountants with extensive local government finance experience. They all follow a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Plan and attend courses on an ongoing basis to keep abreast of new developments in their field. The Council's Section 151 Officer is the officer with overall responsibility for capital and treasury activities.
- 8.14. The Council will ensure that the resources required to manage the Council's assets and regeneration aspirations are available. Where necessary knowledge and skills are not available internally, the Council will use external advisers and consultants that are specialists in their field such as legal, asset management/valuation, treasury management, credit quality assessment, etc.

9. Treasury Management

- 9.1. The Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) is approved by Council annually as part of the budget setting process.
- 9.2. There are close links between the Capital Strategy and TMSS. Treasury management sets out the borrowing need of the Council, essentially the longer-term cash flow planning, to ensure that the Council can meet its capital spending obligations. This management of longer-term cash may involve arranging long or short-term loans or using longer term cash flow surpluses.
- 9.3. The Council makes provision for the repayment of debt over the life of the asset that the borrowing is funding. The proposed provision for the repayment of debt over the

period 2025/26 – 2027/28 is forecast to be £65m. The Council's Minimum Revenue Provision Policy is published as part of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy.

- 9.4. Treasury Management Prudential Indicators including the Operational Boundary and Authorised Limits relating to external borrowing are approved by Council annually as part of the Treasury Management Strategy; and are monitored throughout the year by officers and reported quarterly to Audit & Governance Committee.

10. Action Plan

- 10.1. The Council continues to review its processes to ensure compliance with the Prudential Code, Statutory Guidance and other relevant legislative requirements. To this end an Action Plan (attached as Annex D) is maintained that outlines actions, owners of those actions and timelines for delivery.

Annex A - Schedule of Properties Identified for, or in the Process of Disposal

The Capital receipts assumptions set out in Table 5 of the Capital Strategy are planned to be delivered from the sale of the following assets that are considered to be surplus and available to be sold over the period of the MTFS. Some of the assets below would require further approval before sales could be realised.

Site	Further Information
Market Passageway	Right or way reserved within existing building
Cemetery Arch	Vacant Grade 2 Listed Building
Gosbrook Rd Caversham Nursery	Cleared and vacant former nursery school site
Bridge St, Caversham	Vacant land behind advert hoarding
16 Bennet Road	Site leased for car storage
Crown St / Southampton St	Vacant cleared site in multiple ownership. Advert hoarding on part of RBC land
The Keep	Grade 2 Listed building
Palmer Park Lodge	Residential property located within Palmer Park
10 Oak Tree Road	Strip of land between site boundary and highway
4-6 Broad Street	Long lease extension/variation
Palmer Park WC block	Derelict toilet block
2-4 Buttermarket	Zone A retail
Central Library	1980s purpose built library
Yeomanry House	Vacant Grade 2 Listed Building
Caversham Court offices	2,000 sq ft single and double storey Grade 2 Listed building former offices/outbuildings on 0.15 acre site
Southside – Island Road	Landfill site – former speedway/greyhound stadium

Annex B – Capital Programme Board Terms of Reference (ToR)

Overall Responsibilities of the board

- To advise on the Council's Capital Strategy in line with Council's priorities.
- To ensure the effective development and delivery of the Capital Programme in line with the Council's Capital Strategy and Council's priorities.
- To develop, implement and review the effectiveness of the gateway process for the Capital Programme.
- To identify and monitor the resources available to fund the Capital Programme in the most efficient way.
- To monitor the progress of the Capital Programme against plan and performance, identifications of risk and issues.
- To ensure capital project and programme managers across the Council have the appropriate training, skills and capacity to effectively deliver capital projects.
- To develop toolkits for Project and Programme Managers, including the use of post project reviews.
- To drive value for money.
- To report progress of Capital Programme delivery together with associated risks and mitigations to the Corporate Management Team on a quarterly basis.
- To act as a clearing house for any issues/blockers which Boards have not been able to resolve.

Priority Outcomes from the Board

- An effective Capital Strategy and Capital Programme that optimise the resources available to deliver the Council's priorities.
- To ensure continuous improvement in the development and delivery of the Capital Programme.
- To ensure strategic capital investment is planned and delivered in the most efficient and effective way.
- To improve the management of capital projects, in line with best practice, ensuring benefits are realised.
- To ensure effective bidding for external capital funding.
- To enhance cross-service working and partnerships with other organisations on the development and management of capital projects.
- To ensure the Capital Strategy and Programme is funded in the most efficient way and fully integrated into the Medium Term Financial Strategy of the Council.
- To embed lessons learnt from capital projects undertaken by the Council.
- To monitor and realign the Capital Programme to ensure there is accurate forecasting and less pressure on borrowing.
- Appropriately addressing and reporting any risk to the programme.

Membership of the Board

Chair	Darren Carter	Director of Finance
Members	Emma Gee (Deputy Chair)	Acting Executive Director Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services
	Melissa Wise	Executive Director Communities & Adult Social Care
	Gavin Handford	Assistant Director Policy, Change & Customer Services
	Luana O'Neill	Joint Acting Assistant Director Procurement & Contracts
	Anna Barefoot	Capital and Treasury Lead
	Charan Dhillon	Assistant Director Property & Asset Management
	Susan Jones	Capital Projects Delivery & Business Improvements Manager
	Zoe Hobbs	Portfolio Management Office (PMO) Manager
Additional Attendance	Assistant Directors/ Programme & Project Managers/leads	Attendance is driven by the focus of the agenda

Frequency of the Board

- Quarterly (more frequently may be required in the lead up to budget setting).

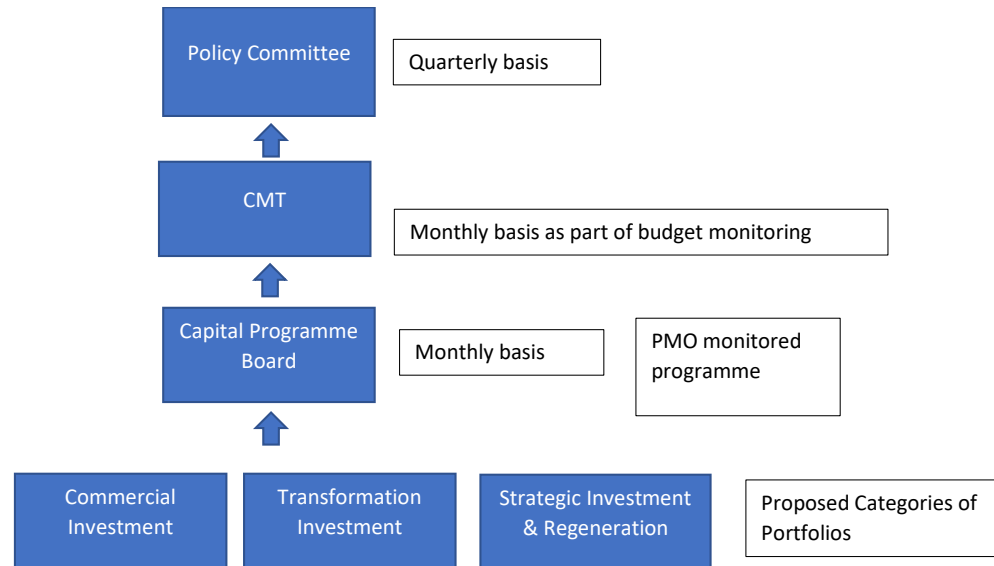
Inputs of the Board – collaborative environment/ use of materials

- Agenda, actions and decisions agreed.
- Highlight reporting for projects and programmes reporting directly into the board.
- Financial spend & monitoring against the programme.
- Monitoring of resource and capacity management against the programme.
- New Business Cases/projects for consideration.

Outputs of the Board

- Actions and decisions agreed.
- Communications/messages.
- Reports to CMT.
- Training and Learning opportunities.
- Toolkits.
- Prioritised schedule of business cases for review as part of the budget setting process.
- Update programmes for approved/rejected activities.

Annex B Part 2 – Capital Monitoring through Capital Programme Board



Commercial Investment:

- Includes develop new and innovative solutions that provide a mix between Council functions, Public Sector, Commercial Return and Place Shaping

Transformation Investment

- Non property service - Invest in and re-develop direct service delivery, but not necessarily physical assets or property.
- Assets to manage growth
- Assets to manage rationalisation

Strategic Investment & Regeneration (includes Economic Growth) **could break out economic growth**

- Infrastructure: Acquire land for infrastructure and build. commission strategic infrastructure also with potential for a commercial return, potentially to reduce costs, potentially to create wider strategic opportunity for development
- Economic Growth: Acquire land, provide investment (including via provision of funding or loans) and build, re-develop, manage, sell property with a focus on place shaping and regeneration that is financially viable in that, as a minimum, it remains affordable and delivers value for money to the Council.

Annex C – Prioritisation Matrix

Budget Prioritisation - Scoring Guidance for Capital Bids		
Criteria	Scoring Method	
Strategic Impact	1. Strategic Fit	Score assesses contribution to each of the Council's corporate plan and other policy objectives (Local Plan, Tackling Inequality Strategy, Local Transport Plan, etc., where:
		3 Specifically identified in Corporate Plan
		2 Identified as a key Project/Activity in the Corporate Plan or directly supports a number of specific outcomes
		1 Low (Indirectly supports at least 1 key outcome)
		0 Will not deliver any identified outcomes
	2. Statutory Implications (Risk of NOT doing)	Score assesses Capital Bids based on a risk to statutory service provision without investment
		3 High Risk (Complete loss of statutory service or inability to respond to impending legislative requirement) (Risk Score 17+)
		2 High Risk (Partial loss of statutory service, complete loss of discretionary service) Risk Score (11-16)
		1 Medium Risk (Partial loss of discretionary service, worsening statutory service) Risk Score (6-10)
		0 No Risk (No discernible impact foreseen, low levels of complaint continue) Risk Score (0-5)
	3. Environmental Impact	Score assesses Capital Bids regarding whether the investment will support the delivery of the Council's climate policy commitments and other environmental goals. The score is defined by climate impact assessment on the following areas 1. Carbon Saving, 2. Improving organisational/community resilience to climate impacts. 3. Environmental Gains. 4. Reduction in noise light or other forms of pollution
		3 Investment has a major positive environmental impact. Scoring in climate impact assessment "deliver significant decrease or high" in one of the four criteria
		2 Investment has a minor positive environmental impact. Scoring in climate impact assessment "low/medium/moderate" in one of the four criteria
		1 Investment has no climate or environmental impact or minor positive impacts are cancelled out by minor negative impacts on environmental factors
		0 Investment has a minor negative environmental impact on environmental factors. Scoring a low/medium/moderate increase and/or reduced resilience.
		-1 Investment has a major negative environmental impact on environmental factors. Scoring a significant increase and or reducing resilience in one of the four categories
	4. Social Impact	This score assesses the Capital Bids in regard to whether the investment will support delivery of equality, social value and public health goals
		3 Investment has a major positive impact on social and equality factors
		2 Investment has minor positive impact on social and equality factors
		1 Investment has no impact on social and equality factors
		0 Investment has a negative impact on social and equality factors
	5. Economic Impact	Score assesses the Capital Bids in regard to whether the investment will support delivery of Reading Economic goals
		3 Investment has a major positive impact on economic factors
		2 Investment has minor positive impact on economic factors
		1 Investment has no impact on economic factors
		0 Investment has a negative impact on economic factors
	6. Condition, H&S risk and Strategic Importance of Asset	3 Expenditure on asset will reduce impact of at least 3 issues - risk to life etc (Risk score 17+)
		2 Expenditure on asset will reduce impact of at least 1 issue (Risk Score 11-16)
		1 Expenditure will have a possibility of reduced impact in at least 1 issue (Risk Score 6-10)
		0 No demonstrated impact on any issues (Risk Score 0-5)
Investment Readiness	7. Fundability	Score assesses level of funding available and/ability to attract external funding/or generate capital receipt:
		3 100% external funding is available (does not necessarily mean scheme will proceed)
		2 50- 99% external funding is available
		1 >0-49% external funding is available
		0 No funding has been identified
	8. Long Term Affordability	Score assesses the Capital Bids in regard to whether there are any resulting revenue implications:
		3 Ongoing revenue savings/income generation repays investment within 3 years or less
		2 Ongoing revenue savings/income generation repays investment within over 3 to 5 years
		1 Ongoing revenue savings/income generation repays investment over the lifetime of asset
		0 No revenue savings/income generation
		-2 Additional on going resources required over existing budgets
	9. Viability (Risk of DOING)	Score assesses bids based on inherent and mitigated risk, likelihood of necessary approvals and permissions, procurement implications and other barriers incl. legal. Should be linked to high level risk assessment
		3 Low Risk (Score 0-5)
		2 Medium Risk (6-10)
		1 High Risk (11-16)
		0 Very High Risk (17+)
	10. Deliverability/ Feasibility	Score assesses bids based on consideration given to resourcing availability (skills and capacity) reliance on partners and timescale for delivery (to inform financial year project falls into)
		3 Includes detailed Project Plan (including resources required, project team and risk matrix)
		2 Includes high-level Project Plan (including resources required, project team and risk matrix)
		1 Project Plan (potential idea of the resources, project team and risk matrix)
		0 No Project Plan

