

PERFORMANCE REPORT CORPORATE PLAN



**Vale
of White Horse**

District Council

**2023/24
QUARTER THREE
OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2023.**



Strategic Context



The Met Office announced that 2023 was the second warmest year on record for the UK – the warmest was 2022 – in a series stretching back to 1884. The mean temperature was just below 10°C. (The ten warmest years in the UK have all occurred since 2003).

Eight of the 12 months of 2023 were warmer than average for the UK. June and September were particularly warm compared to the average. It was the hottest June on record for the UK by a wide margin (the mean temperature of 15.8°C beat the previous joint record set in 1940 and 1976 by 0.9°C), and the joint-hottest September (with a mean temperature of 15.2°C, 2.2°C higher than the usual temperature).

The Copernicus Climate Change Service have confirmed that 2023 was the warmest year on record globally (in as series going back to 1850) with an average temperature of 14.98°C - this beat the previous record set in 2016 by 0.17°C. Every month from June to December was warmer than the corresponding month in any previous year – and July and August were the warmest two months on record. 2023 was also the first time on record that every day within a year exceeded 1°C above the 1850-1900 pre-industrial level for that time of year.

The Met Office's global outlook for 2024 suggests that it could be another record breaker, with experts forecasting that the average temperature could be between 1.34°C and 1.58°C above the average for the pre-industrial period– this is the first

ruled out. It would also be the eleventh year in succession that temperatures will have reached at least 1.0°C above pre-industrial levels.

From 30 November to 13 December, COP28 was held in the UAE. At the summit, agreement was reached on the need to transition away from energy fossil fuels in energy systems. The agreement does not, however, compel countries to take action, nor does it specify a timescale for this change to occur.

During Quarter 3 of 2023/24, the global economic situation remained unsettled. While many of the immediate pressures that had driven inflation have eased, challenges, such as higher borrowing costs and elevated debt levels, remain. Furthermore, with the continuation of fighting in Ukraine and the potential risk of a protracted conflict in the Middle East, there is the potential for further economic shocks and disruption throughout 2024.

The UK's rate of inflation was 4.0 per cent in the 12 months to December 2023 – an increase of 0.1 per cent on the figure for November (inflation peaked at 11.1 per cent in October 2022 – the highest rate since 1981). The increase in the rate of inflation in December was mainly driven by rises in the rate of inflation for alcohol and tobacco. This was, nevertheless, partially offset by the continued slowing of the rate of inflation for food and non-alcoholic beverages.

The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) voted to keep interest rates at 5.25 per cent at their meetings in November and December. While this marked the third consecutive time that the MPC has held the interest rate, it follows a sustained series of rises which have increased borrowing costs to their highest levels since 2008. The Committee have also made clear that monetary policy (interest

rates) is likely to need to be restrictive for an extended period of time.

In the three months to November 2023, economic growth was estimated to have fallen by 0.2 per cent. Analysts suggest that this weakening in economic output has been driven by inflationary pressures and the tightening of monetary policy. Furthermore, the consensus of forecasts for the year ahead suggest that the economy will continue to see low/anaemic growth – a persistent and long-standing issue that has afflicted the UK since the financial crisis of 2008.



NHS figures show that 7.6 million people were waiting for planned NHS treatment in November. While this marks the second monthly fall in figures, waiting lists still remain near record highs. The pandemic, increased/sustained demand, staff vacancies and industrial action have all been cited as major contributory factors towards this backlog.

During October, HM Government announced that recycling in England will be standardised from 2026. All homes, businesses and schools will recycle the same materials and there will also be a once-a-week minimum requirement for food waste collection.

At the end of October, HM Government's Levelling Up and Regeneration Act became law. It is intended to speed up the planning system, hold developers to account, cut bureaucracy, and encourage more councils to put in place plans to enable the building of new homes.

HM Government's Energy Act 2023 also received Royal Assent in October. The aim of the Act is to transform the UK's energy system by strengthening energy security, supporting the delivery of net zero and ensuring household bills are affordable in the long-term.



In early November, the King's Speech set out HM Government's priorities for the new parliamentary session.

Towards the end of November, the Chancellor of the Exchequer unveiled HM Government's Autumn Statement. The stated priorities for the package of measures introduced were reducing debt,

cutting taxes, rewarding hard work and backing British businesses.

In December, the Department for Levelling Up, Communities, Housing and Local Government published the Local Government Finance Policy Statement 2024-25. This set out HM Government's intentions for local government finance for the coming year. Under these proposals, the council tax referendum principles for shire district councils will be set at up to 3.0 per cent or £5 – whichever is higher. Within the Policy Statement, HM Government also reiterated that they do not believe that this is the right time to introduce any fundamental reforms to the local government finance landscape.

Oxford City Council published the first draft of its Oxford Local Plan 2040. While this has identified the need for 26,400 more homes in Oxford by 2040, the City Council have only identified where 9,612 of these will be built. Concerns have been raised that this could push more homes into the surrounding districts.

In November, the ONS released their latest mid-year population estimates. This suggested that, as of June 2022, 142,116 people lived in Vale of White Horse (an increase of 1.9 per cent from June 2021).

Q3 Performance Highlights

Providing the homes people need



The first families supported by the **Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP)** housing scheme have moved into transitional settled accommodation



The **Didcot Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan** was formally approved by the Vale, South Oxfordshire and Oxfordshire County Council. It outlines a variety of schemes to improve the overall active travel network within Didcot and the surrounding areas



298

The number of **affordable home completions reported** to the council between April and December 2023

Tackling the climate emergency



Our **new Air Quality Plan** was endorsed by the council's partners. It is now scheduled to be reviewed by Cabinet in January and by the Licensing Committee in February



We held an online town and **parish forum on retrofitting domestic properties** to improve their energy efficiency



Project management consultants have been **appointed to assist in the delivery of decarbonisation works** at the Wantage Leisure Centre and the White Horse Leisure and Tennis Centre

Building healthy communities

Policies and agreements have been drafted to **simplify the process for local groups wishing to plant on council-owned land**



The Community Hub launched **the Household Support Fund 4 grants**. These will **enable organisations to refer residents for financial support** to help those struggling with the cost-of-living crisis



Building stable finances



Officer-led and member-led **budget challenge exercises were held** as part of the Vale's budget setting activity



£89,050

Awarded (in conjunction with South Oxfordshire) from the **Planning Skills Delivery Fund**



Draft versions of the **Arts Centre Review paper** were circulated to officers.

Working in partnership



We **launched a Food and Warmth Grant Scheme** for voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations.



Officers delivered a **virtual presentation and Q&A session on neighbourhood planning for town and parish councils**. This provided attendees with an opportunity to explore the value of neighbourhood planning and to discover what support is available



£56,756

Grants totalling were awarded to 14 organisations through the **Vale Climate Action Fund**

Working in an open and inclusive way

A **report on an improved approach to garden waste customer** contact and payments was completed. This is now scheduled for consideration by Joint Scrutiny and the Cabinet



Officers implemented the council's **new consultation and engagement platform, "Join The conversation", hosted on Citizen Space**. This should make it easier for residents to contribute/have their say on matters



Theme 1 – Provide the Homes People Need

Key Activity in Q3

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. In some cases, this activity is a prelude to the work being undertaken around the Joint Local Plan. Close liaison was also maintained with Oxfordshire County Council's highways and strategic planning teams.

An updated policy on how Section 106 funds can be used to support the delivery of new affordable housing went live in Q3. This is designed to make it easier for those who wish to develop and deliver affordable homes to access funds. The council has publicised this revised policy through its media channels and by direct contact with the major housing associations operating within the district.

Officers have also reviewed whether existing clauses within the council's Section 106 agreements are increasing the risk that registered housing providers are not developing new affordable housing within

the Vale. Following this assessment, changes have been made to the relevant sections.

A cross-departmental team has continued to work on developing the various housing schemes to support people from Afghanistan and Ukraine. These activities included the signing of a lease for 24 properties from the MOD and continued work to purchase homes under HM Government's Local Authority Housing Fund scheme. The council has also signed an 18-month contract with Soha Housing to provide repairs, maintenance and tenancy support for council-controlled properties.

The first families supported by the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) housing scheme moved into settled accommodation during Q3. As a consequence, most ARAP households in the Vale have been relocated from hotels into new homes while they find somewhere permanent to live.

Officers finalised the pre-application documentation for new mobile home berths

at Pebble Hill. It is now ready for submission.

The council wants to adopt a policy framework that ensures that homes can be delivered in a way that supports the environment and people living healthy lives. To help achieve this, significant progress has continued to be made on the development of the Joint Local Plan. Activities included:

- The Planning Policy team taking the Joint Local Plan Preferred Options through Cabinet and to the Joint Scrutiny Committee. The draft preferred options and policies will be consulted upon at the start of Q4.
- An All-Councillor Roundtable meeting on net zero carbon. This set out the council's recommended approach for new ambitious policies in the Joint Local Plan.
- Bioregional (the council's net zero carbon consultants) completing tasks 1-5 of their commission and preparing a report for publication – this is scheduled for release in Q4.

The Didcot Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan was formally approved by the Vale, South Oxfordshire and Oxfordshire County Council. It outlines a variety of schemes to improve the overall active travel network within Didcot and the surrounding areas.



Theme 2 – Tackling the Climate Emergency

Key Activity in Q3

During Q3 2023/24, the Vale appointed project management consultants to assist in the delivery of decarbonisation works at the Wantage Leisure Centre and the White Horse Leisure and Tennis Centre.

