

# South Oxfordshire District Council Corporate Performance Report



**2022/23 Quarter Four**  
**April 2023**

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# Background

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- The Council monitors performance and progress towards achieving the aims and priorities set out in the South Oxfordshire District Council **Corporate Plan 2020-2024**.
- This report provides a strategic overview of the performance for **quarter four (01 January to 31 March 2022)**, focusing on the activity to deliver our priorities in the Corporate Plan.
- As well as giving a performance update on delivering the Council's six strategic themes in the Corporate Plan, this report will also provide any strategic context relevant to the Council's operations.



## Strategic context

During Quarter 4 of 2022/23, the global economic situation remained precarious. Soaring prices have driven inflation across the world and placed individuals, families and businesses under increasing financial pressures. Nevertheless, the wholesale prices of energy and food have fallen from the highs seen earlier in the year and global supply chain disruptions have continued to ease.

Within the UK, the rate of inflation rose by 10.1 per cent in the 12 months to March 2023. This was down from 10.4 per cent in February (inflation peaked at 11.1 per cent in October 2022 – the highest rate since 1981).

The slight easing in the rate of inflation was driven by falls in the rate of inflation for transport (specifically motor fuels, where average petrol and diesel prices fell by 1.2 and 3.0 pence respectively between February and March) and housing & household services (particularly liquid fuels – the price of heating oil fell by 6.7 per cent between February and March). The downward trends in these sectors were, however, offset by rising prices for recreation & cultural and for food & non-alcoholic beverages (food and non-alcoholic beverage prices rose by 19.2 per cent in the 12 months to March 2023, up from 18.2 per cent in February – according to the ONS' modelled estimates this would be the highest rate seen since August 1977, when it stood at 21.9 per cent).

The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), as part of their remit to keep inflation under control, raised interest rates to 4.25 per cent in March 2023 (the highest level since October 2008 but still significantly below the long-term historic average of 5.9 per cent). Since the end of 2021, the MPC has approved eleven consecutive increases in the Bank Rate. In the medium-term it is expected that these actions will dampen demand within the economy and, therefore, hopefully push down the rate of inflation.

In its Quarterly Monetary Policy Report (February 2022), the Bank of England forecast that inflation will fall sharply during 2023 (to just under 4.0 per cent by the end of the year). This change will be driven by a decline in global price pressures and a greater than previously expected fall in the contribution of household energy prices to inflation.

The continued high rate of inflation has meant that household finances have been squeezed as incomes have failed to keep pace with the rising cost of living. Figures from the Office for National Statistics show that in December 2022 to February 2022, growth in total and regular pay fell in real terms, when adjusted for inflation, by 3.0 per cent and 2.3 per cent respectively on the year.



The precarious financial position of many individuals and families was further emphasised by annual figures from the Trussell Trust showing that they distributed almost three million food parcels between April 2022 and March 2023. This was the largest number of emergency food parcels that the Trust had ever distributed in a single year and represented a 37.0 per cent increase on 2021/22.

As the cost-of-living crisis has worsened, the council's Community Hub has assisted those in our communities who are most in need. Activities in this area have included the sharing of information, the provision of advice and continued support for struggling households. The pressures on household and businesses, combined with the ongoing economic uncertainties, have impacted on overall economic growth. In the three months to February 2023, economic growth was estimated to have been flat (falls in output across the services and production sectors were offset by growth in the construction sector).

In March, the Chancellor of the Exchequer unveiled HM Government's Spring Budget. The measures announced aim to break down barriers to work, unshackle business investment and tackle labour shortages.

In its assessment (released alongside the Budget), the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) forecast that the UK will avoid a recession (two successive quarters of negative growth) in 2023 but that the economy will, nevertheless, contract over the course of the year (by 0.2 per cent). Beyond this year, the OBR forecasts that GDP growth will increase, with the economy growing by 1.8 per cent and 2.5 per cent in 2024 and 2025 respectively. This recovery will be driven by private consumption (as real household incomes rise) and increased business investment (aided by changes to capital allowances).



Industrial action has continued to take place across many sectors of the economy in relation to both pay and conditions. While negotiations have led to some of these disputes being resolved, others are ongoing, with more strikes and disruption expected in the coming weeks and months.

During Q4 2022/23, the devastating war in Ukraine entered its second year. Figures released on the first anniversary of Russia's invasion by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees state that over 13 million people have been uprooted from their homes (nearly eight million are refugees being accommodated across Europe and more than five million are internally displaced people within the border of Ukraine). The council has continued to respond to this ongoing humanitarian crisis by working alongside its partners from across Oxfordshire to help provide 'wrap-around' care for refugees within the county.

In January, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs published the Environment Plan 2023 for England. This is the first revision of the 25 Year Environment Plan and sets out how HM Government will work with landowners, communities and businesses to restore nature, reduce environmental pollution, and build a greener, more prosperous country.

HM Government also announced during Q4 that 'Biodiversity Net Gain' will be introduced from November 2023. Under these proposals, developers in England will be required to deliver a positive benefit for nature when building new housing, industrial facilities or commercial sites.

Towards the end of the quarter, the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero published Powering Up Britain – Energy Security Plan. This sets out HM Government's ambitions in relation to the scaling-up of affordable, clean, homegrown power and the building of thriving green industries.



The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities launched a consultation on its planned infrastructure levy in March. This new charge is intended to ensure that developers pay a fairer share for affordable housing and local infrastructure.

2022 was the sixth warmest year on record globally according to figures released by the Met Office. The global average temperature was 1.16 °C above the pre-industrial baseline and was the ninth year in succession that has equalled or exceeded 1.0 °C above this standard. The data for 2022 is consistent with the long-term warming of 0.2 °C per decade than has been observed over the last 50 years.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change published the final part of its Sixth Assessment Report during Q4. This set out the devastation that has already been caused by global warming and warned that the continuing rise in greenhouse gas emissions was pushing the world to the brink of irrevocable damage that only swift and drastic action can avert.

In February, South Oxfordshire passed its budget for 2023/24. The measures announced aim to advance action on the climate emergency, enhance community wellbeing and support those most in need. To fund the delivery of services, council tax was increased by 3.6 per cent for 2023/24. (For a Band D property, this equates to £5 a year (just under 10p a week), bringing a total charge of £141.24 a year (£2.72 per week). South Oxfordshire continues to charge one of the lowest district council tax rates in the country.

# Quarter four performance highlights

## Protect and restore our natural world

We commissioned research and the creation of a strategy on the local visitor economy using our year one allocation from the **UK Shared Prosperity Fund** and this will have a strong focus on our district's natural resources



We are involved with the development of the **Oxfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy** that will include a local habitats map that will illustrate the region's top priorities for nature's recovery

## Openness and accountability



We highlighted **Holocaust Memorial Day, International Women's Day, and Neurodiversity Awareness Week** and promoted **UK Race Equality Week** through our social media and newsletters



We launched the **'Help us keep your community connected'** questionnaire to gather contact details of local organisations and groups (particularly those that represent certain protected characteristics) for our equalities database

## Action on climate emergency



We chose consultants to create a **Net Zero Carbon Evidence Base** for the Joint Local Plan, this will offer suggestions for the best course of action to ensure zero-carbon development



We are changing the cutting regime on council-owned land to encourage the growth of wildflowers and other plants to thrive and improve biodiversity as part of our **'Let it Bee'** initiative

## Improved economic and community well-being



We joined the **Local Skills Improvement Plan** advisory panel to help improve the interactions between employers and education/training providers



We are in the process of developing a **Community Wellbeing Strategy**



We started reintegrating the **South and Vale Business Support** website into the main council website to help save money and better reflect how Economic Development contributes to achieving our corporate objectives

## Homes and infrastructure that meets local need



We launched an **electric vehicle (EV) car club** pilot scheme, a county wide initiative, to offer pay-per-use EVs in Henley, Wallingford and Thame council owned car parks



Work has begun on five key initiatives, including the creation of a Local Area Energy Network and decarbonization of buildings, following the completion of the **Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan**

27



The number of projects in the Berinsfield draft **Community Delivery Plan** to help transform the village and improve residents' health and wellbeing

## Investment that rebuilds our financial viability



**£5,039,000**

The amount of allocated **Community Infrastructure Levy** funding we approved as part of the budget setting process

**£376,071**



The amount of funds we obtained from the **Public Sector Decarbonization Scheme** to construct solar panels and replace gas-fired boilers at Cornerstone Arts Centre in Didcot with air source heat pumps

# Theme 1: Protect and restore our natural world

## Why?

South Oxfordshire is a largely rural district, including parts of two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and the Oxford Green Belt, as well as a long stretch of the River Thames. The natural world is proven to provide benefits to both mental and physical health, as well as having its own intrinsic value, and it needs our protection.

## So:

We will respect and protect our natural environment, especially our Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and other nature rich areas. We will champion the opportunity to restore our natural world in both biodiverse and bio-depleted areas through nature recovery networks and other means. We will connect urban communities to their local green spaces and restore nature to urban environments.

*Strategic Lead - Suzanne Malcolm (Deputy Chief Executive / Place)*

## Key Activities in quarter four

See Theme 1 performance updates against all reporting measures on page 21

We're committed to restoring nature to urban environments and in the past quarter, tree planting was completed at a number of key sites: Castle Meadows in Wallingford, Wittenham Close in Woodcote, and Greys Road and Kings Road Car Parks in Henley. In Didcot, tree planting took place at Mowbray Fields, Buckingham Close, Worcester Drive and on the Ladygrove Estate. A wild meadow was also planted at Cronshaw Close.

Following a successful bid to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) confirmed in quarter three, the council commissioned research and strategy development into the local visitor economy during quarter four. This will include a focus on the area's natural assets, including Areas Of Natural Beauty (AONB), green spaces, and the river Thames.

The Economic Development team hosted working groups with officers from relevant teams across the council, to inform the use of UKSPF money to create and improve local green spaces in 2024/25. Officers also created an expression of interest form to allow external



organisations (such as AONBs) to pitch appropriate projects for potential funding.

Officers from the Economic Development joined the OxLEP steering group for the development of the Oxfordshire Destination Management Plan. Their involvement will help to ensure that OxLEP's work complements the council's own tourism strategy development work. South Oxfordshire has also continued to promote the district to visitors through local Destination Management Organisations.



Throughout 2022/23, the council worked with partner organisations who are involved with in-depth mapping and surveying of ecosystems across the district. The Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre survey of Local Wildlife Sites, used to create an Annual Monitoring Report, has been produced and will allow the council and partner organisations to monitor, protect, and respect wildlife, habitats, and priority species.

To recognise and support the vital role of farming plays in our district - both for the economy and nature - officers from Economic Development have worked throughout quarter four to highlight the importance of the rural economy in the emerging Strategic Economic Plan for Oxfordshire. Funded by all Oxfordshire local authorities, throughout the year the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust provided advice to farmers and landowners of Local Wildlife Sites and helped those looking to access funding to restore habitats.

