

Appendix 6: Corporate Plan Projects & Initiatives Quarter 3 (2023/24)

Corporate Plan theme	Project or activity	Q1	Q2	Q3	DOT	Commentary
Foundations	Embedding the Hub and Spoke structure. Deliver a programme of work to ensure that we get the best value for money for the goods and services that we buy	▲	●	●	→	Procurement Transformation programme commenced in October 2023 and is reporting to the Transformation & Efficiency Board monthly on progress. Several elements of various workstreams have been completed and others are making strong progress.
Foundations	Implement new finance system with improved business processes	▲	▲	●	↑	The new finance system, e5, went live in early December across RBC and BFFC. All financial processes are operating successfully including the transfer of financial data between systems, raising of purchase orders, payment of suppliers and customer billing. The project is now in a hyper care period through to February 2024 when the Finance Systems Team is being supplemented by specialist resources to complete knowledge transfer in system management, resolve support requests and deliver refresher training to end users.
Foundations	Implement Social Value Strategy and reporting	▲	▲	▲	→	An interim Social Value register has now been put in place for Service Areas to record social value promised at tender stage and delivery throughout the contract. This is on the procurement Intranet site so that all can update and that we can accurately report on delivery. The refreshed Social Value Policy is still in development and is being circulated for feedback with internal key stakeholders.
Foundations	Implementation of new customer platform	●	▲	▲	→	Still a challenging timeline due to complexity of data migration from the legacy system and additional resources have been applied to ensure Built Environment and Regulatory Services elements of the project remain on track for delivery in February/March 2024. Supplier side delay on the Customer element of the project has been resolved and plan has been accepted by Customer Experience Board for release of initial implementation in July 2024. Costs have increased but are contained within associated capital budgets and are being closely monitored by the project and the Customer Experience Board alike. A range of opportunities are being identified as the projects progress through the implementation phase and are providing a backlog of next stage work following go-live and feeding into the overall planning for Customer Experience transformation work.

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Foundations	Implementation of the Connected Reading Strategy	▲	▲	●	↑	<p>Case and Customer Management: The Case stream (replacing Civica APP) remains on track for delivery this financial year (minor move of date from February to March to allow additional testing and data migration time); the delay to the discovery phase of the Customer stream (replacing Granicus) reported last quarter has led to the need to split the go-live of that stream from the Case stream; Customer will now go live in summer 24.</p> <p>The current status of work packages of our digital transformation delivery partner (PwC) is as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Customer Journey Optimisation – voice automation proof of concept delivered in December and in assessment. Customer Journey Optimisation proposal under review and to be commissioned in January. 2) Adult Social Care System and Process review – scoping study complete; work in progress to scope first implementation stage 3) Adult Social Care Digital Front Door – scoping study complete; work in progress to agree implementation plan 4) Housing Digital Presence – all commissioned work now delivered 5) PMO – PwC work complete; key processes and reports agreed; further development, communication and embedding in progress by internal PMO team, which is now close to being fully staffed. <p>The status of other transformation projects is as follows:</p> <p>Independent Living – Our bid for £1m of NHS funding over 2 years to expand the pilot was successful, and mobilisation of the expanded project is well in progress, funding having been released at the end of December</p> <p>Digital inclusion – All community centres now have public WiFi</p> <p>Microsoft 365 Adoption & Exploitation - a project to build and equip a network of local digital ambassadors is now in its inception stage, with a project manager in place.</p> <p>Progress and plans were briefed to the October 2023 Policy Committee and, on that basis, the programme is considered rebaselined and returned to green status.</p>