The Planning Policy team continued to make progress on the development of the Joint Local Plan. Significant work was undertaken in creating/preparing the draft preferred options and policies – including objectives and proposals relevant to sustainable growth and the environment – ready for consultation at the beginning of Q4. As part of this work, the Planning Policy team took the Joint Local Plan Preferred Options through Cabinet and to the Joint Scrutiny Committee. Bioregional (the council's net zero carbon consultants) also completed tasks 1-5 of their commission and prepared a report for publication – this is scheduled for release in Q4. In addition, an All-Councillor Roundtable meeting was held on net zero carbon. This set out the council's recommended approach for new ambitious policies in the Joint Local Plan.

The Vale remains involved in shaping and participating in county-wide initiatives through the Future Oxfordshire Partnership (FOP). In this forum, officers and members continue to work for the realisation of the Good Growth Principles in the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision. During Q3 2023/24, each of FOP's advisory groups made progress with setting their forward work programmes. These will include activities and items on affordable housing, energy planning and the updating of the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS).

The council initiated a review of the meadow trials initiated during 2023. This will analyse the new areas of meadow created on council-owned land and determine whether these have been successful. The review will make recommendations about which of these locations should be retained and managed as meadows. It will also make suggestions for potential new sites for 2024.

The Climate team held an online town and parish forum on retrofitting domestic properties to improve their energy efficiency. Information was also given about the support that the county and district councils can offer on this topic.

In November, the climate team organised a thermal imaging camera training session for community groups and town/parish councils. This covered not just how to use the camera but also how to interpret the images. The Vale have also offered all our town and parish councils the option of borrowing such a device.

Town/parish councils, community groups and businesses were invited during Q3 to apply for funds from the Rural England Prosperity Fund to support a range of climate actions – including retrofitting community buildings, renewable energy schemes, EV charging infrastructure and nature recovery projects. Awards will be made in Q4.

Work continued on the research study (being undertaken by Oxford Brookes) on understanding the net zero challenge for SMEs in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse. The results of this exercise will help to improve the council's insight regarding the barriers experienced by local businesses in the journey to net zero and what support could potentially be offered to help them achieve their decarbonisation goals. A final report is due in March 2024

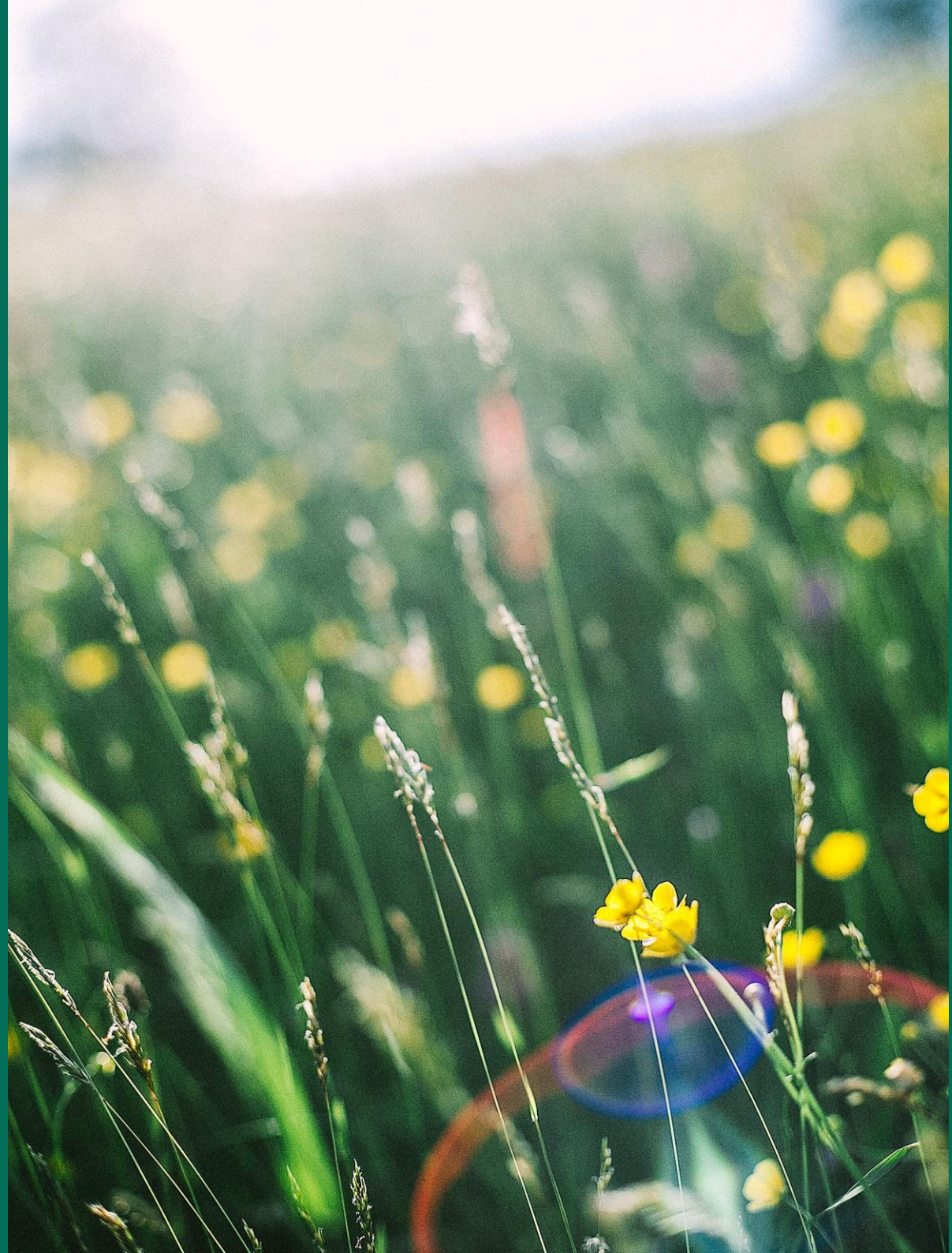
and will help to inform the Vale's use of UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF).

The Vale's new Air Quality Plan was agreed to by the council's partners. It is now scheduled to be reviewed by Cabinet in January and by the Licensing Committee in February.

During Q3, the Vale's 'Check it before you chuck it' campaign continued. This aims to help cut down on recycling contamination by encouraging residents to verify whether things can go in their recycling bins. The campaign webpage has so far received over 10,200 visits. The council also promoted Recycle Week. This highlighted how different items can be recycled with the council and/or locally.

In the weeks before Christmas, the Vale – alongside its traditional seasonal waste messaging – ran a social media campaign encouraging people to 'cut your festive food waste.'

Officers promoted the Community Action Groups (CAG) Oxfordshire/International Tree Foundation's Garden Tree Giveaway. This scheme distributes thousands of free trees to households across the county with the ambition of increasing tree coverage.



Theme 3 – Building Healthy Communities

Key Activity in Q3

The council recorded one rough sleeper at the end of Q3 2023/24 – a decrease of three on the previous quarter. The very low levels of rough sleeping in the district reflects the success of the council's preventative approach.

The number of homeless households in temporary accommodation (TA) on 31 December 2023 was 21 – a slight decrease on the previous quarter despite the increasing pressures on the service. The council is forecasting that there will be a record number of approaches for homelessness assistance this year caused by multiple factors including the cost-of-living crisis and the decline in availability of affordable private rented properties.

The rolling six-month average length of stay in emergency accommodation was 42 nights, matching exactly the council's ceiling target.

The rate of successful homelessness prevention in the Vale was 67.0 per cent. This was below the very challenging target of 80.0 per cent, but remains significantly above the South East prevention rate of 53.0 per cent. The most likely outcome for

households where homelessness is not prevented is a stay in emergency or temporary accommodation which is both disruptive for the household and expensive for the council.



As part of the Vale's commitment to safeguarding and supporting the district's vulnerable residents the council continues to work closely with partners across Oxfordshire to tackle homelessness and is an active member of the countywide Homelessness Steering Group, the Young Persons Steering Group and the Homelessness Directors Group. Progress is currently being made on the Countywide Homelessness Strategy Action Plan to tackle single person homelessness in Oxfordshire.

The Community Hub has continued to work with communities across the district in response to the cost-of-living crisis (particularly in relation to food initiatives and the provision of support for those in most need).

During Q3, the Community Hub launched the Household Support Fund 4 grants. These will enable organisations to refer residents for financial support to help those struggling with the cost-of-living crisis. They also started a Food and Warmth Grant Scheme for voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations.

The Partnership Grant Panel met to review applications that had been submitted to the Partnership Grant Scheme (which will offer up to five years of funding to information and advice services within the district). Recommendations were made to the Leader of the Council with award decisions scheduled to be made in Q4.

With the aim of building strong communities and connections with a sense of place, the Planning Policy team have continued to make progress on the development of the Joint Local Plan. Significant work was undertaken in creating/preparing the draft preferred options and policies ready for consultation at the beginning of Q4. (The emerging policy framework being created through the development of the Joint Local Plan will cover issues specifically relating to infrastructure and the location of homes/jobs. In addition, the emerging Local Plan's spatial strategy will provide the council with a new land use approach).

The council 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.

With the intention of promoting healthy place shaping and active communities, the Vale formally approved the Didcot Local Cycling

and Walking Infrastructure Plan. This document outlines a variety of schemes to improve the overall active travel network within Didcot and the surrounding areas.