Economic Development have also offered business support to Earth Trust to enhance their co-working and events facilities. The emphasis of this work has been on improving relationships with local suppliers.

Due to a delay in the Government's timetable, the council is awaiting a decision on its bid to the Rural England Prosperity Fund, made during quarter three.



## Theme 2: Openness and accountability

### Why?

The complexity of modern society and local government structures can be hard to navigate. Many services are delivered as part of external partnerships, so it can be hard for residents to see what we do and how we do it. There are some groups within our district with whom we have little engagement or interaction, so the diversity of our district is not always recognised and supported.

### So:

We will maintain and improve high levels of satisfaction with the services we provide and will reach out to all sectors and age groups to foster a culture of openness, participation, and representation. We will use our influence to champion inclusion, diversity and transparency across all elected and unelected bodies in our region. We will empower and invest in our staff and conduct our operations with the highest level of integrity and accountability.

*Strategic Lead - Adrianna Partridge (Deputy Chief Executive / Transformation and Operations)*

### Key Activities in quarter four

See Theme 2 performance updates against all reporting measures on page 24

South Oxfordshire is continuing to prepare to bring in a new IT system to provide a better service for garden waste customers as part of its commitment to maintain and improve the services that the council provides. This has involved close collaboration between Customer Services, IT and Waste. IT, Planning and Environment have also made progress on their proposals for the replacement of the council's planning system.

Work has continued on the procurement of a new consultation and engagement platform for the council. South Oxfordshire is currently finalising a decision on the provider, with the aim of implementing in Q1 2023/24.

South Oxfordshire also continues to work with staff so that its websites, social media and the intranet are all fully accessible.

As part of South Oxfordshire's efforts to champion openness and transparency, it continued to livestream all public meetings (except for the Full Council – due to logistical/IT issues) during Q4.

These recordings will remain available on the council's YouTube channel for a year.

South Oxfordshire has also continued to increase the amount of information that it provides through the data hub section of its website so people can better understand what the council does, how it works and how decisions are made. During Q4 2022/23, the performance management report for Q3 2022/23 was published on the council's website. In addition, the annual review of complaints was considered by the Joint Audit & Governance Committee in late January 2023.



The council want to increase meaningful engagement with everyone and as part of this work it is analysing the equalities data (gender, age, ethnicity and disability) collected from its surveys. The data is then compared with South Oxfordshire's demographic data to assess whether the respondents represent the characteristics of the general population. This information will then be used to develop strategies to reach groups that are under-represented in the council's consultations.

As part of this work, South Oxfordshire also launched the "Help us keep your community connected questionnaire". This aims to collect the contact details of local organisations and community groups (especially those that represent/relate to certain protected characteristics).

During Q4, the council began engaging with officers about its Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. Staff have been asked whether they wish to become an Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Champion – training has now started for these voluntary positions.

Progress continued to be made during Q4 2022/23 regarding governance issues. The council has decided that the Annual Governance Statement and Code of Corporate Governance will be during 2023/24.



## Theme 3: Action on climate emergency

### Why?

The greatest challenge we face as a society is the Climate Emergency and our ability to adapt our lives and our behaviours to ensure a safe and resilient future. While statements and targets are welcome, the challenge for our district is to take action, transform our operations and inspire our residents and businesses to do the same. Aspects of our lives will need to change, but we have a duty to make this transition fair for all parts of society.

### So:

We will show leadership by developing and implementing a climate change programme to make the Council net carbon neutral by 2025. We will help our communities to plan a fair transition to a future that will be defined by climate change.

*Strategic Lead - Suzanne Malcolm (Deputy Chief Executive / Place)*

### Key Activities in quarter four

See Theme 3 performance updates against all reporting measures on page 28

South Oxfordshire District Council remains committed to its target of becoming net carbon neutral in its own operations by 2025. During quarter four, the council secured funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme for work at Cornerstone and began work to appoint consultants for this project. The council has also commissioned decarbonisation surveys for its leisure centres. This will allow officers to prepare proposals for any potential future funding opportunities.

The council continued to research policy approaches for greener construction. In quarter four, the council appointed consultants to prepare a Net Zero Carbon Evidence Base for the Joint Local Plan. This will provide recommendations on the best policy approach to good growth and that development do not produce more carbon emissions than is absorbed. Alongside studies underway on Habitats & Species Decline and Landscape, this will inform new policies within the Joint Local Plan, designed to protect South Oxfordshire's environment.



**A**lso, the Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan was endorsed by the Future Oxfordshire Partnership in March.

Supporting business to meet the challenges posed by the climate emergency is essential to our aim of becoming a zero carbon district by 2030. During quarter four, the Economic Development team began work to determine how the council's UK Shared Prosperity Fund allocation could be used. £150,000 has been secured to support business decarbonisation in 2023/24 to 2025 and £100,000 to help build capacity to develop 'green skills' in 2024/25. Detailed proposals are expected to be taken through the governance process during 2023/24.

The council continues to work to encourage businesses to engage with the many resources available to help them to react to the climate emergency. The Economic Development team worked with Oxfordshire Greentech to host a One Plant Living training webinar during quarter four and organised and hosted a Green Business Expo at Thame Town Hall in March. The event (held in partnership with Thame Town Council and Oxfordshire Greentech) was intended to build local business-to-business relationships related to sustainability and to engage the local business community with Thame's Green Living Plan. Feedback on the event has been largely positive, with Thame Town Council indicating they will seek to host another similar event.

**T**o meet its commitment to increase biodiversity in the district, the council launched a nature recovery project called 'Let It Bee'. This aims to increase biodiversity on council land by allowing wildflowers and plants to grow on specific sites. To help achieve this, the cutting regimes in these areas have been modified.

It is a priority for the council to maintain good air quality in the district, for the health of all residents. During quarter four, draft Air Quality Action Plans were reviewed by officers ahead of formal consultation beginning in quarter one 2023/24. A longlist of potential actions to improve air quality was discussed with the Leader of the Council, the relevant portfolio holder, and members representing wards in which there is an Air Quality Management Area.

Officers continued to attend meetings of the Oxfordshire Strategic Active Travel Network Steering Group. The Steering Group considered a longlist of strategic routes across Oxfordshire for walking and cycling, prioritised based on the demand and likelihood that trips could be converted to cycling. Officers also reviewed the safeguarded transport schemes alongside Oxfordshire County Council. Many of these projects either include, or are solely designed, to deliver walking and cycling infrastructure.

**T**he council continues to work to improve waste and recycling services in relation to the environment and to reduce recycling contamination. All homes within the district received the council's waste and recycling leaflet as an insert with this year's council tax bill and a new waste calendar was also promoted on social media.

The council continued to promote and encourage behavioural change through informational campaigns. These included engagement with Food Waste Action Week, the Great British Spring Clean, and Global Recycling Day. The council also highlighted the success of the Park and Charge scheme in changing behaviour within the district, with charging having trebled since Electric Vehicle infrastructure was installed in the council's car parks.



## Theme 4: Improved economic and community well-being

### Why?

South Oxfordshire has a large number of small and micro businesses and is well placed to adapt to changes in the economy, but support will be needed for it to remain a healthy and vibrant place to live and work. The Coronavirus pandemic has shown the strength of the community but there are areas of isolation and deprivation in our district, and the benefits of access to culture, leisure, and community for all has been made clear.

### So:

We will reimagine our high streets, helping independent small businesses to thrive and to encourage cultural well-being for all. We will encourage clean local economic development and support our business hubs, centres of scientific excellence and our educational establishments to become leaders in sustainable technology, innovation, and enterprise. We will help our community groups to strengthen cohesion, reduce social isolation and tackle areas of deprivation.

*Strategic Lead - Suzanne Malcolm (Deputy Chief Executive / Place)*

*Strategic Lead - Adrianna Partridge (Deputy Chief Executive / Transformation and Operations)*

### Key Activities in quarter four

See Theme 4 performance updates against all reporting measures on page 34

To help support the local economy and district's businesses, the Economic Development team focused upon implementing South Oxfordshire's UK Shared Prosperity Fund plans during Q4. The council used its year one allocation to commission research and the development of a tourism strategy. Preliminary work also took place to determine how South Oxfordshire's UK Shared Prosperity Fund allocation could be used to develop a plan to support businesses to decarbonise.

In addition, the council developed an expression of interest process to allow organisations to pitch projects that fit with South Oxfordshire's UK Shared Prosperity Funding plans.

The Economic Development team has continued to support working groups for the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) so that these programmes match South Oxfordshire's objectives. The council has also become a member of

OxLEP's steering group for development of the Oxfordshire Destination Management Plan so the steering group's work complements the council's own visitor economy strategy.

During Q4, work began on re-embedding the South and Vale Business Support website within that of the main council. This will not only achieve cost savings but also better reflect Economic Development's role (through both the UK Shared Prosperity and the Rural England Prosperity Funds) in helping South Oxfordshire achieve its corporate objectives. The South and Vale Business Support newsletter and social media channels will, however, continue under the same branding.

The South Oxfordshire's Digital District Programme (Virtual High Street Initiative) has continued to grow. There are now 197 businesses registered on the council's ShopAppy e-commerce platform. South Oxfordshire has also renewed its contract with Shopappy until 31 March 2024.

The council's focus will, therefore, now turn to promoting the platform to its residents. To help support this, a marketing campaign was developed in Q4 (to be implemented during Q1 2023/24).

South Oxfordshire is committed to using its planning powers to preserve the district's green spaces. Between January and March, the council adopted two neighbourhood plan reviews (Benson and Sonning Common). In total, these reviews contain policies protecting 12 green spaces through Local Green Space designations.

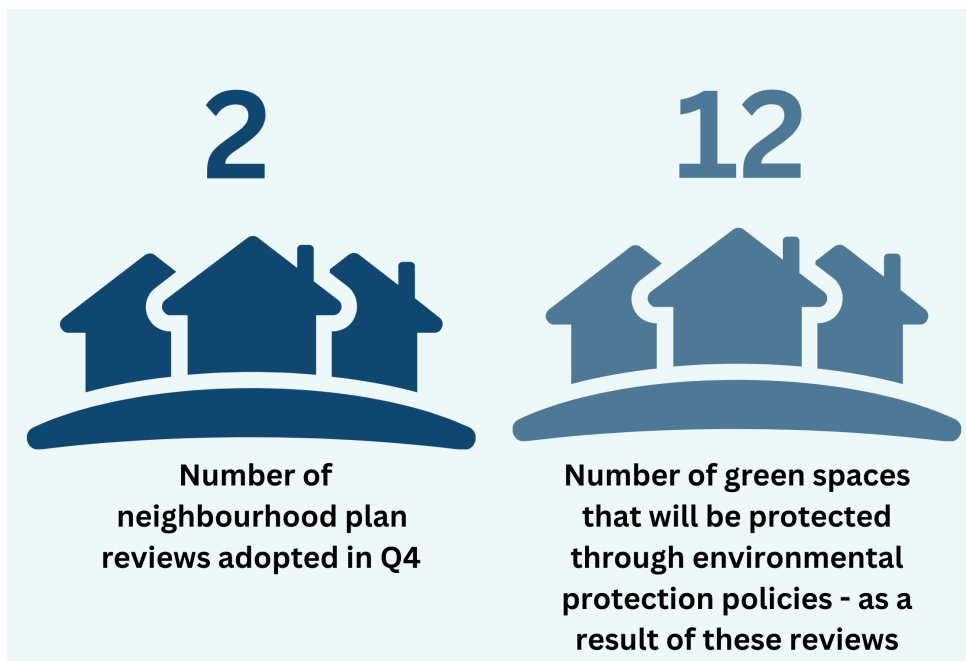
Throughout the quarter, South Oxfordshire has continued to assist those in our communities that are most in need – particularly in light of the cost-of-living crisis – through the Community Hub. The budget, approved by Full Council in February, provides support for the Community Enablement and Community Hub teams for the next financial year.