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Foundations	Implementation of the Customer Experience Programme	▲	▲	●	↑	The Customer Experience Board continues to meet monthly and progress projects and initiatives in the Transformation Programme workstreams. Work highlighted in the last quarters update relating to a deep dive into six service areas and a number of customer journeys was undertaken and has provided additional confidence to support the business case for Customer Experience in the next MTFP. In addition, a voice automation trial was launched before the Christmas break and is currently undergoing a proof of value trial. Two areas make up this trial that seek to automate the reporting of missed bins, and the ordering of a new or replacement waste containers, providing residents who wish to use the telephone channel to access these services the opportunity to do so 24/7, while also reducing demand on mediated contact handled required by the Customer Fulfilment Centre. The proof of value trial will report back findings to the Customer Experience Board at the beginning of February and if deemed successful will lead to the technology being rolled out to other suitable service areas. Work will also commence early February on opportunities identified in the 'deep dive' work completed in conjunction with the Digital Transformation Delivery Partners (PwC). This work will be made up of 8-10 sprints over the next 12 months focusing on Customer Experience improvement and delivering efficiencies across a number of identified customer journeys.
Foundations	Implementation of the Information Management Strategy	▲	▲	▲	→	We are working with the Data Stewards in BFFC and DACHS on the Action Plan work. We also have representation at the meetings from Records Management Unit and Digital, Technology & Change theme. The monthly meetings have good attendance and engagement. We are in the process of setting out working arrangements with the Data Stewards from DoR and DEGNS with the intention of having the first meeting in March 2024. The Data Stewards have completed the Information Asset Register (IAR) and Record of Processing Activities (ROPA) and Privacy Notice for BFFC. The DACHS Data Stewards have completed the Information Asset Register (IAR) and Record of Processing Activities (ROPA). The former DACHS area of work has merged with Housing & Communities (H&C) and are DCASC, the H&C Data Stewards are waiting to be confirmed so that they can join the next meeting in February to start governance work on their service areas.
Healthy Environment	£9 million investment in resurfacing roads and pavements. (Complete) (Further £8m investment project underway)	▲	●	▲	↓	Phase 2: Contract going out in March 2024 with an enhanced road list to incorporate the additional funding received from DfT following HS2 curtailment. This means works will now start later than planned but will include a much larger programme.
Healthy Environment	Climate Emergency Strategy	▲	▲	▲	→	The majority of actions remain green (on track) or amber (progressing but at risk of not being delivered by the target date). Further details are included in the Annual Progress Report for 2022/23 which was produced and presented to SEPT Committee in November 2023 (see https://readingcan.org.uk/about-us/annualreport/). An increasing number of strategy actions have been over-taken by events and the process of reviewing the Strategy and associated action plans for the period 2025-30 has been initiated by the Reading Climate Change Partnership so that a revised Strategy can be produced in the latter part of 2025.

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Healthy Environment	Decarbonisation of the Hexagon theatre through improved heating and lighting.	▲	▲	▲	→	Decarbonisation of the Hexagon is focusing on heating and lighting. The replacement of the house and emergency lighting commenced in September 2023 and is scheduled to complete by August 2024, the contractors are working around events programme, with the busy autumn season and pantomime limiting works in Nov and Dec. In December senior officers approved the appointment of RSK Consultants to provide technical support to the GSHP design to help start the appointment process of a bore hole contractor with the aim to carry out bore hole investigations in the Spring. In the interim, Property Services have commissioned a technical report on the Hexagon mechanical plant and heating systems to assess the implementation of GSHP heat delivery system within the Hexagon itself.
Healthy Environment	Delivery of Capital Education Property Development Programme	●	●	●	→	
Healthy Environment	Delivery of over 150 actions to contribute to the overall vision to mitigate and adapt to climate change	▲	▲	▲	→	The latest Annual Report (2022/23) on the Reading Climate Emergency Strategy detailed good progress, with the majority of the 150 actions within the Strategy ranked 'Green' or 'Amber' (see https://readingcan.org.uk/about-us/annualreport/ for details). The reduction of 51% in Reading's carbon footprint between 2005 and 2021 (the latest year for which data is available) is the 8th highest reduction of 374 local authority areas in the UK and Reading's per capita emissions are also the lowest in Berkshire. Whilst Reading's relative performance is strong, however, the Borough's carbon footprint increased by almost 10% between 2020 and 2021 as emissions 're-bounded' following the lifting of pandemic restrictions, and the pace of emissions reduction needs to increase significantly to align with the target in the Reading Climate Emergency Strategy of 'net zero by 2030'. The 2022 data (which is drawn from a national statistics dataset for UK emissions within the scope of local authorities) will be published in June 2024.
Healthy Environment	Electrification of fleet	▲	▲	▲	→	2 of the 7 E Refuse Collection Vehicles (RCVs) have been received, with remaining 5 expected at a rate of one per week, completion by second week in March. Long term fleet procurement plan being updated to set out a clear pathway to zero carbon vehicles by 2030.
Healthy Environment	New Local Transport Plan (LTP) for Reading	●	●	●	→	The consultation on the new LTP closed on 11 December 2023.
Healthy Environment	Retaining our position on the 'A' list' for bold leadership on climate change	●	●	●	→	The Council submitted its annual return to the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) in July 2023. Following external assessment, the Council was advised in November 2023 that Reading had retained its place on the CDP 'A' list of Councils taking bold climate action, one of only 26 UK local authorities to receive this ranking in 2023.
Healthy Environment	The allocation of £1.6 million Community Infrastructure Funds and commencement of the approved schemes	▲	▲	▲	→	£1.6 million of Community Infrastructure Levy funds were allocated to 18 local projects in March 2022 by Policy Committee. Work has completed on 11 of the projects, whilst the remainder are currently underway, in the preparatory stages or are awaiting the completion of other projects.