The Vale continued to collaborate with Active Oxfordshire to improve the health and wellbeing of the district's residents – especially those in the most deprived areas. The council now has 1,438 people signed up to the 'You Move' project (aimed at families with children and in receipt of benefits). It also has 1,253 people enrolled on the 'Move Together' project (designed to help people with long-term health conditions become more active).

Several refurbished bikes are now waiting to be collected by their new owners as part of the council's Ride Revolution project. Further, a steady stream of bikes are still being donated.

Active Communities continued to work with colleagues from the Climate and Property teams to establish a procedure and progress a licence for community groups to use green spaces for community gardens. During Q3, policies and agreements have been drafted to simplify the process for local groups wishing to plant on council-owned land.

The Vale's new Air Quality Plan was agreed to by the council's partners. It is now scheduled to be reviewed by Cabinet in

January and by the Licensing Committee in February.



Theme 4 – Building Stable Finances

Key Activity in Q3

With the aim of managing the council's resources responsibly and making more effective use of its assets, the Vale continued with its budget setting activity for 2024/25. Both officer-led and member-led budget challenge exercises were held on selected areas of activity. These reviewed and assessed the council's income budgets.

The CIL Member Working Group collated and examined the requests received for projects seeking funding for 2024/25. A final review of the eligible schemes will take place in January and recommendations will then be made for inclusion as part of the budget setting process.

Draft versions of the Arts Centre Review paper were circulated to officers. The formal publication of the paper has, however, been delayed to Q4 due to the complexities of the issues being considered.

Innovate UK - Net Zero Fast Followers - offered funding for a bid submitted in February 2023. The council is liaising with Innovate UK around the details of the funding offer, which could include a training programme to support journey to net zero carbon and a research project for nature-based solutions to carbon offsetting.

Also, in Q3, the Vale (in conjunction with South Oxfordshire) was awarded £89,050 from the Planning Skills Delivery Fund. This will be used to provide online and in-person training to upskill the existing Planning and Planning Policy teams.

In addition, work has been undertaken on a proposal to Innovate UK for a research project to trial electric refuse collection vehicle for recycling and household waste. This application is scheduled for submission in Q4.

Progress has also been made on a bid to fund an astroturf football pitch at Faringdon Leisure Centre.



Theme 5 – Working in Partnership

Key Activity in Q3

Work continued on the research study (being undertaken by Oxford Brookes) on understanding the net zero challenge for SMEs in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse. The results of this exercise will help to improve the council's insight regarding the barriers experienced by local businesses in the journey to net zero and what support could potentially be offered to help them achieve their decarbonisation goals. A final report is due in March 2024 and will help to inform the Vale's use of UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF).

TSE Research completed the initial stages of their visitor economy research project. A baseline report has been presented to officers and is available on request.

Economic Development ran an application scheme for round one of the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) grants programme. 14 applications were received from organisations within the Vale. These are now being assessed and are scheduled to be reviewed by a grant panel in Q4.

Officers from Economic Development continued to assist in the development of the draft Employment Land Needs

Assessment for the Joint Local Plan. This work will help to ensure that the assessment and resulting draft policies are relevant to the needs/requirements of the area's business community.

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 them together to collaborate and share experiences.

In addition, officers also delivered a virtual presentation and Q&A session on neighbourhood planning for town and parish councils. This provided attendees with an opportunity to explore the value of neighbourhood planning and to discover what support is available. The event was attended by representatives from 11 parish councils and was recorded and published on the Vale's website.

The Community Hub has continued to work with communities across the district in response to the cost-of-living crisis (particularly in relation to food initiatives and the provision of support for those in most need).

During Q3, the Community Hub launched the Household Support Fund 4 grants.

These will enable organisations to refer residents for financial support to help those struggling with the cost-of-living crisis. They also started a Food and Warmth Grant Scheme for voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations.

The Partnership Grant Panel met to review applications that had been submitted to the Partnership Grant Scheme (which will offer up to five years of funding to information and advice services within the district). Recommendations were made to the Leader of the Council with award decisions scheduled to be made in Q4.

The council continued to support the White Horse Community Lottery Scheme. Throughout the quarter, 11,962 lottery tickets were sold generating an annual estimated income of £29,920 for the voluntary sector.

14 organisations were awarded grants, totalling £56,756, from the Vale Climate Action Fund.

With the intention of progressing the Vale's goal of working in partnership to influence and shape regional and national agendas, Economic Development have 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.

The Vale continues to be 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 also remains involved in shaping and participating in county-wide initiatives through the Future Oxfordshire Partnership (FOP). In this forum, officers and members continue to work for the realisation of the Good Growth Principles in the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision. During Q3 2023/24, each of FOP's advisory groups made progress with setting their forward work programmes. These will include activities and items on affordable housing, energy planning and the updating of the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS).



The council has supported the development of local action plans related to the Oxfordshire Food Strategy. Officers from Economic Development have also led conversations within the Food Action Working Group regarding proposed mapping, marketing and business development activities linked to the Oxfordshire Food Strategy Action Plan.

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 (ARAP). The Vale is currently working with the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and the Home Office to deliver transitional accommodation for the ARAP residents following the closure of bridging hotels and is now providing housing and community integration support for over 20 Afghan families in MoD housing. Officers from the council have also contributed to discussions at the South East Migration Partnership aimed at coordinating approaches with the Home Office across the asylum system. In addition, the Vale has submitted responses to HM Government consultations on asylum system capacity.

Theme 6 – Working in an Open and Inclusive Way

Key Activity in Q3

As part of 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 Q3 2023/24, the performance management report for Q2 2023/24 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 Consultation and Engagement Report for 2022/23 was considered by the Scrutiny Committee – it was received positively by Members.

To fulfil 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 Q3. These recordings will remain available on the Vale's YouTube channel for a year.

Officers introduced 'Join the Conversation', the council's new consultation and engagement platform. This should make it

easier for residents to contribute and have their say.

The Communications team trialled several social media management systems, assessing them for potential adoption. They are also continuing to explore opportunities offered by newer social media channels.

The Vale continued to develop proposals for utilising the Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) to automate resident's reports of enviro-crimes e.g., fly tipping. This has involved close collaboration between Customer Services, IT and Waste teams.

A report on an improved approach to garden waste customer contact and payments was completed in Q3. This is now scheduled for consideration by Joint Scrutiny and the Cabinet.

In order to increase meaningful engagement with everyone, the Vale raised awareness of the upcoming Joint Local Plan Preferred Options consultation (scheduled to launch in Q4). As part of our communications

campaign, town and parish councils were contacted directly to ensure that they were fully informed in advance. Furthermore, the Vale has also been working with youth groups to increase the involvement of young people in the consultation process.

In November, the Climate team held an online town and parish forum on retrofitting domestic properties to improve their energy efficiency. Information was also given about the support that the county and district councils can offer on this topic.

Also, in Q3, officers from Planning Policy delivered a virtual presentation and Q&A session on neighbourhood planning for town and parish councils. This provided attendees with an opportunity to explore the value of neighbourhood planning and to discover what support is available. The event was attended by representatives from 11 parish councils and was recorded and published on the Vale's website.

With the intention of delivering on the Vale's commitment to increasing accountability and strengthening its governance framework, work has continued on reviewing the council's Constitution.

Individual Cabinet Member Decisions (ICMDs)

Date	Description
06/10/2023	Section 106 Funds to Sweatbox Community Youth Services, Wantage
23/10/2023	Oxfordshire Food Strategy Funding
08/11/2023	Homes For Ukraine Scheme - To Accept Government Funding to Support Ukrainian Guests
13/11/2023	Faringdon Leisure Centre - To Create a Budget from Section 106 Funding to Provide An Artificial Turf Pitch
13/11/2023	Car Parks Contract Performance 2022/23
17/11/2023	Leisure Contract Performance 2022/23
30/11/2023	Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure - To Agree a Funding Arrangement with Oxfordshire County Council
01/12/2023	Software Licensing - To Agree to Sign a New Three-Year Microsoft Enterprise Software Agreement
15/12/2023	Didcot Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan - To Endorse the Plan
21/12/2023	Leader's Appointment to Champion Roles
Total: 10	

Theme: Providing the Homes people Need					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	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 Sue Caul	Head of Housing and Environment	<p>During Q3 2023/24, a cross-departmental team continued to develop the various housing schemes to support people from Afghanistan and Ukraine. These activities included the signing of a lease for 24 properties from the MOD and continued work to purchase homes under HM Government's Local Authority Housing Fund scheme. The council has also signed an 18-month contract with Soha Housing to provide repairs, maintenance and tenancy support for council-controlled properties.</p> <p>The first families supported by these schemes moved into properties during the quarter. As a consequence, most Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) households in the Vale have been relocated from hotels into new homes while they find somewhere permanent to live.</p> <p>An updated policy on how Section 106 funds can be used to support the delivery of new affordable housing went live in Q3. This is designed to make it easier for those who wish to develop and deliver affordable homes to access funds.</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 Diana Lugova	Master Planning Lead	<p>During Q3 2023/24, the Vale continued to have conversations with a range of landowners and promoters to progress housing and residential-led, mixed-use schemes.</p>

