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Our reference:
Your reference:
Date: Monday, 3 March 2025

To all Members of the Cabinet

Dear Councillor

A Meeting of the Cabinet will be held on Tuesday, 11 March 2025 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Rushcliffe Arena, Rugby Road, West Bridgford to consider the following items of business.

This meeting will be accessible and open to the public via the live stream on YouTube and viewed via the link: <https://www.youtube.com/user/RushcliffeBC>
Please be aware that until the meeting starts the live stream video will not be showing on the home page. For this reason, please keep refreshing the home page until you see the video appear.

Yours sincerely



Sara Pregon
Monitoring Officer

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest

[Link to further information in the Council's Constitution](#)

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 February 2025 (Pages 1 - 8)
4. Citizens' Questions

To answer questions submitted by citizens on the Council or its services.

5. Opposition Group Leaders' Questions

To answer questions submitted by Opposition Group Leaders on items on the agenda.

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NON-KEY DECISIONS

6. Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 2024/25 - Financial Update Quarter 3 (Pages 9 - 36)

The report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services is attached.

7. UK Shared Prosperity Fund Programme 2025/26 (Pages 37 - 50)

The report of the Director – Development and Economic Growth is attached.

Membership

Chair: Councillor N Clarke

Vice-Chair: Councillor A Brennan

Councillors: R Inglis, R Upton, D Viridi and J Wheeler

Meeting Room Guidance

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Microphones: When you are invited to speak please press the button on your microphone, a red light will appear on the stem. Please ensure that you switch this off after you have spoken.

Recording at Meetings

National legislation permits filming and recording by anyone attending a public meeting of the Council. This is not within the Council's control.

Rushcliffe Borough Council is committed to being open and transparent in its decision making. As such, the Council will undertake audio recording of meetings which are open to the public, except where it is resolved that the public be excluded, as the information being discussed is confidential or otherwise exempt



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET

TUESDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2025

Held at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Rushcliffe Arena,
Rugby Road, West Bridgford
and live streamed on Rushcliffe Borough Council's YouTube channel

PRESENT:

Councillors N Clarke (Chair), A Brennan (Vice-Chair), R Inglis, R Upton, D Viridi and J Wheeler

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillors T Birch and J Walker

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

D Banks	Director of Neighbourhoods
A Hill	Chief Executive
P Linfield	Director of Finance and Corporate Services
S Pregon	Monitoring Officer
H Tambini	Democratic Services Manager

41 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

42 Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 January 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 14 January 2025 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

43 Citizens' Questions

There were no citizens' questions.

44 Opposition Group Leaders' Questions

Question from Councillor J Walker to Councillor Viridi.

"Will the new 'guiding principles' mentioned on page 52 of the budget be up for discussion with all Councillors?"

Councillor Viridi thanked Councillor Walker for her question, confirmed that Councillors would have the opportunity to discuss the principles at the Council meeting in March, and stated that these were not new, as they were included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy last year.

Councillor Walker asked a supplementary question to Councillor Viridi.

“Do you think the lack of mention of residents within our ‘guiding principles’ should possibly be altered?”

Councillor Virdi stated that the ‘guiding principles’ were adopted for residents to ensure that budget risks were mitigated and it was sustainable.

Question from Councillor Birch to Councillor Virdi.

“How does this Conservative-led Council justify a 2.46% rise in Council Tax on hard working residents when, as a whole, Rushcliffe's residents pay higher overall Council Tax than 95% of councils in the UK, the majority of which is forced on them by the Conservative-led County Council?”

Councillor Virdi thanked Councillor Birch for his question and confirmed that the budget only concerned the Rushcliffe element of Council Tax and had nothing to do with Nottinghamshire County Council. The key point was that Rushcliffe remained within the lowest 25% nationally for district and borough councils for the Council Tax it levied; and remained the lowest in Nottinghamshire in comparison to the other borough or district councils. The Council had only received an increase of 0.9% in Core Spending Power, compared to councils nationally, where the increase was 6.8%. The sums were clear that Rushcliffe was disadvantaged nationally compared to other councils, and the Core Spending Power calculation included the Council Tax increase, which meant in real terms that the Council had less funding than expenditure, given current levels of inflation. He stated that increasing Council Tax was therefore a necessity, with the increase being less than 8p per week and questioned what services Councillor Birch would look to reduce if the Council did not increase Council Tax?

Councillor Birch raised a supplementary question; however, it was rejected by the Chair, on the basis that it did not arise directly from the reply, nor relate to the original question.

45 **2025/26 Budget and Financial Strategy**

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance, Transformation and Governance, Councillor Virdi presented the report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services outlining the Council's proposed budget for 2025/26, the five-year Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) from 2025/26 to 2029/30, which included the revenue budget, the proposed Capital Programme, the Transformation and Efficiency Plan, the Capital and Investment Strategy, and the Pay Policy Statement.

Councillor Virdi referred to a recently circulated amendment regarding changes to the Special Expenses, detailed in the revised covering report, which he would be speaking to. Councillor Virdi stated that all councils continued to face financial pressures; however, unlike many, Rushcliffe was not making service reductions, it was improving them. The Council had a balanced budget, including up to date, signed off Financial Statements, and it remained both diligent and prudent, whilst maintaining a commercial culture and generating financial efficiencies.

Councillor Virdi advised that the Council had received the final Local Government Finance Settlement and reiterated that the Council's Core Spending Power had only increased by 0.9% compared to 6.8% nationally, with the Government redirecting resources to councils linked to areas of high deprivation. With inflation running at 2%, this was in real terms a cut in overall funding, which meant that the Council had to raise revenue to ensure that it continued to provide the best services and invest in its assets.

Cabinet was reminded that Rushcliffe continued to have the lowest Council Tax in Nottinghamshire and remained amongst the lowest 25% in the country, with the Band D average increase of £3.89, being less than 8p per week, which Councillor Virdi felt everyone should be proud of. In respect of Special Expenses, Councillor Virdi referred to the supplementary paper issued, which detailed minor changes to the figures, and advised that even with the changes, the precept for West Bridgford, compared to other areas remained excellent value. He confirmed that the revised figure for West Bridgford was £64.84, Keyworth £3.21 and Ruddington £3.14.

Councillor Virdi referred to the Council's Transformation and Efficiency Plan, which was detailed in Section 7 of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), which would deliver £1.7m over five years and whilst acknowledging some charges were increasing, he felt that they remained competitive compared to other local authorities. Councillor Virdi proposed one change, that the report to Full Council should be amended to retain the proposed £6,000 efficiency for a move to digital bin calendars, as given the complexity of 'Simpler Recycling' and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), it was felt that it would be better to retain the hard copy calendars for now.

The Capital Programme remained substantial with £27.1m budgeted over five years, including a continued range of investments across the Borough and he confirmed that reserves remained sound and would help the Council navigate challenges going forward.

In summary, Councillor Virdi referred to those significant challenges and uncertainties, which were detailed in paragraph 6.1 of the report, and confirmed that the MTFS highlighted the relatively stable, healthy financial position that Rushcliffe was in compared to most local authorities. The Council continued to maintain and deliver excellent services and provide excellent value for money and Councillor Virdi concluded by thanking Councillors and the Director – Finance and Corporate Services and the Finance Team for their continued hard work during very challenging times.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor Upton stated that this was an excellent report, detailing a balanced budget during difficult and uncertain times. He felt that the small increase in Council Tax represented great value for the services provided, together with an ambitious Capital Programme, and he reiterated Rushcliffe's Council Tax position, that it was debt free, with good reserves. Cabinet was reminded that an uncertain future lay ahead and he expressed disappointment that a well-managed, financially prudent council could be abolished. He thanked the Director – Finance and Corporate Services and his team and Councillor Virdi for their hard work in producing this excellent report.

Councillor J Wheeler welcomed the continued investment in projects and schemes throughout the Borough and felt that it was a shame that the Government continued to punish well run councils by reducing funding. However, because of the fantastic work the Council was doing, it could continue to provide excellent services, with only a small increase in Council Tax, and Councillor Wheeler echoed the thanks given to officers.

The Leader felt that it was always regrettable to increase charges; however, the important thing was to remain prudent and continue to give good value for money, and he was proud that the proposed Council Tax would continue to be the lowest in the county, which was important given the excellent services provided. The Leader reiterated comments made by Councillor Viridi regarding the importance of investing in the Council's infrastructure, and agreed that the future was uncertain, so it was vital that the Council continued to manage its finances prudently. The Leader echoed thanks given to the Director – Finance and Corporate Services and his team for their hard work and due diligence and to Councillor Viridi for his support and input.

