



Corporate Overview Group

Tuesday, 25 February 2025

Financial and Performance Management Quarter 3

Report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. This report outlines the quarter three position in terms of financial and performance monitoring for 2024/25.
- 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 three 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.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Corporate Overview Group scrutinises:

- 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)
- c) the overspend of £46.3k on special expenses (paragraph 4.6)
- d) exceptions on performance to judge whether further information is required.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. To demonstrate good governance in terms of scrutinising the Council's on-going performance and financial position.

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)	Reprofiling of the rollout of Microsoft Co-Pilot to 2025/26(to be carried forward).

Projected in year cost/(efficiency)	£000	Reason
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).
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 Pool	(354)	Improved business rates position
Total Net Projected Budget Variance	(2,164)	

- 4.3 The main revenue 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 e.g. Tourism, signs for the Borough
West Bridgford Town Centre Regeneration (Central Avenue) (Q1 report)	500	To put in a new 'West Bridgford Town Council (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 New Homes Bonus 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 given oscillating changes in values
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 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. A further grant allocation has been awarded for 2024/25, for Rushcliffe, this is an amount of £0.113m 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 Q3 represents what is still a positive position and an improvement on Q2 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.

Given the current risk profile 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.

Performance Monitoring – Corporate Strategy 2024-27

- 4.18 The Corporate Strategy 2024-27 was approved at Council on 7 December 2023. The four themes contained within the 2019-2023 Strategy have been retained and The Environment will continue to be a major priority both in the medium and longer term. This is the third report of the new Strategy and performance will be monitored by theme to better show how corporate tasks and performance indicators for each of the four corporate priorities are progressing. The full corporate scorecard is in **Appendix F**.

The Environment

ENVIRONMENT									
Strategic Tasks				Performance Indicators					
 0	 2	 0	 0	 3	 1	 2	 1	 0	
No exceptions				Two exceptions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting Percentage recycling contamination rate 					

- 4.19 The Corporate Strategy 2019-23 pushed forward actions to improve the environment in Rushcliffe, with major investment made in large projects like Bingham Arena and Rushcliffe Oaks Crematorium. The Council continues to pursue environmental improvement and has an ambitious target to achieve net-zero carbon emissions in its own operations by 2030 and much of the planned activity in the next four years will be focussed on this aim.

There are two strategic tasks:

- **Deliver the Climate Change Strategy 2021-2030** – currently 75% progress – progress has been made on all aspects of the Carbon Management action plan.
 - £160k has been drawn down from the Sports England Swimming pool support fund to pay for the solar panels at Cotgrave Leisure Centre. The solar panels will reduce running costs of the new air

source heat pump by allowing the centre to use the onsite generated electricity as opposed to pulling it in off the grid and paying for it.

- Procurement progress in being made on Sir Julian Cahn Pavilion and Gamston Community Hall. An air source heat pump will be installed at Sir Julian Cahn Pavilion this spring and at Gamston Community Hall in summer.
- Three new fully electric vehicles have been deployed as part of the Council's vehicle replacement programme and all large fleet vehicles have converted from carbon intensive diesel to hydrogenated vegetable oil alternatives which has 95% less carbon emissions.
- **Implement the Environment Act commitments** – reporting an accurate progress percentage is difficult as the work involves three separate streams – improve air quality, protect wildlife and increase recycling /reduce waste. It is currently showing as 30%. New legislation has been introduced which will change the way the Council collects household waste. Work is underway with other districts, the County Council and Veolia to put the necessary infrastructure in place to collect glass at the kerbside by April 2026 and food waste from the kerbside by October 2027. Cabinet approved the introduction of a new kerbside glass collection service to start 1 December 2025. This will be a wider corporate Council project with initial meetings having taken place and a project plan being developed. In relation to food waste collections this will be a weekly service with a deferred start date across Nottinghamshire of October 2027, although initial countywide waste officer meetings are beginning to start work on a food waste service.

Officers continue to work toward implementing the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) commitments from the Environment Act.

Work continues embedding the BNG process with Planning and Growth; consultation with county wide BNG group and county Local Nature Recovery Strategy have the main focus this quarter;










Officers continue updating guidance and undertaking assessment of planning application with BNG obligations.

There are seven performance indicators in this theme and two of them have not met their target:

- **Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting** – it is noted nationally recycling rates are decreasing or have stalled pending further recycling changes as part of the Simpler Recycling initiative. Compared to end of quarter 3 in 2023/24 we have seen a significant drop in garden waste tonnages collected (10,783 tonnes in 2023/24 compared to 9,190 tonnes in 2024/25) The reduced tonnage will adversely affect overall recycling rates as in general waste from both the grey and blue bins are consistent year on year.

- **Percentage recycling contamination rate** – there has been a rise in contamination percentage since changes made to how this is measured by Veolia at the tipping site and this is being investigated by officers to better understand the change in methodology and how our waste samples are now tested.