Theme: Providing the Homes people Need					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	Performance Update
					<p>In advance of the publication of the draft Joint Local Plan, the Vale has been interacting closely with the Defence Infrastructure Organisation and the local parish councils in relation to Dalton Barracks.</p> <p>Close liaison was also maintained with Oxfordshire County Council's highways and strategic planning teams.</p>
PHPN1.2	<p>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</p>	<p>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.</p>	Cllr Sue Caul	Head of Housing and Environment	<p>During Q3 2023/24, officers have reviewed whether existing clauses within the council's Section 106 agreements are increasing the risk that registered housing providers are not developing new affordable housing within the Vale. Following this assessment, changes have been made to the relevant sections.</p> <p>An updated policy on how Section 106 funds can be used to support the delivery of new affordable housing went live in Q3. This is designed to make it easier for those who wish to develop and deliver affordable homes to access funds. The council has publicised this revised policy through its media channels and by direct contact with the major housing associations operating within the district.</p> <p>The Vale has continued to partner with Collaborative Housing to help deliver more community-led housing and support a rural</p>

Theme: Providing the Homes people Need					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	Performance Update
					housing project designed to provide new affordable housing schemes.
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 Sue Caul	Head of Housing and Environment	<p>An updated policy on how Section 106 funds can be used to support the delivery of new affordable housing went live in Q3. This is designed to make it easier for those who wish to develop and deliver affordable homes to access funds. The council has publicised this revised policy through its media channels and by direct contact with the major housing associations operating within the district.</p> <p>Officers have operationally reviewed whether existing clauses within Section 106 agreements are increasing the risk that register housing providers (RPs) do not development of new affordable housing within the Vale. The council has reviewed the relevant clauses and made changes which will help RPs to continue to gain financing for housing.</p> <p>During Q3 2023/24, continued progress was made on the development of the Joint Local Plan. Significant work was undertaken in creating/preparing the draft preferred options and policies for consultation at the beginning of Q4.</p>
PHPN1.4	Review our strategy for spending s106 sums paid in lieu of onsite affordable housing and identify how earmarked	Narrative report on s106 spend, focusing on the stated aim and any updates to the existing strategy	Cllr Sue Caul	Head of Housing and Environment	An updated policy on how Section 106 funds can be used to support the delivery of new affordable housing went live in Q3. This is

Theme: Providing the Homes people Need					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	Performance Update
	funds, including retained S106 monies, can be best utilised to deliver affordable homes	Additional quantitative elements - s106 spend/units provided from spend			<p>designed to make it easier for those who wish to develop and deliver affordable homes to access funds.</p> <p>The council has publicised this revised policy through its media channels and by direct contact with the major housing associations operating within the district.</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 Sue Caul	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	During Q3 2023/24 officers finalised the pre-application documentation for new mobile home berths at Pebble Hill. It is now ready for submission.
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 Sue Caul	Head of Policy and Programmes	During Q3 2023/24, a new planning policy for Dalton Barracks Garden Village was drafted as part of the Local Plan. This included an extension to the existing allocated site to cover the brownfield area where the barracks buildings are located.
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 Sue Caul	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q3 2023/24, continued progress was made on the development of the Joint Local Plan. Significant work was undertaken in creating/preparing the draft preferred options and policies for consultation at the beginning of Q4.</p> <p>Activities included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Planning Policy team taking the Joint Local Plan Preferred Options through Cabinet and to the Joint Scrutiny Committee. an All-Councillor Roundtable meeting on net zero carbon.

Theme: Providing the Homes people Need					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	Performance Update
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bioregional (the council's net zero carbon consultants) completing tasks 1-5 of their commission and preparing a report for publication – this is scheduled for release in Q4.
PHPN2.1	Develop a s106 obligations strategy to inform negotiations between planners and developers	Narrative report on strategy development/adherence (once delivered)	Cllr Sue Caul	Head of Policy and Programmes	No update required – action complete.
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	<p>Narrative update on CIL spend to support the delivery of local infrastructure</p> <p>Total CIL spend + CIL spend breakdown</p>	Cllr Sue Caul	Head of Finance	<p>During Q3 2023/24, the CIL Member Working Group collated and examined the requests received for projects seeking funding for 2024/25. A final review of the eligible schemes will take place in January and recommendations will then be made for inclusion as part of the budget setting process.</p> <p>The Vale published its statutory infrastructure statement for 2022/23. https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2023/12/Vale-IFS-2022-23-Final.pdf</p> <p>Also, in Q3, £287,496 of CIL funding was released to town and parish councils that had experienced CIL liable development in their area during the previous six months.</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 Sue Caul	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q3 2023/24, Bioregional (the council's net zero carbon consultants) completed tasks 1-5 of their commission and prepared a report for publication – this is scheduled for release in Q4.</p> <p>In addition, an All-Councillor Roundtable meeting was held on net zero carbon. This set out the council's recommended approach for new ambitious policies in the Joint Local Plan.</p>

Theme: Providing the Homes people Need					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	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 Andy Foulsham	Head of Housing and Environment	No progress to report Q3 2023/24 – action completed.
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 Sue Caul	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q3 2023/24, continued progress was made on the development of the Joint Local Plan. Significant work was undertaken in creating/preparing the draft preferred options and policies for consultation at the beginning of Q4.</p> <p>Activities included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Planning Policy team taking the Joint Local Plan Preferred Options through Cabinet and to the Joint Scrutiny Committee. an All-Councillor Roundtable meeting on net zero carbon. Bioregional (the council's net zero carbon consultants) completing tasks 1-5 of their commission and preparing a report for publication – this is scheduled for release in Q4. <p>The spatial strategy within the emerging Joint Local Plan, as well as specific ideas in relation to employment, retail, housing etc, will collectively deliver a new land use approach for the Vale.</p>
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 Sue Caul	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q3 2023/24, continued progress was made on the development of the Joint Local Plan. Significant work was undertaken in creating/preparing the draft preferred options and policies for consultation at the beginning of Q4.</p>

Theme: Providing the Homes people Need					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	Performance Update
					<p>Activities included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Planning Policy team taking the Joint Local Plan Preferred Options through Cabinet and to the Joint Scrutiny Committee. • an All-Councillor Roundtable meeting on net zero carbon. • Bioregional (the council's net zero carbon consultants) completing tasks 1-5 of their commission and preparing a report for publication – this is scheduled for release in Q4. <p>The emerging policy framework being created through the development of the Joint Local Plan will cover issues specifically relating to infrastructure and the location of homes/jobs. In addition, the emerging Local Plan's spatial strategy will provide the council with a new land use approach.</p> <p>Also, in Q3, the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Infrastructure Advisory Group made progress on setting its forward work programme. This includes activities relating to the updating of the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS).</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 Andy Foulsham	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q3 2023/24, continued progress was made on the development of the Joint Local Plan. Significant work was undertaken in creating/preparing the draft preferred options and policies for consultation at the beginning of Q4.</p> <p>Bioregional (the council's net zero carbon</p>

Theme: Providing the Homes people Need					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	Performance Update
					consultants) completed tasks 1-5 of their commission and prepared a report for publication – this is scheduled for release in Q4. In addition, an All-Councillor Roundtable meeting was held on net zero carbon. This set out the council's recommended approach for new ambitious policies in the Joint Local Plan.
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	<p>Narrative update on housing policy and adherence.</p> <p>Include quantitative measures for housing mix, tenure, and affordable and shared ownership.</p>	Cllr Sue Caul	Head of Housing and Environment	<p>Between April and December 2023, 298 affordable homes completions have been reported to the council.</p> <p>Quantitative measures regarding housing mix, tenure and affordability remain determined on a site-by-site basis at the point that they are brought forward.</p>
PHPN2.9	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. Encourage systems that increase use of the Active Travel Network	Narrative update on progress toward completion of map, once map completed, this should transition to an annual review of the accuracy of map	Cllr Sue Caul	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q3 2023/24, the Didcot Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan was formally approved by the Vale, South Oxfordshire and Oxfordshire County Council. It outlines a variety of schemes to improve the overall active travel network within Didcot and the surrounding areas.</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council's Strategic Active Travel Network (SATN), for which officers from the Vale provided support, is scheduled to go before the County Council's Cabinet during Q4. The SATN seeks to provide a web of strategic travel routes across Oxfordshire.</p>

Theme: Tackling the Climate emergency					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	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	Cllr Bethia Thomas	Head of Policy and Programmes	During Q3 2023/24, the Vale appointed project management consultants to assist in the delivery of decarbonisation works at the Wantage Leisure Centre and the White Horse Leisure and Tennis Centre.
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 Bethia Thomas	Head of Policy and Programmes	During Q3 2023/24, the Quarter 2 2023/24 Climate Action Plan (CAP) report was published on the Vale's website. 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 Bethia Thomas	Head of Policy and Programmes	No update required – action complete.
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 Sue Caul	Head of Policy and Programmes	During Q3, the council initiated a review of the meadow trials initiated during 2023. This will analyse the new areas of meadow created on council-owned land and determine whether these have been successful. The review will make recommendations about which of these locations should be retained and managed as meadows. It will also make suggestions for potential new sites for 2024.
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 its carbon footprint.	Cllr Bethia Thomas	Head of Policy and Programmes	During Q3 2023/24, 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:

Theme: Tackling the Climate emergency					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	Performance Update
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting Recycle Week by highlighting how different items can be recycled with the council and/or locally. • Drawing attention to National Repair Day and local repair shops. • Announcing the Food and Warmth Grants. These can be used by voluntary groups to assist people with items such as low energy slow cookers and energy saving DIY kits. • Publicising the council's new Section 106 Affordable Housing Grant to build homes that meet the Vale's climate criteria. • Highlighting the programme of decarbonisation work being undertaken at the Vale's leisure centres. • Promoting a tree giveaway to residents. • Running a campaign to promote and highlight the issue of festive food waste.
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 Bethia Thomas	Head of Policy and Programmes	No update required – action complete.
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 Bethia Thomas	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q3 2023/24, Bioregional (the council's net zero carbon consultants) completed tasks 1-5 of their commission and prepared a report for publication – this is scheduled for release in Q4.</p> <p>In addition, an All-Councillor Roundtable meeting was held on net zero carbon. This set out the council's recommended approach for new ambitious policies in the Joint Local Plan.</p>