It was RESOLVED that Cabinet RECOMMENDS to Council that it:

- a) adopts the budget setting report and associated financial strategies 2025/26 to 2029/30 (attached Annex) including the summarised Special Expenses budget at Appendix 1, Budget Summary at Appendix 2, changes to fees and charges regarding Garden Waste and Car Parking at Appendix 5 and Transformation and Efficiency Plan at Appendix 7, with the exception of the proposed £6,000 efficiency for a move to digital bin calendars, which shall be retained;
- b) adopts the Capital Programme as set out in Appendix 3;
- c) adopts the Capital and Investment Strategy at Appendix 8;
- d) sets Rushcliffe's 2025/26 Council Tax for a Band D property at £161.77 (increase from 2024/25 of £3.89 or 2.46%);
- e) sets the Special Expenses for 2025/26 for West Bridgford, Ruddington and Keyworth, Appendix 1, resulting in the following Band D Council Tax levels for the Special Expense Areas:
 - i) West Bridgford £64.84 (£59.44 in 2024/25)
 - ii) Keyworth £3.21 (£4.69 in 2024/25)
 - iii) Ruddington £3.14 (£3.29 in 2024/25);
- f) adopts the Pay Policy Statement at Appendix 6; and
- g) delegates authority to the Director – Finance and Corporate Services to make any minor amendments to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) once the final Local Government Finance Settlement is received and advise the Finance Portfolio Holder accordingly, to be reported to Full Council.

46 **Revocation of the Borough's Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA1 and 1/2011)**

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Environment and Safety, Councillor Inglis presented the report of the Director – Neighbourhoods, to consider the revocation of the Borough's Air Quality Management Areas AQMA1 and 1/2011.

Councillor Inglis referred to the obligation on all local authorities to regularly review and assess if air quality objectives were likely to be achieved. The Council had assessed levels of the main air pollutants identified by the Government for a number of years, with four Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) identified and adopted by the Borough, including Trent Bridge and A52/Stragglethorpe Road at Radcliffe on Trent, as detailed in Tables 1 and 2 at paragraph 4.3 of the report, as they had traffic related Nitrogen Dioxide levels, which exceeded the Government's target. The two others areas at Barnstone, and at the Nottingham Knight roundabout had previously been revoked following improvements.

Councillor Inglis advised that automatic continuous analysers were installed at both sites, and the results had been under the target levels for five years and DERFA recommended the removal of AQMAs after three years. It was noted that the Council would continue to monitor air quality with average monthly readings from its 29 other passive sites. Councillor Inglis thanked the Head of Public Protection and the Environmental Health team in conjunction with the County Council and National Highways for their hard work to minimise traffic generated pollution.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor Brennan endorsed the continued monitoring of the 29 passive sites and stated that it was great news that the two areas were now under target levels, improving quality of life, which the Council took extremely seriously, and it was hoped that a decrease in particulates would continue.

Councillor J Wheeler welcomed the report, which would reassure residents and welcomed the ongoing monitoring in place.

It was RESOLVED that the revocation of the Borough's Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA 1 and 1/2011) be approved.

47 **Rushcliffe Play Strategy 2025-2030**

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Wellbeing, ICT and Member Development, Councillor J Wheeler presented the report of the Director – Neighbourhoods, outlining the Rushcliffe Play Strategy for 2025-2030.

Councillor Wheeler stated that over £800,000 had been invested by the Council in the past five years, and referred to differing expectations and requirements, since the previous Strategy was adopted in 2007, including having a wider range of accessible play equipment. Councillor Wheeler confirmed that play area users had been consulted, to ensure that facilities would meet their needs, as it was so important that children were active, and

the Council was committed to providing the best facilities possible. He thanked all those who had responded to the consultation and to the Director – Neighbourhoods and the Communities Manager.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor Brennan referred to the important emphasis on quality of life, together with the experience of living in Rushcliffe, and this Strategy would support and enhance that offer throughout the Borough. She particularly welcomed the emphasis on accessible play areas, and provision for young girls and tweenagers, and that during routine upgrades every effort was being made to ensure that new equipment was inclusive for all. Councillor Brennan noted that in particular young girls sometimes found park less accessible, and considerable time had been taken to identify what young people wanted and to try and accommodate that.

Councillor Upton felt from his own personal experience that facilities in Rushcliffe were excellent, as was the maintenance and management.

Councillor Wheeler responded by confirming that provision for young girls and tweenagers was very important, with all refurbishment projects appealing to everyone, and by speaking to users it had helped to shape this Strategy.

It was RESOLVED that the updated Play Strategy 2025-2030 be adopted as a Strategy of the Council and supporting document to the Council's overall Leisure Strategy 2021 – 2027.

48 **Asset Investment Group Terms of Reference**

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance, Transformation and Governance, Councillor Virdi presented the report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services detailing the Asset Investment Group Terms of Reference.

Councillor Virdi advised that the report followed recent discussions by Councillors regarding asset acquisition, and it highlighted why the Group was required, together with the current Terms of Reference (ToR) and proposed revisions. Councillor Virdi stated that the Group's original focus had been on asset investment for commercial return; however, that type of investment was now less likely, given recent changes to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) rules. It was noted that the Council might need to acquire assets, and such acquisitions were often opportunistic and required quick decision making, with the input of officers and Cabinet. Business cases had to be assessed and scrutinised prior to Council meetings, and given the confidential nature, restrictions were required on those involved, and he referred to paragraph 4.5 of the report, which detailed the revised ToR. Councillor Virdi stated that the report provided additional assurance, and highlighted were broader transparency and accountability lay, to ensure that all Councillors had confidence in this process.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor Upton stated that this Group was still needed, even though its remit had been slightly changed to comply with new financial guidance.

It was RESOLVED that the Terms of Reference for the Asset Investment

Group as referred to in Paragraph 4.5 of the report be approved.

49 **Officer and Member Indemnity**

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance, Transformation and Governance, Councillor Virdi presented the report of the Monitoring Officer and Head of Chief Executive's Department outlining arrangements for officer and Member indemnity.

Councillor Virdi stated that the report clarified the position regarding officers and Members and their personal liability whilst working on behalf of the Council and advised that Members and officers acting on behalf of the Council, had statutory indemnity against personal liability. Whilst the proposed indemnity offered protection, it did not apply to deliberate wrong doing, and not having this indemnity could result in people not serving on such bodies.

In seconding the recommendation, the Leader stated that it was important that an indemnity was in place to ensure that no one was not deterred from seeking public office or participating in outside bodies because of any fear of incurring liability whilst acting on behalf of the Council.

It was RESOLVED that the grant of an indemnity for officers and Members as referred to at Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

The meeting closed at 7.45 pm.

CHAIR

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Cabinet

Tuesday, 11 March 2025

Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 2024/25 – Financial Update Quarter 3

Report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services

**Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance, Transformation and Governance,
Councillor D Viridi**

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. This report presents the budget position for revenue and capital at 31 December 2024.
- 1.2. The financial climate remains volatile although has shown signs of improvement recently. Inflation has remained higher than anticipated resulting in elevated interest rates. This impacts both residents' cost of living and creates cost pressures for the Council's budget. It is imperative that the Council maintains due diligence with regards to its finances and ensures necessary action is taken to ensure a balanced budget is maintained.
- 1.3. At Quarter 3 2024/25, there is a predicted net revenue efficiency of £2.164m. Significant variances are highlighted in Table 1. This represents a variance of 14.23% against budgeted Net Service Expenditure. This is proposed to be earmarked for additional cost pressures and financial challenges discussed below. Since the Quarter 2 report, challenges in relation to Simpler Recycling and Local Government Reorganisation will increasingly start to crystallise as we go into 2025/26. The position may change for the full year outturn.
- 1.4. There is a capital budget underspend projected of £4.40m, this includes rephasing of £0.556m to 2025/26 and other variations including £1.5m land acquisition, whilst the Council continues to explore opportunities for suitable land for carbon offsetting.
- 1.5. The report has been scrutinised by Corporate Overview Group on 25 February 2025, and no significant issues were raised.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet approves the attached report noting:

- a) the expected revenue budget efficiency for the year of £2.164m and proposals to earmark this for cost pressures given at paragraph 4.5 and Table 2;

- b) the projected capital budget efficiencies of £4.440m including the reprofiling of provisions totalling £0.556m (paragraph 4.8 and Table 3); and
- c) the overspend of £46.3k on special expenses (paragraph 4.6).

3. Reasons for Recommendation

To demonstrate good governance in terms of scrutinising the Council's on-going financial position and compliance with Council Financial Regulations.

4. Supporting Information

Revenue Monitoring

- 4.1. For 2024/25, the overall budget variance is expected to be an efficiency of £2.164m with proposals to earmark the in-year efficiencies for specific reserves as detailed in **Appendix A**, should this direction of travel be maintained.
- 4.2. **Table 1** below summarises the main pressures and efficiencies with a full summary of all significant variances at **Appendix B**.