Quality of Life

QUALITY OF LIFE									
Strategic Tasks					Performance Indicators				
 0	 2	 0	 0	 9	 0	 1	 0	 1	
No exceptions					One exception: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage usage of community facilities 				

4.20 Rushcliffe is renowned for providing excellent community facilities for residents and will continue to do so by delivering the Rushcliffe Leisure Strategy 2021-2027. The other task in this theme is being an active partner in the delivery of the East Midlands Devolution Deal, which is expected to bring extra funding to the whole Derbyshire / Nottinghamshire area. By maximising involvement in the future of the combined authority, Rushcliffe can benefit from the future prosperity that this new Mayoral area provides.

- **Be an active partner in the delivery of the East Midlands Devolution Deal** – progress is currently 60%. The Leader and Deputy Leader have both been allocated places on the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) committees (Transport and Overview, and Scrutiny) and will attend to represent all districts..The Local Area Energy Plan programme will be delivered over the next 12-24 months and includes a digital twin energy map of the Borough, funded by East Midlands Combine County Authority. The Chief Executive is the Nottinghamshire Districts representative on the Environment Officer Working Group and colleagues are engaging with workstreams around homelessness and tourism.
- **Deliver Rushcliffe’s Leisure Strategy 2021-2027** – progress is currently at 70%. Cabinet approval has been received to extend the contract with Parkwood Leisure to 2030. Work is now commencing between legal parties to vary the existing contract and premises leases. New enhanced management fees will commence by 31 July 2025, which is the end of the contract year.

Discussions are well underway regarding the end of the PFI arrangements with East Leake Leisure Centre with cabinet approval to incorporate this separate agreement into the overall Lex Contract until 2030 which would mean that the existing staff would Tupe from Mite to the Parkwood contract.

Work continues on the updating of the local football facilities plan to support the Playing Pitch Strategy and the refreshed Play Strategy was discussed at Cabinet on 11 February 2025.

Work also continues with the capital replacement programme in the leisure centres at Cotgrave and Keyworth.

There are 11 quality of life performance indicators, only one is an exception:

- **Percentage usage of community facilities** – usage for quarter 3 is 32.3%.










Whilst the percentage usage of community facilities has not reached its 50% usage target this is somewhat offset by the significant usage increase at our pitches, primarily Gresham Sports Park.

Officers have also been working hard on two projects to increase usage in the coming months and improve productivity.

Project one is the full refurbishment of the Sir Julian Cahn Pavilion at West Park and moving some bookings to other venues to support this and has contributed to the percentage reduction in usage.

Project two is the full replacement of the AV equipment at Rushcliffe Arena to reduce IT related problems and improve systems. The new system will decrease downtime and room preparation and set up which in turn will improve productivity, usage and income.

Sustainable Growth

SUSTAINABLE GROWTH									
Strategic Tasks				Performance Indicators					
 0	 5	 0	 0	 6	 1	 0	 0	 4	
No exceptions				There are no exceptions.					

- 4.21 The Core Strategy is due to be replaced by the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan which will largely determine development up to 2041.










There are five strategic tasks:

- **Provide community leadership in the redevelopment of the Ratcliffe on Soar site, during and post decommissioning of the power station** – 25% progress. Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station closed for production of coal powered energy on 30 September 2024 and the future of that site continues to be regionally significant. The Chief Executive chairs a Ratcliffe Forum which links Uniper with the Freeport, EMCCA, Nottinghamshire County Council and various Government agencies.

Ratcliffe on Soar Parish meeting (invitees include local parish council chairs and clerks, Nottinghamshire County Council, local ward members, officers and councillors from North West Leicestershire) was held on 26 September 2024 at the power station. Those in attendance received an update from Uniper and East Midlands Freeport. A further update meeting will be planned for Spring 2025. There have been extensive communication updates focussed on the closure of the site. Decommissioning work has now commenced, and it is anticipated this will take 2 years.

- **Implement Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill commitments** – 0% progress. There has been no secondary legislation introduced to action. The Government has suggested this will be in autumn 2025.
- **Adopt a Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan** – currently 70% progress. Consultation on the draft Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan (GNSP) closed on Monday 16 December. On 12 December, the Government published the revised National Planning Policy Framework, which includes transitional arrangements for when emerging local plans will need to comply with its new provisions. These arrangements affect the GNSP and the implications of which are currently being considered in order to decide on next steps for progressing the plan.
- **Support the delivery of the new employment sites and new homes, including meeting affordable housing targets, at key sites including Fairham, Gamston, RAF Newton and Bingham** – currently 40% progress. Fairham land is being developed, both commercial and residential sites. Bingham housing development sites have progressed as the build out continues.
- **Develop and deliver an Economic Growth Strategy for the Borough** – currently 25% progress. The strategy was adopted by Cabinet 8 October 2024. Copies have been shared with EMCCA and local MPs. A press release was also issued and the Strategy is now on the Council’s website. The supporting action plan has been developed and will be presented to the next meeting of the Strategic Growth Board. Initial areas of focus; tourism, town/village centres, commercial land available for development, engaging with big businesses and business support/people and skills activity using UK Shared Prosperity Funding in 2025/26.

