



Leicester  
City Council

## **MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE**

**DATE: WEDNESDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER 2025**

**TIME: 5:30 pm**

**PLACE: Meeting Rooms G.01 and G.02, Ground Floor, City Hall, 115  
Charles Street, Leicester, LE1 1FZ**

### **Members of the Committee**

Councillor Joel (Chair)

Councillors Batool, Dave, Kitterick, March, O'Neill, Osman, Pickering, Porter,  
Rae Bhatia, Waddington and Zaman

Members of the Committee are invited to attend the above meeting to consider  
the items of business listed overleaf.

For Monitoring Officer

### **Officer contacts:**

**Julie Bryant and Ed Brown (Governance Services),**  
e-mail: [Julie.bryant@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:Julie.bryant@leicester.gov.uk) or [edmund.brown@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:edmund.brown@leicester.gov.uk)  
Leicester City Council, 115 Charles Street, Leicester, LE1 1FZ

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- ✓ where filming, to (via the Chair of the meeting) ensure that those present are aware that they may be filmed and respect any requests to not be filmed.

### Further information

If you have any queries about any of the above or the business to be discussed, please contact: **Julie Bryant and Ed Brown, Governance Services on.** Alternatively, email [Julie.bryant@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:Julie.bryant@leicester.gov.uk) or [edmund.brown@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:edmund.brown@leicester.gov.uk), or call in at City Hall.

For Press Enquiries - please phone the **Communications Unit on 0116 454 4151**.

## **PUBLIC SESSION**

## **AGENDA**

### **NOTE:**

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#### **1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To issue a welcome to those present, and to confirm if there are any apologies for absence.

#### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members are asked to declare any interests they may have in the business to be discussed.

#### **3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

#### **Appendix A**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview Select Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2025 have been circulated, and Members will be asked to confirm them as a correct record.

#### **4. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair is invited to make any announcements as they see fit.

#### **5. PROGRESS ON ACTIONS AGREED AT THE LAST MEETING**

To note progress on actions agreed at the previous meeting and not reported elsewhere on the agenda (if any).

**6. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATION AND STATEMENTS OF CASE**

The Monitoring Officer to report on the receipt of any questions, representations and statements of case submitted in accordance with the Council's procedures.

**7. PETITIONS**

The Monitoring Officer to report on any petitions received.

**8. TRACKING OF PETITIONS - MONITORING REPORT      Appendix B**

The Monitoring Officer submits a report that updates Members on the monitoring of outstanding petitions. The Committee is asked to note the current outstanding petitions and agree to remove those petitions marked 'Petitions Process Complete' from the report.

**9. QUESTIONS FOR THE CITY MAYOR**

The City Mayor will answer questions raised by members of the Overview Select Committee on issues not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

**10. SCRUTINY REVIEW - A REVIEW OF THE CHANGES TO THE COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME      Appendix C**

The Chair submits a report examining changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme. The Committee will be asked to note the report and support the recommendations set out in paragraph 1.2.

**11. SCRUTINY REVIEW - A REVIEW OF SUPPORT FOR ADVENTURE PLAYGROUNDS      Appendix D**

The Chair submits a report examining support for Adventure Playgrounds. The Committee will be asked to note the report and support the recommendations set out in paragraph 1.2.

**12. UPDATE ON ASSET SALES      Appendix E**

The Strategic Director City Development & Neighbourhood Services will give a presentation updating the Committee on asset sales.

**13. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF CONSTRUCTION      Appendix F**

The Director of Estates and Building Services will give a presentation outlining the environmental impacts of construction projects and the standards achieved by recent council projects.



**14. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING APRIL-JUNE 2025/26** **Appendix G**

The Director of Finance submits a report providing an early forecast for the 2025/26 financial year.

**15. CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING APRIL-JUNE 2025/26** **Appendix H**

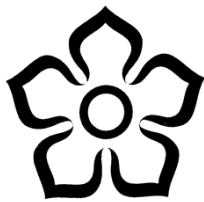
The Director of Finance submits a report presenting the position of the capital programme for 2025/26 as at the end of June 2025.

**16. OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME** **Appendix I**

The current work programme for the Committee is attached. The Committee is asked to consider this and make comments and/or amendments as it considers necessary.

**17. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**





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# Appendix A

## Minutes of the Meeting of the OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE

Held: WEDNESDAY, 9 JULY 2025 at 5:30 pm

### P R E S E N T:

#### Councillor Joel - Chair

Councillor Batool  
Councillor Gregg  
Councillor O'Neill  
Councillor Porter  
Councillor Waddington

Councillor Dave  
Councillor March  
Osman  
Councillor Rae Bhatia  
Councillor Zaman

Sir Peter Soulsby – City Mayor  
Councillor Sood – Assistant City Mayor (online)  
Rebecca Lunn – Youth Representative  
Vivek Masania – Youth Representative

\* \* \* \* \*

### **129. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr Kitterick – Cllr Gregg substituted.

### **130. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were asked to declare any interests they may have had in the business to be discussed.

With regards to the item on Revenues and Benefits, Cllr March mentioned that she worked for the Citizen's Advice Bureau and if it appeared as though there was an interest in the item, she would leave the meeting. She had taken advice from the Monitoring Officer and it did not appear that there would be a need to declare an interest.

### **131. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

AGREED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Overview Select Committee held on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2025 be confirmed as a correct record.

### **132. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE 2025/26**

The Membership of the Commission was confirmed as follows:

Councillor Ashiedu Joel - Chair  
Councillor Melissa March  
Councillor Misbah Batool  
Councillor Sue Waddington  
Councillor Karen Pickering  
Councillor Syed Zaman  
Councillor Molly O'Neill  
Councillor Hemant Rae Bhatia  
Councillor Abdul Osman  
Councillor Bhupen Dave  
Councillor Patrick Kitterick  
Councillor Nigel Porter

### **133. DATES OF MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE 2025/26**

The dates of the meetings for the Commission were confirmed as follows:

9 July 2025  
24 September 2025  
3 December 2025  
28 January 2026  
18 March 2026  
29 April 2026

### **134. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Commission noted the Scrutiny Terms of Reference.

### **135. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATION AND STATEMENTS OF CASE**

The Monitoring Officer reported that no questions, representations and statements of case had been submitted in accordance with the Council's procedures.

Dr Patel asked:

*As a member of the public, I would want to engage with the democratic process as much as I possibly can. However, the current policy requires the public questions to be submitted five working days before a scrutiny*

*meeting. However, the agenda for the meeting is also only published five working days in advance. This means members of the public have no way of knowing whether their questions will be relevant to the agenda.*

*Will the Overview Scrutiny Commission consider reviewing this process to improve meaningful public engagement and allow questions to be submitted after the agenda is published?*

*Possible solutions –*

*1. Change deadline for questions to be submitted 4 working days prior to committee.*

*or*

*2. Publish a provisional agenda front sheet earlier. Provide a draft or indicative agenda 10 working days before the meeting. Mark it clearly as “subject to change”.*

A further question was submitted by Dr Patel but was not published with the agenda. As it was submitted before the deadline, the Chair agreed for it to be asked:

*I attend council meetings often. I park opposite the city hall on Carlton Street. With street parking now increasing by 25%, this now feels like a new tax on residents who are trying to participate in the democratic process.*

*Will the council consider providing support with travel costs, such as validating parking or reimbursing bus fares, for members of the public who attend scrutiny or full council meetings?*

*Removing this financial barrier could help increase public participation in local democracy, particularly for those on lower incomes.*

The Chair informed those present that Dr Patel had received responses to these questions via email and these would be shared with members of the Committee following the meeting.

The Chair referred to the responses that were sent to Dr Patel via email and would be shared with members following the meeting (appended).

It was suggested that the issue on deadlines for questions could be discussed in a meeting of the Committee. It was further suggested that this could be fed back into a constitution review.

It was suggested that the issue on travel and parking costs for council meetings could be picked up at Economic Development, Transport and Climate Emergency Scrutiny Commission.

### **136. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no Chair's announcements.

### **137. PETITIONS**

The Monitoring Officer reported that no petitions had been received.

### **138. TRACKING OF PETITIONS - MONITORING REPORT**

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report which provided an update on the status of outstanding petitions against the Council's target of providing a formal response within three months of being referred to the Divisional Director.

It was raised that petitions concerning libraries and community centres were not included in the report and it was noted that the Monitoring Officer had applied the rule for these petitions to be included as part of the consultation on the matter rather than being considered at Council. Questions were raised as to whether proper procedure was followed.

The Monitoring Officer would be approached for a response.

It was requested that Directors provide updates on the petitions on Peebles Way and Oakland Avenue.

AGREED:

That the status of the outstanding petitions be noted.

### **139. QUESTIONS FOR THE CITY MAYOR**

The Chair accepted the following questions to be asked to the City Mayor:

Young People's Council Representative Rebecca Lunn asked:

*I have a question about public transport. I know that in Manchester they have the hour pass scheme which allows for free buses for youths aged 16 to 18 and 18 to 21 for those in care experience. I was just wondering how Leicester could possibly do something similar or look into how they've achieved this? I know that they did it through the Manchester Combined Authority and I wondered if we could come up with something similar.*

The City Mayor responded:

- Government support had enabled a free Hop bus which linked the central city areas together.

- Concessions were limited due to cost considerations, but opportunities to extend the offer could be explored with government support.
- Benchmarking against other local authorities would be useful.
- The financial benefits of service delivery by combined authorities were acknowledged. The Chair of the Economic Development, Transport and Climate Scrutiny Commission requested that the question be referred there.

Members of the commission asked about government proposals for local reorganisation, particularly in relation to the role of the City Mayor.

The City Mayor responded with the following points:

- Members had been briefed that there would be opportunity to debate preferences for either a mayoral leadership, or leader and cabinet system.
- More recent government announcements included the following:
  - The nationwide introduction of combined authority mayors.
  - The creation of new mayoral systems of governance would be halted.
  - The return to a committee system was ruled out.
  - Authorities with existing mayoral systems could continue, however, any boundary extensions or other significant changes, legally required the establishment of a new authority. The new authority would then adopt a leader and cabinet form.
  - It was highly likely that boundary changes would arise for the city, in advance of the next election in 2027.

AGREED:

That the responses to the questions raised be noted

#### **140. CUSTOMER SERVICES - PERFORMANCE REPORT 24/25**

The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report providing an overview of the corporate customer service including arrangements in place, performance and improvements during 2024/25.

The Assistant City Mayor for Health, Culture, Libraries and Community Centres gave an introduction to the item noting this was a challenging area of work, and there were some good news stories.

It was noted that improvements had been made, through an adjustment to service operating hours leading to an improvement in call waiting times. Feedback from staff was positive, with lower staff absence levels and improved

staff retention, resulting in a more skilled and experienced workforce.

The Chair invited questions and comments from the commission, with the Customer Support Manager being present to answer. Key points were as follows:

- It was clarified that the cut off point for receiving calls was 16:30. Calls incoming toward the end of the day went into a queuing system answered by 17:00.
- Timelines to the customer experience strategy were currently unknown. The Committee requested to have oversight of the plan.
- It was confirmed that the Housing service managed feedback from council tenants.
- It was noted the technology was not yet in place to carry out ad-hoc satisfaction surveys, but this could be something to be considered for the future.
- It was confirmed there was an out of hours service for areas such as children's safeguarding.
- Webform contact information would be reviewed to improve the customer experience.
- Social Care and Housing lines were prioritised.
- Staffing numbers had reduced in line with council budgeting, but workforce retention had improved.
- The commission would be informed about the potential for creating a call-back system.
- AI implementation was subject to a review of current web page information.

AGREED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That comments made by members of this commission be taken into account by the lead officers.

*Councillor O'Neil arrived during consideration of item.*

## **141. OVERVIEW OF THE REVENUES & BENEFITS SERVICE**

The Director of Finance presented a report providing the Overview Select Committee with an overview of the Revenues and Benefits Service. This was



presented by The Head of Revenues Key points to note were as follows:

- The Household Support Fund would be replaced by the Crisis and Resilience Fund, enabling longer term planning.
- A working group had been established as part of the review of the Council Tax Support Scheme.

The Chair invited the commission to raise questions and comments. Key points to note were as follows:

- Welfare advice was delivered both internally and externally via a triaged approach. More information would be distributed to the commission with details of how welfare services could be accessed.
- It was confirmed households could apply for the Household Support Fund repeatedly.
- Council Tax collections were ongoing, any amounts not collected within the financial year would be recovered or support efforts would be put in place.
- Equality Impact Assessments were conducted for decisions affecting service users.
- Questions on support for digital access were best placed with the Director of Corporate Services. Information would be sought and fed back to the commission.
- Leicester ranked 9th out of 13 neighbouring Local Authorities for Council Tax collection rates. More information could come back on rankings.
- Care experienced young people were exempt from paying Council Tax.
- Detail was awaited on the Crises and Resilience Grant.
- Members suggested engaging users in digital expansion considerations.

AGREED:

- 1) That comments made by members of this commission be taken into account by the lead officers.
- 2) That the report be noted.

## **142. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING OUTTURN 2024/25**

The Director of Finance submitted the final Revenue Budget Outturn in the monitoring cycle for 2024/25 and reported performance against budget for the year.

The Strategic Director of City Development and Neighbourhood Services and the Director of Children's Social Work and Early Help attended the meeting to assist with the discussion.

The Committee was recommended to consider the overall position presented within this report and make any observations it saw fit.

The Director of Children's Social Work and Early Help gave an update on placement costs and noted that:

- Placement costs formed a significant proportion of spend in Children's Services.
- There were currently 146 children in residential accommodation, 40 in Council-run accommodation and 106 in private accommodation.
- Quality in private care could be variable, it was aimed to place children in accommodation rated 'good' or outstanding', but this was not always possible due to availability.
- The cost differential of placing a child in private accommodation versus in-house accommodation was £700 per-week per-child, so by having 40 children in Council accommodation, there was an overall cost mitigation of £28k if a child was placed in Council accommodation.
- It was planned to expand internal resource. Holly House had been converted into a new five-bed unit which had received its first Ofsted inspection and had been rated 'good'.
- A new-build had been commissioned at Hillview, the original building had not been suitable for refurbishment, so it had been demolished. However, this had meant it was possible to build to design. The project was mid-build and should be in Council possession in 2-3 months with the aim to open in October or November. It contained an independence flat for those transitioning to independent living.
- There were two further capital bids in with the DfE. There was originally supposed to be a decision on these in May, however, this has been delayed by the government.
- One of these would be a smaller two-bed unit for people with complex needs, and the other would be a four-bed unit for those with complex emotional wellbeing issues. These would be people who needed more care but did not meet the criteria to be an inpatient in a mental health unit. These projects would be dependent on the capital bid.
- The Council were building internal fostering resources and there were now 226 children within Council foster care households and 132 external foster care organisations. There was around £640 per week difference between Council provision and external provision. Anything Councillors could do to champion in-house fostering would be welcomed.
- The majority of private care was profit-making.
- Around £5m per year was spent on supporting special guardians and family members and friends who had filed a residence order and were

taking children in. This was very cost-effective in supporting families to care for children and young people within a family network. This also delivered permanence for the child or young person. The costs to the Council for this process were considerably lower than fostering at £220 per week.

The Commission were invited to ask questions and make comments and the officers and the City Mayor to respond. Key points included:

- With regard to a query on the 32% variance in Departmental Overheads within City Developments and Neighbourhoods, it was clarified that this mainly related to a bad debt provision.
- Housing services were in a better position than anticipated, and the overspend had been reduced by £4m from the end of December.
- With regard to investment in children's homes, providing such facilities made sense, however, it would not be possible to eliminate the reliance on the private sector. However, the government recognised the need to support on this, therefore capital funding was made available to bid for, which could help a move towards not-for-profit care.
- It was noted the best way to promote fostering was to use people who have traction in their own communities, and there was potential to promote in community and faith groups.
- It was noted the variance at outturn compared to the original budget set was £40m. It was explained that the variance was mainly due to the significant work in social care to reduce costs and increase the funding from the NHS.
- It was confirmed the increase in the budget strategy reserve did not fundamentally change the budget the budget gap.
- Information requested on the Connexions service would be picked up outside the meeting.
- More information would be sought on intervention and care packages, and the issue of prevention would be taken up in Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission.
- It was noted the reduction in the forecast outturn was reflective of the work undertaken to increase our own temporary accommodation.

#### AGREED

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That comments made by members of this commission to be taken into account by the lead officers.

#### **143. CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING OUTTURN 2024/25**

The Director of Finance submitted a report showing the final position of the

capital programme for 2024/25.

The Committee was recommended to consider the overall position presented within this report and make any observations it saw fit.

The Commission were invited to ask questions and make comments and the officers to respond.

- It was noted that due to the nature of capital projects the budgets were not all expected to be spent in one year. In relation to work programmes it was confirmed a significant part of the slippage was mainly relating to fleet that had long lead times.
- It was confirmed Library Self Access roll-out was linked to the current review in libraries.
- It was noted that getting a contractor to work on the railway station development had been difficult, however, none of the money spent so far had been government grant funded.
- It was clarified that with regard to the St Paul's project, there had been attempts to engage with the owners to secure the building.

AGREED

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That comments made by members of this commission to be taken into account by the lead officers.

#### **144. INCOME COLLECTION OUTTURN 2024/25**

The Director of Finance submitted a report detailing progress made in collecting debts raised by the Council during 2024-25, together with debts outstanding and brought forward from the previous year. It also set out details of debts written off under delegated authority that it had not been possible to collect after reasonable effort and expense.

AGREED

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That comments made by members of this commission to be taken into account by the lead officers.

#### **145. REVIEW OF TREASURY MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES 2024/25**

The Director of Finance submits a report reviewing how the Council conducted its borrowing and investments during 2023/24.

The Committee were recommended to note the report and make comments to the Director of Finance and the Executive as they wish.

The Commission were invited to ask questions and make comments and the officers to respond. Key points included:

- The breakdown of the Lothbury Fund was welcomed, and this approach was encouraged.
- When questioned if there were any concerns about previous Treasury Advisors following the property fund, There were no concerns with treasury advisors past or present, and credit agencies were used to give the best advice possible at the time.

AGREED

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That comments made by members of this commission to be taken into account by the lead officers.

#### **146. SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT**

The City Barrister and Head of Standards submitted a report providing a summary of the Scrutiny Annual Report 2023-24.

The Chair presented the report:

- The outgoing Chair was thanked, as were colleagues who had previously been part of OSC.
- It was stressed that scrutiny was a fundamental part of governance, and it was aimed to continue to ensure that scrutiny members gave their all in the process to establish key lines of enquiry, and to deliver for the city's residents and challenge on where things could be done better.
- The Chair looked forward to a successful year of working and good scrutiny.

AGREED

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That comments made by members of this commission to be taken into account by the lead officers.
- 3) That the report be considered at Full Council.

#### **147. OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

It was requested that the recommendations on Adventure Playgrounds come to the next meeting of the Committee.

It was requested that a report on Community Asset Transfer policy come to the next meeting of the Committee.

The work programme for the Committee was noted.

**148. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

There being no other items of urgent business, the meeting closed at 20:44pm.

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## **Tracking of Petitions – Monitoring Report**

Overview Select Committee

Date of meeting: 24<sup>th</sup> September 2025

Lead officer: Jessica Skidmore

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### Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All Wards – Corporate Issue
- Report author: Jessica Skidmore
- Author contact details: Jessica.Skidmore@leicester.gov.uk
- Report version number: 1

## 1. Purpose of the Report

To provide Members with an update on the current status of responses to petitions against the Council's target of providing a formal response within 3 months of being referred to the Divisional Director.

## 2. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the current status of outstanding petitions and to agree to remove those petitions marked 'Petition Process Complete' from the report.

## 3. Detailed report

The Committee is responsible for monitoring the progress and outcomes of petitions received within the Council. An Exception Report, showing those petitions currently outstanding or for consideration at the current Overview Select Committee meeting is attached.

The Exception Report contains comments on the current progress on each of the petitions. The following colour scheme approved by the Committee is used to highlight progress and the report has now been re-arranged to list the petitions in their colour groups for ease of reference:

- **Red** – denotes those petitions for which a pro-forma has not been completed within three months of being referred to the Divisional Director.
- **Petition Process Complete** - denotes petitions for which a response pro-forma has sent to the relevant Scrutiny Commission Chair for comment, subsequently endorsed by the Lead Executive Member and the Lead Petitioner and Ward Members informed of the response to the petition.
- **Green** – denotes petitions for which officers have proposed a recommendation in response to a petition, and a response pro-forma has been sent to the relevant Scrutiny Commission Chair for comment, before being endorsed by the Lead Executive Member.
- **Amber** – denotes petitions which are progressing within the prescribed timescales, or have provided clear reasoning for why the three-month deadline for completing the response pro-forma has elapsed.

In addition, all Divisional Directors have been asked to ensure that details of **all** petitions received direct into the Council (not just those formally accepted via a Council Meeting or



similar) are passed to the Monitoring Officer for logging and inclusion on this monitoring schedule.

## **6. Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency and other implications**

There are no legal, financial or other implications arising from this report.

## **7. Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972**

The Council's current overall internal process for responding to petitions.

## **8. Summary of appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Table of Current petitions.

## **9. Is this a private report (If so, please indicate the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?**

No

## **10. Is this a “key decision”? If so, why?**

No



Date Petition referred to Divisional Director	Received From	Subject	Type - Cncr (C) Public (P)	No. of Sig	Ward	Lead Divisional Director	Current Position	Current Status
11/04/2024	Cllr Dave	Peebles Way	(c)	45	Rushey Mead	Sean Atterbury	<i>Petition is in the last stages of being finalised and would be sent out for sign off in due course. Petition has been chased and is awaiting update.</i>  Another meeting has been arranged between officers and ward councillors. Pro-forma expected to be received by Governance Services on 22nd September	RED
17/06/2024	Marcia Stewart	Oakland Avenue	(p)	137	Rushey Mead	Andrew L Smith	<i>A meeting is due with Cllr Dave prior to being presented to Executive Lead Member, Cllr Whittle. It is expected to be finalised by the end of April 2025. Petition has been chased and is awaiting update.</i>  Another meeting has been arranged between officers and ward councillors. Pro-forma expected to be received by Governance Services on 22nd September	RED
06/12/2024	Lucas Mouat	Renovate Basketball Court in Victoria Park	(P)	21	Castle	Sean Atterbury	<i>Petition pro-forma has been issued to the Scrutiny Chair for comment and sign off.</i>  The petition has been signed off by both the scrutiny Chair and Executive Lead and sent back to the lead officer to be executed.	COMPLETE
30/04/2025	Cllr Singh Patel	Road Humps on Rosedale Avenue	(c)	34	Rushey Mead	Andrew L Smith	<i>Petition has been sent to Lead Director</i>  Lead officer has advised that a pro-forma would be provided on 22nd September	AMBER
25/06/2025	Mr / Mrs Jadeja	Parking Issues on Melton Road	(p)	10	Rushey Mead	Andrew L Smith	Petition sent to lead Director	GREEN
25/06/2025	Lezley Finch	New Residential Parking Scheme in South Highfields Zone E	(p)	79	Stoneygate	Andrew L Smith	Petition sent to lead Director	GREEN
06/08/2025	Linda Scott	Speed Limit and Road Cushions on Bryony Road	(p)	6	Humberstone & Hamilton	Andrew L Smith	Petition sent to lead Director	GREEN
06/08/2025	Jaikishan Cantilal	Permit parking Scheme on Gpsy Road	(p)	67	Rushey Mead	Andrew L Smith	Petition sent to lead Director	GREEN
28/08/2025	Andy Little	Stop the Proposed School Street for St John the Baptist School	(p)	28	Castle	Andrew L Smith	Petition sent to lead Director	GREEN
04/09/2025	Cllr Malik and Cllr Batool	One-Way Traffic Flow at Dorothy Roundabout	(c)	138	Spinney Hills	Andrew L Smith	Petition sent to lead Director	GREEN
05/09/2025	Cllr Sood	Neighbourhood Conditions in London Road, Victoria Avenue and Victoria Alley Area	(c)	15	Stoneygate	Sean Atterbury	Petition sent to lead Director	GREEN
08/09/2025	B. M. Parmar	Overdue Maintenance of Pine Tree Avenue	(p)	55	Humberstone & Hamilton	Andrew L Smith	Petition sent to lead Director	GREEN



# **Leicester City Council**

## **Scrutiny Review**

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**A review of the changes to the Council  
Tax Support Scheme**

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**A Review Report of the Overview  
Select Committee**

**June-August 2025**

## Contents

	Page
<b>Chair's Foreword .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1     Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>2</b>
1.1   Background to the Review .....	2
1.1   Review Approach .....	3
1.2   Recommendations .....	3
1.3   Summary of the Working Group Findings .....	3
<b>2     Financial, Legal and Other Implications .....</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1   Financial Implications .....	5
3.2   Legal Implications .....	5
3.3   Equality Implications .....	5
<b>3     Summary of Appendices .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4     Officers to Contact.....</b>	<b>6</b>

# Overview Select Committee

## Committee Members:

Councillor Joel (Chair)  
Councillor March  
Councillor Batool  
Councillor Waddington  
Councillor Pickering  
Councillor Zaman  
Councillor O'Neill  
Councillor Rae Bhatia  
Councillor Osman  
Councillor Dave  
Councillor Kitterick  
Councillor Porter

## Evidence Presented by:

Amy Oliver  
James Rattenberry  
Cory Laywood  
Councillor Bonham (Case Study)

## Chair's Foreword

It is of importance when significant changes are made to Council policies, like the Council Tax Support Scheme that thorough scrutiny is undertaken to ensure the proposed changes have the impact anticipated. This then allows recommendations to be made to the Executive on areas of improvement.

This task group has been able to review the impact of the new Council Tax Support Scheme that came into place from April 2025 and look at areas of potential improvements and model alternatives.

To enable this the group was presented with a range of information about the previous scheme, the new scheme and individual case studies. This has enabled us to make the recommendations for improvements to the new scheme. I would like to thank the members for being active in this group, putting forward ideas where warranted, and I would also like to thank the officers involved for providing detailed and comprehensive evidence and information that has allowed our members to provide optimal scrutiny.

I very much hope that the recommendations made by the group are considered carefully by the Executive.

**Councillor Joel**

**Chair, Overview Select Committee**

# **1 Executive Summary**

## **1.1 Background to the Review**

- 1.1.1. In January 2025 Council approved changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme (CTSS) following a consultation and scrutiny at Overview Select Committee. The changes to the scheme came in affect from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025.
- 1.1.2. The new CTSS impacted households of working age where the policy is determined by the Council. Pensioners were not impacted by the changes to the scheme as the support provided is under the rules prescribed by Central Government.
- 1.1.3. A task group was convened to better allow Councillors to understand the effects of the new scheme and to consider alternatives and potential changes to the proposed scheme.
- 1.1.4. It was recognised the previous scheme was no longer fit for purpose following the introduction of Universal Credit. The previous scheme was complicated and often led to regular reassessments regularly resetting instalments due and leading to households getting into arrears.
- 1.1.5. The intended key features of the new scheme were:
  - To support vulnerable households with them receiving a maximum discount of 100% of a Band C property council tax liability, increased from 80% of a band B property.
  - Other households (non-vulnerable) continue to receive a maximum discount of 80% of a band B property.
  - The scheme remained means-tested based on household weekly income but is simplified, with household income defined within weekly income bands. This means small changes in income will not trigger a support recalculation. Most incomes would be included, with only Child Benefit and UC Housing Costs continuing to be disregarded.
  - A simplified calculation of non-dependant deductions with a proposed deduction of 20% (of any CTS award) where a non-dependant resides within the household. A 20% reduction shall be made for every non-dependant resident who would have attracted a deduction under the previous scheme, which included exemptions for households with disability and students.
  - Disregards for childcare costs and the capital limit of £6,000 would be unaffected.



- There are additional allowances to protect the incomes of households with three or more children, beyond the “two child cap” which previously applied.