Annex D – Action Plan

1. **Objective** – To develop a Corporate Asset Management Plan that clearly explains how we move from the existing asset base to the assets we will need across the short, medium and long term in order to achieve the Corporate Vision.

There are three areas where work is required:

- Developing our knowledge of the existing asset base
- Identifying what assets we need in the future
- Develop and implement new systems and processes to enable the transition

2. Developing our knowledge of the existing asset base.

Action	Lead	Progress update	Deadline
Commission work to gain a better understanding of the asset base to include such aspects as: the condition of the assets; their remaining useful life; likely maintenance costs over their remaining useful life; costs of disposal/decommissioning and; costs of replacement if appropriate, etc.	AD Property & Asset Management	The Asset Management Strategy 2024-34 has been presented to CMT for review/approval. The document was drafted working with services across the council to review and agree future direction, taking into account need, condition, climate and cost in relation to Non-Domestic Land and Property Assets.	Complete.

3. Identifying what assets we need in the future

Action	Lead	Progress update	Deadline
Carry out a review of a third of the Council's Non-Domestic Land & Property Assets as per the rolling three-year cycle set out in the Asset Management Strategy 2024-34.	AD Property & Asset Management	New action.	31/12/2025

4. Develop and implement new systems and processes to enable the transition

The following areas have been identified where work is required:

- Skills and knowledge

Action	Lead	Progress update	Deadline
Ensure service and finance staff receive appropriate training to carry out their roles. This will include training on the capital investment process itself, project management, capital fundamentals, financial regs and the procurement framework	Director of Finance/AD Procurement & Contracts	Training on the decision making process, including providing spend approval for capital schemes has been provided and a new Decision Hub to record decision making by officers has been established. A short help guide on what constitutes capital expenditure has been issued to relevant staff. This and the increased profile of capital throughout the organisation has led to an increase in queries, the answers to which are being developed into a capital handbook. Training on the Financial Regulations will be provided once the work to update these has been finalised.	31/07/2025

- Governance

Action	Lead	Progress update	Deadline
Update the Constitution and related documents to provide clarity around the capital investment process (approval monitoring, virements, slippage)	Director of Finance	Work is currently being undertaken to update the Financial Regulations within the Constitution.	30/06/2025
Review corporate governance arrangements for Capital across the organisation, including post project review and scheme monitoring arrangements.	Director of Finance	<p>The Capital Programme Board was established in December 2022. It will now need to develop a prioritised programme of work. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the prioritisation of limited capital resources including the development of a new prioritisation matrix. Done – see Annex C. • Review of the monitoring arrangements for the delivery of capital projects. Done. Deep Dive sessions have been introduced to help update members of the Capital 	31/12/2025 for outstanding actions

Action	Lead	Progress update	Deadline
		<p>Programme Board on scheme progress and blockages. The success of these sessions will be reviewed by the Board once the 2024/25 outturn position is known. Further work will then be undertaken to improve the monitoring of the schemes, if necessary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the governance framework for capital management. Done. • Review of this Capital Strategy • Monitoring of progress of this Action Plan. Done. Progress is monitored by members of the Capital Programme Board. • Develop and implement new Capital Gateway process. Done 	
Review and update the Commercial Investment Strategy in the light of new restrictions on borrowing from the PWLB	AD Property & Asset Management/Director of Finance	Avison Young has been appointed to support the development of an evidence-based strategy to understand a range of options for our commercial investment portfolio, developing an implementation plan that sets out how to execute the recommendations set out in the Strategy.	30/06/2025
Update the Asset Management Policy	AD Property & Asset Management	New action.	In line with the Corporate Plan

5. On-going work

- a. In addition, there are areas where on-going work will also be required. This includes:
- i. Implementation of a rolling-programme of asset surveys across the entire asset base.
 - ii. On-going training to ensure new staff have the skills and knowledge to carry out their roles.
 - iii. Regular review of service plans, corporate asset management plan etc to ensure any changes are captured.
 - iv. Carrying out actions identified in the Asset Management Action Plan, which forms part of the Asset Management Strategy 2024-34. Actions are prioritised using a scoring mechanism.

Policy Committee

17 February 2025



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Title	Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) 2025/26
Purpose of the report	To make a recommendation to Council
Report status	Public report
Report author	Stuart Donnelly, Financial Planning & Strategy Manager
Lead Councillor	Councillor Terry, Leader of the Council
Corporate priority	Not applicable, but still requires a decision
Recommendations	<p>That Policy Committee endorse and recommend that Council approve:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2025/26 as set out in Appendix 1 Section 2; 2. The Capital Prudential Indicators as set out in Appendix 1 Section 3; 3. The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy for 2025/26 as set out in Appendix 1 Section 4; 4. The Borrowing Strategy for 2025/26 as set out in Appendix 1 Section 5; 5. The Annual Investment Strategy for 2025/26 as set out in Appendix 1 Section 6; 6. The Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators as set out in Appendix 1 Annex 1.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) 2025/26, attached at Appendix 1, sets out the parameters for the Council's planned treasury activity during 2025/26 under which the Council's Treasury Team will manage day to day activity. The TMSS reflects the Council's Capital Programme 2025/26 – 2027/28.
- 1.2. The successful identification, monitoring and control of financial risk are central to the Strategy.
- 1.3. The CIPFA 2021 Prudential Code also requires the Council to prepare a Capital Strategy report which sets out the Council's capital requirements arising from policy objectives, as well as the associated governance procedures and risk appetite.
- 1.4. The Capital Strategy is reported separately from the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and includes non-treasury investments. The CIPFA Treasury Management Code 2021 further breaks down non-treasury investments into:
 - ***"Investments for service purposes (or service investments) are taken or held primarily for the provision and for the purposes of delivering public services (including housing, regeneration, and local infrastructure), or in support of joint working with others to deliver such services"***

- ***“Investment for commercial purposes (or commercial investments) are taken or held primarily for financial return and are not linked to treasury management activity or directly part of delivering services”.***

2. Policy Context

- 2.1. In accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy’s Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2021 and the CIPFA Prudential Code for capital finance in local authorities (2021), the Council is required to approve a Treasury Management Strategy before the start of each financial year. This report fulfils that obligation.

3. Economic Background

- 3.1. The Bank of England’s Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) increased the Bank Rate to 5.25% in August 2023 and it remained at this level until 1st August 2024 when the MPC voted to reduce the Bank Rate by 25 Basis Points (bps) to 5.00%. The MPC voted to reduce rates by a further 25 points on 6th November 2024 in part due to the progress made in reducing inflation. The Bank Rate of 4.75% was maintained at the MPC meeting on 18th December 2024 but was reduced further to 4.50% at the meeting on 6th February 2025.
- 3.2. The annual inflation rate in the United Kingdom as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) stands at 2.5% as at December 2024, down from 4.0% in December 2023. The Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers’ housing cost (CPIH) stands at 3.5% as at December 2024, down from 4.2% in December 2023.

4. Borrowing

- 4.1. Under the Prudential Code, the Council can borrow to fund capital expenditure if such borrowings are sustainable, affordable, and prudent. In order to comply with the Prudential Code, an authority must not borrow to invest primarily for financial return.
- 4.2. The underlying need to borrow (the net borrowing requirement) for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). Usable reserves and working capital are the underlying resources available for investment.
- 4.3. Historically the Council has borrowed to pay for new assets including schools, roads, housing and community facilities etc. The value of the Council’s non-current assets is circa £1.3bn. As at 31st December 2024, the Council had £439.000m of loans outstanding in respect of General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) assets.
- 4.4. The Council has not taken out any long-term borrowing in 2024/25 to 31st December 2024 but has utilised the temporary borrowing market when required in line with the 2024/25 Borrowing Strategy. As at 31st December 2024, the Council had an outstanding temporary borrowing portfolio of £77.500m as set out in Appendix 1 Annex 3.
- 4.5. Market projections, per Table 11 in Appendix 1, indicate that long-term borrowing costs will continue to reduce further in line with the forecast decreases to the Bank of England Bank Rate from early 2025. Consequently, the Council intends to continue with the strategy of utilising lower cost temporary borrowing in the coming year where required. This strategy will be kept under review with the Council’s Treasury Management Advisors. Longer term borrowing will not be taken out until necessary, or until it makes sense to borrow in advance of need. This strategy will thereby avoid the “cost of carry” (the difference between the cost of borrowing and return on investing the funds).
- 4.6. The Capital Programme 2025/26-2027/28 totals £266.436m (£127.519m General Fund and £138.917m HRA) as set out in Table 1 of Appendix 1. The Programme aims to

improve the infrastructure, asset base and effectiveness of service provision for the residents of Reading.

