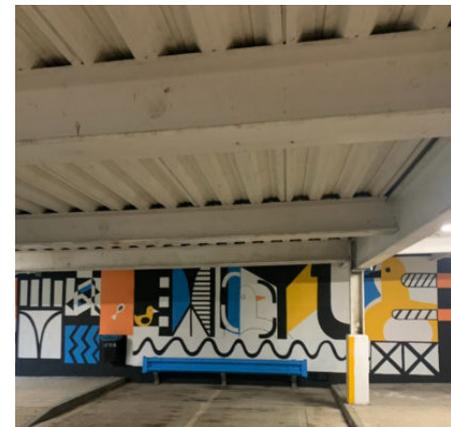
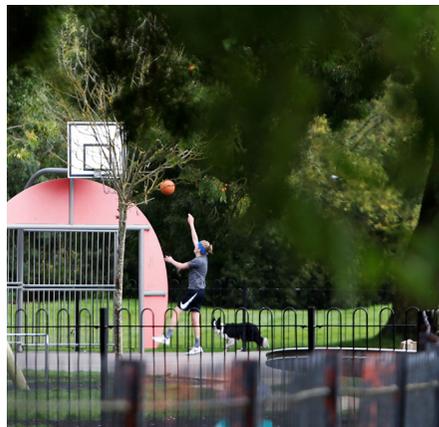


# Vale of White Horse District Council

# Corporate Performance Report



## 2022/23 Quarter Four

## April 2023

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# Background

- The Council monitors performance and progress towards achieving the aims and priorities set out in the Vale of White Horse District Council **Corporate Plan 2020-2024**.
- This report provides a strategic overview of the performance for **quarter four (01 January to 31 March 2023)**, 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 2023, growth in total and regular pay fell in real terms, when adjusted for inflation, 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, Vale of White Horse passed its budget for 2023/24. The measures announced aim to support those affected by the cost-of-living crisis, advance action on the climate emergency and protect frontline services. To fund the delivery of services, council tax was increased by 3.4 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 £151.69 a year (£2.91 per week) – which is more than 25 per cent lower than the national average). The Vale continues to charge one of the lowest district council tax rates in the country.

# Quarter four performance highlights

## Providing the homes people need



**£2.1 million**

The amount of funding received from central government for obtaining housing for those fleeing conflict



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



**£2,132,291**

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

## Tackling the climate emergency



We commissioned **APSE Energy** to do a feasibility study on installing solar energy on council property to help us offset our inevitable carbon emissions



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**



**51,000 m2**

The approximate size of nine council-owned sites that will be included in our **'Let It Bee'** campaign to boost biodiversity on our property

## Building healthy communities



We attended the first meeting of the **Abingdon Area Travel Plan** to discuss local travel and to further the work of the town's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan



We continued our pilot project which gives communities the option to explore ways to address **local air quality challenges**



**1,363**

The number of people we engaged through our **physical activity programmes**

## Building stable finances



**£5,992,916**

The amount of funding received from the **Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme** to help reduce carbon emissions across our property portfolio



We are creating a **Forward Maintenance Plan** for future annual capital funding requests, to help us manage our assets in the best possible manner



We approved a 3.4 per cent rise in **council taxes** for 2023-2024, maintaining one of the lowest rates in the country

## Working in partnership



We joined **Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership's** steering group for the Oxfordshire Destination Management plan, ensuring their work aligns with our own visitor economy plan



We support **Oxfordshire Asylum Support** through hosting a countywide housing capacity team that locates housing for Ukrainian refugees



We continue to support the **White Horse Community Lottery Scheme**, which generated an estimated **£32,978** during the last year for the district's voluntary organisations

## Working in an open and inclusive way



We ran **47 campaigns:**

- 17** highlighted events and council news
- 20** promoted behavioural change
- 10** promoted diversity and inclusion



**229**

The number of information requests received, and we responded to **96%** of these within the target time of 20 working days



We launched the **'Help us keep your community connected'** questionnaire to contribute to our equalities database

# Theme 1: Providing the homes people need

## We will:

- find ways to provide more genuinely affordable housing, including housing for social rent, to better provide for the needs of the Vale residents
- aim to provide a mix of tenures in each development to build sustainable homes in balanced and sustainable communities
- use our influence on decision makers, where the responsibility lies outside of Vale.

## We will do this by:

- exploring and considering opportunities to bring forward the delivery of homes people can afford
- adopting a policy framework that ensures those homes could be delivered in a way that supports the environment and people living healthy lives.

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

## Key Activities in quarter four

See Theme 1 performance updates against all reporting measures on page 22

As part of the Vale's commitment to help deliver more affordable homes, the council continued to have conversations with a range of landowners and promoters to progress housing and residential-led, mixed-use schemes (including Dalton Barracks and Ock Valley Park). Close liaison was also maintained with Oxfordshire County Council's highways and strategic planning teams.

The Vale decided to provide funds to the Collaborative Housing Hub so they can continue support Community Led Housing Schemes for 2023/24. Officers now intend to meet with representatives from the Hub to discuss further details.

Following an assessment of the suitability of land owned by council for housing, no sites of significant size have been identified. The Housing and Strategic Property teams are, however, working together to consider a range of options for the delivery of affordable housing including the acquisition of land or property.



A team of officers from across the council considered a new Local Authority Housing Fund from DLUHC for obtaining housing for those fleeing conflict during Q4. The Vale was offered a grant of £2.1 million to support the purchase of 14 properties for use by those in the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy and Ukrainian families. A report was considered and approved by Cabinet in March seeking authority on accepting this funding.

**A**t a meeting of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership's Housing Advisory Group, officers and members agreed to look at ways for the county's local authorities to work together to bring forward more affordable housing.

The council wants to deliver green homes in communities that encourage healthy lifestyles. To help achieve this, 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 the Vale's aim of supporting the environment and helping people live healthy lives.

In addition, the Vale published a report on the Joint Local Plan Regulation Part 1 Issues Consultation. The results of this engagement exercise have allowed the council to get a better understanding of the public's views on the importance of connecting homes/housing with employment opportunities.

**O**fficers from the council continued to attend meetings of the Oxfordshire Strategic Active Travel Network Steering Group. At these sessions, the Steering Group considered an extensive 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.

Progress on the Didcot Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) 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. 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.

In addition, officers attended the first Abingdon Area Travel Plan meeting. This project is designed to build upon the work of the town's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and will consider all travel in the area.



## Theme 2: Tackling the climate emergency

### We will:

- do everything we can to help tackle the Climate Emergency
- reduce council emissions by 75% by 2025
- become a carbon neutral council by 2030
- reduce all emissions across the Vale District by 75% by 2030
- aspire to be a carbon neutral Vale district by 2045.

### We will do this by:

- a Climate Emergency programme, focussed on what the council has control over, working towards our own targets for our own buildings, vehicles, leisure and arts centres
- a Climate Emergency programme focussed on encouraging the wider district community
- to reduce its carbon footprint in order to meet the Climate Emergency targets
- a programme around exercising our influence with partners on wider policy, working with neighbouring authorities, lobbying Government, and identifying environmental policy gaps.

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

### Key Activities in quarter four

See Theme 2 performance updates against all reporting measures on page 32

The council remains committed to reducing its own emissions by 75% by 2025 and to becoming a carbon neutral council by 2030 - meaning carbon emissions are equal to that absorbed by the environment. In quarter four, the council won its bid to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme for £5,992,916 to support significant decarbonisation projects at the Wantage Leisure Centre and the White Horse Leisure and Tennis Centre. It is forecast the work will reduce the council's overall carbon emissions by over 25 per cent.

Further working to reduce its own emissions, the council commissioned APSE Energy to provide a feasibility study into investing in solar energy on council land. This will aim to offset the council's unavoidable carbon emissions. The council have also contracted Concept Energy to produce additional site decarbonisation assessments, which will help officers to find more opportunities for funding for energy saving measures. The first phase of this work will include the Abbey Meadows Pool and The Beacon.



The council is committed to reducing all emissions across the Vale District by 75% by 2025 and to taking zero carbon approaches to construction wherever possible. The council highlights sustainable design/carbon reduction policies in its Design Guide when people are looking for pre-application advice. The council also requires the submission of an energy statement alongside planning applications which are then assessed to reflect the council's energy and design policies.

In January, the council presented a paper to the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee (CEAC) which examined the ways the council could accelerate its work on retrofitting buildings in the district. Following input from members, possible actions have been prioritised for further work.

In quarter four, the council appointed consultants to work on the Joint Local Plan, including preparing a Net Zero Carbon Evidence Base. This will provide recommendations on the best policy approach to take to secure zero carbon development.

The Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan was endorsed by the Future Oxfordshire Partnership 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.

To meet its commitment to increase tree cover and biodiversity in the district, the council created a new wildflower meadow in Abingdon and planted trees at various sites across the Vale using Community Infrastructure Levy funding. In addition, nine sites (covering approximately 51,000 m<sup>2</sup>) were included in the Vale's 'Let It Bee' campaign, which promotes the wildlife friendly management of council-owned land.

The 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 Vale'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. For Global Recycling Day, the council shared messages on social media to help reduce contamination by highlighting items that people often wrongly put in the recycling bin.

In January, the council's bulky waste collection service was updated to prepare for the changes required to manage waste that contains Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and to ensure that the council remains fully compliant with the relevant legislation.



During Q4 2022/23, HM Government published guidance and regulations for local authorities to produce a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). The council will be part of a steering group with other Oxfordshire authorities for its production. The LNRS will include a statement of the biodiversity priorities within Oxfordshire and a local habitat map will likely be used to target Biodiversity Net Gains.

It is a priority for the council to maintain good air quality in the district, for the health of all residents. During Q4 2022/23, officers reviewed draft Air Quality Action Plans ahead of formal consultation beginning in quarter one 2023/24. A long list 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.

During Q4 2022/23, officers from the Technical Services and Climate Emergency teams supported Oxfordshire County Council in applying for Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding. A grant of £3.655m capital and £500k revenue was awarded to spend in 2023/24 on more Electric Vehicle charging points across the county.

An important part of the council's work on tackling the climate emergency is encouraging the wider district community to play their part as fully as possible. The Vale ran several communication campaigns including Food Waste Action Week and the Great British Spring Clean.

The council continues to encourage the reduction of energy use by: promoting its new retrofitting webpages; setting up new webpages on whether planning permission is needed to install solar panels on homes; highlighting articles on the Climate Action Oxfordshire website on the amount of energy that could be saved by insulating properties; and publicising a new webpage which gives a step-by-step guide to improving the energy efficiency of community buildings.



## Theme 3: Building healthy communities

### We will:

- contribute to making people's lives healthier by encouraging the switch to more active travel, improving air quality where people work and live, and providing active opportunities.

### We will do this by:

- building strong communities and connections with a sense of place and strong community identity
- promoting healthy place shaping and active communities for everyone
- safeguarding and supporting our vulnerable residents

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

### Key Activities in quarter four

See Theme 3 performance updates against all reporting measures on page 41

At the end of Q4 2022/23, the council recorded two rough sleepers. The exceptionally low levels of rough sleeping in the district reflects the success of the Vale's preventative approach.

The number of homeless households in temporary accommodation at the end of March 2023 was 17 – a reduction of nine 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 37 nights, better than the ceiling target of 42. During Q4 2022/23, the rate of successful homelessness prevention in the Vale was 71.0 per cent. This was below the target of 80.0 per cent (the average rate of homelessness prevention in the South East region is 55.0 per cent).

As part of the Vale's commitment to safeguarding and supporting the district's vulnerable residents, the council 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.

Throughout the quarter, the Community Wellbeing team has continued to collaborate with communities across the district to support them through the cost-of-living crisis (particularly in relation to food initiatives and the provision of support for those in most need). They have also maintained the support provided for the Vale's Ukrainian guests and their hosts – The budget, approved by Full Council in February, provides support for the Community Enablement and Community Hub teams for the next financial year.

The Vale approved a policy for a new foodbank grant scheme – this will be rolled out in Q1 2023/24. Also, officers completed the drafting of a new Partnership Grant Fund Policy. This will be presented to Cabinet in June.