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Inclusive Economy	Actions arising from the Powered by People strategy	●	●	●	→	<p>Our Outreach in the Community events ran in Whitley through to the end of November and followed from an event at Job Fest. A total of 509 interactions have now taken place. The second Rotary-organised self-employment course ended in December, 16 completed the course and 11 are expected to apply for start up grants. Abbey Rotary will complete two more courses before Spring. The self employment course by Supersonic StartUp runs until February with participants receiving intense one to one support, learners are at 15 at moment. Education Business Partnership has two more sessions to deliver, including at JMA, and is on target to reach 3,860 student employer interactions through 27 events at 7 secondary schools. The new programme is in discussion to align schools support with Green and Screen Skills.</p> <p>DWP will be working with Reading Economic Development Agency (REDA) to deliver at least 2 Job Fairs in 2024 and focus skills support on Over 50's.</p> <p>All delivery is being aligned with Tackling Inequality aims.</p> <p>The Creative Skills task and finish group has been meeting with the aim of aligning Screen Production Skills with other creative industries and skills delivery across Reading, a newly commissioned piece of research on current delivery and the development of Apprenticeships is expected this month. REDA is working with partners including Screen Berks, to develop a local pipeline involving creative skills as a lifetime skills option.</p>
Inclusive Economy	Adoption of a new Town Centre Strategy	▲	▲	▲	→	Stakeholder engagement ongoing. Review of the scope of Town Centre Strategy and updates to key projects being undertaken.
Inclusive Economy	Bring forward the Minster Quarter site for development	▲	▲	●	↑	Recommendation to approve preferred bidder taken at 22 January Policy Committee. Procurement standstill now commences before finalisation of Development Agreement occurs in Spring/Summer 2024.
Inclusive Economy	Complete and open Green Park Station	●	●	●	→	Reading Green Park Station was opened on Saturday 25 May 2023.
Inclusive Economy	Complete Reading West Station upgrade	▲	▲	▲	→	Construction works by GWR's contractor are complete and Network Rail approval processes have commenced.
Inclusive Economy	Continued delivery of South Reading Mass Rapid Transport	●	●	●	→	Main contractor appointed and works due to commence in January.
Inclusive Economy	Create a diverse and inclusive workforce where everyone, regardless of their background, level or vocation, is able to thrive and reach their full potential	●	●	●	→	Personnel Committee agreed the Inclusion and Diversity Strategy and plan at their December meeting. The strategy is being launched in January 2024. There is a three year action plan associated with the strategy. A regular review process has been developed involving the Chief Executive and relevant SMEs/staff groups.