- 4.7. After accounting for specific grants, s106 contributions and capital receipts, the total borrowing requirement is £121.076m per Table 2 of Appendix 1 (£50.704m General Fund and £70.372m HRA). The cost of borrowing together with any associated revenue savings is included within the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 – 2027/28.
- 4.8. After reducing the borrowing requirement by a total Minimum Revenue Provision charge of £64.855m across the period, the Council has a projected increase in its CFR of £56.221m, as set out in Table 3 of Appendix 1.
- 4.9. The Director of Finance has been delegated responsibility for borrowing and works closely with the Council's Treasury Management Team and advisors, Mitsubishi UFJ Group (MUFG) Corporate Markets (formerly known as Link Group, Link Treasury Services Limited), on borrowing decisions taking into account several factors including:
- The cost of borrowing short or long-term;
 - Anticipated changes in the cost of borrowing;
 - The level of cash balances held under investment;
 - The return on invested balances.
- 4.10. The Council's long-term borrowing (loans over 12 months in length) is from two sources: The Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) and private banks for debt relating to Lender Option Borrower Option loans (LOBO loans currently stand at £5.000m). For short term borrowing the Council will continue to use other sources of finance, e.g. loans from other local authorities that it can borrow from at lower rates of interest than PWLB.
- 4.11. The framework for taking borrowing decisions in the coming year is set out within Borrowing Strategy contained within the Council's TMSS, attached at Appendix 1 Section 5. As set out in paragraph 4.5, the Council intends to continue with the strategy of utilising lower cost temporary borrowing in the coming year where required. Included within the Borrowing Strategy, is the Council's Policy on borrowing in Advance of Need, where the Council may increase its longer term borrowing to cover new capital project expenditure in advance of need to minimise the risk of interest rate fluctuations. Any decision to borrow in advance will be within forward approved Capital Financing Requirement estimates and will be considered carefully as part of the overall Borrowing Strategy, to ensure that value for money can be demonstrated, that the costs of borrowing can be met and that the Council can ensure the security of such funds.
- 4.12. The Council's self-imposed limits on sustainable, affordable and prudent borrowing and investment, the Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators that need to be approved by Council are set out in Appendix 1.

5. Investments

- 5.1. The Council's investments for Treasury Management purposes seek to manage fluctuations in cash-flow. Treasury investments can be called on at short-notice and in the main are held in Money Market Funds or short-term fixed rate/fixed term deposits. These are low-risk investments and give higher rates of interest compared to leaving balances in the Council's bank account. The long-term treasury investments held by the Council are in the CCLA property fund.
- 5.2. The level of investments fluctuates throughout the year dependent on cash balances. The balance of treasury investments was £38.636m at the end of December 2024 (per Table 6 in Appendix 1). The average interest rate (simple average interest rate earned on all investments to 31st December 2024) was 4.365% and the average weighted rate of return (weighing the simple average interest rates based on the principal invested) was 5.179%.

5.3. The Council can legally invest in the following funds and instruments:

- Fixed Term Deposits (Government, public sector bodies, Banks and Building Societies)
- Callable deposits (Banks and Building Societies)
- Money Market Funds
- Certificates of Deposit (tradable term deposits)
- Governments Gilts and Treasury Bills
- Corporate Bonds
- Derivatives (where used for risk management)

5.4. The Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government (MHCLG) (formerly known as Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)) published updated guidance on investments in February 2018. The previous edition covered treasury investments only, but the latest edition focuses on non-treasury investments. These are commercial investments such as the purchase of investment properties, investments in subsidiaries or investments for service objectives including regeneration.

5.5. The revised PWLB borrowing terms announced in November 2020, prevent Local Authorities from borrowing from the PWLB for any purpose should their ongoing Capital Programme contain commercial schemes that are primarily investments to generate a financial yield. Consequently, Policy Committee approved the removal of the Capital budget for the Purchase of Commercial Property from its Capital Programme at its meeting in December 2020.

6. Approved Investments and Counterparties

6.1. The counterparty criteria are kept under regular review and are detailed in section 6 of Appendix 1 to this report. The criteria set out the value and duration limits which are applied in the day to day investment of the Council's cash balances.

6.2. The value and duration limits as well as the minimum credit ratings required of individual institutions seek to minimise the Council's exposure to counterparty risk, i.e. limit any potential loss due to the failure of any single institution or group.

6.3. The credit ratings agencies' criteria are relative measures of financial strength, any changes are notified to the Council's Treasury Team on the same day by our treasury advisors, MUFG. Over recent years the agencies have downgraded many financial institutions by removing the implied sovereign support. However, financial institutions have responded by improving their capital ratios to meet new regulatory standards to enable them to withstand market shocks like that experienced during the financial crisis in 2008. This requirement for increased resilience is designed to give higher assurance that institutions will be going concerns in the medium to long term.

6.4. In addition, central banks such as the Bank of England and European Central Bank provide financial support to financial institutions through Term Funding Schemes (TFS) that ensures they have access to enough liquidity at low rates. The TFS was launched in 2016 and provides funding to banks and building societies at rates close to Base Rate.

6.5. CIPFA's Treasury Management Code (2021) requires the Council to set out its policies and practices relating to environmental, social and governance (ESG) investment considerations within its credit and counterparty policies. The framework for taking investment decisions in the coming year is set out in the Council's TMSS, attached at Appendix 1 Section 6 and includes the use of credit rating agencies' criteria, which incorporate Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) risks alongside more traditional financial risk metrics, and the application of the Freedom House Global Freedom rating system.

- 6.6. The Freedom House Global Freedom rating system is a scored assessment of people's access to political rights and civil liberties in 210 countries and territories. In its annual Freedom in the World report, Freedom House assigns a numerical score and a Free/Partly Free/Not Free status to each country. The Council will only invest in organisations from countries with a 'Free' rating. Ratings will be regularly monitored to determine if ratings have changed.

7. Risk Controls

Investment Risk

- 7.1. The main risk of investing is that the borrower or counterparty defaults on the loan and cannot repay it.
- 7.2. The main controls on investment risk are the application of counterparty criteria which limit the amount and duration of investments with both individual and groups of related counterparties. The criteria are generally based on rating agency evaluations as detailed in Appendix 1 Section 6.

Borrowing Risk

- 7.3. The main risks when deciding to borrow is around the timing of the decision and ensuring affordability. There is a risk that interest rates will increase before any planned borrowing is taken. The Council receives regular interest rate forecasts which are used to inform decisions on the timing of external borrowing.
- 7.4. The latest guidance requires the use of other information as well as rating agency evaluations. When ratings change, the Treasury Team are notified on the same day by our treasury advisors. There are regular internal and external meetings the Treasury Team attend to keep abreast of latest topics. The monthly updates from MUFG include other market sources of information, such as the prices of financial instruments and shares. In addition, professional publications and sector specific reports are reviewed by the Team to ensure that any decision to borrow is based a broad array of available information.
- 7.5. The Treasury Management Policies deal with risk controls, decision making and reporting processes, along with high level administration of the Treasury Management activities.

8. Contribution to Strategic Aims

- 8.1. Full details of the Council's Corporate Plan and the projects which will deliver these priorities are published on the Council's website. These priorities and the Corporate Plan demonstrate how the Council meets its legal obligation to be efficient, effective, and economical. An updated Corporate Plan will be presented to Council in March 2025.
- 8.2. Delivery of the Council's revenue and capital budgets is essential to ensuring the Council meets its strategic aims and remains financially sustainable going forward. The treasury management functions are crucial in ensuring that the Council has access to funds when required and that surplus funds are invested in secure investments.

9. Environmental and Climate Implications

- 9.1. There are no environmental implications arising directly from this report.
- 9.2. As set out in the Council's Annual Investment Strategy (Appendix 1 paragraph 6.18), the Council will not knowingly invest directly in businesses whose activities and practices pose a risk of serious harm to individuals or groups, or whose activities are inconsistent with the Council's Corporate Plan and values. This would include institutions with material

links to environmentally harmful activities (e.g. pollution, destruction of habitat, fossil fuels).

10. Community Engagement

- 10.1. Budget-related communications and consultations will continue to be a priority over the next three years as we work to identify savings.

11. Equality Implications

- 11.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

- 11.2. There are no equality implications arising directly from this report.

12. Other Relevant Considerations

- 12.1. There are none.

13. Legal Implications

- 13.1. This report assists the Council in fulfilling its statutory obligation to set out its Treasury Strategy for borrowing and to prepare an Annual Investment Strategy for the coming year setting out the Council's policies for managing its borrowing and investments and giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments.

14. Financial Implications

- 14.1. The financial implications are set out within the main body and Appendix 1 of this report and have been factored into the 2025/26 Budget & Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26-2027/28 Report elsewhere on the agenda.

15. Timetable for Implementation

- 15.1. Not applicable.

16. Background Papers

- 16.1. There are none.

Appendices

1. **Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) 2025/26**

Appendix 1 - Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) 2025/26

February 2025

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1. Introduction
2. Treasury Management Strategy 2025/26
3. Capital Prudential Indicators 2025/26 – 2027/28
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7. Annexes
 - Annex 1 – The Capital Prudential and Treasury Indicators 2025/26 – 2027/28
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 - Annex 3 – Debt Portfolio as at 31st December 2024
 - Annex 4 - Investment Portfolio as of 31st December 2024
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1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1 The Council is required to set a balanced budget, which broadly means that cash raised during the year will meet cash expenditure. Part of the treasury management operation is to ensure that this cash flow is adequately planned, with cash being available when it is needed. Surplus monies are invested in counterparties or instruments commensurate with the Council's risk appetite, providing adequate liquidity before considering investment return.
- 1.2 The second main function of the treasury management service is the funding of the Authority's capital plans. These capital plans provide a guide to the borrowing need of the Authority, essentially the longer-term cash flow planning, to ensure that it can meet its capital spending obligations. This management of longer-term cash may involve arranging long or short-term loans or using longer-term cash flow surpluses. On occasion, when it is prudent and economic, any debt previously drawn may be restructured to meet risk or cost objectives.
- 1.3 The contribution the treasury management function makes to the Authority is critical, as the balance of debt and investment operations ensure liquidity or the ability to meet spending commitments as they fall due, either on day-to-day revenue or for larger capital projects. The treasury operations will see a balance of the interest costs of debt and the investment income arising from cash deposits affecting the available budget. Since cash balances generally result from reserves and balances, it is paramount to ensure adequate security of the sums invested, as a loss of principal will in effect result in a loss to the General Fund Balance.
- 1.4 Whilst any commercial initiatives or loans to third parties will impact on the treasury function, these activities are generally classed as non-treasury activities, (arising usually from capital expenditure), and are separate from the day-to-day treasury management activities.
- 1.5 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) defines treasury management as: *"The management of the local authority's borrowing, investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks."*

Reporting Requirements

- 1.6 The CIPFA 2021 Prudential and Treasury Management Codes require all local authorities to prepare a number of treasury management related strategies and policies for approval by Council.

Treasury Management

- 1.7 The Council is currently required to receive and approve, as a minimum, three main treasury reports each year, which incorporate a variety of policies, estimates and actuals, including:
 - a. A forward looking report (this report) covering:
 - the Council's capital plans, (including prudential indicators);
 - a Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy, (how residual capital expenditure is charged to revenue over time);

- the Treasury Management Strategy (TMSS), (how investments and borrowing are to be organized), including treasury indicators; and
 - an Annual Investment Strategy, (the parameters within which investments are to be managed).
- b. A mid-year treasury management report, delegated to Audit & Governance Committee, this is primarily a progress report and updates Members on the Investment and capital position, amending prudential indicators as necessary and indicating whether any policies require revision.
- c. An annual treasury outturn report, delegated to Audit & Governance Committee, this is a backward-looking review and compares actual prudential and treasury indicators and operations to the estimates within the Strategy.
- 1.8 In addition to the three major reports detailed above, from 2023/24 quarterly reporting (end of June/end of December) is also required by the Prudential Code. However, these additional reports do not have to be reported to Council but are required to be adequately scrutinised. As Council have delegated scrutiny of the mid-year and outturn reports to the Audit and Governance Committee, these additional reports are also reported to Audit and Governance Committee.