## **1.1 Review Approach**

### **1.1.1 The review took place in 3 parts:**

- Part 1 – Councillors were provided an overview of the new system and how it compares to the previous system and alternative models. (Appendix 1)
- Part 2 –Councillors were provided with updated statistics and analysis of the data to ascertain how the new scheme has affected citizens, this included a review of the communications with those impacted by the changes to the scheme. Councillors asked for alternatives to be modelled and to be presented at the final meeting. (Appendix 2)
- Part 3 – Councillors considered potential changes to the scheme including information provided on a case study and made recommendations. Appendix 3 considers the alternative models considered.

## **1.2 Recommendations**

The Executive are asked to consider the following recommendations:

- 1.2.1 For a household where both partners receive a PIP to exclude 50% of PIP from the income calculation.
- 1.2.2 For households with four or more children, the first income band is increased from the current £250 to a proposed £300. This would provide support at 100% for vulnerable households or up to 80% for non-vulnerable.
- 1.2.3 The additional £250k of the discretionary support scheme be extended beyond two years.

## **1.3 Summary of the Working Group Findings**

- 1.3.1 The working group considered the data presented by officers and communications sent to taxpayers in relation to CTSS. In addition, we considered advice on the requirements to complete a consultation and any potential equality implications of changes to the scheme.
- 1.3.2 Following the work of the task group it is positive to note that the communications to taxpayers have been changed to ensure that they are clear and concise, and assurance was provided around the advertising of the discretionary scheme and support for those struggling to pay their Council Tax.

- 1.3.3 This report does propose some changes to the scheme to reduce the impact on those that have been adversely impacted and an extension of the discretionary support beyond the current two years. Details on the proposals are provided below:

**Recommendation 1 - For a household where both partners receive a PIP to exclude 50% of PIP from the income calculation.**

Less than 200 households were identified where two people received PIP. Of those 75 would have been identified to be entitled to CTS if only one member received PIP. Within the current scheme each of these households were automatically awarded Council Tax Discretionary Relief, this is at a cost of £28,000.

To include this as part of the scheme would come at nil cost to the authority but would require consultation and a decision of Council. Alternatively officers can continue to review applications and awards to award the equivalent award of Council Tax Discretionary Relief, which would not require a change to the scheme.

**Recommendation 2 - For households with four or more children, the first income band is increased from the current £250 to a proposed £300. This would provide support at 100% for vulnerable households or up to 80% for non-vulnerable.**

The adoption of this change would benefit approximately 2,775. The cost of implementing this proposal would be a total of £375k a year. This is broken down in to £325k in the increased support provided and £50k for the increased administration. To amend the scheme to include this change would require consultation and a decision of Council.

**Recommendation 3 - The additional £250k of the discretionary support scheme be extended beyond two years.**

The Council increased the budget by £250k for the first two years of the scheme to support households adversely impacted by the changes in the Council Tax Support Scheme. As much as there is a budget for Council Tax Discretionary Relief, it was noted that even if the budget is fully allocated anyone eligible under the scheme would still receive the relief.

## **2 Financial, Legal and Other Implications**

### **2.1 Financial Implications**

The Council Tax Support scheme was introduced from April 2025 to ensure a simplified scheme and generated savings of £1.6m a year. The impact of each recommendation is provided below.

#### **Recommendation 1**

To exclude 50% of PIP for a household where a couple both receive PIP from the income calculation, would have nil impact on the budget as this is already provided through Council Tax Discretionary Relief.

#### **Recommendation 2**

To increase the weekly income to £300 for households with four or more children would cost the Council £375k a year.

#### **Recommendation 3**

The extend additional discretionary relief beyond the two years would come at an additional cost of £250k a year. It is important to note as much as there is a budget for discretionary relief, if the budget was fully committed but a household was entitled under the policy, we would not be able to refuse the relief due to the budget being fully committed.

If all the recommendations were implemented the total cost to the Council by 2027/28, is estimated to be circa £625k

Amy Oliver, 16<sup>th</sup> September 2025

### **2.2 Legal Implications**

The procedural considerations, by way of the likely need for consultation and a fresh decision by Council are covered in the main body of the report. Continuation of the Discretionary Scheme is also an option because, in law, it cannot be capped by a nominal cash limit if qualifying applicants come forward.

Kamal Adatia, City Barrister  
11 September 2025

### **2.3 Equality Implications**

An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken on the Council Tax Support Scheme which was introduced in April 2025.

If changes are proposed to the scheme based on the three recommendations, a full EIA will need to be undertaken prior to any consultation taking place, this is to ensure that equality impacts have been considered in the development of the proposals and as an integral part of the decision-making process.

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

Sukhi Biring, Equalities Officer  
9 September 2025

## **2.4 Climate Change Implications**

There are no direct climate emergency implications associated with this report.

Phil Ball, Sustainability Officer, Ext 372246  
9 September 2025

## **3 Summary of Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Presentation at first meeting.  
Appendix 2 – Summary of first meeting.  
Appendix 3 – Presentation at second meeting.  
Appendix 4 – Summary of second meeting.  
Appendix 5 – Summary of third meeting.

## **4 Officers to Contact**

Amy Oliver – Director of Finance  
Ed Brown – Senior Governance Officer







# Scrutiny Review: Council Tax Support Scheme

Overview Select Committee  
Part 1 - June 2025

James Rattenberry  
Benefits Business Lead  
Manager

In January 2025 the Council adopted a simplified “banded” council tax support scheme intended to:

- Make it easier to apply for and understand support;
- Reduce the number of times we make changes to amounts awarded;
- Increase support to the most vulnerable households;
- Make the scheme easier to administer;
- Make the system work better for those receiving universal credit (UC); and
- Reduce the overall costs of the scheme to help the Council address future budget deficits.

OSC would like to monitor the progress of the implementation and understand what the implications of the changes are.





# Purpose, aims & scope



## **Monitor the new scheme as it is implemented**

- ◇ Consider the data collected regarding the rollout of the new scheme



## **Make assessments from the data gathered on how well it is working**

- ◇ How successful has the new scheme been?
- ◇ Which citizens have benefitted, and which have lost out relative to the previous scheme?

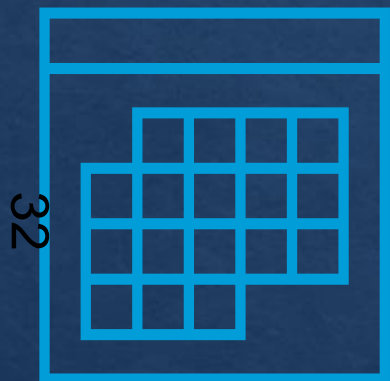


## **Consider if anything needs to be changed**

- ◇ How can the scheme be monitored?
- ◇ What recommendations can be made as to how the scheme could be amended?

# Timetable

- ◆ **Part 1: June 2025** meeting will provide members with an overview of the new system and how it compares to the previous system and alternative models.
- ◆ **Part 2: July 2025** meeting will provide members with updated statistics and to analyse the data to ascertain how the new scheme has affected citizens.
- ◆ **Part 3: August 2025** meeting will allow members to digest the data and make recommendations on how those who have lost out could be helped, and whether any alternatives could be explored.
- ◆ **January 2026 - 2026/27** CTSS must be adopted by full Council to coincide with the setting of the council tax base.

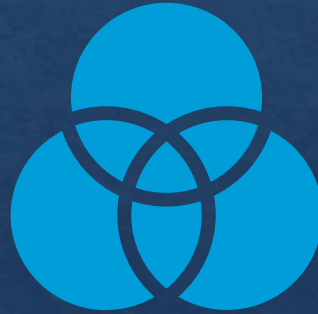


# OSC Task Group – Part 1 session

33



**Overview of the new  
system**



**Comparison to the  
previous system**



**Alternative models**



# Overview of the Previous System

- ◇ Introduced in 2013 after government abolished Council Tax Benefit (CTB). Initially subsidised at 90% of CTB expenditure and subsequently folded into core funding and eroded by cuts. Unchanged since before Universal Credit was introduced.
- ◇ Complex means-tested discount to council tax bills closely related to Housing Benefit. Over 80% of claimants received maximum 80% support, despite income varying between £72 and over £1,000 per week.
- ◇ Changes were only made for working-age households – pensioners council tax support is unchanged.



Someone with more than £6,000 in capital and savings.



Someone entitled to less than £4.65 per week (less than 14-20% of their bill)



Someone whose household income is higher than their calculated needs.



Someone with additional adults living in the household, particularly if they earn money.



Someone in a Band C or higher property – awards are capped at Band B.

**NO SUPPORT**

**REDUCED SUPPORT**

# Why we were making the changes

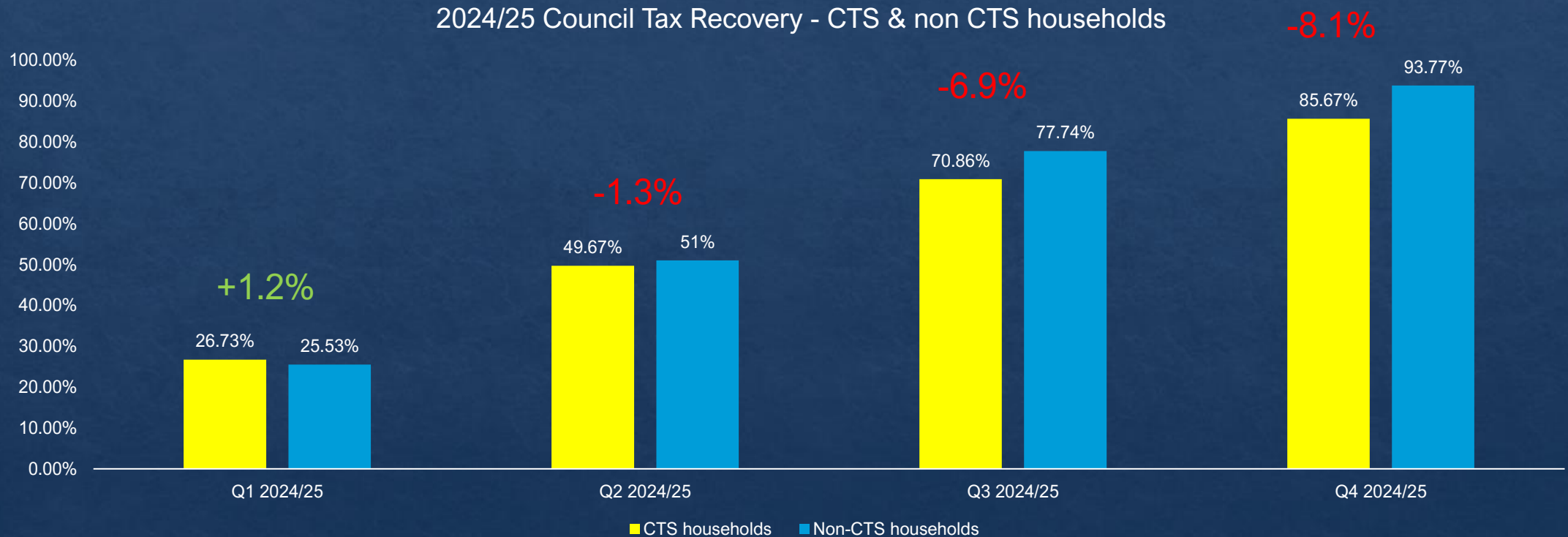
It was complex both for residents and staff, particularly following the introduction of Universal Credit.

Entitlement was recalculated regularly, leading to multiple tax bills showing different discounts, making it difficult for households to budget. The scheme was putting taxpayers in to debt through no fault of their own.

The scheme was not targeted towards the most vulnerable, who are least able to find work.

The Council's financial position means we needed to find ways to save money, as many other local authorities are also having to. The scheme was costly to administer and inflexible when considering savings opportunities.

# Bill recalculations – why they matter



Previously, CTS households fell into arrears late in the year as a result of repeated recalculations and changing payment dates leaving unsustainably high bills due by the final quarter.





# Overview of the new system

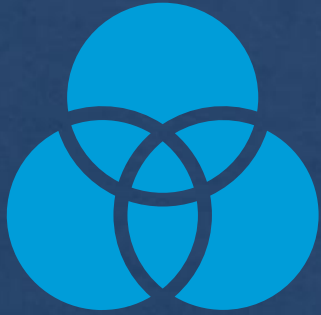
- ◆ The assessment is **simple**, with household income put into **income bands**. This means small changes will no longer trigger a recalculation.
- ◆ Almost all incomes taken into account including disability-related income. The only incomes disregarded are:
  - ◆ Child Benefit & Childcare Costs
  - ◆ Housing Benefit & Universal Credit Housing Costs
- ◆ **Vulnerable** households (receiving a disability benefit or a full-time carer) receive a maximum discount of **100%** of a **Band C** property tax. One in five households is considered “vulnerable”.
- ◆ Other households receive a maximum discount of **80%** of a **band B** property.
- ◆ The calculation of deductions for **additional adults** in a household is simplified, applying either 20% or no deduction.
- ◆ The capital limit of £6,000 is unaffected.

Vulnerable						
Income Band	Discount	Single Person	Couple with no children	Couple or Lone Parent with one child/young person	Couple or Lone Parent with two or more children/young persons	Couple/Lone Parent with three or more children/young persons
Weekly Net Income (after tax and N.I.)						
1	100%	£0 to £150	£0 to £150	£0 to £150	£0 to £200	£0 to £250
2	80%	£150.01 to £225	£150.01 to £225	£150.01 to £300	£200.01 to £350	£250.01 to £400
3	60%	£225.01 to £275	£225.01 to £275	£300.01 to £350	£350.01 to £400	£400.01 to £450
4	40%	£275.01 to £325	£275.01 to £325	£350.01 to £400	£400.01 to £450	£450.01 to £500
5	20%	£325.01 to £375	£325.01 to £375	£400.01 to £450	£450.01 - £500	£500.01 to £550
6	0%	£375.01+	£375.01+	£450.01+	£500.01 +	£550.01

38

Other						
Income Band	Discount	Single Person	Couple with no children	Couple or Lone Parent with one child/young person	Couple or Lone Parent with two or more children/young persons	Couple/Lone Parent with three or more children/young persons
Weekly Net Income (after tax and N.I.)						
1	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2	80%	£0 to £150	£0 to £150	£0 to £150	£0 to £200	£0 to £250
3	60%	£150.01 to £225	£150.01 to £225	£150.01 to £300	£200.01 to £350	£250.01 to £400
4	40%	£225.01 to £275	£225.01 to £275	£300.01 to £350	£350.01 to £400	£400.01 to £450
5	20%	£275.01 to £325	£275.01 to £325	£350.01 to £400	£400.01 to £450	£450.01 to £500
6	0%	£325.01	£325.01	£400.01	£450.01	£500.01





# Comparison to previous system

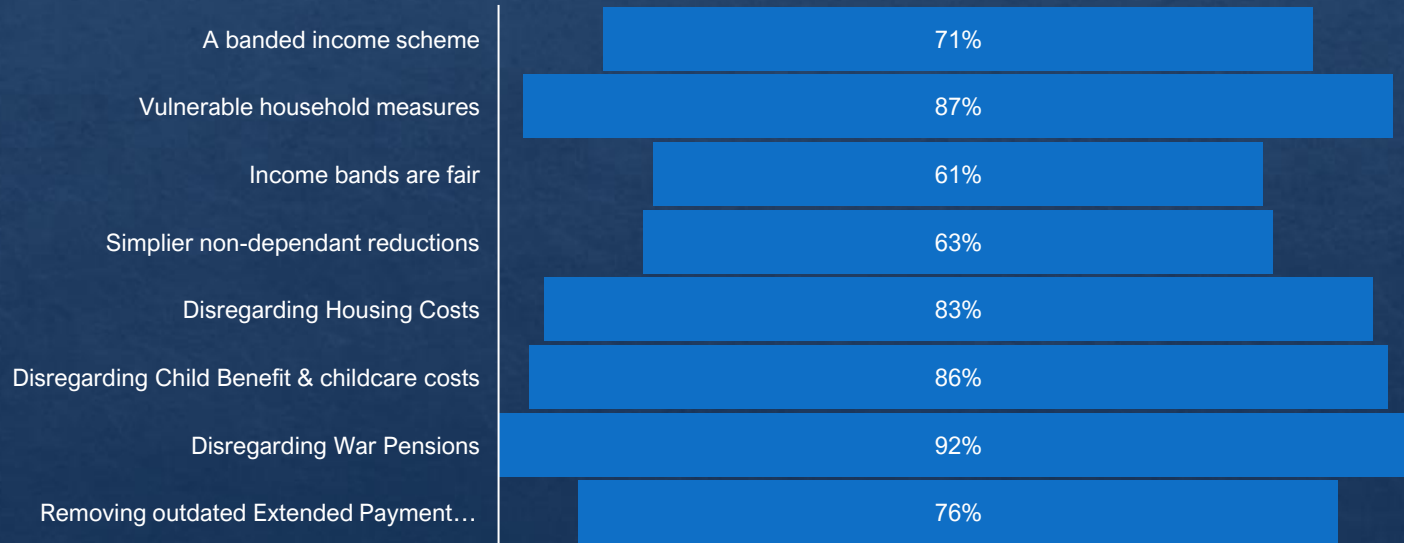
- ◆ **Simpler** - Simplified CTS letters & bills, UC notifications adopted as applications, website redesigned and online forms updated
- ◆ **Less changes** – significantly less changes now expected to lead to new bill and instalments issued
- ◆ **Increased support for most vulnerable** – 15% of households receive 100% support, £2m more support for the lowest incomes
- ◆ **Easier to administer** – more than 50% of changes will be automated in 25/26 (up from less than 30%), including most UC changes
- ◆ **Reduce overall scheme costs** – reliable projected figure not yet known, but savings are anticipated

# Improved support for vulnerable households

- ◆ As noted, the lowest income households are receiving £2m in extra support
- ◆ Council Tax Discretionary Relief increased by 50% to £750,000 for 25/26 and 26/27
  - ◆ over 500 have now received £175,000 in support
- ◆ £500k of HSF funding also used to clear Council Tax debts of 1,400 vulnerable CTS households

# Feedback and changes post-consultation

Our 2024 consultation indicated broad support, although weakest around issues of the fairness of income and bands.



The scheme adopted reflected these concerns by **increasing the number of bands** (from 100/75/50/25% to 100/80/60/40/20%) and **increasing support available** to households with **three or more children**.



# Early feedback so far

- No more complaints about CTSS than in 24/25
- 48 queries received from Members and officers
- Early signs of improved collection for those receiving CTS



# Alternative models

- ◆ The three main methods of amending the scheme would be:

- ◆ **Changing the number of bands** (the percentage 'steps' based on income),

Advantages – arguably 'fairer' – more sensitive to change and reduces 'cliff edge' effect of large changes in award following small changes for some households

Disadvantages – increases the number of changes that lead to bill recalculations, increasing instalments later in the year

- ◆ **Changing the number of categories** (the columns based on household composition)

Advantages – could provide additional support to the 'most' vulnerable (e.g. large families)

Disadvantages – increases scheme complexity and potentially cost

- ◆ **Adding more income disregards** (in addition to child benefit etc)

Advantages – higher awards for households receiving certain incomes (e.g. PIP)

Disadvantages – increases scheme complexity and scheme with both large income bands and significant amounts of disregards would be open to a much larger cohort of households

# At the next meeting we propose to present

Full data analysis will be provided at the next session – the caseload remains ‘in flux’ and over 800 new CTS claims were processed in the first three weeks of May alone.

44

- ◆ Provide updated statistics and to analyse the data to ascertain how the new scheme has affected citizens.
- ◆ Establish which groups have on average seen entitlement increased or decreased.
- ◆ Update on the recovery of Council Tax debt for CTS and non-CTS households.



# Any questions?







## Council Tax Support Scheme Task Group – Session 1

The Benefits Business Lead Manager delivered an introductory presentation on the Council Tax Support Scheme (CTSS), outlining the scope of the task group and the objectives of the sessions (as detailed in the scoping document and presentation slides).

Key points noted included:

- The current CTSS was adopted in January 2025 and came into effect in April 2025. Its objectives were to simplify administration, ensure consistency, reduce overall costs, and increase support to the most vulnerable households (defined as disabled individuals with the lowest incomes, with caring responsibilities or families with disabled children).
- The previous CTSS, adopted in 2013 after the abolition of Council Tax Benefit (CTB), was funded by a one-off grant. Local authorities were mandated to design their own working-age schemes. There had not been any subsequent identifiable funding, and council income was now primarily derived from council tax and business rates.
- This old regime was complex and heavily based on pre-2013 CTB rules, with any income change leading to frequent bill recalculation. The recalculation of bills led to suspension of payment schedules and the reissuance of new bills, which left the recipients with unsustainably large instalments towards the end of the year (data comparisons showed households entitled to Council Tax Support (CTS) struggled more with payments than those not entitled, particularly towards the end of the year).
- Additionally, entitlements were hard to calculate without expert knowledge and there was virtually no correlation between household income and the amount of support received.
- The final adopted scheme was expected to realise savings of approximately £1.3m per year.

Specific changes introduced by the new CTSS were;

1. A simplified 'banded' scheme, awarded in 'bands' of 100, 80, 60, 40 or 20%. Most changes would not result in CTS fluctuation and bill recalculation, allowing for better financial planning.
2. Most income was taken into account, with the exceptions of Child Benefit, Housing Benefit, Universal Credit Housing Costs, and deductions for Childcare costs.
3. Allowances for households in the 'vulnerable' scheme were one band (20% of Council Tax) more generous compared to those who were not, up to 100% - e.g. a vulnerable single household with an income of £200 per week would receive 80% rather than 60% support.
4. Increased support for the most vulnerable, with 15% of CTSS households receiving 100%. The lowest-income households received £2m in extra support.
5. Applications for Universal Credit were automatically treated as applications for CTS, which had reversed a long-term decline in the number receiving support.
6. Discretionary support increased by 50%, from £500k to £750k for this year and next; over 500 households had already received support totalling £175k. Additionally,

£500k of HSF funding had been utilised to clear more than half of the arrears of 1500 vulnerable households, that had got in to arrears due to the flaws in the old scheme.

7. In response to feedback, the number of scheme bands was increased from 4 to 5, and households with three or more children received additional income protection (removing the '2-child cap').

It was further noted that;

- Tracking had been set up to compare payment behaviours between those on CTS and those not, to assess the effectiveness of the new scheme. Initial feedback suggested no more complaints about CTSS than in 24/25.
- Some alternative models were proposed, as well as their disadvantages (detailed in the slides).
- Any recommendations of amendments to the scheme would require public consultation before the council tax base adoption in January 2026.

In response to questions and requests from the task group members, the Director of Finance made the following points:

- The standard letter that goes out had been simplified.
- Officers were not aware that any national studies on CTS had been conducted since the one by the IFS in 2019; members were encouraged to share any known research.
- Officers could look to postpone the next meeting to allow data to be shared with members in advance. However, it was critical to retain the August date to ensure that proposals are presented to the Executive a few weeks after.

The background of the slide is a dense field of 3D-rendered numbers in various shades of blue and white. The numbers are of different sizes and are scattered across the entire frame, creating a sense of depth and complexity. Some numbers are prominent in the foreground, while others recede into the background.

# Scrutiny Review: Council Tax Support Scheme

Overview Select Committee  
Part 2 - July 2025

James Rattenberry

Benefits Business Lead  
Manager

# Contents

Financial impacts on the Council

Council Tax collection rates and monitoring

How the caseload changed

Impacts by household type

Households with supplementary disability income (PIP)

Council Tax Discretionary Relief expenditure

National trends and comparisons



# What are the financial impacts on the Council?

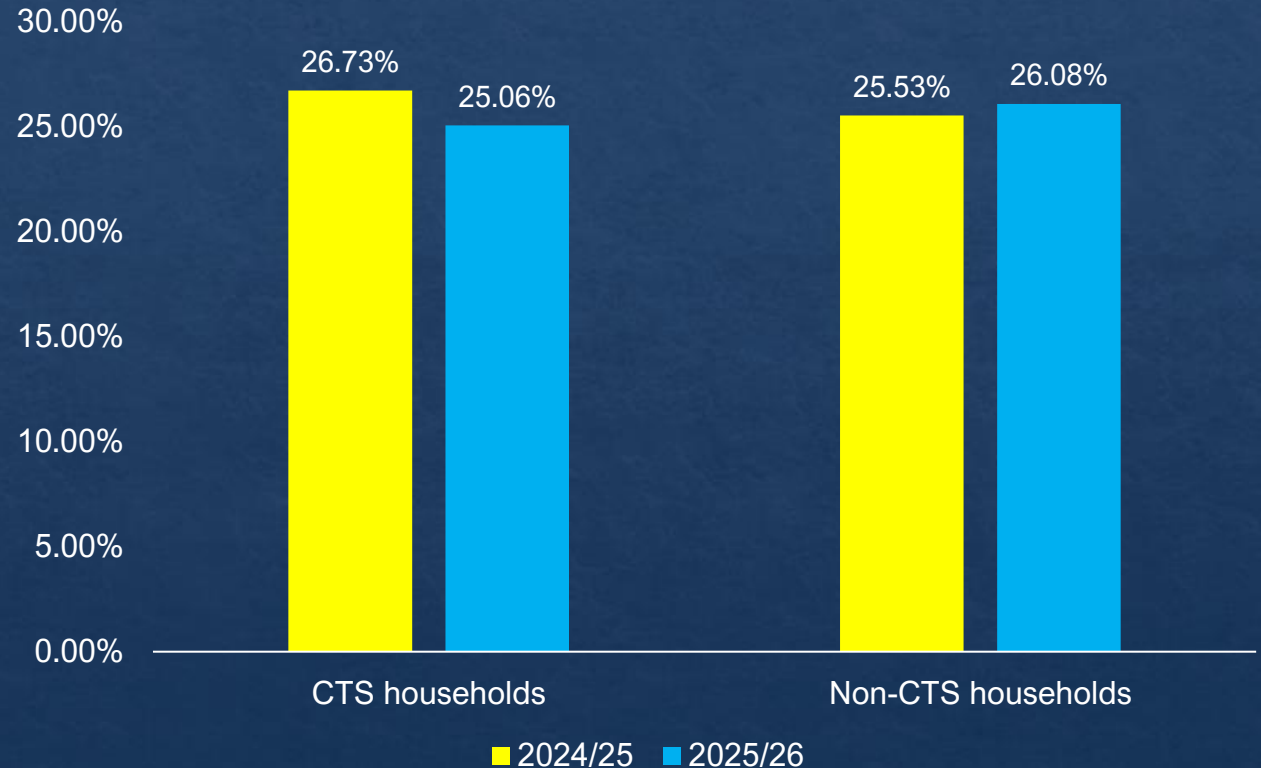
- ◆ Committed expenditure towards working age CTS as of 1<sup>st</sup> April reduced from **£14.3m** in 2024/25 to **£11.7m** in 2025/26.
- ◆ This represents a projected saving of **£2.2m** to the Council.
- ◆ This will reduce if more households become eligible throughout the year.

# Council Tax collection rates & monitoring

At this early stage, recovery is comparable to previous years. This also includes a small amount of CTS and non-CTS households paying their CT bill in full.

52 In previous years, CTS households were more able to meet payments due in first quarters before falling behind in Q3 + 4, with CTS households ending the year 8 percentage points behind non-CTS households. We anticipate that this will improve due to fewer recalculations and more stable payment schedules.

Q1 CT Recovery 2024/25 - 2025/26



# Summons & liability order data

	Working-age CTS households		Non-CTS households	
For 2025/26 Council Tax due	Number	%	Number	%
<b>Bill stage (up-to-date with payments)</b>	9,879	74.2%	112,305	87.9%
<b>Reminder issued</b>	1,541	11.4%	8,075	6.3%
<b>Final notice issued</b>	430	3.2%	1,942	1.5%
<b>Summons issued</b>	40	0.3%	184	0.1%
<b>Liability Order</b>	575	4.3%	3,274	2.6%
<b>Later recovery stage</b>	889	6.6%	2,026	1.6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	13,354		127,806	

Overall reminders and summonses issued are at a comparable level to 2023/24 – recovery stages were delayed in 2024/25 as a result of the cyber incident.