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Inclusive Economy	Create a workforce that is fully representative of the population we serve	●	▲	▲	→	Progress continues to be made towards this target - data from the recruitment team demonstrates a much more diverse set of appointments being made. Monthly statistics are provided to Corporate Management Team about the demographics of our workforce, including this aspect . NB we are using our 2023 data and are comparing it to the 2021 census data for the borough as this is the most up to date information we can use for comparison purposes. Currently 18.2% of our staff are from a BME background compared to c30% of the Borough's population - this is an increase on previous quarters. Annual pay gap reporting showed encouraging results, The Council's gender pay gap is 0.0% whilst the ethnicity pay gap is -0.4%
Inclusive Economy	Deliver our Reducing Inequality Strategy through a place based approach to improving skills education and training.	●	●	●	→	The Tackling Inequality Strategy (TIS) Action Plan is being delivered with 44 Actions being delivered by BFFC, New Directions College and REDA. An update on the TIS delivery is being considered by Policy Committee in January 24. The Place Based Pilots in the south of Reading have identified projects to support the programme objectives which are being considered by the Programme Sponsors for delivery.
Inclusive Economy	Deliver the High Street Heritage Action Zones project objectives.	▲	▲	▲	→	Major issue with main contractor for shop front improvements on Oxford Road. Their essential sub-contractors have closed down their business in December. Main contractors promising things they are not delivering for past two months. We are looking at options with Architects team and Historic England. Likely to terminate the contracts and try to find alternative contractor(s) to finalise some of the works. Public realm- Installation of the railing on Bedford road completed. Forecourt paving: Works has began on Monday 8th January in the area outside 78-84 Oxford Rd with site set up and setting out followed by removal of the existing surfaces and preparation for installing the new burnt ochre concrete block paving. is completed. Works will now move westwards to the area outside Nos 139-141 completing by the end of March outside 205-209. Meetings with shop owners and tenants have been held early January to ensure stakeholders are aware of the works and can easily contact the Council should they need. Access to properties and shops will be maintained at all times. Ghost sign139-141 Oxford Road: We will need to confirm with highways the type of license we need. But owners are happy with the project. We will need to submit the Listed Building Consent.

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Inclusive Economy	Develop adult skills, employment support and implement training programmes	●	●	●	➔	<p>We have been working in Partnership with Thames Water creating a tailored program aimed at enhancing the business English skills of refugees living in Reading facilitating their integration into the workforce. This tailored initiative encompasses various components, such as employability-focused modules, individual mentorship from Thames Water professionals, and regular workshops hosted by the company.</p> <p>We have successfully delivered Interview Skills workshops to support British National Overseas (BNO) individuals, supporting them on the path of Employment, and integration. Meanwhile, our ongoing Smile project is going well with the next Hospitality programme due to start next month, expanding our offerings to meet diverse needs. Our Supported Hospitality programme has also grown, with a new cohort which started in January and the September group progressing to higher-level.</p>
Inclusive Economy	Employment and Skills programme delivered via REDA	●	●	●	➔	<p>There are currently seven Employment and Skills Plans (ESP's) signed with developers locally, four of these are currently underway - following the completion of Phase 1 of Station Hill with Midgard. Phase 2 with Sir Alfred McAlpine is ongoing. There are at least six other significant plans in the development pipeline. New data is still awaited on some sites and the cumulative ESP output since October remains at 771: 25 apprenticeships, 452 local jobs, 38 work experience opportunities and education support to 256 students. Construction teams have engaged with several local schools including Civitas and Reading Girls, providers including New Meaning and Reading College, the University of Reading and Brighter Futures. ESP contributions continue to support the programme agreed by Policy Committee in Dec 22, outlined under Powered by People as above.</p>
Inclusive Economy	Implement and subsequently expand a new apprenticeship and work experience mentoring scheme	▲	▲	▲	➔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work experience- action completed already • Apprenticeships: We currently have 80 apprentices at the council -4.6% of the workforce(based on headcount 4.9% if using Full Time Equivalent FTE). We have an internal target for 2.3% FTE of our workforce to be comprised of newly recruited members of staff. We currently have 1.24% (20) with a recruitment campaign launching during National Apprenticeship week 5-11 February. The campaign consists of 10 roles, 4 ringfenced for care experienced/care leavers and 6 open recruitment. Work continues with Service areas to ensure new apprentice roles are included in workforce redesigns.
Inclusive Economy	Revitalisation of the Hexagon & Central Library	▲	▲	●	↑	<p>Planning permission secured in January for Reading Library and Civic Redesign. Planning application submitted for Hexagon Studio Theatre.</p>
Inclusive Economy	Shape the 3 year delivery plan 2022-25 for Reading's Culture and Heritage Strategy	●	●	●	➔	<p>Community workshop due to take place in March to understand impact of the statement and to gather any updates needed to the plan.</p>