Theme: Tackling the Climate emergency					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	Performance Update
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 Bethia Thomas	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q3 2023/24, continued progress was made on the development of the Joint Local Plan. Significant work was undertaken in creating/preparing the draft preferred options and policies – including objectives and proposals relevant to sustainable growth and the environment – ready for consultation at the beginning of Q4. As part of this work, the Planning Policy team took the Joint Local Plan Preferred Options through Cabinet and to the Joint Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>Also, in Q3, Bioregional (the council's net zero carbon consultants) completed tasks 1-5 of their commission and prepared a report for publication – this is scheduled for release in Q4.</p> <p>In addition, an All-Councillor Roundtable meeting was held on net zero carbon. This set out the council's recommended approach for new ambitious policies in the Joint Local Plan.</p>
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 Andy Foulsham	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q3 2023/24 Bioregional (the council's net zero carbon consultants) completed Tasks 1-5 of their commission and prepared their report for publication alongside the Joint Local Plan in January. The planning policy team held an All-Councillor Roundtable on net zero carbon. This set out the council's recommended approach for new ambitious policies in the Joint Local Plan.</p>

Theme: Tackling the Climate emergency					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	Performance Update
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 Bethia Thomas	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 Bethia Thomas	Head of Housing and Environment	<p>During Q3 2023/24, the Vale's new Air Quality Plan was agreed to by the council's partners. It is now scheduled to be reviewed by Cabinet in January and by the Licensing Committee in February.</p> <p>Real Time Air Quality Data for sites within Vale of White Horse is available at https://www.airqualityengland.co.uk.</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 Bethia Thomas	Head of Housing and Environment	<p>During Q3 2023/24, the Vale's new Air Quality Plan was agreed to by the council's partners. It is now scheduled to be reviewed by Cabinet in January and by the Licensing Committee in February.</p> <p>Real Time Air Quality Data for sites within Vale of White Horse is available at https://www.airqualityengland.co.uk.</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 Bethia Thomas	Head of Policy and Programmes	No update required – action complete.
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	During Q3 2023/24, 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.
TCE3.1	Complete the CEAC Year One Action Plan and plan for future years	Narrative report on progress	Cllr Bethia Thomas	Head of Policy and Programmes	No update required – action complete.

Theme: Tackling the Climate emergency					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	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 Bethia Thomas	Head of Housing and Environment	<p>The September 2023 recycling rate was 65.17%, the landfill rate was 0.07% and the contamination rate was 10.55%. These figures were not available for Q2 2023/24 reporting.</p> <p>The October 2023 recycling rate was 57.10%, the landfill rate was 0.12% and the contamination rate was 12.10%.</p> <p>The November 2023 recycling rate was 55.20%, the landfill rate was 0.16% and the contamination rate was 12.12%.</p> <p>The figures for December are not yet available.</p> <p>The Vale's 'Check it before you chuck it' campaign continued during Q3. This aims to help cut down on recycling contamination by encouraging residents to verify whether things can go in their recycling bins. The campaign webpage has so far received over 10,200 visits.</p> <p>The Vale also promoted Recycle Week. This highlighted how different items can be recycled with the council and/or locally.</p> <p>In the weeks before Christmas, the Vale – alongside its traditional seasonal waste messaging – ran a social media campaign encouraging people to 'cut your festive food</p>

Theme: Tackling the Climate emergency					
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					<p>waste.'</p> <p>The Waste and Communications teams designed a flyer aimed at increasing and improving recycling from homes in Saxton Road in Abingdon. (This is an area where there has been long-term recurring issues with bin contamination).</p>
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 Bethia Thomas	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q3 2023/24, officers promoted the Community Action Groups (CAG) Oxfordshire/International Tree Foundation's Garden Tree Giveaway. This scheme distributes thousands of free trees to households across the county with the ambition of increasing tree coverage.</p>
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 Bethia Thomas	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q3 2023/24 officers continued to be actively engaged in supporting the production of the Oxfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy</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 Bethia Thomas	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	<p>During Q3 2023/24, an Individual Cabinet Member Decision (ICMD) was approved for the Vale to support the County Council's submission for Oxfordshire's allocation of Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Funding (LEVI) grant and to agree to receive the funding if the application is successful. The ICMD also delegates authority to the Head of Development and Corporate Landlord to finalise the locations for EV chargepoints secured via this route within the district.</p>

Theme: Tackling the Climate emergency					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	Performance Update
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 Neil Fawcett	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>No update required – action complete.</p> <p>The Vale does not support the development of a pan-regional partnership across the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.</p>
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 Neil Fawcett	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>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 (FOP). In this forum, officers and members continue to work for the realisation of the Good Growth Principles in the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision.</p> <p>During Q3 2023/24, each of FOP's advisory groups made progress with setting their forward work programmes. These will include activities and items on affordable housing, energy planning and the updating of the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS).</p>
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 Bethia Thomas	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q3 2023/24, the climate team held an online town and parish forum on retrofitting domestic properties to improve their energy efficiency. Information was also given about the support that the county and district councils can offer on this topic.</p> <p>In November, the climate team organised a thermal imaging camera training session for community groups and town/parish councils.</p>

Theme: Tackling the Climate emergency					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	Performance Update
					<p>This covered not just how to use the camera but also how to interpret the images. The Vale have also offered all our town and parish councils the option of borrowing such a device.</p> <p>Town/parish councils, community groups and businesses were invited during Q3 to apply for funds from the Rural England Prosperity Fund to support a range of climate actions – including retrofitting community buildings, renewable energy schemes, EV charging infrastructure and nature recovery projects. Awards will be made in Q4.</p> <p>Funding for retrofitting also remains available to eligible residents within the Vale though Oxfordshire County Council.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the proposal submitted to Innovate UK for the FutureFit Oxfordshire project to create an ‘enabling environment’ for retrofitting one stop shops was unsuccessful.</p>

Theme: Building Healthy Communities					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	Performance Update
PROGRAMME 1	Building strong communities and connections, with a sense of place and strong community identity	Narrative update	Cllr Andy Foulsham	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q3 2023/24, significant progress was made on the development of the Joint Local Plan. Significant work was undertaken in creating/preparing the draft preferred options and policies ready for consultation at the beginning of Q4.</p> <p>The emerging policy framework being created through the development of the Joint Local Plan will cover issues specifically relating to infrastructure and the location of homes/jobs. In addition, the emerging Local Plan's spatial strategy will provide the council with a new land use approach.</p> <p>As of 31 December 2023, there are 17 made Neighbourhood Plans in the district (two of which are currently under review).</p> <p>In addition, there are 10 Neighbourhood Plans currently in progress. Two of these have reached the independent examination stage, two have completed pre-submission consultations and the remaining six are at the plan drafting stage.</p> <p>The council 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>

Theme: Building Healthy Communities					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	Performance Update
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 Q3 2023/24, draft versions of the Arts Centre Review paper were circulated to officers. Its formal publication has, however, been postponed to Q4 due to the complexities of the issues being considered.</p> <p>The proposed paper exploring the provision of community centres in the Vale – and the potential future options for those that the council directly operates on Great Western Park – has been delayed because of a lack of officer resource. Furthermore, with the plan for a new Communities Directorate, consideration will also need to be given to reviewing the impact of this suggested change on the management of the community centres on Great Western Park – the examination of this issue will need to occur before any potential report is provided.</p>
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	The council has implemented an internal public art commissioning and approval process which has negated the need for a formal public arts policy at this stage. Nevertheless, once the new Communities team is in place – and a dedicated Community Arts Manager is appointed – it is envisaged that a wider cultural arts development policy will be created.

Theme: Building Healthy Communities					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	Performance Update
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 Q3 2023/24, the Community Hub launched the Household Support Fund 4 grants. These will enable organisations to refer residents for financial support to help those struggling with the cost-of-living crisis. The Community Hub also started a Food and Warmth Grant Scheme for voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations.</p> <p>The Contain Outbreak Management Fund and Magnox awarded eight VCS sector organisations in the Vale with funding to help support residents to stay warm and fed.</p> <p>The Partnership Grant Panel met to review applications to the Partnership Grant Scheme, making recommendations to the Leader of the Council for decisions to award.</p>
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 Sue Caul	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q3 2023/24, the Didcot Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan was formally approved. This document outlines a variety of schemes to improve the overall active travel network within Didcot and the surrounding areas.</p> <p>The 'Nature Trails' map in South Abingdon have been developed. In addition, the raised beds in Canal Walk were installed – 14 markers posts have also been put in place.</p> <p>Several refurbished bikes are now waiting to be collected by their new owners as part of the council's Ride Revolution project. Further, a steady stream of bikes continue to be donated.</p>