Officers have continued to gather evidence to assist in the development of the new Community Wellbeing Strategy – this information will also be used to inform the council's work in supporting culture, leisure and the arts.

Between January and March, South Oxfordshire continued to take action against fly-tippers. In Q4, the council issued 11 Fixed Penalty Notices for waste crimes. There were also four prosecutions for fly-tipping – a further five prosecutions are pending.

How we used our planning powers to preserve our valuable green spaces - see **ECW5** performance update on p.37

Fly tipping data - see **ECW7** performance update on p.38



## Theme 5: Homes and infrastructure that meet local needs

### Why?

The average price of a home is many times higher than the average salary, particularly for the young, and renting is also expensive. The pressure to build new homes in our district sometimes outweighs local wishes. Infrastructure like roads, schools and GP surgeries have not kept up with housing development. Too many houses being built today are not fit for a low carbon future.

### So:

We will strive to ensure that new homes and infrastructure in South Oxfordshire meet local needs, are sustainable, zero carbon in their build and operation, and high quality in design. We will provide homes that people can afford to live in. New developments will be accessible with walking, cycling and public transport a priority. Neighbourhood plans and local participation will sit at the heart of our planning process. We will work with partners to ensure that development is appropriate for our communities.

*Strategic Lead - Suzanne Malcolm (Deputy Chief Executive / Place)*

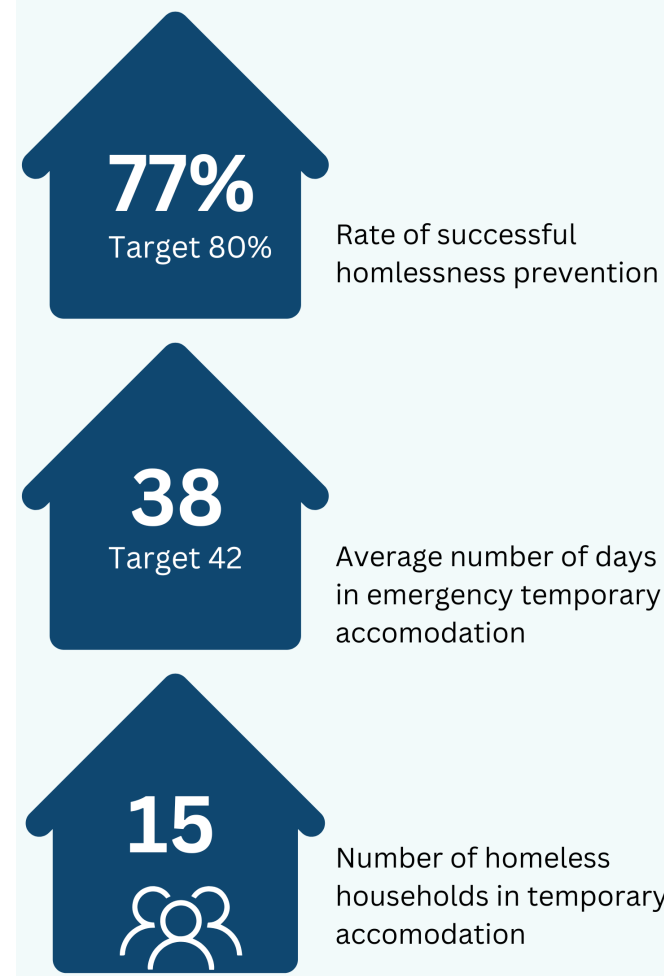
### Key Activities in quarter four

See Theme 5 performance updates against all reporting measures on page 39

At the end of Q4 2022/23, the council recorded three rough sleepers. The very low levels of rough sleeping in the district reflects the success of South Oxfordshire's preventative approach.

The number of homeless households in temporary accommodation at the end of March 2023 was 15 – a reduction of eleven compared to the previous quarter (despite the increasing pressures on the service caused by the cost-of-living crisis and the ending of hosting arrangements under the Homes for Ukraine scheme). The rolling six-month average length of stay in emergency accommodation was 38 nights, better than the ceiling target of 42. During Q4 2022/23, the rate of successful homelessness prevention in South Oxfordshire was 77.0 per cent. This was marginally below the very challenging target of 80.0 per cent (the average rate of homelessness prevention in the South East region is 55.0 per cent).

Furthermore, South Oxfordshire continues to actively participate in the countywide



Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and is a member of both the countywide Homelessness Steering Group and the Homelessness Directors Group.



With the aim of ensuring that new homes and infrastructure meet local needs, are sustainable, zero carbon and high quality in design, the Planning Policy team have continued to make progress on the development of the Joint Local Plan. During Q4, officers worked on the creation of a spatial strategy and the drafting of policy options for the Joint Local Plan. (These will be subject to public consultation in summer 2023). They also further developed the evidence base for the Plan through the commissioning/ advancement of several studies that have a direct relevance to South Oxfordshire's priorities regarding the environment, health, connectivity and sustainability.

In addition, officers from the Planning Policy team have developed an approach for undertaking Health Impact Assessments.

South Oxfordshire published a report on the Joint Local Plan Regulation Part 1 Issues Consultation. This showed a high level of support from respondents for the questions posed around healthy lifestyles and sustainable communities.

Scoping work on the priority projects within the revised Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan was completed during Q4 – activity on delivering them has now been initiated. The Didcot Placemaking Strategy was also published.

Officers developed – in consultation with the Berinsfield Steering Group – a draft Berinsfield Community Delivery Plan. This outlines 27 projects which will support the transformation of the village and improve the health/wellbeing of its residents. Support was also secured through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund for decarbonisation audits of the village's community buildings. Concept Energy are advancing this work and will, in due course, bring forward recommendations.

The Economic Development team continued to explore the possibility of using grant funding secured through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to unlock enterprise infrastructure in South Oxfordshire by making use of vacant premises. Initial conversations have taken place through working groups.



Officers from the Community Wellbeing team have contributed to the consultation on the development of the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Strategy. This document will set the direction for the health and care system in the local area. As part of this work, the council highlighted the need to include infrastructure provision within the Strategy.

To help deliver on South Oxfordshire's commitment to providing homes that people can afford to live in, a total of 150 affordable housing units were delivered across the district between January and February 2023. During the year to date (April 2022 to February 2023), 357 affordable homes have been delivered across South Oxfordshire.

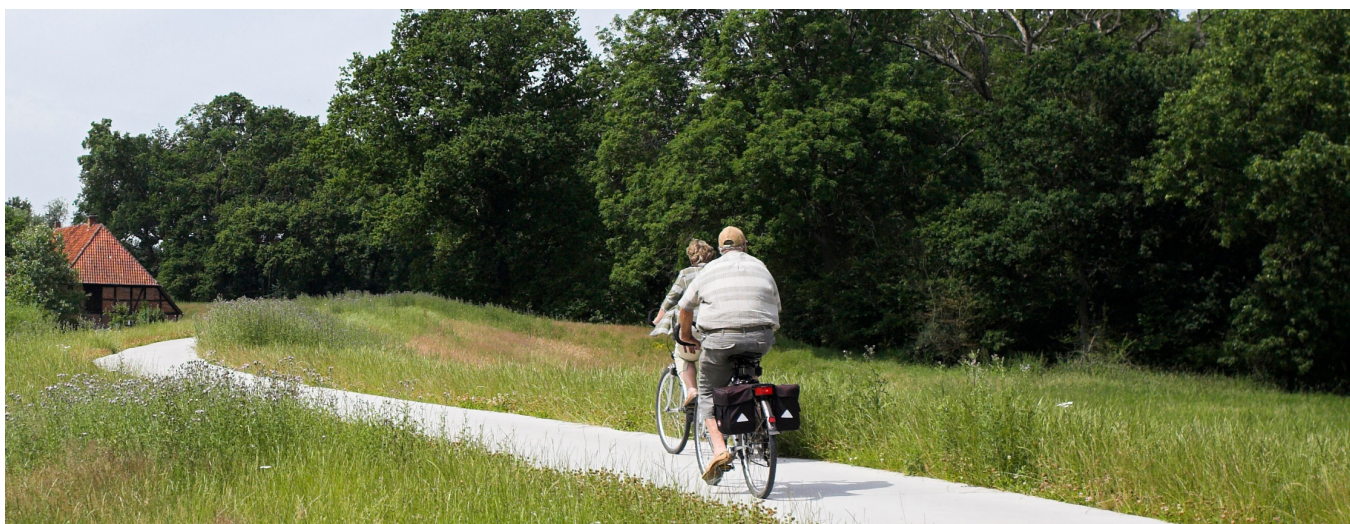
The council (working with an external project manager) also continued to progress the procurement of an architect-led team to design net-zero homes on a council-owned site in Didcot. The procurement documentation is currently being updated to address several clarification questions raised by interested bidders.

The draft Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan was finalised prior to its consideration and endorsement by the Future Oxfordshire Partnership (this occurred at its meeting in March). Work has now started on five priority actions including the decarbonisation of buildings.

In January, a paper was presented to Climate and Ecological Emergencies Advisory Committee (CEEAC) looking at the ways that South Oxfordshire could accelerate its work on retrofit. This document summarised the activities already taking place within the county and the potential options/opportunities for upscaling domestic retrofit in within the district. Following input from members, possible actions have been prioritised for further work.

As part of the council's efforts to prioritise active travel and to make sure that new developments are accessible, progress continued to be made on Didcot Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). Between 20 February and 19 March, a Stage 1 Public Consultation was held to gather feedback regarding ideas or concerns for the local network – 1,308 comments were received. The policy and data review, which will form the basis of core walking and cycling routes within the LCWIP, was also completed. In addition, officers attended a Cycle Safari and Steering Group session for the Didcot LCWIP project to review key cycling pinch points and issues within the town. Consideration was given at this meeting to where walking and cycling infrastructure should be placed.