Table 1: Main Pressures and Efficiencies

Projected in year cost/(efficiency)	£000	Reason
Financial Services	(1,395)	Interest income £977k and savings to budget on; insurance £25k, External Audit £31k, Contingency not allocated £392k, offset by £30k overspend on bank charges due to increased fees
Environmental Health	(148)	Homes for Ukraine funding not allocated (to be carried forward)
Communities	(105)	All weather pitch bookings performing better than budgeted £107k and grant secured for Bio-Diversity £27k, offset by room hire income for Gamston and Sir Julian Cahn Pavilion below target £29k
Depot & Contracts	(92)	Savings on Leisure Management contract £122k, Diesel/HVO £140k, staff vacancies £40k and Eastcroft Depot rent savings £49k offset by overspends; shortfall in sales of waste bins to developers £45k, Toothill utilities £48k, tyres and vehicle hire £58k and net expected loss of £108k at Edwalton Golf Course made up of £47k loss against expected profit of £61k due to extended course closure following adverse weather conditions
Economic Development	(82)	UKSPF management fee element £65k and joint authority post £17k contribution to salaries

Customer Services and Performance Management	(72)	Staff vacancies
ICT	(61)	Savings on projects that have slipped to 2025/26 (to be carried forward).
Strategic Housing	(50)	Additional homelessness grant £145k offsets £45k spend on Choice Based Lettings software upgrade and home alarms profiling of income £50k
Environmental Health/Planning	(50)	Savings from IDOX not moving to cloud hosting.
Revenues	(45)	Increase in recovery of costs raised for Council Tax debtors less £30k potential additional costs of services to find unrated properties for NDR (resulting in increased NDR).
Housing Benefits	170	Rent increase from supported housing provider
Planning & Growth	126	Planning appeals and enforcement costs £255k, offset by reduction in agency £80k and building control contract in year saving £49k.
Streetwise	107	Vehicle hire and maintenance costs £89k and overtime related to emergency planning and flood response £44k offset by fuel savings £26k.
Crematorium	30	Shortfall in income £75k offset by operational savings
Other minor variances	84	
Net Revenue cost/(efficiencies)	(1,583)	
Grant income	(227)	New burdens; Elections £38k, other new burdens £17k, Land Charges compensation grant £30k, Audit grant £18k, Household Support Fund 5 admin £14k, Internal Drainage Board Grant £25k, planning skills delivery fund grant £60k, Rough sleeping grant £27k
Business Rates including Nottinghamshire BR Pool	(354)	
Total Net Projected Budget Variance	(2,164)	

- 4.3. The main adverse variances arise from planning appeals and enforcement, and the rent increase from supported housing providers. There is a specific reserve for planning appeals, which could be utilised to offset these costs. The remaining adverse variances can be covered by in year efficiencies without need to reduce reserves at this time.
- 4.4. The main efficiencies arise from investment income and unallocated contingency, additional grant income, savings on leisure and depot contracts, increased income from football pitch hire and the Business Rates pool expected surplus.
- 4.5. The favourable projected budget position does enable the Council to protect itself from risks that materialise in what remains a challenging financial

environment and carry forward balances or replenish/create reserves for alternative opportunities or risks such as Simpler Recycling. Carry Forward requests are identified in the table below.

Table 2: Use of Projected Underspend

Area for Use	Amount (£'000)	Comment
Homes for Ukraine (Q1 report)	148	Carried forward grant resources
Economic Growth (Q1 report)	70	To fund potential Economic Growth Strategy requirements eg Tourism, signs for the Borough
West Bridgford Town Centre Regeneration (Central Avenue) (Q1 report)	500	To put in a new 'WBTC reserve' towards pedestrianisation of WBTC
Disabled Facilities Grants additional support (Q2 report)	200	See Paragraph 4.10 below.
Council Chamber AV System (Q2 report)	150	Modernise the system to improve functionality and reliability for both council and third-party meetings, optimising the use of council facilities (mainly capital and to amend the capital 2024/25 programme).
Land Acquisition (Q2 report)	698	For Carbon Offsetting, taking the overall allocation to £1.5m (including £0.425 from 2023/24 outturn report and £0.377m from NHB reserve).
IT contracts	61	Savings arising from projects not yet rolled out (mainly Microsoft 365 co-pilot AI technology) will be requested to be carried forward to pursue projects in next financial year.
Treasury Capital Depreciation Reserve	137	Recommended increase
Organisation Stabilisation Reserve	200	Given the uncertainty of Local Government Reorganisation
Total	2,164	

- 4.6. **Appendix E** shows the Quarter 3 position on the Special Expenses budget. The expenditure is expected to be £46.3k above budget, this is mainly due to shortfall of income expected for room hire; Gamston £10.4k and Sir Julien Cahn £18.3k (the use of community facilities was discussed at Communities Scrutiny Group July 2024). Additional costs have also been incurred for the Christmas Lights for electrical pillars and additional equipment hire for the switch on event due to weather conditions and accessibility requirements £7.7k.

Capital Monitoring

- 4.7. The updated summary of the Capital Programme monitoring statement and funding position as of 31 December 2024 is shown at **Appendix C**. **Appendix D** provides further details about the progress of the schemes.

4.8. The original Capital Programme for 2024/25 was £11.079m, with £3.405m carry forwards and other adjustments of £3.254m and slippage approved in Quarters 1 and 2 of £5.191m, to give a current budget of £12.547m. The projected outturn at Quarter 3 is £8.107m, giving an underspend of £4.440m against current budget. It is requested that a further £0.556m is rephased to 2025/26. This is summarised in Table 3 below.

Table 3 - Rephasing of 2024/25 Schemes to/(from) 2025/26

Scheme	Amount £000
Compton Acres Watercourse	180
Edwalton Community Facility	250
Support for Registered Housing Providers	36
Toothill Sports Complex Improvements	90
Total to re-phase	556

4.9. The remaining £3.884m underspend is due to the following main areas:

- £1.5m Land Acquisition Carbon Offsetting - this budget has been created from 2023/24 underspend £0.425m, 2024/25 underspend £0.698m and £0.377m from New Homes Bonus reserve. This will allow the Council to implement the Carbon Offsetting Framework as approved at Cabinet on 14 May 2024, which includes the potential acquisition of land. There are no commitments to date, but opportunities continue to be assessed. Any underspend will be requested to be carried forward at year end.
- £0.856m Cotgrave and Keyworth Leisure Centre Enhancements. Works due to complete early 2025/26, timing of payments may yet move and some of this underspend may be required in year, any underspend at year end will need to be carried forward.
- £0.369m Rushcliffe Oaks Crematorium – £0.550m was set budgeted for post opening enhancement works and potential VAT liability if partial exemption calculation is breached. Drainage and paving works have taken place. The VAT liability is not expected and therefore £150k of this underspend will be released as a saving. There is potential for additional underspend to be released at year end.
- £0.238m Bingham Arena – allowance was made to cover any post opening enhancements, £10k has been committed leaving underspend, which may be released later in the year if no further works are required.
- £0.286m contingency is currently unallocated. If these underspends materialise a full year saving will be realised.
- 0.195m Disabled Facilities Grants, budgets are fully committed but timing of works can cause slippage. There are longer term pressures on this service, and we recognise the need to support some of the most vulnerable in our community. £0.2m has been committed from in-year budget efficiencies to support this budget in the short term (to be carried forward for 2025/26). We retain the view that a prudent, affordable and sustainable longer term funding solution is required as both demand and costs rise. The Council will continue to actively lobby Central Government and local authorities across Nottinghamshire for additional and redistributed Better Care Fund Grant

allocations. In February, it has been announced that a further grant allocation has been awarded for 2024/25, for Rushcliffe, this is an amount of £113,594. This will be required to be carried forward to 2025/26.

- 4.10. The current projected overall variance means that any borrowing requirement can be met from internal resources with no recourse to borrow externally this financial year.

Pressures Update

- 4.11. Inflation continues to fluctuate and was 2.5% in December 2024. Whilst not expected to reach the high levels around the peak of 11.1% in October 2022, inflation above 2% is the new normal, and the legacy increase means higher costs are 'baked-in' to the base budget. Interest rates were reduced to 4.75% in November and have since been cut by a further 0.25% in February. Long term, interest rates will continue to reduce, and this will impact the interest received, during the recent period of high interest rates, the Council has benefited from increased income, and this has largely contributed to the in-year underspend. The budget has been set to reflect expectations and should therefore be insulated against any fluctuations.
- 4.12. New pressures are expected to arise in association with the new Government and policies announced in the Autumn budget. The increase in employers National Insurance (NI) liabilities will impact the Council not only through NI contributions on salaries (confirmation received that grant will be paid but will only partially offset the costs and duration of the grant is not known), but also through increased costs associated with contracts such as the Leisure Management Contract and the general passing on of increased costs from suppliers. Whilst the impact of this may not be reflected in the 2024/25 outturn, this will come into effect from April 2025.
- 4.13. The legacy of recent global issues and the associated increase in cost of living could have implications for collection rates and income from fees and charges. The position on collection rates (see Table 4 below) shows that performance is lower than at the same period last year, there is no current cause for concern, but these will continue to be monitored. Business Rates collection is skewed due to reliefs applied at the beginning of the year and is expected to meet target by the end of the year. The collection rate as at Quarter 3 is still higher than the average of recent years figures. Given the challenges on residents and businesses this represents a relatively positive position.