With the aim of building strong communities and connections with a sense of place, the Planning Policy team have continued the development of the Joint Local Plan. Officers have procured consultants to provide:

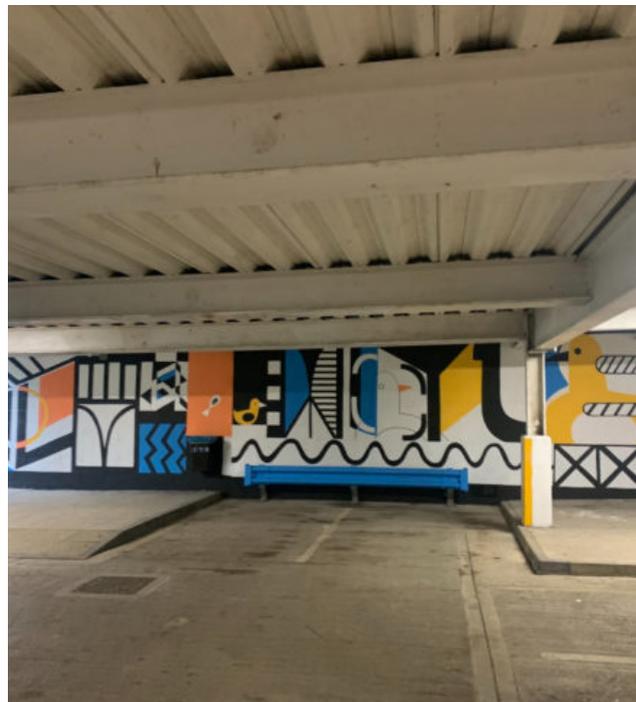
- An Employment Land Needs Assessment
- A Specialist Housing Needs Assessment
- A Comprehensive Evidence Base on Landscape

They have also 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).

In addition, progress has continued on the Town Centre & Retail Study, with the consultants producing this work completing their draft health checks for the district's towns.

The Vale has, through its membership and participation in county-wide initiatives through the Future Oxfordshire Partnership, continued to work for the realisation of the Good Growth Principles in the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision

The council has continued to support and advise parishes throughout the Vale in relation to the provision of public art. (A public art strategy is to be included as part of the new Joint Local Plan. It will be consulted upon as part of the wider process of engagement).



With the intention of promoting healthy place shaping and active communities, officers have completed work on the draft Active Communities Strategy Delivery Plan.

The Vale has continued to collaborate with partners (particularly Active Oxfordshire) to encourage involvement in physical activities. 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). In addition, the council received funding for a second year of the 'You Move' project (aimed at families with children and in receipt of benefits).

The council have established new partnerships to support work with mental health professionals in the Vale. Officers have also developed stronger links with local GP surgeries, with the Active Communities team now having a regular presence at monthly clinics.

The preparation of the artwork for the 'Nature Trails' in Abingdon is in its final stages. Active Communities are currently working with Abingdon Town Council, Oxfordshire County Council's Highways department and our Property and Climate Change teams to finalise the arrangements for their installation by May 2023.

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. The final draft Air Quality Actions Plans will go forward for formal consultation in Q1 2023/24.

Officers have been tasked with creating a quarterly report based on the outcomes arising from the Strategic Property Review. This will list assets (land) that could be used as community gardens and allotments. The potential usage of any identified assets will then be explored by the relevant working groups.

The Vale continued to attend meetings of the Oxfordshire Strategic Active Travel Network Steering Group. At these sessions, the Steering Group considered an extensive 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.

Progress on the Didcot Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) 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. 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.

In addition, officers attended the first Abingdon Area Travel Plan meeting. This project is designed to build upon the work of the town's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and will consider all travel within the locality.



## Theme 4: Building stable finances

### We will:

- manage the council's resources responsibly and make effective use of the council's assets
- do our best to build financial resilience to protect the council against future uncertainties
- work across the public sector to influence and maximise funding for local government, in order to continue to invest and provide the services residents and businesses need.

### We will do this by:

- exploring and actively considering all avenues to deliver financial stability, including maximising income available to the council
- making effective use of the council's assets acting in a manner that ensures the long-term financial viability for the benefit of our residents and the environment.

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

### Key Activities in quarter four

See Theme 4 performance updates against all reporting measures on page 50

With the aim of managing the council's resources responsibly and making more effective use of its assets, the Vale's Asset Management Group continues to meet on a quarterly basis to continue to implement 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 Vale set a balanced budget for 2023/24 in February. To fund the delivery of services, council tax was increased by 3.4 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 £151.69 a year (£2.91 per week) – which is more than 25 per cent lower than the national average). The Vale continues to charge one of the lowest district council tax rates in the country.

Work started on updating the Vale's contract register, which is a list of all the contracts the council has entered into. Once this is completed, officers will look for links between both new and renewed contracts across the organisation to identify savings.

Following the appointment of a Maintenance Scheduling Officer, progress was made on preparing a Forward Maintenance Plan for the Vale's future annual capital funding proposals. This will help to ensure that the council has a comprehensive policy to inform how assets may be most efficiently maintained.

Officers conducted a review of the council's Grounds Maintenance team with the intention of recommending ways to improve the performance and the flexibility of the service.

After the receipt of the art centre consultant's report of activities at the Beacon in December, progress was made by officers on a further review and the development of an action plan to maximise usages and income for the council.

Work also continued delivering the Vale's long-term transformation programme.

With the intention of building financial resilience to protect the council against future uncertainties, the Strategic Property Team continued to lease vacant properties, progress lease renewals and review rents during Q4 2022/23. Progress was also made on work regarding potential housing development sites.

The Vale was successfully awarded £5,992,916 funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Phase 3b during Q4 2022/23. This money will be used for projects at both the Wantage Leisure and White Horse Leisure and Tennis Centres and is a significant milestone in delivering on the Vale's ambition of working across the public sector to influence and maximise funding for local government.

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 also maintained and assessed throughout the quarter.



## Theme 5: Working in partnership

### We will:

- work in partnership with other councils, authorities and businesses, non-profit organisations, community and residents' groups, to achieve our aims and objectives effectively, efficiently and fairly
- provide support to residents and organisations to effect and drive change in the community
- provide all the support we can to businesses in the Vale to help them succeed.

### We will do this by:

- working in partnership to influence and shape regional and national agendas to maximise opportunities for our communities and businesses
- working with and supporting our residents, businesses and communities to effect and enable change.

*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 5 performance updates against all reporting measures on page 55

In Q4 2022/23, the Vale focused upon implementing its UK Shared Prosperity Fund plans. The council used its year one allocation to commission research and the development of a strategy on the local visitor economy. Preliminary work also took place to determine how the Vale's UK Shared Prosperity Fund allocation could be used to develop a plan to support businesses to reduce their carbon emissions. In addition, the council developed an expression of interest process to allow organisations to pitch projects that fit with the Vale's UK Shared Prosperity Funding plans.

During Q4, work began on re-embedding the South and Vale Business Support website within that of the main council. This will not only save money 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 continue under the same branding.

During Q4 2022/23, the Vale's Digital District Programme (Virtual High Street Initiative) continued to grow. There are now 141 businesses registered on the council's ShopAppy e-commerce platform. The Vale 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).

As part of the Vale's efforts to support residents and organisations to effect and drive change in the community, the council continued its pilot project on a simpler approach to neighbourhood planning. Officers met regularly with the pilot groups, providing one-to-one support. They also brought the separate groups together to collaborate and share experiences.

The preparations for workshops with neighbourhood plan groups were paused in Q4 to allow officers to focus upon progressing submitted plans and responding to neighbourhood planning statutory consultations. Preparations for the workshops are expected to resume during Q1 2023/24.

The Vale have continued with the Town and Parish Council Surgeries during Q4 2022/23. Uptake has increased, with more bookings being made.

The Community Hub continued its response to the cost-of-living crisis (particularly in relation to food initiatives and the provision of support for those in most need). The budget, approved by Full Council in February, provides support for the Community Enablement and Community Hub teams for the next financial year.

The Vale approved a policy for a new foodbank grant scheme – this will be rolled out in Q1 2023/24.

During Q4, fourteen applications to the Vale's Climate Action Fund received funding – to the value of £55,592. Also, officers completed the drafting of a new Partnership Grant Fund Policy. This will be presented to Cabinet in June.

The council continued to support the White Horse Community Lottery Scheme. Throughout the quarter, 12,019 lottery tickets were sold generating an annual estimated income of £32,978 for the voluntary sector. The Cabinet also approved the distribution of funding from the White Horse Lottery Central Community Fund. Nine randomly selected 'worthy causes' – registered with the scheme – each received £1,000.

With the intention of progressing our goal of working in partnership to influence and shape regional and national agendas, Economic Development have continued to be actively involved with the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economic Partnership Steering Group. Following the publication of the Partnership's Charter, officers are preparing briefings for members and senior management.



Economic Development have continued to contribute to the working group overseeing the development of the emerging Strategic Economic Plan for Oxfordshire so that the Plan continues to align with the Vale's objectives.

In addition, the Vale has become a member of OxLEP's steering group for development of the Oxfordshire Destination Management Plan – with the intention of ensuring that the steering group's work complements the council's own visitor economy strategy.

The Vale continues to remain involved in shaping and participating in county-wide initiatives through the Future Oxfordshire Partnership.

The council also continues to contribute to the Oxfordshire Asylum Support system and takes a strong partnership approach to both 'Moving On' accommodation and the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Programme. Staff have now been recruited to the county-wide Housing Capacity team (hosted by South and Vale) with the aim of increasing housing supply for Ukrainian guests. Officers have also contributed to discussions at the South East Migration Partnership.

## Theme 6: Working in an open and inclusive way

### We will:

- work openly and transparently, promoting a world in which all can participate equally
- listen to feedback from local residents, communities, businesses, partners and our own officers
- ensure our work particularly aims to include those groups that have historically been
- marginalised or those that have been hard to reach
- ensure we are accountable and that our decisions are open to appropriate scrutiny, and we will admit when we get things wrong.

### We will do this by:

- improving our use of technology to increase understanding and access to what we do, how we work and the decisions we make
- increasing meaningful engagement and communication with everyone
- strengthening our governance framework and address our policy gaps, improving transparency.

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

### Key Activities in quarter four

See Theme 6 performance updates against all reporting measures on page 66

To facilitate the council's commitment to working openly and transparently, the Vale continues to increase the amount of information that it provides through the data hub section of its website. During Q4 2022/23, the performance management report for Q3 2022/23 was published on the Vale's website. This is intended to increase the public's understanding of what the council does, how it works and how decisions are made.

The annual review of complaints was considered by the Joint Audit & Governance Committee in late January 2023.

The council has prepared an annual report summarising the content of all the consultations run during 2022/23, their results and any actions/activities arising from them. This report will be available at the beginning of Q1 2023/24.

Between January and March, the council produced three town and parish and residents' newsletters and sent three In Focus newsletters to share important stories and information with our communities.

As part of the Vale's ambition to improve its use of technology to increase understanding and access to what it does, 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 Vale's YouTube channel for a year.

Progress also been made on the procurement of a new consultation and engagement platform. The council is currently finalising a decision on the provider, with the aim of implementing in Q1 2023/24.

With the aim of increasing meaningful engagement with everyone, the council built a database to analyse the equalities data collected from its surveys. The equalities data of participants (gender, age, ethnicity and disability) is then compared with the Vale's population data to assess whether the respondents represent the characteristics of the general population. This information will then be used to develop strategies to reach demographic groups that are under-represented in the council's consultations.

As part of this work, the Vale 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, officers also started to track the response rates to the Vale’s consultations (both internal and external). Based on the available data for the year, they have determined that the average response rate in 2022/23 was 22.0% (for every 100 people notified of one of the council’s surveys, 22 sent a response). Further, they found that the response rate varies significantly between consultations and is dependent on both the topic and the timing of the survey.

Throughout the quarter, the Vale has been sending out an officer-produced newsletter on the local elections for individuals on the electoral register who are turning 18. The new guide for first time voters is also still available on the council’s website.