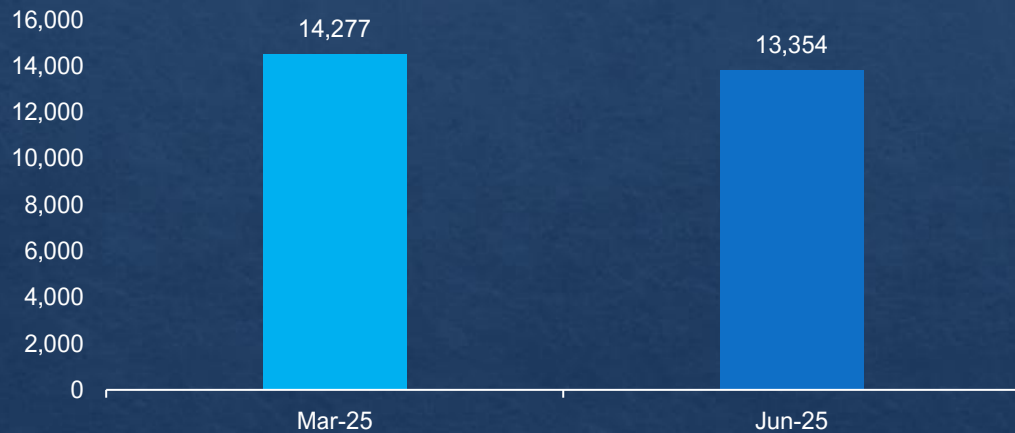
5% of both working-age CTS and non-CTS households have paid their Council Tax in full to date (not including households receiving 100% support).



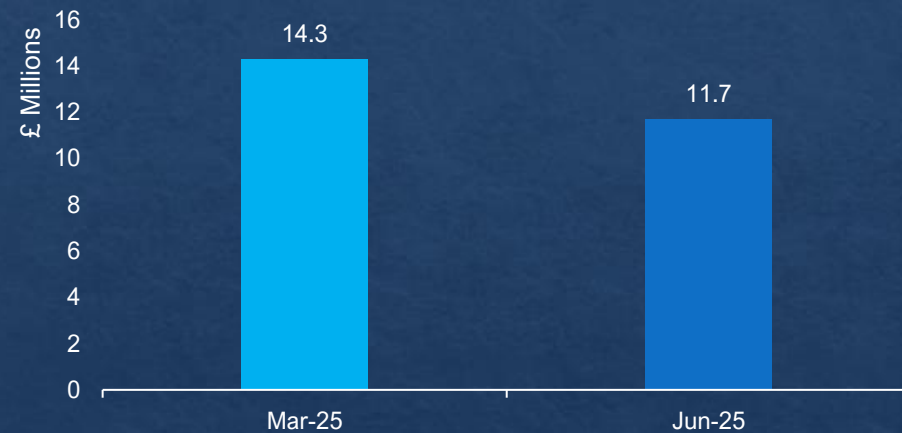
# How the caseload changed - numbers

54

Working-age CTS households March to June 2025



Estimated value of working-age CTS March to June 2025



Between March and April just over 1,500 households ceased to qualify for CTS. Since then, the caseload has increased as new households qualify.

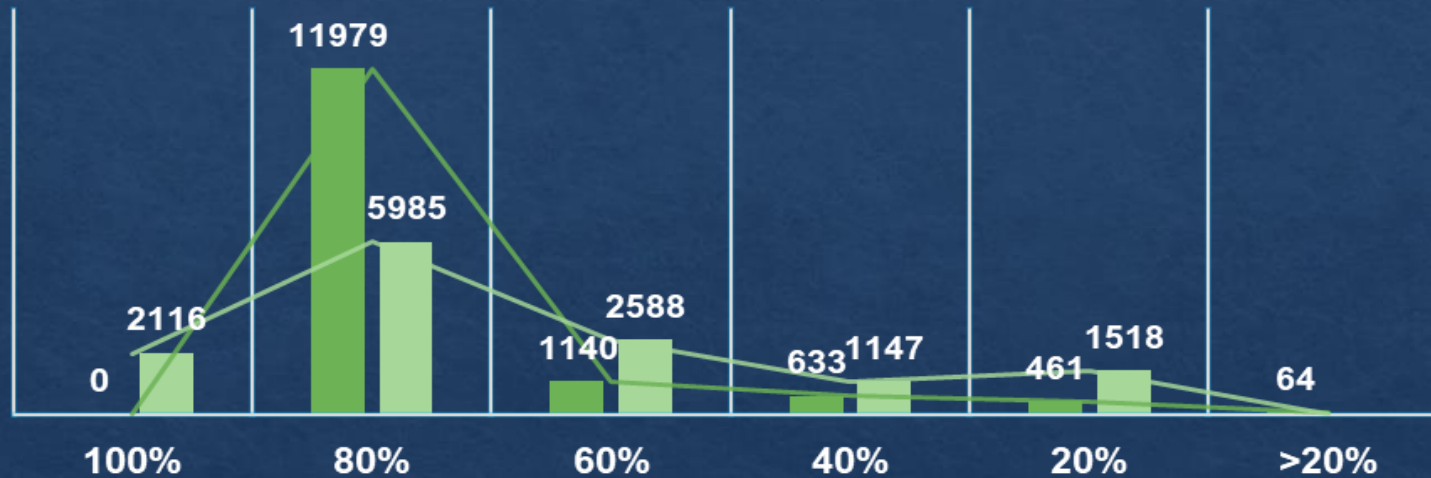
The amount of support provided on average has decreased – New households now qualifying for CTS are primarily low-income UC households with some earnings who would not have previously qualified.



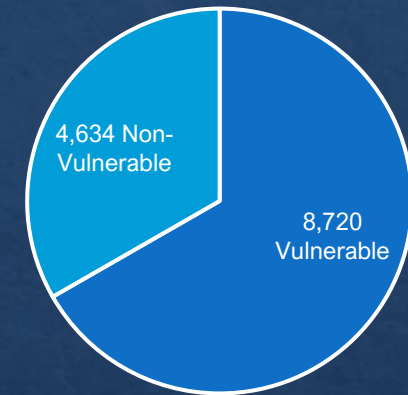
# How the caseload changed - awards

## Working-Age CTS Awards 2024/25 - 2025/26

■ 2024/25 ■ 2025/26

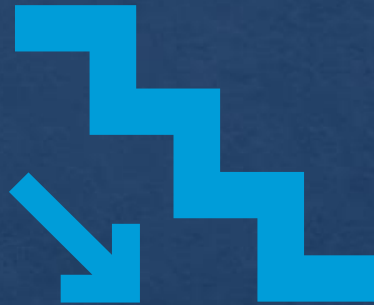
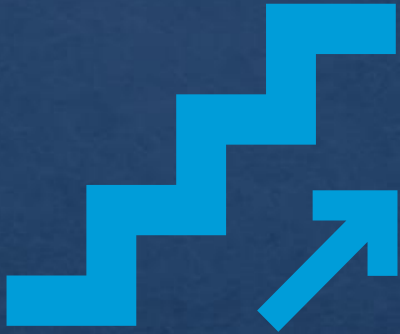


Working Age CTS 2025/26 - by status



- Scheme is now significantly more reflective of income determining % award
- Much more even spread of support rather than over the overwhelming majority all receiving 80%
- 15% of households now receive 100% support
- Support is now more reflective of income

# Increases and reductions in CTS



## Increased:

4,114 households

Average:

£4.90 per week  
£255 per year

Cost: £1.05m

## Decreased:

6,579 households (including  
1,363 ceased and not reapplied)

Average (including ceased):

£11.90 per week  
£619 per year

Saving: £4m

## New households:

817 households

Average:

£9.42 per week  
£490 per year

Cost: £0.42m

# CTS Awards - Impacts by household type

	March 2025		June 2025		% change
	Number	%	Number	%	
Single	7,148	51	7,322	55	4
Couple no children	1,399	10	908	7	-3
Lone parent	4,057	28	3931	29	1
Couple with children	1,673	11	1,193	9	-2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14,277</b>		<b>13,354</b>		



Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is a non-means-tested, non-taxable UK benefit for individuals with long-term health conditions or disabilities, awarded to help with daily living needs regardless of income or savings.

### Impact of Including PIP in Income Assessments:

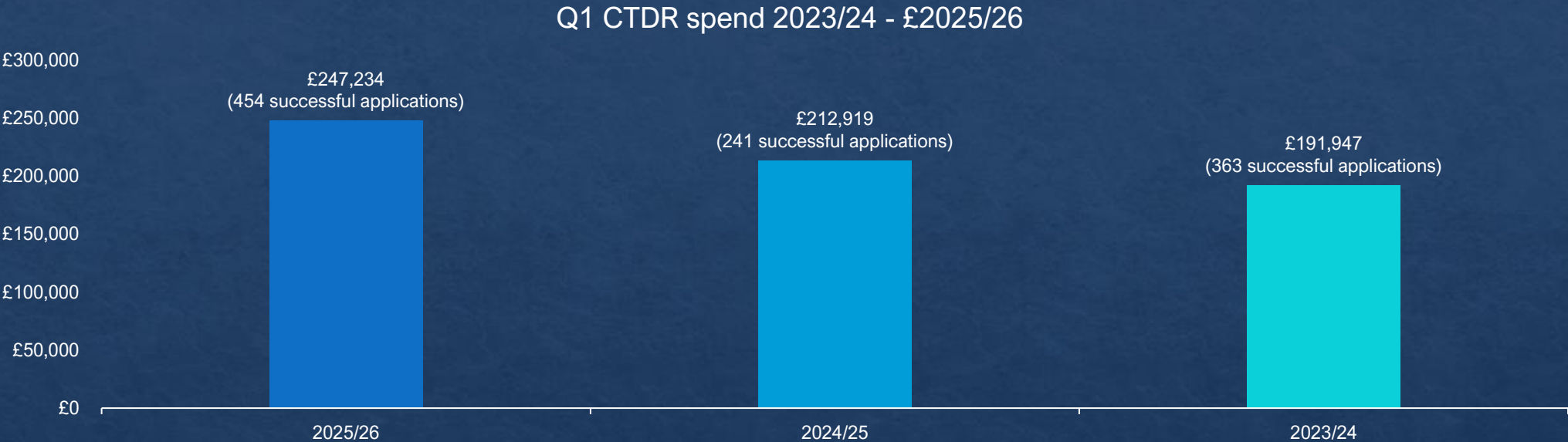
- ◆ 4,181 working-age households had an award of PIP and CTS last year.
  - ◆ 286 are better off overall or have the same entitlement.
  - ◆ 2,578 have a reduced entitlement.
  - ◆ 1,317 no longer qualify for the scheme.
  - ◆ On average, PIP households saw entitlement reduce by £13.14 per week or £683.28 per year.
- ◆ 181 of these households have already paid their annual bill in full.
- ◆ 75 households were automatically supported with CTDR (due to having both members of a couple receiving PIP).

	On PIP + W/A no longer on CTS		On PIP + W/A still on CTS	
For 2025/26 Council Tax due	Number	%	Number	%
<b>Up-to-date with payments at 30/06/25</b>	995	75.6%	2,046	71.4%
<b>Reminder issued</b>	192	14.6%	362	12.6%
<b>Final notice issued</b>	48	3.6%	91	3.2%
<b>Summons issued</b>	1	0.0%	8	0.3%
<b>Liability Order</b>	56	4.3%	127	4.4%
<b>Later recovery stage</b>	25	1.9%	230	8.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	1,317		2,864	
Had CTDR for current year (25/26)	107	8.1%	96	3.4%
Paid in full:	26	2.0%	155	5.4%

- ❖ Households previously on PIP & CTS who no longer receive it are more likely to maintain payments than the average on CTS, but are less likely to have paid in full. Over 8% have received help with CTDR.
- ❖ Households on PIP still receiving CTDR are slightly less likely to be up-to-date with payments but over 5% have already paid in full.
- ❖ Disregarding PIP in full under the current scheme would cost over £3m.

# Council Tax Discretionary Relief –support provided

60



As of 1<sup>st</sup> July we have received 611 applications for CTDR.

We have processed 522 of these requests so far and have supported 454 households, with nearly £250k spent.

Current projections indicate spend will remain within the £750k allocation and are comparable with previous years.



# National CTS trends and comparisons

- ◆ 21% of Local Authorities made changes to their scheme this year
- ◆ Most common change was to increase minimum payments (28 LAs), although 18 did decrease for some claimants (as we did)
- ◆ Over 40% of schemes in England are now simplified 'banded' schemes (126)
- ◆ Limited data available on specific incomes – most banded schemes known to be taking some disability income into account – but this is not known to include PIP.

# Comparable LAs – a complex picture

	Banded scheme?	Protected scheme?	Minimum payment?	Protect 3+ children?
<b>Leicester</b>	Y	Y	N - up to 100% Protected Scheme only (disabled or carer) or 80%	Y
<b>Derby</b>	N	N	Y – up to 70% only	N (up to 2+ children )
<b>Nottingham</b>	N	N	Y = up to 80% only	Y
<b>Leeds</b>	N	Y	N up to 100% Protected Scheme only (disabled, carers, lone parent with child under 5) or 75%	N (no allowances for children)
<b>Barnsley</b>	Y	N	Y (up to 92.8% only)	N (up to 2+ children)
<b>Newcastle</b>	Y	N	N (up to 100%)	N (up to 2+ children)
<b>Croydon</b>	Y	Y	N - up to 100% only for Protected Scheme (disabled non-working) or 75%	N (no allowances for children unless lone parent)
<b>Ealing</b>	Y	Y	N (up to 100% for all households)	N (no allowances for children)



# Questions from 1<sup>st</sup> group session

Last session, question on lone parent vs Single Person Discount. Worked example:

Couple, one child household, Band 2 (income £230)

Liability (Band A 100%) = £30.87 pw

CTS award (60%) = £18.52 pw

To pay = £12.35 pw

(5.4% of income)

Lone parent, one child household, Band 2 (income £170)

Liability (Band A 75%) = £23.15 pw

CTS award (60%) = £13.89 pw

To pay = £9.26 pw

(5.4% of income)

Enc. Template letter regarding CTS & CTDR (as updated prior to last session)

# Any questions?



## Council Tax Support Scheme Task Group – Session 2

### Summary:

The Director of Finance gave a presentation to update members on the impact of the scheme. The slides, containing statistics and data analysis, had also been circulated prior to the meeting. In addition, a copy of a council tax support discretionary application outcome letter and a submission from Councillor Bonham were provided ahead of the meeting.

The key notes in addition to those raised in the slides were as follows:

- It was noted 3,200 household's Council Tax Support entitlement had remained unchanged.
- The Council Tax Discretionary scheme saw higher average payments last year due to support being provided through the Household Support Fund. This support assisted households that had got into arrears due to the old scheme and the cost of living crisis.
- There was a request for forecasting on arrears for CTS and non-CTSS households for quarter 2 to 4 of 2025/26. It was noted this this was not going to be available in time to inform proposals for a new scheme next year. Historic information could be provided for the old scheme.
- There was a request for additional information on why discretionary support applications were refused, and if they were CTS households.

Following a request from the previous meeting, a copy of a letter on discretionary support applications was provided and noted it had been reviewed by communications and recognised it was an improved letter.

The Task Group were asked to provide options they would like to be modelled and then considered at the next meeting:

- It was asked if adding more bands would prevent the big changes in the support provided. It was noted that this would likely to lead to more changes and in turn lead to issues seen in the previously scheme where households get in arrears due to changes in bills and the requirement to re-bill.
- There was a discussion by Councillors that there had been less contact from households than anticipated and discretionary support and been processed efficiently when contact was made.
- There was clarification on timelines for making changes to the scheme. It was noted that the latest we could go to consultation on changes is in October to

ensure any new scheme could be approved by the statutory deadline of the end of January.

- No requests for modelling were received at the meeting. Councillors were asked to provide alternative models by close of play on the 1<sup>st</sup> August to enable modelling could be completed for the next task group meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> August.

## Council Tax Support Scheme Task Group – Session 3

### Summary

This was the final session of the Council Tax Support Task Group, and its purpose was:

- a. For officers to answer questions on the proposals that the task group requested were modelled.
- b. To enable Task Group members to make recommendations and observations for the final report, scheduled for OSC on 26 September.

Key points from the discussion included:

- Minor changes to the scheme would not require further consultation. Legal implications would, however, be sought on the specific proposals, such as disregarding 50% of PIP, which would significantly affect some households.
- It was confirmed PIP was a non-means-tested benefit. Discretionary awards were used to mitigate the position of individuals who required extra support because of disability-related expenses.
- In response to the concerns around public awareness of discretionary funding, it was explained that discretionary schemes were advertised through various channels, including the bills that go out. Support could also be provided without formal applications where the council became aware of the situation through other means.
- PIP had two components, i.e., mobility and daily living. Individuals were generally assessed under these two elements as either enhanced, standard, or ineligible.
- The consequence of completely disregarding PIP had been previously assessed to cost over £3m, because those eligible would go under the protected scheme, with their allowance going up to 100%.
- Concerns were raised about the discretionary scheme ending after two years, and it was noted that extending support beyond the initial term was a decision that could be recommended.
- Regarding the proposal to introduce a new band for households that have a child with disability, it was explained that they were already considered as vulnerable households, and the disability allowance received for the child was disregarded for council tax support scheme.

The following proposals were received prior to the final meeting of the task group:

- Proposal 1 - Look at excluding 50% of PIP payment for the following households:

- a) Households where both couples receive PIP, or
- b) Households with the enhanced rate of PIP for daily living or mobility.
- Proposal 2 - Adding a new band where a household has:
  - a) a child with disability or
  - b) 3+ children.

Proposal 1 part a) is already implemented using a manual process of CTDR awards, and impacts less than 100 households currently.

- It was noted in Equalities implications that Proposal 1 part b) raised concerns with regards to our PSED responsibilities and the protected characteristic of disability. It would result in differential treatment for those households on the enhanced PIP component compared to those households on the standard PIP component. This approach could lead to the council being challenged as we are proposing to apply a 50% discretion to only one component of the PIP and this in turn being unfair to those on the standard PIP component.
- It was noted that Proposal 2 Part a) would require a manual process as Council software does not currently identify these households. Due to these limitations, it had not been possible to model the proposal. It is the case however that these households do currently automatically qualify for the Protected Scheme, receiving support up to 100% in CTSS, and without the child's Disability Living Allowance being considered as income.

# **Leicester City Council**

## **Scrutiny Review**

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**A review of support for Adventure  
Playgrounds**

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**A Review Report of the Overview  
Select Committee**

**February – August 2025**



## Contents

	Page
<b>Chair's Foreword .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1 Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1 Background to the Review and Key Findings .....	3
1.2 Recommendations .....	3
<b>2 Report .....</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1 Background .....	4
2.2 Further Sessions .....	4
Points made on 3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2025 .....	4
2.3 Benchmarking .....	9
Islington London Borough Council .....	9
2.4 Conclusions .....	11
<b>3 Financial, Legal and Other Implications .....</b>	<b>12</b>
3.1 Financial Implications .....	12
3.2 Legal Implications .....	12
3.3 Equality Implications .....	12
3.4 Climate Change Implications .....	12
<b>4 Summary of Appendices .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>5 Officers to Contact .....</b>	<b>12</b>

## Overview Select Committee

### **Commission Members:**

Councillor Joel (Chair)  
Councillor March  
Councillor Batool  
Councillor Waddington  
Councillor Pickering  
Councillor Zaman  
Councillor O'Neill  
Councillor Rae Bhatia  
Councillor Osman  
Councillor Dave  
Councillor Kitterick  
Councillor Porter

### **Evidence Presented by:**

Strategic Director of Social Care and Education

VCSE Engagement Manager

Representatives from:

Highfields Adventure Playground Association  
Mowmacre Young People's Play & Development Association  
Goldhill Play Association – Also representing WhatCabin  
Braunstone Adventure Playground  
St Andrews Play Association  
Woodgate Adventure Playground  
Northfield's District Play Association

## **Chair's Foreword**

Adventure playgrounds and the play associations who deliver their services provide a valuable service to families in Leicester. They provide a chance for children to be active, develop social skills and gain confidence in a safe and supervised environment, as well as bringing communities together. They are particularly valuable resource during school holidays and to families who in recent times are faced with challenging choices but require safe engaging spaces and opportunities for their children but who may not have the means to go further afield.

The changes in the ways in which play associations in Leicester are supported has caused a degree of concern within scrutiny. There is some concern that these playgrounds, and the play associations that deliver valuable services, will be lost due to a lack of long-term sustainable funding.

It is hoped that the recommendations from this task group can be taken on board as potential ways for the Council to provide support for the adventure playgrounds and play associations so as to ensure that they can continue operating in a sustainable way and optimise opportunities for external funding.



**Councillor Ashiedu Joel**

**Chair, Overview Select Committee**

## **1 Executive Summary**

### **1.1 Background to the Review and Key Findings**

- 1.1.1. At the Overview Select Committee on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2025, concern was raised about the withdrawal of funding to adventure playgrounds.
- 1.1.2. Concerns raised by OSC related to the unpredictability of funding, their ability to be financial sustainable without the funding and the statutory framework not recognising the uniqueness of the adventure playgrounds and the services they provide.
- 1.1.3. In February 2025, a decision was made to stop providing grants to the play associations from 31 March 2026.

### **1.2 Recommendations**

The Executive are asked to consider the following recommendations:

- 1.1.4. That the Council communicate all opportunities for bids and funding as they become available to the Play Associations.
- 1.1.5. For Leicester City Council (LCC) to underwrite the risk with regard to Adventure Playgrounds/Play Associations in order to provide stability and security. This would require a budget being produced for 2026/27 detailing how much is needed for each Play Association to continue their current level of service and the likelihood of gaining external income to cover these costs and the Council to meet the deficit between each position.
- 1.1.6. That perspectives be heard on whether funding from external sources would replace funding from LCC. In terms of how much could be provided from external funders.
- 1.1.7. That LCC aim to keep playgrounds going and updated on status of Better Futures Fund with regards to support on applications. Until more is known about the Better Futures Fund.
- 1.1.8. That the Council provide longer leases (suggested 15 years) to help play associations be eligible for certain types of funding.
- 1.1.9. That the Council provide clarity on the processes for Community Asset Transfer. (A paper be produced by property services by September 2025 to explain leases, licences and asset transfer.)
- 1.1.10. That an impact assessment on the eventuality of the closure of Adventure Playgrounds be produced by December 2025.

## **2 Report**

### **1.3 Background**

- 1.1.11. On 13th February 2025, an initial meeting was held on the matter, prior to the decision being taken on the withdrawal of funding. At this meeting, the following proposal was made to the City Mayor:

“We request that the City Mayor commits to funding the adventure playgrounds at the same level during 2025/26 as a minimum, but ideally for the next 3 years, so that the same level of services can be provided. We also request that the Executive works with OSC to look at the long-term sustainable funding of the playgrounds. We would like an indication of the City Mayor’s position on their funding before the Council budget meeting.”

- 1.1.12. On 26<sup>th</sup> February 2025, the Executive Decision was taken (effective from 6<sup>th</sup> March 2025):
- To approve the making of grant in 2025/26 to the Play Associations, equal to the grant 2024/25.
  - The grants will be made on the basis that the Play Associations continue to support open play and work towards self-sustainability.
  - To approve the ceasing of grants to the Play Associations from 31 March 2026
  - For officers to work with Play Associations to explore, where needed, longer term tenancy options.
- 1.1.13. At Overview Select Committee on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2025, it was suggested that whilst the working group on adventure playgrounds had met, it would be useful for it to continue to look and how playgrounds could be helped and supported in continuing to operate sustainably.

### **1.4 Further Sessions**

#### Points made on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025

- 1.1.14. Concern was raised that the cession of funding at the end of the year could cause severe difficulties for the sustainability of adventure playgrounds as it could prove difficult for them to obtain resources from elsewhere and to generate income. The need for sustainability of the play associations was highlighted. In response to this it was reported that so far, three playgrounds had formed a consortium with a business model for sustainability through re-structured governance and staffing, as well as strategies such as opening the premises during the day for alternative schooling to generate income to support open-access play, or by setting up nursery provision. A further four had sustainable models.

- 1.1.15. Further to this it was explained that playgrounds had received a full year's funding with no grant conditions for this year in order to help them.
- 1.1.16. It was stressed that playgrounds should be supported where possible, and questions were raised about the possibility of providing support on fund raising strategies as applying for funding was very competitive. In response to this it was suggested that the play associations had been given access to the VCSE Engagement Manager but had not utilised her services. Other than the VCSE Engagement Manager, there was not much skill on fundraising in the context of this sector in the council, although the Council does commission the voluntary sector for activity.
- 1.1.17. It is possible that other groups such as Voluntary Action Leicester (VAL) have offers for the play associations.
- 1.1.18. There have been conversations between the play associations and the National Lottery Community Fund. It was suggested that it could be the case that if the play associations formed a single community interest association rather than acting individually, they could be more successful in applying for funding and could also reduce costs in management. The National Lottery had their own decision-making process on who receives funding. A number of approaches had been made by play associations and it was thought that one had received a small grant.
- 1.1.19. An email from St Andrews's play association had expressed the desire to maintain a link with the Council either through direct funding or commissioning as this would provide stability, raise their profile and make them more of an attractive proposition for prospective partners. The email had also noted that they were conscious of potential funding coming on stream, for preventative work with youth groups and they wished to be in a position to assist the Authority in the delivery of such services. It could not be confirmed what was referred to with regard to the work with youth groups.
- 1.1.20. Initially the play associations were not due to receive any funding this year but had now received parachute grants which could be used flexibly, and they had free licence on the playgrounds for five years with an option for longer-term leases. It was further clarified that the play associations were independent charities, and it was not for the Council to tell them how to operate. It was stressed that there was a need for clarity that the funding would end and there would be no further payments once it did.
- 1.1.21. There would be opportunities for the voluntary sector, but not regarding the commissioning of play activity.
- 1.1.22. Concern was raised that if funding was withdrawn by the end of March, people working for the play associations could be made redundant by the end of the year, as such the Council needed to move quickly.

- 1.1.23. It was suggested that there needed to be dedicated resource around fundraising to help groups, and if this could be offered then the Council could help the groups.
- 1.1.24. It was suggested that it would be beneficial to maintain ties with the play associations. In response to this it was noted that there was still dialogue between the Council and the play associations and a representative from an association attended Children's Trust meetings, so a connection was maintained, although there was no longer a funding relationship.
- 1.1.25. The grant made to play associations this year was made on the basis that they continued to support open play and worked to sustainability. The executive decision was made and was not called in. Further funding from Council would require a separate decision and an available budget.
- 1.1.26. Meetings with VAL and the VCSE Engagement manager could be considered on what options may be available and where signposting could be offered.
- 1.1.27. It was clarified that there were nine play associations across the city who ran playgrounds on LCC land under licence. This means that the playgrounds are independent of the play associations. If the play associations no longer existed, the playgrounds would not necessarily disappear. If the play associations ceded control of a playgrounds, options could be Community Asset Transfers or small tenders. To clarify a Community Asset Transfer is a form of disposal from the Council and in such a case the playground would not necessarily transfer to the play association and would be open to bids from groups to say what they would do with it and would be competitive. As such, there was limited enthusiasm for Community Asset Transfer.
- 1.1.28. It was deemed necessary to consider how play associations could continue to run premises and be able to put in a strong application in the case of Community Asset Transfer.

Points made on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2025 (Meeting with Play Associations)

Points from Braunstone Play Association

- 1.1.29. A small amount of additional funding had been secured for existing roles.
- 1.1.30. The reorganisation surrounding those posts did not guarantee longevity or replace funding.
- 1.1.31. There was a commitment to open-access play and maintaining a level of service to the users and families of users, and to meeting the needs of the community.
- 1.1.32. The Adventure Playgrounds were exploring opportunities for funding and sustainability, collectively and individually.