Table 4 – Collection Rates - Quarter 3

Description	Q3 2024/25	Q3 2023/24	Increase/(Decrease)
Sundry Debtors	95.17%	95.69%	(0.52%)
Council Tax	84.81%	85.33%	(0.52%)
Business Rates	85.55%	87.3%	(1.75%)

- 4.14. The Council's Transformation and Efficiency Plan (TEP), or Productivity Plan, is designed to meet emerging financial challenges. In 2024/25 the savings

target is £0.733m, the three most significant are income from Green Bin Collection (£0.238m), income from car parks (£0.214m) both due to increases in fees and charges, which have been applied in 2024/25, and Leisure Management contract savings (£0.228m). These savings are on track and are either being met or exceeded. Overall, at Quarter 3 a total of £0.618m of savings have been realised against a year-to-date target of £0.609m, whilst there are some variations within the individual targets overall the transformation savings are expected to be achieved.

- 4.15. The value of the Council's Multi Asset investment or pooled funds as at 31 December 2024 is £14.022m, this is a £0.978m loss against original investment of £15m, this has worsened since Quarter 2 by £0.193 but is slightly higher than Quarter 1 when the value was £13.975m. It should be noted that whilst the value of the assets does fluctuate, the returns from these investments are stable and represent a healthy proportion of the Council's overall return on investments (£0.702m in the past 12 months and £3.3m since investment). When the capital appreciates in value the Council's revenue position will benefit. These are long term investments and form part of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy approved by Full Council as part of the (MTFS). It should also be noted that the statutory override currently in place has been extended to March 2025. It is prudent to maintain a reserve whilst we retain such investments and the Council hold £1.173m to smooth the impact of movements in value, an additional £0.137m is proposed to be added from in year underspends to give a total reserve of £1.31m. This is a fluid position and if it was to worsen then further appropriations to this reserve may be required.

Conclusion

- 4.16. The position at Quarter 3 represents what is still a positive position and an improvement on Quarter 2 projections. That said the risk profile has substantially increased given issues such as Simpler Recycling and Local Government Reorganisation. The overall efficiency position is largely due to interest rates remaining higher for longer and Business Rates growth, but the position can quickly change as the Council faces new and emerging pressures (paragraph 4.12) and risks (section 6).
- 4.17. The position on capital is currently positive although in the long-term resources are diminishing and headroom in the budget will be required to ensure future capital commitments can be met. There will still be no need to externally borrow this financial year.
- 4.18 Given the current risk profile it remains imperative that the Council continues to keep a tight control over its expenditure, identifies any impact from changing income streams, maintains progress against its Transformation Strategy and retains a healthy reserves position to help manage risk.

5. Alternative options considered and reasons for rejection

- 5.1. There are no other options proposed for consideration.

6. Risks and Uncertainties

- 6.1. Failure to comply with Financial Regulations in terms of reporting on both revenue and capital budgets could result in criticism from stakeholders, including both Councillors and the Council's external auditors
- 6.2. Areas such as income can be volatile and are particularly influenced by public confidence and the general economic climate and Government legislation. The impact of this remains to be seen at this stage but is being closely monitored. Areas of risk include, but are not exclusive to, planning and the crematorium and facility hire, particularly dependent on changes in demand.
- 6.3. Any delay in anticipated capital receipts will mean that a higher level of temporary internal borrowing will be required; however, this can be accommodated due to the level of cash reserves. There will be an opportunity cost by way of lost interest on sums invested. There remains a risk in the event of the need to borrow externally that the cost to the Council would be significant due to the level of interest rates.
- 6.4. The Council needs to be properly insulated against potential risks, hence the need to ensure it has a sufficient level of reserves, as well as having the ability to use reserves to support projects where there is 'upside risk' or there is a change in strategic direction. Sufficient reserve levels are critical in ensuring the Council can withstand the financial shocks, and maintaining sufficient reserves to address significant risks remains a key objective of the Council's MTFs and is good financial practice.
- 6.5. There remains much uncertainty as the new Government starts to legislate for, and implement, new policies. The provisional Local Government Settlement in December 2024 was again for a single year and figures are yet to be finalised and the announcement of the white paper for Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation adds another layer of uncertainty.

7. Implications

7.1. Financial Implications

Financial implications are covered in the body of the report.

7.2. Legal Implications

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. It supports the delivery of a balanced budget.

7.3. Equalities Implications

None.

7.4. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

None.

7.5. Biodiversity Net Gain Implications

None.

8. Link to Corporate Priorities

The Environment	The budget resources the Corporate Strategy and therefore resources all Corporate Priorities.
Quality of Life	
Efficient Services	
Sustainable Growth	

9. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet approves the attached report noting:

- a) the expected revenue budget efficiency for the year of £2.164m and proposals to earmark this for cost pressures given at paragraph 4.5 and Table 2;
- b) the projected capital budget efficiencies of £4.440m including the reprofiling of provisions totalling £0.556m (paragraph 4.8 and Table 3); and
- c) the overspend of £46.3k on special expenses (paragraph 4.6).

For more information contact:	Peter Linfield Director Finance & Corporate Services 0115 914 8439 p.linfield@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	Council 7 March 2024 – 2024/25 Budget and Financial Strategy Cabinet 9 July 2024 – Financial Outturn Report 2023/24 Cabinet 10 September 2024 – Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 2024/25 Financial Update Quarter 1 Cabinet 19 November 2024 – Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 2024/25 Financial Update Quarter 2
List of appendices:	Appendix A – Revenue Outturn Position 2024/25 – December 2024 Appendix B – Revenue Variance Explanations – December 2024

	<p>Appendix C – Capital Programme 2024/25 – December 2024</p> <p>Appendix D – Capital Variance Explanations December 2024</p> <p>Appendix E – Special Expenses Monitoring December 2024</p>
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Projected Revenue Outturn Position 2024/25 – December 2024

	Original Budget £000	Revised Budget £000	Projected Outturn £000	Projected Variance £000
Chief Executive	1,524	1,539	1,598	59
Development & Economic Growth	482	530	477	(53)
Finance & Corporate	4,952	4,985	3,582	(1,403)
Neighbourhoods	7,824	8,149	7,963	(186)
Sub Total	14,782	15,203	13,620	(1,583)
Capital Accounting Reversals	(1,895)	(1,895)	(1,895)	0
Minimum Revenue Provision	1,178	1,178	1,178	0
Total Net Service Expenditure	14,065	14,486	12,903	(1,583)
Grant Income (Including New Homes Bonus)	(2,125)	(2,125)	(2,326)	(227)
Business rates (Including SBRR)	(5,763)	(5,763)	(6,117)	(354)
Council Tax	(8,347)	(8,347)	(8,347)	0
Collection Fund Deficit	(32)	(32)	(32)	0
Total Funding	(16,267)	(16,267)	(16,848)	(581)
Net Transfer to/(from) Reserves	(2,202)	(1,781)	(3,945)	2,164
Planning appeals trf from reserves to cover overspend				(255)
Top up planning appeals reserve				255
Homes for Ukraine ringfenced reserve (Q1 report)				148
West Bridgford town centre regeneration (Central Avenue) (Q1 report)				500
Economic Growth (Q1 report)				70
Disabled Facilities Grants additional support (Q2 report)				200
Council Chamber AV System (Q2 report)				150
Land Acquisition (Q2 report)				698
IT contracts savings propose to carry forward				61
Treasury Capital Depreciation Reserve				137
To Organisation Stabilisation Reserve for LGR				200
Total Committed from underspend				2,164
Net Budget Deficit/(Surplus)				0

Revenue Variance Explanations

Adverse variances in excess of £25,000

Department	Reason	Projected Outturn Variance £000
Development & Economic Growth		
Planning & Growth	Cost of planning appeals and enforcement (covered by release from reserve)	255
Crematorium	Shortfall in income £75k offset by operational savings	30
Neighbourhoods		
Depot & Contracts	Edwalton Golf Course budgeted profit £61k against projected £47k loss due to extended course closure following adverse weather conditions	108
Depot & Contracts	Sales of waste bins to developers	45
Depot & Contracts	Toothill utilities	48
Depot & Contracts	£30k tyres £28k hire of vehicles	58
Strategic Housing	Lettings system upgrade and phasing of home alarms rollout	95
Streetwise	Street cleansing overtime related to inclement weather	44
Streetwise	Vehicle maintenance and hire	89
Community Development	Room occupancy at Gamston and Sir Julien Cahn Pavilion not at target (Special Expenses)	29
Finance & Corporate Services		
Revenues & Benefits	Increased rent from Supported Housing providers	170
Revenues & Benefits	Increased spend on tracing unrated properties due to one large case (spend is recovered in long term through increased billable rates)	30
Finance	Increase in bank charges	30
Chief Executive		
Executive Management Team	Costs of advertising and recruitment	25
Total Adverse Variances		1,056