Officers continued to attend meetings of the Oxfordshire Strategic Active Travel Network Steering Group. At these sessions, the Steering Group considered a long list of strategic routes across Oxfordshire for walking and cycling – these were prioritised based on demand/likelihood of converting trips to cycling. Officers also reviewed the safeguarded transport schemes with their colleagues from Oxfordshire County Council. Many of these projects either include, or are solely designed, to deliver walking and cycling infrastructure.



## Theme 6: Investment that rebuilds our financial viability

### Why?

Coronavirus has cost, and lost, the Council money. Many years of austerity before that, as well as a failure to increase Council tax in line with growing costs, makes it hard to balance the books. The future funding picture for Councils from Government remains unclear. In order to deliver a progressive and ambitious agenda, we need to reduce the gap between income and expenditure in our Medium-Term Financial Plan.

### So:

We will invest to save and act responsibly and ethically with our financial resources. We will work with other Councils for fair funding and will investigate new viable sources of revenue in order to maintain and improve vital services. We will ensure all financial operations and reporting support effective decision making and strong, ethical governance.

*Strategic Lead - Simon Hewings (Head of Finance)*

### Key Activities in quarter four

See Theme 6 performance updates against all reporting measures on page 49

In order to invest, save and act responsibly with our financial resources, South Oxfordshire's Asset Management Group continues to meet on a quarterly basis to progress implementation of the Strategic Property Review. The aim of the Group is to assess the council's assets in a holistic manner and consider opportunities for their development, usage or disposal.

The Strategic Property Team continued to lease vacant properties, progress lease renewals and review rents during Q4 2022/23. Progress has also been made on work regarding potential housing development sites in liaison with Housing colleagues. This has resulted in one site being identified as a realistic opportunity (further work is ongoing in relation to smaller sites).

South Oxfordshire set a balanced budget for 2023/24 in February. To fund the delivery of services, council tax was increased by 3.6 per cent for 2023/24. (For a Band D property, this equates to £5 a year (just under 10p a week), bringing a total charge of £141.24 a year

(£2.72 per week). South Oxfordshire continues to charge one of the lowest district council tax rates in the country.

After the decision was taken to reduce the size of South Oxfordshire's new building to four storeys, officers have been working on revising the business case and detailed financial implications for the project. This activity is going on in parallel to a redesign of the offices.

Work also continued on delivering South Oxfordshire's long-term transformation programme.

With the ambition of improving its effectiveness as an organisation, the council is continuing to prepare to bring in a new IT system to provide a better service for garden waste customers. This has involved close collaboration between Customer Services, IT and Waste. In addition, IT, Planning and Environment have made progress on their proposals for the replacement of the council's planning system.

South Oxfordshire was successfully awarded £376,071 funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Phase 3b during Q4 2022/23. This money will be used to deliver improvements at Cornerstone and is a significant milestone in meeting South Oxfordshire’s commitment to maximise external funding opportunities to support services and to enrich the district’s leisure facilities.

South Oxfordshire has also commissioned decarbonisation surveys for several other council-owned buildings. This will allow officers to prepare proposals for any potential future funding opportunities.

During Q4 2022/23, the Active Communities team secured an additional year’s funding for the ‘Move Together’ programme (designed to help people with long-term health conditions become more active). The council also received funding for a second year of the ‘You Move’ project (aimed at families with children and in receipt of benefits).

Officers from the Garden Communities team met with representatives from Homes England to discuss future opportunities for funding.

In addition, Oxfordshire (as the result of a joint application involving all the county’s councils) was awarded £698,407 to fund cable gullies for residents with properties on the street without off-street parking to run an Electric Vehicle (EV) charging cable under the pavement.

The pipeline of external funding opportunities was maintained and assessed throughout the quarter.

### South Oxfordshire quarter four individual cabinet member decisions

Date	Description
10/01/2023	Car parks management contractor performance
20/01/2023	Cornerstone Decarbonisation Project Funding
23/01/2023	Council tax exceptional hardship fund
24/01/2023	Section 106 funding for public open space at Radnor Road, Wallingford
10/02/2023	Office accommodation
02/03/2023	Sonning Common Neighbourhood Plan
16/03/2023	Capital grants
16/03/2023	Riverside splashpad, Wallingford
24/03/2023	Simpler Approach to Neighbourhood Planning Pilot project
27/03/2023	Tree planting and biodiversity enhancements
27/03/2023	Electric vehicle car club pilot

## Theme 1: Protect and restore our natural world - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
PRN1	With partners, promote in-depth mapping and surveying of ecosystems across the district, planning for restoration of the natural world and working closely with land-owners and specialist agencies	Narrative report to include information on work with partners, and Habitat and Species data + changes/trends on a 12 month basis	Cllr Sue Cooper	Head of Planning	<p>During 2022/23, South Oxfordshire has worked with a number of different partner organisations who are involved in the surveying, collecting and mapping of ecosystems.</p> <p>The Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) undertake a programme of rolling surveys of Local Wildlife Sites across the district each year. This data is used to create an Annual Monitoring Report.</p> <p>Between 2021 and 2022, this report shows that:                      The area of Local Wildlife Sites increased by 37.48 ha.                      The area of priority habitats recorded decreased by 41.73 ha                      The number of UK priority species decreased by four (from 173 to 169)                      The density of farmland birds recorded increased slightly by 0.02 from 2020.</p> <p>The Berkshire Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) provide advice to farmers and landowners of Local Wildlife Sites. They also assist those looking to access funding to allow habitat restoration. This work is a partnership project funded by all of Oxfordshire's local authorities.</p> <p>In 2022, work commenced on the production of an Oxfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). In order to develop a Local Habitats Map that shows the priorities for restoring/recovering nature, all of the important sites within the county will be surveyed. statutory requirement of the Environment Act 2021 and South Oxfordshire is actively participating in this work.</p>

## Theme 1: Protect and restore our natural world - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
PRN2	Celebrate, protect and enhance our natural assets, including the River Thames and the AONBs and their setting, promoting our rural district for tourism, leisure and wellbeing	Narrative report to include information on work to manage natural assets and ANOBs (both internally and with partners)	Cllr Andrea Powell	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the council used its year one allocation from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to commission research and the development of a strategy on the local visitor economy. This will have a strong focus on South Oxfordshire's natural assets.</p> <p>In addition, Economic Development joined the OxLEP steering group for the development of the Oxfordshire Destination Management Plan. Their involvement will help to ensure that OxLEP's work compliments the council's own visitor economy strategy development work.</p> <p>South Oxfordshire has also continued to promote the district to visitors through local Destination Management Organisations.</p> <p>Unfortunately, HM Government's timetable for confirmation of Rural England Prosperity Funding slipped and is, therefore, now expected in Q1 2023/24.</p>
PRN3	Encourage the use of natural processes to combat risks arising from climate change, such as meadows and trees to reduce flooding	Narrative report to include direct and indirect information on use of natural processes to combat risks of climate change. This should include new policy development and direct activity undertaken by the Council	Cllr Sue Cooper	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	<p>During Q4 2022/23, tree planting was completed at several locations across the district.</p> <p>Didcot (Mowbray Fields, Buckingham Close, Worcester Drive and on the Ladygrove Estate). Wallingford (Castle Meadows). Woodcote (Wittenham Close). Henley (Greys Road and Kings Road Car Parks)</p> <p>A wildflower meadow was also planted at Cronshaw Close in Didcot.</p>
PRN4	Recognise and support the vital role of farming in economic and ecosystem resilience, local food provision and the recovery of soils and natural processes	Narrative report on activity undertaken with partners to encourage and support the vital role of farming in economic and ecosystem resilience (where possible, although this may be implicitly included in the information above)	Cllr Sue Cooper	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	<p>Unfortunately, HM Government's timetable for confirmation of Rural England Prosperity Funding slipped and is, therefore, now expected in Q1 2023/24. Consequently, the council is awaiting the result of its submission – if successful, this money will be used to support rural businesses and communities in a variety of ways e.g., environmental sustainability.</p> <p>Officers from Economic Development have also been working throughout Q4 on ensuring that the importance of the rural economy is noted within the emerging Strategic Economic Plan for Oxfordshire.</p>

## Theme 1: Protect and restore our natural world - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
PRN5	Call for the establishment of a Local Nature Partnership for Oxfordshire to promote an ambitious nature recovery programme, including tree and meadow planting, rewilding and providing habitats for wildlife including wildlife corridors	Narrative report - accepting that much of the activity to support PRN3 will be relevant here	Cllr David Rouane	Head of Policy and Programmes	This action is now complete – the Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership (OLNP) has been formed and officially launched.
PRN6	Work in partnership with the Earth Trust, Chilterns Conservation Board, North Wessex Downs AONB, the Environment Agency and others to improve access to green spaces in and around our towns, reinforcing access to nature as a priority for community wellbeing	Narrative report on activity with partners (including those named, and others), with a particular focus on work supporting the link between green spaces and community wellbeing	Cllr Sue Cooper	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	<p>During Q4 2022/23, Economic Development hosted working groups to inform the use of UK Shared Prosperity Funding to create/improve local green spaces in 2024/25. Officers have also created an expression of interest form to allow external organisations (such as AONBs) to pitch appropriate projects for potential funding.</p> <p>In addition, Economic Development have offered business support to Earth Trust to enhance their co-working and events facilities. The emphasis of this work has been on improving relationships with local suppliers.</p>

## Theme 2: Openness and accountability - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
OA1	Enhance trust and accountability in democratic decision-making, including live-streaming and recording of meetings, ensuring full accessibility of facilities and monitoring progress in an open and transparent way	<p>Narrative update to include information on the performance management framework, communications update on Cabinet/Council decisions, IAG around the operations/activity of the Council</p> <p>% of Public Council meetings within 12 months available online</p>	Cllr Andrea Powell	Deputy Chief Executive - Transformation and Operations	With the exception of the Full Council (due to logistical/IT issues), all other meetings during Q4 2022/23 were livestreamed (they will also remain available to view on the council's YouTube channel for a year).
OA2	Ensure that council departments work collaboratively to deliver best outcomes for residents	Narrative report detailing significant, non-recurring examples of inter-departmental working which have secured concrete outcomes for residents	Cllr Andrea Powell	Deputy Chief Executive - Transformation and Operations	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the preparatory work for the migration of the garden waste service to the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system has continued. This has involved close collaboration between Customer Services, IT and Waste.</p> <p>Customer Services and IT have also been actively supporting the Elections team with their preparations for the local elections. This has involved preparing the council's GIS with the locations of polling stations, supporting the nominations process and prepping the election result webpages.</p> <p>In addition, IT, Planning and Environment have pushed on with their arrangements for the replacement of the council's planning system.</p> <p>Other notable collaborations in Q4 included the continued cross-departmental collaboration on the council's response to the cost-of-living crisis and ongoing support for the Homes for Ukraine programme.</p>