- 1.1.33. Adventure Playgrounds concluded that the future of the playgrounds was uncertain without council funding.
- 1.1.34. Feedback from the communities and families indicated a preference to maintain a play service without transitioning into different provision.
- 1.1.35. Adventure Playgrounds brought communities together and added value to family life by encouraging play and promoting healthy lifestyles. This had been of particular value post-Covid.
- 1.1.36. The Adventure Playgrounds remained flexible in their approach and were adaptive to change.
- 1.1.37. There was a long-standing infrastructure, and trust had been built up in the neighbourhoods over several decades.
- 1.1.38. It was felt that if the AP's closed, this would be final, and that there was not a route back.

#### Other Points from Play Associations

- 1.1.39. Budgets had been tight over the previous 25 years and cutbacks had already been made.
- 1.1.40. Families in need utilised the services across the generations, with some current parents having attended as children themselves.
- 1.1.41. Other existing initiatives might not have the long-established family relationships.
- 1.1.42. Staff workloads were already stretched, and staff were not employed on bid writing.
- 1.1.43. The transition to becoming a money-making organisation would be difficult and help was requested from the Council.
- 1.1.44. The grants market was competitive.
- 1.1.45. Communications were awaited following discussions on leases.
- 1.1.46. National Lottery Funding bids had been unsuccessful so far.
- 1.1.47. Clarity was required on processes and business planning.
- 1.1.48. Core funding hadn't been sufficient previously, a lack of funding would mean that PAs could fold.

- 1.1.49. Services provided at the Adventure Playgrounds such as school holiday activities and food programmes could be discontinued if the Play Associations folded.
- 1.1.50. Adventure Playgrounds welcomed advice on community asset management.

Points from members

- 1.1.51. The possibility of Play Associations obtaining funding from the Governments Better Futures Fund was raised.
- 1.1.52. It was queried whether impact assessments could be carried out for areas if Adventure Playgrounds closed down.
- 1.1.53. Clarity was sought on around what Community Asset Transfer entailed.
- 1.1.54. It was requested that an officer from Property Services attend to clarify issues around leases, licences and Community Asset Transfer.
- 1.1.55. It was suggested that funding from the Council had helped Play Associations support LCC initiatives, so the knock-on effect of losing funding would be that LCC would lose these services.

Points from Officers (Strategic Director of Social Care and Education and VCSE Engagement Manager)

- 1.1.56. The final six-month grant would be paid to the APs in October 2025.
- 1.1.57. The difficulty of securing funding was acknowledged.
- 1.1.58. There were a number of possibilities, including The Better Futures Fund where funds would go direct to organisations.
- 1.1.59. Information from government schemes could be relayed to the Adventure Playgrounds.
- 1.1.60. The current offer from central government was limited with a narrowing of funding for community organised endeavours.
- 1.1.61. Adventure Playgrounds were encouraged to continue the discussion surrounding leases. Any decision to award a lease over seven years needs to go through the Council's property disposal policy. It would be the same for a Community Asset Transfer.
- 1.1.62. Community asset transfer could be an avenue to explore, but this could present risks.
- 1.1.63. The Adventure Playgrounds were already in touch with field experts such as the National Lottery team.

- 1.1.64. The funding market was notably challenging.
- 1.1.65. The Adventure Playgrounds would be invited to networking events and would be included as VCSEs.
- 1.1.66. Dialogue could remain open so that APs could be updated on external grants that may become available.
- 1.1.67. Liaisons with the Neighbourhoods Team could be useful.

## **1.5 Benchmarking**

### Islington London Borough Council

- 1.1.68. Islington council commissions their adventure play offer to the VCS sector, whereby all of their 12 adventure play sites are managed by three providers.
- 1.1.69. Formerly six of these were run by the Council and five by Play Associations, with one as a specialist playground for children with special needs.
- 1.1.70. The in-house playgrounds became part of a savings agenda and came out of the local authority to be run by a play association. Currently, the playgrounds are run as follows:
  - Five by a voluntary-sector organisation called 'Islington Play Association'
  - Six by an employee-led mutual called 'Awesome'
  - One by a specialist organisation called 'Kids'.
- 1.1.71. Islington London Borough Council (ILBC) continues to provide over £1m of funding per-year to these associations, over a 15-year contract, so as to provide stability.
- 1.1.72. As part of the three contracts, the play providers are required to generate additional income through various means to support delivery, such as through charitable trusts and commercial activity.
- 1.1.73. An example of this commercial activity has been from Awesome, who run a commercial offer for meetings and venue hire during school hours (up until 3pm when the playgrounds open).
- 1.1.74. No advice was given on bidding for charitable funds as the associations have their own fundraisers.

- 1.1.75. The ILBC supported playgrounds through helping with commercial offers in terms of marketing and publicity.
- 1.1.76. ILBC also offered a significant level of wider support, significant level of wider support over the years including support with income generation activities, publicity and quality assurance and safety of delivery.
- 1.1.77. ILBC has a Play Strategic group on which the Executive Member for Children and Families, Play London, and key officers sit. This group discusses strategic developments in play in the Borough. The Executive member has also issued a letter to the Minister for Children and Families to spotlight Islington as a highly supportive borough for adventure and also pledge the council's support for the recommendations set out in the recent Play Commission's report including the call for the National Play Strategy.
- 1.1.78. A call for a national play strategy has been discussed in central government and a report has been published, emphasising the benefits of play and making recommendations for the government to support play.

#### Nottingham City Council

- 1.1.79. Limited contact was made with Nottingham City Council, but it was acknowledged that many of adventure centres have closed down or have been moved as these were run by Council Staff, and that a number have closed or potentially been moved to third sector provision.

#### Manchester City Council

- 1.1.80. Originally in Manchester, Adventure Playgrounds had been run directly by the local authority, however, these were transferred out to Play Associations many years ago and are currently run by the group 'Manchester young Lives'. The Council does not deliver any of the services itself.
- 1.1.81. Manchester City Council (MCC) provides £1.6m (Roughly £50k per ward per year) funding for all youth and play provision. The Play Associations need to apply for this funding from a commissioning pot in 3-year cycles. This is an open and competitive process.
- 1.1.82. The amount of funding the Local Authority provides is a small proportion of what the Play Associations need. Therefore, MCC invests in capacity-building programmes looking at funding from other sources and helping them to build fundraising skills (i.e. how to find funding sources and complete applications and how to deliver other services from their sites).
- 1.1.83. Examples of other services delivered from the sites include an adventure playground in Wythenshawe who have a centre on their site which is used for education provision during the day which generates income and also is

available for meeting hire. Additionally, other youth providers (such as Debdale Sailing Centre) offer corporate team days.

- 1.1.84. A third-sector support agency known as Manchester Community Central (MACC) are the CVS for Manchester. They are commissioned by the local authority to provide support to all voluntary sector groups.
- 1.1.85. The Community Asset Transfer process is made use of. If a group wants to operate a former council premises and take over the building, they can go through a Community Asset Transfer whereby they need to demonstrate a robust business plan and show they can manage it effectively. This helps the groups to think about funding streams.
- 1.1.86. There are 63 groups on Community Asset Transfers, and a Community Asset Support Group was being looked into. Groups of officers from various disciplines in MCC help with Community Assets and putting leases in place. It is being looked into as to how to put in a process to help groups in the longer term.

## **1.6 Conclusions**

- 1.1.87. Time is of the essence and Play Associations could fold whilst awaiting funds.
- 1.1.88. It is hoped that the Adventure Playgrounds risk could be underwritten.
- 1.1.89. Council funding provides a platform so Play Associations could bid for other funding.
- 1.1.90. Without a long-term lease Play Associations would struggle to secure funding.
- 1.1.91. Holding a one-year licence could prevent grant applications as sustainability would need to be proved.
- 1.1.92. The Council used to be responsible for the Adventure Playground buildings, this has dwindled and Capital Grants are required.
- 1.1.93. If alternative provision is needed, it is necessary to consider what resources are needed.

### **3 Financial, Legal and Other Implications**

#### **1.7 Financial Implications**

The cost of the play association grants in 2025/26 is £1m. The Children's budgets from 2026/27 assumes a £1m saving, following the decision to withdraw the grant funding. Any decision to continue this funding will require alternative savings to meet the savings target in this area, otherwise will increase the budget gap for the Council.

Note that Community Asset Transfers can take place in different ways, and the financial implications of any specific proposals would require consideration as they come forward.

Mohammed Irfan – Head of Finance  
05 September 2025

#### **1.8 Legal Implications**

There are no direct legal implications arising from this review report, as its recommendations are not binding. It is noted that a formal Executive Decision has already been taken terminating from March 2026 the Council's grant funding of these Play Associations.

The Community Asset Transfer Policy is predicated upon a multi-stage open bidding process for sites that are deemed to be amenable for asset transfer (usually via short term lease).

The recommendations exploring the tenure of the Play Associations on their existing sites will be informed by a range of factors such as the legal status of the licensee/tenant and also the legal obligations such as repairing covenants (which tend to be more burdensome the longer the tenure) and the issue of personal responsibility that comes with leasehold status. Licenses are easier to grant and less burdensome in terms of legal obligations, though they may inhibit the ability to attract funding sources in some cases.

Kamal Adatia - City Barrister  
10 September 2025

## 1.9 Equality Implications

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken on play association grants as part of the council's decision-making process to ensure due regard has been paid to the PSED. Whilst the EIA has identified that if funding is not secured for the play associations and adventure playgrounds, this will have an impact on current provision and those accessing the services, there are other options available across the city for play opportunities which can be accessed.

The EIA has an action plan which highlights that accurate data is needed on who is accessing provision and promotion of play opportunities across the city, so parents are aware of what options exist.

Sukhi Biring, Equalities Officer  
2 September 2025

## 1.10 Climate Change Implications

There are likely to be limited climate emergency implications directly associated with this report, particularly where adventure playgrounds are to continue operating at current or reduced/consolidated levels. As part of work to engage with the adventure playgrounds on future financial sustainability, consideration should be given to opportunities to increase energy efficiency and therefore reduce energy bills, which may act as a significant cost pressure. For example, this could include signposting around potential grants and funding to support the delivery of such work, where available and appropriate.

Phil Ball, Sustainability Officer, Ext: 372246  
26<sup>th</sup> August 2025

## 4 Summary of Appendices



Appendix 1 – Representation from Mowmacre Playground  
Appendix 2 – Representation from St Andrews Playground  
Appendix 3 – Manchester City Council - Youth, Play and Participation  
Commissioning Framework  
Appendix 4 – Manchester City Council – Commissioning Youth and Play  
Presentation

## **5 Officers to Contact**

Ed Brown  
Senior Governance Officer  
Email: [edmund.brown@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:edmund.brown@leicester.gov.uk)





# Appendix 1



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Leicester  
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E [mowmacreplayground@mac.com](mailto:mowmacreplayground@mac.com)  
W [mowmacreplayground.org](http://mowmacreplayground.org)

12/7/2025

We must recognise the significant impact that play has on promoting the mental health and well-being of our children. It is essential to support communities that have been adversely affected by the hardships and developmental delays brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Mowmacre Play Association would like to propose the following suggestions for your consideration. These suggestions aim to enhance the support provided to voluntary sector play providers and build upon the existing responsibilities outlined in our leases. By doing so, we can ensure better maintenance of council properties while also providing the council with valuable oversight.

## 1. Building Maintenance Support.

### Technical Assistance:

We propose that the council offer training and resources for playgrounds to help them maintain their leased buildings. This could include B.R.O. training and certification programs, which would ultimately benefit the council by ensuring that properties are well-maintained.

### Funding for Repairs:

Identify small capital grants specifically for building repairs and maintenance to assist play providers in covering these costs.

## 2. Shared Services for Economies of Scale.

### Building Insurance Contracts:

Facilitate group insurance schemes for city council-owned playground buildings, alleviating financial burden.

### Safety Testing Contracts:

Coordinate water, gas, and electrical safety testing across playground properties to negotiate better rates and improve overall safety standards.

## 3. Policy Advocacy.

### Advocate for Policy Changes:

Collaborate with play providers to promote local and national policies that support their sustainability and funding needs.

### Incorporate Goals into City Council Targets:

Recognise the contributions of quality play providers to community health, well-being, and development in city council planning and reporting.

We believe that by implementing these suggestions, Leicester City Council can support the voluntary sector playgrounds survive these times of austerity.

We hope you can consider these suggestions and we can discuss them in more detail on Thursday,

Best regards,

Warm regards,  
Nick Frearson  
Chairperson



# Appendix 2

## Submission to OSC, July 17<sup>th</sup> 2025

All five of the Adventure Playgrounds listed under the Leicester Play and Youth Cooperative banner, are **hopeful of maintain their current service for the duration of the current financial year**. Whilst continuing to **explore all possible options and opportunities** to bring in alternative funding and services in order to subsidise the existing provision.

This, as all CVS organisations will tell you, during the most challenging period for fundraising that anyone has been aware of. **Without any additional Council funding, the Playgrounds have a very uncertain future.**

All of us are committed to exploring whatever possible solutions that may be available during this period of intense competition that even results in us competing against each other. Various activities have been set up, or are in the planned process, aimed at **subsiding the opening of the Playgrounds**; whilst simultaneously recognising that it will be highly unlikely to fully subsidise our core costs.

Sadly, the support previously promoted by the Authority has never materialised.

All five of us have been **successful in finding funding for existing roles** that now take on different responsibilities, but this won't be enough to maintain the comprehensive service, required by our respective communities.

All the Playgrounds have **already adapted** to the currently and further forecast, reduced income with restructuring haven taken place to pro-long the longevity of individual projects. Whilst we are **trying to maintain existing services** for as long as possible we are extremely conscious of the knock effects noted by other agencies – Schools, Social Care and Health, Police etc.

Despite the current and future difficulties we all **committed to the provision of Open Access** Adventure Playground, making them freely available to the Children and Young People of the City. All our current efforts designed for that to happen.

As Projects set up by local Communities and funded by the wider Community, we are all committed to maintaining our original Aims and Objectives and not simply looking to offer Staff teams alternative employment, by morphing into another sort of organisation. We are **committed to meeting the needs of the community** that lobbied for our funding in the first place.

Collectively, we continue to seek funding for **collaborative work across the City**, to support work around health eating/ healthy weight, bring communities together and broader community cohesion.

We hope soon to be able to re-submit a proposal to the various strand of the national lottery and a new proposal to the City Council for the continuation of partnership working. If successful this would Children and Young People benefiting from a clearly thought out service to access in their leisure time as opposed to reactive services, parachuted in to areas identified as being problematic.

The very real danger of the ***City's Playgrounds disappearing comes at the same time that the needs for Children and Young people's play becoming ever more vital and recognised.***

**Play England's** latest successes in adding Play values to legislation and their latest published reports indicate the necessity to maintain Play provision. Please see below:

<https://www.playengland.org.uk/newsblog/appg-on-play-working-in-parliament-to-champion-all-childrens-right-to-play>

<https://www.playengland.org.uk/strategy>

<https://www.playengland.org.uk/newsblog/play-commission-report-everything-to-play-for-a-national-wake-up-call-on-play>

<https://www.playengland.org.uk/newsblog/to-play-or-not-to-play-mapping-unequal-provision-of-childrens-playgrounds>

**Our collective aim** is to seek to build on the increased awareness of the need for Play and to remain viable, in order to bid for any Central Government funding that will be aimed at Children and particularly young people.

Adventure Playgrounds have existed in this Country for nearly all of the post war period and in this ***City for over 60 years.*** As we have never been a statutory service we have always been vulnerable to funding cuts when savings are looking to be made.

Playgrounds have always given Children and Young People the opportunity to experience a childhood and freely choose their Play, in a safe environment. ***Playgrounds have now evolved to be the antidote the current list of ills identified as affecting Children and Young People*** – social isolation; inactivity; reliance on digital devices; general unhealthy lifestyles and a lack of Play space.

In short, they are needed more than ever.

***Between the five Playgrounds we are expecting 16,000 individual visits, from 4,000 registered users during the School Summer Holidays – all with access to nutritional food. During the rest of the year we'd expect 35,000 individual visits, again all with access to food.***









**MANCHESTER**  
CITY COUNCIL

## **Youth, Play and Participation Commissioning Framework**

**1st April 2026 – 31st March 2029**



### **Contents**

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Important note</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. Strategic context</b>	<b>4</b>
National context	4
Local context	5
<b>4. National curriculum for youth work</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>5. Play work principles</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>6. Funding priorities</b>	<b>7</b>
Commitment to carers	7
Use of libraries	7
Costs that be funded	8
<b>7. Available funding</b>	<b>8</b>
Grant amounts	8
Key dates	9
Stage 1: Launch and information	9
Stage 2: Application period	9
Stage 3: Due diligence	10
Stage 4: Decision making and grant award	10
<b>8. Workforce development</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>9. Quality assurance</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>10. Value for money</b>	<b>11</b>
Real living wage	12
Diversifying income	12
<b>11. Who can apply</b>	<b>13</b>
Individual and partnership applications	13
Who cannot apply	14
<b>12. How to apply</b>	<b>14</b>

## **1. Introduction by Councillor Julie Reid**

Manchester City Council's ambition is to provide high quality youth, play and participation services (YPPS) and sustainable outcomes for children and young people, practitioners and leaders. Our approach to deliver high quality services to children and young people is intended to promote and celebrate the diversity of the city, secure the active participation of children, young people and those working with them and capture other benefits such as community cohesion, reducing carbon emissions, civic pride, skills development, volunteering opportunities, and improving health and well-being. Manchester is proud of its diverse population and the city Council is committed to providing opportunities to connect young people from different backgrounds and help people learn about each other through a range of activities in various settings.

Our priority is to continue to meet the needs of our children and young people as well as youth and play providers. Our unique population enables our grants to take on a tailored approach in responding to diverse and sometimes sporadic needs. In meeting the needs of children and young people, we will continue to deliver a range of grant-aided services to assist in their development to thrive in the city.

The approach and funding investment demonstrates the Council's commitment and ability to work in partnership with the voluntary, community, faith, and social enterprise sector (VCFSE) to support children and young people via the provision of good-quality youth and play work. It provides informal education that focuses on the personal, social, and political development of participants. This increases youth participation, enabling children and young people to develop their voice and influence decision-making in a meaningful way, helping to build our young community.

The YPPS Grants Programme 2026-2029 aims to assist organisations financially so they can deliver the desired outcomes, by building on the assets of the VCFSE, promoting enterprise and social value. We expect applications to the fund to show very clearly how their proposals will help achieve the outcomes and their implementation of youth work and/or play principles and values.

It should be noted that the key principles and indeed the framework were developed from and have been built upon learning and reflection of our most recent grant funding of youth & play in the city, from January 1<sup>st</sup> 2024 – March 31<sup>st</sup> 2026.

The aims of this funding and the YPPS include but are not limited to: a) fulfil our Statutory Youth Duty 507b; b) contribute to the achievement of our ambition to become a UNICEF UK 'Child Friendly City' and c) fulfil the priorities identified in the Our Manchester Strategy 2025-35.

I want to thank every individual and organisation working hard to develop Manchester's children and young people.

**Councillor Julie Reid**

**Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education**

## **2. Important note**

Following a high volume of applications in the previous round, we anticipate strong interest in this upcoming funding cycle. Given the potential for applications to exceed the available funds, it is likely that some applicants may not receive the full funding requested. While we strive to support as many applicants as possible, we encourage you to plan accordingly and consider alternative funding options where feasible.

This framework sets out Manchester City Council's (MCC) vision and commitment for commissioning youth and play services for children and young people. It is aimed at and will inform potential service providers, residents, colleagues and Elected Members of our commissioning approach. Hereafter the term commissioning is changed to the grants programme, given the money to be distributed will be in grant form.

## **3. Strategic context**

### **National context**

Updated in September 2023 Section 507B of the Education Act 1996 places a statutory duty on local authorities to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that young people aged 13 to 19 (and up to 24 for those with learning difficulties or disabilities) have access to sufficient leisure-time activities and facilities for their well-being and personal development. The duty also becomes the responsibility of MCC funded youth and play organisations to jointly achieve sufficient and effective implementation of the duty:

- Service Delivery - Providers must deliver youth services that align with the local authority's vision and meet the needs of young people.
- Collaboration - Work closely with local authorities to ensure services are integrated and complement other local youth provisions.
- Monitoring and Reporting - Regularly report on service outcomes and effectiveness to the local authority.

There are nine essentials of the 507B local youth offer outlining the key components that local authorities and funded partners must work together to ensure a comprehensive and effective youth and play service. These are:

- I. Needs Assessment - Conduct regular assessments to understand the needs and preferences of young people in the area.
- II. Inclusivity - Ensure services are accessible to all young people, including those with disabilities and from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- III. Quality Assurance - Maintain high standards in service delivery through regular monitoring and evaluation.
- IV. Youth Participation - Involve young people in the planning, delivery, and evaluation of services to ensure they meet their needs.
- V. Partnership Working - Collaborate with other organisations, including schools, health services, and voluntary groups, to provide a coordinated approach.
- VI. Provision of Information - Make information about available services easily accessible to young people and their families.
- VII. Safe Environments - Ensure that all activities and facilities are safe and welcoming for young people.
- VIII. Sustainability - Develop services that are financially and operationally sustainable in the long term.
- IX. Review and Adaptation - Regularly review the local youth offer and adapt it to changing needs and circumstances.

These essentials help local authorities create a supportive and engaging environment for young people, promoting their well-being and personal development.

These responsibilities aim to create a supportive environment that fosters the personal and social development of young people, helping them to become active and engaged members of their communities.

Working to deliver the above via granting funds to local providers and collaboration work will enable the Council to fulfil its statutory youth duty.

Providers should be aware and familiarise themselves with the emerging National Youth Strategy.

## **Local context**

Manchester is on a journey to become a UNICEF UK-recognised Child Friendly City. This initiative aims to ensure that children and young people have a meaningful say in and benefit from the decisions, services and spaces that shape their lives. Key aspects of Manchester's plan are:

- Children's Rights - Training for local politicians, council staff, and partners on children's rights
- Community Involvement - Engaging children and young people in decision-making processes
- Action Plan - Developing a detailed plan to address the identified priority areas over the next two to four years

The voluntary sector plays a crucial role in this initiative by:

- Providing Support Services - Offering essential services such as mental health support, educational programs along with youth and play activities
- Advocacy and Representation - Ensuring the voices of children and young people are heard and considered in policymaking
- Collaboration - Working with the council and other partners to implement the action plan and achieve goals set by children and young people

By working together, Manchester aims to create a city where all children and young people feel safe, heard and able to flourish.

The new Our Manchester Strategy 2025-35 please visit [Our Manchester Strategy 2025-35 | Our Manchester Strategy 2025-35 | Manchester City Council](#) outlines the city's priorities for the next decade, shaped by the ambitions of thousands of residents. It focuses on five key themes:

- A thriving and sustainable city – Supporting a diverse economy that creates jobs and opportunities.
- A highly skilled city – Developing world-class and homegrown talent to sustain economic success.
- A progressive and equitable city – Unlocking the potential of communities and ensuring inclusivity.
- A liveable and low-carbon city – Making Manchester a desirable place to live, work, and visit.
- A connected city – Enhancing infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth.

The strategy builds on the successes and challenges of the past decade, including population growth, economic development, and cultural investments. It was developed through extensive engagement with over 10,000 responses from residents across the city.

Further, Manchester's strategic approach to working with children and young people is guided by the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP). The latest plan, covering 2024-2027, focuses on several key priorities:



- Safety and Well-being: Ensuring children and young people are safe, happy, and healthy.
- Education and Skills: Providing high-quality education and opportunities for skill development.
- Inclusion and Equality: Promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion, addressing poverty, and ensuring children's rights are upheld.
- Environmental Sustainability: Integrating environmental issues and zero-carbon targets into decision-making processes.

These priorities aim to create a thriving, sustainable city that meets the needs of all its children and young people.

Successfully funded youth and play providers are expected to plan and link the local and national priorities in their delivery of varied services by using youth and play work principles.

#### **4. National curriculum for youth work**

The next section explains the principles that can be applied to deliver on a variety of priorities, interests and issues pertaining to children and young people.

The National Youth Work Curriculum can be found here [National Youth Work Curriculum - National Youth Agency](#)

Particular attention should be paid to the 10 youth work curriculum outcomes.

#### **5. Play work principles**

Please visit the Play England website for further information visit, [Play England](#)

The principles are linked to UN Rights of the Child read more on: [http://www.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/UNCRC\\_summary-1\\_1.pdf](http://www.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/UNCRC_summary-1_1.pdf)

All potential VCFSE organisations seeking funds are expected to utilise and demonstrate the national curriculum for youth work and the play work principles to assist in their delivery to meet children and young people's needs.

## 6. Funding Priorities

When assessing applications for funding, it will be essential to ensure that projects align with key priorities that support meaningful, high-quality youth and play work. The following priorities will guide the evaluation process, ensuring resources are allocated effectively to projects that meet critical needs and deliver lasting impact:

- Quality – Ensuring high standards in project delivery in relation to play work principles and the national youth work curriculum that is safe and welcoming.
- Collaborative Work – Work in partnerships that strengthen outcomes for children and young people and provide access to other services.
- Youth Voice – Delivering regular activities that amplify and enable children and young people to participate in decision making forums, social action and volunteering.
- Value for Money – Demonstrating cost-effectiveness and impact.
- Targeted Delivery – Focusing on areas of greatest need, particularly those identified through deprivation indices and areas with limited or no existing provision.
- Inclusivity – Promoting accessibility and equity for all children and young people. Including those with protected characteristics and meets the aims of the [Equality Act 2010](#)

### Commitment to young carers

As part of our commitment to young carers, all successfully funded organisations must meet one of the following criteria:

Option A – Already a Young Carer Aware Organisation and have achieved or are working toward the FREE Manchester Young Carers Award. We will request evidence for this including: A brief outline of your current approach, and the name and email address of your Young Carer Champion.

Option B – A commitment to become a Young Carer Aware Organisation. You agree to work with the Manchester City Council's Young Carers Operational Lead to develop this awareness and practice. To do this, please complete this [Expression of interest form](#).

Organisations will be asked about the two available options during the second stage of the application process (see page 8 under the heading of Key dates for information on the two-stage process).

### Use of libraries

Providers are encouraged to build links with their local library (funding is not dependent on this). This can include sessions when only young people are allowed in the library – for example at times outside the library's usual opening hours. If you would be interested in using a library for some of your session delivery, please indicate this in your response including the name of the library where possible, and we will assist you to link into the library service. Visit the Manchester City Council website for the list of libraries <https://www.manchester.gov.uk/directory/14/libraries/category/1957>

## Costs that can be funded

The programme can fund core and delivery costs associated with delivering your activities, including but not limited to:

- Direct delivery of sessions and projects including residentials
- Salaries
- Volunteer costs
- Management and administrative costs – no more than 10% of the total delivery costs
- Premises costs
- Utilities and overheads
- Equipment for delivery
- Partnership project costs

This programme will not fund:

- Sports and activities that do not **effectively/explicitly demonstrate** youth and play work outcomes and principles.
- The purchase of vehicles, land or buildings and major refurbishment.
- Projects where the main aim is research/evidence gathering.
- Promotion or affiliation to a specific religion or religious activity.
- Promotion of political parties, political campaigning or lobbying activities.
- Exclusion or discrimination against any group based on belief, background, or identity.
- Costs of activities taking place outside Manchester local authority boundaries except for residentials, exchanges and project work where the sole purpose is for the development of children and young people via direct face to face delivery.
- Any spend on capital investment (equipment costs will be capped at £500 per item).

## 7. Available funding

The grants programme will commence from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2026 for up to 3 years to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2029 (subject to yearly Council funding availability). We appreciate that effective provision for children and young people is best delivered via long-term grants over a period of years enabling consistency and certainty for providers and children and young people.

### Grant amounts

The total available in this funding programme is £1.62million per year. Applicants can apply for a small single year or multiple year grant as listed below:

Funding Level	Amount
Small Single Year Grant only	Under £10,000
Multiple Year Gant	Over £10,000

Small single year grants will be available for applicants on an annual basis. If you are awarded a multiple-year grant, you **cannot apply** for a small single-year grant.

Organisations cannot apply for more than 50% of their annual turnover. In line with Councils financial regulations applicants cannot apply for more than £500,000 over a period of three years.