Favourable variances in excess of £25,000

Department	Reason	Projected Outturn Variance £000
Chief Executives		
Legal Services	Vacant post	(25)
Economic Growth & Development		
Economic Development	UKSPF management fee funding and joint authority contribution to post	(82)
Planning & Growth	IDOX Uniform system used by Planning and Environmental health, cloud savings less allowance for post to cover these works	(25)
Planning & Growth	In year savings on building control contract	(49)
Planning & Growth	Agency budget not required	(80)
Finance & Corporate Services		
Financial Services	Investment income	(977)
Financial Services	Budget in excess of fee External audit £31k, insurance £25k	(56)
Financial Services	Contingency not expected to be allocated	(392)
Revenues & Benefits	Council tax recovery costs	(75)
Customer Services and Performance Management	Vacant posts	(72)
ICT	Contract savings (mainly £40k Microsoft 365 co-pilot AI Technology will not be rolled out in 2024/25)	(61)
Neighbourhoods		
Environmental Health	IDOX Uniform system used by Planning and Environmental health, cloud savings less allowance for post to cover these works	(25)
Environmental Health	Homes for Ukraine carry forward not fully committed	(148)
Strategic Housing	Additional homelessness funding	(145)

Department	Reason	Projected Outturn Variance £000
Depot & Contracts	Leisure Management contract	(122)
Depot & Contracts	Eastcroft Depot rent	(49)
Depot & Contracts	Diesel/HVO savings	(140)
Depot & Contracts	Savings related to staff turnover, covered within agency budget	(40)
Community Development	All weather pitch hire income exceeding budget £107k, £27k Biodiversity Net Gain Grant	(134)
Streetwise	Savings on fuel	(26)
Total Favourable Variances		(2,723)
Other Minor variances		84
Total Variance		(1,583)

Capital Programme 2024/25 December 2024

Expenditure Summary	Original Budget £000	Current Budget £000	Projected Actual £000	Projected Variance £000	Comments
Development and Economic Growth	2,950	2,153	1,238	(915)	£607k for post-opening enhancements Bingham Arena and the Crematorium not committed; £180k for Compton Acres Watercourse requested to be reprofiled to 2025/26
Neighbourhoods	7,829	9,591	6,368	(3,223)	Primarily £1.5m provision for land acquisition carbon offsetting not committed; £856k CLC/KLC potential to slip to 2025/26; and £250k Edwalton Community Facility request to reprofile to 2025/26.
Finance and Corporate Services	150	517	501	(16)	Budget adjustments processed for AV Replacement £84k; FMS Upgrade £47k; and Income Management System upgrade £110k.
Contingency	150	286	0	(286)	Capital contingency not yet allocated.
Total Expenditure	11,079	12,547	8,107	(4,440)	
Financing Analysis					
Capital Receipts	(2,989)	(2,541)	(999)	1,542	Capital Contingency balance not yet allocated to be part funded by Capital Receipts; provisions for post opening enhancements at Bingham Arena and the Crematorium not yet committed. CLC/KLC Enhancements £856k potential to slip to 2025/26.
Government Grants	(2,745)	(4,441)	(4,239)	202	Underspend RETROFIT grants; scheme slippage Gamston and West Park decarbonisation works supported by SALIX grants.
Use of Reserves	(2,053)	(3,567)	(1,182)	2,385	Capital Contingency balance not yet allocated to be part funded by Reserves; £1.5m Land Acquisition for carbon offsetting not committed; £545k reserves not needed to support CLC/KLC expenditure in 2024/25.
Grants/Contributions	0	(276)	(276)	0	
Section 106 Monies	(3,292)	(1,722)	(1,411)	311	Post opening enhancements at Bingham Hub not committed.
Borrowing	0	0	0	0	
Total Funding	(11,079)	(12,547)	(8,107)	4,440	
Net Expenditure	0	0	0	0	

Capital Variance Explanations 2024/25 December 2024

	Current Budget £000	Budget YTD £000	Actual YTD £000	Variance £000	Projected Actual £000	Variance £000	Comments
Development and Economic Growth							
REPF Capital Grants	520	390	305	(85)	522	2	Rural England Prosperity Fund wholly committed.
UKSPF Capital Grants (UK Shared Prosperity Fund)	153	108	105	(3)	153	0	£8k grant commitment brought forward plus 2024/25 grant approvals £145k - wholly committed.
Manvers Business Park Enhancements	100	94	86	(8)	100	0	Roller shutters complete. £200k Roof reprofiled to 2025/26 may be cost pressures on this scheme due to inflation.
Unit 10 Moorbridge Enhancements	140	0	0	0	140	0	£40k original estimate for EVCP but revised cost £49k to be funded from UKSPF. Contractor appointed. Potential cost pressure for EVCP if enhanced power supply needed. Compliant Vehicle Wash to be commissioned up to £50k and works to the internal layout for health and safety reasons estimated £41k. £100k reprofiled to 2025/26.
Bridgford Park Kiosk	0	0	0	0	0	0	Planning approval obtained to construct a dedicated staff toilet for the kiosk. Building regs application to be made and works to be tendered. Scheme reprofiled to 2025-26

	Current Budget £000	Budget YTD £000	Actual YTD £000	Variance £000	Projected Actual £000	Variance £000	Comments
Colliers BP Enhancements	0	0	0	0	0	0	Installation of barriers and bollards for security to be assessed. Guttering and cladding under review. Not urgent, £16k reprofiled to 2025/26.
Highways Verges: Cotgrave/Bingham/Cropwell Bishop	50	0	0	0	15	(35)	Officer investigation of sites continues to prioritise work plan. Works at Woodview commissioned £11k. Schemes complicated as Highways Authority need to be consulted - possible use of SLA to enable NCC to lead and commission VIA. £140k reprofiled to 2025-26.
Traveller Site Acquisition	0	0	0	0	0	0	No sites identified; no commitments. Provision removed (funding from NHB repatriated: £377k to the Climate Change Reserve for land acquisition and balance back to the NHB Reserve).
Rushcliffe Customer Contact Centre Premises	35	26	0	(26)	15	(20)	IT infrastructure/furniture
Cotgrave Phase 2	38	34	27	(7)	38	0	Hard and soft landscaping works, final payments to be processed.
Boundary Court	16	16	17	1	17	1	Air Conditioning Replacements. Minor overspend.

	Current Budget £000	Budget YTD £000	Actual YTD £000	Variance £000	Projected Actual £000	Variance £000	Comments
Bingham Arena	250	0	2	2	12	(238)	Residual £250k provision to meet any post opening enhancements for Bingham Arena and Enterprise Centre. £10k committed and Clerk of Works fees paid.
Water Course Improvements	210	0	0	0	30	(180)	Order placed for feasibility work, need clearance from the Environment Agency. Contractor on site undertaking surveys. Provisional £150k UKSPF funding of which £30k can be utilised. £180k requested to be reprofiled to 2025/26.
The Point	15	0	0	0	15	0	Ramp roller shutter to be done, £25k reprofiled to 2025/26
Bingham Market Place Improvements	6	0	0	0	0	(6)	Not committed yet.
Devonshire Railway Bridge	0	0	0	0	0	0	VIA inspection identified some remedial work but not urgent. £100k scheme reprofiled to 2026/27.
Walkers Yard 1a/b and 3	70	0	0	0	0	(70)	Works not committed and use of unit 3 under review. Some enhancement works may need to be undertaken in 2024/25 but there are no commitments yet.
Rushcliffe Oaks Crematorium	550	370	54	(316)	181	(369)	£150k of this provision is for VAT if the partial exemption calculation is breached, this is not now expected and it is anticipated that £150k can be given up as a saving at year

	Current Budget £000	Budget YTD £000	Actual YTD £000	Variance £000	Projected Actual £000	Variance £000	Comments
							end. £400k to address any post opening enhancement works required. Drainage and paving works undertaken. £54k UKSPF funding to cover expenditure to date.
Keyworth Cemetery	0	0	0	0	0	0	Surveys undertaken. Works to be agreed with the Diocese. Quotes to be sourced. No commitments yet. £25k reprofiled to 2025/26.
	2,153	1,038	596	(442)	1,238	(915)	
Neighbourhoods							
Vehicle Replacement	737	485	200	(285)	755	18	A review of the fleet has been carried out and there is a need to accelerate the purchase of a Tanker and a Crane Tipper. £90k has been accelerated from the 2025-26 Capital Programme. A further £18k may be needed.
Support for Registered Housing Providers	60	0	0	0	24	(36)	£24k due in 24-25 for remaining 3 units practical completion on Garage Sites Ph 2; £36k for 1 affordable housing unit at Ruddington now needed in 25/26. Meetings taking place with RPs/Developers and Homes England to explore opportunities to commit the provision.
Discretionary Top Ups	100	56	52	(4)	100	0	Due to spending pressures on Mandatory DFGs, Cabinet 12.07.22 approved amendment of the policy to

	Current Budget £000	Budget YTD £000	Actual YTD £000	Variance £000	Projected Actual £000	Variance £000	Comments
							temporarily suspend use of the Discretionary pot until a review of the national formula allocation is undertaken. This provision is to meet existing commitments and contains £89k top up monies from County.
Disabled Facilities Grants	1,031	774	601	(173)	836	(195)	There is continued pressure on the Mandatory DFG provision. RBC has had to commit its own resources to support service delivery. Additional grant of £113k has been provisionally awarded, budget adjustment to be processed. The provision is wholly committed but timing may mean that some expenditure falls in 2025-26.
Hound Lodge Enhancements	0	0	0	0	0	0	£325k provision reprofiled into 26/27. A further £70k has been added to the 26/27 Capital Programme to meet costs of decarbonisation.
Arena Enhancements	65	44	12	(32)	65	0	Some work required to upgrade reception and corridor floors. Work required on fire dampers. Reconfiguration of Data Centre complete.
Car Park Resurfacing	79	72	52	(20)	61	(18)	Bridgford Road works complete. Final costs to be charged. Carry forward any unspent balance.