Preparations have also been made for events aimed at informing and involving seldom heard groups to be held during the second stage of the Joint Local Plan consultation

With the intention of delivering on the Vale’s commitment to increasing accountability and strengthening its governance framework, officers have continued to make progress on reviewing the council’s constitution.

A full examination of the Scheme of Delegation is currently underway, alongside the drafting of a Planning Protocol document. It is intended that these items will be considered by the Constitution Review Group when it reconvenes after the elections.

Work on the council’s informal financial management review concluded during Q4 2022/23. The outcome of this evaluation and the determination of any actions required to ensure compliance with the CIPFA financial management code is now expected during Q1 2023/24.

### Vale of White Horse quarter one independent cabinet member decisions

Date	Description
11/01/2023	Car parks management contractor performance
12/01/2023	Section 106 funding for the Tuckmill Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
20/01/2023	Decarbonisation Project Funding for Wantage Leisure Centre and the White Horse Leisure and Tennis Centre
24/01/2023	Council tax exceptional hardship fund
14/02/2023	Commissioning of domestic abuse services - to agree a partnering agreement for a pooled budget
22/02/2023	Outside body appointments
23/03/2023	Simpler Approach to Neighbourhood Planning Pilot project
28/03/2023	Electric vehicle car club pilot

## Theme 1: Providing the homes people need - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
PROGRAMME 1	Explore and consider opportunities to bring forward the delivery of homes people can afford	Narrative report of newly identified opportunities to bring forward/expedite the delivery of affordable homes	Cllr Judy Roberts	Head of Housing and Environment	<p>During Q4 2022/23, a team of officers from across the council considered a new Local Authority Housing Fund from DLUHC for obtaining housing for those fleeing conflict. The Vale was offered a grant of £2.1 million to support the purchase of 14 properties for use by those in the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy and Ukrainian families. A report was considered and approved by Cabinet in March seeking authority on accepting this funding.</p> <p>Following an assessment of the suitability of land owned by council for housing, no sites of significant size have been identified currently. The Housing and Strategic Property teams are, however, working together to consider a range of options for the delivery of affordable housing including the acquisition of land or property.</p>
PHPN1.1	Explore a council-owned holding company/vehicle, to focus on delivering a wide range of regeneration and community benefits including housing, community facilities, land maintenance and health	Narrative update on the potential opportunities/challenges around the creation of a holding company/SPV (special purpose vehicle)	Cllr Judy Roberts	Master Planning Lead	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the Vale continued to have conversations with a range of landowners and promoters to progress housing and residential-led, mixed-use schemes (including Dalton Barracks and Ock Valley Park). Close liaison was also maintained with Oxfordshire County Council's highways and strategic planning teams.</p> <p>The option of a council-owned holding company is not currently being explored.</p>
PHPN1.2	Explore how the council can provide low-cost sustainable housing. Include working with developers, registered providers, community trusts, as well as new partnerships. Include council owned housing. Include a definition of affordability relative to ability to pay, not to market value, and social rent definitions	Narrative report on provision of low cost housing, focusing on partnership working, including an update on the shifting metric of affordability based on relative ability to pay rather than market value and social rent definitions	Cllr Judy Roberts	Head of Housing and Environment	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the Collaborative Housing Hub approached all of the county's councils seeking continued support for their work in assisting Community Led Housing Schemes. After considering the Collaborative Housing Hub's proposal, the Vale has decided to provide funds for 2023/24. Officers now intend to meet with representatives from the Hub to discuss further details.</p> <p>Also, in Q4, work was undertaken to collate initial data on the number of registered providers within the district, their portfolio size and the age of their housing stock. This document also provided a preliminary outline of the retrofit plans required to meet future legislative needs.</p>

## Theme 1: Providing the homes people need - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
PHPN1.3	Review our affordable housing planning policies and ensure they are providing what's needed in the Vale	Narrative report on review of planning policies	Cllr Judy Roberts	Head of Housing and Environment	<p>During Q4 2022/23, a report updating the policy and processes for S.106 grant funding was completed (including allocations for organisations that apply for support to bring forward affordable housing). This is due to be taken to Cabinet for decision in Q1 2023/24.</p> <p>Progress also continued on the development of the Joint Local Plan.</p> <p>The Affordable Housing Guidance Note (which aims to assist planning applicants and others with the identification of relevant published policy and guidance, where it relates to the provision of affordable housing), and the Housing Delivery Strategy (which outlines the aspirations for the council – and other developers within the district – in relation to types of housing, tenure mix and demographic), were both published on the Vale's website in Q4.</p> <p>At a meeting of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership's Housing Advisory Group, officers and members agreed to look at ways for the county's local authorities to work together to bring forward more affordable housing.</p>
PHPN1.4	Review our strategy for spending s106 sums paid in lieu of onsite affordable housing and identify how earmarked funds, including retained S106 monies, can be best utilised to deliver affordable homes	<p>"Narrative report on s106 spend, focusing on the stated aim and any updates to the existing strategy</p> <p>Additional quantitative elements - s106 spend/units provided from spend</p>	Cllr Judy Roberts	Head of Housing and Environment	<p>During Q4 2022/23, a report updating the policy and processes for S.106 grant funding was completed. This is due to be taken to Cabinet for decision in Q1 2023/24.</p> <p>The council also continues to seek to build upon the success of delivering two affordable housing projects using commuted S.106 sums. Bidding remains open for registered providers and community land trusts to submit applications for grant funding to deliver new affordable housing schemes.</p>
PHPN1.5	Explore how mobile homes might be better used as affordable homes, reviewing sites and policies to ensure good use of available space	Narrative update on utilisation of mobile homes/mobile home sites or opportunities for creating such sites	Cllr Judy Roberts	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	<p>During Q4 2022/23, a report on Pebble Hill mobile home berths was reviewed by SMT and an Independent Cabinet Member Decision (ICMD) paper will be prepared. This followed the conclusion of discussions and research into the charging mechanism for recovering the development costs of the project and the process of allocating licences for the new berths.</p>

## Theme 1: Providing the homes people need - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
PHPN1.6	Use Garden Villages and Towns designation as a mechanism to introduce innovative housing to meet our needs for high quality, low energy, zero-carbon homes	Narrative report on garden village and town designation utilisation and any projects which fall within this designation. Also to include initiatives which will result in low energy, zero carbon homes.	Cllr Judy Roberts	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the Vale continued to hold discussions with both the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) and the parish councils on advancing Dalton Barracks Garden Village (including the masterplan for the project).</p> <p>In Q4, the Didcot Placemaking Strategy was published.</p> <p>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>

## Theme 1: Providing the homes people need - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
PROGRAMME 2	Adopt a policy framework that ensures those homes could be delivered in a way that supports the environment and people living healthy lives	Narrative report against the Programme aim	Cllr Judy Roberts	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, progress continued on the development of the Joint Local Plan. As part of this work, officers are 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 aim of supporting the environment and helping people live healthy lives:</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>In addition, procurement work has started on both a Sustainability Appraisal and a Habitats Regulations Assessment.</p>
PHPN2.1	Develop a s106 obligations strategy to inform negotiations between planners and developers	Narrative report on strategy development/adherence (once delivered)	Cllr Judy Roberts	Head of Policy and Programmes	No update required - action complete.

## Theme 1: Providing the homes people need - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
PHPN2.2	Update the CIL spending strategy and associated procedures to accelerate the delivery of local infrastructural improvements for our communities both in line with our corporate objectives and, where appropriate, to support current spending on existing infrastructure	"Narrative update on CIL spend to support the delivery of local infrastructure  Total CIL spend + CIL spend breakdown"	Cllr Judy Roberts	Head of Finance	<p>During Q4 2022/23, new allocations of CIL funding – totalling £2,132,291 – were approved as part of the budget setting process and the following allocations have been included in the new capital programme:</p> <p>Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme funding contribution - Wantage Leisure Centre = £247,540 Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme funding contribution - WHLTC = £1,659,751 Replacement of all roof coverings at Wantage Leisure Centre - £225,000</p> <p>The above allocations, profiled for expenditure between 2023/24 and 2025/26, support the Vale's successful Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme funding bid.</p> <p>The previously approved CIL allocations, if unused, will carry forward into 2023/24 – with the exception of the cancelled Wantage Leisure Centre Spin Studio project.</p> <p>An update on all CIL allocations will be provided in Q1 2023/24 following the end-of-year budget process.</p>
PHPN2.3	Consider ways we can encourage lower-carbon construction in Vale	Narrative update to include any activity supporting lower-carbon construction in the Vale	Cllr Judy Roberts	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the Vale 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>

## Theme 1: Providing the homes people need - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
PHPN2.4	Develop an affordable housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Evidence of housing needs, housing mix, self-build, rural exception sites. Include definition of 'affordable'	Narrative update on the development of an affordable housing SPD, additionally include information on planning permissions granted with affordable housing numbers	Cllr Debby Hallett	Head of Housing and Environment	<p>The Affordable Housing Guidance Note (which aims to assist planning applicants and others with the identification of relevant published policy and guidance, where it relates to the provision of affordable housing), and the Housing Delivery Strategy (which outlines the aspirations for the council – and other developers within the district – in relation to types of housing, tenure mix and demographic), were both published on the Vale’s website in Q4.</p> <p>Progress also continued on the development of the Joint Local Plan.</p> <p>During Q4 2022/23, a report updating the policy and processes for S.106 grant funding was completed (including allocations for organisations that apply for support to bring forward affordable housing). This is due to be taken to Cabinet for decision in Q1 2023/24.</p> <p>At a meeting of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership’s Housing Advisory Group, officers and members agreed to look at ways for the county’s local authorities to work together to bring forward more affordable housing.</p> <p>Also, in Q4, work was undertaken to collate initial data on the number of registered providers within the district, their portfolio size and the age of their housing stock. This document provided a preliminary outline of the retrofit plans required to meet future legislative needs.</p>

## Theme 1: Providing the homes people need - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
PHPN2.5	Develop a Land Use strategy to inform and guide OxPlan2050 and Vale Local Plan with proposed need for housing, retail, employment, leisure, open spaces	Narrative update on progression against stated aim of PHPN 2.6 in the corporate plan.	Cllr Judy Roberts	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4, the Planning Policy made progress on the spatial strategy for the Joint Local Plan – this will be subject to public consultation in summer 2023. Work also continued on the Settlement Assessment, including the completion of the processing of responses provided by town and parish councils.</p> <p>The Planning Policy team have also focused upon commissioning/developing the evidence base for the Joint Local Plan. This includes the following studies which are directly related to land use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Specialist Housing Needs Assessment (Consultant appointed Q4)</li> <li>•Town Centres and Retail</li> <li>•Employment Land Needs Assessment (Consultant appointed Q4)</li> <li>•Leisure</li> <li>•Playing Pitches</li> <li>•Open Spaces</li> </ul>
PHPN2.6	Update the Local Development Plan to reflect the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) and connecting our strategic housing sites with employment land	Narrative update on progression against stated aim of PHPN 2.7 in the corporate plan.	Cllr Judy Roberts	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the Vale published a report on the Joint Local Plan Regulation Part 1 Issues Consultation. The results of this engagement exercise have allowed the council to get a better understanding of the public's views on the importance of connecting homes/housing with employment opportunities.</p> <p>Progress has also been made on drafting policy options relating to spatial strategy, infrastructure and transport. This forms part of the wider work towards the next Joint Local Plan consultation on preferred options – scheduled for summer 2023.</p>
PHPN2.7	Update Vale's Local Plan and OxPlan2050 with modern environmental policies in support of government's and Vale's goals	Narrative update on progression against stated aim of PHPN 2.8 in the corporate plan.	Cllr Debby Hallett	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the Vale 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 the Vale's environment.</p>