## **Key dates**

The funding round covers a 36 -month period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026 to 31 March 2029. This is subject to Council funding being available each year.

This funding round follows a two-stage process to ensure fair and efficient allocation of resources. This process ensures that only the most suitable candidates proceed, making the application process more streamlined:

- Expression of Interest (EOI) – In the first stage, applicants complete an EOI form. This serves as an initial screening to assess eligibility based on predefined criteria. It helps determine whether applicants meet the fundamental requirements before moving forward.
- Full Application – Those who successfully pass the EOI stage will be invited to submit a detailed application. This second stage allows applicants to provide more comprehensive information about their project, objectives, and how they intend to utilise the funding. If successful, and as in previous years it is highly likely that a final stage of negotiation will be required to finalise grant amounts.

The timeline for the application, evaluation and award process is:

## **Stage 1: Launch & Information**

The Youth, Play & Participation Service will host two webinars and one in-person meeting for potential applicants. These sessions will provide essential context, rationale, and details, along with a Q&A segment to address any areas requiring clarification. These will take place on:

- In person meeting - Tuesday 10th June from 15:30 to 16:30 at Friends Meeting House, 6 Mount Street, Manchester, M2 5NS – visit Eventbrite to book on to this session <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/meet-the-funders-youth-play-work-grant-information-tickets-1376175711599?aff=oddtcreator>
- First webinar - Thursday 12th June 2025 from 10:30 to 11:30 - visit Eventbrite to book on to this session <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/meet-the-funders-youth-play-work-grant-information-am-tickets-1376043837159?aff=oddtcreator>
- Second webinar - Thursday 12th June 2025 from 18:00 to 19:00 – visit Eventbrite to book on to this session <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/meet-the-funders-youth-play-work-grant-information-pm-tickets-1376165661539?aff=oddtcreator>

## **Stage 2: Application period**

- EOI information advertised week beginning 26th May 2025.
- Closing date for EOI at noon 27<sup>th</sup> June 2025.
- Appraisal of EOI applications week beginning 30th June 2025.
- Applicants will be notified of the outcome by 11<sup>th</sup> July 2025. If your EOI is successful, you will receive an invitation to submit a full application. The full application form will be sent electronically.
- Full applications to be submitted by Sunday 17th August 2025.
- Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their full application during week commencing 15th December 2025. If we can notify you earlier, we will do so. The time between submission and notification is due to the Council's approval and committee review processes.

### **Stage 3: Due diligence**

Due diligence will be conducted for applicants progressed beyond the EOI stage.

The following evidence and documents will be collected at the application stage or when notified of successful EOI.

- Your governing document (constitution, articles of association, etc.).
- Safeguarding policy (including your named safeguarding lead).
- Health and safety.
- Data protection.
- Equal opportunities.
- Financial overview.
- Copies of your insurance cover certificate. You must have £10M liability cover.
- Your annual accounts/report for at least the last 12 months

### **Stage 4: Decision-making and grant award**

If you are currently receiving funds from the YPPS, your current monitoring and statistical data will be used in the assessment of your application.

- The grant making panel will meet and assess applications from 17<sup>th</sup> August 2025.
- Applicants informed of decisions week beginning 15<sup>th</sup> December 2025 subject to approval and committee processes.
- Delivery will be expected to commence on the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2026.

## **8. Workforce development**

Our approach recognises the importance of the VCFSE in providing services for children and young people in Manchester. To support and enhance delivery the YPPS aims to support the sector to develop their workforce, we will work with the sector to address key areas including but not limited to:

- A commitment to increasing the number of professionally recognised youth & play workers. The YPPS will separately fund levels 2&3 Joint Negotiating Committee's (JNC) youth work qualifications. We will also fund accredited level 2 Play work practice qualifications.
- Continuous professional development (CPD): safeguarding, issue-based, capacity building, organisational development.
- Support to enhance quality assurance: peer (workforce) review training, monitoring, recording and evaluation, young ambassadors training etc.

## **9. Quality assurance**

The need for funds granted and the resulting procurement activity to be undertaken within a quality assurance framework is critical to achieving success and continuous improvement and to ensuring that resources are targeted effectively.

In terms of this funding, we will use a standardised performance management framework for all funded youth and play providers; this will involve the setting of clear targets and the use of Views as the data system to monitor performance and measure impact. All successful organisations will be provided with training and be provided with a license to use Views.

Views will be a:

- a) Record keeping system of children and young people's information, engagement with provision and evidence of their learning. Views can help measure the real impact of provision on young people's lives, including measuring learning outcomes/accreditations/Duke of Edinburgh's Award & other qualifications.
- b) Provision for qualitative data which MCC can access, providers can share this information anonymously.
- c) Provision for quantitative data and demographics.

Additionally, quality assurance, impact and monitoring processes will be carried by using a supportive, transparent and a developmental approach. Providers successful in their applications and in receipt of funds are expected to:

- a) Be visited by the YPPS – Informal process with the aim of collaborative learning. Visits will be carried out to all funded providers during session times. YPPS staff will have a document to complete during the visits which explores; management of sessions, activities on offer, implementation of youth work and play work principles, safeguarding and feedback from children and young people in attendance.
- b) Be visited by Young Ambassador – Trained young people to conduct announced visits to assess session delivery from their perspectives.
- c) Provide timely updates to the Views system for monitoring. The YPPS service may request further information based on the monitoring submitted.
- d) Give evidence on the 8 play work principles and on the national youth work curriculum.

This information will be collated into an annual report and shared with provider organisations.

## **10. Value for money**

There will be close links with procurement and contracting colleagues within the council and other bodies to ensure that all services are contracted in accordance with local standing orders and procurement regulations.

The Local Government Information Association defines contestability as being "the process of considering different supplier options, rather than just considering changing the management, method or processes of the existing supplier". Promoting a mixed market in the delivery of public services is a key component of the government's public service reform agenda. Ensuring grant makers, users, and funders of public services get the best value for money from a mixed pool of providers is crucial to service improvement and sustainability. The Council's approach supports the need to work to the principle of contestability in terms of

widening the market to create more suppliers of youth and play services. The procurement approach will utilise several principles that will be applied to secure value for money. These are as follows:

- Cost effectiveness without compromising quality.
- Competition will be sought.
- Required rather than desired outputs and outcomes.
- Added value through innovation and creativity.
- Accountability and transparency.
- All viable sourcing options will be considered.
- Transactions will be streamlined to ensure efficient use of resources.
- Administrative processes kept to a minimum to avoid bureaucracy.
- Continuous improvement and learning from experience through ongoing relationships and the joint effective management of the relationships.
- Focus on improving services for the future rather than maintaining services of the past.

Proof of good value for money is in concluding that the services received were worth the price paid. For services for children and young people this will be increasingly measured by their outcomes achieved in relation to the budgets committed.

As outlined above, to demonstrate value the points above will become established procurement practice within the grants to deliver youth and play services.

## **Real living wage plans**

Manchester City Council is dedicated to promoting fair pay across all sectors, including the VCFSE, which is based on the cost of living rather than the government's minimum wage. The Council's funding programmes, such as the Our Manchester Voluntary & Community Sector (OMVCS) Fund including the YPPS Fund, require applicants to outline their progress towards paying the Real Living Wage. This initiative ensures that funded providers are aligned with the city's commitment to fair wages and helps support the sustainability and well-being of their employees.

We would also encourage you to use Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) rates set by the National Youth Agency for those members of staff who are JNC qualified youth workers. There are two grades within the JNC framework, youth support worker and professional youth workers. The JNC rates can also be applied for qualified play workers.

## **Diversifying income**

We recognise that local, national, and international factors can impact funding availability and applicants may not always have guaranteed financial support. Additionally, we understand that many organisations often rely heavily on a limited number of funding sources. As strong advocates for the youth and play sector, we are committed to supporting you. If your application is successful and you require assistance, our service will collaborate with you to develop and implement a strategy to enhance your financial resilience by diversifying your income streams.

## **11. Who can apply**



Individual organisations from the VCSFE sector who meet the listed criteria are eligible to apply:

- Registered charity.
- Charitable incorporated organisation.
- Community-interest company limited by guarantee.
- Community-interest company limited by share (schedule 2 with 100 per cent asset lock only).
- Community-benefit company registered as an industrial and provident society.

In addition to the above, **your organisation must:**

- Be applying for funding to deliver open-access, universal youth & play work for children and young people aged 5 to 19 (up to 25 for care leavers and those with additional needs and/or disabilities). Demonstrate clear and effective implementation of youth voice throughout your organisation and your planned activity.
- Be based in the city of Manchester and be a registered organisation.
- Have staff delivering provision who are suitably qualified. Organisations applying to deliver youth work or play work **must have youth work or play work qualified staff in place to manage/deliver it.**
- **This funding must only be used to deliver services to children and young people who are residents of the City of Manchester.**
- Be constituted and have a bank account in the organisation's name.
- Have at least three trustees or directors (who are not related to each other and are not paid shareholders).
- Have a set of objectives that allows you to undertake the activities you're proposing. The objectives of your organisation must relate to youth and play work or positive activities for children and young people. This will be cross referenced against the information available via the Charities Register.
- Be value-driven, for the social good.
- Demonstrate a commitment to reducing carbon emissions.
- Comply with the Council's statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010.
- Provide services or activities that are not religious or party-political in nature (please note that faith groups can apply but not for activities related to worship or the promotion of a particular faith).

Applicants will be asked to confirm they meet these requirements at the expression of interest stage, which will then be confirmed at due diligence should you submit a subsequent successful application. Any organisation not able to provide evidence during due diligence will be unsuccessful in receiving funding.

### **Individual & partnership applications**

The YPPS will prioritise applications from partnerships, but individual applications are still welcomed and will be considered on their own merit. They must demonstrate local collaboration with other organisations/services.

Organisations can apply on an individual bases to deliver youth & play work city wide, area/district wide or in smaller geographical areas. If organisations chose to submit applications on an individual basis, **they cannot be included within any partnership applications elsewhere**, this decision has been made in the interest of ensuring funds are distributed as effectively as possible across the city.

An organisation **cannot apply as a lead partner in more than one application** but may also be a named partner from other partnerships in different areas. Named partners can be present in multiple partnerships across the city.

Organisations can apply in partnership to deliver youth and play services city wide, area wide or in certain geographical areas.

Where a partnership wishes to apply to the grants programme, one organisation must complete the application on behalf of the partnership, known as the lead partner. Other organisations in the partnership application are known as named partners. There must be at least three organisations in a partnership application (**lead plus at least two named partners**) and all partners must be involved in the delivery of provision in order to submit a partnership bid. A maximum of 10% management/administrative costs can be claimed by the lead partner.

Lead partners will be expected to:

- Confirm that all partner organisations named on the application meet the fund's eligibility requirements and undertake due diligence on partners.
- Take responsibility for distribution of funds to partner organisations.
- Confirm how any conflicts in the partnership are to be resolved.
- Be responsible for the timely submission of monitoring information on behalf of the partnership.

Partnerships will be expected to have an agreement in place that includes (but is not limited to) how they will work together to deliver activities, keep people safe (in terms of health and safety and safeguarding), monitor the work and pass on The EOI funding.

All formal partners will be expected to take part in the due diligence process. Officers will undertake due diligence of the partnership arrangements.

### **Who cannot apply**

We will not accept applications from the following:

- Private limited companies.
- Profit making organisations.
- Organisations unable to demonstrate at least 3 years of operation in Manchester (does not apply to small grants applicants).
- Organisations not offering open access universal provision (i.e. provision requiring referral or provision based in a school limited to its own students).
- Organisations charging more than a nominal fee for entrance.

## **12. How to apply**

Applications must be submitted online via: the smart survey, click the link to submit the online application [www.manchester.gov.uk](http://www.manchester.gov.uk)

A word document copy of application questions is also available to assist with your completion of the application – please email [youth\\_team@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:youth_team@manchester.gov.uk) to receive a copy.



# Youth, Play and Participation Service

# Commissioning

# Youth and Play 2026-29

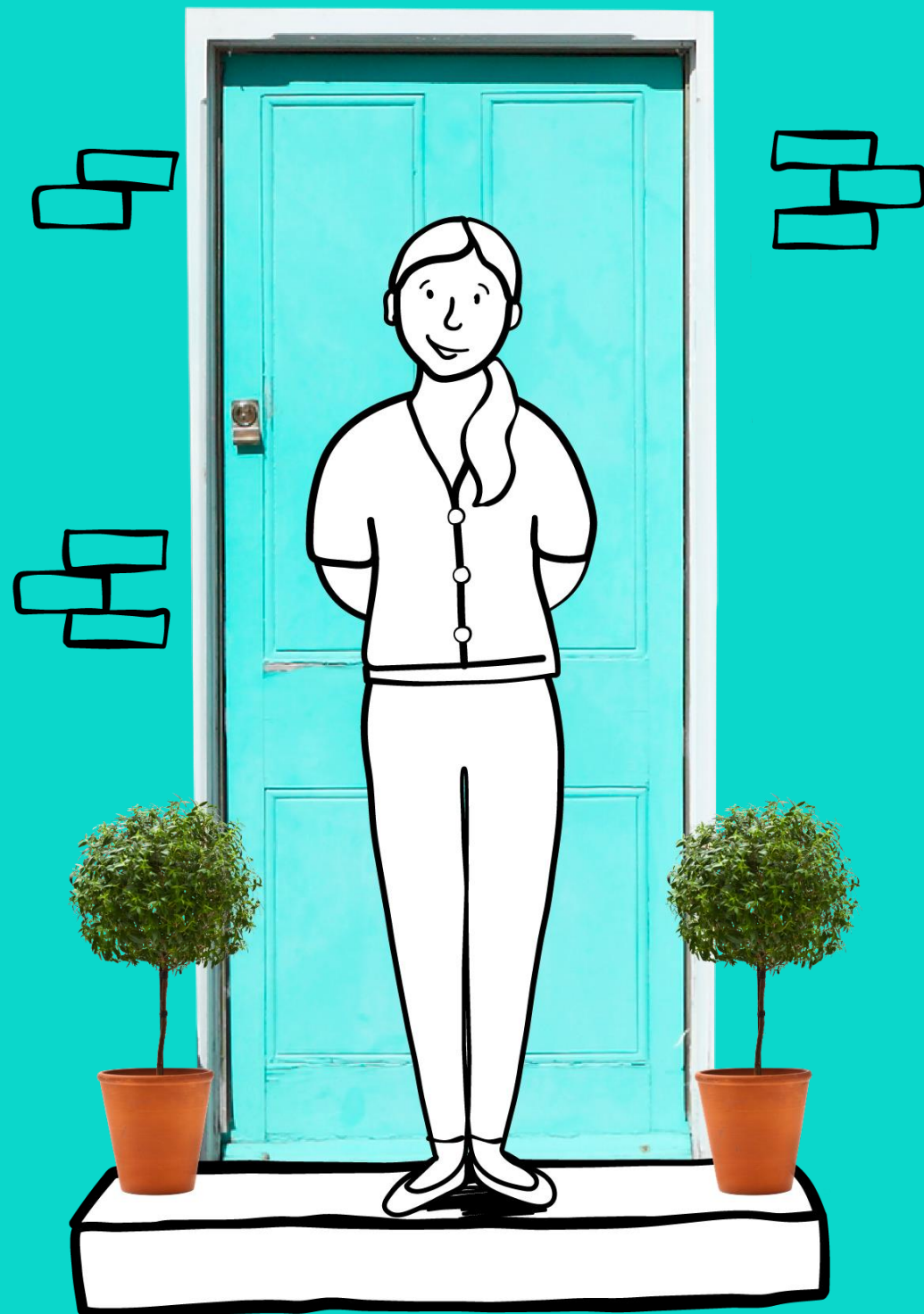




# Commissioning

## Current programme for 2025-26

- The Commissioning of Youth and Play was brought back into the council in 2022
- Initially extending the existing contracts a new process was introduced for 2023-24 and 2024-25
- For 2025-26 these arrangements have been rolled over to all existing providers
- We are now planning for a new round of commissioning to start delivery of services from 1st April 2026 – the aim of this presentation is to go through the key features of the new process



## **2024-25 Commissioning**

**In the last full year providers reached 17,557 children and young people – approximately 15% of the population of 5-19 year olds**

**So far, we expect 2025-26 figures to be broadly similar**

**We have drafted a report from 2024-25 and will circulate that shortly**

# Commissioning

## Background to 2026 process

- The previous process for 2023-24 was delayed due to being oversubscribed and underestimation of approval process – we are therefore implementing some process changes to improve this for applicants
- Funding for VCFSE is particularly challenging at present, charitable funds are under huge pressure, vastly oversubscribed and less able to fund high number of projects, many more projects formed during COVID, costs have risen.
- This process will undoubtedly face similar pressures. We are suggesting increased clarity of criteria from the outset, so we do not raise unrealistic expectations of funding new organisations.
- Aligning processes and criteria to other MCC VCFSE funding streams particularly OMVCS and Culture (which have the same timescales)





# Commissioning

## Our Approach for 2026-27

- Continue to invest in high quality youth work and play work opportunities as per previous grant rounds, citywide coverage with weighted investment in wards of high IMD.
- Application process – an EOI round to better advise applicants and triage.
- Focus on investments in existing Manchester based provision (not necessarily existing funded) with a track record of 3 years or more.
- Having an annual small grants programme to support new and emerging provision/ priorities.
- Preference for partnerships or at least close collaboration.
- Increasing reach without compromising quality from 15% to 20% population.



# Application process

- Open process at EOI stage starting from 6/6/25 to 27/6/25.
- Invited applications for either small grants (year 1) or longer term investment for 3 years.
- Preference for partnerships (though individual applicants are welcome and will be given assessed on merit).
- Preference for organisations with clear youth work / play work charitable objectives.
- Ward coverage mapped against IMD data and numbers of children and young people residents.
- Funding open access provision primarily, with targeted support for communities of interest.
- We want geographical spread (as far as practically possible) of inclusive, universal youth and play work.





# 2026-27 Proposed changes

- 3 year funding agreement subject to budgets and achievement of annual targets, with an annual small grants process (maximum of £100k per annum out of £1.62m).
- Fund 6 months in advance on completion of monitoring returns – regular VIEWS inputting with a 6 monthly narrative report.
- Clear output and outcome targets for every provider – numbers of participants.
- Improve reporting by ward to stakeholders – annual report.
- EOI process prior to full applications.
- YP involvement in decision making – a proportion of the application % to be by young people's panel(s).
- New scoring framework to include previous performance data.





Commissioning  
2026-29

**Thank you for listening –  
any comments or questions?**

# **Update on Asset Sales OSC**

**24 September 2025**

**Strategic Director CDN – Richard Sword**

# ASSET SALES

- The 2025/26 Budget Strategy includes 5 strands to support bridging the budget gap, one of which was to generate £60m of capital receipts from property sales.
- Asset sales generate one-off capital receipts which can be used to finance capital expenditure or repay debt.
- At some point, it may become necessary to use these receipts to support revenue expenditure, but this would require permission from the Secretary of State through a “capitalisation direction”. Permission would not be granted without a credible savings plan.



# ASSET DISPOSALS CRITERIA

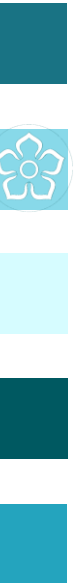
117

Key Criteria	Commentary
Low yielding assets	Assets generally below 4% yield to be identified
Public Interest	Identify assets of low value to the public
Strategically important	Ensure assets of low strategic importance or already part of a continued delivery strategy
Speed of delivery (wherever possible)	Asset which can be sold quickly to generate receipt in time



# DISPOSAL DUE DILIGENCE

- Local Plan.
- Two External valuations.
- Strategic value of the Asset.
- Ownership adjacencies.
- Planning pre-application advice.
- Legal title review and searches.
- Sale contract- Heads of Terms.
- Restrictive covenants/user clause/overage where applicable.
- Development build out period.



# ASSET DISPOSALS GOVERNANCE

119

Stages	Process for assets	Governance
1	Asset identified for disposal - Tabled at Asset Disposal Board	Asset Summary <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Acquisition history</li><li>- Site details</li><li>- Internal valuation and yield identification</li><li>- Title details</li><li>- Repurpose options</li></ul>
2	Asset board determines site suitable for disposal - Formal report to Asset Board	As stage 1 plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Detailed report</li><li>- Two external valuations</li></ul>
3	Asset Board determines site can be sold -Briefing to the Executive	Asset agreed for disposal <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Executive Decision (ED) if land transaction rules/scheme of delegation required</li><li>- DPC where outside of ED scope</li></ul>





# ASSET BOARD- MEMBERSHIP

- Strategic Director City Development & Neighbourhoods (CDN)
- Director Estates & Building Services (EBS)
- Director Planning Development & Transportation (PD&T)
- Representatives from
  - EBS, PD&T
  - Legal Services
  - Finance



# EXECUTIVE DECISIONS (PROPERTY)

- Asset Disposals related Executive Decision criteria listed in Executive Members' Portfolios.  
(The City Mayor's Scheme of Delegation)
- Paragraph 8.  
Freehold acquisitions, disposals and appropriations of property where the market value exceeds £500,000.
- Paragraph 10.  
Disposals of land and property at less than best consideration.



# DISPOSAL ROUTES

122

- Repurpose
- Special Purchaser
- Private Treaty
- Informal Tender (sealed bids)
- Formal Tender (contractual bids)
- Auction

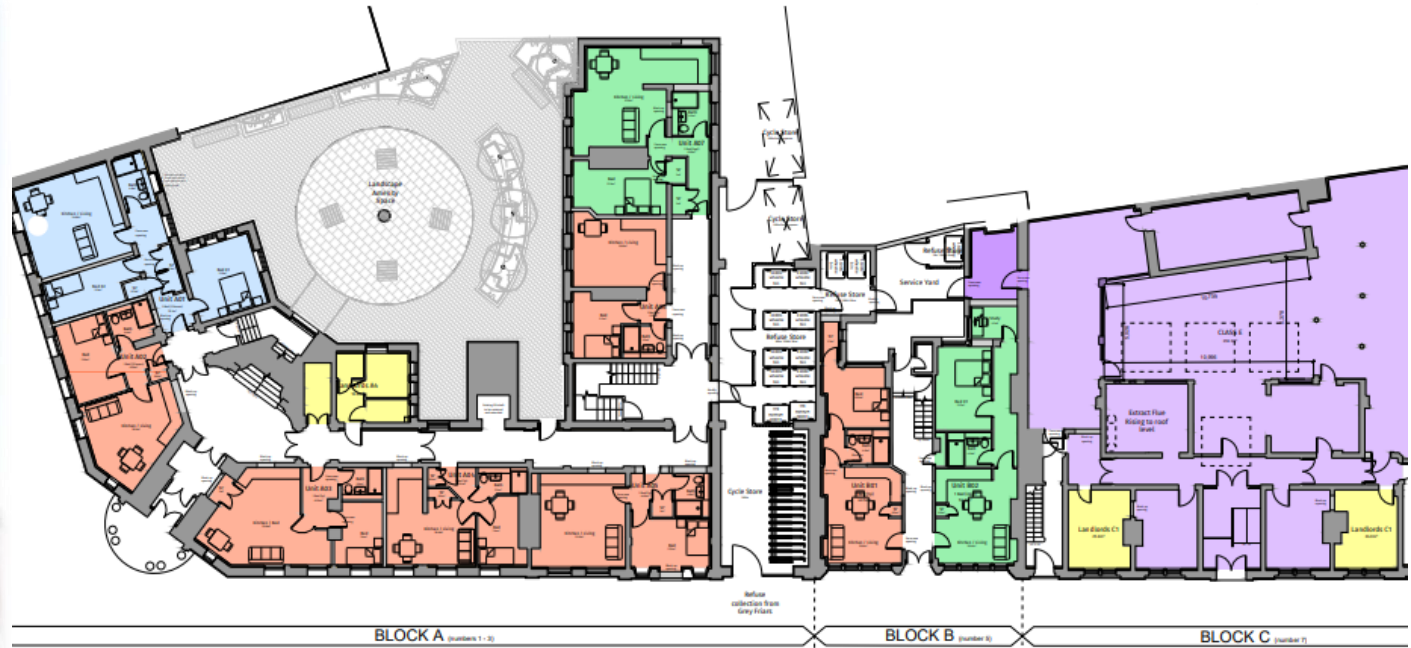


# DISPOSAL PROFILE

- Sold and contractually secured £16.3m
- Sites at advanced terms stage or STC/ED £32.6m.
- Further pipeline of £11.1m of assets to be reviewed, progressed and completed by 2027/28.



# GREYFRIARS (SOLD)



- Sympathetic redevelopment within the Greyfriars Conservation Area.
- Regeneration of a listed asset.
- Supporting the City's Housing supply.
- Commercial space offer.

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# **Environmental Impacts of Construction**

OSC: 24<sup>th</sup> September 2025

Lead Member: Cllr Geoff Whittle, Assistant City Mayor –  
Environment and Transport

Lead director: Matt Wallace, Director of Estates and  
Building Services

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### **Useful information**

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Duncan Bell, Change Manager (Climate Emergency)
- Author contact details: [duncan.bell@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:duncan.bell@leicester.gov.uk) Tel: 454 2249 (37 2249)
- Report version number: 1

#### **1. Summary**

At the committee's request, the attached presentation is being brought to OSC, outlining the environmental impacts of construction projects and the standards achieved by recent council projects.

#### **2. Recommended actions/decision**

OSC is recommended to:

- i. Note the content of the presentation.

#### **3. Scrutiny / stakeholder engagement**

NA

#### **4. Detailed report**

Refer to slide presentation at Appendix 1.

### **5. Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency and other implications**

#### **5.1 Financial implications**

The focus of this report is the environmental impact of construction projects rather than cost. However, the capital cost of construction and the revenue cost of operating and maintaining buildings is influenced by the method of construction and any energy efficiency measures that are put in place.

Stuart McAvoy – Head of Finance  
8<sup>th</sup> September 2025

#### **5.2 Legal implications**

There are no legal implications of this report, nor the presentation to which it refers.

Emma Young, Qualified Lawyer  
1 September 2025



### 5.3 Equalities implications

There are no direct equality implications arising from the report.

Equalities Officer, Surinder Singh, Ext 37 4148  
Dated 29 August 2025

### 5.4 Climate Emergency implications

Contained in the presentation.

Duncan Bell, Change Manager (Climate Emergency).  
8 September 2025

### 6.5 Other implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

In addition to reducing carbon emissions, the measures discussed in the presentation can have positive implications in terms of

- Energy bills – for the council and for its tenants
- A healthy living or working environment for building occupants
- Avoiding the emission of air pollutants by avoiding the use of gas boilers
- Income from any surplus electricity generated from PV panels.

## **7. Background information and other papers:**

[Minutes of the Special Meeting of the ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRANSPORT AND CLIMATE EMERGENCY SCRUTINY COMMISSION. Held: THURSDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 2023 at 5:30 pm.](#)

## **8. Summary of appendices:**

Appendix 1: Slide presentation: Environmental Impacts of Construction Projects

## **9. Is this a private report (If so, please indicate the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?**

No.

## **10. Is this a “key decision”? If so, why?**

No.