	Current Budget £000	Budget YTD £000	Actual YTD £000	Variance £000	Projected Actual £000	Variance £000	Comments
Cotgrave & Keyworth Leisure Centre Enhancements	3,056	2,161	1,159	(1,002)	2,200	(856)	Work in progress. Salix Grant Funding of £1.215m awarded which needs 12% match funding £146k from the Climate Change Reserve. £730k redirected to CLC/BLC from Bingham Arena underspend; £780k Strategic CIL allocated; and £250k Lottery Grant for PV at CLC. Project slightly behind schedule. Could reallocate some additional UKSPF here. £1m refiled to 2025-26. Exploring options of principal contractor variation for Keyworth and legal implications of this.
Edwalton Golf Club Enhancements	30	0	0	0	0	(30)	Sum not yet committed. Flooding issues need to be addressed first and are currently being assessed with a view to establishing a costed action plan for the proposed works.
Toothill Sports Complex Improvements	100	0	0	0	10	(90)	Sum for improvements to Athletics Track subject to a pre-app with planning. Options to be assessed but are tied in with school redevelopment. £90k requested to be refiled to 2025/26 to align with school development plans. Consultant assessment to be commissioned, likely to cost £10k this year.

	Current Budget £000	Budget YTD £000	Actual YTD £000	Variance £000	Projected Actual £000	Variance £000	Comments
SAFE4HEARTS UKSPF	3	0	0	0	0	(3)	No further installations, sum to be returned to UKSPF Capital pot.
Gresham Sports Park Redevelopment	88	51	26	(25)	88	0	Moving shipping container nearly complete and CCTV improvements (following ASB/crime issues). CCTV may slip to 2025/26. Further work on swale and trees required. UKSPF allocation could be made. £20k expenditure on cricket wickets fully funded by English Cricket Board Grant. A consultant will be commissioned for the CCTV specification.
Land Acquisition Carbon Offsetting	1,500	0	0	0	0	(1,500)	Cabinet approved new initiative. No commitments yet but land acquisition opportunities continue to be assessed.
RETROFIT Grants	583	437	176	(261)	489	(94)	New Government Initiative. Contract in place. Survey and works have commenced, invoices being processed. Underspend £94k.
Gamston Community Centre Enhancements Special Expense	130	85	7	(78)	25	(105)	Sum for decarbonisation works. Successful Salix bid. Contract tendered but no bidders. Consultant designer approved. A retender exercise will follow. Proposed tender exercise February and works completion by August.

	Current Budget £000	Budget YTD £000	Actual YTD £000	Variance £000	Projected Actual £000	Variance £000	Comments
Lutterell Hall Enhancements Special Expense	0	0	0	0	0	0	Sum not required; £50k provision redirected to Teen Play Provision at West Park.
Home Upgrade Grants (HUG2) Green Energy Grants	890	0	0	0	890	0	New initiative, fully funded by Government Grant. Capital works have commenced but no invoices received yet.
Car Park Machines Bingham	28	28	0	(28)	28	0	Replacement and new installations. Invoice to be processed.
Rushcliffe Country Park Play Area	97	97	99	99	99	2	Works complete, payments to be processed. Site opened June 24. Minor overspend.
External Door/Window Upgrades Various Sites	46	0	0	0	0	(46)	To be undertaken ad hoc, no commitments yet.
Sharphill Paths Special Expense	7	7	7	0	7	0	Funded from UKSPF; works complete.
Bridge Field Access Imps Spec Exp	53	53	53	3	56	3	Works complete. £20k funded from UKSPF; £25k Neighbourhood CIL; and £8k from Special Expense Capital Reserve. Minor overspend.
Alford Road Football Pitches	28	28	26	(23)	30	2	Order placed. £25k funding from Neighbourhood CIL; £3.4k Football Foundation Grant. Works nearing completion. Projected minor overspend.
Edwalton Community Facility Spec Exp	250	0	0	0	0	(250)	Detailed design and cost plan to be drawn up. Legal Agreement to be drafted. Estimated total cost is now £840k including legal and professional costs. £500k already reprofiled to 25/26; request is for £250k to also be

	Current Budget £000	Budget YTD £000	Actual YTD £000	Variance £000	Projected Actual £000	Variance £000	Comments
							reprofiled with a view that the provision can be accelerated back to 24/25 if expenditure incurred. This project is at risk due to complexity and timescales.
Greythorn Drive Play Area Spec Exp	106	106	89	(17)	106	0	Scheme to be funded from S106 Contribution. Practical completion of the Play Area element 05.07.24; Mini MUGA still to be completed. Requested project management support from VIA.
Bridgford Park and Bridge Field Play Areas Spec Exp	159	0	0	0	159	0	£75k UKSPF funding allocated; £57k S106; £25k Neighbourhood CIL; and balance from reserves. Contractor appointed.
The Hook Works	6	0	0	0	6	0	Works required to the ditch at Hook Nature Reserve funded from UKSPF complete.
West Park Julien Cahn Pavilion Special Expense	359	474	196	(278)	334	(25)	Planning fee and surveys in advance of works. Detailed design and cost plan to be drawn up. Part funded by UKSPF £100k (may need to reallocate if timescales slip). Consultants appointed to do design (also covering Gamston). Out to tender, may be costs pressures. £50k redirected from Lutterell Hall for Teen Play Areas at West Park. £164k Grant awarded from English Cricket Board for

	Current Budget £000	Budget YTD £000	Actual YTD £000	Variance £000	Projected Actual £000	Variance £000	Comments
							Cricket Wicket. £385k reprofiled to 2025-26.
	9,591	4,964	2,764	(2,200)	6,368	(3,223)	
Finance and Corporate Services							
Information Systems Strategy	517	180	245	65	501	(16)	Rollout of the ICT Alignment Strategy to meet business needs and embrace changing technology. Cloud Based Solutions now being assessed. There may be a need to accelerate some of the 25-26 provision for EXSI Boxes and the San Replacement. This is currently being assessed. Budget adjustments processed: AV Replacement in the Council Chamber £84k; Financial Management System upgrade £47k; and the Income Management System upgrade £110k. These three schemes funded from the Organisation Stabilisation Reserve.
	517	180	245	65	501	(16)	
Contingency	286	0	0	0		(286)	Budget movement: Original Budget £150k; £180k brought forward from 23-24; £28k allocation

	Current Budget £000	Budget YTD £000	Actual YTD £000	Variance £000	Projected Actual £000	Variance £000	Comments
							Bingham Car Park Machines; £16k allocation Boundary Court Air Con..
	286	0	0	0	0	(286)	
Total Capital Programme	12,547	6,182	3,605	(2,577)	8,107	(4,440)	

Special Expenses Monitoring December 2024

	2024/25 Original Budget £	Projected Outturn £	Projected Variance £	Reason
West Bridgford				
Parks & Playing Fields	486,700	495,400	8,700	West Park income below target; cricket £3.8k and football £1.7k, £2.8k due to maintenance costs
West Bridgford Town Centre	115,100	122,800	7,700	Electrical pillars for Christmas Lights and overspend on event due to adaptations for weather conditions
Community Halls	101,300	133,800	32,500	Mainly due to expected shortfall on income targets for room hire Gamston £10.4k and SJCP £18.3k
Contribution to deficit	7,300	7,300	0	
Annuity Charges	98,000	98,000	0	
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay	75,000	75,000	0	
Sinking fund (The Hook Skatepark)	20,000	20,000	0	
Total	903,400	952,300	48,900	
Keyworth				
Cemetery	9,600	8,100	(1,500)	
Annuity Charge	4,600	4,600	0	
Total	14,200	12,700	(1,500)	
Ruddington				
Cemetery	10,400	9,300	(1,100)	
Total	10,400	9,300	(1,100)	
Total Special Expenses	928,000	974,300	46,300	