## Theme 1: Providing the homes people need - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
PHPN2.8	Develop a Housing Policy: that outlines the types of housing we are going to provide, in what mix of design and for what demographic and tenure, to inform our Local Plan and future work. Include affordable housing aspirations, consideration of an aging population, and environmental policies for housing	"Narrative update on housing policy and adherence.  Include quantitative measures for housing mix, tenure, and affordable and shared ownership."	Cllr Judy Roberts	Head of Housing and Environment	<p>The Affordable Housing Guidance Note (which aims to assist planning applicants and others with the identification of relevant published policy and guidance, where it relates to the provision of affordable housing), and the Housing Delivery Strategy (which outlines the aspirations for the council – and other developers within the district – in relation to types of housing, tenure mix and demographic), were both published on the Vale’s website in Q4.</p> <p>The quantitative measures regarding housing mix, tenure and affordability will be determined on a site-by-site basis at the point that they are brought forward.</p> <p>In the ten months to the end of January 2023, there were 382 recorded affordable housing completions in the Vale. This compares to 289 completions for the whole of 2021/22.</p>

## Theme 1: Providing the homes people need - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
PHPN2.9	<p>Work with partners to produce an Active Travel Network map of current and required coverage across the Vale to include commercial and community buses, cycle paths and storage facilities, pavements and footpaths, green and blue infrastructure, and local taxi firms.</p> <p>Encourage systems that increase use of the Active Travel Network</p>	<p>Narrative update on progress toward completion of map, once map completed, this should transition to an annual review of the accuracy of map</p>	<p>Cllr Judy Roberts</p>	<p>Head of Policy and Programmes</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. The map produced as part of this work could help to address the need to produce an active travel chart for the Vale.</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>In addition, officers attended the first Abingdon Area Travel Plan meeting. This project is designed to build upon the work of the town's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and will consider all travel within the locality.</p> <p>During Q4 2022/23, progress on the Didcot 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>

## Theme 2: Tackling the climate emergency - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
PROGRAMME 1	A climate emergency programme, focussed on what the council has control over, working towards our own targets for our own buildings, vehicles, leisure and arts centres	A narrative summary comprised of all new activity to reduce the carbon footprint of all Council assets on a quarterly basis		Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>APSE Energy has commenced work on a feasibility study into investing in solar energy on council land with an aim to offset the councils' unavoidable carbon emissions. The report will include a financial model as well as contractual, planning and grid supply issues and will enable an investment decision to be made.</p> <p>During Q4 2022/23, the Vale was successful in its bid to HM Government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme and has been awarded £5,992,916 in funding. This will be used to support decarbonisation projects at the Wantage Leisure Centre and the White Horse Leisure and Tennis Centre.</p> <p>Wantage Leisure Centre: New roof insulation, the addition of solar panels, new windows that will keep the heat in more effectively, the installation of air source heat pumps, the fitting of exterior wall insulation.</p> <p>White Horse Leisure Centre: the addition of solar panels, the installation of air source heat pumps</p> <p>Once completed, these measures are expected to reduce the council's overall carbon emissions by over 25 per cent.</p> <p>The Vale have also awarded a contract for additional site decarbonisation assessments to Concept Energy. These evaluations will allow officers to review the opportunities to make further funding applications for heat pumps, insulation, solar energy and other relevant energy saving measures. The first phase of this work will include the Abbey Meadows Pool, Abingdon and The Beacon, Wantage.</p> <p>In addition, during Q4, APSE Energy has commenced work on a feasibility study into investing in solar energy on council land – the aim of which will be to offset the councils' unavoidable carbon emissions. APSE's report will include a financial model, as well as contractual, planning and grid supply issues, and will enable the council to make a decision regarding investment.</p>

## Theme 2: Tackling the climate emergency - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
TCE1.1	Develop a Climate Emergency Strategy for the Council, setting out how we will reach Zero Carbon for all Vale assets by 2030. Identify energy saving opportunities in council-owned buildings and fleets	A narrative report of activity underway to design the plan to achieve a zero carbon position for all Vale assets by 2030.	Cllr Sally Povolotsky	Head of Policy and Programmes	During Q4 2022/23, the Quarter 3 Climate Action Plan (CAP) report was published on the Vale's website – the Quarter 2 report was also discussed by the climate Emergency Advisory Committee on 23/01/2023. The progress made against the CAP targets is detailed in the published CAP reports.
TCE1.2	Complete the CEAC Year One Climate Action Plan and plan for future years	Narrative report on progress	Cllr Sally Povolotsky	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>The Vale Climate Emergency Advisory Committee (CEAC) Year One Action Plan has been completed. The actions contained within it have now been further developed in the Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2022-24.</p> <p>During Q4 2022/23, the Quarter 3 Climate Action Plan (CAP) report was published on the Vale's website – the Quarter 2 report was also discussed by the climate Emergency Advisory Committee on 23/01/2023. The progress made against the CAP targets is detailed in the published CAP reports.</p>
TCE1.3	Include in Councils Open Space Strategy opportunities to increase biodiversity, increase tree cover, and (other things we want to do on Council's open spaces)	Narrative report on specific opportunities which have arisen for the council to improve open spaces. Also include any additional policy developments.	Cllr Judy Roberts	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23 a new wildflower meadow was created in Abingdon and trees were planted across various sites across the Vale. This work was funded through money received from the Community Infrastructure Levy.</p> <p>In addition, a total of nine sites (covering approximately 51,000 m<sup>2</sup>) were included in the Vale's 'Let It Bee' campaign. This project aims to promote the wildlife friendly management of council-owned land.</p>

## Theme 2: Tackling the climate emergency - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
PROGRAMME 2	A climate emergency programme focussed on encouraging the wider district community to reduce its carbon footprint in order to meet the Climate Emergency targets	A narrative update of the work of the comms team in promoting measures/initiatives which will help the community to reduce it's carbon footprint.		Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the Vale ran several successful comms campaigns and initiatives designed to increase awareness of the Climate Emergency and to help the community to reduce its carbon footprint. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting the council's new retrofitting webpages. These give information to people looking to reduce their energy use by insulating their properties and/or installing renewable energy sources.</li> <li>• Issuing a press release on the doubling of EV charging that has taken place at the council's car parks as part of the Park and Charge scheme.</li> <li>• Setting up new webpages on whether planning permission is needed to install solar panels on homes.</li> <li>• Highlighting articles on the Climate Action Oxfordshire website on the amount of energy that could be saved by insulating properties.</li> <li>• Publicising a new webpage which gives a step-by-step guide to improving the energy efficiency of community buildings.</li> </ul>
TCE2.1	Complete those tasks in Year one Climate Action Plan that have to do with reducing carbon in the wider district	Narrative report on progress	Cllr Sally Povolotsky	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>The Vale Climate Emergency Advisory Committee (CEAC) Year One Action Plan has been completed. The actions contained within it have now been further developed in the Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2022-24.</p> <p>The monitoring of the activities and actions undertaken by the Vale as part of the Climate Action Plan (CAP) during Q3 2022/23 has been completed and the CAP Performance Report published on the council's website. Progress on the delivery of the CAP will be tracked and reviewed on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>One meeting of the CEAC was held during Q4 2022/23. During this, members discussed progress on the CAP actions.</p>

## Theme 2: Tackling the climate emergency - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
TCE2.2	Introduce policies for zero carbon construction requirements	Narrative update on progress toward design guide implementation, transitioning into review of relevant information/developments in this area	Cllr Sally Povolotsky	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the Vale 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>Officers from the Vale attended a workshop with the county's other local authorities to share thinking on approaches for the next round of local plans. At this event, external consultants working for Cherwell gave a presentation about progress at examination of net zero local plan policies across England.</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>The Vale 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>
TCE2.3	Introduce sustainable growth and environmental policies to our Local Plan	Narrative update on the progress towards development of new local plan, specifically referring to details in TCE2.3/4	Cllr Sally Povolotsky	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, work continued on the development of the Joint Local Plan. Officers from the Planning Policy team procured consultants to undertake:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Employment Land Needs Assessment</li> <li>• A Specialist Housing Needs Assessment</li> <li>• A Net Zero Carbon Study</li> </ul> <p>These reports will be used to help the council's policies in relation to sustainable development and good growth.</p> <p>The Vale also responded to a consultation from Oxford City Council on Local Plan Housing Needs. The council objected to the inclusion of high housing numbers (above and beyond those derived from HM Government's standard method) for all of Oxfordshire's districts.</p>

## Theme 2: Tackling the climate emergency - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
TCE2.4	Ensure our Local Plan contains policies to make new buildings carbon zero to build and to live/work in	Narrative update on the progress towards development of new local plan, specifically referring to details in TCE2.3/4	Cllr Debby Hallett	Head of Policy and Programmes	During Q4 2022/23, the Vale 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.
TCE2.5	Develop a year two plan with CEAC for meeting our Climate emergency goals	High level narrative on progress towards approval of two year plan	Cllr Sally Povolotsky	Head of Policy and Programmes	No update required - action complete.
TCE2.6	Improve how we measure air quality. Explore particulate measurement in our sensitive areas. Explore ways to publish AQ measurements in live time, so people can make decisions on whether it's healthy outside for them today	Narrative containing updates/ changes to AQ monitoring techniques, an update on work with partners to monitor AQ and details of published AQ measures	Cllr Sally Povolotsky	Head of Housing and Environment	<p>The indicative Particulate Matter (PM) and Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) monitoring in Marcham concluded at the end of the calendar year. Provisional results show no exceedances in national air quality objectives for NO<sub>2</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>.</p> <p>Real Time Air Quality Data for sites within Vale of White Horse is available at <a href="https://www.airqualityengland.co.uk">https://www.airqualityengland.co.uk</a>.</p>
TCE2.7	Update the Air Quality Action Plans for our Air Quality Management Areas	Until funding confirmed for development of new AQAP's, narrative update on any significant deviation from last relevant AQAP. Once funding confirmed, this can report on the development of the new AQAP.	Cllr Sally Povolotsky	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>
TCE2.8	Explore setting up a Habitat Bank to deliver biodiversity offsetting requirements and facilitate tree planting	Narrative update as to progress of potential pilot and other relevant initiatives	Cllr Sally Povolotsky	Head of Policy and Programmes	This action is now complete – a Habitat Bank having been established at the conclusion of the pilot scheme.

## Theme 2: Tackling the climate emergency - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
PROGRAMME 3	A programme around exercising our influence with partners on wider policy, working with neighbouring authorities, lobbying Government and identifying environmental policy gaps	General Narrative update		Head of Policy and Programmes	The Vale – through its membership of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Environment Advisory Group – continued to work with neighbouring authorities in relation to climate and environmental matters. 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.
TCE3.1	Complete the CEAC Year One Action Plan and plan for future years	Narrative report on progress	Cllr Sally Povolotsky	Head of Policy and Programmes	No update required - action complete.
TCE3.2	Work with partners to define a waste reduction scheme: including ways to reduce bulky waste headed to landfill and reduce recycling contamination	Narrative report to outline steps to influence partners and our actions to reduce overall waste	Cllr Sally Povolotsky	Head of Housing and Environment	<p>The December 2022 recycling rate was 61.00%, the landfill rate was 0.26% 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 61.10%, the landfill rate was 0.24% and the contamination rate was 10.58%.</li> <li>•The February 2023 recycling rate was 60.67%, the landfill rate was 0.22% and the contamination rate was 13.46%.</li> <li>•The figures for March are not yet available.</li> </ul> <p>In Q4, work continued on embedding the new routes for many of the waste and recycling crews. There was also an improvement in the number of missed bins seen between January and March.</p> <p>After Christmas, the usual closure of the bulky waste collection service took place. This year, however, it took a little longer than normal to re-open as the council prepared for the changes required to handle waste that contains Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs).</p> <p>(update continues on next page)</p>

## Theme 2: Tackling the climate emergency - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
TCE3.2	Work with partners to define a waste reduction scheme: including ways to reduce bulky waste headed to landfill and reduce recycling contamination	Narrative report to outline steps to influence partners and our actions to reduce overall waste	Cllr Sally Povolotsky	Head of Housing and Environment	<p>The service has now fully restarted, and offers residents more flexibility on when they can have a collection, as well as ensuring that the Vale remains fully compliant with the relevant legislation</p> <p>During Q4 2022/23, the Vale ran several communication campaigns. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Waste and recycling leaflet: All homes within the district received the Vale'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.</li> <li>•Food Waste Action Week: The Vale 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.</li> <li>•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.</li> <li>• Great British Spring Clean: The Vale promoted this to residents and parishes. They encouraged communities to get involved and highlighted the positive work that occurred during the event. (As a result, over 1,000 people within the Vale participated in the Great British Spring Clean this year).</li> </ul>
TCE3.3	Develop a tree-planting strategy and work with partners to plant more trees across the district	Narrative update to include development of the tree policy and subsequent activity	Cllr Sally Povolotsky	Head of Policy and Programmes	During Q4 2022/23, trees were planted at various sites across the Vale. These were funded through the Community Infrastructure Levy.