# Environmental Impacts of Construction Projects

Overview Select Committee

24<sup>th</sup> September 2025

# In this presentation we will:

1. Outline the main environmental impacts of construction, with a focus on carbon and energy
2. Outline the main legal and regulatory requirements
3. Set out the key features of a low carbon building
4. Present examples of what's being targeted and achieved in current council projects

# Environmental impacts

131

## EMBODIED

Raw materials,  
manufacture,  
transport to site

Site preparation and  
construction process

Construction waste

**Construction**

## OPERATIONAL

Energy and fuel use

Water use

Waste disposal

Drainage - wastewater  
and rainwater

**Use**

## EMBODIED

Raw materials,  
manufacture,  
transport to site

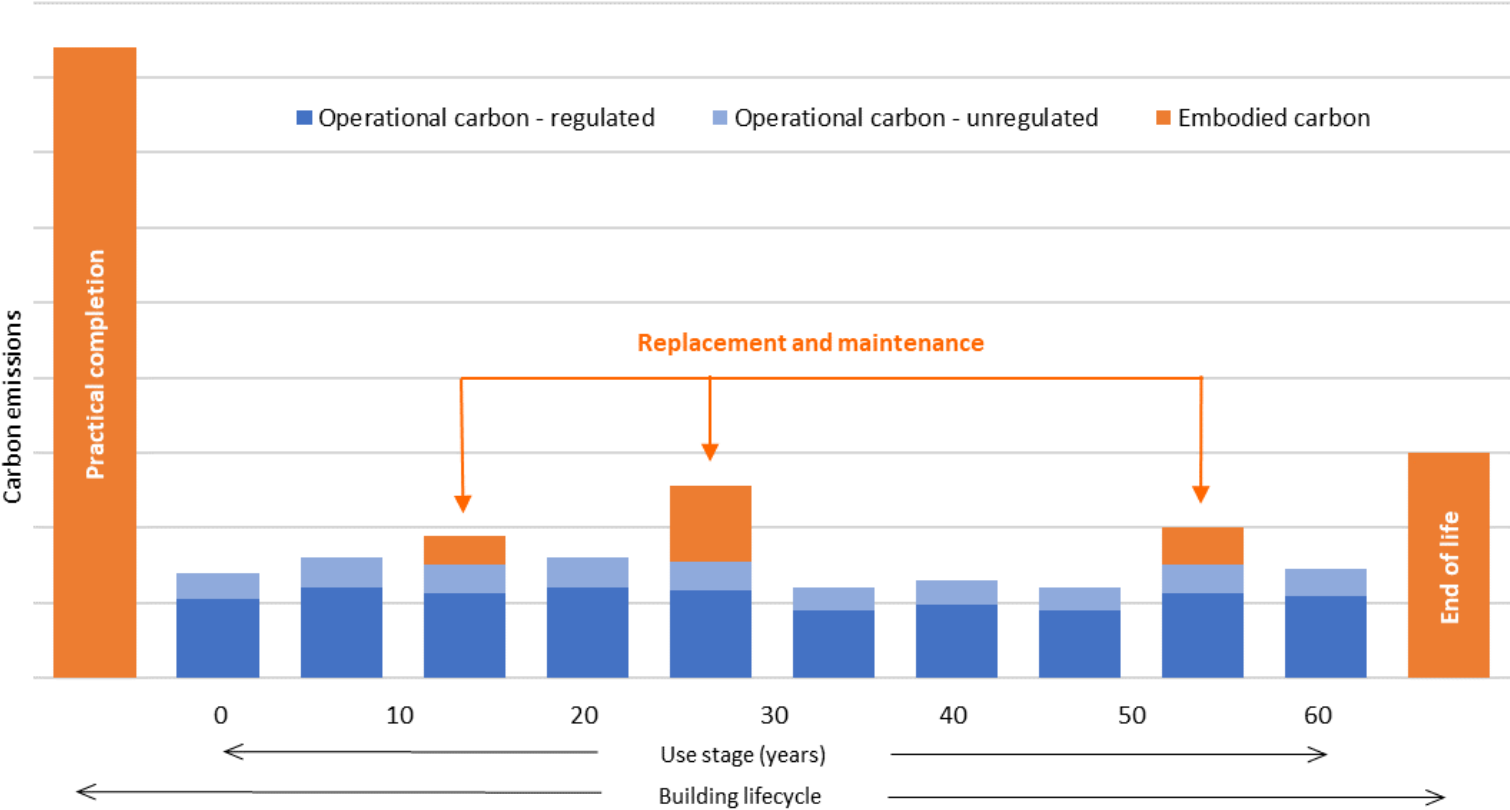
Demolition / refurb  
process

Demolition waste

**Maintenance  
and end-of-life**

# Carbon emissions across the whole building lifecycle

132



# Planning requirements

- National Planning Policy Framework

- Development must support low carbon transition and climate adaptation
- New devt. must reduce carbon, inc. through location, orientation, design and take account of opportunities to connect to heat networks and renewables

- Core Strategy

- Energy efficient building - shape, orientation, insulation, airtightness
- Energy efficient systems/fittings
- Low carbon heat source
- Renewables



# Building regulations

- Part L: Conservation of fuel and power (2021)
  - Target for carbon emissions
  - Minimum requirements for energy efficiency
- Part F - Ventilation
- Part O – Overheating
- Part S – EV chargers

134

# What makes a low carbon building?

135

Energy efficient and airtight building	Efficient heating and other systems – with no fossil fuel use	On-site renewables	Reduction of embodied carbon
Compact shape, orientated to benefit from solar gain	Efficient electric heating – usually heat pump* (or district heating connection). Good controls for heating	Roof mounted PVs where suitable roof area is available	Reuse of existing building where possible (or reuse of materials from demolition where not)
Well insulated, airtight	Mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR) Option of summer passive ventilation		Use of low carbon concrete and steel, reclaimed materials and materials with recycled content.
Good daylighting but avoids overheating	Energy efficient lighting - 100% LED. Good controls for lighting		Modelling of embodied carbon and setting of target based on a recognised benchmark figure.

\* In a few building types, a heat pump may not be the most efficient low carbon option e.g. a warehouse.

# Other climate issues in construction

- Water use
- Low carbon transport and accessibility
- Indoor comfort – including preventing overheating and maintaining indoor air quality
- Sustainable drainage
- Biodiversity

# Examples of current schemes



St Margaret's Bus Station

# St Margaret's Bus Station

139

Description	Redevelopment of bus station following strip-out and partial demolition of old bus station back to steel frame.
Operational carbon emissions	Net carbon positive due to electricity from PVs expected to exceed operational demand of building.
Operational energy demand	Achieved EPC of A+ due to PV output expected to exceed demand of building.
Lighting	Maximises natural daylighting through glazed concourse.
Heat/cooling and ventilation	No fossil fuel use. Electric radiant panel space heaters and electric water heaters.
Renewables	390 solar PV panels, generating approx. 142MWh electricity per year.
Embodied carbon	Retention of concrete foundations, apron, gutters and part of steel frame saved 575t carbon.
Other features	Bays for buses increased from 18 to 24 and electric bus charge-points included. Improved pedestrian and cycle access, plus secure storage for up to 100 cycles.



# Dock 3-5





# Dock 3-5

Description	4,000m <sup>2</sup> of new offices and 2,000m <sup>2</sup> of new industrial units
Operational carbon emissions	Net carbon negative for regulated emissions. 101% emissions reduction compared to Target Emissions Rate (TER).
Operational energy demand	PVs will generate slightly more renewable energy than buildings use (ex. plug loads, machinery used by tenants, ext. lighting, EV charge points).
141 Basic building energy efficiency	Highly insulated and airtight. Roof lights to increase daylighting. Orientated to optimise solar gain while minimising overheating risk.
Heat/cooling and ventilation	Air source heat pumps. Heat recovery from mechanical ventilation to meeting rooms, canteen and tea point.
Lighting	100% LEDs with movement and daylight sensors to turn off when spaces are empty, or daylight is sufficient.
Renewables	717m <sup>2</sup> PVs with peak generating capacity of 144kW.
Other features	8 EV charge points.

# Phase 2 new council housing

142

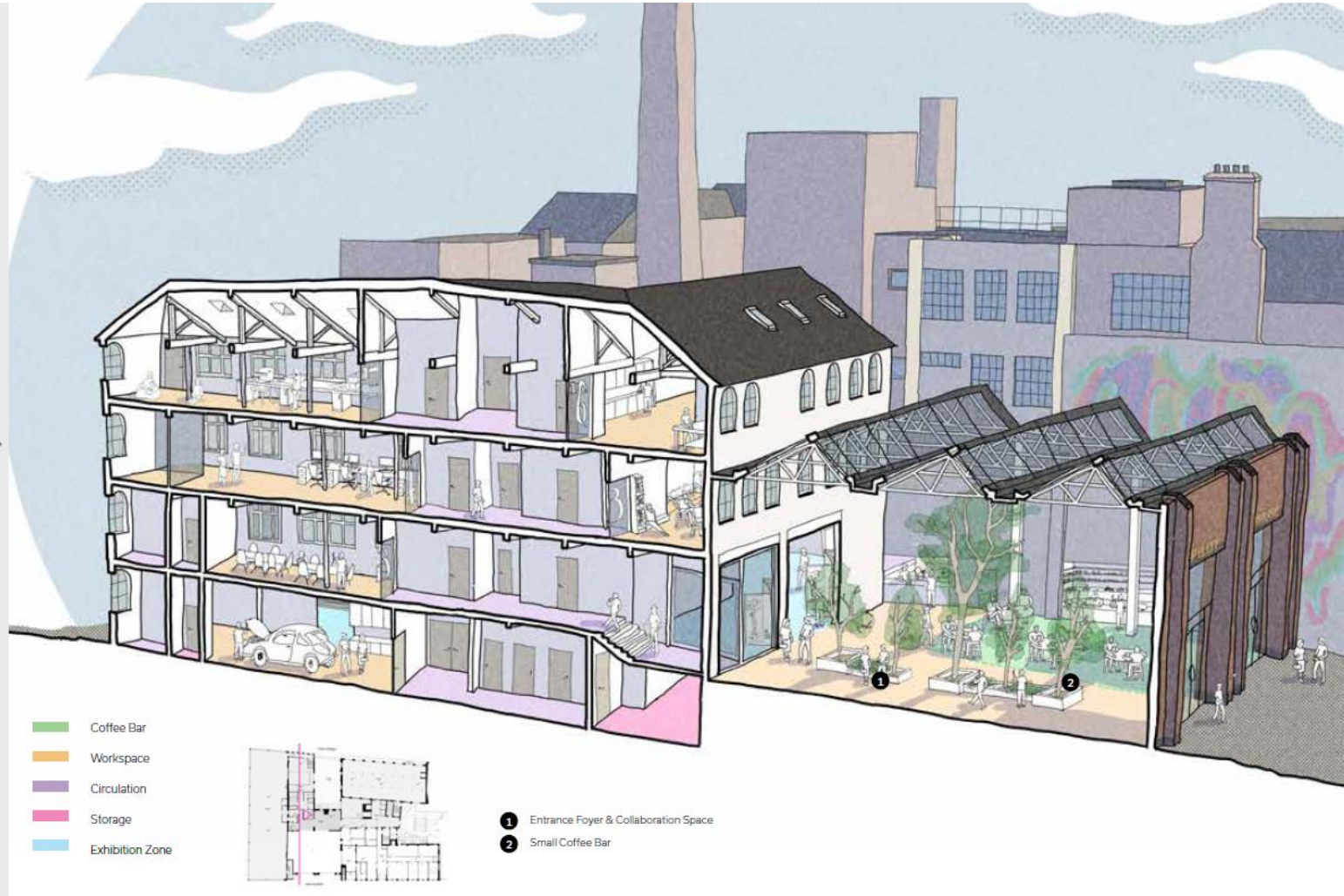


# Phase 2 new council housing

Description	93 new homes at Saffron Velodrome, Lanesborough Road, Hydra Walk, Rockingham Close, Austin Rise and Whitteney Drive.
Operational carbon emissions	More than 70% reduction of regulated emissions compared with Part L 2013.
Operational energy demand	Designed to be very low energy with EPC 'A' rating. Annual energy bills were estimated (at the time of the original design work in 2020) to be not much more than a third of an average household dual-fuel bill at the time.
Basic building energy efficiency	Highly insulated. Targeting low air permeability.
Heat/cooling and ventilation	Combined units incorporating air source heat pumps plus mechanical ventilation with heat recovery.
Lighting	High efficiency LED lighting throughout.
Renewables	PVs with approx. 1.5kW peak generating capacity per house, with up to 2kW for some homes.
Other	Targeting low water use of 110 litres per person per day (compares to 142 litres average)

# Canopy

144



# Canopy

145

Description	Refurbishment of approx. 5,800m <sup>2</sup> floorspace to create new rental offices, shared workspaces, café and reception.
Operational carbon emissions	Approx. 50% reduction of regulated operational carbon compared to pre-refurbishment.
Operational energy demand	Targeting EPC improvement from 'D' to 'B' rating. Will be nearly as efficient as a typical newbuild.
Basic building energy efficiency	Existing fabric being improved within constraints of protecting heritage value and retaining industrial character. Measures include roof insulation, secondary glazing, draft-proofing and low U-values for new glazing to atrium and cafe.
Heat/cooling and ventilation	Retaining connection to district heating for provision of space heating and hot water. Mechanical ventilation with heat recovery.
Lighting	High efficiency LED lighting throughout.
Renewables	Limited due to space requirements for other plant, as well as overshadowing of roof areas, but space found for some PVs.
Embodied carbon	Creation of new office space based on refurbishment of existing buildings is reducing embodied carbon substantially compared to newbuild.



# Stocking Farm

146



# Stocking Farm

Description	Exemplar low-carbon, social housing led regeneration scheme on land owned by the Council. 50 newbuild council homes and five refurbished units.
Operational carbon	More than 80% reduction compared with Building Regs. Part L 2021.
Operational energy	Designed to be ultra-low energy. Highly insulated, very low air permeability. Homes orientated to optimise solar gain while minimising overheating risk.
147 Heating & ventilation (newbuilds)	Air source heat pumps. Mechanical ventilation with 95% heat recovery.
Lighting	High efficiency LED lighting throughout.
Renewables	PVs with peak generating capacity of average 4kW per newbuild house. PVs also to be considered for refurbished maisonettes and farmhouse building.
Embodied carbon	Newbuild homes to be less than 625kgCO <sub>2</sub> e/m <sup>2</sup> (RIBA 2030 Climate Challenge target). Existing maisonettes and farmhouse building being retained and refurbished to reduce use of new materials. Demolition waste segregation for potential reuse.
Other features	6 EV charge points, public bike parking for 38 bikes; water saving target of 95 litres per person per day (meets RIBA Climate Challenge target for 2025); new community green space.





Recent PV arrays by EBS, Capital Projects

# Recent PV arrays by EBS, Capital Projects

Project	Est. energy generation	Est. carbon saving	Est. energy cost saving	Investment
<b>Aylestone Leisure Centre</b> Roof replacement and PVs. 828 panels, 3600m <sup>2</sup>	270MWh pa	~55tCO <sup>2</sup> e pa	£65,000 pa Est. 9-year payback	50% ERDF - £598k 50% LCC - £598k
<b>Newarke Street Car Park</b> 198 panels, 360m <sup>2</sup> Steel canopy mounted. Technical challenges overcome.	67MWh pa	12tCO <sup>2</sup> e pa	Up to £24,500 pa. Est. 6-year payback	45% ERDF - £122k 55% LCC - £149k
<b>Leycroft Road Depot</b> 267 panels across 4 buildings.	~70MWh pa	Over 31tCO <sup>2</sup> e pa	£12,400 pa. Est. 5-year payback	33% ERDF - £31k 67% LCC - £64k

# Towards Climate Ready construction

- Council default approach is now highly energy efficient and fossil-fuel free, with PVs in most cases
- Aspirational standards identified to work towards – addressing operational and embodied carbon
- Assessing the learning from current schemes – costs, market readiness, in-use performance
- New Local Plan policy and Future Homes and Building Standards will push up standards for all development

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# **Executive Decision- Revenue Budget Monitoring April-June 2025/26**

Overview Select Committee

Decision to be taken by: City Mayor

Date of decision: 24th September 2025

Lead director/ officer: Amy Oliver, Director of Finance

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### Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Karen Linnett
- Author contact details: karen.linnett@leicester.gov.uk
- Report version number: 1

## 1. Summary

This report provides an early forecast for the 2025/26 financial year, showing a forecast spend of £431.0m against the current approved budget of £437.5m. This variance reflects effective cost management and additional income across several service areas, partially offsetting ongoing financial pressures.

We are continuing to see cost pressures across the Council particularly in relation to Homelessness with them forecasting to use £3m of the contingency set aside for this year. However, we must remember this cost was forecast to have been £20m higher if it had not been for the significant investment in temporary accommodation.

Social care continues to have difficulties in filling posts across the Division and this leading to most of their forecast spend below budget.

Overall, the corporate budgets are forecasting a £1.7m underspend against budget. This is due to homelessness forecasting not to require £3m of their £6m contingency budget and additional one-off grants not known at budget setting. This is offset by a continued pressure within Housing Benefits, where the subsidy for this in supported accommodation is not sufficient to meet the costs, this is anticipated to be £2m above the budget this year.

The budget strategy agreed at Council in February 2025 set savings targets for Divisions. Appendix D notes the management action that has been taken resulting in savings towards the target. To date a total of £15m of the £23m target by 2027/28 has been achieved. The in-year savings target was £12.3m of which £8.7m has been achieved to date.

The cumulative deficit on Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) continues to grow and is forecast to be £43.1m by March 2026. A time-limited “statutory override” extended to 2027/28 means this does not currently impact the resources available for other services.

## 2. Recommended actions/decision

2.1 The Executive is recommended to:

- Note the forecast outturn position detailed in the report.

- Approve the use of £2.2m of HRA reserves for repair and maintenance work and deliver on the requirements coming out of the recent inspection by the Regulator of Social Housing (para 10.6).
- Note the savings to be achieved by Officers to achieve their budget savings target in appendix D

2.2 The OSC is recommended to consider the overall position presented within this report and make any observations it sees fit.

### 3. Scrutiny / stakeholder engagement

N/A

### 4. Background and options with supporting evidence

The General Fund budget set for the financial year is £438.6m, before the use of managed reserves. Following savings identified since the budget was set, this has been updated to £437.5m

Appendix A summarises the original budget, current budget and anticipated spending in 2025/26.

Appendix B provides more detailed commentary on the forecast position for each area of the Council's operations.

Appendix C summarises the latest forecasts for managed reserves.

Appendix D summarises the savings to be achieved to support the budget strategy.

## 5. Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency and other implications

### 5.1 Financial implications

This report is solely concerned with financial issues.

Signed: Amy Oliver

Dated: 14th August 2025

### 5.2 Legal implications

There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

Signed: Kamal Adatia – City Barrister

Dated: 18 August 2025

### 5.3 Equalities implications

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have statutory duties, including the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions they have to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't. The report provides an early forecast for the 2025/26 financial year.

It is important to note that currently no policy changes have been proposed but the possibility remains that the Council may need to consider changes to existing services going forward. If this is the case, the Council's equality impact assessment process should be used to evaluate the potential equalities impact of any proposed changes. The aforementioned cost pressures and ongoing identified savings should take into account equality considerations.

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. There are no direct equality implications arising out of this budget monitoring report.

Signed: Equalities Officer, Surinder Singh, Ext 37 4148

Dated: 5 August 2025

#### 5.4 Climate Emergency implications

There are no climate emergency implications directly associated with this report, as it is a budget monitoring report.

However, where proposals are brought forward to make additional savings required, any climate emergency implications should be considered and addressed while proposals are being developed and should be identified in the appropriate decision reports at the time. The Sustainability service may be able to help departments with assessing implications as part of the evaluation of proposals ahead of report preparation.

Where any necessary capital funding can be identified or secured, the potential role of invest-to-save energy efficiency and renewable energy projects in helping to address revenue budget pressures while also reducing carbon emissions is also worth noting.

Signed: Phil Ball, Sustainability Officer, Ext 372246

Dated: 26th August 2025

#### 5.5 Other implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

No other implications are noted as this is a budget monitoring report, and therefore no policy changes are proposed.



**6. Background information and other papers:**

Report to Council on 19 February 2025 on the General Fund Revenue budget 2025/26.

Revenue Outturn Report presented to OSC on 09 July 2025

**7. Summary of appendices:**

Appendix A – Period 3 (April-June) Budget Monitoring Summary.

Appendix B – Divisional Narrative – Explanation of Variances.

Appendix C – Updated reserves position.

Appendix D - Savings achieved to support the 2025/26 budget strategy.

**8. Is this a private report (If so, please indicate the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?**

No

**9. Is this a “key decision”? If so, why?**

Yes – a recommendation of over £1m of one-off expenditure is included as part of the report.

## Revenue Budget at Period 3 (April – June) 2025-26

Table A

2025-2026	Original Budget £000's	Current Budget £000's	Forecast £000's	Variance £000's	Variance %
Financial Services	10,783.5	10,516.8	10,516.8	0.0	0.00%
Information Services	11,432.3	11,133.4	11,133.4	0.0	0.00%
Corporate Services	9,044.2	9,376.9	8,229.1	(1,147.8)	-12.24%
Legal Services	6,094.8	6,119.8	6,264.7	144.9	2.37%
<b>Corporate Resources &amp; Support</b>	<b>37,354.8</b>	<b>37,146.9</b>	<b>36,144.0</b>	<b>(1,002.9)</b>	<b>-2.70%</b>
Planning, Development & Transportation	14,765.3	14,350.1	14,188.8	(161.3)	-1.12%
Tourism Culture & Inward Investment	3,232.0	3,248.2	3,248.2	0.0	0.00%
Neighbourhood & Environmental Services	41,694.5	41,694.5	42,222.1	527.6	1.27%
Estates & Building Services	3,964.6	4,371.5	4,505.0	133.5	3.05%
Departmental Overheads	590.4	590.4	590.4	0.0	0.00%
Housing Services	20,533.3	23,533.3	23,643.1	109.8	0.47%
<b>City Development &amp; Neighbourhoods</b>	<b>84,780.1</b>	<b>87,788.0</b>	<b>88,397.6</b>	<b>609.6</b>	<b>0.69%</b>
Adult Social Care & Safeguarding	209,673.2	209,299.8	208,250.8	(1,049.0)	-0.50%
Adult Social Care & Commissioning	(30,713.4)	(31,232.3)	(31,490.6)	(258.3)	0.83%
<b>Sub-Total Adult Social Care</b>	<b>178,959.8</b>	<b>178,067.5</b>	<b>176,760.2</b>	<b>(1,307.3)</b>	<b>-0.73%</b>
Strategic Commissioning & Business Support	3,114.5	1,998.6	1,864.3	(134.3)	-6.72%
Learning Services	23,328.8	23,070.5	22,189.2	(881.3)	-3.82%
Children, Young People & Families	93,180.1	93,183.0	91,148.0	(2,035.0)	-2.18%
Departmental Resources	960.3	1,108.9	1,113.5	4.6	0.41%
<b>Sub-Total Education &amp; Children's Services</b>	<b>120,583.7</b>	<b>119,361.0</b>	<b>116,315.0</b>	<b>(3,046.0)</b>	<b>-2.55%</b>
<b>Total Social Care &amp; Education</b>	<b>299,543.5</b>	<b>297,428.5</b>	<b>293,075.2</b>	<b>(4,353.3)</b>	<b>-1.46%</b>
<b>Public Health</b>	<b>23,448.5</b>	<b>25,377.2</b>	<b>25,377.2</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.00%</b>
<b>Total Operational</b>	<b>445,126.9</b>	<b>447,740.6</b>	<b>442,994.0</b>	<b>(4,746.6)</b>	<b>-1.06%</b>
Corporate Budgets	7,661.2	8,836.2	10,183.7	1,347.5	15.25%
Capital Financing	6,219.0	6,219.0	6,201.0	(18.0)	-0.29%
Contingencies budget	10,000.0	7,000.0	4,000.0	(3,000.0)	-42.86%
<b>Total Corporate &amp; Capital Financing</b>	<b>23,880.2</b>	<b>22,055.2</b>	<b>20,384.7</b>	<b>(1,670.5)</b>	<b>-7.57%</b>
Public Health Grant	(30,402.3)	(32,331.0)	(32,331.0)	0.0	0.00%
<b>TOTAL GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>438,604.8</b>	<b>437,464.8</b>	<b>431,047.7</b>	<b>(6,417.1)</b>	<b>-1.47%</b>

1.1 Changes since the original budget are summarised in the table below:

	<b>Total General Fund £000's</b>
<b>Original budget</b>	<b>438,605</b>
Savings approved - Outturn 2024/25	<b>(1,140)</b>
<b>Latest budget</b>	<b>437,465</b>

1.2 The original budgets split between employees, running costs and income are available at: [Budget summaries](#)

**Divisional Narrative – Explanation of Variances**

**Corporate Resources and Support (Chief Operating Officer: Alison Greenhill)**

Corporate Resources Department is forecasting to spend £36.1m, £1m below the budget.

**1. Finance (Director – Amy Oliver)**

1.1. The Financial Services Division is forecasting to spend £10.5m, as per the budget.

**2. Corporate Services (Director - Andrew Shilliam)**

2.1. Taken together corporate services are forecasting to spend £19.4m, which is £1.1m below the budget, after the planned use of reserves within IT. The HR service is forecasting a £0.7m underspend, resulting from vacancies across various areas together with additional traded income. There is a further underspend of £0.4m across the division from staffing vacancies. The underspend is part of a planned approach to meeting their future year savings targets.

**3. Legal, Coronial and Registrars, Members and Democratic Services (City Barrister – Kamal Adatia)**

3.1. Legal Coronial and registrar services are forecasting to spend £6.2m an overspend of £0.1m compared to the budget. The overspend solely relates to legal services, with agency staff currently being utilised to cover vacancies and retain a high level of service. Recruitment options are being explored.

3.2. Coronial and registrar services are forecasting to remain in budget after £0.2m of support from corporate budgets as per previous years.

### **City Development and Neighbourhoods (Strategic Director – Richard Sword)**

The department is forecasting to spend £88.4m, some £0.6m above budget, after the use of £3m corporate provision towards homelessness costs. The position for each division is as follows:

#### **4. Planning, Development & Transportation (Director – Andrew Smith)**

- 4.1. The division is forecasting to spend £14.2m resulting in an underspend for the year of £0.2m.
- 4.2. Concessionary fares' reimbursement to bus operators is forecast to be £0.6m under budget. However, this shows a continuing pattern of higher concessionary fares costs across recent years, where the underspend has been decreasing year-on-year.
- 4.3. There is a forecast overspend of £0.4m on Park and Ride services, although new contractual arrangements for the operation of the service will be in place from August 2025, and this is predicted to lead to reduced operating costs in future years. Additional BSIP (Bus Service Improvement Plan) grant funding of over £1.3m has been received which will cover the Park & Ride pressure in the current year and contribute towards an underspend of £0.2m on supported bus services.
- 4.4. A cost pressure of £0.1m relates to operating the city centre Pedestrian Priority Zone. This relates to increased maintenance costs of rising bollards.
- 4.5. The Planning Service is forecasting a net overspend of over £0.7m, mostly due to a continuing shortfall of planning fee income. Despite national development market conditions showing signs of improvement as a result of greenfield land policy being relaxed, this is not expected to have the same benefits in constrained cities with the challenges which come from brownfield sites.
- 4.6. Other notable variances include underspends in Lighting and City Highways operations, with a combined surplus expected of £0.3m, reflecting a high predicted level of programmed work, resulting in increased recharges.
- 4.7. The division has overachieved on their planned savings of £0.3m and this is being utilised to offset the pressures above.

#### **5. Tourism, Culture & Inward Investment (Director – Peter Chandler)**

- 5.1. The division is forecasting to spend £3.2m resulting in a breakeven position by year end.

## **6. Neighbourhood & Environmental Services (Director – Sean Atterbury)**

- 6.1. The division is forecasting to spend £42.2m, resulting in a £0.5m overspend by year end.
- 6.2. Regulatory services are forecast to overspend by £0.3m, partly due to shortages in staffing reducing the generation of building control income. However, fees are being increased and there is an aim to increase current market share to gradually mitigate the issue.
- 6.3. Parks and Open Spaces is anticipated to overspend by £0.2m. Of this, £0.1m relates to bereavement services due to essential repairs being required at Gilroes Crematorium. There are other small overspends across the service amounting to £0.1m, relating to works being required within trees & woodlands and a park building currently being empty which is attracting increased rates.
- 6.4. Leisure Centres are currently set to generate a surplus of £0.4m due to increased fees and charges across various activities. This is offsetting a £0.2m overspend within Sportivate, relating to works at Aylestone Leisure Centre for upgraded toilets and a new entrance system, fencing at Humberstone Park and a new website for Active Leicester.
- 6.5. There are small overspends in the wider division, amounting to £0.2m. £0.1m relates to staffing overspends in Standards & Development as well as an overspend of £0.1 million in Community Safety, arising from contract price increases for neighbourhood CCTV.