Theme: Building Healthy Communities					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	Performance Update
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 neighbourhoods plans and the stage they are current at</p>	Cllr Andy Foulsham	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q3 2023/24, the council continued its pilot project on a simpler approach to neighbourhood planning. The project provides the opportunity – if they wish – 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 December 2023, there are 17 made Neighbourhood Plans in the district (two of which are currently under review).</p> <p>In addition, there are 10 Neighbourhood Plans currently in progress. Two of these have reached the independent examination stage, two have completed pre-submission consultations and the remaining six are at the plan drafting stage.</p>
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 Bethia Thomas	Head of Housing and Environment	<p>During Q3 2023/24, the Vale's new Air Quality Plan was agreed to by the council's partners. It is now scheduled to be reviewed by Cabinet in January and by the Licensing Committee in February.</p> <p>Real Time Air Quality Data for sites within Vale of White Horse is available at https://www.airqualityengland.co.uk</p> <p>Local information is also available at www.oxonair.uk.</p>

Theme: Building Healthy Communities					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	Performance Update
PROGRAMME 2	Promoting healthy place shaping and active communities, for everyone	Narrative update	Cllr Helen Pighills	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>Between October and December, 1,470 people took part in the Vale's regular activities.</p> <p>The Vale now has 1,253 people signed up to the 'You Move' project (aimed at families with children and in receipt of benefits). It also has 1,253 people enrolled on the 'Move Together' project (designed to help people with long-term health conditions become more active).</p> <p>Significant progress has been made on the development of the Joint Local Plan. The Preferred Options document was considered by Cabinet and Joint Scrutiny in advance of the next public consultation due to launch in early 2024. As part of this work, officers are advancing planning policies that will help to promote healthy place shaping and active communities.</p>
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 Q3 2023/24, the Active Communities team have worked with several different partners to widen the council's offer to residents. For example, we have been working with the Keystone Mental Health Hub in Abingdon, St Ethlewold's and with a number of personal trainers.</p> <p>After developing stronger links with local GP surgeries, the Active Communities team also continues to have a regular presence at monthly clinics in all the district's market towns.</p>

Theme: Building Healthy Communities					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	Performance Update
BHC2.2	Work with Active Oxfordshire to target get active projects in our most deprived communities	Narrative update on proposals from 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 the most deprived areas.</p> <p>The Vale now has 1,438 people signed up to the 'You Move' project (aimed at families with children and in receipt of benefits). It also has 1,253 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>During Q3 2023/24, the 'Nature Trails' map in South Abingdon was sent to the printers. In addition, the raised beds in Canal Walk were installed – 14 markers posts have also been put in place.</p> <p>Active Communities continued to work with colleagues from the Climate and Property teams to establish a procedure and progress a licence for community groups to use green spaces for community gardens. During Q3, policies and agreements have been drafted to simplify the process for local groups wishing to plant on council-owned land – the 'Nature Trails' in South Abingdon will be used a pilot to test these new arrangements.</p>

Theme: Building Healthy Communities					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	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	Active Communities continued to work with colleagues from the Climate and Property teams to establish a procedure and progress a licence for community groups to use green spaces for community gardens. During Q3, policies and agreements have been drafted to simplify the process for local groups wishing to plant on council-owned land – the ‘Nature Trails’ in South Abingdon will be used a pilot to test these new arrangements.
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 Health Improvement Partnership Board met on 16 November 2023 and considered reports on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Performance monitoring of the current Oxfordshire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. •An update from Healthwatch Oxfordshire. •A Strategic Update on Healthy Place Shaping •An update on the Oxfordshire Tobacco Control Strategy. <p>The Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on 23 November 2023 and received the following reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health • Oxfordshire Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) Update • Healthwatch Oxfordshire Update • Oxfordshire Place Based Partnership Update • Wantage Community Hospital Update

Theme: Building Healthy Communities					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	Performance Update
					<p>The Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board met on 7 December 2023 and considered the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxfordshire Winter Plan and Vaccinations • Health and Wellbeing Strategy • Adults Safeguarding Annual Report • Children's Safeguarding Annual Report • Healthwatch Oxfordshire Update • Performance Report • Reports from Partnership Boards of Place, HIB, and the Children's Trust.
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 Q3 2023/24, 19 safeguarding concerns were raised with the council – the majority of these were for poor mental health, neglect and domestic abuse. Seven of these resulted in referrals to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and the Oxfordshire Adult Safeguarding Teams.</p> <p>Five new closure orders were issued during Q2 (a closure order acts to safeguard access to properties where vulnerable tenants are being exploited).</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 3 2023/24 will be available in Q4 2023/24.</p> <p>During Q2 2023/24, the countywide service received 1,220 calls to their helpline, an increase of nearly 26 per cent on the previous quarter (969).</p> <p>In Q3 2023/24, there were 19 referrals to the</p>

Theme: Building Healthy Communities					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	Performance Update
					South and Vale domestic abuse sanctuary scheme. This was an increase of 35 per cent on Q2 2023/24 (14).
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	<p>The Community Hub has 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>During Q3 2023/24, the Community Hub launched the Household Support Fund 4 grants. These will enable organisations to refer residents for financial support to help those struggling with the cost-of-living crisis. The Community Hub also started a Food and Warmth Grant Scheme for voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations.</p> <p>The Contain Outbreak Management Fund and Magnox awarded eight VCS sector organisations in the Vale with funding to help support residents to stay warm and fed.</p> <p>The Partnership Grant Panel met to review applications that had been submitted to the Partnership Grant Scheme. Recommendations were made to the Leader of the Council with award decisions scheduled to be made in Q4.</p>
BHC3.3	Review and Revise the Joint Taxi Licensing Policy (JTLP)	Narrative update on the JTLP	Cllr Helen Pighills	Head of Legal and Democratic	No update required – action complete.

Theme: Building Healthy Communities					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	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 only one rough sleeper at the end of Q3 2023/24 – a decrease of three on the previous quarter. 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 December 2023 was 21 – a slight decrease on the previous quarter despite the increasing pressures on the service. The council is forecasting that there will be a record number of approaches for homelessness assistance this year caused by multiple factors including the cost-of-living crisis and the decline in availability of affordable private rented properties.</p> <p>The rolling six-month average length of stay in emergency accommodation was 42 nights, matching exactly the council’s ceiling target. During Q3 2023/24, the rate of successful homelessness prevention in the Vale was 67.0 per cent. This was below the very challenging target of 80.0 per cent, but remains significantly above the South East prevention rate of 53.0 per cent. The most likely outcome for households where homelessness is not prevented is a stay in emergency or temporary accommodation which is both disruptive for the household and expensive for the council.</p>

Theme: Building Healthy Communities					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	Performance Update
					<p>The council continues to work closely with partners across Oxfordshire to tackle homelessness and is an active member of the countywide Homelessness Steering Group, the Young Persons Steering Group and the Homelessness Directors Group. Progress is currently being made on the Countywide Homelessness Strategy Action Plan to tackle single person homelessness in Oxfordshire.</p>

Theme: Building Stable finances					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	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	During Q3 2023/24, the Vale continued with its budget setting activity. Both officer-led and member-led budget challenge exercises were held on selected areas of activity. These reviewed and assessed the council's income budgets.
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 Q3 2023/24.
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 Q3 2023/24, an Individual Cabinet Member Decision (ICMD) was approved for the Vale to support the County Council's submission for Oxfordshire's allocation of Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Funding (LEVI) grant and to agree to receive the funding if the application is successful. The ICMD also delegates authority to the Head of Development and Corporate Landlord to finalise the locations for EV chargepoints secured via this route within the district. Oxfordshire County Council's bid for LEVI funding was submitted during Q3.</p> <p>In addition, this quarter Innovate UK - Net Zero Fast Followers - offered funding for a bid submitted in February 2023. The council is liaising with Innovate UK around the details of the funding offer, which could include a training programme to support journey to net zero carbon and a research project for nature-based</p>

Theme: Building Stable finances					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	Performance Update
					<p>solutions to carbon offsetting.</p> <p>In addition, work has been undertaken on a proposal to Innovate UK for a research project to trial electric refuse collection vehicle for recycling and household waste. This application is scheduled for submission in Q4.</p> <p>Progress has also been made on a bid to fund an astroturf football pitch at Faringdon Leisure Centre.</p>
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	During Q3 2023/24, the Vale continued with its budget setting activity. Both officer-led and member-led budget challenge exercises were held on selected areas. These reviewed the council's revenue budgets and capital programme. As part of these activities, consideration was given to opportunities for income generation.
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	<p>No progress to report Q3 2023/24.</p> <p>The first stage of the project on updating the Vale's contract register is now scheduled to commence in Q1 2024/25.</p>
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	Due to illness, CIPFA were unable to share their findings with core SMT during Q3. This will, therefore, be rescheduled for Q4.

Theme: Building Stable finances					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	Performance Update
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	No progress to report Q3 2023/2024.
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 Q3 2023/2024.
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	The Strategic Property Review was completed during 2021/22. No further progress on related initiatives to report Q3 2023/24.
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 Q3 2023/24. There are no plans to update the recently introduced procurement policy.
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	During Q3 2023/24, the capital budgets for 2024/25 were put forward. The remainder of the capital works identified for this financial year (2023/24) are currently in the procurement phase.
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: Building Stable finances					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	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	During Q3 2023/24, draft versions of the Arts Centre Review paper were circulated to officers. Its formal publication has, however, been delayed to Q4 due to the complexities of the issues being considered.
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 Andrew Crawford	Head of Development and Corporate Landlord	During Q3 2023/24, the project initiation document for the Grounds Maintenance service review was signed. This confirmed the project governance (objectives, scope, exclusions, deliverables, benefits, costs and risks).