## Theme 2: Tackling the climate emergency - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
TCE3.4	Develop a Biodiversity Net Gain Targeting Strategy and contribute to a Nature Recovery Network for Oxfordshire	Narrative update on related work, including but not limited to the work to support the Oxfordshire Plan.	Cllr Sally Povolotsky	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, HM Government published the guidance and regulations for local authorities in relation to the production of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).</p> <p>In Oxfordshire, the County Council has been identified as the 'Responsible Body' in relation to the LRNS – the Vale is a 'Supporting Authority'. A steering group has been established to steer the production of the strategy, with a convening meeting held in January.</p> <p>The LNRS will include a statement of the biodiversity priorities within Oxfordshire and a local habitat map. It is also expected to be the mechanism used to target Biodiversity Net Gains.</p>
TCE3.5	Work with partners to provide electric charging points in Vale car parks and at our buildings, and increase charging infrastructure across Oxfordshire	<p>"A narrative update to include work to promote and develop EV infrastructure across the district.</p> <p>Quantitative element - breakdown of existing/planned EV charging points"</p>	Cllr Sally Povolotsky	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	<p>During Q4 2022/23, officers from the Technical Services and Climate Emergency teams supported Oxfordshire County Council in applying for LEVI (local electric vehicle infrastructure) funding. This helped result in a grant of £3.655m capital and £500k revenue being awarded to spend in 2023/24 on more EV charging points across the county.</p> <p>Number of EV Charging Points:                      Audlett Drive – 16                      Cattle Market – 10                      West St Helens – 12                      Southampton Street – 12                      Portway – 12</p>
TCE3.6	Take an active role in the Oxford-Cambridge arc to influence the inclusion of sustainable growth and environmental policies	A narrative update on the work of the Oxford-Cambridge arc and our influencing activity	Cllr Bethia Thomas	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>No progress to report Q4 2022/23 – This action is now complete.</p> <p>The Vale does not support the proposed development of a pan-regional partnership across the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.</p>

## Theme 2: Tackling the climate emergency - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
TCE3.7	Take an active role in the Growth Deal and the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 to influence the inclusion of sustainable growth and environmental policies	Narrative report on work to support the Oxfordshire Plan in accordance with TEC3.7	Cllr Bethia Thomas	Head of Policy and Programmes	While work has ceased on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, the Vale remains involved in shaping and participating in county-wide initiatives through the Future Oxfordshire Partnership. In this forum, officers and members continue to work for the realisation of the Good Growth Principles in the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision – for example, during Q4 2022/23, officers attended a workshop exploring the option of taking forward an approach to local area energy planning.
TCE3.8	Work with local partners and Government to encourage retrofitting houses with sustainable energy schemes; help residents take advantage of schemes that come along to help with costs	Narrative report on work influencing work, comms activity and direct engagement with residents.	Cllr Sally Povolotsky	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 CEAC 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 the Vale. 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 3: Building healthy communities - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
PROGRAMME 1	Building strong communities and connections, with a sense of place and strong community identity	Narrative update		Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, work continued on the development of the Joint Local Plan. Officers from the Planning Policy team procured consultants to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Employment Land Needs Assessment</li> <li>• A Specialist Housing Needs Assessment</li> <li>• A Comprehensive Evidence Base on Landscape</li> </ul> <p>In addition, progress was made on the Town Centre &amp; Retail Study. The consultants producing this document have completed their draft health checks for the district's towns.</p> <p>The Community Wellbeing team continued to work with communities across the district to support them through the cost-of-living crisis. They also maintained the support provided for the Vale's Ukrainian guests and their hosts.</p> <p>The Vale remains involved in shaping and participating in county-wide initiatives through the Future Oxfordshire Partnership. In this forum, officers and members continue to work for the realisation of the Good Growth Principles in the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision.</p>
BHC1.1	Review the use of Community buildings and other facilities owned or managed by the council to maximise usage, income for the council and ensure communities have spaces in which to come together.	Narrative update as to the progress/outcomes from the Strategic Property Review	Cllr Helen Pighills	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	<p>During Q4 2022/23, bookings at Great Western Park's community centres remained stable. In addition, budgetary and resource support has been secured from the Communications team for marketing.</p> <p>The Beacon has seen a growth in usage, with a strong demand in bookings and events. Following the receipt of the art centre consultant's report of activities in December, progress is now being made on a further review and the development of an action plan to maximise usages and income for the council.</p>

### Theme 3: Building healthy communities - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
BHC1.2	Establish a Public Arts policy	Narrative update on the progress towards developing a public arts policy	Cllr Helen Pighills	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, officers continued to support and advise parishes throughout the Vale in relation of the provision of public art.</p> <p>A draft public art strategy is to be included as part of the new Joint Local Plan. It will be consulted upon as part of the wider process of engagement.</p>
BHC1.3	Maintain and develop the council's Community Enablement function to respond to changing needs because of Covid-19	Narrative update on relevant areas of the Council response to Covid 19 as the needs/ requirements change	Cllr Helen Pighills	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the Vale approved a policy for a new foodbank grant scheme – this will be rolled out in Q1 2023/24.</p> <p>The Community Hub continued to work with the voluntary and community sector in response to the cost-of-living crisis (particularly in relation to food initiatives and the provision of support for those in most need).</p> <p>Officers have also drafted a new partnership grant policy for the council. This is scheduled for Cabinet approval in early 2023/24.</p> <p>The budget, approved by Full Council in February, continued to provide support for the Community Enablement and Community Hub teams for the next financial year.</p>

## Theme 3: Building healthy communities - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
BHC1.4	Work with others to promote Active Travel and support the development of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure plans to help shape new developments that link homes to work, recreation and social spaces within communities	<p>Narrative report on the work with partners to promote active travel and encouragement of cycling and walking infrastructure</p> <p>Quantitative measure of amount of new footpaths/cycle paths approved since last report/YTD etc.</p>	Cllr Judy Roberts	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>The preparation of the artwork for the 'Nature Trails' in Abingdon is in its final stages. Active Communities are currently working with Abingdon Town Council, Oxfordshire County Council's Highways department and our Property and Climate Change teams to finalise the arrangements for their installation by May 2023.</p> <p>Work on the draft Active Communities Strategy Delivery Plan was completed.</p> <p>In Q4, officers attended the first Abingdon Area Travel Plan meeting. This project is designed to build upon the work of the town's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and will consider all travel within the locality.</p> <p>During Q4 2022/23, progress on the Didcot 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, 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. The map produced as part of this work could help to address the need to produce an active travel chart for the Vale.</p> <p>(update continues on next page)</p>

### Theme 3: Building healthy communities - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
BHC1.4	Work with others to promote Active Travel and support the development of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure plans to help shape new developments that link homes to work, recreation and social spaces within communities	<p>Narrative report on the work with partners to promote active travel and encouragement of cycling and walking infrastructure</p> <p>Quantitative measure of amount of new footpaths/cycle paths approved since last report/YTD etc.</p>	Cllr Judy Roberts	Head of Policy and Programmes	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.
BHC1.5	Develop planning policies to ensure careful consideration of the effect of air pollution on the lives of people who will live there	<p>Narrative update to include information relevant to BHC1.5,</p> <p>Quantitative measure - the number of neighbourhood plans and the stage they are current at</p>	Cllr Debby Hallett	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the Planning Policy made preparations to procure consultants to undertake both a Sustainability Appraisal and a Habitats Regulations Assessment (the latter will assess the cumulative impacts of development on air quality affecting protected habitats sites).</p> <p>The council continued its pilot project on a simpler approach to neighbourhood planning. The project provides an opportunity for communities to explore how to tackle air quality issues locally. Officers met regularly with the pilot groups, providing one-to-one support. They also brought the different groups together to collaborate and share experiences.</p> <p>As of 31 March 2023, there are 15 made Neighbourhood Plans in the district (one of which is currently under review). There are nine plans in progress, one is progressing to referendum on 4 May, two have formally been submitted to the council, two have completed pre-submission consultations and the remaining four are at plan drafting stage.</p>

### Theme 3: Building healthy communities - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
BHC1.6	Update the Air Quality Management Action Plans for the Vale's air pollution hotspots; Work with Oxfordshire County Council to improve how we measure and report air pollution and how we will work with schools and community groups to raise awareness of our clean air campaigns	Narrative update on activity related to BHC 1.6	Cllr Sally Povolotsky	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>
PROGRAMME 2	Promoting healthy place shaping and active communities, for everyone	Narrative update		Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>Between January - 31 March 3,426 people took part in the Vale's regular activities.</p> <p>The Vale continued to collaborate with Active Oxfordshire to improve the health and wellbeing of the district's residents – especially those in or most deprived areas.</p> <p>The Vale now has 706 people signed up to the 'You Move' project (aimed at families with children and in receipt of benefits). It also has 657 people enrolled on the 'Move Together' project (designed to help people with long-term health conditions become more active).</p> <p>During Q4 2022/23, progress continued on the development of the Joint Local Plan. As part of this work, officers are advancing planning policies that will help to promote healthy place shaping and active communities.</p> <p>Work on the draft Active Communities Strategy Delivery Plan was completed.</p>

### Theme 3: Building healthy communities - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
BHC2.1	Produce an Active communities strategy; setting out how the council will work with our communities and partners and enable everyone to participate in physical activities	Narrative update on progress against strategy development and work with partners to encourage involvement in physical activities	Cllr Helen Pighills	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, work on the draft Active Communities Strategy Delivery Plan was completed.</p> <p>The council have established new partnerships to support work with mental health professionals in the Vale. Officers have also developed stronger links with local GP surgeries, with Active Communities now having a regular presence at monthly clinics. In addition, the Vale has continued to work with partners (particularly Active Oxfordshire) to encourage involvement in physical activities.</p>
BHC2.2	Work with Active Oxfordshire to target get active projects in our most deprived communities	Narrative update on proposals form Active Oxfordshire	Cllr Helen Pighills	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>The Vale continued to collaborate with Active Oxfordshire to improve the health and wellbeing of the district's residents – especially those in or most deprived areas.</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.</p> <p>The Vale now has 706 people signed up to the 'You Move' project (aimed at families with children and in receipt of benefits). It also has 657 people enrolled on the 'Move Together' project (designed to help people with long-term health conditions become more active).</p>
BHC2.3	Promote use of the Council's public green spaces for exercise and activity.	Narrative update on the work to promote green spaces for exercise and activity	Cllr Helen Pighills	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>The preparation of the artwork for the 'Nature Trails' in Abingdon is in its final stages. Active Communities are currently working with Abingdon Town Council, Oxfordshire County Council's Highways department and our Property and Climate Change teams to finalise the arrangements for their installation by May 2023.</p>

### Theme 3: Building healthy communities - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
BHC2.4	Identify councils owned land for community gardening and allotments projects	Narrative update on the work/outcomes from the Strategic Property Review	Cllr Helen Pighills	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	Officers have been tasked with creating a quarterly report based on the outcomes arising from the Strategic Property Review. This will list assets (land) that could be used for meeting Climate Emergency actions – including community gardens and allotments. The potential usage of any identified assets will then be explored by the relevant working groups.
BHC2.5	Active engagement with the Oxfordshire Health Improvement Board and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to ensure the Vale has strong representation in countywide health forums	Narrative update on work with the Oxfordshire Health Improvement Board/Health overview and Scrutiny Committee	Cllr Helen Pighills	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>The Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board met on 16 March 2023. At this event, the Board received the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Protection update</li> <li>• Integrated Care System Strategy</li> <li>• Development of a 5 year Joint Forward Plan</li> <li>• Development of 'Place' Working in Oxfordshire</li> <li>• Support for Carers</li> <li>• Developing Community Research Capacity</li> <li>• Healthwatch Oxfordshire</li> <li>• Performance Report</li> <li>• Health Improvement Board update</li> <li>• Children's Trusts</li> </ul> <p>The Health Improvement Board held a workshop on 7 March 2023 regarding their priorities for 2023/24.</p> <p>The Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on 9 February 2023 and considered the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oxfordshire Community Musculoskeletal Service</li> <li>• Oxfordshire Temporarily Closed Services update</li> <li>• Healthwatch Oxfordshire</li> <li>• Response to Committee recommendations</li> <li>• Winter Pressures update</li> <li>• South Central Ambulance Service Improvement Programme update</li> <li>• Chair's Report</li> <li>• Actions and Recommendations tracker</li> </ul>