## Theme 2: Openness and accountability - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
OA3	Embed an organisational culture that celebrates diversity, inclusion and respect	Narrative report on work undertaken to celebrate diversity, inclusion and respect. Should include standard recurring activity, one off supporting activity. This should be a joint report primarily from HR/Comms but include comments from others	Cllr Maggie Filipova-Rivers	Deputy Chief Executive - Transformation and Operations	<p>During Q4 2022/23, South Oxfordshire highlighted Holocaust Memorial Day, International Women’s Day and Neurodiversity Awareness Week. It also promoted UK Race Equality Week.</p> <p>The council shared details of Cornerstone’s focus on Women’s Week in March. This celebrated women from all walks of life through comedy, drama and music.</p> <p>The council also launched the 'Help us keep your community connected questionnaire'. This aims to collect the contact details of local organisations and community groups (especially those that represent/relate to certain protected characteristics). This information will then be used to help populate South Oxfordshire's equalities database of contacts</p> <p>On the first anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, South Oxfordshire reiterated its support for the Ukrainian people in a message released across the council’s social media channels and through the flying of the Ukrainian flag.</p> <p>Also, in Q4, the council began engaging with officers about its Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. Staff have been asked whether they wish to become an Equality, Diversity &amp; Inclusion Champion – training has now started for these voluntary positions.</p> <p>In addition, South Oxfordshire continues to work with staff on the accessibility of its websites, social media and the intranet.</p>
OA4	Apply good governance and transparency in all our working and decision-making, exploring optimal structures and mechanisms for best practice in local government	Narrative report on significant change initiatives which have resulted in restructures/new processes to deliver local govt services	Cllr Kate Gregory	Head of Legal and Democratic	<p>Progress continued to be made during Q4 2022/23 on governance issues. It has been decided that the Annual Governance Statement and Code of Corporate Governance will be rolled out later in the year. This will coincide with the Statement of Accounts and is an approach recommended by CIPFA.</p>

## Theme 2: Openness and accountability - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
OA5	Engage effectively with residents, Parish and Town Councils and other community organisations, using plain English in our communications and using appropriate methods and technologies to ensure equal and fair access for all	Narrative report on activities communications/engagement specific activities	Cllr Andrea Powell	Deputy Chief Executive - Transformation and Operations	<p>Between January and March, the council produced three town and parish and residents' newsletters and disseminated three In Focus newsletters to share important stories and information with our communities.</p> <p>As part of the council's ongoing #CostofLivingHelp campaign, it continued to signpost people to South Oxfordshire's Community Hub and cost-of-living help web pages. Information was also provided on #WarmWelcome spaces within the district. Moreover, the council's budget communications highlighted its ongoing commitment to the Community Hub and supporting people through the cost-of-living crisis.</p> <p>When there were periods of cold weather between January and March, South helped to promote the availability of emergency beds and encouraged residents to report anyone they saw sleeping rough.</p> <p>The council promoted free and low-cost activities for kids and families over both the February half term and the Easter holidays.</p> <p>On the first anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, South Oxfordshire reiterated its support for the Ukrainian people in a message released across the council's social media channels and through the flying of the Ukrainian flag.</p> <p>Progress has continued to be made on the procurement of a new consultation and engagement platform – which will be more user-friendly and comply with the latest accessibility standards. The council is currently finalising a decision on the provider, with the aim of implementing in Q1 2023/24.</p> <p>During Q4 2022/23, South Oxfordshire's social media accounts have been in the process of moving from Hootsuite to a different social media manager. The analytics for this quarter are, therefore, from each social media platform's own native site.</p> <p>(update continues on next page)</p>

## Theme 2: Openness and accountability - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
OA5	Engage effectively with residents, Parish and Town Councils and other community organisations, using plain English in our communications and using appropriate methods and technologies to ensure equal and fair access for all	Narrative report on activities communications/engagement specific activities	Cllr Andrea Powell	Deputy Chief Executive - Transformation and Operations	<p>There are clear discrepancies in the like-for-like data for both Facebook and Instagram between Q3 and Q4, as a result, the statistics presented here are not comparable and should be used merely as a reference point.</p> <p>The data provided by Twitter is more robust (apart from an anomaly in the post numbers for January) and shows an increase in the council's tweet impressions despite a slight drop in followers.</p> <p>Facebook: Posts 93 / Reach 35,901 / New fans 47 / Total fans 7,456</p> <p>Instagram: Posts 60 / Reach 1,941 / New followers: 13 / Total followers: 635</p> <p>Twitter: Tweets 149 total (2 months – there was an anomaly in the post numbers for January) / Tweet impressions: 90.2k / New followers: 40 / Total followers: 11,335</p> <p>During Q4 2022/23, there was a 27.0% increase in unique website visitors compared to the previous reporting period (there was also a 29.0% increase in page views). There was a slight decrease in the bounce rate for the website but an increase in the average visit duration</p> <p>Q4 Web Usage Figures / 240,435 unique visitors / 662,128 page views / 54.0 % Bounce rate / 2m12s average visit duration</p>

### Theme 3: Action on climate emergency - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
ACE1	Achieve our own zero carbon target by 2025 and support others to achieve the district target of zero carbon by 2030	Narrative report on strategic projects which will help to deliver net zero carbon for 2025/2030. This should be split between Council specific and District specific activities	Cllr Sue Cooper	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	<p>During Q4 2022/23, South Oxfordshire secured funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme for work at Cornerstone. Work is now underway to appoint consultants for this project.</p> <p>The council have also commissioned decarbonisation surveys for its leisure centres. This will allow officers to prepare proposals for any potential future funding opportunities.</p>
ACE2	Develop an annually approved climate emergency programme and adequately finance it	Quantitative measure - delivery of an annual CEP Y/N	Cllr Sue Cooper	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>The Climate Action Plan (CAP) is being monitored as part of South's corporate performance management framework and will provide a detailed overview of all actions that may have an impact on reducing carbon in the wider district.</p> <p>The CAP Performance Report for Q3 2022/23 has been completed and is published on the council's website.</p>
ACE3	Deliver Council-owned net-zero homes and use grants, planning policy and advocacy to ensure the same standards throughout the district	Narrative Update on the current activities which WILL result in the delivery of Council owned homes (and details of those homes where possible)	Cllr Robin Bennett	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the council (working with an external project manager) continued to progress the procurement of an architect-led team to design net-zero homes on a council-owned site in Didcot. The procurement documentation is currently being updated to address several clarification questions raised by interested bidders.</p>

### Theme 3: Action on climate emergency - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
ACE4	Promote and encourage behavioural change with informational campaigns and leading by example	Narrative update to include the number of communications campaigns undertaken which promote/encourage behavioural change (with examples)	Cllr Andrea Powell	Deputy Chief Executive - Transformation and Operations	<p>In Q4 2022/23, South ran 52 public information campaigns. 25 of these promoted behavioural change, 17 highlighted/publicised events and council news and ten promoted diversity and inclusion.</p> <p>The council launched a nature recovery project called Let It Bee. This aims to increase biodiversity on council land by allowing wildflowers and plants to grow on specific sites. To help achieve this, the cutting regimes in these areas have been modified.</p> <p>South Oxfordshire highlighted the success of the Park and Charge scheme in changing behaviour within the district – charging has trebled since EV infrastructure was installed in the council’s car parks.</p> <p>All homes within the district received the South’s waste and recycling leaflet as an insert with this year’s council tax bill. The new waste calendar was also promoted/highlighted on social media and through South and Vale News to parishes. (A flyer telling people about the elections and informing them about the new Voter ID requirement was included with council tax bills).</p> <p>Also, in Q4, South Oxfordshire supported a promotional campaign for the Thame Eco Expo a business-to-business event.</p>
ACE5	Take positive action on single-use plastics, air quality improvement measures and sustainable transport	Suggested combined narrative update on Comms relating to single use plastics/comms relating to AQ initiatives and metrics relating to AQ (with an appreciation that this data will be skewed in 2020 due to lockdown(s))	Cllr Sue Cooper	Head of Housing and Environment	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the draft Air Quality Action Plans were reviewed by officers. In addition, a longlist of potential actions to improve air quality were discussed with the Leader of the Council, the relevant Portfolio holder and members representing wards where there is an Air Quality Management Area – information was also shared with Oxfordshire County Council and Highways England.</p> <p>The final draft Air Quality Actions Plans will go forward for formal consultation in Q1 2023/24.</p>

### Theme 3: Action on climate emergency - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
ACE6	Mitigate climate change through planning and land use, enhancing biodiversity on our own land and strengthening the planning system to enforce environmental standards	Narrative update to focus on planning initiatives which support the potential deliverables where possible (primarily the development of the joint 2041 Local Plan, the joint Design Guide and carbon reduction in planning (DES8/10)	Cllr Anne-Marie Simpson	Head of Planning	<p>The Planning Policy team continued to work on researching policy approaches for greener construction and enhancing biodiversity. During Q4 2022/23, South Oxfordshire selected consultants – following a competitive tendering process – to prepare a Net Zero Carbon Evidence Base for the Joint Local Plan. This will provide recommendations on the best policy approach to take to secure zero carbon development.</p> <p>The Net Zero Carbon Evidence Base, alongside the studies already underway on Habitats &amp; Species Decline and Landscape, will form a solid basis for new policies within the Joint Local Plan designed to protect South Oxfordshire’s environment.</p> <p>Also, in Q4 2022/23, the draft Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan was finalised prior to its consideration and endorsement by the Future Oxfordshire Partnership (this occurred at its meeting in March).</p>

## Theme 3: Action on climate emergency - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
ACE7	Promote the circular economy (reduce, re-use and recycle), including in our waste management contracts	<p>Narrative measure on comms activity relating to waste/ recycling</p> <p>Quantitative information on recycling rate, contamination rates, % of residual waste to landfill</p>	Cllr Sue Cooper	Head of Housing and Environment	<p>The December 2022 recycling rate was 63.33%, the landfill rate was 0.29% and the contamination rate was 12.20%. These figures were not available for Q3 reporting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The January 2023 recycling rate was 62.72%, the landfill rate was 0.26% and the contamination rate was 10.58%.</li> <li>• The February 2023 recycling rate was 62.25%, the landfill rate was 0.25% and the contamination rate was 13.46%.</li> <li>• The figures for March are not yet available.</li> </ul> <p>During Q4 2022/23, South Oxfordshire ran several communication campaigns. These included:</p> <p>Waste and recycling leaflet: All homes within the district received South's waste and recycling leaflet as an insert with this year's council tax bill. The new waste calendar was also promoted/highlighted on social media and through South and Vale News to parishes.</p> <p>Food Waste Action Week: South Oxfordshire encouraged people to both reduce their food waste and ensure they put things in the correct bin through a series of social media posts (which were seen more than 8,000 times) – information was also provided to staff.</p> <p>Global Recycling Day: Messages were shared on social media that highlighted items that people often wrongly put in the recycling bin. They were encouraged, as a way of reducing contamination, to check what they were placing in their waste receptacles.</p> <p>Great British Spring Clean: South Oxfordshire promoted this to residents and parishes. They encouraged communities to get involved, publicised the South Oxfordshire litter pick giveaway and highlighted the positive work that occurred during the event. (As a result, over 1,000 people within South Oxfordshire participated in the Great British Spring Clean this year).</p>