Theme: Working in Partnership					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	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	Cllr Neil Fawcett	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q3 2023/24, 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 (ARAP). The Vale is currently working with the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and the Home Office to deliver transitional accommodation for the ARAP residents following the closure of bridging hotels and is now providing housing and community integration support for over 20 Afghan families in MoD housing. Officers from the council have also contributed to discussions at the South East Migration Partnership aimed at coordinating approaches with the Home Office across the asylum system. In addition, the Vale has submitted responses to HM Government consultations on asylum system capacity.</p> <p>The Vale remains involved in shaping and participating in countywide 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>The Economic Development team have maintained their connection to the working group overseeing the development of the</p>

Theme: Working in Partnership					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	Performance Update
					<p>emerging Strategic Economic Plan for Oxfordshire. The Vale also continues to be a member of OxLEP's steering group for development of the Oxfordshire Destination Management Plan and Vision for Oxfordshire. In both of these forums, officers have represented the Vale with the purpose of ensuring that these activities continue to align with the council's objectives. During Q3, feedback and briefings were offered on the development of these plans to the Vale's Future Oxfordshire Partnership members.</p> <p>The council has supported the development of local action plans related to the Oxfordshire Food Strategy. Officers from Economic Development have also led conversations within the Food Action Working Group regarding proposed mapping, marketing and business development activities linked to the Oxfordshire Food Strategy Action Plan.</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 its completion	Cllr Neil Fawcett	Head of Policy and Programmes	No update required – action complete.
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	Narrative update on proactive work to lobby govt and key organisations, update on key consultations responded to within the period.	Cllr Neil Fawcett	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q3 2023/24, the Vale responded to the following external consultations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Oxfordshire District Council's Local Plan

Theme: Working in Partnership					
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		Quantitative -- Number of consultations replied to.			<p>2041 Focused Consultation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HM Government's Consultation on the implementation of plan-making reforms. • Cherwell District Council's Local Plan Consultation. • Oxford City Council's Local Plan 2040 Regulation 19 Consultation.
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 Diana Lugova	Master Planning Lead	<p>During Q3 2023/24, meetings have been held with developers, promoters and public/private landowners. Officers have also continued to connect with members, town/parish councils, other interested stakeholders, Oxfordshire County Council and Homes England. These events have focussed on the delivery of new homes, employment floorspace and supporting infrastructure, including green space, and are part of the Vale's framework of coordinated activity in this area.</p> <p>In November, Cabinet members were briefed on the next steps regarding the Central Abingdon Regeneration Framework.</p>
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 Q3 2023/24, Economic Development continued to assist in the development of the draft Employment Land Needs Assessment for the Joint Local Plan. This work will help to ensure that the assessment and resulting draft policies are relevant to the needs/ requirements of the area's business community.</p> <p>TSE Research completed the initial stages of their</p>

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					<p>visitor economy research project. A baseline report has been presented to officers and is available on request.</p> <p>Work continued on the research study (being undertaken by Oxford Brookes) on understanding the net zero challenge for SMEs in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse. The results of this exercise will help to improve the council's insight regarding the barriers experienced by local businesses in the journey to net zero and what support could potentially be offered to help them achieve their decarbonisation goals. A final report is due in March 2024 and will help to inform the Vale's use of UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF).</p> <p>Economic Development ran an application scheme for round one of the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) grants programme. 14 applications were received from organisations within the Vale. These are now being assessed and are scheduled to be reviewed by a grant panel in Q4.</p> <p>Between October and December, Economic Development responded to 156 enquiries via the business support inbox.</p>

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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>During Q3 2023/24, Economic Development sent out 10 newsletters. These achieved a 52.0 per cent open rate and a 16.0 per cent clickthrough rate. The most popular link was the application for Rural England Prosperity Funding (REPF).</p> <p>At the end of the quarter, the Economic Development newsletter has 2,493 subscribers (+12 on the figure for Q2).</p> <p>The Economic Development webpages received 894 views in Q3. The most popular information concerned the REPF.</p> <p>On social media, 56 posts were shared by Economic Development via X/Twitter. These created 7,000 impressions and 177 engagements. On Facebook, 56 posts were shared. These earned 4,127 impressions, five new web page likes and 924 engagements.</p>
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>The Vale remains involved in shaping and participating in countywide 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>The Economic Development team have maintained their connection to the working group overseeing the development of the emerging Strategic Economic Plan for</p>

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					<p>Oxfordshire. The Vale also continues to be a member of OxLEP's steering group for development of the Oxfordshire Destination Management Plan and Vision for Oxfordshire. In both of these forums, officers have represented the Vale with the purpose of ensuring that these activities continue to align with the council's objectives. During Q3, feedback and briefings were offered on the development of these plans to the Vale's Future Oxfordshire Partnership members.</p> <p>The council has supported the development of local action plans related to the Oxfordshire Food Strategy. Officers from Economic Development have also led conversations within the Food Action Working Group regarding proposed mapping, marketing and business development activities linked to the Oxfordshire Food Strategy Action Plan.</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	No update required – action complete.
PROGRAMME 2	Work with and support our residents, businesses and communities to effect and enable change	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.	Cllr Neil Fawcett	Head of Policy and Programmes	In Q3 2023/24, the Vale 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 them together to collaborate and share experiences.

Theme: Working in Partnership					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	Performance Update
		Quantitative elements - number of neighbourhood plans adopted, number of community initiatives undertaken, breakdown of assets where management has been transferred			<p>As of 31 December 2023, there are 17 made Neighbourhood Plans in the district (two of which are currently under review). In addition, there are 10 Neighbourhood Plans currently in progress. Two of these have reached the independent examination stage, two have completed pre-submission consultations and the remaining six are at the plan drafting stage.</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>
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>TSE Research have now completed the initial stages of their visitor economy research project. A baseline report has been presented to officers and is available on request. TSE Research are scheduled to present a strategic recommendations report during Q4.</p> <p>During Q3 2023/24, work continued on the research study (being undertaken by Oxford Brookes) on understanding the net zero challenge for SMEs in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse. The results of this exercise will help to improve the council's insight regarding the barriers experienced by local businesses in the journey to net zero and what support could potentially be offered to help them achieve their</p>

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					<p>decarbonisation goals. A final report is due in March 2024 and will help to inform Vale's use of UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF).</p> <p>Unfortunately, at the beginning of Q3, the council was informed that ShopAppy had ceased trading – thus, negating some of the specific ShopAppy related activities planned by the council for Q3. As a result, the Vale's focus switched to supporting local high streets with a short form "shop local" campaign in the run up to Christmas, comprising of radio, digital and print advertising.</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 Diana Lugova	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q3 2023/24 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>In November, officers delivered a virtual presentation and Q&A session on neighbourhood planning for town and parish councils. This provided attendees with an opportunity to explore the value of neighbourhood planning and to discover what support is available. The event was attended by representatives from 11 parish councils and was recorded and published on the Vale's website.</p>

Theme: Working in Partnership					
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					<p>During Q3, the Vale 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 them together to collaborate and share experiences.</p> <p>As of 31 December 2023, there are 17 made Neighbourhood Plans in the district (two of which are currently under review). In addition, there are 10 Neighbourhood Plans currently in progress. Two of these have reached the independent examination stage, two have completed pre-submission consultations and the remaining six are at the plan drafting stage.</p>
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 Neil Fawcett	Head of Planning	<p>During Q3 2023/24, 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 also continued with the Town and Parish Council Surgeries during Q3 2023/24.</p>

Theme: Working in Partnership					
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					<p>Officers 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>Two Planning Committee meetings were held between October and December 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18.10.23 – 28 views • 29.11.2023- 69 views
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 Neil Fawcett	Head of Finance	<p>During Q3 2023/24, the CIL Member Working Group collated and examined the requests received for projects seeking funding for 2024/25. A final review of the eligible schemes will take place in January and recommendations will then be made for inclusion as part of the budget setting process.</p> <p>The Vale published its statutory infrastructure statement for 2022/23. https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2023/12/Vale-IFS-2022-23-Final.pdf</p> <p>Also, in Q3, £287,496 of CIL funding was released to town and parish councils that had experienced CIL liable development in their area during the previous six months.</p>

Theme: Working in Partnership					
Corp Plan ID	State Aim / Project Description	Reporting Measure	Cabinet Lead	Officer Lead	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 Neil Fawcett	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q3 2023/24, the council continued to support the White Horse Community Lottery Scheme. Throughout the quarter, 11,962 lottery tickets were sold generating an annual estimated income of £29, 920 for the voluntary sector.</p> <p>14 organisations were awarded grants, totalling £56,756, from the Vale Climate Action Fund.</p> <p>The Partnership Grant Panel met to review applications that had been submitted to the Partnership Grant Scheme. Recommendations were made to the Leader of the Council with award decisions scheduled to be made in Q4.</p>

Theme: Working in an Open and Inclusive way					
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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 Andy Foulsham	Head of Corporate Services	<p>During Q3 2023/24, officers completed a report on an improved approach to garden waste customer contact and payments. This will be considered by Joint Scrutiny and the Cabinet.</p> <p>Officers continue to develop proposals for utilising the Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) to automate resident's reports of enviro-crimes e.g., fly tipping. This has involved close collaboration between Customer Services, IT and Waste.</p> <p>Officers implemented the council's new consultation and engagement platform. This should make it easier for residents to have their say.</p> <p>Also, in Q3, the Vale's Communications team trialled several social media management systems with the intention of assessing them for potential permanent adoption.</p>