### Theme 3: Building healthy communities - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
PROGRAMME 3	Safeguarding and supporting our vulnerable residents	Narrative report on support provided by the VCS and potentially the number of properties approved with special adaptations (drawn from AMR data, available annually)	Cllr Helen Pighills	Head of Legal and Democratic	<p>During Q4 2022/23, 16 safeguarding concerns were raised with the council – the majority of these were for poor mental health or domestic abuse. Ten of these resulted in referrals to Oxfordshire Safeguarding Teams.</p> <p>Four new closure orders were issued during Q4 (a closure order acts to safeguard access to properties where vulnerable tenants are being exploited). This was a decrease on the previous quarters (eight in Q3 and five in Q2).</p>
BHC3.1	Work as part of the South and Vale Community Safety Partnership on the agreed priorities: tackling Domestic abuse; exploitation of vulnerable people and children (including modern slavery, county lines); and reducing knife crime, harm and vulnerability caused by drugs and alcohol	Narrative report on work with partners, to include relevant published statistics as quantitative measure for information	Cllr Helen Pighills	Head of Legal and Democratic	<p>The data from the domestic abuse service for Quarter 4 2022/23 will be available in Q1 2023/24.</p> <p>During Q3 2022/23, the countywide service received 1,152 calls to their helpline, an increase on the previous quarter (1,113).</p> <p>Of these, 434 were new contacts, 97 of whom came from South and Vale. Across Oxfordshire, 52 cases were referred for outreach – of which 24 came from South and Vale.</p> <p>In Q3 2022/23, there were 24 referrals to the South and Vale domestic abuse sanctuary scheme. This was a slight increase on Q2 2022/23 (21).</p>
BHC3.2	Develop a new framework on vulnerability, responding to changes in needs arising from the Covid-19 pandemic	Narrative update on related work	Cllr Helen Pighills	Head of Policy and Programmes	No progress to report Q4 2022/2023
BHC3.3	Review and Revise the Joint Taxi Licensing Policy	Narrative update on the JTLP	Cllr Helen Pighills	Head of Legal and Democratic	This action is now complete – the work to review, revise and embed the new Joint Taxi Licensing Policy was completed during Q2 2021/22.

## Theme 3: Building healthy communities - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
BHC3.4	Take a key role in countywide homelessness prevention and provision for young people, those with mental health conditions and review of adult homelessness pathway	<p>Narrative update on influencing/partnership activity, new initiatives.</p> <p>Quantitative update on successful homelessness cases + other homelessness stats, TA stats including average length of stay etc.</p>	Cllr Helen Pighills	Head of Housing and Environment	<p>Vale of White Horse recorded two 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 17 – a reduction of nine 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 37 nights, better than the ceiling target of 42.</p> <p>During Q4 2022/23, the rate of successful homelessness prevention in the Vale was 71.0 per cent. This was 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 4: Building stable finances - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
PROGRAMME 1	Explore and actively consider all avenues to deliver financial stability, including maximising income available to the council	Narrative update on initiatives to deliver financial stability and maximise income across the Council	Cllr Andrew Crawford	Head of Finance	<p>Following Q3's successful revenue base budget challenge (which included a review of income budgets to ensure their accuracy and that fees are maximised), the Vale set a balanced budget for 2023/24 in February.</p> <p>Work also continues on delivering the council's long-term transformation programme.</p>
BSF1.1	Introduce an Investment Strategy and associated Investment Policy which gives the Council greater ability to invest in a wider range of assets to maximise its return on capital and therefore improve its income	Narrative update on the introduction of an introduction of the investment strategy and subsequent decision-making around investing	Cllr Andrew Crawford	Head of Finance	No progress to report Q4 2022/23

## Theme 4: Building stable finances - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
BSF1.2	Commit resources to identify more third-party income, including government and other grants, to help pay for our services	Narrative update as to current initiatives to increase external funding for Council activities, with details of additional resources committed to support these activities	Cllr Andrew Crawford	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the Vale was successful awarded £5,992,916 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, external wall insulation, double glazing and associated electrical network upgrades. At Wantage Leisure Centre and at White Horse Leisure and Tennis Centre, Abingdon this will be put towards replacing gas fired boilers with air source heat pumps, installing solar panels and associated electrical network upgrades.</p> <p>The Vale was also awarded a £2,500 Natural England Green Infrastructure Grant (half of a £5,000 total grant shared with South Oxfordshire) 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, the Vale submitted the following proposal for funding: UKRI Net Zero Fast Followers - £298,023 joint bid with South Oxfordshire, 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>The pipeline of external funding opportunities was also maintained and assessed throughout the quarter.</p>

## Theme 4: Building stable finances - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
BSF1.3	Identify opportunities to generate additional income from our services and assets and review these annually as part of the budget setting process	Narrative describing activity/ referring to programme 1 narrative	Cllr Andrew Crawford	Head of Finance	No progress to report Q4 2022/23
BSF1.4	Review the schedule of existing contracts to identifying opportunities for rationalisation and savings	Narrative update initially detailing BAU activity to support this aim, until specific project is kicked off at which point reporting would be based on the project activity	Cllr Andrew Crawford	Head of Finance	During Q4 2022/23, work started on updating the Vale's contract register. Once this is completed, officers will be able to look for synergies between both new and renewed contracts across the organisation. It is hoped that this will allow the council to rationalise the number of suppliers and contracts that it deals with and, thereby, identify savings.
BSF1.5	Upgrade the council's finance IT systems to improve functionality and support in-year budget monitoring	Narrative report on the implementation of new systems, and then a yearly light-touch review	Cllr Andrew Crawford	Head of Finance	The Head of Finance is currently in discussion with CIPFA regarding a review of business partnering. This would take place during 2023/24 and would build on the work that the Vale has already undertaken on, for example, workspaces in Unit4.
BSF1.6	Lobby for the ability to set our Council Tax at a level that can sustain council services while seeking opportunities to reduce council tax for those on the lowest incomes	Narrative report covering external influencing/lobbying work (and work with partners) and additionally, relevant information pertaining to Council Tax decisions within the Council	Cllr Andrew Crawford	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the Vale agreed the budget for 2023/24. Council tax was increased by 3.4 per cent for 2023/24 to fund services delivered by the district council. For a Band D property, this equates to £5 a year (just under 10p a week), bringing a total charge of £151.69 a year (£2.91 per week) – which is more than 25 per cent lower than the national average.</p> <p>The Vale continues to charge one of the lowest district council tax rates in the country.</p>
BSF1.7	Lobby for a fairer distribution of government funding and more devolution of funding to councils to sustain essential local services	Narrative report detailing lobbying activity over the period and any successes occurring as a result	Cllr Andrew Crawford	Head of Policy and Programmes	No progress to report Q4 2022/2023

## Theme 4: Building stable finances - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
PROGRAMME 2	Make effective use of the council's assets acting in a manner that ensures the long-term financial viability for the benefit of our residents and the environment	Narrative report on the progress of the Strategic Property review and other relevant initiatives	Cllr Andrew Crawford	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.</p> <p>In addition, the Asset Management Group (established during Q3 2021/22) continues to meet on a quarterly basis to progress implementation of the Strategic Property Review and to consider assets in line with the council's corporate priorities.</p>
BSF2.1	Develop a comprehensive and ethical Procurement Policy that reflects our corporate goals and aims	Narrative update reporting on completion of activity and an annual review of success	Cllr Andrew Crawford	Head of Finance	No progress to report Q4 2022/23
BSF2.2	Conduct a Strategic Property Review to identify opportunities to enhance, redevelop, transfer the councils assets to maximise income and/or benefit to the district	Narrative report on the progress of the SPR	Cllr Andrew Crawford	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	No update required - action complete.
BSF2.3	Complete an asset management plan to provide a comprehensive policy to inform how assets may be most efficiently maintained	Narrative report on progress of this within the SPR	Cllr Andrew Crawford	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	Following the appointment of a Maintenance Scheduling Officer, work began in Q4 on formulating a Forward Maintenance Plan for future annual capital funding proposals. This will help to ensure that the council has a comprehensive policy to inform how assets may be most efficiently maintained.
BSF2.4	Undertake a full review of all leases and licences to ensure council income is collected when due and maximised	Narrative report on progress of this within the SPR	Cllr Andrew Crawford	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	No update required - action complete.

## Theme 4: Building stable finances - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
BSF2.5	Undertake a detailed review of the financial position of the Beacon in Wantage and determine what changes to its operations can be made to improve its viability	Narrative update on the review of financial position of the Beacon	Cllr Andrew Crawford	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	<p>Following the receipt of the art centre consultant's report of activities at the Beacon in December, progress is now being made on a further review and the development of an action plan.</p> <p>Proposals to Cabinet on governance decisions are scheduled to be presented in Q2 2023/24.</p>
BSF2.6	Insource our grounds maintenance and public conveniences contracts to save funds and increase flexibility over how our public spaces are used and managed	Narrative update on the activities of the new insourced team and the initiatives being undertaken	Cllr Sally Povolotsky	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	<p>During Q4 2022/23, officers from the Performance team carried out a review of the council's Grounds Maintenance team. The intention is for them to recommend ways of improving performance and increasing the flexibility of the service.</p> <p>The Vale also 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>

## Theme 5: Working in partnership - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
PROGRAMME 1	Work in partnership to influence and shape regional and national agendas to maximise opportunities for our communities and businesses	Narrative report on work with partners across the organisation which will maximise opportunities for communities and businesses		Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, 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>Officers continued to contribute to the Oxfordshire Asylum Support system. The council takes a strong partnership approach to both 'Moving On' accommodation and the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Programme. Staff have now been recruited to the county-wide Housing Capacity team (hosted by South and Vale) with the aim of increasing housing supply for Ukrainian guests. Officers from the council have also contributed to discussions at the South East Migration Partnership.</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 the development of a Local Area Energy Network and pushing forward the decarbonisation of buildings.</p> <p>The Vale remains involved in shaping and participating in county-wide initiatives through the Future Oxfordshire Partnership. In this forum, officers and members continue to work for the realisation of the Good Growth Principles in the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision.</p> <p>Economic Development have continued to be actively involved with the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economic Partnership Steering Group.</p> <p>(update continues on next page)</p>

## Theme 5: Working in partnership - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
PROGRAMME 1	Work in partnership to influence and shape regional and national agendas to maximise opportunities for our communities and businesses	Narrative report on work with partners across the organisation which will maximise opportunities for communities and businesses		Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>Following the publication of the Partnership's Charter, briefings are being prepared for members and senior management.</p> <p>The Economic Development team have also maintained their connection to the working group overseeing the development of the emerging Strategic Economic Plan for Oxfordshire. Officers have represented the council at meetings and workshops with the purpose of ensuring that the Plan continues to align with the Vale's objectives.</p> <p>The Vale has become a member of OxLEP's steering group for development of the Oxfordshire Destination Management Plan – with the intention of ensuring that the steering group's work complements the council's own visitor economy strategy. Also, in Q4 2022/23, the Vale joined the advisory panel for the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP).</p> <p>Officers from Economic Development have continued to support OxLEP with development of Community Employment Plans (CEP). Progress has also been made on developing a CEP toolkit and evidence paper.</p>
WIP1.1	Create a partnerships protocol. Map our current partnerships and assess the effectiveness of each. clarify which local, regional, and national partnerships Vale needs to have an active presence in and focus resource accordingly.	Narrative update on the position of this work and an annual review after it's completion	Cllr Bethia Thomas	Head of Policy and Programmes	No progress to report Q4 2022/23 – This work was completed during Q4 2021/22. It will now be subject to an annual review.