Capital Strategy

- 1.9 The CIPFA Code also requires the Council to prepare a Capital Strategy Report which includes the following:
- A high-level long term overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of services;
 - An overview of how the associated risk is managed;
 - The implications for future financial sustainability.
- 1.10 The Capital Strategy is reported separately from the Treasury Management Strategy; non-treasury investments will be reported through the former. This ensures the separation of the core treasury function under security, liquidity and yield principles, and the policy and commercial investments usually driven by expenditure on an asset.

Non-Treasury Investments

- 1.11 Where the Council has borrowed to fund any non-treasury investment, there should be an explanation of why borrowing was required.
- 1.12 If any non-treasury investment is found to have sustained a loss during the preparation of the final accounts or audit process, the implications will be reported through the procedure set out in the Capital Strategy.
- 1.13 To demonstrate the proportionality between the treasury operations and the non-treasury operation, high-level comparators are shown throughout this report.
- 1.14 The Council has no plans to undertake new investment in property primarily for yield in the period 2025/26-2027/28. However, the Council's expenditure plans include a capital scheme for the Maintenance & Enhancement of Council Properties. It is anticipated that this capital expenditure will include works to the existing portfolio of commercial properties. The Capital Programme also includes a scheme in respect of the regeneration of Minster Quarter. These types of expenditure remain allowable under the revised PWLB borrowing terms announced in November 2020.

2. Treasury Management Strategy for 2025/26

1.1 The Strategy for 2025/26 covers two main areas:

a. Capital Issues

- the capital expenditure plans and the associated prudential indicators;
- the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy.

b. Treasury Management Issues

- the current treasury position;
- treasury indicators which limit the treasury risk and activities of the Council;
- prospects for interest rates;
- the borrowing strategy;
- policy on borrowing in advance of need;
- debt rescheduling;
- the investment strategy
- creditworthiness policy; and
- the policy on use of external service providers.

1.2 These elements cover the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, the CIPFA Prudential Code, Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government (MHCLG) (formerly known as Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)) MRP Guidance, the CIPFA Treasury Management Code and MHCLG Investment Guidance.

Training

- 1.3 The CIPFA Treasury Management Code requires the responsible officer (Section 151 Officer) to ensure that Members with responsibility for treasury management receive adequate training in treasury management. This especially applies to Members responsible for scrutiny.**
- 1.4 Furthermore, pages 47 and 48 of the Code state that they expect “all organisations to have a formal and comprehensive knowledge and skills or training policy for the effective acquisition and retention of treasury management knowledge and skills for those responsible for management, delivery, governance and decision making. The scale and nature of this will depend on the size and complexity of the organisation’s treasury management needs.”**
- 1.5 Further “Organisations should consider how to assess whether treasury management staff and board/ council members have the required knowledge and skills to undertake their roles and whether they have been able to maintain those skills and keep them up to date.”**
- 1.6 This Council recognises the importance of ensuring that all staff involved in the treasury management function are fully equipped to undertake the duties and responsibilities allocated to them. The Council will therefore seek to appoint individuals who are both capable and experienced and will provide training for staff to enable them to acquire and maintain an appropriate level of expertise, knowledge and skills. The Section 151 Officer will recommend and implement the necessary arrangements, including the specification of the expertise, knowledge and skills required by each role or member of staff.**

- 1.7 The Section 151 Officer will ensure that Members tasked with treasury management responsibilities, including those responsible for scrutiny, have access to training relevant to their needs and those responsibilities.
- 1.8 The Section 151 Officer will have regular communication with officers and members, encouraging them to highlight training needs on an ongoing basis.
- 1.9 During 2023/24 a member training session was delivered by the Council's Treasury Management advisors, now known as Mitsubishi UFJ Group (MUFG) Corporate Markets (formerly known as Link Group, Link Treasury Services Limited). Appropriate training will continue to be made available to members with sessions being offered at least annually.
- 1.10 The training needs of treasury management officers are periodically reviewed and a record of training received by officers central to the Treasury function will be maintained by the Capital and Treasury Lead.

Treasury Management Consultants

- 1.11 The Council uses MUFG as its external treasury management advisors.
- 1.12 The Council recognises that responsibility for treasury management decisions remains with the organisation at all times. All decisions will be made with due regard to all available information, including, but not solely, that provided by our treasury advisers.
- 1.13 The Council also recognises that there is value in employing external providers of treasury management services in order to acquire access to specialist skills and resources. The Council will ensure that the terms of their appointment and the methods by which their value is assessed are properly agreed and documented, and subject to regular review.

3. The Capital Prudential Indicators 2025/26 – 2027/28

- 1.14 The Council's capital expenditure plans are the key driver of treasury management activity. The output of the capital expenditure plans is reflected in the prudential indicators below.

Capital Expenditure

- 1.15 This prudential indicator is a summary of the Council's capital expenditure plans, both those agreed previously, and those forming part of this budget cycle as set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Capital Expenditure (2024/25 – 2027/28)

	Estimate	2025/26-2027/28 Estimate			
	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	Total £m
Community & Adult Social Care Services	3.039	8.876	2.986	2.223	14.085
Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services	47.267	41.162	16.871	16.477	74.510
Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services – Education Schemes	15.098	10.139	12.301	1.612	24.052
Resources	2.834	3.028	2.925	2.096	8.049
Corporate	3.899	3.623	1.600	1.600	6.823
Non-HRA	72.137	66.828	36.683	24.008	127.519
HRA	27.335	90.143	29.778	18.996	138.917
Total	99.472	156.971	66.461	43.004	266.436

- 1.16 Table 2 below summarises how the above capital expenditure plans are expected to be financed by capital or revenue resources. Any shortfall results in a borrowing need (Net Borrowing Requirement).

Table 2. Financing of Capital Expenditure (2024/25 – 2027/28)

General Fund & HRA	Estimate	2024/25-2026/27 Estimate			
	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	Total £m
Capital Expenditure	99.472	156.971	66.461	43.004	266.436
Capital receipts	(9.605)	(6.542)	(4.298)	(1.629)	(12.469)
Capital grants & other contributions	(64.264)	(59.477)	(17.391)	(6.212)	(83.080)
Capital reserves (HRA)	(13.552)	(21.730)	(16.187)	(11.894)	(49.811)
Revenue contributions	(0.148)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Net Borrowing Requirement	11.903	69.222	28.585	23.269	121.076

Capital Financing Requirement

- 1.17 The second prudential indicator is the Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). The CFR is the Council's underlying need to borrow, or Net Borrowing Requirement.
- 1.18 The CFR does not increase indefinitely, as the minimum revenue provision (MRP) is a statutory annual revenue charge which broadly reduces the indebtedness in line with

each assets life, and so charges the economic consumption of capital assets as they are used.

- 1.19 The CFR includes other long-term liabilities (e.g. PFI schemes and finance leases). Whilst these increase the CFR and therefore the Council's borrowing requirement, these types of scheme include a borrowing facility by the PFI, PPP lease provider and so the Council is not required to separately borrow for these schemes.

- 1.20 The CFR projections are set out in Table 3 below:

Table 3. CFR Projections

Capital Financing Requirement	Estimate 2024/25 £m	2025/26-2027/28 Estimate			
		2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	Total £m
CFR – General Fund	412.505	403.015	398.679	401.162	
CFR – HRA	215.701	266.092	277.366	283.265	
Total CFR	628.206	669.107	676.045	684.427	
Movement in CFR	(0.307)	40.901	6.938	8.382	56.221
Movement in CFR represented by:					
Net financing need for year	11.903	69.222	28.585	23.269	121.076
Less MRP/VRP* and other financing movements	(12.210)	(28.321)	(21.647)	(14.887)	(64.855)
Movement in CFR	(0.307)	40.901	6.938	8.382	56.221

*Voluntary Revenue Provision

Liability Benchmark

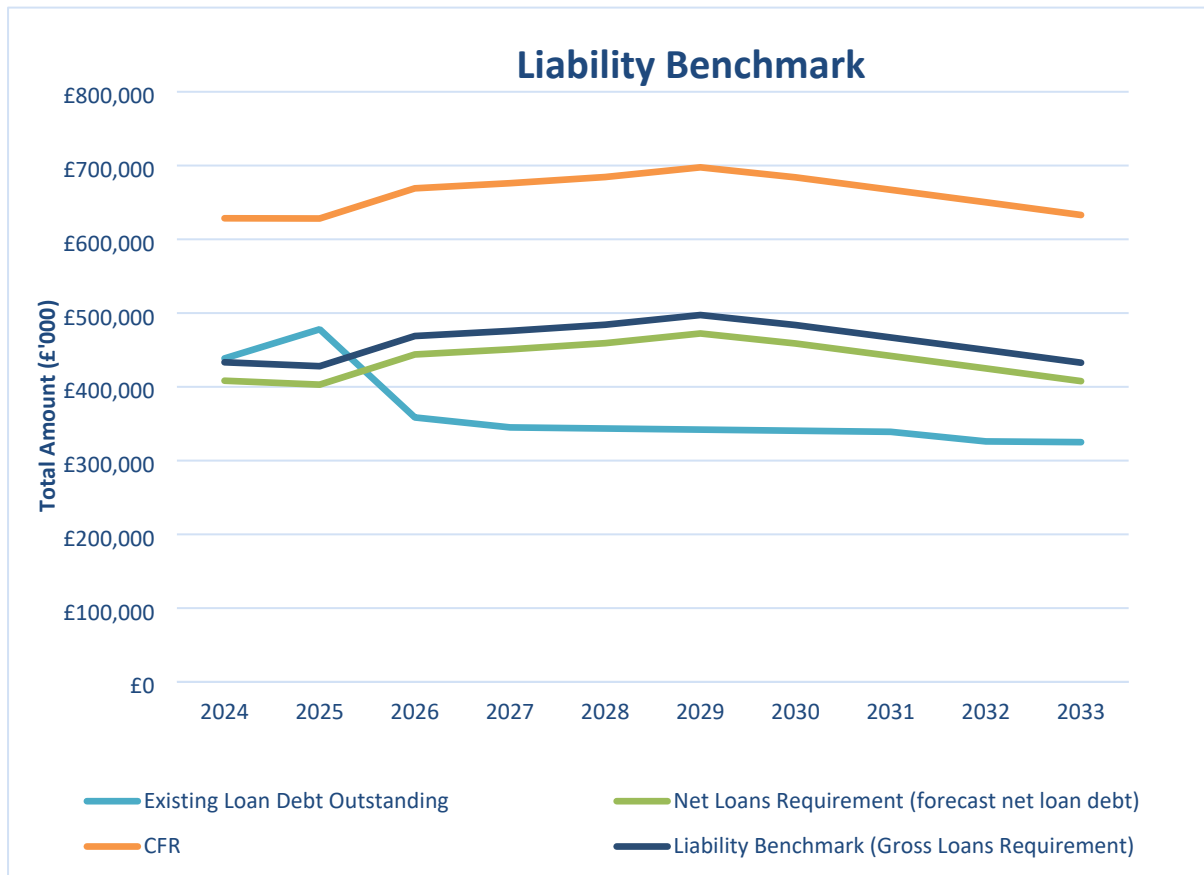
- 1.21 A third prudential indicator is the Liability Benchmark, which provides a comparison of the existing loan portfolio against the committed borrowing needs. In future periods where external loans are less than the Liability Benchmark this indicates a borrowing requirement and where external loans exceed the Liability Benchmark this indicates excess cash requiring investment. The Authority is required to estimate and measure the Liability Benchmark for the forthcoming financial year and the following two financial years, as a minimum.