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Cabinet

Tuesday, 11 March 2025

UK Shared Prosperity Fund Programme 2025/26

Report of the Director – Development and Economic Growth

Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Business and Growth, Councillor A Brennan

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. This report to Cabinet follows previous reports in February 2023, October 2023 and most recently February 2024, about the allocation of UK Shared Prosperity and Rural England Prosperity Funding (UKSPF and REPF). This report seeks Cabinet's endorsement of proposals for the recently announced further year of funding (2025/26).
- 1.2. Rushcliffe's allocation of UKSPF is £1,051,399 for the financial year 2025/26. It is a mix of capital (£460,644) and revenue (£590,755) funding. As previously 4% (£42,055) of this can be used for management and administration of the funding. Therefore, the figure available to allocate is £1,009,344.
- 1.3. In addition to UKSPF in 2025/26, we are waiting for Government to confirm whether the Council will be receiving another round of REPF, which has previously been capital only funding. Proposed plans for REPF are not included in this report but will be consulted on, as appropriate, upon confirmation of the REPF funding position. The Economic Growth Team is currently working in preparation to deliver the proposals as efficiently as possible, pending the approval of these proposals.
- 1.4. This report sets out plans for the Council's direct delivery and commissioning of the UKSPF allocation for 2025/26, as well as reflecting on what has been achieved in 2024/25.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:

- a) recognises UKSPF activity delivered in 2024/25;
- b) endorses the proposals for UKSPF in 2025/26;
- c) delegates sign-off of refinements to proposals for 2024/25 to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and S151 Officer, with both revenue and capital implications reported in future financial reports to Cabinet and the MTFs to Full Council;

- d) supports the proposals as outlined in the report for UKSPF grant pots; and
- e) delegates sign off of grant awards and reallocation of grant funding between priorities (Business Support and Communities and Place) for UKSPF and REPF to the S151 Officer and Director – Development and Economic Growth, in consultation with the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Business and Growth, following officer recommendations based on assessment of applications and moderation.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

It is important to have a clear framework and principles for UKSPF and REPF (if applicable) activity to be delivered in 2025/26 and for this to be endorsed by Cabinet. However, it may be necessary to make adjustments to ensure that funds are allocated where they can have the most impact and to be able to respond to opportunities as they may arise throughout the year. In the interest of not slowing delivery and risk of not spending the full allocation, it is appropriate for authority to approve any changes to proposals to be delegated to the Leader, Chief Executive and S151 Officer.

4. Supporting Information

Delivery in Year 3 (2024/25)

- 4.1. As outlined in the report to Cabinet in February 2024, the UKSPF and REPF funding was allocated via direct commissioning by the Council and grants for community groups and businesses. In Year 3, the allocation of UKSPF and REPF was:
 - UKSPF – £1,635,250
 - REPF – £447,145
 - Total – £ 2,082,395
- 4.2. An overview of some projects delivered across UKSPF and REPF, including the outputs and outcomes delivered by them can be found in Appendix A. This is not an exhaustive list; it is just a sample of some projects to show the range of projects and outputs and outcomes being delivered. Some headlines from delivery in 2024/25 so far are:
 - 18 grants to community organisations
 - 266 households given energy efficiency advice
 - 8 facilities improved
 - 17 supporting business grants awarded
 - 31 high street grants awarded
 - 350 businesses supported (delivered from start of the contract in September 2023)
 - 55 training courses for local residents delivered
 - Launch of Start South Notts employment and skills website

- 4.3. As Councillors will see, a wide range of projects have been delivered across the Borough. Collectively these have achieved a good spread of outputs and outcomes benefitting both local communities and businesses.

Funding available for Year 4 (2025/26) and proposals for spend

- 4.4. As the East Midlands Mayoral County Combined Authority (EMCCA) is now established, the allocation of UKSPF has been awarded to them from Government. EMCCA is now the lead local authority and will be responsible for reporting to Government. For previous allocations of UKSPF in areas where a mayoral combined authority existed, the funding was allocated to them rather than individual local authorities.
- 4.5. At the EMCCA Board on 10 February 2025, it was confirmed that UKSPF would be allocated to districts and city councils in the area. In the papers, EMCCA confirmed its intention to use a portion of the funding to deliver initiatives around inward investment, tourism and business support across the region, while working with districts to enable them to focus on local provision. Rushcliffe has a confirmed allocation of £1,051,335 to be spent in 2025/26:

UKSPF total	Capital allocation	Revenue allocation
£1,051,335	£460,644	£590,755

- 4.6. As the table shows, there is an approximate 60/40 split between revenue and capital respectively; however, there is the option to convert revenue funding to capital if required. Previously, local authorities (LA's) submitted an Investment Plan to Government outlining their proposed projects and spend across the range of UKPSF interventions. For Year 4, this Investment Plan will be submitted to EMCCA (as the lead local authority), who is asking LA's to review their existing projects and proposed spend, as well as forecast outputs and outcomes.
- 4.7. There are a few updates to the UKSPF for 2025-26. The existing interventions have been mapped into Mission-led themes across the three priority areas: Communities and Place; Support for Local Business; and People and Skills. Five themes and 12 sub themes have replaced the previous interventions, as set out in the table below. All interventions and activity previously eligible for UKSPF funding in 2022-25 remain eligible in 2025-26.

Priorities & Sub Themes		
Communities & Place	Supporting Business	People & Skills
<p>Healthy, Safe and Inclusive Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy – Improve health & wellbeing • Safe – Reduce crime and the fear of crime • Inclusive – Bringing communities together, tackling homelessness <p>Thriving Places</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the visitor economy • High streets and town centre improvements 	<p>Support for Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice & support to businesses • Enterprise culture and start up support • Business sites & premises 	<p>Employability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting people to progress towards and into employment • Support for young people who are at risk of being NEET <p>Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential skills (including numeracy, literacy, ESOL & digital) • Employment related skills

4.8. Previously, Government advised that funding can be moved between themes as plans develop and up to the value of 30% of the total allocation can be moved before approval from Government is required. However, the Council are waiting for confirmation from EMCCA on whether the previous guidelines still stand or if there will be changes.

4.9. When considering projects for inclusion in Year 4 of UKSPF, it is important to ensure these are deliverable as all spend needs to be complete by the end of March 2026. With no guarantee of future funding and with a smaller total funding amount than previous years, there is an increased pressure on the Council to allocate resources to projects with the greatest impact which can be delivered within timescales. The proposed projects for 2025/26 are:

Theme	Proposed Projects	Proposed allocation
Community & Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Bridgford Play areas • Delivery of work deferred from 2024/25 UKSPF programme e.g. Compton Acres watercourse and Sir Julien Cahn Pavilion • Active travel in Bingham • Rushcliffe Country Park - gate access and footpath improvements • Enhanced events • Community grant pot (including community wellbeing grant pot) • Tourism - brochure/website/social media/Welcome to Rushcliffe signage • West Bridgford masterplan 	£645,000
Supporting Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business grant pot (including high street shop front pot) • Business support 	£325,000

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements to RBC commercial units including energy efficiency 	
People Skills &	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuation of Transform Your Future programme of employment and skills support 	£40,000
Total		£1,010,000
UKSPF available		£1,009,344
Difference		+£656

4.10. Our proposed allocations across the three themes for Year 4 are:

- Communities and Place - £645,000
- Business Support - £325,000
- People and Skills - £40,000

4.11. Cabinet will note that the above total is an over allocation of £656. This is a very small amount and allows for flexibility in the event of delayed delivery and/or underspend of any projects.

4.12. The above list of projects aims to achieve a balance of delivery across the Borough with a wide range of outputs and outcomes. As already referred to in the report, the above list is subject to change if it becomes apparent that: these are undeliverable within the required timeframes; if alternative funding applied for is awarded; or if alternative priorities are identified. Approval for any changes will be sought from the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and S151 Officer, as set out in the recommendations.

4.13. In addition to the above list of projects, there are the certain initiatives which will be procured and managed by EMCCA, including business support and inward investment:

- Start Up Programme - £850k
- Regional Workshop Delivery - £200k
- Scale up programme - £500k
- Export programme - £500k
- Visitor Economy Activity - £400k

Any business support activity commissioned by the Council will therefore consider this wider offer and ensure that there is no duplication.

Grant pot

4.14. The proposal above includes the allocation of £200k for a grant pot for communities and £200k for businesses so £400k of the total allocation. The intention is to launch this, subject to Cabinet approval, on 12 March 2025.