### Theme 3: Action on climate emergency - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
ACE8	Support and encourage local businesses to respond to climate change and nature recovery	Narrative update on the work influencing work undertaken to support and encourage local businesses relating to climate change and nature recovery	Cllr Robin Bennett	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	<p>During Q4 2022/23, preliminary work took place to determine how South Oxfordshire's UK Shared Prosperity Fund allocation (£150,000 secured to support business decarbonisation in 2023/24 to 2025, and £100,000 to help build capacity to develop 'green skills' in 2024/25) could be used by Economic Development. Detailed proposals are expected to be taken through the governance process during 2023/24.</p> <p>In March, Economic Development organised and hosted a Green Business Expo at Thame Town Hall. The event (held in partnership with Thame Town Council and Oxfordshire Greentech) was intended to build local business-to-business relationships related to sustainability, engage the local business community with Thame's Green Living Plan and encourage exhibitors and attendees to engage with the multiple resources available to help them react to climate change. Feedback on the event has been largely positive, with Thame Town Council indicating they will seek to host another similar event.</p> <p>Economic Development also worked with Oxfordshire Greentech to host a One Plant Living training webinar during Q4 2022/23.</p>
ACE9	Promote waste minimisation initiatives such as Repair Cafés	Unless specific activity relating to Repair Café's and Freecycle can be reported on, suggest that this is covered in previous narratives	Cllr Sue Cooper	Head of Housing and Environment	<p>Although there was no specific activity during Q4 2022/23 relating to Repair Cafés and Freecycle, South Oxfordshire did run several comms campaigns to highlight ways to reduce waste. These included:</p> <p>Food Waste Action Week: The council through a series of social media posts (and information to staff), encouraged people to reduce their food waste and to ensure they put things in the correct bin. The posts were seen more than 8,000 times on social media.</p> <p>Global Recycling Day: The council shared messages on social media highlighting items that people often wrongly put in their recycling bin. This was designed to help reduce waste contamination.</p> <p>South also continued to promote the use of Repair Cafés through the council's website.</p>



### Theme 3: Action on climate emergency - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
ACE10	Work with Oxfordshire County Council to build on our commitment to active travel including walking, public transport and cycling infrastructure	<p>Narrative update on work with Oxfordshire County Council</p> <p>Optional Quantitative metrics on the amount of new footpaths/ cycle paths</p>	Cllr Sue Cooper	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	<p>In Q4, officers continued to attend meetings of the Oxfordshire Strategic Active Travel Network Steering Group. At these sessions, the Steering Group considered a long list of strategic routes across Oxfordshire for walking and cycling – these were prioritised based on demand/likelihood of converting trips to cycling.</p> <p>Officers also reviewed the safeguarded transport schemes with their colleagues from Oxfordshire County Council. Many of these projects either include, or are solely designed, to deliver walking and cycling infrastructure.</p>

## Theme 4: Improved economic and community well-being

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
ECW1	Partner with regional agencies to ensure economic recovery, quality employment, thriving businesses and vibrant communities, avoiding the blight of “dormitory towns”	<p>Narrative report on work with partners in this area</p> <p>Quantitative metrics relating to employment rates (trends, actuals) - unemployment rate, trajectory/trend, earnings information</p>	Cllr Robin Bennett	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	<p>During Q4 2022/23, South Oxfordshire’s Digital District Programme (Virtual High Street Initiative) continued to grow. There are now 197 businesses registered on the council's ShopAppy e-commerce platform. South Oxfordshire has also renewed its contract with Shopappy until 31 March 2024. The council’s focus will, therefore, now turn to promoting the platform to its residents. To help support this, a marketing campaign was developed in Q4 (to be implemented during Q1 2023/24).</p> <p>The Economic Development Manager joined the advisory panel for the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) during Q4. The LSIP will focus on creating more dynamic relationships between employers and education/training providers.</p> <p>Economic Development continued to support working groups for the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP) to ensure that these programmes align with South Oxfordshire's objectives.</p> <p>As of January 2023, the unemployment rate in South Oxfordshire was 2.5 per cent – a slight increase on the quarterly figures, but a decrease of 0.2 per cent against the comparative period in 2022.</p>

## Theme 4: Improved economic and community well-being

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
ECW2	Provide advice on access to grants, training and diversification programmes, helping local businesses to build agility and resilience	Quantitative measures - number of businesses we engage with, social media hits, newsletter subscribers, clickthrough rate, numbers of business grants awarded	Cllr Robin Bennett	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	<p>In Q4 2022/23, work began on re-embedding the South and Vale Business Support website within that of the main council. This will not only achieve cost savings but also better reflect Economic Development's role (through both the UK Shared Prosperity and the Rural England Prosperity Funds) in helping the Vale achieve its corporate objectives. The South and Vale Business Support newsletter and social media channels will, however, continue under the same branding.</p> <p>During Q4 2022/23, South and Vale Business Support sent 11 newsletters. These generated 1,218 clickthrough's (the most popular being shopappy.com) with an average open rate of 51.14%.</p> <p>From January to March, there were 3,864 pageviews of the South and Vale Business Support Website – 1,120 users visited the website of which 1,192 were new.</p> <p>Twitter activity undertaken during the quarter created 7,476 impressions and gained two new followers. The South and Vale Business Support Facebook page over the same period created 7,026 impressions, generated 233 engagements and had 284 page visits.</p> <p>The council also sent out seven Start Your Own Business Guides and one Greening the Web Guide during the quarter.</p> <p>While there are currently no business grants available through South Oxfordshire, an expression of interest process has been opened to allow organisations to propose projects that align with the council's UK Shared Prosperity Fund plans. (All other grant enquiries are triaged to the Business and Intellectual Property Centre in Oxford).</p> <p>One Planet Living Training was offered to businesses in March – 16 companies in South Oxfordshire enrolled.</p>

## Theme 4: Improved economic and community well-being

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
ECW3	Plan for communities connected by walking & cycling networks, with sustainable, accessible and affordable public transport and reliable Broadband, learning the lessons from the Covid-19 experience and enabling more home-working	<p>Narrative update on work support reliable broadband (where possible)</p> <p>Narrative update on transport initiatives</p> <p>Quantitative - new footpath/ cycle paths delivered</p>	Cllr Anne-Marie Simpson	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	<p>During Q4 2022/23, Economic Development continued to support the Digital Infrastructure Partnership (DIP). Work focused upon arranging advice (via colleagues in Planning) to the Partnership to improve planning applications and notifications.</p> <p>The Didcot Placemaking Strategy was published.</p> <p>Progress on the Didcot Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) has continued in Q4. Between 20 February and 19 March, a Stage 1 Public Consultation was held to gather feedback regarding ideas or concerns for the local network – 1,308 comments were received. The policy and data review, which will form the basis of core walking and cycling routes within the LCWIP, was also completed.</p> <p>Officers also attended a Cycle Safari and Steering Group session for the Didcot LCWIP project to review key cycling pinch points and issues within the town. Consideration was given at this meeting to where walking and cycling infrastructure should be placed.</p> <p>In Q4, officers continued to attend meetings of the Oxfordshire Strategic Active Travel Network Steering Group. At these sessions, the Steering Group considered a long list of strategic routes across Oxfordshire for walking and cycling – these were prioritised based on demand/likelihood of converting trips to cycling.</p> <p>Officers also reviewed the safeguarded transport schemes with their colleagues from Oxfordshire County Council. Many of these projects either include, or are solely designed, to deliver walking and cycling infrastructure.</p>
ECW4	Launch a new community wellbeing strategy to encourage and support culture, leisure and the arts	Approval/Launch of 'Community Wellbeing Strategy' Y/N (document should encompass large parts of information above)	Cllr Maggie Phillipova-Rivers	Head of Policy and Programmes	During Q4 2022/23, officers continued to gather evidence to assist in the development of the new Community Wellbeing Strategy – this information will also be used to inform the council's work in supporting culture, leisure and the arts.

## Theme 4: Improved economic and community well-being

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
ECW5	Use our planning powers to preserve our valuable green spaces, particularly in urban areas	Number of Neighbourhood Plans implemented/green spaces secured	Cllr Anne-Marie Simpson	Head of Planning	During Q4 2022/23, the council adopted two neighbourhood plan reviews (Benson and Sonning Common). In total, these contain policies protecting 12 green spaces through Local Green Space designations. Local Green Space designations provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities.
ECW6	Work with our communities to maximise Community Infrastructure Levy funds and to allocate these to achieve best outcomes for residents in the District	<p>Narrative update about work in this area to include detail of new CIL spending strategy, communication with parishes</p> <p>Quantitative elements - CIL Spend broken down by type, by parish</p>	Cllr Robin Bennett	Head of Finance	<p>During Q4 2022/23, new allocations of CIL funding – totalling £5,039,000 – were approved as part of the budget setting process and been included in the new provisional capital programme.</p> <p>The full details of the funding allocations are shown in the provisional capital programme but some of the most significant allocations are:</p> <p>CIL Infrastructure Grant Scheme = £750,000                      Didcot Wave Learner Pool = £1,400,000 (funding also to come from S106)                      Cornerstone Decarbonisation Works = £1,592,000 (also supported by a Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme grant)</p> <p>The previously approved CIL allocations, if unused, will carry forward into 2023/24 – with the exception of the Cornerstone roof replacement allocation.</p> <p>An update on all CIL allocations will be provided in Q1 2023/24 following the end-of-year budget process. As projects come forward for delivery, they will go through the required consultation and approvals processes.</p>

## Theme 4: Improved economic and community well-being

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
ECW7	Take enforcement action on fly-tipping and dog fouling	<p>Small narrative on Fly Tipping/dog following activity (with Comms input on any campaigns)</p> <p>Qualitative data on fly tipping - what we collect, where from, how much, nature of enforcement action undertaken, hotspot map</p>	Cllr Sue Cooper	Head of Housing and Environment	<p>In January 2023, there were 85 fly tips in South Oxfordshire. This was an increase on the 63 fly tips recorded in January 2022.</p> <p>In February 2023, there were 82 fly tips in South Oxfordshire. This was a slight increase on the 80 fly tips recorded in February 2022.</p> <p>The figures for March are not yet available</p> <p>During Q4 2022/23, the council issued 11 Fixed Penalty Notices for waste crimes.</p> <p>There were four prosecutions for waste crimes between January and March. Another five prosecutions are pending.</p> <p>In addition, officers received 116 abandoned vehicle reports between during Q4 2022/23. Of these, 43 vehicles were not on site, 38 were identified as not abandoned, 1 was removed, and 17 investigations remain ongoing (the other 17 were duplicate reports).</p>
ECW8	Work with local partners to introduce civil parking enforcement as a district responsibility	Narrative update on progress	Cllr David Rouane	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	No update required – action complete.