## Theme 5: Working in partnership - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
WIP1.2	Develop an enhanced consultations strategy and process to ensure we respond to consultations and proactively lobby national government and other bodies on matters that impact our corporate priorities	<p>Narrative update on proactive work to lobby gov't and key organisations, update on key consultations responded to within the period.</p> <p>Quantitative -- Number of consultations replied to.</p>	Cllr Neil Fawcett	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the Vale responded to ten external consultations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Thames Water Resources Management Plan 2024 Consultation</li> <li>• Oxford Local Plan Housing Need Consultation</li> <li>• HM Government's Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: reforms to national planning policy consultation</li> <li>• Water Resources South East: Draft Best Value Regional Plan Consultation</li> <li>• Affinity Water Resources Management Plan 24 (WRMP 24) consultation</li> <li>• The Building Safety Levy Consultation</li> <li>• Local Plan for Buckinghamshire Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report Consultation</li> <li>• Local Plan for Buckinghamshire HRA Scoping Report Consultation</li> <li>• Code of conduct for registered building inspectors</li> <li>• Consultation for changes to the building control profession and the building control process for approved inspectors (in future to be known as registered building control approvers)</li> </ul>
WIP1.3	Create a framework that sets out how we will engage with developers, other councils, and members to maximise opportunities for our priorities to shape development	Narrative update on the work of planning and engagement activity	Cllr Judy Roberts	Master Planning Lead	During Q4 2022/23, meetings have been held with developers, promoters and public/private landowners. Officers have also continued to meet with members, town/parish councils, other interested stakeholders, Oxfordshire County Council and Homes England. These events are part of the Vale's framework of coordinated activity in this area.

## Theme 5: Working in partnership - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
WIP1.4	Work with businesses to undertake economic development review to ensure that council is providing support to SMEs, homebased businesses, supporting skills development, and ensuring that businesses are playing a role in place making	<p>A narrative report of activity to undertake an economic development review and details of how the Council is supporting SME's at this time.</p> <p>Quantitative information from CRM detailing number of businesses engaged with</p>	Cllr Neil Fawcett	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	<p>In Q4 2022/23, Economic Development focused upon implementing the Vale's UK Shared Prosperity Fund plans. The council used its year one allocation to commission research and the development of a strategy on the local visitor economy. This programme will offer support to the sector as it not only continues to recover from the pandemic, but also faces increasing threats from the cost-of-living crisis.</p> <p>Preliminary work also took place to determine how the Vale's UK Shared Prosperity Fund allocation could be used to develop a plan to support businesses to decarbonise.</p> <p>In addition, the council developed an expression of interest process to allow organisations to pitch projects that align with the Vale's UK Shared Prosperity Funding plans.</p> <p>Fourteen complex enquiries were logged by the Economic Development team in Q4. These included requests for business space, enquiries about how to access finance and challenges related to energy infrastructure.</p>

## Theme 5: Working in partnership - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
WIP1.5	Strengthen any existing network of local business groups to increase awareness of the council's ED programmes and communication throughout the district	Detail engagement with small business newsletter, number of recipients, clickthrough	Cllr Neil Fawcett	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 clickthroughs (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>

## Theme 5: Working in partnership - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
WIP1.6	Input into countywide and Arc-wide economic recovery plans to maximise understanding of the local impact of Covid-19 and to help shape the support available to our local economy	Narrative update on activity supporting WIP 1.5	Cllr Neil Fawcett	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	<p>During Q4 2022/23, Economic Development have continued to be actively involved with the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economic Partnership Steering Group. Following the publication of the Partnership's Charter, briefings are being prepared for members and senior management.</p> <p>The Economic Development team have also maintained their connection to the working group overseeing the development of the emerging Strategic Economic Plan for Oxfordshire. Officers have represented the council at meetings and workshops with the purpose of ensuring that the Plan continues to align with the Vale's objectives.</p> <p>The Vale has become a member of OxLEP's steering group for development of the Oxfordshire Destination Management Plan – with the intention of ensuring that the steering group's work complements the council's own visitor economy strategy. Also, in Q4 2022/23, the Vale joined the advisory panel for the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP).</p> <p>Officers from Economic Development have continued to support OxLEP with development of Community Employment Plans (CEP). Progress has also been made on developing a CEP toolkit and evidence paper.</p>
WIP1.7	Work with Oxfordshire County Council to introduce civil parking enforcement for the Vale	Narrative update on progress in this area, if impacts are seen in other areas as a result of this activity, those impacts should be included (PnD parking income for example)	Cllr Neil Fawcett	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	<p>No update required – action complete.</p> <p>There has been no noticeable increase in Pay and Display income since the introduction of civil parking enforcement.</p>

## Theme 5: Working in partnership - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
PROGRAMME 2	Work with and support our residents, businesses and communities to effect and enable change	<p>Narrative update on work with Parish Councils, particularly relating to the transfer of management of assets. Update on other activity that directly supports residents and business effecting change</p> <p>Quantitative elements - number of neighbourhood plans adopted, number of community initiatives undertaken, breakdown of assets where management has been transferred</p>		Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>The council continued its pilot project on a simpler approach to neighbourhood planning. Officers met regularly with the pilot groups, providing one-to-one support. They also brought the different groups together to collaborate and share experiences.</p> <p>As of 31 March 2023, there are 15 made Neighbourhood Plans in the district (one of which is currently under review). There are nine plans in progress, one is progressing to referendum on 4 May, two have formally been submitted to the council, two have completed pre-submission consultations and the remaining four are at plan drafting stage.</p> <p>The Community Hub continued its response to the cost-of-living crisis (particularly in relation to food initiatives and the provision of support for those in most need). The budget, approved by Full Council in February, continued to provide support for the Community Enablement and Community Hub teams for the next financial year.</p> <p>The Vale approved a policy for a new foodbank grant scheme – this will be rolled out in Q1 2023/24.</p> <p>Officers have also drafted a new partnership grant policy for the council. This is scheduled for Cabinet approval in early 2023/24.</p>

## Theme 5: Working in partnership - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
WIP2.1	Support new business start-ups and support schemes for businesses and residents through post Covid-19 economic recovery initiatives, by implementing the “Opening Up High Streets Safely Fund” and associated schemes	Narrative update on support schemes for businesses and residents. Updates on any relevant schemes should be included	Cllr Neil Fawcett	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	<p>In Q4 2022/23, Economic Development focused upon implementing the Vale’s UK Shared Prosperity Fund plans. The council used its year one allocation to commission research and the development of a strategy on the local visitor economy. This programme will offer support to the sector as it not only continues to recover from the pandemic, but also faces increasing threats from the cost-of-living crisis.</p> <p>Preliminary work also took place to determine how the Vale’s UK Shared Prosperity Fund allocation could be used to develop a plan to support businesses to decarbonise.</p> <p>During Q4 2022/23, the Vale’s Digital District Programme (Virtual High Street Initiative) continued to grow. There are now 141 businesses registered on the council’s ShopAppy e-commerce platform. The Vale 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>
WIP2.2	Find ways to elevate the understanding of and promote Neighbourhood Plans in planning decisions with a review of development appraisal and communications with all parties prior to an application coming to committee	<p>Narrative update on activity to support and promote Neighbourhood plan adoption.</p> <p>Quantitative measure - number of Neighbourhood plans adopted</p>	Cllr Judy Roberts	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, officers have continued to use internal planning communications to confirm the progress of new neighbourhood plans and the appropriate weight they carry when determining planning applications. All relevant parish councils are informed of the council’s decision to progress and make neighbourhood plans and webpages are updated accordingly.</p> <p>As of 31 March 2023, there are 15 made Neighbourhood Plans in the district (one of which is currently under review). There are nine plans in progress, one is progressing to referendum on 4 May, two have formally been submitted to the council, two have completed pre-submission consultations and the remaining four are at plan drafting stage.</p>

## Theme 5: Working in partnership - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
WIP2.3	Review the planning committee process to identify ways to maximise public understanding, engagement and participation as well as supporting member input into the committee meetings with opportunities for training and development	<p>Narrative update on activities to review and promote the activities and understanding of the planning committee.</p> <p>Quantitative elements - Online engagement figures relating to the planning portal/planning sections of the website.</p>	Cllr Judy Roberts	Head of Planning	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the Vale maintained the processes that had been developed around the Planning Committee. This meant that the Weekly Chair Briefing sessions continued – including debriefs on the meetings of the Committee.</p> <p>In addition, the Chair and the Deputy Chair, along with the Development Manager, have regularly reviewed all call-in requests to determine whether they should be referred to the Planning Committee.</p> <p>The Vale have continued with the Town and Parish Council Surgeries during Q4 2022/23. Uptake has increased, with more bookings being made.</p> <p>Officers also continue, where differing views exist, to advise town and parish councils of their recommendations on planning applications. This helps to explain why decisions are being made and improves partnership working between the Vale and these organisations.</p> <p>Four Planning Committee meetings were held between January and March 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 01-01-2023 - this had 61 views</li> <li>• 25-01-2023 – this had 138 views</li> <li>• 14-02-2023 – this had 204 views</li> <li>• 08-03-2023 – this had 53 views</li> </ul>

## Theme 5: Working in partnership - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
WIP2.4	Review developer contribution collection and spend policy and improve ward member and parish council involvement with a clear timetable that is triggered by officers, with improved communication from the council	<p>A narrative update on activities relating to the spend of CIL</p> <p>Quantitative element - Breakdown of CIL spend by type/amount/area</p>	Cllr Judy Roberts	Head of Finance	<p>Recommendations for the allocation of CIL in the 2023/24 capital programme were considered as part of the budget setting process. £2,132,191 of CIL funding was approved and the following allocations have been included in the new capital programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme funding contribution - Wantage Leisure Centre = £247,540</li> <li>• Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme funding contribution - WHLTC = £1,659,751</li> <li>• Replacement of all roof coverings at Wantage Leisure Centre - £225,000</li> </ul> <p>The above allocations, profiled for expenditure between 2023/24 and 2025/26, support the Vale's successful Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme funding bid.</p> <p>The previously approved CIL allocations, if unused, will carry forward into 2023/24 – with the exception of the cancelled Wantage Leisure Centre Spin Studio project.</p> <p>The April CIL payment (made in accordance with regulations) will be made to eligible parish councils by 28 April. The funding transferred will be recorded in the 23/24 Q1 report. This funding will be used directly by parish councils to support development in their respective areas.</p> <p>An update on all CIL allocations will be provided in Q1 2023/24 following the end-of-year budget process.</p> <p>There is currently no aim/project to review the CIL process.</p>

## Theme 5: Working in partnership - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
WIP2.5	Refresh our community grants scheme and introduce a Community Lottery to raise funds for groups to develop in line with our corporate objectives	Narrative report on activity relating to new community grants, information relating to the implementation of the Community Lottery, and once implemented performance metrics	Cllr Bethia Thomas	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the council continued to support the White Horse Community Lottery Scheme. Throughout the quarter, 12,019 lottery tickets were sold generating an annual estimated income of £32,978 for the voluntary sector.</p> <p>The Cabinet also approved the distribution of funding from the White Horse Lottery Central Community Fund. Nine randomly selected 'good causes' – registered with the scheme – each received £1,000.</p> <p>Fourteen applications to the Vale's Climate Action Fund received funding – to the Value of £55,592.</p> <p>Also, in Q4, officers completed the drafting of a new Partnership Grant Fund Policy. This will be presented to Cabinet in June.</p>

## Theme 6: Working in an open and inclusive way - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
PROGRAMME 1	Improve our use of technology to increase understanding and access to what we do, how we work and the decisions we make.	Narrative update on any work relating to technological implementation/adaptation and processes making greater use of existing technology to bring about efficiency or increase accessibility.	Cllr Bethia Thomas	Head of Corporate Services	During Q4 2022/23, work continued on fully automating the key end-to-end garden waste processes – this has involved the integration of third-party systems. Further progress was also made on the implementation of the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.
WIOI1.1	Provide and maintain a new Vale website with increased accessibility to services and information, on multiple devices	Quantitative report on website usage	Cllr Bethia Thomas	Head of Corporate Services	<p>During Q4 2022/23, there was a 28.0% increase in unique website visitors compared to the previous reporting period (there was also a 27.0% increase in page views). The bounce rate for the website remained the same as in Q3 – as did the average visit duration.</p> <p>Q4 Web Usage Figures            198,970 unique visitors            543,382 page views            54.0% bounce rate            2m10s average visit duration</p>