4.15. It is intended that the grant pots will be delivered in the same way as previous years:

Communities and Place grants	Business support grants
<p>Larger grant pot:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivered via a call for projects (13 March to 30 April) • Grants between £5k and £40k • Projects can be applied for under any of the Government themes and sub themes • 30% match funding desirable but this can be in kind (e.g. volunteer time) • Mix of capital and revenue projects 	<p>Larger grant pot</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivered via a call for projects (13 March to 30 April) • Target investment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tourism and visitor economy ○ low carbon and energy efficiency ○ supporting growing businesses • £1k to £40k • Match requirement 60% from the business and 40% from UKSPF • Capital and revenue projects
<p>Community wellbeing funding grants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First come first served grant pot – open from 1 April 2024 • Projects from £1k to £5k 	<p>High street grants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First come first served – open from 1 April 2024 • Funding for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shop front and premises improvements (including accessibility) ○ Digital – social media, website etc. ○ low carbon and energy efficiency • Capital and revenue projects • £1k to £5k • 30% match requirement from the business and 70% from UKSPF
Allocation - £200k (approx. £30k of this for the community wellbeing funding)	Allocation - £200k (approx. £50k of this for the high street grant pot)

4.16. As noted it is not clear at this stage if any REPF will be allocated. If REPF is made available this will be used to increase grant pot allocations for communities and businesses. REPF is capital funding only and covers the whole of the Borough excluding West Bridgford.

Governance

4.17. The Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and S151 Officer, will be required to sign off any changes to the above proposals, including new projects or changes of allocations, as well as receiving updates on projects supported.

4.18. Rushcliffe's Strategic Growth Board acts as the Partnership Board, which was required to be established for the purposes of UKSPF. This Board usually meets quarterly, and it is proposed that at each Board meeting an update on UKSPF/REPF (if relevant) continues to be provided to Councillors.

4.19. Officers from the Economic Growth Team will meet regularly with identified project leads to ensure delivery remains on track and any issues are identified early. Regular reports are provided to the Executive Management Team.

5. Alternative options considered and reasons for rejection

- 5.1. An alternative option is that the Council allocates more funding into the grant pots for community groups and businesses to access. However, it is anticipated that the grant allocation will enable delivery of a range of projects across the Borough as it has done in the current financial year.
- 5.2. In addition, a wider range of smaller projects could be supported; however, this will be more resource intensive and with requirements for monitoring delivery of grant funded projects, this would become unmanageable. Alternatively, the allocation could remain more open for projects to be identified throughout the year. As outlined, projects need to be deliverable as funding must be spent by the end of March 2026 and this would pose a bigger risk to delivery.

6. Risks and Uncertainties

- 6.1. Projects can be subject to delays, for example, when dealing with third party contractors. For UKSPF projects funding can be lost if work is not completed within the financial year. To mitigate this risk the Council will look to re-appropriate funds to other projects that meet the UKSPF criteria. The financial position for all of the 2024/25 projects will be reported in the Q4 2024/25 Financial Outturn report
- 6.2. There is a risk that outputs and outcomes are not achieved in line with the Investment Plan submitted to EMCCA. Officers will be reporting to EMCCA on a regular basis as part of the requirements of the scheme and therefore any issues will be identified and addressed as early as possible.

7. Implications

7.1. Financial Implications

- 7.1.1 UKSPF and REPF are both funding awarded by Government to be allocated and spent by the Council. When deciding on projects, the Council has been mindful of not committing itself to on-going revenue and capital costs.
- 7.1.2 The MTFS and Capital Programme will be amended accordingly and reported through the usual governance and reporting procedures.
- 7.1.3 The final UKSPF allocations for 2024/25 will be reported in the Q4 year-end Financial Outturn report to Cabinet. Due to timing issues on the delivery of some projects there have been reallocations e.g. Edwalton Community Hall and Compton Acres watercourse ensuring the resources are maximised within the financial year.

7.2. Legal Implications

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

7.3. Equalities Implications

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for the UKSPF programme. In addition, all grant applicants will be asked to complete Equality Impact Assessments as part of their application.

7.4. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

There are no crime and disorder implications associated with this report.

7.5. Biodiversity Net Gain Implications

There are no biodiversity net gain implications associated with this report.

8. Link to Corporate Priorities

The Environment	Interventions within UKSPF activity for 2024/25 include a focus on decarbonisation, in line with the Council's work to make Rushcliffe net zero by 2050.
Quality of Life	The UKSPF's focus is on supporting Government's Levelling Up ambitions and particularly pride in place. The funding offers the opportunity for the Council and other organisations to deliver new activities to support and enhance our residents' quality of life.
Efficient Services	No contributions to this corporate priority identified.
Sustainable Growth	Objectives of the fund include supporting local businesses and people and skills, this funding will allow the Council and partners to deliver local interventions that meet the needs of our businesses and community.

9. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:

- a) recognises UKSPF activity delivered in 2024/25;
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Business and Growth, following officer recommendations based on assessment and moderation.

For more information contact:	Catherine Evans Head of Economic Growth and Property 0115 914 8552 cevens@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	Report to Cabinet in July 2022 Report to Cabinet in January 2023 Report to Growth and Development Scrutiny Committee in January 2025 Report to cabinet in February 2023 Report to Cabinet in October 2023
List of appendices:	Appendix A

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Theme	Project	Grant Award	Outputs & Outcomes	Target
Communities & Place	NTU Air Raid Shelter	£40,000	<p>Outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of Tourism, Culture or Heritage assets Amount of rehabilitated land Number of events/participatory programmes Number of local events or activities supported <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of community led arts cultural heritage and creative programmes Increased visitor numbers (number of people) Improved engagement numbers (number of people) Improved perception of facilities/amenities (number of people reporting) 	<p>1 tourism asset</p> <p>30</p> <p>1</p> <p>5</p> <p>1</p> <p>300</p> <p>300</p> <p>150</p>
	Framework Knitters Museum	£10,050	<p>Outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of tourism/culture or heritage assets created or improved Number of people reached <p>Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved perception of facilities/amenities Improved engagement numbers Increased visitor numbers Number of volunteering opportunities created as a result of support 	<p>1</p> <p>10,000</p> <p>50</p> <p>250</p> <p>166</p> <p>44</p>
	Bingham Town Sports Club	£21,912	<p>Outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of amenities/facilities supported/created or improved Number of tournaments supported Amount of low or zero carbon energy infrastructure installed (M2) <p>Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimated Carbon dioxide equivalent reductions as a result of support (Tonnes of Co2e) 	<p>1</p> <p>67</p> <p>300m2</p> <p>5 tonnes</p>

Supporting Business	Embroidery Design Solutions	£20,600	<p>Outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of businesses supported Number of people reached <p>Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jobs created as a result of support (FTE) Jobs safeguarded as a result of support (FTE) Number of enterprises with improved productivity Number of enterprises adopting new to the firm technologies or processes 	<p>1</p> <p>500</p> <p>2</p> <p>8</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p>
	Wolds Childcare	£27,720	<p>Outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of farm businesses supported <p>Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jobs created as a result of support (FTE) Jobs safeguarded as a result of support (FTE) Number of enterprises experiencing growth 	<p>1</p> <p>3</p> <p>15</p> <p>1</p>
	Waring Waste	£40,000	<p>Outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of businesses supported Amount of low/zero carbon infrastructure installed Number of decarbonisation plans developed <p>Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jobs created as a result of support (FTE) Number of enterprises with improved productivity Number of enterprises experiencing growth Increased amount of low/zero carbon energy infrastructure installed 	<p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>2.5</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p>
People & Skills	Futures (joint commission)	£50,000	<p>Outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eco inactive engaging with keyworker support Eco inactive supported to engage benefits system Socially excluded accessing support Supported to access basic skills 	<p>64</p> <p>45</p> <p>51</p> <p>64</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessing mental and physical health support leading to employment 38 • Supported to engage in job-searching 51 • Receiving support to gain employment 51 • Receiving support to sustain employment 33 • Effective working between keyworkers and additional services (no. of engagements) 0 <p>Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eco inactive in receipt of benefits 12 • No. of active or sustained participants in community groups 0 • Increased employability through development of interpersonal skills 51 • Beneficiaries with basic skills (English, maths, digital and ESOL) 0 • No. of people in supported employment 6.4 (FTE) • No. of people engaging with mainstream healthcare services 37 • No. of people sustaining engagement with keyworker support and additional service 40 • No. of people engaged in job-searching • No. of people in employment, including self-employment, following support 51 • No. of people sustaining employment for 6 months 38 	6
	Fully Funded Training Courses	£25,000	<p>Outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of people supported to engage in life skills 30 • Number of people supported onto a course through providing financial support 0 • Number of people supported to access basic skills courses 20 • Number of people supported to engage in life skills 30 <p>Outcomes</p>	

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of people in education/training • Number of people in employment, including self-employment, following support • Increased number of people with basic skills (English, maths, digital and ESOL) 	<p>50</p> <p>10</p> <p>30</p>
	Start South Notts	£6,000	<p>Outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of organisations receiving non-financial support • Number of people in employment engaging with the skills system • Number of people supported to engage in job-search • Number of people supported to access basic skills courses • Number of people supported to engage in life skills • Number of people supported to participate in education <p>Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of people engaged in job searching following support • Number of people in employment, including self-employment, following support • Number of people sustaining employment for 6 months 	<p>10</p> <p>100</p> <p>100</p> <p>50</p> <p>30</p> <p>50</p> <p>100</p> <p>10</p> <p>10</p>