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Inclusive Economy	Work in partnership to further the community and Council ambitions for Reading Gaol	●	●	●	→	Up to 31 Dec no further information on the sale. On January 11 2024, the Government announced it had sold the prison to a not for profit education foundation.
Thriving Communities	Berks West Health & Wellbeing Strategy - Five implementation plans delivering in collaboration with statutory, voluntary and community partners a range of health improvement actions across the five priority areas: 1. Reducing the difference in health between different groups of people; 2 Support for individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes to live healthy lives; 3. Help children and families in early years; 4. Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people; 5. Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all adults	●	●	●	→	A paper on the delivery against the KPIs in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy is being taken to the Health and Wellbeing Board meeting on 19.01.24. The report indicates that the majority of indicators on the dashboard for the five priority implementation plans and actions within them are Green and continuing to progress well, with some being amber but progress continues to be made against these action, though progress may be slower. None of the actions are red - evidencing good progress against the 3 year implementation plans. However, because of the good progress the actions within the plans will be reviewed this year in March in addition to actions, where appropriate, that address local need.

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Thriving Communities	<p>BFFC have set four key priorities which are based on what success would look like by putting our young people at the heart of what we do, to drive all improvement and initiatives:</p> <p>Priority 1: 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.</p> <p>Priority 2: 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.</p> <p>Priority 3: deliver a sustainable Children Social Care service through practice rooted in relational and timely statutory engagement with families.</p> <p>Priority 4: 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.</p>	▲	▲	▲	➔	<p>The rise in demand across early help, children's social care and services for children with SEND continues. The children's transformation programme is now being implemented. The restructure of Early Help concluded in December and phase 2, the development of a Family Hub model for Reading, is due to start in January 2024. This will align with the partnership review of the Early Help Strategy. The DfE funded RISE team, aimed at meeting children with Special Education Needs & Disabilities (SEND) earlier is in place as of January 2024. An increase in Additionally Resourced Provision in mainstream schools in Reading has also been achieved and continues, meaning that more children can have their needs met in their local mainstream school.</p>
Thriving Communities	<p>Celebrate Reading's diverse arts, culture and heritage. Use arts, culture, heritage and leisure as a vehicle for delivering placemaking; health and wellbeing; inclusion; economic development and lifelong learning outcomes.</p>	●	●	●	➔	<p>Oct - Dec</p> <p>Successful delivery of Black History Month.</p> <p>Launch of small creative grants aimed at giving everyone the opportunity to get involved in creative activities.</p> <p>Theatre show to teach young people about the dangers of knife crime and gangs.</p> <p>Funded Whitley Winter Wonderland to support the launch of the micro grants and will be delivering a day of creative activity in Whitley Wood community centre .</p> <p>Writing a funding bid with Hong Kong Association and Reading Libraries for activities to be delivered in Libraries linked to Cantonese books for children and their families.</p>