- 1.22 There are four components to the Liability Benchmark: -

1. **Existing loan debt outstanding:** the Council's existing loans that are still outstanding in future years.
2. **Loans CFR:** this is calculated in accordance with the loans CFR definition in the Prudential Code and projected into the future based on approved prudential borrowing and planned MRP.
3. **Net loans requirement:** this will show the Council's gross loan debt less treasury management investments at the last financial year-end, projected into the future and based on its approved prudential borrowing, planned MRP and any other major cash flows forecast.
4. **Gross loans requirement:** this equals net loans requirement plus short-term liquidity allowance.

- 1.23 The Liability Benchmark graph below shows that at the end of 2023/24 the Council was in a surplus position where actual loans exceeded the benchmark. A similar position is forecast at the end of 2024/25. This is the result of short-term cashflows

where grants and other funding had been paid to the Council in advance of expenditure being incurred. The forecast for 2026/27 shows the benchmark overtaking the actual loans position. This represents a future borrowing requirement for the Council, which is as expected due to the Council's actual level of borrowing being significantly lower than the Council's projected Capital Financing Requirement, which is projected to increase as outlined above.



4. Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement

- 1.24 The Council is required to annually set aside revenue funds for the prudential repayment of outstanding capital borrowing in accordance with provisions set out in CIPFA's Prudential Code and MHCLG Statutory Guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision. The setting aside of revenue funds for the future repayment of outstanding borrowing is referred to as a Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) charge. The Council is also allowed to make additional voluntary payments if required.
- 1.25 As part of the regulatory framework, Council is required to approve its Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy annually.
- 1.26 The MRP Policy, in accordance with proper practice, considers outstanding capital borrowing to be the Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) rather than external loans taken out to finance capital expenditure. Accordingly, any reference in this Policy to the repayment of capital borrowing relates to the setting aside of resources to reflect movements within the Council's CFR rather than to the physical repayment of external debt.
- 1.27 In April 2024, the MHCLG published a new Statutory Instrument with amended Statutory Guidance on MRP, which applies to accounting periods from 2025/26 onwards. The main intent of the changes was to make explicit that that capital receipts may not be used in place of the revenue charge and that excluding debt associated with certain types of assets is not allowed.
- 1.28 The Council has revised its MRP policy to ensure compliance with the regulations and guidance, with the main changes relating to MRP policy with respect to loans to third parties.

General

- 1.29 Provision for the repayment of outstanding capital borrowing will generally be made in accordance with guidance and regulations to reflect the estimated life over which the capital assets acquired are anticipated to provide useful economic benefit. A schedule setting out expected lives of standard categories of assets is provided below. However, this may be adjusted on an individual asset by asset basis depending on the specific circumstances. The Council's statutory Section 151 officer will, as necessary determine individual asset lives for MRP purposes (in accordance with the overriding requirement to allow for the prudent provision for repayment of debt).

Table 4. Standard Expected Asset Lives

Asset Type	Expected Life (Years)
Major New Builds	40-50
Freehold Land	50
Major Extensions	20-40
Major Refurbishments	20
Major Transport Infrastructure / Regeneration	30
Other Transport Schemes	20
Other Small Capital Schemes	10
Large Vehicles (Refuse Freighters/Buses etc.)	7-10
Other Vehicles	5
Software Licenses	Length of License
Share Capital	20
Capital Grants / Loans to Others	Expected Life of Asset Held by Third Party

- 1.30 Of the four standardised methods set out as examples in the statutory regulations for the calculation of MRP, the Council has adopted the “Asset Life Method - Annuity” as the one which best allows for the prudent repayment of capital borrowing over the life of individual capital assets. MRP is the principal element for the repayment of borrowing. The annuity is the repayment profile determined by the useful life of the asset and an appropriate interest rate.
- 1.31 Assets acquired before 31st March 2011, and with a notional outstanding capital borrowing balance, will continue to have an annual MRP charge levied at 2% of the identified capital debt balance as at 31st March 2011.
- 1.32 Assets under construction including regeneration sites undergoing development, which have yet to fully deliver their expected benefits will not be subject to MRP charges to the Revenue Account until such time as they become operational for a full accounting year. Accordingly, on becoming operational, the charge for MRP will not commence until the following financial year.
- 1.33 Any prior error or change in assumption as to expected future asset life may be adjusted for in the current (or future) financial year, subject to any constraints on such adjustment as set out in the Prudential Code or Statutory Regulations.
- 1.34 Whilst the above sets out the Council’s general MRP principles and Policy, a number of specific instances and circumstances require separate treatment with regard to MRP in order to ensure the charge to revenue is both prudent for the repayment of debt and accurately reflects the economic benefits being realised. These are set out below:

Specific MRP Cases

- 1.35 Capital expenditure financed by finance lease or other service concessions (including Private Finance Initiative schemes) include within their annual payments both an interest and principal repayment element. The principal element included within these payments will be used to represent the MRP charge in accordance with the contractual agreement rather than separately calculating an MRP charge under the usual annuity method.
- 1.36 Capital loans to third parties with terms that include annual principal repayment (either equal instalment or annuity-based) will not be charged a separately calculated MRP charge as the annual principal repayments will be used to reduce the CFR and accordingly reduce the overall capital borrowing.
- 1.37 Short term loans for capital purposes (those with a full repayment date of five years or less) which are classed as non-commercial, and have not been subject to a recognised credit loss, will generate a receipt on their maturity which for capital accounting purposes counts as a capital receipt. On the basis that such capital receipts will be applied to reduce the Capital Financing Requirement – and as such deemed to repay the capital borrowing – no MRP charge will be made on such loans.
- 1.38 Capital loans to wholly-owned subsidiaries which are classed as non-commercial and have not been subject to a recognised credit loss, will not be subject to MRP charges in circumstances where the net worth of the subsidiary is (or is reasonably expected to be in the short to medium term) in excess of the loan and as such a disposal of those assets would provide sufficient funds to fully repaying the outstanding capital borrowing of the Council.

- 1.39 If the Council grants any commercial loans, MRP will be charged in the year after the loan is granted and each year thereafter until the loan matures.
- 1.40 For Council loans granted prior to 7 May 2024, where those loans have been subject to an actual or expected credit loss in the current or any previous financial year then a prudent MRP charge will be made in each financial year.
- 1.41 For Council loans granted on or after 7 May 2024 where those loans are subject to an expected or actual credit loss, then the MRP charge will be at least the amount of the recognised credit loss for the financial year, after adjusting for any previous MRP or capital receipts applied to the loan.
- 1.42 Charges for the provision to repay capital debt relating to share capital for group holdings will be subject to a prudent MRP charge.
- 1.43 Where the Council has outstanding borrowing relating to historic individual and specific investment in property assets, a prudent MRP charge will be made in each financial year.
- 1.44 Surplus assets will be subject to an MRP charge even when there is a likely expectation of generating a capital receipt in the short to medium term.
- 1.45 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is not subject to the same statutory annual requirement to make an MRP charge as the General Fund. It is however required to make provision for the repayment of capital debt over the longer term (broadly over the thirty year life of the HRA Business Plan). The HRA Business Plan provides for significant investment in modernising its existing holdings as well as new housing stock, the application of a more flexible and long term strategy for debt repayment eases pressure on HRA balances and enables greater provision of decent homes whilst still allowing the overall level of debt to be repaid over the long term. The Council's Section 151 Officer will continue to ensure that the HRA Business Plan provides for the prudent repayment of debt over the longer term.
- 1.46 Subject to affordability and the sustainability of the budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy, the Council's Section 151 Officer will continue to explore opportunities for the earlier reduction of outstanding debt for both the General Fund and HRA, and where appropriate and subject to available resources, reserve the power to make supplementary MRP contributions over and above the minimum previously determined as prudent, where longer term financial benefits may be derived.

Capital Receipts

- 1.47 Capital receipts may ordinarily be applied to fund capital expenditure or be set aside for the repayment of debt. An exemption currently applies until 31st March 2030 (an extension from 31st March 2025 was announced as part of the Local Government Finance Policy Statement on 28th November 2024) which allows capital receipts to be used to fund revenue expenditure which generates future and ongoing savings and service transformation – referred to as the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts.
- 1.48 The Council's Section 151 Officer will apply General Fund capital receipts so as to optimise the benefit to the Revenue Account whilst being mindful of the long term need to prudently repay capital debt.
- 1.49 To the above end, all capital receipts (unless statutorily or contractually ring-fenced to specific purposes) will be applied to their most beneficial purpose. Where capital receipts are applied to repay debt, such repayments will be applied against the

remaining borrowing identified on an asset by asset basis and the MRP liability adjusted accordingly.

MRP Overpayments

- 1.50 Under the MRP guidance, any charges made in excess of the statutory MRP are known as voluntary revenue provision (VRP). VRP can be reclaimed in later years if deemed necessary or prudent. In order for these amounts to be reclaimed for use in the budget, this Policy must disclose the cumulative overpayment made each year. Up until 31st March 2024 nil overpayments were made, and there is no expectation that any VRP contributions will be made in the period 2024/25-2027/28.

5. Borrowing Strategy 2025/26

- 1.51 The capital expenditure plans set out in section 3 of this report summarise the Council's proposed service capital expenditure activity. The treasury management function ensures that the Council's cash is organised in accordance with the relevant professional codes, so that sufficient cash is available to meet this service activity and the Council's Capital Strategy. This will involve both the organisation of the cash flow and, where capital plans require, the organisation of appropriate borrowing facilities. The Strategy covers the relevant treasury / prudential indicators, the current and projected debt positions and the Annual Investment Strategy.

Current Treasury Management Portfolio Position

- 1.52 The overall treasury management portfolio as at 31st March 2024 and the position as at 31st December 2024 are shown below for both borrowing and investments.

Table 5. Treasury Portfolio (Net Debt)

General Fund & HRA	31 st March 2024		31 st December 2024	
Debt Portfolio	Principal	Average Rate	Principal	Average Rate
	(£m)	%	(£m)	%
Fixed Rate Loans				
PWLB	352.500	3.281	351.500	3.281
Local Authorities	76.000	6.025	77.500	4.889
Market	10.000	4.090	10.000	4.090
Variable Rate Loans				
PWLB	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Total Borrowing Debt	438.500	4.094	439.000	3.789
Total Investments	30.219	5.314	38.636	4.365
Net Debt	408.281		400.364	

- 1.53 The Council's investment portfolio summary as at 31st March 2024 together with the position as at 31st December 2024 is summarised below:

Table 6. Investment Portfolio Summary

	31 st March 2024 (£m)	31 st March 2024 (%)	31 st December 2024 (£m)	31 st December 2024 (%)
Treasury Investments				
Banks	1.719	5.69	0.236	0.61
Money Market Funds (MMF)	13.500	44.67	23.400	60.57
Total Managed In-house	15.219	50.36	23.636	61.18
Total Managed Externally – Property Funds	15.000	49.64	15.000	38.82
Total Treasury Investments	30.219	100.00	38.636	100.00

- 1.54 The Council's forward projections for borrowing are summarised in Table 7 below which shows actual external debt compared to the underlying need to borrow (the Capital Financing Requirement - CFR), highlighting any over or under borrowing.