## **7. Estates & Building Services (Director - Matt Wallace)**

- 7.1. The division is forecasting to spend £4.5m, resulting in a £0.1m overspend by year end
- 7.2. The budget for 2025/26 includes the delivery of £2.3m of savings within the division. Whilst continued work takes place to achieve these, they will not deliver in full within the current year, creating a £0.4m pressure. However, there are vacancies in the Capital Projects Team of £0.2m which will partially offset this. Other one-off savings are being explored to bridge this, and £0.1m of vacancies accumulated across the wider division will also help to partially offset the pressure in the current year.

## **8. Departmental Overheads**

- 8.1. This area holds budgets for added years' pension costs and departmental salaries. This is forecast to break even.

## **9. Housing General Fund (Director – Chris Burgin)**

- 9.1. The division is forecasting to spend £23.6m, which is an anticipated £0.1m overspend by the end of the financial year.
- 9.2. As previously reported, increased costs of provision for homeless households are a national issue. The increased presentations of homelessness cases in the city continues to put significant demand on the service. Grant funding and housing benefit continue to be insufficient to cover the rising costs of temporary accommodation. With the planned additional use of £3m in corporate provision, homelessness services are set to live within their budgets, showing the success in the mitigating measures implemented so far.
- 9.3. It is estimated that the overspend would have been around £20m without any mitigating action. Frequent reviews of this area are being undertaken, and further work is continuing to find longer-term solutions to this nationally recognised issue.
- 9.4. Wider in the division, there is an overspend in fleet services of £0.1m mainly relating to the use of agency staff whilst recruitment continues.

## **10. Housing Revenue Account (Director – Chris Burgin)**

- 10.1. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is a ring-fenced income and expenditure account relating to the management and maintenance of the Council's housing stock. The HRA is forecast to overspend by £0.8m for the year. Revenue is also used for capital spending, and this is reported separately within the capital monitoring report
- 10.2. Income from core rent and service charges is expected to exceed the budget by £0.9m from higher levels of affordable rents and service charges. This offsets £0.2m of rental loss at the Bridlespur flats during their refurbishment.
- 10.3. The HRA incurs the cost of interest on its debt and receives income from interest on the cash balances which it holds. Interest payable by the HRA on its borrowing is forecast to be below budget by £1.2m due to a reduction in short-term interest rates, alongside lower levels of predicted HRA debt. This will offset a £0.3m shortfall in investment interest due to the reduced rates generating less interest on the HRA's cash balances.
- 10.4. The Repairs and Maintenance service is forecast to overspend by £3m. Whilst there are vacant posts generating underspends of £0.6m, this is more than offset by a £1.3m overspend on external contractors. This relates to increased works as a result of legislation changes for electrical regulations and compliance with updates to Awaab's Law. There have been continued disrepair claims and associated costs driven by law firms before the introduction of fixed recoverable costs, creating a pressure of £1.5m, much of which relates to disrepair works



being allocated to contractors. Running costs are set to be above budget by £0.6m, predominantly due to the utilities costs, with other pressures relating to waste disposal and continuing repairs at the metalwork shop. There is also a small pressure of £0.2m relating to various overspends in the division, including in stores and due to a small under-recovery of income.

10.5. Management and Landlord Services are expected to underspend by 0.6m, mainly attributable to staffing vacancies across various administrative and support teams.

10.6. A decision is requested as part of this report to allocate £2.2m of HRA general reserves towards the work recommended by the Regulator of Social Housing following its recent inspection. This is over and above the additional costs identified at section 10.4. This includes investment in to enhancing Tenant Engagement opportunities, more regular communication to tenants including a review of the Housing website. There will also be ongoing investment to speed up repairs and maintenance and further strengthen the work we do on reports of damp and mould alongside the work being done on a programme of EICR's (Electrical Installation Condition reports) and HHSRS (Housing Healthy Safety Rating System) inspections across the whole Housing stock.

### **Adult Social Care (Strategic Director – Laurence Jones)**

#### **11. Adult Social Care (Service Directors – Ruth Lake & Kate Galoppi)**

11.1. Adult Social Care is forecasting to spend £176.7m against a net budget of £178m, resulting in a forecast of £1.3m below budget, this equates to 0.73% of the budget.

11.2. Approximately £0.9m of this underspend can be attributed to staff vacancies. Whilst most vacancies are planned to be filled during the year, this will only have a part year effect resulting in an underspend. There continues to be difficulties in recruiting social worker posts, although currently some of these vacancies are being covered by agency staff.

11.3. The remainder is attributable to additional health income supporting joint funded packages of care of £0.4m. The 2025/26 Revenue Budget included £1.2m as an unallocated saving that has now been included within Adult Social Care for additional income. We are forecasting that we will achieve this additional £1.2m income and a further £0.4m on top.

11.4. Forecasting for care packages is complex and takes into account inflationary and demographic pressures. Costs can fluctuate due to changes in the type of care needed or due to the numbers of people being cared for. However, Adult Social Care is forecasting to use all its £233m gross package budget.

11.5. Alongside the underspend reported above, Adult Social Care is continuing to focus on reducing growth in the costs of care, managing growth in demand, improving efficiency and working closely with partners. Operationally the service is committed to better management of the commissioning cycle and improved social work practice.

11.6. Following the recent CQC report there is an action plan being implemented that will focus on the areas for improvement. Relevant cost implications will be included in future reports.

### **Education and Children's Services (Strategic Director – Laurence Jones)**

#### **12. Education and Children's Services (Service Directors – Damian Elcock and Sophie Maltby)**

12.1. The department is forecasting an underspend of £3.0m on a budget of £119.4m which equates to 2.55%. The principal areas of underspend relate to vacancies across the department and reduced costs on SEND home to school transport.

12.2. £2.2m of the underspend is due to staffing vacancies across the department. Some posts like social workers and educational psychologists have proven difficult to recruit to due to the competitive market, and admin posts have been left vacant pending the children's centres review. Vacancies have created significant work pressures, but action has been taken where possible to review structures and recruit.

12.3. The SEND home to school transport is forecast to underspend by £0.8m. This is due to securing reduced prices from the taxi companies following dynamic purchasing tender last year and growth in numbers of children supported not being as high as expected following the new post-16 SEND transport policy approved in May.

12.4. Placement costs for looked after children continue to increase year on year. A lot of work is being done to reduce average placement costs but there are a small number of extremely high-cost individual residential placements. The average placement cost for an internal residential placement is £5,104 per week and £5,783 week for an external residential placement. The net position is that placement costs for children are forecast to budget.

12.5. The cumulative DSG reserve deficit was £22.2m at the end of March 2025. The allocation increased by 8.14% to £88m in 2025/26, which has been applied towards inflationary increases.

12.6. In the current academic year up to June 2025, the number of new Education, Health, and Care plans (EHCPs) agreed for statutory assessment was 488 which is on track to be a reduction on the previous year's total. With effectively zero

real terms funding growth, the in-year deficit grows significantly as the full cohort increases. The service has put in place a range of strategies to mitigate the cost impact of the growth in demand for and complexity of SEND support as part of the HNB Management Recovery Plan and Transformation Project. Leicester is also part of the DfE's SEND and alternative provision change programme, alongside Leicestershire and Rutland for the East Midlands region. Even with mitigations it remains a significant challenge to meet increasing demand. The forecast for the current year is an overspend of £20.9m, which brings the cumulative deficit on 31 March 2026 to £43.1m.

- 12.7. Due to a special Government “override” we are able to maintain the DSG cumulative deficit as a negative balance (normally, we would be expected to write it off against our other reserves). The Government has extended the Statutory Override until the end of 2027/28 and planning to provide additional details on SEND deficits as part of the local government finance settlement at the back end of this calendar year.

### **Public Health (Director – Rob Howard)**

#### **13. Public Health**

- 13.1. The Public Health Service is forecasting a break-even position.
- 13.2. The Public Health Grant for 2025/26 is £32.3m, which is an increase of £1.9m compared to last year. The grant remains ringfenced for use on the Council's statutory public health duties set out in the NHS Act 2006, with the uplift being mainly for Agenda for Change (NHS pay settlements) contract pressures, increased national insurance contributions and supervised toothbrushing. The grant is expected to be fully utilised in 2025/26.
- 13.3. Public Health expect to receive £6m of additional government grants in 2025/26, similar to last year, to allow further investment in specific services including Substance Misuse, Stop Smoking and 0-19 Children's services.

### **Corporate Items & Reserves**

#### **14. Corporate Items**

- 14.1. The corporate budgets cover the Council's capital financing costs, items such as audit fees, bank charges, contingencies and levies. This budget is currently forecasting an underspend of £1.7m.
- 14.2. As in recent years, a net shortfall on Housing Benefit subsidy is expected, relating to supported accommodation where rents can be significantly higher than the maximum amount of subsidy paid by the government. The issue has

been increasing in recent years and is not unique to Leicester. The subsidy loss for the first quarter was £0.78m, offset by an expected surplus on recovery of overpayments; if this trend continues the full year loss will be around £2m

- 14.3. The budget for capital financing represents the cost of interest and debt repayment for capital spend, less the interest received on balances held by the council. The majority of our borrowing is at fixed rates, and unlike the HRA, short-term interest rate variations have only a minor impact. At P3, the economic conditions and capital programme have not caused any changes to the original budget; as a result, the capital financing forecast remains as per the current budget.
- 14.4. The council has allocated £0.75m to fund discretionary (hardship) relief for council taxpayers outside the main CTSS. This support is now being funded from government grant received via the Household Support Fund, so this budget is not required.
- 14.5. The budget contained provision for a 3% pay award. An offer of 3.2% on all pay points has been made by the local government employers. This implies an additional £0.7m cost. The forecast also includes a £0.2m expected overspend on coroners' costs (see para. 2.3). This has been agreed at the beginning of August and budgets will be updated for the period 6 monitoring.
- 14.6. At the time of setting the budget, some funding allocations had not been confirmed, and the budget was based on estimates. Final allocations have now been received for:
- Extended Producer Responsibility for waste packaging – an additional £0.3m compared to the budget
  - Grant funding towards the cost of employers' NI increases – an increase of £0.7m compared to the budget (although this still falls short of our actual costs incurred)
- 14.7 Contingencies are held corporately to manage any unexpected cost pressures in the year. These include a £6m contingency budget for the cost of providing services to homeless households, which have increased sharply in recent years. Following work to mitigate these pressures, it is estimated that £3m of this provision will not be required in the current year. This report assumes that all other contingency budgets will be required in full.

**Reserves Position**

- 1.1 When the 2025/26 budget was set, an estimated £169.8m was available to support the budget strategy. In the 2024/25 outturn reported to committee in July, additional savings and reserves transfers had increased the amount available to £193.8m. The variances included in this report have updated the position as shown below:

	£m	£m
Resources available 1 April 2025		193.8
Required for 2025/26 budget:		
As set (February 2025)	30.1	
Savings identified	(1.1)	
		(29.0)
Underspend as forecast in this report		6.4
<b>Balance to support 2026/27 &amp; future budgets</b>		<b>171.2</b>

- 1.2 The forecast balance available has improved by almost £40m since the budget was set, which increases the resources available to support future years' budgets. The whole budget position, including reserves, will be reviewed in time for the budget for 2026/27.

### **Savings Identified**

- 1.1 As members are aware, when we set the budget for 2025/26 there were savings targets set for Divisions. Since setting the budget Directors have been working on actions they can take to achieve the savings. This report identifies where Directors have been able to take actions to achieve their savings.
- 1.2 The table below provides detail on savings achieved towards the savings targets approved at Council in February 2025.

<b>Description</b>	<b>2025/26 £000</b>	<b>2026/27 £000</b>	<b>2027/28 £000</b>
<b>Savings Decision Previously Noted in Outturn Report</b>	<b>5,854</b>	<b>8,989</b>	<b>9,471</b>
<b><u>Estates &amp; Building Services</u></b>			
Business Performance & Sustainability organisational review	145	145	145
Operational cleaning organisational review	100	100	100
Capitalisation of staffing costs	60	60	60
Increase in rebate from energy provider	100	100	100
Removal of surplus building running costs budget	50	50	50
<b>EBS Subtotal</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>455</b>
<b><u>Corporate Services</u></b>			
Deletion of vacant posts across the division	400	400	400
<b>CS Subtotal</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>400</b>
<b><u>Neighbourhood and Environmental Services</u></b>			
Changes to leisure centre membership fees	425	850	850
Modified opening hours to public toilets	40	40	40
Amended arrangements for overnight park closures	48	48	48
Capitalisation of staffing costs	112	112	112
Revised fees for cremation services	0	300	300
Organisational review within bereavement services	33	33	33
<b>NES Subtotal</b>	<b>658</b>	<b>1,383</b>	<b>1,383</b>
<b><u>Housing General Fund</u></b>			
Embedding of empty homes management into primary services.	162	332	332
<b>HGF Subtotal</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>332</b>

<b>Adult Social Care</b>			
Additional income towards care package costs	1,200	1,200	1,200
<b>ASC Subtotal</b>	<b>1,200</b>	<b>1,200</b>	<b>1,200</b>
<b>Total Savings Reported in this Report</b>	<b>2,875</b>	<b>3,770</b>	<b>3,770</b>
<b>Total Cumulative Savings Reported</b>	<b>8,729</b>	<b>12,759</b>	<b>13,241</b>

1.3 The Council has achieved £13.2 million of the total £23m savings target by 2027/28.



# **Executive Decision Capital Budget Monitoring April-June 2025/26**

Overview Select Committee

Decision to be taken by: City Mayor

Decision to be taken on: 24th September 2025

Lead director: Amy Oliver, Director of Finance

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## Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Karen Linnett
- Author contact details: karen.linnett@leicester.gov.uk
- Report version number: 1

### 1. Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the position of the capital programme for 2025/26 as at the end of June 2025.
- 1.2 This is the first capital monitoring report of the financial year. There will be two further quarterly reports followed by and an outturn report being presented to this committee.
- 1.3 As reported in the previous year's monitoring reports, progressing capital projects continues to be difficult. New pressures in schemes, where possible, will be managed within project contingencies and revised scope of works while maintaining the desired project outcomes. When this is not possible it is reported in the monitoring report and decisions are taken as required.

### 2. Recommended actions/decision

- 2.1 The Executive is recommended to note the following:
  - Total spend of £23.1m for the year to date.
  - The progress in delivery of major projects, as shown at Appendix A.
  - The progress on spending against work programmes, as shown at Appendix B.
  - The provisions that remain unspent as shown at Appendix C.
  - That across a number of schemes, £187k has been saved following completion of schemes below budget. Of this, £163k was funded by corporate resources.
  - The prudential indicators presented in Appendix F.

The OSC is recommended to consider the overall position presented within this report and make any observations it sees fit.

### 3. Scrutiny / stakeholder engagement

N/a

#### 4. Background

- 4.1 The 2025/26 Capital programme was initially approved by Council on 19 February 2025. It has subsequently been amended (including through the 2024/25 outturn report).

The capital programme is split in the following way:

- (a) Schemes classified as '**immediate starts**', which require no further approval to commence; and
- (b) A number of separate '**policy provisions**' which are not released until specific proposals have been approved by the Executive.

- 4.2 Immediate Starts are further split into:

- (a) **Projects**, which are discrete, individual schemes such as a road scheme or a new building. Monitoring of projects focusses on delivery of projects on time and the achievement of milestones. Consequently, financial slippage is not in itself an issue on these projects;
- (b) **Work Programmes**, which consist of minor works or similar on-going schemes where there is an allocation of money to be spent during a particular year. Monitoring of work programmes focusses on whether the money is spent in a timely fashion;
- (c) **Provisions**, which are sums of money set aside in case they are needed, where low spend is a favourable outcome rather than indicative of a problem;
- (d) **Schemes which are substantially complete**. These schemes are the tail end of previous years' capital programmes, usually consisting of small amounts of money brought forward from earlier years.

- 4.3 A summary of the total approved 2025/26 capital programme budget and the spend as at the end of June, is shown below:

	2025/26 Budget £'000	2025/26 Spend £'000
Projects	107,048	13,948
Work Programmes	77,299	6,912
Provisions	1,997	0
Schemes Substantially Complete	7,231	2,246
<b>Total Immediate Starts</b>	<b>193,575</b>	<b>23,106</b>
Policy Provisions	16,297	0
<b>Total Capital Programme</b>	<b>209,872</b>	<b>23,106</b>

4.4 A summary of the total approved 2025/26 capital programme budget and the resources that are funding them is shown below:

	£000s					
	Projects	Work Programmes	Provisions	Substantially Complete	Policy Provisions	Total
HRA - Budget	3,413	24,732	380	24	750	29,299
GF - Budget	103,635	52,567	1,617	7,207	15,547	180,573
<b>Total</b>	107,048	77,299	1,997	7,231	16,297	209,872
Ringfenced - HRA	650	2,315	-	-	750	3,715
Unringfenced - HRA	2,763	22,417	380	24	-	25,584
<b>Total HRA</b>	3,413	24,732	380	24	750	29,299
Ringfenced - GF	16,711	3,969	558	1,689	10	22,937
Unringfenced - GF	86,924	48,598	1,059	5,518	15,537	157,636
<b>Total GF</b>	103,635	52,567	1,617	7,207	15,547	180,573

4.5 The following changes have occurred to the capital programme since period 12 2024/25. These movements are included in the table at 4.3 above:

	Budget £000
<b>Decisions since Outturn 2024/25</b>	
Connecting St Margarets	798
Local Transport Schemes	656
New Walk Museum	411
Private Sector Disabled Facilities Grant	407
High Streets Heritage Action Zones	237
Affordable Housing - Acquisitions	950
<b>Directors Decisions</b>	
Other	62
<b>Net Movements</b>	<b>3,251</b>

4.6 The following appendices to this report show progress on each type of scheme:

- Appendix A – Projects
- Appendix B – Work Programmes
- Appendix C – Provisions
- Appendix D – Projects Substantially Complete
- Appendix E – Policy Provisions
- Appendix F – Prudential Indicators

4.7 This report only monitors policy provisions to the extent that spending approval has been given, at which point they will be classified as projects, work programmes or provisions.

#### 4.8 Capital Receipts

4.8.1 As part of the budget strategy set for 2025/26 there was a requirement to generate £60m of asset sales that could be used if a capitalisation directive was required. The Council has a significant programme to generate these capital receipts. In the first quarter of 2025/26, the Council has realised £3.6m of General Fund capital receipts which relates almost exclusively to the sale of 1-7 Grey Friars.

4.8.2 Over the same period “Right to Buy” receipts from sales of council housing have amounted to £3.9m. Whilst the number of completed sales in the first quarter of this year were modest, the Council has not yet seen the full impact of the changes to scheme eligibility made in November 2024. These changes resulted in a surge in the number of applications which are currently being processed. Applications have since dropped by around 30% compared to historic levels, which is a smaller reduction than anticipated. Although many applications will not result in a sale of the property, the Council is likely to see high levels of completed sales throughout 2025/26 and 2026/27. The changes to scheme eligibility will likely reduce sales thereafter as the number of applications reduces further and people opt to discontinue the process when the reduced level of discount becomes apparent. Assumptions relating to the impact of the change in government policy were included in the HRA’s 2025/26 budget report approved at Council in February 2025.

#### 4.9 Prudential Indicators

This report also presents prudential indicators, in accordance with the CIPFA code.

## 5. Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency and other implications

### 5.1 Financial implications

This report deals entirely with financial matters, the implications of which are contained within the report.

Signed: Amy Oliver

Dated: 14 August 2025

### 5.2 Legal implications

There are no adverse legal implications arising in respect of this report of which mostly is for noting. The monitoring of capital expenditure is required in order to comply with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2003 which this report seeks to do.

Signed: Mannah Begum, Principal Solicitor – Commercial Legal

Dated: 07 August 2025

### 5.3 Equalities implications

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have statutory duties, including the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions they have to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

People from across all protected characteristics should benefit from the improved public good arising from the capital programme. The purpose of this report is to present the position of the capital programme for 2025/26 as at the end of June 2025.

At this time, there are no further equality implications as these will have already been identified for the proposals agreed and submitted.

There may be future projects, arising from the report and its recommendations, which would benefit from further consideration of the equalities implications and possibly a full equality impact assessment in certain circumstances. Whether an Equalities Impact Assessment is required will be dependent upon how work develops and whether the changes are likely to have a disproportionate impact on any protected group; this is usually the case where there are significant changes or a reduction in provision.

Signed: Surinder Singh – Equalities Officer

Dated: 8 August 2025

## 5.4 Climate Emergency implications

Following the council's declaration of a climate emergency and ambition to reach net zero carbon emissions for the council and the city, the council has a key role to play in addressing carbon emissions relating to the delivery of its services. This includes through its delivery of capital projects, as projects involving buildings and infrastructure often present significant opportunities for achieving carbon savings or climate adaptations and are an area where the council has a high level of control.

Notable projects in the current programme expected to achieve climate benefits / high standards of environmental performance include Pioneer Park, Pilot House, Leicester Urban Natural Flood Management, PV panels at Evington Leisure Centre, Aikman Avenue District Heating project and Local Transport Schemes.

It is important that the climate implications and opportunities of all projects and work programmes are considered on a project-by-project basis, both during the development phase and when decisions are made.

Signed: Phil Ball, Sustainability Officer

Dated: 12 August 2025

## 5.5 Other implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

No other implications are noted as this is a budget monitoring report, and therefore no policy changes are proposed.

## **6. Background information and other papers:**

- General Fund Capital Programme 2025/26 and HRA Budget (including Capital Programme) approved by Council on 19 February 2025.
- Capital Outturn 2024/25 presented at OSC on 9 July 2025.

## **7. Summary of appendices:**

- Appendix A – Projects
- Appendix B – Work Programmes
- Appendix C – Provisions
- Appendix D – Projects Substantially Complete
- Appendix E – Policy Provisions
- Appendix F – Prudential Indicators



**8. Is this a private report (If so, please indicate the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?**

No.

**9. Is this a “key decision”? If so, why?**

No

## PROJECTS

### 1. Summary

- 1.1** As stated in the cover report, the focus of monitoring projects is physical delivery, i.e. whether they are being delivered on time, on budget and to the original specification. This appendix summarises progress on projects. Project summaries provided by departments/divisions are shown in the remainder of this Appendix.

Department / Division	Approved Budget £000	2025/26 Spend £000	Forecast (Under) / Overspend £000
Corporate Resources	1,000	4	0
Planning, Development & Transportation	27,115	1,451	0
Tourism, Culture & Inward Investment	15,907	399	0
Neighbourhood & Environmental Services	5,710	415	0
Estates & Building Services	8,621	1,708	0
Housing General Fund	35,869	8,245	0
Children's Services	9,412	1,293	0
Housing Revenue Account	3,413	433	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>107,048</b>	<b>13,948</b>	<b>0</b>

- 1.2** A list of the individual projects is shown in the table below. This also summarises the progress of each project. Attention is drawn to expected completion dates and any project issues that have arisen.
- 1.3** A colour-coded rating of progress of each project has been determined, based on whether the project is progressing to the latest approved delivery and cost plan as expected, and whether it is still expected to complete within budget.
- 1.4** The ratings used are:
- (a) **Green** Successful delivery of the project on time, within budget, to specification and in line with original objectives seems very likely. There are no major issues that appear to threaten delivery significantly.
  - (b) **Amber** Successful delivery of the project on time, within budget, to specification and in line with original objectives appears probable. However, some risks exist, and close attention will be required to ensure these risks do not materialise into major issues threatening delivery. Alternatively, a

project is classed as amber if some insubstantial slippage or minor overspend is probable.

- (c) **Red** Successful delivery of the project on time, within budget, to specification and in line with original objectives appears to be unachievable. The project is expected to require redefining, significant additional time or additional budget.
- (d) **Blue** The project is substantially complete.
- (e) **Purple** The project is on hold, for reasons which have nothing to do with management of the capital programme. Examples include reconsideration of whether the project is still needed as originally proposed, or withdrawal of a funder.