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Thriving Communities	Complete the restoration of the crematorium chapels and ancillary facilities	●	▲	●	↑	Works deferred in the capital programme to 2025/26.
Thriving Communities	Continue to deliver investment in the borough's leisure facilities, including improvements at South Reading Leisure Centre and progress on the new Rivermead Leisure Centre.	●	●	●	→	South Reading Leisure Centre - Significant extra work is required to the pool tank. Once the top layer of the concrete was removed, significant corrosion of steel work was found, necessitating replacement works. This could not be seen until the destructive element of the preparation work was completed. There is sufficient time contingency within the programme, the cost impact is an additional 42k. An ODN was submitted in Dec 23. GLL were instructed to continue with works to prevent delays.
Thriving Communities	Deliver 300 new Council homes	●	●	●	→	Works are progressing well on site and we remain on target to deliver the new homes. However, risks continue as HS2, Inflation, Brexit and the war in Ukraine has had an impact on the construction industry. We are seeing issues throughout the supply chain and the procurement of main contractors has proved challenging on a couple of schemes.
Thriving Communities	Deliver key improvements to the library service, including plans for the Central Library.	●	●	●	→	<p>Levelling Up Fund (LUF)</p> <p>Q3 has seen the library design largely finalised.</p> <p>Work ongoing on potential disposal of items and decant</p> <p>Plan of numbers of stock starting to be created and will be finalised in January (Planning granted in January)</p> <p>Non LUF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * replacement printers ordered for all libraries * new customer app soft launched, formal to follow in Q4 * new library cards and external branding all now done * Tilehurst self-operating system failed final testing in December, will be replaced in Q4
Thriving Communities	Deliver zero carbon initiatives within Council homes	●	●	●	→	New local authority housing at Passivhaus standards being developed e.g. at Wensley Road
Thriving Communities	Development of a Personal Assistant Market to enable people to live independently at home	●	●	●	→	Completed Project - now Business as Usual

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Thriving Communities	Development of a voluntary sector-led Adult Social Care Front Door	▲	▲	●	↑	A Prior Information Notice was published December 2023 on Intend and via email distribution lists to ASC networks, which has provided an idea of interest and feedback has informed the final developments of commissioning intentions. The project budget has been agreed to be increased to £300K per year, utilising underspend from this financial year split out to 2024/25 and 2025/26. The tender has been opened for bidding 8th January and closes 23rd February, on schedule as per revised project planning with scheduled contract award end of March. To date 11 organisations have registered an interest on Intend.
Thriving Communities	Embedding outcomes based working and independence skills within Supported Living	●	●	●	→	Project Closed. Managed as part of business as usual.
Thriving Communities	Implement plans to commemorate the Forbury Gardens attacks and install a permanent memorial in the Gardens	●	●	●	→	Complete
Thriving Communities	Implementation of the VCS action plan to build our relationship with the VCS and increase capacity within the sector.	●	●	●	→	A new draft Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Compact Action Plan has been produced following the VCS Assesmbly meeting and input from Reading Voluntary Action. This draft action plan will be considered by the Social Inclusion Board. Regular engagement with the VCS has continued, including monthly Voluntary Information Network meetings and direct engagement on specific issues.
Thriving Communities	Procure and implement crowdfunding solution to support projects delivered by the voluntary and community sector	▲	◆		↓	Project no longer proceeding. Removed in Q2.
Thriving Communities	Review and expansion of the Community Reablement Team to maximise peoples independence	◆	●	●	→	Moved to Business As Usual (BAU)
Thriving Communities	Work with our partners and GLL new leisure provider to increase rates of physical activity and attendance at borough leisure centres	▲	▲	▲	→	GLL recorded 218,087 visits to our leisure centres in the third quarter, taking the total visits YTD to 627,421. The membership base, Swimschool programme and fitness classes continue to grow in numbers. Work has been ongoing between Public Health and GLL to refine the contract specification developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with supporting KPIs to measure and evidence the impact of the leisure contract on improving health and wellbeing, across the life course through promoting healthy habits, with particular focus on physical activity.