Table 7. Borrowing Estimates

	2024/25 Forecast £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m	2027/28 Estimate £m
External Debt				
Debt at 1 st April	438.500	473.000	540.222	555.307
Net Change in Debt	34.500	67.222	15.085	21.769
Debt at 31 st March	473.000	540.222	555.307	577.076
PFI Liabilities at 1 st April	20.479	19.175	17.811	16.536
Net Change in PFI Liabilities	(1.304)	(1.364)	(1.275)	(1.549)
PFI Liabilities at 31 st March	19.175	17.811	16.536	14.987
Total Gross Debt at 31 st March	492.175	558.033	571.843	592.063
Capital Financing Requirement	628.206	669.107	676.045	684.427
(Under)/Over Funding of CFR	(136.031)	(111.074)	(104.202)	(92.364)
(Under)/Over Borrowing (exc PFI)	(155.206)	(128.885)	(120.738)	(107.351)

- 1.55 Within the above figures the level of debt relating to historic (pre 1st April 2020) commercial property investment activity / non-financial investment is:

Table 8. Analysis of Non-Financial Investment Borrowing

	2024/25 Forecast £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m	2027/28 Estimate £m
External Debt for Non-Financial Investments				
Actual Debt at 31 March	66.859	66.859	66.859	66.859
Percentage of Total External Debt	14.14%	12.09%	11.63%	11.78%

- 1.56 Within the range of prudential indicators there are a number of key indicators to ensure that the Council operates its activities within well-defined limits. One of these is that the Council needs to ensure that its gross debt does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of its CFR in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional CFR for 2025/26 and the subsequent two financial years. This allows some flexibility for limited early borrowing for future years, but ensures that borrowing is not undertaken for revenue or speculative purposes.
- 1.57 The Council has complied with this prudential indicator in the current year and does not envisage difficulties for the future. This view takes into account current commitments, existing plans, and the proposals in this report.

Treasury Indicators: Limits to Borrowing Activity

- 1.58 **The operational boundary.** This is the limit beyond which external debt is not normally expected to exceed. In most cases, this would be a similar figure to the CFR, but may be lower or higher depending on the levels of actual debt and the ability to fund under-borrowing by other cash resources.

Table 9. Operational Boundary

	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m	2027/28 Estimate £m
Capital Financing Requirement	628.206	669.107	676.045	684.427
Headroom	20.000	20.000	20.000	20.000
Total	648.206	689.107	696.045	704.427

- 1.59 **The authorised limit for external debt.** This is a key prudential indicator and represents a control on the maximum level of borrowing. This represents a legal limit beyond which external debt is prohibited, and this limit needs to be set or revised by Council. It reflects the level of external debt which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short term, but is not sustainable in the longer term. This is the statutory limit determined under section 3 (1) of the Local Government Act 2003. The Government retains an option to control either the total of all councils' plans, or those of a specific council, although this power has not yet been exercised.

- 1.60 The Authorised Borrowing limits are set out below:

Table 10. Authorised Limit

	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m	2027/28 Estimate £m
Operational Boundary	648.206	689.107	696.045	704.427
Headroom	40.000	40.000	40.000	40.000
Total	688.206	729.107	736.045	744.427

Prospects for Interest Rates

- 1.61 The Council has appointed MUFG as its treasury advisor and part of their service is to assist the Council to formulate a view on interest rates. MUFG provided the following forecasts on 11th November 2024. These are forecasts for Bank Rate, average earnings and PWLB certainty rates, gilt yields plus 80 bps.

Table 11. Interest Rate Projections (%)

Link Group Interest Rate View	11.11.24												
	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25	Mar-26	Jun-26	Sep-26	Dec-26	Mar-27	Jun-27	Sep-27	Dec-27
BANK RATE	4.75	4.50	4.25	4.00	4.00	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50
3 month ave earnings	4.70	4.50	4.30	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.80	3.80	3.80	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50
6 month ave earnings	4.70	4.40	4.20	3.90	3.90	3.90	3.80	3.80	3.80	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50
12 month ave earnings	4.70	4.40	4.20	3.90	3.90	3.90	3.80	3.80	3.80	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50
5 yr PWLB	5.00	4.90	4.80	4.60	4.50	4.50	4.40	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.00	4.00	3.90
10 yr PWLB	5.30	5.10	5.00	4.80	4.80	4.70	4.50	4.50	4.40	4.30	4.20	4.20	4.10
25 yr PWLB	5.60	5.50	5.40	5.30	5.20	5.10	5.00	4.90	4.80	4.70	4.60	4.50	4.50
50 yr PWLB	5.40	5.30	5.20	5.10	5.00	4.90	4.80	4.70	4.60	4.50	4.40	4.30	4.30

- 1.62 The forecast reflects a view that monetary policy is sufficiently tight at present to cater for some further moderate loosening, the extent of which, however, will continue to be data dependent. MUFG forecast the next reduction in Bank Rate to be made in February and for a pattern to evolve whereby rate cuts are made quarterly and in keeping with the release of the Bank's Quarterly Monetary Policy Reports (February, May, August and November).

Borrowing Strategy

- 1.63 The Council is currently maintaining an under-borrowed position. This means that the capital borrowing need, (the Capital Financing Requirement), has not been fully funded with loan debt as cash supporting the Authority's reserves, balances and cash flow has been used as a temporary measure. This strategy is prudent as medium and longer dated borrowing rates are expected to fall from their current levels once prevailing inflation concerns are addressed by tighter near-term monetary policy. That is, Bank Rate remains elevated in 2025 even if some rate cuts arise.
- 1.64 The most cost effective borrowing currently is internal borrowing which involves running down cash balances and foregoing interest earned (at historically low rates), in lieu of taking out new borrowing at a higher rate. The Council will look to utilise temporary and short term borrowing, if a borrowing need arises, as this is a cheaper option than long term borrowing at present. However, in view of the overall forecast for long term borrowing rates to remain at high levels over the next few years, consideration will also be given to weighing the short term advantage of internal, temporary and short term borrowing against potential longer term costs if the opportunity is missed for taking loans at rates which will be higher in future years.
- 1.65 Against this background and the risks within the economic forecast, the Treasury Team will monitor interest rates in financial markets and adopt a pragmatic approach to changing circumstances. If during the period there was a significant risk of a sharp rise in borrowing rates than that currently forecast, fixed rate funding will be drawn whilst interest rates are lower than they are projected to be in the next few years. If it was felt that there was a significant risk of a sharp fall in borrowing rates, then borrowing may be postponed.
- 1.66 Any decisions will be reported subsequently to the Audit & Governance Committee.

Policy on Borrowing in Advance of Need

- 1.67 The Council will not borrow more than or in advance of its needs purely to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed. Any decision to borrow in advance will be within forward approved Capital Financing Requirement estimates, and will be considered carefully to ensure that value for money can be demonstrated and that the Council can ensure the security of such funds.
- 1.68 Risks associated with any borrowing in advance will be subject to prior appraisal and subsequent quarterly reporting.

Debt Rescheduling

- 1.69 Rescheduling of current borrowing in our debt portfolio may be considered whilst premature redemption rates remain elevated but only if there is surplus cash available to facilitate any repayment, or rebalancing of the portfolio to provide more certainty is considered appropriate.
- 1.70 Any rescheduling will be reported to Members in a treasury report at the earliest meeting following its action.
- 1.71 The Authority holds £5.000m of LOBO (Lender's Option Borrower's Option) loans where the lender has the option to propose an increase in the interest rate at set dates, following which the Authority has the option to either accept the new rate or to repay the loan at no additional cost. The Council will take the option to repay LOBO loans if there is a financial benefit in doing so.

Approved Sources of Long and Short-term Borrowing

1.72 The list of approved lenders and types of funding that can be secured with each entity is set out below:

	Fixed	Variable
PWLB	●	●
UK Municipal Bond Agency	●	●
Local Authorities	●	●
Banks	●	●
Pension Funds	●	●
Insurance Companies	●	●
Market (long-term)	●	●
Market (temporary)	●	●
Overdraft		●
Finance leases	●	●

6. Annual Investment Strategy 2025/26

Investment Policy – Management of Risk

1.73 The MHCLG and CIPFA have extended the meaning of ‘investments’ to include both financial and non-financial investments. This report deals solely with financial investments. Non-financial investments, essentially the purchase of income yielding assets, are covered in the Council’s Capital Strategy.

1.74 The Council’s Investment Policy has regard to the following:

- MHCLG’s Guidance on Local Government Investments (“the Guidance”)
- CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes 2021 (“the Code”)
- CIPFA Treasury Management Guidance Notes 2021

1.75 The Council’s investment priorities are security first, portfolio liquidity second and then yield (return). The Council will aim to achieve the optimum return (yield) on its investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity and with the Council’s risk appetite. In the current economic climate it is considered appropriate to keep investments short term to cover cash flow needs. However, where appropriate (from an internal as well as external perspective), the Council will consider the value available in periods over 12 months with high credit rated financial institutions, as well as wider range fund options.

1.76 The above guidance from the MHCLG and CIPFA place a high priority on the management of risk. The Council has adopted a prudent approach to managing risk and defines its risk appetite by:

- i. The application of minimum acceptable **credit criteria** to generate a list of creditworthy counterparties. This also enables diversification and the avoidance of concentration risk. The key ratings used to monitor counterparties are the short term and long-term ratings.
- ii. Ratings will not be the sole determinant of the quality of an institution; it is important to continually assess and monitor the financial sector on both a micro and macro basis and in relation to the economic and political environments in which institutions operate. The assessment will also take account of information that reflects the opinion of the markets. To achieve this consideration the Authority will engage with its advisors to maintain a monitor on market pricing such as “**credit default swaps**” and overlay that information on top of the credit ratings.
- iii. Reviewing other information sources including the financial press, share price etc. pertaining to the financial sector in order to establish the most robust scrutiny process on the suitability of potential investment counterparties.
- iv. The Council defining the **types of investment instruments** that the Treasury Management Team are authorised to use as follows:
 - **Specified investments** - those with a high level of credit quality and subject to a maturity limit of one year.
 - **Non-specified investments** - those with less high credit quality, may be for periods in excess of one year, and/or are more complex instruments which require greater consideration by members and

officers before being authorised for use. Once an investment is classed as non-specified, it remains non-specified all the way through to maturity. For example, an 18-month deposit would still be non-specified even if it has only 11 months left until maturity.

- v. **Non-specified investments limit.** The Council has determined that it will limit the maximum total exposure to non-specified investments to £30m of the total investment portfolio.
 - vi. **Lending limits**, (amounts and maturity) for each counterparty will be set through applying the matrix in Table 12.
 - vii. Setting a £30m limit for the amount of investments which are invested for **longer than 365 days**.
 - viii. Investments will only be placed with counterparties from countries with a specified minimum **sovereign rating**.
 - ix. Engaging **external consultants**, to provide expert advice on how to optimise an appropriate balance of security, liquidity, and yield, given the risk appetite of the Council in the context of the expected level of cash balances and need for liquidity throughout the year.
 - x. All investments will be denominated in **sterling**.
 - xi. As a result of the change in accounting standards for 2022/23 under IFRS 9, the Council will consider the implications of investment instruments which could result in an adverse movement in the value of the amount invested and resultant charges at the end of the year to the General Fund. In November 2018, MHCLG concluded a consultation for a temporary override to allow English local authorities time to adjust their portfolio of all pooled investments by announcing a statutory override to delay implementation of IFRS 9 for five years ending 31st March 2023. A further extension to the over-ride to 31st March 2025 has been announced by the Government. The only pooled investment on the Council's portfolio is the £15.000m invested with the CCLA Property Fund.
 - xii. Based on the latest valuation (as at 31st December 2024), the investment is worth £14.042m, which represents an indicative loss of £0.958m that would need to be recognised in 2025/26 should the statutory override end. The Council has set aside an earmarked reserve of £1.200m to mitigate against the impact of this statutory override ending. Any future year movements in value (gains or losses) of the investment would be compared to £14.042m. For context, as set out in Annex 4, the current interest rate earned on this investment is 5.36% which would equate to £0.804m annually. In total, this investment has earned the Council £6.900m of gross interest (£6.000m net of management fees) over the period from 1st April 2015 to 30th September 2024. This investment is reviewed regularly by Officers and the current view is that this investment should be retained.
- 1.77 However, this authority will also pursue value for money in treasury management and will monitor the yield from investment income against appropriate benchmarks for investment performance. Regular monitoring of investment performance will be carried out during the year.