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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 Lucy Edwards	Head of Corporate Services	<p>During Q3 2023/24, there was a small increase in web traffic (a 2.0% increase in unique web visitors and 1.0% increase in visits) but a minor decrease in page views (-1.0%). This may be because visitors are finding the information they require more quickly (and, therefore, an endorsement of the work that has/is being undertaken to review and refresh the council's webpages) or it could simply be natural fluctuation – officers will monitor to see if this a long-term trend.</p> <p>Q3 Web Usage Figures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 166,684 unique visitors • 187,171 total visits • 413,652 page views • 2.21 views per visit • 58% bounce rate • 1m 54 visit duration
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 Lucy Edwards	Head of Corporate Services	<p>During Q3 2023/24, the Vale's Communications team trialled several social media management systems with the intention of assessing them for potential permanent adoption. The ongoing flux at both Facebook and X/Twitter</p>

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					<p>are also still affecting the council's social media activities/performance.</p> <p>On Facebook, the Vale's reach has increased by 14.0% despite a reduction in the volume of posts. Furthermore, the council gained an extra 230 new followers in Q3.</p> <p>Facebook</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach – 114,503 • Posts – 234 • New Followers – 230 • Total Followers – 7,737 <p>The Vale's Instagram reach was significantly down in Q3 (-52.0%) compared to Q2. While this is partly explained by the fact that the council had fewer Instagram-suitable posts, officers will, nevertheless, review the decline in the council's Instagram reach. Despite the decline in reach, the Vale did, however, gain 57 new followers on Instagram during Q3.</p> <p>Instagram</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach – 568 • Posts – 110 posts, 41 stories • New Followers – 57

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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Followers – 753 <p>The changes introduced since the takeover of Twitter/X continue to negatively impact upon this channel. Currently its analytics are missing several key metrics as it “makes improvements” and so it is not possible to produce reliable comparable quarterly figures. The Vale is also continuing to explore the potential opportunities offered by newer social media channels. During Q3, the council achieved 32,741 impressions on Nextdoor.</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 Bethia Thomas	Head of Legal and Democratic	With the exception of the Full Council (due to logistical/IT issues), all other meetings during Q3 2023/24 were livestreamed (they will also remain available to view on the council’s YouTube channel for a year).
WIOI1.4	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 Lucy Edwards	Head of Corporate Services	During Q3 2023/23, the Annual Consultation and Engagement Report for 2022/23 was considered by the Scrutiny Committee – it was received positively by Members.

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					<p>Officers implemented the council's new consultation and engagement platform. This should make it easier for residents to have their say.</p> <p>Detailed preparation work has taken place in anticipation of the proposed consultation on the Joint Local Plan scheduled for early Q4.</p>
PROGRAMME 2	Increase meaningful engagement and communication with everyone	Narrative update on successful communication initiatives	Cllr Lucy Edwards	Head of Corporate Services	<p>During Q3 2023/24, the Vale continued to highlight the cost-of-living help that the council offers. This included the promotion of two grant schemes designed to help support district's food banks and community larders.</p> <p>When there were periods of cold weather between October and December, the Vale helped to promote the availability of emergency beds and explain the extra support in place to assist rough sleepers.</p> <p>The Vale issued two press releases explaining the assistance that the council – through the repurposing of unused Ministry of Defence Housing – is providing to families</p>

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					<p>who supported the UK's military operations in Afghanistan.</p> <p>The council publicised its revised Section 106 policy to support the delivery of new affordable housing through its media channels and by direct contact with the major housing associations operating within the district.</p> <p>The Vale promoted free and low-cost activities for kids and families over the October half term. It also highlighted the periods of free parking offered by the council in the run up to Christmas.</p> <p>The Leader of the Council made statements on several important topics during Q3 – including welcoming the news that the A34 Lodge Hill Interchange scheme has been awarded HM Government funding.</p> <p>During Q3 2023/24, the council continued to promote the White Horse Community Lottery Scheme. Throughout the quarter, 11,962 lottery tickets were sold generating an annual estimated income of £29,</p>

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					<p>920 for the voluntary sector.</p> <p>The Vale's 'Check it before you chuck it' campaign continued during Q3. This aims to help cut down on recycling contamination by encouraging residents to verify whether things can go in their recycling bins. The campaign webpage has so far received over 10,200 visits.</p> <p>The Vale also promoted Recycle Week. This highlighted how different items can be recycled with the council and/or locally.</p> <p>In the weeks before Christmas, the Vale – alongside its traditional seasonal waste messaging – ran a social media campaign encouraging people to 'cut your festive food waste.'</p> <p>The Waste and Communications teams designed a flyer aimed at increasing and improving recycling from homes in Saxton Road in Abingdon. (This is an area where there have been long-term</p>

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					recurring issues with bin contamination).
WIO12.1	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 Sue Caul	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>In November, officers delivered a virtual presentation and Q&A session on neighbourhood planning for town and parish councils. This provided attendees with an opportunity to explore the value of neighbourhood planning and to discover what support is available. The event was attended by representatives from 11 parish councils and was recorded and published on the Vale's website.</p> <p>No community liaison groups were established between October and December.</p>
WIO12.2	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 Helen Pighills	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>In Q3 2023/24, the climate team held an online town and parish forum on retrofitting domestic properties to improve their energy efficiency.</p> <p>Officers have started preparing a town and parish survey – to be launched in Q4 – to find out what topics they would like to be covered during 2024.</p>

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					<p>The Vale is also awaiting the outcome of the county council's town and parish charter work before embarking on any new formal programme of town and parish forums – this is to ensure that our work in this area is aligned.</p>
WIOI2.3	<p>Work with communities, schools and other local organisations on shared campaigns and initiatives that help further our corporate objectives</p>	<p>Narrative update on comms and engagement activities which interface with communities, schools and other local organisations</p>	<p>CLlr Helen Pighills</p>	<p>Head of Corporate Services</p>	<p>During Q3 2023/24, the Vale raised awareness of the upcoming Joint Local Plan Preferred Options consultation (scheduled to launch in Q4). As part of our communications campaign, town and parish councils were contacted directly to ensure that they were fully informed in advance. Furthermore, the Vale has also been working with youth groups to increase the involvement of young people in the consultation process.</p> <p>The Vale highlighted the work that the council's Community Safety team have been carrying out to improve safety and tackle anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>The council continued to publicise</p>

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					<p>the White Horse Community lottery. The Vale raised awareness of the groups/ good causes this initiative supports and encouraged residents to get involved/participate.</p> <p>The Vale also continued to promote You Move with the goal of encouraging more people to get active.</p> <p>Between October and December, the council celebrated/ recognised several significant days (including Armistice Day) and raised awareness of a range of campaigns (e.g., Recycle Week, Big Energy Saving Week and National Tree Week).</p>
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	Narrative update to be provided on the progress of this work		Head of Corporate Services	<p>"During Q3 2023/23, the Annual Consultation and Engagement Report for 2022/23 was considered by the Scrutiny Committee – it was received positively by Members.</p> <p>Officers implemented the council's new consultation and engagement</p>

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	to facilitate opinions being more informed				<p>platform. This should make it easier for residents to have their say.</p> <p>Detailed preparation work has taken place in anticipation of the proposed consultation on the Joint Local Plan scheduled for early Q4.</p>
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 Neil Fawcett, Cllr Helen Pighills	Head of Corporate Services	<p>"No progress to report Q3 2023/24.</p> <p>Activities are, however, scheduled to take place during Q4 2023/24 and Q1 2024/25 to coincide with the national/regional election messaging taking place in the lead up to the Police and Crime Commissioner election.</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 Lucy Edwards	Head of Corporate Services	<p>During Q3 2023/23, the Annual Consultation and Engagement Report for 2022/23 was considered by the Scrutiny Committee – it was received positively by Members.</p> <p>Officers implemented the council's new consultation and engagement platform. This should make it easier for residents to have their say.</p> <p>Detailed preparation work has taken place in anticipation of the proposed consultation on the Joint</p>

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					Local Plan scheduled for early Q4.
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.	CLlr Bethia Thomas	Head of Policy and Programmes	<p>During Q3 2023/24, the Didcot Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan was formally approved by the Vale, South Oxfordshire and Oxfordshire County Council. It outlines a variety of schemes to improve the overall active travel network within Didcot and the surrounding areas.</p> <p>Progress was made on the development of the Joint Local Plan. Significant work was undertaken in creating/preparing the draft preferred options and policies for consultation at the beginning of Q4.</p> <p>Also, in Q3, work continued on updating the council's waste strategy and the creation of a new empty homes policy.</p> <p>As part of the Vale's annual budget setting activities progress was made on the development of the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2024/25. • Capital Strategy 2024/25 to 2033/34

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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 to 2028/29.
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 Andy Crawford	Head of Finance	Due to illness, CIPFA were unable to share their findings with core SMT during Q3. This will, therefore, be rescheduled for Q4.
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 a focus on the climate emergency	CLlr Bethia Thomas	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 Bethia Thomas	Head of Legal and Democratic	<p>The council's constitution has remained under constant review throughout Q3 2023/24.</p> <p>Meetings of the Constitution Review Group have also taken place.</p>
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 Lucy Edwards	Head of Corporate Services	<p>During Q3 2023/24, the performance management report for Q2 2023/24 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 Q3 2023/24, the Vale received 266 FOI/EIRs. 97.0% of these were responded to within the target time</p>

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					<p>of 20 working days – this is above the ICO’s target.</p> <p>The council received 11 stage one complaints, four stage two complaints and one complaint from the Local Government Ombudsman between October and December 2023.</p>