## Theme 6: Working in an open and inclusive way - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
WIOI1.2	Develop our use of social media platforms to reach and engage with more residents and local businesses	<p>Narrative report on new social media initiatives</p> <p>Quantitative report on social media engagement</p>	Cllr Bethia Thomas	Head of Corporate Services	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the Vale'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>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 218 / Reach 55,032 / New fans 139 / Total fans 7,167</p> <p>Instagram: Posts 146 / Reach 2,113 / New followers: 51 / Total followers: 636</p> <p>Twitter: Tweets 158 total (2 months – there was an anomaly in the post numbers for January) / Tweet impressions: 94.4k / New followers: 7 / Total followers: 9,185</p>
WIOI1.3	Introduce live streaming and recordings of public meetings to increase accessibility and understanding of the democratic process	<p>Number/Percentage of public meetings streamed live</p> <p>Number/percentage of public meetings available to watch online</p>	Cllr Debby Hallett	Head of Legal and Democratic	<p>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).</p>

## Theme 6: Working in an open and inclusive way - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
WIO11.4	Review the current use of online surveys assessing their take up over time, and by subject, as well as reviewing survey design	Narrative update on survey utilisation/progress towards this review/details of any particularly successful surveys	Cllr Bethia Thomas	Head of Corporate Services	<p>During Q4 2022/23, officers started to track the response rates to the Vale's consultations (both internal and external). Based on the available data for the year, they have determined that the average response rate in 2022/23 was 22.0% (for every 100 people notified of one of the council's surveys, 22 sent a response). Further, the response rate varies significantly between consultations and is dependent on both the topic and the timing of the survey.</p> <p>The council has also prepared an annual report summarising the content of all of the consultations run during 2022/23, their results and any actions/activities arising from them. This report will be available at the beginning of Q1 2023/24.</p> <p>Progress has continued to be made on the procurement of a new consultation and engagement platform. The council is currently finalising a decision on the provider, with the aim of implementing in Q1 2023/24.</p>

## Theme 6: Working in an open and inclusive way - performance updates against reporting measures

Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
PROGRAMME 2	Increase meaningful engagement and communication with everyone	Narrative update on successful communication initiatives		Head of Corporate Services	<p>In Q4 2022/23, the Vale ran 47 campaigns. 17 of these highlighted/publicised events and council news, 20 promoted behavioural change and ten promoted diversity and inclusion.</p> <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>During Q4, the Vale promoted free and low-cost activities for kids and families over both the February half term and the Easter holidays. These included events at The Beacon and at the council's leisure centres designed to help children and families get active.</p> <p>As part of the council's ongoing #CostofLivingHelp campaign, it continued to signpost people to the Vale'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, the Vale helped to promote the availability of emergency beds and encouraged residents to report anyone they saw sleeping rough.</p> <p>On the first anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the Vale 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>(update continues on next page)</p>

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PROGRAMME 2	Increase meaningful engagement and communication with everyone	Narrative update on successful communication initiatives		Head of Corporate Services	<p>In Q4 2022/23, the council promoted the publication of the regulation part 1 consultation report on the Joint Local Plan. This included a thank you message from cabinet members, social media videos and a press release.</p> <p>Officers also communicated the cost saving and energy efficiency benefits of the Faringdon decarbonisation project.</p>
WIOI2.1	Ensure the creation of community liaison groups form part of all early stages of development planning, to understand local infrastructure needs and support community cohesion	<p>Narrative update on the creation and utilisation of community liaison groups and the development of the policy</p> <p>Quantitative measure - number of community liaison groups</p>	Cllr Bethia Thomas	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the Vale published the Joint Local Plan Regulation Part 1 Issues Consultation Report. This document summarised the feedback that the council received (including from stakeholder contacts and community groups) on a wide range of topics (e.g. the environment, health lifestyles and infrastructure needs). Through this work, the Planning Policy Team has increased its understanding of the views of residents on what is needed in the Vale.</p> <p>The Vale's Planning Policy team also continued to work on the development of the Joint Local Plan in Q4.</p> <p>No community liaison groups were established between January and March.</p>
WIOI2.2	Refresh Town and Parish Forums so they are more interactive and useful for communities and develop the Connecting Communities Policy	Narrative update on Town and Parish Forums and the development of the connected communities policy	Cllr Bethia Thomas	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>As part of the preparation for the local elections, officers attended meetings of the Society of Local Council Clerks (Oxfordshire) and the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils. At these events, they provided briefings on the forthcoming polls.</p> <p>In addition, officers have also shared with parish councils the Vale's training material on the pre-election period.</p>

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Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
WIOI2.3	Work with communities, schools and other local organisations on shared campaigns and initiatives that help further our corporate objectives	Narrative update on comms and engagement activities which interface with communities, schools and other local organisations	Cllr Bethia Thomas	Head of Corporate Services	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the Vale continued to promote the White Horse Community Lottery. It highlighted the difference that the lottery had made to organisations and voluntary/charitable groups across the district. The council also publicised a new approach to distributing the White Horse Community Lottery community fund through its communication channels.</p> <p>The Vale promoted the Great British Spring Clean to residents and parishes. They encouraged communities to get involved and highlighted the positive work that occurred during the event.</p> <p>The Vale also highlighted the work of council's Active Communities team and publicised You Move and Move Together Programmes.</p> <p>Pages have been added to the council's website focusing on the retrofitting of community buildings.</p> <p>Officers helped to prepare and launch four conservation area reviews consultations, two neighbourhood plans, a neighbourhood plan review and a neighbourhood plan development order.</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 the Vale's equalities database of contacts</p> <p>The Vale publicised, via a press release, newsletters and social media, the Didcot Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for the town and its environs.</p>

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Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
WIOI2.3	Work with communities, schools and other local organisations on shared campaigns and initiatives that help further our corporate objectives	Narrative update on comms and engagement activities which interface with communities, schools and other local organisations	Cllr Bethia Thomas	Head of Corporate Services	<p>Also, in Q4, officers provided information and resources for community organisations (including town and parish councils) and schools on the upcoming local elections.</p> <p>Officers started preparatory work on the second stage of the Joint Local Plan Consultation – this is scheduled for Q2 2023/24.</p> <p>The Vale shared the story of the transformation of a graffiti strewn car park through public art paid designed by local youngsters and paid for by the council.</p>

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Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
WIOI2.4	Reinstating residents surveys in a refreshed form - deliver effective ways for the public to have their say, to reach more people, mechanisms for feedback, more timely dialogue, educate and provide subject matter information to facilitate opinions being more informed	Narrative update to be provided on the progress of this work	Cllr Bethia Thomas	Head of Corporate Services	<p>In Q4 2022/23, the council built a database to analyse the equalities data collected from all of its surveys. The equalities data of participants (gender, age, ethnicity and disability) is then compared with the Vale's population data to assess whether the respondents represent the characteristics of the general population. Officers will then use this information to develop strategies to reach demographic groups that are under-represented in the council's consultations. The results of this work will be summarised in the Vale's consultation and engagement report which will be available Q1 2023/24.</p> <p>Also, during Q4 2022/23, officers started to track the response rates to the Vale's consultations (both internal and external). Based on the available data for the year, they have determined that the average response rate in 2022/23 was 22.0% (for every 100 people notified of one of the council's surveys, 22 sent a response). Further, the response rate varies significantly between consultations and is dependent on both the topic and the timing of the survey.</p> <p>The council has also prepared an annual report summarising the content of all of the consultations run during 2022/23, their results and any actions/activities arising from them. This report will be available at the beginning of Q1 2023/24.</p> <p>Progress has continued to be made on the procurement of a new consultation and engagement platform. The council is currently finalising a decision on the provider, with the aim of implementing in Q1 2023/24.</p>

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Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
WIOI2.5	Explore initiatives to increase voter registration and turnout levels at elections, especially amongst young people	Narrative update on individual initiatives and opportunities to encourage voter registration	Cllr Debby Hallett	Head of Corporate Services	<p>During Q4 2022/23, work continued on promoting the upcoming local elections.</p> <p>The Vale has, every month, been sending out an officer-produced newsletter on the local elections for individuals on the electoral register who are turning 18. The new guide for first time voters is also still available on the council's website.</p> <p>In addition, a flyer telling people about the elections and informing them about the new Voter ID requirement was included with council tax bills.</p>
WIOI2.6	Ensure council's consultations engage specifically with young people and other under-represented groups	A narrative report with input from the engagement/comms teams and the equalities officer on activity to encourage these groups	Cllr Bethia Thomas	Head of Corporate Services	<p>In Q4 2022/23, the council built a database to analyse the equalities data collected from all of its surveys. The equalities data of participants (gender, age, ethnicity and disability) is then compared with the Vale's population data to assess whether the respondents represent the characteristics of the general population. Officers will then use this information to develop strategies to reach demographic groups that are under-represented in the council's consultations. The results of this work will be summarised in the Vale's consultation and engagement report which will be available Q1 2023/24.</p> <p>During the second stage of the Joint Local Plan consultation, the council has made plans to run events aimed at informing and involving seldom heard groups (young people etc).</p>
PROGRAMME 3	Strengthen our governance framework and address our policy gaps, improving transparency	Narrative update on policies/strategies currently in development/awaiting approval/recently approved.		Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>No progress to report Q4 2022/2023</p> <p>Policies and strategies continue to be developed by officers.</p> <p>There is, however, no centralised library/portal which lists policies and strategies that are under development, awaiting approval or have been recently approved.</p>

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Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
WIOI3.1	Work to adopt new CIPFA financial management code to enhance our financial governance	Narrative update detailing the elements of the code which have been implemented, which are underway and which are yet to be started	Cllr Andrew Crawford	Head of Finance	Work on the council's informal financial management review concluded during Q4 2022/23. The outcome of this evaluation and the determination of any actions required to ensure compliance with the CIPFA financial management code is now expected during Q1 2023/24.
WIOI3.2	Council reporting and decision-making templates to include impact on the climate emergency	Narrative update on significant decisions which have key environmental considerations, additionally any updates to key policies which have an focus on the climate emergency	Cllr Debby Hallett	Head of Legal and Democratic	No update required - action complete.
WIOI3.3	Review the councils constitution and scheme of delegation annually	Narrative update with the outcome of the review	Cllr Debby Hallett	Head of Legal and Democratic	<p>During Q4 2022/23, most work was paused on the review of the council's constitution. This was due to the build-up to the local elections in May.</p> <p>Officers have, however, continued to make progress on certain topics in the background. Currently, a full examination of the Scheme of Delegation is underway alongside the drafting of a Planning Protocol document. It is intended that these items will be considered by the Constitution Review Group when it reconvenes after the elections.</p>

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Corp Plan ID	Stated Aim/Project description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead Title	Q4 Performance Update
WIOI3.4	Increase and improve publicly available information – e.g.- code of conduct complaints (decision noted) FOIs (responses), corporate complaints (data) Improve accessibility of corporate information through publishing on our website	<p>“Narrative update on relevant reviews/newly available information/website improvements and metrics</p> <p>Quantitative - FOI/ Complaints data”</p>	Cllr Debby Hallett	Head of Corporate Services	<p>During Q4 2022/23, the performance management report for Q3 2022/23 was published on the Vale’s website. This is intended to increase the public’s understanding of what the council does, how it works and how decisions are made.</p> <p>In Q4 2022/23, the Vale received 229 FOI/EIRs. 96.0% of these were responded to within the target time of 20 working days – this is above the ICO’s target.</p> <p>The council received 13 stage one complaints, four stage two complaints and three Local Government Ombudsman complaints between January and March 2023.</p> <p>The annual review of complaints was considered by the Joint Audit &amp; Governance Committee in late January 2023.</p>

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