Changes in risk management policy from last year

- 1.78 The above criteria are unchanged from last year. There are no proposed changes for 2025/26.

Creditworthiness Policy

- 1.79 The primary principle governing the Council's investment criteria is the security of its investments, although the yield or return on the investment is also a key consideration. After this main principle, the Council will ensure that:
- It maintains a policy covering both the categories of investment types it will invest in, criteria for choosing investment counterparties with adequate security and monitoring their security; and
 - It has sufficient liquidity in its investments. For this purpose, it will set out procedures for determining the maximum periods for which funds may prudently be committed. These procedures also apply to the Council's prudential indicators covering the maximum principal sums invested.
- 1.80 The Council's Section 151 Officer will maintain a counterparty list in compliance with the following criteria and will revise the criteria and submit them to Council for approval as necessary. These criteria are separate to that which determines which types of investment instrument are either Specified or Non-specified as it provides an overall pool of counterparties considered high quality which the Council may use, rather than defining what types of investment instruments are to be used.
- 1.81 Credit rating information is supplied by the Council's treasury advisors, on all active counterparties that comply with the criteria below. Any counterparty failing to meet the criteria would be omitted from the counterparty (dealing) list. Any rating changes, rating Watches (notification of a likely change), rating Outlooks (notification of the longer-term bias outside the central rating view) are provided to officers almost immediately after they occur and this information is considered before dealing. Notification of a negative rating Watch applying to a counterparty with the minimum Council criteria will be suspended from use, with all others being reviewed in light of market conditions.
- 1.82 The criteria for providing a pool of high quality investment counterparties, (both Specified and Non-specified Investments) is set out in Table 12 below, as are the time and monetary limits for institutions on the Council's counterparty list:

Table 12. Investment Criteria

	Credit Rating	Counterparty Limit	Time Limit
Banks and organisations and securities whose lowest long-term credit rating published by Fitch, Moody's or Standard & Poor is:	AAA	£20m (each)	5 Years
	AA+		3 Years
	AA		2 Year
	AA-		
	A+		
	A		1 Year
	A-		
The Council's current account, Lloyds Bank Plc should circumstances arise when it does not meet above criteria	N/A	£1m (total)	Next Day

UK Building Societies without credit rating	N/A	£10m (each)	1 Year
UK Government (irrespective of credit rating)	N/A	Unlimited	50 Years
UK Local Authorities (irrespective of credit rating)	N/A	£20m (each)	50 Years
UK Registered Providers of Social Housing whose published long-term credit rating is A- or higher	A-	£5m (each)	2 Years
UK Registered Providers of Social Housing whose published long-term credit rating is lower than A- or without a long-term credit rating	N/A	£2m (each)	1 Year
	Fund rating	Cash Limit	Time
Money Market Funds	AAA	£20m (each)	liquid
Pooled Funds (including pooled property funds)	AAA	£30m (total)	liquid

- 1.83 The credit rating of counterparties is monitored regularly. The Council receives credit rating information including changes, rating watches and rating outlooks from MUFG as and when ratings change, following which the Council's schedule of approved counterparties is promptly updated – on occasion ratings may be downgraded when an investment has already been made. The criteria used are such that a minor downgrading should not affect the full receipt of the principal and interest. Any counterparty failing to meet the criteria will be removed from the list immediately and if required new counterparties which meet the criteria will be added to the list by the Council's Section 151 Officer.

Creditworthiness

- 1.84 Significant levels of downgrades to Short-Term and Long-Term credit ratings have not materialised since the crisis in March 2020. In the main, where they did change, any alterations were limited to Outlooks. Nonetheless, when setting minimum sovereign debt ratings, this Authority will not set a minimum rating for the UK

Credit Default Swap (CDS) Prices

- 1.85 Although bank CDS prices, (these are market indicators of credit risk), spiked upwards during the days of the Truss/Kwarteng government, they have returned to more average levels since then. However, sentiment can easily shift, so it will remain important to undertake continual monitoring of all aspects of risk and return in the current circumstances. MUFG, our treasury advisers, monitor CDS prices as part of their creditworthiness service to local authorities and the Council has access to this information via its portal.

Other Limits

- 1.86 Due care will be taken to consider the exposure of the Council's total investment portfolio to non-specified investments, countries, groups and sectors.
- a) **Non-specified investment limit.** The Council has determined that it will limit its maximum total exposure to non-specified investments to £30.000m.
 - b) **Country limit.** The Council has determined that it will only use approved counterparties from the UK and from countries with a minimum sovereign credit rating of AA- from Fitch or equivalent. In addition, the Council will apply

the Freedom House Global Freedom rating system to inform decision making and will only invest in organisations from countries with a 'free' rating. The list of countries that qualify using these criteria as at the date of this report are set out in Annexe 3 to this appendix. This list will be added to, or deducted from, by officers should ratings change in accordance with this Policy.

c) **Other limits.** In addition:

- no more than £20.000m will be placed with any non-UK country at any time;
- limits in place above will apply to a group of companies;
- sector limits will be monitored regularly for appropriateness.

1.87 As an additional layer of security, a concentration of investments in too few counterparties or countries will be avoided with officers ensuring that the portfolio is diversified across counterparties/countries.

Investment Strategy

1.88 **In-house fund** Investments will be made with reference to the core balance and cash flow requirements and the interest rate outlook. Greater returns are usually obtainable by investing for longer periods.

1.89 Accordingly, while most cash balances are required in order to manage the ups and downs of cash flow, where cash sums can be identified that could be invested for longer periods, the value to be obtained from longer term investments will be carefully assessed.

1.90 The Council will not knowingly invest directly in businesses whose activities and practices pose a risk of serious harm to individuals or groups, or whose activities are inconsistent with the Council's Corporate Plan and values. This would include institutions with material links to:

- human rights abuse (e.g. child labour, political oppression)
- environmentally harmful activities (e.g. pollution, destruction of habitat, fossil fuels)
- socially harmful activities (e.g. tobacco, gambling)

1.91 Further, the Council will only invest in countries deemed as "Free" as per the Freedom House Global Freedom rating system.

Investment Return Expectations

1.92 The current forecast shown in Table 11, includes a forecast Bank Rate to fall to a low of 3.50%. Bank Rate projections to December 2027 are set out in Table 11 above.

Investment Treasury Indicator and Limit

1.93 The Investment Treasury Indicator and Limit refer to the total principal funds invested for greater than 365 days. These limits are set with regard to the Council's liquidity requirements and to reduce the need for early sale of an investment and are based on the availability of funds after each year-end.

1.94 Table 13 below sets out the limits on investments that can be longer than 365 days.

Table 13. Upper limit for principal sums invested on fixed terms for longer than 365 days

	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
Principal sums invested for longer than 365 days	30.000	30.000	30.000
Current investments as at 31 st December 2024 in excess of one year maturing in each year	Nil*	Nil*	Nil*

*As of 31st December 2024, the Council has £15.000m invested in pooled property funds which have no fixed maturity, as set out in Table 6.

1.95 For its cash flow generated balances, the Council will seek to utilise its notice accounts, money market funds and short-dated deposits in order to benefit from the compounding of interest.

Policy on Apportioning Interest to the HRA

1.96 Reform of the Housing Revenue Account Subsidy system was completed at the end of 2011/12, the Council was required to pay MHCLG £147.800m. Prior to 2012/13 The Council would recharge interest expenditure and income attributable to the HRA in accordance with determinations issued by MHCLG. The Council subsequently adopted a policy that it would continue to manage its debt as a single pool using a similar regime to that applied prior to self-financing and which would not result in a material change to the average interest rate paid by the Council.

1.97 During 2016/17 and 2017/18 the methodology was adjusted to recognise that in essence the £147.800m of loans the Council borrowed at the time of self-financing were primarily taken for HRA debt, and therefore the operation of the single pool should not lead to the average interest rate charged to the HRA being less than the average rate on the remaining part of those loans.

1.98 The HRA also has a notional cash balance which may be positive or negative. This balance is measured each month and interest transferred between the General Fund and HRA at the net average rate earned by the Council on its portfolio of treasury investments (excluding the CCLA Property Fund) and short-term borrowing.

End of Year Investment Report

1.99 At the end of the financial year, the Council will report on its investment activity as part of its Annual Treasury Report.

External Fund Managers

1.100 The Council does not currently employ external fund managers for any part of its investment portfolio, other than the pooled property fund, and does not plan to do so. If in future, officers determine that an external fund manager will add value to the Council's treasury management function, a report will be brought to the Audit and Governance Committee to first seek approval of a change in policy and subsequently the appointment of a preferred fund manager.

7. Annexes

Annex 1 – Prudential and Treasury Indicators

Annex 2 – Treasury Management Scheme of Delegation

Annex 3 – Debt Portfolio as of 31st December 2024

Annex 4 – Investment Portfolio as of 31st December 2024

Annex 5 – List of Approved Countries for Investment

Annex 1 - The Capital Prudential and Treasury Indicators 2025/26 – 2027/28

- The Council's capital expenditure plans are the key driver of treasury management activity. The output of the capital expenditure plans is reflected in the prudential indicators, which are designed to assist members' overview and confirm capital expenditure plans.

Capital Expenditure

	Forecast 2024/25 £m	2025/26-2027/28 Estimate			
		2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	Total £m
General Fund	72.137	66.828	36.683	24.008	127.519
HRA	27.335	90.143	29.778	18.996	138.917
Total	99.472	156.971	66.461	43.004	266.436

Affordability Prudential Indicators

- Section 5 in the main body of the Strategy cover the overall capital and control of borrowing prudential indicators, but within this framework prudential indicators are required to assess the affordability of the capital investment plans. These provide an indication of the impact of the capital investment plans on the Council's overall finances. The Council is asked to approve the following indicators:

Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

- This indicator identifies the trend in the cost of capital, (borrowing and other long-term obligation costs net of investment income), against the net revenue stream.

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	Estimate (%)	Estimate (%)	Estimate (%)	Estimate (%)
General Fund	10.93	9.69	9.58	9.59
HRA	12.86	14.05	15.16	15.15
Total	11.40	10.75	10.89	10.87

Maturity Structure of Borrowing

- These gross limits are set to reduce the Council's exposure to large, fixed rate sums falling due for refinancing and are required for upper and lower limits. Council is asked to approve the limits in the following table.