## Theme 5: Homes and infrastructure that meet local need - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
HILN1	Didcot Garden Town priority projects as identified by the Advisory Board, specifically a sustainable plan to redevelop the Didcot Gateway site, a public transport and active walking and cycling network, community facilities and accessible green spaces for Didcot residents	Narrative update against the stated aim, to include as many of the potential deliverables as possible, but not limited in scope to this	Cllr Robin Bennett	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>In Q4, the Didcot Placemaking Strategy was published.</p> <p>During Q4 2022/23, the scoping work on the priority projects within the revised Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan was completed. Activity on delivering them has now been initiated. Specific areas of focus include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan</li> <li>• Didcot Central Corridor</li> <li>• Wayfinding</li> <li>• Meanwhile Spaces</li> <li>• The Didcot Garden Party</li> <li>• Health Didcot projects</li> </ul> <p>Progress on the Didcot Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) has continued in Q4. Between 20 February and 19 March, a Stage 1 Public Consultation was held to gather feedback regarding ideas or concerns for the local network – 1,308 comments were received. The policy and data review, which will form the basis of core walking and cycling routes within the LCWIP, was also completed.</p> <p>Officers also attended a Cycle Safari and Steering Group session for the Didcot LCWIP project to review key cycling pinch points and issues within the town. Consideration was given at this meeting to where walking and cycling infrastructure should be placed.</p> <p>In Q4, officers continued to attend meetings of the Oxfordshire Strategic Active Travel Network Steering Group. At these sessions, the Steering Group considered a long list of strategic routes across Oxfordshire for walking and cycling – these were prioritised based on demand/likelihood of converting trips to cycling.</p> <p>Officers also reviewed the safeguarded transport schemes with their colleagues from Oxfordshire County Council. Many of these projects either include, or are solely designed, to deliver walking and cycling infrastructure.</p>

## Theme 5: Homes and infrastructure that meet local need - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
HILN2	The transformation of Berinsfield into a thriving Garden Village with improved facilities that are developed in line with the community's needs and aspirations	Narrative update against the stated aim, to include as many of the potential deliverables as possible, but not limited in scope to this	Cllr Robin Bennett	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the council developed – in consultation with the Berinsfield Steering Group – a draft Community Delivery Plan. This outlines 27 projects which will support the transformation of the village and improve the health/wellbeing of its residents.</p> <p>Officers from the council attended the Community Planning Weekend (31 March-1 April). The engagement process was being led by Ptarmigan as land agent for the Mount Farm site alongside their appointed master planners JTP.</p> <p>Oxford Architects continued their work on the Community Facilities Project. An options report is due to be completed in April 2023 which will recommend indicative spatial options and stewardship proposals.</p> <p>In collaboration with colleagues in Economic Development, officers secured support for decarbonisation audits of the village's community buildings through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Concept Energy are advancing this work and will, in due course, bring forward recommendations.</p> <p>Also, in Q4, a successful procurement exercise was undertaken to appoint an organisation to undertake a feasibility study on the opportunities for developing land or building-based energy assets within Berinsfield. The money to support this work also came through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.</p> <p>South Oxfordshire, in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council's Public Health team, have made progress on the Berinsfield Health and Wellbeing Project. The aim of this scheme is to address issues surrounding health, wellbeing and inequalities within the village. Work has begun on developing an evidence base that will support any of the multi-agency actions needed to drive this project forward.</p>



## Theme 5: Homes and infrastructure that meet local need - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
HILN3	New council-owned homes with a focus on quality of design, affordability and local requirements	Narrative Update on the current activities which WILL result in the delivery of Council owned homes (and details of those homes where possible) Also reporting on progress of Design Guide	Cllr Robin Bennett	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	During Q4 2022/23, the council (working with an external project manager) continued to progress the procurement of an architect-led team to design net-zero homes on a council-owned site in Didcot. The procurement documentation is currently being updated to address several clarification questions raised by interested bidders.
HILN4	Support and encouragement for the retrofit of our existing housing stock for low-carbon performance and to eliminate fuel poverty	Narrative update on current/completed activities and influencing activity	Cllr Sue Cooper	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the draft Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan was finalised prior to its consideration and endorsement by the Future Oxfordshire Partnership (this occurred at its meeting in March). Work has now started on five priority actions, including the development of a Local Area Energy Network and pushing forward the decarbonisation of buildings.</p> <p>In January, a paper was presented to CEEAC looking at the ways that the council could accelerate its work on retrofit. This document summarised the activities already taking place within the county and the potential options/opportunities for upscaling domestic retrofit in South Oxfordshire. Following input from members, possible actions have been prioritised for further work.</p> <p>In addition, pages have also been added to the council's website focusing on the retrofitting of community buildings.</p>

## Theme 5: Homes and infrastructure that meet local need - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
HILN5	Elimination of homelessness in our District	<p>Narrative update on progress in this area</p> <p>Quantitative information on - Homelessness rates, homeless cases and TA numbers, length of stay in TA and effectiveness of interventions (avoided homelessness)</p>	Cllr Maggie Fillipova Rivers	Head of Housing and Environment	<p>South Oxfordshire recorded three rough sleepers at the end of Q4 2022/23. The very low levels of rough sleeping in the district reflects the success of the council's preventative approach.</p> <p>The number of homeless households in temporary accommodation (TA) on 31 March 2023 was 15 – a reduction of eleven compared to the previous quarter (despite the increasing pressures on the service caused by the cost-of-living crisis and the ending of hosting arrangements under the Homes for Ukraine scheme).</p> <p>The rolling six-month average length of stay in emergency accommodation was 38 nights, better than the ceiling target of 42.</p> <p>During Q4 2022/23, the rate of successful homelessness prevention in South Oxfordshire was 77.0 per cent. This was marginally below the very challenging target of 80.0 per cent (the average rate of homelessness prevention in the South East region is 55.0 per cent).</p> <p>The council continues to actively participate in the countywide Homelessness &amp; Rough Sleeping Strategy and is a member of both the countywide Homelessness Steering Group and the Homelessness Directors Group.</p>

## Theme 5: Homes and infrastructure that meet local need - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
HILN6	Bringing empty properties back into use	Narrative update on any relevant initiatives to reduce the number of empty properties and any data on empty property levels in South Oxfordshire	Cllr Robin Bennett	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	<p>There are currently no funded initiatives to bring vacant commercial premises back into use in South Oxfordshire. Nevertheless, during Q4 2022/23, Economic Development continued to explore the possibility of using grant funding secured through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to unlock enterprise infrastructure in South Oxfordshire by making use of vacant premises. Initial conversations have taken place through working groups, where all participants were informed that funding should be made available in 2024/25. In addition, an expression of interest form has been developed to allow private organisations to pitch appropriate projects for potential funding.</p> <p>Empty rateable premises data shows that 331 rated premises are currently vacant in South Oxfordshire (total rateable value circa £4.3m)</p> <p>The vacancy rates for the district's largest towns remained largely stable, with the most recent figures (December 2022) showing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Didcot Town Centre: 10.6 per cent</li> <li>• Henley: 9.9 per cent</li> <li>• Thame: 8.0 per cent</li> <li>• Wallingford: 10.7 per cent</li> </ul> <p>This compares to a vacancy rate of 9.6 per cent across the wider South East region.</p>

## Theme 5: Homes and infrastructure that meet local need - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
HILN7	Ensuring that our teams are ready to access or signpost to any Government schemes or funding that is made available	Narrative update on signposting activity and if possible, update on take-up	Cllr Robin Bennett	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, South Oxfordshire was successful awarded £376,071 funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Phase 3b. This will be put towards replacing gas fired boilers with air source heat pumps, installing solar panels and associated electrical network upgrades, at Cornerstone Arts, Didcot</p> <p>South Oxfordshire was also awarded a £2,500 Natural England Green Infrastructure Grant (half of a £5,000 total grant shared with the Vale) towards commissioning consultants to develop recommendations on how to embed Natural England's Green Infrastructure Strategy recommendations into Local Plans</p> <p>In addition, Oxfordshire was awarded £698,407 from a joint application involving all the county's councils to fund cable gullies for residents with properties on the street without off-street parking to run an Electric Vehicle (EV) charging cable under the pavement. (Interested parties will be able to apply to Oxfordshire County Council for grants).</p> <p>Between January and March, South Oxfordshire submitted the following proposal for funding:</p> <p>UKRI Net Zero Fast Followers - £298,023 joint bid with Vale of White Horse, Cherwell, and West Oxfordshire District Councils to fund: a full-time Net Zero Innovation and Delivery Officer (for two years) / a two-year project to pilot approach to nature-based carbon offsetting in Oxfordshire</p> <p>Also, in Q4, officers from the Garden Communities team met with representatives from Homes England to discuss future opportunities for funding.</p> <p>In addition, South Oxfordshire has commissioned decarbonisation surveys for several other council-owned buildings. This will allow officers to prepare proposals for any potential future funding opportunities.</p>

## Theme 5: Homes and infrastructure that meet local need - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
HILN8	New homes are future-proofed, meeting the highest environmental standards and enhancing nature through sensitive, high quality design	Narrative update around refresh of the design guide, local plan, and information around DES10	Cllr Anne-Marie Simpson	Head of Planning	<p>During Q3 2022/23, the council continued to work on ensuring that, through planning policy, South Oxfordshire responds to the climate emergency, sets robust evidence-based carbon reduction targets and delivers net zero carbon development. To help further this ambition, the officers selected consultants – following a competitive tendering process – to prepare a Net Zero Carbon Evidence Base for the Joint Local Plan. This will provide recommendations on the best policy approach to take to secure zero carbon development.</p> <p>The draft Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan was finalised prior to its consideration and endorsement by the Future Oxfordshire Partnership (this occurred at its meeting in March). Work has now started on five priority actions, including pushing forward the decarbonisation of buildings.</p> <p>Where pre-application advice is sought from the council, officers have been told to draw attention to the advice in the council’s Design Guide and the appropriate sustainable design/carbon reduction policies within the Local Plan. The council encourages zero carbon approaches wherever possible.</p> <p>South Oxfordshire also requires the submission of an energy statement alongside planning applications. Officers will then assess the extent to which schemes follow both the Design Guide and adopted policies. Where appropriate, the council will impose planning conditions to reflect their energy and design policies.</p>