## 2. Summary of Individual Projects

Dept/ Division	Project	Approved Budget (£000)	2025/26 Spend (£000)	Forecast O/(U)spend (£000)	Original Completion Date	Forecast Completion Date	Previous Reported RAG Rating	Project RAG Rating @ P3
CRS	Finance System Replacement	1,000	4	0	Apr-27	Apr-27	-	Green
CDN (PDT)	Local Transport Schemes	3,130	1,200	0	Mar-24	Dec-27	Green	Green
CDN (PDT)	Waterside Strategic Regeneration Area	2,371	54	0	Mar-23	Jun-26	Green	Green
CDN (PDT)	St George's Churchyard	160	29	0	Aug-18	Sep-25	Amber	Green
CDN (PDT)	Leicester Railway Station - Levelling up	14,230	16	0	Mar-24	TBC	Red	Red
CDN (PDT)	St Paul's Church	400	0	0	Aug-25	TBC	Purple	Purple
CDN (PDT)	Land South of Phoenix	281	16	0	Jun-25	Dec-25	Green	Amber
CDN (PDT)	Leicester Urban Natural Flood Management	60	4	0	Mar-27	Mar-27	Green	Green
CDN (PDT)	Heritage Development Trust	134	1	0	Mar-25	Mar-26	Green	Green
CDN (PDT)	Restoring the Soar	562	8	0	Jul-26	Jul-26	Green	Green
CDN (PDT)	Southgates Underpass Lighting	55	0	0	Oct-25	Oct-25	-	Green
CDN (PDT)	Strategic Sites	4,934	123	0	Mar-28	Mar-28	-	Green
CDN (PDT)	Connecting St Margarets	798	0	0	Mar-26	Mar-26	-	Green
CDN (TCI)	Leicester Market Redevelopment	7,725	430	0	Dec-21	Dec-26	Green	Green
CDN (TCI)	12-20 Cank St Link	2,594	116	0	Jan-25	Oct-26	Green	Amber
CDN (TCI)	Leicester Museum and Art Gallery Phase 1	5,037	(147)	0	Mar-22	Jun-26	Green	Green
CDN (TCI)	King Richard III Café	551	0	0	Feb-27	Feb-27	-	Green
<b>Total</b>		<b>44,023</b>	<b>1,854</b>	<b>0</b>				

Dept/ Division	Project	Approved Budget (£000)	2025/26 Spend (£000)	Forecast O/(U)spend (£000)	Original Completion Date	Forecast Completion Date	Previous Reported RAG Rating	Project RAG Rating @ P3
CDN (NES)	Library Self Access Rollout	473	10	0	Sep-24	Dec-26	Green	Purple
CDN (NES)	Neighbourhood Services Transformation	1,000	0	0	Mar-27	Mar-27	-	Green
CDN (NES)	St Margaret's Pastures Skate Park	295	249	0	Jan-23	Jul-25	Green	Blue
CDN (NES)	Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs)	2,515	134	0	Mar-25	Apr-26	Green	Green
CDN (NES)	Depot Relocation	149	38	0	Mar-25	Mar-26	Amber	Green
CDN (NES)	Pest & Dogs Depot Relocations	48	0	0	Mar-25	Mar-26	Green	Green
CDN (NES)	Leisure Centre Improvements	1,072	0	0	Dec-25	TBC	Purple	Purple
CDN (NES)	Green Libraries Project	130	1	0	Mar-25	Dec-25	Amber	Green
CDN (NES)	Saffron Lane Athletics Stadium S106 Improvements	27	(17)	0	Mar-25	Nov-25	Green	Blue
CDN (EBS)	Estate Shops	266	0	0	Mar-22	Dec-26	Amber	Amber
CDN (EBS)	Replacement Cladding Phoenix Square	2,077	647	0	Dec-24	Sep-25	Green	Green
CDN (EBS)	St Nicholas Wall	362	0	0	Sep-24	Jun-26	Amber	Green
CDN (EBS)	Aikman Avenue District Heating	195	0	0	Dec-23	TBC	Purple	Purple
CDN (EBS)	Boston Road	1,431	11	0	Jul-25	Sep-26	Green	Purple
CDN (EBS)	The Curve Remedial Works	1,613	1,050	0	Oct-25	Aug-25	Green	Blue
CDN (EBS)	Gilroes Cemetery	675	0	0	Sep-25	Feb-26	Green	Amber
CDN (EBS)	Energy Smart Initiatives	2,002	0	0	Jun-26	Jun-26	Green	Green
CDN (HGF)	86 Leycroft Road Depot	3,794	0	0	Sept-27	Sept-27	-	Green
CDN (HGF)	Housing Acquisitions - SAP	32,075	8,245	0	Aug-25	Dec-25	Green	Green
SCE (ECS)	Additional SEND Places (including Pupil Referral Units)	5,716	711	0	Jan-24	Sep-27	Green	Green
SCE (ECS)	S106 School Places (Slater/ Wolsey House)	847	0	0	Sep-26	Sep-26	Green	Green
SCE (ECS)	Pindar Nursery	825	0	0	Mar-23	TBC	Purple	Purple
SCE (ECS)	Expansion of Children's Homes	538	287	0	May-23	Sep-25	Green	Green
SCE (ECS)	Education System Re-tender	1,486	295	0	Mar-26	Mar-27	Green	Green
<b>Total (excluding HRA)</b>		<b>103,635</b>	<b>13,515</b>	<b>0</b>				

Dept/ Division	Project	Approved Budget (£000)	2025/26 Spend (£000)	Forecast O/(U)spend (£000)	Original Completion Date	Forecast Completion Date	Previous Reported RAG Rating	Project RAG Rating @ P3
CDN (HRA)	Dawn Centre Reconfiguration	1,104	96	0	May-23	Nov-25	Amber	Amber
CDN (HRA)	St Matthews Residential Property Concrete Works	1,633	24	0	Mar-24	Apr-26	Green	Amber
CDN (HRA)	Bridlespur Way Refurbishment	220	313	0	Mar-23	Jun-25	Green	Blue
CDN (HRA)	Council Housing - District Heating	455	0	0	Dec-23	TBC	Purple	Purple
<b>Total HRA</b>		<b>3,413</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>0</b>				
<b>Total (including HRA)</b>		<b>107,048</b>	<b>13,948</b>	<b>0</b>				

## Capital Programme Project Monitoring 2025/26 P3

### Corporate Resources

#### 1. Projects Summary

Project Name	Approved Budget (£000)	Over / (Under) Spend (£000)	Original Completion Date	Forecast Completion Date	RAG Rating
Finance System Replacement	1,000	0	Apr-27	Apr-27	G
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>0</b>			

#### 2. Projects Commentary (for all projects rated Amber, Red or Purple)



## Capital Programme Project Monitoring 2025/26 P3

### Planning, Development & Transportation

#### 3. Projects Summary

Project Name	Approved Budget (£000)	Over / (Under) Spend (£000)	Original Completion Date	Forecast Completion Date	RAG Rating
Local Transport Schemes	3,130	0	Mar-24	Dec-27	G
Waterside Strategic Regeneration Area	2,371	0	Mar-23	Jun-26	G
St George's Churchyard	160	0	Aug-18	Sep-25	G
Leicester Railway Station - Levelling up	14,230	0	Mar-24	TBC	R
St Paul's Church	400	0	Aug-25	TBC	P
Land South of Phoenix	281	0	Jun-25	Dec-25	A
Leicester Urban Natural Flood Management	60	0	Mar-27	Mar-27	G
Heritage Development Trust	134	0	Mar-25	Mar-26	G
Restoring the Soar	562	0	Jul-26	Jul-26	G
Southgates Underpass Lighting	55	0	Oct-25	Oct-25	G
Strategic Sites	4,934	0	Mar-28	Mar-28	G
Connecting St Margarets	798	0	Mar-26	Mar-26	G
<b>Total</b>	<b>27,115</b>	<b>0</b>			

#### 4. Projects Commentary (for **all** projects rated Amber, Red or Purple)

- 4.1. Leicester Railway Station – Levelling Up** – This is a very large and complex contract. The response from contractors able to deliver this sort of scheme reflected the state of the construction industry at the time. The contracting approach is being carefully reviewed and is subject to detailed discussion with a range of potential contractors. There is confidence that

when the contract is reissued in the coming months it will be attractive to the market, and we will receive competitive bids. An appointment is expected by spring next year.

- 4.2. St Paul's Church** – Funding was approved to support a compulsory purchase order (CPO) if required on this listed building. The council is working with the owner to maintain the building themselves, but a CPO may be required if this is unsuccessful.
- 4.3. Land South of Phoenix** - It took longer than anticipated for the Council to gain vacant possession of its land. This, combined with the complex legal arrangements for the final land transaction have resulted in a delayed date for completion.

## Capital Programme Project Monitoring 2025/26 P3

### Tourism, Culture and Inward Investment

#### 1. Projects Summary

Project Name	Approved Budget (£000)	Over / (Under) Spend (£000)	Original Completion Date	Forecast Completion Date	RAG Rating
Leicester Market Redevelopment	7,725	0	Dec-21	Dec-26	G
12-20 Cank St Link	2,594	0	Jan-25	Oct-26	A
Leicester Museum and Art Gallery Phase 1	5,037	0	Mar-22	Jun-26	G
King Richard III Café	551	0	Feb-27	Feb-27	G
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,907</b>	<b>0</b>			

#### 2 Projects Commentary (for **all** projects rated Amber, Red or Purple)

**2.1 12-20 Cank St Link** – The design development timelines have required extending to accommodate the structure of the existing buildings, increasing the forecast completion date to October 2026.

## **Capital Programme Project Monitoring 2025/26 P3**

### **Neighbourhood and Environmental Services**

#### **1. Projects Summary**

Project Name	Approved Budget (£000)	Over / (Under) Spend (£000)	Original Completion Date	Forecast Completion Date	RAG Rating
Library Self Access Rollout	473	0	Sep-24	Dec-26	P
Neighbourhood Services Transformation	1,000	0	Mar-27	Mar-27	G
St Margaret's Pastures Skate Park	295	0	Jan-23	Jul-25	B
Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs)	2,515	0	Mar-25	Apr-26	G
Depot Relocation	149	0	Mar-25	Mar-26	G
Pest & Dogs Depot Relocations	48	0	Mar-25	Mar-26	G
Leisure Centre Improvements	1,072	0	Dec-25	TBC	P
Green Libraries Project	130	0	Mar-25	Dec-25	G
Saffron Lane Athletics Stadium S106 Improvements	27	0	Mar-25	Nov-25	B
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,710</b>	<b>0</b>			

#### **2. Projects Commentary** (for **all** projects rated Amber, Red or Purple).

**2.1 Library Self Access Rollout** – The timing and roll out of library self-access will be dependent on the future Executive Decision on libraries and community centres.

**2.2 Leisure Centre Improvements** – The project is currently paused to allow for completion and review of the feasibility study. A report has been received outlining revised options and costs, with two key options now under consideration. The temporary delay is necessary to ensure the most appropriate and cost-effective approach is taken before progressing.

**Capital Programme Project Monitoring 2025/26 P3**  
**Estates and Building Services**

**1. Projects Summary**

Project Name	Approved Budget (£000)	Over / (Under) Spend (£000)	Original Completion Date	Forecast Completion Date	RAG Rating
Estate Shops	266	0	Mar-22	Dec-26	A
Replacement Cladding Phoenix Square	2,077	0	Dec-24	Sep-25	G
St Nicholas Wall	362	0	Sep-24	Jun-26	G
Aikman Avenue District Heating	195	0	Dec-23	TBC	P
Boston Road	1,431	0	Jul-25	Sep-26	P
The Curve Remedial Works	1,613	0	Oct-25	Aug-25	B
Gilroes Cemetery	675	0	Sep-25	Feb-26	A
Energy Smart Initiatives	2,002	0	Jun-26	Jun-26	G
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,621</b>	<b>0</b>			

**2. Projects Commentary** (for all projects rated Amber, Red or Purple).

**2.1 Estate Shops** – Refurbishment of the estate shops is currently delayed. A failed procurement to secure a contractor and officer capacity has delayed the works. Drainage works also need to be undertaken in advance of internal improvements.

**2.2 Aikman Avenue District Heating** – The project is currently on hold while viable delivery options are explored. Conversations with the new supplier, Bring Energy, have been hindered by changes in Directors since the company took control.

**2.3 Boston Road** – The roof replacement project is currently on hold this season due to unanticipated feasibility and survey findings. A review of the proposed approach has resulted

in plans to complete the procurement over the winter with an anticipated start date of spring 2026.

**2.4 Gilroes Cemetery** – Whilst the tender process took longer than anticipated, procurement is now largely complete, and the contractor is expected to be on site by November 2025.

## Capital Programme Project Monitoring 2025/26 P3

### Housing General Fund

#### 1. Projects Summary

Project Name	Approved Budget (£000)	Over / (Under) Spend (£000)	Original Completion Date	Forecast Completion Date	RAG Rating
86 Leycroft Road Depot	3,794	0	Sept-27	Sept-27	G
Housing Acquisitions - SAP	32,075	0	Aug-25	Dec-25	G
<b>Total</b>	<b>35,869</b>	<b>0</b>			

#### 2 Projects Commentary (for all projects rated Amber, Red or Purple)

## Capital Programme Project Monitoring 2025/26 P3

### Children's Services

#### 1. Projects Summary

Project Name	Approved Budget (£000)	Over / (Under) Spend (£000)	Original Completion Date	Forecast Completion Date	RAG Rating
Additional SEND Places (including Primary Pupil Referral Unit)	5,716	0	Jan-24	Sep-27	G
S106 School Places (Slater/Wolsey House)	847	0	Sep-26	Sep-26	G
Pindar Nursery	825	0	Mar-23	TBC	P
Expansion of Children's Homes	538	0	May-23	Sep-25	G
Education System Re-tender	1,486	0	Mar-26	Mar-27	G
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,412</b>	<b>0</b>			

#### 2. Projects Commentary (for **all** projects rated Amber, Red or Purple).

**2.1 Pindar Nursery** – Work was completed to review refurbishing the current site or using another site. It has been determined to progress with the refurbishment scheme at the current site and the associated costings. A revised brief has been produced to determine any revised scope and budget sufficiency.

**2.2 Expansion of Children's Homes** – The council has been successful in gaining £1.9m of grant funding from the Department for Education which is a 50% contribution towards the costs of building two new children's homes. Plans are being drawn up to include this in the capital programme going forward.



## Capital Programme Project Monitoring 2025/26 P3

### Housing (HRA)

#### 1. Projects Summary

Project Name	Approved Budget (£000)	Over / (Under) Spend (£000)	Original Completion Date	Forecast Completion Date	RAG Rating
Dawn Centre Reconfiguration	1,104	0	May-23	Nov-25	A
St Matthews Residential Property Concrete Works	1,633	0	Mar-24	Apr-26	A
Bridlespur Way Refurbishment	220	0	Mar-23	Jun-25	B
Council Housing - District Heating	455	0	Dec-23	TBC	P
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,413</b>	<b>0</b>			

#### 2. Projects Commentary (for all projects rated Amber, Red or Purple).

**2.1. Dawn Centre Reconfiguration** – The delay mainly relates to an unforeseen increase in lead time on items to finish the centre including a suspended ceiling and some furniture items.

**2.2. St Matthews Residential Property Concrete Works** – The ongoing investigation work to take concrete samples is facing delays due to contractor availability, resulting in an extension to the project completion to April 2026.

**2.3. Council Housing - District Heating** - The project is currently on hold while viable delivery options are explored. Conversations with the new supplier, Bring Energy, have been hindered by changes in Directors since the company took control.

**WORK PROGRAMMES****1. Summary**

- 1.1 As stated in the cover report, work programmes are minor works or similar on-going schemes where there is an allocation of money to be spent during a particular year. Monitoring of work programmes focusses on whether the money is spent in a timely fashion.

Department / Division	Approved to spend in 25/26 £000	2025/26 Spend £000	Slippage £000	Over/(under) Spend £000
City Development & Neighbourhoods	1,935	26	767	0
Planning, Development & Transportation	13,092	720	250	0
Tourism, Culture & Inward Investment	813	26	120	0
Neighbourhood & Environmental Services	997	0	0	0
Estates & Building Services	5,925	52	1,403	0
Housing General Fund	11,507	842	756	0
Children's Services	18,048	329	3,747	0
Adults	250	0	0	0
<b>Total (excluding HRA)</b>	<b>52,568</b>	<b>1,995</b>	<b>7,043</b>	<b>0</b>
Housing Revenue Account	24,731	4,917	120	0
<b>Total (including HRA)</b>	<b>77,299</b>	<b>6,912</b>	<b>7,163</b>	<b>0</b>

## 2. Summary of Individual Work Programmes

Work Programme	Dept/ Division	Approved £000	2025/26 Spend £000	Slippage £000	Over/ (under) Spend £000
Feasibility Studies	CDN	1,935	26	767	0
Transport Improvement Works	CDN (PDT)	4,764	496	0	0
Bus Engine Retrofitting	CDN (PDT)	376	0	0	0
Air Quality Action Plan	CDN (PDT)	1	0	0	0
Highways Maintenance	CDN (PDT)	6,100	96	0	0
Flood Strategy	CDN (PDT)	321	25	0	0
Festival Decorations	CDN (PDT)	55	1	0	0
Local Environmental Works	CDN (PDT)	400	90	0	0
Architectural & Feature Lighting	CDN (PDT)	50	0	50	0
Front Wall Enveloping	CDN (PDT)	582	0	200	0
Secure Cycle Parking (TCF Funded)	CDN (PDT)	338	1	0	0
Conservation Building Grants	CDN (PDT)	16	10	0	0
Street Nameplates City Branding Programme	CDN (PDT)	15	1	0	0
Historic Building Grant Fund	CDN (PDT)	75	0	0	0
Heritage Interpretation Panels	CDN (TCI)	170	(9)	0	0
Local Shopping Centres Reopening & Improvement Programme	CDN (TCI)	494	37	120	0
Community Asset Transfer	CDN (TCI)	150	(2)	0	0
Franklyn Fields Public Open Space	CDN (NES)	31	0	0	0
Grounds Maintenance Equipment	CDN (NES)	150	0	0	0
Evington Park Depot Staff Welfare Facilities	CDN (NES)	140	0	0	0
Street Cleaning Equipment	CDN (NES)	445	0	0	0
Public Toilet Automatic Locking	CDN (NES)	176	0	0	0
Trees and Woodland Stump Grinder	CDN (NES)	55	0	0	0
Corporate Estate	CDN (EBS)	1,358	44	0	0
Property & Operational Estate Capital Maintenance Programme	CDN (EBS)	4,567	8	1,403	0
Private Sector Disabled Facilities Grant	CDN (HGF)	2,775	387	675	0
Repayable Home Repair Loans	CDN (HGF)	121	0	81	0
Vehicle Fleet Replacement Programme	CDN (HGF)	8,323	312	0	0
Action Homeless' Supported Living Scheme	CDN (HGF)	288	143	0	0
School Capital Maintenance	SCE (ECS)	17,653	329	3,747	0
Foster Care Capital Contribution Scheme	SCE (ECS)	395	0	0	0
Extra Care Feasibility	ASC	250	0	0	0
<b>Total (excluding HRA)</b>		<b>52,568</b>	<b>1,995</b>	<b>7,043</b>	<b>0</b>

Work Programme	Dept/ Division	Approved £000	2025/26 Spend £000	Slippage £000	Over/ (under) Spend £000
Council Housing - New Kitchens and Bathrooms	CDN (HRA)	2,658	394	0	0
Council Housing - Boiler Replacements	CDN (HRA)	2,000	466	0	0
Council Housing - Rewiring	CDN (HRA)	1,610	145	0	0
Council Housing - Disabled Adaptations & Improvements	CDN (HRA)	1,200	109	0	0
Council Housing - Insulation Works	CDN (HRA)	200	72	0	0
Council Housing - External Property Works	CDN (HRA)	1,158	157	0	0
Council Housing - Fire and Safety Works	CDN (HRA)	600	(28)	0	0
Council Housing - Community & Environmental Works	CDN (HRA)	1,757	16	120	0
Affordable Housing - Acquisitions	CDN (HRA)	6,067	2,340	0	0
Public Realm Works	CDN (HRA)	732	7	0	0
New House Build Council Housing	CDN (HRA)	6,750	1,239	0	0
<b>Total HRA</b>		<b>24,731</b>	<b>4,917</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total (including HRA)</b>		<b>77,299</b>	<b>6,912</b>	<b>7,163</b>	<b>0</b>

### 3. **Commentary on Specific Work Programmes**

- 3.1 Explanatory commentary for work programmes not currently progressing as planned, or for which issues have been identified is provided below. For monitoring purposes this has been defined as any scheme where budgets have significantly changed, where spend is low or where material slippage is forecast.
- 3.2 **Feasibility Studies** – A number of schemes are progressing well; however, a few have been delayed into the next financial year due to limited available staffing resources.
- 3.3 **Architectural & Feature Lighting** – There are several projects in the pipeline, and we continue to work with third parties to progress these through to delivery.
- 3.4 **Front Wall Enveloping** – Progress is being made on the Welford Road front wall scheme, with tendering currently underway for project management and construction contractors; on-site work is expected to commence in Q3 or Q4.
- 3.5 **Local Shopping Centres Reopening & Improvement Programme** – Currently low on resources to deliver all schemes, so will be phased over this year and the next.
- 3.6 **Property & Operational Estate Capital Maintenance Programme** – The slippage on this programme is primarily due to the prioritisation of the Curve Remedial works

which has meant there is not enough time to procure and get consents for works that are weather dependant; these works will be programmed for Q1 next financial year. Due to a combination of factors associated with the hot weather and a fault in the inlet into Abbey Park boating lake, the basin of the lake has been exposed, and we have identified there is a significant amount of silt. We are taking the opportunity to complete this cleaning process and fix the Victorian plumbing

- 3.7 **Private Sector Disabled Facilities Grant** – Whilst all funds will be committed by year end, there will be some slippage of expenditure into next financial year
- 3.8 **Repayable Home Repair Loans** – The Home Improvement Team continues to prioritise delivery of Mandatory DFGs, and as a result, some slippage is expected on discretionary grants. However, a small number of discretionary grants are still being processed where required.
- 3.9 **Vehicle Fleet Replacement Programme** – Due to the lead times associated with the procurement of vehicles, £0.4m of the current budget has been re-profiled into 2026/27.
- 3.10 **School Capital Maintenance** – The slippage on the programme is due to schools' access issues to carry out the larger schemes. IAN (Individual Access Needs) works slippage is due to no schemes being put forward at present for this funding.
- 3.11 **Council Housing - Community & Environmental Works** – Budget of £120k remains unallocated on this rolling programme. Community engagement will take place during the year to prioritise schemes on which to spend this.

**PROVISIONS**

**1. Summary**

- 1.1 As stated in the cover report, provisions are sums of money set aside in case they are needed, where low spend is a favourable outcome rather than indicative of a problem.
- 1.2 Normally provisions are there if needed. The sums below are for the 2025/26 financial year.

<b>Provision</b>	<b>Dept/ Division</b>	<b>Approved £000</b>	<b>2025/26 Spend £000</b>	<b>Remaining Budget £000</b>
Early Years - Two Year Olds	SCE (ECS)	593	0	593
District Heating Metering	CDN (HGF)	1,024	0	1,024
District Heating Metering	CDN (HRA)	380	0	380
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,997</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,997</b>

**PROJECTS SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLETE****1. Summary**

1.1 As at the end of the quarter one in 2025/26, the following schemes were nearing completion. The budgets are the unspent amounts from previous years' capital programmes, mainly as a result of slippage.

Project	Dept/ Division	Approved £000	2025/26 Spend £000	Over/(Under) Spend £000
Off-site Cloud Backup	CRS	204	205	1
City-wide Parkmap TRO review, signs and lines upgrades	CDN (PDT)	12	0	0
High Streets Heritage Action Zones	CDN (PDT)	177	0	0
Electric Bus Investment and Grant	CDN (PDT)	8	0	0
Pioneer Park - Levelling Up	CDN (PDT)	867	46	0
Gresham Business Workspace	CDN (TCI)	8	0	0
Pilot House - Levelling Up	CDN (TCI)	2,201	1,014	0
Climate Change Retail Scheme	CDN (TCI)	17	(13)	0
Community Digital Grant	CDN (TCI)	7	0	0
Jewry Wall Museum Improvements	CDN (TCI)	1,754	967	0
De Montfort Hall	CDN (TCI)	50	0	(50)
PV Panels at Evington Leisure Centre	CDN (NES)	91	(6)	0
Spinney Hills Park	CDN (NES)	127	0	(127)
Study Zones	CDN (NES)	56	8	0
SuDS in Schools	CDN (EBS)	66	0	0
Tiny Forests in Leicester Schools and Parks	CDN (EBS)	4	0	0
Haymarket Theatre - Internal Completion Works	CDN (EBS)	19	14	0
Leycroft Road Energy Reduction Works	CDN (EBS)	88	0	0
Leisure Centre Air Handling Units	CDN (EBS)	14	0	0
Additional Primary School Places	SCE (ECS)	20	(15)	0
Expansion of Oaklands Special School	SCE (ECS)	710	(24)	0
Overdale Infant and Juniors School Expansion	SCE (ECS)	219	45	0
Family Hubs	SCE (ECS)	102	(19)	0
S106 Additional School Places	SCE (ECS)	366	0	0
Children's Homes Refurbishments	SCE (ECS)	1	14	13
Winstanley Contact Centre	SCE (ECS)	18	10	0
Goscote Site Carpark	CDN (HRA)	24	0	(24)
<b>Total</b>		<b>7,231</b>	<b>2,246</b>	<b>(187)</b>

**POLICY PROVISIONS****1. Summary**

1.1. As at the end of the 2025/26 financial year, the following policy provisions were still awaiting formal approval for allocation to specific schemes.

Department/ Division	Policy Provision	Amount
		£000
CDN (TCII)	Tourism & Culture	10
CDN (NES)	Library Investment	1,000
CDN (EBS)	Growing Spaces	301
CDN (Various)	Match Funding	3,000
CDN (Various)	People & Neighbourhoods	392
SCE (ECS)	New School Places	1,923
SCE (ASC)	Extra Care Schemes	5,686
Other	Black Lives Matter	435
All	Programme Contingency	2,800
<b>Total (excluding HRA)</b>		<b>15,547</b>
CDN (HRA)	Other HRA Schemes	750
<b>Total HRA</b>		<b>750</b>
<b>Total (including HRA)</b>		<b>16,297</b>

1.2. Since the previous monitoring report, £250k has been released from the Extra Care Schemes Policy Provision.



## Prudential Indicators

### Summary

Under the requirements of the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities, the full Council sets prudential indicators for the authority at the beginning of each year as part of the Treasury Management Strategy and Capital Strategy. This appendix reports on compliance during the year.

#### 1. Debt and the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary

The Authority is legally obliged to set an affordable borrowing limit (also termed the Authorised Limit for external debt) each year and to keep it under review. In line with statutory guidance, a lower “operational boundary” is also set as a warning level should debt approach the limit.

	<b>2025/26 Authorised Limit £m*</b>	<b>2025/26 Operational Boundary £m*</b>	<b>Debt at 30/06/25 £m</b>	<b>Complied?</b>
Borrowing	650	550	157	Yes
PFI and Finance Leases	500	450	80	Yes
<b>Total debt</b>	<b>1,150</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>237</b>	

#### 2. Maturity Structure of Borrowing

This indicator is set to control the Authority’s exposure to refinancing risk (i.e. not having to repay too much and then borrow again at the same time). The upper and lower limits on the maturity of all borrowing were:

	<b>Upper Limit £m</b>	<b>Lower Limit £m</b>	<b>30/06/25 Actual £m</b>	<b>Complied?</b>
Under 12 months	50	Nil	23	Yes
12 months and within 24 months	100	Nil	Nil	Yes
24 months and within 5 years	150	Nil	Nil	Yes
5 years and within 10 years	200	Nil	Nil	Yes
10 years and within 25 years	250	Nil	125	Yes
25 years and over	300	Nil	9	Yes

3. Short-term Treasury Management Investments

The Council is allowed to utilise a broad range of investment instruments but in practice things are kept straight forward concentrating on other Local Authorities & similar bodies, UK Registered Banks and Money Market Funds (MMF). At the 30 June 2025 the council held £74.42m in short-term investments including £59.42m in MMFs which allow the Council instant access for liquidity purposes.

4. Long-term Treasury Management Investments

The Council has a limit of £50m for long-term investments. The total sum of such investments held by the Council as of 30 June 2025 was £14.3m which includes £4.3m in property funds, the limit was therefore complied with. It should be noted that in the first quarter of 2025/26 the council has received one further repayment of principal of £79K adding to five repayment of investment instalments in 2024/25 totalling £2.106m.

5. Gross Debt and the Capital Finance Requirement (CFR)

The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is called the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR).

Statutory guidance is that debt should remain below the capital finance requirement, except in the short term. The authority has complied and expects to continue to comply with this requirement.

6. Liability Benchmark

The Liability Benchmark forecasts the underlying need to borrow for capital purposes over the next 50 years, to make sure it remains within the CFR. Our forecasts suggest we will comply with this requirement.

**Overview Select Committee  
Work Programme 2025 – 2026**

Meeting Date	Item	Recommendations / Actions	Progress
<b>9 July 2025</b>	1. Customer Services Update 2. Revenues and Benefits 3. Revenue Outturn 2024/25 4. Capital Revenue Outturn 2024/25 5. Income Collection 2024/25 6. Treasury Management Annual Report 2024/25 7. Scrutiny Annual Report	2a. Councillors to be provided the detail on the different level of social welfare advice provided. 2b. Information to be provided on dates of where and when welfare rights support is available in neighbourhoods (i.e. in food banks). 2c. Comparator data to be provided for Council Tax income, collection rates. 3. More information to be provided on the saving within Connexions service. 4. Confirmation why dates on the Library Self Access roll-out have been delayed.	2a. Information provided to members. 2b. information provided to members. 2c. Data provided to members. 3. Information provided to members.
<b>24 September 2025</b>	1. Council Tax Support Scheme – Task Group Recommendations. 2. Adventure Playgrounds – Task Group Recommendations. 3. Update on Asset Sales 4. Environmental Impact of Construction Projects 5. Period 3 Revenue Monitoring 6. Period 3 Capital Monitoring		

Meeting Date	Item	Recommendations / Actions	Progress
<b>3 December 2025</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Corporate Estate - Annual Report</li> <li>2. Period 6 Revenue Monitoring Report</li> <li>3. Period 6 Monitoring Report</li> <li>4. Treasury Management mid-year report</li> <li>5. Income Collection mid-year report</li> <li>6. Vacancies and Recruitment</li> <li>7. Domestic and Sexual Violence Needs Assessment.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. To include information on where vacancies are, the levels of vacancies, and recruitment particularly in social work.</li> <li>7. Postponed from 9<sup>th</sup> July 2025.</li> </ol>	
<b>28 January 2026</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Revenue Budget</li> <li>2. Capital Budget</li> <li>3. HRA Budget</li> <li>4. Treasury and Investment Strategy</li> </ol>		

Meeting Date	Item	Recommendations / Actions	Progress
18 March 2026	1. Period 9 Revenue Monitoring 2. Period 9 Capital Monitoring		
29 April 2026			

#### Forward Plan Items (suggested)

Topic	Detail	Proposed Date
Customer Experience Strategy		TBC
Children's Homes and Planning Issues	Requested at meeting of 1 <sup>st</sup> May 2025 – Planning colleagues to be invited to Provide info on location and ownership of private sector children's homes & regulatory position, advise on use of conditions around time limited use, provide data tracking applications/interventions and provide data showing pattern of applications from smaller care homes.  Ofsted, CQC and DfE representatives to be invited.	TBC
Local Government Reform		TBC

Update on Workforce Representation Informal Scrutiny Work		TBC
City Mayor's Strategic Priorities		TBC