Maturity structure of fixed interest rate borrowing 2025/26		
	Lower	Upper
Under 12 months	0%	100%
12 months to 2 years	0%	20%
2 years to 5 years	0%	20%
5 years to 10 years	0%	30%
10 years to 20 years	0%	40%
20 years to 30 years	0%	50%
30 years to 40 years	0%	60%
40 years to 50 years	0%	60%

Maturity structure of variable interest rate borrowing 2024/25		
	Lower	Upper
Under 12 months	0%	100%
12 months to 2 years	0%	100%
2 years to 5 years	0%	100%
5 years to 10 years	0%	100%
10 years to 20 years	0%	100%
20 years to 30 years	0%	100%
30 years to 40 years	0%	100%
40 years to 50 years	0%	100%

Annex 2 - Treasury Management Scheme of Delegation

i) Council

- receiving and reviewing reports on treasury management policies, practices, and activities;
- approval of/amendments to the Council's adopted clauses, Treasury Management Policy Statement and Treasury Management Practices;
- approval of annual Strategy.

ii) Audit & Governance Committee

- Receive and recommend to Council amendments to the Council's adopted clauses, Treasury Management Policy Statement and Treasury Management Practices;
- budget consideration and approval;
- approval of the division of responsibilities;
- receiving and reviewing regular monitoring reports and acting on recommendations;
- approving the selection of external service providers and agreeing terms of appointment.

iii) Section 151 Officer

- reviewing the Treasury Management Policy and Procedures and making recommendations to the responsible body.

Annex 3 – Debt Portfolio as at 31st December 2024

Class	Type	Start Date	Maturity Date	Counterparty	Profile	Rate	Principal O/S (£)
Loan	Temporary Borrowing - Fixed	15/08/24	15/04/25	West Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner	Maturity	4.7500%	10,000,000.00
Loan	Temporary Borrowing - Fixed	28/08/24	22/04/25	Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council	Maturity	4.7500%	5,000,000.00
Loan	Temporary Borrowing - Fixed	05/09/24	07/04/25	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority	Maturity	4.7500%	2,000,000.00
Loan	Temporary Borrowing - Fixed	05/09/24	07/04/25	North Hertfordshire District Council	Maturity	4.7500%	2,000,000.00
Loan	Temporary Borrowing - Fixed	05/09/24	15/04/25	Hyndburn Borough Council	Maturity	4.7500%	2,000,000.00
Loan	Temporary Borrowing - Fixed	27/09/24	28/04/25	West Yorkshire Combined Authority	Maturity	4.9000%	5,000,000.00
Loan	Temporary Borrowing - Fixed	11/10/24	11/04/25	South Kesteven District Council	Maturity	4.8500%	3,000,000.00
Loan	Temporary Borrowing - Fixed	17/09/24	17/04/25	Stroud District Council	Maturity	4.9000%	2,500,000.00
Loan	Temporary Borrowing - Fixed	19/09/24	24/04/25	Fermanagh & Omagh District Council	Maturity	4.7750%	2,000,000.00
Loan	Temporary Borrowing - Fixed	23/09/24	23/04/25	Liverpool City Region Combined Authority	Maturity	4.9000%	5,000,000.00
Loan	Temporary Borrowing - Fixed	01/11/24	01/05/25	Tendring District Council	Maturity	4.7500%	5,000,000.00
Loan	Temporary Borrowing - Fixed	01/10/24	01/04/25	Leicester, Leics and Rutland Fire Authority	Maturity	4.7500%	3,000,000.00
Loan	Temporary Borrowing - Fixed	09/10/24	15/04/25	Middlesbrough Teesside Pension Fund	Maturity	4.7500%	15,000,000.00
Loan	Temporary Borrowing - Fixed	08/11/24	06/05/25	Fermanagh & Omagh District Council	Maturity	4.7500%	2,000,000.00
Loan	Temporary Borrowing - Fixed	09/12/24	09/06/25	Chichester District Council	Maturity	5.3500%	5,000,000.00
Loan	Temporary Borrowing - Fixed	11/12/24	03/04/25	South Ribble Borough Council	Maturity	5.4000%	4,000,000.00
Loan	Temporary Borrowing - Fixed	24/04/24	06/01/25	Cornwall Council	Maturity	5.2800%	5,000,000.00
Temporary Borrowing - Fixed Total						4.8852%	77,500,000.00
Loan	Fixed	26/03/18	25/03/68	PWLB	Maturity	2.2800%	15,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	27/09/18	27/09/43	PWLB	Maturity	2.8200%	15,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	27/09/18	27/09/49	PWLB	Maturity	2.7900%	15,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	11/03/19	11/03/66	PWLB	Maturity	2.3800%	15,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	13/03/19	13/03/37	PWLB	Maturity	2.4200%	5,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	13/03/19	13/03/57	PWLB	Maturity	2.4200%	5,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	01/04/19	01/04/64	PWLB	Maturity	2.2000%	10,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	01/10/19	02/10/62	PWLB	Maturity	1.6400%	5,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	01/10/19	01/10/63	PWLB	Maturity	1.6300%	5,000,000.00

Loan	Fixed	07/10/19	07/10/66	PWLB	Maturity	1.6300%	5,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	07/10/19	08/10/68	PWLB	Maturity	1.6300%	5,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	11/03/20	25/09/69	PWLB	Maturity	2.0700%	15,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	13/05/05	25/09/51	PWLB	Maturity	4.1500%	2,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	11/01/06	25/09/55	PWLB	Maturity	3.9000%	5,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	23/01/06	25/09/55	PWLB	Maturity	3.7000%	5,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	23/05/06	25/09/47	PWLB	Maturity	4.2000%	2,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	19/07/06	25/03/52	PWLB	Maturity	4.2500%	20,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	20/09/06	25/09/51	PWLB	Maturity	4.2000%	5,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	28/09/06	25/09/52	PWLB	Maturity	4.0500%	10,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	08/03/07	25/03/53	PWLB	Maturity	4.2500%	10,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	08/03/07	25/03/54	PWLB	Maturity	4.2500%	10,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	05/08/08	25/03/58	PWLB	Maturity	4.4800%	2,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	15/08/08	25/09/57	PWLB	Maturity	4.3900%	6,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	02/12/08	25/09/58	PWLB	Maturity	4.1200%	10,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	20/08/09	25/03/59	PWLB	Maturity	4.2000%	5,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	31/08/10	25/03/60	PWLB	Maturity	3.9200%	10,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	14/07/11	25/03/26	PWLB	EIP	3.5900%	750,000.00
Loan	Fixed	15/09/11	25/03/31	PWLB	EIP	3.3500%	3,250,000.00
Loan	Fixed	28/03/12	25/03/51	PWLB	Maturity	3.5300%	12,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	28/03/12	25/09/26	PWLB	Maturity	2.9700%	12,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	28/03/12	25/03/50	PWLB	Maturity	3.5300%	15,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	28/03/12	25/03/41	PWLB	Maturity	3.4900%	15,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	28/03/12	25/03/61	PWLB	Maturity	3.4800%	15,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	28/03/12	25/03/32	PWLB	Maturity	3.3000%	12,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	28/03/12	25/09/41	PWLB	Maturity	3.4900%	15,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	28/03/12	25/09/51	PWLB	Maturity	3.5200%	3,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	28/03/12	25/03/62	PWLB	Maturity	3.4800%	15,000,000.00
Loan	Fixed	28/03/12	25/03/41	PWLB	EIP	2.9900%	16,500,000.00
Loan	Fixed	06/12/05	06/12/55	Barclays Bank plc (Market)	Maturity	3.9900%	5,000,000.00
Fixed Total						3.2536%	356,500,000.00
Loan	LOBO	30/01/08	31/01/78	Dexia (Market)	Maturity	4.1900%	5,000,000.00
LOBO Total						4.1900%	5,000,000.00
Loan Total						3.5523%	439,000,000.00

Annex 4 - Investment Portfolio as at 31st December 2024

Class	Type	Start / Purchase Date	Maturity Date	Counterparty	Rate	Principal O/S (£)
Treasury Investments						
Deposit	MMF	N/A	N/A	Aberdeen Standard Liquidity Fund	5.060%	18,900,000.00
Deposit	MMF	N/A	N/A	Federated Short Term Sterling Prime Fund	5.070%	4,500,000.00
Deposit	Current Account	N/A	N/A	Lloyds Bank	2.000%	236,322.98
Deposit	Property Fund	30/03/15	N/A	CCLA Local Authorities Property Fund	5.330%	15,000,000.00
Treasury Investments Total					5.180%	38,636,322.98
Non-Treasury Investments						
Deposit	Fixed	25/03/2021	24/03/2026	Brighter Futures for Children Ltd	1.810%	5,000,000.00
Deposit	Fixed	29/09/2017	26/09/2022	Homes for Reading Ltd	3.250%	1,100,000.00
Deposit	Fixed	23/01/2018	26/09/2022	Homes for Reading Ltd	3.380%	400,000.00
Deposit	Fixed	28/02/2018	26/09/2022	Homes for Reading Ltd	3.590%	800,000.00
Deposit	Fixed	20/03/2018	26/09/2022	Homes for Reading Ltd	3.580%	700,000.00
Deposit	Fixed	25/04/2018	24/03/2023	Homes for Reading Ltd	3.620%	800,000.00
Deposit	Fixed	11/05/2018	24/03/2023	Homes for Reading Ltd	3.570%	800,000.00
Deposit	Fixed	29/08/2018	24/03/2023	Homes for Reading Ltd	3.480%	2,000,000.00
Deposit	Fixed	24/09/2018	24/03/2023	Homes for Reading Ltd	3.410%	3,000,000.00
Deposit	Fixed	11/12/2018	24/03/2023	Homes for Reading Ltd	3.190%	4,000,000.00
Deposit	Fixed	07/02/2019	24/03/2023	Homes for Reading Ltd	3.380%	2,000,000.00
Deposit	Fixed	29/06/2018	24/03/2023	Homes for Reading Ltd	3.510%	1,300,000.00
Deposit	Fixed	16/04/2019	24/03/2029	Homes for Reading Ltd	3.750%	7,000,000.00
Deposit	Fixed	30/04/2019	30/04/2029	Reading Transport Ltd	5.000%	3,949,000.00
Deposit	Fixed	15/08/2019	30/07/2029	Reading Transport Ltd	5.000%	500,000.00
Deposit	Fixed	08/04/2018	01/07/2023	Reading Transport Ltd	5.000%	490,000.00
Deposit	Fixed	03/06/2018	01/07/2023	Reading Transport Ltd	5.000%	207,000.00
Deposit	Fixed	29/07/2018	01/07/2023	Reading Transport Ltd	5.000%	164,000.00
Deposit	Fixed	20/01/2020	01/01/2024	Reading Transport Ltd	5.000%	151,000.00
Deposit	Fixed	21/08/2020	01/10/2024	Reading Transport Ltd	5.000%	700,000.00
Non-Treasury Investments Total					3.926%	35,061,000.00
Total Investments *						73,697,322.98

* Values above do not include lease agreements with Reading Transport Ltd.

Annex 5 – List of Approved Countries for Investment

1. The below list of approved countries for investment is based on the lowest available rating from all ratings agencies (as at 17th January 2025).

AAA

- Australia
- Denmark
- Germany
- Netherlands
- Norway
- Sweden
- Switzerland

AA+

- Canada
- Finland
- United States of America

AA

- France

AA-

- Belgium
- United Kingdom

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