## Theme 5: Homes and infrastructure that meet local need - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
HILN9	Spatial planning embeds public health, wellbeing and sustainability	Narrative update on work around planning reinforcing wellbeing and sustainability. This should include 'health based planning data' where possible - information on public gym equipment - footpaths, cycle paths etc.	Cllr Anne Marie Simpson	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the council published the results of the Joint Local Plan issues consultation. This showed a high level of support from respondents for the questions posed around healthy lifestyles and sustainable communities.</p> <p>Work also continued on the development of the Joint Local Plan, with officers advancing planning policies that will help to protect the environment and allow people to live healthier lifestyles. The focus of the Planning Policy team during the last three months has been on commissioning/developing the evidence base for the Joint Local Plan and the drafting of policy options which will go forward to public consultation over the summer.</p> <p>The evidence base for the Joint Local Plan includes the following studies which have a direct relevance to the council's commitment to supporting wellbeing and sustainability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playing Pitch Strategy (underway)</li> <li>• Leisure Facilities Strategy (underway)</li> <li>• Evidence on Habitats and Species Decline (Thames Valley Environment Records Centre appointed to provide data)</li> <li>• Net Zero Carbon Evidence (consultant appointment in progress)</li> </ul> <p>Moreover, procurement work has started on both a Sustainability Appraisal and a Habitats Regulations Assessment.</p> <p>Officers from the Planning Policy team also developed an approach for undertaking Health Impact Assessments while advancing the Joint Local Plan.</p> <p>In addition, officers from the Community Wellbeing team contributed to the consultation on the development of the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Strategy. This document will set the direction for the health and care system in the local area. As part of this work, South Oxfordshire highlighted the need to include infrastructure provision within the Strategy.</p>

## Theme 5: Homes and infrastructure that meet local need - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
HILN10	Changes over time in our stock of homes meet local needs	<p>Narrative update based on information available from 3rd parties and the impact this has on the local area</p> <p>Bedroom mix in new developments breakdown every 6 months</p>	Cllr Anne-Marie Simpson	Head of Planning	<p>During December 2022, the final month of Q3, a further 8 affordable properties were reported as delivered, taking the Q3 total to 46. The type and size of the 8 units delivered in December 2022 was as follows: 8 x 2 bed houses</p> <p>During January and February 2023, 150 affordable properties have been reported as delivered.</p> <p>The type and size of the 150 units currently delivered in Q4 is as follows: 40 x 1 bed flats / 57 x 2 bed flats / 37 x 2 bed houses / 16 x 3 bed houses</p> <p>A quarterly total, including March, will be made available towards the end of April. 2022/23 to date has seen the delivery of 357 affordable homes.</p> <p>It should be noted that over the life of a development, different dwelling and tenure types will be delivered at varying rates depending upon the developer's build programme.</p>

## Theme 5: Homes and infrastructure that meet local need - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
HILN11	Sustainable transport solutions prioritise walking, cycling and public transport to reduce car dependency and air pollution	Narrative update on overall progress relating to sustainable transport solutions - particularly EV elements	Cllr Anne Marie Simpson	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	<p>During March, a trial Electric Vehicle (EV) car club scheme was agreed. EVs will be available in three of South Oxfordshire's car parks – Greys Road, Henley; Cattlemarket, Wallingford; and Southern Road, Thame.</p> <p>In Q4, officers continued to attend meetings of the Oxfordshire Strategic Active Travel Network Steering Group. At these sessions, the Steering Group considered a long list of strategic routes across Oxfordshire for walking and cycling – these were prioritised based on demand/likelihood of converting trips to cycling.</p> <p>Officers also reviewed the safeguarded transport schemes with their colleagues from Oxfordshire County Council. Many of these projects either include, or are solely designed, to deliver walking and cycling infrastructure.</p> <p>During Q4 2022/23, progress on the Didcot Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) continued. Between 20 February and 19 March, a Stage 1 Public Consultation was held to gather feedback regarding ideas or concerns for the local network – 1,308 comments were received. The policy and data review, which will form the basis of core walking and cycling routes within the LCWIP, was also completed.</p> <p>Moreover, officers also attended a Cycle Safari and Steering Group session for the Didcot LCWIP project to review key cycling pinch points and issues within the town. Consideration was given at this meeting to where walking and cycling infrastructure should be placed.</p> <p>In Q4, the Didcot Placemaking Strategy was published.</p>



## Theme 6: Investment that rebuilds our financial viability - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
IRFV1	Develop and implement an innovative Transformation Strategy to diversify our revenue streams, improve our effectiveness and secure our on-going viability	<p>Narrative measure relating to the development of an overarching Transformation Strategy and any overall narrative linking to potential deliverables</p> <p>Quantitative data - Income relative to Net expenditure (in context), this could be broken down by service</p>	Cllr Pieter-Paul Barker	Head of Policy and Programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Transformation programme continues to progress delivery against the themes namely “Customer”, “Digital, Data and “Technology”, “People” and Future proof”</li> <li>• Further recruitment undertaken to grow the capabilities of the core transformation team to include more project managers and project support officers.</li> <li>• Development of a business case to replace the soon to be ‘end of life’ contact centre telephony system started.</li> <li>• Further development needed to complete the implementation of the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.</li> <li>• Assessment and discovery work being undertaken within the Planning and regulatory services workstream and the Grounds maintenance workstream.</li> </ul>
IRFV2	“Invest to save” for the District, including the delivery of sustainable new Council offices – on time and within budget – to realise future operational efficiencies	Narrative on progress of the Corporate Office project, including data on current spend on office accommodation which will no longer be spent once project completed. Further narrative to discuss impact of new building finances	Cllr Pieter-Paul Barker	Head of Policy and Programmes	Following the decision to reduce the size of the building to four storeys, officers have been working on revising the business case and detailed financial implications for the project. This activity is going on in parallel to the redesign of the new council offices.

## Theme 6: Investment that rebuilds our financial viability - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
IRFV3	Exercise strong Stewardship of all Council assets including property and financial investments, optimising their performance for the benefit of our residents	Narrative update on the progress of the SPR, in the initial period detailing the scope and scape, then once SPR has been delivered, the outcomes and future measures (quant element)	Cllr Pieter-Paul Barker	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the Strategic Property Team continued to progress lease renewals and review rents and where appropriate seek new tenants.</p> <p>Progress has also been made on work regarding potential housing development sites in liaison with Housing colleagues. This has resulted in one site being identified as a realistic opportunity (further work is ongoing in relation to smaller sites).</p> <p>In addition, the Asset Management Group (established during Q3 2021/22) continues to meet on a quarterly basis to progress the implementation of the Strategic Property Review and to consider assets in line with the council's corporate priorities.</p>

## Theme 6: Investment that rebuilds our financial viability - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
IRFV4	Maximise external funding opportunities to support our services and to enrich our leisure, sporting and community activities	<p>Narrative update relating to external funding utilisation, both funding received direct to the council, and projects which have received part external funding or are in progress if not already delivered</p> <p>Specific elements which should be included - Proportion of spend on leisure/community facilities vs amount funded by Council.</p> <p>CIL/106 spend broken down by type/parish</p> <p>Externally funded Capital schemes</p> <p>Total External funding received figure - narrative should be clear that this is not the total figure</p>	Cllr Maggie-Fillipova Rivers	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, South Oxfordshire was successful awarded £376,071 funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Phase 3b. This will be put towards replacing gas fired boilers with air source heat pumps, installing solar panels and associated electrical network upgrades, at Cornerstone Arts, Didcot</p> <p>South Oxfordshire was also awarded a £2,500 Natural England Green Infrastructure Grant (half of a £5,000 total grant shared with the Vale) towards commissioning consultants to develop recommendations on how to embed Natural England's Green Infrastructure Strategy recommendations into Local Plans</p> <p>In addition, Oxfordshire was awarded £698,407 from a joint application involving all the county's councils to fund cable gullies for residents with properties on the street without off-street parking to run an Electric Vehicle (EV) charging cable under the pavement. (Interested parties will be able to apply to Oxfordshire County Council for grants).</p> <p>Between January and March, South Oxfordshire submitted the following proposal for funding: UKRI Net Zero Fast Followers - £298,023 joint bid with Vale of White Horse, Cherwell, and West Oxfordshire District Councils to fund: a full-time Net Zero Innovation and Delivery Officer (for two years) and a two-year project to pilot approach to nature-based carbon offsetting in Oxfordshire</p> <p>Also, in Q4, officers from the Garden Communities team met with representatives from Homes England to discuss future opportunities for funding.</p> <p>In addition, South Oxfordshire has commissioned decarbonisation surveys for several other council-owned buildings. This will allow officers to prepare proposals for any potential future funding opportunities.</p> <p>(update continues on next page)</p>

## Theme 6: Investment that rebuilds our financial viability - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
IRFV4	Maximise external funding opportunities to support our services and to enrich our leisure, sporting and community activities	<p>Narrative update relating to external funding utilisation, both funding received direct to the council, and projects which have received part external funding or are in progress if not already delivered</p> <p>Specific elements which should be included - Proportion of spend on leisure/community facilities vs amount funded by Council.</p> <p>CIL/106 spend broken down by type/parish</p> <p>Externally funded Capital schemes</p> <p>Total External funding received figure - narrative should be clear that this is not the total figure</p>	Cllr Maggie-Fillipova Rivers	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, new allocations of CIL funding – totalling £5,039,000 – were approved as part of the budget setting process and been included in the new provisional capital programme. The full details of the funding allocations are shown in the provisional capital programme but some of the most significant allocations are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CIL Infrastructure Grant Scheme = £750,000</li> <li>• Didcot Wave Learner Pool = £1,400,000 (funding also to come from S106)</li> <li>• Cornerstone Decarbonisation Works = £1,592,000 (also supported by a Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme grant)</li> </ul> <p>The previously approved CIL allocations, if unused, will carry forward into 2023/24 – with the exception of the Cornerstone roof replacement allocation.</p> <p>South Oxfordshire are also contributing £200,000 through CIL/Capital Growth Bid to fund the installation of Changing Places Toilets in Wallingford, Thame and at the Riverside Campsite in Crowmarsh.</p> <p>During Q4, the Active Communities team secured an additional year’s funding for the ‘Move Together’ programme. This will enable the council to continue the work that it is currently undertaking with residents who have long-term health conditions. The council also received funding for a second year of the ‘You Move’ project.</p>
IRFV5	Invest responsibly and ethically with the Climate Emergency at the heart of what we do	Narrative update detailing changes which have included climate elements into regularised decision making	Cllr Pieter-Paul Barker	Head of Finance	As a consequence of the uncertain economic climate, officers are not currently pursuing a funds review to find alternative potential investment opportunities. They will, however, continue to monitor the situation and liaise with the council’s treasury advisors.



Listening Learning Leading

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### **Policy and Programmes**

South Oxfordshire District Council  
Abbey House  
Abbey Close  
Abingdon  
OX14 3JE

Email: [performance@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:performance@southandvale.gov.uk)

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