Efficient Services

EFFICIENT SERVICES									
Strategic Tasks				Performance Indicators					
 1	 2	 0	 0	 19	 4	 6	 0	 0	
No exceptions				There are six exceptions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of cremations held at 					

EFFICIENT SERVICES	
	<p>Rushcliffe Oaks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income from all activities at Rushcliffe Oaks • Average number of days to process a change in circumstances to a housing benefit claim • Percentage of Councillors completing e-learning mandatory e-learning modules this municipal year • Percentage increase in digital transactions • Income generated from community buildings

4.22 The Council strives to deliver services in the most efficient way. New ways of working and cost saving where possible will be sought during the four years of this Strategy. There are three strategic tasks within this priority:

- **Deliver good value for money in Council operations for residents** – current progress is 75% for 2024/25 and is being monitored through the year with the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).
- **Participate in an LGA Corporate Peer Challenge and implement recommendations** – progress is 100%. A number of key recommendations have already been implemented e.g. establish a corporate project management office, revise RBC values, with others in progress. The Peer Team visited again in November 2024 and were happy with the progress made against recommendations. A report was taken to December Cabinet sharing the Peer Teams feedback report which was accepted by Cabinet.
- **Conduct a review of the Council’s asset base** – current progress at 20%. Operational assets are being assessed using the framework which has been developed. This identifies options to be explored in more detail which is being done for a number of existing assets.

An internal working group, chaired by the Director of Finance and Corporate Services, continues to meet regularly and will be reporting to the Executive Management Team in March 2025 with some initial findings.

There are 11 performance indicators falling under the Efficient Services priority. Six are exceptions at this stage of the year:

- **Number of cremations held at Rushcliffe Oaks** – Cremation numbers were reprofiled across the year at the start of 2024/25 reflecting the trend that was seen in year 1 with higher numbers in the winter months. This was largely on target until December 2024, however feedback from funeral directors is that it was quiet across the board and this will be taken into consideration when profiling for 2025/26. The facility and team continue to get incredibly positive feedback and is seeing significant growth when comparing numbers to this time last year. It is forecast that by year end there will be a 20% increase in the number of cremations compared to 2023/24. The team continue to work hard on promoting the facility including recently placing adverts in the brochures of AW Lymm's.
- **Income from all activities at Rushcliffe Oaks** – income projections are based on cremation numbers. The projection for year-end has been reduced however this could be revised should targets be exceeded in the remaining 3 months of the year. The income in 2024/25 represents growth from that achieved in 2023/24, if targets for the remaining 2 months of the year are realised, there will be £170k growth in income.
- **Average number of days to process a change in circumstances to a housing benefit claim** – the figure is a little above the target and will be below 4 days following the annual billing process.
- **Percentage of Councillors completing e-learning mandatory e-learning modules this municipal year** – there have been no e-learning modules completed since November. Although Councillors are required to complete the modules during their 4-year term, early completion is encouraged.
- **Percentage increase in digital transactions** – There were 4,384 more transactions than in quarter 3 last year which creates an increase of 1.01% over the rolling 12-month period. Increases were shown from e-form completion, payments on the RBC website, logins to the Benefits/Revenues system and pitch bookings. All other transactions showed a decrease.

There is constant variation from month to month and year to year resulting in uneven growth of transactions. This is due to a variable volume of transactions resulting from outside forces (elections for example) and internal business decisions (e.g. consultations). Growth will largely be delivered by increasing the number of transactions that can be completed online.

- **Income generated from community buildings** – Income for quarter 3 is £80,668 against target of £106,497. Officers have begun the process of transferring bookings for the Sir Julian Cahn Pavilion to our other community buildings in preparation for the capital refurbishment of the site, this has led to some loss of booking due clashes in timings which can't be accommodated. Marketing of the venues continues and the project to replace the AV equipment at Rushcliffe Arena is well underway with the intention of improving community buildings income.

5. Risks and Uncertainties

- 5.1. 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.
- 5.2. Failure to identify and thoroughly investigate instances of poor performance within the Council could lead to significant operational disruptions and damage to the Council's reputation.
- 5.3. 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 particularly dependent on changes in demand.
- 5.4. Any delay in anticipated capital receipts will mean that a higher level of temporary internal borrowing will be required. This can, however, 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.
- 5.5. 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.
- 5.6. 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.

6. Implications

6.1. Financial Implications

Financial implications are covered in the body of the report.

6.2. Legal Implications

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

6.3. Equalities Implications

There are no direct equality implications arising from this report.

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

There are no direct Section 17 implications arising from this report.

6.5. Biodiversity Net Gain

There are no direct Biodiversity Net Gain implications arising from this report.

7. Link to Corporate Priorities

The Environment	Successful management of the Council's resources can help the Council deliver on its goals as stated in the Corporate Strategy and monitored through this quarterly report
Quality of Life	
Efficient Services	
Sustainable Growth	

8. Recommendations

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- c) the overspend of £46.3k on special expenses (paragraph 4.6)
- d) exceptions on performance to judge whether further information is required.

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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

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Appendix B – Revenue Variance Explanations –
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Appendix C – Capital Programme 2024/25 –
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Appendix D – Capital Variance Explanations
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Appendix E – Special Expenses Monitoring
December 2024

Appendix F – Strategic Performance Scorecard